

ברכת החמה

Birkat HaChamah

BIRKAT HACHAMAH, the blessing over the sun, the rarest event in Jewish practice, is recited only once in twenty-eight years. This year, on April 8, 2009, the sun will arrive at the exact location of its creation—at the precise moment of the anniversary of its creation.


Upon witnessing this extraordinary synchronization of time and place, Jews gather together to recite a blessing—*Birkat HaChamah*.



Berachot/Blessings: Recognition and Thanksgiving

Text 1 ■■

תנו רבנן: אסור לו לאדם שיהנה מן העולם הזה בלא ברכה . . .
רב יהודה אמר אמר שמואל:
כל הנהנה מן העולם הזה בלא ברכה כאילו נהנה מקדשי שמים
וכתיב: (תהלים כד, א) "לה' הארץ ומלואה"
רבי לוי רמי: כתיב: "לה' הארץ ומלואה"
וכתיב: (תהלים קטו, טז) "השמים שמים לה' והארץ נתן לבני אדם"
לא קשיא, כאן קודם ברכה, כאן לאחר ברכה
ברכות לה, א

ur Rabbis have taught: It is forbidden for a man to enjoy anything in this world without reciting a blessing . . . Rav Yehudah said in the name of Shmuel: To enjoy anything of this world without reciting a blessing is like making personal use of things consecrated to heaven, since it says, "The earth and that which fills it is the Lord's (Tehilim/Psalms 24:1)." Rabbi Levi contrasted two texts. It is written, "The earth and that which fills it is the Lord's (*Ibid.*)," and it is also written, "The heavens are the heavens of the Lord, but the earth He has given to man (Tehilim 115:16)!" There is no contradiction: in the one instance, it is before a blessing was said; in the other instance, after.

TALMUD, BERACHOT 35A

Text 2

כל הברכות כולן שלשה מינים:
ברכות הננייה וברכות מצות
וברכות הודאה, שהן דרך שבח והודיה ובקשה
כדי לזכור את הבורא תמיד וליראה ממנו
ונוסח כל הברכות עזרא ובית דינו תקנום
רמב"ם, הלכות ברכות א, ד-ה

All blessings are divided into three types: blessings over enjoyment, blessings upon performing mitzvot, and blessings of thanksgiving, which are [said both] in praise and gratitude and to request [one's needs from G-d. All these are for us] to remember the Creator constantly, and to be in awe of Him.

RAMBAM (MAIMONIDES), LAWS OF BENEDECTIONS 1:4-5

R. Moshe ben Maimon (1135–1204), better known as Maimonides or Rambam, author of *Mishneh Torah*, a compendium of Jewish law, and *Guide to the Perplexed*. He was born in Córdoba, Spain. After the conquest of Córdoba by the Almohads, who sought to forcibly convert the Jews to Islam, he fled and eventually settled in Cairo. There he became the leader of the Jewish community and served as court physician to the vizier of Egypt.

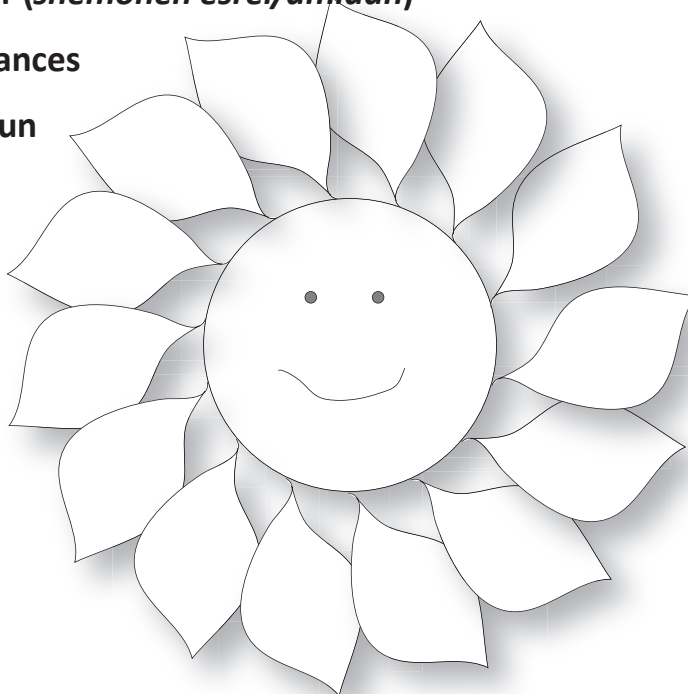
ברכות
ד :

Learning Exercise

Mark down “E” for enjoyment, “M” for mitzvot, or “T” for thanksgiving next to the appropriate *berachot*.



