

He Will Appease His Land and His People

Aryeh Leib Thorne Toren · 18 September 2026

Ha'azinu 6th · Shabbat Shuva · the oath, the land, and the people still named

He Will Appease His Land and His People

Daily Learning Portions for 29 Elul 5786 — Elul Expansion

Friday, 11 September 2026 · כ"ט אלול תשפ"ו · Haazinu, 6th · Erev Rosh Hashanah 5787 Day 29 of Elul · twelfth of the twelve monthly-cheshbon days (today = Elul of the year now closing) Rosh Hashanah 5787 begins this evening at sunset · first day falls on Shabbat, 12 September 2026 / 1 Tishrei · second day Sunday, 13 September 2026 / 2 Tishrei Ashkenaz Selichot: a lengthier recitation this morning · omit Tachanun · no shofar today (to separate Elul custom from the biblical blast of the festival) · Hatarat Nedarim after Shacharit · extra Tehillim 85–87 On this date: fifth day of Creation — swarming life of the waters and birds of the heavens, with the blessing “be fruitful and multiply” (Bereishit 1:20–23); birth of the Tzemach Tzedek, 29 Elul 5549 / 1789; death of the false prophet Hananiah son of Azzur on the last day of the year (Yirmeyahu 28)

Today's Daily Learning Portions

- Cycle — Portion
- **Chumash** — Parshat Haazinu, 6th aliyah — Devarim 32:40–32:43
- **Tehillim** — Chapters 140–150 (Elul extra chapters: 85–87 per Hayom Yom / Baal Shem Tov custom)
- **Tanya** — Iggeret HaKodesh, beginning of Epistle 19
- **Rambam (3 ch.)** — Hilchot She'ar Avot HaTum'ah 12–14
- **Rambam (1 ch.)** — Hilchot Ishut 15
- **Sefer HaMitzvot** — Positive Commandment 105 — ritual impurity of *zera*
- **Hayom Yom** — Elul 29 / Erev Rosh Hashanah — Selichot before dawn; remain standing at *Vayomer David*; Hatarat Nedarim with a *minyan*; birth of the Tzemach Tzedek; from the Alter Rebbe: “We have absolutely no conception how precious to G-d is the body of a Jew.”
- **Seasonal overlay** — Last day of 5786; King still in the Field until sunset; lengthier Selichot; no weekday shofar; annulment of vows; cemetery visitation of the righteous where custom; candle-lighting for Shabbat and Yom Tov before sunset; evening greetings *Leshana tova tikatev veteichatem*; apple in honey at the night meal

Seasonal frame. Yesterday the song said *re'u atah* — see now that I, I am He. Today the same speaker raises a hand to heaven and swears by His own life. The last weekday blast has already fallen silent, not because the Field closed early, but because the festival's shofar must not be confused with Elul's custom. What remains of the year is a morning of longer Selichot, an annulment of vows before a court of ten, the last three extra chapters of Tehillim before Tishrei,

and four verses in which an oath, a sword, blood, and a strange comfort stand together: the nations will be told to sing for His people, because He will avenge the blood of His servants and *vekhipei admato amo* — He will appease His land and His people.

The twelfth of the twelve Elul days answers for Elul itself. The King is still in the Field. After sunset He is no longer walking the rows in work-clothes. He is seated. The work of this morning is to arrive at that seat having released what cannot be carried, having named what the year fed, and having remembered that the body walking into the meal tonight is, in the Alter Rebbe's words, precious beyond our conception.

I. The Sixth Aliyah: An Oath by Life, a Sword That Can Be Retrieved, a Land That Is a People

“For I raise My hand to heaven, and say: As I live forever.” (Devarim 32:40)

Rashi: this is the language of an oath. He lifts His hand toward Himself and swears by His own life. The song that spent yesterday teaching Israel to *see* now binds the seeing to a vow. Human kings swear by a higher name. The Rock swears by the fact that He lives, and that the living is *le'olam*.

Elul's last morning is not a mood. It is the hour in which the year's speech is measured against an oath that does not expire when the sun sets. *Cheshbon hanefesh* that treats teshuvah as a seasonal atmosphere has not yet heard 32:40. The Speaker is not experimenting with mercy. He is under His own word.

“When I sharpen My flashing sword, and My hand grasps judgment, I will bring vengeance upon My adversaries and repay those who hate Me.” (32:41)

Rashi hears two notes at once. The sword is made to flash — *barak charbi* — and the hand takes hold of *mishpat*, leaving the attribute of mercy for the enemies who “helped to do harm” (Zechariah 1:15). The Mechilta adds what a human archer cannot do: a man looses an arrow and cannot call it back; the Holy One looses lightning and still holds judgment in His hand. Retribution here is not a projectile that has left the will of its Sender. It remains graspable.

