



OFF-RAMP TORAH

A JUDICIOUS DEPARTURE FROM
THIS WEEK'S TORAH PORTION

- February 24, 2024 -



בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ, אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם,
אֲשֶׁר קִדְּשָׁנוּ בְּמִצְוֹתָיו, וְצִוָּנוּ לְעֲסוֹק בְּדַבְרֵי תוֹרָה:

TO START: Parashat-haShavu'a Stats

Weekly Portion: T'tzaveh Exodus 27:20-30:10

Sequence in Torah cycle: 20th of 54

Sequence in Exodus: 8th of 11

WHERE WE'RE GOING INSTEAD, and why

Numbers 28:9-15

Context: Last week's Torah portion furnished the specifications of the components for the Mishkan, the portable shrine which more than symbolically will be God's abode within the Israelite encampment. This week continues with an outline of the ordination of the Aaronide priesthood, and of the vestments they will wear at their sacred service.

Content: Two weeks ago we focused on that day having been Rosh Chodesh, the New Moon, of the month of Adar. That means that **today**— two weeks later, the Full Moon of Adar— **should by rights be Purim. Let's explore why it isn't.**

Presenting the Time-table - the Book of Esther

3:7] - Beginning in The First Month [of the Hebrew calendar]— which is [the Persian] month of Nissan— in the twelfth year of the reign of King Artaxerxes, Haman had them begin throwing the *pur* (that is, casting lots) before him every day throughout every month, until at last it fell out on **The Twelfth Month, which is the month of Adar.**

3:8] - Whereupon Haman declared to King Artaxerxes: "There is one nation, scattered and dispersed amongst the other peoples throughout all the provinces of your kingdom, whose laws are different from everyone else's, so that they disregard the King's laws. It is not to the King's advantage to let them be. [3:9] - If it please the King, let a decree be written to destroy them, and I will allocate ten thousand talents [= 375 tons] of silver for the costs to be drawn from the royal treasury."

בַּחֹדֶשׁ הָרִאשׁוֹן הוּא חֹדֶשׁ נִסָּן
בְּשָׁנַת שְׁתַּיִם עֶשְׂרֵה לַמֶּלֶךְ
אֲחַשְׁוֵרוּשׁ הַפִּיל פּוּר הוּא הַגּוֹרֵל
לִפְנֵי הָמָן מִיּוֹם לְיוֹם וּמְחֻדָּשׁ
לְחֹדֶשׁ שְׁנַיִם עָשָׂר הוּא חֹדֶשׁ אָדָר

וַיֹּאמֶר הָמָן לַמֶּלֶךְ אֲחַשְׁוֵרוּשׁ יְשָׁנוּ
עִם אֶחָד מִפָּגֶר וּמִפֶּרֶד בֵּין הָעַמִּים
כָּל מְדִינוֹת מְלְכוּתְךָ וְדַתֵּיהֶם
שְׁנוֹת מִכָּל עַם וְאֵת דַּתִּי הַמֶּלֶךְ
אֵינָם עוֹשִׂים וְלַמֶּלֶךְ אֵין שׂוּהָ
לְהַנִּיחָם אִם עַל הַמֶּלֶךְ טוֹב יִכְתֹּב
לְאַבְדָם וְעֲשֶׂרֶת אֲלָפִים כֶּסֶף
אֲשָׁקוּל עַל יְדֵי עֲשֵׂי הַמְּלָאכָה
לְהָבִיא אֶל גְּנָזֵי הַמֶּלֶךְ

- more over

3:10] - Whereupon the King removed his signet ring from his hand and gave it over to Haman son of Ham'data the Agagite, hater of the Judeans. [3:11] - And the King declared to Haman: “The silver is given over to you, as is that people, to do with as you see fit.”

3:12] - So the Imperial scribes recorded on the thirteenth day of The First Month that dispatches were to be written and sent to all the imperial officers and regional officials throughout the entire Empire, regarding all that Haman had instructed— directed to every province in its own respective language and writing-script— all issued in the name of the Emperor Artaxerxes and sealed with the Emperor’s own signet.