- Shooting Stars
- Bananas
- Beautiful Trees
- Studying Torah
- Shehecheyanu*
- Thunder and Lightning
- Prayer (*shemoneh esrei/amidah*)
- Fragrances
- The Sun



Text 3 ■

“ברוך” מלשון “המבריד הגפן”
שכופף ראש הזמורה לארץ ומשם צומח גפן אחר
והיינו בחינת השפעה והברכה מעולם ועד עולם
להיות המשכה והברכה מעולם ועד עולם כדי להיות גילוי מלך העולם
... וענין ברכה זו הוא . . . שיהא גילוי מלכותו יתברך נראה לעין כל העולם
שלא יהא העולם בבחינת העלם והסתר על בחינת מלוכה
וכדי להיות גילוי זה אומרים “ברוך”
שיהא ברוך ונמשך בחינת הוי”ה בבחינת אלקינו

The Hebrew word *baruch* (blessed) is related to, “If one has *bent down* (*hamavrich*) a vine shoot,” he bends the head of the vine shoot into the ground and from it grows a different vine. This refers to bending and drawing down of energy from one world to the next The concept of this form of *brachah* (bending down) is to draw down and bend down from one world to the next, to reveal the King of the universe . . . that His Kingship should be revealed to the entire world in order that the *olam* (the world) will not be a *he’elem* (concealment) of His Kingship. To reveal this, we recite “*baruch*” (blessed), to bend down, and draw down G-d’s name, *Havayah*, [representing G-dliness that transcends the world] into His name *Elokim* [representing G-d’s appearance in nature].

Rabbi Shne’ur Zalman of Liadi (1745–1812), “the Alter Rebbe,” author of *Tanya*, an early classic of Chassidism; *Torah Or*; *Likutei Torah*; and *Shulchan Aruch HaRav*, a halachic commentary. He founded the Chabad school of mysticism.

RABBI SHNE’UR ZALMAN OF LIADI, TORAH OR, MIKETZ 37C

A Blessing—Revealing G-dliness in the World

Text 4

על הזיקין ועל הזועות ועל הברקים ועל הרעמים ועל הרוחות
אומר: "ברוך שכחו וגבורתו מלא עולם"
על ההרים ועל הגבעות ועל הימים ועל הנהרות ועל המדברות
אומר: "ברוך עושה מעשה בראשית"
ר' יהודה אומר: הרואה את הים הגדול
אומר: "ברוך שעשה את הים הגדול"
בזמן שרואה אותו לפרקים
על הגשמים ועל הבשורות הטובות
אומר: "ברוך הטוב והמטיב"
ועל שמועות רעות
אומר: "ברוך דיין האמת"

