

# JPRO



## NETWORK

---

EDUCATE ■ CONNECT ■ INSPIRE ■ EMPOWER

One who [sins and] says [twice]: I will sin and repent, I will sin and repent [since he sinned twice he does not depart from this practice easily and convinces himself that he really did not sin thus] an opportunity to repent is not given to him. [If one says:] I will sin and Yom Kippur will atone for me, Yom Kippur does not atone for him. For those transgressions that are between a person and God, Yom Kippur atones, but for those transgressions that are between man and his fellow man, Yom Kippur does not provide atonement until he pacifies his fellow man. Rabbi Elazar ben Azariah expounded: “From all your sins before the Lord, you will be purified” (Leviticus 16:30), [meaning] for sins that are between man and God, Yom Kippur provides atonement, but for sins that are between man and fellow man Yom Kippur does not provide atonement until he pacifies his fellow man

## What can we learn from Moshe's prayers? (v.21:7)

**Rashi:** From here we learn that if a person asks you for forgiveness, you should not be cruel and refrain from forgiving.

**Rambam:** When one person sings against another, he should not hide the matter and remain silent...rather, it is a mitzvah for him to bring the matter into the open and say, "Why did you do such and such to me?" ...And if the person [who sinned] returns and asks him for forgiveness, then he should forgive, for the forgiver should not be cruel...(Laws of Moral Conduct 6:6).

Teshuva and Yom Kippur only achieve atonement for sins between man and G-d... However, sins between man and his fellow man...are not forgiven until compensation is paid...and the person has been asked for forgiveness...It is forbidden for a person to be cruel and difficult to appease. Rather, a person should be easily placated and difficult to anger, and when the sinner asks him for forgiveness, he should forgive him with a full heart and a willing spirit (Laws of Teshuva 2:9-10).

If a person injures another, even if he paid full compensation...he does not achieve atonement for the sin that he committed until he seeks out the injured party and is granted forgiveness from him. And it is forbidden for the injured party to be cruel and refuse to forgive him, for this is not the way of Jewish People. Rather, when the attacker has asked forgiveness once, and then a second time, and we know that he has repented for his sin and he has abandoned the evil that he has done, then once must forgive him. Any person who forgives quickly is considered praiseworthy, and his actions are pleasing to the Sages (Laws of Person Injury 5:9-10).

“ The Lord would speak to Moses face to face, as one man speaks to another. And he would then return to the camp; but his attendant, Joshua son of nun, a youth, would not stir out of the Tent.” - (Ex. 33:11)

“And the Lord said, “See, there is a place near Me. Station Yourself on the rock and, as My Presence passes by, I will put you in a cleft of the rock and shield you with My hand until I have passed by. Then I will take My hand away and you will see My back; but my face must not be seen.”  
-(Ex. 33: 21-23)

“ The Lord came down in a cloud; He stood with him there and proclaimed the name Lord. The Lord passed before him and proclaimed: “The Lord! The Lord! A God compassionate and gracious, slow to anger, abounding in kindness and faithfulness.”-(Ex 34: 5-7)

**Rabbi Nachman of Breslov**

**Likkutei MoHara'N, I 115**

**“So the people stood at a distance, while Moses approached the thick cloud where God was”  
(Ex. 20:18)**

If you have been living a life of materiality and worldliness and then wake up spiritually, turning to walk in God's ways, the Quality of Judgement will stand accusingly against you. It will not allow to you walk in God's ways, instead setting an obstacle in your way. But God is loving, and (as if it could be so) hides in that obstacle. Now, if we are truly paying attention, and look closely at the nature of the obstacle, we will be able to perceive the Creator there. This is what the Talmud teaches (J. Ta'anit ch. 1,3a): [R. Shimon ben Levi taught:] If someone asks you “Where is your God?” tell him, “In the capital city of Aram (Rome)” as it says, [The Dumah/Romah pronouncement;} He calls to me from Seir” (Is. 21:11). But, if we are not really aware, when we see an obstacle we just give up and go back to our old ways.

Now, obstacles have the quality of “clouds and thick cloud” and both infer darkness. Darkness (CHoSHeKh) itself is a form of obstacle, as it says, “You have not withheld (CHaSaKHta) your son” (Gen 11:16). In this light we can understand our opening verse: **“The people stood out at a distance”**- when they saw the thick cloud, that is, the obstacle, they stood afar. **“But Moses”**- who embodies and represents the true awareness of all Israel- **“approached the thick cloud where God was”**- that is, he went closer to the obstacle, the very place in which God was hidden.

An additional teaching regarding how God conceals God's self in obstacles.

God loves justice, but God also loves Israel. The love with which God loves Israel is greater than the love with which God loves justice. So, sometimes the quality of judgement accuses someone who is not worthy to approach God, preventing him/her from setting out on the path of life- to draw near to the true zaddik and the ways of truth. God loves justice, and so has to accede to this accusation, and so to setting obstacles that will prevent him/her from the path of life, in accord with his/her previous negative behavior, as justice would demand. God is not able to brush aside this judgement, since God loves justice.

But, because God really loves Israel, and that love is therefore greater than the love of justice, what does God do? After all, God is compelled to agree to the obstacles to prevent access to the truth, because of the accurate judgment, and God loves justice! Nevertheless, the truth is that God wants this person to come near, because God loves Israel more than justice. Therefore, even though God agrees that there should be obstacles, God hides God's self in the obstacles. And, of this person is aware, he/she can find God in the obstacles themselves, because in fact there is really no such thing as an obstacle. In the very force of the obstacle God is hidden, and it is precisely by means of the obstacles themselves that it is possible to draw near to God, since that is where God is hidden, waiting to be found. That is the meaning of our verse: **“Moses approached the thick cloud”**-that is, the obstacle-because that is **“where God is.”**