

Discourse 13

*“HaChodesh HaZeh Lachem Rosh Chadashim -
This month shall be for you the head of months”*

Delivered on Shabbat Parshat VaYakhel-Pekudei,
Parshat HaChodesh, Shabbat Mevarchim Nissan, 5713
By the grace of *HaShem*, blessed is He,

1.

The verse states,⁹⁰⁷ “This month shall be for you the head of months, it shall be for you the first of the months of the year.” The question regarding this verse is well known.⁹⁰⁸ Namely, Rosh HaShanah is in the month of Tishrei, and is called the head-*Rosh*-ראש of the year because it includes the vitality for the whole year, after which, the vitality is divided to the remaining months of the year and then to the days. (This is similar to the vitality of the head-*Rosh*-ראש, which includes all the general vitality of the body, and from there vitality is drawn down to all the limbs and organs.)⁹⁰⁹ This being the case, the month of Tishrei is the head-*Rosh*-ראש. Thus, it is not understood why the verse states about the

⁹⁰⁷ Exodus 12:2

⁹⁰⁸ See Ohr HaTorah, Bereishit 18b and on; Discourse entitled “*HaChodesh HaZeh*” 5615 (Maamarei Admor HaTzemach Tzedek 5615 p. 70); 5654 (Sefer HaMaamarim 5654 p. 131); 5666 (*Hemshech* 5666 p. 156); 5670 (Sefer HaMaamarim 5670 p. 295); 5678 (Sefer HaMaamarim 5678 p. 224).

⁹⁰⁹ See Likkutei Torah, Tavo 41c; Netzavim 47a and on; Drushei Rosh HaShanah 58a and on; Ateret Rosh, beginning of Shaar Rosh HaShanah.

month of Nissan, “This month shall be for you the head-*Rosh*-ראש of the months,” (and continues by emphasizing), “the first of the months of the year.”

The question is further exacerbated by what it states in Mechilta,⁹¹⁰ “The verse states, ‘This month shall be for **you** the head of months,’ however Adam, the first man, did not count (the months) in this way.” In other words, before the verse “this month shall be for you the head of months” was stated, the month of Tishrei was at the head-*Rosh*-ראש of the count. This being the case, we must understand the reason for this change, that for the Jewish people (“for you”) the month of Nissan is the head, as it states, “this month shall be for you the head-*Rosh*-ראש of months,” so that for the Jewish people (“for you”), Nissan is the beginning-*Rosh*-ראש.

2.

The explanation,⁹¹¹ based on what it states in the Akeidah,⁹¹² is known. That is, that there are two manners of conduct through which one may come to recognize the Godliness of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He. The first is recognition of *HaShem*'s-יהו"ה Godliness through the natural order of the world, as the verse states,⁹¹³ “Raise your eyes on high and see Who created these.” More specifically, all novel

⁹¹⁰ Mechilta to Exodus 12:2

⁹¹¹ See the discourse entitled “*HaChodesh HaZeh*” 5678 (Sefer HaMaamarim 5678 p. 224 and on).

⁹¹² Akeidah to Exodus 12:2 (Shaar 38)

⁹¹³ Isaiah 40:26

creatures are limited and it is impossible for limitless vitality to be in something that is limited. For, even the vessels (*Keilim*) of the world of Emanation-*Atzilut*, about which it states,⁹¹⁴ “He and His organs are one,” since their state of existence is limited, therefore, the light and vitality within them is also limited.⁹¹⁵ If this is the case in the world of Emanation-*Atzilut*, it certainly is so in the worlds of Creation-*Briyah*, Formation-*Yetzirah* and Action-*Asiyah*. This is as stated in Iggeret HaKodesh,⁹¹⁶ that in the vessels of the worlds of Creation-*Briyah*, Formation-*Yetzirah* and Action-*Asiyah*, even the lights (*Orot*) of the aspects of the *Nefesh* and *Ru’ach*, are in a state of novel created beings. How much more is this certainly so regarding the physical heavens and earth, in that the vitality invested in them is certainly in a state of limitation and it therefore is impossible for them to contain limitless vitality.⁹¹⁷

Nonetheless, we observe that they do indeed possess a certain aspect of limitlessness, in that they do not undergo change. This is as stated in the Jerusalem Talmud⁹¹⁸ in explanation of the verse,⁹¹⁹ “These are the generations of the heavens and the earth **on the day they were created**,” that is, “They are as strong today as they were on the day they were created.” That is, besides the fact that all the hosts of earth are

⁹¹⁴ Introduction to Tikkunei Zohar 3b

⁹¹⁵ See *Hemshech* 5666 p. 191

⁹¹⁶ Tanya, Iggeret HaKodesh, Epistle 20 (130a)

⁹¹⁷ See Moreh HaNevuchim (The Guide for the Perplexed), introductions to Vol. 2, Introduction 12, cited in *Hemshech* 5666 *ibid*.

⁹¹⁸ Talmud Yerushalmi, beginning of Tractate Brachot

⁹¹⁹ Genesis 2:4

sustained in their species and all the hosts of the heavens are sustained as individuals, as it states,⁹²⁰ “not one is missing,” they also are as strong today as the day they were created. In other words, though they have existed for over five thousand years, they are as strong as the day they were created. This indicates the matter of limitlessness (*Bli Gvul*). For, when it comes to something that is limited, meaning that there is a time and place in which it ceases, its limitation is recognizable even at its middle and even at its beginning. This being so, lack of change indicates the matter of limitlessness (*Bli Gvul*). Thus, this matter, that something limited (in which even its vitality is limited) possesses a certain aspect of limitlessness, indicates the greatness of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, the Creator, blessed is He.

