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PARSHA INSIGHT

BY RABBI YAAKOV ASHER SINCLAIR

With the Help of the Maestro

“Every man whose heart inspired him.” (35:21)

A part from being Poland’s president, Ignacy Jan Paderewski (1860-1941) is one of the greatest pianists of the last two hundred years. A large part of his success comes from his tremendous stage presence and charisma. In 1891 the pianist sets out on a tour of the United States, which brings him great acclaim. His name at once becomes synonymous with the highest level of piano virtuosity. But not everyone is equally impressed. After hearing Paderewski for the first time, Franz Liszt’s premier pupil Moriz Rosenthal comments with characteristic sarcasm: “Yes, he plays well, I suppose, but he’s no Paderewski”. America becomes the place Paderewski tours most often (over 30 times in 50 years) and his second home.

At one of his performances at the Metropolitan in New York City, there sits a lady named Sally Goldstein, together with her five-year-old son, Joey, neatly decked out in his tuxedo. Sally wanted Joey to be a pianist, so she thought it worth the high price of a ticket in the stalls for Joey to hear the master. Sally catches sight of an old friend in the row behind them and starts to talk to her. Joey becomes a little impatient and so he gets up from his seat and wanders towards the front of the theater toward a door marked NO ENTRY. Unable to read, Joey blithely saunters through the doorway. At that moment the lights started to dim. An expectant hush grips the audience. And out into the spotlights walks... Joey Goldstein! The crowd starts to murmur, but Joey, seeing the beautiful large Steinway in the middle of the stage, toddles over to it. He hikes himself up on to the piano stool, gives a casu-

al flip of the tails to his tux, and with tremendous aplomb begins his favorite piece, “Twinkle Twinkle Little Star.” *“Plink plonk plink plonk, plink plonk plonk.”* The crowd becomes agitated — where is Paderewski? Just then the master comes on stage, goes straight to the piano, and, placing his two relatively enormous hands on either side of Joey’s, he says quietly to the boy, “Young man, you’re doing fine. Just keep going!” And with this, Paderewski begins to interweave the most sublime harmonies and counterpoint into Joey’s *plinks* and *plonks*. They play on together. The piece rises to a crescendo, and as they strike the final chord the audience rises to a standing ovation. Paderewski leads Joey down to the front of the stage where they both bow deeply to the ecstatic applause of the audience.

“Every man whose heart inspired him.”

From where could slaves who had spent hundreds of years in crushing captivity find the artisanal skills to construct something as fine and sophisticated as the Mishkan?

When a person tries to serve G-d, even though his efforts are about as sophisticated as a nursery rhyme, G-d says, “You’re doing great! Just keep going!”

Out of our feeble attempts He builds the sublime. As long as we are sincere and humble the Maestro will elevate our paltry efforts into something we never dreamed possible.

• Sources: based on the Ramban and a story heard from Rabbi Yirmiyahu Abramov

ADVICE FOR LIFE

Based on the Talmudic Sages found in the seven pages of the Talmud studied each week in the Daf Yomi cycle

BY RABBI MOSHE NEWMAN

Chullin 79 - 85

Four Days and Two Animals

On four days of the year, one who sells an animal to another must inform him: "Its mother I sold for shechita (today)", or alternatively, "Its offspring I sold for shechita (today)."

This statement in the *mishna* teaches a Rabbinical decree that was enacted to help ensure that people will not inadvertently transgress the Torah prohibition banning the *shechita* of a mother animal and its offspring on the same day. The Torah states, "An ox or sheep you shall not slaughter, it and its offspring in one day". (Vayikra 22:28) Rashi, in his commentary on Chumash (based on the *gemara* above), notes that the second person transgresses by *shechting* either the mother or the offspring, and also that this mitzvah applies only to a mother and its offspring but not to the father (even if we could know the identity of the father).

Is there a "logical" reason for this mitzvah? Of course, all *mitzvot* are decrees we accept as the Will of G-d, and we fulfill them because He commanded us to do so. Yet, is there any insight offered to help us better "taste" (*ta'am*) this mitzvah?

The Sefer HaChinuch (attributed to Rabbi Aharon HaLevi, 13th century Spain) explains that the rationale for this mitzvah is "to train ourselves in the trait of mercy, and to distance ourselves from the trait of cruelty. And although we are permitted to slaughter animals for eating, we must do so in a merciful manner. Killing both the mother and its child on the same day is merciless and will train us in brutality. Therefore, the Torah forbids it."

