

**Prayers for Muslims
based upon the Promises regarding Ishmael
compiled by Dick Grady**

1. Pray that the Lord would find the sons and daughters of Ishmael in the midst of the flight from the place of blessing and call them back to "Abraham's tent" (Gen 16:7)

The Word of God in angelic form found Hagar just before she crossed over into Egypt and commanded that she return to Sarah. The Lord desired Hagar's child to be part of the covenant community of Abraham. Just as the Lord sought out Hagar in the midst of her flight from God, pray that the Lord would seek out and find the sons and daughters of Ishmael. Pray that he would call them back to "Abraham's tent" through dreams and visions

2. Pray that the Lord would cause those who return to the place of blessing to be spiritually fruitful. Pray that their descendants would be too numerous to count (Gen 16:10).

As an encouragement to obedience, the Lord gives some amazing promises to the slave woman from Egypt. First, he promises that her descendants would be too numerous to count. This is the first in a series of promises given concerning Ishmael which echo the promises given to Sarah's son Isaac. As the sons and daughters choose to obey the Lord and turn to Jesus, the place of covenant blessing at great personal risk, pray that the Lord would make them fruitful. Pray that these Ishmaelite followers of Jesus would become too numerous to count.

3. Pray that the Lord would hear and answer the Muslims prayer "Show us the straight path." This is the prayer that every devout Muslim prays seventeen times each day (Gen 16:11).

Only a handful of people in the history of mankind have been named by God. Each one had a significant place in God's plan for mankind. The first to be so named was Ishmael. His name means "God hears" because God heard Hagar's distress. In fulfillment of his name, later God heard Ishmael's cries in the desert. Seventeen times a day, devout Muslims pray the first chapter of the Qur'an. A portion of this prayer is a plea that God would show them the straight path. Jesus said, "I am the way, the truth, and the life." Pray that God would hear and answer their prayers and show them the true way.

4. Pray that the sons and daughters of Ishmael would experience true freedom Gen 16:12a).

The Lord promises Hagar that her son would be free like a wild donkey (cf. Job 39:5-8). The vast majority of the Ishmaelites are suffering in bondage to the evil one. Pray that they would experience the freedom like a wild donkey.

5. Pray that those who return to the place of blessing would find a unique place for themselves alongside their brothers from other peoples around the world (Gen 16:12b).

The angel of the Lord then promised Hagar that her son's descendants would live in the land to the east of the Israelites (lit. "in the face of"). As children of Ishmael choose to submit to God and become followers of His Messiah, they are often treated as second class citizens. Pray that they will find their unique place in the community of faith.

6. Pray the sons and daughters of Ishmael would realize that Jesus is more than just a prophet sent by God to the Jews (Gen 16:13,14).

Hagar when seeing the angel of the LORD realized that she had seen God. Similarly Jesus said, "Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father." Pray that, like Hagar, the children of Ishmael would recognize that Jesus, (Arabic: Isa al Masih) is the eternal Word of God come in the flesh.

7. Pray that the sons and daughters of Ishmael would experience true blessing (Gen. 17:20a).

Abraham, out of love for son, requests that his son Ishmael would also be blessed alongside Isaac. Blessing in this context implies an on-going relationship with God. To this request, God answers, "As for Ishmael I will surely bless him." Pray that the

children of Ishmael, who only know God as a distant king, would experience this personal relationship with God and come to know Him as their heavenly Father.

8. Pray that this blessing would extend to the multitude of ethnic groups and people around the world who trace their spiritual heritage back to Abraham through Ishmael (Gen. 17:20b; 21:18).

The Lord promises that he will make Ishmael into a “great nation.” This term always refers to a nation made up of a myriad of ethnic groups. Israel became a great nation in Egypt when people from other nations joined them in the Exodus (Gen. 46:3; Ex. 12:37,38). Babylon, a kingdom with many kings (Jer. 50:41) is a great nation. Likewise, peoples from around the world have become part of the “great nation of Ishmael” through Islamic arabization. Pray that all these people would be blessed in the heavenly realms with every spiritual blessing in Christ (Eph. 1:3).

9. Pray that God would open the eyes of the Ishmaelites that they would see the spring of the water of life which is flowing before their eyes that they might drink and live (Gen. 21:20)

Hagar and her son were dying of thirst in the wilderness, although there was a source of life-giving water right beside them. God had to open Hagar’s eyes to see the well. Likewise, Ishmaelites around the world are dying of spiritual thirst although the source of life giving water is all around them. Pray that the Lord would open their eyes to see the water of life – a spring of water welling up to eternal life (Jn. 4:14).

10. Pray that the Ishmaelites would be reconciled to their Jewish brothers in Abraham (Gen 25:9).

It is significant that Isaac and Ishmael come back together to bury their father Abraham. Unlike the sons of Keturah, only Isaac and Ishmael are called the sons of Abraham. The others are called the “sons of his concubines.” Pray that through the “seed” of Abraham, Jesus, both the children of Isaac and the children of Ishmael might be reunited and experience peace.

11. Pray for a massive turning to Christ among the sons of Ishmael which will result in their leading the procession of nations coming to worship the Messianic King (Is. 60:6,7).

At the end of the age, the nations will come joyfully to their Messianic King bringing gifts and offerings. At the front of this procession are the children of Keturah (Midian, Ephah, Sheba) and the children of Ishmael (Kedar, Nebaioth). This is speaking specifically about the Arabs and generally about those who have embraced Arabic language and culture. Isaiah portrays a massive number of Arabs bringing gifts to Jesus, the light of the world. Pray that this prophecy would soon be fulfilled.

12. Pray that the Lord would draw the children of Ishmael to Jesus through signs and wonders (Mat. 2:1,2).

The maji, who were the first non-Jews to worship Jesus, most likely were from Northern Arabia. God Himself called these Arabs to worship Jesus through the star in the sky. Pray that God would continue to use signs and wonders to draw the children of Ishmael to Jesus, the King of kings and Lord of lords.

13. Pray that the Lord would continue to raise up laborers to carry the gospel to the sons and daughters of Ishmael (Gal. 1:15-17).

Paul, recognizing the importance of the Arabs in God’s plan for the nations, goes to Arabia before any other people or region. Pray that the Lord would continue to raise up laborers to carry the gospel to the people of Ishmael.

14. Pray that the Lord would teach Muslims around the world to sing a new song which exalts Jesus as King over all (Is. 42:10-11)

The majority of Muslims live across the deserts of North Africa and the Middle East, the mountains of Central Asia, and the islands of Southeast Asia. These Muslims are united by the song that is sung from minaret of the mosque 5 times a day. The Lord is calling these places where the sons and daughters of Ishmael live to sing a new song.