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ABRAHAM: The Friend Of God, The Father Of Many Nations, including Jewish, Christian and Islam

(They all worship the one true God of Abraham)

The Bible And Quran are used interchangeably to show the close link between Islam and Christianity through the covenant God/Allah made with Abraham regarding the roles both Isaac and Ishmael would play in history.

1. Name: Of faith unknown

2. Date: 2000 BCE approx.

**3. Family Name of Prophet:
Abram**

**4. Holy Name:
Abraham, the Friend of God: Father of Multitudes:**

**5. Name for God:
Elohim, (Creator) Jehovah, El Shaddai**

**6. Name For The Promised One:
(Unknown)**

7. Birth Legends & Life:

Abraham is a central figure in Jewish, Christian and Islamic history. He lived in the ancient city of Ur, in present day Iraq.

Traditional rabbinic stories, called the Midrasht, mention Abram's father was an idol maker and that one day Abraham destroyed them. His father explained to Abram these idols had no real power whereupon Abram asked, "then why do you worship them".

Abraham was aware of a deeper reality. It was apparent he was not like the others in the tribe.

Abraham married Sarah. They left with his father Terah and his nephew Lot to the village of Haran, some 1000 miles away. He would never return to Ur.

The bulk of the information concerning the life and teachings of Abraham are found in **Genesis (I am using King James Old Testament Bible version)**

Little is known of Abrams childhood. I would encourage those interested to seek Jewish sources such as the “Midrasht”.

This study begins as God commands Abram to leave his home where he is being persecuted. God then tells the discouraged Abram saying, ” I will bless them that bless thee and curse him that curseth thee.”

Excerpts from Genesis:(12:1-20) KIJ

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 he built 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.

9 And Abram journeyed, going on still toward the south. 10 And there was a famine in the land: and Abram went down into Egypt to sojourn there for the famine was grievous in the land.

Abram makes up a lie to protect himself from the Egyptians asking her to claim she is his sister, not his wife. Through skillful bargaining, Abram is allowed to leave Egypt.

11 And it came to pass, when he was come near to enter into Egypt, that he said unto Sarai his wife, Behold now, I know that thou art a fair woman to look upon: 12 Therefore it shall come to pass, when the Egyptians shall see thee, that they shall say, This is his wife: and they will kill me, but they will save thee alive. 13 Say, I pray thee, thou art my sister: that it may be well with me for thy sake; and my soul shall live because of thee. 14 And it came to pass, that,

when Abram was come into Egypt, the Egyptians beheld the woman that she was very fair. 15 The princes also of Pharaoh saw her, and commended her before Pharaoh: and the woman was taken into Pharaoh's house. 16 And he entreated Abram well for her sake: and he had sheep, and oxen, and he asses, and menservants, and maidservants, and she asses, and camels. 17 And the LORD plagued Pharaoh and his house with great plagues because of Sarai Abram's wife. 18 And Pharaoh called Abram and said, What is this that thou hast done unto me? why didst thou not tell me that she was thy wife? 19 Why saidst thou, She is my sister? so I might have taken her to me to wife: now therefore behold thy wife, take her, and go thy way. 20 And Pharaoh commanded his men concerning him: and they sent him away, and his wife, and all that he had.

Abram leaves Egypt and returns to his previous camp. The land cannot provide for their herds so feuding breaks out between family kin. Abram makes peace but realizes the practical necessity of separation.

Genesis 13:1-18

1 And Abram went up out of Egypt, he, and his wife, and all that he had, and Lot with him, into the south. 2 And Abram was very rich in cattle, in silver, and in gold. 3 And he went on his journeys from the south even to Bethel, unto the place where his tent had been at the beginning, between Bethel and Hai; 4 Unto the place of the altar, which he had make there at the first: and there Abram called on the name of the LORD. 5 And Lot also, which went with Abram, had flocks, and herds, and tents.

