

1. Rambam, Mishneh Torah, Hilchot Yesodei HaTorah 1:3

After this mighty man was weaned, he began to explore and think. Though he was a child, he began to think [incessantly] throughout the day and night, wondering: How is it possible for the sphere to continue to revolve without having anyone controlling it? Who is causing it to revolve? Surely, it does not cause itself to revolve. He had no teacher, nor was there anyone to inform him. Rather, he was mired in Ur Kasdim among the foolish idolaters. His father, mother, and all the people [around him] were idol worshipers, and he would worship with them. [However,] his heart was exploring and [gaining] understanding. Ultimately, he appreciated the way of truth and understood the path of righteousness through his accurate comprehension. He realized that there was one G-d who controlled the sphere, that He created everything, and that there is no other G-d among all the other entities. He knew that the entire world was making a mistake. What caused them to err was their service of the stars and images, which made them lose awareness of the truth. Abraham was forty years old when he became aware of his Creator. When he recognized and knew Him, he began to formulate replies to the inhabitants of Ur Kasdim and debate with them, telling them that they were not following a proper path. He broke their idols and began to teach the people that it is fitting to serve only the G-d of the world. To Him [alone] is it fitting to bow down, sacrifice, and offer libations, so that the people of future [generations] would recognize Him. [Conversely,] it is fitting to destroy and break all the images, lest all the people err concerning them, like those people who thought that there are