The second manner, is the recognition of *HaShem*'s-יהו"ה Godliness through the miraculous, meaning through a conduct that transcends and overpowers the natural order, through which the greatness of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, the Creator, blessed is He, is recognized.

Now, the difference between these two manners of recognizing *HaShem*'s-יהו"ה Godliness is that, when it comes to the first, natural mode of conduct, contemplation is necessary to come to recognize *HaShem*'s-יהו"ה Godliness. In other words, through contemplation (*Hitbonenut*), a person arrives at the definite conclusion that this so. Nevertheless, it comes about specifically through contemplation (*Hitbonenut*) and without the contemplation (*Hitbonenut*), this matter would

⁹²⁰ Isaiah 40:26

be unrecognizable. The reason is because the Godly vitality itself is in a state of concealment, because in this first mode of conduct, the vitality is from the externality of the light of *HaShem*-יהו"ה (*Chitzoniyut HaOhr*) which comes into actual investment (*Hitlabshut*) and limitation. It therefore is possible for it to be in a state of concealment.

However, this is not the case, in the second mode of conduct, which comes from the inner aspect of the light of *HaShem*-יהו"ה (*Pnimiyyut HaOhr*). In other words, the vitality comes forth as it is, not in a way of being garbed (*Hitlabshut*), and therefore comes forth in a revealed manner. This is the superiority of the second mode of conduct over the first mode of conduct. For, although in both, there is recognition of *HaShem*'s-יהו"ה Godliness, nevertheless, in the first manner, the vitality is garbed within limitation and is concealed, whereas in the second manner, the vitality is not garbed within limitation, and thus is revealed as it is.

This then, is the meaning of the verse, "This month shall be for you the beginning of months, it shall be for you the first of the months of the year." For, although Rosh HaShanah is in the month of Tishrei, nevertheless, as the verse states, Nissan is the first of the months of the year. That is, the fact that Rosh HaShanah is in the month of Tishrei relates to the conduct of the natural order, in which Tishrei is indeed the beginning-*Rosh*-ראש. However, when it comes to the conduct of the miraculous (*Nissit*-ניסית), the month of Nissan (ניסן) is the beginning-*Rosh*-ראש.

This accords with the explanation of the Ritva,⁹²¹ who explained, at length, that even according to the view of Rabbi Eliezer,⁹²² who held that the world was created on the twenty-fifth day of Elul, for which reason Rosh HaShanah falls in Tishrei, nevertheless, once the Torah was given, the month of Nissan became the head-*Rosh*-ראש of the months in the count of the Torah and the Jewish people. About this, our sages, of blessed memory, stated,⁹²³ “When the Holy One, blessed is He, chose to create His world, He established new moons for them, and when He chose Yaakov and his sons, He established a month of redemption for them.” In other words, in relation to the conduct of the natural order (“His **world**”), the month of Tishrei is the beginning-*Rosh*-ראש. However, when it comes to the conduct of the miraculous, which transcends the natural order, that is, the matter of the “month of redemption,” the month of Nissan is the beginning-*Rosh*-ראש. This is why the verse states, “This month shall be for you the beginning of the months, it shall be **for you** the first of the months of the year.”

3.

Now, all this explains and answers how it is that Rosh HaShanah falls in Tishrei and that this does not contradict the fact that Nissan is the first of the months. For, since there are two modes of conduct, the natural and the miraculous, which

⁹²¹ Chiddushei HaRitva to Rosh HaShanah 7a

⁹²² Midrash Vayikra Rabba 29:1; Psikta d’Rav Kahanah, Piska 23 (*BaChodesh HaShvi’i*) and elsewhere.

⁹²³ Midrash Shmot Rabba 15:11

transcends the natural order, therefore, according to the natural order Tishrei is first, and according to the conduct of the miraculous, Nissan is first.

Nonetheless, we still must understand why according to the miraculous conduct, Nissan is first. For, at first glance, even according to the miraculous conduct, it is possible that the month of Tishrei is first. This is because, even the miraculous, which transcends the natural order, takes place within the world, and since the world itself was created in Tishrei, therefore, even according to the miraculous, we must say that Tishrei is first.

The explanation is as follows: As known,⁹²⁴ the months of summer and winter are different from each other, and generally, this is the difference between the months of Nissan and Tishrei. This is because, the summer months (beginning with the month of Nissan), are masculine months that are rooted in the aspect of *Zeir Anpin* and are primarily kindnesses (*Chassadim*) (since “kindness-*Chessed* accompanies all the other days”).⁹²⁵ On the other hand, the winter months (beginning with the month of Tishrei), are feminine months, that is, the aspect of kingship-*Malchut*, which is constructed of the judgments (*Gevurot*).

⁹²⁴ See Likkutei Torah of the Arizal, Vayeitzei, section entitled, “*Inyan HaSheva Kochavei Lechet*.”; Also see Kohelet Yaakov, section on the 12 months “*Yud Beit Chadashim*”; (These are the citations in the note of the Rebbe to Sefer HaMaamarim 5700 p. 28).

