

# Rosh Chodesh Elul 2019 Video Notes

**Sixth Month** (11<sup>th</sup> or last month on civil calendar)

**Month:** Elul, meaning “nothingness or to search.”

**Tribe:** Gad, meaning “an invading troop.”

**Mazel:** Betulah or Woman, the Virgin or Virgo

**Sense:** Action - To act requires both thought and deed. It connects the head (thought/speech) to the arm/hand (fruit/deeds).

## Birkat HaChodesh

May it be your will, Adonai our God and God of our forefathers, to renew this month of Elul for us with goodness and blessing. Grant unto us long life, a life of peace, a life of goodness, a life of blessing, a life of sustenance, a life of physical health, a life that reflects a true reverence for God and dread of sin, a life that is free from shame and disgrace, a life of wealth and honor, a life in which we have a love of Torah, Messiah, and an awe of Heaven, a life in which our heartfelt requests are fulfilled for good. Amen.

He Who performed miracles for our forefathers, and redeemed them from slavery to freedom, may He soon redeem us and gather in our dispersed from the four corners of the earth and may all Israel become united in fellowship in the Holy Jerusalem, and let us say, Amen.

## Overview

As the sixth month, expect to see parallels to day six of creation, and other implications of six. The live and active Word of Adonai cuts between soul and spirit, bone and marrow, to reveal whether we are an image of the beast or the image of Adonai, a true “man.” Hence, this is the month of repentance, mercy, and forgiveness. But, it is also a month of preparation.

Heb 4:9-13 (NASB) So there remains a Sabbath rest for the people of God. 10 For the one who has entered His rest has himself also rested from his works, as God did from His. 11 Therefore let us be diligent to enter that rest, so that no one will fall, through following the same example of disobedience. 12 For the word of God is living and active and sharper than any two-edged sword, and piercing as far as the division of soul and spirit, of both joints and marrow, and able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart. 13 And there is no creature hidden from His sight, but all things are open and laid bare to the eyes of Him with whom we have to do.

Just as Friday, the sixth day, is the preparation day for the seventh day Shabbat, Elul, the sixth month, is the preparation month for the seventh month, Tishrei. Not surprisingly, the sense for the month of Elul is **action**. Preparation requires action in thought, word, and deed. In this

sense, Elul is a month of training. To prepare for the upcoming fall appointed times, one needs to train their thoughts, words, and deeds to align with the Word of Adonai. While it is necessary to make physical arrangements to celebrate the fall festivals, the primary preparation is inward and spiritual, one of the heart.

On the civil calendar, the cycle of the year rather than months, Elul is the eleventh month. Thus, there is an “eleventh hour” association as we near the new year or Rosh Hashanah. The upcoming seventh month is a both an end and a new beginning. Hence, clean slates or fresh starts such as the beginning of the Shemmitah (seven year cycles) and Yovel (Jubilee fifty year cycles) begin in the month in which the “turn of the year” occurs.<sup>1</sup>

### **Gad – A Troop**

Gad was Leah’s **fifth** son, born through her handmaid Zilpah. But, he was the **seventh** son born to Jacob. (Rachel’s maid, Bilhah, had Dan and Naphtali before Gad was born.) Since Gad is the tribe of the sixth month, which is sandwiched between the testing of the fifth month and the judgment of the seventh month, his characteristics underscore how one repents and then prepares for the return of the King. After testing, repentance reconciles one back to God for a favorable judgment. But, there will be a battle until we fully enter Adonai’s rest. Out of all the tribes of Israel, Gad teaches this truth in a profound way. First, consider his birth:

Gen. 30:9-11 (NKJV) When Leah saw that she had stopped bearing, she took Zilpah her maid and gave her to Jacob as wife. 10 And Leah's maid Zilpah bore Jacob a son. 11 Then Leah said, "**A troop comes!**" So, she called his name **Gad**.

Some translations say, “how fortunate” instead of a “coming troop” to translate the Hebrew word “gad.” But, based on the blessings of Jacob and Moses, I believe the latter is the most

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<sup>1</sup> Ex. 23:16 (NASB) "Also you shall observe the Feast of the Harvest of the first fruits of your labors from what you sow in the field; also the **Feast of the Ingathering at the end of the year** when you gather in the fruit of your labors from the field.

Ex. 34:22 (NKJV) "And you shall observe the Feast of Weeks, of the firstfruits of wheat harvest, and the **Feast of Ingathering at the year's end**.

Dt. 31:10 (NASB) Then Moses commanded them, saying, "At the **end of every seven years, at the time of the year of remission of debts, at the Feast of Booths...**

Lev. 25:8-9 (NASB) 'You are also to count off seven sabbaths of years for yourself, seven times seven years, so that you have the time of the seven sabbaths of years, namely, forty-nine years. 9 'You shall then **sound a ram's horn abroad on the tenth day of the seventh month; on the day of atonement** you shall sound a horn all through your land.

accurate. Jacob’s blessing is especially unique. In Hebrew, every word of the following verse is a play on the word **גַּד** (Gad), except the words for “he” and “heel.”

