

**The following information was found on the internet via Google search using these key words – ["children of the east" Arabs]**



## **Islam: What does the Bible say about Muslims/Islam?**

Although not mentioned directly in the Bible, there is recorded in the Bible an outline of the Arabic people as the Children of Abraham who inhabited the "eastern country". The history of the Muslim peoples, therefore, begins with the prophet Abraham and his descendants through Ishmael, his firstborn son.

Abraham's first born son by Hagar the Egyptian was Ishmael. It's in the Bible, the Torah, Genesis 16:15, RSV. "And Hagar bore Abram a son; and Abram called the name of his son, whom Hagar bore, Ishmael. Abram was eighty-six years old when Hagar bore Ishmael to Abram."

Abraham was given a special promise that the descendants of Ishmael would become a great nation. It's in the Bible, the Torah, Genesis 17:20, RSV. "As for Ishmael, I have heard you; behold, I will bless him and make him fruitful and multiply him exceedingly; he shall be the father of twelve princes, and I will make him a great nation."

His name (Ishmael) was given by God through the angel, and stands as a perpetual reminder of God's mercy. Ishmael means "God hears" - and understands, and will respond in your times of need. It's in the Bible, the Torah, Genesis 16:7-11, RSV. "The angel of the Lord found her by a spring of water in the wilderness the spring on the way to Shur. And he said, "Hagar, maid of Sarai, where have you come from and where are you going?" She said, "I am fleeing from my mistress Sarai." The angel of the Lord said to her, "Return to your mistress, and submit to her." The angel of the Lord also said to her, "I will so greatly multiply your descendants that they cannot be numbered for multitude." And the angel of the Lord said to her, "Behold, you are with child, and shall bear a son; you shall call his name Ishmael; because the Lord has given heed to your affliction."

Again when Hagar and Ishmael were moving to Arabia the angel appeared to her. It's in the Bible, the Torah, Genesis 21:17-21, RSV. "And God heard the voice of the lad; and the angel of God called to Hagar from heaven, and said to her, "What troubles you, Hagar? Fear not; for God has heard the voice of the lad where he is. Arise, lift up the lad, and hold him fast with your hand; for I will make him a great nation." Then God opened her eyes, and she saw a well of water; and she went, and filled the skin with water, and gave the lad a drink. And God was with the lad, and he grew up; he lived in the wilderness, and became an expert with the bow. He lived in the wilderness of Paran; [northern Arabia] and his mother took a wife for him from the land of Egypt."

The descendants of Ishmael and the other sons of Abraham through Keturah were given the eastern country and are referred to as the children or people of the east. They are the progenitors of the Arabs. Muhammad, the prophet of Islam, traces his lineage back to Ishmael through his first born son, Nabaioth. It's in the Bible, the Torah, Genesis 25:6,12-18, RSV. "But to the sons of his concubines Abraham gave gifts, and while he was still living he sent them away from his son Isaac, eastward to the east country." "These are the descendants of Ishmael, Abraham's son, whom Hagar the Egyptian, Sarah's maid, bore to Abraham. These are the names of the sons of Ishmael, named in the order of their birth: Nebaioth, the first-born of Ishmael; and Kedar, Adbeel, Mibsam, Mishma, Dumah, Massa, Hadad, Tema, Jetur, Naphish, and Kedemah. These are the sons of Ishmael and these are their names, by their villages and by their encampments, twelve princes according to their tribes. (These are the years of the life of Ishmael, a hundred and thirty-seven years; he breathed his last and died, and was gathered to his kindred.) They dwelt from Havilah to Shur, which is opposite Egypt in

the direction of Assyria; he settled over against all his people." The areas noted here in verse 18 are located in Central and Northern Arabia.

There is evidence of a spiritual partnership between the sons of Abraham through Isaac (the Jews) and the sons of Abraham through Ishmael (the Arabs and the prophet of Islam, Muhammad). Ishmael and Isaac together buried their father Abraham. It's in the Bible, the Torah, Genesis 25:7-10, RSV. "These are the days of the years of Abraham's life, a hundred and seventy-five years. Abraham breathed his last and died in a good old age, an old man and full of years, and was gathered to his people. Isaac and Ishmael, his sons, buried him in the cave of Machpelah, in the field of Ephron the son of Zohar the Hittite, east of Mamre, the field which Abraham purchased from the Hittites. There Abraham was buried, with Sarah his wife."