⁹²⁵ Zohar III 103a-b; Sefer HaMaamarim 5708 p. 144

This is why the month of Nissan is called,⁹²⁶ “the month of springtime-*Aviv*-אביב,” for, in the name “*Aviv*-ב-א” the order of the *Aleph-Beit*-ב-א is in forward order, that is, from Above to below, and is the aspect of kindness-*Chessed*.⁹²⁷ In contrast, in Tishrei-תשרי the order of the *Aleph-Beit* is in the reverse, *Tav-Shin-Reish-Kof*-ק-ש-ת, that is, from below to Above.⁹²⁸

The same is true of the twelve permutations (*Tzirufim*) of the Name *HaShem*-יהוה, blessed is He, which manifest in the twelve months of the year.⁹²⁹ That is, in the month of Nissan, the permutation of the Name *HaShem*-יהוה is in its straightforward and proper order,⁹³⁰ indicating the revelation of the Name *HaShem*-יהוה, blessed is He. For, when the letters are exchanged, it is because the light (*Ohr*) is in a state of concealment.⁹³¹ However, because the permutation of the month of Nissan is in its straightforward and proper order, it indicates the revelation of the Name *HaShem*-יהוה, blessed is He, which is the aspect of kindness-*Chessed*. However, this is not so of the month of Tishrei, which is from the aspect of

⁹²⁶ Exodus 13:4; Also see Mishneh Torah of the Rambam, Hilchot Kiddush HaChodesh 4:1

⁹²⁷ See Zohar II 186a, 51b (citations in the note of the Rebbe to Sefer HaMaamarim 5700 *ibid.*)

⁹²⁸ See Zohar II *ibid.*

⁹²⁹ See Pardes Rimonim, Shaar 13 (Shaar HaShe’arim), Ch. 3; Mishnat Chassidim, Sefer Mesechet Nissan and on (*Kavanot Kol HaChodesh*), and elsewhere.; Also see Ohr HaTorah, Bereishit 15a and on; Bo p. 254; Rosh HaShanah, p. 1,352 and on, and elsewhere.

⁹³⁰ Pardes Rimonim, Shaar 21, (Shaar Pratei HaShemot), Ch. 16; Mishnat Chassidim *ibid.* Mesechet Nissan.

⁹³¹ See Ginat Egoz of Rabbi Yosef Gikatilla, translated as *HaShem Is One*, Vol. 3, The Letters of Creation, Part II.

HaShem's יהו"ה kingship-*Malchut*, and is constructed of judgments (*Gevurot*). Thus, the aspect of *HaShem's* יהו"ה kingship-*Malchut*, causes concealment in the creations. Moreover, even the aspect of the kingship-*Malchut* of *HaShem* יהו"ה itself, is an aspect of concealment.

For, as stated by his honorable holiness, the Alter Rebbe⁹³² in the name of the Rav, the Maggid of Mezeritch, the limitless light of *HaShem* יהו"ה, the Unlimited One, blessed is He, dwells specifically in the *Sefirah* wisdom-*Chochmah*. This is because specifically in wisdom-*Chochmah*, there is a sense of sublimation and nullification to *HaShem* יהו"ה, blessed is He; that He alone exists and there is nothing besides Him. This being so, the aspect of *HaShem's* יהו"ה kingship-*Malchut*, which is the matter of His exaltedness and rulership, is the opposite of the sublimation and nullification of the *Sefirah* of wisdom-*Chochmah*, and thus is the aspect of concealment.

Now, because kingship-*Malchut* is the aspect of concealment, it therefore is necessary to draw forth revelation into it. This is the matter of charity (*Tzedakah*), which is in kingship-*Malchut*, and is called *Tzedek Hey* צדק ה'. For, charity is given to the poor to satisfy his lacking, as in the verse,⁹³³ "You shall lend him his requirement, whatever is lacking from him."

However, such is not the case in regard to the month of Nissan, which is the aspect of *HaShem's* יהו"ה kindness-

⁹³² Tanya, Ch. 35 (in the note)

⁹³³ Deuteronomy 15:8

Chessed, and is thus loftier than the matter of charity (*Tzedakah*). For, charity (*Tzedakah*) only applies to the poor, whereas acts of lovingkindness (*Gemiloot Chassadim*) apply to both the poor and the wealthy.⁹³⁴ That is, charity (*Tzedakah*) is for the sole purpose of filling a lacking, whereas acts of lovingkindness (*Gemiloot Chassadim*) are not a matter of filling a lacking, but are the matter of bestowing additional illumination.

This then, is the difference between the month of Nissan and the month of Tishrei. That is, Tishrei is the aspect of *HaShem*'s יהו"ה kingship-*Malchut*, which is called charity-*Tzedakah*, and is the matter of filling that which is lacking. Therefore, it is a drawing forth of the light (*Ohr*) and illumination of *HaShem*-יהו"ה that relates to the worlds, for which reason it is the first month, at the head-*Rosh*-ראש of the natural order of the worlds. However, the month of Nissan is the aspect of kindness-*Chessed*, and indicates the light (*Ohr*) of *HaShem*-יהו"ה that transcends the worlds. It therefore is the first month, at the head-*Rosh*-ראש of the miraculous conduct that transcends the natural order of the worlds.

To restate this in the language of the received knowledge (Kabbalah),⁹³⁵ the natural conduct of the world arises from the external union of wisdom-*Chochmah* and understanding-*Binah*, which are in a constant state of union in

⁹³⁴ Talmud Bavli, Sukkah 49b; See at greater length in the discourse entitled “*Padah b'Shalom* – He redeemed my soul in peace” 5712, translated in The Teachings of The Rebbe – 5712, Discourse 5, Ch. 7 and on, and elsewhere.

⁹³⁵ Cited and explained in Likkutei Torah, Netzavim 47a; Shir HaShirim 20c, 22c.

order to maintain the existence of the worlds. However, the fulfillment of Torah and *mitzvot*, causes an inner union of wisdom-*Chochmah* and understanding-*Binah*, that transcends the worlds.

