



The Fascinating Connection between Parshas Sazria and Shabbas HaChodesh In the Merit of the Mitzvah of Milah We Possess the Ability to Perform Teshuvah and to Hasten the Future Geulah which Will Occur in the Month of Nissan

We refer to next Shabbas Kodesh as **Shabbas HaChodesh**; this year it also happens to be Rosh Chodesh Nissan. In addition to the parshas hashavua of parshas Sazria, our blessed sages instituted that we read a special passage from parshas Bo as the Maftir on this special Shabbas. This passage designates the month of Nissan as first and foremost of the months of the year (Shemos 12, 2): **"החודש הזה לכם ראש חדשים, ראשון הוא לכם לחדשי השנה"—this month shall be for you the beginning of the months; it shall be for you the first of the months of the year.** In this essay, we will focus on the connection between the weekly Torah portion and Parshas HaChodesh.

To begin with, we will focus on the mitzvah of milah mentioned at the beginning of the parsha (Vayikra 12, 1): **"ידבר ה' אל משה לאמר, דבר אל בני ישראל לאמר אשה כי תזריע וילדה זכר וטמאה ה' שבעת ימים כימי נדת דוותה טמאה, וביום השמיני ימול בשר ערלתו."** **Hashem spoke to Moshe, saying: Speak to Bnei Yisrael, saying: When a woman conceives and gives birth to a male, she shall be impure for a seven-day period, as during the days of her menstrual infirmity shall she be impure. On the eighth day, the flesh of his foreskin shall be circumcised.**

We find the following pertinent elucidation in the Midrash (V.R. 14, 2): **"אשה כי תזריע. הדא הוא דכתיב אשא דעי למרחוק ולפועלי אתן: צדק... אמר רבי נתן, מחשבין לשמו של אברהם אבינו, אותו שבא מרחוק, הדא הוא "When a woman conceives." It is written (Iyov 36, 3): "I shall lift my mind to far away, and to my Maker I shall ascribe justice" . . . Rabbi**

Nasan said: This alludes to the essence (name) of Avraham Avinu, the one who came from far away, as it is written (Bereishis 22, 4): "Avraham raised his eyes, and he saw the place from afar." Simply understood, Rabbi Nasan is drawing a connection between the mitzvah of "milah" mentioned in our parsha and Avraham Avinu—who merited accepting the mitzvah of "milah" for himself and his descendants. What benefit, however, accrues to us from associating the mitzvah of "milah" with Avraham Avinu?

David HaMelech Dedicated the Psalm "למנצח על השמינית" to the Mitzvah of Milah which Is Performed on the Eighth Day

We learn in the Gemara (Menachos 43b): **"בשעה שנכנס דוד לבית המרחץ וראה את עצמו עומד ערום, אמר אזי לי שאעמוד ערום בלא מצוות, כיון שזכר במילה שבבשרו נתישבה דעתו, לאחר שיצא אמר עליה שירה שנאמר למנצח Upon entering the bathhouse and seeing himself standing naked, David said, "Woe is me that I should stand naked, without mitzvos." When he recalled the circumcision in his flesh, he was consoled. After exiting, he composed a song regarding this matter, as it states (Tehillim 12, 1): "To Him Who grants victory, on the eight-stringed instrument, a psalm by David." This song is about the milah, which was given on the eighth day. While it is true that David became elated upon remembering the mitzvah of "milah" imprinted in his flesh, why did he specifically rejoice**

about the fact that it was performed on the eighth day—so much so that he formulated an entire psalm related to this fact?

It appears that we can answer this question by introducing another passage from the Gemara related to the mitzvah of “milah” (Nedarim 32a): **“אמר רב יהודה אמר רב, בשעה שאמר לו הקב”ה: ה'תהלך לפני והיה תמים, אחזתו רעה אמר שמא יש בי דבר מגונה, לאברהם אבינו. כיון שאמר לו ואתנה בריתי ביני ובינך נתקררה דעתו.”** Rav Yehudah said in the name of Rav: **When HKB”H said to Avraham Avinu (Bereishis 17, 1): “Go before Me and be perfect,” he was seized with trembling. He thought: “Perhaps there is something revolting in me (rendering me unworthy).” However, when He (HKB”H) told him (ibid.): “I will establish My covenant between Me and You,” his mind was set at ease.**

It is understandable why Avraham was seized with a fit of trembling. When HKB”H said to him: **“Go before Me and be perfect,”** he interpreted this to mean that up until that point he was lacking and unworthy in the eyes of the Almighty. But why was he consoled when HKB”H informed him that **He would establish a covenant with him?**

Additionally, we will endeavor to explain the significance of the addition by HKB”H of the letter “hei” to the name Avram in association with the mitzvah of “milah,” as it is written (ibid.4): **“אני הנה בריתי אתך והיית לאב המון גוים, ולא יקרא עוד את שמך אברם והיה שמך אברהם—as for Me, this is My covenant with you: You shall be a father of a multitude of nations; your name shall no longer be called Avram, but your name shall be Avraham.** Why was the letter “hei” added to him name specifically at that juncture?