Gen. 49:19 (NASB) As for Gad, raiders shall raid him, But he will raid at their heels.

In Hebrew, it looks like this: (If you don’t read Hebrew, at least look for the gimel and dalet **גַּד** within the words.)

**גַּד, גַּדוֹד יְגוֹדְנוּ; וְהוּא, יְגַד עֵקֶב.**

Gad reminds Jacob of **גִּד** (gud), which means to cut, penetrate, press, or invade. The enemy is indeed a **גִּדּוֹד** (gedud), a pressing warlike host, which invades the land. (And, one’s life, heart, and circumstances.) But, Gad is also a **גִּדּוֹד** (gedud)! He doesn’t just sit down and take the punches of the enemy. He knows how to fight back! So much so, that Moses describes Gad this way:

Dt. 33:20-21 (LITV) And of Gad he said, blessed is he who enlarges Gad; **he shall live like a lioness**, and shall **tear the arm**, also the **top of the head**. 21 And he eyes the first part for himself, for there was the portion of the **lawgiver hidden**; and he came with the rulers of the people; **he executed the justice of Jehovah**, and **His judgments with Israel**.<sup>2</sup>

Gad is tribe of war. 1 Chronicles 5:18 describes them as “men who bore shield and sword and shot with bow and were skillful in battle.” It requires great preparation and organization to amass a troop and train them for combat. Gadites know where to strike, because they have trained well. They attack the **heel** (lower nature/nephesh/appetites/ego), the **arm** (deeds/power/strength), and the **head** (the source, leader, authority). When David fled from King Saul, the mighty men of Gad joined him in the wilderness. 1 Chronicles 12:8 describes them this way:

From the Gadites there came over to David in the stronghold in the wilderness, **mighty men of valor, men trained for war**, who could handle **shield and spear**, and whose faces were **like the faces of lions**, and they were as **swift as the gazelles on the mountains**. (NASB)

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<sup>2</sup> I chose Green’s Literal Translation to show that Gad is compared to a lioness, not a lion in Hebrew. Elul is preparation of the Bride, another feminine term. Though our King is compared to a Lion, His Bride is more akin to the lioness. Moreover, the mazel this month is the woman, Betulah. This translation also reveals the “hidden” portion. In Chassidic teachings, Elul is the city of refuge in the yearly cycle, a hidden place of safety.

How does the month of *teshuvah* or repentance relate to this aspect of the tribe of Gad? Each day of this month, leading up to Yom Kippur is a training day. There is a battle, but it is not necessarily with an external enemy. **The preparation of Elul is a time to search the depths of one's heel (nephesh), arm (power- intentions and actions), and head (are you at the helm or is Elohim?).**

2 Cor. 10:4-5 (TLV) For the weapons of our warfare are not fleshly but powerful through God for the **tearing down of strongholds**. We are **tearing down false arguments** 5 and **every high-minded thing** that exalts itself against the knowledge of God. We are **taking every thought captive to the obedience of Messiah**.

The war is for your thoughts, your mind, and your heart. These direct your actions. Last month, the sense was hearing, shema. And the tribe was Simeon, the one that hears. I mentioned my favorite Simeon from the Book of Luke – the one that proclaimed Yeshua as the consolation of Israel. But there was another Simeon, mentioned in the Book of Acts, that had the opposite type of character. Instead of a prophet, he was a magician.

Acts 8:4-12 (NASB) Therefore, those who had been scattered went about preaching the word. 5 Philip went down to the city of Samaria and began proclaiming Christ to them. 6 The crowds with one accord were giving attention to what was said by Philip, as they heard and saw the signs which he was performing. 7 For in the case of **many who had unclean spirits, they were coming out of them shouting with a loud voice; and many who had been paralyzed and lame were healed.** 8 **So there was much rejoicing in that city.** 9 Now there was a man named **Simon, who formerly was practicing magic** in the city and astonishing the people of Samaria, **claiming to be someone great;** 10 and they all, from smallest to greatest, were giving attention to him, saying, "This man is what is called the Great Power of God." 11 And they were giving him attention because he had for a long time astonished them with his magic arts. 12 But when they believed Philip preaching the good news about the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, they were being baptized, men and women alike.

Simon claimed to be someone "great," and the people also thought of him that way. He likely made his living by astonishing the people with his magic arts. But when Philip brought Samaria the Good News, the people believed and were immersed. They HEARD, Shema.

