

Hebrew Heroism

Abraham the Ivri

Genesis 14:13

A fugitive brought the news to Abram the Hebrew, who was dwelling at the terebinths of Mamre the Amorite, kinsman of Eshkol and Aner, these being Abram's allies.

וַיְבֹא הַפְּלִיט וַיַּגֵּד לְאַבְרָם הָעִבְרִי וְהוּא שָׁכֵן בְּאַלְנֵי מַמְרֵי הָאֲמֹרִי אֲחֵי אֲשֶׁכֶל וְאַנֶּר וְהֵם בְּעֵלֵי בְרִית־אַבְרָם:

Bereshit Rabbah 42:8

"And told Abram the Hebrew [*Ivri*]" – Rabbi Yehuda, Rabbi Neḥemya, and the Rabbis, Rabbi Yehuda says: The entire world was on one side and he was on the other side [*ever*]. Rabbi Neḥemya said: Because he was among the descendants of Ever. The Rabbis say: It is because he is from the other side [*ever*] of the river, and he spoke the Hebrew [*Ivri*] language.

וַיַּגֵּד לְאַבְרָם הָעִבְרִי, רַבִּי יְהוּדָה וְרַבִּי נְחֵמְיָה וְרַבְּנָן, רַבִּי יְהוּדָה אוֹמֵר כָּל הָעוֹלָם כְּלוֹ מַעֲבָר אֶחָד וְהוּא מַעֲבָר אֶחָד. רַבִּי נְחֵמְיָה אָמַר שֶׁהוּא מִבְּנֵי בְּנֵי שֵׁל עֵבֶר. וְרַבְּנָן אָמְרִי שֶׁהוּא מַעֲבָר הַנָּהָר, וְשֶׁהוּא מִשִּׁיחַ בְּלִשׁוֹן עִבְרִי (בְּרֵאשִׁית יד, יג):

Why do we add characterizations to the names of people in our lives?

What qualities have you been named with? Which would you like to claim?

Shem and Ever – the mythic background of the ancestors

Genesis 10:21

Sons were also born to Shem, ancestor of all the descendants of Eber and older brother of Japheth.

וַיִּלְשֵׁם יֶלֶד גַּם־הוּא אָבִי כָּל־בְּנֵי־עֵבֶר אֲחֵי יַפֶּת הַגָּדוֹל:

Genesis 14:18-20

And King Melchizedek of Salem brought out bread and wine; he was a priest of God Most High. He blessed him, saying, "Blessed be Abram of God Most High, Creator of heaven and earth. And blessed be God Most High, Who has delivered your foes into your hand." And [Abram] gave him a tenth of everything.

וּמִלְכֵי צֶדֶק מֶלֶךְ שָׁלֵם הוֹצִיא לָחֶם וַיֵּין וְהוּא כֹהֵן לַאלֹהִים עֲלִיּוֹן: וַיְבָרְכֵהוּ וַיֹּאמֶר בְּרוּךְ אַבְרָם לַאלֹהִים עֲלִיּוֹן קֹנֵה שָׁמַיִם וָאָרֶץ: וַיְבָרֶךְ אֶל עֲלִיּוֹן אֲשֶׁר מִגֵּן צָרִיךָ בְּיַדְךָ וַיִּתֵּן לּוֹ מֵעֵשֶׂר מְכֹל::

Rashi Genesis 14:18

A Midrashic explanation is that he is identical with Shem, son of Noah (Nedarim 32b).

מ"א הוא שם בן נח (נדריים ל"ב)

Midrash Genesis Rabbah

“The field that Abraham purchased from the children of H̄et; there Abraham was buried, and Sarah his wife” (Genesis 25:10). “The field that Abraham purchased” – Rabbi Tanḥuma said: Were there not thirty-eight years between Sarah’s burial and Abraham’s burial? And yet you say here: “There Abraham was buried, and Sarah his wife”? The explanation is that it is to teach you that everyone who performed kindness to Sarah [in attending her funeral] was privileged to perform kindness for Abraham [in attending his funeral as well]. Rabbi Shmuel bar Nah̄man said: Shem and Ever were walking before his bier, and they saw an empty spot alongside her [Sarah] for our patriarch Abraham, and they buried him in that adjacent plot, in the place that was prepared and designated for him.

