



2024

**Elul and the Season of
Teshuvah**

**Preparing for The Year of Matured
Fruit**

**ACROSS ALL BOUNDARIES
CHRISTIAN CHURCH AND
OUTREACH MINISTRIES**

**APOSTLE SHEL'DON HUDSON
PASTOR CAROL WOODARD**

**WEEKLY
MEDITATIONS**



ELUL

The month of Elul teaches us to examine ourselves. The word "Elul " means "search". As we exit 5784, it is the perfect time of the year when we search our hearts before entering into the new one. The new year is sure to be a fruitful one and in order to enjoy the bountifulness of it, we must be prepared.

Elul is regarded as the appropriate time for analyzing the past year. This means we seek out our own weaknesses and confront them. We examine the mistakes of the past year in order not to repeat them. This means taking an honest look at what has restricted us, distracted us, captured us in bondage and prevented us from moving forward. By reflecting on the previous year, we are better able to enter the New Year, 5785, ready for improvement, which manifests itself with an enhanced spiritual awakening and an increased desire to live holy and righteous before Yahweh.

WEEK 1 – SEPTEMBER 2-8

SELF EXAMINATION - IT'S TIME TO WAKE UP

Scripture Reference: “Seek the Lord while he may be found; call upon him while he is near; let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; let him return to the Lord, that he may have compassion on him, and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon. (Isa. 55:6-7)

Prayer: With my whole heart will I seek you O Lord, may I turn around and see you. May I experience your compassion and your forgiveness as I seek to walk upright. Yahweh, forgive me of any offensive thing that I have done.

Points of Meditation:

- The theme for the month of Elul can be found in the appeal from the Prophet Isaiah when he says to seek the Lord while he may be found. During this season of Elul, God is in the midst of his people.
- This month is regarded as the appropriate time for analyzing the past year. We are to seek, enquire, search for answers since God is near. We are asking him to reveal in us those things that we may have overlooked in our lives that are offensive to God so that we can turn and return to the Lord.
- So let us examine our lives and turn and return to the Lord
 - Let us examine our ways and test them and let us return to the Lord. (Lam 3:40 NIV)
 - But if we were more discerning with regard to ourselves, we would not come under such judgment. (1 Cor 11:31)
 - Each one should test their own actions. Then they can take pride in themselves alone, without comparing themselves to someone else. (Gal 6:4)

Self Examination (Test)

I know of no individual who likes tests. It's as if the word itself causes great anxiety. If we would realize that a test is more about progress and less about intelligence, we may be able to test better. We don't know how much information we have retained until we are tested.

One scriptures advises to " Test and evaluate yourselves to see whether you are in the faith and living your lives as [committed] believers. Examine yourselves [not me]! Or do you not recognize this about yourselves [by an ongoing experience] that Jesus Christ is in you—unless indeed you fail the test and are rejected as counterfeit?" 2 Corinthians 13:5 Amp

My Test

- Am I in sin or have I sinned and not repented?
- Am I in iniquity, transgressions or sin? Pre-mediated, rebellious or undisciplined sin
- Have I lost sight of who I am and what I'm doing?
- Am I bitter? Am I depressed? Am I slothful or lazy?
- Am I thankful or am I a murmurer and complainer?
- Do I have hard to reach places in my soul?
- Am I blind to certain attitudes and behaviors that are offensive to God and to people?
- Why am I so negative about myself ?
- Have I become dispirited or gone to sleep spiritually?

My thoughts and goals for improvement

WEEK 2 – SEPTEMBER 9-15

TESHUVAH (REPENTANCE) RETURN TO THE LORD

Scripture Reference: “Have mercy on me, O God, according to your unfailing love; according to your great compassion blot out my transgressions. Wash away all my iniquity and cleanse me from my sin. For I know my transgressions, and my sin is always before me.” Psalm 51:1-3 (NIV)

Prayer: My rebellion wipe out oh Lord, according to your vast compassion, according to your faithful love! O GOD, show me your favor!

Points of Meditation:

- This month teaches us the necessity of being willing to repent; being willing to turn around. The Hebrew word that reveals this understanding is “teshuvah”.
- The word actually means “to return”, which suggests that we have moved away from God. It also is a sign of spiritual apathy.
- Psalm 51 is often called the Chapter of Repentance. It is the well-known story of how David, who after he had committed an awful transgression against the Lord, acknowledged his sin and returned to the Lord for cleansing and forgiveness. This lesson from David’s life lets us know that we also can return to the Lord because of the Lord’s great compassion.
- The King (our Creator) is among us and no matter how we may feel, He has never had His back turned. All we need to do is turn ourselves around to realize that He is there and waiting for us. We should not let guilt or shame cause us to not return to the Lord.
- By working on ourselves during this month, by being willing to turn around and make changes, we realize that our Creator has never had His back turned. He has always been facing us, waiting for us to turn around.

