

Insights Into Halacha: The Parasha Dual Dichotomy 5782/2022; Which Week is Which?.

By Rabbi Yehuda Spitz

This time of year is an interesting one. For the next several months or so, already starting right after Pesach, and lasting all the way almost up until Tisha B'Av, the Jewish world will not be aligned. No, I am not referring to constellations, but rather to the weekly parasha. A simple innocuous question of "What's this week's parasha?" will elicit a different response depending on where in the world the question is being asked. This is because the parasha will not be the same regularly scheduled one in Chutz La'aretz as it is in Eretz Yisrael.

Truthfully, this type of dichotomy actually happens not so infrequently, as it essentially occurs whenever the last day of a Yom Tov falls on Shabbos. In Chutz La'aretz where Yom Tov Sheini is halachically mandated,[1] a Yom Tov Kriyas HaTorah is publicly leined, yet, in Eretz Yisrael (unless by specific Chutznik minyanim)[2][3] the Kriyas HaTorah of the next scheduled Parasha is read. This puts Eretz Yisrael a Parasha ahead until the rest of the world soon 'catches up', by an upcoming potential double-Parasha, which each would be read separately in Eretz Yisrael.

The reason for this current interesting phenomenon is that this year, 5782/2022, the eighth day of Pesach, observed only outside Eretz Yisrael, fell out on a Shabbos. On this Shabbos / Yom Tov the communities of the Diaspora leined the Yom Tov reading of 'Asser Te'asser' (Devarim, Parashas Re'eh, Ch. 14: 22), whereas in Eretz Yisrael, communities read Parashas Acharei Mos, the next parasha in the cycle, as Pesach has already ended for them.

Parasha Background

The background for this uncanny occurrence is as follows: It is well known that the Torah is divided into 54 parshiyos, ensuring there are enough parshiyos for every Shabbos of the yearly cycle, which begins and ends on Simchas Torah. Since most (non-leap) years require less than 54 parshiyos, we combine certain parshiyos. This means that two consecutive parshiyos are read on one Shabbos as if they are one long parasha, to make sure that we complete the Torah reading for the year on Simchas Torah.

As detailed by the Abudraham, there are seven potential occurrences when we read "double parshiyos". These seven are:

Vayakheil / Pekudei, the last two parshiyos of Sefer Shemos.

Tazria / Metzora, in Sefer Vayikra.

Acharei Mos / Kedoshim, in Sefer Vayikra.

Behar / Bechukosai, in Sefer Vayikra.

Chukas / Balak, in Sefer Bamidbar.[4]

Matos / Masei, the last two parshiyos of Sefer Bamidbar.

Netzavim / Vayeileich, towards the end of Sefer Devarim.[5]

However, there are several possible instances in which certain parshiyos are combined in Chutz La'aretz, yet are read on separate weeks in Eretz Yisrael. This is one of them, with those parshiyos being Matos / Masei.

Calendarical Conundrum

Although, as mentioned previously, this sort of calendarical conundrum occurs not infrequently, it generally only takes about a month for the rest of the world to "catch-up" to Eretz Yisrael. But this year, 5782/2022, in what is inexplicable to many, instead of soon amalgamating, quite fascinatingly, this odd alignment with Eretz Yisrael being a week ahead continues for quite a while. In fact, the world will not actually synchronize until Mattos/Maasei – only realigning around Rosh Chodosh Av - a divergence of over three months (!) with Eretz Yisrael out of sync with the rest of the world,[6] all the while passing over several potential double-Parasha catch-up points. In Eretz Yisrael, Matos and Masei will be read separately on consecutive weeks, while in Chutz La'aretz they will be combined and read on a single Shabbos. The last several times a Parasha split of this magnitude occurred were back in 1995, 2016, and 2019. The next time will be in 21 years from now in 2043/5803.[7]

Many ask [in fact, this author has personally been asked this literally dozens of times over the last few weeks], why did we not catch up right away by Acharei Mos/Kedoshim or soon with Behar/Bechukosai? Or even Chukas/Balak? Why should three separate double parshiyos be passed over, with the world only amalgamating on the fourth possibility months later? In layman's terms, why should we wait so long for the whole world to be realigned?