This World Was Created with the Letter “Hei” Providing an Aperture for Ba’alei Teshuvah to Return to Good Standing

I would like to propose a wonderful explanation for this matter based on an elucidation in the Midrash (B.R. 12, 9) related to a passuk that appears toward the end of the chronicle of the creation (ibid. 2, 4): **“אלה תולדות השמים והארץ בהברא”ם באברה”ם, בזכותו של אברהם.”** **“These are the generations of the heavens and the earth בהברא”ם.”** The word **בהברא”ם** is an anagram for **באברה”ם**, implying that the heavens and the earth were created **in the merit of Avraham.**

Additionally, they expound in the Midrash (ibid. 10): **“בהברא”ם —the word בהברא”ם can be read as בה’ ברא”ם, indicating**

that this world was created with the letter **“hei.”** In Zera Kodesh (Succos, First Night), the great Rabbi of Ropshitz explains that these two Derashos—elucidations—go hand in hand. Indeed, the world was created with the letter **“hei”**—in keeping with the interpretation of **“בה’ ברא”ם**—however, it is referring to the merit of the letter **“hei”** that HKB”H added to Avraham’s name.

To explain the matter, let us refer to the Gemara (Menachos 29b). There, they expound on this passuk:

“אלה תולדות השמים והארץ בהברא”ם, אל תקרי בהברא”ם אלא בה’ ברא”ם. ומפני מה נברא העולם הזה בה’ ברא”ם, מפני שדומה לאכסדרא שכל הרוצה לצאת יצא וזמאי טעמא תליא כרעיה דאי הדר בתשובה מעיילי וליעייל בהך לא מסתייעא מילתא.”

The passuk states: **“These are the generations of the heavens and the earth בהברא”ם.” Do not read the word as it is actually written—בהברא”ם—but rather as בה’ ברא”ם** (indicating that the heavens and the earth were created with the letter “hei”). **And why was Olam HaZeh created with the letter “hei”? Because it resembles a pavilion (Rashi: it is open underneath); so that anyone who wishes to leave (go astray) can leave (to lead a life of sin). Then the Gemara asks: And for what reason is the left leg of the “hei” hanging (i.e., it is not connected to the top of the “hei”)? So that if he performs teshuvah, they can bring him back in (through the upper opening between the suspended leg and the top of the “hei”).**

Now, from the aspect of “midas hadin,” a person who sins against the King of Kings does not deserve a tikun; strictly speaking, his teshuvah should not be accepted. However, in His infinite mercy, HKB”H treats the sinner with divine “chesed” above and beyond the dictates of “din,” and accepts his teshuvah. This is evident from the following passage in the Talmud Yerushalmi (Makkos 7a):

“שאלו לחכמה חוטא מהו עונשו, אמרו להם חטאים תרדף רעה, שאלו לנבואה חוטא מהו עונשו, אמרה להן הנפש החוטאת היא תמות, שאלו לקודשא בריך הוא חוטא מהו עונשו, אמר להן יעשה תשובה ויתכפר לו, היינו דכתיב על כן יורה חטאים בדרך, יורה לחטאים דרך לעשות תשובה.”

They asked “Chochmah” (Wisdom): “What should the punishment of a sinner be?” She answered them (Mishlei 13, 21): “Evil pursues sinners.” They asked “Nevuah” (Prophecy), “What should the punishment for a sinner be?” She answered them (Yechezkel 18, 4): “The soul that sins shall die.” They asked the Torah, “What should the punishment for a sinner be?” She answered them, “Let him bring an

‘asham,’ and it will atone for him.” They asked HKB”H, “What is the punishment for a sinner?” He answered that he should perform teshuvah, and it will atone for him, as it is written (Tehillim 25, 8): “Good and upright is Hashem; therefore, He guides sinners on the proper path”—for He shows the sinners the path; they should perform teshuvah.

