

Judaism

The Story of Abraham (excerpt)

Genesis, King James Version of the Holy Bible

According to the Jewish Torah, Judaism began with the covenant between God and Abraham, believed by many to be the common ancestor of the Jewish people. The story of Abraham is perhaps the earliest known instance of monotheism. The story tells of a man whose faith in God was so great that he was willing to sacrifice his son, Isaac. It is contained within the book of Genesis. Many believe that Genesis was written by Moses (circa 1300 BC), along with four other of the first books of the Hebrew Bible (Tanakh). The story of Abraham is also included in both the Holy Bible and the Qur'an, the sacred books of Christianity and Islam.



Abraham and Isaac, Rembrandt, 1634

Chapter 12

[1] Now the LORD had said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will shew thee:

[2] And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing:

[3] And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed.

[4] So Abram departed, as the LORD had spoken unto him; and Lot went with him: and Abram was seventy and five years old when he departed out of Haran.

[5] And Abram took Sarai his wife, and Lot his brother's son, and all their substance that they had gathered, and the souls that they had gotten in Haran; and they went forth to go into the land of Canaan; and into the land of Canaan they came.

[6] And Abram passed through the land unto the place of Sichem, unto the plain of Moreh. And the Canaanite was then in the land.

[7] And the LORD appeared unto Abram, and said, Unto thy seed will I give this land: and there builded he an altar unto the LORD, who appeared unto him.

[8] And he removed from thence unto a mountain on the east of Bethel, and pitched his tent, having Bethel on the west, and Hai on the east: and there he builded an altar unto the LORD, and called upon the name of the LORD.

Chapter 13

[14] And the LORD said unto Abram, after that Lot was separated from him, Lift up now thine eyes, and look from the place where thou art northward, and southward, and eastward, and westward:

[15] For all the land which thou seest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed for ever.

[16] And I will make thy seed as the dust of the earth: so that if a man can number the dust of the earth, then shall thy seed also be numbered.

[17] Arise, walk through the land in the length of it and in the breadth of it; for I will give it unto thee.

[18] Then Abram removed his tent, and came and dwelt in the plain of Mamre, which is in Hebron, and built there an altar unto the LORD.

Chapter 15

[1] After these things the word of the LORD came unto Abram in a vision, saying, Fear not, Abram: I am thy shield, and thy exceeding great reward.

[2] And Abram said, Lord GOD, what wilt thou give me, seeing I go childless, and the steward of my house is this Eliezer of Damascus?

[3] And Abram said, Behold, to me thou hast given no seed: and, lo, one born in my house is mine heir.

[4] And, behold, the word of the LORD came unto him, saying, This shall not be thine heir; but he that shall come forth out of thine own bowels shall be thine heir.

[5] And he brought him forth abroad, and said, Look now toward heaven, and tell the stars, if thou be able to number them: and he said unto him, So shall thy seed be.

[6] And he believed in the LORD; and he counted it to him for righteousness.

[7] And he said unto him, I am the LORD that brought thee out of Ur of the Chaldees, to give thee this land to inherit it.

[8] And he said, Lord GOD, whereby shall I know that I shall inherit it?

[9] And he said unto him, Take me an heifer of three years old, and a she goat of three years old, and a ram of three years old, and a turtledove, and a young pigeon.

[10] And he took unto him all these, and divided them in the midst, and laid each piece one against another: but the birds divided he not.

[11] And when the fowls came down upon the carcasses, Abram drove them away.

[12] And when the sun was going down, a deep sleep fell upon Abram; and, lo, an horror of great darkness fell upon him.

[13] And he said unto Abram, Know of a surety that thy seed shall be a stranger in a land that is not theirs, and shall serve them; and they shall afflict them four hundred years;

[14] And also that nation, whom they shall serve, will I judge: and afterward shall they come out with great substance.

[15] And thou shalt go to thy fathers in peace; thou shalt be buried in a good old age.

