

## AT HOME WITH THE KING

The Shemoneh Esrei or Amidah is a person's "private time" with the King – time that he is given graciously because he is not merely a subject, he is the King's child. During this prayer, he is not "out in public" pronouncing the King's grandeur to the world. He is "at home," in a place of worship asking his "Father" in hushed tones for what he needs. As a Father, Hashem lovingly ministers to each of His children's needs, despite their imperfections, simply because they are His children.

One Jewish writing states: "Serve Hashem with awe." Another, that one should approach prayer with a feeling of happiness. The feeling of awe arises from recognition of God as the King, Whose absolute rule extends over every aspect of Creation. Joy, however, comes from knowing that this Almighty King is our personal father in Heaven. He is always there, in every situation, ready to respond the instant His child calls upon Him.

One comes before Hashem in prayer with a complete sense of reliance, as King David writes in his Psalm: "Even though I walk in the valley overshadowed by death, I will not fear evil, for You are with me."

The following rabbinic parable confirms this: *A child goes for a walk with his father in the forest. When the father monetarily lets go of his hand, the child wanders away and becomes lost. As he searches for his father and night begins to fall, he becomes terrified. Then, in the distance, he sees his father looking for him. Although the darkness and wild animals still surround him, he is comforted. His fears subside.*

Similarly, we face many dangerous situations and difficulties in life. When periods of darkness set in, we too may be overcome with fear. However, we need to know that even in the most trying situation we are not alone. Rather, our Father in Heaven is always with us.

## POINTS TO PONDER

***The blessings of the Shemoneh Esrei or Amidah do not include the word Melech (King), even though the essence of the prayer is a face-to-face audience with the King.***

***Mention of Hashem's Kingship is not necessary because one is speaking "in private," as the king's child speaks to his father.***

***As our Father, Hashem loves and cares for us unconditionally.***

***As our Father the King, He has the power to help us in any situation, at all times.***

**Mattiyahu 5:45 Then you will become children of your Father in heaven. For he makes his sun shine on good and bad people alike, and he sends rain to the righteous and the unrighteous alike. (CJB)**