(בראשית כה, י): הַשְּׂדֵה אֲשֶׁר קָנָה אַבְרָהָם, אָמַר רַבִּי תַנְחוּמָא וְהִלּוּא מִקְבוֹרֶתָהּ שֶׁל שָׂרָה לְקְבוֹרָתוֹ שֶׁל אַבְרָהָם שְׁלֹשִׁים וְשִׁמוֹנֶה שָׁנָה, וְהִכָּא אֵת אָמַר (בראשית כה, י): שְׁמָה קָבַר אַבְרָהָם וְשָׂרָה אִשְׁתּוֹ, אֲלֵא בָּא לְלַמְדָּךְ שְׁכַל מִי שֶׁגָּמַל חֶסֶד לְשָׂרָה זָכָה לְגַמֵּל חֶסֶד לְאַבְרָהָם. אָמַר רַבִּי שְׁמוּאֵל בַּר נַחֲמָן שֶׁם וְעֵבֶר הָיוּ מְהַלְכִין לִפְנֵי מֵטוֹת וְרָאוּ גְבֵה מְקוֹם מִפְּנֵה לְאַבְיָנוּ אַבְרָהָם וְקָבְרוּ אוֹתוֹ בְּדִיּוֹטְרִין שְׁלֹו בְּמְקוֹם הַמּוֹכֵן וּמִזְמָן לוֹ.

Midrash Genesis Rabbah 63:6

“She went to inquire of the Lord” (Genesis 25:22) – were there synagogues and study halls in those days? Did she not go only to the academy of Shem and Ever? It is, rather, to teach you that anyone who enters before a Torah scholar, it is as though he enters before the Divine Presence.

(בראשית כה, כב): וַתֵּלֶךְ לְדַרְשׁ אֶת ה', וְכִי בָתִּי כְּנִסְיוֹת וּבָתִּי מְדַרְשׁוֹת הָיוּ בְּאוֹתָן הַיָּמִים, וְהִלּוּא לֹא הִלְכָה אֶלָּא לְמַדְרַשׁ שֶׁל שֵׁם וְעֵבֶר, אֲלֵא לְלַמְדָּךְ שְׁכַל מִי שֶׁהוּא מְקַבֵּל פְּנֵי זָקֵן כְּמַקְבִּיל פְּנֵי שְׁכִינָה.

Midrash Exodus Rabbah 1:1

“Jacob was a simple man, [a dweller in tents]” (Genesis 25:27). He learned what his father taught him and then he took his leave from his father and secluded himself in the house of Ever to study Torah. Therefore, he merited blessing and inherited the land, as it is stated: “Jacob settled in the land of his father's residence, in the land of Canaan” (Genesis 37:1).

שְׁנֵאמַר (בראשית, כז): וַיַּעֲקֹב אִישׁ תָּם וְגו', וְלָמַד מֵה שֶׁלְּמַדּוֹ אָבִיו, וְאַחַר כֵּן פָּרַשׁ מֵאָבִיו וְנִטְמָן בְּבֵית עֵבֶר לְלַמֵּד תּוֹרָה, לְפִיכָּה זָכָה לְבָרְכָה וְיָרַשׁ אֶת הָאָרֶץ, שְׁנֵאמַר (בראשית לז, א): וַיָּשֶׁב יַעֲקֹב בְּאֶרֶץ מִגּוּרֵי אָבִיו בְּאֶרֶץ כְּנַעַן.

Midrash Genesis Rabbah 84:8

“Israel loved Joseph more than all his sons, because he was a son of his old age; he crafted him a fine [passim] tunic” (Genesis 37:3). “Israel loved Joseph” – Rabbi Yehuda and Rabbi Neḥemya: Rabbi Yehuda says: Because the contours of [Joseph’s] face resembled his. Rabbi Neḥemya said: All the laws that Shem and Ever had transmitted to Jacob, he transmitted to him.