Now, the acceptance of a sinner back into good standing via “midas hachessed” is entirely in the merit of Avraham Avinu. He served Hashem with “midas hachessed” by hosting guests and teaching them to return to their Father in Heaven by means of teshuvah. According to the Zera Kodosh, this explains HKB”H’s rationale for adding the letter “hei” to Avraham’s name. The right side of the “hei” is an uninterrupted, intact, straight line. It represents Avraham’s flawless, unmitigated, right sided “midas hachessed.” The left side of the “hei,” on the other hand, is broken and incomplete. It represents the left sided “midas hadin,” which has been broken and diminished (modified) due to the merit of Avraham. Hence, there is an opening in its upper left corner to accept a sinner back once he has performed teshuvah.

Thus, the two elucidations of **בהבראם** go hand in hand beautifully. It can be interpreted as an anagram for **באברהם**—in the merit of Avraham—and it can also be read as **בה' בראם**—they were created with the letter “hei.” For, the world was created with the letter “hei,” which has an entrance on its left side for “ba’alei teshuvah” in the merit of Avraham, who epitomized “midas hachessed,” which is alluded to by the intact right side of the letter “hei.”

By Removing the Physical Barrier through the Mitzvah of Milah We Are Capable of Removing the Barrier of the Heart through Teshuvah

Based on this introduction, we will now explain why HKB”H added the letter “hei” to the name of Avraham Avinu in association with the mitzvah of “milah.” As our sacred sefarim explain, the purpose of the mitzvah of “milah” is not only physical, but it is also spiritual. As it is written (Devarim 10, 16): “**וּמַלְתֶּם אֶת עֶרְלַת לִבְבְּכֶם**”—you shall cut away the barrier (“**orlah**”) in your heart.

This is explained in the Shu”t (Responsa) of Rabbi Akiva Eiger (42) in the name of the Kli Yakar, who writes in Ollot Ephraim (Part 3, Issues of Milah 392): **“מִילָה חִיצוֹנִית זוֹ הִיא סִיבָה לְמִילָה פְּנִימִית: מִעֶרְלַת הַלֵּב, כְּשִׁימוּל עֶרְלַת לִבּוֹ אִזְ יִהְיוּ חֲדָרֵי לִבּוֹ רְחוּבִים, וְהִמָּה פְּתוּחוֹת לְהַבִּין**

וְלֹהֲשִׁיכֵל, כְּמָה דָּאֵת אִמְרֵי (קִהְלֵת א-טז) וְלִבִּי רָאָה הַרְבֵּה חֲכָמָה וְדַעַת.” This external “milah” is the cause of the internal “milah” from the barrier of the heart. When a person removes the barrier of his heart, then the chambers of his heart will be more expansive, in keeping with the statement (Koheles 1, 16): “**And my heart has discerned much wisdom and knowledge.**”

We can now better appreciate the words of the Gemara: **When HKB”H said to Avraham Avinu: “Go before Me and be perfect,” he was seized with trembling. He thought: “Perhaps there is something revolting in me** (rendering me unworthy).” In other words, Avraham understood that the mitzvah of removing the physical “orlah”—foreskin or barrier—served as a preparation and prerequisite for the removal of the “orlah” of the heart via teshuvah. Hence, Avraham trembled with fear lest HKB”H found that he had committed sins requiring teshuvah and the removal of the “orlah” of the heart.

However, when HKB”H informed him that **He was entering into a covenant with him**, he understood that he was being given the mitzvah of “milah,” so that HKB”H could enter into a covenant with him and his descendants. Thus, even if they sinned, they would be afforded a tikun via teshuvah, in the merit of the mitzvah of “milah.” Now, Avraham himself did not actually require this tikun, because he had achieved a state of perfection and righteousness. This concurs magnificently with what the Kli Yakar writes concerning HKB”H’s statement to Avraham (Bereishis 17, 9):

“As for you, you shall keep My covenant.” Why does it initially say only “you”? Why does it then repeat and say, “you and your offspring”? This is the explanation: The command was directed primarily to his offspring, because they require this external circumcision, so that they will achieve an internal circumcision and purification of the heart through it. As for you, however, who already has a pure heart, you did not require your “milah” for yourself but rather for the rest of the world, as explained. His offspring that come after him, though, require the “milah” for themselves.

