



Should We Observe Rosh Chodesh?

By Rabbi Reuel Dillon

Rosh Chodesh has been something the commonwealth of Yisrael has observed ever since the giving of Torah. One reason it was necessary to observe was so God's people could also observe the rest of the Moedim (Appointed Times). The observance of Rosh Chodesh is firmly established in the Torah.

B'midbar (Numbers) 10:10 states, "And in the day of your gladness, and in your appointed times, and in your new moons, you shall blow the trumpets over your burnt offerings, and over the sacrifices of your peace offerings. And they shall be to you for a memorial before your God. I am HaShem your God."

B'midbar (Numbers) 28:11-15 states, "In the beginnings of your months you shall offer a burnt offering to HaShem: two young bulls, and one ram, seven male lambs a year old without blemish; and three tenth parts [of an efah] of fine flour for a meal offering, mixed with oil, for each bull; and two tenth parts of fine flour for a meal offering, mixed with oil, for the one ram; and a tenth part of fine flour mixed with oil for a meal offering to every lamb; for a burnt offering of a sweet savor, an offering made by fire to HaShem. Their drink offerings shall be half a hin of wine for a bull, and the third part of a hin for the ram, and the fourth part of a hin for a lamb: this is the burnt offering of every month throughout the months of the year. One male goat for a sin offering to HaShem; it shall be offered besides the continual burnt offering, and the drink offering of it."

Rosh Chodesh was certainly a holy time for Adonai and that is why we see all the instructions for special offerings and sacrifices at the beginning of each month (Rosh Chodesh). The sacrifices were a part of the worship Adonai prescribed for His people, and He wanted this worship to take place on each Rosh Chodesh. We see that Tehillim (Psalms) 81:3-4 states that it was indeed a statute for Yisrael... "Blow the ram's horn in the new moon (Rosh Chodesh), at the fullness, on our feast day. For this was a statute for Yisrael, an ordinance of the God of Ya'akov."

Even though the scriptures don't specifically say Rosh chodesh is a Shabbat, it was a day that Adonai's people (Yisrael) observed. They got together for worship and fellowship, and it had a semi-feast status. We see evidence of this throughout scripture. For example, it was King David's practice to observe Rosh Chodesh by coming together with his brothers.

Sh'mu'el Alef (1Samuel) 20:5 states, "David answered Y'honatan, "Look, tomorrow is Rosh-Chodesh, and I ought to be dining with the king.". And, in 1Sh'mu'el (1Samuel) 20:18 we read, "Then Y'honatan said to him, Tomorrow is the Rosh-Chodesh: and you will be missed, because your seat will be empty.". We also see that it was the practice of God's people to come together as evidenced in Melachim Bet (2Kings) 4:23 where it says, "He asked, "Why are you going to him today? It isn't Rosh-Chodesh and it isn't Shabbat..."

Furthermore, we see that in 'Amos 8:4-6 that Rosh Chodesh was given a semi-Holy Day status. The Navi (Prophet) states, "Listen, you who swallow the needy and destroy the poor of the land! You say, "When will Rosh-Chodesh be over, so we can market our grain? and Shabbat, so we can sell wheat?" You measure the grain in a small eifah, but the silver in heavy shekels, fixing the scales, so that you can cheat, buying the needy for money and the poor for a pair of shoes, and sweeping up the refuse of the wheat to sell!".

Not only is Rosh Chodesh a holy day that was observed by the God's people in the past, but it will also be a day of convocation and worship in the future. Yeshayahu (Isaiah) 66:23 states, "It shall happen, that from one Rosh Chodesh (New Moon) to another, and from one Shabbat to another, shall all flesh come to worship before me, says HaShem". Also, Yechezk'el (Ezekiel) 46:1-3 tells us, "This is what Adonai HaShem says: 'The east gate of the inner courtyard is to be shut on the six working days, but on Shabbat it is to be opened, and on Rosh-Chodesh it is to be opened. The prince is to enter by way of the outer vestibule of the gate and stand by the support of the gate. The Cohanim are to prepare his burnt offering and peace offerings. Then he is to prostrate himself in worship at the threshold of the gate, after which he is to leave; but the gate is not to be shut until evening. The people of the land are also to prostrate themselves in worship before HaShem at the entrance to that gate on Shabbat and on Rosh-Chodesh.".

In conclusion, if we want to find excuses not to observe this set-apart day of Adonai...I am sure we could find many reasons to excuse one's self, but it would be in spite of what the scriptures teach us. If the scriptures say you will be observing Rosh Chodesh in the future, why not get a head start and start observing it now? Let us celebrate Adonai's holy calendar with the observance of Rosh Chodesh each month.

Rosh Chodesh sameach!
(Happy Rosh Chodesh)