

# **Journal of Jewish Music and Liturgy**

**Editor**  
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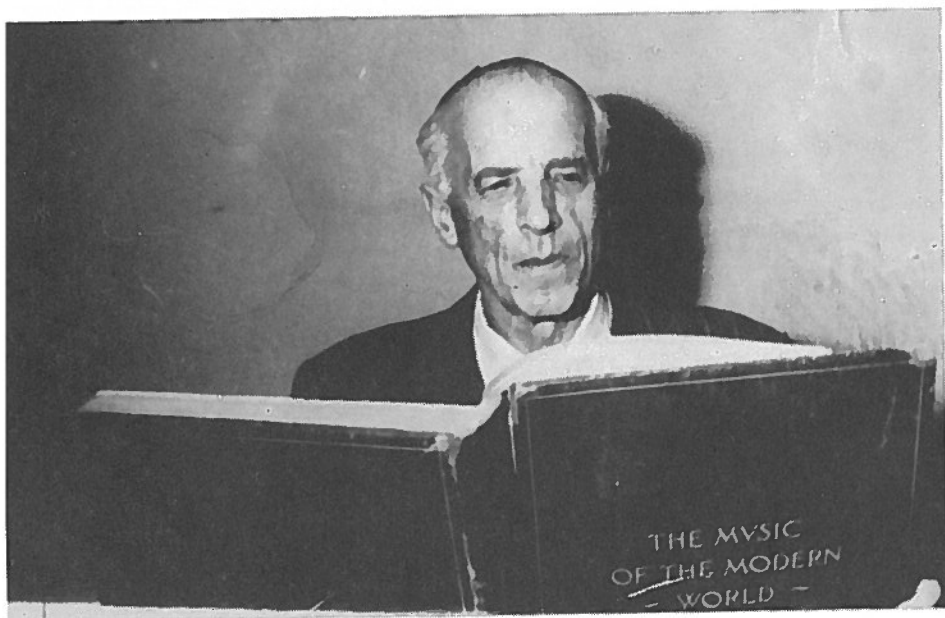
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## IN MEMORIAM

*Observing the Fiftieth Year  
after the Holocaust*

*This Journal is dedicated to the memory of*



**Dr. Karl Adler, Z"L**

Noted for establishing at Yeshiva University

a Music Department

the Cantorial Training Institute

*(now known as the Philip and Sarah Belz School of Jewish Music)*

a Music Program at Stern College

and a co-founder of the

Cantorial Council of America

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# Journal of Jewish Music and Liturgy

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**DR. KARL ADLER:  
A TRIBUTE TO A GREAT PEDAGOGUE,  
MENTOR, AND FRIEND**

*by Yaakov Yosef Iskowitz*

“Breathe deeply! Project your voice...from here...through there...so!” Those and similar phrases, accompanied by appropriate gestures, were the trademark of Dr. Karl Adler, of blessed memory, Professor and Director of Music at Yeshiva University and the Philip and Sarah Belz School of Jewish Music (formerly the Cantorial Training Institute) when I studied there in the mid-sixties. His instruction in voice and musicianship benefited me and countless other students beyond all expectations over decades to come. Both as a civilian rabbi and as an army chaplain, I often had to lead services and deliver sermons as well. Voice projection was useful not only during *Pesah Sedarim* for three hundred plus soldiers, but even when trying to sound officer-like on the phone.

Having served in Stuttgart, Germany, I acquired a large memorial book to its WWII Jewish community. How surprised I was to discover that many of its pages were devoted to the accomplishments of none other than Dr. Karl Adler! It is most fitting that some of these be shared with this journal’s readers on observing this year, the fiftieth year after the holocaust. This is especially fitting since Dr. Adler helped so many Jews in numerous ways both in Germany and in the United States. His involvement as conductor, musician, educator, and humanitarian inspired all those that came in contact with him.

In March 1933, Dr. Adler was beaten unconscious by three Nazi hooligans and had to be admitted to the hospital. Ironically, his head wound was right next to the one he received while defending his “homeland” during WWI. Upon leaving the hospital, he discovered that the Nazis had ousted him from his post as director of the Stuttgart Conservatory of Music, a post he held with distinction for eleven years. In December 1931, he had been highly praised on his tenth anniversary as director. Nevertheless, now he was berated for having “corrupted the music and youth of Germany”. As an act of solidarity for his excellent work and dedication, the entire board of directors resigned.

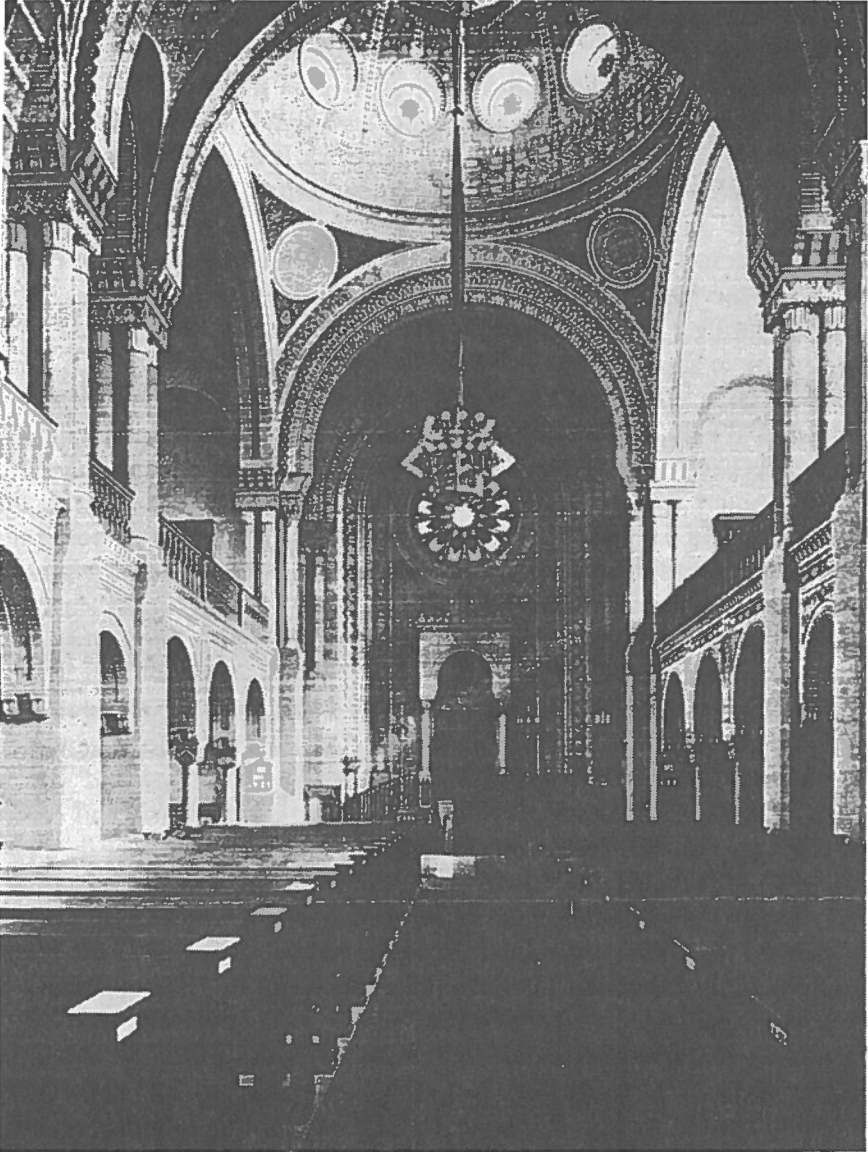
Dr. Adler then founded the Jewish Arts Council for lay choirs. In October 1934, the Jewish community organized a special program for *Simhat Torah*. Dr. Adler led 300 singers in traditional and modern Hebraic songs. He also conducted grand performances on *Hanukkah* and *Purim*, trying to keep up the Jewish community’s traditions and morale in those very trying times. These events were also held in communities outside

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## **Dr. Karl Adler: A Tribute to a Great Pedagogue, Mentor, and Friend**

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Stuttgart. Often, parts of the performances were eliminated at the last moment due to censorship. Some shows were canceled entirely, even following months of rehearsals, as the Nazis desired to break the Jewish spirit. In spite of this, Dr. Adler continued to offer his services to Jewish schools and organizations.



***Synagogue built in 1859-1861. Burned on Kristallnacht.***

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## **Dr. Karl Adler: A Tribute to a Great Pedagogue, Mentor, and Friend**

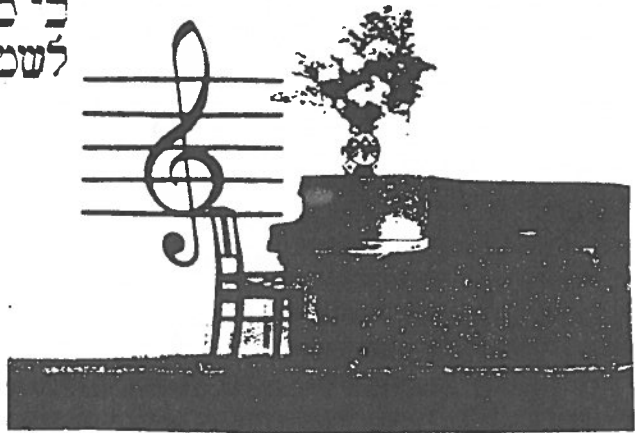
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It was during Kristallnacht that Dr. Adler rushed over to the synagogue, only to stand helplessly by as the Nazis kept pouring kerosene onto the burning building. He then hurried over to his office from which he removed the most important files. Along with many others, he was arrested for interrogation by the Gestapo. Dr. Adler was surprised by the kindness one of the secretaries displayed towards him at great risk. It was in this environment, too, that he organized activities to take the prisoner's minds off their predicament, utilizing their respective talents and abilities. He volunteered to teach them music, breathing, exercise and English. This was most difficult since oral communication among prisoners was forbidden. In eight days he was released, but had to promise not to engage in any cultural activities, and to expedite the emigration of Jews from Germany, while refraining from emigrating himself.

Realizing that saving lives was now the top priority, Dr. Adler organized an Emigration Aid and Self-Help Agency, which he headed until his own emigration in May 1941. Since Jewish bank accounts had been confiscated, money had to be channeled through trustworthy non-Jewish hands. All work was supervised by both the Gestapo and Security Services. Of course, Jews were the scapegoats whenever those two bodies clashed. At first, Dr. Adler gave his main efforts to gaining each of the remaining prisoners' release. Arguments were based on the prisoners' health, value to the economy or promise for emigration. The office was besieged by desperate people who could find no country willing to take them. Those who managed to emigrate had to leave behind whatever they still possessed. Some were able to be smuggled across the border for the enormous sum of 1,000 marks.

After saving many Jewish lives, Dr. Adler was finally granted permission to leave Germany. The American Consulate arranged this, provided that a music school in America would accept him on their faculty. The New York College of Music offered him a position. Hesitating to leave the decimated community behind, he agreed to do so only after deportations to the French concentration camps in Gurs had begun and it appeared that he might better help his brethren abroad. Poems, songs, and tears were part of the sad farewell "party" tendered Karl and Greta (Marx) Adler on October, 1940. The stage from which he descended for the last time had only a piano topped with a vase of flowers, an empty chair, and a background on which there was a very large treble clef and the Hebrew verse: "For His angels will command on your behalf, to guard you in all your ways" (Ps. 91:11).

בִּי מִלְאֲכֵיז יִצְוֶה לָךְ  
לְשִׁמְרֵךְ בְּכָל דְרָכֶיךָ



*Podium upon which Dr. Adler last stood.*

The Adler's son had been sent to England with the Children's Transport before the war. Sadly, the boat in which he set sail to America never arrived. It was this tragedy that prompted Dr. Adler to combine his prestigious music career with an active interest and educational involvement of Jewish youth. In 1945 he approached Dr. Samuel Belkin (President of Yeshiva University) and Dean Isaacs (Dean of Yeshiva College) at Yeshiva University looking for "a task, not a job". From this emerged the Department of Music and eventually the Philip and Sarah Belz School of Jewish Music at Yeshiva University.

We, his students and countless others have been immeasurably enriched by his profound scholarship, his rich personal experience as a musician and his dedication and concern to raise the standards of Jewish Music. Above all his energetic service to every person in need made him a voice of genuine humanity - a *Mensch* among men. *Yehi Zikhro Baruch* ("May his memory be blessed").

Thanks to Dr. Moshe Ahrend for assisting me with the translation from German of parts of this article.

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## THE VOICE IS STILL HEARD: DR. KARL ADLER Z"l (1890-1973)

by Macy Nulman

The following article appeared in *Hamevaser*, Volume XII (Tuesday, October 30, 1973), a student newspaper published by the Jewish Studies Division of Yeshiva University.

With the passing of Dr. Karl Adler a few short months ago we, at Yeshiva, and *Klal Yisrael* suffered a great loss. During his distinguished career as musician, educator, conductor, pioneer and mentor, many were blessed by the rare privilege of being touched and influenced by a great human being who left a lasting imprint. His love for fellow Jews is well known. As a professional he will be remembered for his richness of skills in organizing Jewish musical activities and movements as well as evincing a fatherly interest in his students.

### CENTRAL FIGURE IN GERMANY

Prior to 1933, in pre-Hitler days, Dr. Adler was director of the Music Department of the Wurttemberg Adult Education System, director of the Conservatory of Music at Stuttgart, and co-founder of the Jewish Lerhaus in Stuttgart, Germany. In 1933 the Nazis ousted him from his various posts but granted him permission to organize a Jewish chorus and orchestra in Stuttgart and in other communities throughout Germany. So great was the prominence and esteem in which he was held that the Jewish community asked Dr. Adler to be its intermediary with the police and Gestapo. Between 1933 and 1940 Dr. Adler was instrumental in rescuing and redeeming Jewish lives as well as *Sifre Torah*. In 1938, he was imprisoned and after a week he was promised his freedom if he would sign a statement agreeing to halt his cultural activities, not to emigrate, and to help in preparing the emigration of other Jews who had permission to leave the country. The Nazis destroyed his office during his imprisonment and from then on he had to deal with the Gestapo from a make-shift office helping Jews under all adverse circumstances.

### EMIGRATES TO THE UNITED STATES

In 1940 The Gestapo granted him permission to leave Germany providing that a music school in the United States elect him to its faculty. The New York College of Music offered him a position. Prior to leaving the country, Dr. Adler and his wife made arrangements to send their son to

## **The Voice is Still Heard: Dr. Karl Adler Z"l (1890-1973)**

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England and eventually bring him to the United States. Tragically the boat on which his son sailed never arrived. This personal tragedy probably was the catalyst that caused Dr. Adler to devote the rest of his life to the musical education of Jewish youth.

In the United States his musical activities branched out as teacher and conductor at Briarcliff College and the City College of New York. In 1945 Dr. Adler approached Dr. Belkin and the late Dr. Isaacs, then dean of Yeshiva College, and told them he was "not looking for a job, but a task". Although "music making" was common at Yeshiva, academic, structured music education was unknown. Starting his first class with "half a student" (since there was only one student who could spare one half credit in his college load), in a small room in the Main Center, Dr. Adler had the courage to begin classes with the broad architectural outlines of a music department and cantorial school that he envisaged. As each semester began, more and more students enrolled in his classes. By 1951 he established a Music Department and in 1952 he assumed supervision of the Cantorial workshop. In 1954 he participated in the creation of the Cantorial Training Institute, of which he served as director through 1966. With this workload in effect and as the first to wrestle with liturgical music education in the United States on an academic level, Dr. Adler took over as sort of a multiple functionary. He assisted in organizing the Cantorial Council of America, a professional affiliate of the Cantorial Training Institute, he served on the placement committee in assisting students and alumni in obtaining music teaching and cantorial positions, founded a music library, organized a music program at Stern College for Women, and participated in the publication program of C.T.I. In addition to this, his work for helping guiding musicians from Nazi Germany continued. To the last days of his life he was called upon for assistance. He also served as a board member of the National Jewish Music Council sponsored by the National Jewish Welfare Board.

### **REMINISCENCES**

Those who were privileged in attending Dr. Adler's classes will remember him for his qualities as mentor, teacher, and pedagogue. He was not one who was concerned only with imparting knowledge but he took an active interest in his students' physical and spiritual well being. Often when a student did not have sufficient money to pay his tuition, Dr. Adler lent him the money. He also gave money to students to get a decent meal. Each and every student was motivated by his vibrant personality and clarity in teaching. Never did he fail to attend mid-term or final examinations which activated him into probing for ways and means to perfect the methods, curriculum, and system of Jewish music education. In addition to demanding technical skills of the student, he insisted on enunciation and articulation of the text of the *Siddur*

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### **The Voice is Still Heard: Dr. Karl Adler Z"l (1890-1973)**

and *Mahzor* as prescribed by the *Shulhan Arukh*. He encouraged piety and *Torah* learning from the students enrolled at the Cantorial Training Institute. He arrived at Yeshiva at 9:00 a.m. and stayed far beyond 10:00 p.m., planning programs and solving problems that beset the cantor and Jewish music education. Musicians came to see him from around the world for advice and help. His door was always open. No one left without assistance. He went out of his way to help and befriend persons in need. His love for Yeshiva knew no bounds. He was deeply concerned with the physical appearance of Yeshiva: the chairs, walls, lights—everything was his concern. Even after his retirement he would ask, “How are things going with Yeshiva, financially; how are the classes at C.T.I.; what about the student body”? He continually inquired about his colleagues. He succeeded in improving the image of the cantor and the Jewish musician in the eyes of world Jewry. Indeed he had a TASK at Yeshiva University—not a job. His life will be an inspiration for future generations; his memory will live forever in the hearts of his pupils, colleagues, and friends.

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## THE USE OF THE ORGAN IN RESPONSA LITERATURE

by *David Zevi Hoffmann*

*Translated by Wilfred Wolfson*

The organ in Jewish history has been considered a "Christian instrument" because it was the principal instrument in the church. As early as the twelfth century records show that a pipe organ was played in a Baghdad synagogue on weekdays. In Prague, beginning in 1594, the organ was used before welcoming the Sabbath. Not until the nineteenth century did the "organ-synagogue" become a controversial issue between the Reform and Orthodox movements. A violent opponent of reform was the rabbi and scholar David Zevi Hoffmann. His responsa are distinguished by a concern with contemporary conditions. In his work *Melamed Leho'il (Mahberet Harishonah, She'aylot Uteshuvot al Orah Hayyim)*, Rabbi Hoffmann wrote the following responsum (No. 16) dealing with the playing of the organ on Sabbath and weekdays and he shows that it is *halakhically* forbidden. The responsum was published posthumously by his son Moshe Yehudah Hoffmann on Wednesday the second day of *Rosh Hodesh Adar I*, 1897.

M.N.

### QUESTION

In a certain city the *parnasim* ("leaders of the community") consented to install an organ in their synagogue. The rabbi of the synagogue attempted, with every effort, to dissuade them of this decision, but was unsuccessful. He, therefore, wishes to choose the lesser evil, namely, to allow the playing of the organ on weekdays; for example, at weddings, or on the king's birthday. By this approach, at least, they will not desecrate Sabbaths and holidays. An additional concern of the rabbi is if he should relinquish his position as rabbi and leave because of the organ, another rabbi might then come along who might cause other serious transgressions besides the use of the organ. The rabbi is therefore asking if he should remain in his position and permit playing the organ during the weekdays.

### RESPONSE

Before expressing an opinion let us turn to the *Mishkenot Haro'im*, those great people, men of stature who wrote their decisions in the year 1829 at

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the time when the evil (of installing the organ) first broke out in the city of Hamburg. It was there that they created many breaches in religion in spite of the views of the *Bet Din*. The *Bet Din* of Hamburg gathered letters and decisions of all the scholars of the generation and they enacted their discourses in the well known work *Eileh Divrei Habrit*. The *ge'onim*, *hassidim*, and *kedoshim* issued a prohibition because of three sins; one of which is the ban against playing any musical instrument in the synagogue on *Shabbat* and Holidays, even with the participation of a non-Jew. If it is permissible or not to play an organ on a weekday, however, I did not see an endorsement among them. After critical examination I found among the *ge'onim* three opinions.

A. There are those who simply wrote that it is forbidden to play music on the Sabbath and festivals. Concerning weekdays, they made no decision. Perhaps they were of the opinion it is permitted or, possibly they themselves were in doubt, and thus they did not want to decide the law either way. These are the decisors: *Bet Din Tzedek* of the community of Hamburg, Rabbi Meshulam Zalman Hakohen (*Sefer Bigdei Kehunah*), Rabbi Eliezer (*Sefer Shemen Rokeach*), Rabbi Abraham Tiktin (Breslau), and Rabbi Aharon Yosha Ravitch, *Bet Din* of the *Kehillah* of Padua. The *gaon* Rabbi Akiva Eger (Posen) wrote explicitly: "On weekdays as well there is no evident authorization. Examine what is written in *Be'ayr Sheva* (chap. 74): The reason we do not pray with outstretched hands, which is compared to the prohibition 'You shall not erect a monument' and this same reason applies to the organ" (The two practices connected with the religion of the non-Jew are forbidden and applies as well to the usage of the organ). And thus it is possible that there is no apparent permission according to all these renowned scholars.

B. There are those *ge'onim* who unequivocally permitted playing the organ on weekdays. They are: *Bet Din* of the community of Prague, Rabbis Eliezer of Fleklesh, Samuel Landau and Leib Moolish. They wrote: "And those who play an instrument (the organ) on the holy Sabbath are violating a definite prohibition, even when the playing of the instrument is done by a non-Jew. Those in our community who play an instrument at *Kabbalat Shabbat* must stop playing a half hour before *Barekhu*". Thus the ten rabbis of Livorno (Leghorn) signed their decision, saying, "All of us have prohibited the playing of the organ on *Shabbat* and *Yom Tov*. We permitted its use only on *Hol Hamo'ayd*, *erev Shabbat* and *erev Yom Tov*, prior to the onset of these holy days; even this was permitted to take place only for Jews who fear the Lord in their heart."

