

TIMES AND PLACES OF EIS RATZON

Parenting methods may offer some this-world insight into the ways in which the Almighty varies His approach with us. If He has the desire to bring us close, why should there be times of difficulty and distance?

The way for a child to learn how to walk is for the father to let go. The moment his father allows him to stand on his own is a far more loving moment than when his father holds son and assists him.

One rabbi explains that when difficulties beset a person and the Almighty seems more distant, the purpose is to provide a situation in which the person is forced to exercise his power of *bechirah*, free choice. By choosing correctly in the face of a challenge, a person is able to arrive at higher spiritual levels and come closer to the Almighty. The obstacles the Almighty poses are designed to cause the person to delve deeper into his own spiritual capacities, thereby enabling him to more vigorously exercise his free will, which allows him to earn greater reward. It is that effort that brings a person to fulfill his potential.

However, without the assistance of an *eis ratzon*, hopelessness might set in. By establishing an *eis ratzon* as a time of mercy, the Almighty enables a person to more easily connect with Him. If a person who feels he might falter uses these times to strengthen himself, he can find the strength to continue meeting the challenges life sets before him.

POINTS TO PONDER

When the Almighty distances Himself from us, it is to provide the opportunity for us to exercise our free will and build our spiritual strength.

The eis ratzon enables one to more readily seek strength to face challenges.

ESV Psalm 36:7 How precious is your steadfast love, O God! The children of mankind take refuge in the shadow of your wings.