

A NEW NOW FOR YOU

by Rabbi Label Lam

And HASHEM spoke to Moshe and to Aaron in the land of Egypt, saying, "This month shall be to you the head of the months; to you it shall be the first of the months of the year." (Shemos 12:1-2)

Rabbi Isaac says; 'It was only necessary to begin the Torah from, "This month is for you..."', because that's the first Mitzvah that Israel was commanded in. What is the reason it begins with Breishis? (Exodus 12:2)" -Rashi- On the first word in Chumash- "Breishis"

Rashi spells out clearly that it is sensible that the Torah should begin from "HaChodesh HaZeh Lachem- This month is for you!" Why is this verse a more worthy starting point, than the beginning of creation? Imbedded in the question is an important piece of information. The Torah is not a book of stories, history, or cosmology. It has not been crafted and presented to humanity by the Creator for satisfying scientific or historical curiosities. Rather it serves an extraordinarily practical purpose. What exactly is that purpose?

Imagine I would call a giant meeting inviting investors to learn about an authentic investment strategy that guarantees that you double you money every year. (Remember you are being asked to imagine.) If it would be true we could fill Yankee stadium plus in no time. When the seats are full and the seminar begins, I start to ramble on about how when my great grandfather came to this country he was so broke he couldn't afford pockets.

After a while of the history lesson the audience begins to grow impatient. Eventually I get to the bottom line and the crowd is very pleased beyond words but the gnawing questions remains, "Why the lesson is history?" Implied in that question is the premise that we came here for some major purpose and although you may have some other good reason for beginning from back there, the money making info was the real meat and potatoes we all came for.

Similarly, the Torah has reasons the big beginning was needed but the real substantial meaning is contained and begins with "HaChodesh HaZeh Lachem- This month is for you!" Why is that the so valuable even more so than an investment strategy for doubling your money annually?

We have a problem! It's part of the human condition. What do we do about time? The hour glass gives us a perfect visual. The time we have left is the amount of sand on top. The time we've spent is piling up slowly but steadily on the bottom. Each present moment glides swiftly through the birthing channel quietly converting the future to the past. How do we hold time? It is slipping through our hands. Pictures and memories are weak and transient monuments. Then along comes the Torah and

we begin to learn about MITZVOS! If we can connect a deed, a moment, a thought, any and every one to HASHEM Who WAS – IS – and Will Be! We have essentially connected with eternity. That is the definition of the word Mitzvah which means a commandment, and to connect, and to be in the company of -the Commander! Now life is no long being lost! Time is being wisely invested!

Rashi implies that although the age of the universe may be a matter of sincere intellectual curiosity more critically important is “what to do about NOW and NOW and NOW?! King Solomon already told us there is nothing “chadash” new under the sun but beyond the sun there is a constant Chiddush-renewal. HASHEM looks into the Torah and creates the world as the Zohar tells us.

We recite twice daily that HASHEM renews the creation with His kindness constantly. Almost all blessing are present tense, “Borah pri ha etz- Who makes the fruit of the tree”, because it is being made now and now again. So we can appreciate that it is not an old world but a new world and each moment is a ray of eternity waiting to be realized as **a new now for you.**