

## **"And Hashem Almighty shall grant you sympathy in the presence of the man." (43:14)**

The word ohnjr (sympathy) designates the attribute of Hashem which is the most general and secure. It is the fundamental trait by which the relationship among people should be characterized. "ohnjr" reflects family love - the love of parents to children, children to parents, the love of children one to another on account of the common "ojr" (womb), from where they all originate. This definition conflicts with the popular definition of ",ubnjr" (pity), which we are inclined to accept. Indeed, pity is a feeling with less essence than that of true ohnjr. Which is more ennobling: to be moved to pity at another's sorrow or to be moved to joy at another's happiness? Rarely do we find an individual who is not sympathetic to his fellowman's sorrowful plight. There are few, however, who feel sympathy for the poor man today and equally share his tremendous joy when he draws the first prize in the lottery.

The feeling of ohnjr is more than pity. The word is derived from ojr, which symbolizes the most self-sacrificing energy of one being for the formation of another being. ojr, the womb, is the place of the deepest devotion. And afterward, too, when the new being has arrived, the ojr begets not only sympathy, as a reaction to its crying, but even more intimate joy as a reaction to its smiling. ohnjr is not pity but indicative of a deeper form of kinship, relating to another individual as if he were an integral part of ourselves.