

Laugh!

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A Sacred Time – Elul #2

Rebbe Nachman reveals that Elul is an acronym in Hebrew for King Solomon's famous words about the Woman of Valor: "*Oz v'hadar levushah vatischak l'yom acharon*"—"Strength and splendor are her garment and she will laugh till her last day." This is the attitude we need to have during this month. We need to really know that we are beloved to G-d. This is why the zodiac sign of Elul is the maiden. This shows how beloved the Jewish people are to G-d, like His freshly betrothed bride. Specifically in the month leading up to judgment, when we work to correct our flaws, we need to work on knowing our strength and splendor. We know that a sincere *teshuvah* really does work to transform the past, and so we can laugh until our

last day. We are like a beloved new bride who has no past at all.

Breslover Chasidim would explain the reference to a garment. By returning to G-d we enrobe our souls in completely new attitudes and actions. This naturally causes one to "rejoice in trembling"—to unify our joyous love and awed reverence of G-d.

Dear G-d, show me how to transform sin into merit. Help me shed my old skin and take on a newer better self which is less selfish and shallow. Let me feel the joy of my intrinsic connection to You so that I can laugh until my last day.