

**Extracted from the Sisterhood Column – Jan Feb 2023 Temple
Rosh Chodesh – A Time For New Beginnings
By Suellen Eshed**



“Whoever blesses the new moon in its time welcomes in the presence of the *Shechina*.”

—Babylonian Talmud, Sanhedrin 42a

Rosh Chodesh, “the head of the month”, is the phase of the lunar cycle when the first sliver of moon appears. Celebrated by Jews as a time of renewal and rebirth, Talmudic and modern-day interpretations connect the holiday to women. In one Midrashic interpretation, Rosh Chodesh was a day of rest given to women by God as a reward for not participating in the sin of the Golden Calf. Modern interpretations link changing phases of the moon to women’s monthly and life cycles. Throughout much of Jewish history, Rosh Chodesh has been marked as a time for women to gather.

For more than twenty-five years, Sisterhood has led a Rosh Chodesh program, focusing on biblical writings about women from a feminist perspective, from their role as heroines and priestesses, to how they have changed Judaism. One Sunday a month, we gather for a pot luck brunch, to study and discuss, ending with a candle-lighting ceremony, while voicing our gratitude for the time we have spent together and the gifts we have shared.

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