

Discourse 24

*“HaChodesh HaZeh Lachem... -
This month shall be for you...”*

Shabbat Parshat Vayikra, Parshat HaChodesh,
Rosh Chodesh Nissan, 5724
By the grace of *HaShem*, blessed is He,

1.

The verse states,¹²⁰² “This month shall be for you the head of the months, it shall be for you the first of the months of the year.” In his discourse by this title of the year 5754,¹²⁰³ (seventy years ago), His honorable holiness, the Rebbe Rashab, whose soul is in Eden, (and whose Hilullah is on the 2nd day of Nissan), asks a question about this.

That is, we must better understand this, being that Rosh Chodesh Tishrei is called Rosh HaShanah (the Head of the Year) since it includes all twelve months of the year within itself. This is why it is called “the Head of the Year” (*Rosh HaShanah*),¹²⁰⁴ because it is like the head (*Rosh*-ראש), which in general, includes all the powers of the soul within itself, and the other limbs and organs only receive from the head afterwards. In the same way Rosh HaShanah (the “head of the year”)

¹²⁰² Exodus 12:2

¹²⁰³ Sefer HaMaamarim 5654 p. 131 and on; Also see the discourse by the same title of the year 5615 (Maamarei Admor HaTzemach Tzedek, p. 70 and on); 5670 p. 295 and on.

¹²⁰⁴ See Likkutei Torah, Tavo 41c; Nitzavim 47a and on; Drushim L'Rosh HaShanah 58a and on; Ateret Rosh, Shaar Rosh HaShanah, Ch. 2.

includes the vitality for entire year within itself, which is then divided from Rosh HaShanah to the twelve particular months, each month including thirty days, which then divides into each particular day. This being so, Rosh Chodesh Tishrei is first. Why then does the verse here state that “it [Nissan] shall be for you the first of the months of the year?”

More specifically,¹²⁰⁵ two matters are stated in this verse. The first is that the month of Nissan is “the head of the months,” and the second is that the month of Nissan is “first of the months of the year.” The question that arises from this is that the fact that Rosh Chodesh Tishrei is called Rosh HaShanah (the head of the year) also includes the month of Nissan, which is called “the head of the months,” (being that Rosh HaShanah includes the vitality of all twelve months within itself). However, what is even more difficult [to understand] is that it states, “it [Nissan] shall be for you the first of the months of the year,” because from this it is understood that even in regard to the drawing down for the entire year, Nissan is the head, even though Rosh Chodesh Tishrei is Rosh HaShanah.

We also must understand why the verse states, “This month shall be **for you** (*Lachem*-לכם)... it shall be **for you** (*Lachem*-לכם),” specifying “for you-*Lachem*-לכם.” What is added by the inclusion of the word “for you-*Lachem*-לכם”?

¹²⁰⁵ Also see Likkutei Sichot, Vol. 17, p. 150 and the citations there.

2.

In the discourse he explains that in Akeida it states¹²⁰⁶ that there are two ways by which to recognize the greatness of the Creator, blessed is He. The first is through [contemplating] the conduct of the natural order, which is constant and undergoes no change or cessation, stemming from the power of the Unlimited One, HaShem blessed is He, such that the heavens and the earth, “are as strong as the day they were created.”¹²⁰⁷ We thus find that even in [contemplating] the conduct of the natural order, which is rooted in the light of *HaShem*-יהו"ה that fills all worlds (*Memaleh Kol Almin*), we see the revelation of His unlimited Godly power, but even so, it is measured in accordance to how [the natural order of] the created beings is conducted etc.

The second way is from miraculous conduct, such as the exodus from Egypt and the splitting of the sea, in a way that the natural order is overpowered. This conduct is rooted in the light of *HaShem*-יהו"ה that transcends and surrounds all worlds (*Sovev Kol Almin*), which is the matter of a drawing down of His unlimited light (*Bli Gvul*).

