Two months ago, we featured an article on the special connection between the Jewish woman and the festival of Rosh Chodesh. Due to the response of our readership, we are pleased to present another aspect of the connection between the Jewish woman and the Seasons of the Moon.

Hashem gave the three festivals of Pesach, Shavuot and Succot respectively to Avraham, Yitzchak and Yaakov - the three Avot (fathers) of the Jewish People. Hashem also wanted to

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give a festival to the twelve tribes of Israel, and Rosh Chodesh, the first day of each of the twelve months, was designated as their Yom Tov.

However, the tribes transgressed in the incident of the golden calf, and so Hashem took away the festival of Rosh Chodesh from them and gave it instead to the women of Israel. But why was it the Jewish woman specifically who received the gift of Rosh Chodesh?

The reason is that when the men demanded jewelry from their wives to make the golden calf, the women replied “You want to make a idol with no power to save us...?!” and they refused to give over their jewelry. The Jewish woman had no part in the golden calf, and for this, Hashem rewarded her with Rosh Chodesh as her special day, a day when she would desist from the routine of the rest of the month.

With this understanding, we can explore an interesting aspect of Jewish Law. As we know, women are not obligated to perform most positive mitzvot which are time-related: For example - the mitzva of tefillin which can only be worn during the day, or the mitzva of sitting in the succah, which one can only do seven days of the year.

The fact that women are not obliged to do these mitzvot has been widely misunderstood as a put-down of women. In fact - the reverse is really the case!

The spiritual well-being of a person requires a constant connection to the reality of time. One of the ways that a man anchors himself to time is through the time-related mitzvot. Woman, however, with her natural connection to the cycle of the months needs less outside help to link her to time. She is created with an inherent, intuitive connection to reality.

Maybe, it was for this reason that the women of the generation who came out of Egypt instinctively understood that the golden calf was a dangerous folly, while the men, in spite of all the mitzvot they had just received at Sinai, failed to recognize their error. The woman of Israel with her natural connection to the ebb and flow of the spiritual world earned her own festival - Rosh Chodesh. The festival of the Seasons of the Moon.

Sources:
This Month’s Sign - Esther Rabah 7:11, Rabbi Gad Erlanger;
Mostly For Women (Part Two) - Tur, Oruch Chaim 417:1; Rabbi Nota Schiller;

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