



Abram, Ishmael, Isaac

Genesis 16, 18, 21, 22

Ishmael

- They carry with them the spirit of Ishmael, whose hand was against everybody, and everybody's hand against him. (*AH* 226.2; Genesis 16:12))
- Abraham loved him — Genesis 17:18
- God named him — Genesis 16:11
- God promised to bless him — Genesis 17:20
- Lack of faith — “The lack of faith on the part of Abraham and Sarah had resulted in the birth of Ishmael, the mingling of the righteous seed with the ungodly.” (*PP* 173.5)

- Abraham's early teachings had not been without effect upon Ishmael, but the influence of his wives resulted in establishing idolatry in his family. Separated from his father, and embittered by the strife and contention of a home destitute of the love and fear of God, Ishmael was driven to choose the wild, marauding life of the desert chief, "his hand" "against every man, and every man's hand against him." Genesis 16:12. In his latter days he repented of his evil ways and **returned to his father's God**, but the stamp of character given to his posterity remained. The powerful nation descended from him were a turbulent, heathen people, who were ever an annoyance and affliction to the descendants of Isaac. (*PP* 174.1)

- Ishmael persecuted Isaac — Galatians 4:29; Genesis 21:9
- Ishmael despised Isaac — “After the birth of Isaac, the great joy manifested by Abraham and Sarah, caused Hagar to be very jealous. Ishmael had been instructed by his mother that he was to be especially blessed of God, as the son of Abraham, and to be heir to that which was promised to him. Ishmael partook of his mother’s feelings, and was angry because of the joy manifested at the birth of Isaac. He despised Isaac because he thought that he was preferred before him. (*3SG* 103.2)
- They wandered “as strangers in a strange land.” (*ST* March 27, 1879, par. 12)
- Both Ishmael (89) and Isaac (75) buried Abraham (175) — Genesis 25:9; Genesis 16:16; Genesis 21:5)

[Genesis 15:4]

Flattered with the honor of her new position as Abraham's wife, and hoping to be the mother of the great nation to descend from him, Hagar became proud and boastful, and treated her mistress with contempt. Mutual jealousies disturbed the peace of the once happy home. Forced to listen to the complaints of both . . . She desired to banish her rival; but Abraham refused to permit this; for Hagar was to be the mother of his child, as he fondly hoped, the son of promise. She was Sarah's servant, however, and he still left her to the control of her mistress. Hagar's haughty spirit would not brook the harshness which her insolence had provoked. "When Sarai dealt hardly with her, she fled from her face." (*PP* 145.2)

In the way to Shur. Hagar was on the way to her native Egypt, and had almost reached the Egyptian border (Gen. 25:18; 1 Sam. 15:7). “*The fountain*” implies a particular, well-known spring.

The angel of the Lord. Angels were frequently used to transmit divine messages to men. Verse 13. Ellen White speaks of him simply as “an angel” (*PP* 145, 152). God Himself repeatedly appeared to Abram (Acts 7:2; Gen. 12:1; 13:14; 15:1; 17:1; 18:1; 21:12).

She made her way to the desert, and as she rested beside a fountain, lonely and friendless, **an angel** of the Lord, in human form, appeared to her. (*PP* 145.3)

An angel of God calls to the patriarch out of heaven, “Abraham, Abraham!” He quickly answers, “Here am I,” And again the voice is heard, “Lay not thine hand upon the lad, neither do thou any thing unto him: for now I know that thou fearest God, seeing thou hast not withheld thy son, thine only son, from Me.” (*PP* 152.3)

God did tempt Abraham. The Hebrew word *nissab*, “tempt,” has been translated in various ways: (1) When one man tests or proves another. The queen of Sheba came to Solomon “to **prove** him with hard questions” designed to reveal whether his wisdom was as great as it was reputed to be (1 Kings 10:1). (2) When God tries, tests, or proves a man (Ex. 16:4). (3) When a man puts God to the test by trying to compel Him to act in accordance with his own proposals. This is presumption, as distinct from faith (Ex. 17:2). Since “tempt” today is used to imply evil intent, the word “test” would be preferable here. God never “tempts” any man (James 1:13).

Isaac

- Had been taught to love a life of obedience — “Isaac’s deference to his father’s judgment was the result of the training that had taught him to love a life of obedience.” (*AH 74.2*) — in choice of wife, in submitting as a sacrifice
- Matthew 8:11 — And I say unto you, That many shall come from the east and west, and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven.
- Hebrews 11:20 — By faith Isaac blessed Jacob and Esau concerning things to come.

- The Lord appeared to Isaac in vision — To Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob the Lord appeared in vision, foretelling the blessings that would come to their posterity. (*CET* 238.2)
- Named by God — Genesis 17:19
- Christ spoke to him — “It was Christ who spoke with Abraham under the oaks at Mamre; with Isaac as he went out to pray in the fields at the eventide . . .” (*DA* 290.3; Genesis 24:63)
- The submission of Isaac was tested — “Heavenly beings were witnesses of the scene as the faith of Abraham and the submission of Isaac were tested.” (*PP* 155.1)