C. There are *ge'onim* who sign as signatories explicitly forbidding the playing of the organ in the synagogue on weekdays just as on the Sabbath. They are the following: Rabbi Herz Shier who felt that there may be a

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category of a prohibition based on the verse "How can we sing (the song of God on a strange land"; ps. 137:4); and also in the category of holiness (how can it be played). The *ga'on Hatam Sofer* (Presburg) wrote in his first letter "since our forefathers didn't institute musical instruments in prayer, even though song was prominent in the service of the Temple, indicates that this was not proper for the reason that once the holy Temple was destroyed 'there is no joy before Him' etc. and 'How can we sing, etc'". In the second letter he taught a new prohibition based on the works of a Sephardic *rav* in his book *Nogah Tzedek* (who decided to permit it) and the *Hatam Sofer* forbade it because of *hukotayhem* (not to follow in their statutes). The *ga'on*, our teacher Rabbi Mordecai Benet (Nikolsburg) wrote that (playing the organ) is prohibited even on weekdays because of *hukotayhem* and concludes "In my humble opinion there is a strong doubt, and it should be forbidden on the basis of its being questionable". So wrote the *ga'on* Rabbi Jacob of Lissa, author of *Havat Da'at*: "It is a definite prohibition to play the organ in the synagogue whether on weekday or *Shabbat* even if it is played by a non-Jew. Similarly ruled the *ge'onim* Rabbi Shmuel, head of the *Bet Din* of Amsterdam, Rabbi Moshe Tuviah of Sontheim Hanau, Rabbi Hirsch Lakov of *Ventzenheim*, author of *Sha'ar Naftali*. See the responsa volume of Rabbi Asad (question 8, *Orah Hayyim*, chap. 59), a response from his teacher Rabbi Mordecai Benet who prohibited the use of the organ on *Shabbat*. He did not question its prohibition on weekdays possibly because the question was as to its use on *Shabbat* but weekday was not mentioned because it was a questionable doubt.

In the year 5580 (1830) the outstanding *sefer*, *Tzeror Hahayyim*, by the *ga'on* Rabbi Abraham Lewenstamm, head of the *Bet Din* of Emden, was published. He, too, gave a decision that the use of the organ is prohibited both on weekdays and Sabbath because of *uvehukotayhem lo taylaykhu* ("In their statutes do not walk"; Lev. 17:3).

In the year 5623 (1873) the eminent Rabbi David Deutsch, head of the *Bet Din* of Sohrua (Zory) (Oberselsia), authored a remarkable work in Yiddish *Di Orgel In Der Synagoga* ("The Organ in the Synagogue"). In this work he went to great length to clarify the prohibition of the use of the organ in all of its aspects. He wrote that it is forbidden to play the organ on weekdays because of *uvehukotayhem* and quotes the prohibition according to the *dayyanim* of Berlin, Rabbis Elchanan Rosenstein and Dr. Zachs of blessed memory. In the year 5622 (1872) the paper "Israelite" (Nos. 2, 3, 4) printed the prohibition in the names of Rabbi Meyer, Dr. Lehmann, of blessed memory, (One to differentiate between the living and the deceased) Rabbi Meshullam Zalman Dr. Kahn. Similarly the same decision of Rabbi Yisrael Schwartz, head of the *Bet Din* of Kolin, was printed in the Israelite (No. 1) in 1865. They all agreed to ban the organ both on weekdays and on

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*Shabbat*. This prohibition is written in the instructions we give to every student of our *Bet Hamedrash* here in Berlin, together with the authority to decide law, based on the dictum of *uvehukotayhem*. So I saw in the explanation to the verse in Leviticus (18:3) by Rabbi Samson Raphael Hirsch (of blessed memory) that he forbade the use of the organ both on weekdays and Sabbath because of *uvehukotayhem*. I also saw in the *sefer* of *Meharatz Hayes* (*R. Zevi Hirsch Chajes*) *Minhat Kena'ot* that the use of the organ is prohibited because of the prohibition of *uvehukotayhem* as the *Rambam* wrote (chap. 11) concerning the laws of idol worship: "It is forbidden to utilize an article which is used for idol worship". I saw, however, in the *sefer* of Rabbi Abraham Zutra (*Milhamot Hashem*; Hanover, 1836) that the prohibition of playing the organ is only on *Shabbat* and it is not prohibited on weekdays except if women sing (and it accompanies them).

### CLARIFICATION AND SYNOPSIS

Now let us examine and clarify the law in its every detail on account of those who permit the use of the organ. They strengthen their point of view by saying that in the Temple musical instruments, similar to the organ, were also in use. They also brought proof that the organ was played in the city of Prague. Thus we will commence our investigation concerning these matters.

### MAGREFA-THE MUSICAL INSTRUMENT IN THE TEMPLE

We have learned in *Arakhin* (10b): "Rabbi Masnah said in the name of Shmuel: There was a *magrefa* in the Temple in which there were ten holes. Each one produced ten different types of musical sounds, a sum total of one hundred types of musical sounds. We studied in a *Beraitha* it was an *amah* long and *amah* high, and a handle protruded from it," etc. In the Jerusalem Talmud (*Hahallil*) and in the *Midrash Yalkut Kohelet* there is a difference of opinion between Rav and Shmuel regarding the structure of the *magrefa*. The commentators said that it is a musical instrument similar to the organ. According to the *Mishnah* (*Tamid* 5, 10) the function of the *magrefa* was for special uses and not for accompanying the Levites. It is true that *Tosafot Yom Tov* wrote there that the *magrefa* of this instance is not the *magrefa* of the *Mishnah* (3, 8) and that of *Arakhin* which was an instrument of great significance (other than a musical instrument). It is difficult to say, however, that there were two types of musical instruments in the Temple with the same name *magrefa*. The *Rabad* in his interpretation of the *Mishnah* (3, 8) in *Tamid* wrote, "It is called *magrefa* in that it is similar to the *magrefa*

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which assembles the ashes together as the musical instrument brings together many kinds of sounds. The *Mishnah* states that he took the *magrefa* and threw it; it does not mean literally throwing but rather as the saying “It was thrown out by the group” – every person related thoughts to each other and expressed them together just as the sounds of the *magrefa* came out at different times; one time this pitch and at another time a different pitch, similar to the violin that sets the pitch.

At that instance the Levites understood that they should begin singing in unison in a loud voice so that no individual heard the voice of his fellow Levite. Consequently, the *magrefa* was used for purposes other than music and it is not similar to the organ. Even if it was an important musical instrument, there is doubt if there was an organ in the Temple. In fact, the student of Rabbi Mordecai Benet wrote in his *sefer* and brings evidence that there was no organ, since Rabbi Shimon Ben Gamliel stated there was no hydraulus in the Temple because its sound was thick and the sound of the organ is similar. In conclusion it seems that the organ was not in usage in the Temple. And even if there was an organ, it has now become despised as it is used for *avodah zarah* (idolatry).

### THE ORGAN IN PRAGUE

Those who permit the organ in Prague bring evidence from the Altneu Synagogue which had an organ and no one protested. I saw in the *Sefer Eleh Divrei Habrit* that the *ga'on* Rav Shier wrote: “In the community of Prague, a large city in which there were nine synagogues and in the largest they had the custom to greet the Sabbath with musical instruments.” The *Hatam Sofer* wrote: “Our ancestors told us that in earlier times a flute was played in Prague in the Altneu Synagogue. We, too, are aware that they terminated their playing in Prague before they said *Mizmor Shir Leyom Hashabbat*; nevertheless, the truth is that the singing was accompanied with the flute, with its specific melody. In other synagogues of the city, however, they did not have this custom and once this custom was found to be wrong it was not reinstated. (In fact the Rabbi of Hamburg wrote me that the organ was not in the Altneu Synagogue but rather in the Meisel Synagogue).

Take note, that the young man, Yaakov Wagner, an expert in Hebrew literature showed me an old *Siddur* from the year 1693 (Later my student Alexander Marks showed me this *Siddur* bound together with a book, *Siftef Yesheirim* printed in Amsterdam in the year 1690. It seems that this *Siddur* was printed in Amsterdam in which is printed a song before *Lekhah Dodi*. It is written on this book:

”A beautiful song by Reb Shlomoh Singer which is sung in the Meisel Synagogue with flute and lyre before *Lekhah Dodi*”.

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## The Use of the Organ in Responsa Literature

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We can understand in reading between the lines why they permitted to greet the Sabbath with musical instruments for it is written in a verse:

“The Sabbath, the bride with the groom  
In splendor and greatness.  
If we will observe two of them according to law  
We will immediately merit redemption.  
And then God will send a redeemer  
He will come in song.  
This is the day that God made with joy in his heart,  
Let us be happy and rejoice with it.”

It is evident from this that since they permitted to play in honor of the bride and groom they also permitted it in honor of Sabbath the Queen and Israel her partner for they are similar to a groom and bride. From this it is obvious that in early times they played the flute and lyre in the Meisel Synagogue in Prague. Afterwards they revoked this as testified by the *Hatam Sofer*. Rabbi Avraham Emden wrote in his book *Tzeror Hahayyim*: “The fact that the author of *Nogah* told us that there was an organ in the Prague Synagogue, perhaps the synagogue was built with the organ and in fact its use was not in vogue in their service. Truthfully, as we have heard, this synagogue had been built from the time of the Second Temple, at which time it was permitted to construct the organ and the law of *hukat ha'akum* (the statutes of non-Jews) did not apply. But once it (the use of the organ) broke down, we do not reinstate its use since they (non-Jews) used the organ for their religious services and it is forbidden to us according to the dictum of *hukat ha'akum*.

In truth, it is possible that in early times the organ was not commonly used in their service. We, however, have seen in the Meisel Synagogue that they played a lyre. More so one can say that they gave themselves a permit to use the organ based on the perception that the organ is mentioned in the Torah among the musical instruments as *Nevel* or *Ugav* (some translate these words by “organ”). Or, they thought as did the *Shiltei Hagibborim* (chap. 11) that (these two instruments) were the *minim* (strings) mentioned in the Holy Writ.

### THE PROHIBITION OF THE ORGAN BECAUSE OF HUKOTAYHEM

(Rabbi Hoffmann enters here into a lengthy discussion as to *hukotayhem* (“their statues”) and *avodah zarah* (“idolatry”). He refers to several

Talmudic commentators and concludes with their decision regarding the organ.)

- A. According to Rabbi Yitzhak (known as the *Ri*) the use of the organ is forbidden since it is associated with *avodah zarah*.
- B. The *Ran* (Nissim ben Reuben Gerondi) also ruled that since the organ is used in idol worship it may not be utilized in the synagogue.
- C. Rabbenu Yonah, The *Ritba* (Yom Tov b. Avraham Ishbili), and the Maharik (Joseph B. Solomon Colon) all agree that the use of the organ is *avodah zarah* and is prohibited.
- D. In *Orah Hayyim* (53:25) Rabbi Josef Karo wrote that one may not sing their melodies. The *Bach* (Joel Sirkes) defined these melodies as those sung specifically for *avodah zarah*.

### THE PROHIBITION OF THE ORGAN DUE TO IMITATING HERETICS

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We learn in Tractate Hulin (41a): One may not slaughter into a body of water nor into a ditch. One may, however, do so within his household but not in a market place. The reason for this prohibition is *shelo yekhakeh et haminim*; which is explained by *Rashi* not to strengthen their hands in their statutes (*behukotayhem*) (*yekhakeh* is rooted in the word *hok*, “statute”). The *Beraitha* states that he should not slaughter in the market place since it is written, “You should not follow in their statutes”. Thus I say even if it can be said that the use of the organ is not forbidden because of the laws of *avodah zarah*, nevertheless it can not be permitted since its employment would enforce the *apikursim* (“heretics”). It is a known fact that those who broke away and first instituted organ playing then desecrated the Sabbath publicly, changed the prayers, denied the concept of the coming of the Messiah, as well as other loathsome acts irrespective of the opinions of the rabbis true to the word of God. And now if we will permit the organ, these destroyers will claim that they have prevailed over us and we have answered *Amen* to their claims. And surely they will permit other bans which they claim the time does not warrant. In truth, experience has shown that people will not be satisfied with a minor change but will multiply the sins. Justly we have written in our worthy publication that the use of the organ will be the main venom of one sin causing another as well as great abominations. Because in a short time, owing to its use, choirs of women singing will be heard in the Temple of God, the synagogue. Likewise, the sequence of our prayers as they were received from our ancestors will be destroyed one after another. That service of the heart, (namely, prayer) will be distorted by addition and omission, by changes which will testify that they deny the promises of God through His prophets to bring back the

## The Use of the Organ in Responsa Literature

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Divine Presence to Zion and Temple Worship to Jerusalem in the end of days. And therefore, in our time, it is all the more reason to forbid the use of the organ since its use is emulating the heretics and non-believers and is strengthening their hands with the breakdown of belief and religion.

I will not mention the prohibition of the organ because of the law of mourning for the destruction of the holy Temple, although Rav Meshullam Zalman Cohen in his article in the *Israelite*, showed with great erudition that one who mourns for Jerusalem will not wish to hear the song of God on strange land. Those who rejoice with the music of the organ, have rejected the redemption promised by our prophets. For them the emancipation is the true redemption and therefore, they have eradicated in prayer all the sentences which mention Zion and Jerusalem. Nevertheless, I will not speak concerning the prohibition of use of the organ for the above reason since they question if it may be used at weddings and in honor of the king and they have permitted its use on these occasions. Notwithstanding, every God-fearing person will choose other musical instruments but not the organ since it is tied in with *hukot avodah zarah* (the practices of idolatry) and *vehukat ha'apikursim* (emulating the heretics).

The final decision is clear to us that we cannot permit the use of the organ, in any way, even on weekdays. I saw in *Leket Kemah, Orah Hayyim (Hilkhoh Bet Hakeneset)* and these are his words: "Look at *Sefer Hashirim* concerning the music in the synagogue. It seems that *Sefer Hashirim (Ha-Shirim Asher li-Shelomo)* was written by Shelomo Minhadumin (Salamone de Rossi) of Mantua. According to the catalog of Ben Jacob there is a decision of law (as opposed to those who forbid it) to permit it according to the Rav of Modina (Judah Aryeh) and the *Bet Din* of Venice. This *sefer* is not in my possession and I cannot understand the reason for their decision. If a rabbi who is coerced or finds himself in a serious situation, sees fit to rely on those who permitted its use on weekdays, and he looks also upon its use only for the sake of the bride and groom or for a king, I would be reluctant to nullify this permission. However, it is his obligation to publicize the matter under what circumstance he permitted its use in order that they should follow him in other instances.

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## THE LU'AH: A GUIDE TO JEWISH LIVING

by Macy Nulman

Although the words *lu'ah* and calendar are synonymous, in their inception there were differences in function. The word *lu'ah*, used since the medieval period, had its starting-point in early days before print was in vogue. The fixing of the month and the appearance of the new moon (*molad*) were posted on a large tablet (*lu'ah*) made of parchment. It was hung on a wall in the synagogue so that all should know when *Rosh Hodesh*, *Yom Tov*, and the *four Tekufot* (seasons) occur (Lipiec, 1894). The word calendar, on the other hand, was given to us by the Greek and Roman civilizations. Its etymology are the Greek *kalend*, "I shout" and the Roman *calends*, the first day of the Roman month. The person shouting was a public timetable who apprised the people when to pay taxes, when the magistrates would try criminals, and when marketing days and religious and athletic events would take place (Fischer, 1987:8). Others simply give the derivation from the Latin *kalends* meaning a system of reckoning time devised especially to make the naming of a day possible and convenient (W. Bridgwater and E.J. Sherwood (1959:296). Hanging the *lu'ah* on a wall, may possibly be rooted in Rabban Gamaliel's practice of having a diagram of the phases of the moon on a tablet hung on the wall of his upper chamber. He would show them to the unlearned and say, did it look like this or this (*Mishnah*, Rosh Hashanah 2,8).

### FIXING THE MONTH BY OBSERVATION

The advent of the new moon was calculated by the *Sanhedrin* (from the Greek meaning "sitting together") who assembled in the courtyard (*bet ya'azayk*) of Jerusalem on the thirtieth of each month from morning to evening, waiting for reports of those appointed to observe the new moon. After the examination of these reports the president of the *Sanhedrin*, in the presence of at least three members, called out *mekudash* ("the moon is consecrated"). The entire assembly of people responded twice "it is consecrated" (Rosh Hashanah, chap. 2). The fixation of the month was referred to as *kevi'a deyarha* (Sabbath 86b). Originally they used to light bonfires from mountaintop to mountaintop proclaiming the new month, but when the Samaritans adopted evil courses to mislead the Babylonians, they made a rule that messengers should be sent instead (Rosh Hashanah 22b).

In the course of history discrepancies arose as to exact times for observing holidays as well as other important occasions. For example, because it happened one year that the witnesses arrived late, it led to observing Rosh Hashanah for two days, even in *Eretz Yisrael*. The Talmud (Bezah 4b, 5a) writes, "In early times they (the *Sanhedrin*) admitted the testimony about a new month throughout the (whole) day. Once the witnesses were late in arriving and the Levites erred in their chant (*nitkalkelu ha-Leviyim beshir*)". They sang the psalm for the ordinary days at the eventide sacrifices and it turned out, after the arrival of the witnesses, that it was actually New Year's day. Consequently they enacted that they should only receive witnesses until *Minhah*, but if witnesses come from *Minhah* onward they observed the remainder of that day and the following day as holy. Thus under such conditions the *Sanhedrin* itself observed *Rosh Hashanah* for two days even though there was no uncertainty. This enactment was fixed from the very beginning making the two days one continuous day of holiness (*yoma arikhta*). The two-day holiday of the Diaspora (*Yom Tov Shayni Shel Golyot*), however, is different since the situation arose where, due to distances from Jerusalem, communications presented difficulties, and weeks would pass before Jews in the Diaspora would learn which of the days had been proclaimed *Rosh Hodesh*. It was thus decreed that communities in the Diaspora observe the festivals for two days solely because of doubt (*sefayka deyoma*). But in Israel where there is no doubt, only one day was observed.

Other discrepant arguments took place as to the correct day for observing Yom Kippur. The Talmud cites disputes between R. Levi and the people of Babylon (Rosh Hashanah 21a) and R. Joshua and Rabban Gamaliel (Rosh Hashanah 25a). The exact day for observing *Shavu'ot* was also debated. The Rabbis said the Ten Commandments were given to Israel on the sixth day of *Sivan* and R. Jose argued it was on the seventh day (Shavuot 86b).

Calculating time was no doubt difficult. Some reckoned time according to different eras known as *minyan hashanim* ("number of years") or chronology. For instance, dates were calculated according to the building of the Temple (*lebinyan habayit*), by the destruction of the Temple (*lehurban habayit*), by the Era of Contracts (*minyan shetarot*) and the documents connected with the Kingdom of Greece (*minyan Yevanim*).

In our own day it has wittingly been said, ask a Jew or Jewess when is Rosh Hashanah and he/she will respond, it's early this year. When is *Pesah*? It's late this year. You never receive a definite answer; it is either early or late. But inquire by those who follow the Gregorian calendar when is New Years and the answer forthcoming immediately is January 1. When is Thanksgiving? The last Thursday in November. What caused this earliness or lateness in the Jewish calendar?

The Jewish calendar is based entirely on calculation, albeit we do not depart from the principles by which the *Sanhedrin* abided when they regulated the calendar by observation. The month of *Nisan* or *Aviv* in which *Pesah* is observed must always coincide with the advent of spring; *Shavu'ot* in the summer, and *Sukkot* in autumn. It was because of this that it was essential to coordinate the lunar and solar years which was accomplished by the intercalation or insertion (*sod ha'ibur*) of an extra month *Adar*, which made that year a leap year. In every cycle of nineteen years there are seven such leap years. Each year, whether ordinary or leap year, has no duration in Jewish reckoning. Certain months (*Kislev* and *Heshvan*) have 29 or 30 days; ordinary years vary between 353, 354, and 355 days; leap years between 383, 384, and 385 days. It is for this reason that a holiday may be early one year and late the next year and vice versa.

It was not until the middle of the fourth century c.e. that the patriarch Hillel II (330-365 c.e.) established for all time an astronomically fixed calendar. Like the former system of observation, it is based on a Lunar-Solar principle.

### PRAYERS AND TORAH READINGS USED IN RECKONING TIME

Though every Jew did not have a printed calendar in his possession to consult he was able to determine intervals of time, seasons, and particular periods by reciting certain prayers and reading certain Torah portions. As part of the morning Temple service the Levites chanted a psalm after the daily sacrifice of the *Tamid* that was suited to the significance of the particular day of the week (*Tamid* 7, 4). The Talmud (*Rosh Hashanah* 31a) tells how each psalm is related to its respective day. Eventually the custom of reciting the psalm of the day continued after Temple times (*Tamid*, *ibid.*; *Soferim*. chap. 18, 1) and is still part of the daily *Shaharit* service. No doubt, in the Temple days, the text of the psalm together with its musical accompaniment, indicated the particular day of the week once it was heard. The worshiper did not need to depend on the calendar. Moreover, when reciting the psalm it is introduced with "Today is the (first) day of the Sabbath, on which the Levites would recite in the Temple". This, too, gave the Jew an inner road map as to when the Sabbath would occur.

