

A CRYING CHILD

Three years old, running around the field on his sturdy little legs, the toddler barely glanced at his father, who sat on a bench a short distance away. Suddenly, the child tripped and fell, tumbling face-first onto the grass. He lifted his head and desperately looked around for his now-approaching father and crying out, "Abba! Abba!"

Precisely at the moment when one feels the sting of harsh justice, the Torah teaches that one should call out to Hashem as a child calls out to his father. The journey of the Hebrews, then Israel and now the Jewish people in dealing with troubled times, persecution and exile until the ultimate travail preceding the coming of Moshiach.

In these situations, Hashem is referred to as "our Father in Heaven," for it is in the midst of their suffering that Hashem wants His children to know that He loves them – even with their worst flaws, and even when He must allow them to suffer. He is there, the Father hovering nearby, ready to offer comfort to His frightened children.

The dynamic that unfolds whenever a person experiences the pain that sometimes comes his way. The Rabbis provide the window through which one can find closeness to Hashem and feel His Divine love, not only despite troubles, but because of them: For Hashem admonishes the one He loves, and like a father He mollifies the child.

Even at the end of history, when the world is shuddering with the final throes of chaos preceding the coming of Moshiach, turning to our Father in Heaven will be the only course of action possible. As previously mentioned, the Rabbinic Writings asks what the Jewish people are to do in this era of total helplessness and decay. The answer is to rely solely on our Father in Heaven.

Reaching out to Hashem as a child reaches out to a father does more than provide comfort as one endures tribulations. It actually helps to mitigate the troubles themselves. Psalm 89:27 states: He will call to Me, "You are my Father, my God, and the Rock of my salvation." One can find comfort in the knowledge that, as a Father, Hashem's response to one's prayer is given with love and compassion, even if one's suffering has not abated.

This is the closeness upon which we can rely when we come before Hashem in prayer. We are not only bowing before the King, but we are also standing under the loving gaze of our Father, Whose only desire is for the good of His child.

POINTS TO PONDER

The Torah teaches us to relate to Hashem as our Father in times of travail.

Calling upon our Father in Heaven not only brings comfort, but also mitigates the troubles we endure.

Joel 1:14 Solemnize a fast, Proclaim an assembly; Gather the elders -- all the inhabitants of the land -- In the House of the LORD your God, And cry out to the LORD. (TNK)

Blessings in Messiah Yeshua,
Mordecai Silver

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