This then, explains the teaching that, “when the Holy One, blessed is He, chose Yaakov and his sons,” – referring to the giving of the Torah, – “He established a month of redemption for them.” This is because the matter of redemption (*Ge’ulah*) transcends the natural order of the world, and since Nissan is the aspect of kindness-*Chessed* and is of the light of *HaShem*-יה"ה that transcends the worlds, in regard to this type of conduct, the month of Nissan is the head.

4.

Now, as known, the explanation is that the *Sefirah* of kingship-*Malchut* is called “prayer-*Tefilah*-תפלה,” as stated at the beginning of *Pri Etz Chaim*, that she prays and pleads with her husband, *Zeir Anpin*, to give her what she lacks, as in the verse,⁹³⁶ “and I am prayer-*Va’Ani Tefilah*-ואני תפלה.” This is similarly so in man below. That is, during the twelve blessings at the middle of the eighteen blessings of the *Amidah* prayer,⁹³⁷ we ask for all our needs and that our lackings be filled.⁹³⁸ Now, as known, the request and supplication in

⁹³⁶ Psalms 109:4

⁹³⁷ In actuality, there are nineteen blessings in the *Amidah* prayer. The blessing, “May informers have no hope etc.” was added later by our sages, of blessed memory, when it became necessary to do so.

⁹³⁸ Talmud Bavli, Brachot 34a

prayer must be for the fulfillment of the Supernal lacking, through which the lacking below is automatically rectified and filled.⁹³⁹ In other words, Above there also is a matter of lacking, and thus, kingship-*Malchut* prays and pleads with her husband, *Zeir Anpin*, to give her what she lacks. This is because the *Sefirah* of kingship-*Malchut* “has nothing of her own,”⁹⁴⁰ for which reason⁹⁴¹ “David was meant to be a miscarriage,” and did not have any years to his life. Instead, years were drawn to him from Adam, the first man and from our forefathers.⁹⁴² Because of this, kingship-*Malchut* pleads with *Zeir Anpin* to fill her lacking.

Now, the lacking is filled specifically by the light of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, that transcends all worlds (*Sovev Kol Almin*), for since this light transcends all lacking, therefore, to fill the lacking, light must be drawn from there. Nevertheless, kingship-*Malchut* pleads to *Zeir Anpin*, which is the light of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, that **fills** all worlds (*Memaleh Kol Almin*), since the drawing forth of the light of *HaShem*-יהו"ה that transcends all worlds (*Sovev Kol Almin*) comes specifically through the light of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, that fills all worlds (*Memaleh Kol Almin*).

This is because kingship-*Malchut* is called speech (*Dibur*). Now, we observe that in speech (*Dibur*) as it is

⁹³⁹ See the previous discourse of this year 5713 entitled “*Ki Tisa*,” Discourse 10, in which the Rebbe explains this at length.

⁹⁴⁰ Zohar I 181a, 239b; Zohar II 218b; Etz Chayim, Shaar 6 (Shaar HaAkudim) Ch. 5

⁹⁴¹ Megaleh Amukot Vayeitzei 39b; Yalkut Shimoni Bereishit, Remez 41; Zohar I 55a, 91b, 168a and elsewhere.

⁹⁴² See Yalkut Shimoni and Zohar *ibid*.

below in man, an infant does not begin speaking until he develops and grows to the point that he has some level of intellect. He then will speak of things that his heart desires, which is the aspect of the emotions (*Midot*). However, he does not speak except when he specifically desires to speak. That is, it is drawn forth from the desire (*Ratzon*) by means of the intellect (*Sechel*) and the emotions (*Midot*). The same applies to the *Sefirah* of kingship-*Malchut*. The drawing forth is from the light of *HaShem*-יהו"ה that transcends all worlds (*Sovev Kol Almin*), specifically by means of the light of *HaShem*-יהו"ה that fills all worlds (*Memaleh Kol Almin*). She therefore prays and pleads with her husband *Zeir Anpin*, that he fill her lacking.

To further explain, it is from the *Sefirah* of kingship-*Malchut* that the worlds are brought forth into existence. Now, the existence of the worlds comes through bringing about a lacking in the illumination of *HaShem*'s-יהו"ה light (*Ohr*), lacking after lacking, for, as known,⁹⁴³ “Before the world was created, there was Him and His Name alone.” It is explained in various places⁹⁴⁴ that His Name and His Light are one and the same matter and that both are only illumination. In other words, the worlds were only brought forth into existence by an illumination of the light of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He.

⁹⁴³ Pirke d'Rabbi Eliezer Ch. 3

⁹⁴⁴ See Likkutei Torah, Behar 41c; *Hemshech* 5666 p. 462, and elsewhere; Also see Shaar HaYichud of the Mittler Rebbe, translated as The Gate of Unity, Ch. 10-11.

Moreover, as explained,⁹⁴⁵ there is a difference between the bestowal of light (*Ohr*) and the bestowal of influence (*Shefa*). That is, the bestowal of influence (*Shefa*) causes change in the bestower (*Mashpiah*). In other words, there is change from before he bestows the influence, to when he bestows the influence, to after he bestows the influence. Before he bestows influence he prepares himself to bestow the influence. During the bestowal of influence, he is preoccupied with bestowing the influence and limits himself to do so. After the bestowal of influence he changes from how he was while bestowing the influence. The reason for this is because the bestowal of influence (*Hashpa'ah*) is the existence of something that the bestower (*Mashpiah*) gives of himself. It therefore affects change in the bestower of the influence (*Mashpiah*). This also includes the fact that the bestowal of influence also causes positive change in the bestower, as in the teaching,⁹⁴⁶ “I have learned much from my teachers, from my friends I have learned even more, but from my students I have learned more than from all of them.” This is because the influence (*Hashpa'ah*) is something of substance.