Another way of keeping track of time is by the recital of *Birkat Hahodesh* or *Hakhrazat Rosh Hodesh*. On the Sabbath before the start of every month (*Tishre* excluded) the blessing of the New Moon (*Birkat Hahodesh*) occurs. R. Yohanan said, "I never recited the *Musaf* service without knowing when *Rosh Hodesh* would fall" (*Jerusalem Talmud Sanhedrin* 5,3). In the Geonic period it became customary to announce the date of the beginning of the new month in the synagogue on the Sabbath



preceding *Rosh Hodesh*.

When the time came for counting the *Omer*, commencing with the second night of *Pesah* until the night before *Shavu'ot*, this, too, gave the Jew a sense of time element. According to the *Abudraham* the counting was instituted as a reminder to the Israelites who were scattered and were busy in their fields in the season and would forget to make the mandatory pilgrimage to Jerusalem on *Shavu'ot* (*Abudraham* 1489:65a (129).

The Jew had other landmarks for an awareness or cognizance of the sequence of time. When reading special Torah portions and reciting *piyyutim* (prayer poems) on the *Arba Parshiyot*, between the end of the month of *Shevat* and *Rosh Hodesh Nisan*, it indicated to him that *Pesah* is not too far away. The *Shulhan Arukh* even prescribed studying the laws of *Pesah* thirty days prior to the holiday (Karo 1565:429,1). The three days of preparation immediately preceding the festival of *Shavu'ot* (*Sheloshet Yemay Hagbalah*), blowing the *Shofar* during the month of *Elul*, the three weeks between the Seventeenth of *Tammuz* and the Ninth of *Av* (*Bayn Hametzarim*), the Ten Days of Penitence (*Aseret Yemay Teshuvah*), the special *Shabbatot* during the year cycle (e.g. *Shabbat Hazon*, *Shabbat Nahamu*, etc.), the seven *haftarot* (*Zayin Denehemta*) read on *Shabbatot* following *Tishah b'Av*, *SHOVeVIM TaT* (when men of piety fast on Thursdays, that is, weeks when the following *Sidrot* are read: *Shemot*, *Va'ayra*, *Bo*, *Beshalah*, *Yitro*, *Mishpatim*, *Terumah*, *Tetzaveh*), *Ta'anit BeHaB* (a custom of fasting on Monday (*Bet*) and Thursday (*Hay*), and Monday (*Bet*) in the months of *Heshvan* and *Iyyar*), and inserting *Vetayn tal umatar livrakhah* in the ninth blessing of the *Amidah* (*Birkat Hashanim*) are all occasions for regulating time in the life of the Jew.

The East European Jew had a way of calculating the passage of time during the summer months by saying "*zibn vuhkhn tzeylt men*" ("seven weeks one counts") "*dray vuhkhn kluhgt men*" ("three weeks one wails") "*un fir vuhkhn bluhzt men*" ("and four weeks one blows").

The Jew counts the years according to the creation of the world (*libriyat ha'olam*). It is accepted today (1995 until *Tishre*) that it is 5,755 (*HaTaSHNaH*) since the creation of the world. When writing out *HaTaSHNaH* completely with the letter *hay* it is known as *lifrat gadol* (large designation); when writing out only *TaSHNaH*, (leaving out the letter *hay*) it is called *lifrat katan* (small designation). It is interesting that when wanting to know the comparable Gregorian date to the Jewish date just add 1240 *lifrat katan*. For example, to *TaSHNaH* (757) add 1240 = 1995. Conversely, when wanting to arrive at the Jewish date from the Gregorian date subtract 1240.

A mnemonic device was established so that the days of the week on which principal festivals and *Tishah b'Av* will fall, may be ascertained

when using *Pesah* as a base. This was accomplished by combining the first and last letters of the Hebrew Alphabet (*AT-BaSH*):

*Aleph-Tav-Tishah b'av (tav)* falls on the same day of the week as the first day (*aleph*) of *Pesah*.

*Bet-Shin - Shavu'ot (shin)* falls on the same day of the week as the second day (*bet*) of *Pesah*.

*Gimmel-Raysh-Rosh Hashanah (raysh)* falls on the same day of the week as the third day (*gimmel*) of *Pesah*.

*Daled-Kuf - Simhat Torah (Keri'at Hatorah)* falls on the same day of the week as the fourth day (*daled*) of *Pesah*.

*Hay-Tzadi-Yom Kippur (tzom)* falls on the same day of the week as the fifth day (*hay*) of *Pesah*.

*Vav-Pay-Purim (pay)* falls on the same day of the week as the sixth day (*vav*) of the preceding *Pesah*.

*Zayin-Ayin - Atzmaut day (ayin)*, celebrating the anniversary of Israel's declaration of independence (*Iyyar 5, 1948*), falls on the same day of the week as the seventh day (*zayin*) of *Pesah*.

Other points of designation with which the Jew was familiarized was that the first day of *Rosh Hashanah* can never fall on a Sunday, Wednesday or Friday. The principle concerning the three days is expressed in three words, *Lo ADU rosh* (*aleph = 1; daled = 4; vav = 6*). *Pesah* cannot fall on Monday, Wednesday or Friday (*BeDU*); *Shemini Atzeret* cannot fall on a Tuesday, Thursday, or Saturday (*GeHaZ*); and *Purim* cannot fall on Saturday, Monday or Wednesday (*ZeBaD*). (Jacob B. Asher 1455:428).

Throughout the ages the synagogue-going Jew has been hearing certain melodies that often assume the character and function of leitmotifs. These motifs were additional signs to call to mind observances and practices in the year calendar. For instance, in Frankfurt-am-Main when two *Sifray Torah* would be taken out on *Shabbat* morning the word *hamevorakh* in *Barekhu* on Friday evening would be sung with an elaborate melismatic chant (Fabian Ogutsch 1930:46). The period of *Sefirah* has a fixed melody for *Lekhah Dodi*. During the three weeks in some communities, and on *Shabbat Hazon* only in other communities *Lekhah Dodi* is linked with the *Eli Tziyon* tune sung on *Tishah b'Av* morning (Abraham Baer, 1877:90). On *Shabbat Hazon*, too, the verse in Deuteronomy (1:12) as well as verses in the *haftarah* are chanted to the *Ekhah* tune. Announcing the days when *Rosh Hodesh Elul* occurs is chanted to a melody utilizing the High Holy Day *Musaf Kaddish* motifs (Gershon Efros 1953:299). When chanting *Yehadshayhu* at *Birkat Hahodesh* the western Ashkenazi rite link the text to particular melodies sung at certain seasons; for *Hanukkah*, *Ma'oz Tzur*; for *Pesah*, *Addir Hu*; for *Shavu'ot*, *Akdamut*; for *Tisha b'Av*, *Eli Tziyon*; for *Rosh Hashanah* the *Ma'ariv* chant (Louis Lewandowski 1921: 122-123).

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THE LU'AH - A GUIDE TO LAWS, CUSTOMS AND PRACTICES

The *lu'ah* today is accessible to all in several formats; a wall *lu'ah*, a pocket sized *lu'ah*, a *lu'ah* appended to a book as in volume one of the *Encyclopedia Judaica* covering 100 years (1920-2020), and even a computerized *lu'ah*. Originally the *lu'ah* contained only a list in order of time of the days of the year. In the nineteenth century a literary supplement was introduced which has become an almost indispensable part of the *lu'ah*. The first printed *lu'ah* came from the printing office of di Gara at Vienna in 1597. *Luhot* were later printed in large cities inhabited by Jews. Of the earliest printed in the United States is *The Jewish Calendar for Fifty Years* (1854 - 1904) with an essay on the Jewish Calendar by J.J. Lyons and Abraham de Sola. Currently most *luhot* are printed in the United States and Israel. Although the *lu'ah* has been in existence for over two millennia, it was not widely distributed until the last 200 years. The calendar descriptions that follow include those printed in Germany, United States and Israel and lay no claim to completeness.

GERMANY

A. An early *lu'ah* dating back to 5671 (1810 - 1811) is the Frankfurt *lu'ah* (See Figure 1). The two pages predominately covering the month of April (*Nisan*) list the observance of the Passover holiday in April 1811.

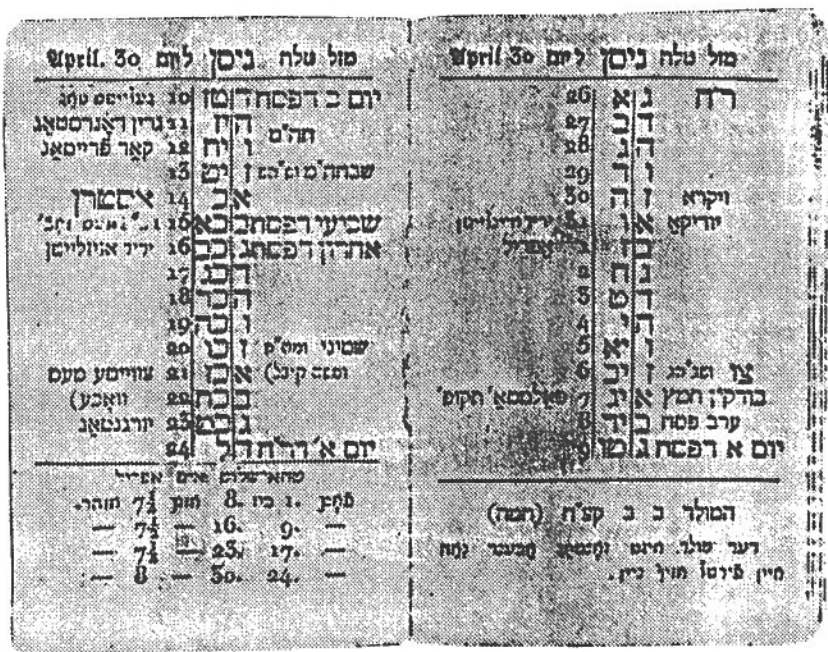


Figure 1. The Frankfurt Lu'ah of 5671 (1810-1811).

Besides giving the dates when Passover is observed it gives, in Yiddish transliteration, the time when the Christian holiday Easter takes place (*Grin Donerstag* = "Holy Thursday"; *Kar Freitag* = "Good Friday"; *Ostern* = "Easter"). At the bottom of the page are the times showing when the gates of the Frankfurt ghetto are opened and closed during the month (*Tarschluss in April* - "Door closes in April"). On the top of the page is printed *Taleh*, the sign of the Zodiac Aries (the Ram) designated for the month of *Nisan*.

## G e b e t s z e i t e n

Im Kalenderjahr 5699

In der Hauptsynagoge in

WURZBURG

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זמני התפלה בשנת תרצט לפ"ק  
בבית הכנסת דק"ק ווירצבורג יע"א

Figure 2A

B. Figure 2A is a *lu'ah* of Wurzburg, Germany representing mainly the exact times when the three prayer services are held (on Sabbaths and weekdays) during the year cycle. On its cover is printed *Gebetszeiten im Kalenderjahr 5699 in der Haupt-synagoge in Wurzburg* ("Times of prayer in the calendar year 5699 in the main synagogue of Wurzburg"). It also gives the date, Torah portion of the week to be read, holidays, fast days (notice on top of page; last column, *Bemerkungen*, where it specifies the precise moment the fast begins and ends), when to begin blowing the *Shofar* (notice in *Bemerkungen*, last column, four columns from top, that the *Shofar*, is blown after *Ma'ariv*), and when *Selihot* are said. See Figure 2B.

The Lu'ah: A Guide to Jewish Living

Woche vom	Sabbat u. Feiertage				Werktage	Bemerkungen
	Vorabend	Morgen	Nachmittag	Abend		
6./12. Mai אמר	7.15	8.00	4.00	8.40	6.80 7.15	
18./19. Mai בתי בתקני	7.15	8.00	4.00	8.50	6.80 7.15	מבי הרדש Feilung ראש חדש סיון
20./23. Mai במבר	7.15	8.00	4.00	9.00	6.80 7.15	So. 21. mit Di 23. V. ני ימי וילה ערב שבועות
24./25. Mai שבועות einischl. 26. Mai	7.15	8.00	4.00	9.10	6.80 7.15	
27. Mai/2. Juni נשא	7.15	8.00	4.00	9.15	6.80 7.15	
3./9. Juni כהעלק	7.15	8.00	4.00	9.25	6.80 7.15	
10./16. Juni שזא לך	7.15	8.00	4.00	9.80	6.80 7.15	מברכין הרדש
17./23. Juni קרח	7.15	8.00	4.00	9.85	6.80 7.15	8a. 17. und So. 18. VI. ראש חדש תמוז
24./30. Juni חקת	7.15	8.00	4.00	9.85	6.80 7.15	
1./7. Juli בלק	7.15	8.00	4.00	9.85	6.80 7.15	Di 4. VII. שבועות קטור בתמוז Nachm.-offend. 7.45 Fastenende: 9.20
8./14. Juli מינחם	7.15	8.00	4.00	9.80	6.80 7.15	
15./21. Juli משה ומע	7.15	8.00	4.00	9.25	6.80 7.15	מבי הרדש Mo 17. VII. ראשודש מנחםאב

Woche vom	Sabbat u. Feiertage				Werktage	Bemerkungen
	Vorabend	Morgen	Nachmittag	Abend		
22./28. Juli שבת חזון יבכרים	7.15	8.00	4.00	9.15	6.80 7.15	Di 25. VII. באב Mo 26. VII. באב Fastenbeg. 8.15 Di mo. 6.15. nachm. 7.30 Fastenende 9.02
29. Juli ואחרון שבתי נחמו	7.15	8.00	4.00	9.05	6.80 7.15	Mo 31. VII. מ"ז באב
5./11. Aug. עקב	7.15	8.00	4.00	8.50	6.80 7.15	
12./18. Aug. ראה	7.15	8.00	4.00	8.85	6.80 7.15	מברכין הרדש Mo 18. u. Mi. 16. ראש חדש אבול אורך מעריב 16. 10. תוקעין
19./25. Aug. שמיים	7.15	8.00	4.00	8.20	6.80 7.15	
26. Aug. כי תצא	7.00	8.00	4.00	8.05	6.80 7.00	
2./8. Sept. כי תבוא	6.45	8.00	4.00	7.50	6.80 6.45	So. 10. IX. 39 Mo 11. IX. 39 Mi 13. IX. 39 Mo 14. IX. 39 Mo 15. IX. 39 Mo 16. IX. 39 Mo 17. IX. 39 Mo 18. IX. 39 Mo 19. IX. 39 Mo 20. IX. 39 Mo 21. IX. 39 Mo 22. IX. 39 Mo 23. IX. 39 Mo 24. IX. 39 Mo 25. IX. 39 Mo 26. IX. 39 Mo 27. IX. 39 Mo 28. IX. 39 Mo 29. IX. 39 Mo 30. IX. 39 Mo 31. IX. 39 Mo 1. X. 39 Mo 2. X. 39 Mo 3. X. 39 Mo 4. X. 39 Mo 5. X. 39 Mo 6. X. 39 Mo 7. X. 39 Mo 8. X. 39 Mo 9. X. 39 Mo 10. X. 39 Mo 11. X. 39 Mo 12. X. 39 Mo 13. X. 39 Mo 14. X. 39 Mo 15. X. 39 Mo 16. X. 39 Mo 17. X. 39 Mo 18. X. 39 Mo 19. X. 39 Mo 20. X. 39 Mo 21. X. 39 Mo 22. X. 39 Mo 23. X. 39 Mo 24. X. 39 Mo 25. X. 39 Mo 26. X. 39 Mo 27. X. 39 Mo 28. X. 39 Mo 29. X. 39 Mo 30. X. 39 Mo 31. X. 39 Mo 1. XI. 39 Mo 2. XI. 39 Mo 3. XI. 39 Mo 4. XI. 39 Mo 5. XI. 39 Mo 6. XI. 39 Mo 7. XI. 39 Mo 8. XI. 39 Mo 9. XI. 39 Mo 10. XI. 39 Mo 11. XI. 39 Mo 12. XI. 39 Mo 13. XI. 39 Mo 14. XI. 39 Mo 15. XI. 39 Mo 16. XI. 39 Mo 17. XI. 39 Mo 18. XI. 39 Mo 19. 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The Lu'ah: A Guide to Jewish Living

C. An unusual and fascinating *lu'ah* is the hand written *Camp Calendar of Buchenwald* for the years 1944-1945 composed and created from memory by Rabbi Dr. Jacob Avigdor in Buchenwald, Germany. Dr. Isaac C. Avigdor, a son of Rabbi Avigdor, tells that his father "considered this a holy duty, a mission in his role as a rabbi" to create this calendar. This was especially important since after 1940 no new calendars were printed and persons in the camp would ask him when a *Yom Tov* or a fast day occurred. Recreating the calendar proved to be a spiritual resistance and passionate hope for the future in spite of the incomprehensible psychological and physical duress Buchenwald inmates had to endure. See Figures 3A and B.

יום	חודש	שנה	א"ת	ב"ש	ג"ה	ד"ה	ה"ה	ו"ה	ז"ה	ח"ה	ט"ה	י"ה	יא"ה	יב"ה	יג"ה	יד"ה	ט"ו	י"ו	יז"ה	יח"ה	יט"ה	כ"ה	כ"א	כ"ב	כ"ג	כ"ד	כ"ה	כ"ו	כ"ז	כ"ח	כ"ט	ל"ה																											
א	ב	ג	ד	ה	ו	ז	ח	ט	י	יא	יב	יג	יד	טו	טז	יז	יח	יט	כ	כא	כב	כג	כד	כה	כו	כז	כח	כט	ל	א	ב	ג	ד	ה	ו	ז	ח	ט	י	יא	יב	יג	יד	טו	טז	יז	יח	יט	כ	כא	כב	כג	כד	כה	כו	כז	כח	כט	ל
א	ב	ג	ד	ה	ו	ז	ח	ט	י	יא	יב	יג	יד	טו	טז	יז	יח	יט	כ	כא	כב	כג	כד	כה	כו	כז	כח	כט	ל	א	ב	ג	ד	ה	ו	ז	ח	ט	י	יא	יב	יג	יד	טו	טז	יז	יח	יט	כ	כא	כב	כג	כד	כה	כו	כז	כח	כט	ל
א	ב	ג	ד	ה	ו	ז	ח	ט	י	יא	יב	יג	יד	טו	טז	יז	יח	יט	כ	כא	כב	כג	כד	כה	כו	כז	כח	כט	ל	א	ב	ג	ד	ה	ו	ז	ח	ט	י	יא	יב	יג	יד	טו	טז	יז	יח	יט	כ	כא	כב	כג	כד	כה	כו	כז	כח	כט	ל
א	ב	ג	ד	ה	ו	ז	ח	ט	י	יא	יב	יג	יד	טו	טז	יז	יח	יט	כ	כא	כב	כג	כד	כה	כו	כז	כח	כט	ל	א	ב	ג	ד	ה	ו	ז	ח	ט	י	יא	יב	יג	יד	טו	טז	יז	יח	יט	כ	כא	כב	כג	כד	כה	כו	כז	כח	כט	ל
א	ב	ג	ד	ה	ו	ז	ח	ט	י	יא	יב	יג	יד	טו	טז	יז	יח	יט	כ	כא	כב	כג	כד	כה	כו	כז	כח	כט	ל	א	ב	ג	ד	ה	ו	ז	ח	ט	י	יא	יב	יג	יד	טו	טז	יז	יח	יט	כ	כא	כב	כג	כד	כה	כו	כז	כח	כט	ל
א	ב	ג	ד	ה	ו	ז	ח	ט	י	יא	יב	יג	יד	טו	טז	יז	יח	יט	כ	כא	כב	כג	כד	כה	כו	כז	כח	כט	ל	א	ב	ג	ד	ה	ו	ז	ח	ט	י	יא	יב	יג	יד	טו	טז	יז	יח	יט	כ	כא	כב	כג	כד	כה	כו	כז	כח	כט	ל
א	ב	ג	ד	ה	ו	ז	ח	ט	י	יא	יב	יג	יד	טו	טז	יז	יח	יט	כ	כא	כב	כג	כד	כה	כו	כז	כח	כט	ל	א	ב	ג	ד	ה	ו	ז	ח	ט	י	יא	יב	יג	יד	טו	טז	יז	יח	יט	כ	כא	כב	כג	כד	כה	כו	כז	כח	כט	ל
א	ב	ג	ד	ה	ו	ז	ח	ט	י	יא	יב	יג	יד	טו	טז	יז	יח	יט	כ	כא	כב	כג	כד	כה	כו	כז	כח	כט	ל	א	ב	ג	ד	ה	ו	ז	ח	ט	י	יא	יב	יג	יד	טו	טז	יז	יח	יט	כ	כא	כב	כג	כד	כה	כו	כז	כח	כט	ל
א	ב	ג	ד	ה	ו	ז	ח	ט	י	יא	יב	יג	יד	טו	טז	יז	יח	יט	כ	כא	כב	כג	כד	כה	כו	כז	כח	כט	ל	א	ב	ג	ד	ה	ו	ז	ח	ט	י	יא	יב	יג	יד	טו	טז	יז	יח	יט	כ	כא	כב	כג	כד	כה	כו	כז	כח	כט	ל
א	ב	ג	ד	ה	ו	ז	ח	ט	י	יא	יב	יג	יד	טו	טז	יז	יח	יט	כ	כא	כב	כג	כד	כה	כו	כז	כח	כט	ל	א	ב	ג	ד	ה	ו	ז	ח	ט	י	יא	יב	יג	יד	טו	טז	יז	יח	יט	כ	כא	כב	כג	כד	כה	כו	כז	כח	כט	ל

Figure 3A



D. Another Holocaust *lu'ah* is the *Underground Lu'ah of the Jews of Amsterdam*. Beginning with 1943 there were no longer any *luhot* in print. The two persons who set out constructing a *lu'ah* were S. Hammelburg of Amsterdam and a young German refugee Yehoshua Y. Neuwirth, now of *Kol Torah* (Jerusalem) and author of *Shemirat Shabbat Kehilkhatah*. Toward the end of 1944 Rabbi Neuwirth was the only one preparing the *lu'ah* by hand on a large sheet of paper. It was arranged in tables for each month and then printed on a typewriter in Hebrew and Dutch. It was later collated into a pocket sized *lu'ah*. All this was done in hiding. It marks the time for beginning and ending of *Shabbat*, the holidays, fast days, and the *parashah* of the week. In 1944 there were still Jews of Amsterdam who thought they would be exiled and they begged Rabbi Neuwirth to make a *lu'ah* for 1945. Unfortunately they were sent to the death camps (Tuvia Preschel, 1967).

