

# CHAPTER 4:3 ISRAEL AND THE OTHER NATIONS

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*Derech Hashem* - The Way of G-d 2:4:3

Recall that originally there'd been root souls and offshoots <sup>1</sup>. The root souls were to have regained Adam and Eve's original high spiritual stature, their offshoots were to follow in their wake <sup>2</sup>, and all of humanity was to have remained on that exalted plane <sup>3</sup>.

But there were to have been two time periods for this to have worked itself out, though. There was a fixed period in antiquity during which the gates <sup>4</sup> were left wide open and when everyone could have become a root him- or herself and been worthy of being on the level of Adam and Eve before their sin. And all of his or her descendants would have been on that level, too. This opportunity was available from the time of Adam and Eve themselves up to the time of the destruction of the Tower of Babel <sup>5</sup>.

For, there were indeed people at that time who strove for personal perfection, like Enoch <sup>6</sup>, Methuselah <sup>7</sup>, Shem <sup>8</sup>, and Eber <sup>9</sup>. They and others of their caliber could very well have become root souls to their particular offshoots, who'd then have served as bearers of G-d's message for mankind, as we Jews do. But none of them did. Only Abraham, the father of the Jewish Nation, did, which is why only we, his descendants, came to inherit his spiritual bounty <sup>10</sup>.

There eventually came to be 70 primal nations in all <sup>11</sup>. And each one plays its own particular role in the larger scheme of things <sup>12</sup> while yet remaining on the level of humankind in its fallen state.

Thus while mankind may seem the same as it always has been there's actually a profound difference between then and now. For, again, up to the time of the Tower of Babel all of humankind existed in the age of potential root souls and was dealt with accordingly; while afterwards, a new era began -- the era of offshoots, which we're still in the midst of.

Footnotes:

<sup>1</sup> See 2:4:2 above.

<sup>2</sup> I.e., to have "inherited" their high status, if you will.

<sup>3</sup> But that would not have guaranteed that they would have achieved the ultimate spiritual status that Adam and Eve would have reached had they not sinned. See *Adir Bamarom* p. 29 for a discussion of that ultimate level in this context as well as note 3 to 2:4:2 above.

<sup>4</sup> ... of possibility and heavenly down flow ...

<sup>5</sup> See Genesis 1:26 to 11:1-9. Abraham, who'll be cited below, lived within this time period, as is indicated in *Breishit Rabbah* 38:6 and elsewhere.

See Ramchal's remarks about this in *Ma'amar HaGeulah*.

<sup>6</sup> Genesis 5:21-24.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid. 5:25.

<sup>8</sup> See *Breishit Rabbah* 63:8.

<sup>9</sup> See *Seder Olam* 1. Also See *Adir Bamarom* p. 13 about Shem and Eber.

<sup>10</sup> Ramchal's overarching point here is that we are the Chosen People only because we are the offshoots of Abraham who was singled out among others in his primal epoch to serve as a root soul. We ourselves would not have been the Chosen People had he not succeeded since there's nothing inherently worthy about us to have earned that merit on our own. The Enochites and Methusalites could have been, but that didn't happen.

Ramchal wrote extensively about the difference between Abraham and the righteous individuals who preceded him. See *Adir Bamarom* pp. 8,29,31,218, *Biurim Al Tanach*, *Parshat Lech Lecha* (as found in *Otsrot Ramchal* pp. 18, 20), and *Messilat Yesharim* Ch. 4.

<sup>11</sup> With many subsequent subdivisions. See Genesis Ch. 10 and 1 Chronicles 1:5-23.

<sup>12</sup> See *Sukkah* 55a and *Sotah* 36b.