וְיִשְׂרָאֵל אָהַב אֶת יוֹסֵף (בראשית לז, ג), רַבִּי יְהוּדָה וְרַבִּי נְחֵמְיָה, רַבִּי יְהוּדָה אוֹמֵר שֶׁהָיָה זַיּוֹ אֵיקוֹנֵין שְׁלוֹ דְדוֹמָה לוֹ. רַבִּי נְחֵמְיָה אָמַר שֶׁכָּל הַלְכוֹת שֶׁמָסְרוּ שֵׁם וְעֵבֶר לִיעֲקֹב מִסְרָן לוֹ.

Rambam Mishneh Torah Laws of Idolatry 1:1

...as the years passed, [God's] glorious and awesome name was forgotten by the entire population. [It was no longer part of] their speech or thought, and they no longer knew Him. Thus, all the common people, the women, and the children would know only the image of wood or stone and the temples of stone to which they were trained from their childhood to bow down and serve, and in whose name they swore.

The wise men among them would think that there is no God other than the stars and spheres for whose sake, and in resemblance of which, they had made these images. The Eternal Rock was not recognized or known by anyone in the world, with the exception of a [few] individuals: for example, Chanoch, Metushelach, Noach, Shem, and Ever. The world continued in this fashion until the pillar of the world - the Patriarch Abraham - was born.

וְכִינּוּן שֶׁאָרְכוּ הַיָּמִים נִשְׁתַּכַּח הַשֵּׁם הַנִּכְבָּד וְהַנּוֹרָא מִפִּי כָּל הַיְקוּם וּמִדַּעְתָּם וְלֹא הִכִּירוּהוּ וְנִמְצְאוּ כָּל עַם הָאָרֶץ הַנָּשִׁים וְהַקְטָנִים אִינָם יוֹדְעִים אֶלֶּא הַצּוֹרֵה שֶׁל עֵץ וְשֶׁל אֶבֶן וְהַהִיכָל שֶׁל אֲבָנִים שֶׁנִּתְחַנְּנוּ מִקְטָנוּתָם לְהִשְׁתַּחֲוּוֹת לָהּ וּלְעַבְדָּהּ וּלְהִשָּׁבַע בְּשִׁמְהָ. וְהַחֲכָמִים שֶׁהָיוּ בָהֶם כְּגוֹן כַּהֲנִיָּהֶם וְכִיּוֹצֵא בָהֶן מִדְּמִין שֶׁאֵין שֵׁם אֱלֹהִים אֶלֶּא הַכּוֹכָבִים וְהַגְּלָגְלִים שֶׁנַּעֲשׂוּ הַצּוֹרוֹת הָאֵלוּ בְּגִלְגָּלָם וְלִדְמוּתָן. אֲבָל צוּר הָעוֹלָמִים לֹא הָיָה שׁוֹם אָדָם שֶׁהָיָה מִפִּירוֹ וְלֹא יוֹדְעוֹ אֶלֶּא יְחִידִים בְּעוֹלָם כְּגוֹן חֲנוֹךְ וּמְתוֹשֶׁלַח נֹחַ שֵׁם וְעֵבֶר. וְעַל דֶּרֶךְ זֶה הָיָה הָעוֹלָם הוֹלֵךְ וּמִתְגַּלְגֵּל עַד שֶׁנוֹלַד עַמּוּדוֹ שֶׁל עוֹלָם וְהוּא אַבְרָהָם אָבִינוּ:

What is added to the stories of the forefathers and mothers by connecting them to Shem and Ever at key moments?

Looking at all of these sources, what was the inheritance bequeathed by Shem and Ever?

The Hebrew Tribe

Deuteronomy 4:20

But the Lord took you and brought you out of the iron crucible, out of Egypt, to be a people of His possession, as of this day.