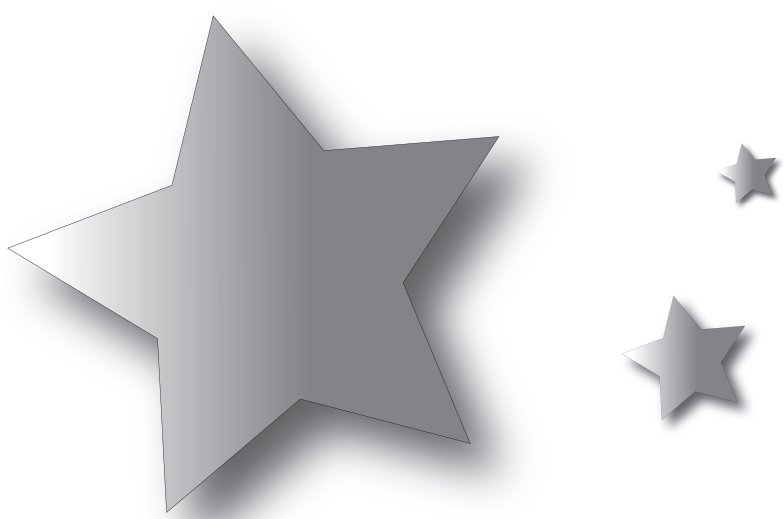
משנה ברכות ט,ב

Upon witnessing shooting stars, earthquakes, thunderclaps, storms, and lightning, one should say: "Blessed be He whose strength and might fill the world." Upon seeing mountains, hills, seas, rivers, and deserts he should say: "Blessed be He who wrought creation." Rabbi Yehudah says: If one sees the Great Sea, one should say: "Blessed be He who made the Great Sea," [that is] if he sees it at considerable intervals. For rain and for good tidings one says: "Blessed be He who is good and bestows good." For evil tidings one says: "Blessed be the true judge."

MISHNAH, BERACHOT 9:2

Table 1

<i>SheKocho</i> <i>UGevurato</i> <i>Malei Olam</i>	<i>Oseh</i> <i>Ma'aseh Bereishit</i>	<i>She'asah et</i> <i>HaYam HaGadol</i>	<i>HaTov</i> <i>VeHaMeitiv</i>	<i>Dayan</i> <i>Ha'Emet</i>
Whose strength and might fill the world	Who enacts the work of creation	Who made the Great Sea	Who is good and bestows good	The true judge
Shooting Stars	Mountains	The Great Sea	Rain	Evil Tidings
Earthquakes	Hills		Good Tidings	
Thunderclaps	Seas			
Storms	Rivers			
Lightning	Deserts			



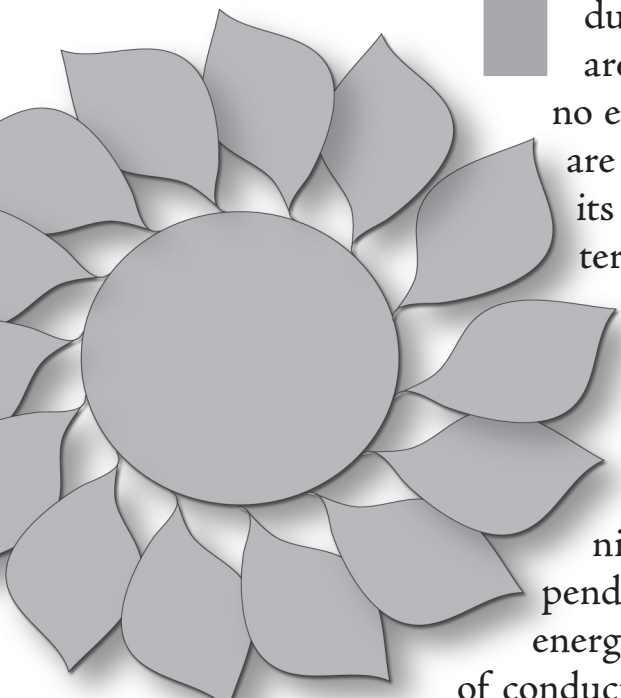
A Meditation

Questions for Discussion

1. How do we recognize G-d when witnessing the sun?
2. To what degree is life on earth dependent upon the sun?

Text 5 ■

“The Heavens recount the glory of the Almighty”



The heavens reveal that an infinite power conducts them and makes them come alive. They are like the source of water, which flows with no end, no cessation, and no change. While they are myriad in number, each planet and star has its own unique and distinctive orbit and pattern that is different from every other. Yet, they all synchronize and unite in one system to allow for day and night, cold and heat, summer and winter, planting and harvesting to exist. Who binds them together and coordinates all of them in this majestically synchronized organism? It cannot possibly be the independent energy within each individual planet. The energy within every planet and star is only capable of conducting its own motion and it is unable to conduct even its own movement alone. Since every celestial body is finite, it is bound to weaken and change and

there is bound to be some modification or cessation to its momentum. All galaxies differ in nature; some orbit in one direction and others in another, and many other stark differences. Clearly, there is an infinite power that unites all the myriad unique galaxies into one system and organism. Even the sciences must admit that there is a power vested within all celestial beings—the infinite divine power and ability of the Creator. This explains the verse, “Lift up your eyes and see, who created these (Yeshayahu/Isaiah 40:12)?”