This now illuminates for us HKB”H’s rationale for adding the letter “hei” to Avraham when He commanded him to perform the mitzvah of “milah.” He wished to teach us that the purpose of the physical circumcision is to serve as a spiritual preparation enabling us to fulfill the command: **“You shall cut away the barrier of your hearts.”** In other words, even if a person sins

and is swayed by the desires of his heart, it is within his power to excise that barrier created by the heart and to perform sincere, complete teshuvah, returning to good standing through the tiny aperture on the left side of the letter “hei.” This phenomenon is attributable to Avraham Avinu, who personified “midas hachessed,” symbolized by the right side of the letter “hei.”

Milah Is Performed on the Eighth Day Corresponding to Binah the Realm of Teshuvah

Following this path, we will now endeavor to explain the cause of David HaMelech’s elation concerning the mitzvah of “milah,” which was given on the eighth day, prompting him to compose the psalm “למנצח על השמינית,” lauding the virtues of the “milah,” which is performed on the eighth day. Our sacred sefarim teach us that the mitzvah of “milah” performed on the eighth day corresponds to the eighth midah, the midah of “binah”—the realm of teshuvah. The author of the Toldos Yaakov Yosef explains this in Ketonet Passim (Sazria): **“On the eighth day,” in the upper world, the world of “binah,” which is the eighth, “he shall circumcise the flesh of his ‘orlah’ and be purified.** Let us explain. HKB”H created the world with ten midos: **כתר, חכמה, בינה, חסד, גבורה, תפארת,** **נצח, הוד, יסוד, מלכות.** Thus, if we count from the bottom up, the eighth midah is “binah.”

We find an association between the midah of “binah” and teshuvah in the Gemara (Megillah 17b). The Gemara explains the order of the Berachos instituted in Shemoneh Esrei. Concerning the berachah of teshuvah--“השיבנו אבינו”—the Gemara inquires: **“ומה ראו לומר תשובה אחר בינה [אחר ברכת]: אתה: חונן לאדם דעת ומלמד לאנוש בינה.”** **And why did they see fit to say the berachah of teshuvah after the berachah of “binah”? For it is written (Yeshayah 6, 10): “And his heart will understand, and he will repent and be healed.”** In other words, we see that teshuvah hinges on the insight—“binah”—provided by the heart.

This can be explained simply in light of the following teaching (Sotah 3a): **“אין אדם עובר עבירה אלא אם כן נכנס בו רוח שטות”**—**a person does not commit an aveirah unless he is possessed by a whim of foolishness (insanity).** In such a state, he no longer possesses the capacity or insight to discern right from wrong; he no longer takes into consideration that he will ultimately be held accountable for his sins and iniquities. At that time, the momentary pleasure he enjoys currently from his aveirah will

be punished severely with suffering in Gehinnom. Therefore, the basis of teshuvah is the midah of “binah”—possessing the insight to dispel the foolish, insane whims within him, so that **“his heart will understand, and he will repent and be healed.”**

This explains very nicely why HKB”H commanded us to perform the mitzvah of “milah” on the eighth day. As explained, in the merit of the mitzvah of “milah”—removing the body’s “orlah”—we are able to fulfill the mitzvah of teshuvah—also removing the heart’s “orlah.” Therefore, HKB”H commanded us to perform a symbolic gesture. By waiting until the eighth day to perform the mitzvah of “milah,” a human being ascends the ladder of midos day by day, from the bottom up, until he reaches the eighth midah on the eighth day, the midah of “binah”—the basis of the mitzvah of teshuvah.

David HaMelech Demonstrated the Path of Teshuvah

Concerning the tikun of teshuvah, Chazal teach us that David HaMelech had conquered and abolished the yetzer hara. Nevertheless, it was ordained from above that he sin in order to demonstrate the path of teshuvah for individuals. We learn in the Gemara (A.Z. 4b):

“לא דוד ראוי לאותו מעשה דכתיב ולבי חלל בקרבי... לומר לך שאם חטא יחיד אומרים לו כלך אצל יחיד... והיינו דרבי שמואל בר נחמני אמר רבי יונתן, מאי דכתיב נאום דוד בן ישי ונאום הגבר הוקם על, נאום דוד בן ישי שהקים עולה של תשובה.”

David was not suited to perform that deed (involving Bas Sheva), for it is written (Tehillim 109, 22): “And my heart (the yetzer hara) has died within me” . . . to teach you that if an individual sins, we tell him, “Go, reflect about another individual (namely David HaMelech) . . . and this is what Rabbi Shmuel bar Nachmani said in the name of Rabbi YoNasan: What is the meaning of that which is written (Shmuel II 23, 1): “The words of David the son of Yishai, the words of a man ‘hukam ol’”? It means: The words of David the son of Yishai, who established the benefit (mechanism) of teshuvah.

