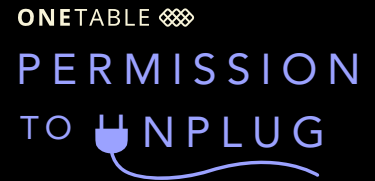


# An Elul Sourcesheet



I am my beloved's and my beloved is mine...

(Ani L'Dodi v'Dodi Li) Song of Songs 6:3

There is a hint in the verse 'I am my Beloved's and my Beloved is mine' that the first letters spell Elul and the last letters have a numerical value of 40. This alludes to the forty days from the beginning of Elul until Yom Kippur for during these forty days repentance is [more readily] accepted so a person should bring their heart near to their Beloved [the divine] with teshuva (return, sometimes translated as repentance), and then the Beloved will be close to them to accept the teshuva with love.

Mishnah Berurah 581:1

Why do we hear that, in Elul, the king is in the field?

Before a king [or monarch] enters their city, its inhabitants go out to greet them and receive them in the field. At that time, anyone who so desires is granted permission [and can] approach them and greet them. They receive them all pleasantly, and show a smiling countenance to all...

Likutei Torah, the Alter Rebbe

*Essentially this is our time during the year to have an audience with the divine (who is referred to throughout High Holidays liturgy as king and with royal imagery).*

**When we forget the essence of our own soul... everything becomes confused and in doubt**

The primary teshuva (returning), that which immediately lights the darkness, is when a person returns to themselves, to the root of their soul – then they will immediately return to the divine, to the soul of all souls.

Rav Kook, Orot HaTeshuva

What does Unplugging have to do with it? \_\_\_\_\_

Wellbeing [is] part of the path to the divine, for it is impossible to understand or have any knowledge of the Creator when one is not well. Therefore one must avoid anything that may harm the body and one must cultivate healthful habits.

Maimonides, Hilchos De'os 4:1

What does Shabbat have to do with it? \_\_\_\_\_

On Shabbat, when the divine bestows blessings for the entire week, time connects to something beyond it. Similarly, Elul, just before the new year, is a time when even in this world, one can connect to the eternal.

Sefat Emet, Deuteronomy, For the Month of Elul 3:2

What is the deal with Permission to Unplug? \_\_\_\_\_

Remember Shabbat and keep it holy. Six days you shall labor and do all your work, but the seventh day is a sabbath of the divine: you shall not do any work... For in six days the divine made heaven and earth and sea, and all that is in them, and rested on the seventh day; therefore the divine blessed Shabbat and made it holy.

Exodus 20:8-11

What was Creation's climactic culmination? The act of stopping. Why should God have considered it so important to stop? Rabbi Elijah of Vilna put it this way: God stopped to show us that what we create becomes meaningful to us only once we stop creating it and start to think about why we did so. The implication is clear. We could let the world wind us up and set us to marching, like mechanical dolls that go and go until they fall over, because they don't have a mechanism that allows them to pause. But that would make us less than human. We have to remember to stop because we have to stop to remember.

[Judith Shulevitz, Bring Back the Sabbath, NY Times, March 2, 2003](#)

If you were really wondering what type of activities are prohibited on Shabbat...

The primary categories of labor prohibited on Shabbat, which number forty-less-one. They are grouped in accordance with their function: One who sows, and one who plows, and one who reaps, and one who gathers sheaves into a pile, and one who threshes, removing the kernel from the husk, and one who winnows threshed grain in the wind, and one who selects the inedible waste from the edible, and one who grinds, and one who sifts the flour in a sieve, and one who kneads dough, and one who bakes. Additional primary categories of prohibited labor are the following: One who shears wool, and one who whitens it, and one who combs the fleece and straightens it, and one who dyes it, and one who spins the wool, and one who stretches the threads of the warp in the loom, and one who constructs two meshes, tying the threads of the warp to the base of the loom, and one who weaves two threads, and one who severs two threads for constructive purposes, and one who ties a knot, and one who unties a knot, and one who sews two stitches with a needle, as well as one who tears a fabric in order to sew two stitches. One who traps a deer, or any living creature, and one who slaughters it, and one who flays it, and one who salts its hide, a step in the tanning process, and one who tans its hide, and one who smooths it, removing hairs and veins, and one who cuts it into measured parts. One who writes two letters and one who erases in order to write two letters. One who builds a structure, and one who dismantles it, one who extinguishes a fire, and one who kindles a fire. One who strikes a blow with a hammer to complete the production process of a vessel (Rabbeinu Hananel), and one who carries out an object from domain to domain. All these are primary categories of labor, and they number forty-less-one.

[Talmud Bavli Shabbat 73a:6-9](#)

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