RABBI MENACHEM MENDEL SCHNEERSOHN, YAHEL OR, TEHILIM 19:2

Rabbi Menachem Mendel Schneersohn of Lubavitch (1789–1866) also known as “the *Tzemach Tzedek*,” after the title of his major work on Talmudic law. Settled in Lubavitch (today in Belarus) where he led the Jewish community during a time of severe persecutions, including the censorship of Jewish publishing and the kidnapping of Jewish boys to serve harsh, lengthy terms in the Tsar’s army. The *Tzemach Tzedek* was the grandson of Rabbi Schne’ur Zalman of Liadi.

Understanding the Practice Why It Does Not Resemble Idolatry

Text 6 ■

הרוואה את החמה ואת הלבנה ואת הכוכבים ואת המזלות
אומר: “ברוך עושה בראשית”
רבי יודה אומר: המברך על החמה הרי זו דרך אחרת
תוספתא ברכות ו,ו

Upon witnessing the sun, moon, stars, and constellations, one recites: “Blessed be He who wrought creation.” Rabbi Yudah says: It is a deviant practice to bless the sun.

TOSEFTA, BERACHOT 6:6

Question for Discussion

Why might Rabbi Yudah consider blessing the sun a deviant practice?

Text 7a

כל בי עשרה שכינתא שריא

סנהדרין לטא

The divine Presence rests upon every gathering of ten Jews.

TALMUD, SANHEDRIN 39A

Text 7b

”זכר ונקבה בראם” ועל ידי זה ”ויברך אותם” ע”י ההתכללות כו’

וכמו בצירוף עשרה אומרים דבר שבקדושה

דאכל בי עשרה שכינתא שריא

מה שאין כן אם היו כל אלו העשרה כל אחד בפני עצמו

He created them [Adam and Eve] man and woman, and then He [G-d] blessed them, because of their amalgamation. Just as prayers are recited in a group of ten, for “the divine Presence rests upon every gathering of ten Jews,” which would not occur if each of these ten were on his own.

TORAH OR, OP. CIT., BEREISHIT/GENESIS 10D

Question for Discussion

Why might the presence of a group enhance the presence of the Divine?

Text 8

בעשרה דוקא שכינה שורה, כו'
משום דבעשרה דוקא שהם נגד עם דאצילות בעיור קומה שלימה
שם שורה כללות אור אין סוף

Rabbi Shalom DovBer Schneerson (1860–1920), also known as “the *Rashab*,” author of many volumes of discourses. The Rashab had the difficult responsibility of leading the Jewish community in Russia during times of great persecution, war, and upheaval.

The Divine Presence rests specifically upon a group of ten because ten corresponds to the ten *sefirot* (divine attributes) of *Atzilut* (World of Emanations) in a full configuration; there rests the totality of *Or Ein Sof* (infinite light).

RABBI SHOLOM DOVBER SCHNEERSON, SEFER HAMa'AMARIM 5672, P. 1457

Text 9

בְּרֵב עִם הַדֶּרֶת מֶלֶךְ

In a multitude of people is the king's glory.

MISHLEI/PROVERBS 14:28

When Do We Recite *Birkat HaChamah*?

Text 10 📖

תנו רבנן: הרואה חמה בתקופתה
ואימת הוי? . . . אומר: "ברוך עושה בראשית"
אמר אביי: כל עשרים ושמונה שנים
והדר מחזור ונפלה תקופת ניסן בשבתאי באורתא דתלת נגהי ארבע
ברכות נט,ב



ur Rabbis taught: He who sees the sun at its
turning point . . . should say, "Blessed be He
who has wrought the work of creation." And
when [does this happen]? Abaye says: Every twenty-eight
years when the cycle begins again and the Nisan [spring,
in the Land of Israel and in the rest of the Northern
Hemisphere] equinox falls in Saturn on the evening of
Tuesday, going into Wednesday.

TALMUD, BERACHOT 59B

Table 2

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Jupiter	Venus	Saturn	Sun	Moon	Mars	Mercury

Text 11

תניא, רבי אליעזר אומר: בתשרי נברא העולם . . .
רבי יהושע אומר: בניסן נברא העולם . . .
תנו רבנן: חכמי ישראל מונין למבול כרבי אליעזר
ולתקופה כרבי יהושע

ראש השנה יא, א-יב, א

It has been taught: Rabbi Eliezer says: In Tishrei the world was created Rabbi Yehoshua says: In Nisan the world was created Our Rabbis taught: The wise men of Israel follow Rabbi Eliezer in dating the Flood, and Rabbi Yehoshua in dating the annual cycles.

