

10 facts About the Biblical Month of Elul

By T.W. Tramm

THE biblical month of Elul begins on Sunday, September 1, 2019.

Here are 10 interesting facts about Elul.

1. The name Elul originates from the Akkadian word “ulolo,” which means “harvest.”
2. Elul is the sixth month on the biblical calendar. In Scripture, the number six symbolizes a period of labor and points to the conclusion of God’s 6,000-year plan to redeem humanity.
3. The constellation sign traditionally linked to the month of Elul is Virgo, or the “Woman of the Apocalypse” (Rev. 12).
4. Elul marks the halfway point of earth’s yearly circuit around the sun, the autumnal equinox, and the transition from the typologically significant summer harvest to the fall harvest season. Elul is thus a turning point, astronomically, agriculturally, and prophetically.
5. The first day of Elul traditionally marks the beginning of a 40-day period of repentance in preparation for the arrival of the Day of Atonement, or “Judgment Day.” As part of this custom, every day during the month of Elul, except for the Sabbath, a trumpet is sounded. The daily trumpet blasts are meant to awaken one’s spirit to the fact that judgment is near and time is short to draw close to God.
6. During the month of Elul, it’s customary to begin or end written letters with the blessing “K’tiva VaHatima Tova,” which translated means “a good writing and sealing [of judgment]” for the coming year. Being sealed against judgment reminds us of the 144,000 sons of Israel sealed by the Holy Spirit before God’s wrath is poured out on the earth (Rev. 7, 8).
7. The month of Elul is historically associated with major or biblical scale financial collapses, most recently two unprecedented crashes that occurred on Elul 29/Tishrei 1 in 2001 and 2008 (see Jonathan Cahn’s *Mystery of the Shemitah*).
8. Tradition holds that Elul is the month in which the “King is in the field.” A popular rabbinic teaching describes the reality of the Elul encounter as a great king paying a surprise visit to his subjects while they are at work in the field. (Workers would be in the field in Elul/September as wheat planted in the spring is typically harvested at this time.) The average person in the field sees the king as inaccessible and far removed, never imagining he will see or speak to him face-to-face in his own domain. Then one day,

while the worker is engrossed in his menial labor, he feels a tap on his shoulder. He turns around and to his shock and surprise sees the king standing above him!

The shock and awe experienced by the worker in the field parallels that which most people will feel when Jesus appears suddenly in the clouds, on a day no one is expecting, to gather the Church.

9. Jews customarily read Psalm 27 each day from the first day of Elul through the end of the fall festival season at Tabernacles. Psalm 27 describes the Lord keeping His people safe in the shelter of His dwelling during the time of Trouble: “The LORD is my light and my salvation—whom shall I fear? ... When the wicked advance against me to devour me, it is my enemies and my foes who will stumble and fall For in the day of trouble he will keep me safe in his dwelling; he will hide me in the shelter of his sacred tent and set me high upon a rock” (Ps. 27:1, 2, 5).

10. Elul is known as the “month of the bride.” The bridal theme derives from the fact that the name Elul is an acronym for the phrase oft spoken by the Shulammite maiden in the Song of Solomon, *ani ledodi vedodi li*—“I am my Beloved’s, and my Beloved is mine.”

Significantly, the passages depicting the Shulammite awaiting or in the company of her beloved shepherd distinctly mention apples and grapes—fruits harvested mainly during Elul/September. In Song 2:3-5 the maiden compares her beloved to an apple tree and speaks of being brought to the banqueting house where she is refreshed by apples: “Like an apple tree among the trees of the woods, so *is* my beloved among the sons. I sat down in his shade with great delight, and his fruit *was* sweet to my taste. He brought me to the banqueting house, and his banner over me *was* love ... Refresh me with apples, for I *am* lovesick.” In verse 13, tender grapes are mentioned just before the shepherd arrives and says to the maiden, “Rise up, my love ... and come away.”

In summary, Elul is—

- A time of harvest
- The sixth month
- The month associated with the Sign of Virgo
- A turning point
- A time to repent before Judgment Day arrives
- A time of trumpets sounding
- A time of financial reckoning
- A time when the King is in the field

- A season of coupling or marriage

With the above themes in view, Elul is considered a likely time for major eschatological events to occur.

This year's Elul seems an especially apt time because—

- We're in the harvest season following Israel's 70th year (Matt. 24:32-35; Ps. 90:10; Jer. 29:10).
- We're in the harvest season following the 49th year since Jerusalem began to be restored in 1969 (Dan. 9:25).
- A Middle East peace plan dubbed the "deal of the century"—the most talked about, delayed, and carefully guarded peace plan since Israel's return to the land in 1948, is drafted and ready to be released at the right time by the Trump Administration (1 Thess. 5).
- The global economy is ostensibly booming—people are buying, selling, planting, and building as never before—yet a number of analysts say it is poised for a collapse that will mark the end of the financial system as we know it (Luke 17:26-30; Rev. 13:16, 17).
- Earthquakes, storms, threats of war, disease outbreaks, and crop failures/food shortages are increasing in frequency and intensity (Matt. 24:6-8).

Jesus says to keep watch at all times (Matt. 24:42-51).

The month of Elul in a year of so much prophetic convergence is no exception.