



א שטיקל תורה A LITTLE SLICE OF TORAH
 פון פרשת דער וואָך FROM THE WEEKLY PORTION
 April 4, 2026



“Fostering diverse modes of attention to textual details cultivates correlative forms of attention to the world and divine reality”

Michael Fishbane (1943-), *Sacred Attunement: A Jewish Theology*

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

Parashat-haShavu'a Stats



<u>Weekly Portion:</u>	Chol haMo'eid Pesach
<u>Consists of:</u>	Exodus 33:12-34:26
<u>Sequence—</u>	“Torah Out Of Season,” reprising last month’s parashah “Ti Tissa”
<u>in Exodus:</u>	9 th of 11
<u>in annual Torah cycle:</u>	21 st of 54

A Salient Canapé Selected from the Portion -

Context: *Exodus, second of the Five Books of the Torah, is an account of how God liberated the Israelites from Egypt and entered into a Covenant with us at Mount Sinai, and a record of the legislations we undertook for the conduct of the society we were to establish in the Promised Land.*

Content: *The “Covenant Redux” following the making of the Golden Calf highlights only two Israelite duties: to forego idol-worship, and to hallow time by observing the three Pilgrimage Feasts appointed by The Eternal One. Of those we focus on only one—the current holiday of Passover—and the central religious duty associated with it.*

- An Exercise in Juxtaposition, and Context -

Exodus 34:18 -

	אַתְּ חַג הַמִּצּוֹת תִּשְׁמֹר
	שִׁבְעַת יָמִים תֹּאכַל מִצּוֹת
	אֲשֶׁר צִוִּיתִךָ
	לְמוֹעַד חֹדֶשׁ הָאָבִיב
	כִּי בְּחֹדֶשׁ הָאָבִיב יָצֵאתָ מִמִּצְרַיִם

You are to keep the Feast of Unleavened Bread.

For those seven days you are to eat [only] unleavened bread

which I have commanded you

in grain-ripening season—

for it was in that grain-ripening season that you went forth from Egypt.

- more over

noun **מַצָּה** *matzah*

plural **מַצּוֹת** *matzot*

מ-צ-ץ, "emptied out"

4x in Torah; none in NaCH

31x in Torah; 11 in NaCH

וַיִּפְצַר-בָּם מֵאֵד וַיִּסְרוּ אֵלָיו וַיָּבֵאוּ אֶל-בֵּיתוֹ

A) Genesis 19:3 - Since [Lot] insisted, [the two angelic messengers sent to Sodom] turned aside and entered his house,

**וַיַּעַשׂ לָהֶם מִשְׁתָּה וּמַצּוֹת
אֲפֹה וַיֹּאכְלוּ**

where he made them a feast, and baked [cakes of] *matzah* for them to eat.



Druze women
baking flatbread

**וַיִּגְדְּעוּן בָּהּ וַיַּעַשׂ גְּדֵי עֵזִים
וַיֹּאכְלוּ קֶמַח מַצּוֹת**

B) Judges 6:19 - Whereupon Gideon went in and prepared a goat-kid, and a **baking-of-flour** [into cakes of] *matzah*.

הַבָּשָׂר שָׁם בַּסֵּל וְהַמָּרְקָ שָׁם בַּפְּרוֹר וַיּוֹצֵא אֵלָיו אֶל תַּחַת הָאֵלֶּה וַיִּגַּשׁ

Putting the meat in a basket, and the pan-dripping gravy into a pan, he took them out to [the angelic messenger] under the oak tree and served it.

וְלֵאשָׁה עֶגְל מְרִבָּק בַּבַּיִת וְתַמְהָר וְתִזְבַּחְהוּ

C) I Samuel 28:24-25 - Now [this seer of Ein-Dor] had a stall-fattened calf at her home, which she hastened to slaughter.

וַתִּקַּח קֶמַח וְתָלַשׁ וְתַפְּהוּ מַצּוֹת

Then she took flour; and, having kneaded it, baked it into [cakes of] *matzah*.

וַתִּגַּשׁ לְפָנָיו שְׂאוֹל וְלְפָנָיו עֲבָדָיו וַיֹּאכְלוּ וַיִּקְמוּ וַיֵּלְכוּ בַלַּיְלָה הַהוּא

These she served before [King] Saul and his attendants— who, having eaten it, arose and left that same night.