UNITED STATES

THE PRESIDENTS OF THE UNITED STATES	
George Washington	1 וְהַאֲרִיזוּ חַמְשֵׁיבָנָיִם
John Adams	2 וְהָאֵן אֲדָמָס
Thomas Jefferson	3 פֶּהֶאָמָס דְּשַׁעֲנֵרְטָמָן
James Madison	4 דְּוִישִׁיָּס מַעֲדִיָּאָן
James Monroe	5 דְּוִישִׁיָּס מַנְרָא
John Quincy Adams	6 דְּוִשָׁן קוֹנְטִי אֲדָמָס
Andrew Jackson	7 אַנְדְּרִי דְּזַעֲקֵסָאָן
Martin Van Buren	8 מַאָרְטִין וּבֹרְעֵן
William Henry Harrison	9 וִילְיָאָם הַנְּדִי הַקְּדִישִׁיָּאָן
John Tyler	10 דְּוִשָׁן טִילֵרִי
James Knox Polk	11 דְּוִישִׁיָּס נֹאָקס פּוֹלְק
Zachary Taylor	12 זַאָכָאָרִי טִילֵרִי
Millard Fillmore	13 מִילְלָאָרְד פִּילְמֹרֶ
Franklin Pierce	14 פְּרִינְקְלִין פִּיעֵרְס
James Buchanan	15 דְּוִישִׁיָּס בֹּוֹקֵנְעֵן
Abraham Lincoln	16 אַבְרָהָאָם לִינְקֹלִן
Andrew Johnson	17 אַנְדְּרִי דְּזַשָׁנְטֹאָן
Ulysses S. Grant	18 אֲוִלִּיָּסֶסֶט סִטְסָמָן גְּרַנְט
Rutherford B. Hayes	19 רוֹדֶרְטֵר פֶּהֶאָרְד הַיִּיעֵס
James A. Garfield	20 דְּוִישִׁיָּס גָּאָרְפִּילְד
Chester A. Arthur	21 טְשֶׁסֶטֶר אָרְטֹוּר אֲרִיטֹוּר
Grover Cleveland	22 גְּרוֹוֶר קְלִיבְלַעַד
Benjamin Harrison	23 בֶּנְיָמִין הַנְּדִישִׁיָּאָן
Grover Cleveland	24 גְּרוֹוֶר קְלִיבְלַעַד
William McKinley	25 וִילְיָאָם מַקִּינְלִי
Theodore Roosevelt	26 תְּהֹוֹדֹוֹר רוֹזוֹוֶילְט
William H. Taft	27 וִילְיָאָם תְּהֹוֹדֹוֹר טֵפֶנֶס
Woodrow Wilson	28 וּוֹדְרוֹוֹ וִילְסֹאָן
Warren G. Harding	29 וַוָּאָרֶנְט גֶּוֹוֶרְד הַאָרְדִּיעַ
Calvin Coolidge	30 קַאָלְוִין קוֹלִידִיעַ
Herbert C. Hoover	31 הֶרְבֶּרְט בֶּעֶרְט הַוֹוֶוֶר
Franklin D. Roosevelt	32 פְּרִינְקְלִין ד. רוֹזוֹוֶילְט

A. An early pocket-*lu'ah* printed in the United States was given out by the Hebrew Kindergarten and Infants' Home in New York City in 1936-'37. It lists the Hebrew dates and equivalent secular dates, the Torah portions read on *Shabbat*, the Jewish holidays, the non-Jewish holidays, *Shki'ah*, *Rosh Hodesh*, *molad*, blessings for kindling the Sabbath and festival lights and blessings for the Torah. It gives the test for *Kiddush*, *Kaddish*, and *Yizkor*, and the service at setting a tombstone.

The first page reads, "Dear Jews, have mercy! Support an orphan in his need ... One dollar supplies an orphan with sustenance for a day. Do your duty and God will help you". Another feature in this calendar are the texts given for

Figure 4. The presidents of the United States, in a *lu'ah* issued by the Hebrew Kindergarten and Infants' Home



various Hebrew and Yiddish songs such as *Kayli Kayli*, *Zamd un Shtern*, *Oyfn Pripitchuk*, etc. Another page lists the presidents of the United States in English with a transliteration in Hebrew letters (from George Washington to Franklin D. Roosevelt). No doubt this was printed so that a person applying for citizenship would be able to answer the judge's question when he asked who was the United States president at a certain time. See Figure 4.

B. The *Lu'ah Hayovayl* ("Jubilee Lu'ah"), issued in 1935, contains not only all memorable days but gives a fifty year calendar with an evaluation of Ezrat Torah that was organized in 1915. Articles on special subjects such as, "Education in Talmud Torahs and Yeshivot", "On Kissing the *Sefer Torah*", "Facing East During Prayer", etc. as well as laws and customs of the synagogue are an integral part of this *lu'ah*. Of special interest are letters to help promote Ezrat Torah written by the Torah luminaries Rabbis Yisrael Meir ha-Kohen (*Hafetz Hayyim*), Hayyim Ozer Grodzinski, Abraham Shapiro of Kovno (Kaunas), Isser Zalman Meltzer and Shlomo David Kahana. Short paragraphs on the importance of Ezrat Torah are also written by Rabbis Eliezer Silver, Joseph Konowitz, Yitzhak Siegel, Bernard Revel, Yaakov Levenson, Nissen Telushkin, and Aaron Burack. Numerous pages are devoted to lists of contributors. Leafing through the pages I came across my grandfather's name, Mordecai Feder, A.H., of North Adams, Massachusetts. The *Lu'ah Hayovayl* also gives a chronological listing of generations from creation to the present time. The following is a letter written by the *Hafetz Hayyim*. See Figure 5.

לוח היובל של עזרת תורה

מכתבי הערכה מנאוני הדור

ב"ה, יום ז' לחדש שבט, תרפ"ח

כבוד חרבנים הנאונים מנהלי התעד של המוסד עזרת תורה

אשר באמריקה, יחי נועם ד' עליהם

ע"ד בקשתם לשלוח קול קורא לעזרת תורה לעורך את לב  
אחב"י אשר באמריקה לבוא לעזר אל המוסד הק' הזה, לדעתי ולמותר  
יהיה כי מי מאחב"י אשר עוד זיק יראת שמים נוגע בלבבו אינו ידוע  
שמצוה נדולה מאוד לבוא לעזרת המוסד הקדוש הזה שהוא נוגע לרבנים  
לכלל בעלי תורה ולפעמים נוגע לפקו"צ ממש, — אשרי המחזיק ומסייע  
לאיש הישראלי בעת החקו ובפרט לבעלי תורה ולמותר לי לבאר גדל  
מצות החוקת התורה ובפרט בזמנינו שהתורה עלובה מאוד, ד' המוסד  
ירים את קץ התורה ויזיה לכל העולם במתרה בב"א.

ישראל סאיר הכתן

Figure 5. A letter from the *Hafetz Hayyim* appearing in the *Ezrat Torah Lu'ah Hayovayl*

## The Lu'ah: A Guide to Jewish Living

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Ezrat Torah continues to issue a wall and pocket sized *lu'ah* in Hebrew and also an English version. The original compilations edited by Rav Yosef Eliyahu Henkin is now under the jurisdiction of Rav Moshe Margolin. It has become an extremely popular and almost indispensable tool for thousands of rabbis and *gabbaim*, for whom the work was intended. It contains the Hebrew and secular dates, the weekly portion and *haftarah*, the *molad*, the *Daf Yomi* for the day, times for sunrise, candle lighting, *Sof Zeman Keriat Shema* (also according to the *Magen Avraham*) for larger cities in the United States. It also gives the laws and customs for the synagogue prayer service as well as for various home services.

C. A *lu'ah* that has remained a classic is *The Comprehensive Hebrew Calendar - Its Structure, History, and One Hundred Years of Corresponding Dates* (5660-5760; 1900-2000) by Arthur Spier. Published in book form in English by Behrman House, Inc. Publishers (1952, New York), the twenty one features that appear in its table of contents comprise 228 pages. Dr. Samuel Belkin, President of Yeshiva University wrote, "Particularly useful are the columns of the *parshiyot* and the *haftarot* added to the tables and the *halakhic* expositions clarifying the laws concerning *Bar-Mitzvah* and *Yahrzeit*." This *lu'ah* offers an enormous body of information in an intelligible and accessible form.

D. A handy calendar is *The Heritage Desk Diary (Sixteen Month Weekly Planner)* by Rabbi Avie Gold with Judith B. Calder, published by Mesorah Heritage Foundation. Special features, in addition to the usual items that appear in a *lu'ah* are: the ample space for notes and daily appointments, the *Daf Yomi* ("page-of-the-day") to be studied, the *Mishnah Yomit* ("*Mishnah*-of-the-day") to be studied, select readings, and a Torah thought related to the weekly Torah reading or events of the week. An indispensable highlight is the prelude called "What is the Jewish Calendar?". In this introduction one learns, in a concise manner, the history of the Jewish calendar together with the events that occur each month in the year cycle.

E. All calendars have their particular messages for its readers. A calendar with a distinctive communication is the *Lu'ah Temidi* ("Permanent *Haftarah* Calendar"). It provides the Torah portion and *haftarah* to be read eternally on each *Shabbat* and festival during the year cycle. Compiled by Duber Alperin and published by the Hebrew Publishing Company (1928), it found its way into the *humash* and even into the *Reverend's Hand Book*. See Figure 6.


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The charts indicate the *Sidrot* and *Haftarot* read in regular years (*Shanim Peshutot*). Instructions are given on the left side on how to read the charts. For example, which *Sidrah* and *Haftarah* is read on *Shabbat*, the 29th of *Nisan* in 1934 (*TaRTZaD*)? First see in which column *TaRTZaD* appears. It can be found in the column headed by *HaKaZ*. This means if *Rosh Hashanah* falls on the fifth day of the week (*hay*) and it is *Kesidrah* (meaning *Tishre* has 30 days and *Marheshvan* has 29 days) then *Pesah* will fall on the seventh day of the week (*zayin*). See line ten at the right side where the date *Nisan 29* appears under *HaKaZ* and then look at line ten at the left side. The *Sidrah* is *Shemini* and the *Haftarah* is *Mahar Hodesh*. And so in this manner the *Sidrah* and *Haftarah* can be found for the particular date forever.


F. The *lu'ah* is sometimes appended to the *siddur* or the *humash*. It can also be found in different newspapers. The *Lishkat Hasofrim* issued a *lu'ah* for the different times of the day even for South Fallsburg, New York. See Figure 7.



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Time under any one month Lullaby New York	ז	סוקש"ו	סוקש"ו	סוד	חמ"ח	זר"ק	סוקש"ו	סוקש"ו
<b>לוח זמני היום</b>								
Fri - Jun 30 - ב תמוז - נקודת עשירי	5:27	8:38	9:14	10:30	1:02	8:19	8:37	9:49
Fri - Jul 7 - ט תמוז - נקודת עשירי	5:31	8:41	9:17	10:32	1:03	8:18	8:36	9:48
Fri - Jul 14 - טו תמוז - נקודת עשירי	5:36	8:44	9:20	10:34	1:04	8:14	8:32	9:44
Fri - Jul 21 - כב תמוז - נקודת עשירי	5:42	8:47	9:23	10:37	1:05	8:09	8:27	9:39
Fri - Jul 28 - אב א - נקודת עשירי	5:48	8:50	9:26	10:39	1:05	8:03	8:21	9:33
Fri - Aug 4 - אב ב - נקודת עשירי	5:55	8:53	9:29	10:41	1:04	7:55	8:13	9:25
Fri - Aug 11 - אב ג - נקודת עשירי	6:02	8:56	9:32	10:43	1:03	7:46	8:04	9:16
Fri - Aug 18 - אב ד - נקודת עשירי	6:10	8:59	9:35	10:44	1:02	7:37	7:55	9:06
Fri - Aug 25 - אב ה - נקודת עשירי	6:17	9:02	9:38	10:45	1:00	7:26	7:44	8:55
Fri - Sept 1 - אדר א - נקודת עשירי	6:24	9:05	9:41	10:46	12:58	7:14	7:32	8:43



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Figure 7. A *lu'ah* issued by a Judaica store in South Fallsburg, New York.

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G. A computerized *lu'ah* is the *Zmanim Hebrew/English Calendar Program* written by Joe Kohn and issued by the Davka Corporation of Chicago, Illinois. With this *lu'ah* you can print monthly calendars with personal reminders, anniversaries, *yahrzeits*, and other information. Calendars display Hebrew dates, sunrise and sunset times, Torah/*Haftarah* readings, and Jewish holidays on screen or in printed calendars. One can find Hebrew or English dates equivalent for any date between the years 1600-2200 (c.e.); *alot hashahar*, *hanaytz hahamah*, *Keri'at Shema*, *zeman tefillah*, *hatzot*, earliest *Minhah*, *Minhah ketanah*, *pelag Minhah*, and sunset. This useful -packed program includes a wealth of features in an easy-to-use Windows-based program. What is needed is an IBM compatible PC with Microsoft Windows 3.1 or greater.

### ISRAEL

Turning to the *luhot* of Israel one finds diverse types, somewhat different from those in the United States and surely Germany.

A. A *lu'ah* used in most large synagogues in Israel is the *Lu'ah Dinim Uminhagim* for the Ashkenazic and Sephardic communities. Published by the Organization of Synagogues in Israel (Jerusalem) it specifies for each week the time of dawn, sunrise, sunset, and when *Keri'at Shema* should be concluded. It also gives the time for candle lighting and the conclusion of the Sabbath for Jerusalem, Tel-Aviv, Haifa, Be'er Sheva, and Eilat. At the beginning of each month one views various Scriptural and Talmudic sources for the name of the month as well as Zodiac signs. Also included in this *lu'ah* are various Scriptural, Mishnaic, Talmudic, and *Halakhic* portions to be studied daily. In addition to the daily synagogue laws and procedures it lists the various prayers recited on *Yom Ha'atzmaut* (Israel Independence Day) for *Arvit* and *Shaharit*, and for *Yom Yerushalayim*. It gives the *Haftarah* recited on *Yom Ha'atzmaut*, the prayer for peace, the *Mi Shebayrakh* for the soldiers, a *Yizkor* prayer for those who died during the Holocaust and for Israeli soldiers who fought in the various wars. The Ashkenazic section of this *lu'ah* (for 5754) was prepared by Rabbi Hayyim Menahem Lewittes and the Sephardic section by Rabbi Eliyahu ben Dahan.

B. Another *lu'ah* used by many in Israel is the *Lu'ah Le'ereetz Yisrael - Dinay Uminhagay Hashanah* (5755) by Rabbi Yehiel Mikhal Tukazinsky, produced by his son Nisan Aharon Tukazinsky. This *lu'ah*, unlike other *luhot*, offers diverse opinions as to home and synagogue procedures. For example, it is customary to take out two Torah scrolls on *Parashat Shekalim* so that the congregation should not have to wait for the reader to roll the Torah to the place for the reading of *Shekalim*. In this *lu'ah*, however, we

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read that Rabbi Shmuel Salant had the custom of reading both the *parashah* and the portion of *Shekalim* from one Torah, since the *Shekalim* portion is not too far away from the *Sidrah* that is being read, and it would not cause a *tirhah detzibbura* (disturbance for the congregation) for the worshipers if it is rolled. This *lu'ah* gives an in depth approach to the laws and customs of the home and synagogue; as for instance, information concerning the *molad* (p. 5), principles of blowing *Shofar* (pp. 9, 10) guests who have to observe the second day of *Yom Tov* in Israel (p. 25), the times for dawn, rising of the sun (according to the *Ari* and European countries), the concluding time of reciting *Keri'at Shema, Minhah Gedolah*, and sunset.

C. A different kind of *lu'ah* is the *Lu'ah Lishnat TaSHNaH* (5755) published by A. Bloom. In its introductory page is written that it is a year comprised of thirteen months (*me'uberet*), having 384 days, 55 *Shabbatot*, a year for *Shemittah*, and it is 1,927 years since the destruction of the Temple. It also specifies that the *Sidrot* read are separated; that is, in the Diaspora there is a difference in the Torah reading portion of Israel since in the Diaspora it is still *Pesah* when in Israel it is a regular *Shabbat* and the Torah portion is *Aharay Mot*. Thus in Israel the reading is always one week ahead of that of the Diaspora. In the Diaspora they catch up when reading *Matot-Masai* together while in Israel *Masai* is read alone. The *lu'ah* also gives the *zemanim* (the times) for dawn, sunrise, sunset, the concluding time for the daily morning prayer service, *Minhah Gedolah* and *Minhah Ketanah*.

A unique feature of this *lu'ah* is the list of *Yahrzeits* for the disciples of the Ba'al Shem Tov as well as numerous decisors and sages throughout the ages. Prepared by Tzvi Elimelech Bloom, the instructions given are to read, on the day of the *Yahrzeit*, the life of the particular sage and/or to repeat a *devar Torah* (a word of Torah), custom or innovation that the sage had said or practiced (*Sefer Melitzay Aysh, Nisan; Arugat Habosem, Sivan*). The writer also definitely warns not to omit *Tahanun* on these *Yahrzeits*. Omission is acceptable only when one is able to visit the grave of the sage, but to omit *Tahanun* for every person's *Yahrzeit* is ludicrous.

Other items in this *lu'ah* are recitals for something that was lost and cannot be found (after *Medrash Rabbah, Bereishit* 53:19), *Seder Tefillat Haderekh*, and a prayer to be said when preparing the *Shabbat* candles (*Pela Yo'aytz*).

D. Another *lu'ah* that stands out is the *Lu'ah Halakhot Uminhagim "Devar Yom Beyomo"*, produced by *Kehal Mahzikay Hadat Be'erez Yisrael (Hasiday Belz)* and prepared by Rabbi Eliyahu Shmuel Weiner for Israel as well as the Diaspora. Unlike other *luhot*, this compilation offers practices and procedures for Jews around the world in addition to the practices and procedures peculiar only to *Hasiday Belz*. For example, the *Sheli'ah Tzibbur* recites the prayer *Hineni* quietly. When reciting *Shir Hama'alot* on *Rosh*

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*Hashanah* and *Yom Kippur*, the *Sheli'ah Tzibbur* recites just the first verse and the congregation reads the rest of the psalm quietly. The *Sheli'ah Tzibbur* then concludes from *Nafshi la-Shem*. At the end of *Ne'ilah* the *Sheli'ah Tzibbur* says *Shema Yisrael* (once) followed by the congregation (once), *Barukh Shaym* is said by the *Sheli'ah Tzibbur* once followed by the congregation three times and *Hashem Hu Ha'elokim* is said one time aloud by the *Sheli'ah Tzibbur* and seven times by the congregation. Both before *Tefillat Tal* and *Geshem* the *Sheli'ah Tzibbur* quietly recites the *Hineni* prayer. The *lu'ah* is replete with personal practices as to attire worn on the High Holy Days, foods to be eaten on certain days, wearing Sabbath clothing on Saturday night until going to sleep, laws for *kashering* utensils on *Pesah*, etc. In addition to the times mentioned in other *luhot*, this one gives the time for putting on one's *Tallit* in the morning, *Pelag Minhah*, *Hazot* (day and night). On the cover of this *lu'ah* is printed the name of the *lu'ah* (on top), on the outer circle are the names of the months and the zodiac signs and photos for each month. On the inner circle are the four *tekufot* (seasons). *Tekufat Nisan* (the vernal equinox), *Tekufat Tammuz* (the summer solstice), *Tekufat Tishre* (the autumnal equinox) and *Tekufat Tevet* (the winter solstice). In the middle circle is the name of the publisher, *Kahal Mahzikay Hadat*, the year, *TaSHMaT* (5749), and *Be'eretz Yisrael* (Israel). See Figure 8.



Figure 8. Cover of a *lu'ah* published by *Kahal Mahzikay Hadat Be'eretz Yisrael* (*Hasidat Belz*)

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E. A wall calendar in the English language that has gained popularity in recent times both in Israel and the United States is the one issued by the Yad L'achim. Printed on both sides of a large sized paper (for two separate months) are the usual features appearing in most calendars. This calendar gives the *halakhic* practices for each month. For example, in the *lu'ah* of *Tevet 5755* are printed the laws of slander and tale bearing. The calendar lists its offices in Jerusalem, B'nai B'rak (as well as other cities in Israel), United States, Canada, Manchester and London. It also lists the many services it provides to the community: Torah promotion division, anti-missionary division, immigration absorption division, and education division.

