

Notes: September 12, 2015

Start: 10 AM

**Order of service:**

1. Meet and Greet
2. Introduction (if new people)
3. Ma Tovv
4. Open in Prayer for service
5. Liturgy – Sh'ma +
6. Announcements
7. Praise and Worship Songs
8. Message
9. Aaronic Blessing
10. Kiddush
11. Oneg

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 End of Elul...What Was it All About?

Start with Psalm 27 - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wMzkqhZfVqc>

Elul – the month preceding Rosh Hashanah – begins a period of intensive introspection, of clarifying life's goals, and of coming closer to God. It is a time for realizing purpose in life – rather than merely going through the motions of living in pursuit of amassing money and seeking gratification. It is a time when we step back and look at ourselves critically and honestly, as Jews have for centuries, with the intention of improving.

This concept doesn't go back as far as you think it would...

There is a custom to recite psalm 27, *L'David Hashem ori v'yish'i*, from the beginning of the month of Elul after prayer services. The source for this custom is relatively unclear and whether one should follow this custom is also under dispute. Dr. Shnayer Leiman traces the origins of this custom and provides some interesting insights.

**The following is a summary of a summary of Dr. Leiman's lecture...**

This custom is not mentioned in Shas or Shulchan Aruch "the **Code of Jewish Law.**" A composite of writings that I have not mentioned to you yet. There are various legal codes in Judaism but the Shulchan Aruch is the most widely consulted. It was authored in Safed, Israel, by Yosef Karo in 1563 and published in Venice two years later. Together with its commentaries, it is the most widely accepted compilation of Jewish law ever written.

**Note:** Again, like the Talmud and other Jewish writings, we look to them as a resource into our history, yet do not consider the rulings and decisions to be either authoritative or binding. Our subjection is to Yeshua and His rulings, His authority.

However the Mishna Brura, a work of halakha by Rabbi Yisrael Meir Kagan (1838 - 1933) tells us that it is “our” custom to recite psalm 27 from the beginning of Elul until Yom Kippur. This raises a few questions, namely, what is the connection of this psalm to this period of time, why should one say it and what is the source of this custom?

To keep it short the conclusion reached by Dr. Leiman was...

The origin of the recital of psalm 27 during Elul is from R. Eliyahu Baal Shem of Chelm in the 16th century.

You can read the entire summary through the link provided.

<http://jewishthoughtandbeyond.blogspot.com/2010/08/custom-of-reciting-psalm-27-during.html>

Rabbeinu Yitchak Abohav writes in "Menoras HaMeor":

Any intelligent person who is scheduled for trial before a mortal king will surely spend sleepless nights and days preparing his case. He will seek the advice of every knowledgeable person he knows who can help him prepare his case. He will go to great lengths to attain a favorable verdict, even if all that is at stake is but a small part of his fortune, and he faces no personal risk.

Should he not do so as well when brought to judgment before the Supreme King of Kings, the Holy Blessed One, when not only he, but his children and his fortune all hang in the balance?

As the month of Elul draws to a close, the mood of repentance becomes more urgent. Prayers for forgiveness called selichot (properly pronounced "s'lee-KHOHT,) are added to the daily cycle of religious services. Selichot are recited in the early morning, before normal daily shacharit service.

**Selichah** (סליחה) — Hebrew for "forgiveness." This is the default Selichah and comprises the vast majority of the Selichot service.

Selichot are recited from the Sunday before Rosh Hashanah until Yom Kippur. The first selichot service of the holiday season is usually a large community service, held around midnight on Motzaei Shabbat (the night after the sabbath ends; that is, after nightfall on Saturday) . The entire community, including men, women and older children, attend the service, and the rabbi gives a sermon. The remaining selichot services are normally only attended by those who ordinarily attend daily shacharit services in synagogue.

A fundamental part of the selichot service is the repeated recitation of the "Thirteen Attributes," a list of God's thirteen attributes of mercy that were revealed to Moses after the sin of the golden calf.