Back to the Rabbinical decree in our *mishna*. According to the law of the Torah before this decree it was permitted to sell a mother and its offspring to two people on the same day throughout the year without concern that the second person would *shecht* his animal on that same day. Presumably, the buyer and seller would discuss this issue on their own initiative. But, with time, our Sages saw a need to decree that *on four specific days of the year* the seller of a mother animal and its offspring on the same day must inform the second buyer about the first sale that he made that day so that the second "buyer beware" not to *shecht* his animal on the day of the sale.

The *mishna* lists these four days as: 1) The day preceding Shemini Atzeret (i.e., on Hoshana Rabbah); 2) The day preceding the first day of Pesach; 3) The day preceding Shavuot; 4) The day preceding Rosh Hashana.

It is the custom and practice of the Jewish People to celebrate the four festive days that occur immediately afterwards with special festive meals, thus requiring especially large quantities of meat. Therefore, a seller of animals can assume that any animal he sells on the day prior to these festive days will be *shechted* on that very same day in preparation for festive meals. By the seller's informing the buyer of the second animal that its mother or offspring was sold that very day (and presumably already *shechted*), the second buyer will know to wait to *shecht* his animal on a later day.

However, there are at least two other days in the year that we would likely expect to be part of this decree: The day preceding the seventh day of Pesach (also a Yom Tov), and the day before Succot. Answers for these "omissions" are taught by the classical commentaries.

Shemini Atzeret is a Festival that has its own identity and is "separate" from the preceding days of the Festival of Succot. It is therefore an occasion that is especially dear and precious, and celebrated with an abundance of meat. (Rashi) The seventh day of Pesach, however, as dear and precious as it is, continues and concludes the already ongoing Festival of Pesach. (Our Sages did not want to extend the decree to include more days than they deemed absolutely necessary.) An additional reason, found in the Midrash, is that the bullock sacrifices during Succot represented the 70 nations of the world, whereas the sacrifices on Shemini Atzeret were for the Jewish People alone. And why was no decree made for the first day of Succot as there was for the first day of the other Festivals? Rabbeinu Tam in Tosefot in our *masechta* answers this by stating that on *erev* Succot people are very busy preparing *succot*, *lulavs* and *etrogs*, and do not have time to *shecht* all that much. One might think that this reason should also apply to *erev* Pesach since it is also a very busy day — a time to ensure that all chametz is destroyed and to bake fresh matzahs for that night's Seder. Perhaps due to this question Tosefot elsewhere (Avoda Zara 5b) cites another reason from the Midrash: Pesach is the time of our *geula* and freedom, and a special decree was enacted to increase in our festive meals to enhance the celebration of this splendid day!

• Chullin 83a

PARSHA Q&A?

1. On which day did Moshe assemble the Jewish People?
 2. Why is the prohibition against doing work on Shabbat written prior to the instruction for building the Mishkan?
 3. Why does the Torah specify the particular prohibition of lighting a fire on Shabbat right after it had already noted the general prohibition of doing work on Shabbat?
 4. What function did the “*yitdot hamishkan*” serve?
 5. What function did the “*bigdei hasrad*” serve?
 6. What was unusual about the way the women spun the goat’s hair?
 7. Why were the *Nesi'im* last to contribute to the building of the Mishkan? How does the Torah show dissatisfaction with their actions?
 8. Who does the Torah identify as the primary builders of the Mishkan? From which tribes were they?
 9. What time of day did the people bring their daily contributions for the construction of the Mishkan?
 10. For what was the woven goat’s hair used?
 11. What image was woven into the *parochet*?
 12. Why does the Torah attribute the building of the *aron* to Betzalel?
 13. Where were the sculptured *keruvim* located?
 14. How many lamps did the *Menorah* have?
 15. Of what materials was the *mizbe'ach haketoret* composed?
 16. Of what material was the *mizbe'ach ha'olah* composed?
 17. The *kiyor* was made from copper mirrors. What function did these mirrors serve in Egypt?
 18. How did the *kiyor* promote peace?
 19. The *kiyor* was made from the mirrors of the women who were crowding at the entrance to the *Ohel Mo'ed*. Why were the women crowding there?
 20. Of what material were the “*yitdot hamishkan*” constructed?
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PARSHA Q&A!