That is the Elul architecture of limited power under higher law. Judgment is not a flood that escapes its banks. It is held. The same Hand that hid a Face in the earlier stanzas of the song can retrieve what it sent. A civic reading is native, not imported: authority that cannot recall its own blow is not the authority this verse describes. Vengeance on adversaries is not a license for a people to baptize its anger as liturgy. The hand that grasps *mishpat* is His.

“I will make My arrows drunk with blood, and My sword shall devour flesh — with the blood of the slain and the captives, from the first breach of the enemy.” (32:42)

Rashi: the payment answers both the blood of Israel's slain and the captives taken from them, and it reaches back to the first breach the enemy ever made. When punishment comes upon the nations, the account is not only the last insult. It is the archive of the first.

The last day of a year is a poor time to pretend that breaches have no first day. Elul *cheshbon* that starts the ledger at last week's failure has not read "from the first breach." The verse is first a word about the nations. It is also a warning to a soul that has been explaining itself only from the latest chapter. Teshuvah that wants to be sealed tonight has to be willing to name the first opening through which the year leaked.

"Sing aloud, O nations, His people! For He will avenge the blood of His servants, and will render vengeance to His adversaries, and He will appease His land, His people." (32:43)

Rashi: at that time the nations will praise Israel — see now what this nation's praise is: they cleaved to the Holy One through all that befell them and did not forsake Him. He will avenge the blood. He will repay robbery and violence. *Vekhiper* is an expression of conciliation, as in Jacob's "I will appease his face." And what is His land? His people. When the nation is comforted, the land is comforted. So Tehillim 85:2: "You have favored Your land; You have returned the captivity of Jacob." Sifrei records the split that must be kept honest. Rabbi Yehudah reads the surrounding section as addressed to Israel. Rabbi Nechemiah reads it as addressed to the nations. The sixth aliyah can bear both without flattening either. The nations are commanded to sing for a people that did not trade the Rock for a shelter that eats fat and cannot stand. Israel is told that the end of the song is not only a sword. It is *kippur* of land and people together.

On Erev Rosh Hashanah the verse does work that no slogan can replace. The year is not closed by self-estimate. It is closed by a promised appeasement that joins *adamah* and *am*. A people that treats land as a backdrop and a land that treats people as inventory have both misread the last line of the aliyah. Covenant binds them. The comfort named here is not amnesia. It is the repair of a wound that Heaven still calls by both names.

Readings that must be kept distinct. The vengeance of 32:41–42 is not a human policy paper. The singing of 32:43 is not a demand that the nations already understand. The *kippur* of land and people is not a substitute for the *teshuvah* of this morning. Rabbi Yehudah and Rabbi Nechemiah disagree about the addressee of the section; they do not disagree that the Speaker is the same One who swore by His own life. Synthesis for the season: hold the oath, refuse to baptize private anger as the flashing sword, and walk into tonight's meal knowing that the comfort Scripture names is *admato amo* — land and people in one breath.

II. Tehillim 140–150 and the Extra Chapters 85–87

The ordinary cycle on the twenty-ninth of a month finishes the book: from "Rescue me, Lord, from evil men" (140) through the last *Halleluyah*. Erev Rosh Hashanah therefore does what the calendar almost never does on a weekday. It ends Tehillim.

Psalm 140 asks to be kept from violent hands. Psalm 141 is the evening offering of speech: "Set a guard, Lord, over my mouth." Psalm 142 is the voice from the cave. Psalm 143 refuses to enter judgment with the servant, "for no living being is righteous before You." Psalm 144 blesses the Lord who trains hands for battle and asks that sons be as plants, daughters as cornerstones. Psalm 145 is *Ashrei* — the kingship psalm that will be said tomorrow in a different key. Psalms 146–150 close the book in mounting praise that no longer argues.

The Baal Shem Tov's extra chapters today are 85–87. Psalm 85 is the Rashi of 32:43 already waiting in the Psalter: “You have favored Your land; You have returned the captivity of Jacob. You have forgiven the iniquity of Your people.” Psalm 86 is a poor man's prayer on the last morning of a year. Psalm 87 names the gates of Zion and the people registered there.

A family table can hold one line from this confluence without a sermon. The book ends today. The extra chapter that Elul assigned to this dawn already contains the last line of the sixth aliyah. Favor the land; return the people. The same request will be on the table tonight in the form of an apple and honey.