Ishmaelites (the descendants of Ishmael had become traders in spices) rescue Joseph (a son of Jacob, son of Isaac). It's in the Bible, the Torah, Genesis 37:25 & 28, RSV. "Then they sat down to eat; and looking up they saw a caravan of Ishmaelites coming from Gilead, with their camels bearing gum, balm, and myrrh, on their way to carry it down to Egypt... and they drew Joseph up and lifted him out of the pit, and sold him to the Ishmaelites for twenty shekels of silver; and they took Joseph to Egypt."

This rescuing of Joseph by the Ishmaelites and taking him to Egypt was part of God's plan. It's in the Bible, the Torah, Genesis 45:5-7, RSV. "So Joseph said to his brothers, "Come near to me, I pray you." And they came near. And he said, "I am your brother, Joseph, whom you sold into Egypt. And now do not be distressed, or angry with yourselves, because you sold me here; for God sent me before you to preserve life. For the famine has been in the land these two years; and there are yet five years in which there will be neither plowing nor harvest. And God sent me before you to preserve for you a remnant on earth, and to keep alive for you many survivors."

Jethro (a Midianite, Arab, one of the "eastern" children of Abraham, provides refuge for Moses who is escaping for his life from Egypt. Jethro has kept alive the worship of the One true God and therefore teaches Moses, since the knowledge of God among the Hebrew people in Egypt was nearly lost, and Moses had received most of his training in the pagan religions of Egypt in the court of Pharaoh. It's in the Bible, the Torah, Exodus 2:15,16, 21; 3:1, RSV. "But Moses fled from Pharaoh, and stayed in the land of Midian; and he sat down by a well. Now the priest of Midian had seven daughters; and they came and drew water, and filled the troughs to water their father's flock" "And Moses was content to dwell with the man, and he gave Moses his daughter Zipporah." "Now Moses was keeping the flock of his father-in-law, Jethro, the priest of Midian; and he led his flock to the west side of the wilderness, and came to Horeb, the mountain of God."

Job, an eastern man - an Arab - endures suffering, provides an example of patient submission to God and gives a picture of the great controversy between God and Satan. It's in the Bible, the Torah, Job 1:1-2;10, NEB. "There lived in the land of Uz a man of blameless and upright life named Job, who feared God and set his face against wrongdoing. He had seven sons and three daughters; and he owned seven thousand sheep and three thousand camels, five hundred yoke of oxen and five hundred asses, with a large number of slaves. Thus Job was the greatest man in all the East. Now his sons used to foregather and give, each in turn, a feast in his own house; and they used to send and invite their three sisters to eat and drink with them. Then, when a round of feasts was finished, Job sent for his children and sanctified them, rising early in the morning and sacrificing a whole-offering for each of them; for he thought that they might somehow have sinned against God and committed blasphemy in their hearts. This he always did. The day came when the members of the court of heaven took their places in the presence of the Lord, and Satan was there among them. The Lord asked him where he had been. "Ranging over the earth," he said, "from end to end." Then the Lord asked Satan, "Have you considered my servant Job?" You will find no one like him on earth, a man of blameless and upright life, who fears God and sets his face against wrongdoing." Satan answered the Lord, "Has not Job good reason to be God-fearing? Have you not hedged him round on every side with your protection, him and his family and all his possessions? Whatever he does you have blessed, and his herds have increased beyond measure. But stretch out your hand and touch all that he has, and then he will curse you to your face." Then the Lord said to Satan, "So be it. All that he has is in your hands; only Job himself you must not touch." And Satan left the Lord's presence. When the day came that Job's sons and daughters were eating and drinking in the eldest brother's house, a messenger came running to Job and said, "The oxen were ploughing and the asses were grazing near them, when the

