

# ACCEPTING THE KING

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Yeshiva World News reports foxes coming in and out of the Temple area. The ancient prophecy of Zecharya, fulfilled in 2019. Moshiach –what can I do to make this cosmic shift, longed for since the beginning of time, happen now?

The prophet Hoshea promises that the redemption will come when all the people will gather and accept upon themselves one head, appointing a leader from the house of David. (Hoshea 2,2)

The Malbim explains that the revelation of Moshiach will occur when the Jewish people accept upon themselves as king the Davidic leader of the generation of redemption. (Malbim Amos 9,11)

Sefer Hachinuch questions the commandment of appointing a king. A commandment necessitates something people do. But G-d already chose David and his descendants forever; the commandment was fulfilled. Sefer Hachinuch clarifies that the command is a mandate for us to establish the sovereignty of the descendent of David. (Sefer Hachinuch Mitzvas Minuy Melech 497)

Maimonides establishes that we have to identify the potential Moshiach of our time.

But why is the process of revelation in this fashion, and not directly from G-d?

David's sovereignty is within every fitting male descendent. When Moshiach will emerge, his kingship is already intact; it is David's kingship that has continued and is expressing itself through him. David's appointment is embedded in every one of his descendants.

Seemingly, we are appointing the king who was already appointed some 3000 years ago.

If we look into David's journey to the monarchy, we will understand. We will

actually see the same process.

David was anointed by the prophet Samuel, through G-d's direct command. Maimonides rules that from the moment of his anointment David merited to the crown of sovereignty, but he didn't immediately become king. Even after the passing of the then king Saul, David still did not become the king. He needed an additional anointment by the people, first the people of the tribe of Judah, where he initially led only his tribe, and then seven years later by the elders of the entire nation, to become ruler of the Jewish people.

The people acknowledged David after the chief general of Saul, Abner, pledged allegiance to David and committed to go to the people and bring them to accept David as king. We see in the verses of Samuel the discussion of Abner with David concerning this plan, David's agreement and Abner's fulfillment of his self-appointed mission. (Shmuel II chap 3)

David, anointed by the prophet from the direct word of G-d, needs a campaign manager and an election platform.

Abner even stated that just like G-d promised David, so I will do to him. Metzudos explains, just like G-d promised to make him king over all the Jews, so I will help David with this issue of the sovereignty. (Metzudos David Shmuel II 3,9)

G-d promised. He needs Abner's help to fulfill?

Yes, because the people needed to accept him. David didn't become king through Divine wonders. Only through Abner's efforts did the people decide they wanted David to be their king. Then the elders, representing all the Jews, said, "behold we are your bones and your flesh" expressing how fused the people desired to be with the king. (Shmuel II 5,1)

The reasoning behind this seeming incongruous disparity, that G-d's words and the prophet's anointment didn't cause the kingship, but Abner's popular campaign did, is based on a principal of our Sages, "there is no king without a people." A king only exists by virtue of people believing in him as such. (Pirkei DiRebbe

Eliezar chap 1; Rabbeinu Bichayeh Vayeshev 38,30)

David was anointed three times, by the prophet Samuel, by the tribe of Judah and by the elders of the Jewish people. According to Jewish law it is forbidden to anoint a king with the special anointing oil who has already been so anointed. Here it was permissible because the first two times didn't make him king as he didn't have the popular acceptance of the people. He only became king with the people's coronation. Solomon also had two anointments because the first time was exclusively with the people of Jerusalem. To be king he needed the entire Jewish people, and that is what happened by the second anointment. In both of these cases, the people's acceptance is creating a legal situation that did not exist previously.

This entire example with David is powerful and relevant, but even more so when we recognize how Moshiach and David are so intertwined. All aspects of David are a microcosm of King Moshiach. This is the reason Maimonides, in writing the laws of Moshiach, quotes verses containing two phrases. In each, the first phrase refers to David and the second to Moshiach. By David in a small way, by Moshiach in a complete fashion. David's inability to rule until the people's acceptance of him, despite being chosen by G-d, is a powerful message to us about our need to accept Moshiach now, to enable him to redeem the Jewish people and the entire world.