מזגו לו כוס שני וכאן הבן שואל אביו

D) Mishnah P'sachim 10:4 - They pour out the Second Cup[, after recitation of the Festival Evening *Qiddush*], and this is the point where the child makes inquiry of the parent.

ואם אין דעת בבן אביו מלמדו מה נשתנה הלילה הזה מכל הלילות שבכל הלילות **אנו אוכלין חמץ ומצה** הלילה הזה כולו מצה

But if the child is too young, the parent prompts them: “How different tonight is, from all other nights! For, whereas **on all other nights we eat either leavened bread or *matzah***, tonight it is exclusively *matzah*!”

חג הפסח “the Feast of Passover”

only in our present passage,
Exodus 34:25

חג המצות “the Feast of *Matzot*”

9x in TaNaCH,
4 of them in Torah

מצות אֲשֶׁר צִוִּיתֶךָ “the unleavened bread which I have commanded you ”	
<u>Genesis 3</u> -	eating the fruit of the Tree (2x).
<u>Exodus 31</u> -	producing the accessories of the <i>Mishkan</i> (2x).
<u>Deuteronomy 12:21</u> -	eating first-born livestock at home (rather than at God’s Altar in the national shrine).
<u>Exodus 23:15 and 34:18</u> -	eating <i>matzah</i> at the Passover season.

E) Midrash Sifrei, Re’eh 23 -

כַּאֲשֶׁר צִוִּיתֶךָ - מה קדשים בשחיטה

“Which I have commanded you” - just as holy sacrifices must be properly slaughtered,

אף חולין בשחיטה so, too must routine meat be properly slaughtered.

ומה קדשים במקום

Similarly, just as holy sacrifices are associated with a place[– namely, the Temple in Jerusalem–]

אף חולין במקום

so, too is routine meat associated with that same place [ref. Deuteronomy 12:21].

F) Talmud, Chullin 85b -

כַּאֲשֶׁר צִוִּיתֶךָ מלמד שנצטוו משה על הושט

“Even as I have commanded you” [Deuteronomy 12:21] teaches you that Moses was instructed concerning the [simultaneous severing of the] trachea and the esophagus [when sacrificing],

ועל הקנה ועל רוב אחד בעוף ועל רוב שנים בבהמה

that [kosher slaughtering involves] the greater part of either of them for birds, and both of them for livestock.

אֲשֶׁר	relative pronoun -	“that which”	4,829x in TaNaCH
בְּאֲשֶׁר	conjunction -	“inasmuch as”	17x in TaNaCH
כְּאֲשֶׁר	relative adverb -	“at such time as”	496x in TaNaCH

שימושי אֲשֶׁר רבים יש מהם יורו על הזמן כגון וַיְהִי כְּאֲשֶׁר בָּא יוֹסֵף אֶל אָחָיו כְּאֲשֶׁר פָּלוּ לֵאכֹל אֶת הַשֶּׁבֶר וּדְוִמִיהֶם

G) RaMBaN (Bonastruc da Porta, 1194-1270) on Leviticus 4:22 - The conjunction אֲשֶׁר *asher* has many uses, among them as a designator of a specific time, as in “when Joseph came up to his brothers [Genesis 37:23]” or “when they had eaten all of the grain [Genesis 43:2]” and the like.

וכן את הַבְּרָכָה אֲשֶׁר תִּשְׁמָעוּ אֵל מִצְוֹת יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵיכֶם שְׁבַעַת יָמִים תֹּאכֵל מִצְוֹת אֲשֶׁר צִוִּיתֶךָ כֹּאֲשֶׁר צִוִּיתֶךָ

