



Lesson #4 – The Naming of Isaac and Ishmael

It is generally understood that the sons of Sarah and Abraham have names which have etymologies found in our Torah. An interesting note is that there is more than one source for each of the names.

I. Isaac – in Hebrew, **יִצְחָק**

Genesis 18:10-15 (J)

<p>10. Then one said, "I will return to you next year, and your wife Sarah shall have a son!" Sarah was listening at the entrance of the tent, which was behind him. 11. Now Abraham and Sarah were old, advanced in years; Sarah had stopped having the periods of women. 12. And Sarah laughed to herself, saying, "Now that I am withered, am I to have enjoyment—with my husband so old?" 13. Then the Lord said to Abraham, "Why did Sarah laugh, saying, 'Shall I in truth bear a child, old as I am?' 14. Is anything too wondrous for the Lord? I will return to you at the time next year, and Sarah shall have a son." 15. Sarah lied, saying, "I did not laugh," for she was frightened. But He replied, "You did laugh."</p>	<p>י וַיֹּאמֶר, שׁוּב אָשׁוּב אֵלַיךָ כְּעַת חַיָּה, וְהִנֵּה-בֹן, לְשָׂרָה אֲשֶׁתְּךָ; וְשָׂרָה שָׂמְעַת פֶּתַח הָאֹהֶל, וְהוּא אֲחֵרָיו. יא וְאֲבָרְהָם וְשָׂרָה זָקְנִים, כְּבָאִים בְּיָמִים; חֲדַל לִהְיוֹת לְשָׂרָה, אֲרַח כְּנָשִׁים. יב וַתִּצְחַק שָׂרָה, בְּקִרְבָּהּ לֵאמֹר: אֲחֵרִי בְלֹתִי הִיְתָה-לִּי עַדְנָה, וְאֲדֹנָי זָקֵן. יג וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה, אֶל-אֲבָרְהָם: לָמָּה זֶה צִחַקָה שָׂרָה לֵאמֹר, הֲאֵף אֲמַנָּם אֵלֶּךְ--וְאֲנִי זָקְנָתִי. יד הֲיִפְלֵא מִיְהוָה, דָּבָר; לְמוֹעֵד אָשׁוּב אֵלַיךָ, כְּעַת חַיָּה--וְלִשְׂרָה בֵן. טו וַתִּכְחַשׁ שָׂרָה לֵאמֹר לֹא צִחַקְתִּי, כִּי יִרְאֶה; וַיֹּאמֶר לֹא, כִּי צִחַקְתְּ.</p>
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Genesis 21:3-6 (E)

<p>3. Abraham gave his newborn son, whom Sarah had borne him, the name of Isaac. 4. And when his son Isaac was eight days old, Abraham circumcised him, as God had commanded him. 5. Now Abraham was a hundred years old when his son Isaac was born to him. 6. Sarah said, "God has brought me laughter; everyone who hears will laugh with me."</p>	<p>ג וַיִּקְרָא אֲבָרְהָם אֶת-שְׁם-בְּנוֹ הַנּוֹלָד-לוֹ אִשָּׁר--וַיִּלְדָּה-לוֹ שָׂרָה--יִצְחָק. ד וַיִּמָּל אֲבָרְהָם אֶת-יִצְחָק בְּנוֹ בְּיוֹם-שְׁמֹנֶת יָמִים כַּאֲשֶׁר צִוָּה אֱתוֹ אֱלֹהִים. ה וְאֲבָרְהָם, בֶּן-מֵאֵת שָׁנָה בְּהוֹלֵד לוֹ אֶת יִצְחָק בְּנוֹ. ו וַתֹּאמֶר שָׂרָה--צִחַק עָשָׂה לִּי אֱלֹהִים כָּל-הַשְּׂמֵעַ יִצְחַק-לִי.</p>
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Genesis 17:17-19 (P)

<p>17. Abraham threw himself on his face and laughed, as he said to himself, "Can a child be born to a man a hundred years old, or can Sarah bear a child at ninety?" 18. And Abraham said to God, "O that Ishmael might live by Your favor!" 19. God said, "Nevertheless, Sarah your wife shall bear you a son, and you shall name him Isaac; and I will maintain My covenant with him as an everlasting covenant for his offspring to come.</p>	<p>יִזְעַק אֲבְרָהָם עַל-פָּנָיו, וַיִּצְחַק; וַיֹּאמֶר בְּלִבּוֹ, הֲלֵבֶן מֵאָה-שָׁנָה יוֹלֵד, וְאִם-שָׂרָה, הִבְתַּתְשָׁעִים שָׁנָה תֵלֵד. יִחַ וַיֹּאמֶר אֲבְרָהָם, אֶל-הָאֱלֹהִים: לוֹ יִשְׁמְעָאֵל, יַחֲיֶה לְפָנֶיךָ. יֵט וַיֹּאמֶר אֱלֹהִים, אֲבַל שָׂרָה אֲשֶׁתְּךָ יִלְדֶת לְךָ בֵן, וְקָרָאתָ אֶת-שְׁמוֹ, יִצְחָק; וְהִקְמֹתִי אֶת-בְּרִיתִי אִתּוֹ לְבְרִית עוֹלָם, לְזֵרְעוֹ אַחֲרָיו.</p>
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II. Ishmael – in Hebrew, **יִשְׁמְעָאֵל**

Genesis 16:11 (J)

<p>11. The angel of the Lord said to her further, "Behold, you are with child And shall bear a son; You shall call him Ishmael, For the Lord has paid heed to your suffering.</p>	<p>יָא וַיֹּאמֶר לָהּ מַלְאָךְ יְהוָה הִנֵּה הָרָה וְיִלְדֶת בֵּן וְקָרָאת שְׁמוֹ יִשְׁמְעָאֵל כִּי-שָׁמַע יְהוָה אֶל-עֲנִיָּךְ.</p>
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Genesis 21:17 (E)

<p>17. God heard the cry of the boy, and an angel of God called to Hagar from heaven and said to her, "What troubles you, Hagar? Fear not, for God has heeded the cry of the boy where he is.</p>	<p>יִזְ וַיִּשְׁמַע אֱלֹהִים אֶת-קוֹל הַנֶּעֱר וַיִּקְרָא מַלְאָךְ אֱלֹהִים אֶל-הַגֵּר מִן-הַשָּׁמַיִם וַיֹּאמֶר לָהּ מַה-לָּךְ הַגֵּר אֶל-תִּירָאִי כִּי-שָׁמַע אֱלֹהִים אֶל-קוֹל הַנֶּעֱר בְּאֶשֶׁר הוּא-שָׁם.</p>
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Genesis 16:15 (P)

<p>15. Hagar bore a son to Abram, and Abram gave the son that Hagar bore him the name Ishmael.</p>	<p>טו וַתֵּלֵד הַגֵּר לְאַבְרָם בֵּן וַיִּקְרָא אַבְרָם שְׁם-בְנוֹ אֶשֶׁר-יָלְדָה הַגֵּר יִשְׁמְעָאֵל.</p>
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