All the above relates to the bestowal of influence-*Shefa*-שפע. However, such is not at all the case with bestowal of light (*Ohr*), which causes no change in the bestower whatsoever. This is because light (*Ohr*) is only the aspect of

⁹⁴⁵ See Maamarei Admor HaZaken 5562 Vol. 1, p. 42, p. 261; Vol. 2, p. 422 and on; *Hemshech* 5666 p. 173 and on, and in various other places; Also see Shaar HaYichud of the Mittler Rebbe, translated as The Gate of Unity, Ch. 9 and the notes there.

⁹⁴⁶ Talmud Bavli, Taanit 7a

illumination. Nevertheless, there also is a superiority to light (*Ohr*) over and above influence (*Shefa*), being that light is similar to the essence of the influencer, whereas influence (*Shefa*) changes according to the condition of the recipient, unlike light (*Ohr*), which is similar to the essence.⁹⁴⁷

This is why the coming into being the worlds is specifically from the power of the light (*Ohr*). For, although the possibility of bringing creation into existence is specifically in the power of the Singular Preexistent Intrinsic and Essential Being, *HaShem* יהו"ה Himself, blessed is He, who has no cause that precedes Him, God forbid,⁹⁴⁸ nonetheless, the coming into being of novel existence is through the medium of light (*Ohr*), since His light (*Ohr*) is like His Essence, blessed is He. However, since the light is like the essence, therefore, the coming into being of novel

⁹⁴⁷ To clarify, the difference between a bestowal of light (*Ohr*) and a bestowal of "influence" (*Shefa*) is as follows: An example of an influence of light (*Ohr*) is when a person expresses an intellectual thought into speech. Here, there is no change in his intellect at all, and it remains completely whole, as it was before he spoke. His intellect did not diminish whatsoever. Likewise, his speech itself did not diminish, in that he does not run out of words. Furthermore, the recipient of this "light" (*Ohr*) did not receive the actual light of the intellect itself, but only its radiance in the speech. The intellect remains where it was the entire time, in the head of the influencer. This is an example of a "light and ray" (*Ohr v'Ziv*) which is only a revelation of the essential power, but is not the essential power itself. In contrast, an example of "influence" (*Shefa*) is in a manner of cause and effect (*Ila v'Alul*), and is more comparable to when a person lifts a heavy object. Here, his strength will diminish slowly, and he will not be able to hold it constantly. There is a diminishment from when he picked it up to afterwards, and therefore a change. Furthermore, there is a cause and effect here, and therefore when there is a difference in the effect it is due to the difference in the cause etc. (See Shaar HaYichud of the Mittler Rebbe, translated as The Gate of Unity, Ch. 9 and 19, and the notes there.)

⁹⁴⁸ Tanya, Iggeret HaKodesh, Epistle 20.

existence cannot come about from the light except specifically through the restraint and diminishment (*Tzimtzum*) of the light.

We thus find that the general coming into being of novel existence is from the diminishment and lack of light (*Ohr*), lacking after lacking, for all of novel existence is only an illumination from His Name *HaShem*-יהו"ה.⁹⁴⁹ Therefore, it is called the creation of something (*Yesh*) from nothing (*Ayin*). For, although⁹⁵⁰ "everything is from You," it is nevertheless called, "nothing-*Ayin*-אין," since it is merely a glimmer of illumination, which in relation to the One Above, blessed is He, is called "nothing-*Ayin*-אין."⁹⁵¹

Moreover, in the light itself, the coming into being of novel existence is from the lowest aspect of the light, that is, from the aspect of kingship-*Malchut* of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, the Unlimited One, blessed is He, and even in this itself, there was a concealment and restraint-*Tzimtzum*, so that all that remained revealed was the aspect of kingship of kingship-*Malchut* of *Malchut*. This is as stated in Etz Chayim,⁹⁵² "It is as if we say, "*Malchut* of *Malchut* of the Unlimited One (*Ain Sof*)."

It is about this that the verse states,⁹⁵³ "You *HaShem*-יהו"ה are alone; You made the heavens, the heavens of the heavens and all their hosts, the earth and all that is upon it, the

⁹⁴⁹ See at length in Ginat Egoz of Rabbi Yosef Gikatilla, translated as *HaShem is One*, Vol. 1, The Gate of Intrinsic Being (*Shaar HaHavayah*) and on.

⁹⁵⁰ Chronicles I 29:14

⁹⁵¹ See Likkutei Torah, Re'eh 19c and elsewhere.

⁹⁵² Etz Chayim, Shaar 42 (Shaar Drushei ABY"א), Ch. 1

⁹⁵³ Nehemiah 9:6; Also see Sefer HaMaamarim 5660 p. 43 and on; 5677 p. 117 and on, and elsewhere.

seas and all that is in them, and you give life to them all; and the heavenly hosts bow down to You.” That is, the words “You *HaShem*-יהוה are alone,” refers to the aspect of the light of the Unlimited One, *HaShem*-יהוה, blessed is He, that precedes the restraint of the *Tzimtzum*. After this it states, “You-*Ata*-את made,” wherein the word, “You-*Ata*-את,” is spelled minus the letter *Hey*-ה at the end of the word. This is because, at that point, there was a lacking of the five-*Hey*-ה statures (*Partzufim*) from crown-*Keter* to kingship-*Malchut*, and only the aspect of kingship of kingship-*Malchut* of *Malchut* remained, so that she could become the source for the existence of the worlds.

