

Notes: September 14, 2024

Children's Blessing:

Transliteration: *Ye'simcha Elohim ke-Ephraim ve hee-Menashe*

English: *May God make you like Ephraim and Menashe*

Transliteration: *Ye'simech Elohim ke-Sarah, Rivka, Rachel ve-Leah.*

English: *May God make you like Sarah, Rebecca, Rachel and Leah.*

Introduction:

## **The Month of Elul, the Beginning of Your Selichot**

As we are approaching Yom Kippur, we are in the midst of the 30 Days of the month of Elul. A time where our pursuit of repentance begins.

Chabad rabbis note that the name "Elul" is an acronym for the biblical phrase "*ani ledodi vedodi li*"—"I am my Beloved's, and my Beloved is mine." From Song of Solomon 6:3

**Son 6:3** I belong to the man I love, and he belongs to me; he pastures his flock among the lilies.

In other words, the intense love between G-d and the Jewish people comes to the surface during [Elul](#). This particular verse also indicates that during Elul, it is man who takes the initiative in his relationship with [G-d](#). In chassidic thought this verse is contrasted with a similar verse, "My Beloved is mine, and I am His," which reflects a different expression of this love relationship.

**Son 2:16** My darling is mine, and I am his, as he pastures his flock among the lilies.

**Son 2:17** Before the daytime breeze rises and the shadows flee, return, my love, like a stag or gazelle on the hills of Beter.

"My Beloved is mine" suggests the initiative is taken by divine revelation, which then evokes a response from man. "I am my Beloved's," by contrast, suggests an expression of love initiated by man, to which G-d responds.

There is also this allusion created by the Rabbis in relation to the King being in the field during the month of Elul. This parable is taught...

*"Before a king enters his city, its inhabitants go out to greet him and receive him in the field.*

*At that time, anyone who so desires is granted permission [and can] approach him and greet him. He receives them all pleasantly, and shows a smiling countenance to all"*

*This parable appears to contradict the direction suggested by the phrase, "I am my Beloved's," for the parable seems to indicate that in Elul it is G-d Who initiates the relationship, by revealing His Thirteen Attributes of Mercy. (The sages explain that these Attributes refer to an unlimited expression of divine love.) In contrast, the verse "I am my Beloved's" indicates that the initiative is taken by man.*

*In chassidic thought, this difficulty is resolved by explaining that the revelation of the king in the field, i.e., the expression of the Thirteen Attributes of Mercy in the month of Elul, generates the potential for the initiative to be taken by man. Otherwise the people of the field, ordinary men whose spiritual attainments are modest, would be incapable of turning to G-d with the inspired commitment expressed by the phrase, "I am my Beloved's."*

[https://www.chabad.org/therebbe/article\\_cdo/aid/155856/jewish/The-King-in-the-Field.htm](https://www.chabad.org/therebbe/article_cdo/aid/155856/jewish/The-King-in-the-Field.htm)

As I continue to share you will see that the initiative is man's and thus it is Adonai who responds, holding to the premise found throughout Scripture as it pertains to repentance.

It is a time we begin focusing on the upcoming season of the fall moadim. A time when Israel would be judged as a nation. It is on the calendar, the same day every year - 10<sup>th</sup> of Tishrei. - Yom Kippur.

Unlike the olam haba, the world to come, when the Books will be open and everyone will be judged according to what is in the books.

**Rev 20:12** And I saw the dead, both great and small, standing in front of the throne. Books were opened; and another book was opened, the Book of Life; and the dead were judged from what was written in the books, according to what they had done.

In the past, I have mentioned the "books" on Rosh Hashanah in which God inscribes all of our names. On Yom Kippur, the judgment entered in these books is sealed. This day is, essentially, your last appeal, your last chance to change the judgment, to demonstrate your repentance and make amends. This is the thought within Traditional Judaism.

I have conveyed my own belief that we all begin in the Book of Life according to Moshe's interaction with Adonai in which he Moshe conveys wanting to be removed from

**Exo 32:32** Now, if you will just forgive their sin! But if you won't, then, I beg you, blot me out of your book which you have written!"

**Exo 32:33** Adonai answered Moshe, "Those who have sinned against me are the ones I will blot out of my book.

And yet are removed upon our transgression...

And to be inscribed in the Book of Life again upon acceptance of Yeshua as the one whom Adonai sent to be a kapparrah, atonement for us.