Sabaeans swooped down and carried them off, after putting the herdsmen to the sword; and I am the only one to escape and tell the tale." While he was still speaking, another messenger arrived and said, "God's fire flashed from heaven. It struck the sheep and the shepherds and burnt them up; and I am the only one to escape and tell the tale." While he was still speaking, another arrived and said, "The Chaldaeans, three bands of them, have made a raid on the camels and carried them off, after putting the drivers to the sword; and I am the only one to escape and tell the tale." While this man was speaking, yet another arrived and said, "Your sons and daughters were eating and drinking in the eldest brother's house, when suddenly a whirlwind swept across from the desert and struck the four corners of the house, and it fell on the young people and killed them; and I am the only one to escape and tell the tale." At this Job stood up and rent his cloak; then he shaved his head and fell prostrate on the ground, saying: "Naked I came from the womb, naked I shall return whence I came. The Lord gives and the Lord takes away; blessed by the name of the Lord. Throughout all this Job did not sin; he did not charge God with unreason. Once again the day came when the members of the court of heaven took their places in the presence of the Lord, and Satan was there among them. The Lord asked him where he had been. "Ranging over the earth," he said, "from end to end." Then the Lord asked Satan, "Have you considered my servant Job?" You will find no one like him on earth, a man of blameless and upright life, who fears God and sets his face against wrongdoing. You incited me to ruin him without a cause, but his integrity is still unshaken." Satan answered the Lord, "Skin for skin! There is nothing the man will grudge to save himself. But stretch out your hand and touch his bone and his flesh, and see if he will not curse you to your face." The Lord said to Satan, "So be it. He is in your hands; but spare his life." And Satan left the Lord's presence and he smote Job with running sores from head to foot, so that he took a piece of a broken pot to scratch himself as he sat among the ashes. Then his wife said to him, 'Are you still unshaken in your integrity? Curse God and die!' But he answered, 'You talk as any wicked fool of a woman might talk. If we accept good from God, shall we not accept evil?' Throughout all this, Job did not utter one sinful word."

Caleb, an Arab, gives an example of courage and partners with Joshua in leading the Hebrews into the Promised Land. It's in the Bible, the Torah, Numbers 13:30,31; 14:6-10, RSV. "But Caleb quieted the people before Moses, and said, "'Let us go up at once, and occupy it; for we are well able to overcome it.' Then the men who had gone up with him said, 'We are not able to go up against the people; for they are stronger than we.' ... And Joshua the son of Nun and Caleb the son of Jephunneh, who were among those who had spied out the land, rent their clothes, and said to all the congregation of the people of Israel, 'The land, which we passed through to spy it out, is an exceedingly good land. If the Lord delights in us, he will bring us into this land and give it to us, a land, which flows with milk and honey. Only, do not rebel against the Lord; and do not fear the people of the land, for they are bread for us; their protection is removed from them, and the Lord is with us; do not fear them.' But all the congregation said to stone them with stones."

Rechabites, eastern people, of the same lineage as Caleb, are commended as an example of steadfast faith by the prophet Jeremiah at a time when there was little evidence of faith among the Hebrew people. It's in the Bible, the Torah, Jeremiah 35:14,18,19, RSV. "The command which Jonadab the son of Rechab gave to his sons to drink no wine has been kept; and they drink none to this day, for they have obeyed their father's command. I have spoken to you persistently, but you have not listened to me... . But to the house of the Rechabites Jeremiah said, 'Thus says the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel: Because you have obeyed the command of Jonadab your father, and kept all his precepts, and done all that he commanded you, therefore thus says the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel: Jonadab the son of Rechab shall never lack a man to stand before me.'"

Wise men, from the east (from Persia), brought gifts to the infant Jesus. It's in the Bible, the Injil, Matthew 2:1,2,9-12, RSV. "Now when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king, behold, wise men from the East came to Jerusalem, saying, 'Where is he who has been born king of the Jews? For we have seen his star in the East, and have come to worship him.' ... When they had heard the king they went their way; and lo, the star which they had seen in the East went before them, till it came to rest over the place where the child was. When they saw the star, they rejoiced exceedingly with great joy; and going into the house they saw the child with Mary his mother, and they fell down and worshipped him. Then, opening their treasures, they offered him gifts, gold and frankincense, and myrrh. And being warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they departed to their own country by another way."

Descendants of Abraham through Ishmael are predicted to bring their praise into the temple of God. This is interpreted by most scholars to refer to the gathering of the peoples in the New Earth, heaven, paradise. It's in the Bible, the Torah, Isaiah 60:6 & 7, RSV. "A multitude of camels shall cover you, the young camels of Midian and Ephah; all those from Sheba shall come. They shall bring gold and frankincense, and shall proclaim the praise of the Lord. All the flocks of Kedar shall be gathered to you, the rams of Nebaioth shall minister to you; they shall come up with acceptance on my altar, and I will glorify my glorious house." These are all sons of Abraham, children of the East, Arabs, forefathers of the Muslim people.