3:13] - These documents were dispatched by couriers, instructing all the provinces within the realm of the King to **destroy, kill off, and massacre all the Judeans**— young and old, infants and women— **on a single day (the thirteenth day of The Twelfth Month, which is the month of Adar)** and to **take their property as spoils**. [3:14] - The substance of this decree was to be proclaimed as law throughout each and every province, and made known to all the peoples, that they might be ready in anticipation of that day.

וַיִּסֶר הַמֶּלֶךְ אֶת טַבַּעְתּוֹ מֵעַל יָדוֹ
וַיִּתְּנָהּ לְהֶמָּן בֶּן הַמְּדַתָּא הָאֲגָגִי
צָרֵר הַיְהוּדִים וַיֹּאמֶר הַמֶּלֶךְ לְהֶמָּן
הַכֶּסֶף נָתַן לָךְ וְהָעָם לַעֲשׂוֹת בּוֹ
כַּטּוֹב בְּעֵינֶיךָ

וַיִּקְרְאוּ סִפְרֵי הַמֶּלֶךְ בַּחֲדָשׁ
הָרִאשׁוֹן בְּשָׁלוֹשָׁה עָשָׂר יוֹם בּוֹ
וַיִּכְתֹּב כָּכָל אֲשֶׁר צִוָּה הֶמָּן אֶל
אֲחֻשְׁדָּרְפָּנִי הַמֶּלֶךְ וְאֶל הַפְּחוֹת
אֲשֶׁר עַל מְדִינָה וּמְדִינָה וְאֶל שְׂרֵי
עַם וְעַם מְדִינָה וּמְדִינָה כְּכַתְּבָהּ
וְעַם וְעַם כְּלָשׁוֹנוֹ בְּשֵׁם הַמֶּלֶךְ
אֲחֻשְׁוֹרֶשׁ נִכְתָּב וְנִחְתָּם בְּטַבַּעַת
הַמֶּלֶךְ

וְנִשְׁלַח סִפְרִים בְּיַד הָרָצִים אֶל כָּל
מְדִינוֹת הַמֶּלֶךְ לְהַשְׁמִיד לְהַרְגוֹ
וּלְאַבֵּד אֶת כָּל הַיְהוּדִים מִנְּעֵר וְעַד
זָקֵן טַף וְנָשִׁים בְּיוֹם אֶחָד בְּשָׁלוֹשָׁה
עָשָׂר לַחֲדָשׁ שְׁנַיִם עָשָׂר הוּא חֲדָשׁ
אָדָר וּשְׁלָלָם לְבוֹז פְּתִשְׁגֹּן הַכְּתָב
לְהַנְתִּין דָּת בְּכָל מְדִינָה וּמְדִינָה גְלוּי
לְכָל הָעַמִּים לְהִיּוֹת עֲתִידִים לַיּוֹם
הַזֶּה

The Achaemenid Empire



- continued

8:10] - So it was written in the name of King Artaxerxes— and signed with the King's signet, and dispatched in written form by courier, horse, and chariot of the royal stables— [8:11] - that **the King had granted the Judeans of each and every city license to assemble together and stand in defense of their lives**, and to destroy, kill off, and massacre any inimical people or district that arose to attack them— killing them, their children, and their wives, **and taking their property as spoils**— [8:12] - throughout the entire dominion of King Artaxerxes **on a single day: the thirteenth day of The Twelfth Month, which is the month of Adar.**

