

## Regret and Return

Whoever does not mourn as the sages commanded is being cruel. Rather, one should be afraid, should worry, should examine one's deeds, and make *teshuvah*.

If one member of a group dies, the entire group should worry. For the first three days, one should see himself as if a sword is drawn over his neck. From the third day until the seventh, one should consider it as if that sword is in the corner. From that time onward, as if it is passing before him in the market.

All of this is so that a person should prepare himself, make *teshuvah*, and awaken from his sleep.

*Maimonides, Laws of Mourning 13:12*

Even though the sound of the shofar is a scriptural decree, there is an allusion in the sound beyond the words of the decree, namely: Wake, you slumberers, from your sleep! You, who are drowsy, stir yourselves from your rest! Search through your acts, return in *teshuvah* and remember your creator!

*Maimonides, Laws of Teshuvah 3:4*

And every person is a dam between past and future.  
When he dies the dam is broken and the past breaks through into the future  
And there is no early or late. Time is one  
Like our God, our time is one.  
And the memory of the dam is a blessing.

*Yehuda Amichai*

*Translated by Rabbi Steven Sager*

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