



THE TRIBE SCRIBE

VAYIKRA, HACHODESH - ROSH CHODESH - OVER THE MOON!



TODAY IS ROSH CHODESH! NOT ONLY IS IT ROSH CHODESH BUT IT IS ALSO PARASHAT HACHODESH WHEN THE JEWS RECEIVED THEIR FIRST EVER MITZVAH - THAT'S RIGHT - IT WAS ROSH CHODESH!



ROSH CHODESH MARKS THE BEGINNING OF EACH HEBREW MONTH. IT'S IMPORTANT AS IT HELPS US KEEP TRACK OF WHEN THE CHAGIM ARE. BUT BEFORE THERE WERE CALENDAR APPS, DIARIES AND ALL THE THINGS THAT WE USE TO KNOW THE DATE, ANNOUNCING ROSH CHODESH WAS A MUCH MORE SIGNIFICANT EVENT.

Two witnesses needed to have seen the new moon in order for Rosh Chodesh to be announced.

Anyone who saw the new moon would go to the Beth Din to testify.

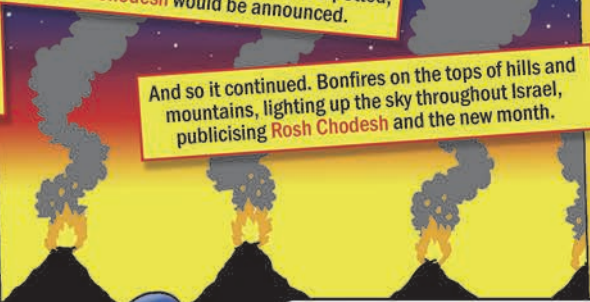
BUT HOW DID THEY LET EVERYONE KNOW? THEY COULDN'T JUST SEND A GROUP CHAT OR EMAIL?



The court would ask them detailed questions to confirm what they'd seen. When the court was satisfied that the new moon had been spotted, Rosh Chodesh would be announced.

When Rosh Chodesh was confirmed, a bonfire would be lit on the top of a mountain. The people in the next village along would see the bonfire in the distance, and then they would know it was Rosh Chodesh. They'd quickly light a bonfire on the top of their mountain to let the people in the next town know.

And so it continued. Bonfires on the tops of hills and mountains, lighting up the sky throughout Israel, publicising Rosh Chodesh and the new month.



NOWADAYS, WE DON'T NEED THE BONFIRES BUT WE STILL ANNOUNCE ROSH CHODESH IN SHUL WITH A SPECIAL PRAYER, WHICH REMINDS US OF THAT BEAUTIFUL CEREMONY.

ROSH CHODESH IS AN OPPORTUNITY TO THINK ABOUT RENEWAL. WE HAVE A NEW MONTH AHEAD OF US AND A NEW CHANCE TO FILL IT WITH MITZVOT AND ALL GOOD STUFF. CHODESH TOV!



DID YOU KNOW, ROSH CHODESH IS A MINOR FESTIVAL AND SOME PEOPLE MAKE A POINT OF CELEBRATING IT IN SOME WAY? IN OUR HOUSE WE HAVE ICE CREAM ON ROSH CHODESH!