וּכְתַב בְּשֵׁם הַמֶּלֶךְ אֲחַשְׁוֶרֶשׁ
וַיִּחַתֵּם בְּטַבַּעַת הַמֶּלֶךְ וַיִּשְׁלַח
סִפְרִים בְּיַד הָרָצִים בְּסוּסִים וּרְכָבִי
הָרֶכֶשׁ הָאֲחַשְׁתָּרְנִים בְּנֵי הָרַמְכִים
אֲשֶׁר נָתַן הַמֶּלֶךְ לַיהוּדִים אֲשֶׁר
בְּכָל עִיר וְעִיר לְהַקְהֵל וּלְעַמֵּד עַל
נַפְשָׁם לְהַשְׁמִיד וּלְהַרְגֹּ וּלְאַבֵּד אֶת
כָּל חַיִּל עִם וּמְדִינָה הַצָּרִים אֹתָם
טַף וְנָשִׁים וּשְׁלָלָם לְבוֹז בְּיוֹם אֶחָד
בְּכָל מְדִינוֹת הַמֶּלֶךְ אֲחַשְׁוֶרֶשׁ
בְּשְׁלוֹשָׁה עָשָׂר לַחֹדֶשׁ שְׁנַיִם
עָשָׂר הוּא חֹדֶשׁ אָדָר

9:20] - So Mordechai wrote down all these matters, and sent a written record of them to all the Judeans throughout all the provinces of King Artaxerxes, both near and far, [9:21] - with instructions to take it upon themselves henceforth **to observe the fourteenth day of The Month of Adar (as well as the fifteenth day thereof)**, each and every year, [9:22] - as the occasion **when the Judeans had relief from their enemies**, and as the month that was changed over for them from disaster to joy, and from mourning to a festival, **and to celebrate them** as days of **feasting and rejoicing**, and of sending food-gifts to one another and providing gifts to the needy.

וּכְתַב מֹרְדֳכַי אֶת הַדְּבָרִים הָאֵלֶּה
וַיִּשְׁלַח סִפְרִים אֶל כָּל הַיְהוּדִים
אֲשֶׁר בְּכָל מְדִינוֹת הַמֶּלֶךְ
אֲחַשְׁוֶרֶשׁ הַקְּרוּבִים וְהָרְחוּקִים
לְקִים עֲלֵיהֶם לְהִיּוֹת עֲשִׂים אֶת
יוֹם אַרְבַּעַה עָשָׂר לַחֹדֶשׁ אָדָר וְאֶת
יוֹם חֲמִשָּׁה עָשָׂר בּוֹ בְּכָל שָׁנָה וּשְׁנָה
כַּיְמִים אֲשֶׁר נָחוּ בָהֶם הַיְהוּדִים
מֵאוֹיְבֵיהֶם וְהַחֹדֶשׁ אֲשֶׁר נֶהְפָּד
לָהֶם מִיָּגוֹן לְשִׂמְחָה וּמֵאֵבֶל לְיוֹם
טוֹב לַעֲשׂוֹת אוֹתָם יְמֵי מְשֻׁתָּה
וּשְׂמִיחָה וּמְשֻׁלוֹחַ מְנוֹת אִישׁ לְרֵעֵהוּ
וּמִתְּנוֹת לְאֲבִיוָנִים

מגלה נקראת באחד עשר בשנים עשר בשלשה עשר בארבעה עשר בחמשה עשר לא פחות ולא יותר

A) Mishnah M'gillah 1:1-2 - [Purim can be observed by the] **reading of the m'gillah** on the 11th, 12th, 13th, **14th, or 15th** [of Adar]— but never earlier or later than that.

כרכין המוקפין חומה מימות יהושע בן נון קורין בחמשה עשר

In **walled cities existing at the time of Joshua**, it is read on the 15th [= Shushan Purim].

כפרים ועירות גדולות קורין בארבעה עשר אלא שהכפרים מקדימין ליום הכניסה

In **villages and towns**, it is read on the 14th [of Adar] (except that in the case of villages it is preferable to read it earlier [on the adjacent prior market-day Monday or Thursday]).

חל להיות יום ארבעה עשר בשני כפרים ועירות גדולות קורין בו ביום ומוקפות חומה למחר

If the 14th falls out on a Monday, both villages and towns read it that day, while walled cities do so the next day [the 15th].

חל להיות בשלישי או ברביעי כפרים מקדימין ליום הכניסה ועירות גדולות קורין בו ביום ומוקפות חומה למחר

If the 14th falls out on a Tuesday or Wednesday, villages read earlier on the previous [Monday's market-day, the 12th or 13th]; towns read it on that [Tuesday or Wednesday]; and walled cities postpone until the next day [the 15th].

