I. The First Mitzvot

The LORD said to Moses and Aaron in the land of Egypt:

This month shall be for you the beginning of the months; it shall be for you the first of the months of the year.

Given the blank slate that surrounds this moment, ח"ש"מ perceive the emergence of two separate directives:

1. יאשר החדש הזה לכם - קידוש החדש

2. חדש ניסן ראש לחדשים - החדש הזה לכם ראשון

II. קידוש החדש: Layer Upon Layer

A. Partnership

There were three (perhaps four) phenomena that required audio visual presentation form HaShem to Moshe

Because it was a mitzvah to do it, HaShem also did it with their help.

And it was in the same way that HaShem gave the mitzvah to Moshe:

Because it was a mitzvah to do it, HaShem also did it with their help.

And it was in the same way that HaShem gave the mitzvah to Moshe:

Because it was a mitzvah to do it, HaShem also did it with their help.

And it was in the same way that HaShem gave the mitzvah to Moshe:
If the earthly court declares: ‘Today is Rosh Hashana!’ The Holy One Blessed Be He proclaims to the angels: ‘Erect a podium! Call the prosecuting attorneys; call the defense attorneys! My children have declared: Today is Rosh Hashana!’

If the earthly court determines to delay the holiday, the Holy One Blessed Be He declares to the heavenly Angels: ‘Remove the podium! Remove the prosecuting attorneys; remove the defense attorneys! My children have decided to postpone the holiday for a day.’

*The first mitzva granted to the nation underscores the purpose of all the mitzvot: The establishment of a fundamental partnership between God and man in the sanctification of the world.*

### B. Controlling Time/Transcending Time

**Rabbi Joseph Soloveitchik: Reflections of the Rav**

"Time-awareness is the singular faculty of the free man, who can use or abuse it. To a slave, it is a curse or a matter of indifference. It is not an instrument which he can harness to his purposes. The free man wants time to move slowly because, presumably, it is being employed for his purposes.

*God grants the Hebrew slaves control...over time itself*

*Time, however, defies our control. Time seems to mock us; when we want it to go fast...it goes slowly; when we want it to go slowly...it goes fast*

*How can we control time? Rabbi Soloveitchik’s answer: 3 aspects of time awareness*

**Rabbi Joseph Soloveitchik: Reflections of the Rav**

*Retrospection* refers to man's ability to re-experience the past, to feel deeply that which is only a memory, to transport an event of the distant past into a ‘creative living experience’ of the present.

*Anticipation* is man's projection of visions and aspirations into the future. Indeed, his present life is regulated in expectation of the fulfillment of these dreams. His present is shaped by his vision of the future.

*Appreciation* embraces the present as a precious possession, as inherently worthy… Retrospection and anticipation are significant only insofar as they transform the present. In every fraction of a second, visions can be realized or destroyed."
Transcending time...investing moments with significance
Tie into symbol of matza-a symbol of both slavery and freedom-how can it be both?

Matza-Bread of “Affliction”
מצה זו שאנו אוכלים, על שום מה על שום שלא הספיק בצקם של אבותינו להחמיץ עד שנגלה עליהם מלך מלכי המלכים, הקדוש ברוך הוא, וגאלם, שנאמר: ויאפו את־הבזק אשר הוציאו ממצרים עגת מצות, כי לא חמץ, כי גרשו ממצרים ולא יכלו להתמהמה, גם זו לא עשו להם.

Matza-Bread of “Haste”
Matza physically and philosophically-capturing a moment of time-the moment of transition....
capturing moments of significance...investing moments with significance

B. Sanctification of Time

• יברך אלוהים את־יום השבת ויקדש אתו כי בו שבת מכל־מלאכתו אשר־ברא את־יום השביעי ויקדש אתו אלוהים ויברך HaShem introduces sanctity to the world through, Shabbat-the sanctification of time. time. The first mitzva thus invites man to mirror the actions of God
• קדושת שבת and קדושת יום טוב are fundamentally different: the experience of God’s gift of Shabbat vs. the partnership of Yom Tov.
• Two major domains of man; Time and space: Transcendence of קדושת צומח over קדושת יום טוב and the origin of the laws of melacha
• Time, man’s most precious commodity. The investiture of time, man’s greatest gift to God and His law?

C. Process

The first mitzva as a prototype for halachic process. Pre-empting the common-sense rebellion of Korach
D. Why the moon?

- **Concept of chidush**
- **Reflected light**
- **Jewish National experience**
E. Why at the Beginning?

- Tie into national journey
- Celebrating the journey-tie into sefira, etc

III Second Directive: ניסי ראש חדש

- Two major Rashei Shana- Universal, Particular: גר ותושב retention of both!!