

B.160

FOR PARSHAT HA-HODESH

5-10-63

(I gave part of this at the Seudah honoring Stern College for Women Guests at Parshat Ha-Hodesh in March 1963)

The month of Nisan is called by that name, according to the author of

Benei Yisas'khor, because it comes from the word nes, miracle.

Furthermore, the Hebrew word for miracle, nes, stands for the initial letters of the two words nofel and somekh - falling and supported or uplifted. The miracle of Jewish survival is that although we have often fallen and seemingly been crushed to death, nevertheless we have always shown remarkable ability to rise again.

This, too, is the idea expressed in the Torah reading for Parshat Ha-Hodesh, namely "this month is unto you" which stands for the moon - and the moon goes through the phases, rising/ and falling, thereby symbolizing the very same thing.