III. Tanya: Light Inside a Garment — Even Moshe Did Not Grasp the Inwardness of Chochmah

Iggeret HaKodesh 19 opens from “He wraps Himself with light as with a garment” (Tehillim 104:2). Infinite light cannot create finite worlds without an intermediary that itself participates in both sides of the chasm. Torah is that intermediary: inward light whose measure is longer than the earth, and a revealed garment that can touch a finite world.

The Arizal, in *Likkutei Torah* to Ki Tissa and Vayikra, is cited at once. Moshe Rabbeinu did not apprehend the *pnimiyut* of supernal *chochmah* — *abba* of Atzilut — and certainly not *keter*, *arich anpin*, whose very name means a countenance of infinite extent. What he reached was the *achorayim* of *chochmah* vested in *binah*, and through *binah* in the seven lower *sefirot* called *ze'er anpin*. There, in the inner dimension of *netzach*, *hod*, *yesod*, and *malchut* — the powers that lower the higher lights into worlds beneath Atzilut — his prophecy stood.

The letter will go on to distinguish prophetic grasp from Torah's grasp, and to show how the garment of *nigleh* conceals the light of *pnimiyut*. For Erev Rosh Hashanah the opening is already enough, and it is severe in the right way.

Even Moshe did not hold the inwardness of the highest wisdom. The day of judgment does not require a soul to pretend it has. What it requires is fidelity to the garment that was given — the revealed Torah whose laws of fit and unfit, innocent and guilty, pure and impure, descend through the *middot*. Kindness writes one ruling; severity writes another. The infinite light is not absent from those rulings. It is clothed in them.

Elul *teshuvah* that tries to leap past the garment into a private infinity has misread the letter. The King who sat in the Field all month is the same King whose light reaches a finite year only through measure. Returning tonight is not becoming Moshe. It is taking the garment that was placed in the mouth and the heart — yesterday's *lo bashamayim hi* still in force — and wearing it into the meal.

The civic sting is again native. Limited apprehension is not a defect to be denied at the gate of a new year. It is the condition under which consent, law, and return remain human. A politics that claims the inwardness of *keter* will dominate. A covenant that accepts the garment can be judged, and can be repaired.

IV. Rambam and Sefer HaMitzvot: Other Fathers of Impurity, the Mitzvah of Seed, the Duty to Be Fruitful

The three-chapter cycle continues Hilchot She'ar Avot HaTum'ah, chapters 12–14 — further roots of impurity that are not the primary *avot* treated earlier: transmissions, carriers, foods and liquids, and the ordinary paths by which tum'ah moves through a world that still has a Mishkan-logic even when the House is not standing. Sefer HaMitzvot assigns today Positive Commandment 105: we are commanded concerning the ritual impurity of semen; when it is contracted, its laws must be kept.

The one-chapter cycle is Hilchot Ishut 15: the husband's duty of *onah* and of *peru u'revu*; fulfillment in a son and a daughter; the ten-year mark; disputes of infertility; the rabbinic insistence that a man not desist from being fruitful even after the biblical minimum; modest and honoring conduct inside a marriage.

On any other Friday these chapters would be technical. On the last morning of the year they sit next to Hayom Yom without strain. Impurity of seed is not a disgust. It is the law's way of saying that the source of life is holy enough to create a status. *Peru u'revu* is not a demographic slogan. It is the first blessing spoken over living creatures on this very date in Creation, now bound upon a Jewish household as mitzvah. A year that treated the body as instrument, brand, or afterthought is confronted here by two facts at once: seed can render impure because it is not trivial, and a marriage is commanded to seek a next generation. The purity system does not despise the body. It refuses to let the body be ordinary.

V. Hayom Yom: The Preciousness of a Jewish Body, and the Last Morning's Halachah

The Rebbe's calendar note for 29 Elul in 5703 records the day's practice: Selichot in the last watch of the night; no *nefilat apayim*; Hatarat Nedarim with ten; and, in that year's alignment, *eiruv tavshilin*. It records the birth of the Tzemach Tzedek in 5549. Then the line that should govern the table tonight.

From the Alter Rebbe's aphorisms: we have absolutely no conception how precious to God is the body of a Jew.

Not the soul only. The body. The body that stood in Selichot before dawn, that will dip apple in honey after nightfall, that will hear no shofar this morning so that tomorrow's and Sunday's blasts can be what they are. The same body the Rambam surrounds with laws of seed and fruitfulness. The same body the fifth day of Creation already blessed with swarming life.

