

Dvar Torah Parshat HaChodesh

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Based on Likutey Halakhot, M'onen u'M'nacheish 2

Parshat HaChodesh, celebrating as it does our very first mitzvah that we received as a people, cries for an explanation: Why are we moonies (pardon the expression)?

From its first mention in the Torah, the moon represents all that has gone wrong and remains in a state of imperfection in the world, as it currently operates. By immediately giving us the mitzvah to sanctify the moon, God is telling us that our mission is to correct what is broken, to "fill the moon's lack."

"[None among you shall be a...] diviner of auspicious times or omens..." (Deuteronomy 18:10). One of the motivations for seeking out the help of fortune-tellers and soothsayers is to gain an advantage over Nature by knowing what is in store and how to avoid it, if detrimental, or how to optimally use it. The mitzvah to not seek such knowledge is to remind us that we are, essentially, a super-natural people. Of course, none of us can fly and we all have to look both ways before crossing the street—we are not impervious to physical harm or disease.

But to fulfill our mission as a people, we as individuals have to take care to guard our essence, our connection to the Creator of Nature. In an ideal world, one's connection to the Divine, through observance and performance of His will, would correspond directly to a like-result. We know all too well, however, that the world does not currently operate that way. God hides His continual, loving control and guidance behind the screen of Nature.

Filling the moon's lack requires our synthesizing the natural and the rational laws of life with faith in the Creator, Who

is beyond and outside them, Who can contravene them as He likes, whenever He chooses. To seek magical and paranormal solutions is to misuse our faith, even if we haven't totally excluded God from our calculations.

And coming on the heels of last week's episode of the Golden Calf, we see that the Jewish women, who refused to give their jewelery to produce the Golden Calf, exhibited a Jewish essence deeper than their husbands'. This is why they, and not the men, were given Rosh Chodesh as a special holiday, and why they are promised to be continually renewed in the Future (Pirkei d'Rebbe Eliezer, Chapter 45), when faith and nature will collaborate to reveal God's presence.

May we live to see it, soon. Amen.

agutn Shabbos!

Shabbat Shalom!

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