וְאַתְּכֶם לָקַח יְהוָה וַיּוֹצֵא אֶתְכֶם מִכּוּר הַבַּרְזֶל מִמִּצְרַיִם לִהְיוֹת לוֹ לְעַם נַחֲלָה כִּיּוֹם הַזֶּה:

What are the processes in life which have made you who you are?

What parallel processes have strengthened your relationships with other individuals or communities?

Minor Pesikta, Devarim (Ki Tavo) 41a

Another interpretation: "And there they became a nation" – this teaches that the Israelites were distinct there, in that their clothing, food, and language was different from the Egyptians'. They were identified and known as a separate nation, apart from the Egyptians.

דבר אחר ויהי שם לגוי. מלמד שהיו ישראל מצויינים שם. שהיה מלבושם ומאכלם ולשונם משונים מן המצריים.
מסומנין היו וידועין שהם גוי לבדם חלוק מן המצריים:

Midrash Leviticus Rabbah 32

R' Huna said in the name of Bar Kapparah: Because of 4 things Israel was redeemed from Egypt: They didn't change their names or their language, they didn't speak evil of one another and none of them was promiscuous.

רב הונא אמר בשם בר קפרא בשביל ד' דברים נגאלו ישראל ממצרים שלא שנו את שמם ואת לשונם ולא אמרו לשון הרע ולא נמצא ביניהן אחד מהן פרוץ בערוה

What are the aspects of how you present yourself that you could change do not? Why?

Who shares these aspects? What does solidarity with them offer? What challenges does it present?

Hear the call

Genesis 12:1-3

God said to Abram, “Go forth from your native land and from your father’s house to the land that I will show you. I will make of you a great nation, And I will bless you; I will make your name great, And you shall be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you and curse the one who curses you; And all the families of the earth Shall bless themselves by you.”

וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה אֶל־אַבְרָם לֵךְ־לְךָ מֵאֶרֶץ וּמִמּוֹלַדְתְּךָ וּמִבֵּית אָבִיךָ אֶל־הָאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר אֲרָאָךְ: וְאַעֲשֶׂךָ לְגוֹי גָּדוֹל וְאַבְרַכְךָ וְאַגְדְּלָה שְׁמֶךָ וְהָיָה בְרַכְּהָ: וְאַבְרַכְהָ מִבְּרַכְיָי וּמִקְלָלָי אֲרָא וְנִבְרַכְוּ בְּךָ כָּל מִשְׁפְּחוֹת הָאָדָמָה:

Midrash Genesis Rabbah 38:13

“Haran died in the presence of Terah his father in the land of his birth, in Ur of the Chaldeans” (Genesis 11:28).

“Haran died during the lifetime of Terah his father” – Rabbi Hiyya grandson of Rav Ada of Yafo: Terah was an idol worshipper [and a seller of idols]. One time, he went away to some place, and he installed Abraham as salesman in his stead. A person would come seeking to buy. He [Abraham] would say to him: ‘How old are you?’ He would say to him: ‘Fifty or sixty years old.’ He would say to him: ‘Woe to this man who is sixty years old and seeks to prostrate himself before something that is one day old.’ He would be ashamed and leave. One time, a certain woman came, carrying a dish of fine flour in her hand. She said to him: ‘Here, offer it before them.’ He arose, took a club in his hand, shattered all the idols, and placed the club in the hand of the largest among them. When his father came, he said to him: ‘Who did this to them?’ He said to him: ‘I will not lie to you, a certain woman came, carrying a dish of fine flour in her hand. She said to me: Here, offer it before them. I offered it before them. This one [idol] said: I shall eat first, and another one said: I shall eat first. This big idol, who was standing among them, got up and took the club and shattered them.’ He [Terah] said to him: ‘What, are you mocking me? Are they sentient at all?’ He said to him: ‘Do your ears not hear what your mouth is saying?’

