

Rights and Duties of King

Ref: *Sefer Shoftim, Hilchot Melachim, Chapters 3–4*

RIGHTS AND DUTIES OF KING



King should not marry many wives³ – **18 or less**

King should not accumulate many horses⁴ – only what is necessary for his cavalry.

King may not amass much silver and gold.⁵

- Should write a *Sefer Torah* for himself. This should accompany him wherever he goes (except bathroom), even when he goes to war. i.e. should have two *Sifrei Torah* – his own and one left by his predecessor.

Mipi Hashmuah he should not take more than 18 wives

- Has to limit number of horses for military purposes only
- Can amass silver and gold in public treasury (Temple Treasury) but not his own personal treasury
- Cannot drink wine to intoxication
- Not to be overindulgent with wives
- Davidic Kings can judge and be judged and testimony can be given against them, but Kings of Israel may not judge or be judged, nor can they give testimony, nor can testimony be given against them.

Reminder:

Table Qualities needed by a judge, *Sefer Shoftim, Hilchot Sanhedrin, Chapter 2*



- King has power to execute those who rebel. They may even be allowed to hang in public for many days.

The whole purpose of a King is to wage wars and to execute justice and destroy the power of the wicked (for the sake of Heaven).

- He may levy taxes and impose duties on goods
- Employ soldiers
- Employ servants and attendants
- Employ craftsmen to construct his equipment
- Take animals, servants and maids (he pays for them)
- Take wives and concubines (a concubine has less *halachic* nature than a wife, but it is a King's right to acquire concubines)
- Appoint officers
- Take fields (with payment) to feed his army when they go to war
- Entitled to 1/10 of products in country
- Messianic King entitled to 1/3 of all conquered land as his own
- Property of one executed by the King, belongs to the King
- Spoil of war shared between King and army (King takes first **50%**)

- Lands conquered belong to the King. He may apportion to his servants and soldiers as he desires.

All the deeds of the King should be for the sake of Heaven.

His intentions are to

- Establish the true religion
- Fill the world with justice
- Destroy the wicked
- Wage the war of Hashem

The whole purpose of establishing a King is to execute justice and wage wars.