

Pesach: A Groan In The Void

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God knew that certain of the Jewish children were not worthy of being redeemed. They were just not ready. So when the enslaved Jews failed to produce their quota of bricks, *these* children were thrown into the walls (*Sanhedrin* 101b, 103b; *Aderet Eliyahu*, *Nitzavim* 29:17).

As they lay dying, near-corpses, crushed under the weight of the wall above, their groans ascended to Heaven. Though these children did not merit Redemption, their groans certainly hastened it (*Yalkut Shimoni*; *Pirkei d'Rabbi Eliezer* #48).

Scripture uses the term “groan” in reference to a *chalal* (corpse) (*Shemot Rabbah* 1:34; *Ezekiel* 30:24). *Chalal* has another meaning, “void” – namely, the Vacated Space. God created a level of existence where He appears not to exist. It’s a paradox. God must exist everywhere. Nothing can exist without His permeating Presence. Yet these voids do exist, and they are not just esoteric concepts (*Likutey Halakhot. Minchah* 7:22). They can be a dire reality in our lives. They are the spiritual/emotional “black

holes” of life.

These are the situations in which we feel estranged from God, filled with questions and contradictions about ourselves, about Him, about Providence. Why did God do this to me? Why do I suffer like this? Why did He allow me to do what I did? Is there any hope for me? Looking into the depths of our souls, we see only a vacuum. Who am I?

We have fallen into the Vacated Space. Found ourselves in a void. Ask no questions in this non-place, in this seemingly Godforsaken place. God’s presence here, as everywhere, is imperative – but a paradox nonetheless (*Likutey Moharan* I, 64).

There is only one way out. We must search for God despite His “absence.” We must cry out to Him, and groan from the pressure of our suffering. Where God has concealed Himself, we must reveal Him (*ibid.*, II, 12). Believe God is right here. With you. Wherever you are.

Those Jewish children in Egypt had fallen into the Vacated Space. There are Jewish “children” today who still suffer in those very same spiritual voids. *Yehi Ratzon* – May the groans of their search make the “children” of today worthy of redemption. May they show us the yearning for God hidden beyond the void. And may God, in their merit, hasten the Final Redemption. Amen.

[Based on The Breslov Haggadah](#)