

## WILLING SUBJECTS

When we come before Hashem in prayer, his approach to the King of kings is one of a loyal, willing subject, for we recognize Hashem's beneficent mastery and proclaimed His Kingship to the world. We are the "embattled nation" that agreed to become subjects of the "mighty warrior."

This unique relationship is expressed in the verse: *"For the Kingship is Hashem's, and He rules over the nations."*

The Hebrew word *Melech* refers to a king whose kingship is accepted by the people. This is the meaning of the saying that "There is no king without a nation." In contrast, the word *mosheil* refers to a ruler who imposes his rulership over an unwilling people.

What is the purpose, then, of the distinction between *melech* – a king willingly accepted by his subjects – and *mosheil* – a ruler who imposes his rule? What is the difference whether we pray to Hashem out of awe and obligation, or out of joy and gratitude, other than the fact that the latter option is more pleasing to the human psyche?

Our role in "accepting: Hashem's Kingship obviously bears tremendous importance, as one of the holiest days of the year is dedicated to this concept. Jewish writings states that Hashem says: "recite before Me on Rosh Hashanah verses of Kingship...so that you may accept My Sovereignty upon yourselves." Why does Hashem desire that we formally accept His Kingship?

One rabbi explains: *When we accept Hashem's Kingdom and acknowledge it with his heart and his lips, then Hashem manifests Himself in His world and blessing is passed on to us.*

Appreciating the good bestowed by our King, blessing His Name and serving Him are all precious yet practical and attainable components of the *kavannah* that turns our words of prayer into a true service of the heart. The ability to see Hashem's dominion in the world, and thereby relate to Him as the beneficent *Melech*, is therefore a potent means of constantly increasing the good that Hashem bestows.

## POINTS TO PONDER

***The title "King" in reference to Hashem signifies that we are His willing subjects. To the rest of the rest of the world, His title is that of "Ruler."***

***Reciting blessings with attention to the words "Melech HaOlam" reinforces our acceptance of Hashem's Kingship and enables us, through prayer, to draw Hashem's goodness into the world.***

**Zechariah 14:17 And if any of the families of the earth do not go up to Jerusalem to worship the King, the LORD of hosts, there will be no rain on them. (ESV)**