Answers to this week’s questions! - All references are to the verses and Rashi’s commentary unless otherwise stated.

1. 35:1 - The day after *Yom Kippur*.
 2. 35:2 - To emphasize that the building of the Mishkan doesn’t supersede the laws of Shabbat.
 3. 35:3 - There are two opinions: One opinion is to teach that igniting a fire on Shabbat is punishable by lashes as opposed to other “*melachot*” which are punishable by death. The other opinion is to teach that violation of numerous “*melachot*” at one time requires a separate atonement for each violation.
 4. 35:18 - The edges of the curtains were fastened to them. These were inserted in the ground so the curtains would not move in the wind.
 5. 35:19 - They covered the *aron*, the *shulchan*, the *menorah*, and the *mizbachot* when they were packed for transport.
 6. 35:26 - It was spun directly from off the backs of the goats.
 7. 35:27 - The *Nesi'im* reasoned that they would first let the people contribute materials needed for the Mishkan and then they would contribute what was lacking. The Torah shows its dissatisfaction by deleting a letter from their title.
 8. 35:30, 35:34 - Betzalel ben Uri from the tribe of Yehuda; Oholiv ben Achisamach from the tribe of Dan.
 9. 36:3 - Morning.
 10. 36:14 - It was made into curtains to be draped over the Mishkan
 11. 36:35 - *Cherubim*. (See Rashi 26:31)
 12. 37:1 - Because he dedicated himself to its building more than anyone else.
 13. 37:7 - On the two extremities of the *kaporet* (cover of the *aron*).
 14. 37:23 - Seven.
 15. 37:25,26 - Wood overlaid with gold.
 16. 38:1-2 - Wood overlaid with copper.
 17. 38:8 - These mirrors aided in the proliferation of the Jewish People. The Jewish women in Egypt would look in the mirrors so as to awaken the affections of their husbands who were exhausted by their slave labor.
 18. 38:8 - Its waters helped a woman accused of adultery to prove her innocence.
 19. 38:8 - To donate to the Mishkan.
 20. 38:20 - Copper.
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LOVE of the LAND

Selections from classical Torah sources which express the special relationship between the People of Israel and Eretz Yisrael

Yad Vashem

The Yad Vashem Holocaust Museum in Jerusalem is visited regularly not only by Israelis and Jewish tourists but also by non-Jewish heads of state and other distinguished guests from all over the world. In a media interview, Rabbi Yisrael Meir Lau stressed the role which this institution has, not only as a memory of the past but also as a warning for the future. Referring to the recent increase in anti-Semitic incidents in Europe he called upon foreign governments to learn the lesson of the Holocaust and take tougher measures to punish those guilty of attacking Jews and desecrating Jewish cemeteries.



PARSHA OVERVIEW

Moshe Rabbeinu exhorts *Bnei Yisrael* to keep Shabbat, and requests donations for the materials for making the Mishkan. He collects gold, silver, precious stones, skins and yarn, as well as incense and olive oil for the *menorah* and for anointing. The princes of each tribe bring the precious stones for the *Kohen Gadol's* breastplate and *ephod*. G-d appoints Betzalel and Oholiav as the master craftsmen. *Bnei Yisrael* contribute so much that Moshe begins to refuse donations. Special curtains with two different covers

were designed for the Mishkan's roof and door. Gold-covered boards in silver bases were connected, forming the Mishkan's walls. Betzalel made the Holy Ark (which contained the Tablets) from wood covered with gold. On the Ark's cover were two figures facing each other. The menorah and the table with the showbreads were also of gold. Two altars were made: A small incense altar of wood overlaid with gold, and a larger altar for sacrifices made of wood covered with copper.

PLEASE JOIN US...

...in saying Tehillim/Psalms and a special prayer to G-d for the safety and security of all of Klal Yisrael in these times of conflict and conclude with the following special prayer:

אֲחֵינוּ בְּלִבֵּית יִשְׂרָאֵל

"Our brothers, the entire family of Israel, who are delivered into distress and captivity, whether they are on sea or dry land – may G-d have mercy on them and remove them from stress to relief, from darkness to light, from subjugation to redemption now, speedily and soon."

ASK!

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BY RABBI YIRMIYAHU ULLMAN

Homecoming?