Acts 8:13-24 (NASB) Even **Simon himself believed;** and after being baptized, he continued on with Philip, and as he observed signs and great miracles taking place, he was constantly amazed. 14 Now when the apostles in Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent them Peter and John, 15 who came down and prayed for them that they might receive the Holy Spirit. 16 For He had not yet fallen upon any of them; they had simply been baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. 17 Then they began laying their hands on them, and they were receiving the Holy Spirit. 18 Now when Simon saw that the Spirit was bestowed through the laying

on of the apostles' hands, **he offered them money**, 19 saying, "**Give this authority to me** as well, so that everyone on whom I lay my hands may receive the Holy Spirit." 20 But Peter said to him, "May your silver perish with you, **because you thought you could obtain the gift of God with money!**" 21 "You have no part or portion in this matter, for **your heart is not right before God.**" 22 "Therefore **repent of this wickedness** of yours, and pray the Lord that, if possible, the **intention of your heart may be forgiven** you. 23 "**For I see that you are in the gall of bitterness and in the bondage of iniquity.**" 24 But Simon answered and said, "Pray to the Lord for me yourselves, so that nothing of what you have said may come upon me."

While most of us can say that we haven't practiced magic, we should all admit that we've been rebellious, which is like the sin of witchcraft. Likewise, insubordination is akin to iniquity and idolatry. Simon the magician was bound by all these things.

1 Sam. 15:23 (NASB) "For **rebellion is as the sin of divination** (witchcraft), and **insubordination is as iniquity and idolatry**. Because you have rejected the word of the LORD, He has also rejected you from being king."

The story in 1 Samuel 15 has parallels to Acts 8, and each teach an aspect of heart searching in the season of repentance. Simon the magician believed and was immersed. Likewise, King Saul believed in the LORD. Both Saul and Simon lost a type of power or authority, and both were more concerned about this, and their influence with the people than they were with their relationship with Adonai. Simon assumed he could BUY power and authority (the Holy Spirit) to have sway over the people; whereas Saul desired Samuel to honor him in front of the people.

1 Sam. 15:30 (NASB) Then he said, "I have sinned; but please honor me now before the elders of my people and before Israel, and go back with me, that I may worship the LORD your God."

Thankfully, Samuel understood that he needed to be like a Gadite and cut the Amalekite king, Agag, into pieces. The head needed to be destroyed because that was part of the command of Adonai that Saul had ignored.

Elul means "to search." Sometimes, our hearts and intentions are not right before God and we don't even realize it. Like Simon, we have believed and been immersed into Yeshua, but something is still not right. Saul at one time trusted the LORD, but then began to fear the people more than Adonai.

Maybe it is due to our past, like Simon. Everything we understand is filtered and colored by tragedies and circumstances we endured as children (or adults), false worship and powers, or simply our old ways of doing things. The Kingdom of Adonai is diametrically opposed to the kingdoms of this world. God's economy doesn't operate the way that we would expect, with worldly wisdom. We certainly "buy" more oil, wine, and milk from Adonai, but it is not with worldly money.

Is. 55:1-3 (NASB) "Ho! Every one who thirsts, come to the waters; And **you who have no money come, buy and eat. Come, buy wine and milk Without money and without cost.** 2 "Why do you spend money for what is not bread, And your wages for what does not satisfy? **Listen** carefully to Me, and eat what is good, And delight yourself in abundance. 3 "**Incline your ear** and come to Me. **Listen**, that you may live; And I will make an everlasting covenant with you, According to the faithful mercies shown to David.

Peter told Simon that he was in the “gall of bitterness” and the “bondage of iniquity.” These things skewed his understanding of Adonai and the Kingdom of Heaven. In other words, he, the one that should “hear,” didn’t know how to listen. Buying without money is a difficult concept for one to grasp in the natural. Peter discerned that instead of being regenerated by the Spirit of Adonai, Simon was bitter about losing his “great” position with the people and sought for a way to regain his lost authority. He was concerned only for self. He had not been released from the bondage of sin, as his **actions** proved. There was only one answer – to repent!

The parable of the Ten Virgins is set in this season just before the fall feasts and the return of the Bridegroom. Not only is the virgin in the mazel of the month, the Gospel in the stars, but other things mentioned in this parable also hint to this truth. The virgins slumber and sleep, and awake at the midnight cry like the piercing blast of the shofar on Yom Teruah. Yeshua warns that the Son of Man is coming on a “day and hour that no one knows,” which is an idiom for the new moon, especially the High Holy Day of Rosh Hashanah. Those that do not have enough oil for their lamps are told to go and buy for themselves.

