



בס"ד

The modern plague of darkness

By Harav Yitzchak Reuven Rubin

One thing you learn in this life, at least hopefully so, is that the more you see, the more things are the same. Human nature is such that no matter where one comes from, those small human foibles are always there, ready to jump out and snap at your heels. As an example, I will give you a sneak preview of my Pesach message that will resonate through my community in Bowdon, South Manchester, this coming week.

“The most popular book found in any Jewish Home is the Hagadah. The story of the Exodus from Egypt and its many lessons are central to the Jewish experience. Each word has many levels of meaning and every generation can learn new and unique lessons. There are thousands of different commentaries on this cherished book, and one can learn from each one. The vital point is that we actualize the Exodus experience in our own lives, making its lessons part of our own reality. Pesach is not only about events thousands of years ago, it is about things that are happening in the here and now.

Our Heimishe world is populated with neshomos groping in darkness and alone

We are all enslaved by the trappings of a material world that often drags us away from what is positive and leads us into a quagmire of ego-driven want. Our children are taught to desire more and more, while the media with its messages of commercialism, seeps into the most private of places in our homes. It seems that the slavery to all this materialistic need becomes so pervasive, that we don't even realize that we are indeed enslaved to it.

For more inspirational articles from the Rov Shlita please check out our website theinformalproject.com

To Sponsor a week, please contact us at aakletter+sponsor@gmail.com

In the Hagadah we relate all the plagues that struck the Egyptians during the period that led up to our Exodus. The phase of darkness is very fascinating and deserves deeper understanding. We are told that the darkness had a material dimension, as the passage says, "One man did not see another....no one got up from his place." The Rebbe of Gur commented: a man who is so blinded by self-concern that he cannot see another neighbour will never get up from his place, will never be able to experience any spiritual growth." We must work, each in our own way, to learn to "see" one another and reach out to everyone. In this world of over- indulgence, we seem stricken with a blindness that doesn't allow for us to get up and touch others.

Our community has a well- earned reputation for being warm and caring. In fact we all strive to see ourselves as one large family. As such, we should learn to be sensitive and "see" each other. We should grow together and share our concerns, and in this way we can release ourselves from the bonds of our contemporary slavery and grow in true spirituality."

Now this message is equally vital to every Jew, no matter where his community is. There are some who will say that my words seem pointed towards those who are perhaps not yet as committed to a Torah lifestyle as they should be. It could be thought that such lessons need not be taught to a more committed community. Wrong and wrong again. Our Heimishe world is populated with neshomos groping in darkness and alone. No one seems able to reach out to them, and show them the light. There are children who are lost in the education system, married couples who live in a battle ground of hostility and anger. This is slavery in every sense of the word, and Pesach is our time for a true exodus. Rabbonim will tell you how desperate many are, how there are brethren who live in despair. Families argue, money seems to have become the sole source of respect and eminence, all this in just a generation or two after our people were slaves of the Nazi exterminators. We are merely 60 years from those darkest moments, yet we have allowed materialistic gain to become the yardstick by which so much of our lives is measured.

Those blessed with wealth seem to be able to glide through life "paying off" any problem that rears its head. Tragically, such behavior doesn't buy one any guarantee. Pain comes packaged in many ways, and all the money in the Royal Mint can't provide true happiness. The darkness that doesn't allow us to see others is created by our own ego and in the end will envelope us completely. The secrets of the Hagadah are manifold, and the darkness of the plague must teach us to give light. Reaching out to others, feeling their pain, is the key to one's own deliverance.

Whilst we are engaging in the feverish preparations for Yom Tov, let us think about the real chometz that seems ensconced in our lives. We rub and wash, creating havoc whilst seeking to root out any small crumb, yet, how well do we relate this cleanliness to our inner thoughts? There are those near and dear who are carrying burdens of emotional chometz that no cleaning regime can ever remove.

Let us reach out, see one another and help them. If we don't rise up from our gloom, then we will remain in the darkest of slavery imaginable, the slavery of our own hearts



AISH KODESH UK NEEDS YOUR HELP!
FOR MORE INFORMATION PLEASE GO TO
WWW.AISHKODESH.CO.UK



REMEMBER!
THE ANNUAL INFORMAL PROJECT - PESACH APPEAL.
DONATE NOW
<http://theinformalproject.com/pre-pesach-appeal-2017>