

PETAH LANU SHA'AR / OPEN FOR US THE GATES



The gates are almost closed as we chant the final prayers as the sun is setting, We ask God one last time this year in the plaintive theme of the Ne'ilah service:



*Open for us the gates, even as the gates are closing, for daylight fades
...Let us enter your gates at last."*

Inspired by the words of the lovers in the Song of Songs and Psalm 118, "Open for me," the rabbis recount the following legend:

The Holy One said to Israel, "Make for me an opening of teshuvah, as wide as a needle's eye, and I will widen it into an opening through which wagons and carriages can pass."

This teaching makes clear that our own efforts, even the slightest, have the power to initiate the phase of teshuvah.