Moshiach already has the 'crown of sovereignty' which David received through his anointment by the prophet Samuel, he also has the appointment to kingship which was given to David when he was further anointed by the Jewish people, but in order to reveal the sovereignty of Moshiach in actuality he needs the acceptance of his rulership by the people of that generation.

David was appointed by the people, yet his successors need to have the people's acceptance of their reign.

We see historically it's a necessary component. Creating a critical juncture in the line of the Davidic kings, Queen Asalya tried to wipe out every descendant of David, to destroy his line and become the sole ruler of the Jews without any fear of competition. She almost achieved her diabolical desire, but there was one child, a year-old baby, Yoash, that was hidden from her murderers. Asalya's

brother in law, the high priest Yehoyada, smuggled Yoash and his nursemaid into the temple, and for six years Yoash was hidden with his nursemaid in the attic area of the Holy of Holies. When Yoash was a seven-year-old child, Yehoyada made a covenant with the high officers that they would do whatever they could to restore Yoash's rule, and then they all declared together, "Yechi Hamelech," "Long live the king." Why was this necessary? Yehoyada knew that they needed to do an action that expressed their nullification to Yoash's rule. Though this seven-year-old child was innately king as the heir of David's line, and he is referred to in the verses as 'king' because he was the king before anyone even knew of his existence, but for his kingship to be actualized, he needed the people's nullification to him. Yechi Hamelech was the traditional expression of the people's nullification to the king's rule. Therefore, Yehoyada and the officers proclaimed this to seven-year-old Yoash, to actualize his rulership by their formal acceptance of it. (Kings II chap 11)

Similarly with Solomon, David declared that Solomon would be his successor. Then David said that the people should proclaim "Long live the king" to Solomon. (Kings I 1,34) This act of acceptance of his reign by the people made Solomon the king in actuality. David's statement was not enough.

We see that David's successors need acceptance by the people, even though they are innately king by virtue of David's rule. In the commandment of the appointment of the king there are two dimensions. The first is the appointment the first time of G-d's king, as happened to David when the elders of the Jews accepted him as king over the Jewish people. The second aspect is the future generation's acceptance of the sovereignty of David's descendants.

Most significantly we see this with Moshiach himself. Since the completion of his kingship is through the people accepting his authority, Rabbi Akiva proclaimed before Bar Kochva that he is the King Moshiach. (Talmud Yerushalmi Taanis chap 4, halacha 5) He realized Bar Kochva fulfilled the criterion of Moshiach; his proclamation impacted the process of revelation. Based on this, when we identify a leader from the line of David who has all the attributes of Moshiach, we too should acknowledge him as such. As the nation identifies the Davidic king and accepts his authority, this is

the beginning of his revelation from a legal perspective. Thus Maimonides describes for us the criterion by which we can identify Moshiach. Criterion are only needed before the official reign. Then we need them to determine the man who is the Moshiach, to fulfil our commandment of appointing the king. When we identify the person who fulfills all the criterion, we know the time has come for us to accept his sovereignty.

This explains why Maimonides, in his magnum opus dedicated exclusively to law, enumerated the criterion of Moshiach. The criterion have legal status because of our Torah obligation to identify Moshiach by these signs.

In the Yalkut Shimoni it explains that exile began with the rejection of the Davidic reign, and this will be rectified by the restoration of the Davidic reign at the beginning of the redemption. (Yalkut Shimoni II Remez 106) When the nation identifies, reveals and requests the revelation of Moshiach, fulfilling the prophecy of Hoshea, "and they will seek ... David their king," this is the beginning that allows the ultimate revelation with the redemption. (Hoshea 3,5)

Concerning this verse of Hoshea, "and they will seek the Almighty their G-d and David their king," the Metzudos explains, they will seek the king Moshiach who comes from the seed of David, and from him they will seek their request that he should rule them. The people will seek Moshiach and ask him to rule them. This is critical is the process of the revelation of Moshiach!

