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The “Keren Dovid” - The Eternal Kingdom

וקרנו תרום בישועתך - we ask Hashem that the “*Keren Dovid*”, the “pride of Dovid”, be exalted, along with the salvation of the future that will come.

What is the ‘*Keren Dovid*’? A *keren* can mean ‘corner’, like Rabbi Nechunia ben Hakanah prayed, that he be among those who place themselves in the *keranos*\corners of Torah study, and not to be among those who are *yoshvei keranos*, those who sit in corners and waste their time. There were also *keranos* (corners) on the *Mizbeiach*. A *keren* can also mean a horn of an animal. This is not the kind of *keren* we refer to when we ask that the *Keren Dovid* be revealed, however.

The ‘*Keren Dovid*’ is referring to a kind of ‘*keren*’ that is above all these kinds of *keranos*.

We also find that “*keren*” can mean “reward”, as we find that there are certain *mitzvos* which a person gets rewarded for on this world, yet he still retains the *keren*\essence of the reward on the Next World. King Shaul was anointed with a “*pach*”, a jug of oil, and because of this, the Sages found an allusion that his kingdom would end. But Dovid and Shlomo were anointed with a *keren*, a horn; thus, their kingdom lasts forever.

So a *keren* is a kind of anointing that is eternal. Thus, the ‘*Keren Dovid*’ represents a kind of anointing that is eternal. We need to understand what is behind the concept of ‘*keren*’, but this is the first point we need to be clear in: that the entire kingdom of David came about through a *keren* (horn), and not through a *pach* (jug). An anointing through *pach*\jug doesn’t last - whereas an anointing through a *keren* lasts forever.

Malchus (Royalty): A King Can Do As He Pleases

Our Sages state because Shaul was anointed with a *pach*\jug, his kingdom did not last, while Dovid and Shlomo were anointed with a *keren*, and that is why their kingdom will last forever.

A king can do as he pleases; “A king breaks fences, and no one can protest.” The *halachah* is that a regular person cannot cut a path through someone’s field in order to take a shortcut, while a king has the right to do so.

The concept of *malchus* (royalty) is not only with kings. In our soul, we also have a power called ‘*malchus*’. It is also known as our power of *ratzon* (will).

Malchus\Ratzon (when it is holy) is a power in a person to do as he wants - to act differently than all his surroundings. Even when everyone else is doing something else, a person has the power to act differently than his surroundings and do what he feels is correct. This is the power of *malchus* in our soul.

However, *malchus* is not always being used properly. It can be used for good or evil, as we will explain.

Evil Uses of The Power of 'Malchus'

1) Meridah\Rebelliousness - When *malchus* in the soul is used for evil, it is called *koach hameridah*, the nature of "rebellion" in the soul^[1] - when the soul wants to rebel against the surroundings. This takes the lofty power of *malchus* in the soul and misuses it for *meridah*, for rebellion, to rebel against Hashem, or simply to do as one pleases and rebel against society in the process.

2. Gaavah\Arrogance - This negative use of *malchus* in the soul is otherwise known as the trait of *gaavah*, arrogance. When a person does the opposite of others, it can be coming from *meridah\gaavah*, and this is evil.

But when person uses this power for holiness, he is able to act differently than others because he searches for the truth. This is the holy way to employ *meridah\gaavah\malchus*. For example, sometimes, society has a certain mentality which doesn't seem truthful to a person who thinks into it. The person who seeks truth will do differently than society.

This is the holy way to use the power of *malchus*. It is reached when a person clarifies on his own that although something seems okay and everyone says it's okay, that doesn't mean it is right.

However, when using this ability of the soul, caution is advised, because it can also awaken a person's *gaavah*. One has to be wary of the *gaavah* when using the power of *malchus* in the soul, but in essence, it can definitely be stemming from a search for the truth, which is the power of *emes* (truth) in the soul.

3. Individuality - There is another source for acting differently than others: a person might simply be a non-conformist to society. He will do something even though no one else is doing it, because he feels, "This is who I am." This is a different power in the soul: the need to express one's individuality.