Yet, just because we have accepted Yeshua, doesn't mean we stop seeking Adonai, His mercy and forgiveness from our sins.

On the contrary, we should be doing this always, but equally as important, we should still be doing it at this time. I will tell you more about the why on Yom Kippur, but today, I want to focus on the pursuit part...

I want to focus on this time that we are to pursue repentance, forgiveness.

This begins with our own introspection.

An in depth self-analysis of what we have done in the past year.

A Jewish understanding of this includes going and making amends with anyone you may have offended in the past year. Yet this concept is also consistent within the New Covenant...

**Mat 5:23** So if you are offering your gift at the Temple altar and you remember there that your brother has something against you,

**Mat 5:24** leave your gift where it is by the altar, and go, make peace with your brother. Then come back and offer your gift.

**Selichot** are Jewish repentance poems and prayers, especially those said in the time leading up to the High Holidays, and on Fast Days.

God's 13 Attributes of Mercy are a central theme throughout these prayers.

## Categories of Selichot

When Selichot are recited, these are the elements you will find...

- **Selichah** (סליחה) — Hebrew for "forgiveness." This is the default Selichah and comprises the vast majority of the Selichot service.
- **Pizmon** (פזמון) — Hebrew for "chorus." These central Selichot vary according to the day and contain a chorus which is repeated after each stanza. (Psalm 136)
- **Akeidah** (עקידה) — Hebrew for "binding", a word which specifically refers to the Binding of Isaac. This Selichah contains the theme of the *Akeidah* as a merit for God answering our prayers. It begins to appear on Rosh Hashanah eve and is placed immediately before the Pizmon.
- **Techinah** (תחינה) — Hebrew for "petition." This Selichah begins to appear on the eve of Rosh Hashanah in the Tachanun section, at the very end of the Selichot service.
- **Chatanu** (חטאנו) — Hebrew for "we have sinned." Starting on the evening before Rosh Hashanah and continuing through Yom Kippur, this Selichah is said after the final recitation of the Thirteen Attributes and before Vidui - confession. It contains as its refrain, "חטאנו צורנו סלח לנו יוצרנו", "We have sinned, our Rock, forgive us, our Creator". Perhaps the most famous Chatanu Selichah is the Eleh Ezkera Martyrology recited during Musaf (an additional service on Yom Kippur, though the recitation of the aforementioned refrain is not always followed in this particular Chatanu.

Eleh Ezkera Martyrology – The 10 Martyrs were ten rabbis living during the era of the Mishnah who were martyred by the Romans in the period after the destruction of the second Temple. Although all ten could not have been killed at the same time, since two of the rabbis listed

lived well before the other eight, they are listed together, in a manner of a dramatic poem (known as the *Eleh Ezkera*) recited on two important Jewish holidays, to elicit the proper mood of the day, one of reflection and the hope of redemption in the face of attacks to the beliefs of Judaism.

### **The Story:**

The Roman emperor Hadrian during the revolt of 132 – 135 CE, decides to martyr 10 rabbis as 'punishment' for the 10 brothers listed in the Torah who sold their brother Yosef to Ancient Egypt (Genesis 37). He justifies this by saying that the penalty for this was death (according to Jewish law, one who kidnaps his fellow Jew and sells him into slavery is punished with death. This, however, does not allow for descendants to be punished in place of their ancestors), and though this crime took place almost two thousand years earlier, there are 'none like you' 10 who are capable of rectifying this crime.

<http://leibelewaldman.blogspot.com/2012/03/eleh-ezkerah-martyrology-prayer.html>

In contemporary times, the moral of this poem has taken on a new meaning with the deaths of millions of Jews during the Holocaust. Many Jews followed Rabbi Akiva's example reciting the Shema as they were being led to the gas chambers. A liturgical link was made explicit in the *Mahzor for Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur*, a 1972 project of the Rabbinical Assembly which is the primary rabbinical association for Conservative Judaism. In an elaborate reworking of the traditional text, the martyrology was interwoven with material from Hayyim Nahman Bialik, Lillel Bavli, and other sources, connecting the Roman persecutions to later persecutions such as those by the Russian Czars and the Nazis. The section climaxes with a special version of Mourner's Kaddish which names sites of persecution and Jewish flourishing

During this time of Selichot, we focus on the 13 attributes of Adonai as found in Exodus 34:6-7, where we truly weigh what His mercy truly means to us. A mercy that is undeserving yet is freely given.

