



SHOSHANA JUDELMAN

TORAH TIDBITS CONTRIBUTOR

## Growing Our Garments

The Previous Lubavitcher Rebbe used to say that on the Shabbos before Rosh Chodesh Elul he could already “smell the aroma and feel the wind of teshuva” in the air.

My favorite understanding of the concept of teshuva is “return.” A return to the real you- the “You” Hashem sees and knows you can become.

Last week in parshas Eikev, Moshe Rabbeinu told us that during the Forty Years in the desert, שְׂמֹאלְךָ לֹא בָלְתָה מֵעֵלְיךָ.

Your clothing did not wear out from upon you

Rashi explains that this refers to the miraculous way that the Clouds of Glory kept our clothes freshly pressed and laundered as well as the fact that our clothing grew with us.

In Chassidus, a person’s thoughts, speech and actions are called “levushim,” the garments or “clothing” of the soul. They are the ways through which the soul interacts with the body and with other people, the pathways through which a soul interacts with the world.

In the desert, Hashem was constantly teaching us Torah. He was fully supporting our growth, guiding us exactly where to go, when to fight, and how to stop and rest. And so the growth of our “clothing,” both physical

and spiritual, was constant and continuous.

Since entering Eretz Yisrael, Hashem handed over the responsibility of maintaining our garments to us. We are responsible for making sure they are up-to-date and fitting for the lives we want to live.

But the path is much less clear to us. We encounter stumbling blocks. And we get stuck.

Part of the growth we are looking for is in realizing when we have outgrown old garments. Noticing that the way I think about myself is no longer appropriate to who I am, that the way I speak to my loved ones comes from a place of hurt rather than a place of connection, that my actions reflect the defensiveness of a child rather than the expansiveness and generosity of emotional balance.

It takes a lot of strength and courage to see the ways our garments no longer fit us. And even more to change them.

Elul, with its air of teshuva and change, is an auspicious time for this type of personal growth.

But we have to believe that it is possible before we even begin.

R’ Levi Yitzchak of Berdichev helps us get there.

He points out that according to Chazal, teshuva is embodied in the concept of “Now.” “Now” tells us that each moment holds the potential for growth.

He points out that as Hashem is constantly creating the world, so too He is continuously

creating each one of us.

As we are breathing, we can imagine each exhalation as old energy leaving us, old garments returning to their source.

And we can understand that each and every inhalation is new energy, new life and new potential being sent back to us from Hashem. With every breath that He sends us, He is supporting us, believing in us, and giving us the strength to improve. To create new garments and to grow into them.

May Hashem bless each one of us to tap into the transformational energy of Elul, to have the courage to look at the state of our garments and believe in the possibility of sizing up, and to inhale the teshuva-scented air knowing that the ability for growth is as close as the next breath. ■

**Shoshana** teaches Chassidus for the Shirat David Community in Efrat as well as in Jerusalem for Midreshet Rachel v'Chaya and Shiviti Women's Institute. She is a guide in Poland with JRoots and co-leads inspirational trips to Ukraine and around Eretz Yisroel. Shoshana has also been a guide at Yad Vashem since 2014.

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## ISRAEL'S PROPERTY AND COMMUNITY MATCHMAKER

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RETURN OF ALL OUR HOSTAGES AND  
THE SAFETY OF OUR SOLDIERS

### FEATURED PROPERTIES IN ANGLO COMMUNITIES

<b>JERUSALEM</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Large home</li> <li>• 6 bedrooms</li> <li>• Beautiful garden</li> <li>• Pool</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: right;">₪8M / \$2.37M</p>	<b>JERUSALEM</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• German Colony</li> <li>• Brand New</li> <li>• 3 Bedrooms</li> <li>• 2 Bathrooms</li> <li>• Sukkah balcony</li> <li>• Parking &amp; Storage</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: right;">₪7.95M / \$2.35M</p>
<b>BEIT SHEMESH</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mishkafayim</li> <li>• Luxury Apartment</li> <li>• 5 large bedrooms</li> <li>• Over 250 SQM</li> <li>• One floor</li> <li>• Rare opportunity</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: right;">₪12.5M / \$3.7M</p>	<b>ASHKELON</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Luxury towers</li> <li>• Sea views</li> <li>• 40 units left</li> <li>• Gym</li> <li>• Pool &amp; private spa</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: right;">Starting Price ₪2.49M / \$740K</p>
<b>EDEN HILLS</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Villa</li> <li>• 7 Bedrooms</li> <li>• Over 270 SQM</li> <li>• Private parking</li> <li>• Huge Garden</li> <li>• 10 Mins from RBS</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: right;">₪6.95M / \$2.06M</p>	<b>CARMEI GAT</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New Project</li> <li>• Private Parking</li> <li>• Sukkah Balcony</li> <li>• 2-4 Bedrooms</li> <li>• Ready: 2027</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: right;">3 bdrms starting at: ₪2.1M / \$620K</p>

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