

And it shall be when he sits upon the throne of his kingdom and he shall write him a copy of this law . . . and it shall be with him. And he shall read therein all the days of his life that he may learn to fear Hashem his G-d . . . that his heart not be lifted up (in arrogance) above his brethren and that he not turn aside from the mitzvah." (17:18,19,20)

The *Torah* implies that the king must seek *shleimus*, perfection, not only as king, but also as an individual Jew. He is not permitted to allow his exalted position to go to "his head." Arrogance is an unbecoming character trait for anyone, especially a Jewish king. All too often, one who is constantly involved with communal responsibility forgets his obligation to himself. One's personal spiritual perfection should not defer to his communal endeavors.

One who devotes himself to *Klal Yisrael* undoubtedly has enormous *zechusim*, merits. These merits will support him in his time of need. Nonetheless, as *Horav D. Bliacher, z.l.*, observes, the *Torah* implores the king not to depend upon these merits, but to personally endeavor to perfect himself. The quest for perfection is effected through the writing and constant use of his own *Sefer Torah*. This concept is illustrated by *David Ha'melech*, who often spent the night engrossed in *Torah* study and praise to the Almighty. The following morning he was available to the Jewish leaders in order to involve himself in communal problems.

Every *Torah* leader should be aware of this obligation. All too frequently, one defers his own spiritual advancement for the sake of others. This is a grave mistake. If one's personal spiritual dimension is not perfected, he has no right to act in a leadership role. Indeed, rather than help others, he may ultimately cause irreparable damage.