From: Jacob

Dear Rabbi,

I am in my early 20's, have graduated college from a school in a big city where I became interested in my Judaism, but have now returned to my small hometown where there is very little Jewishness. My question is: How I can maintain a Jewish lifestyle when there aren't any Jewish young people here, and all of my friends are non-Jews who have no interest in what I've found meaningful?

Can I go out with my friends as I used to, to movies, to play sports, and to restaurants (I'll only eat or drink what's kosher there)? And what would be the main areas of Judaism to keep committed to if I'm not able to keep everything? I know you'll say it would be better if I was not here in this place at all, but that's non-negotiable for now. There are reasons why I have to be here, and it could be for a long time. Thanks for any guidance you might offer.

Dear Jacob,

I congratulate you on your decision to come home to your Judaism, but going back to your hometown is not much of a Jewish homecoming.

You are right, that given what you describe I would suggest your leaving there as soon as you can. But if you can't, for now I suggest the following:

You will not be able to immediately and completely sever your relationship with your friends. And that might not be healthy anyway. So consider which of your old friends think and act in ways which are most compatible with what you know about Jewish values and practices, and which do not. Of the time that you spend with friends, which should be limited, spend more time with the former, and less with the latter.

And of the friends that you determine to be more compatible with your newfound interest in Judaism, make an effort to transform your friendship accordingly. Find and make opportunities to discuss and do things which will be wholesome and productive. Obviously, you need to avoid going to parties, clubs, and bars. Rather, seek to do things with them that will be more educational and enriching.

Going to movies with them occasionally, given your situation, while not the greatest pastime, could be OK as long as it's a "decent" movie. Sports and exercise are even better, as long as done in a wholesome setting.

About your suggestion of eating "kosher" in a non-kosher restaurant, this is not a good idea. A Jew may not do that, because by doing so he will either look un-kosher or will make the establishment look kosher. That being said, if you ever falter in this, you must at least make sure that signs which identify you as being Jewish, like a *kippa* or *tzitzit*, are not visible. Rather, a person would need to tuck in his *tzitzit* and wear a baseball cap. And even then, he may only eat and drink closed products like kosher soft drinks and pretzels, or cold, whole (uncut) fruits and vegetables.

But even more important than all this is what you should be doing to maintain at least a bare minimum of observance and connection to Judaism. The main areas in which you need to make a special effort in observing, and to continue learning about, are keeping kosher, studying and praying, and keeping Shabbat.

No matter where you are, the ubiquitous grocery chain stores carry nearly everything you need with the commonly-accepted kosher supervision symbols. Contact a rabbi in the closest established Orthodox community for detailed guidance in buying kosher food and setting up what you need in order to keep kosher at home.

As far as learning is concerned, there are so many online resources that there's no reason you could not order and read books on your own or listen to Torah classes and lectures at least an hour a day. You can also arrange free, long distance learning sessions via phone, Skype, etc. And praying regularly and wearing *tefillin*, even on your own, is a must.

Finally, it is of utmost importance that you observe the Sabbath and holidays, which will also keep you connected and give you regular opportunities to read, reflect and grow. You should seek frequent hospitality in the nearest Jewish communities in order to regularly observe these occasions in the supportive context of friends and families with whom contact and connection will be invaluable for you in so many important ways.

One last thing. Insofar as there are no other Jewish young people where you are, you need to safeguard against getting involved in personal relationships which would not only deflect you from your commitment to Judaism, but could result in a forbidden marriage and non-Jewish children. So whatever dating you engage in, and it should be for the purpose of marriage, must be done within the Jewish community, for which there are kosher online venues as well.

WHAT'S IN A WORD?

Synonyms in the Hebrew Language

BY RABBI REUVEN CHAIM KLEIN

Raise the Curtain

We call the special ornamental curtain which hangs in front of the Ark in a synagogue a *parochet*. That word comes from the Biblical passages concerning the Tabernacle, in which the word *parochet* refers to a “curtain” that separates one area from another. However, another word is also used in that very same context: *masach*. In this essay, we will sharpen the differences between the meanings of these two words, and we will also explain the etymology of the words *vilon* and *pargod* that appear in the Talmud and other rabbinic sources as “curtain”.

Rashi (to Ex. 26:31) explains that *parochet* refers to a “curtain” that separates between a king and his people. In the context of the Tabernacle the *parochet* is used to separate between the Sanctuary and the Holy of Holies (see Ex. 26:31-33).

