

Off The Pulpit

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Saving Those in Darkness

The Torah warns the backsliding Israelites that they will "Grope in midday as a blind man gropes in darkness (Deut. 28:29)." Of course, darkness is the same as midday to a blind man, but the Talmud reminds us that at midday the man can be seen, and others will help him.



Much of the world dwells blindly in the night. They cannot see a way forward and there are none to help. They believe that no one will see them, for many kinds of darkness blot out vision: when we see masses fleeing, it is hard to see each person; when we are involved only in our own lives, those in need dwell in the darkness of our self-preoccupation.

On Yom Kippur we recounted "who will live and who will die." Although it is ultimately God's decree, teshuva, repentance, reminds us how much is in our hands. There are people groping in darkness all over our world. No individual can save them all. Equally, none of us is entitled to neglect them, to dwell only in our own corner, to forget that carrying a candle in the night is our passion and our task.