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How Will We Get Out Of This Exile?

In Egypt, the depravity of the country had reached such a low that we were steeped in the 49th gate of impurity. Had the Jewish people remained even one more moment in Egypt, they would have descended into the 50th gate of impurity, which is impossible to come out of. However, this was only because we did not yet have the Torah. If the Torah would have been given already by the time we were in Egypt, we would have been able to come out of even the 50th gate of impurity, due to the immense holiness of the Torah.

The *Ohr HaChaim (Shemos 14:10)* writes that in our current exile, we are in the 50th Gate of Impurity, and that there is no natural way for us to get out of this impurity - except through the power of the Torah. Through the power of Torah, one can leave even the worst and most depraved levels of impurity - even the 50th level of impurity.

The question is that we can see many people who do bad things, even though they learn Torah. Why doesn't their Torah learning help them? Why doesn't the Torah affect them and purify them?

It must be that these people are entrenched in the lowest kinds of behaviors because they aren't **connected** enough to the Torah that they learn. It is not enough just to learn Torah - a person has to forge a connection with the Torah, through his learning. A person needs to reveal forth from his soul a power to connect inwardly to the Torah.

The Dismal Situation We Are In

Our generation is not like the previous generations. The *Meor Einayim* writes that in the later generations, there will be open connections to the Torah - but the inner connections are few. The only way to be saved from impurity is to have an inner connection to the Torah.

What is the difference between the current exile, where we are in the 50th Gate of Impurity, and the Egyptian exile, in which they were in the 49th Gate of Impurity?

In today's generation, the evil in today's world is a very deep kind of evil, and it is hidden.

But, we have the same amount of holiness to counteract that. For the amount of evil in the world, Hashem created enough good for us to counteract it.

Today, what we need is to reveal our *mesirus nefesh* (self-sacrifice in keeping the Torah and *mitzvos*).

Because the evil of today is very grave, we have no other hope other than to live with Hashem every second – to constantly feel as if we are literally “one” with Hashem.

When we say *Shema Yisrael*, the Arizal says that we should picture ourselves giving up our lives in honor of Hashem’s name – specifically at the word *Echad*, “one.” This shows us that we have to live constantly with Hashem, as if we are one with Him, in order to be able to live a life of *mesirus nefesh*.

We must understand the serious situation of today’s world. It is wonderful to work on to improve our *Emunah*, to increase our Torah learning and to improve our *middos*. But in today’s generation, even all of this is not enough.

Our only hope is to be prepared to give up our very lives for Hashem!

Otherwise, it will be impossible for us to escape the dismally low level of impurity in today’s times, and we will be forever trapped in a hopeless struggle, *chas v’shalom*.

The confusion today about what’s important, as well as the general lack of *ruchniyus* (spirituality) in today’s times, are both factors that have created a very mistaken notion. A person today can look to everyone else as if he’s “immersed in learning Torah” and that he is very *frum* – he might even look like he is very a growing person, an aspiring person, someone who truly “serves Hashem”. But if a person gains a truthful perspective, he understands the depth of what’s going on – the *pnimiyus* of matters – and he is painfully aware that he hasn’t even **begun** to really be an “*oived Hashem*” (one who serves Hashem).

This *pnimiyus* we must all realize is that we all need to have achieve a **simple** relationship with Hashem – to **simply** feel that we live with Him in our life.

The Two Major Sources of Our Spiritual Problems In Today’s Generation

There are two big problems going on today.

One problem is that in general, people have forgotten in their hearts about Hashem. The second major problem of the world today is the ridiculous, endless pursuit of physical gratification.

How can we come out of these problems?

We must be prepared, every second of our life, to escape the the *alma d’shikra* (false world).

It is like the words of the *sefer Tzettil Kattan*, that a person should always imagine that he is being thrown into a furnace and to sanctify his life in the name of Hashem, rather than commit a sin.

If someone cannot fathom this, it shows that he is very attached to this world, and he is for sure being swayed after this world’s desires like a magnet; he won’t be able to come out of the desires.

This is not *mussar* (words of rebuke). It is not either *hisorerus* (inspiration). It is what our **life** is about.

These words are not only for people who have reached a high spiritual level or for those who are extremely pure and holy. These are simple words: we have no other way to survive this world spiritually other than to accept upon ourselves that we are prepared to give up our life for Hashem’s will!

These words are really simple and clear. They are already brought in the works of the *Ohr HaChaim* and the *Baal Shem Tov*. But they need to be clarified to each person, on his own.

Hashem should help us that these words not just serve as mere inspiration for us (which comes and goes), but that we should really take them to heart. If we believe in the words of the *sefarim hakedoshim* and in the advice which they have given us, we will be able to bring the entire world to the redemption, speedily in our days.

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