On account of his extreme humility, David HaMelech believed that he had indeed sinned. He expressed this fact as follows (Tehillim 51, 5): **“כי פשעי אני אדע וחטאתי נגדי תמיד”**—**for my transgressions I recognize, and my sin is before me always.** Consequently, he constantly yearned to perform teshuvah and to inspire others to perform teshuvah, as he says

(ibid. 15): "אלמדה מושעים דרכיך וחטאים אליך ישובו"—I will teach transgressors Your ways, and sinners will return to You. As a result, he is described as the man who established the path of teshuvah—"הגבר הוקם על".

We can now shed some light on the passage in the Gemara: **Upon entering the bathhouse**—according to our sacred sefarim, this implies that David went to cleanse himself of his iniquities; **and seeing himself standing naked**—due to his extreme humility, he considered himself a sinner, naked with regard to mitzvos. In the words of the Gemara (Sotah 21a): "עבירה מכבה מצוה"—**an aveirah extinguishes a mitzvah**. Hence, **David declared, "Woe is me that I should stand naked, without mitzvos."**

However, **when he recalled the circumcision in his flesh, he was consoled**, since he understood that HKB"H gave us the mitzvah of "milah," so that by removing the body's "orlah," we would be able to also remove the heart's "orlah"—by performing teshuvah. **After exiting, he composed a song regarding this matter, as it states** (Tehillim 12, 1): **"To Him Who grants victory, on the eight-stringed instrument, a psalm by David"**—corresponding to "binah," the eighth midah, the realm of teshuvah.

With this understanding, we can begin to comprehend the words of the Midrash: **"When a woman conceives."** . . . **Rabbi Nasan said: We should consider the name of Avraham Avinu.** In other words, we should keep in mind the fact that HKB"H added the letter **"hei"** to the name of Avraham Avinu when he commanded him to perform the "milah." Thus, He made Avraham aware that in the merit of the mitzvah of "milah," we are able to and entitled to perform teshuvah. Then, the Midrash describes Avraham as **the one who came from far away**, because he grew up in the house of his father Terach, who worshipped idols. This is taught elsewhere in the Midrash (B.R. 30, 8): **"בן ארבעים ושמונה—**at the age of 48, Avraham recognized his Creator. To prove its point, the Midrash above cites the passuk: **"Avraham raised his eyes, and he saw the place from afar."** This implies that Avraham Avinu always considered himself lacking and far away from HKB"H; this motivated him to perform teshuvah. In this merit, he and his descendants were granted the mitzvah of "milah": **"On the eighth day, he should circumcise the flesh of his 'orlah,"** corresponding to the eighth midah, "binah," the world of teshuvah.

"This month will be for you the first of months" the First for the Two Geulos—Past and Future

It is with great pleasure that we will now establish a connection with the special Maftir we read this Shabbas—Parshas HaChodesh—related to the month of Nissan. The Torah defines the month of Nissan as follows: **החודש הזה לכם ראש חדשים—ראשון הוא לכם לחדשי השנה—this month shall be for you the beginning of the months; it shall be for you the first of the months of the year.** The commentaries focus on the fact that the language of the passuk is redundant. If Nissan is **"the beginning of the months,"** then we already know that it is the **"first of the months of the year."** So, what does this come to teach us?

To reconcile this apparent redundancy, we will refer to the Imrei Yosef (Moadim, Shabbas HaChodesh). He writes that the Torah is alluding to the unique status of the month of Nissan; it is the month of two redemptions—the geulah from Mitzrayim was in Nissan and the future geulah will also be in Nissan. As it states explicitly in the Gemara (R.H. 11a): **"בניסן נגאלו, בניסן עתידין ליגאל"—in Nissan, they were redeemed; in Nissan, they are destined to be redeemed.**

This is the implication of the passuk: **החודש הזה לכם ראש חדשים**—it marks the beginning of two major, historical events—the past geulah from the galus in Mitzrayim and the geulah le'asid la'vo from all of the galuyos. For this reason, HKB"H alluded to the name of the two redeemers in this passuk. The last letters of the words **"החודש הזה לכם"** are an anagram for **משי"ה**—the redeemer from the galus of Mitzrayim. Also, the gematria of the words (424) **"החודש הזה לכם"** (without a "vav," as it is written in the Torah) equals (424) **משי"ה בן דוד**—the redeemer of the future geulah.

