

A Light unto the Nations

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The Medresh tells the story of a king and his two friends. Once the king was walking and noticed his friend sinking in the mud. The king promptly rescued him. Another time, the king was travelling in a dimly lit alley. He noticed a light coming from a window. It was another friend of his, and he was holding a lantern. The king said, "Why do you light my path from the window? Come walk in front of me and illuminate the way."

The two friends in the Medresh represent Noah and Abraham. Noah was a righteous man in a generation of evildoers; therefore H-shem saved him from the flood which destroyed the rest of humanity. However, Abraham was not only righteous, but shared the message of the one G-d with the world. He was loved by the King and illuminated His path in the world. While Noah followed in the ways of G-d, he did not reach out to the rest of his generation. It was only Abraham who made it his mission to promulgate G-d's teachings.

It is astounding that one man in the Middle East changed the history of the world by preaching G-d's oneness; a belief now shared by much of humanity. In his book, *World Perfect*, Rabbi Ken Spiro even demonstrates how the world's positive ethical values have their source in Judaism. For example, Judaism was the first to teach the value of human life, the importance of charity, being kind, justice, altruism etc. While other nations were practicing infanticide, human sacrifice, thievery, and immorality, Judaism declared that human life is holy and human dignity is essential. This all began with Abraham who initiated a spiritual revolution by teaching the world about H-shem, and what He desires from humanity. For this reason, Abraham merited that his descendants would be the Chosen People. G-d chose Abraham's children to carry on his mission of being a light unto the nations. It is truly an honor to be a Jew. May we continue in the sacred mission of our forefather Abraham by representing G-dliness in the world.