So there are two holy ways to use the power of being a non-conformist to society: either because a person searches for the truth and he feels something is not truthful to do, even though everyone else is doing it, or, he finds a need to do something which society does not do, because he feels that this expresses his individuality. We will explain the difference between these two abilities.

Seeking the truth is that "I feel that a certain thing is the truth, and that doing otherwise is not the truth." The other ability mentioned is the ability to realize one's individuality, for each soul has an individual role in the Jewish people.

4. Brazenness - There is also another source of why a person acts differently from others: the power of *azus*, brazenness, in the soul. This can also be used for good or evil, as the Sages said: "Be *az* (brazen) as a leopard."

'Malchus': Transcending The Human View

Until now, we explained different reasons why a person would act differently than society. But the

deepest power from all of these is *malchus*. A king, by his very essence, can break all boundaries. The *malchus* was only given to people who possessed lofty souls, souls which were really above the souls of most others.

Compare this to the difference between the view from a car and the view from a plane. A view from a car sees the plane you are on, while a view from the plane sees all that goes on below from above. The king is like the view from the plane.

When a person is really involved in spiritual growth – and we do not mean that he is doing so out of *gaavah* (arrogance), *chas v'shalom* – he can, at moments, access a higher view, where he temporarily resembles an angel, as the Chazon Ish writes. His body is found here on this earth, but in one's soul, he can be above it all. He sees a higher perspective than what society sees.

This is the depth of the holy power of *malchus* in the soul to act differently from others. *Malchus* is to live a more elevated kind of existence, which places a person in a higher perspective, and he sees things differently than how most of society sees things.

Again, we will emphasize that a person might act like this out of *gaavah*, thinking that he is above everyone else, while in reality he is on a lower level. But if the higher view is real, it comes from *malchus* in the soul, because the person lives a more elevated kind of life.

This doesn't mean that a person feels more inspired, has more feelings, or that he possesses more keen understanding. That is good too, but that doesn't describe *malchus*. It is to live in a higher plane of existence. The body of a person can be found here on this earth, but his heart/soul can be living above this earth.

Fighting The Trend of the Generation

Shaul was anointed with a *pach*, a jug of oil. The word "*pach*" is also related to the word "*hafoch*", which means "opposite", hinting to how a king can do opposite than society. But as we know, Shaul's *malchus* did not last. Thus, we can learn from this that it is not enough for a person to do opposite than society. There must be more depth to *malchus* than just acting differently than others.

So far we have only addressed a part of the ability to act differently than society; now we will explain the deeper aspects that it involves.

In our generation, people follow society like sheep following a herd – and the 'sheep' are being led to 'slaughter'. Simply put. If one truly seeks Hashem, he must fight the trend of society nowadays; he has to develop an ability to not give in to society.

We must deeply examine ourselves, though, if this comes from *gaavah*, which is evil haughtiness, or if it comes from realizing our dignified status of being the Jewish people, which is holy. It can also come from a sense of individuality or from brazenness, [which can be good or evil, depending on the situation]. Or, it comes from a power to seek *emes* (truth), or from our power of *malchus* (royalty); these are both holy ways of being non-conformist to society.

In this generation, one of the major tools we need to get by is the power to act differently than society, and to not be embarrassed what others think of you, as you pursue the *emes*. You can get along with others, of course, but you don't have to agree with how others live life.

Overturing Your Lifestyle And Seeking Truth

But the power to act differently than others has more depth to it. One has to always reflect about the

worth of the mitzvos and the detriment of sin; a person needs to make a *cheshbon hanefesh* (soul-accounting).

Chazal state that there are four times to make a *cheshbon hanefesh* (soul-accounting): at night before one goes to bed, every Erev Shabbos, every Erev Rosh Chodesh, and Erev Rosh HaShanah. One aspect of *cheshbon hanefesh* is to reflect on our deeds. But there is another aspect of *cheshbon hanefesh* we need: to see if we are living a good kind of life in general. Rabbeinu Yonah writes that *teshuvah* means for a person to leave his improper path. A person has to see if he is living a good kind of life in general.

