

The Song of the Lion

The lion says:

**Hashem will
go out like a
mighty man;
like a warrior
He will
invoke
passion. He
will trumpet
and shout;
His enemies
He will
overpower.**



אַרְיֵה אֹמֵר:

ה' כַּגְּבוּר יֵצֵא
כְּאִישׁ מִלְחָמוֹת
יַעִיר קוֹנָאָה
יָרִיעַ אֶף
יִצְרִיחַ עַל
אֹיְבָיו יִתְגַּבֵּר.

(ישעיה מב, יג)

The lion is traditionally known as the “king of wild animals”, and rightfully so. The male lion is crowned with a majestic mane and sits lazily like a Pharaoh, fearing none. It has a characteristic ferocious roar that strikes terror in all within earshot. This is similar to the way all are locked in silence when a king opens his mouth to speak.¹ It hunts other animals without fear, consuming them even while they are still alive², as opposed to other predators that tend to first kill their prey before eating them and then commonly drag their food back to their lairs to eat in safety.

The existence of the lion is a symbol of the ultimate King and Warrior: Hashem. It sings of Hashem going out to vanquish His enemies like a charging and roaring lion, overpowering His foes without fear. For this reason, the lion is engraved upon Hashem’s throne of glory.

Living with Song

King David was compared to a young lion and it was also the symbol and banner of his tribe, the royal Yehuda.

This virtue of kingship is apparent to a lesser extent in the entire Jewish nation. Even in our times of exile, when we have no kings and we are not a significant world power, we nonetheless represent Hashem’s kingship in the world.

When the non-Jewish prophet Bilam blessed the Jewish nation in the desert, he compared them to the lion. When the Jewish people rise in the morning and overcome the earthliness of their physicality in order to declare Hashem King through praise and through prayer – the lion’s roar resounds throughout all Jewish prayer-halls. They do not rest at night until they have first declared anew their allegiance to King of the Universe through the bedtime Shmah and entrust their souls securely into His hold. They conduct themselves with majesty and with the surety of an uncontested monarch. With leonine courage they tirelessly strive to perform the will of the King of the world. Although enemy nations from the outside, and the evil inclination from the inside, have tried throughout history to vanquish them, they still remain strong, vigorously set on their course. Such a nation will not retire from the annals of history until Hashem’s kingship is realized in His world.

Jewish majesty runs through your veins. Take pride in your heritage and rejoice upon your lot. Every small but firm step taken to make Hashem’s kingship known in this world gives voice to the celestial lion etched on the throne of glory.

¹ Gr’a.

² Rosh. See also Sefer Habris quoted in a footnote in “The Identity of the Neshet”.