

## RESOURCES FOR ELUL AND THE HIGH HOLY DAYS 5780-5781

*"THIS IS REAL AND YOU ARE COMPLETELY UNPREPARED"*

Dear Etz Members,

I hope you had a meaningful Rosh Hashanah and that the year ahead is filled with good health and positive change!

Here are some resources for the Yamim Noraim, the Days of Awe.

G'mar chatimah tovah (Hebrew: גמר חתימה טובה) May you be inscribed for a good sealing!

### CHANTS:

- *Kol D'mamah Dakah*: A small Voice is Heard: Congregation Bet Haverim:  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6kbK9EoAkUc>
- Another tune for *Achat Sha'alti* (Hebrew and English): One things I Ask of G-d: from Psalm 27: Chava Mirel:  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=olqBdmrwhkQ&list=RDTBQbC-wPjn0>
- Another tune for *Hashkivenu* (Hebrew and English): Let There Be Love by Noah Aronson:  
[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=H\\_2ajSLZ0p0&list=RDTBQbC-wPjn0&index=4](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=H_2ajSLZ0p0&list=RDTBQbC-wPjn0&index=4)
- *Avinu Malkeinu*: A Child's Heartfelt Version:  
<https://www.ipost.com/diaspora/video-of-kid-singing-yom-kippurs-avinu-malkeinu-poem-goes-viral-642325>
- *Petach Lanu Sha'achar Odaya*: Open for Us the Gates of Praise: in Hebrew so here is the translation:  
Another beautiful song posted by Yossi Klein Halevi...Some of Israel's leading musicians, including Avraham Tal and Raviv Kaner and Lior Narkis, have released a song for Rosh Hashanah. It is a prayer of musicians – for inspiration, for purity, for God's embrace – a wonderful contribution to the emerging Israeli prayer book:  
"Open for us the gates of love/ bless us, give us something of Yourself/  
Open for us the gates of redemption/speak to us, give us some hope/  
Open for us the gates of praise/ and give us energy for the soul/  
Open for us the gates of song/ embrace us, You don't need a reason/  
Open for us the gates of purity/Dweller on High. eleicha chazarah/  
Open for us the gates of forgiveness/Teach us how to choose between right and wrong/

Open for us the gates of blessing/ Accompany us in song open for us the inner sanctuary  
Open for us the gates of forgiveness/ the day is coming when we will all sing to You.  
Open wide for us/ we need to breathe in the spaces between heaven and earth/  
Watch over me/I've distanced myself from You, gone astray/ What else is left in life?"

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=No1njdnllno&list=RDNo1njdnllno&start\\_radio=1&fbclid=IwAR36AN6ayQ9X\\_8EOdPsD4NbgLWshC8AT85zFz-EvxGeomZlchTTP4vzqTCA](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=No1njdnllno&list=RDNo1njdnllno&start_radio=1&fbclid=IwAR36AN6ayQ9X_8EOdPsD4NbgLWshC8AT85zFz-EvxGeomZlchTTP4vzqTCA)

- *Shiviti*: Nava Tehila:  
" I place YHWH before me always"  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=h6nzAD4tlj8>
- *Shiviti*: Wendie Berstein Lash:
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WrpOmAlvF5k>

#### POEMS:

- *Poem for Yom Kippur* by Leonard Bernstein:  
<https://bernstein.classical.org/features/bernsteins-poem-for-yom-kippur/>
- *On Erev Yom Kippur* by Zelda

"On Erev Yom Kippur  
we'd embark  
from trials that ended to the trials that had just begun  
Erev Yom Kippur was for us  
the beginning of time  
in the silence of an island that lit up  
a sea  
with candles –  
where you brought me into your aching heart  
before the all powerful  
before you'd go to pray with everyone  
before you'd become one of the many  
in the sanctuary  
one of the trees  
in the forest."

- *Yom Kippur*: Linda Pastan

A tree beside the synagogue atones  
 of all its leaves. Within the ram's horn blows  
 and sins come tumbling down to rest among  
 old cigarettes and handkerchiefs. My sins  
 are dried and brittle now as any leaves  
 and barely keep me warm. I have atoned  
 for them before, burned clean by October,  
 lulled by the song of a fasting belly.  
 But sins come creeping back like wayward girls,  
 and leaves return to willing trees for spring.

#### PRAYERS

- Reinterpretation of Psalm 27: by Rabbi Sheila Peltz Weinberg:  
<https://www.reconstructingjudaism.org/article/psalm-27>
- Reinterpretation and translation of the Mourner's Kaddish: by Rabbi David Seidenberg:
- <https://opensiddur.org/prayers/solilunar/everyday/kaddish/mourners-kaddish-for-a-minyan-of-ten-souls-including-jews-and-non-jews-by-rabbi-david-seidenberg-neohasid-org/>

#### PROGRAMS:

- Yom Kippur with BINA: Interactive workshop with Join Ariel Resnikoff and Tova Birnbaum: Date: Thursday, Sep 24, 2020, 9:00 AM PDT:  
[https://www.bina.org.il/english\\_event/yom-kippur-at-home/](https://www.bina.org.il/english_event/yom-kippur-at-home/)
- Tablet Magazine: Unorthodox: *The Apology Episode* 244:  
<https://www.tabletmag.com/podcasts/unorthodox/episode-244-yom-kippur-2020-apology-reconciliation-episode>