[16] But in the fourth generation they shall come hither again: for the iniquity of the Amorites is not yet full.

[17] And it came to pass, that, when the sun went down, and it was dark, behold a smoking furnace, and a burning lamp that passed between those pieces.

[18] In the same day the LORD made a covenant with Abram, saying, Unto thy seed have I given this land, from the river of Egypt unto the great river, the river Euphrates:

[19] The Kenites, and the Kenizzites, and the Kadmonites,

[20] And the Hittites, and the Perizzites, and the Rephaims,

[21] And the Amorites, and the Canaanites, and the Girgashites, and the Jebusites.

Chapter 16

[1] Now Sarai Abram's wife bare him no children: and she had an handmaid, an Egyptian, whose name was Hagar.

[2] And Sarai said unto Abram, Behold now, the LORD hath restrained me from bearing: I pray thee, go in unto my maid; it may be that I may obtain children by her. And Abram hearkened to the voice of Sarai.

[3] And Sarai Abram's wife took Hagar her maid the Egyptian, after Abram had dwelt ten years in the land of Canaan, and gave her to her husband Abram to be his wife.

[4] And he went in unto Hagar, and she conceived: and when she saw that she had conceived, her mistress was despised in her eyes.

[5] And Sarai said unto Abram, My wrong be upon thee: I have given my maid into thy bosom; and when she saw that she had conceived, I was despised in her eyes: the LORD judge between me and thee.

[6] But Abram said unto Sarai, Behold, thy maid is in thy hand; do to her as it pleaseth thee. And when Sarai dealt hardly with her, she fled from her face.

[7] And the angel of the LORD found her by a fountain of water in the wilderness, by the fountain in the way to Shur.

[8] And he said, Hagar, Sarai's maid, whence camest thou? and whither wilt thou go? And she said, I flee from the face of my mistress Sarai.

[9] And the angel of the LORD said unto her, Return to thy mistress, and submit thyself under her hands.

[10] And the angel of the LORD said unto her, I will multiply thy seed exceedingly, that it shall not be numbered for multitude.

[11] And the angel of the LORD said unto her, Behold, thou art with child, and shalt bear a son, and shalt call his name Ishmael; because the LORD hath heard thy affliction.

[12] 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.

[13] And she called the name of the LORD that spake unto her, Thou God seest me: for she said, Have I also here looked after him that seeth me?

[14] Wherefore the well was called Beer-lahai-roi; behold, it is between Kadesh and Bered.

[15] And Hagar bare Abram a son: and Abram called his son's name, which Hagar bare, Ishmael.

[16] And Abram was fourscore and six years old, when Hagar bare Ishmael to Abram.

Chapter 17

[1] And when Abram was ninety years old and nine, the LORD appeared to Abram, and said unto him, I am the Almighty God; walk before me, and be thou perfect.

[2] And I will make my covenant between me and thee, and will multiply thee exceedingly.

[3] And Abram fell on his face: and God talked with him, saying,

[4] As for me, behold, my covenant is with thee, and thou shalt be a father of many nations.

[5] Neither shall thy name any more be called Abram, but thy name shall be Abraham; for a father of many nations have I made thee.

[15] And God said unto Abraham, As for Sarai thy wife, thou shalt not call her name Sarai, but Sarah shall her name be.

[16] And I will bless her, and give thee a son also of her: yea, I will bless her, and she shall be a mother of nations; kings of people shall be of her.

[17] Then Abraham fell upon his face, and laughed, and said in his heart, Shall a child be born unto him that is an hundred years old? and shall Sarah, that is ninety years old, bear?

[18] And Abraham said unto God, O that Ishmael might live before thee!

[19] And God said, Sarah thy wife shall bear thee a son indeed; and thou shalt call his name Isaac: and I will establish my covenant with him for an everlasting covenant, and with his seed after him.

[20] 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.