In current times, on Shabbos Parshas Vayera 1991 the Lubavitcher Rebbe stated that all the work to bring Moshiach is done, we are standing ready to accept Moshiach, now we have not only the existence of Moshiach but also the revelation of Moshiach. We need only **accept** him in actuality. He is here, he is revealed, and we must accept him, that's the remaining work.

Then Shabbos Parshas Toldos 1991 the Lubavitcher Rebbe explained even further, based on the mishna, " 'all the days of your life' to bring to the days of Moshiach." When King Moshiach is revealed, this brings to the days of Moshiach, as his existence contains within it all details of the days of Moshiach. Metaphorically, the Rebbe compares this to the air of Moshiach versus the light of Moshiach. Air of Moshiach symbolizes his existence while light of Moshiach represents his

activities. Through acknowledging Moshiach's identity, Moshiach's activities will be revealed to all. The *primary* way to bring Moshiach is to reveal his existence as all the details of the days of Moshiach will come as a result of the revelation of his existence.

Beyond the legal ramifications, the historical aspect, the prophecies and the current reality, the concept of the Jewish people accepting Moshiach to enable him to rule is an expression of a deep kabalistic truth. "There is no king without a people." We allow G-d's sovereignty on the world by our coronation of Him. Our sages say, "G-d requests, say before me the verses of malchios, sovereignty, to coronate Me upon you." (Rosh Hashana 16,1) Kabbalistically, as explained by Rav Chaim Vital in the Prei Eitz Chayim in the name of the Arizal, the dimension of Malchus, sovereignty, has nothing of its own, constructing it is only through the acceptance of its authority by creations. On the eve of Rosh Hashana, G-d's desire for creation retreats. Then, with the blasts of the shofar and prayers on Rosh Hashana expressing our self-nullification to Him and His reign, G-d once again accepts our coronation and rules this world.

"The kingship of this world is like the kingship of Heaven." (Brachos 58,1) Therefore we see this pattern by the kingdoms of David and Moshiach. Both in the Talmud Sanhedrin and in the Zohar, David and Moshiach are referred to as "bar nafli," miscarriage, in a fallen state. Establishing the kingdom of Moshiach from its fallen state occurs when the Jewish people accept his sovereignty, causing his rule to be revealed. (Sanhedrin 96,2; Zohar I 55,1)

Kings on this world reflect G-d's kingship. The Tzemach Tzedek in a foundational discourse entitled The Commandment of Appointing a King explores the need for a king. Since we don't have the ability to be completely nullified to G-d, we need to connect to the person who is truly nullified. At the same time this selfless person needs to be fitting as king over the people, nullified to G-d and ruling with G-d's power over the people and connecting them to G-d. This is a human we can relate to, who is completely fused with G-d and can help us come closer. We need a human king as for us G-d is an abstract reality. When we accept this human as G-d's representative, we can nullify ourselves to him and through him connect to

G-d Himself.

The human king is a representative of G-d's sovereignty. Since G-d's system is that we need arouse His will to reign, the same is with the human king. For him as well, "There is no king without a people." Therefore our acceptance of the king's sovereignty is as critical for his kingship as is our acceptance of G-d's reign every Rosh Hashana.

Additionally, Moshiach is one of the five comprehensive souls of all times, as explained by the Ramaz to the Zohar. ( Ramaz on Zohar III 260,2) There are five levels of soul, and there is one person who is the absolute embodiment of each level. David nefesh, Eliyahu ruach, Moishe neshama, Adam chaya and the highest human embodying the highest aspect of soul, Moshiach yechida. Every Jew has in the core of each level of soul a spark of the comprehensive soul of that level; each of us has at the core of our yechida, our highest level of soul, a spark of the soul of Moshiach. (Mi'or Einayim end Parshas Pinchas) When a Jew accepts the sovereignty of Moshaich, nullifies and connects to him, he is gifting Moshiach with the power of his spark. Through this process, Moshiach is receiving his life as Moshiach and the ability to reveal the absoluteness of his sovereignty.

From all of the sources we have seen one unifying message: we empower Moshiach. G-d has placed the key to redemption in our hands; He trusts us to use it. For the sake of every human on this planet, for the sake of every soul waiting above, for the sake of G-d longing for this world to be His home, accept Moshiach now.