**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."

The four Hebrew letters of the word Elul (*aleph-lamed-vav-lamed*) are the first letters of the four words *Ani l'dodi v'dodi lee* – "I am to my Beloved and my Beloved is to me" (Song of Songs 6:3). These words sum up the relationship between God and His people.

In other words, the month preceding Rosh Hashanah is a time when God reaches out to us, in an effort to create a more spiritually-inspiring atmosphere, one that stimulates t'shuva.

Which gets us to Psalm 27...what is it intended to do for us, in reading it daily, leading up to Rosh Hashanah?

The first half of the psalm bespeaks assurance in the first verse.

**Psa 27:1** [*By David:*] Adonai is my light and salvation; whom do I need to fear? Adonai is the stronghold of my life; of whom should I be afraid?

David, then goes on to describe the enemy first from a distance (from whom will I be afraid), approaching (as evil men come near), preparing (should an army besiege me), and attacking (should war come against me), nevertheless is calm, above all danger, sacrificing and thanking the Lord. The opening verses reflects both the growing threat and its total disappearance. There follows the central word of the psalm, One. Facing all these threats, the psalmist feels the peace of unity, and throughout this first half the reader senses no doubt, no real threat.

**Psa 27:2** When evildoers assailed me to devour my flesh, my adversaries and foes, they stumbled and fell.

**Psa 27:3** If an army encamps against me, my heart will not fear; if war breaks out against me, even then I will keep trusting.

Once identifying the enemy, David then returns to seeking Adonai...

**Psa 27:4** Just one thing have I asked of Adonai; only this will I seek: to live in the house of Adonai all the days of my life, to see the beauty of Adonai and visit in his temple.

Yeshua conveys to us what David is expressing...

**Mat 7:7** "Keep asking, and it will be given to you; keep seeking, and you will find; keep knocking, and the door will be opened to you.

**Mat 7:8** For everyone who keeps asking receives; he who keeps seeking finds; and to him who keeps knocking, the door will be opened.

**Psa 27:5** For he will conceal me in his shelter on the day of trouble, he will hide me in the folds of his tent, he will set me high on a rock.

Shelter on the day of trouble...

**Mat 23:37** "Yerushalayim! Yerushalayim! You kill the prophets! You stone those who are sent to you! How often I wanted to gather your children, just as a hen gathers her chickens under her wings, but you refused!

Not one Israelite was killed as a result of the plagues enacted upon Egypt.

Not one person who followed Adonai's instruction on the first Passover perished.

Likewise, in pursuing Adonai, you obtain His protection.

**Psa 27:6** Then my head will be lifted up above my surrounding foes, and I will offer in his tent sacrifices with shouts of joy; I will sing, sing praises to Adonai.

Ultimately, it is in Adonai that we find our protection, where we find our reassurance.

It is David's faith in Adonai that ultimately protects him.

Yet, how strange it is that the second half of the psalm depicts a world so totally opposite to the point where some scholars even conclude that these are separate psalms!

Here we find a desperate search, a constant request, a pleading before the Holy One (“do not hide Your face ... do not thrust [me] aside ... do not forsake me, do not abandon me”). The author is abandoned by parents and surrounded by enemies. At the apex of this section, the psalmist cries out in agony, with a sentence he cannot finish, for it depicts the worst of all: Had I not the assurance that I would enjoy the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living .... His faith is his sole remaining thread connecting him to the land of the living. If he did not have this faith,

This part is where the connection to Elul as a month of repentance comes into focus.

**Psa 27:7** Listen, Adonai, to my voice when I cry; show favor to me; and answer me.

**Psa 27:8** "My heart said of you, 'Seek my face.' " Your face, Adonai, I will seek.

It is David's heart felt pleas and pursuit of Adonai that we are to be reminded of who we are. Sha'ul conveys this concept in Romans 3:10-13 as conveyed in Psalm 14 and Psalm 53:

**Rom 3:10** As the Tanakh puts it, "There is no one righteous, not even one! No one understands,

**Rom 3:11** no one seeks God,

**Rom 3:12** all have turned away and at the same time become useless; there is no one who shows kindness, not a single one!