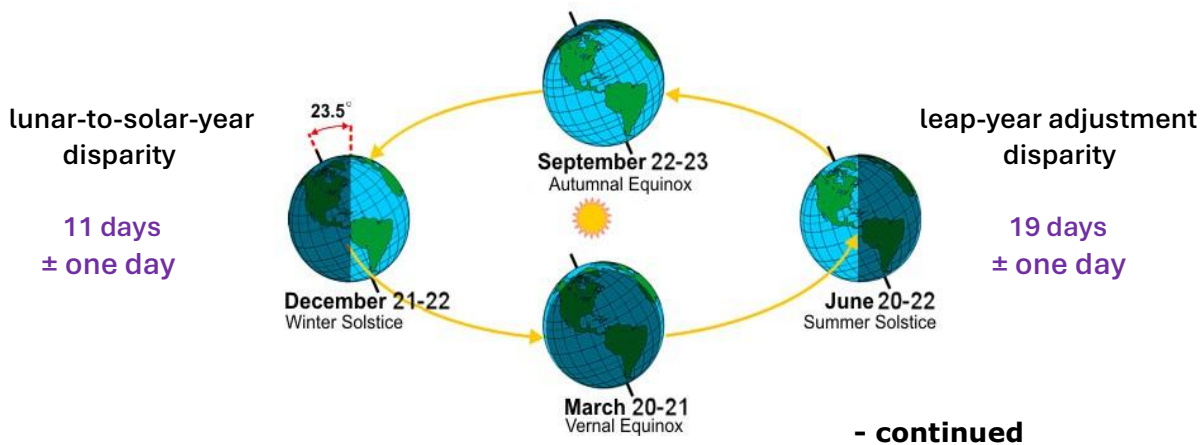
The same holds for “the blessing [coming to you] once you have hearkened to the commandment of the Eternal One, your God [which I am commanding you this day” - Deuteronomy 11:27],” and “for seven days you will eat [only] the unleavened bread which I have commanded you” means “at that time that I commanded you.”

את-חג המצות תִּשְׁמֹר - מכאן היה רבי יהודה בן בתירא אומר כל אֲשֶׁר צִוִּיתֶךָ כדי שלא תהא מביא אלא בַּחֹדֶשׁ הָאָבִיב

H) Midrash M’chilta d’Rabi YishmaEl, Mishpatim 20 - “You are to keep the Feast of Unleavened Bread” - it was on the basis of this that Rabbi Judah ben-Bateira says that Scripture adds “which I have commanded you” in order that you should not be bringing [the Passover offering at any other time] except “in grain-ripening season.”

- Tracking Incidence of 1st-Day Passover on 15th of Nissan -
 first full-moon following The Vernal Equinox (= March 20 ± one day)

2014	April 15	----	2019	April 20	+20	2024	April 23	+18
2015	April 4	-11	2020	April 9	-11	2025	April 13	-10
2016	April 23	+19	2021	March 28	-11	2026	April 2	-11
2017	April 11	-12	2022	April 16	+19	2027	April 22	+20
2018	March 31	-11	2023	April 6	-10	2028	April 11	-11



שְׁלֹשׁ רַגְלִים תִּחַג לִי בַשָּׁנָה

I) Exodus 23:14-15 - Three regular occasions you are to feast to Me each year.

אֶת-חַג הַמִּצּוֹת תִּשְׁמֹר

You are to observe the Feast of Unleavened Bread.

שִׁבְעַת יָמִים תֹּאכַל מִצּוֹת **כָּאֲשֶׁר צִוִּיתִךָ** לְמוֹעֵד חֹדֶשׁ הָאָבִיב **כִּי בּוֹ יֵצְאֵת מִמִּצְרַיִם**

For seven days you will eat [only] unleavened bread **at that time that I have commanded you**— in grain-ripening season, for it was **then** that you went forth from Egypt.

Hence in Exodus 34:18 -
כִּי בְחֹדֶשׁ הָאָבִיב יֵצְאֵת מִמִּצְרַיִם
for it was in that grain-ripening season that you went forth from Egypt.

וְלָקַחוּ מִן-הַדָּם וְנָתְנוּ עַל-שְׁתֵּי הַמְּזוּזוֹת וְעַל-הַמַּשְׁקוּף עַל הַבָּתִּים אֲשֶׁר-יֹאכְלוּ אֹתוֹ בָּהֶם

J) Exodus 12:7-8, 12:11 - They are to take some of the blood, and they are to place it on the two doorposts and on the lintel of the houses in which they will eat it.