6 And the land was not able to bear them, that they might dwell together: for their substance was great, so that they could not dwell together. 7 And there was a strife between the herdmen of Abram's cattle and the herdmen of Lot's cattle: and the Canaanite and the Perizzite dwelled then in the land. 8 And Abram said unto Lot, Let there be no strife, I pray thee, between me and thee, and between my herdmen and thy herdmen; for we be brethren. 9 Is not the whole land before thee? separate thyself, I pray thee, from me: if thou wilt take the left hand, then I will go to the right; or if thou depart to the right hand, then I will go to the left. 10 And Lot lifted up his eyes, and beheld all the plain of Jordan, that it was well watered every where, before the LORD destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah, even as the garden of the LORD, like the land of Egypt, as thou comest unto Zoar.

11 Then Lot chose him all the plain of Jordan; and Lot journeyed east: and they separated themselves the one from the other. 12 Abram dwelled in the land of Canaan, and Lot dwelled in the cities of the plain, and pitched his tent toward Sodom. 13 But the men of Sodom were wicked and sinners before the LORD exceedingly.

The Lord Promises," I will make thy seed as the dust of the earth."

Genesis 13: 14-18

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.

there were intertribal battles after which he victorious Abram meets with his allies, the King of Sodom and the King of Salem, who in turn praises God for the victories. Sodom offers Abram riches which he refuses.

Genesis 14:17-24

17- the king of Sodom went out to meet him after his return from the slaughter of Chedorlaomer, and of the kings that were with him, at the valley of Shaveh, which is the king's dale. 18 And Melchizedek king of Salem brought forth bread and wine: and he was the priest of the most high God. 19 And he blessed him, and said, Blessed be Abram of the most high God, possessor of heaven and earth: 20 And blessed be the most high God, which hath delivered thine enemies into thy hand. And he gave him tithes of all.

21 And the king of Sodom said unto Abram, Give me the persons, and take the goods to thyself. 22 And Abram said to the king of Sodom, I have lift up mine hand unto the LORD, the most high God, the possessor of heaven and earth, 23 that I will not take from a thread even to a shoe latchet, and that I will not take any thing that is thine, lest thou shouldest say, I have made Abram rich: 24 Save only that which the young men have eaten, and the portion of the men which went with me, Aner, Eshcol, and Mamre; let them take their portion.

Again God promises Abram an heir, that his seed shall be numberless as the stars in the sky. God tells Abram He is his shield.

Genesis 15: 1-15, 18

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 a 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.

God promises Abram a long life but his seed shall be afflicted with servitude (slavery?) for 400 years at which time God will set them free. (Is this Moses?)

12 and when the sun was going down, a deep sleep fell upon Abram; and, lo, a 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...

God again infers Abraham's lineage by telling him his offspring will populate a wide area.

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:

Abram is aging and has no sons so his wife willingly offers her maid as a surrogate mother who conceives.

Genesis 16: 1-16

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:

Sarah, Abram's wife comes to despise the maid bearing Abram's child. She confides to Abram who tells her to have her will with the servant. Harsh treatment forces the maid to flee into the desert.

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 thine hand; do to her as it pleaseth thee. And when Sarai dealt hardly with her, she fled from her face.

An angel finds Hagar, the maid, in the wilderness. The angel tells her she must return to Sarah but adds her own seed will multiply exceedingly. The baby will be named Ishmael.

7 And the angel of the LORD found her by a fountain of water in the wilderness, by the fountain in the way to Shu. 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 Beerlahairoi; 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.

The following is where God makes a Covenant with Abram and declares his name to be Abraham (Father of Many Nations). He will father kings. God establishes the law of circumcision.

Genesis 17:1-22

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.

6 And I will make thee exceeding fruitful, and I will make nations of thee, and kings shall come out of thee. 7 And I will establish my covenant between me and thee and thy seed after thee in their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be a God unto thee, and to thy seed after thee. 8 And I will give unto thee, and to thy seed after thee, the land wherein thou art a stranger, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession; and I will be their God. 9 And God said unto Abraham, Thou shalt keep my covenant therefore, thou, and thy seed after thee in their generations.