Following this line of thought, we will now proceed to interpret the continuation of the passuk: **"It shall be for you the first of the months of the year."** Regarding the Korban Pesach, it is written (Shemos 13, 5): **"ועבדת את העבודה הזאת בחודש הזה"—you shall perform this service in this month.** Rabbi Baruch of Medzhybizh, zy"a, explains in Butzina D'Nehora (Bo) that the service of Hashem performed during the month of Tishrei is referred as **"זאת"**. For, when Aharon HaKohen entered the Kodosh HaKodashim on Yom HaKippurim, it states (Vayikra 16, 3): **"בזאת יבא אהרן אל הקודש"—with "זאת" (this) shall Aharon come into the Sanctuary.** In contrast, the service performed during

the month of Nissan is referred to as "זה", as it is written: "החודש הזה לכן ראש חדשים" —the first and foremost month of the year is the month of "זה". Now, if we apply this to the passuk: "ועבדת את ה' העבודה הזאת בחודש הזה" —HKB"H is saying: You shall perform the service referred to as "זאת" —the service of the month of Tishrei—"בחודש הזה"—during the month of Nissan, referred to as "זה".

It appears that he is referring to the special, intensified teshuvah performed during the first ten days of the month of Tishrei—the Aseres Yimei Teshuvah. Thus, the passuk is saying: "ועבדת את העבודה הזאת"—you should perform the same teshuvah associated with the month of Tishrei "בחודש הזה"—in the month of Nissan. The reason is straightforward; it is because the month of Nissan is the month designated for the future geulah. As the Rambam teaches us (Hilchos Teshuvah 7, 5): "אין ישראל נגאלין אלא בתשובה"—Yisrael will only be redeemed, if they perform teshuvah. Therefore, it is imperative that we perform the same quality of teshuvah in Nissan that we perform in Tishrei. Thus, we will hasten the arrival of the future and final geulah.

Now, our sacred sefarim teach us that HKB"H gave us the twelve months of the year, so that we would renew and improve our deeds for the better by means of sincere teshuvah. For, Yisrael are compared to the moon that renews itself monthly. We express this phenomenon in the berachah for sanctifying the new month: "פועל אמת שפעולתו אמת, וללכנה אמר שתתחדש, עטרת תפארת לעמוסי בטן, שהם עתידים להתחדש כמותה, ולפאר ליוצרים על שם כבוד מלכותו". **The One Who does truth, Whose deed is truth. To the moon He said that it should renew itself, as a crown of splendor for those borne by Him from the womb, those who are destined to renew themselves like it and to glorify their Creator for the name of His glorious kingdom.** This in fact is the reason

we call a month "חודש", because every individual is supposed to renew himself monthly. This is implied by the formula we recite in Mussaf on Rosh Chodesh: לכל כפרה נתן זמן כפרה לכל ראשי חדשים לעמך נתן זמן כפרה לכל תולדותם—**You have given Your people New Moons, a time of atonement for all of their offspring.**

If this applies to all of the months, it applies all the more so to the month of Nissan; it is the month most fitting for us to perform complete, sincere teshuvah. As we learn in the Mishnah (Pesachim 116b): "בכל דור ודור חייב אדם לראות את עצמו כאילו הוא יצא ממצרים"—**in each and every generation, one is obligated to view himself as though he has departed from Mitzrayim.** After all, the exodus from Egypt was not only a physical departure from the land, but it was also a spiritual departure from the tumah of the Egyptians. Therefore, during every Nissan, every Jew is capable of departing from his own, personal spiritual Mitzrayim by means of total teshuvah.

This then is the message conveyed by the passuk: "החודש הזה לכן ראש חדשים". As the Imrei Yosef explains, the month of Nissan marks the beginning of two geulos for Yisrael—the past geulah from the galus in Mitzrayim and the future geulah from all of the exiles. Thus, the passuk goes on to teach us how to merit the future geulah: "ראשון הוא לכם לחדשי השנה"—Nissan is the first and foremost of all the months of the year. In the month of Nissan, every Jew is capable of departing from his own, personal galus-Mitzrayim by performing teshuvah. In this merit, we will be renewed and rejuvenated totally once again with the arrival of the future geulah led by the redeemer "בן דוד", who is alluded to by the gematria of the words "ש ה' לך"—swiftly, in our times! Amen.

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