Rabbi Shlomo Pappenheim of Breslau (1740-1814) explains that the word *parochet* is related to the root *PEH-REISH-KAF*. That root refers to a form of “breaking” whose purpose is to begin something new. For example, the Jews’ work in Egypt is described as *avodat perech* (Ex. 1:13), because the Egyptians would constantly interrupt the Jews in middle of their work and make them work on something else. Constantly stopping the Jews from finishing their project was a form of torture which the Egyptians inflicted upon them. In Talmudic parlance a *pircha* is the type of question which interrupts the intended flow of a discussion and forces the topic into a different direction.

Similarly, explains Rabbi Pappenheim, the word *parochet* serves as a partition to “break off” one area and mark off the beginning of a new area. This is why in the Tabernacle a *parochet* is used to demarcate the Holy of Holies and separate it from the Sanctuary. The *parochet* essentially screams: “Up until here is the Sanctuary; from here and onwards is something new and holier — the Holy of Holies.” Based on this, Rabbi Pappenheim argues that the word *parochet* does not inherently refer to a “curtain,” but rather it refers to any sort of barrier or divider used to establish the borders between different domains.

Shoresh Yesha explains that the word *parochet* denotes “glory”. He justifies this meaning by offering two possible etymologies for the word *parochet*. Firstly, he suggests that it is related to the word *pe’er* (“glory”). Secondly, he

suggests that the letter *PEH* at the beginning of the word is interchangeable with the letter *BET*, such that scrambling the consonants in the word *parochet* yields the word *rechev* (“vehicle”). This means that the *parochet* is the feature of G-d’s “glory,” just as His Chariot (*merkavah*) and the cherubs (*kruvim*) are.

In contrast to all of this, the term *masach* has a completely different connotation. Rashi (to Ex. 26:36) explains that a *masach* is a curtain which covers the entrance to a building or room (see also Rashi to Ex. 35:12).

Rabbi Pappenheim explains that the word *masach* is derived from the root *SAMECH-KAF*, which refers to “covering”. Other cognates of that root include *sukkah* (a “hut” covered with *s’chach*) or the Modern Hebrew word *maseicha* (“mask” which covers one’s face). In a similar fashion the word *masach* refers to a screen or curtain that protects something from the eyes of onlookers. In fact, *masach* in Modern Hebrew refers to any sort of “screen” (e.g. a computer monitor). Rabbi Pappenheim further explains that *masach* refers to any thick cloth used for protective purposes, whether it is placed on top of something as a cover (like in II Sam. 17:19 and Ps. 105:39), or drapes down from its side like a curtain.

Based on this, Rabbi Pappenheim notes that the “curtain” that marks off the Holy of Holies in the Tabernacle is called a *parochet hamasach* (Ex. 35:12) because it has both the qualities of a *parochet* (for it delineates between the Sanctuary and the Holy of Holies) and a *masach* (because it is a thick fabric which protects the Holy of Holies by screening out the dust from the *kohanim* working in the Sanctuary).

Vilon — another word for “curtain” — appears four times in the Mishna (*Keilim* 20:6, 24:13, 27:9, and *Negaim* 11:11). It is also the name of the first of the Seven Heavens (*Chagiga* 12b) because it serves as a “curtain” that covers the entrance to the Heavens. However, the origins of this word are neither Hebrew nor Aramaic — it’s Greek. The Mishnaic word *vilon* is a loanword from the Greek *velum*, which is related to the English word *veil*. The word *velum* survives in English scientific terminology, where it refers to a thin veil-like membrane. The English words *reveal* and *unveil* literally mean to “undo a veiling”.

In Rabbinic Hebrew, the word *pargod* is used instead

Continued on page eight



Letter & Spirit

Insights based on the writings of Rav S. R. Hirsch

BY RABBI YOSEF HERSHMAN

Terumah and Tenufah

The Torah uses two words to describe the physical movement of an object as it is being sanctified or dedicated to the Sanctuary: *terumah* and *tenufah*. *Terumah* refers to the vertical movement upward and downward, and *tenufah* refers to the horizontal movement back and forth — away from and towards the body.

Although these terms appear in our *parsha* in reference to the donation of gold, silver and copper, they are most often associated with the parts of the sacrificial animal that are designated as gifts to the priest.