TALMUD, ROSH HASHANAH 10B, 11A, AND 12A.

Table 3

Sage	Creation	Kabbalah	In practice we follow
Rabbi Eliezer	<i>Tishrei</i> (autumn)	Actual creation	For years
Rabbi Joshua	<i>Nisan</i> (spring)	Creation in thought/potential	For seasons

The *Birkat HaChamah* Ceremony

Optional Section

Text 12

Rabbi David ben Solomon ibn Avi Zimra (1479–1573), “*RadBaZ*,” was a Sephardic sage and halachist who authored responsa and a commentary to Maimonides. Following the expulsion from Spain in 1492, he lived in Egypt and Israel.

ואם תאמר: הלא על מנהגו של עולם הוא מברך
ואפילו שלא יהנה מאורה מה בכך?
הא ליתא: דהא אמר ר' יהודה: הרואה לבנה בתדושה אומר “ברוך” וכו’


If you will say: Is he not reciting the blessing over the conduct of the universe? Even though he does not benefit from its light, why should that be significant? This is not so, for Rabbi Yehudah said: one who sees the moon in its renewal should recite, “blessed be . . .”

RABBI DAVID BEN SOLOMON IBN AVI ZIMRA, *RESPONSA*, VOL. I, 34I

The Actual Ceremony

Text 13 ■

תנו רבנן: הרואה חמה בתקופתה
אומר: "ברוך עושה בראשית"
ואימת הוי? . . .
אמר אביי: כל עשרים ושמונה שנים
והדר מחזור ונפלה תקופת ניסן בשבתאי באורתא דתלת נגהי ארבע
ברכות נט, ב

 Our Rabbis taught: He who sees the sun at its turning point . . . should say, "Blessed be He who has wrought the work of creation." And when [does this happen]? Abaye says: Every twenty-eight years when the cycle begins again and the Nisan [spring] equinox falls in Saturn on the evening of Tuesday, going into Wednesday.

