

# עדת אש קודש

## Adass Aish Kodesh



### A Life in Goshen

By *Harav Y. Reuven Rubin Shlita*

The Baal Shem HaKodosh was renowned for his travels throughout the small villages of the Carpathian Mountains where many simple holy Yidden lived. He sought to give them hope and a connection to Hashem, and in his very special way he brought thousands back to a sense of belonging to our holy nation. There was nothing that would stop him from reaching these souls, except just one thing, he would never enter a village if it didn't have a church steeple. His Chasidim wondered why the absence of a non-Jewish house of worship would be an obstacle for the Rebbe's visiting. When asked, the Tzadik would explain that if a village didn't even have a church, then it was obviously a G-dless community and hence a dangerous place for Yidden.

Researchers have recently shown that Britain is becoming an increasingly G-dless society, with more than half of the population now describing themselves as having "no religion". The proportion of non-believers is at a record high of 53%, according to the latest data from the National Centre for Social Research's (NatCen) British social attitudes survey.

Well, what should we do? Where do we go from here? Must we move away? Are we not safe within our Mosdos, and our shuls? How much of the secular world drips into our daily lives? How is this affecting us in real terms?

The secular left of society has slowly and militarily encroached on a myriad of levels. Our cherished education is being challenged, anti-Semitism is on the rise, issues of our safety are apparent as guards stand at our school gates.

Heartfelt wishes to our dear  
**Rov & Rebitzen**  
 On the birth of their great-grandchild  
 Daughter to  
**Mr & Mrs. Bezael Schreibhand**  
 May they see only simchos in good health.

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In Parshas Vayigash we find Yosef Hatzadik giving advice to his reconciled brothers. He tells them:

“And it shall be, when Pharaoh summons you and says, ‘What is your occupation?’ Then you shall say, ‘Your servants have been cattlemen from our youth till now, both we and our forefathers,’ so that you may settle in the land of Goshen, every shepherd is an abomination to Egypt.” The Chiddushei Harim sees this as a mussar lesson, The Rebbe explains that in every generation there will be those who seek to get closer to the society they find themselves in. They will seek to ape their ways and think that this will make them more acceptable and worthy. However we see from Yosef just the opposite. He knew a thing or two about the corrupt society of Egypt, circumstances had forced him to be there and now he was giving first hand advice to his family. He counsils his brothers to distant themselves, tell Pharaoh that your shepherds, the Egyptians can’t abide such trade and will stay well away from you. Don’t seek to be too close, that will only destroy your unique holiness.

We can’t move to Goshen with our herds, in this world of technology, distance is only as far as the phone in your pocket. So what should we do, how can the words of Yosef offer us guidance?

We must create a land of Goshen within our homes, and our Mosdos. Today’s world has no borders, we can’t just send ourselves off to a far off place of safety. Technology invades our every corner. What we can do is create an atmosphere of warmth and Torah loyalty. Our homes are more than four walls, we are being called upon to permeate them with real love for Torah life.

Those who are involved with youngsters who are going off the derech tell us that a major cause of this calamitous misfortune is the apparent hypocrisy these kids perceive in our community. We often preach one thing, walk the walk, but our reality is something different. Young eyes take this all in and wonder.

We have to create a Goshen within each of our individual hearts, clean from self-delusion and compromises. Our community, no, actually we ourselves must take stock in our inner precincts and discover who we are and what we want. This Golus is severe because it pretends to draw us closer with a culture that allows everything but offers numbing emptiness. We each make compromises that our young see as being false and two faced. I know this sounds harsh, but the matzav is at a dangerous state and we need to take action. We all have difficulties in this world of constant weighing up of options. Yidden, we need to know the secret of Goshen, that place that creates a border that will keep us from losing our identity and flooding our Kinderlach with false notions and a convoluting understanding of what we are.

The world that is Mitzrayim mocks at what is holy and wholesome. Our task is to create illumination thru a true sense of purpose. We can do this, previous generations vouchsafe our abilities to do so. Just stand fast, with a joyfulness of pride, and create a Goshen from within.

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