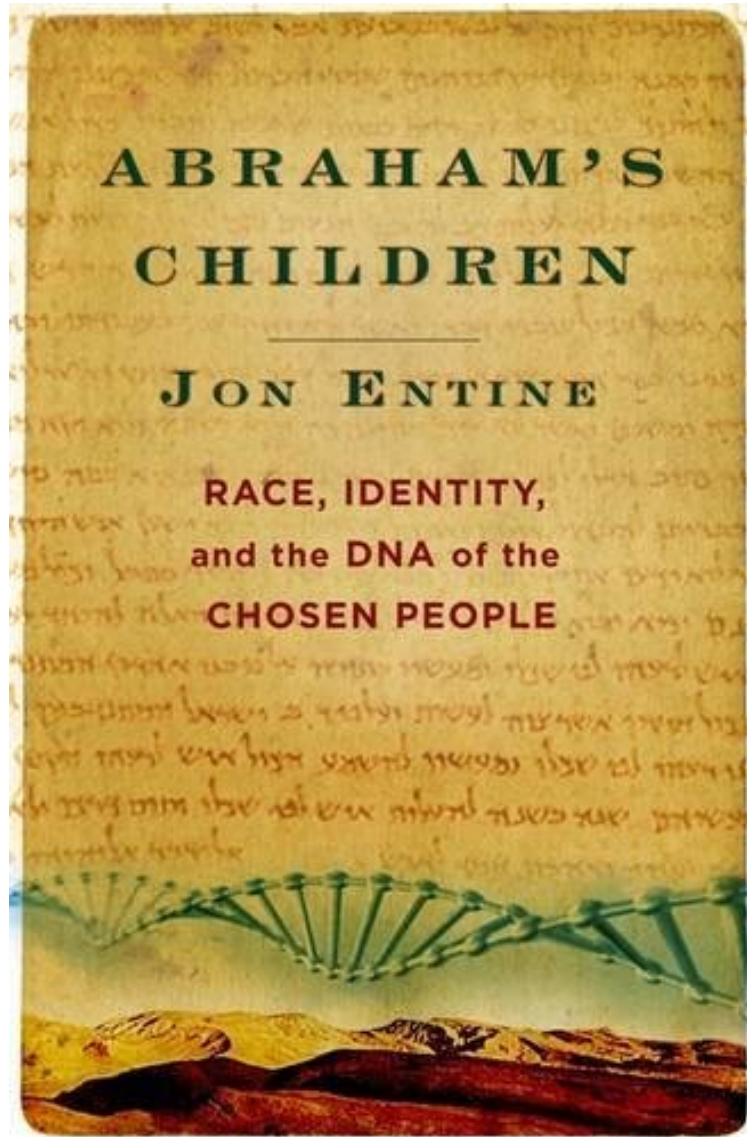


(Download pdf ebook) Abraham's Children: Race, Identity, and the DNA of the Chosen People

# Abraham's Children: Race, Identity, and the DNA of the Chosen People

*Jon Entine*

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**Jon Entine : Abraham's Children: Race, Identity, and the DNA of the Chosen People** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Abraham's Children: Race, Identity, and the DNA of the Chosen People:

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Eye OpenerBy Ellen KI started this book never thinking how much I

would learn about my heritage. So many myths are questioned. Reasonable explanations are given to many unanswered questions. The science of genetics is amazing. Understanding the relationships of the races and different ethnicities kept me reading. Sometimes the science can be confusing, but the overall picture is easily understood. I would recommend this to anyone, no matter what your identity.<sup>3 of 3</sup> people found the following review helpful. Abraham's Children By life's student Very interesting information presented in book. The results of the genetic research are consistent with the Tanach. However, the information presented is only the tip of the iceberg. Much more work needs to be done to give more conclusive information of ourselves, the Jews. We are only at the tip of the iceberg in understanding DNA and its telling of history, social information, medical secrets past and present, and the nature of the family of people. The anti-semites spin on Ashkenazim as non-native to Eretz Yisrael is just that; big surprise! I did find it interesting that our ancestral line of women has as much mixing of non-Israelites as it does. The discussion of genetic diseases that affect Jews was very good. It will only help us be able to be more careful to not pass on these predispositions and diseases. The purpose of the designation of Jews being a "chosen people" in the Tanach has always perplexed me. Certainly our history amongst Christians and Muslims doesn't show it as a badge of honor. We have certainly been a light unto the nations, but the light has mostly fallen on blind eyes, or at least filtered eyes. The book certainly raises more questions than it answers, and for that reason I did appreciate and enjoy reading it.<sup>1 of 1</sup> people found the following review helpful. Who Knew? By Louise This was my book club's recommendation for our April book. And, how pleased that makes me! DNA testing was something that I'd heard about, but Abraham's Children taught how it developed, how it's helped determine our history, and finally, how it can help to isolate and find cures, etc. most informative and well-written!