חל להיות בחמישי כפרים ועירות גדולות קורין בו ביום ומוקפות חומה למחר

If the 14th falls out on a Thursday [market-day], villages and towns read it that day, while walled cities postpone until the next day [Friday, the 15th].

חל להיות ערב שבת כפרים מקדימין ליום הכניסה ועירות גדולות ומוקפות חומה קורין בו ביום

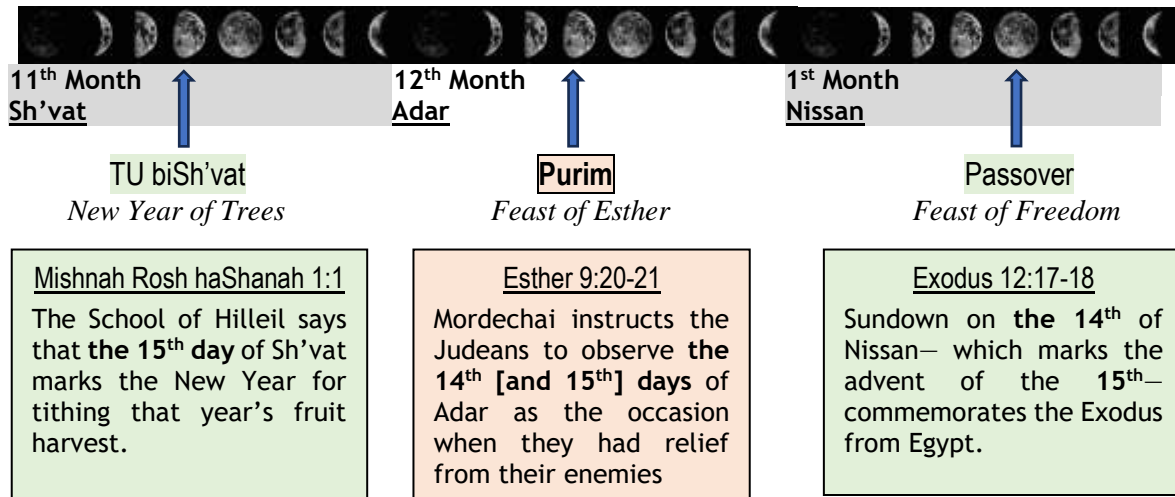
If the 14th falls out on a Friday, then villages read it on [the adjacent market-day Thursday, the 13th] while towns and walled cities both read it on its due date.

חל להיות בשבת כפרים ועירות גדולות מקדימין וקורין ליום הכניסה ומוקפות חומה למחר

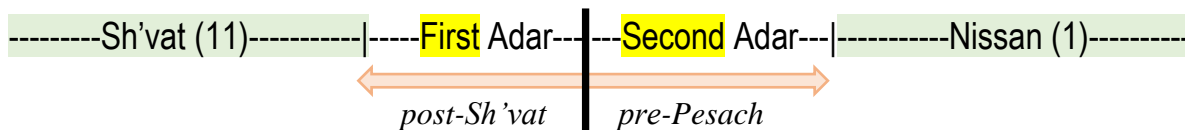
If the 14th falls out on a Saturday Shabbat, then villages and towns read it on [the adjacent market-day Thursday the 12th], while walled cities postpone until the next day [Sunday, the 15th].

חל להיות אחר השבת כפרים מקדימין ליום הכניסה ועירות גדולות קורין בו ביום ומוקפות חומה למחר

If the 14th falls out on a Sunday, then villages read it on [the prior market-day Thursday, the 11th], while towns read it on that [Sunday the 14th], and walled cities postpone until the next day [Monday, the 15th].



In a Leap Year— Will the REAL “Twelfth Month” Please Stand Up



- continued

קראו את המגלה באדר הראשון ונתעברה השנה קורין אותה באדר השני

B) Mishnah M'gillah 1:4 - [If they observed Purim by] reading the *m'gillah* during the **First Adar** in an intercalated year, **they must then read it again during the Second Adar**.