Tzemach Tzedek — “a sprouting of righteousness” — is born on the last day of the year. A sprout is a body-event. It is not an idea. The third Rebbe would write tens of thousands of pages and stand in the breach against a regime that wanted Jewish bodies remade by edict. The coincidence of his birth with Erev Rosh Hashanah is not ornament. It is a comment on 32:43. Land and people are appeased in the same breath. A sprout of righteousness is how that breath looks when it takes flesh in a generation.

Hananiah son of Azzur died on this date. Jeremiah had named the year. The false prophet had promised a short, convenient restoration. The last day of the year closed the account. Erev Rosh Hashanah has no patience for a prophecy that shortens the road by lying about the yoke. Teshuvah is not Hananiah. Teshuvah is Jeremiah's willingness to let the year end on the true name of things.

Practice recorded for the morning. Longer Selichot. Remain standing at *Vayomer David*. Annul vows that should not travel into 5787. Do not blow the shofar. Do not say Tachanun. Prepare the house for a festival that is also Shabbat: food, flame, candles before sunset. Visit the graves of the righteous where that is the custom — not as necromancy, but because the resting place of a tzaddik is an opening for petition on the last day of a year.

For 5787 the first day is Shabbat. All Shabbat and first-day needs must be in place before candle-lighting. The festival shofar will not be heard until Sunday. That silence is itself a teaching: custom and commandment are not the same blast.

VI. Elul, Bechirah, and Limited Power under Higher Law

The King has been in the Field since the first of Elul. Accessibility was the month's mercy: anyone who wished could approach, and the countenance was cheerful. Accessibility is not the abolition of the throne. After sunset the King is seated. The difference is not that love ended. The difference is that the year's remaining speech will be heard from the seat of judgment.

Free will is the ground of that hearing. A return that could not have been otherwise is not return. The sixth aliyah's oath is addressed to a people that can still sing or still refuse. Hatarat Nedarim is the legal recognition of the same fact: speech binds, and speech, before a court, can be released when it was never meant to become a second Torah. A republic of the covenant understands this without translation. Consent that cannot be revised under law is domination. Vows that cannot be examined before witnesses are a private tyranny. The last morning of the year is built to prevent both.

Non-domination in this register is not a campaign. It is 32:41: the Hand grasps judgment; the arrow does not escape the Sender. It is Tanya 19: even Moshe does not own *pnimiyut chochmah*; the garment is how infinite light becomes livable law. It is Hayom Yom: the body is precious, therefore it is not available for a regime, a habit, or a self-contempt to treat as cheap.

Personal and national return meet in *vekhiper admato amo*. A soul can do *cheshbon* without a land; a land without a people is not the land of the verse. The song will not let the last day of 5786 split them.

VII. Practical Avodah for Erev Rosh Hashanah

1. **Finish the twelve.** Today answers for Elul itself. Write, briefly, what this month actually was — not what it was supposed to be. One page is enough. Name one approach to the King that was real and one that was theater.
2. **Release what cannot be carried.** Hatarat Nedarim after Shacharit is not a formality. Prepare the language. Do not walk into candle-lighting still bound to a vow that was never meant to rule 5787.

3. **Keep custom and commandment distinct.** No shofar this morning. Let the silence work. The blast that belongs to the throne will come when the day that is Shabbat has passed.
 4. **Guard the mouth that Psalm 141 asked to be guarded.** The last weekday speech of a year is already part of the record. Speak to spouse and children as if the garment of Torah is on the body that Hayom Yom called precious.
 5. **Prepare the table as theology.** Apple in honey is not folklore. It is 32:43 in food: favor the land, sweeten the year, refuse Hananiah's shortcut. Head of a fish, pomegranate, tzimmes — each is a petition with a body.
 6. **Give the body its due.** Sleep what can be slept after Selichot. Eat a real Erev meal before sunset. The preciousness the Alter Rebbe named is not served by arriving at the throne depleted as a proof of seriousness.
 7. **One act of zikui harabbim.** A greeting given carefully — *Leshana tovah tikatev veteichatem* — is already communal. Add one concrete help so that another household can light on time.
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VIII. Chinuch — Points for the Table Before Candles

