

MAKING HIM KING

By Rabbi Levi bar Ido / B'nai Avraham

What is the fundamental characteristic of Rosh HaShannah, or the head of the New Hebrew Year? It is the coronation of YHWH Elohim as our King (*Melek*). The sages quote Elohim as asking Yisrael: "Say before Me... verses reflecting My Kingship to make Me King over you."

Until we have acknowledged Elohim as our King, serving Him through the performance of *mitzvot* is not pertinent. And so the sages quote Elohim as saying: "Accept My Kingship, and afterwards accept My decrees and *Torah*." Therefore *teshuvah*¹, which helps lead to forgiveness for failures in fulfilling the King's decrees or *Torah* (instructions), is relevant only after His Kingship has been accepted.

Our acceptance of Elohim as King relates to His essence - a plane above all revelations. The observance of the *mitzvot* relates to Elohim's Will (*Keter*-Crown) as it has come into revelation, for all the *mitzvot* are expressions of His will.

Teshuvah, which leads to true forgiveness for transgressions of His Will, relates to a higher stage of holiness, but one which still shares a union to His Will. For a level which totally transcends Elohim's Will must also rise above the service which repents for transgressions of that Will. Thus, *teshuvah* still relates to revealed levels of holiness. The acceptance of Elohim as King, however, relates to Elohim's essence, which transcends all revelations.

From this, we can appreciate the distinctiveness of the souls of Yisrael - that they can affect Elohim's essence and stir up in Him a yearning to be our King. To be able to affect Elohim's essence, however, it is necessary to express the inner *bittul*² that lies at the heart of every Yisraelite soul. This is expressed in our request of Elohim: "Reign over the entire creation in Your glory (*kavod*)."

Elohim's spirit knows no boundaries. Since the power drawn down by the blowing of the *shofar*³ on Rosh HaShanah is embedded in Elohim's essence, this influence is not limited by any restrictions of the spiritual universe. The influence is drawn down precisely as He desires and Wills it to be. And what He desires is certainly good (*tov*), as it is written: "In the countenance (*penai*) of the King, there is life." The Hebrew word- *Penai*, translated here as "countenance," can also mean "inner dimension." Thus any desire emanating from Elohim's inner dimension will surely be associated with abundant life and goodness.

This will be revealed in the material world (*Malkhut*), for Elohim's essence is joined to our material reality and experience. And so it is that we pray that every Yisraelite soul will be inscribed for a good and sweet New Year, filled with open and perceptible blessings from Above.

¹ Return

² negation

³ Ram's horn