Could our sense of who we are really turn on a sliver of DNA? In our multiethnic world, questions of individual identity are becoming increasingly unclear. Now in ABRAHAM'S CHILDREN bestselling author Jon Entine vividly brings to life the profound human implications of the Age of Genetics while illuminating one of today's most controversial topics: the connection between genetics and who we are, and specifically the question "Who is a Jew?" Entine weaves a fascinating narrative, using breakthroughs in genetic genealogy to reconstruct the Jewish biblical tradition of the chosen people and the hereditary Israelite priestly caste of Cohanim. Synagogues in the mountains of India and China and Catholic churches with a Jewish identity in New Mexico and Colorado provide different patterns of connection within the tangled history of the Jewish diaspora. Legendary accounts of the Hebrew lineage of Ethiopian tribesmen, the building of Africa's Great Zimbabwe fortress, and even the so-called Lost Tribes are reexamined in light of advanced DNA technology. Entine also reveals the shared ancestry of Israelites and Christians. As people from across the world discover their Israelite roots, their riveting stories unveil exciting new approaches to defining one's identity. Not least, Entine addresses possible connections between DNA and Jewish intelligence and the controversial notion that Jews are a "race apart." ABRAHAM'S CHILDREN is a compelling reinterpretation of biblical history and a challenging and exciting illustration of the promise and power of genetic research.

From Publishers Weekly Jewish law is quite clear on the question "Who is a Jew?" (anyone whose mother is Jewish), yet the question remains vexing, calling up issues of religion, history, culture and sometimes politics. In his second foray into the world of genetics and race, Entine (an American Enterprise Institute fellow and author of *Taboo: Why Black Athletes Dominate Sports and Why We're Afraid to Talk About It*) shows the degree to which genetics has been thrown into the mix. He presents fascinating evidence from DNA studies: the genes of Jewish males around the world can be traced back to the ancient Middle East; the genes of Jewish women cannot. Among Africans who claim Jewish ancestry, the Falashas of Ethiopia do not have Jewish genetic markers; but the less well known Lemba of South Africa do. A majority of Cohanim, or priests, have a common genetic marker, but Levites (of whom priests are supposedly a subset) do not. But Entine can be sloppy (his grasp on the respective roles of high priests, priests and Levites is shaky; he seems unclear whether the Pilgrims were Quakers or Puritans), and he digresses from science to potted history, myths about the 10 Lost Tribes and an account of his trip to the West Bank. More problematic, his account of genetic science and DNA analysis is vague. Entine's final chapters broach the contentious topics of whether one can speak genetically of race and whether "Jewish genes" confer intellectual superiority on Ashkenazi Jews. While he cites scientists, some of the assumptions and conclusions (such as that medieval Jews' role as moneylenders contributed to a high IQ) are speculative. Copyright Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. Entine (*Taboo: Why Black Athletes Dominate Sports and Why We're Afraid to Talk About It*, 2000) tackles the thorny matter of Jewish identity. Some of his conclusions may be surprising. The author, a secular Jew and an adjunct fellow at the American Enterprise Institute, has been driven by family health crises to seek out the genetics of Judaism. In doing so, he unravels an epic tale of "The Chosen People." DNA acts as a starting point for discussion of Jewish origins--Chapter 1 is entitled, "The Dead Sea Scrolls of DNA"--as Entine explains how it is now possible through genetic testing for apparent non-Jews to discover Jewish ancestry, and for Jews (and others) to learn more about their origins. The author disputes conventional wisdom, which cautious scientists have advanced recently, that genetic

differences between individuals are minute and superficial. Instead, he embraces genetics as a method of discovering more about the diverse breadth of humanity. Nevertheless, Entine realizes that Jewish DNA does not necessarily make a Jew. To explore the question of Jewish origins, Entine takes the reader on a global tour, exploring both mythic and factual migrations of Jews across Europe, the Middle East, Africa, Asia and finally into the Americas. DNA testing has allowed scientists to explore the validity of direct ancestry claims for far-flung Jewish communities in such places as South Africa and India, while it has also identified hidden enclaves of "crypto-Jews" in places such as the American Southwest. Entine goes on to discuss the touchy subject of race, and how Jewish identity has been perceived by both Jews and non-Jews through recent history and into the present. He also bluntly approaches modern (and historic) stereotypes of Jews and offers possible reasons for their formation, as well as their potential validity in certain cases. Because the author's approach is broad and inclusive, the book is sure to cause controversy, but it serves as an excellent catalyst for discussion as many continue to ask the question, "What does it mean to be Jewish?" Engaging and informative reading for Jews and non-Jews alike. -- Kirkus sThis book informs us of who we are, how we got here, and, why we do what we do. New methods of genetic study turn up fascinating connections and differences between the Ashkenazim and Sephardim, not only in language and customs, but also in DNA. For example, studies of women's diseases show that one group has a higher incidence of breast cancer, and the other, a higher incidence of cervical cancer. Maps detail migration routes, and chapters discuss the history and rituals of various tribes and families. The book is full of information and it is a fascinating popular read. Highly recommended. -- Association of Jewish Libraries Newsletter, September/October. ed by Lee Wixman

About the Author Jon Entine, author of the bestseller TABOO: Why Black Athletes Dominate Sports and Why We're Afraid to Talk about It, is an international columnist, adjunct fellow at the American Enterprise Institute, and consultant on business and media ethics. He spent twenty years as a producer and executive with NBC News and ABC News and has taught at numerous universities, including Miami University (Ohio) and New York University. He has been awarded many fellowships and prizes for his journalism, including a National Press Club award and two Emmys.