In David's heart he is encouraged, directed, to Seek the face of Adonai, to pursue Him. If there is anything in the way of this pursuit, David is to do t'shuvah

**Psa 27:9** Do not hide your face from me, don't turn your servant away in anger. You are my help; don't abandon me; don't leave me, God my savior.

We see the desperation of David's impassioned plea.

Lord Don't leave me!!!

**Psa 27:10** Even though my father and mother have left me, Adonai will care for me.

**Psa 27:11** Teach me your way, Adonai; lead me on a level path because of my enemies -

**Psa 27:12** don't give me up to the whims of my foes; for false witnesses have risen against me, also those who are breathing violence.

**Psa 27:13** If I hadn't believed that I would see Adonai's goodness in the land of the living, . . .

David's final statement is just as true today as it was when he wrote this Psalm

**Psa 27:14** Put your hope in Adonai, be strong, and let your heart take courage! Yes, put your hope in Adonai!

Our hope in Adonai has been realized through the fulfillment of His promise in providing us with Mashiach.

Yeshua says...

**Joh 14:1** "Don't let yourselves be disturbed. Trust in God and trust in me.

Last month during my sermon on preparing for Elul, I incorporated Romans 3:21 – 23, but today I want to provide you with a more expanded

**Rom 3:20** For in his sight no one alive will be considered righteous on the ground of legalistic observance of Torah commands, because what Torah really does is show people how sinful they are.

**Rom 3:21** But now, quite apart from Torah, God's way of making people righteous in his sight has been made clear — although the Torah and the Prophets give their witness to it as well —

**Rom 3:22** and it is a righteousness that comes from God, through the faithfulness of Yeshua the Messiah, to all who continue trusting. For it makes no difference whether one is a Jew or a Gentile,

**Rom 3:23** since all have sinned and come short of earning God's praise.

**Rom 3:24** By God's grace, without earning it, all are granted the status of being considered righteous before him, through the act redeeming us from our enslavement to sin that was accomplished by the Messiah Yeshua.

**Rom 3:25** God put Yeshua forward as the kapparah for sin through his faithfulness in respect to his bloody sacrificial death. This vindicated God's righteousness; because, in his forbearance, he had passed over [*with neither punishment nor remission*] the sins people had committed in the past;

**Rom 3:26** and it vindicates his righteousness in the present age by showing that he is righteous himself and is also the one who makes people righteous on the ground of Yeshua's faithfulness.

**Rom 3:27** So what room is left for boasting? None at all! What kind of Torah excludes it? One that has to do with legalistic observance of rules? No, rather, a Torah that has to do with trusting.

**Rom 3:28** Therefore, we hold the view that a person comes to be considered righteous by God on the ground of trusting, which has nothing to do with legalistic observance of Torah commands.

**Rom 3:29** Or is God the God of the Jews only? Isn't he also the God of the Gentiles? Yes, he is indeed the God of the Gentiles;

**Rom 3:30** because, as you will admit, God is one. Therefore, he will consider righteous the circumcised on the ground of trusting and the uncircumcised through that same trusting.

**Rom 3:31** Does it follow that we abolish Torah by this trusting? Heaven forbid! On the contrary, we confirm Torah.

If we put this time into perspective, Elul was merely your time of preparation.

Consider it practice for what should be a daily routine in every believer's life.

Sha'ul says we are to die to ourselves daily.

Imagine what the body of Messiah would truly be like if everyone did what you have done. An entire month searching ourselves, reaching out to Adonai to show us His way and seeking to right wrongs that have been made in our lives.

I believe the body of Messiah would be a whole lot stronger than it is today.

Think about it.