### WORLD CALENDAR REFORM

Attempts have been made for calendar reform in the early 1900's. Whereas the Gregorian calendar does not affect the regularity of the days of the week, this proposed reform calendar would, from a Jewish point of view, destroy the consistent nature of *Shabbat*. If in one year *Shabbat* coincided with the day known as Saturday, in the following year it would shift to Friday and the unbroken sequence of six working days followed by *Shabbat* would not occur. In 1929 some fifty Jewish organizations resolved that the following resolution should be forwarded to the President of the United States, President Herbert Hoover, to the Congress of the United States, and to every member of the Senate and the House of Representatives of the Congress of the United States. See Figure 9. In 1931, Rabbi J.H. Hertz, British Chief Rabbi, vigorously opposed the World Calendar Reform before a committee established by the League of Nations.

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Chairman, Executive Board  
ISAAC ROSENKANTH  
Secretary

### League for Safeguarding the Fixity of the Sabbath

Against Possible Encroachment by Calendar Reform

40 WEST 32nd STREET

NEW YORK CITY

#### Resolution

on the Proposed Simplification of the Calendar, adopted May 19, 1929

WHEREAS, there is a resolution before the Congress of the United States providing "That the President is respectfully requested to propose, on behalf of the United States, to the nations of the world the calling of an international conference for the simplification of the calendar, or to accept an invitation on behalf of the United States to participate in such a conference upon the proposal of some other nation or group of nations"; and

WHEREAS, plans for calendar simplification in behalf of which there is active propaganda, propose that the 365th day in every ordinary year and two days in every leap year be neither counted as, nor given the name of, one of the seven days of the week, but be designated as "blank day," "year day," "leap day" or otherwise; and

WHEREAS, this device, if adopted, would destroy the existing and immemorially fixed periodicity of the Sabbath and, from year to year, would cause the Sabbath to fall on different days of the week; and

WHEREAS, the laws of the Jewish religion as prescribed in the Ten Commandments and elsewhere, require the observance of the Sabbath every seventh day in unbroken periodicity, and the adoption of the proposed "blank day" device, resulting in a shifting Sabbath, would confront Jews with the unconscionable dilemma of either con-



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tinuing the observance of the fixed Sabbath, thereby suffering severe economic hardship and civil disability, or abandoning the observance of the fixed Sabbath in flagrant disregard of most solemn and fundamental tenets of the Jewish religion, thereby violating their conscience; and

WHEREAS, in view of the foregoing and other considerations, the adoption of a blank day device would have the effect of abridging the right of citizens to the free exercise of their religion guaranteed to all by the Constitution of the United States; now therefore be it

RESOLVED, that we, the accredited representatives, respectively, of the Jewish national and central organizations listed below, constituting the League for Safeguarding the Fixity of the Sabbath, assembled on this Nineteenth Day of May, Nineteen Hundred Twenty-nine, in New York City, do hereby solemnly protest against the adoption of any method of simplification of the calendar which includes the device of a "blank day" or any other device which would destroy the existing and immemorially fixed periodicity of the Sabbath; and be it further

Figure 9. Part of the resolution declaring opposition to calendar reform.

### EPILOGUE

The importance of the *lu'ah* cannot in any way be minimized since it regulates our lives. It regulates our weeks, months, years, holidays, and other important occasions. From the beginning Scripture writes, "And God said to Moshe and Aaron in the land of Egypt saying: This month shall be for you the head of months. It shall be the first for you of the months of the year" (Ex. 12:2). Our sages comment, this is comparable to a king who had a timepiece and would tell time by looking at it but when his son got older, he handed over the timepiece to him. Similarly, God said "Until now, the reckoning of the months and the years was My province, but from now on this task is entrusted to you" (Yalkut, Ber. 190). It is this *mitzvah* of *Hahodesh hazeh lakhem* ("This month shall be for you") that our enemies in every generation tried to take away. By preventing us from issuing *luhot* they managed to make the Jewish people forget their heritage and how to live out their Sabbaths, festivals and weekdays properly.

It is only since about 1989 after some seventy years that the *lu'ah* became freely available in the Soviet Union and other communist countries. When I was in Leningrad in 1990 (now St. Petersburg) men and women came to the synagogue *en masse* asking when is *Rosh Hashanah*? When is *Simhat Torah*? It is told of the historian Simon Dubnow that he wrote a letter to a colleague in *Eretz Yisrael* (dated March 1941) saying, "I finally acquired a *lu'ah* after a difficult search. It was the only Hebrew book printed here in Riga this past year."

So essential is the *lu'ah* that it is related that when the rabbi would complete giving his examination for rabbinical ordination (*semikhah*) in all phases of the Talmud and *halakhah* he would place a *lu'ah* into the pocket of the student saying, "this will be extremely essential for you when you will be a practicing rabbi: women will ask you '*ven bencht men licht?*' ('When do you kindle the Sabbath candles?'); *ven iz Rosh Hodesh?*' ('When is *Rosh Hodesn*'?). Thus Scripture writes concerning keeping and doing the statutes (*hukim*) and judgements (*mishpatim*) of the Lord, *ki hi hakhmatkhem uvinatkhem le'aynay ha'amim* ("for this is your wisdom and your understanding in the sight of the nations"; Deut., 4:6). And the Talmud

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(Shab. 75a) asks: "What is this wisdom and understanding that is in the sight of the nations? So say it is the calculation of the seasons (*tekufot*) and constellations (*mazalot*)". The twelfth century *paytan* (poet) Abraham Hozeh (others say it is Solomon Ibn Gabirol (1021-1058), while others say it is Elijah b. Menahem Hazakayn (11th cent.) and still others say it is by Ibn Ezra who was also called Abraham the Astronomer) wrote in *Tziyon Kehi* (a *Kinah* recited on *Tishah b'Av* morning) "Through you the thread of time was balanced with perfect line, through your doubling the month of *Adar*, the years were determined throughout the generations. The new moon (was fixed) according to your longitude, and its (first) appearance was determined according to your latitude, and through her (light) she revealed (the accuracy of) your secret (knowledge)".

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## THE TORAH READING CYCLE PAST AND PRESENT

by Norman A. Bloom

The public reading of the Torah is one of the truly venerable traditions of the synagogue. Progressing through the year on a predetermined rhythm, referred to as the *Torah reading cycle*, it is one of the prime vehicles that enables the lessons of the Torah to be conveyed on an ongoing and consistent basis. The cycle in use today, uniformly followed by all Jewish communities, is the product of an evolutionary process that spans three millennia. This article will deal in detail with the factors that govern this reading cycle – as well as explore the evolutionary process that created it.

Tradition dates the origins of the public reading of the Torah to the very beginnings of the Jewish people, when Moses “...instituted an ordinance for Israel that they read the Torah on *Shabbatot*, *Yamim Tovim*, New Moons, and *Hol Hamo’ed*.<sup>1</sup> The practice of reading of the Torah on Mondays and Thursdays was likewise ascribed to Moses – the expressed purpose being that three consecutive days should never go by without the learning of Torah.<sup>2,3</sup>

The scriptural basis for the reading of the Torah on *Shabbatot* and other major days of the Jewish calendar is the verse “And Moses spoke of the holidays of the Lord to the Children of Israel” .<sup>4</sup> As this passage deals primarily with the *holidays* of the year, it also serves as the source for determining which portions of the Torah are to be read on these holidays. “It is a *mitzvah*” the final *Mishnah* of *Masekhet Megillah* concludes, basing itself on this very same verse, “that the appropriate section of the Torah relating to each of the holidays be read in its proper time.”<sup>5</sup> The *gemara* elaborates on this further by noting that “Moses laid down a rule for Israel that they should inquire and give expositions concerning the laws of *Pesah* on *Pesah*, *Atzeret* on *Atzeret*, and the laws of *Sukkot* on *Sukkot*.<sup>6</sup>

The public reading of the Torah was thus instituted to fulfill at least two purposes. The primary motive was educational – mandating that Torah be studied at regular, frequent intervals. This study, however, had to be made relevant to the particular time of the year – specifically the holidays. In this manner, the text itself would both explain the details of the holiday, and serve as well to inspire sermons and homilies that further clarify the meanings and *halakhot* of the day.

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What is absolutely essential to appreciate, therefore, in approaching the subject of the Torah reading cycle, is the close association that the holidays of the year and the reading of the Torah have with one another – inspired as they both are by the exact same source in the Torah. This intimate relationship, as will become apparent, will leave an indelible imprint on the traditions by which the Torah, till this very day, is being read.

With this in mind, it is not surprising that in the Talmud, the earliest source that deals *halakhically* with the reading of the Torah, the only portions that are specifically designated to be read at an appointed time are those of the various holidays.<sup>7</sup> Included as well are the four special *parshiyot* of *Shekalim*, *Zakhor*, *Parah*, and *Hahodesh*<sup>8</sup>. These are also of seasonal relevance as they herald the arrival of the months of *Adar* and *Nisan*, and thereby introduce the themes of *Purim* and *Pesah*.

This latter group is of further interest as they are read on *regular Shabbatot*, and except for one reading to be duly noted, they are the only reference the Talmud ever makes to specific Torah readings that are not on the holidays themselves. The Talmud, in fact, deals only peripherally with the readings for all the remaining *Shabbatot*, and gives no *halakhic* directives as to how the Torah is to be read the rest of the year.

From discussions in the Talmud,<sup>9</sup> however, we do know that, at least as early as the period of the *amoraim* (third to fifth centuries), two parallel traditions of Torah reading had arisen in the two major communities of that era – the triennial cycle of the Jews of Eretz Israel and the annual cycle of those in Babylonia.

A brief comment (for the moment) regarding the triennial cycle – its name is a bit of a misnomer. The cycle actually lasted approximately three and one half years<sup>10</sup> and was completed, therefore, at different seasons. The Jews of Eretz Israel had no holiday equivalent to *Simhat Torah* and their Torah reading cycle was completed on an ordinary *Shabbat* with minimal fanfare.<sup>11</sup> The demise of this community in the wake of the First Crusade (11th century) spelled the eventual death knell of the triennial cycle. Today it is only of historical and scholarly interest.

Unlike the triennial cycle which is alluded to in the Talmud,<sup>12</sup> the annual cycle of the Babylonian community is not specifically mentioned at all. Some details are, nevertheless, available to us in the Talmud. Though sparse and disjointed, when placed together they do create a partial picture of the Torah reading cycle as it existed during that era, and through study of

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subsequent *halakhic* development, allow us to follow its evolution.

The first of these Talmudic sources is a statement by the *tanna*, R. Shimon ben Elazar, citing the *takkanah* of Ezra, that the *tokhehah* of *parashat Behukotai* (*Vayikra* 26: 14-45) must be read prior to *Shavuot*, and similarly, the *tokhehah* of *parashat Ki Tavo* (*Devarim* 28: 15-68) must be read before Rosh Hashanah.<sup>13</sup>

This statement need not imply that originally the *parshiyot* of *Behukotai* and *Ki Tavo* were necessarily read prior to *Shavuot* and *Rosh Hashanah* respectively. It may have just been their *tokhehah segments*, read as a supplement – akin to the *maftir* of a special *Shabbat* (e.g. *Shekalim*.) Whether or not this was originally the case, the *takkanah* of Ezra eventually determined that these *parshiyot* were to be read in their entirety at that time of the year – thus creating the *first* connections between specific points on the calendar and the Torah reading cycle.<sup>14</sup>

Though this *takkanah* of Ezra was to endure, it would do so in a slightly modified form. Already in the ninth century *siddur* of R. Amram Gaon<sup>15</sup>, *Behukotai* and *Ki Tavo* each had been moved up one week earlier; *parashat Bamidbar* was now being read prior to *Shavu'ot* and *Nitzavim* (*Vayelekh*) prior to *Rosh Hashanah*. This remains the accepted practice till today.

This modification, according to *Tosafot*<sup>16</sup>, was brought about so as to separate by one week the curses of the *tokhehah* from the respective holidays.<sup>17</sup> There is still one other answer, however, that takes into account the scheduling demands of the Torah reading cycle, that may also be suggested.<sup>18</sup> But first to digress for a moment and address a basic historical problem: at the time of *Hazal*, when was the yearly Torah reading concluded?

The answer to this question is not easy to come by because sources are virtually nonexistent. One matter is, however, clear – the holiday known today as *Simhat Torah*, in which with great ceremony, the final *parashah* of the Torah is read, is not mentioned by *Hazal*.<sup>19</sup> There is, however, a Talmudic source – the second in our grouping – which does shed some light on the subject, and at least allows further exploration of it.

The reference is in a *baraita* in *masekhet Megillah*<sup>20</sup> stating that *Ve Zot Habrakhah* is to be read on the last day of *Sukkot* (*Shemini Atzeret*). What is left unsaid, however, is that the Torah reading cycle was also to be concluded on this day. Though such inference may be valid, there is evidence

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that does suggest an alternate view.

The *raison d'être* for Torah readings on holidays, it may be recalled, was to accentuate the particular theme of the *yom tov*. Viewed from this perspective, *Ve Zot Habrakah* (and not necessarily the entire *parashah*, but rather its first portion) was selected for the *last* day of *Sukkot* to emphasize that the *yom tov* (or for that matter all the holidays of *Tishri*) was to be concluded on an upbeat note of blessing. *Ve Zot Habrakah*, as noted by R. Nissim, is eminently suited to play this role, for on “... the finale of all the holidays, [it is appropriate to] conclude with the blessings with which Moshe Rabbeinu blessed Israel”.<sup>21</sup>

In reality, The Torah reading on *Shemini Atzeret*, does present a bit of a dilemma. What appears to be amongst the earlier sources<sup>22</sup> speaks only of reading of the sacrifices of the day from *parashat Pinhas* (*Bemidbar* 29:35-38). The *minhag* today, however, is based on a *baraita* that states that the main Torah reading for this holiday is *kol habekhor, mitzvot, vehukim, uvekhor*.<sup>23</sup> The interpretation of this passage is subject to a diversity of opinion<sup>24</sup> but the accepted practice is to read from *parashat hamo'adim* of the book of *Devarim* (*Devarim* 15:19-16, 17) and to relegate to the *maftir* the sacrifices of the day from *parashat Pinhas*.

In this way a parallelism was created between *Shemini Atzeret*, the second day of *Shavu'ot*, and the eighth day of *Pesah*, when the same *parashah* from *Devarim* is also read. The parallelism, however, goes no further. The last days of *Pesah* and *Shavu'ot* are *Rabbinic* holidays – while *Shemini Atzeret* is *Torah* mandated. Even more important – unlike the other two holidays which are specifically mentioned in the designated Torah reading, *Shemini Atzeret* is *not mentioned at all*. This *parashat hamo'adim*, in fact, in contrast to its counterpart in *sefer Vayikra*, pointedly refers to *Sukkot* as a *seven day* holiday! (*Devarim* 16-13)<sup>25</sup>

Later *halakhists* were sensitive to this problem. It would come to play a role in the development of the *minhag*, now practiced by eastern Ashkenazim (*nusah Polin*), and first documented by *Rashi*, that the Torah reading for *Shemini Atzeret*, unlike *Pesah* or *Shavu'ot*, always begins at *aser te'aser* (*Devarim* 14:22) – even when the holiday falls out on a weekday – because this particular portion deals with the laws of the tithes for the poor and *Shemini Atzeret* “... is the time of the harvest when the poor have to

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gather food into their homes.”<sup>26</sup>

Finding an appropriate Torah reading for *Shemini Atzeret* could not have been a simple undertaking for *Hazal*. The holiday is mentioned only in *parashat hamo'adim* of the book of *Vayikra* (*Vayikra* 23:36, 39), and in *parashat Pinhas* – and these had already been “used up” for the first days of *Sukkot* and the *maftir* respectively.

But in selecting an appropriate *haftarah*, no such dilemma would exist – for there was an historical event in *Tanakh* that connects to the eighth day of *Sukkot*. This event was the dedication of the first *Beit Hamikdash* – recorded in the book of Kings as having taken place on *Sukkot*.<sup>27</sup> On its completion, ascribed by tradition to the eighth day,<sup>28</sup> King Solomon *blessed* the throngs of people who had assembled in Jerusalem for that joyous occasion.

Quite appropriately, it is from this chapter in the book of Kings that the *haftarah* is read on *Shemini Atzeret*. But what is of even greater interest is that in contrast to the *minhag* of today, the *haftarah* for the second day of *Shemini Atzeret* (“*Simhat Torah*” in today’s reference) picked up on the same theme, and was also taken from this very same chapter<sup>29</sup> featuring the prayer that King Solomon offered on that day.

Viewed from this perspective, a theme of blessing is seen to permeate both days of *Shemini Atzeret*, and it is partly for this reason, the *Sefer Hamanhig* explains that “on ... the ninth [day of *Sukkot*] *safek Shemini Atzeret* ... all Israel reads *Vezot Habrakhah*, because Shlomo a”h blessed Israel on ... [that day] ... therefore [on that day] we [also] read ... the blessing that Moshe Rabbeinu blessed Israel.”<sup>30</sup>

The originally designated *haftarah* for the second day of *Shemini Atzeret* was ultimately to be replaced. Already in the *siddur* of R. Amram Gaon<sup>31</sup>, mention is made of an alternate reading – from the first chapter of the book of Joshua. This was the *minhag* that was ultimately to prevail, and by the close of the period of the *rishonim*, it had been almost universally accepted.

But not without controversy. *Tosafot*, who apparently still adhered to the original custom, took strong exception to its replacement. Taking note<sup>32</sup> that there were communities during their time (12th to 14th centuries) that were reading from the book of Joshua, they strongly condemn this practice as an error (*shibush*). They recognized that the change was probably attributable to the *geonim*, but were at a complete loss to justify modifying what had been clearly set forth in the Talmud.

*Tosafot*’s quandary, however, may be easily resolved. *Vezot Habrakhah* entered the period of the *geonim* as a Torah reading for the second day of *Shemini Atzeret* because of its theme of blessing (the holiday was in fact known during this era by its Arabic name, *Al Tavrigh* – the Day

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of Blessing<sup>33</sup>), and thus carried with it the *haftarah* that conveyed a similar message. But reading this *parashah* on that day would offer a most tempting opportunity – not only reading it for the sake of the holiday but at the same time in order to complete the yearly Torah cycle as well. After all, *Ki Tavo* had been read but a short time before, and the book of *Devarim*, and with it the entire Torah, was nearing its conclusion.

It may be assumed that this is exactly what happened – during the period of the *geonim*, the holiday that we recognize today as *Simhat Torah* slowly evolved. The thrust of the day changed with this evolution – it would no longer feature the theme of blessing but would be geared to completing the Torah reading cycle. In the wake of this change, the *haftarah* from the book of Joshua would logically be deemed to be more appropriate.<sup>34</sup>

Reading *Vezot Habrakhah* as the final weekly Torah portion on the second day of *Shemini Atzeret*, would, however, necessitate some readjustment in the scheduling of the immediately preceding *parshiyot*. *Ki Tavo*, in the time of *Hazal*, and in accordance with the *takkanah* of Ezra, was read on the *Shabbat* prior to Rosh Hashanah. Two more *parshiyot*, *Nitzavim* (of which *Vayelekh* was then a part<sup>35</sup>) and *Ha'azinu*, remained to be read. But in some years, there may be only one “free” *Shabbat* (i.e., on which there is no holiday) between Rosh Hashanah and *Shemini Atzeret* on which to read them.

The problem, of course, could have easily been resolved by joining these *parshiyot* together on this *Shabbat* – but very likely there was a reluctance to do so. *Hazal* appeared to relate to *Ha'azinu* as a totally independent *parashah*; its public recital dated back to the *Beit Hamikdash*, from whence is derived its division into *Aliyot*, the only *parashah* so demarcated in the Talmud.<sup>36</sup> Its combination with *Nitzavim* was less than desirable.

To remedy the situation, therefore, some other adjustment was required – the simplest maneuver being to move *Ki Tavo* (in spite of the *takkanah* of Ezra) up by one week. Helping this along, however, was yet another determinant that was coming into play, involving the very same *parashat Ha'azinu*. The next two of our Talmudic sources, to which we now turn, shed further light on this subject.

A *Mishnah*, again in the last chapter of *masekhet Megillah*, after delineating the Torah readings for the four special *Shabbatot* of the *Purim-Pesah* season (*Shekalim*, *Zachor*, *Parah*, and *Hahodesh*), concludes with the statement that “[the regular reading] is interrupted for any special occasion: for New Moons, *Hannukah*, *Purim*, Fasts, *Ma'amadot*, and Yom Kippur.”<sup>37</sup>

From an historical perspective, this *halakhah* is quite understandable. In its earliest form, the public Torah reading centered around the special occasions of the year. Only later did a formal cycle

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develop that filled in the resultant large gaps that characterized the remainder of the year. Ultimately, there had to develop a “tension” between the two. This *Mishnah* is addressing itself to this eventuality; it is stating that the special occasion will always take precedence, and the yearly cycle must give way to it.

In practice, however, there would develop a clear distinction between the Jews in Eretz Yisrael and those in Babylonia. The former followed this *halakhah* absolutely literally, so that not only on *yamim tovim* but on all other special occasions as well (even e.g. *parashat Shekalim*),<sup>38</sup> the designated reading for that *Shabbat* was the *only* portion of the Torah that was read.<sup>39</sup>

Babylonian Jewry, in contrast, was more eclectic in its approach to this *Mishnah*. On *yamim tovim* that fell out on *Shabbat*, the reading cycle was interrupted – not so on all other *Shabbatot* that called for special readings, when the latter were *added* to the weekly portion as a *maftir*. On Mondays and Thursdays, however, whenever a special occasion did intervene, e.g. *Rosh Hodesh*, *Hannukah*, and *Purim*, the *parashat hashavu'a* was dispensed with. This remains our practice till today.