In other words, in regard to the first way, although it clearly is apparent that it is the power of the Unlimited One, *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, it nevertheless is not actually in a way of [open] revelation, but is hidden and concealed [in the

¹²⁰⁶ Akaida to the Torah portion of Bo to Exodus 12:2 (Shaar 38)

¹²⁰⁷ See Talmud Yerushalmi, Brachot 1:1; Ginat Egoz of Rabbi Yosef Gikatilla, translated as HaShem Is One, Vol. 1, The Gate of His Title (*Shaar HaKinuy*); Sefer HaChakirah of the Tzemach Tzedek 4a, 62a, 103a and on; *Hemshech* “*Mayim Rabim*” 5636, Ch. 33; Sefer HaMaamarim 5692 p. 41, p. 50.

natural order]. However, in the second way, the aspect of the limitless light of the Unlimited One, *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, which transcends the natural order and transcends the chaining down of the worlds (*Seder Hishtalshehut*), illuminates in an openly revealed way, literally.

With the above in mind, he explains the matters of Rosh HaShanah and Rosh Chodesh Nissan. That is, the fact that Rosh HaShanah is called the “head-*Rosh*”-ראש,” in that it includes the vitality for the entire year, is solely in regard to the natural conduct. However, in regard to the miraculous conduct, specifically Rosh Chodesh Nissan is first.

He continues to explain that the two above-mentioned ways, (the natural conduct of Tishrei and the miraculous conduct of Nissan) correspond to the two ways of the union (*Yichud*) of Wisdom-*Chochmah* and Understanding-*Binah*, these being external union (*Yichud Chitzoni*) and inner union (*Yichud Pnimi*).¹²⁰⁸

The difference between them is that the purpose of the external union (*Yichud Chitzoni*) is to sustain the worlds, that they should be conducted according to the natural order from the aspect of the light of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, that fills all worlds (*Memaleh Kol Almin*). This is a constant union (*Yichud*). However, the purpose of the inner union (*Yichud Pnimi*) is for there to be a drawing down from higher than the natural order, from the aspect of the light of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, that transcends and surrounds all worlds (*Sovev*

¹²⁰⁸ See Likkutei Torah, Shir HaShirim 22c and the citations there, and 20c there (from the note of the Rebbe to Sefer HaMaamarim 5654 *ibid.*).

Kol Almin). This union (*Yichud*) is brought about through [our] toil in serving *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He.

Based on this, we can explain why the verse states, “This month shall be for you,” specifying “for you-*Lachem*-לכם.” This is because the matter of Rosh Chodesh Nissan, which is the first month of the miraculous conduct, brought about through the inner union (*Yichud Pnimi*), comes about through our toil (*Avodah*) in serving *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He. Therefore, this specifically applies to the Jewish people (“for you-*Lachem*-לכם”), since through their service of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, they bring this about.

3.

Now, this is also connected to the general matter of a month, (not just the month of Nissan, which is the month of redemption). This is because, the matter of months in general, is specifically connected to the moon. This is as in the well-known teaching of Rabbi Avraham Ibn Ezra,¹²⁰⁹ “The sun has no [units of] months, and the moon has no [units of] years.” The matter of a “month-*Chodesh*-חודש” is the birth of a [new] moon, which is a matter of “renewal-*Chiddush*-חידוש.” However, this does not apply the sun, in which there is no matter of renewal (*Chiddush*-חידוש).

¹²⁰⁹ Avraham Ibn Ezra to Exodus 12:2, cited in Sefer Nechmad v'Na'im, Section 93.

[To further explain, based on this, he explains in the discourse¹²¹⁰ that according to the view of the Shnei Luchot HaBrit,¹²¹¹ the unit of the month (*Chodesh*) corresponds to Kingship-*Malchut*, whereas the unit of the year is in Splendor-*Tiferet* or Understanding-*Binah*. That is, the unit of the year is loftier than [the unit of] the month.

This is as explained by the Alter Rebbe, of righteous memory, in the discourse entitled “*Sos Tasees*” in Likkutei Torah on the Torah portion of Nitzavim.¹²¹² Namely, that the unit of the year is much loftier than the aspect of the month. Yet, even so, Rosh Chodesh Nissan is “the first of the months of the year.” This is because the general vitality drawn down for the whole year on Rosh HaShanah, does not have any division into months. This is because this vitality is from the aspect of the sun, and the sun has no units of months at all. However, when the vitality is drawn into the aspect of the moon, it then is divided into the aspect of months, and in regard to units of months, Nissan is the first.]

