

## **THE EVERLASTING HATRED**

Arabs and Jews all trace their ancestry back to Abraham. In that sense this is a “family” dispute. As such, it is the longest running “family conflict” in the history of the world. Abraham had a son named Ishmael through Hagar, the Egyptian handmaiden of his wife Sarah (cf. Gen. 16:1-4). There were “tensions” from the very beginning over this child (cf. 16:5-6). Eventually Ishmael was cast out of the house lest he be counted as “heir” with Isaac (cf. 21:10-12). He lived down south in the wilderness of Paran and took a wife from Egypt (cf. 21:21). His descendants were nomadic people eventually settling in the Arabian Peninsula where they became known as Arabs.

When Sarah died Abraham took another wife by the name of Keturah (cf. 25:1) who bore him an additional six sons (25:2) including one by the name of Midian. In the course of time Abraham gave these sons gifts and then sent them eastward to the country of the east. But the inheritance he gave to Isaac alone (cf. 25:5-6). The Ishmaelite’s intermarried with the Midianites to the point where the terms “Midianites” and “Ishmaelite’s” are at times used interchangeably (cf. Judges 8:1, 12, 22, 24). The Ishmaelites also intermarried with Esau’s descendants called Edomites (cf. Gen. 28:9).

So the Arabs have Ishmaelite blood in them but they are a mixture of various tribal families. In particular we note the family connections between Ishmael, Keturah’s sons, and Esau, but it is much more mingled and complex than just this. According to Genesis 16:12 Ishmael would be “**a wild donkey of a man**” (literal rendering). Conflict would define him. However, he would become fruitful begetting 12 princes that would become a great nation (cf. 17:20). We believe these relate to the assortment of Arab peoples and nations in our world today.

In contrast the Jews are the blood descendants of Isaac and Jacob. God’s covenant with Abraham went through the line of Isaac and then through Jacob (cf. 26:3, 28:13-15). At each step we see conflict and tension: Between Ishmael and Isaac; then between Jacob and Esau, and then between their descendants. Paul notes this principle and makes application in Galatians 4:28-29: The children of promise are persecuted by the children of the flesh. And so, it has been.

This conflict between Arabs and Jews cannot be explained in merely natural terms. This involves spiritual issues and spiritual warfare. The devil from the beginning has sought to derail God's plan regarding Abraham and his descendants. God promised to bless all nations through Abraham and the covenant line through Isaac and Jacob, culminating in the Messiah (cf. Gen. 12:3, 22:18, 26:4, Mt. 1:1, 17, 21-23). Satan therefore has targeted Israel for destruction. To succeed he would have to overpower God. Satan has used many agents in this great effort including Pharaoh (cf. Ex. 1:15-22), Athaliah (cf. 2 Kings 11:1-2), Haman (cf. Est. 3:8-15), Herod (cf. Matt. 2), etc., (cf. Rev. 12:4, 6, 12-15). But a key agent in this attempt has been the Arabs (speaking generally), especially in conjunction with the Satan-inspired religion of "Islam" which came through them.

In the 600s (AD) an Arab named Mohammed brought forth to the world the false religion of Islam. In lockstep the Arab world has followed Islam (with few exceptions). Satan has greatly used this tool, but with limited success. Islam claims Ishmael is the rightful heir of Abraham and that any land that has ever been possessed by Muslims permanently belongs to Allah forever thereafter.

Therein lies the rub in the Middle-East conflict between the Arabs and the Jews. It's about religion! It's about the Bible versus the Quran. It's about Allah versus YHWH! The Arabs at one point dominated the land of Israel and therefore they claim it for Allah. It is for this reason that they detest the idea of Israel having ANY right to the land at all.

No Arab map in the world has "ISRAEL" on the map. Arab Muslim organizations universally call for the annihilation of Israel. Israel's great offense is simply her existence! Psalm 83 pinpoints the issue as being hatred against YHWH, the God of Israel. In evil hatred they say, "Come, and let us cut them off from being a nation, that the name of Israel may be remembered no more." (v. 4) They form a confederacy involving the people of Edom and the Ishmaelites, etc. (v. 6). Ezekiel 35:5 refers to this spirit that wants to destroy Israel as "an ancient hatred" or as some have dubbed it: "THE EVERLASTING HATRED."

The underlying issues are "spiritual" in nature and the only ultimate answer to the conflict is "supernatural intervention". It will come in the future day of the LORD when God supernaturally intervenes. Then "on Mount Zion there shall be deliverance...The house of Jacob shall possess their

possessions...But the house of Esau shall be stubble... For the LORD has spoken." (Obadiah 17-18)

"All things are mortal but the Jew; all other forces pass, but he remains. What is the secret of his immortality?" – **Mark Twain**.

Actually, it is no secret! The answer to Mr. Twain's question is YHWH – the covenant God of Israel! Israel's destiny is spelled out in the prophetic Scriptures and is just as sure to come to pass as God Himself is real!