The last book in scripture in the Injil, is called Revelation. It is the revelation specifically given to Jesus. It's in the Bible, the Injil, Revelation 1:1-3, RSV. "The revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave him to show to his servants what must soon take place; and he made it known by sending his angel to his servant John, who bore witness to the word of God and to the testimony of Jesus Christ, even to all that he saw. Blessed is he who reads aloud the words of the prophecy, and blessed are those who hear, and who keep what is written therein; for the time is near."

Many scholars identify the power depicted in Revelation 9:1-12 as referring to Islam and its prophet, Muhammad. It's in the Bible, the Injil, Revelation 9:1-3, RSV. "And the fifth angel blew his trumpet, and I saw a star fallen from heaven to earth, and he was given the key of the shaft of the bottomless pit; he opened the shaft of the bottomless pit, and from the shaft rose smoke like the smoke of a great furnace, and the sun and the air were darkened with the smoke from the shaft. Then from the smoke came locusts on the earth, and they were given power like the power of scorpions of the earth; . . ."

It is a power which is instructed to hurt only those who have NOT received the "seal of God". It's in the Bible, the Injil, Revelation 9:4, RSV. "They were told not to harm the grass of the earth or any green growth or any tree, but only those of mankind who have not the seal of God upon their foreheads; . . ." Islam did, in fact, respect those Christians maintaining a pure monotheistic faith, but did "hurt" those whose faith had become corrupted with idolatry and polytheism.

Its leader is called "the angel of the bottomless pit". The Greek work "angelos" for angel, means "messenger". Bottomless pit here can be understood as a desolate place, the desert. If, in fact, we take this to refer to Islam, it would be logical for this to be identified as Arabia. Their leader then is known as "the Messenger of Arabia". It's in the Bible, the Injil, Revelation 9:11, RSV. "They have as king over them the angel of the bottomless pit; his name in Hebrew is Abaddon, and in Greek he is called Apollyon." To the Hebrews and Greeks, whose religion had not remained pure, he is known as "destroyer".

The purpose of this power was to lead people to the worship of the one true God and away from their idolatry and evil. But most of mankind did not repent of their evil. It's in the Bible, the Injil, Revelation 9:20, 21, RSV. "The rest of mankind, who were not killed by these plagues, did not repent of the works of their hands nor give up worshipping demons and idols of gold and silver and bronze and stone and wood, which cannot either see or hear or walk; nor did they repent of their murders or their sorceries or their immorality or their thefts."

Copyright © 2005, Bibleinfo.com | [Privacy Policy](#)

# ISHMAEL AND THE ARABS

*Courtesy: National Message*

[www.ensignmessage.com/archives/ishmaelarabs.html](http://www.ensignmessage.com/archives/ishmaelarabs.html)

By

*J. Simms*

*“He will be a wild man; his hand (will be) against every man and every man’s hand against him; and he shall dwell in the presence of all his brethren.” - (Genesis 16:12)*

**T**URNING to an *Encyclopaedia*, we read that “*Arab*” is a name loosely applied to all the Arabic-speaking peoples of the Near and Middle East, but restricted by ethnologists to the basic Semitic stock of the Arabian peninsula, where many of the nomadic tribes have preserved their identity after thousands of years of internecine war and migration into Iraq, Syria and Africa. It is also used both inside and outside the Islamic world as synonymous with Bedouin, the Nomadic Arab as distinct from the town dweller.

Arabians are of two stocks: those of the uplands of the south-west corner of the Arabian peninsular, and the group located in northern and central Arabia ***“and often alleged to be descendants of Ishmael, son of Abraham. To this day almost every Arab tribe claims to be descended from one or other of these two stocks” (Encyclopaedia Britannica, 1967).***

As rainfall is scanty and precarious, the desert cities can only be near springs, wells or along the coast. The settled population lives by agriculture, chiefly gardens of date palms, or they are go-betweens buying camels, sheep, wool or animal oil from the tribes and exporting to neighbouring countries such as Egypt, Syria or Iraq.

In the south-west mountainous regions spices are the principal exports, and it is known that wealthy Arab kingdoms there were settled at least a thousand years before Christ.

### **SONS OF HAGAR AND KETURAH**

Dr. William Smith, in his *Dictionary of the Bible*, puts forward evidence to show that Joktanites settled in the south-west of the Arabian peninsular. As Jokshan was a son of Keturah this would make the stock Abrahamic, but not through Ishmael, son of Hagar. Sheba and Dedan, both ancient kingdoms in south-west Arabia, were also the names of the sons of Jokshan.

