

So that his heart not become haughty over his brethren. And not turn from the commandment right or left. (17:20)

The Torah demands that the Jewish king maintain a sense of humility, shying away from anything that might present him as pretentious and vain. The fact that he is king neither gives him license to act haughty, nor does it allow him to feel that he is better than anyone. With his position comes enormous responsibilities, as well as temptation to accede to a *yetzer hora*, evil inclination, that will play with his subconscious, encouraging him to act pompously and to use his office for personal gain. Monarchy, as with all leadership positions, is not a free pass. It creates tremendous opportunity, but equally formidable responsibility. One does not come without the other.

Horav Shimshon Pincus, zl, compares this to businessmen who go to the business show to purchase wares and products for resale. Some spend more than others, thus returning home with a greater amount of merchandise. While the one who purchased much is overjoyed with his full load of merchandise, he also understands that he must sell it all in order to realize the enormous profit he expects to make. He is also aware that selling the wares is only half-way home – it is securing payment from the buyer that ensures his profit. It is fortuitous to have a great deal of merchandise to sell, but only if he sells it, receives payment, and no misfortune occurs in its delivery. If it is stolen and he has no insurance, it could prove disastrous – especially for the businessman who has the most to lose.

This is what the Torah implies when it writes, *L'vilti room levavo mei'echav*. Veritably, why should the king not be inclined toward haughtiness? After all, he is the nation's powerful monarch. With the position comes the pomp and power, wealth and honor. What we conveniently fail to acknowledge are the numerous obligations that are part and parcel of this position. Indeed, the more he has, the greater is his debt to the Almighty for selecting him for this honor.

Veritably, this idea applies to each and every one of us, whether he is blessed with wealth, acumen, an abundance of common sense or physical and emotional strength. Whoever has more than his fellow must never forget that he has been bequeathed a Heavenly gift which he must appreciate and for which he must be grateful. With this gift come enormous added responsibilities and obligations. The more we receive – the greater is our debt to Hashem. He granted us with this gift for a reason, for a purpose. Only an ingrate would ignore the significance of this gift; only a fool would be oblivious to its implicit message.