Most don't realize this, but the grace conveyed in the New Covenant through Yeshua is the same grace that is found in the Tanakh.

Think of it this way, had there been no sacrificial system, had there been no Yom Kippur, there would be no mercy or grace because we all would have died in our transgression. There would have been no means by which we could make atonement and therefore restore our place with Adonai. It was through His mercy and His grace that He instilled the sacrificial system as a way for making atonement. It would be His mercy and His grace that Yeshua would be that ultimately, final and most powerful kapparah sacrifice, once and for all.

**Heb 9:24** For the Messiah has entered a Holiest Place which is not man-made and merely a copy of the true one, but into heaven itself, in order to appear now on our behalf in the very presence of God.

**Heb 9:25** Further, he did not enter heaven to offer himself over and over again, like the cohen hagadol who enters the Holiest Place year after year with blood that is not his own;

**Heb 9:26** for then he would have had to suffer death many times — from the founding of the universe on. But as it is, he has appeared once at the end of the ages in order to do away with sin through the sacrifice of himself.

**Heb 9:27** Just as human beings have to die once, but after this comes judgment,

**Heb 9:28** so also the Messiah, having been offered once to bear the sins of many, will appear a second

time, not to deal with sin, but to deliver those who are eagerly waiting for him.

The Thirteen Attributes begin with the first "Adonai," in verse 6, and end with the word "ve-nakeh" in verse 7.

**Exo 34:6** Adonai passed before him and proclaimed: "YUD-HEH-VAV-HEH!!! Yud-Heh-Vav-Heh ( יהוה ) [*Adonai*] is God, merciful and compassionate, slow to anger, rich in grace and truth;

**Exo 34:7** showing grace to the thousandth generation, forgiving offenses, crimes and sins; yet not exonerating the guilty, but causing the negative effects of the parents' offenses to be experienced by their children and grandchildren, and even by the third and fourth generations."

This is how each attribute is applied based on the Hebrew...whereby each of these 13 attributes are contained in these verses are as follows:

1. יְתָה *Adonai* — God is merciful prior to the sin.
2. יְתָה *Adonai* — God is merciful after the sin.
3. אֵל *El* — God is merciful above and beyond.
4. רַחֵם *Rachum* — God eases punishment of the guilty and has great sympathy for human frailty.
5. וְחַנוּן *VeChanun* — God shows mercy to those who may not even deserve it, while also raising up the oppressed and consoling the downtrodden.
6. אֶרְחָמִים *Erech appayim* — God allows for the sinner to reflect, change, and repent.
7. וְרַב־חֶסֶד *VeRav chesed* — God always leans in the favor of virtue over sin and is kind to those who may not be able to muster personal merit.
8. וְאֵמֶת *VeEmet* — God is honest and keeps his word to those who stay true.
9. וְצִדְקָתוֹ לְאָלֵינוּ *Notzer chesed laalafim* — God doesn't forget the acts of the righteous and applies those merits to less deserving generations.
10. וְשָׂאֵוֶן *Noseh avon* — If the sinner repents, God forgives (even intentional sin).
11. וְפֶשַׁע *VaFeshah* — If the sinner repents, God forgives (even malicious sin).
12. וְחַטָּאָה *VeChata'ah* — God forgives sin that arose out of ignorance, carelessness, or apathy.
13. וְנִקְיָה *VeNakeh* — If one truly repents, God is merciful and forgiving.

A consistent theme found throughout Scripture:

### **Return to me and I Adonai will return to you.**

**Hos 14:1 (14:2)** Return, Isra'el, to Adonai your God, for your guilt has made you stumble.

**Hos 14:2 (14:3)** Take words with you, and return to Adonai; say to him, "Forgive all guilt, and accept what is good; we will pay instead of bulls [*the offerings of*] our lips.

Atonement comprises blood of an innocent to be applied to the altar, yet it is T'shuvah that truly restores us to Adonai.

Confession, admittance, acknowledgment of our transgression to Adonai. This is a consistent message found throughout Scripture...

1Jn 1:8 If we claim not to have sin, we are deceiving ourselves, and the truth is not in us.

1Jn 1:9 If we acknowledge our sins, then, since he is trustworthy and just, he will forgive them and purify us from all wrongdoing.

