

The life of The Noble Prophet



Lesson 1.3: Ibrahim and the Descendents of Ishmael

It is mentioned in the Genesis that Ishmael was thirteen years older than his brother Ishaq. The sequence of the story of the sacrifice of Ishmael shows that it really happened before Ishaq's birth, and that Allāh's Promise to give Abraham another son, Ishaq, came after narration of the whole story.

This story spoke of one journey – at least – before Ishmael became a young man. Al-Bukhari, on the authority of Ibn 'Abbas reported the other three journeys; a summary of which goes as follows:

When Ishmael became a young man, he learned Arabic at the hand of the tribe of Jurhum, who loved him with great admiration and gave him one of their women as a wife, soon after his mother died. Having wanted to see his wife and son again, Abraham came to Makkah, after Ishmael's marriage, but he didn't find him at home. He asked Ishmael's wife about her husband and how they were doing. She complained of poverty, so he asked her to tell Ishmael to change his doorstep. Ishmael understood the message, divorced his wife and got married to the daughter of Mudad bin 'Amr, chief of the tribe of Jurhum.

Once more, Abraham came to see his son, but again didn't find him at home. He asked his new wife the same previous question, to which she thanked Allāh. Abraham asked her to tell Ishmael to keep his doorstep (i.e. to keep her as wife) and went back to Palestine.

A third time, Abraham came to Makkah to find Ishmael sharpening an arrow under a lofty tree near Zamzam. The meeting, after a very long journey of separation, was very touching for a father so affectionate and a so dutiful and righteous son. This time, father and son built Al-Ka'bah and raised its pillars, and Abraham, in compliance with Allah's Commandment, called unto people to make pilgrimage to it.

By the grace of Allāh, Ishmael had twelve sons from the daughter of Mudad, whose names were Nabet, Qidar, Edbael, Mebsham, Mishma', Duma, Micha, Hudud, Yetma, Yetour, Nafis and Qidman, and who ultimately formed twelve tribes inhabiting Makkah and trading between Yemen, geographical Syria and Egypt. Later on, these tribes spread all over, and even outside, the peninsula. All their tidings went into oblivion except for the descendants of Nabet and Qidar.

The Nabeteans – sons of Nabet – established a flourishing civilization in the north of Hijaz, they instituted a powerful government which spread out its domain over all neighboring tribes, and made Petra their capital. Nobody dared challenge their authority until the Romans came and managed to eliminate their kingdom. After extensive research and painstaking investigation, Mr. Sulaiman An-Nadwi came to the conclusion that the Ghassanide kings, along with the Aws and Khazraj were not likely to be Qahtanians but rather Nabeteans.

Descendants of Qidar, the son of Ishmael, lived long in Makkah increasing in number, of them issued 'Adnan and son Ma'ad, to whom 'Adnanian Arabs traced back their ancestry. 'Adnan is the twenty-first grandfather in the series of the Prophetic ancestry. It was said that whenever Prophet Muhammad ﷺ spoke of his ancestry he would stop at 'Adnan and say: "Genealogists tell lies" and did not go farther than

him. A group of scholars, however, favored the probability of going beyond ‘Adnan attaching no significance to the aforementioned Prophetic *Hadith*. They went on to say that there were exactly forty fathers between ‘Adnan and Abraham - Peace be upon him -.

Nizar, Ma‘ad’s only son, had four sons who branched out into four great tribes; Eyad, Anmar, Rabi’ah and Mudar. These last two sub-branched into several septs. Rabi’ah fathered Asad, ‘Anazah, ‘Abdul Qais, and Wa’il’s two sons (Bakr and Taghlib), Hanifa and many others.

Mudar tribes branched out into two great divisions: Qais ‘Ailan bin Mudar and septs of Elias bin Mudar. Of Qais ‘Ailan were the Banu Saleem, Banu Hawazin, and Banu Ghatafan of whom descended ‘Abs, Zubyan, Ashja‘ and Ghani bin A‘sur. Of Elias bin Mudar were Tamim bin Murra, Hudhail bin Mudrika, Banu Asad bin Khuzaimah and septs of Kinana bin Khuzaimah, of whom came Quraish, the descendants of Fahr bin Malik bin An-Nadr bin Kinana.

Quraish branched out into various tribes, the most famous of whom were Jumah, Sahn, ‘Adi, Makhzum, Tayim, Zahra and the three septs of Qusai bin Kilab: ‘Abdud-Dar bin Qusai, Asad bin ‘Abdul ‘Uzza bin Qusai and ‘Abd Manaf bin Qusai.

‘Abd Manaf branched out into four tribes: ‘Abd Shams, Nawfal, Muttalib and Hashim. It is, however, from the family of Hashim that Allâh selected Prophet Muhammad bin ‘Abdullah bin ‘Abdul-Muttalib bin Hashim.

Prophet Muhammad ﷺ said:

"Allâh selected Ishmael from the sons of Abraham, Kinana from the sons of Ishmael, Quraish from the sons of Kinana, Hashim from the sons of Quraish and He selected me from the sons of Hashim."

Al-‘Abbas bin ‘Abdul-Muttalib quoted the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ as saying:

"Allâh created mankind and chose me from the best whereof, He chose the tribes and selected me from the best whereof; and He chose families and selected me from the best whereof. I am the very best in person and family."

Having increased in number, the children of ‘Adnan, were in pursuit of pastures and water, spread out over various parts of Arabia.

The tribe of ‘Abdul Qais, together with some septs of Bakr bin Wa’il and Tamim, immigrated to Bahrain where they dwelt.

Banu Hanifa bin Sa‘b bin Ali bin Bakr went to settle in Hijr, the capital of Yamama. All the tribes of Bakr bin Wa’il lived in an area of land which included Yamama, Bahrain, Saif Kazima, the sea shore, the outer borders of Iraq, Ablah and Hait.

Most of the tribe of Taghlib lived in the Euphrates area while some of them lived with Bakr.

Banu Tamim lived in Basra semi-desert.

Banu Saleem lived in the vicinity of Madinah on the land stretching from Wadi Al-Qura to Khaibar onwards to the eastern mountains to Harrah.

Thaqif dwelt in Ta’if and Hawazin east of Makkah near Autas on the road from Makkah to Basra.

Banu Asad lived on the land east of Taimâ' and west of Kufa, while family of Tai' lived between Banu Asad and Taimâ'. They were five-day-walk far from Kufa.

Zubyan inhabited the plot of and between Taimâ' and Hawran.

Some septs of Kinana lived in Tihama, while septs of Quraish dwelt in Makkah and its suburbs. Quraish remained completely disunited until Qusai bin Kilab managed to rally their ranks on honorable terms attaching major prominence to their status and importance.

