

I am my Beloved's and my Beloved is mine

by Rabbi Greg

This week is Shabbat Re'eh and also the last shabbat in the month of Av. Next week we begin the month of Elul. That little sliver-moon that we are watching in the Winter sky means that Rosh Hashanah is just over four weeks away and Yom Kippur 40 days away. In Rabbinic tradition these 40 days correspond to the 40 days that Moses was up on Mt Sinai. Just as he did then, so Jews for centuries have spent the month of Elul in reflection, study and preparation for the High Holy Days.

Each morning to wake up our senses and alert our soul to the need to get itself into order, we blow the shofar in anticipation of Rosh Hashanah. The Hebrew word Elul is an acronym for the verse Ani L'dodi v'dodi li – I am my beloved's and my beloved is mine, from the Song of Songs.

What does Elul have to do with love? The rabbis taught that if we show our love of G-d throughout the month in study, making amends with any friends or family that we have offended over the past year, and doing acts of tzedakah, then G@d in turn shows Her love for us through helping us make our way painlessly through the High Holy Day period. Put as simply as: what you put in during Elul you get back during the 10 Days of t'shuvah from Rosh Hashanah to Yom Kippur. To help us all in the process, we have put together a whole bunch of resources for reflection throughout this month.

Wishing you a Shabbat Shalom and a fruitful Elul.

Rabbi Greg