



Malky Hirth - The Little Tiny Queen

by Rabbi Yechiel Spero

Malky.
What a girl. So much personality. So much life.
And now she is gone.
Anyone who met her will never forget the interaction. That's the way she was.
Her personality.
Her self-assuredness.
Her incredible joy and sparkle.
You could not help but be completely enamored. Though so fragile and sick, she would say things that radiated indomitable strength, and that is how she held up those around her.
I remember when I met Malky. I had heard so much about her from my daughter and her friends, who were privileged to spend time with her. And now, it was my turn to spend a few precious moments with her, as well. She was sharp and funny and made us all laugh. I couldn't get over the fact that this little girl was running the show.
It was only after her sickly body finally breathed its last breath that I realized how she was able to do it.

It all comes back to her name.

Malky.

Malky is a nickname for מלכה, which means queen, but the word מלכי in Hebrew can be translated as my King.

She did not look at the Ribbono Shel Olam as some far-off and distant Being. Rather, He was her King. Her very own, personal King.

In turn, she knew — undoubtedly — that she was His queen.

Though this was apparent when I met her at the age of 7, she had this awareness her entire life. Imagine that. She knew, with complete certainty, what many of us are never able to fathom.

Can you imagine how different this world would look if every young Jewish girl, and even every adult, felt that Hashem is "my King"? Can you imagine if everyone was like Malky?

She spoke with confidence and flair, broadcasting from her various thrones, which consisted of a series of hospital beds in the children's oncology ward. And while her frail little body may have been terribly weak, her pure soul was healthy, robust, and strong.

Every morning and every evening we recite the tefillah of Adon Olam. Rav Shamshon Raphael Hirsch points out that in this tefillah, we refer to Hashem as Keili, which connotes mercy. Hashem is Keili — my very own G-d of Mercy.

As we begin our day and realize that we have lived through the night, and are now faced with a full day in which to fulfill His will, we may feel overwhelmed and intimidated. This is why, at this very moment, the composers of our tefillah set our minds at ease. Remember that Hashem is our personal Master, and right there for us. With those comforting thoughts, we are ready to daven.



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Many of Malky's days must have been intimidating and daunting. The constant pricks and needles, treatment after treatment, would have broken many and caused them to give up hope. But not Malky.

Not with Hashem as her own, personal King.

Fun-loving and playful, yet mature beyond her years, Malky knew that whatever the day may bring, she could count on her King for anything she needed. She knew that so many were davening on her behalf, and she was well aware of the potency of those tefillos.

Just shy of 8 years old and she knew all of that.

At the end of the day, as we are about to lay our heads on our pillows, we turn to this tefillah once more. Here, too, there may be apprehension and worry. We look back on our day's accomplishments, or lack thereof, and feel vulnerable and a bit frightened. We are about to go to sleep and that is always an unnerving time. Have we done enough today? Will He trust us to try again tomorrow? At this time, we again remember, "Ve'Hu nisi u'manos li — He is my banner and my refuge." What an encouraging choice of words. Imagine yourself as a soldier ready to face the enemy. In front, you see Hashem, Who is your victory banner, while from behind, He serves as a haven, where you can take shelter. Hashem encourages and supports us, and wants us to know that He believes in us.

Malky knew it. She knew that whatever dreadful battles she had to fight, her King would be there for her — to wave her on and to protect her.

This is as Dovid says in Tehillim (5:3), "Hakshivah le'kol shavi Malki V'Elokai ki eilecha espallal — Hearken to the sound of my outcry, my King and my G-d, for to You do I pray."

Malky, the fight is over. You won not only the battle, but the war. Now, there will be no more pain and suffering.

You and your family have taught us well. You all taught us the power of tefillah and emunah, as well as the meaning of love, commitment, dedication, and perseverance.

The doctors and nurses marveled at you and admired your family. They wanted to be with you, and to hear your "Malkyisms."

You changed their lives. And ours. And the world around us.

This past week, you ascended to your Heavenly throne. I have a feeling you will have quite an audience in Shamayim, as well.

Shluf gezunt, Malky.

We will miss you.