

## "Is He not your Father, your Master?" (32:6)

**Horav Chaim Berlin, zl**, translated the word "*kanecha*," as a derivative of the word "*ken*," nest. This would then mean that Hashem is *Klal Yisrael's* nest, their home, their source of sustenance and protection. He rendered this interpretation in light of an interesting story that occurred when he was *Rav* of Moscow. One day a Jew came to him and implored him to circumcise his newborn son - secretly. This strange behavior aroused the *Rav's* curiosity, and he questioned the man regarding his desire to keep his son's circumcision secret. The man responded that he was a totally assimilated Jew who had absolutely no desire to publicize his ancestry. "If you are so ashamed of your Jewishness," asked the *Rav*, "why do you want to circumcise the baby altogether?" "You are right," answered the man, "but I do not want to close the door to Judaism for my son." This poignant response indicates the reality that after all is said and done, every Jew, regardless of how far he has strayed from his people, maintains a spark of *Yiddishkeit*. His *neshamah* still glows with the warmth of Judaism.

*Horav* Berlin then interpreted the phrase in *Shir Ha'Shirim 1:15* "*your eyes are like doves*," in the following manner: A dove will stray from its nest only so far that it can still keep its nest in sight. The nest serves as a base. The nest radiates a sense of security which renders it indispensable to the bird. The same is true concerning *Klal Yisrael*. Although the individual Jew will, at times, surrender to his evil inclination and stray away from his roots, he never distances himself to the point of no return. He always leaves the option of *teshuvah*, repentance, open.

This is the interpretation of our *pasuk*, "Is He not your father - your '*kanecha*,' your nest": Regardless of how far you go away, your "nest" is always there - willing to take you back when you have acknowledged your errors. This awareness serves as a security so that the wayward Jew does not to wander too far from home.