וְאָכְלוּ אֶת-הַבָּשָׂר בִּלְיָלָה הַזֶּה צְלִי-אֵשׁ וּמִצּוֹת עַל-מֵרִיס יֹאכְלֶהוּ

Then they are to eat of the flesh that same night roasted in fire, eating it on unleavened bread with bitter herbs.

וְכָכָה תֹאכְלוּ אֹתוֹ

And in this manner are you to eat it:

מְתַגֵּיכֶם חֲגָרִים

with your loins girded;

your shoes on your feet;

and your staves in your hands.

וְאָכְלֶתֶם אֹתוֹ בְּחִפְזוֹן פֶּסַח הוּא לִיהוָה

For you are to eat it in haste— because it is the Passing-over offering for the Eternal One.

בַּעֲשֶׂר לַחֹדֶשׁ הַזֶּה וַיִּקְחוּ לָהֶם אִישׁ שֶׁה לְבַיִת-אֶבֶת שֶׁה לְבַיִת

K) Exodus 12:3, 12:6 - On the tenth day of this month they are to take themselves one sheep apiece (a sheep per household),

וְהָיָה לָכֶם לְמִשְׁמֶרֶת עַד אַרְבָּעָה עָשָׂר יוֹם לַחֹדֶשׁ הַזֶּה

guarding it until the fourteenth day of this month—

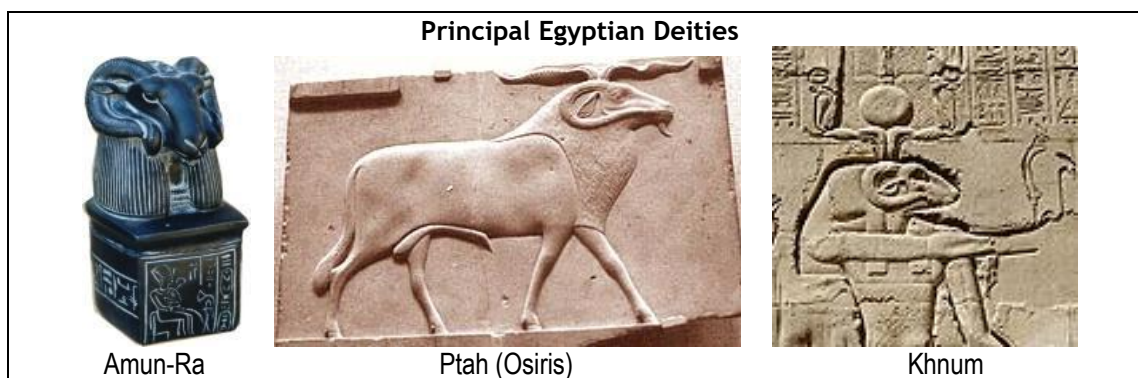
וְשַׁחֲטוּ אֹתוֹ כָּל קְהַל עֲדַת-יִשְׂרָאֵל בֵּין הָעֶרְבִים

then all the assemblage of the community of Israel will slaughter it at dusk.



נְעִלְיֶכֶם בְּרַגְלֵיכֶם

וּמַקְלֵיכֶם בְּיַדְכֶם



וְזָבַחְתָּ פֶּסַח לַיהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ **צֹאן וּבָקָר** בַּמָּקוֹם אֲשֶׁר יִבְחַר יְהוָה לְשִׁכְנוֹ שְׁמוֹ
שָׁם

L) Deuteronomy 16:2-3 - You are to offer up the Passover offering to the Eternal One, **whether from the flock or the herd**, only in that place which the Eternal One will have chosen as the abode of the Divine Name.

לֹא תֹאכַל עִלְיוֹ חֶמֶץ שִׁבְעַת יָמִים תֹּאכַל עִלְיוֹ מִצּוֹת לֶחֶם עֲנִי



You are not to eat it with leavened bread; for those [ensuing] seven days you are to eat with it only *matzah*, the bread of affliction,

כִּי בַחֲפֹזוֹן יָצֵאתָ מֵאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם

since it was in haste that you went forth from the land of Egypt—

לְמַעַן תִּזְכֹּר אֶת יוֹם צֵאתְךָ מֵאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם
כָּל יְמֵי חַיֶּיךָ

in order that you may remember the occasion when you went forth from the land of Egypt **all the days of your life.**

הרי הוא אומר וגם אשר לא שאלת נתתי לך גם אשר גם כבוד

M) Midrash Sifrei, Shof'tim 19 - Note that God says [to Solomon]: “Moreover I have granted you that which you did not request for yourself— both wealth and glory [I Kings 3:13].”

