



# The Ability to Exist

## רמב"ם הלכות מלכים פ"א הי"ב

A son who succeeds his father as king is not anointed unless he assumes his position amid a dispute over the inheritance or during a civil war. Under these circumstances, he should be anointed in order to remove all disagreement.

Therefore, they anointed Shlomo because of the claim of Adoniyahu; Yehoash, because of the usurpation of Atalyah; and Yehoachaz, because of the claim of his brother, Yehoyakim.

וְאִין מוֹשְׁחִין מֶלֶךְ בְּנוֹ מֶלֶךְ. אֵלֶּא אִם כּוֹ הִיָּתָה שָׁם מַחְלָקָת אוֹ מַלְחָמָה מוֹשְׁחִין אוֹתוֹ כְּדִי לְסַלֵּק הַמַּחְלָקָת. לְפִיכָר מִשְׁחוּ שְׁלֹמֹה מִפְּנֵי אֲדֹנִיָּהּ. וַיֹּאשׁ מִפְּנֵי עֵתְלִיָּהּ. וּמִשְׁחוּ יְהוֹאָחָז מִפְּנֵי הַיּוֹקִים אֲחָיו:

## רמב"ם הלכות מלכים פ"ג ה"ח

Anyone who rebels against a king of Israel may be executed by the king. Even if the king orders one of the people to go to a particular place and the latter refuses, or he orders him not to leave his house and he goes out, the offender is liable to be put to death. The king may execute him if he desires, as stated: "Whoever rebels against your command ... shall be put to death."

כָּל הַמוֹרֵד בַּמֶּלֶךְ יִשְׂרָאֵל יֵשׁ לְמֶלֶךְ רִשׁוּת לְהַרְגוֹ. אֶפְלוּ גָזַר עַל אֶחָד מִשְׂאָר הָעָם שֶׁיֵּלֶךְ לְמָקוֹם פְּלוּנִי וְלֹא הֵלֵךְ אוֹ שֶׁלֹּא יֵצֵא מִבֵּיתוֹ וַיֵּצֵא חָיִב מִיָּתוֹ. וְאִם רָצָה לְהַרְגוֹ יִהְיֶה. שְׁנֵאמַר (יהושע א יח) "כָּל אִישׁ אֲשֶׁר יִמְרָה אֶת פִּירִי."



# 40 מחזור הארבעים CYCLES OF LEARNING RAMBAM

מוקדש לחיזוק ההתקשרות לכ"ק אדמו"ר  
לרגל יום הבהיר כ"ח סיון  
-שמונים שנה-  
נדפס ע"י  
הרה"ת ר' לוי יצחק וזוגתו מרת שיינא חי'  
ומשפחתם שיחיו  
גרינברג

## A KING AND HIS PEOPLE

The bond between a king and his subjects is different from other relationships, such as the relationship between student and teacher. The connection a student shares with his teacher concerns only the teachings he receives from him. The connection between subjects and their king, by contrast, involves the totality of their being; their entire existence is dependent on the king.

For this reason, “anyone who rebels against a king of Israel... the king may execute him if he desires.” According to Torah law, punishments are meted out according to the nature of the blemish caused by the unbecoming

deed.<sup>1</sup> The death penalty is given because kingship (and the rebellion against it) affects the very essence of a subject’s existence.

The third king of Beis Dovid was king Rechavam. Soon after he became king, Yeravam ben Nevat, followed by ten tribes, contested his sovereignty.

A king who is the son of a king must be anointed when there is a controversy over his succession. But there is no mention of Rechavam being anointed, despite the fact that Yeravam contested his sovereignty.

Why indeed wasn’t Rechavam anointed?

The reason is that Yeravam’s challenge came after Rechavam

had already assumed the throne, at which point he no longer required anointment. With the assumption of his throne, a king acquires the essence of all of his subjects (“בכל עצמותם”). The people can no longer call the king’s rule into question, as their very existence is already completely dependent on the king. Therefore, any revolt that happens from that point on does not impede on his rulership over their essence, but rather involves only their external faculties. At their core they are still very much connected to the king.

(*Likkutei Sichos vol. 4, p. 1050*)

1. Tanya, ch. 24.