This is similarly the case subsequent to the restraint of the *Tzimtzum*, that whatever is drawn forth and chains down to the existence of the worlds is the aspect of diminishment and lack of light (*Ohr*). This is as stated in Etz Chaim,⁹⁵⁴ that in the aspect of *Akudim*, (which is at the beginning of the chaining down of the worlds (*Hishtalshelut*)), there only is an illumination of the two transcendent lights (*Makifim*) and the five inner lights (*Pnimiym*). Thus, in the world of Emanation-*Atzilut*, the revelation in its entirety, is only the aspect of a glimmer of the light of the line-*Kav*.

This is similarly so regarding the inner lights (*Orot Pnimiym*) of the world of Emanation-*Atzilut* as they illuminate to the worlds of Creation-*Briyah*, Formation-*Yetzirah* and Action-*Asiyah*. That is, in the world of Creation-*Briyah*, there is a lack of the aspects of crown-*Keter* and

⁹⁵⁴ Etz Chayim, Shaar 6 (Shaar HaAkudim), Ch. 2

wisdom-*Chochmah*, and there only is an illumination from the aspect of understanding-*Binah*, as it states,⁹⁵⁵ “The Supernal mother (*Imma Ila’ah*) dwells in the throne.” Likewise, in the world of Formation-*Yetzirah* there only is an illumination from the aspect of *Zeir Anpin*, and in the world of Action-*Asiyah*, there only is illumination of the aspect of kingship-*Malchut*.

From all the above it is understood that the coming into being of novel existence is from the diminishment and lack of light (*Ohr*), lacking after lacking. Therefore, since all of novel existence is from the diminishment and lack of light (*Ohr*), brought about by the *Sefirah* of kingship-*Malchut*, therefore, kingship-*Malchut* prays and pleads with her husband, *Zeir Anpin*, to fill her lacking.

Now, the lack is filled through the matter of charity-*Tzedakah*, and in regard to charity-*Tzedakah*, even if it is with great abundance, which even includes giving the one in need⁹⁵⁶ “a horse upon which to ride,” it nevertheless is only the matter of filling a lacking. In general, this is the matter of revelation that relates to the worlds. In contrast, the matter of lovingkindness-*Chessed*, applies both to the poor and to the wealthy.

The explanation is as follows: As known,⁹⁵⁷ “There is no one poorer than one who is poor in knowledge-*Da’at* and there is no one wealthier than one who is wealthy in

⁹⁵⁵ Tikkunei Zohar, Tikkun 6 (23a); Etz Chayim, Shaar 47 (Shaar Seder ABY”A), Ch. 3; Tanya Ch. 39, and elsewhere.

⁹⁵⁶ Talmud Bavli, Ketuvot 67b

⁹⁵⁷ Talmud Bavli, Ketuvot 68a; Nedarim 41a; Zohar III 273b

knowledge-*Da'at*.” Now, as known, there are two aspects to the position of knowledge-*Da'at* in the scheme of the *Sefirot*. There is the order of *Sefirot* one beneath the other (which is the order of chaos-*Tohu*),⁹⁵⁸ in which case, the *Sefirah* of knowledge-*Da'at* stands below the intellectual *Sefirot* of wisdom-*Chochmah* and understanding-*Binah* and is drawn to the emotions. In this case, the knowledge-*Da'at* is in a state of poverty, meaning that it is in a state of limitation, since it only draws forth according to how it receives from wisdom-*Chochmah* and understanding-*Binah*, which are in a state of limitation. In contrast, when the *Sefirot* are arranged in three lines,⁹⁵⁹ then the *Sefirah* of knowledge-*Da'at* stands directly below the *Sefirah* of crown-*Keter*, which transcends the lack and restraint of *Tzimtzum*, in which case, knowledge-*Da'at* is in a state of wealth.

This then, is the difference between lovingkindness-*Chessed* and charity-*Tzedakah*. That is, charity-*Tzedakah* is needed for the poor, and is the aspect of light (*Ohr*) in a state of limitation (*Gvul*) that relates to the worlds. In contrast, lovingkindness-*Chessed* is for the benefit of the wealthy too, and is light in a state of limitlessness (*Bli Gvul*) that transcends the worlds.

⁹⁵⁸ See Torah Ohr, Toldot 19a and on; Vayishlach 24d; Maamarei Admor HaZaken 5568 Vol. 1 p. 1; 5569 p. 13 and on, and elsewhere.

⁹⁵⁹ See Torah Ohr, Toldot 19a and on; Vayishlach 24d; Maamarei Admor HaZaken 5568 Vol. 1 p. 1; 5569 p. 13 and on, and elsewhere.

This likewise is the difference between the study of Torah and prayer (*Tefilah*). For, the matter of prayer (*Tefilah*) is to satisfy one's lackings, which is the purpose of the twelve middle blessings of the *Shemonah Esreh*; that *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, should be drawn to heal the sick and bless the years etc. For, the matter of sickness is that one has a fever of a strange fire (*Aish Zarah*) in him that is detrimental to his health. As this relates to serving *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, if there is a lack in the fire of holiness (*Aish d'Kedusha*), this brings about a strange fire (*Aish Zarah*) in him etc., and this subsequently has an affect Above. This is as stated,⁹⁶⁰ "You disregarded (*Teshi*-תשי) the Rock Who gave birth to you and have forgotten God Who brought you forth," which causes "a weakening (*Metishin*-מתישין) of the power of the One Above, so to speak."⁹⁶¹

Now, there also is a loftier kind of sick person, as in the verse,⁹⁶² "I am lovesick." That is, he has love for Godliness, but has nothing to satisfy this love. This is as stated in the writings of the Arizal,⁹⁶³ that the word "sick person" – *Choleh*-חולה – has the numerical value of forty-nine-ט"ט, meaning that he possesses the forty-nine gates (of understanding-*Binah*) and all matters that relate to them, but is

⁹⁶⁰ Deuteronomy 32:18

⁹⁶¹ Midrash Eicha Rabba 1:33 *ibid*.