With regard to the *haftarot*, however, unanimity of practice prevailed, entailing an absolutely literal interpretation of the *Mishnah*. Readings for special occasions *always* took precedence over the weekly *haftarah*. This principle went so far that even when no special Torah reading was mandated, e.g. *Shabbat Erev Rosh Hodesh*, a special *haftarah* was nevertheless read.<sup>40</sup>

It is in this light that one approaches another Talmudic source – a statement of R. Huna<sup>41</sup> that if *Rosh Hodesh Av* falls out on a *Shabbat*, the *haftarah* is read from the first chapter of Isaiah. This *amora*, is, in effect, taking this principle of precedence one step further. Normally, on *Rosh Hodesh*, the special *haftarah* is the *last* chapter of the book of Isaiah. So central, in R. Huna's opinion, was *Tishah b'Av* to Jewish experience, however, that he was insisting that for *Rosh Hodesh Av*, an even more “specialized” *haftarah* dealing with the tragic events of the ninth day of *Av*, be recited.

R. Huna's statement is reflective of an approach that would pave the way for the emergence of a unique sequence of *haftarot* that would encompass no fewer than three months of the year. Hitherto, “from *Bereishith* till the seventeenth of *Tammuz*, *haftarot* are recited that are similar to the weekly portions. From there on, everything is according to the time of the year and the occasion”.<sup>42</sup> This would lay the groundwork for further specialization that eventually impacted on the Torah reading cycle as well.

It is *Tosafot*<sup>43</sup> who takes note that R.Huna's opinion was not being

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literally adhered to. Rather, the *minhag* was to follow the *Pesikta* wherein three *haftarot* of suffering (*puranuta*) are read on the three *Shabbatot* prior to *Tishah b'Av*, followed by seven of consolation (*nehemta*), and ending with two of repentance (*teyuvta*) – the latter being recited on the Fast of Gedaliah and *Shabbat Shuvah* respectively.<sup>44</sup>

*Rambam* (a contemporary of the earlier *Tosafists*) takes an ambivalent approach to this practice. Though aware of it being widespread, he only mentions them secondarily, and not by name, in his listing of the *haftarot*. His primary list (whose source remains undocumented) is composed only of *haftarot* that are relevant to the theme of each *parashah*. Presumably these *haftarot*, already fallen out of use in the time of *Rambam*, reflects an alternate, perhaps equally as old tradition of the Talmudic era.<sup>45</sup>

*Tosafot* is thus, almost indirectly, lightly touching on a custom of highlighting, through *appropriate scriptural readings*, the theme of *repentance* in the period between Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur. Though *Tosafot* is dealing only with the subject of *haftarot*, *Sefer Hamanhig* connects this to the Torah reading when commenting that "...on the *Shabbat* after Rosh Hashanah, *Ha'azinu* is read in order to warn Israel ...to repent ..."46

Ultimately this had to be taken one step further, for *parashat Ha'azinu* can be read on *Shabbat Shuvah* only when there is one "free" *Shabbat* between Rosh Hashanah and *Sukkot*. If there are two, then *Ha'azinu* must be read after Yom Kippur. But the immediately preceding *parashah*, *Nitzavim* also deals with the exact same subject and is thus just as suitable for the role. Which is exactly what was to happen. *Nitzavim* came to be split into two during these years – with its second part, *Vayelekh*, being read on *Shabbat Shuvah* itself, and its first part on the *Shabbat* prior to Rosh Hashanah. This custom has remained in effect till today.<sup>47</sup>

The presence of *Nitzavim* on this *Shabbat* would come to be looked on no longer as a "filler" to separate the curses of the *tokhehah* in *Ki Tavo* from Rosh Hashanah, but for its own intrinsic message of *teshuvah*<sup>48</sup>. That particular *Shabbat* was obviously well suited to introduce the theme of repentance – so much so that there were those *rishonim*<sup>49</sup> who were of the opinion that the *haftarah* of *Shuvah Yisrael*, normally associated with *Shabbat Shuvah* should in fact be read *before* Rosh Hashanah – on *Shabbat Nitzavim*. The theme of repentance on this *Shabbat*, would then be highlighted both in its Torah and *haftarah* readings. Though this opinion was not to prevail, *Nitzavim* would remain steadfast in its position and its reading would come to be used in *halakhic* literature as a symbol for the arrival of Rosh Hashanah.<sup>50</sup>

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The last of the Talmudic sources<sup>51</sup> features a discussion of the *halakhic* ramifications of *parshiyot Tetzaveh* or *Ki Tisa* being read on *Shabbat Shekalim*, i.e., either on the *Shabbat* of *Rosh Hodesh Adar* or the one just prior to it. What is of interest in this discussion, besides being the only reference made in the Babylonian Talmud to the triennial cycle of Eretz Yisrael, is that it connects the reading of the middle of the book of *Shemot* with a specific time of the year, i.e. the beginning of the month of *Adar*.

What therefore emerges from these sources is a picture of an early Torah reading cycle that has similarities to the one of today – namely the middle of *sefer Shemot* being read around the time of *Rosh Hodesh Adar*, the book of *Vayikra* being completed prior to *Shavu'ot*, the book of *Devarim* drawing to an end before *Rosh Hashanah*, and *Ve Zot Habrakha* being read on the second day of *Shemini Atzeret*.

But of equal interest are the *differences*. Besides those already enumerated, including the uncertainty of knowing when the cycle was originally completed, another clear point of divergence is the lineup of *parashiyot* mentioned in connection with *Shabbat Shekalim*. Today, this *parashah* is read either with *Mishpatim* or rarely *Terumah* during ordinary years, and with *Vayakhel* or occasionally *Pekudei* during leap years – but *never*, as the Talmud would have it, with *Tetzaveh* or *Ki Tisa*.

This matter, though seemingly minor, is of particular importance because it touches on the subject of a key feature of the Torah reading cycle – the joining and/or splitting of *parshiyot*. Though never discussed in the Talmud, such arrangements would be necessary for any *annual* cycle<sup>52</sup> to function. In some form, therefore, this practice, well known to us today, must have dated back to the Talmudic era. A glance at a few pertinent numbers reinforces this premise.

A. There are 53 *parshiyot* in the Torah. This represents a *post* Talmudic tradition, e.g. R. Saadiah Gaon<sup>53</sup> (10th century), *Rashi*<sup>54</sup> (11th century), and *Rambam*<sup>55</sup> (12th century). It is *Rambam* who is the first to list all these *parshiyot* by name. The discrepancy between this number and the 54 in vogue today is explained, as has been noted, by *Nitzavim-Vayelekh* (referred to only as *Nitzavim*) being originally considered as one *parashah*.

*Hazal*, in contrast, are silent on this subject, though they do mention the names of several *parshiyot* that are familiar to us, including *Tetzaveh*<sup>56</sup>, *Ki Tisa*,<sup>57</sup> *Vayakhel*<sup>58</sup>, *Aharei-Mot*<sup>59</sup>, and *Kedoshim*<sup>60</sup>, as well as alluding (though not by name) to *parshiyot Vayehi*<sup>61</sup>, and *Ha'azinu*<sup>62 63</sup>

B. There are 50 or 51 *Shabbatot* between one *Simhat Torah* and the next in an ordinary year. In a leap year, the equivalent numbers are 54 or 55.<sup>64</sup>

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C. The number of *Shabbatot* that fall out during the various holidays vary from two to five. These decrease the number of *Shabbatot* that are available for the reading of the weekly *parashah*. In an ordinary year there may be as few as 46 “free” *Shabbatot*, and in a leap year, 50.

Keeping these numbers in mind, there is an obvious disparity between *parshiyot* and the available *Shabbatot* on which to read them – hence the need to join *parshiyot* together.<sup>64a</sup>

That during the Talmudic era, *parashat Shekalim* may have been read either with *Tetzaveh* or *Ki Tisa* – a situation that no longer occurs – would have as a corollary that at the time of *Hazal*, *parshiyot* were joined together in a manner different than today. In order to understand these differences, one has first to follow the subsequent evolution of the Torah reading cycle through the period of the *geonim* and into the early *aharonim*, before returning to the Talmud and allowing this last piece of the puzzle to fall into place.

It is in the ninth century *siddur* of R. Amram Gaon,<sup>65</sup> written three hundred years after the close of the Talmud, that the documentary trail is picked up again. Still faithful to the original intent of connecting Torah readings with holidays, this principle was now to be expanded further, coming to include not only Rosh Hashanah and *Shavu'ot*, but *Pesah* and *Tishah b'Av* as well. In essence, “stations” of the cycle had been created – specific *parshiyot* being assigned to the *Shabbat* prior to or immediately following these respective days.

The basic wording of this formula may be found in R. Amram's *siddur* and, with slight variations in language, in the eleventh century works of *Rashi*<sup>66</sup> and R. Simha Vitry<sup>67</sup>. One century later, *Rambam*, in more prosaic style, would state the exact same *halakhah*.<sup>68</sup> With one major addition, to be duly noted, R. Amram's formula is the same one found in the 14th century *siddur* of Abudarham<sup>69</sup>, in the *halakhic* writings of his contemporary, *Tur*<sup>70</sup>, and the subsequent *Shulhan Arukh*<sup>71</sup> of the 16th century. It is this formula that governs our reading cycle till this very day:

1 “*Pikdu u'fis'hu*”. “In an ordinary year *command* and *make Pesah*” i.e., in a non-leap year, *parashat Tzav* (i.e., *command* (rendered as *pakeid* in *Targum Onkelos*) is read on *Shabbat Hagadol*.

2. “*Sigru u'fit'hu*” – “while in a leap year, *close* and *open*” – that is – read *parashat Metzora* on *Shabbat Hagadol*. This is a play on words: *close* refers to a person afflicted by *tzora'at*, who is *closed* off from others – while *open* refers to the doors of the Israelite homes in Egypt that remained *open* on that first night of *Pesah*.<sup>72</sup> In Ashkenazic *pronunciation*, the Hebrew

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words for *Passover* and *door* are identical. This is the only part of the formula not found in the *siddur* of R. Amram, a matter of significant historical import to be discussed.

Both *parshiyot* are appropriate for this particular *Shabbat* as each one touches on the subject of the *kashering* of utensils *Vayikra* 6-21, 16-12) – a relevant topic before *Pesah*.

The one exception to these two “stations” occurs about once every nine years when *Aharei-Mot* is read on *Shabbat Hagadol*.<sup>73</sup>

3. “*M’nu ve’itzru*” – “Count and make *Atzeret*” i.e., read *parashat Bemidbar* – in which the Israelites are *counted* – on the *Shabbat* just prior to *Shavu’ot* (*Atzeret*). As noted above, this separates the curses of the *tokhehah* of *Behukotai* by at least one week from this holiday<sup>74</sup>.

In the same years that *Aharei-Mot* is read on *Shabbat Hagadol*, *parashat Naso* is read prior to *Shavu’ot*. In Eretz Yisrael, *Naso* is also read before *Shavu’ot* in leap years in which the eighth day of *Passover* falls out on a *Shabbat*.

4. “*Tzumu vetzalu*” – “Fast and pray.” This signifies that *parashat Va’ethanan* (“and I prayed”) is to be read on the *Shabbat* after *Tishah b’Av*. This allows *parashat Devarim*, containing Moshe’s reprimands to the Jewish people to be read on the *Shabbat* before the fast<sup>75</sup>, followed on the next *Shabbat* by *Va’ethanan*. This *parashah* retells the story of the giving of the Torah and thus conveys a message that even after the tragedy of *Tishah b’Av*, the Torah again will be accepted.<sup>76</sup>

5. “*Kumu ve’tik’u*” – “Stand up and sound the *shofar*” – *parashat Nitzvaim*, (“*Standing up*” – (with or without its *Vayelekh* segment) for reasons already noted, is always read on the *Shabbat* before Rosh Hashanah.

Bringing the cycle to its end, though not part of the formula, is the reading of *Ve Zot Habrakhah* on the second day of *Shemini Atzeret* (or the first day in Eretz Yisrael.)

This is the basic *halakhah* that determines the timing of the reading cycle. It goes no further, *and great leeway, therefore, remains for all of the other parshiyot. They too must be “plugged” in, but the manner in which this is done falls more into the realm of minhag – rather than absolutely obligatory halakhic compliance.*

The *minhag* accepted by all of *Klal Yisrael* today is identical with that found in *Tur*<sup>77</sup> and involves three different categories of combinations: A. Those dependent on the length of the year i.e., *Vayakhel-Pekudei*, *Tazri’ah-Metzora*, *Aharei Mot-Kedoshim*, and *Behar-Behukotai* are always read together during an ordinary year and separately in a leap year. Also in this group is *Matot-Masei*, but they present a special case. They are *rarely ever read separately* – the one exception being a leap year whose Rosh

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Hashanah falls out on a Thursday. Over the span of a century, this occurs on the average only about once every nine years – the last time in 1984 – and they won't be read separately again (outside of Eretz Israel) till 2005.<sup>78, 79, 80</sup>

B. Those dependent on the second day of *Shavu'ot* i.e., *Hukat-Balak* are combined whenever this particular day falls out on a *Shabbat*. Since in Eretz Yisrael, there is *no* second day of *Shavu'ot*, these *parshiyot* are *never* read together there.

C. Those dependent on the number of “free” *Shabbatot* between Rosh Hashanah and *Sukkot*. As already noted, if there are two, then *Nitzavim* is read by itself on the *Shabbat* before Rosh Hashanah, *Vayelekh* on *Shabbat Shuvah* and *Ha'azinu* on the *Shabbat* after Yom Kippur. If, however, there is only one available *Shabbat*, *Ha'azinu* is read then, and *Nitzavim-Vayelekh* are combined on the *Shabbat* prior to Rosh Hashanah.<sup>81, 82</sup>

The fact that this order of *parshiyot*, identical with that of *Tur*, is universally followed today in no way implies that it represents the only one that ever existed. Quite the contrary is true – it is but only one of several that evolved from the period of the Talmud, some of which were practiced even at the time of *Tur* and survived him by at least two centuries. Documentation from the literature of the *geonim* through that of the early *aharonim* gives ample testimony to this.

R. Saadiah Gaon's *siddur*<sup>83</sup> is the earliest source to dwell on this subject (R. Amram Gaon not mentioning it). For the first time we are apprised of the practice of combining *Vayakhel-Pekudei*, *Tazri'ah-Metzora*, *Aharei-Mot* and *Kedoshim*, and *Behar-Behukotai*, as well as the splitting of *Nitzavim* and *Vayelekh*. In the book of *Bemidbar*, however, when necessary, it was this Gaon's practice to read *three parshiyot* i.e., *Korah*, *Hukat*, and *Balak* over *two Shabbatot* – splitting the middle *parashah* at *Bemidbar* 20-32. No mention is made whatsoever of *Matot-Masei*.

*Rashi*<sup>84</sup> presents similar arrangements but does include *Matot-Masei* – as well as the joining of *Hukat* and *Balak*, without the *Korah* connection. He also suggests that when the need arises in an ordinary year (“when the *parshiyot* are being stretched out” (*nimshakhot*), *Terumah* and *Tetzaveh* may be combined in order to assure that *Tzav* is read on *Shabbat Hagadol*.

*Rashi's* disciple and contemporary, R. Simha Vitry is far less specific on this subject – his only pointed reference being to the *Shabbatot* between the 17th of *Tammuz* and *Tishah b'Av* when tradition allows for *parshiyot* to be “condensed, diminished, added to, arranged, combined, or scattered” in order to assure that *parashat Devarim* is read prior to the fast.<sup>85</sup>

In marked contrast to this laissez-faire attitude of *Mahzor Vitry* is the far more structured approach of R. David Abudarham. Dividing the year into four units – from *Sukkot* to *Pesah*, *Pesah* to *Shavu'ot*, *Shavu'ot* to *Tishah b'Av*, and then back to *Sukkot*, he provides the reader with the number of weeks that will occur in each one of these units – for all types of years – both ordinary and leap – in a nineteen year calendar. Relating these numbers to those of the *parshiyot* that must be completed during each time frame, he then lists the specific *parshiyot* that are to be combined to accomplish this purpose.

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Abudarham's treatment of the subject<sup>86</sup> is a model of clarity – reducing to simple outline form the “engine” that drives the Torah reading cycle forward. His arrangements to differ from those already presented in a few significant details. He combines *Shelah* with *Korah* rather than *Hukat* and *Balak*. In addition, *Matot-Masei* were for the most part read *separately* and joined only during those years in which the second day of *Shavu'ot* fell out on a *Shabbat*. Finally, he makes note of those communities who insisted that even in a leap year whose Rosh Hashanah falls out on a Thursday, *Metzora* (and not *Aharei-Mot*) was to be read on *Shabbat Hagadol*. To achieve this, either *parashat Mishpatim* (at *Shemot* 22-24) or *parashat Ki Tisa* (at *Shemot* 32-16) were split and read over two *Shabbatot* during those years.

Unfamiliar as some of these customs may now seem, they are not just bits of historical esoterica, but are of considerable importance because they suggest another facet of the Torah reading cycle that dated back to the era of the Talmud. This allows us finally to understand why during that time, *parashat Shekalim* could fall out with *parshiyot Tetzaveh* or *Ki Tisa*. To expand on this further, the next of the major sources of this period will now be introduced.

R. Issachar ben Sوسان was a 16th century contemporary of R. Yosef Karo, and for at least part of his life also a resident of Safed. There he served as *Rav* of those Sephardic Jews (the “Westerners”) who had settled in Safed after their expulsion from Spain. An avid student of the Jewish calendar, he also had a keen interest in the *mitzvot* and traditions that emanated from it – including the Torah reading cycle. Forced to leave Safed, he spent a good portion of his life wandering from community to community in and outside of Eretz Yisrael where he painstakingly documented the rich variety of customs that he encountered or that he learned of in the reading of the Torah. His book, *Tikkun Issachar*<sup>87</sup> is devoted, in part, to chronicling, month by month, each of the years of the calendar cycle and the variegated traditions of Torah readings associated with them.

In addition to including several of the customs already cited, *Tikkun Issachar* mentions the *minhag* of the Jews of Tzova (Syria) of *always splitting Hukat* and *Balak*, while combining *Korah* and *Hukat* during those years when the second day of *Shavu'ot* fell out on a *Shabbat*.<sup>88</sup> He also refers<sup>89</sup> to a city in the “west” (Constantinople) where *parashat Va'era* was split (at *Shemot* 8-16), and yet another city in the “west” where *parashat Mitzet* was split (at *Bereishith* 42-18) while *Behar-Behukotai*, *Hukat-Balak* or *Matot-Masei* were *never* divided.

The traditions of splitting *parshiyot Mitzet*, *Va'era* or *Mishpatim* are the key to understanding how *parashat Shekalim* could fall out with either *Tetzaveh* or *Ki Tisa*. *Shekalim* is read today, during leap years, usually with

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*Vayakhel* and less often with *Pekudei*. Splitting of one or two of these three aforementioned *parshiyot* would result in *Shekalim* coinciding either with *Tetzaveh* or *Ki Tisa*. It may be assumed that this is exactly what was occurring during the Talmudic era.<sup>90</sup>

This particular arrangement of *parshiyot* was to survive the Talmud by almost a millenium. R. Yitzhak Alfasi (11th century)<sup>91</sup> refers to *Shekalim* as possibly falling out with *Tetzaveh* or *Ki Tisa*, as does *Rambam*, one century later. *Rashi*<sup>92</sup> and *Mahzor Vitry*<sup>93</sup> make reference solely to *Ki Tisa*.<sup>94</sup>

*Tur*<sup>95</sup> still deals with the exact same possibility but includes *Tetzaveh* in his discussion as well. His *contemporary* and Spanish *compatriot*, R. Nissim<sup>96</sup> (who lived in Barcelona – *Tur* was a resident of Toledo), however, insists that neither *Tetzaveh* nor *Ki Tisa* could ever any longer be read with *Shekalim*. In almost similar vein, two centuries later, R. Yosef Karo<sup>97</sup> notes that unlike the generation of *Tur*, this line up of *parshiyot* no longer occurs – yet, at the same time, his *contemporary*, R. Issachar ben Sousean, is documenting the splitting of *parshiyot Miketz* and *Va'era* – which conceivably could make this lineup feasible.

Approaching the *Shekalim-Tetzaveh-Ki Tisa* question from a slightly different perspective, and filling in one other crucial detail, is the 13th century scholar, R. Menahem ben Solomon (*HaMeiri*). Note has already been made that the only portion of the reading cycle formula not found in the earlier sources is the one dealing with *Metzora* on *Shabbat Hagadol* of a leap year. R. Amram Gaon makes no mention of it and though, three centuries later, *Rambam*<sup>98</sup> specifies that *Tzav* is to be read on *Shabbat Hagadol* of an *ordinary* year, he makes absolutely no stipulation as to what is to be read on a *leap* year.



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adhered to the previously cited custom of *Rashi* of combining *Terumah* with *Tetzaveh* – in order to “make up the spread.”