TALMUD, BERACHOT 59A

בְּרוּךְ עוֹשֵׂה בְּרֵאשִׁית

The Message

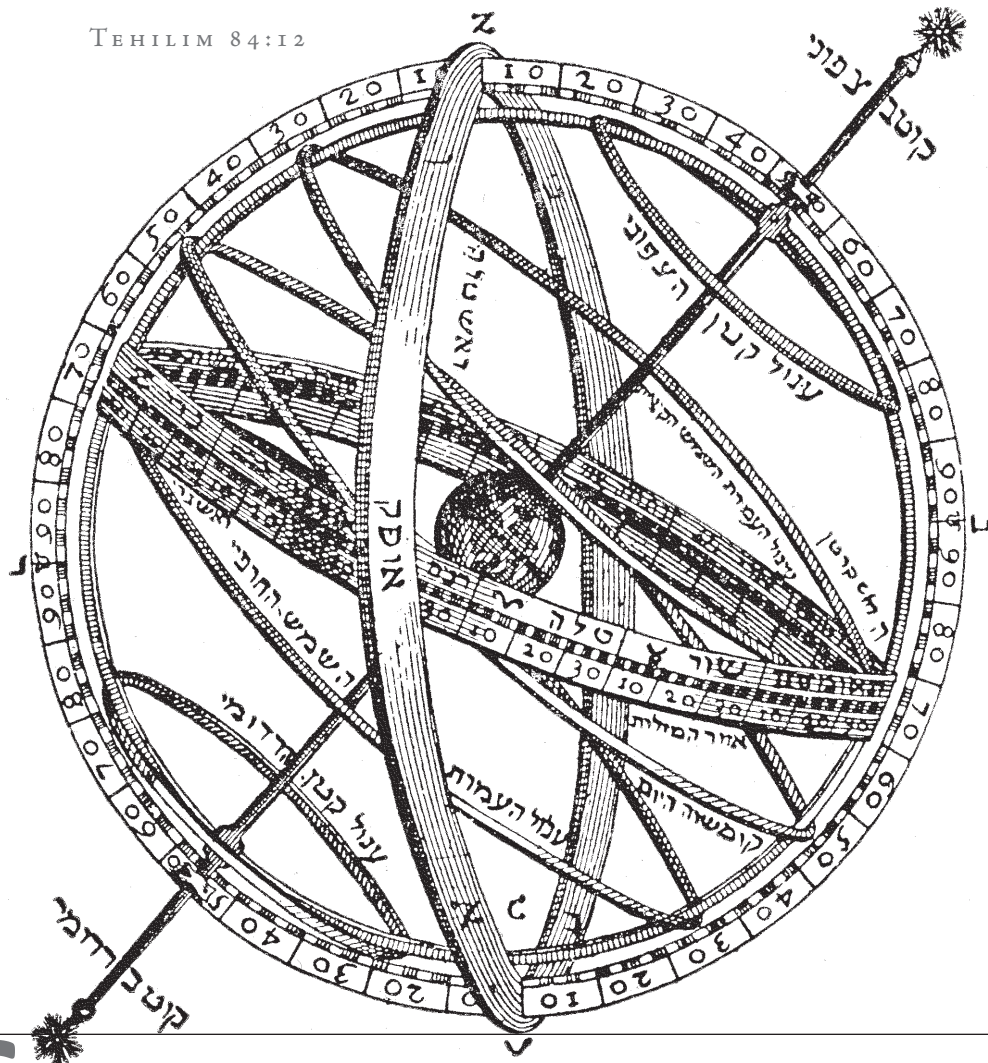
The Sun-Moon Relationship

Text 14

כי שמש ומגן ה' אלקים
תהלים פד, יב

For the Lord G-d is a sun and shield.

TEHILIM 84:12



Key Points

- 1.** By reciting blessings, we recognize and thank G-d and reveal His Presence.
- 2.** The sun reveals G-d's Presence and His constant guiding hand that keeps creation in motion.
- 3.** We recite *Birkat HaChamah* in a group whose collective power elicits infinite divine energy.
- 4.** We recite *Birkat HaChamah* at the alignment of the time and place of the sun's potential creation, recognizing the sun's spiritual source.
- 5.** *Birkat HaChamah* is the rarest event on the Jewish calendar. It transpires only once in twenty-eight years.
- 6.** *Birkat HaChamah* will be recited on the morning of Wednesday, April 8, 2009.
- 7.** At the ceremony, we will recite selected *Tehilim*, a passage from the Talmud, the blessing on creation, and *Shehecheyanu*.
- 8.** The message of *Birkat HaChamah* is to acknowledge the Creator and renew our commitment to Him.

Additional Readings

Our Other Head

By Rabbi Yanki Tauber

Based on the teachings of the Lubavitcher Rebbe, Rabbi Menachem Mendel Schneerson

And G-d spoke to Moses and Aaron in the land of Egypt, saying: This month shall be to you the head of months—the first of the months of your year.

Exodus 12:1-2

*Rabbi Eliezer says: The world was created in Tishrei...
Rabbi Joshua says: The world was created in Nissan*

Talmud, Rosh Hashanah 10b-11a

The Talmud tells of an exchange between the wise men of Athens and Rabbi Joshua in which the Greek philosophers challenged the Talmudic sage to identify the exact center of the world. Rabbi Joshua pointed to a field atop a nearby hill, and said: “In the middle of that field is a well. That well is the center of the world. You can take ropes and measure it, if you wish.”

As every schoolchild knows today, the earth is a sphere, meaning that its every point can be considered the center of the earth’s surface. If a certain point is regarded as the top or bottom of the globe, or a certain half is designated as its eastern or western hemisphere, these are expressions of a particular historical or conceptual view of our world. In purely geometrical terms, the surface of a sphere has no definitive top, bottom or center, just as a circle is a line with no definitive beginning or end.

The time we inhabit is also circular in form. As we travel through time, we come in contact with the various qualities imbued in it by its Creator: freedom on Passover, awe on Rosh HaShanah, joy on Sukkot, and so on. But each year we return, like a traveler circling the globe, to the same point in the annual cycle at which we stood a

year earlier. Theoretically, any point in this cycle can be regarded as its beginning.