⁹⁶² Song of Songs 2:5

⁹⁶³ Ta'amei HaMitzvot, Vayeira; Me'orei Ohr 8:35; Likkutei Torah Zot HaBrachah 97b, and elsewhere.

thirsty nonetheless, because he lacks the fiftieth gate (*Sha'ar HaNun*) [which is given as a gift from Above] and thus he has no means of satisfying his thirst.

The same applies Above, in the *Sefirah* of kingship-*Malchut*, about which it states,⁹⁶⁴ “The lower fire constantly yearns for the upper fire, but it is not found.” That is, she has no means to quench her thirst, which is the matter of sickness. It is about this that we request that *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, should heal the sick.

Similarly, in the blessing for the year, the supplication and prayer is that *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, grant dew-*Tal*-טל and rain-*Matar*-מטר for blessing. For, when one has left the path by sinning and causing blemish, the rain-*Matar*-מטר is not drawn down.⁹⁶⁵ In addition, even regarding the dew-*Tal*-טל, “which is constant and does not cease,”⁹⁶⁶ a change is caused, so that he does not receive the dew-*Tal*-טל.⁹⁶⁷ This then, is why we plead that the lacking be filled. This is to say that through filling the Supernal lacking, the lacking below is

⁹⁶⁴ Zohar II 140a; Zohar I 178b, 77b, 86b

⁹⁶⁵ See Likkutei Torah, HaAzinu 73b, and elsewhere.

⁹⁶⁶ Talmud Bavli, Taanit 3a-4a; The Talmud relates that the Jewish people entreated *HaShem* to be a blessing as the rain as in the verse (Hosea 6:3) “And let us know, eagerly strive to know *HaShem*. His going forth is sure as the morning, and He will come to us as the rain.” To this *HaShem* responded, “My daughter, you request [my manifestation by comparing me to] the matter [of rain] which is sometimes desired and sometimes not desired. However, I will be for you like that which is always desired as stated (Hosea 14:6) ‘I will be as the dew-*Tal*-טל to Israel.’” In other words, dew is constant and unchanging, just as *HaShem* is One-*HaShem Echad*-יהו"ה אחד is constant and unchanging. Thus, the dew-*Tal*-טל has a numerical value of 39 which is the same as *HaShem* is One-*HaShem Echad*-יהו"ה אחד-39. See Ginat Egoz of Rabbi Yosef Gikatilla, translated as *HaShem Is One*, Volume 1, The Gate of Intrinsic Being (*Shaar HaHavayah*).

⁹⁶⁷ See Likkutei Torah *ibid.*;

automatically filled, first spiritually, after which it is drawn down physically as well.

All the above is in regard to prayer (*Tefilah*), the theme of which is the satisfaction of that which is lacking. However, when it comes to the study of Torah, which is the aspect of kindness-*Chessed*, this is not the case. This is as stated,⁹⁶⁸ “The Torah of kindness-*Chessed* is upon her tongue.” In other words, Torah study is not a matter of filling a lacking, but rather, Torah is light (*Ohr*) that transcends the worlds.

This then, is the meaning of the teaching of our sages, of blessed memory, about the verse, “This month shall be for you the beginning of months.” That is, “when the Holy One, blessed is He, chose Yaakov and his sons, He established a month of redemption for them.” For, in reality, Parshat HaChodesh (the verses about the month of Nissan) should actually be the beginning of the Torah, as Rashi states at the very beginning of his Torah commentary,⁹⁶⁹ “Rabbi Yitzchak said: The Torah should have begun with the verse, ‘This month shall be for you the beginning of months.’” Likewise, the fact that Yaakov and his sons were chosen is tied to the giving of the Torah, and as known,⁹⁷⁰ the two thousand years of Torah began with our forefather Avraham.

Thus, since Torah is the aspect of kindness-*Chesed*, therefore, from the perspective of Torah itself, its order is that, “This month shall be for you the beginning of months,” which

⁹⁶⁸ Proverbs 31:26

⁹⁶⁹ Rashi to Genesis 1:1

⁹⁷⁰ Talmud Bavli, Sanhedrin 97a; Avodah Zarah 9a

is in the manner of miraculous conduct that transcends the natural order. This is also indicated by the specific wording of the verse, “This month shall be **for you-Lachem-לכם** the beginning of the months,” and that “Adam, the first man, did not count (the months) in this way.” This is because the external, constant union of wisdom-*Chochmah* and understanding-*Binah* is solely to sustain the existence of the worlds. That is, it is a union that existed prior to the giving of the Torah. Moreover, even after the giving of the Torah, for this external union to continue, no additional toil in the service of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, on the part of man below, is necessary. Rather, it even is drawn forth by the angels, who are emissaries for the drawing forth influence, as in the teaching that the, “constellation hits the plant and tells it to grow.”⁹⁷¹ This is because the existence of the angelic beings is also rooted in the external union.⁹⁷²

In contrast, the inner union of wisdom-*Chochmah* and understanding-*Binah* is the root of miraculous conduct, which is specifically drawn forth through toil in the service of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, on the part of man below. Therefore, the verse specifically states, “This month shall be **for you-Lachem-לכם**.”