Of further interest is that rather than *Vayakhel* or *Pekudei* being read on *Shabbat Shekalim* of a leap year (as is the present custom), *Pekudei* or *Vayikra* were – *Pekudei*, presumably being read when *Metzora* was the portion of the week on *Shabbat Hagadol*, and *Vayikra* when *Aharei-Mot* was. But *Shekalim* always precedes *Shabbat Hagadol* by six weeks – yet there are only five *parshiyot* from *Pekudei* and *Vayikra* to (and including) *Metzora* and *Aharei-Mot* respectively! This would indicate that *parshiyot* in the beginning of *Sefer Vayikra*, to which we have absolutely no clear reference in any source, must have been divided in *HaMeiri's* community so as to “fill in the gap”.<sup>100</sup>

A similar observation may be made regarding the reading of *Ki Tisa* on *Shabbat Shekalim* when *Tzav* was being read on *Shabbat Hagadol*. This leaves only four *parshiyot* for the intervening six weeks. Exactly how three of them i.e., *Vayakhel*, *Pekudei*, and *Vayikra* were divided into five parts, so that *Tzav* may be read on *Shabbat Hagadol*, again remains unknown.<sup>101</sup>

*HaMeiri*, (as does *Abudarham*<sup>102</sup>) also makes note of those communities who always read *Metzora* on *Shabbat Hagadol* of leap years (and never *Aharei-Mot*). To do this, they divided *Terumah* (at *Shemot* 26-1), *Tetzave* (at *Shemot* 29-1), or *Ki Tisa* (at *Shemot* 32-15), and in consequence, unlike our present custom, combined *Matot-Masei* during those years as well.<sup>103</sup>

To the modern observer, accustomed as he is to one reading cycle, all the variants that have heretofore been cited should evoke a picture of a Torah reading cycle that in its formative stages was considerably different than that of today. It points to a lack of rigidity in the delineation of *parshiyot*, and strongly suggests that in the time of the Talmud, the order of *parshiyot* was far more amorphous than is presently true. Moreover, it would seem almost certain that the “standard” order of 53 *parshiyot* that is so familiar to us, but which only first appeared in *halakhic* literature in the time of the *geonim*, was but one of several such orders that once existed.

The triennial cycle of Eretz Yisrael serves as an historical model that lends credence to this contention. Within this tradition, at least four separate orders existed – some were comprised of 141 *sedarim*, others of 154, still others of 167, and still yet others of 185<sup>104</sup>. There is no reason to assume that in the annual Torah reading cycle of Babylonia, a parallel situation did not also prevail. From this perspective, the phenomenon of *parshiyot* (e.g. *Behar-Behukotai*, *Hukat-Balak*, and *Matot-Masei*) always being combined may be the vestige of a variant tradition that once recognized these “combined *parshiyot*” as one integral unit. In similar vein, the “splitting” of *parshiyot* may be viewed as but a reflection of a tradition in which these

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“half units” were in fact independent *parshiyot* in their own right.<sup>105</sup>

That this indeed was the case is supported by the observation that the “fault lines:” at which most of these *parshiyot* i.e. *Miketz*, *Va’era*, *Mishpatim*, *Terumah*, *Tetzaveh*, and *Ki Tisa* were once divided are exactly where in the *triennial cycle* new *sidrot* would begin, and in the case of one of them, *Va’era*, the second segment of the “split” *parashah* (*Shemot* 8-16 through 9-35) was *identical* to a *sidra* of the *triennial cycle*.<sup>106</sup>

The case of *Va’era* is particularly cogent because this was very likely one of the *parshiyot* that was once “split” in *Babylonia* in order to allow the possibility of *parshiyot* *Tetzaveh* or *Ki Tisa* to coincide with *Shekalim*. It thus suggests the presence in *Babylonia* – at least amongst some segments of its community – of a different order of *parshiyot* that was slightly more in tune with some of the Torah reading traditions normally associated with *Eretz Yisrael* (which is only logical since they both stem from the same *tannaic* sources!)<sup>107</sup>

The standard order of *parshiyot* and associated reading cycle that we have today survived its “competitors”, in part, because it very likely proved to be the most practical. This practicality stemmed from the fact that during most of the Talmudic era there was no fixed calendar, and therefore there could not have been a predetermined Torah reading cycle.

Besides having to take into account the number of *Shabbatot* that fall out on holidays within a given year, an even more important prerequisite for a reading cycle is to know whether the year would be a leap year or not. But this often would not be determined till five months into the year – after the advent of the month of *Adar* – and after all of *sefer Bereishith* and a good part of the book of *Shemot* has already been read. The simplicity of the “standard” order is that it allows the adjustments for a leap year *now* to be made – by separating *Vayakhel* and *Pekudei*.

Conversely, had earlier *parshiyot* e.g. *Miketz*, *Va’era*, or *Mishpatim* been split in *expectation* of a *leap year*, and the year ultimately turned out to be an *ordinary* one, then the *parshiyot* would have to be readjusted once more, so that *Tzav* would be read on *Shabbat Hagadol*.

The multiplicity of traditions that was once a hallmark of the public reading of the Torah brings another observation to the fore. Amongst the directives that govern the reading cycle (and there are only a paltry few), there is one that is notably absent i.e., any insistence that, except for the four “stations” of the cycle, all Jewry ever need be on the same schedule.<sup>108</sup>

*Tur’s* treatment of the reading cycle makes this clear. Though his order of *parshiyot* is identical with the one in use today, and thus should preempt the possibility of *Tetzaveh* or *Ki Tisa* ever coinciding with *Shabbat Shekalim*, he nevertheless discusses<sup>109</sup> the *halakhic* ramifications of this event occurring! This is in no way contradictory. His order of *parshiyot* is

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no more than a *suggestion* of how the *parshiyot* may be read.<sup>110</sup> It undoubtedly was followed in *Tur*'s own community – but elsewhere, a different timetable was being adhered to, and *Tetzaveh* and *Ki Tisa* were falling out on *Shabbat Shekalim*; *Tur*, therefore, had to address this question.

What is only implied in *Tur* is expressly stated in *Tikkun Issachar* when dealing with the phenomenon of Jews inside and outside of Eretz Yisrael not always reading the same *parashah*. This occurs when the eighth day of *Pesah* or the second day of *Shavu'ot* fall out on *Shabbat*. As these final days of the *yomim tovim* are not celebrated in Eretz Yisrael, the regular portion of the week is read there instead. Thus is created a one week differential.

When the eighth day of *Pesah* does fall out on *Shabbat* in an *ordinary* year, the gap is not closed till *six* weeks later, at which time *Behar* and *Behukotai* are read separately in Eretz Yisrael, and together elsewhere. There were, however, communities in Eretz Yisrael at the time of R. Issachar, who preferred to close the gap *earlier* with *Tazria-Metzora*, a practice with which he emphatically took issue. The only reason for the combining of *parshiyot* in this particular time of year, he points out, is for *parashat Bemidbar* to be read on the *Shabbat* prior to *Shavu'ot*. Therefore, *Behar-Behukotai* are combined. The fact that this could have been done earlier, and thereby the gap could have been closed sooner between the Jews inside and outside of Eretz Yisrael, *is really of no concern*.<sup>111</sup>

An even more exaggerated indication of *halakhic* indifference to the synchronization of *parshiyot*, noted by *Tikkun Issachar*,<sup>112</sup> but without elaboration, occurs in *leap* years, when the eighth day of *Pesah* falls out on a *Shabbat*. Then, almost *four* months are allowed to go by before those inside and outside of Eretz Israel “catch up” with one another – with the reading of *Matot* and *Masei*.<sup>113</sup>

The *halakhic* basis for this attitude is solidly rooted in the historical realities of the Talmudic world. There, two communities coexisted that were on *totally different schedules*; one was reading the Torah every three and a half years, while the other every year. This presented no problem to *Hazal*, whose sole interest lay in assuring that Torah be read and studied on a regular ongoing basis. That different communities would opt to do so on different timetables was totally irrelevant.

Even after the close of the Talmud, this dichotomy would endure for at least one more millennium. Though the Eretz Yisrael community would be destroyed in the 11th century, its triennial cycle would survive 500 more years in Egypt. There, in the 16th century, R. Issachar would find a city (? Fustat) on the outskirts of Cairo, consisting of “two large and important *kehillot*, with many *hazanim*, and a great *yeshiva* with many *rabbanim*. In their two synagogues, they respectively adhered to different customs in the

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manner in which they combined and separated *sedarim* – each one according to the *minhag* of his ancestors. Neither one found fault in the other, and they were happy to join together in celebrating with each other the respective completions of their Torah cycles.”<sup>114</sup>

This idyllic scene, as described by R. Issachar 400 years ago, however, would not continue for very much longer. The triennial cycle would soon disappear completely from the Jewish landscape, and at the same time a perceptible change would set in on the annual cycle as well. *Halakhic* literature would no longer touch on the diversity in which the *parshiyot* were read. The “standard” Torah reading cycle as we know it today was becoming universally accepted.

It is probably no coincidence that this metamorphosis would take place at the same time that the printing press was beginning to make its impact in the Jewish world. The first printed Bibles appeared in the late fifteenth century; *Mikra'ot Gedolot*, which would become the basis for all subsequent editions of the *Tanach*, was first published in Venice in 1524-5.<sup>115</sup> The creation of “standard” editions of the classical texts would consign all others to relative oblivion.<sup>116</sup> In the wake of this, the variegatedness of the Torah reading cycle, which entailed significant diversity in the scheduling, combining, and splitting of *parshiyot*, as well as in the delineation of *aliyot*, and in the selection of *haftarot*, would disappear as well.

From the perspective, therefore, of a three thousand year history of the public reading of the Torah, the existence today of but one reading cycle is a rather new phenomenon, having secured a place in the panoply of Jewish ritual a mere 400 years ago. It succeeded a world of striking diversity in which communities, while rigidly adhering to the exact same *halakhah*, endowed it with their own set of unique variants, solidly rooted in the *masorah* of previous generations. Though there is but little trace of this incredibly diverse history that remains in contemporary *humashim*, it is, nevertheless, these texts that represent the final repository of this remarkable age-old tradition.

I wish to thank Rabbi Yisrael Janowski for his invaluable and selfless assistance in the preparation of this article.

### FOOTNOTES

1. *Yerushalmi*, Megillah 4, 1.
  2. *Mishnah Torah*, *Hilkhot Tefillah*, 12, 1.
  3. Ezra, according to *Rambam* (ibid.), also played a role in the evolution of this custom by introducing, in the beginning of the era of the Second Temple, the practice of the public reading of the Torah on *Minhah* of *Shabbat*. He also instituted a *takkanah* that three people were to be called up during weekdays, and that no fewer than ten verses were to be read at this time. See also Israel Schepansky, *The Takkanot in Israel* (in Hebrew), Mosad Harav Kook, Jerusalem, 1991, Vol. 1, pgs. 123-128.
  4. *Vayikra*, 23:44.
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5. Megillah 31a.
  6. Ibid, 32a.
  7. Megillah 30b, 31a.
  8. Ibid, 29a.
  9. Ibid, 29b.
  10. A. Ya'ari, *Toledot Hag Simhat Torah*, Mosad Harav Kook, Jerusalem, 1964, pg. 28.
  11. E. Fleischer, *Eretz-Israel Prayer and Prayer Rituals As Portrayed in the Geniza Documents* (in Hebrew), Magnes Press, The Hebrew University, Jerusalem, 1988. The tone of the day was in fact one of mourning (!) as *VeZot Habrakhah* tells of the death of Moses.
  12. Megillah, 29b.
  13. Megillah, 31b.
  14. This obviously could not be the case with the triennial cycle where no *sidra* ever had any permanent connection with any particular time of the year. As in this cycle, however, the *sidra* of the week was dispensed with completely on the *Shabbatot* of *Shekalim*, *Zakhor*, *Parah*, and *Hahodesh*, with the special reading for these *Shabbatot* being the *only* reading, it is conceivable that in Eretz Yisrael, the *Tokhehah* was the *only* portion to be read prior to *Shavu'ot* and *Rosh Hashanah*.
  15. *Seder R. Amram Gaon*, Ed. D. Goldschmitt, Mosad Harav Kook, Jerusalem, 1971, pg. 109.
  16. Megillah 31b, s.v. *Kellalot*.
  17. This would remain immutable for Rosh Hashanah; for *Shavu'ot*, however, there are years when the holiday is separated from *Behukotai* by two weeks. (*vide infra*).
  18. See *Maharsha* on Megillah 31b, s.v. *Kedai*.
  19. See A Ya'ari, *Toledot Hag Simhat Torah*, Mosad Harav Kook, Jerusalem, 1964, for a detailed history of *Simhat Torah*.
  20. Megillah, 31a.
  21. R. Nissim on Megillah, 31a, s.v. *Lemahar*.
  22. *Tosefta* Megillah, 3-8.
  23. Megillah, 31a.
  24. D. Goldschmitt & Y. Frankel, *Mahzor Sukkot, Shemini Atzeret veSimhat Torah*, Koren Jerusalem, 1981, Introduction, pg. 23.
  25. In the Eretz Israel community that adhered to the triennial cycle, this particular *parashah* was read on a more appropriate time – *Shabbat Hol Hamo'ed*, and not on *Shemini Atzeret*. (Goldschmitt, op. cit., introduction, pg. 19, footnote 30).
  26. *Rashi* on Megillah, 31a, s.v. *Korim*; Goldschmitt., op. cit., introduction, pg. 23.
  27. 1 Kings, 8:2.
  28. Ibid, verse 66.
  29. 1 Kings, 8:22-34 (or 53); *Encyclopedia Talmudit*, Jerusalem, 1971, Vol. 10, 719.
  30. *Hilkhot Sukkah*:54, as quoted by A. Ya'ari, op. cit., pg. 33; In Eretz Israel of today, *aser te'aser* is dispensed with altogether, and only *VeZot Habrakhah* is read on *Shemini Atzeret*. Of course, this is done to complete the Torah reading cycle – but another benefit is also accrued i.e., *VeZot Habrakhah* is a more appropriate reading for the holiday itself.
  31. Op.cit., pg. 177.
  32. Megillah, 31a, s.v. *Lemahar*.
  33. Ya'ari, op. cit., pg. 28.
  34. See also *Meshekh Hakhmah* on *VeZot Habrakhah*, s.v. *Besimhat*. In spite of the celebration of *Simhat Torah* now centering around the completion of the Torah reading cycle, its original thrust of being the concluding holiday of the month of *Tishri* still remains evident in several customs of the day:
    - a. The melody traditionally used in the eastern Ashkenazic rite (*nusah Polin*) during *Ma'ariv* is that of *Rosh Hashanah* and *Yom Kippur*. Though commonly misconstrued as a parody (a difficult premise to accept that a public prayer as significant as *Ma'ariv* would ever be the subject of a parody!), the melody is really an attempt to recapitulate a musical theme (and thus recapture the mood) of the *Yamim Noraim* – a premise reinforced by the fact that ...
    - b. During the Torah reading of *Ma'ariv*, the *trop* used is also that of the the *Yamim Noraim*!
    - c. Again in *nusah Polin*, at least three *piyutim* of *Rosh Hashanah/Yom Kippur* i.e., *Veye'etayu Kol*, *Ha'aderet Veha'emunah*, and *Al Yisrael* may be found interspersed between the *hakafot*.
    - d. The prayer that introduces the *hakafot* recapitulates two liturgical themes of *Tishri*. Its opening phrase, *Ana Hashem hoshi'a na*, brings to mind the *Hoshanot* of *Sukkot* – while the concluding portion, *aneinu beyom kareinu*, recalls the *Selihot* of the *Yamim Noraim*.
  35. In the order of parshiyot of Rambam (end of Sefer Ahava), *Vayelekh* is not mentioned; *vide infra* footnote 116.
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36. Rosh Hashanah, 31a; *Shulhan Arukh Orach Hayyim*, 428, 5.
  37. Megillah, 29a.
  38. S. Lieberman, *Tosefta Kifshuta*, Jewish Theological Seminary, New York, 1962, Megillah, pg. 1166.
  39. In the Babylonian Talmud, this is expressed as the opinion of R. Ami (Megillah 30b); it is for this reason that, though there were only between 141 and 185 *sedarim* in the triennial cycle (*vide infra*), it, nevertheless, took approximately three *and one half* years to complete it.
  40. Megillah, 31a; *Shabbat Hagadol* would fall into this category as well.
  41. Megillah, 31a, b.
  42. *Pesikta*, quoted by Abudarham, (*Abudarham Hashalem*, Hatehiya Jerusalem, 1963, pgs. 302, 3).
  43. Megillah, 31b, s.v. *Rosh*.
  44. *Encyclopedia Talmudit*, op. cit., Vol. 10-21.
  45. a. *Mishnah Torah* end of *Sefer Ahavah*. It is presumably for this reason that the only *haftarot* of regular *Shabbatot* that are repeated are during this time of the year: Those of *parshiyot Re'eh* and *Ki Teze* had already been said (together) on *parashat Noah*. The first half of the *haftarah* of *Shabbat Shuvah* (*Shuvah Yisrael*) is found in the *haftarah* of *Vayeze*, and in the Sephardic tradition, *parshiyot Shemot* and *Matot* also share a common *haftarah*. It may be theorized that these repetitions, which are not found in *Rambam's* series of *haftarot*, resulted from the convergence of two separate traditions.  
b. The only extant rite that still reflects to a considerable degree the order of *haftarot* of *Rambam* is that of Italian Jewry.
  46. As quoted by Ya'ari, op. cit., pg. 33.
  47. *Vide infra* footnote 80.
  48. *Maharsha* on Megillah, 31b, s.v. *Kedai*.
  49. *Mahzor Vitry*, J. Bulka, Nuremberg, 1923, pg. 223.
  50. *Bei'ur Halakhah* on *Shulhan Arukh*, *Hilkhot Rosh Hodesh*, 428, 4; *Encyclopedia Talmudit*, *ibid*, 22.
  51. Megillah, 29b, 30a.
  52. It may be theorized that as the triennial cycle had no particular time constraints (the reading could end on any *Shabbat*) there was little need to combine or split *parshiyot* in this tradition (*vide infra* footnote 64a).
  53. *Siddur R. Saadiah Gaon*, Eds. I. Davidson, S. Assaf, B.I. Joel, Mekitzei Nirdamim, Jerusalem, 1978, pg. 764.
  54. *Sefer Hapardes*, ed. H. Ehrenreich, Yahadut, Bnei Brak, 1980, pg. 340.
  55. *Ibid*; a variant tradition, almost identical to that of *Rambam*, but containing only 52 *parshiyot*, is listed by name in the 11th century *Mahzor Vitry* (op. cit. pgs. 674 ff.). *Metzora* is omitted as a separate *parashah*; it is included in *Tazria*. (*vide infra* footnote 105) *Mahzor Vitry's* tradition, however, is in need of further elucidation as another portion of the work (pg. 221) refers to *Metzora* as a distinct *parashah* that is frequently read prior to *Pesah* on a leap year.
  56. Megillah, 29b.
  57. *Ibid*.
  58. Megillah, 30a.
  59. Gittin, 60a.
  60. *Zevahim*, 28a.
  61. *Bereishith Rabbah* 96, 1.
  62. Rosh Hashanah, 31a.
  63. It is unclear that the references to *Vayehi*, *Vayakhel*, *Aharei Mot*, *Kedoshim*, and *Ha'azinu* are necessarily referring to the entire *parashah*.
  64. In the Jewish calendar there are six different types of years. Besides the basic division between an ordinary year of twelve months, and a leap year of thirteen months, there is further division by the number of days that may be found in *Marheshvan* and *Kislev*: Both have 29 days (*haseira* i.e., "deficient"); *Marheshvan* has 29 days and *Kislev* 30 days (*kesidran* i.e. "in their proper order" or regular); both months have thirty days (*sheleima* i.e., "complete"). The result is that an ordinary year may have 353, 354, or 355 days and a leap year 383, 384, or 385 days, and, consequently, the number of *Shabbatot* per year varies as well.
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## The Torah Reading Cycle - Past and Present

- 64a. It may be theorized that the Babylonian tradition of continuing the reading cycle on all *Shabbatot* – except for *yamim tovim* (vide supra) – was not a matter of principle but one of simple practicality. Each year there are between one and three *Shabbatot* of *Rosh Hodesh*, one or two *Shabbatot* of *Hanukkah*, and four special *Shabbatot* (*Shekalim* etc.). Thus the number of “free” *Shabbatot* would be diminished by six to nine if *parashat hashavu’a* were not read at these times. This would create additional need to combine even more *parshiyot* so that the reading cycle could be completed on the same date each year. As in an ordinary year all of the shorter *parshiyot* of *sefer Vayikra* had already been combined, much longer *parshiyot* would then have to be joined as well – resulting in a considerable number of unwieldy and excessively long Torah readings. For this reason, the Babylonian tradition could not follow the literal meaning of the *Mishnah* that dictated the interruption of reading cycle for all special occasions. Eretz Yisrael, as already noted, had no such problem as in its tradition there was no obligation to conclude the Torah reading on any specific date. It was therefore able rigidly to adhere to the intent of the *Mishnah*.
65. Op. cit., pg. 109.
66. *Siddur Rashi*, Ed. S. Bauber, H. Itzkowski, Berlin, 1911, pg. 169.
67. *Mahzor Vitry*, op. cit., pg. 221.
68. *Mishnah Torah, Hilkhot Tefillah*, 13-2.
69. *Abudarham Hashalem*, Hatehiya, Jerusalem, 1963, pg. 372.
70. *Tur, Orah Hayyim*, following 428.
71. *Shulhan Arukh, Orah Hayyim*, 428-4.
72. This is the text – *ufit’hu* with a *tav* i.e., *open* – as rendered in *Shulhan Arukh* (ibid). In *Tur* (ibid) it is with a *samekh* i.e., *make Pesah*.
73. Vide infra footnote 79.
74. Also see *Maharsha on Megillah* 31b, s.v. *Kedai*.
75. *Bei’ur Halaklah on Mishnah Berurah, Orah Hayyim*, 428,4.
76. J. Cohen, “Kunterus Magid Harakia”, in *Mishnah Tractate Rosh Hashanah*, The Rabbi Jacob Joseph School Press, Brooklyn, 1981, pg. 183.
77. *Tur*, op. cit., *Luhot Ha’ibur* (after 428).
78. There is one exception to this rule: in an ordinary year that is *complete* (vide supra footnote 64) and Rosh Hashanah falls out on a Thursday, *Vayakhel* and *Pekudei* are read separately (vide infra footnote 79).
79. Rosh Hashanah falling out on a Thursday is important in the reading cycle as it increases by one the number of *Shabbatot* between *Sukkot* and *Pesah*. For that reason, in such a *leap* year, *parashat Shekalim* falls out on *Pekudei* (instead of *Vayakhel*), *Aharei-Mot* is read on *Shabbat Hagadol*, *Naso* on the *Shabbat* prior to *Shavu’ot*, and in order to allow *Devarim* to be read before *Tishah b’Av*, *Matot-Masei* are separated.

