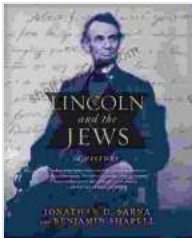


Lincoln and the Jews: A Deeper Look into their Historical Connection



Lincoln and the Jews: A History by Jonathan D. Sarna

★★★★☆ 4.6 out of 5

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Abraham Lincoln, the 16th President of the United States, has long been revered as a champion of liberty and equality. However, lesser known is his deep and profound connection with the Jewish people. This article aims to shed light on this often-overlooked aspect of Lincoln's life and legacy, exploring the shared values, aspirations, and interactions that defined their relationship.

Lincoln's Early Exposure to Jews



Lincoln's first encounter with Jews occurred during his childhood in Indiana. Among his neighbors was a Jewish family, the Wolffs, who left an enduring impression on the future president. The Wolffs observed the Jewish Sabbath and dietary laws, practices that intrigued Lincoln. He often visited their home, where he engaged in discussions with them and gained insights into their faith and traditions.

Shared Values and Aspiration

As Lincoln matured, his understanding of and sympathy for the Jewish people grew. He recognized their common struggles, especially regarding

equality and religious freedom. Lincoln firmly believed that all people, regardless of their religion, deserved the same rights and opportunities.

Like the Jewish people, Lincoln held a deep reverence for the Bible and saw it as a source of moral guidance. His speeches and writings were often imbued with biblical language and imagery, reflecting his belief in a higher power and the importance of justice

Emancipation Proclamation



Lincoln's most significant act in relation to the Jewish people was the issuance of the Emancipation Proclamation in 1863. This document freed enslaved people in Confederate-held territories, effectively ending slavery in the United States. While the Emancipation Proclamation did not explicitly

mention Jews, it was seen as a symbol of hope and liberation for all marginalized groups, including Jewish immigrants facing discrimination in the New World.

Jewish Immigration and Support for Lincoln

During Lincoln's presidency, the United States experienced a wave of Jewish immigration from Germany. These immigrants brought with them skills and talents that contributed to the nation's growth and prosperity. Lincoln welcomed these newcomers and recognized their potential. He appointed several Jewish individuals to government positions, a testament to his inclusive approach to governance.

In return, the Jewish community strongly supported Lincoln's policies and his leadership during the Civil War. They played an active role in raising funds, supplying goods, and volunteering for the Union cause. The Jewish press also played a crucial role in rallying support for Lincoln's administration.

Anti-Semitism and Lincoln's Response

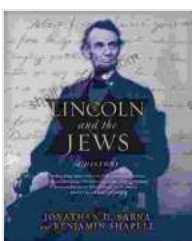
Despite Lincoln's efforts to promote equality, anti-Semitism persisted in the United States during his time. Some newspapers and politicians openly expressed prejudice against Jews, blaming them for various societal ills. Lincoln, ever the advocate for justice, condemned these attacks and denounced anti-Semitism in all its forms.

In 1862, Lincoln responded to a letter from a group of Jewish rabbis in New York City, expressing his support for their community and his commitment to protecting their rights. This letter became a powerful symbol of his unwavering stance against bigotry.

Legacy

Lincoln's legacy as a champion of equality and justice for all continues to inspire generations. His relationship with the Jewish people stands as a testament to the power of shared values, mutual respect, and the pursuit of a more just and inclusive society.

Abraham Lincoln's connection with the Jewish people was not merely a matter of personal friendship or political expediency. It was a deep and abiding bond rooted in shared beliefs, common aspirations and a mutual desire to create a more perfect union. By shedding light on this often-overlooked aspect of Lincoln's life, we gain a richer understanding of his character, his values, and his enduring legacy as a leader who embraced the principles of liberty and equality for all.



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