

Lasting Change

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A Sacred Time – Elul #5

Elul is the month of repentance that leads up to Rosh Hashanah, when we crown G-d king of the universe. This coronation really means making it clear to ourselves and declaring publicly that the universe has a Creator and an Orchestrator of absolutely everything that exists. The Maggid of Mezeritch would say that if a person has an audience with the king, he's going to need time to prepare. If he shows up at the palace in soiled garments, unkempt and disorganized, he could be jailed for showing gross disrespect. Similarly, we've been given a whole month to get ourselves together so that, when the big day [really two days] arrives, we're presentable. But what does it really mean to be ready? What are the garments that we need to put in order?

Reb Nosson, z"l, explains that we blow the *shofar* day after day throughout Elul to express our deep cry of desire to return to G-d. Returning to the Source is a process. It takes time and internal movement. We blow the *shofar* during Elul,

day after day, to remind us of this fact. And on Rosh Hashanah itself, we sound it to demonstrate the vast energy that's needed to accomplish a complete *teshuvah*. Although the simple feeling of regret is a genuine degree of *teshuvah*, it's only after I completely fix the breach so that I won't repeat the sin that I have really fixed the problem.

Master of the World! Please help me to keep up my efforts to do teshuvah. I want so badly to turn to You time and time again, day after day, until I meet my goal of genuine, lasting change.