וַיָּמָת הָרָן עַל פְּנֵי תֵרַח אָבִיו (בראשית יא, כח), רַבִּי חִיָּא בַר בְּרִיָּה דְרַב אֲדָא דִּיפּוֹ, תֵרַח עוֹבֵד צִלְמִים הָיָה, חַד זְמַן נָפִיק לְאַתֵּר, הוֹשִׁיב לְאַבְרָהָם מוֹכֵר תַּחְתָּיו. הָוָה אֱתֵי בַר אִינֶשׁ בְּעֵי דִּיזְבֹן, וְהָוָה אָמַר לֵיהּ בַר כְּמָה שְׁנֵין אַתָּה, וְהָוָה אָמַר לֵיהּ בַר חֲמִשִּׁין אוֹ שְׁתֵּין, וְהָוָה אָמַר לֵיהּ וַיֵּי לֵיהּ לְהוֹוֵא גַבְרָא דְהָוָה בַר שְׁתֵּין וּבְעֵי לְמִסְגַּד לְבַר יוֹמֵי, וְהָוָה מְתַבְּיֵשׁ וְהוֹלֵךְ לוֹ. חַד זְמַן אָתָּא חַד אֲתָתָא טַעִינָא בִידָהּ חֲדָא פִּינָה דְסִלְתָּ, אָמְרָה לֵיהּ הָא לָךְ קָרַב קַדְמִיהוֹן, קָם נָסִיב בּוּקְלָסָא בִידֵיהּ, וְתַבְרִינֹן לְכָלְהוֹן פְּסִילָא, וַיְהִיב בּוּקְלָסָא בִידָא דְרַבָּה דְהָוָה בִּינֵיהוֹן. פִּיּוֹן דְאָתָּא אָבוּהּ אָמַר לֵיהּ מֵאֵן עֲבִיד לְהוֹן כְּדִין, אָמַר לֵיהּ מַה נִּכְפּוֹר מִינָה אֲתָתָא טַעִינָא לֵיהּ חֲדָא פִּינָה דְסִלְתָּ, וְאַמְרַת לִי הָא לָךְ קָרִיב קַדְמִיהוֹן, קָרִיבֵת לְקַדְמִיהוֹן הָוָה דִּין אָמַר אָנָּא אִיכּוֹל קַדְמָאֵי, וְדִין אָמַר אָנָּא אִיכּוֹל קַדְמָאֵי, קָם הֲדִין רַבָּה דְהָוָה בִּינֵיהוֹן נָסִיב בּוּקְלָסָא וְתַבְרִינֹן. אָמַר לֵיהּ מַה אַתָּה מְפָלָה בֵּי, וַיִּדְעִין אִינֹן. אָמַר לֵיהּ וְלֹא יִשְׁמְעוּ אֲזַנֵּיךָ מֵהַ שְׁפִיךְ אוֹמֵר.

Midrash Genesis Rabbah 61:1

“And he meditates on His Torah” (Psalms 1:2) – Rabbi Shimon said: He [Abraham] had no father to teach him, and he did not have a teacher. From where, then, did he learn Torah? The answer is that the Holy One blessed be He set his two kidneys [kilyotav] as two teachers of a sort, and they would flow forth and teach him Torah and wisdom. That is what is written: “I bless the Lord who counsels me, even on nights when my thoughts [khilyotai] are anguished” (Psalms 16:7).

(תהלים א, ב): ובתורתו יְהִי אֱבֹרָה לְמִדּוֹ, וְרַב לֹא יִהְיֶה לוֹ, וּמֵהֵיכָן לְמִדּוֹ אֶת הַתּוֹרָה, אֲלֵא זְמַן לֹא הִקְדוּשׁ בְּרוּךְ הוּא שְׁתִּי כְּלִיּוֹתָיו כְּמִין שְׁנֵי רִבְנִים, וְהָיוּ נוֹבְעוֹת וּמְלַמְּדוֹת אוֹתוֹ תּוֹרָה וְחֻכְמָה, הִדָּא הוּא דְכְּתִיב (תהלים זט, ז): אֲבָרַךְ אֶת ה' אֲשֶׁר יַעֲצֵנִי אֶף לַיְלֹת יִסְרוּנִי כְּלִיּוֹתָי.