Both *terumah* and *tenufah* denote gifts, to mankind in general and to G-d. *Tenufah* — horizontal movement to all sides — “directs” the object toward the community, toward fellow man. *Terumah* — raising and lowering — expresses man’s commitment to devote the object and all earthly aims to Heaven. Although both movements were performed when both the thigh and the breast were sanctified for the Kohen, the text specifically associates the thigh with vertical movement (*shok haterumah*), and the breast with horizontal movement (*chazeh hatenufah*). In referring to the precious metal donations to the Mishkan the text refers to gold as *tenufah* (horizontal) and to copper and silver as *terumah* (vertical). These designations have symbolic significance.

The breast, which encloses within itself the whole range of man’s spiritual power, represents man’s thought and volition. These are most naturally directed to G-d, and thus the Torah specifically instructs that they are to be dedicated also to the communal purposes. The thigh, which represents physical strength, is more naturally directed at communal affairs, and thus the Torah emphasizes that it must also be dedicated

upward, toward G-d.

The horizontal movement also has another implication — the object is dedicated on the same plane as the object to which it is to be dedicated. It is already directed toward its goal and given over to its intended purpose. It does not need further purification before it can be dedicated.

In the vertical moment up and down, the goal of the object to be dedicated is on a level high above the point at which it presently stands. The object to be dedicated must first be elevated before it can be dedicated.

Gold, the noblest metal, symbol of purity and refinement, is used in the realm of the holy — the menorah, the ark, the altar. It can be dedicated immediately without refinement. But the silver and copper symbolize an unrefined state. They must first be lifted upwards, striving toward the holy, before they can be accepted and incorporated into the holy. There are those contributions which are pure and noble and can be directed to the holy without much processing — these are chiefly our thoughts and volitions. And then there are those contributions which must undergo a process of deliberate sublimation — most notably the physical and mundane activities — before they can be called holy.

All dedications — of money, time, talent, resources, thought and action — are subject to some combination of *terumah* and *tenufah*. The ones that are more naturally devoted to G-d must also be consciously devoted to the community, and vice versa. And then in the process of dedicating these valuables, some may need refinement and purposeful striving before they can be properly directed at their destined end.

• Sources: *Commentary*, *Shemot* 35:22; 29:22-25

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BY RABBI ZE'EV KRAINES

Children Placing Mezuzot

Q: I wanted my children to be involved in the mezuzah ceremony, so I let even my nine-year-old son affix his mezuzah on his own room. When I saw how excited he was by this opportunity, I let him put one on the playroom door as well.

When I told over this story at the Shabbat table, one of the guests suggested that I should ask a rabbi whether a child under Bar or Bat Mitzvah age can put up a mezuzah. He said maybe I would need to remove them and put them up again by myself. Is that correct?

A: The mitzvah of mezuzah placement on all the rooms of the house is incumbent upon the owner or renter. So the room is not actually the child's.

However, Rambam writes: "Minors should be educated to affix a mezuzah to their rooms." Consequently, many opinions hold that a father can allow children to put *mezuzot* on their own doors. Since they are of an age to understand and perform the mitzvah, this is part of their training. Even after they become Bar or Bat

Mitzvah, they would not have to re-affix it.

Incidentally, if you had your child in mind when making the *beracha*, he would not make his own *beracha*.

Nevertheless, some authorities dissent from this view and do not allow a child to place a mezuzah, even on his own room. In deference to these opinions, some authorities rule that if he did place the mezuzah as a child, he should re-affix it after his Bar Mitzvah.

Ideally, an adult should have put the mezuzah on the playroom doorway. However, if a child placed it there, it does not have to be removed. Some authorities suggest that when the mezuzah is taken down for routine checking, it should be replaced by an adult.

- Sources: Rambam, *Hilchot Sefer Torah* 5:10; Chovas HaDar 1:6:25; Agur B'ohalecha 7:15, 8:8,22; Sha'arei HaMezuzah 16:4-5; Mezuzos Beisecha 289:2

Got a mezuzah question or story? Email rabbi@ohrsandton.com or submit on my website mymezuzahstory.com
Free "Mezuzah Maven" book for every question or story submitted (when published in the near future!)