Chapter 21

[1] And the LORD visited Sarah as he had said, and the LORD did unto Sarah as he had spoken.

[2] For Sarah conceived, and bare Abraham a son in his old age, at the set time of which God had spoken to him.

[3] And Abraham called the name of his son that was born unto him, whom Sarah bare to him, Isaac.

[9] And Sarah saw the son of Hagar the Egyptian, which she had born unto Abraham, mocking.

[10] Wherefore she said unto Abraham, Cast out this bondwoman and her son: for the son of this bondwoman shall not be heir with my son, even with Isaac.

[11] And the thing was very grievous in Abraham's sight because of his son.

[12] And God said unto Abraham, Let it not be grievous in thy sight because of the lad, and because of thy bondwoman; in all that Sarah hath said unto thee, hearken unto her voice; for in Isaac shall thy seed be called.

[13] And also of the son of the bondwoman will I make a nation, because he is thy seed.

[14] And Abraham rose up early in the morning, and took bread, and a bottle of water, and gave it unto Hagar, putting it on her shoulder, and the child, and sent her away: and she departed, and wandered in the wilderness of Beer-sheba.

[15] And the water was spent in the bottle, and she cast the child under one of the shrubs.

[16] And she went, and sat her down over against him a good way off, as it were a bowshot: for she said, Let me not see the death of the child. And she sat over against him, and lift up her voice, and wept.

[17] And God heard the voice of the lad; and the angel of God called Hagar out of heaven, and said unto her, What aileth thee, Hagar? fear not; for God hath heard the voice of the lad where he is.

[18] Arise, lift up the lad, and hold him in thine hand; for I will make him a great nation.

[19] And God opened her eyes, and she saw a well of water; and she went, and filled the bottle with water, and gave the lad drink.

Chapter 22

[1] And it came to pass after these things, that God did tempt Abraham, and said unto him, Abraham: and he said, Behold, here I am.

[2] And he said, Take now thy son, thine only son Isaac, whom thou lovest, and get thee into the land of Moriah; and offer him there for a burnt offering upon one of the mountains which I will tell thee of.

[3] And Abraham rose up early in the morning, and saddled his ass, and took two of his young

men with him, and Isaac his son, and clave the wood for the burnt offering, and rose up, and went unto the place of which God had told him.

[4] Then on the third day Abraham lifted up his eyes, and saw the place afar off.

[5] And Abraham said unto his young men, Abide ye here with the ass; and I and the lad will go yonder and worship, and come again to you,

[6] And Abraham took the wood of the burnt offering, and laid it upon Isaac his son; and he took the fire in his hand, and a knife; and they went both of them together.

[7] And Isaac spake unto Abraham his father, and said, My father: and he said, Here am I, my son. And he said, Behold the fire and the wood: but where is the lamb for a burnt offering?

[8] And Abraham said, My son, God will provide himself a lamb for a burnt offering: so they went both of them together.

[9] And they came to the place which God had told him of; and Abraham built an altar there, and laid the wood in order, and bound Isaac his son, and laid him on the altar upon the wood.

[10] And Abraham stretched forth his hand, and took the knife to slay his son.

[11] And the angel of the LORD called unto him out of heaven, and said, Abraham, Abraham: and he said, Here am I.

[12] And he said, 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.

[13] And Abraham lifted up his eyes, and looked, and behold behind him a ram caught in a thicket by his horns: and Abraham went and took the ram, and offered him up for a burnt offering in the stead of his son.

[14] And Abraham called the name of that place Jehovah-jireh: as it is said to this day, In the mount of the LORD it shall be seen.

[15] And the angel of the LORD called unto Abraham out of heaven the second time,

[16] And said, By myself have I sworn, saith the LORD, for because thou hast done this thing, and hast not withheld thy son, thine only son:

[17] That in blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of the heaven, and as the sand which is upon the sea shore; and thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies;

[18] And in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed; because thou hast obeyed my voice.