אין בין אדר הראשון לאדר השני אלא קריאת המגלה ומתנות לאביונים

The only difference between the **First Adar** and the Second Adar is **the reading of the *m'gillah* and the Purim gifts to the needy**.

ועל אדר מפני הפורים

C) Babylonian Talmud, Rosh haShanah 19b - “Couriers are dispatched for **Adar, on account of Purim**” [Mishnah Rosh haShanah 1:3].

ואילו נתעברה השנה יוצאין אף על אדר שני מפני הפורים לא קתני מתניתין דלא כרבי דתניא רבי אומר אם נתעברה השנה יוצאין אף על אדר השני מפני הפורים

Why does that text not say, “When the year has been intercalated, couriers are dispatched to inform the community of the New Moon of the Second Adar, on account of Purim” (which is, in fact, a teaching of Rabbi Judah the Prince recorded elsewhere)?

לימא בהא קמיפלגי

Shall we say that the sages have a difference of agreement,

דמר סבר כל מצות הנוהגות בשני נוהגות בראשון

with one holding that all the ceremonies observed in Second Adar are also observed in the **First** [Adar],

ומר סבר כל מצות הנוהגות בשני אין נוהגות בראשון

while the other holds that the ceremonies observed in Second Adar are not observed in the **First** [Adar]?

לא דכולי עלמא מצות הנוהגות בשני אין נוהגות בראשון

No; both concur that any celebration observed in Second Adar is not observed in the **First** [Adar].

אם נער אחד נולד בכ"ט לאדר ראשון משנה מעוברת ונער אחד נולד באדר שני באחד בו

D) Joseph Karo (1488-1575), Shulchan Aruch – Orach Chayim 55:10 - If a child is born in an intercalated year [shortly before midnight] on the 29th of **First Adar**, and [his twin] is born a few minutes later on the 1st of Second Adar,

ושנת י"ג אינה מעוברת

and if the year they both turn thirteen is not a similarly intercalated year—

אותו שנולד בכ"ט לאדר הראשון צריך להמתין עד כ"ט לאדר בשנת י"ג להיות בן י"ג שנה

then **to be considered thirteen years old** the one born on the 29th of **First Adar** **must abide until the 29th of Adar of the following year** [by which time he is 14],

ואותו שנולד אחריו באחד באדר השני יהיה בן י"ג שנה כיון שהגיע אחד באדר של שנת י"ג

while his twin born after him on the first day of Second Adar will be considered thirteen years old on the arrival of Adar in the thirteenth year following their birth.

- more over

יום י"ד וט"ו שבאדר ראשון אין נופלים על פניהם

E) Joseph Karo (1488-1575), *Shulchan Aruch – Orach Chayim 697:1* - On the 14th and 15th day of **First Adar** [in an intercalated year] we do not “fall on our faces” [viz. we skip the *Tachanun* plea for compassion concluding morning worship];

ואין אומרים מזמור יענך ה' ביום צרה

we do not recite [the petitionary Psalm 20], “He will respond to you on the day of your distress”;

ואסורים בהספד ותענית

and we are forbidden to recite a eulogy or to undertake a fast.

פורים קטן
Purim Qatan
“Little Purim”

אבל שאר דברים אין נוהגים בהם וי"א דאף בהספד ותענית מותרים

But no other practices [associated with the joy of Purim] **are customary on that day**. Indeed, there are many authorities who say that eulogizing and fasting are permitted [on the full moon of First Adar].

הגה והמנהג כסברא הראשונה

NOTE [by Moshe Isserles of Cracow, 1530-1572]: The proper conduct is according to that first opinion [stating that no other practices associated with the joy of Purim are customary on “Little Purim”].

י"א שחייב להרבות במשתה ושמחה בי"ד שבאדר ראשון ואין נוהגין כן

There are some authorities— Tur [Jacob ben-Asher, 1270-1340], citing Isaac al-Fazi [1013-1103]— who maintain that it is an obligation to proliferate feasting and rejoicing on the 14th of **First Adar** in an intercalated year, but that is not the customary practice.