The Bedouin has to be constantly on the move to find pasture for their livestock and the black goatskin tents are a feature of the life of wandering. Set up against a hillock for protection from wind and sand, the tents look tiny against the immensity of space and the undulations of hill and valley seen as far as the eye can reach. Through the centuries the nomadic Arabs have spent their time raiding, hunting and fighting. They have endured severe physical hardship and, even until after World War I, terrorised Central Arabia and surrounding territories.

### **DESCENT THROUGH ISHMAEL**

There can be little doubt that the Palestinian Arab is descended from Abraham through Ishmael, as pilgrims to the Holy Land will agree. They are proud of their ancestry and delight to tell visitors that they are descended from Abraham, the friend of God.

The mosque that now stands at Hebron was first built by Herod the Great, before our Lord was born, as a mausoleum for the bodies of Abraham and Sarah, Isaac and Rebecca, Jacob and Leah. The building is over the cave of Machpelah, the cave which was in the field of Ephron, the Hittite, when Abraham sought for a place to bury his wife Sarah (Genesis 23). The Arabs know this and, in spite of the passage of centuries, and invading armies entering, settling and disappearing from the land, the knowledge remains and, what is more important, the actual place remains to be seen by all.

When Abraham himself died, the record in the Book of Genesis states that Ishmael was present with his half- brother, Isaac, at the service of burial.

*“Then Abraham gave up the ghost and died in a good old age, an old man, and full (of years); and was gathered to his people. And his sons Isaac and Ishmael buried him in the cave of Machpelah, in the field of Ephron” - (Genesis 25:8-9).*

When Isaac came to die, Esau was with Jacob at the burial. Jacob died in Egypt but his body was embalmed and returned to his own land escorted by a very great company of his own people and Egyptians. Thus the burial-place was known to all surrounding nations.

### “A WILD MAN”

Certain aspects of Ishmael’s character were described to his mother before he was born. It will be remembered that when Hagar found that she was pregnant she scorned her mistress, Sarai, for her barrenness. Sarai, in her turn, afflicted her maid until Hagar fled from her presence towards her own country of Egypt. Then, while resting in the wilderness of Shur, by a well of water, the angel of the Lord found her. She was alone and desperately unhappy but the Lord heard her affliction and sent His messenger to strengthen and inform her of what he intended to do for her child:

*“I will multiply thy seed exceedingly, that it shall not be numbered for multitude. ... Behold, thou (art) with child, and shalt bear a son, and shalt call his name Ishmael (God shall hear); because the LORD hath heard thy affliction. And he will be a wild man; his hand (will be) against every man, and every man’s hand against him; and he shall dwell in the presence of all his brethren” - (Genesis 16:10-12).*

In the strength of the Lord’s promise, Hagar returned to her mistress and gave birth to her son.

*“And Abram called his son’s name, which Hagar bore, Ishmael” - (Genesis 16:15).*

*“A wild man”* does not mean in the sense of a wild beast but rather in the way a free animal runs wild. In Ferrar Fenton’s translation it is *“a free man”* and James Moffatt makes it *“a wild-ass of a man,”* which is the literal translation. His very freedom and independence have put the Arab in the position of opposing those with a more settled way of life. Abraham, too, is given information about his first-born:

*“And as for Ishmael, I have heard thee: behold, I have blessed him, and will make him fruitful, and will multiply him exceedingly; twelve princes shall he beget, and I will make him a great nation. But my covenant will I establish with Isaac” - (Genesis 17:20-21).*

At the time of this revelation Ishmael was thirteen years of age and Isaac not yet born. It is worth noting that Abraham's new name was only given him when he was ninety-nine years of age and that with it came the promise of a son by Sarah. When Ishmael was born of Hagar, the bond-woman, his name was still Abram (High Father).

### ISHMAEL'S TWELVE SONS

Undoubtedly there was an urge in Ishmael to seek the wild, free, desert places. When he and his mother were sent away from Abraham and Sarah, after the birth of the child of promise, Isaac, he dwelt in the wilderness of Paran, married an Egyptian and begat the twelve sons as predicted. A daughter's name is also given who married her cousin, Esau. In the wilderness Ishmael became an archer.