בֵיוָן שֶׁנָגְמַל אֵיתָן זֶה הִתְחִיל לְשׁוֹטֵט בְּדַעְתּוֹ וְהוּא קָטָן וָהָתָחִיל לַחֲשֹׁב בַּיּוֹם וּבַלַּיִלָה וָהָיָה תַּמֵהַ הֵיאַךְ אֵפְשַׁר שַׁיָּהְיֵה הַגַּלְגַּל הַזָּה נוֹהֶג תַּמִיד וַלֹא יִהְיֵה לוֹ מַנָהִיג וּמִי יָסַבֵּב אוֹתוֹ. כִּי אִי אֵפִשַׁר שֵׁיִסַבֵּב אֵת עַצִמוֹ. וַלֹא הַיָה לוֹ מָלַמֵּד וָלֹא מוֹדִיעַ דַּבָר אֵלַא מַשָּׁקַע בָּאוּר כַּשִּׁדִים בֵּין עוֹבְדֵי כּוֹכָבִים הַטִּפְּשִׁים וְאָבִיו וְאִמּוֹ וְכָל הָעָם עוֹבְדֵי פוֹכַבִים וָהוּא עוֹבֶד עִמֲהֶם וַלְבּוֹ מְשׁוֹטֵט וּמֵבִין עַד שָׁהָשִּׂיג דָּרֶךְ הַאֱמֶת וָהָבִין קוּ הַצָּדֵק מִתְּבוּנַתוֹ הַנָּכוֹנַה. וְיָדַע שָׁיֵשׁ שָׁם אֱלוֹק אֶחָד וְהוּא מַנְהִיג הַגַּלְגַּל וְהוּא בָּרָא הַכּל וָאֵין בָּכַל הַנִּמָצַא אֱלוֹק חוּץ מִמֶנוּ. וַיַדַע שֶׁכַּל הָעוֹלָם טוֹעִים וְדָבָר שֶׁגָּרַם לָהֶם לִטְעוֹת זֶה שֶׁעוֹבְדִים אַת הַכּוֹכַבִים וָאֵת הַצּוּרוֹת עַד שֵׁאַבַד הָאֵמֵת מִדַּעִתַּם. וּבֶן אַרְבַּעִים שַׁנָה הָכִּיר אַכְרָהַם אֵת בּוֹרָאוֹ. כֵּיוַן שֵׁהָכִּיר וַיַדַע הָתָחִיל לָהַשִּׁיב תִּשׁוּבוֹת עַל בָּנֵי אוּר כַּשִׂדִים וְלַעֲרֹדְ דִּין עִפָּהֶם וְלוֹמַר שָׁאֵין זוֹ דָּרֶדְ הָאֱמֶת שֶׁאַתֶּם הוֹלְכִים בַּהּ וָשָׁבֵּר הַצִּלַמִים וָהָתְחִיל לְהוֹדִיעַ לַעַם שֵׁאֵין רָאוּי לַעֲבֹד אֶלָּא לָאֱלוֹק הָעוֹלָם וְלוֹ רָאוּי לְהַשָׁתַּחַווֹת וּלְהַקְרִיב וּלְנַסֵּךְ כָּדֵי שֵׁיַכִּירוּהוּ כַּל הַבִּרוּאִים הַבַּאִים. וָרַאוּי לְאַבֶּד וּלְשָׁבֶּר כַּל הַצוּרוֹת כָּדֵי שֶׁלֹא יָטְעוּ בַּהָן כַּל העם כַמוֹ אַלוּ שָהָם מִדָמִים שַאֵין שם אַלוֹק אַלָּא אַלוּ. בִּיוַן שֵׁגַבַר עַלֵיהָם בִּרְאַיוֹתַיו בִּקְשׁ הַמֵּלֵךְ לְהַרגוֹ וְנַעֲשַׂה לוֹ גַס וְיָצָא לְחָרָן. וְהִתְחִיל לַעֲמֹד וְלִקְרֹא בָּקוֹל גָּדוֹל לְכַל הָעוֹלָם וּלְהוֹדִיעָם שֶׁיֵּשׁ שֶׁם אֱלוֹק אֶחָד לְכַל הָעוֹלָם ּוְלוֹ רָאוּי לַעֲבֹד. וְהָיָה מְהַלֵּךְ וְקוֹרֵא וּמְקַבֵּץ הָעָם מֵעִיר לְעִיר וּמְמַמְלַכָה לְמַמְלַכָה עַד שֶׁהָגִּיעַ לְאֶרֵץ כְּנַעַן וְהוּא קוֹרֵא שַנַאֵמַר (בראשית כא לג) "וַיִּקְרָא שָׁם בְּשׁם ד' קאֵל עוֹלַם". וָכֵינַן שֶׁהָיוּ הַעָּם מִתְקַבָּצִין אֵלַיו וְשׁוֹאַלִין לוֹ עַל דָבַרַיו הַיָה מוֹדִיעַ לְכַל אֵחַד וָאֵחַד כִּפִי דַּעִתּוֹ עַד שַׁיַּחְזִירֵהוּ לְדֶרֶךְ הָאֱמֶת עַד שֶׁנִּתְקַבְּצוּ אֵלָיו אֲלָפִים וּרְבָבוֹת וָהֵם אַנְשֵׁי בֵּית אַבְרָהָם וְשָׁתַל בְּלִבָּם הָעִקַּר הַגָּדוֹל הַזֶּה וְחַבֵּר בּוֹ סְפָרִים וְהוֹדִיעוֹ לְיִצְחָק בְּנוֹ. וְיָשַׁב יִצְחַק מִלְמֵּד וּמַזָהָיר. וַיִצְחַק הוֹדִיעַ לְיַעַקֹב וּמִנַהוּ לְלַמֵּד וַיַשֶׁב מָלַמֶּד וּמַחַזִיק כַּל הַנָּלוִים אֱלֵיו. וַיַעַקֹב אֲבִינוּ לְמֶד בַּנֵיו כַּלָם וָהָבִדִּיל לֵוִי וּמְנַהוּ ראֹשׁ וְהוֹשִׁיבוֹ בִּישִׁיבָה לָלַמֵּד דֵּרֵךְ הַשַּׁם וָלְשָׁמֹר מָצְוַת אַבְרַהַם. וְצְוַּה אֵת בַּנַיו שׁלֹא יַפָּסִיקוּ מִבָּנֵי לֵוִי מִמֻנַּה אַחַר מִמֻנַּה כָּדֵי שׁלֹא תִשָּׁכַח הַלְּמוּד. וְהָיָה הַדְּבָר הוֹלֵך וּמִתְגַבֵּר בִּבְנֵי יַעֲלְב וּבַנָּלְוִים עַלֵיהֶם וָנַעֲשֵׂית בַּעוֹלַם אָמַה שֶׁהִיא יוֹדַעַת אֶת ד'. עַד שָאָרְכוּ הַיָּמִים לְיִשְׂרָאֵל בְּמִצְרַיִם וְחָזְרוּ לִלְמֹד מַעשִׂיהֶן וַלַעֲבֹד כּוֹכַבִים כִּמוֹתַן חוּץ מִשָּׁבֵט לֵוִי שֶׁעַמַד בּמִצְוַת אַבוֹת. וּמֵעוֹלַם לֹא עַבַד שֶׁבֶט לָוִי עֲבוֹדַת כּוֹכָבִים. וְכִמְעַט קָט הָיָה הָעִקָּר שֶׁשָׁתַל אַבְרָהָם נֶעֱקָר וְחוֹזָרִין בָּנֵי יַעַלְב לְטַעוּת הַעוֹלָם וּתִעִּיּוֹתַן. וּמֵאַהַבַּת ד' אוֹתַנוּ וּמִשַּׁמָרוֹ אֵת הַשָּׁבוּעָה לְאַבְרָהַם אַבִינוּ עַשַּׂה משֵׁה רבֵנוּ רַבַּן שֵׁל כָּל הַנְּבִיאִים וּשְׁלָחוֹ. כֵּיוָן שֶׁנְתְנַבֵּא משֶׁה רַבֵּנוּ וּבָחַר ד' יִשְׂרָאֵל לְנַחֲלָה הִכְתִּירָן בְּמִצְוֹת וְהוֹדִיעָם



no other G-ds besides these [images]. When he overcame them through the strength of his arguments, the king desired to kill him. He was [saved through] a miracle and left for Charan. [There,] he began to call in a loud voice to all people and inform them that there is one G-d in the entire world and it is proper to serve Him. He would go out and call to the people, gathering them in city after city and country after country, until he came to the land of Canaan proclaiming [G-d's existence the entire time] - as [Genesis 21:33] states: "And He called there in the name of the L-rd, the eternal G-d."