- Tonight the King stops walking the field in work-clothes and sits down. We spent a month allowed to approach Him among the rows. Now we approach a seat. Both are love. They are not the same posture.
 - We do not blow shofar today so that we will not confuse a custom with the mitzvah. Knowing the difference between a good habit and a commandment is part of becoming a person who can be trusted with either.
 - Hashem swears by His own life. We do not swear that way. That is why we annul vows this morning: human speech is powerful enough to bind and humble enough to need a court.
 - “He will appease His land and His people.” The land is not a backdrop. The people are not tourists on it. Comfort, when it comes, comes to both.
 - The Alter Rebbe said we have no conception how precious a Jewish body is to God. That is why we dress for the meal, wash, bless, and do not speak of ourselves as accidents.
 - The Tzemach Tzedek was born today. A sprout is small and alive. Righteousness that does not take a body is not the sprout he was named for.
 - Psalm 85, assigned to this dawn as extra Tehillim, already says the last line of today's Chumash. Favor the land. Return the people. That is the prayer inside the honey.
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IX. Synthesis

The sixth aliyah of Haazinu on the last day of 5786 does not soften the song. It oaths it. A hand is raised to heaven. A sword is sharpened and still held. Blood is remembered from the first breach. Then the nations are told to sing, and land and people are named as one object of *kippur*.

Tanya refuses the fantasy that a finite soul will grasp the inwardness of *keter* before candle-lighting. The light is real. The garment is how it reaches a year. Rambam will not let seed be trivial or fruitfulness optional. Hayom Yom will not let the body be an afterthought on the day the Tzemach Tzedek entered the world and a false prophet left it.

Elul's work was approach. Tonight's work is to be found standing, vows examined, mouth guarded, table set, children told the truth about custom and commandment, and the last extra psalms already containing the comfort the aliyah promised. The Field has not failed. It has completed its month. The King who smiled among the rows is the King who sits. *Vekhiper admato amo*. May the appeasement named in the song be the writing named in the greeting.

Bibliography

Primary — Daily Portions

- Deuteronomy 32:40–43, with Rashi and Sifrei. Sefaria: Devarim 32 · Chabad Daily Torah Reading, 11 Sep 2026
- Tehillim 140–150; extra Elul chapters 85–87. Chabad Daily Tehillim · Sefaria: Psalms 85
- Tanya, Iggeret HaKodesh, Epistle 19 (beginning). Chabad Daily Tanya · Sefaria: Tanya, Iggeret HaKodesh 19
- Mishneh Torah, She'ar Avot HaTum'ah 12–14; Ishut 15; Sefer HaMitzvot, Positive Commandment 105. Chabad Daily Rambam · Sefer HaMitzvot for the date
- Hayom Yom, 29 Elul. Chabad Hayom Yom

Calendar, Customs, History

- Chabad calendar: Friday, 11 September 2026 / 29 Elul 5786 — Erev Rosh Hashanah. [Day page](#)
- Laws and customs: lengthier Selichot; omit Tachanun; no shofar; Hatarat Nedarim; cemetery visitation; RH begins at sunset; greetings and symbolic foods. Same day page.
- Birth of the Tzemach Tzedek, 29 Elul 5549 (1789); fifth day of Creation; death of Hananiah son of Azzur (Yirmeyahu 27–28). [Chabad day history](#)
- Rosh Hashanah 2026 timing and practice (first day on Shabbat; shofar on Sunday). [Chabad RH 2026 FAQ](#)

Classical and Chassidic

- Rashi and Sifrei on Haazinu 32:40–43 (Rabbi Yehudah and Rabbi Nechemiah). Sefaria Sifrei Devarim
- Mechilta on the retrieved arrow / grasped judgment (cited by Rashi to 32:41).
- Arizal, *Likkutei Torah*, Ki Tissa and Vayikra — on Moshe's apprehension of *chochmah* (cited in Tanya IH 19).
- Rabbi Schneur Zalman of Liadi, *Likkutei Torah* / *Iggeret HaKodesh*; the Elul metaphor of the King in the Field (*Likkutei Torah*, Re'eh).
- Rabbi Menachem Mendel of Lubavitch, Tzemach Tzedek — responsa and Chassidic writings; biographical frame on Chabad.org.

High Holiday and Elul

- Psalm 27 throughout Elul and the Days of Awe; Psalm 85 as extra chapter corresponding to 32:43.
- Hatarat Nedarim texts in standard *siddurim* / *machzorim*.
- Symbolic foods of the RH evening meal: apple in honey, head of a fish, pomegranate, tzimmes.

Covenantal-republican points of contact (used only where the text itself supports them)

- Philip Pettit, *Republicanism: A Theory of Freedom and Government* — freedom as non-domination; power that remains recallable under law.
- Eric Nelson, *The Hebrew Republic* — classical reception of biblical monarchy as limited under divine law.
- The verses themselves remain primary: a Hand that still grasps its own judgment; a garment that makes infinite light livable; vows examined before witnesses; a body that is not available for cheap use.

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