The explanation¹²¹³ is that, in and of itself, the light of the sun illuminates constantly and without change. This indicates the external bestowal (from the external union – *Yichud Chitzoni*) for the purpose of sustaining the worlds. In contrast, the light of the moon, (meaning, that which the moon

¹²¹⁰ In the above-mentioned discourse entitled “*HaChodesh HaZeh*” Ch. 6 (Sefer HaMaamarim 5654 *ibid.*, p. 137); Also see Ohr HaTorah, Bo, Vol. 8 p. 2,916 and on.

¹²¹¹ Shnei Luchot HaBrit, Mesechet Pesachim 157b and on (in the note).

¹²¹² This is as stated in the discourse entitled “*HaChodesh*” 5654 and 5615 *ibid.* (See, however, discourse entitled “*Ki Karov*” [in Likkutei Torah] Nitzavim 46b.)

¹²¹³ See Ohr HaTorah, Bereishit 5a and on; Also see Likkutei Sichot, Vol. 27 p. 45.

receives of the light of the sun), is in a way of renewal and novelty (*Chiddush*-חידוש), indicating the inner bestowal (the inner union – *Yichud Pnimi* – brought about through our service *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, as explained before). Through this aspect there is a drawing down of additional light that transcends the chaining down of the worlds (*Hishtalshelut*).

This then, is the meaning of “This month shall be **for you.**” That is, the matter of a month (*Chodesh*-חודש) is connected to the moon, which specifically relates to the Jewish people, who are compared to the moon.¹²¹⁴ This is because through their service of *HaShem*-יהו"ה, blessed is He, the matter of renewal and novelty (*Chiddush*-חידוש) is caused, meaning a drawing down of additional light from **higher** than the chaining down of the worlds (*Hishtalshelut*).

4.

Based on the above, we can explain the continuation of the discourse¹²¹⁵ in regard to the matter of the union (*Yichud*) of the sun and moon. For, at first glance, all that is relevant here is the renewal of the moon, which is the aspect of the inner union (*Yichud Pnimi*) (unlike the sun, which is in a state of constant equality and is the aspect of the external union (*Yichud Chitzoni*) as mentioned above). This being so, why is it necessary to mention the way that the moon is renewed, that it

¹²¹⁴ See Talmud Bavli, Sukkah 29a; Midrash Bereishit Rabbaa 6:3

¹²¹⁵ In the above-mentioned discourse entitled “*HaChodesh HaZeh*” Ch. 3 & 4 (Sefer HaMaamarim 5654 *ibid.*, p. 134 and on).

receives from the sun, (this being the union (*Yichud*) of the sun and moon)?

However, the explanation is that the intention in this is to explain that the novelty and renewal (*Chiddush*-חידוש) brought about through the service of *HaShem*-יהו"ה of the Jewish people, is not only a drawing down that transcends the chaining down of the worlds (*Hishtalshehut*), meaning that it is the miraculous conduct (the moon), but that they draw this down and bind it to the natural conduct itself, (the union of the sun and moon).

This then, is the meaning of the verse, “This month shall be for you the head of the months, it shall be for you the first of the months of the year.” That is, the novelty and renewal (*Chiddush*-חידוש) (the month-*Chodesh*-חודש), brought about through the service of *HaShem*-יהו"ה of the Jewish people, (“for you-*Lachem*-לכם”), is not just in regard to the matter of drawing down the miraculous conduct (*Nissim*-נסים) (the matter of the month of Nissan (ניסן), “the head of the months”), but beyond this, through them the miraculous conduct is drawn down into the natural order itself. This is why the verse states, “It shall be **for you** the first of the months of the year.” That is, through the service of *HaShem*-יהו"ה of the Jewish people (“for you-*Lachem*-לכם”), the miraculous conduct is also drawn down into the months of **the year**.