This explains a curiosity of the Jewish calendar. We know that the Jewish year begins on the first of Tishrei—a day we observe as Rosh HaShanah, “The Head of the Year”—and ends twelve (or thirteen) months later, on the 29th of Elul. But if the head of the year is on the first of Tishrei, why does the Torah (in Leviticus 23:24) refer to Tishrei as the *seventh* month of the year? And why is the month of Nissan, occurring midway through the Tishrei-headed year, designated—in the very first mitzvah commanded to the Jewish people—as “the head of months, the first of the months of your year”?

But like a sphere with two poles, the Jewish year has two “heads” or primary points of reference; each of which is equally its beginning. Our annual journey through time is actually two journeys—a Tishrei-to-Elul journey, and a Nissan-to-Adar journey. Every day on the Jewish calendar can be experienced on two different levels, for it simultaneously exists within these two contexts.

(For example: in the Tishrei-to-Elul year, Yom Kippur is the climax of the Ten Days of Repentance that begin on Rosh HaShanah; on the Nissan-to-Adar calendar, Yom Kippur is the second “Giving of the Torah”, culminating a 120-day process that begins on Shavuot. In the Tishrei-to-Elul year, the seventh day of Passover is the cosmic “birth of the souls”, following their “conception” on Shemini Atzeret, the eighth day of Sukkot; in the Nissan-to-Adar year, Passover is the first festival, commencing a cycle that culminates in Purim, “the last miracle” and final frontier in our quest for connection with G-d.)

A Miraculous People

As already noted, both these beginnings for the Jewish year are referred to in the Torah as “heads”: the first of Tishrei is Rosh HaShanah, “The Head of the Year”, while the month of Nissan is designated as “the head of months.”

The head is the highest part of the body, both in the literal, spatial sense, as well as in that it is the seat of its loftiest and most sophisticated faculties. More significantly, it serves as the body's nerve and command center, providing the consciousness and direction that guides the body's diverse components toward a unified goal.

And the Jewish year has not one but two heads. For Jewish life embraces two different—indeed, contrasting—modes of existence, each with its own nerve-center and headquarters.

The “Head of the Year” that we're all familiar with—the one on which we sound the *shofar* and pray for a healthy and prosperous year—occurs on the first of Tishrei. The first of Tishrei is the anniversary of G-d's creation of the universe, particularly His creation of man. On this day we reaffirm our commitment to G-d as our Creator and King, and ask that He inscribe us in the book of life.

But if the first of Tishrei is the first day of human history, the month of Nissan marks the birth of Jewish time. On the first of Nissan, 2,448 years after the creation of Adam, G-d commanded His first mitzvah to the fledgling nation of Israel—to establish a calendar based on the monthly lunar cycle. On the fifteenth of that month, the Jewish people exited the land of Egypt and embarked on their seven-week journey to Mount Sinai.

The Jew is a citizen of G-d's world—a status he shares with all other peoples and all other creations. As such, his head of the year is the first of Tishrei, the birthday of man and the Rosh HaShanah of the natural world. But the Jew also inhabits another reality—a reality born of the supra-natural events of the Exodus, the splitting of the Red Sea, and the divine revelation at Sinai. This dimension of his life has its own “head”—the miraculous month of Nissan.

For the first twenty-five centuries of human history, the basic, natural relationship between Creator and creation held sway. The Torah records miracles and supernatural events prior to the Exodus, but these are exceptions, temporary departures on the part of G-d from His normal manner of running the world in accordance with the pre-defined formula we call “the laws of nature.” The Exodus, on the other hand, produced the Jew, a being whose very existence is a perpetual miracle. The Jew

makes redemption a constant, living a life in which the miraculous is the norm.

G-d of the Exodus

This is why when G-d revealed Himself to us at Sinai He proclaimed: “I am the L-rd your G-d, who has taken you out from the land of Egypt, from the house of slavery.” Would it not have been more appropriate, ask the commentaries, for G-d to introduce Himself as the creator of the heavens and the earth? Is not the fact that we owe our very existence to G-d more significant than the fact that He took us out of Egypt?

But G-d as the creator of the heavens and the earth, G-d as the author of nature, is the G-d that Israel shares with the rest of creation. At Sinai, however, G-d did not speak to us as the G-d of creation, but as the G-d of the Exodus. At Sinai, a new chapter was opened in divine-human relations as G-d and the people of Israel committed themselves to a *miraculous relationship*—a relationship that does not recognize the dictates of convention and normalcy.