### TEXT STUDY:

- The Akeda Project by Jewish Live: This amazing resource provides different perspectives on the Akeda, the Binding of Isaac (which is usually read on Rosh Hashanah). "...More than 30 videos, each offering coming to the Akedah from a different angle. If you like what you see here, The Akedah Project is just the beginning. We believe that a plurality of voices can be brought together to explore the vast canon of Jewish literature. Tradition tells us that the Torah has "seventy faces," and we look forward to exploring them with you."  
<https://www.jewishlive.org/isaac>
- BINA's Yom Kippur Learning and Discussion Guides:  
[https://www.bina.org.il/english\\_articles/yomkippurlearning/](https://www.bina.org.il/english_articles/yomkippurlearning/)
- Rabbi Jonathan Sacks: Ceremony and Celebration: Yom Kippur 5871:  
<https://rabbisacks.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/CC-Yom-Kippur-FINAL.pdf>
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Dear Etz Members,

We are compiling a list of resources that can supplement our reading of “This Is Real and You Are Completely Unprepared” and give us different ways to prepare during Elul and the period between Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur. We will be adding to this list ongoingly for the next 40 days.

PRACTICES:

- Shofar: Listen to the sound of the Shofar every day during Elul except on Shabbat:  
Here is a beautiful shofar call and response by Karen Kennan and Fred Munic:  
<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1BIQXt30oNi7eLZCyEoP--B-Sl8rwbVio/view>
- Psalm 27: It is a traditional practice to recite Psalm 27 during Elul. These are the verses that have been developed into chants:  
“One thing I ask, I ask of You, I earnestly pray for  
That I might dwell in Your house all the days of my life  
Knowing the beauty, the beauty of You,  
and to dwell in Your holy place!”  
Here is a link to Rabbi Barenblat’s (the Velveteen Rabbi) teaching about these verses as well as one of the melodies for chanting:  
<https://velveteenrabbi.blogs.com/blog/2009/09/achat-shaalti-one-thing-i-ask.html>
- Counting 40 days: The number 40 appears at critical times in the Tanach (Bible) and the Talmud. The story of Noah tells us that it rained for 40 days. The spies scouted out the land of Canaan for 40 days. Moses ascended Mount Sinai for 40 days while receiving the Torah (twice). He led the Israelites through the desert in their journey from Egypt to the Land of Israel for 40 years. According to the Talmud (Avot 5:26) a person transitions from one level of wisdom to the next and reaches the level of *binah* - the deeper level of insight and understanding - at age 40. These examples seem to indicate that 40 is a number connected with traveling along a path and transition. It therefore seems fitting that there are 40 days between the first day of Elul, when we begin to blow the Shofar to prepare for Rosh Hashana, until Yom Kippur, the end of the annual teshuva (repentance)

period. This is the time for a journey of personal growth, change, and renewal. One way to mark it is to count off days between the first day of Elul and Yom Kippur, the way one does for the Omer. Each day indicates an awareness of our path towards Yom Kippur.

ART: “*Doodling as a Spiritual Practice*” featuring our own **Melissa Dinwiddie**, from last year’s **Elul Unbound**. Brought to you by our own Wendie Lash (joined by Lex Rofeberg):  
<https://melissadinwiddie.com/doodling-spiritual-practice/>

#### CHANTS AND MUSIC:

- 1) “*Ani Acher*” (I am another person) by Aharon Razel and Evyatar Banai: this song is based on the words of Maimonides about Teshuvah (repentance, returning). The Hebrew words mean:

“The way of penitence is to cry out before God  
and to distance oneself from that sin  
[It’s as though] one changes one’s name  
as if to say: I’m not the same person that did that/  
Yesterday I was far away; today I am close.”

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eMIOVheBM7U&fbclid=IwAR1kQ4woPKpUvZ44WTxyPxSxtQZZQYaT58mlHCqpYVYqTVMpSmzgLuydZyY>

- 2) Avinu Malkenu by Barbara Streisand: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0YONAP39jVE>

- 3) “*Ba’at Pitom*” by Keren Peles: accompanied by Israeli musicians from around the world. The Hebrew words mean:

“You came to me suddenly and told me, Come  
God reserves a corner of the day for people like you, for innocents like me  
It was almost the twilight of my life  
I nearly gave up but suddenly you were there.”