The names of his twelve sons are recorded in Genesis 25 and, also, that his people dwelt from "*Havilah unto Shur,*" that is, from the wilderness near Egypt right across to the centre of the Arabian peninsular. Three at least of the princes gave their names to a place or district, Kedar, Dumah and Tema. Kedar, the second son, seems particularly well known and the name of a great tribe of the Arabs (see Win. Smith's *Bible Dictionary* and Scripture maps). The name is used by some as a universal name for the Bedouin Arabs.

Isaiah, the prophet, refers to "*the glory of Kedar*" (Isaiah 21:13-17) and describes them as archers and mighty men. The Psalmist implies that Kedar is one of those that hates peace and is for war and strife (Psalm 120). Ezekiel includes Arabia and all the princes of Kedar amongst the merchants of Dedan, Sheba and Raamah (Ezekiel 27:2 1). Jeremiah, when denouncing Israel for immorality, uses the illustration of an Arabian sitting in the wilderness as though it were a common sight in his day:

*"In the ways hast thou sat for them (thy lovers), as the Arabian in the wilderness" - (Jeremiah 3:2).*

### THE MIDIANITES

Perhaps it would be true to say that our earliest memory of Ishmaelites is in the story of Joseph and his brothers when the boy was drawn up from the pit and sold to the caravan of merchantmen on their way to Egypt. The Authorised Version states:

*"Behold, a company of Ishmaelites came from Gilead with their camels bearing spicery and balm and myrrh, going to carry (it) down to Egypt" - (Genesis 37:25).*

Through Reuben, who wanted to save his young brother's life, and Judah, who saw he could make a profit out of the transaction, the sons of Jacob agreed to sell Joseph to the merchants for twenty pieces of silver. In verse 36 comes the statement:

*"The Midianites sold him into Egypt unto Potiphar, an officer of Pharaoh's, (and) captain of the guard."*

Why Midianites? The name is used as though it is an alternative name for Ishmaelite. But Midian was a son of Keturah (not Hagar, as was Ishmael), which makes the tribe from Abraham, not, strictly speaking, of Ishmael. The same mixture occurs in the Book of Judges, when Midianites were defeated by Gideon and it is explained that they had golden earrings "*because they were Ishmaelites*" (8:24). It would seem that, because

Ishmael and Midian were half-brothers, Midian as the younger took on the name of Ishmael on occasions, perhaps using it as a family name.

The enemy of Israel at that time against Gideon and his three hundred men were *“Midianites ...Amalekites, and the children of the east, ... they came up with their cattle and their tents, and they came as grasshoppers for multitude; (for) both they and their camels were without number: and they entered Into the land to destroy it”* - (Judges 6:3-5).

## NOMADIC TRIBES

The description is of nomadic tribes and makes it clear that the desert dwellers to the east and south of Canaan, who opposed Israel at the time of the Judges, were Abrahamic tribes, descendants of Hagar, Keturah and Esau-Edom. (Abraham had sent the sons of the concubines away to the east.)

The list of plunder taken in the war of Gideon, together with that taken by Moses when fighting Midianites two centuries earlier, is remarkable: gold, silver, brass, iron, tin and lead, jewels of gold, chains and bracelets, rings, earrings and tablets, ornaments and collars, purple raiment, chains that were about the camels' necks. *“We have here a wealthy Arab nation living by plunder, delighting in finery, and, where forays were impossible, carrying on the traffic southwards into Arabia, the land of gold - if not naturally, by trade - and across to Chaldea, or into the rich plains of Egypt”* (Win. Smith's Dictionary of the Bible.)

Neither should the camels be overlooked. In war they must have been a frightening sight. A camel may plod along slowly when loaded with merchandise but racing camels can cover the ground at great speed and, undoubtedly, their riders were able to make surprise attacks, gather their booty quickly, and be away before the terrified defenders had gathered their wits.

When Reuben, Gad and the half-tribe of Manasseh made war against the Hagarites, Jetur, Nephish (all of Ishmael) and Nodab in the days of Saul, they captured **fifty thousand camels** and a hundred thousand men, as well as two hundred and fifty thousand sheep and two thousand asses (I Chronicles 5:18-22).

Enough has been written to show that desert or Bedawee tribes have much in common, whether living in Old Testament days or the twentieth century AD. There is not, perhaps, the tribal warfare now and travellers tell much of the hospitality and generosity of the desert, and an obvious desire to be friendly. But, still, there is a love of liberty and a fierce independence, which will brook no interference with their chosen way of life.

