

You shall hallow yourselves and be holy, for I am Hashem who brought you up from the land of Egypt to be your G-d. (11:44,45)

Hashem adjures us to sanctify ourselves, to act differently, to be *kadosh*, because He brought us up from Egypt. We were raised up from the murky depths of depravity which symbolized the land of Egypt. We are to be separate. We are to be different. We are to distinguish ourselves in the way that we live; in the way that we act among ourselves and in the manner that we interface with others. We suggest that *Chazal* are teaching us an important lesson. How are we to respond and execute this distinction? Are we to be reclusive, hiding from the world as we perform our service to Hashem? Are we to lock ourselves up in ghettos concealed from society? No! We are to raise our heads up high with pride. The *Torah* says that "Hashem brought us up from Egypt. He distinguished us by raising us up above the nations." Is that a reason to hide?

This does not mean that we should revoke our separations, leave the ghetto and join contemporary society on their terms. Never!! We are to live openly, not concealed and ashamed. We are to maintain our observances, *tzitzis*, *Shabbos*, *kashrus*, our mode of dress, everything that constitutes living a Jewish life. We remain where we are -- but we observe *Torah* with pride, dignity and joy. We have nothing to fear but our own insecurity; we have nothing of which to be ashamed, but our own lack of self-respect. Hashem has raised us up; only we can denigrate ourselves.