מ"מ ירבה קצת בסעודה כדי לצאת ידי המחמירים וטוב לב משתה תמיד

Nonetheless, **one should enhance one's meal a little**, in order to fulfill the teaching of those who are stringent in this manner, and one should always be glad-hearted at feasting.

בשנה מעוברת אם אירע שר"ח או ט"ו שבט או פורים קטן חל ביום ה' נוהגים שאין מתענים בהם

F) Chayim Margolis (1745?-1818), *Sha'arei T'shuvah, Laws of the M'gillah 685* - During an intercalated year, if Rosh Chodesh or TU biSh'vat or “Little Purim” fall out on a Thursday [= the full-assembly day when Torah is read, and when preparations are underway for the joyous feast of Shabbat], **we are accustomed not to practice self-deprivation on those days**.

וכדומה שנוהגים להקל אף אם אירע לו סעודת מצוה שהוא שייך בה

And all the authorities are similarly lenient when it comes to celebration of **the mitzvah-feast** associated with those occasions.

Israel Meyer Kagan (1838–1905), *Mishnah B'rurah* -

בפורים - היינו בשני ימים

G) *Laws of “Falling on the Face” 131:33* - [We do not recite the *Tachanun* plea for compassion] on Purim - this applies to both days [the 14th, and in walled cities the 15th],

וכן בפורים קטן בשנה מעוברת

- continued

and likewise on “**Little Purim**” in an intercalated year.

ובכל אלו אין אומרים גם במנחה שלפניו

In either of these cases, it is not recited at the *Minchah* service on the prior day.

H) Laws of Reading the *M'gillah* 697:1-2 -

ולכו"ע אין אומרים על הניסים כיון דאין קורין המגילה ואם אמרו אין מחזירין אותנו

It is universal practice not to recite [on “**Little Purim**”] “**For the miracles and wonders**” [inserted in the middle of the *Hoda'ah* Thanksgiving prayer in the *T'fillah*], inasmuch as we are not reading the *m'gillah* that day. And even if someone [in their personal silent recitation of the liturgy] did recite that prayer, the Cantor does not include it in the shared reprise of the *T'fillah* aloud.

יענך ואין אומרים א"א בפורים קטן ב' הימים

“He will respond to you [on the day of your distress” - Psalm 20] is **not** recited on “**Little Purim**,” for either of the two days [= the 14th or 15th of First Adar].

ומזמור לאסף בפורים קטן מקומות יש בלבוב שא"א אותו בכל יום שא"א תחנון

As for “A song of Asaf [- God stands in the divine assembly,” Psalm 82 - “Psalm of the Day” concluding weekday worship on Tuesday] on “**Little Purim**,” there are places in Lwow [= Lviv in western Ukraine] that they recite it as a regular part of the daily liturgy, even on those days when the *Tachanun* penitential prayer is not read,

ויש מקומות שאומרים רק ביום הלל א"א מזמור לאסף וכן נוהגים בפד"א while there are other places that they recite “A song of Asaf” only on days calling for the recitation of the *Hallel* Psalms of thanks-giving (which is the custom in Frankfurt on the Oder [in East Brandenburg, on the frontier with Poland]).

אם חל פורים קטן בשבת א"א צו"צ מי שאירע לו נס באדר וקבל ע"ע לעשות תמיד יום משתה ושמחה

If “**Little Purim**” falls on Shabbat, one does not recite the prayer “...the one on whose behalf a miracle was wrought in Adar,” **but nonetheless takes it upon himself always to make a joyous feast.**

Ψ 82 - A psalm of Asaph

God stands in the divine assembly;	among the divine beings He pronounces judgment.
How long will you judge perversely,	showing favor to the wicked?
Judge the wretched, and the orphan;	vindicate the lowly, and the poor;
Rescue the wretched and the needy—	save them from the hand of the wicked!
They neither know nor understand;	they go about in darkness.
All the foundations of the earth totter.	
I had taken you for divine beings,	sons of the Most High, all of you—
But you shall die as all men do;	fall like any prince.
Arise, O God, judge the earth,	for all the nations are Your possession!