

## **"You are children of Hashem your G-d, you shall not cut yourselves nor make any baldness between your eyes for the dead." (14:1)**

The concept of being considered Hashem's children carries with it powerful consequences. As the children of Hashem, we are promised redemption from the depths of bondage, persecution, and the many other trials which have marked the chronicles of our tumultuous past. These special guarantees, however, are accompanied by the responsibilities of being Hashem's children. We are inescapably subject to specific tasks, rigorous standards, and formidable punishment.

Attribution as Hashem's children implies a sympathetic and personal loving relationship. As the *Bechor Shor* emphasizes, even when one suffers excruciating loneliness as a result of the loss of a parent or other close relative, he must realize that he is never truly alone; his Father in Heaven lives eternally with him. A Jew's period of mourning should be mitigated by the knowledge that he is never alone because Hashem is there. The existence of a stable binding relationship with Hashem, characterized by love, has been a most vital force throughout our history. Membership in this "family" also carries with it the profound awareness that one retains this relationship from the minute he is born until that time when his soul returns to his "Father" in Heaven.