

◆ SEASONS OF THE MOON ◆

The Month of Tishrei

Tishrei 5756 / September - October 1995

Welcome to *SEASONS OF THE MOON* - A new monthly newsletter that shows you the Jewish year through its 'seasons of the moon'. Each month, we hope to bring you a distinctive picture of what's happening in that Jewish month. Write and tell us about yourself!
 Best wishes for a wonderful year. May you be sealed in the Book of Life for a year of good life and peace!
 Rabbi Yaakov Asher Sinclair

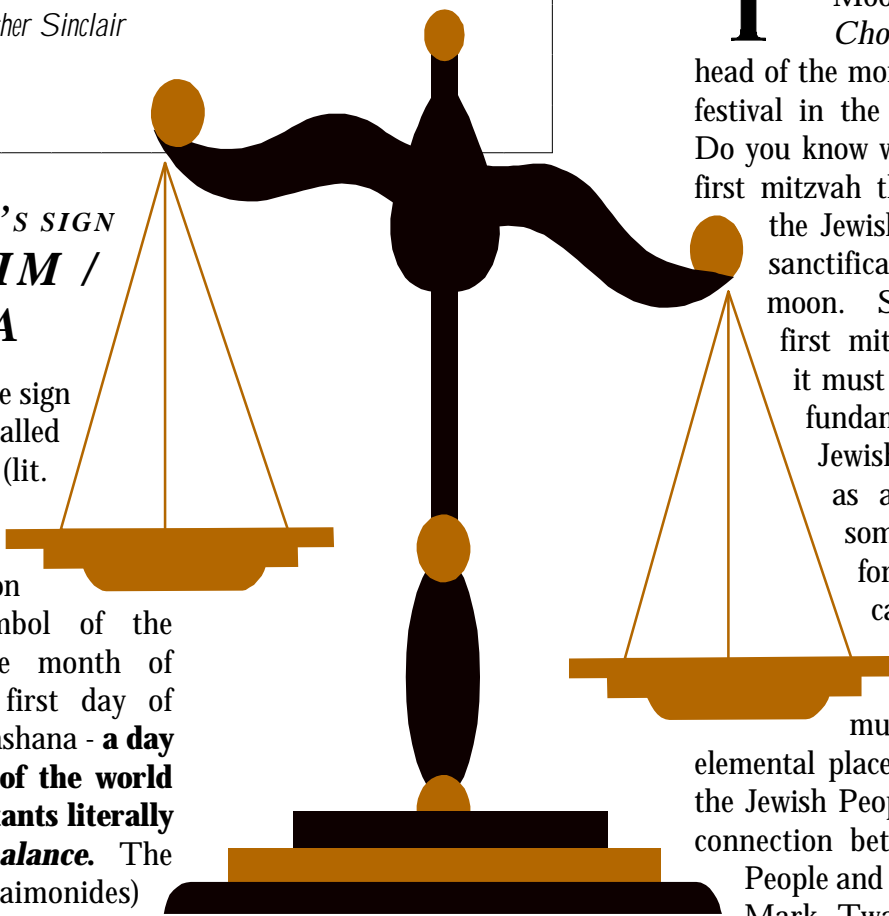
WHY ARE THE JEWISH PEOPLE LIKE THE MOON...?

The festival of the New Moon - *Rosh Chodesh* (lit. the head of the month) - is a unique festival in the Jewish calendar. Do you know what was the very first mitzvah that was given to the Jewish People? - The sanctification of the new moon. Since this was the first mitzvah, necessarily it must define something fundamental about the Jewish People, for just as a single chromosome sets the stage for the whole edifice called Man, so the sanctification of the moon

must have an elemental place in the edifice of the Jewish People. What is the connection between the Jewish People and the moon? It was Mark Twain that pointed out, "the Egyptian, the Babylonian, and the Persian filled the planet with sound and splendor then faded to dream-stuff and passed away...other peoples have sprung up and held their torch high for a time, but it burned out and they sit in twilight now, or have vanished. The Jew saw them all, beat them all and is now what he always was..." (from *Mark Twain*)

THIS MONTH'S SIGN MOZNAIM / LIBRA

In Hebrew, the sign of Libra is called *Moznaim* (lit. balances). It's not difficult to see the connection between the symbol of the balances and the month of Tishrei, for the first day of Tishrei is Rosh Hashana - **a day when the future of the world and all its inhabitants literally hangs in the balance.** The Rambam (Maimonides) writes that a person should see himself, and the whole world, as being on a knife edge, precisely and exquisitely balanced - half meritorious and half culpable. If he does one sin, he tips the balance of his own life and that of the whole world to the negative side. **However, with just one mitzvah, he can alter the balance of his own life and that of the whole world to the side of blessing and life!**



With just one mitzvah, a person can alter the balance of his whole

(Continued over)

*ON THE ORIGIN OF THE NAMES
OF THE HEBREW MONTHS*

WHEN we came out of Egypt.
Our months had no names.
We counted them. One by One.
Like.

*This is the third month from
When we came out of Egypt...*

WHEN we came out of Egypt.
When/Ever we remembered
The Numbers of our months,
The memory of the Great Miracle
Welled up in our hearts -
Of our redemption.
From the House of Slaves...

WHEN we came out of Babylon.
We called *Nissan* and *Iyar*
The Names of our months.
Persian names.
Made in Babylon.
The Names of our months
To remember our second redemption.
Just as,
through the Numbers,
we had remembered
the first...

*WHY ARE THE
JEWISH PEOPLE
LIKE THE MOON ...?*

(Continued from other side)

Concerning the Jews - Harper's Magazine) All the other great nations of the world are like the sun: They shine very brightly, seemingly immortal, but inevitably they explode like a super-nova, or fade into cosmic dust and are heard

*AM YISRAEL CHAI!
THE PEOPLE OF
ISRAEL LIVE!*

of no more. All nations, that is, except the Jews, who are like the moon, for just at the moment when all is completely dark, when they seem to have vanished forever, either through holocaust or assimilation, **at that very moment, the People of Israel are being re-born...like the moon.**

SOURCES:

*THIS MONTH'S SIGN - Rambam, Laws of Repentance;
WHY ARE THE JEWISH PEOPLE LIKE THE MOON...? - Sfias Emes, Exodus 12:2;
ON THE ORIGIN OF THE NAMES OF THE HEBREW MONTHS - Ramban, Exodus 12:2;*

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This publication contains words of Torah. Please treat it with due respect.