What's in a Word...continued from page six

of *parochet*. Rabbi Nosson of Rome (1035-1106) writes in *Sefer HaAruch* that a *pargod* is the word for a "curtain" that separates a bridegroom from everyone else. This, of course, mirrors the way that a *parochet* refers to the "curtain" that separates a king from the masses, or the Holy of Holies from the Sanctuary. Indeed, when the Mishna (*Keilim* 29:1) uses the word *pargod*, Rav Hai Gaon's commentary there explains that *pargod* means *parochet*.

Like the word *vilon*, *pargod* also has some Heavenly connotations. The Talmud (*Chagiga* 15a) relates that the apostate Elisha ben Avuyah claimed that he heard from beyond the *pargod* a call for everyone else to repent except for him. Similarly, in the Yom Kippur Mussaf liturgy a poem is read that describes Rabbi Yishmael ben Elisha ascending to the Heavens and reporting that he heard "from beyond the *pargod*" about the Divine decree concerning the Ten Martyrs. In similar contexts, Rashi (to *Bava Metzia* 59a) defines *pargod* as the separation between G-d and His angels, while elsewhere, Rashi (to

Berachot 18b) explains *pargod* as the separation between G-d and His Holy Presence.

The esteemed etymologist Ernest Klein (no relation) writes that the word *pargod* is derived from the Greek *paragaudos/paragaudion* and the Latin *paragauda*, which refer to a "laced garment" or "tunic." In this way, the lattice design of a curtain somewhat resembles the make of the garment in question. Others explain that *pargod* comes from the Latin word *pergere* ("come" or "go forward"), which in turn might ultimately be derived from the Akkadian *paraku* ("to go across"). This refers to the curtain's position at the entrance to a building or room, and how one must pass through the curtain to enter. Another derivative of *pergere* is the Latin word *pergola* — from which the English word pergola is derived — which refers to a "roof" that "comes out" or "protrudes" from elsewhere.

For questions, comments, or to propose ideas for a future article, please contact the author at rklein@ohr.edu

Configuring the “Arba Parshiyot” Puzzle

It is well known that during the current “*simcha* season” known as the joyous month(s) of Adar, many changes were instituted to the normal weekly Torah readings, in the *Maftir* and *Haftara*, each for their own purpose and reason.

First up is *Parshat Shekalim*, on the Shabbat before or on *Rosh Chodesh Adar (Sheini)*, which commemorates the communal mitzvah of the giving the *Machtzit HaShekel* that was used to pay for the daily *Korban Tamid* for the whole year. Next is *Parshat Zachor*, which is always on the Shabbat before Purim, which evokes and condemns the unprovoked attacks of the evil Amalek on *Klal Yisrael*. Third is *Parshat Parah*, on the third week of Adar, commemorating the *Parah Adumah* (Red Heifer) used to purify *Klal Yisrael* for the upcoming *Korban Pesach*. Lastly, on the Shabbat before or on *Rosh Chodesh Nisan*, is *Parshat Hachodesh*, to properly honor the coming of the “First Month” that we were commanded in the Torah to observe, *Rosh Chodesh Nisan*. These four changes to the *Maftir* and *Haftara* are collectively known as the “*Arba Parshiyot*”.

The *Gemara* in *Megillah* (29a-30b) devotes considerable attention to the details of the “*Arba Parshiyot*,” including how to compute the Jewish calendar’s nineteen-year-cycle of which exact week will host which special reading. It seems a bit confusing, but luckily several of our great early authorities, including the *Rif*, *Rashi* and the *Rosh* (ad loc.), give a simple mnemonic that allows anyone to figure out which week is which. This is especially practical for a shul’s *gabbai* who has to arrange the *Sifrei Torah* to the proper places on each of these weeks. In fact, this code is so useful that it is even cited as halacha by the *Shulchan Aruch* (*Orach Chaim* 685: 6).

ZAVD”U - זבד”ו - Unlocking the Code

In our Jewish calendar the second day of *Rosh Chodesh Adar*, meaning the first actual day of Adar, can only fall out on four days of the week — Shabbat,

Monday, Wednesday, and Friday. In a leap year, such as this year — 5779 — these calculations and configurations apply exclusively to *Adar Sheini*, as it is considered the main Adar for these matters. This is due to the conclusion in the *Gemara* (*Megillah* 6b) that all Purim-related observances, including the *Arba Parshiyot*, are celebrated in *Adar Sheini* in order that the *Geulah* from Haman on Purim and the *Geulah* from Egypt on *Pesach* should be observed in consecutive months. In fact, the majority consensus is that if a boy was born in a non-leap year, when there was only one Adar, and on the year of his Bar Mitzvah there are two Adars, his Bar Mitzvah will occur in the second Adar since it is considered the true one.