⁹⁷¹ See Midrash Bereishit Rabba 10:6; Zohar I 251a (*Hashmatot*); Zohar II 171b; Moreh HaNevuchim Vol. 2, Ch. 10; Tanya Iggeret HaKodesh, end of Epistle 20 (132a).

⁹⁷² See Etz Chayim, Shaar 39 (Shaar Ma"N uMa"D) Drush 4; Maamarei Admor HaZaken, Inyanim p. 240 and on; Sefer HaMaamarim 5696 p. 43.

From all the above, we may also understand the statement of our sages, of blessed memory,⁹⁷³ “In Tishrei (that is, on Rosh HaShanah) the enslavement of our forefathers was nullified.” This is because, when there is a lacking, the first thing is for the lacking to be filled. Only afterwards can there be a drawing forth of wealth that is above and beyond the filling of the lacking. This likewise occurred in the exodus from Egypt. The lacking had to be filled first. This happened in the month of Tishrei, which is the matter of charity-*Tzedakah*, as explained before. This is why, “In Tishrei (that is, on Rosh HaShanah) the enslavement of our forefathers was nullified.” However, in and of itself, this did not yet constitute the matter of redemption (*Ge’ulah*), which transcends the natural order. Rather, this specifically took place in the month of Nissan, which is the aspect of kindness-*Chessed*.

To further explain, the Torah uses four terms of redemption (*Ge’ulah*) in regard to the exodus from Egypt.⁹⁷⁴ These are,⁹⁷⁵ “I shall take you out-*V’Hotzeiti* וְהוֹצֵאתִי,” “I shall rescue you-*V’Hitzalti* וְהִצַּלְתִּי,” “I shall redeem you-*V’Ga’alti* וְגָאַלְתִּי,” and, “I shall take you-*V’Lakachti* וְלָקַחְתִּי.” The first one, “I shall take you out from under the burdens of Egypt,” refers to exiting evil through filling the lacking. This is brought about through the revelation of the light of *HaShem*-

⁹⁷³ Talmud Bavli, Rosh HaShanah 11a-b

⁹⁷⁴ See also Sefer HaMaamarim 5678 p. 144 and on.

⁹⁷⁵ Exodus 6:6-7

יהו"ה, blessed is He, that fills all worlds (*Memaleh Kol Almin*), in which the matter of lacking is applicable ("the burdens of Egypt"), and within which the filling of the lacking is drawn.

The word, "I shall rescue you-*V'Hitzalti* וְהִצַּלְתִּי," is of the same root as the word "shade-*Tzeil* צֶל," indicating the aspect of the encompassing lights (*Makif*), referring to the light of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, that transcends all worlds (*Sovev Kol Almin*). For, as explained before (in chapter three), the lacking is filled specifically from the light of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, that transcends all worlds (*Sovev Kol Almin*). The word, "I shall redeem you-*V'Ga'alti* וְגִאֲלִיתִי" refers to the matter of juxtaposing redemption (*Ge'ulah*) to prayer (*Tefilah*).⁹⁷⁶ For, prayer (*Tefilah*) is the filling of the lacking, as explained before.

However, all the above occurred in the month of Tishrei. On the other hand, the words, "I shall take you-*V'Lakachti* וְלָקַחְתִּי unto Me as a people and I shall be a God unto you, and you shall know that I am *HaShem*-יהו"ה your God," refer to a drawing forth of the Singular Preexistent Intrinsic and Essential Being, *HaShem*-יהו"ה Himself, blessed is He. This is as stated,⁹⁷⁷ "I shall go through the land of Egypt on this night etc.," about which it states,⁹⁷⁸ "I and not an angel, I and not an emissary, I and no other," that is, the Singular Preexistent Intrinsic and Essential Being, *HaShem*-יהו"ה Himself, blessed is He.

⁹⁷⁶ Talmud Bavli, Brachot 10b

⁹⁷⁷ Exodus 12:12

⁹⁷⁸ See Sifri Tavo 26:8; Zohar I 117a; Haggadah for Pesach (Passover).

This refers to the inner union of wisdom-*Chochmah* and understanding-*Binah*, wherein the drawing forth is from high above, all the way from the aspect of the Singular Preexistent Intrinsic and Essential Being, *HaShem*-יהו"ה Himself, blessed is He. This is similar to the teaching of our sages, of blessed memory (in regard to finding a partner in marriage),⁹⁷⁹ "Their union is as difficult as the splitting of the sea." For, when it comes to marriage, there also is a drawing forth of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, the Unlimited One, blessed is He, as known.⁹⁸⁰ This matter occurred specifically in the month of Nissan, since as explained before, Nissan is the aspect of kindness-*Chessed*. Similarly, it for this reason that our sages, of blessed memory, stated,⁹⁸¹ "They were redeemed in Nissan, and in Nissan they are destined to be redeemed," may this occur speedily in our days, through our righteous redeemer, Moshiach!

⁹⁷⁹ Talmud Bavli, Pesachim 118a; Sotah 2a

⁹⁸⁰ See Likkutei Torah, Shir HaShirim 39d and on; Maamarei Admor HaEmtza'ee Vayikra Vol. 2, p. 671 and on; Sefer HaMaamarim 5652 p. 130; 5657 p. 179, and elsewhere.

⁹⁸¹ Talmud Bavli, Rosh HaShanah 11a; Midrash Shmot Rabba 15:11