

## **Midianites (Jethro was a priest of Midian)**

If you remember Abraham married Sara, who became Sarah, and God promised her a son and through him the nations would be blessed and Israel would number more than the stars in heaven.

When that son did not come she told Abraham to take her handmaiden, Hagar, to be his wife (Genesis 16:1-2). Hagar was an Egyptian. (Genesis 25:12)

When Sarah became jealous of Hagar and there was friction between her and Hagar. Hagar ran away. The Angel of the Lord intervened and told her to go back to her master and gave her promises that Ishmael would be born. (Genesis 16:7-16) God promise Abraham that Ishmael would be blessed with 12 sons and he would be a great nation. (Genesis 17:20)

After Sarah gave birth to Isaac at 89 years of age and Abraham at 99 years old. (Genesis 21:1-6) Isaac married and had Jacob and Esau. Jacob's name is changed to Israel when he wrestled with the Angel. He later had 12 sons who became the 12 tribes of Israel, including Joseph. Esau's descendants move south of Israel and live between Israel and the desert in Edom. They are called Edomites.

Hagar's son was Ishmael. A second time there was a feud between Sarah and Hagar, this time Abraham sent Hagar packing with her son and some food and water to the desert of Beersheba. God saved her from starvation and promised that God heard the boy crying. Then God shows her a well of water and they survived. The boy became an archer and they lived in the desert. He settled on the borders with Egypt. He marries an Egyptian wife. (Genesis 21:20-21)

In Genesis 21 Abraham takes another wife, **Keturah**. She bore him Zimran, Jokshan, Medan, **Midian**, Ishbak and Shuah. Midian was a descendant of Abraham through his wife Keturah – (Genesis 25:1-4) His family became the Midianites who lived in the Sinai deserts, the same area to which Ishmael and Hagar had fled and where he was raised.

**Full Circle:** When Joseph's brothers sold him to the caravan of Ishmaelites, who were also called Midianites, they were selling him to extended family members, though they were unaware of that connection.