

Harvest Moon 2019

By T.W. Tramm

THIS year's Harvest Moon rises on the evening of September 13.

The Harvest Moon, the full moon occurring nearest the autumnal equinox, gets its name from farmers who benefited from a special characteristic of the full moon this time of year. Around the time of the equinox, the moon rises closer to sunset than at other times.

For mid-temperate latitudes the moon rises only about 25 minutes after sunset for several days before and after the full harvest moon. The shorter than usual lag-time between sunset and moonrise means no long period of darkness between daytime and night.

In the days before tractor lights, the lamp of the Harvest Moon allowed farmers to continue gathering crops despite the diminishing daylight. Only minutes after the sun's light faded in the west, the moon would rise in the east to illuminate the fields throughout the night.

Interestingly, the September 23 equinox, occurring 10 days after this year's Harvest Moon, corresponds to the biblical calendar date Elul 23 in 2019.

Elul 23 is the biblical date of the 9/11 attacks in 2001. It was 18 years ago, on the 23rd day of Elul, that major icons of US and worldly wealth, power, and governance were attacked and, in the case of the twin towers in New York, utterly destroyed.

A week later, on Elul 29/Tishrei 1, the reopening of the US stock market, the most influential financial market in the world, saw its most colossal crash to date.

Seven years later, on the same date (Elul 29/Tishrei 1), came an even larger stock-market crash, which led to the financial crisis of 2008.

Viewing the fall months of Elul and Tishrei as a turning point (equinox) and a time of destruction and collapse, it's fascinating to consider the rabbinic tradition which holds that Adam and Eve committed the fatal sin of eating from the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil, resulting in the fall of humanity, on Tishrei 1.

That the fall of man presumably occurred around the end of the six month makes it a plausible time for the restoration, when a trumpet blast from heaven will announce the reinstatement of immortality:

“In a flash, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, the dead will be raised imperishable, and we will be changed. For the perishable must clothe itself with the imperishable, and the mortal with immortality” (1 Cor. 15:52, 53).

While no one knows the day, tonight’s Harvest Moon is a reminder that the ultimate harvest—the harvest of the earth at the Lord’s return—is near.

NOTES:

*The famous “super blood moon eclipse” of four years ago (September 28, 2015) was a harvest moon.

*The rabbinic tradition that says humanity fell around the end of the sixth month also says that man was created at this time. Another rabbinic tradition, however, states that man was created in the spring, during the first biblical month of Nisan, the time of birth and new beginnings.

<https://nypost.com/.../full-harvest-moon-will-shine-on-frida.../>

<https://earthsky.org/astronomy-essentials/harvest-moon-2>