Similarly, in an ordinary year that is *complete* (vide supra footnote 64) and Rosh Hashanah falls out on a Thursday, *parashat Shekalim* is read on *Terumah* (instead of *Mishpatim*) and *Vayakhel-Pekudei* are separated. This accommodates the one extra *Shabbat* and assures that *Tzav* will still be read on *Shabbat Hagadol*. This is the only time that these *parshiyot* of *sefer Shemot* are separated without the other six of *sefer Vayikra*. It is a highly unusual set of circumstances – during the 20th century having occurred but three times – 1902-3 (5663), 1973-4 (5734), and 1993-4 (5754).

The first day of Rosh Hashanah falling out on *Shabbat* also impacts on the reading cycle – albeit in a minor way. In most years, there is but one *Shabbat* during *Hannukah*, and *parashat Miketz* is read at that time. If, however, the first day of Rosh Hashanah does fall on *Shabbat*, and the year is *complete*, there will be two *Shabbatot* during *Hannukah* of that year – *parashat Vayeshev* being read on the first *Shabbat* and *Miketz* on the second. If, however, that year is *deficient* (vide supra footnote 64), there will again be only one *Shabbat* of *Hannukah*, and *Vayeshev* will be read. This is an uncommon occurrence – appearing during a century approximately every nine years (which are the only times that the *haftarah* of *Miketz* is ever read).

80. *Tur* does not mention *parshiyot Tazri’ah, Metzora, Aharei-Mot, Kedoshim, Behar, or Behukotai* by name as he apparently makes reference only to those *parshiyot* whose combinations may vary from one *leap* year to another *leap* year or one *ordinary* year to another *ordinary* year. These six *parshiyot* fall into neither category as they are *always* combined during ordinary years and *always* read separately during leap years.
81. *Shulhan Arukh, Orah Hayyim*, 428,4.

82. The following summarizes the possible arrangements of *Nitzavim-Vayeilekh* and *Ha’azinu*:

<i>Shabbat before Rosh Hashanah</i>	<i>1st Day Rosh Hashanah</i>	<i>Shabbat Shuvah</i>	<i>Tom Kippur</i>	<i>Next Shabbat</i>
<i>Nitzavim</i>	Monday or Tuesday	<i>Vayeilekh</i>	Wednesday	<i>Ha’azinu</i>
<i>Nitzavim-Vayeilekh</i>	Thursday	<i>Ha’azinu</i>	<i>Shabbat</i>	<i>Sukkot</i> (3rd day)
<i>Nitzavim-Vayeilekh</i>	<i>Shabbat</i>	<i>Ha’azinu</i>	Monday	<i>Sukkot</i> (1st day)

(The first day of Rosh Hashanah cannot fall on a Sunday, Wednesday, or Friday)

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83. Op. cit., pgs. 365, 6.
84. *Sefer Hapardes*, op. cit., pg. 342.
85. *Mahzor Vitry*, op. cit. pg., 223.
86. *Abudarham Hashalem*, op. cit., pgs. 374,5.
87. *Tikkun Issachar*, Jerusalem, 1988. The full title of the book is *Ibur Shanin Tikkun Issachar*. It was first published in Venice 400 years ago.
88. *Ibid*, 24a.
89. *Ibid*, 33a.

90. The following is the lineup of *parshiyot* and dates as they occurred in 5755:

<i>Mishpatim</i>	<i>Terumah</i>	<i>Tetzaveh</i>	<i>Ki Tisa</i>	<i>Vayakhel</i>
27 Shevat	4 Adar I	11 Adar I	18 Adar I	25 Adar I (Shekalim)

Were *Mishpatim* to be split, the new lineup would have been as follows:

<i>Mishpatim 1</i>	<i>Mishpatim 2</i>	<i>Terumah</i>	<i>Tetzaveh</i>	<i>Ki Tisa</i>
27 Shevat	4 Adar I	11 Adar I	18 Adar I	25 Adar I (Shekalim)

If, in addition, *Miketz* or *Va'era* had been split, *Shekalim* would then have fallen out with *Tetzaveh*.

91. On Megillah, 30a.
92. *Siddur Rashi*, op. cit., pg. 155.
93. *Mahzor Vitry*, op. cit., pg. 155.
93. *Mahzor Vitry*, op. cit., pg. 203,4.
94. The fact that *Shekalim* fell out with *Tetzaveh* or *Ki Tisa* during the period of the *rishonim*, when the annual cycle was universally completed on *Simhat Torah*, precludes the explanation that this lineup of *parshiyot* was possible during the Talmudic era solely because they were finishing the cycle at a different time.
95. *Tur*, op. cit., 685.
96. On Megillah, 30a.
97. *Beit Yosef* on *Tur* *ibid*, s.v. UM" S.
98. *Mishnah Torah, Hilkhot Tefillah*, 13, 2.
99. *Beit Habehirah* on Megillah, 30a.
100. *Vide infra* footnote 101a.
101. a. This is undoubtedly what *HaMeiri* was alluding to when stating that *sedarim* (sic) were divided in order to make this lineup possible.
- b. When *Tetzaveh* on *Shabbat Shekalim* lined up with *Tzav* on *Shabbat Hagadol*, one merely had to divide *Ki Tisa* (a practice that *HaMeiri* himself takes note of ( *[vide infra]* ) to have the requisite six Torah readings.
102. *Abudarham Hashalem*, op. cit., pg. 373.
103. *Kiryat Sefer*, pg. 84.
104. I.D. Gilat, "The Drasha and the Reading of the Torah in the Synagogue on the Sabbath," pg. 271, footnote 24, in "*Jews and Judaism in the Second Temple, Mishnah and Talmud Period*, (in Hebrew), Editors I. Gafni, A. Oppenheimer, Yad Izhak Ben-Zvi, Jerusalem, 1993; J. Mann, *The Bible As Read and Preached In The Old Synagogue* (two volumes), Jewish Publication Society, Philadelphia, 1940-1966, delineates in detail the variants in the *sidrot*. One order of these *sidrot* is demarcated on the inner margins of the contemporary "Koren" Tanach. In the common "Humash with Rashi" found in most synagogues, the number of *sidrot* that respectively comprise each of the books of the Torah is noted immediately following the concluding verse of each *sefer*.
105. *HaMeiri's* observation (*Kiryat Sefer* pg. 84) that "there are those who always combine *Ki Tisa* with *Vayyifien*" (*Shemot* 32:15) would appear to indicate that he related to these entities as two separate *parshiyot* – in spite of the Talmud dealing with the "entire" *Ki Tisa* as one *parashah* (*vide supra*).
106. There are still two *parshiyot* of today's standard cycle that are respectively identical with *sidrot* of the triennial cycle: *Ha'azinu* and *VeZot Habrakha*.
107. The historical process by which the annual cycle of the Babylonians came to be universally accepted spanned one half of a millennium. Already in Eretz Yisrael of the seventh – eighth centuries, there were many congregations who had abandoned the triennial cycle in favor of the annual one. (E. Fleischer, *The Yotzer – Its Emergence and Development*, The Magnes Press, Jerusalem, 1984, pg. 94). In Fustat, Egypt, amongst the last outposts of the triennial cycle, it was the *minhag* of the Eretz Yisrael community during the early 13th century to read the [Babylonian] *parashah* from a *humash* – and then follow with the formal reading of the [Eretz Yisrael] *sidra* from a *Torah*. (E. Fleischer, *Eretz-Israel Prayer and Prayer Rituals* etc., op. cit., pgs. 293, 4). Thus existed another possible vehicle for continued "cross pollination" of the traditions – and for *sidrot* of the triennial cycle to be reflected in the annual cycle as well.
108. Even in these "stations" there are times, i.e., the *Shabbat* prior to *Shavu'ot*, when there may be a one *parashah* gap between Eretz Yisrael and the diaspora; *vide infra* footnote 111.



## The Torah Reading Cycle - Past and Present

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109. *Vide Supra*.
110. Consistent with this premise is the fact that the *Shulhan Arukh*, other than dealing with the “stations” of the cycle and the splitting of *Nitzavim* (*Orah Hayyim* 428-4), discusses the subject no further!
111. *Tikkun Issachar*, 32b; he also notes that it would be inappropriate for those in Eretz Yisrael to catch up with those outside of the land as that would be ceding primacy to the diaspora – especially since this adjustment was being done solely because of the celebration of a purely *Rabbinical* holiday without any counterpart in Eretz Yisrael. This touches on yet another aspect of the reading cycle i.e., it is a creation of diaspora Jewry and was only *secondarily* transplanted onto the Jews of Eretz Yisrael, following the demise of their triennial cycle. For this reason, at least one “station” of the reading cycle – that of *parashat Bemidbar* being read prior to *Shavu'ot* – is less often adhered to in Eretz Yisrael. Thus, as already noted, in any leap year in which the eighth day of *Pesah* falls out on a *Shabbat*, *parashat Naso* (and not *Bemidbar*, as in the diaspora) is read in Eretz Yisrael prior to *Shavu'ot* – thus separating by two weeks the *tokhehah of Behukotai* from that holiday.
112. *Tikkun Issachar*, 38b.
113. See also *She'ailot u'Teshuvot Maharit*, Tel Aviv, 5719, part 2, *Orah Hayyim*, *Teshuva* 4.
114. *Tikkun Issachar*, 33b; Geniza documents, however, portray a different scene. The writings of R. Abraham the son of *Rambam*, three centuries earlier, reflect a significant degree of tension existing between the two traditions. (Fleischer, *Eretz-Israel Prayers and Prayer Rituals* etc., op.cit., pgs. 215-218).
115. *Encyclopedia Judaica*, Keter Publishing House, Jerusalem, 1972, Vol. 16, pg. 1476.
116. It apparently was the printers who “created” the 54th *parashah* by elevating *Vayelekh* to a *parashah* in its own right – for reasons of simplicity – as this “*parashah*”, along with its own *haftarah*, is not infrequently read as a *separate* entity. In modern *humashim* there still is a trace of *Vayelekh's* former status of just being the concluding *thirty* verses of *Nitzavim* that were split off from the “mother” *parashah*. At the conclusion of *Vayelekh* is found the note that there are *seventy* verses in this *parashah* – which is correct only if the *forty* verses of *Nitzavim* are considered part of the total!

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### RECENT BOOKS

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**ISRAELI FOLK MUSIC - SONGS OF THE EARLY PIONEERS.** Edited by Hans Nathan with a forward and afterword by Philip V. Bohlman, Madison Wisconsin: A-R Editions, Inc., 1944, 64 pp.

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Begun in the 1930's by Hans Nathan in Berlin, this authoritative book is a comprehensive treatment of early Israeli folk song. Inspired by postcards with musical notation of the songs, the postcards were distributed by The Keren Kayemeth, the Palestine National Fund with the intent to stimulate a nationalistic music project. It was Hans Nathan who took up and coordinated this challenge. Although his work was interrupted by WWII he continued this project after emigrating to Boston. Nathan invited such composers as Paul Dessau, Kurt Weill, Darius Milhaud, Stefan Wolpe, Arthur Honegger, Aaron Copland, Ernst Toch, and Eric Walter Sternberg to arrange the songs with piano accompaniment. In total the book has seventeen songs. Included also are the texts and translations of all the songs, facsimiles of the postcards and references.

Prof. Bohlman's in-depth “Afterword” sheds exceptional light on the early Israeli folk song and the postcards. His assessment of styles of each of the composer's creation is particularly valuable. The work has been published under the imprint of the Recent Researches in the Oral Traditions of Music with Philip V. Bohlman, General Director.

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**MUSIC IN THE JEWISH COMMUNITY OF PALESTINE 1880-1948 - A SOCIAL HISTORY.** By Jehoash Hirshberg, New York: Oxford University Press Inc., 1995, 297 pp.

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*Music in the Jewish Community of Palestine* is a most noteworthy and useful work written with clarity of style, presenting a social history of the music of the Jewish community in Palestine from 1880-1948. Prof. Hirshberg opens with a description of music in Palestine under Ottoman rule, and then proceeds to chart the momentous history of the next seventy years in a broadly chronological framework. The author brings together the influences of numerous outstanding personalities and movements that shaped the music of the country. Among them are Abraham Zvi Idelsohn who "affected a major turning-point in the cultural life and status of Jerusalem" (p. 11). About Bronislaw Huberman the author writes "unlike previous ventures which were instigated by local immigrant musicians, the creation of the Palestine Orchestra (Israel Philharmonic Orchestra) was a daring enterprise from the outside" (p. 122). The Kibbutz movement and the World Centre for Jewish Music likewise played an important role. Individuals who played a significant part were Joel Engel, Jacob Weinberg, Mordecai Sandberg, Stephen Wolpe, Erich Walter Sternberg, Hermann Swet, Marc Lavry, Alexander U. Boskovitch, Peter E. Gradenwitz and Paul Ben-Haim and many others.

This book, with its wealth of detail, will earn not only the admiration of the music specialist but it can be equally important to social historians, cultural anthropologists, and historians of contemporary Jewry.

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**FROM THE BIBLE TO BROADWAY - A SHORT HISTORY OF JEWISH MUSIC.** By Sylvia Gilbert, Nashville, Tennessee: James C. Winston Publishing Company, Inc., 1995, 80 pp.

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Sylvia Gilbert writes in her conclusion to her short booklet that, "Jewish music today is a mixture of many ingredients and thus a true mirror of Jewish History" (p. 60). In a brief format she takes the reader on a musical journey from "Music from the Bible" to "Broadway". Along the way she touches on cantillation, Jewish folk song, the *hazzan*, hasidic music, Yiddish theater, Jewish composers, choirs and choruses, art music, synagogue music, and Israeli music. The last pages include texts of songs for Passover, Hanukkah and Purim, and Israeli folk songs as well as several musical settings of liturgical texts.

The booklet, designed for the beginner or perhaps children, whets the appetite for the reader to learn more about Jewish music.

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**RESPONSA OF MODERN - JUDAISM - QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS ON JUDAISM, VOL. 3.** By Rabbi Sholom Klass, Brooklyn, New York: Jewish Press Publications, 1995, 394 pp.

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Rabbi Sholom Klass' book, *Responsa of Modern Judaism*, will no doubt become as valuable a source of informaton as his earlier two volumes. In this new work, Rabbi Klass delves into the Bible and Talmud and from there into the literature of various decisors of each era to answer questions on observing the Sabbath, holidays, marriage, children, death and mourning, as well as numerous other topics. The book presents a mixture of *halakhah*, custom, history, and Torah guidance for everyday living. The wide range of topics were culled from thousands of questions and answers Rabbi Klass gave during the years in the Anglo-Jewish newspaper, The Jewish Press.

This work is written in simple, readable, and straightforward language and surely has a place in synagogues and libraries, and among inquisitive laymen and educators. It contains a wealth of information and is a pedagogical tool with wide range application.

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**SHARASHAY MINHAG ASHKENAZ.** By Rabbi Binyamin Shlomo Hamburger, Bnei-Brak, Israel: Makhon Moreshet Ashkenaz, 1995, 481 pp.

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This volume examines a large segment of the *halakhot* and *minhagim* as

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practiced in the Ashkenazic tradition. It interests the reader chiefly by virtue of its tracing many of the practices to various talmudic and rabbinic sources. Moreover, while discussing variant traditions, this analytical work allows the reader a glimpse into the astounding wealth of material that cause one specific custom to be preferred over another. For example, when elaborating on the interaction between the *Sheliah Tzibbur* and congregation when reciting *Kedushah*, the author cites the *minhag* of the *geonim*, Rosh, Sephardim and Yemenites, Poland, Taz, Ari, Lithuania, Gra, and Ashkenaz and shows why the Ashkenazic tradition should prevail.

Of special interest to the Jewish music historian are the melodies and practices discussed for singing when the Torch is removed and returned to the ark (p. 148), *Al Hakol* (p. 155), *Ledavid Barukh* (p. 193), *Barekhu* (p. 209), *Semayhim Betzaytum* and *Kaddish Titkabayl* (p. 400), and blowing the *shevarim* and *teruah* sounds on the *Shofar* (p. 324). Those interested in pronunciation will find the chapter dealing with the vowel *holam* fascinating.

In order to further streamline the reader's searches through this abundance of scholarship and tradition, a detailed table of contents and an index of names and places are on hand. At the end of each chapter a summary is given. For those interested in *halakhah* and *minhag*, the book is a treasure.

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**SEFER HA-NEYAR.** By Dr. Gersion Appel, Jerusalem: Makhon Yerushalayim, 1944, 249 pp.

This classic work, *Sefer HaNeyar*, contains forty-four chapters, embracing all the *halakhot* governing the day-to-day observance of the Jew. Written by an anonymous author, the manuscript was in existence for some 600 years before it was published. Some attribute its title to one of the first books written on paper (*neyar*, "paper") while others credit its title as being derived from the French town Niort.

Dr. Appel annotated the sources to the book in order to show how the author derived at his *halakhic* decisions. The first part of the volume, *Hilkhoh Kiddush Vehavdalah* (par. 1) up to *Hilkhoh Yayin Nesekeh* (par. 25), was published by Makhon "Sura" and Yeshiva University in 1960. This is the first time that all forty-four chapters are published together.

The in-depth introduction to the work gives insights as to the book's contents, the author's outlook on *halakhah*, the book's importance and influences, the source of the book's name and its preparation, and the seven different manuscripts that were found.

The professional, as well as the erudite layman, who will study this book will have a unique opportunity to learn the customs of France and Germany, including their valuable *halakhic*, literary, and historical material written by one of the last *tosafists* of the late thirteenth or early fourteenth century.

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**JUDAISM AND HEBREW PRAYER - NEW PERSPECTIVES ON JEWISH LITURGICAL HISTORY.** By Stefan C. Reif, New York, N.Y.: Cambridge University Press, 1993/'95, 437 pp.

In this work Stefan C. Reif provides an overall scientific treatment of Jewish liturgical history from biblical to modern times. The nine chapters include "On Jewish liturgical research," "The biblical inspiration", "The early liturgy of the synagogue", "Some liturgical issues in the Talmudic sources", "How the first Jewish prayer-book evolved", "Authorities, rites and texts in the Middle Ages", "From printed prayers to the spread of pietistic ones", "The challenge of the modern world", "A background to current developments."

The author deplores the situation that intensive study of Jewish liturgy is still not taken seriously in academic institutions as well as rabbinical seminaries. "It is not therefore surprising that in comparison with similar areas of study, the number of articles and books on the subject as a whole is few, courses are rare, progress in research is slow and spasmodic, and the interest of learned societies and academic conferences is distinctly limited" (p. 9).

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*Judaism and Hebrew Prayer* has many powerful insights into liturgical development that capture the imagination of changing circumstances and outlooks. It is an indispensable book for anyone interested in the study of Jewish liturgy.

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**KOHAH SHEL MILAH - DER KOAH FUN A VORT.** By Yisrael Leib Nulman, Jerusalem: 1995, 138 pp.

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In this work the author explains, in Hebrew, the meaning of 96 sayings which reflect the many aspects of Jewish life. The book unearths the curious origins of the sayings, both lofty and commonplace, and carries the reader to a number of rabbinic luminaries as well as rabbinic sources to whom these sayings are often related.

Whether a folk saying, or a saying of the Sages, of a proverb in Yiddish, or a saying derived from a word of Torah, each one telescopes entire concepts. The author writes in his introduction that the Talmud often uses the format of a popular saying. For example, Raba asked Rabbah b. Mari fifteen times, "Whence can be derived the proverbial saying - - - - - "? (Baba Kama 92 a, b).

This is a unique compendium of helpful, meaningful, enjoyable, and certainly thought-provoking material for the professional as well as the layman. It will enrich all those who will read it.

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**WHEN A GRANDPARENT DIES - A KID'S OWN REMEMBERING WORKBOOK FOR DEALING WITH SHIVA AND THE YEAR BEYOND.** By Nechama Liss-Levinson, Woodstock, Vermont: Jewish Lights Publishing, 1995, 48 pp.

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It is a known fact to adults that death is inevitable and its naturalness is part of the very fabric of the world since creation. To the child, however, it is the first encounter with grief. What should a child feel? How should he/she react?

This workbook, designed for children aged 7-11, answers these questions and tells much more. The book is divided into three parts: "Remembering during the first week - *Shiva*", "Remembering throughout the whole year", and "Remembering during holidays". In addition to children learning about themselves and their background, the information may be life-lasting.

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### RECORDED JEWISH MUSIC

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**THE HARP OF KING DAVID: SONGS OF LONGING AND HOPE.** Dominique Piana, harpist and Cantor Gregory Yaroslow, Soloist; Redlands, California. Harpiana Productions.

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This release, available on CD or cassette, offers a combination of vibrant melodies that echo the sounds of medieval Spain, the colors of the Mediterranean, and the haunting melismas of the near East. Available also with this release are extensive notes in English, French, and Spanish.

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**CASSETTE RECORDING.** Sung by E. Flam and J. Markowitz, Ben Fishman, Producer; Brooklyn, N.Y. Benor Music Publishers.

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This recording, both in English and Hebrew, consists of four phases of Jewish history. Songs such as "Heritage", "Earth, Sky, and Heaven," "It Was So", and "Lord Thank You" make up this tape that can be very useful in integrating into a cantata or play on a Jewish theme.

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