



לקוטי שיחות
PROJECT
LIKKUTEI
SICHOS

Sicha Summary

Chelek 17 | Tazria - Hachodesh

The Question:

On the Shabbos before (or the Shabbos of) Rosh Chodesh Nissan, we read *parshas HaChodesh* (*Shemos* 12:1–20), which relates G-d’s command to Moshe instructing the Jewish people to set the Jewish calendar by the monthly new moon, and to regard Nissan as the “head of months.” G-d also instructs the people to bring the *pesach* offering.

Occasionally, the reading of *parshas HaChodesh* coincides with *parshas Tazria*. Because everything related to Torah is precise, including the alignment of dates and readings, we would expect *HaChodesh* and *Tazria* to share a similar theme. However, they seem to have opposing themes:

G-d establishing Nissan — the month of open miracles — as the head of months, as well as the law of the Pesach offering — commemorating G-d “leaping over” the Jewish homes — highlights G-d’s ability to impose Himself on nature, unilaterally uplifting a nation from slavery by supernatural means.

Parshas Tazria, on the other hand, highlights humanity’s efforts to advance spiritually on their own initiative and with their own resources. The opening verse of *Tazria* discusses the law of a woman who has given birth to a son. (*Vayikra* 12:1) In kabalistic symbolism, women, the physically weaker gender, represent a human being’s fallible efforts. A male child, the physically stronger gender, alludes to the enduring results — a “child” born of our own spiritual labor. (*Likkutei Torah, Vayikra, Maamar “Sos Tasis”*)

Thus, the first verse of *Tazria* stresses the natural, human-inspired movement toward G-d, while *parshas HaChodesh* stresses the miraculous, Divinely-initiated salvation of humankind.

When *HaChodesh* and *Tazria* coincide there is tension between the two ways that G-d interacts with Creation — through the system of natural law, and through the supernatural shattering of natural law. Where is the thematic connection?

The Preface to the Explanation:

The two modes of the natural and the supernatural are not neatly divided, but rather, they complement each other, and express G-d's essential transcendence, above any form of limitation.

The consistency of natural law defies the expectation that a created being should experience decay and have an expiration date. This imperviousness to change is actually a reflection of Divine infinity within the natural order. Thus, even the natural world expresses G-d's transcendence above nature.

Similarly, there are miraculous events, such as those of Chanukah and Purim, which appear to be consistent with the rules of nature. Yet, these are undoubtedly Divinely orchestrated events. Thus, even G-d's limitless transcendence can express itself through nature, manipulating it so that it conforms to the Divine will.

In Personal Terms:

In a person's spiritual life, the mode of the natural alludes to a relationship with G-d that is cultivated by the person's own mind and heart. Just as this mode expresses G-d's compatibility with Creation, so does a man-made appreciation of G-d express our compatibility with the Divine.

The mode of the supernatural alludes to a Jew's capacity for unquestioning, suprarational devotion to G-d to the point of self-sacrifice. Just as G-d ignores the dictates of nature when performing a miracle, so too, a Jew

ignores the “natural” demands of his own self-interest and devotes himself entirely to G-d.

The Explanation:

Thus, the ultimate objective is the synthesis between the natural and the supernatural. Both in the macro sense — that the natural world should express G-d’s limitlessness and that the miraculous should manifest within nature’s parameters — and in the in the micro sense, a person’s “natural,” coherent relationship with G-d should be suffused with the person’s unquestioning devotion of the supernatural, and the supernatural devotion should find expression within his structured, natural self.

This is the message conveyed by *Hachodesh* and *Tazria* coinciding: The miraculous and the G-dly are not at odds with the natural and the human — they are inseparable elements of one Divine reality.