According to teacher, John P. Parson, there are four steps of Teshuvah

- Forsake the Sin (Prov 28:18) – Sincere repentance
- Regret the breach (Psalm 51) – godly sorrowful for the breach you have caused between God as well as relationships with people
- Confess the truth and make amends (Prov 28:13; I John 1:9) Admit to God and to others and determine to make amends
- Accept your forgiveness (Phil 3:13-14; I John 1:9) move forward with God through faith

WEEK 3 – SEPTEMBER 16-22

FORGIVENESS

Scripture References: The Lord our God is merciful and forgiving, even though we have rebelled against him. Daniel 9:9.

They refused to listen and failed to remember the miracles you performed among them. They became stiff-necked and, in their rebellion, appointed a leader in order to return to their slavery. But you are a forgiving God, gracious and compassionate, slow to anger and abounding in love. Therefore, you did not desert them. Nehemiah 9:17

Prayer: Because of your mercy, you offer forgiveness and faithfulness to those who seek forgiveness and to those who call Your Name. I seek and ask for you to forgive me of all my sin. I sincerely regret doing the things that I have done. Please accept this my prayer of forgiveness. In Jesus' Name. Amen

Points of Meditation:

- The month of Elul teaches us about forgiveness. It is seeking forgiveness from God and also from others whom we may have offended and caused pain. One Hebrew word for forgiveness is Selach lanu. It comes from selichah meaning "pardon." To ask for pardon is to say to the one we have injured: "I am sorry for what I did; I sincerely regret having done it, and I will never do it again."
- Another Hebrew word for forgiveness is Machah meaning to "wipe out". Here, we are asking the one we've injured to wipe away the transgression as if it never happened, and restore the relationship (if at all possible) to the former level of warmth and intimacy. See Scripture Reference in Isaiah 43:25-26
- Additional Scripture References on Forgiveness:
 - Micah 7:8-9;
 - Luke 17:3-4;
 - Ephesians 4:31-32;
 - 1 John 1:9

WEEK 4 – SEPTEMBER 23-OCTOBER 2

"I AM TO MY BELOVED AND MY BELOVED IS TO ME"

*ACCEPT YOUR FORGIVENESS AND MOVE FORWARD WITH
GOD THROUGH FAITH.*

Scripture References: I am my Beloved's and my Beloved is Mine
(Song of Songs 6:3).

Prayer: Circumcise my heart, O Lord so that I may love you with all my heart and with all my soul and live the life of freedom in you.

Points of Meditation:

- Elul gives us the key to unlocking the inner and most potent meaning of the heart. The Hebrew letters that make up the word "Elul," aleph, lamed, vav and lamed, are an acronym for the phrase from the biblical Song of Songs which means "I am to my beloved and my beloved is to me." This beautiful and romantic phrase is that which represents our relationship with our Creator, which is often paralleled to that of a husband and wife, a bride and groom.
- Elul is the month that begins back-to-back and ends face-to-face. At the beginning of the month, we may have forgotten about the reality that "I am to my beloved and my beloved is to me." However, by working on ourselves during this month, by being willing to turn around and make changes, we come to realize that our Creator has never had His back turned. He has always been facing us and is just waiting for us to turn around.
- During Elul the connection to the Lord becomes an invitation to reflect upon that relationship. It is the time that all your thoughts should be directed towards my Beloved (God) then, my Beloved is also to me; my Beloved helps, assists, and cares for me. It is the time to forget those things that are behind and to move forward with God.

PSALM OF MEDITATION FOR THE ENTIRE MONTH

THE LORD IS MY LIGHT AND MY SALVATION PSALM 27

The Lord is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? the Lord is the strength of my life; of whom shall I be afraid? 2 When the wicked, even mine enemies and my foes, came upon me to eat up my flesh, they stumbled and fell. 3 Though an host should encamp against me, my heart shall not fear: though war should rise against me, in this will I be confident. 4 One thing have I desired of the Lord, that will I seek after; that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord, and to enquire in his temple. 5 For in the time of trouble he shall hide me in his pavilion: in the secret of his tabernacle shall he hide me; he shall set me up upon a rock. 6 And now shall mine head be lifted up above mine enemies round about me: therefore will I offer in his tabernacle sacrifices of joy; I will sing, yea, I will sing praises unto the Lord. 7 Hear, O Lord, when I cry with my voice: have mercy also upon me, and answer me. 8 When thou saidst, Seek ye my face; my heart said unto thee, Thy face, Lord, will I seek. 9 Hide not thy face far from me; put not thy servant away in anger: thou hast been my help; leave me not, neither forsake me, O God of my salvation. 10 When my father and my mother forsake me, then the Lord will take me up. 11 Teach me thy way, O Lord, and lead me in a plain path, because of mine enemies. 12 Deliver me not over unto the will of mine enemies: for false witnesses are risen up against me, and such as breathe out cruelty. 13 I had fainted, unless I had believed to see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living. 14 Wait on the Lord: be of good courage, and he shall strengthen thine heart: wait, I say, on the Lord.