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rKyLspnPvts&fbclid=IwAR2ORAx17PfjGHFoOliYAk\\_VXZ57A8m-wnLd\\_ScrPJERoOc8Yv2\\_54zQ778](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rKyLspnPvts&fbclid=IwAR2ORAx17PfjGHFoOliYAk_VXZ57A8m-wnLd_ScrPJERoOc8Yv2_54zQ778)

- 4) “Create a Pure Heart in Me, Great Spirit” (from Psalms 51:12) by Nava Tehila:  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oKKNwwXXVi0>

- 5) "Oh Lord Prepare Me to Be a Sanctuary"  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KX9Miv0WbYs>
- 6) "Turn, Turn, Turn": written by Pete Seeger, arranged for Judy Collins in 1963 and adapted by the Byrds in 1965, this song based on the Book of Ecclesiastes, is particularly relevant to the Elul theme of *Teshuvah* "Turning":  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=K3kKqfTjsj0>

### JOURNALING:

1) **Jewels-of-Elul:** produced by Craig Taubman <http://www.JewelsofElul.com/>  
Craig Taubman is an American Jewish musician and producer, based in Los Angeles. He is well known for his children's music and has since branched out to adult Jewish music as well. Each year, He offers a daily quote for Elul based on short stories, anecdotes and introspective questions from an eclectic group of inspired personages. The entries are short and many of them lend themselves to reflection and journaling. Sign up at the link above and receive a jewel a day!

2) **Judaism Unbound Comics:** Every Shabbat of Elul, *Elul Unbound* will be releasing a "comic". These artistic combinations of comic style pictures and printed words by Becca Lubow, are accompanied by explanation and prompt questions. They are a great vehicle for journaling and appear every Shabbat for four weeks. Here is the link to the first one. It will be followed by three more: <https://www.judaismunbound.com/elul2020/comics>

3) **Judaism Unbound:** Story and writing and contemplation prompt: Each Tuesday of Elul, *Elul Unbound* Each Tuesday of Elul (beginning August 25th, 2020) we will be sending out a story that connects to Elul, accompanied by reflection and journaling prompts:  
<https://www.judaismunbound.com/elul2020/stories>

### MEDIA

1) **Every Wednesday:** : Each Wednesday of Elul (beginning August 26th, 2020) *Elul Unbound* is sending out a video, or other digital media, that relates to the "holi-month" of Elul: <https://www.judaismunbound.com/elul2020/media>

2) **Every Sunday:** Wendie Lash and Lex Rofeberg (*Elul Unbound*) produce a mini podcast about Elul: <https://www.judaismunbound.com/elul2020/minipodcasts>

#### LEARNING SESSIONS:

1) **This is Real and We Are Completely Unprepared:** Congregation Etz Chayim: Rabbi Chaim and lay leaders. Please register:

<https://www.etzchayim.org/form/this-is-real.html>

2) **Learn in Elul with Rabbi Chaim Seidler-Feller from Hillel UCLA:**

<https://hillelatucla.wufoo.com/forms/s1a6wa061nghbfq/>

#### MEDITATION:

##### **1) Weekly Meditation**

*Wednesdays at 2:00 pm*

Wendie Bernstein Lash is leading a free weekly meditation on the [JewishLive.org](https://www.jewishlive.org) platform.

Some Etznicks are regular attendees and she would like to invite others to join. You can find out more information and log into the zoom [here](#). Recordings are also available on the information page or on her [YouTube channel](#).

2) **From Elul through Rosh Hashanah & Yom Kippur to Sukkot & Simchat Torah An Inward Pilgrimage of Walking, Meditation, and Journaling**, from Maggid Andrew Ramer (part of *Elul Unbound* resources):

<https://static1.squarespace.com/static/56295ee3e4b04076bfd784c7/t/5f41bfd4381f2c334d3ab2a2/1598144468683/From+Elul+to+Sukkot.pdf>

#### POETRY AND PROSE:

1. "...believe us, they say,  
it is a serious thing  
just to be alive  
on this fresh morning  
in the broken world..." Excerpt from *Invitation* by Mary Oliver



2) *A Man Doesn't Have Time in His Life*, by Yehuda Amichai (needless to say a woman does not have time either...):

<https://allpoetry.com/A-Man-Doesn't-Have-Time-In-His-Life>

#### SOCIAL JUSTICE:

**Each Thursday of Elul**, *Elul Unbound*, is highlighting ways in which you can participate in social justice work, so that the internal, personal work we do during the month can be channeled out into bettering our world.

#### SPIRITUAL PRACTICE:

1) **Each Monday of Elul**, *Elul Unbound* will be offering up a different spiritual practice, via video, that you can take on for yourself as preparation for Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur. Use these practices throughout Elul or anytime. Choose the ones that feel most energizing for you.

#### TEXT STUDY:

1) Three text studies and discussion questions developed by Solange Tajchman for Session 2 of "This Is Real and We Are Completely Unprepared" on Teshuvah: returning and forgiveness:

- Teshuvah: seeking forgiveness from other individuals:  
<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1c7KPB4P8FWBE2H9N7b6yvbgsxbJ6hWW3r0xyJNs3PbQ/edit>
- Teshuvah: seeking forgiveness as a community from God (or our greater selves, or the Source of Goodness):  
<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1uXr0LYHrHlokVncDH2h5hmqTogeAlBUttd3Wy3Z3Fg/edit>
- Teshuvah: seeking forgiveness from ourselves:  
<https://docs.google.com/document/d/15y4mfdW2KCT4j2z7bCcRQl4xneDFyFiajZsPx2RWMJE/edit>

