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## Tefillah - 096 Ellul: Going Above Our Level

### **Three Reasons Why We Need A King**

In the blessing of **השיבנו** , we ask Hashem, **ומלוך עלינו** - "And rule over us."

What is the concept of a kingship (*malchus*)? The Torah gives a *mitzvah* to appoint a king: "Place upon yourselves a king." The kings which we had in the Jewish people are mainly the Davidic dynasty.

There is a difference of opinion in our Sages of how to view the need for a [Jewish] king. One opinion is that we needed a king to lead wars for us, and another opinion in the Sages is that we needed a king to judge over us so we can have an established court system. (Another opinion in the Sages is that we do not need a king at all, for Hashem can fight wars for us and judge us perfectly; so appointing a king is optional, and it is not obligatory.)

What we learn from the concept of a king is how we need to relate to Hashem as our king. The first reason why we need a king, according to our Sages, is so that our wars will be fought. We need to realize that Hashem can fight our wars for us, as it is written, "Hashem will fight the wars for you, and they [the enemies] will be silenced." A second reason why we need a king is so that we can have a judge. This is also how relate to Hashem as our King. In order to merit a merciful judgment, we declare Hashem as King over us.

But that is not all there is to why we need a king; there is a deeper reason why we needed a king. Another opinion in the Sages of why we needed a king is because we needed someone to fear. This is also part of how we relate to Hashem as King, because we need to accept ourselves the *kabalas ol malchus shomayim*, the "yoke of Heaven". Thus, we needed to appoint a king because we needed someone to fear; the way we view Hashem as our King is because we fear Him by accepting ourselves His *mitzvos*, and this is a very necessary part of our life.

Thus, there are three reasons why we need kingship - to fight wars; to be a judge over us and mete out proper judgment, and because we need to have someone that we will fear.

### **A Fourth Reason Why We Need A King: To Recognize Our Status As Princes**

There is also a fourth reason that we find in why we need a king - yet a deeper reason. It is because the Jewish people are called "sons of kings", *bnei melochim*, and even more so, we are called "a kingdom of priests and a holy nation." This is the higher reason that we need a king - it is not just because we need to realize that we are the "servants" of the King, but because we are the "children of Hashem". Thus, we need to recognize Him as our Father, and that is the depth behind accepting

Him as our King.

We will try to explain this further, but this is the basic outline of the concept.

### ***Declaring Hashem As King: Connecting Ourselves To The King***

We have an *avodah* during *Yomim Noraim* to declare Hashem as King over us (*malchiyos*). Part of our *avodah* in declaring Hashem as King is to declare Him as King over us and accept His rule over us, as was explained earlier. But there is a deeper reason of why we need to accept Hashem's Kingship over us: so that we can connect ourselves with His very kingship and become a part of His Kingdom.

### ***Yomim Noraim: Connecting To A Higher Level***

The Rema writes that during *Aseres Y'mei Teshuvah*, a person has to act on a higher level and practice certain stringencies that he doesn't normally practice during the rest of the year. The depth behind this is because since we declare Hashem as King, and as our Father, we are really sitting in His palace. We are enjoying a status of being His princes that reside in the King's palace. We are being enveloped by Hashem's Kingship, for we are in His palace during these days.

Declaring Hashem as King is that we are ascending to Him in His palace, not that we are bringing Him down onto our level so we can place Him on top of us! It is that we are connecting ourselves to the King above us. That is the depth of declaring Hashem as King.

### ***Seeing The 'Creator' In The 'Creations'***

To explain this more: Hashem is the Creator, and we are His creations. On Rosh HaShanah, we return to the beginning of Creation. How do we view this? Do we focus on the fact that it is the beginning of Creation in which all creations were first made? There is more to the beginning of creation. It is the time in which we can come out of our perception of seeing Creation just the "creations", and to instead enter a higher perspective, that we see the *Creator* behind all of the creations.

Because we are supposed to act on a higher level during *Yomim Noraim*, this shows us that it is a time in which we can enter into a higher perspective than we are used to from the rest of the year. The 30 days of Elul, along with the Ten Days of Teshuvah (which are a total of 40 days) are days in which we are essentially above the rest of the year, just as Moshe Rabbeinu was in Heaven for the entire 40 days, which included Elul and the Ten Days of Teshuvah.

We know that the *beinonim* ("average" people who are not totally righteous but not totally wicked) are "hanging" in the balance during the Ten Days of Teshuvah. Simply speaking, this is because it is not clear if the *beinonim* are righteous or wicked, thus their judgment is hanging until Yom Kippur; if the *beinoni* does *teshuvah* during the Ten Days of Teshuvah, it is apparent that he is a *tzaddik*. But the deeper meaning is that a *beinoni* can hang onto a higher level and connect himself the level above himself, which is the level of *tzaddikim*.

### ***The Avodah Of Elul - Seeing The Creator In Everything***

During Elul and *Aseres Y'mei Teshuvah*, the *avodah* is to see the Creator behind everything. It is about connecting to a higher level, to see the root behind all that you see, whether it is an action or a thought. This is how these days reveal Hashem more.

Whatever level you are on, you can take upon yourself one thing during these days that is really above your level, and try to practice it during *Yomim Noraim*. Realize that you can connect yourself to a higher level during these days.

Don't attempt to live with that high level during the rest of the year, though, because that would be acting delusional. You're not on that high level during the rest of the year, so don't fool yourself. But during *Yomim Noraim*, we can act on a higher level, even if we are not actually on it (as the Rema writes). And by doing that, we can make a mark on ourselves for the rest of the year as well, even though we aren't on the level of *Yomim Noraim* anymore.

This is essentially the power of *emunah* in the soul - the power to believe that we can become connected to higher levels that are really above us.

Through this, may we merit to place Hashem as King over us, and connect with His kingship, completely.

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