1Jn 1:10 If we claim we have not been sinning, we are making him out to be a liar, and his Word is not in us.

**Pro 28:13** He who conceals his sins will not succeed; he who confesses and abandons them will gain mercy.

Consider Nehemiah's words...

**Neh 1:6** Let your ear now be attentive and your eyes be open, so that you will listen to the prayer of your servant, which I am praying before you these days, day and night, for the people of Isra'el your servants — even as I confess the sins of the people of Isra'el that we have committed against you. Yes, I and my father's house have sinned.

And pay careful attention to verse 7...

**Neh 1:7** We have deeply offended you. We haven't observed the mitzvot, laws or rulings you ordered your servant Moshe.

“WE HAVE DEEPLY OFFENDED YOU.”

Most don't realize that their justification for not doing any of Adonai's mitzvot that apply to them is in essence offending Adonai.

So, when you say you don't have to because Yeshua fulfilled the law and I therefore am not required, ask yourself...

“Did God really say I didn't have to do it?”

Yet it is through our confession and Adonai's atonement, we receive His mercy found in forgiveness.

**Hos 14:3 (14:4)** Ashur will not save us, we will not ride on horses, and we will no longer call what we made with our hands our gods. For it is only in you that the fatherless can find mercy."

**Hos 14:4 (14:5)** "I will heal their disloyalty, I will love them freely; for my anger has turned from him.

**Hos 14:5 (14:6)** I will be like dew to Isra'el; he will blossom like a lily and strike roots like the L'vanon.

**Hos 14:6 (14:7)** His branches will spread out, his beauty be like an olive tree and his fragrance like the L'vanon.

**Hos 14:7 (14:8)** Again they will live in his shade and raise grain; they will blossom like a vine, and its aroma will be like the wine of the L'vanon.

**Hos 14:8 (14:9)** Efrayim [*will say*], 'What have I to do any more with idols?' And I, I answer and affirm him; I am like a fresh, green cypress tree; your fruitfulness comes from me."

**Hos 14:9 (14:10)** Let the wise understand these things, and let the discerning know them. For the

ways of Adonai are straight, And the righteous walk in them, but in them sinners stumble.

Let us be mindful of these 13 attributes of who Adonai is and just how significant they should be within our lives...

**Mic 7:18** Who is a God like you, pardoning the sin and overlooking the crimes of the remnant of his heritage? He does not retain his anger forever, because he delights in grace.

**Mic 7:19** He will again have compassion on us, he will subdue our iniquities. You will throw all their sins into the depths of the sea.

**Mic 7:20** You will show truth to Ya`akov and grace to Avraham, as you have sworn to our ancestors since days of long ago.

Your Selichot prayers don't need to come from a prayer book, but should comprise the elements I had mentioned earlier, while also focusing on Adonai's 13 attributes of mercy.

When both are present, I believe a truly repentant heart is exposed for Adonai to see.

This is where true T'shuvah begins and can be found.

And the seal that I shared with you earlier occurring on Yom Kippur, where your names are back in the book is because of Yeshua.

Just as Moshe had requested his name be blotted from Adonai's book, Your name has been unblotted in the book because of your acceptance of Yeshua, turning from your life that was absent of Adonai, turning / returning to Him.

**Rev 20:12** And I saw the dead, both great and small, standing in front of the throne. Books were opened; and another book was opened, the Book of Life; and the dead were judged from what was written in the books, according to what they had done.

The books being opened is not a New Covenant exclusive, but reiterates that of the Prophet Daniel...

**Dan 7:9** "As I watched, thrones were set in place; and the Ancient One took his seat. His clothing was white as snow, the hair on his head was like pure wool. His throne was fiery flames, with wheels of burning fire.

**Dan 7:10** A stream of fire flowed from his presence; thousands and thousands ministered to him, millions and millions stood before him. Then the court was convened, and the books were opened.

Everything I have shared with you today should be viewed as one consistent message. It is not exclusive to one covenant or the other. It is promised through the Old Covenant at Sinai, but is empowered through the New Covenant ratified by Yeshua.

So let us pray, whereby the components of Selichot are present, while being mindful of the 13 attributes of Adonai, which would also be considered the 13 attributes of Messiah Yeshua in that they are echad, they are one.

And let me leave you with this question...

How much stronger would the entire body of Messiah be if we emphasized a time of T'shuvah. Not just a day, nor 10 days, but an entire month prior to these periods.

