



CLASS 1 BEING AND BECOMING

Source 1



Genesis (Bereshit) 12:1-9

א וַיֹּאמֶר ה' אֶל אַבְרָם לֵךְ מֵאֶרֶצְךָ וּמִבֵּית אָבִיךָ אֶל הָאֶרֶץ אֲשֶׁר
אֲרָאָךְ.

- 1 The LORD said to Abram, "Go forth from your native land and from your father's house to the land that I will show you.

ב וְאָעֲשֶׂה לְגוֹי גָּדוֹל וְאֶבְרַכְךָ וְאֶגְדְּלָה שְׁמִי וְהָיָה בְרָכָה.

- 2 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.

ג וְאֶבְרַכָּה מְבָרְכֶיךָ וּמְקַלְלֶיךָ אֲאָר וְנִבְרַכְנוּ בְּךָ כָּל מִשְׁפַּחַת הָאֲדָמָה.

- 3 I will bless those who bless you and curse him that curses you; and all the families of the earth shall bless themselves by you."

ד וַיֵּלֶךְ אַבְרָם כַּאֲשֶׁר דִּבֶּר אֱלֹהֵי ה' וַיֵּלֶךְ אֹתוֹ לוֹט וְאַבְרָם בֶּן חֲמִשׁ שָׁנִים וְשִׁבְעִים
שָׁנָה בְּצֵאתוֹ מִחָרָן.

- 4 Abram went forth as the LORD had commanded him, and Lot went with him. Abram was seventy-five years old when he left Haran.

ה וַיִּקַּח אַבְרָם אֶת שָׂרִי אִשְׁתּוֹ וְאֶת לוֹט בֶּן אָחִיו וְאֶת כָּל רְכוּשָׁם אֲשֶׁר רָכְשׁוּ וְאֶת
הַנֶּפֶשׁ אֲשֶׁר עָשׂוּ בְּחָרָן וַיֵּצְאוּ לְלֶכֶת אֶרֶצָה כְּנַעַן וַיָּבֹאוּ אֶרֶצָה כְּנַעַן.

- 5 Abram took his wife Sarai and his brother's son Lot, and all the wealth that they had amassed, and the persons that they had acquired in Haran; and they set out for the land of Canaan. When they arrived in the land of Canaan,



- ו וַיַּעֲבֹר אַבְרָם בְּאֶרֶץ עַד מְקוֹם שְׂכָם עַד אֵלוֹן מוֹרֶה וְהַכְנַעֲנִי אָז בְּאֶרֶץ.
- 6 Abram passed through the land as far as the site of Shechem, at the terebinth of Moreh. The Canaanites were then in the land.
- ז וַיֵּרָא ה' אֶל-אַבְרָם וַיֹּאמֶר לְזֶרְעֲךָ אֶתֵּן אֶת הָאֶרֶץ הַזֹּאת וַיְבֹן שָׁם מִזְבֵּחַ לַה' הַנִּרְאָה אֵלָיו.
- 7 The LORD appeared to Abram and said, "I will assign this land to your offspring." And he built an altar there to the LORD who had appeared to him.
- ח וַיַּעֲתֵק מִשָּׁם הָהָרָה מִקְדָּם לְבֵית אֵל וַיֵּט אֶהֱלֶה בֵּית אֵל מִיָּם וְהָעִי מִקְדָּם וַיְבֹן שָׁם מִזְבֵּחַ לַה' וַיִּקְרָא בְּשֵׁם ה'.
- 8 From there he moved on to the hill country east of Bethel and pitched his tent, with Bethel on the west and Ai on the east; and he built there an altar to the LORD and invoked the LORD by name.
- ט וַיֵּסַע אַבְרָם הַלּוֹךְ וְנִסּוּעַ הַנֶּגֶבָה. {פ}
- 9 Then Abram journeyed by stages toward the Negeb. {P}

Source 2



Michael Wyschogrod, *The Body of Faith* (1983)

The foundation of Judaism is the family identity of the Jewish people as the descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Whatever else is added to this must be seen as growing out of and related to the basic identity of the Jewish people as the seed of Abraham elected by God through descent from Abraham. This is the crux of the mystery of Israel's election. Seen through the eyes of man, a divine election of a group defined by some ideological criterion would be far more plausible. It would have been far more understandable had God elected all those who feed the hungry and clothe the naked or, if our sensibilities are more contemplative than active, all those who have grasped the absolute or achieved Nirvana. These are accomplishments of individuals and reflect unusual endowment or effort or both. But being born into a particular family is hardly an achievement for which anyone deserves either credit or blame...God chose the route of election, and of the election of a biological instead of ideological people, because this was his free choice...Rarely has any theology come to grips with the contingency that follows from God's freedom.



Source 3



Exodus (Shemot) 19:1-6

- א בחדש השלישי לצאת בני ישראל מארץ מצרים ביום הזה באו מדבר סיני.
- 1 On the third new moon after the Israelites had gone forth from the land of Egypt, on that very day, they entered the wilderness of Sinai.
- ב ויסעו מרפידים ויבאו מדבר סיני ויחנו במדבר ויחן שם ישראל נגד ההר.
- 2 Having journeyed from Rephidim, they entered the wilderness of Sinai and encamped in the wilderness. Israel encamped there in front of the mountain,
- ג ומשה עלה אל הא-להים ויקרא אליו ה' מן ההר לאמר כה תאמר לבית יעקב ותגיד לבני ישראל.
- 3 and Moses went up to God. The LORD called to him from the mountain, saying, "Thus shall you say to the house of Jacob and declare to the children of Israel:
- ד אתם ראיתם אשר עשיתי למצרים ואשא אתכם על-כנפי נשרים ואבא אתכם אלי.
- 4 'You have seen what I did to the Egyptians, how I bore you on eagles' wings and brought you to Me.
- ה ועתה אם שמוע תשמעו בקלי ושמרתם את בריתי והייתם לי סגלה מכל העמים כי לי כל הארץ.
- 5 Now then, if you will obey Me faithfully and keep My covenant, you shall be My treasured possession among all the peoples. Indeed, all the earth is Mine,
- ו ואתם תהיו לי ממלכת כהנים וגוי קדוש אלה הדברים אשר תדבר אל בני ישראל.
- 6 but you shall be to Me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.' These are the words that you shall speak to the children of Israel."



Source 4



Emma Green, "I've Spent My Life Studying These Books That Say Decency Actually Matters," interview with Sharon Brous in *The Atlantic* (December 17, 2017)

When we were building IKAR, I realized that I wasn't interested at all in the movement question. What I wanted to do was bring together people who were interested in asking, 'What does it mean to be a Jew and a human being in a world on fire?' I don't, frankly, care if you identify as Reform or Modern Orthodox...

For me, I say what I need to say. I'm not looking to build the biggest, widest tent so that any person with any political perspective should and could feel absolutely comfortable here. I think in those environments, we become so neutral and so numb that we can't actually say something.