10 This is my covenant, which ye shall keep, between me and you and thy seed after thee; Every man child among you shall be circumcised. 11 And ye shall circumcise the flesh of your foreskin; and it shall be a token of the covenant betwixt me and you. 12 And he that is eight days old shall be circumcised among you, every man child in your generations, he that is born in the house, or bought with money of any stranger, which is not of thy seed. 13 He that is born in thy house, and he that is bought with thy money, must needs be circumcised: and my covenant shall be in your flesh for an everlasting covenant. 14 And the uncircumcised man child whose flesh of his foreskin is not circumcised, that soul shall be cut off from his people; he hath broken my covenant.

Sarah is promised a son but Abraham wonders because of age. She is told, as Hagar before her, that Sarah will be a mother of nations.

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.

Clearly at this point, God blesses Ishmael and also promises His Covenant will be with the yet to be conceived Isaac. Both are to father many nations. The line of Ishmael will father 12 princes. (Islam interprets this as the twelve Imams) or leaders of their Faith.

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. 21 But my covenant will I establish with Isaac, which Sarah shall bear unto thee at this set time in the next year. 22 And he left off talking with him, and God went up from Abraham.

We skip now to an account of the birth of Isaac as told in Genesis. Abraham was 100 years old and Sarah way passed menopause and yet she miraculously gives birth to and nurses a baby. Note in the first verse “the Lord visited Sarah...and did unto Sarah as he had spoken.”

Genesis 21: 1-8

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. 4 And Abraham circumcised his son Isaac being eight days old, as God had commanded him.

5 And Abraham was an hundred years old, when his son Isaac was born unto him. 6 And Sarah said, ‘God hath made me to laugh, so that all that hear will laugh with me.’ 7 And she said, ‘Who would have said unto Abraham, that Sarah should have given children suck? for I have born him a son in his old age’.

8 And the child grew, and was weaned: and Abraham made a great feast the same day that Isaac was weaned.

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.

God then tells Abraham not to worry. It is ordained that both sons will have many descendents because they were fathered by Abraham. (Isaac’s line leads to Jesus, Ishmael’s descendents include Muhammed.)

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 [Abraham’s] 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 Beersheba. 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 bow shot: 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.

This is where the story in Genesis ties in with the tradition of the Ka'ba in Islam. Traditionally the "Black Stone" marks the very spot where God caused the spring to gush forth. This is a focal point of the sacred pilgrimage or "Hajj".

17 And God heard the voice of the lad; and the angel of God called to 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.

20 And God was with the lad; and he grew, and dwelt in the wilderness, and became an archer. 21 And he dwelt in the wilderness of Paran: and his mother took him a wife out of the land of Egypt.

As alluded to earlier with Ishmael, Abraham is a central figure in Islamic as well as Jewish and Christian traditions.

After praising God and acknowledging the wrong done to Abraham by his own people, the Quran begins recapping the essentials of the story; the uncultivable valley causing hardship; the covenant of the "Father of Nations" being fulfilled through Ishmael and then Isaac.

(What Surah 14:32-46 in the Qur'an says about Abraham)

32 Allah is He Who created the heavens and the earth, and causeth water to descend from the sky, thereby producing fruits as food for you, and maketh the ships to be of service unto you, that they may run upon the sea at His command, and hath made of service unto you the rivers; 33 And maketh the sun and the moon, constant in their courses, to be of service unto you, and hath made of service unto you the night and the day. 34 And He giveth you of all ye ask of Him, and if ye would count the bounty of Allah ye cannot reckon it. Lo! man is verily a wrong-doer, an ingrate.

35 And when Abraham said: My Lord! Make safe this territory, and preserve me and my sons from serving idols. 36 My Lord! Lo! they have led many of mankind astray. But whoso followeth me, he verily is of me. And whoso disobeyeth me - Still Thou art Forgiving, Merciful.