When the people would gather around him and ask him about his statements, he would explain [them] to each one of them according to their understanding, until they turned to the path of truth. Ultimately, thousands and myriads gathered around him. These are the men of the house of Abraham.

He planted in their hearts this great fundamental principle, composed texts about it, and taught it to Isaac, his son. Isaac also taught others and turned [their hearts to G-d]. He also taught Jacob and appointed him as a teacher. [Jacob] taught others and turned [the hearts] of all those who gathered around him [to G-d]. He also taught all of his children. He selected Levi and appointed him as the leader. He established him [as the head of] the academy to teach them the way of G-d and observe the mitzvot of Abraham. [Jacob] commanded his sons that the leadership should not depart from the descendants of Levi, so that the teachings would not be forgotten. This concept proceeded and gathered strength among the descendants of Jacob and those who collected around them, until there became a nation within the world which knew G-d. When the Jews extended their stay in

דֶּרֶךְ עֲבוֹדָתוֹ וּמָה יִּהְיֶה מִשְׁפַּט עֲבוֹדַת כּוֹכָבִים וְכָל הַטוֹעִים אַחָרֶיהָ:



Egypt, however, they learned from the [Egyptians'] deeds and began worshiping the stars as they did, with the exception of the tribe of Levi, who clung to the mitzvot of the patriarchs - the tribe of Levi never served false G-ds.

Within a short time, the fundamental principle that Abraham had planted would have been uprooted, and the descendants of Jacob would have returned to the errors of the world and their crookedness. Because of G-d's love for us, and to uphold the oath He made to Abraham, our patriarch, He brought forth Moses, our teacher, the master of all prophets, and sent him [to redeem the Jews]. After Moses, our teacher, prophesied, and G-d chose Israel as His inheritance, He crowned them with mitzvot and informed them of the path to serve Him, [teaching them] the judgement prescribed for idol worshiper and all those who stray after it.

2. Deuteronomy 4:19

And when you look up to the sky and behold the sun and the moon and the stars, the whole heavenly host, you must not be lured into bowing down to them or serving them. These the L-RD your G-d allotted to other peoples everywhere under heaven;

וּפֶּן־תִּשָּׂא עֵינֶיךְּ הַשָּׁמִּיְמָה וְּרָאֵּיתָ אֶת־הַשָּׁמֶשׁ וְאֶת־הַיָּרֹם וְאֶת־הַכְּוֹכְבִּים כָּלֹ צְבָא הַשָּׁמִׁים וְנִדְּחָתְּ וְהִשְׁמַחֵנִיתְ לָהָם וַעֲבַדְתָּם אֲשָׁר חָלֵק ד' אֱלֹקיךְ אֹתָם לְכֹל הַעַמִּים תַּחַת כַּל־הַשַּׁמֵיִם:

3. Jeremiah 10:1-5

Thus said G-D:

Do not learn to go the way of the nations, And do not be dismayed by portents in the sky;

Let the nations be dismayed by them! For the laws of the nations are delusions: For it is the work of a craftsman's hands. He cuts down a tree in the forest with an ax. שׁמְעֵּוּ אֶת־הַדָּבָּרְ אֲשֶׁׁר דְּבֶּר ד' עֲלִיכֶם בֵּית יִשְׂרָאֵל: כָּה וֹ אָמֵר יְהֹּוָה אֶל־דֶּרֶךְ הַגּוֹיִם אֵל־תִּלְמָׁדוּ וּמֵאֹתוֹת הַשָּׁמֵיִם אֵל־תַּחָתוּ כִּי־יִחָתוּ הַגוֹיִם מֵהַמָּה:

בָּי־חַקּוֹת הָעַמָּים הָבָל הָוּא כִּי־עֵץ מִיֵּעַר כְּרָתוֹ מַעֲעֵׂה יְדֵי־חָרָשׁ בַּמַעֲצֵד:

בְּכֶסֶף וּבְזָהֶב יְיַפֵּהוּ בְּמַסְמְרָוֹת וּבְמַקּבֶוֹת יְחַזְּקוּם וְלְוֹא יְפֵיק: יָפִיק:

ּכְּתُמֶר מִקְשָׁה הַּמָּה וְלָא יְדַבֵּּרוּ נָשְוֹא יִנָּשֻוּא כִּי לְאׁ יִצְעָדוּ אַל־תִּירְאָוּ מֵהֶם כִּי־לָא יָבִעוּ וְגַם־הֵיטֵיב אֵין אוֹתֵם: {פ}



He adorns it with silver and gold,	
He fastens it with nails and hammer,	
So that it does not totter.	
They are like a scarecrow in a cucumber	
patch,	
They cannot speak.	
They have to be carried,	
For they cannot walk.	
Be not afraid of them, for they can do no	
harm;	
Nor is it in them to do any good.	

4. Deuteronomy 4:35

It has been clearly demonstrated to you that	אַתָּהֹ הָרְאֵתָ לָדַּעַת כִּי ד' הָוּא הָאֱ-לֹקִים אֵין עָוֹד מִלְּבַדְוֹ:
the L-RD alone is G-d; there is none beside	
Him.	