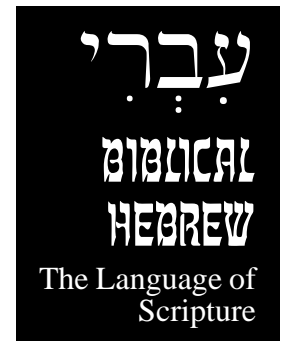


# מלך המלכים

## King of kings

BY KARL D. COKE, PH. D.



The most common phrase heard in Jewish prayers is *ברוך אתה יי אלהינו מלך העולם* (*Baruch atta Adonai Elohainu melech ha'olam*) which is "Blessed art Thou, O LORD our God, King of the universe" in English. It prefaces all of their *B'Rachot* (Blessings)—*Birchot nehenin*; *Birchot he'mitzvot*; and, *Birchot hoda'ah* (joyful experiences; performing a mitzvah; and, petition, praise or thanksgiving).

According to Blu Greenberg in her book, *How to Run a Traditional Jewish Household*, page 143, "These particular blessings are among the most beautiful features of Judaism. What they imply is that we take absolutely nothing for granted."

Lisa Aiken said in her book, *To Be a Jewish Woman*, page 83, "*Lehitpallel* means "to pray" in Hebrew, but it also means "to judge oneself." This suggests that prayer should not be our way of trying to convince God to change how He runs the world. Rather, it should be a process by which we introspect and then change who we are, thereby allowing God to respond to us differently than he otherwise would."

Following in the Jewish woman's traditional dedication and respect for prayer, Ruth Specter Lascelle in her book, *Jewish Faith and the New Covenant*, spoke of the *Talliith*, the Jewish prayer shawl. On pages 49 and 50, she wrote of God's request in Deuteronomy 22:11-12 not to use wool and linen together. Her comment about prayer was, "How the LORD desires an undivided heart in our worship, an unwavering faith, not tossed about by every wind of doctrine, not mixed with the religion of the world, but PURE and single to his honor and glory!"

Prayer is a pure way for man to establish the kingdom of God in his life. Prayer sets God upon His throne. Therefore, God allows each man to place a single, royal blue, woolen thread in the *tzitzit* attached in the four corners of his prayer shawl. This encourages each man, as the head of his family, to pray as a "king-priest." The mix of linen and wool was allowed for priests only and the dye used to make the royal blue thread was so costly that only kings could afford it.

Numbers 15:37-41 declares twice that each man should "look upon" the *tzitzit* and be reminded that he should do all of God's commands. Man's authority in God's kingdom comes from God's Word at work in each "king-priest's" life, not each man demanding that God perform on his behalf as described in Scripture. God is sovereign and requires His will be done—and so, it shall be done!

Exodus 19:6 reveals what God looks for from His people. It says, "And ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation." The Hebrew text says, "וְאַתֶּם תִּהְיוּ לִי מְמַלְכֵת כְּהֹנִים וְגוֹי קָדוֹשׁ." God wants "king-priests" that is, a "nation set apart." According to verse 5, this makes this people God's "treasured possession." Since מלך in Hebrew means "to reign, to be king," according to Gesenius' *Hebrew-Chaldee Lexicon of the Old Testament*, page 477, it is clear that God intends His people to rule and reign with Him! כהן (priest) in Hebrew means, "a prophet, ... one who undertakes anyone's cause, ... he who stands up in anyone's matter, ..." according to Gesenius' (*ibid.*, p. 385).

Those who are "born of His Spirit" and have taken up His cause are His kingdom of priests. John said in Revelation 17:14 (NIV) of those kingdoms who will attempt to war unsuccessfully against Jesus, "They will make war against the Lamb, but the Lamb will overcome them because he is Lord of lords and King of kings—and with him will be his called, chosen and faithful followers." His followers are those "king-priests" over whom He is "King of kings and Lord of lords (Priest of priests).

John says of Jesus (Rev. 19:16, NIV), "On his robe and on his thigh he has this name written: KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS. This passage indicates that Jesus Christ will return to rule and reign with His followers, and, perhaps, will be wearing His *Talliith*. Some scholars suggest that His *tzitzit* will be laying upon His thigh indicating His priest-king status. Written upon his shawl will be "וְאֵדְנֵי הָאֲדֹנָיִם" מלך המלכים." The angel Gabriel said, "The Lord God will give him the throne of his father David, and he will reign over the house of Jacob forever; his kingdom will never end." (Luke 1:32-33 NIV)

**Written upon his shawl will be "וְאֵדְנֵי הָאֲדֹנָיִם" מלך המלכים וְאֵדְנֵי הָאֲדֹנָיִם (KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS)."**