37 Our Lord! Lo! I have settled some of my posterity in an uncultivable valley near unto Thy holy House, our Lord! that they may establish proper worship; so incline some hearts of men that they may yearn toward them, and provide Thou them with fruits in order that they may be thankful. 38 Our Lord! Lo! Thou knowest that which we hide and that which we proclaim. Nothing in the earth or in the heaven is hidden from Allah.

39 Praise be to Allah Who hath given me, in my old age, Ishmael and Isaac! Lo! my Lord is indeed the Hearer of Prayer. 40 My Lord! Make me to establish proper worship, and some of my posterity (also); our Lord! and accept my prayer. 41 Our Lord! Forgive me and my parents and believers on the day when the account is cast.

Is the following a reference to “Sodom”? In Genesis 14; 22-24 (see above) Abraham refuses gifts from the king of Sodom.

42 Deem not that Allah is unaware of what the wicked do. He but giveth them a respite till a day when eyes will stare (in terror), 43 As they come hurrying on in fear, their heads upraised, their gaze returning not to them, and their hearts as air. 44 And warn mankind of a day when the doom will come upon them, and those who did wrong will say: Our Lord! Reprieve us for a little while. We will obey Thy call and will follow the messengers. (It will be answered): Did ye not swear before that there would be no end for you? 45 And (have ye not) dwelt in the dwellings of those who wronged themselves (of old) and (hath it not) become plain to you how We dealt with them and made examples for you ?

46 Verily they have plotted their plot, and their plot is with Allah, though their plot were one whereby the mountains should be moved.

God “Allah” keeps his promises to his messengers. God hints at a time when the earth and heavens will be changed.

47 So think not that Allah will fail to keep His promise to His messengers. Lo! Allah is Mighty, Able to Requite (the wrong).

48 On the day when the earth will be changed to other than the earth, and the heavens (also will be changed) and they will come forth unto Allah, the One, the Almighty,
The Quran Pickthall tr, Surah 14:32- 48) Abraham:

(Abdul-Baha of the Baha’i Faith talks of the lineage of Abraham)

Among the great prophets was His Holiness Abraham who being an iconoclast and a herald of the oneness of God, was banished from His native land. He founded a family upon which the blessing of God descended; and it was owing to this religious basis and ordination that the Abrahamic house progressed and advanced.

Through the divine benediction, noteworthy and luminous prophets issued from the lineage of His Holiness. There appeared Isaac, Ishmael, Jacob, Joseph, Moses, Aaron, David and Solomon. The Holy Land was conquered by the power of the Covenant of God with Abraham, and the glory of the Solomonic wisdom and sovereignty dawned.

All this was due to the religion of God which this blessed lineage established and upheld. It is evident that throughout the history of Abraham and His posterity this was the source of their honor, advancement and civilization. Even today the descendants of His household and lineage are found throughout the world.

(Abdu'l-Baha, Baha'i World Faith - Abdu'l-Baha Section, p. 271)

Besides this, an especial blessing is conferred on some families and some generations. Thus it is an especial blessing that from among the descendants of Abraham should have come all the Prophets of the children of Israel.

This is a blessing that God has granted to this descent: to Moses from His father and mother, to Christ from His mother's line; also to Muhammad and the Báb, and to all the Prophets and the Holy Manifestations of Israel. Baha'u'llah is also a lineal descendant of Abraham, for Abraham had other sons besides Ishmael and Isaac who in those days migrated to the lands of Persia and Afghanistan, and the Blessed Beauty is one of their descendants.

(Abdu'l-Baha, Some Answered Questions, p. 213)

George Townsend, in his book :”Christ & Baha’u’llah”writes of Abraham,

”God foretold to Abraham that the Prophetic succession was to run through Him and be fulfilled not only in Isaac but in Ishmael. In Genesis xii 1-2 it is written "Now the Lord had said unto Abram, . . . I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing:" And again in Genesis xvii 20 "And as for Ishmael, I have heard thee: Behold I have blessed him, . . . and will multiple him exceedingly; twelve princes shall he beget, and I will make him a treat nation." The narrative continues (Gen. xxi 20-21) "God was with the lad; and he grew,. . . and he dwelt in the wilderness of Paran: and . . . took him a wife out of the land of Egypt."