You don't have to do this every day, but you need to think about it often. Without this *cheshbon hanefesh*, it's very hard to change one's lifestyle. Not only is it hard to fight the trend of society. An even more difficult task we need to do, which is no less necessary, is to develop the ability to change our entire lifestyle. One has to be prepared to turn over his entire life, if need be it. A person has the power to change things around; to turn everything over.

When this power is used for evil, a person goes off the *derech* in one day; he rebels. Yesterday he was wearing *tefillin*, and the next day, he changes his skin. But the power to turn over one's life really stems from a good place, and it needs to be channeled towards holiness. It is really a deep power which we can use for holiness. It is called "*hafichah*" - the ability to "turn over" things.

"Hafichah": Turning Over

Until now, we mentioned two aspects of using the power of *hafichah* ('turning over'). The first way it is used is to turn against the trend of society. The second way this power is used is when one turns over himself, when he turns over his whole lifestyle in pursuit of truth, because he seeks Hashem.

But there is another way to use this power, which is deeper. We will explain what it is.

When a person lives a life of *katnus* (immaturity), he is not able to undergo an overhaul in one moment. But the more a person matures, the easier he can handle a massive change. Chazal say that one should "tremble, where he has joy".

Yirah, awe, and *ahavah*, love, are two opposing forces; it seems that they cannot harmonize. But our Avodas Hashem incorporates these two opposite forces - *yirah*, and *ahavah*. We are able to balance two opposites together, at once. Our mind cannot handle two contradictory aspects. Our mind might be able to comprehend that we can be happy on Sukkos and sad on Tisha B'Av, but it cannot understand how two opposite concepts can be balanced together. The power of *hafichah* is not a concept that can be understood logically.

These are deep and subtle words, and they are above the understanding of most people. Until now we addressed a level that can be reached by anyone who seeks Hashem, but from this point onward, we will discuss loftier matters that will not be understood by all people.

Going Above Our 'Daas'

When a person serves Hashem through his *daas* (understanding), he cannot understand the concept of *hafichah*. But when a person penetrates deep into his soul and he enters the point above his *daas*, which is really the depth of the power of ***emunah*** - and *emunah* is above the power of even the deepest thought - there, the soul can handle two contradictory concepts.

Our *daas* cannot comprehend such a thing. Our *daas* either differentiates or decides between two options[2], and our *daas* can connect concepts but it cannot connect two opposites[3], and our *daas*

can also turn over a concept^[4], but our *daas* cannot handle two opposite concepts at once. The point in the soul that is above *daas*, though, can handle two opposite concepts: our *emunah* can tell us that we can even handle two opposite concepts. The more a person lives *emunah* – to live the reality of Hashem’s existence – the more he can handle opposing concepts. That is the whole depth to *emunah*.

The depth of the redemption will be the gathering of all Creations together; all the disparity, which seems to be separate and unable to be unified, will be unified. It doesn’t make sense that it will happen. But through our power of *emunah*, which is deeper than our *daas*, it can happen. The depth of the “ingathering of all the exiles” will essentially be the ingathering of all the abilities in the soul, which will come together in unison, in spite of the many different powers in the soul that contradict each other. The depth of the redemption will reveal the depth of the power of *emunah*.

Thus, *emunah* is not just *emunah* – it is a power in the soul to handle opposite concepts. It is a new gate in the soul. Through *emunah*, a person can understand that he must hate evil, but he must love the sinner at the same time, for he we must still have *Ahavas Yisrael*. We must hate the evil that a person does, not the person. We handle two contradictory concepts at once – that is the deep power of *emunah*, which transcends the understanding of our limited *daas*.

In Conclusion

May we merit the ‘*Keren Dovid*’, which will unify all opposites, revealing how Hashem’s Name is ‘One’; the perfect level of *d’veykus*.

[1] Editor’s Note: For further research into the nature of *koach hameridah* \rebelliousness, see sefer *Alei Shur* (of Rav Shlomo Wolbe zt”l) Vol. I, p.334

[2] See **Utilizing Your Daas** - #01 (Differentiating) and #02 (Deciding).

[3] This is called *daas d’chibbur* (Connecting); refer to **Utilizing Your Daas** #03.

[4] This is called *daas hamis-hapeches*; see **Utilizing Your Daas** #07.