Finally, the Lord said that Ishmael should *“dwell in the presence of all his brethren,”* and here it must be remembered that Keturah's sons were as much his half-brothers as Isaac. Ishmael did just that and *“died in the presence of all his brethren”* - (Genesis 25:18). Promise of possession of the land which was made to Abraham by covenant, was not passed to Ishmael. His descendants, together with their brethren, have dwelt on the face of the land, and still do, according to the prediction of God.



<http://db.bible.org/isbe.asp?id=2050> web site

## International Standard Bible Dictionary

A B C D E F G H I J K L M N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z

### CHILDREN OF THE EAST

**CHILDREN OF THE EAST** - est (bene qedhem): A term which in a general way designated the inhabitants of the country East of Palestine. The Hebrews thought of their own country as occupying the central place, and of the other parts of the world in relation to this. They spoke of the "queen of the south" ([Mt 12:42](#)), and of the "king of the south" ([Dan 11:5,6](#)). They spoke of people coming from "the east and the west" and sitting down with the patriarchs ([Mt 8:11](#)).

The term "children of the east" seems to have been applied to the inhabitants of any part of the country East of Palestine. It is stated that Jacob, when he fled from Esau, "came to the land of the children of the east" ([Gen 29:1](#)), and the place to which he came was Haran in Mesopotamia. In [Jer 49:28](#) the inhabitants of Kedar are called "the children of the east," and **in later Jewish literature, Kedar is identified with the Arabs (see KEDAR).** Job was designated as "the greatest of all the children of the east" ([Job 1:3](#)), and the land of Uz was mentioned as his home ([Job 1:1](#)). While it is impossible absolutely to locate the land of Uz, it must have been on the edge of the desert which was East of Palestine. The children of the east seem to have been famous for their wisdom. It is said that "Solomon's wisdom excelled the wisdom of all the children of the east" ([1 Ki 4:30](#)), and "Wise-men from the east" came to Jerusalem seeking the one that was born king of the Jews ([Mt 2:1](#)).

Many of the inhabitants of the east country were regarded as descending from Abraham (see [Gen 25:6](#)), and hence, they were related to Israel.

A. W. Fortune

Abraham, Abram, Ibrahim

## General Information

From the web site [<http://mb-soft.com/believe/txh/abraham.htm>]

**Abraham, originally called Abram, was Israel's first great patriarch.** He probably lived in the late 3d or early 2d millennium BC, but the earliest source for information on his life is Genesis 11-25, written about 10 centuries later. He was born at Ur in Chaldea, where he married his half-sister Sarah. Under divine inspiration, he went to Haran in Mesopotamia. Later God commanded him to leave his home for a new land; in return God offered Abraham fame, land, and descendants, promising that he would become a blessing to all nations. Abraham obeyed and migrated to Canaan, where he lived as a nomadic chieftain. He soon became wealthy, but he still had no son. Because Sarah was advanced in years, she substituted her Egyptian slave Hagar, who bore Ishmael, Abraham's first son. Later, in accord with a divine promise, Sarah gave birth to Isaac.

Abraham's faith was put to a severe test when God commanded that he sacrifice Isaac, his only son by Sarah. Abraham did not waver and he prepared for the sacrifice, but God spared the boy at the last moment, substituting a ram. The Bible portrays Abraham as a man struggling to trust God's promises. **By his faith Abraham became the father of the Israelite people and is still honored in three different religions. Jewish tradition stresses Monotheism. Christians see him as a model for the man of faith and recognize him as their spiritual ancestor. Muslims accept him as an ancestor of the Arabs through Ishmael.** Numerous works of art are based on the story of the sacrifice of Isaac.

(Editor's Note: Muslims believe that God commanded Abraham to sacrifice Ishmael instead of Isaac. Where the Hebrew and Christian Bibles present later genealogies as based on Isaac, the Islam Koran indicates that Arabs descended through Ishmael. There is no agreement on this matter, but in all cases, it is agreed that Abraham, and therefore his ancestor Shem was an ancestor, which means that both Jews and (Sunnite) Arabs are Semites (descended from Shem).)

**BELIEVE**

Religious  
Information  
Source  
web-site

[Our List of 1,000  
Religious Subjects](#)

[E-mail](#)

J. J. M. Roberts

### Bibliography

Bright, John, A History of Israel (1972); Neusner, Jacob, Genesis Rabbah: The Judaic Commentary on the Book of Genesis, 3 vols. (1985); van Seters, John, Abraham in History and Tradition (1975).