Ramban on Genesis 12:2

This parsha is not at all clear. Why does the Holy One, blessed be He, tell him 'abandon your land and I will do good to you in a manner which has never been seen,' without first teaching us that Avraham served Gd or was perfectly righteous? And why are we not told the reason he must abandon his land, that going to a new land will actually bring about Divine intimacy?

והנה זאת הפרשה לא בארה כל הענין, כי מה טעם שיאמר לו הקדוש ברוך הוא עזוב ארצך ואיטיבה עמך טובה שלא היתה כמוהו בעולם, מבלי שיקדים שהיה אברהם עובד אלהים או צדיק תמים, או שיאמר טעם לעזיבת הארץ, שיהיה בהליכתו אל ארץ אחרת קרבת אלהים.

Sefat Emet Bereshit Parshat Lech Lecha [5632]

The Ramban asks the question: why does the Torah say "Go forth" without first mentioning what made Avraham beloved? In the Holy Zohar it appears that this itself was what made him praiseworthy - that Avraham heard the call to "go forth" which Gd says to all people at all times. This is as it says "Woe to those who sleep in their holes! But our father Avraham heard and received [reward]." And of necessity, the statement is presented [in the verse] as if it were said to him alone, because was he not the only one unique enough to hear it? Certainly this itself is his praiseworthiness, that he was ready to receive Gd's call.

רמב"ן הקשה שנאמר לך לך בלי שנזכר מקודם חיבתו. ובזוה"ק נראה כי זה עצמו השבח ששמע זה המאמר לך לך שנאמר מהשי"ת לכל האנשים תמיד כמ"ש וי לאינון דשינתא בחוריהון ואע"ה שמע וקיבל. וממילא נקרא רק הדיבור אליו כי הלא לא נמצא מיוחד לשמוע. רק הוא אבל בודאי זה השבח בעצמו שהי' מוכן לקבל המאמר:

What role has a call played in your life?

What "calls" are going out at all times to all people in the world in which you live?

What prevents us from hearing them?

The Covenant

Genesis 17:1-5

When Abram was ninety-nine years old, God appeared to Abram and said to him, "I am El Shaddai. Walk in My ways and be whole. I will establish My covenant between Me and you, and I will make you exceedingly numerous." Abram threw himself on his face; and God spoke to him further, "As for Me, this is My covenant with you: You shall be the father of a multitude of nations. And you shall no longer be called Abram, but your name shall be Abraham, for I make you the father of a multitude of nations

וְהָיָה אֲבָרָם בֶּן־תְּשָׁעִים שָׁנָה וַתִּשַׁע שָׁנָיִם וַיֵּרָא יְהוָה אֶל־אֲבָרָם וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלָיו אֲנִי־אֵל שְׂדֵי הַתְּהַלָּה לְפָנַי וְהָיָה תַמִּים:
 וְאַתָּנָה בְרִיתִי בֵינִי וּבֵינְךָ וְאַרְבָּה אוֹתָךְ בַּמָּאֵד מְאֹד: וַיִּפֹּל אֲבָרָם עַל־פָּנָיו וַיְדַבֵּר אֵתְּנוּ אֱלֹהִים לֵאמֹר: אֲנִי הִנֵּה בְרִיתִי אִתְּךָ וְהָיִיתָ לְאֵב הַמּוֹן גּוֹיִם: וְלֹא־יִקְרָא עוֹד אֶת־שִׁמְךָ אֲבָרָם וְהָיָה שִׁמְךָ אֲבָרָהֶם כִּי אֲב־הַמּוֹן גּוֹיִם נִתְּתִיךָ:

Deuteronomy 18:9-13
 When you enter the land that the Lord your God is giving you, you shall not learn to imitate the abhorrent practices of those nations. Let no one be found among you who consigns a son or daughter to the fire, or who is an augur, a soothsayer, a diviner, a sorcerer, one who casts spells, or one who consults ghosts or familiar spirits, or one who inquires of the dead. For anyone who does such things is abhorrent to God, and it is because of these abhorrent things that the Lord your God is dispossessing them before you. You must be wholehearted with the Lord your God.
 כִּי אַתָּה בָּא אֶל־הָאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר־יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ נֹתֵן לָךְ לֹא־תִלְמַד לַעֲשׂוֹת כְּתוֹעֵבֹת הַגּוֹיִם הָהֵם: לֹא־יִמָּצָא בָּךְ מַעֲבִיר בְּנוֹ־וּבִתּוֹ בָּאֵשׁ קִסָּם קְסָמִים מְעוֹגָן וּמְנַחֵשׁ וּמְכַשֵּׁף: וְחֹבֵר חֹבֵר וְשֹׂאֵל אוֹב וַיְדַעְנִי וְדָרַשׁ אֶל־הַמְּתִים: כִּי־תוֹעֵבֹת יְהוָה כָּל־עֲשֵׂה אֵלֶּה וּבִגְלַל הַתּוֹעֵבֹת הָאֵלֶּה יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ מוֹרִישׁ אוֹתָם מִפְּנֵיךָ: תַמִּים תְּהִיֶּה עִם יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ:

Proverbs 27:7
 Iron sharpens iron, and a man sharpens the countenance of his friend.
 בְּרִזְל בְּרִזְל יִחַד וְאִישׁ יִחַד פְּנֵי־רֵעֵהוּ:

What does it mean that God calls Abraham to be “whole,” and then commands that he remove part of his body?

Who are the people in your life, or what are the commitments, that give you context to be who you are?

Are there covenants you might make to become someone new?

Genesis 18:17-25
 And the Lord said, "Shall I conceal from Abraham what I am doing? And Abraham will become a great and powerful nation, and all the nations of the world will be blessed in him. For I have known him because he commands his sons and his household after him, that they should keep the way of the Lord to perform righteousness and justice, in order that the Lord bring upon Abraham that which He spoke concerning him." And the Lord said, "Since the cry of Sodom and Gomorrah has become great, and since their sin has become very grave, I will descend now and see, whether according to her cry, which has come to Me, they have done; [I will wreak] destruction [upon them]; and if not, I will know." And the men turned from there and went to Sodom, and Abraham was still standing before the Lord. And Abraham approached and said, "Will You even destroy the righteous with the wicked? Perhaps there are fifty righteous men in the midst of the city; will You even destroy and not forgive the place for the sake of the fifty righteous men who are in its midst? Far be it from You to do a thing such as this, to put to death the righteous with the wicked so that the righteous should be like the wicked. Far be it from You! **Will the Judge of the entire earth not perform justice?**"

וַיְהִי אִמֶּר הַמַּכְסָּה אֲנִי מֵאַבְרָהָם אֲשֶׁר אָנִי עֹשֶׂה: וְאַבְרָהָם הָיוּ יְהִי לְגֹי גָדוֹל וְעַצוֹם וְנִבְרָכוּ-בּוֹ כָּל גּוֹי הָאָרֶץ:
 כִּי יִדְעֹתֶיךָ לְמַעַן אֲשֶׁר יֵצֵא אֶת-בְּנֵיךָ וְאֶת-בֵּיתוֹ אַחֲרָיו וְשָׁמְרוּ דְרָךְ יְהוָה לַעֲשׂוֹת צְדָקָה וּמִשְׁפָּט לְמַעַן הֵבִיא
 יְהוָה עַל-אַבְרָהָם אֶת אֲשֶׁר-דָּבַר עָלָיו: וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה זַעֲקֵת סָדָם וְעַמֶּרְהָ כִּי-רָבָה וְחָטְאוּתָם כִּי כָבְדָה מְאֹד:
 אֲרָדָה-נָא וְאַרְאֶה הַכְּצַעֲקֹתֶיךָ הַבָּאָה אֵלַי עֲשׂוּ כָלָה וְאִם-לֹא אֲדַעַה: וַיִּפְנוּ מִשֵּׁם הָאֲנָשִׁים וַיִּלְכוּ סְדָמָה
 וְאַבְרָהָם עֹדְנֹו עִמָּד לִפְנֵי יְהוָה: וַיִּגַּשׁ אַבְרָהָם וַיֹּאמֶר הָאֵף תִּסְפָּה צְדִיק עִם-רָשָׁע: אוֹלֵי יֵשׁ חַמְשִׁים צְדִיקִים
 בְּתוֹךְ הָעִיר הָאֵף תִּסְפָּה וְלֹא-תִשָּׂא לְמִקּוֹם לְמַעַן חַמְשִׁים הַצְדִיקִים אֲשֶׁר בְּקִרְבָּהּ: חָלְלָה לְךָ מַעֲשֵׂת | כְּדָבַר
 הַזֶּה לְהַמִּית צְדִיק עִם-רָשָׁע וְהָיָה כְּצְדִיק כְּרָשָׁע חָלְלָה לְךָ הַשֹּׁפֵט כָּל-הָאָרֶץ לֹא יַעֲשֶׂה מִשְׁפָּט:

R' Lord Jonathan Sacks, from Covenant & Conversation - The Courage not to Conform Lech Lecha 5774
<https://rabbisacks.org/covenant-conversation/lech-lecha/the-courage-not-to-conform/>

Abraham is without doubt the most influential person who ever lived. Today he is claimed as the spiritual ancestor of 2.3 billion Christians, 1.8 billion Muslims and 14 million Jews, more than half the people alive today. Yet he ruled no empire, commanded no great army, performed no miracles and proclaimed no prophecy. He is the supreme example in all of history of influence without power. Why? Because he was prepared to be different. As the Sages say, he was called ha-ivri, "the Hebrew," because "all the world was on one side (be-ever echad) and he was on the other". Leadership, as every leader knows, can be lonely. Yet you continue to do what you have to do because you know that the majority is not always right and conventional wisdom is not always wise. Dead fish go with the flow. Live fish swim against the current. So it is with conscience and courage. So it is with the children of Abraham. They are prepared to challenge the idols of the age.

Father of many nations (source for the supplementary video)

R' A.Y. Hakohen Kook, Orot Yisrael 5:11

It is fitting that humanity be united into one family, and then all conflicts and bad traits which arise from the divisions of people and their borders will cease. But the world requires an essential refinement, an advance through which humanity integrate all the richness of the colors particular to each nation. This lack will be filled by *Knesset Yisrael*, whose particular quality is as a great storehouse of spirits that contains within it every ability and every lofty spiritual inclination. Through the complete fullness of *Knesset Yisrael*, and particularly through its connection with the whole world, all the good which comes from the divisions of peoples will be maintained in the world and there will no longer be any need for actual division. All the peoples will be one unit and above, in the role of a holy storehouse, the kingdom of priests and holy nation (Shmot 19:6), the treasured portion of all the peoples, as Gd has spoken.

ראויה היא האנושיות שתתאחד כולה למשפחה אחת, וחדלו אז כל התגרות וכל המדות הרעות היוצאות מחילוקי עמים וגבולותיהם. אבל העולם צריך להעידון התמציתי, שהאנושיות משתכללת על ידו בעושר הצביונים המיוחדים של כל אומה. וזה החסרון תשלים כנסת ישראל, שתכונתה היא כמין אוצר רוחות גדול הכולל בקרב כל כשרון וכל נטית רוח עליונה. ובמילואה הגמור של כנסת ישראל יהיה שמור בעולם, ביחוד ע"י קישורה עם כל העולם

כולו, כל הטוב שיוצא מפלוגת עממים, ושוב לא ימצא כל צורך בהתפלגות הממשית, והיו כל העמים הכלליים חטיבה אחת, ועל גביהם בתור אוצר קדוש, ממלכת כהנים וגוי קדוש, סגולה מכל העמים, כאשר דבר ד'.