

## Removing The Fear of Rejection As An Impediment to Teshuva

*Based on the weekly Shmuess given by HaRav Shaya Cohen, Rosh HaYeshiva, Yeshiva Zichron Aryeh*

לעילוי נשמת גיטל בת הרב אליעזר מנחם | הרב יוסף חיים בן מאיר | רפאל חיים דוב בן-ציון שלום | ר' ברוך בן ר' יהודה | שרה בת ר' יחזקאל | ראובן יוסף בן יהושע | דב בעריש בן פסח צבי  
לרפואה שלמה יוסף בן מלכה מטל | יעקב אליעזר בן חנה נשא

Resolving strife and conflict in any relationship can be quite challenging. One of the obstacles to peace and closeness is often a fear of rejection. A person may feel that if I express remorse and attempt to come close, will the other party reciprocate or reject my attempts to connect? This dynamic often exists in our relationship with Hashem. We tend to feel hindered in coming close to Hashem as we feel He does not want to be close to us. If a person feels that he may be rejected in the Teshuva process he potentially won't start the process. The following Rabbeinu Bachya can help us not only cope with this feeling, but completely dispel it - ultimately paving the way for us to come close to Hashem.

Rabbeinu Bachya in his Sefer Kad Hakemach quotes the following Medrash: "You should seek Hashem when He is found. This teaches us that sometimes Hashem can be seen and sometimes He can't be seen. Sometimes He listens and sometimes He does not want to listen...Sometimes He is found and sometimes He is not found. Sometimes He is close and sometimes He is not close. This is illustrated by the fact that He appeared to Moshe, as it says, 'Hashem spoke to Moshe face to face,' He then hid himself from Moshe when Moshe said, 'Show me your glory.' Hashem appeared to Klal Yisrael at Har Sinai as it says, 'They saw the G-d of Yisrael', and it is written, 'The appearance of Hashem was like a consuming fire.' Hashem then hid Himself from Klal Yisrael, as it says 'You should extremely guard your soul because you will not see any image'.....When Klal Yisrael does Teshuva, Hashem is found to them, as it says, 'And I sought Hashem from there and I found

Him.' If they do not do Teshuva, what is written by it, 'With their sheep and cattle they go to seek Hashem and they don't find Him'.....Seek Hashem when He is found....So too, Hashem says to Klal Yisrael...on Rosh Hashanah I judge life and death. If you do Teshuva before me, I will accept you and judge you for good. This is because the gates of heaven are open, and I listen to your prayers. I supervise from the windows and peer through the cracks. Do this before your judgment is sealed on Yom Kippur. Therefore, it says seek Hashem when He is found."

In summary, this Medrash is saying that although even Tzadikim are not Zocheh to always find or be close to Hashem, one who does Teshuva will always bring Hashem close to him.

Often we view the famous statement of, "Seek Hashem when He is found," as a call to take advantage of the time Hashem is close. We don't necessarily view ourselves as having any say in whether Hashem is close or not. However, it is clear from the Medrash that we are actually the ones bringing Hashem close through Teshuva. Now that Hashem is close, we should take advantage and Daven, as our Tefillos will be heard.

We can glean a powerful insight from this Medrash. If we attempt to come close to Hashem, He will be close to us; it is reciprocal. Our relationship with Hashem is in our control, and if we take the steps necessary to connect to Hashem He will connect with us. This insight can help us overcome our fear of being rejected by Hashem and commit to the Teshuva process, as it empowers us to direct the relationship.