He became the progenitor of the people of Arabia- and the twelve Princes which he begot are interpreted as the twelve Imams who followed Muhammad.

Moses confirmed this promise when He Prophetied (Deut. xviii 15) to the Israelites that "the Lord thy God will raise up unto thee a Prophet from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me." This refers not only to the coming of Jesus Christ, as is usually thought, but more especially to Muhammad.”

“Moses would have used the word "seed" if He had meant to refer to an Israelite, whereas the word "brethren" indicates that He alludes to Isaac's brother Ishmael. He connects Mount Paran explicitly with the Prophetic line when, in His final blessing before His death, He describes the Prophets who will follow Him: "The Lord came from Sinai" (meaning Himself, and rose up from Seir . . . (meaning Jesus Christ).”

The story continues in Genesis as three men appear at Abraham’s tent. They are welcomed and served.

Genesis 18: 1-33 continues

1 And the LORD appeared unto him in the plains of Mamre: and he sat in the tent door in the heat of the day; 2 And he lift up his eyes and looked, and, lo, three men stood by him: and when he saw them, he ran to meet them from the tent door, and bowed himself toward the ground, 3 And said, My LORD, if now I have found favour in thy sight, pass not away, I pray thee, from thy servant: 4 Let a little water, I pray you, be fetched, and wash your feet, and rest yourselves under the tree: 5 And I will fetch a morsel of bread, and comfort ye your hearts; after that ye shall pass on: for therefore are ye come to your servant. And they said, So do, as thou hast said.

6 And Abraham hastened into the tent unto Sarah, and said, Make ready quickly three measures of fine meal, knead it, and make cakes upon the hearth. 7 And Abraham ran unto the herd, and fetcht a calf tender and good, and gave it unto a young man; and he hasted to dress it. 8 And he took butter, and milk, and the calf which he had dressed, and set it before them; and he stood by them under the tree, and they did eat.

Sarah, who is old and past menopause, laughs within herself when she overhears the angels saying she will bear a son. God tells Abraham who in turn accuses Sarah. Being frightened, she denies ever having laughed.

9 And they said unto him, Where is Sarah thy wife? And he said, Behold, in the tent. 10 And he said, I will certainly return unto thee according to the time of life; and, lo, Sarah thy wife shall have a son. And Sarah heard it in the tent door, which was behind him.

18:11 Now Abraham and Sarah were old and well stricken in age; and it ceased to be with Sarah after the manner of women. 12 Therefore Sarah laughed within herself, saying, After I am waxed old shall I have pleasure, my lord being old also? 13 And the LORD said unto Abraham, Wherefore did Sarah laugh, saying, Shall I of a surety bear a child, which am old? 14 Is any thing too hard for the LORD? At the time appointed I will return unto thee, according to the time of life, and Sarah shall have a son. 15 Then Sarah denied, saying, I laughed not; for she was afraid. And he said, Nay; but thou didst laugh.

16 And the men rose up from thence, and looked toward Sodom: and Abraham went with them to bring them on the way. 17 And the LORD said, Shall I hide from Abraham that thing which I do; 18 Seeing that Abraham shall surely become a great and mighty nation, and all the nations of the earth shall be blessed in him? 19 For I know him, that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the LORD, to do justice and judgment; that the LORD may bring upon Abraham that which he hath spoken of him.

Here the justice, righteousness and mercy of God are illustrated. God reveals his plan to destroy Sodom and Gomorrah to Abraham who then asks God if the righteous would be destroyed with the wicked. God assures Abraham the cities would be spared even if only ten worthy people were found.