Mat. 25:1-13 (NKJV) "Then the kingdom of heaven shall be likened to **ten virgins** who took their lamps and went out to meet the bridegroom. 2 Now five of them were wise, and five were foolish. 3 Those who were foolish took their lamps and took no oil with them, 4 but the wise took oil in their vessels with their lamps. 5 **But while the bridegroom was delayed, they all slumbered and slept.** 6 "And at midnight a cry was heard: 'Behold, the bridegroom is coming; go out to meet him!' 7 Then **all those virgins arose and trimmed their lamps.** 8 And the foolish said to the wise, '**Give us some of your oil, for our lamps are going out.**' 9 But the wise answered, saying, 'No, lest there should not be enough for us and you; but **go rather to those who sell, and buy for yourselves.**' 10 And while they went to buy, the bridegroom came, and **those who were ready went in with him to the wedding; and the door was shut.** 11 "Afterward the other virgins came also, saying, 'Lord, Lord, open to us!' 12 But he answered and said, 'Assuredly, I say to you, **I do not know you.**' 13 "**Watch therefore, for you know neither the day nor the hour in which the Son of Man is coming.**

Who sells the oil for our lamps? Olive oil comes from pressing the olive fruit. Getting oil for the menorah and for anointing requires suffering - pressure. There is a cost to be a disciple of Yeshua, but money will not buy one a ticket.

Luke 14:27-28 (NKJV) And **whoever does not bear his cross and come after Me cannot be My disciple.** 28 For which of you, intending to build a tower, does not sit down first and count the cost, whether he has enough to finish it.

Yeshua gave His all for us; therefore, we are required to give our all to Him. This is what the acronym Elul means: “Ani l’dodi v’dodi li.”<sup>3</sup> Often translated as, “I am to my beloved, and he is to me.” But, more accurately it is, “I am FOR my beloved, and He is FOR me.” Like a husband and wife, we are ONE, and love one another sacrificially. We are FOR each other. God is FOR you, beloved. We might be pressed until the oil gushes forth, but we will not be crushed.

The pressing produces a great treasure:

2 Cor. 4:7-18 (TLV) But we have this **treasure in jars of clay**, so that the surpassing greatness of the power may be from God and not from ourselves. 8 **We are hard pressed in every way, yet not crushed**; perplexed, yet not in despair; 9 persecuted, yet not forsaken; struck down, yet not destroyed; 10 always carrying in the body the death of Yeshua, so that the life of Yeshua may also be revealed in our mortal body. 11 For we who live are always being handed over to death for Yeshua’s sake, so that the life of Yeshua may be revealed in our mortal body. 12 So death is at work in us, but life is at work in you. 13 But we have the same spirit of faith, according to what is written, “I believed, and therefore I spoke.” So we also believe, and therefore we also speak, 14 knowing that the One who raised the Lord Yeshua will raise us also with Yeshua, and will bring us with you into His presence. 15 For all things are for your sakes, so that the grace that is spreading through more and more people may cause thanksgiving to overflow—to the glory of God. 16 Therefore **we do not lose heart. Though our outward man is decaying, yet our inward man is renewed day by day.** 17 For our trouble, light and momentary, **is producing for us an eternal weight of glory far beyond all comparison**, 18 as we look not at what can be seen but at what cannot be seen. For what can be seen is temporary, but what cannot be seen is eternal.

This is the cost. This is how one buys without money. Our “trouble” causes an abundance of oil for one’s lamp, and where there is oil, there is the Ruach HaKodesh. And where the Spirit is, there is liberty. Bitterness, bondage, and iniquity must go. They cannot coexist with the Spirit of Liberty. Prepare for the Bridegroom this month. Release EVERYTHING over to Him; He is FOR you. Let go of the past, bitter roots, feelings of unfairness, regret, and anger (both toward God and others), and be set free. Train your arms for battle, like Gad. Become a lioness that tears off the arm, head, and the heel of the enemy – even if that enemy is just a high place in your mind.

Set the princess (your soul) free from that high tower! The Prince has already given you an open door to walk through that no man can shut. That was Yeshua’s words to the assembly of Philadelphia, the SIXTH church of brotherly love.

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<sup>3</sup> Song of Songs 6:3

## **Suggestions for Preparation & Training in Elul**

- Daily read Psalm 27
- Read Hebrews 11 – learn from those that knew how to walk in faith.
- Read 1 Samuel 15 and Acts 8
- Search your heart for rebellion and bitterness.
- Blow/hear shofar
- Daily prayer/repentance/confession
- Devotions/Ethics/Soul Help: Mussar, Lashon Hara, others (suggestions given in video)
- Prepare for gatherings at fall feast days – ensure that they are “love” festivals.

## **Warfare Prayer**

May every stronghold, every high place of our minds be destroyed and replaced with *emet*, truth. May we learn to band together as a host, a troop of Adonai’s making. And, may we be found without spot or blemish, a chaste Bride like the mazel this month, Betulah or Virgo.