נְתַתִּי לְךָ עַל מַה שְׁלֹא הִתְנִיתִי בַתּוֹרָה לִיתֵן לְךָ

“I have granted you” that, the receipt of which I had not made conditional upon [your compliance with] the Torah;

נְתַתִּי לְךָ עַל מַה שֶׁהִתְנִיתִי לֹא אֵתָּן לְךָ אִלָּא אִם כֹּן עֲשִׂיתָ

and “I have granted you” that, the receipt of which I had stipulated not to give to you, **absent your compliance.**

וְכֹן הוּא אוֹמֵר וְאַתָּה אִם תִּלְךָ לְפָנַי כַּאֲשֶׁר הִלַּךְ דָּוִד אָבִיךָ בְּתָם לֵבָב וּבִישׁוֹר
לַעֲשׂוֹת כְּכֹל אֲשֶׁר צִוִּיתִיךָ חֻקֵי וּמִשְׁפָּטַי תִּשְׁמֹר

That is why Scripture continues further: “It is you only if you walk before Me even as your father David did, wholeheartedly and with integrity and doing all that I have commanded, and if you keep My statutes and regulations [I Kings 9:4].”

הנני מכון את לבי לקיים מצות בוראי באכילת מרור בפסח ככתוב בתרותך
ומצות על-מררים יאכלהו

N) “*Kavvanah*” (preliminary meditation) from the Passover *Haggadah* - **I hereby prepare my innermost being** to fulfill the commandment of my Creator by eating bitter herbs on Passover, even as it is written in Your Torah: “let them eat it on unleavened bread with bitter herbs [= Text J above].”

יהי לרצון שיעלה אלי כאילו יצאתי בכל מצות עשה שבתורה ונזכה אני
וכל בית ישראל להיגאל מעבדות לחרות

May it be Your Will that this be counted to my merit as if I had fulfilled thereby all the commandments taught in Your Torah, that thereby I and all the House of Israel be deemed worthy of being redeemed from servitude to freedom.

ברוך אתה יי אלהינו מלך העולם אשר קדשנו במצותיו וצונו על אכילת
מרור

We praise You, Eternal One, our God and universal Ruler, Whose *mitzvot* fill our lives with meaning and Who has instructed us concerning the eating of bitter herbs.

חַרְבוֹת יְרוּשָׁלַם	פָּצְחוּ רַגְנֵי יַחְדָּו
גָּאֵל יְרוּשָׁלַם	כִּי נַחַם יְהוָה עַמּוֹ
לְעֵינַי כָּל הַגּוֹיִם	חֲשָׁף יְהוָה אֶת זְרוּעַ קְדָשׁוֹ
אֵת יְשׁוּעַת אֱלֹהֵינוּ	וְרָאוּ כָּל אֲפִסֵי אֶרֶץ

O) Isaiah 52:9-12 -

Break forth and shout together, As the Eternal One consoles His people The Might of the Eternal will be revealed So that all the ends of the earth shall see	O ruins of Jerusalem, and redeems Jerusalem. in the sight of all the nations, our God's triumph!
טָמֵא אֶל-תִּגְעוּ נְשָׂאֵי כְּלֵי יְהוָה וּבְמִנוּסָה לֹא תֵלְכוּן וּמֵאֲסָפְכֶם אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל	סוּרוּ סוּרוּ צְאוּ מִשָּׁם צְאוּ מִתּוֹכָהּ הַבְּרוּ כִּי לֹא בְּחַפְזוֹן תֵּצְאוּ כִּי-הֲלֵךְ לִפְנֵיכֶם יְהוָה
Turn aside, turn from there Keep yourself pure as you go forth, For you will not go forth in haste, Because the Eternal One will lead you,	and touch nothing ritually unclean; O you who carry God's vessels! neither shall you flee as you go— and the God of Israel is your rear-guard!