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לזכות הילד חיל בצבאות ה' מענדל שי' לרגל הולדתו בר"ח מנחם אב  
שיגדל להיות חי"ל כרצו"ק כ"ק אדמו"ר  
נדפס ע"י הוריו  
הרה"ת חבר מערכת של גליון זה ר' יוסף מנחם וזוגתו מרת חנה שיחיו קאמען

# An Unexpected Response

## Awakening to Teshuvah

How would you respond to a simpleton who insults the king? What should a father do if his son acts in a brazen manner?

Surely the procedure is simple; they should be punished and rebuked until they beg for forgiveness and repent from their foolish ways.

As logical as that approach may seem, the Torah in Parshas Nitzavim tells us otherwise.

The<sup>1</sup> *possuk* says, "When it happens that there come upon you all these statements, the blessing and the curse..." The very next *possuk*, as a direct continuation and outcome of this one, states, "You will return to Hashem your G-d..."

### A DIFFERENT KIND OF REACTION

The Baal Shem Tov raises a very apparent question on this. The effects of suffering and undesirable circumstances would certainly awaken a person to do teshuva, so why does the Torah also mention the blessings? How are the blessings a sure path to bring one closer to Hashem again?

He answers this question by explaining that there is a certain type of revenge that Hashem carries out, which stems

from *middas harachamim* (the attribute of mercy) and he uses a *mashal* to bring out this point:

There was once a simple villager who behaved in a very inappropriate manner towards the king. The king's retribution and reprisal was quick in coming, albeit in a very strange way.

He ordered the villager to be immediately promoted in stature and provided him with all kinds of valuables and luxuries. It didn't end there. Every few months he increased these wonderful gifts and continued showering him with every good thing available.

Unusual approach? Perhaps. But after a short period of time the villager thought long and hard about his situation and came to a clear conclusion. If such a great and mighty king is so kind to me and provides me with all these good things, how can it be that I acted in so low a manner towards him? Completely broken from the reality of his situation, the simple farmer repented wholeheartedly and begged for forgiveness. When the king saw how much it pained him, he accepted his repentance in a full and complete way.

With this *mashal* in mind, we can now understand the way in which Hashem awakens us to teshuva, because he wants us to act in a way befitting of the only son of the King of kings. Just like the king, he showers us with *brachos* and all good things, and this evokes within us a deep regret for the things we did that were not befitting for who we are.

### REACHING OUT TO OTHERS

There is a famous adage from the Rebbeim regarding teshuva: A Yid's sigh is *teshuva ila'ah*, the highest level of repentance that a person can reach. When a Yid feels remorse for what he has done, Hashem forgives him, and even more so—transforms the misdeeds into merits on his behalf.

It is with this approach that the Baal Shem Tov reached out to others, and he guided his *talmidim* to do the same. Throughout the generations of Chabad we have seen all of the Rebbeim act in a similar fashion. When we follow suit and treat our fellow Yidden this way, we can be sure that Hashem will respond in the same manner, many times over. **D**

1. This article is based on a Sicha from 18 Elul 5736