120 And the LORD said, Because the cry of Sodom and Gomorrah is great, and because their sin is very grievous; 21 I will go down now, and see whether they have done altogether according to the cry of it, which is come unto me; and if not, I will know. 22 And the men turned their faces from thence, and went toward Sodom:

but Abraham stood yet before the LORD. 23 And Abraham drew near, and said, Wilt thou also destroy the righteous with the wicked? 24 Peradventure there be fifty righteous within the city: wilt thou also destroy and not spare the place for the fifty righteous that are therein? 25 That be far from thee to do after this manner, to slay the righteous with the wicked: and that the righteous should be as the wicked, that be far from thee: Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right? 26 And the LORD said, If I find in Sodom fifty righteous within the city, then I will spare all the place for their sakes. 27 And Abraham answered and said, Behold now, I have taken upon me to speak unto the LORD, which am but dust and ashes: 28 Peradventure there shall lack five

of the fifty righteous: wilt thou destroy all the city for lack of five? And he said, If I find there forty and five, I will not destroy it. 29 And he spake unto him yet again, and said, Peradventure there shall be forty found there. And he said, I will not do it for forty's sake. 30 And he said unto him, Oh let not the LORD be angry, and I will speak: Peradventure there shall thirty be found there. And he said, I will not do it, if I find thirty there. 31 And he said, Behold now, I have taken upon me to speak unto the LORD: Peradventure there shall be twenty found there. And he said, I will not destroy it for twenty's sake. 32 And he said, Oh let not the LORD be angry, and I will speak yet but this once: Peradventure ten shall be found there. And he said, I will not destroy it for ten's sake. 33 And the LORD went his way, as soon as he had left communing with Abraham: and Abraham returned unto his place.

Of course, the story of Sodom and Gomorrah is well known wherein God destroys the city for none are found worthy of saving.

8. Manner of Revelation:

God appears and bids Abraham to “walk before me and be thou perfect.”

Genesis: 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.”

9. Revealed Book:

Unknown: Accounts in Genesis are likely based on ancient Sumerian oral traditions.

10. Basic Teachings:

The most important teaching is that there is only one God.

In a world where people worshipped the sun, moon, stars, animals and forces of nature along with statues made of stone and clay symbolizing many Gods who must be appeased; Abraham, much as Jesus in the temple, smashes the idols made by his own father. His father discovers the broken idols. When asked, Abraham told him they had destroyed themselves. His father answered, “These idols cannot do such a thing as destroy themselves, whereupon Abraham asked, “then why do you worship them’? God established a Covenant with Abraham. Abraham hears the voice of God commanding him to teach the radical concept of an invisible single moral God.

Abraham’s position as progenitor of all of the Prophets of Israel merit him a very unique station.

A Second teaching found, expressed and universally echoed in all World Faiths is obedience to God.

The story of Abraham being called by God to sacrifice the very son promised so unmistakably to be the progenitor of “seed as numberless as the stars” as the “grains of dust open the earth” would seem to be contradictory to God’s own Plan. In hindsight we now understand it both as a test of faith and a lesson of truth.

The main element of the Scripture is not the literal story of a father putting his most treasured possession on the alter of sacrifice but rather, a father obeying a very harsh command of God which is seemingly directly in contradiction to the promises of a lifetime. This same theme is expressed in the Quran, where Ishmael is the son in question, and in Genesis where Isaac is the sacrifice. Again, the importance here is not the literal accuracy but the perception of a very difficult situation dealt by the hand of God to Abraham.

The best way this message can be expressed is to use “Ishmael”, whose seed fathered Mohammed, and “Isaac”, whose descendents lead to Jesus, as the best vehicles for expressing this far deeper question to respective traditions.

Here then is the well-known Genesis version of this story:

Genesis 22: 1-19

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 Jehovahjireh: 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.

19 So Abraham returned unto his young men, and they rose up and went together to Beersheba; and Abraham dwelt at Beersheba.

11. Role as Civilizing agent:

Ancient Mesopotamia or Sumerian area:

Clear evidence is found that his progeny would populate the area between possibly Egypt and present day Iraq.

Genesis 16: 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:”

“home” <http://onenessbecomesus.com>

Reference links:

<http://www.bahai-education.org/ocean/>

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Main_Page