It is for this reason that our sages question the very inclusion of the first 2,448 years of history in the Torah. In his commentary of the very first verse of the Torah, Rashi cites the question posed by Rabbi Yitzchak:

Why does the Torah begin, “In the beginning [G-d created the heavens and the earth]”? It should have begun, “This month shall be to you [the head of months],” which is the first mitzvah commanded to Israel.

If the Torah is the document that outlines our mandate as a people unconstricted by the laws of nature and history, of what relevance are the events of the pre-Exodus era? And even if they are of historical and educational value, should the Torah *begin* with these stories?

Cross-References

And yet, the Torah does not begin with that first mitzvah, commanded on the first of Nissan, but with the creation of the world on the first of Tishrei. Our covenant with G-d, though a product of the Exodus and of a Nissan/miraculous character, has its roots in the natural soil of Tishrei.

Indeed, the Exodus itself also has its beginnings in the month of Tishrei: the Talmud notes that the process of our liberation from Egypt began on the first of Tishrei, when the hard labor imposed upon our forefathers by the Egyptians ceased six months before they actually left Egypt.

The reverse is also true: the creation of the natural world on Tishrei has its origins in the month of Nissan. Our sages tell us that while the physical world was created in the six days that culminate in the first of Tishrei, the “thought” or idea of creation was created six months earlier (conceptual months, that is, since physical time is itself part of the physical creation), on the first of Nissan¹.

In other words, the natural and the miraculous time-systems are mutually interconnected, each serving as the basis for the other.

As Jews, we follow both cycles, straddling both worlds. On the one hand, even the most natural aspects of our lives are predicated upon the miraculous, and are permeated with a norm-transcending vision. On the other hand, our most miraculous achievements are grounded in the natural reality.

For our mission in life can be achieved only by inhabiting both worlds—only by being a part of the natural world and, at the same time, rising above it to transcend its strictures and limitations.

¹ The Talmud (Rosh Hashanah 10b-11a) cites a debate between two sages: “Rabbi Eliezer says: The world was created in Tishrei... Rabbi Joshua says: The world was created in Nissan.” The Kabbalists explain that Rabbi Eliezer and Rabbi Joshua are not debating the date of G-d’s actual creation of the universe, which, after all, is a matter of historical fact. Rather, both sages agree that the physical world was created in Tishrei, and that the idea of creation was created in the month of Nissan. Where they differ is on the question of priority and emphasis: is the day that the physical universe was completed to be regarded as the primary anniversary of creation, or is the world’s true date of birth the day that it was conceived in the divine mind?

The Paradox

Our mission in life is to transform the very nature of reality; in the words of the Midrash, to build “A dwelling for G-d in the lower realms.” This, writes Rabbi Schneur Zalman of Liadi in his Tanya, is what man is all about; this is the purpose of his creation and the creation of all the worlds—that we transform the lower realms (i.e., the natural, material world which, by its nature, conceals the face of its Creator) into an environment receptive to the divine truth, into a place in which the goodness and perfection of G-d is at home and is the dominant reality.

But here comes the paradox, a seemingly closed logical circle: are we ourselves part of this “lower realm” we are to transform, or are we a step above it? If we are part and parcel of the material world, how can we truly change it and uplift it? As the Talmudic axiom goes, “A prisoner cannot release himself from prison”—if he himself is bound by its parameters, from where might derive his ability to supersede them? On the other hand, if we are, in essence, transcendent beings, existing beyond the confines of the natural reality, then whatever effect we have upon the world cannot truly be considered “a dwelling for G-d in the lower realms.” For the world *per se* has not been transformed—it has only been overwhelmed by a superior force. The true meaning of “a dwelling in the lower realms” is that the lowly realms themselves change, from within.

So to achieve His aim in creation for a dwelling in the lower realms, G-d created the Jew, a hybrid of the Tishrei and Nissan realities. For only in incorporating both these time-cycles in our lives, combining a norm-defying approach with a natural-pragmatic *modus operandi*, can we achieve the redemption of ourselves and our world. Only by drawing from above to change from within can we make our world a home for G-d.

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