



Dear Friends,

While I always had questions on the Haggadah, one aspect perennially perplexed me. We are taught in the text that each person is obligated to envision oneself as if they were slaves leaving Egypt. It's a nice thought but a peculiar obligation. How could the Sages obligate an act of imagination? We live 3,000 years after the event. Let's say I do not have such a creative mind, am I not able to fulfill this annual responsibility?

One year it dawned on me that the Rabbis were not requiring an act of imagination but for us to get in touch with reality. We are not to close our eyes and pretend we are in Egypt, we are to open our eyes and recognize that the story of Egypt is happening to us as well. In every generation, we continue to face new threats, God continues to save us, and we continue forth on our mission to bring redemption to the world. The players have changed, the servitude different but the challenges and opportunities we face in every generation reappear.

And this is what I told Pharaoh himself on a recent visit to the British Museum.



Click on the image above or [this link](#) to watch Rabbi Berman's remarks

As you sit with your family retelling the grand narrative of the Jewish people, I hope your Seder is filled with those echoes of eternity—our 3000 year old tradition and our redemptive future, with us around the Seder table in the middle, bridging past and future. We are still here. And we are moving history forward.

Chag Sameach,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be the name 'Ari Berman'.

Rabbi Dr. Ari Berman
President, Yeshiva University

To watch the full *shiur*, The Privilege and Responsibility of Being Chosen, [click here](#)

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