Double Codes

Back to the code. The mnemonic for these days that *Rosh Chodesh Adar* can occur on is ZAVD”U. This stands for *Zayin*, the seventh day of the week — Shabbat, *Beit* stands for the second day of the week — Monday, *Dalet* refers to the fourth day of the week — Wednesday, and *Vav* for the sixth day of the week — Friday.

The *Rishonim* teach us that each of these letters stands for an additional code: ZAT”U, B”O, DA”D, U”BIV (or U”BYU); and knowing their meanings will help us calculate which week each of the *Parshiyot* will fall out on. The *first* letter of each of these codes refers to which day of the week *Rosh Chodesh Adar* falls out on, and the *remaining* letters refer to which day(s) of the week during the month is a “skip week,” with no special reading.

ZAT”U — זט”ו

ZAT”U refers to when *Rosh Chodesh Adar* falls out on a Shabbat (“*Zayin*,” the seventh day of the week), then that day itself — Shabbat (the first week) is *Parshat Shekalim*, the subsequent Shabbat is *Parshat Zachor*, the next Shabbat — “TU” or the fifteenth of

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Adar — is a “skip week” with no exceptional attributes, the following Shabbat is *Parshat Parah*, and the last one is *Parshat Hachodesh*. The same applies for all the rest as well.

ב”ו — ב”ו

B”O refers to when *Rosh Chodesh Adar* falls out on a Monday (“*Beit*,” the second day of the week). Then, the preceding Shabbat is *Parshat Shekalim*, that week (with Shabbat being the sixth day of Adar — “O” or “Vav”) is a skip week, and the remaining weeks are all special reading weeks consecutively: *Zachor*, then *Parah*, and followed by *Hachodesh*.

ד”ד — ד”ד

DA”D is similar to B”O, with *Rosh Chodesh Adar* falling out on a Wednesday (“*Dalet*,” the fourth day of the week), with *Parshat Shekalim* being the preceding week, that Shabbat (the fourth of Adar — “*Dalet*”) being a skip week, and all remaining weeks are consecutive special reading weeks as well.

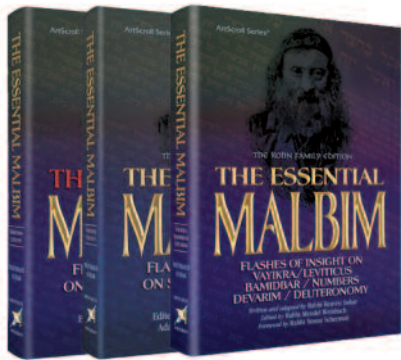
וב”יו — U”BIV (or U”BYU)

U”BIV (or U”BYU), is a bit more complicated, with two skip weeks. This occurs when *Rosh Chodesh Adar*

falls out on Friday (“U” or “Vav,” the sixth day of the week). The preceding Shabbat is *Parshat Shekalim*, and the day immediately following *Rosh Chodesh* (the second of Adar — “*Beit*”), which is Shabbat, is a skip week. The next week is *Parshat Zachor*, and the following (on the sixteenth of Adar — “IV,” “*Yud-Vav*”) is another skip week. The remaining subsequent weeks are *Parah* and *Hachodesh*, respectively.

One may realize that this is actually this year’s (5779/2019) Adar code, which contains the two skip weeks. Hence, this year, it turns out that *Parshat Vayakhel* is *Parshat Shekalim*, *Parshat Pekudei* is a skip week, *Vayikra* is *Parshat Zachor*, *Tzav*, following on the heels of Purim, is a skip week, *Shemini* is *Parshat Parah*, and *Tazria* is *Parshat Hachodesh*.

The *Gemara* in Shabbat (75a) stresses the importance of knowing the calculations of our calendar, with many *Rishonim* understanding that there is a specific mitzvah to do so. The *Chazon Ish* explicitly mentions the calculations of the lunar month as a prime example of this. Although, for many, making calendar calculations seems to be out of the realm of expertise, thankfully our great *Rishonim* have led the way, enabling even the layman to utilize the Creator’s tools to at least configure the *Arba Parshiyot* puzzle.



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