Moreover, this causes all sorts of halachic issues for travelers to and from Israel during this time period – which Parasha should they be reading? If / how can they catch up? Although technically-speaking, since Kriyas HaTorah is practically considered a Chovas HaTzibbur, a communal obligation, one is not actually mandated to 'catch-up', but rather fulfills his Kriyas HaTorah obligation with whichever Kriyah is publicly correctly being read,[8] [9] nevertheless, commonly, special minyanim are set up expressly for this purpose. Many Yeshivos double-up the Parasha when most of the bochurim return from Chutz La'aretz in order to catch them up. In fact, several shuls in Eretz Yisrael, such as the renowned Zichron Moshe 'Minyan Factory', as well as the Beis Yisrael Shteiblach in Yerushalayim, offer a solution by hosting weekly "catch-up minyanim," featuring the Torah reading of each previous week's Israeli Parasha, which is the Chutznik's current one, until the calendars re-merge. But those flying back to Chutz La'aretz would presumably not have such a 'safety-net' to fall back on, unless one happens to be near the landmark Shomrei Shabbos Shul in Boro Park, which this author has heard offers a Shabbos minyan including the Israeli Parasha.

Minhag Yisrael

Although some cite alternate minhagim,[10] nevertheless, it is important to note that nowadays this long Parasha split is indeed Minhag Yisrael, as codified by the Knesses Hagedolah, Magen Avraham, and Mishnah Berurah.[11] [12] We should also realize that back then travel to and from Eretz Yisrael was far less of an issue, as since undertaking the trip would take several months, missing one Parasha would be the least of one's worries. But to properly understand the 'whys' of this fascinating dual dichotomy, one must first gain an understanding of the Parasha rules and setup. In fact, this is not a new question, as several early Acharonim, including the Maharit,[13] Rav Yosef Tirani, addressed this exact issue almost 500 years ago.

Managing Mnemonics

While it is true that technically Eretz Yisrael does not, nor should not, have to take Chutz La'aretz into account, to slow down or join parshiyos together due to their independent luachs (or to be grammatically correct, 'luchos') and cycles, as Eretz Yisrael's is indeed deemed the ikar kriyah,[14] nevertheless, there is more to the story.

The Tur, when codifying the halacha, sets four necessary sign-posts in relation to parshiyos, time of year, various Yomim Tovim. He also offers special codes, mnemonics, as to remember the proper order of parshiyos as they relate to. In a regular year, he writes, 'Pikdu U'Pischu'. This refers to Parashas Tzav being Shabbos Hagadol directly before Pesach.[15] However, in a leap year, like ours - 5782/2022, the mnemonic is 'Sigru U'Pischu,' Parashas Metzora is right before Pesach. The other three are: 'Minu V'Atzru,' Parashas Bamidbar is directly prior to Shavuot, 'Tzumu V'Tzalu,' the fast of Tisha B'Av is directly before Parashas Va'eschanan (also meaning that Parashas Devarim is always Shabbos Chazon and Va'eschanan always Shabbos Nachamu), and 'Kumu V'Tik'u,' that Parashas Netzavim is before Rosh Hashanah.[16] These mnemonics, denoting the four specific rules, or more accurately, necessary points of parasha alignment (or realignment) during the year, are accepted lemaaseh as halachah pesukah by all later authorities.[17]

Bamidbar = Buffer Zone

Several of these rules directly affect our split situation. Tosafos, and later seconded by the Levush,[18] states that since Parashas Bechukosai contains tochachah (rebuke), there must be a noticeable "buffer week" [or perhaps "intervening Shabbos"; practically, Parashas Bamidbar] between its reading and Shavuot. This tochacha does not fall out at this time of year simply by chance. The Gemara in Megillah (31b) teaches that Ezra HaSofer made a Takana that the curses of tochacha should be read twice a year – those in Vayikra (Parashas Bechukosai) before Shavuot and those in Devarim (Parashas Ki Savo) prior to Rosh Hashanah.

This is done so because we pray that a year and its curses should end, in order to usher in a new year with its blessings.[19] This is apropos for Shavuot as it is Rosh Hashanah for Peiros Ha'Ilan, tree fruits (see Gemara Rosh Hashanah 16a). Therefore, explains Tosafos, Bamidbar must be the stand-alone "buffer week" before Shavuot, in order to emphasize that we are getting Bechukosai in just before Shavuot.

Accordingly, the Maharit, citing Rav Yissachar ben Sussan, one of the foremost experts on intercalation of the Jewish calendar and its minhagim, in his renowned sefer Tikkun Yissachar (written in 1538/5298), explains that if Chutz La'aretz would catch up to Eretz Yisrael prior to Shavuot, then Parashas Nasso (the Parasha following Bamidbar) would be read on Shabbos Erev Shavuot, as it will be in Eretz Yisrael, and then all of Klal Yisrael will miss the 'buffer week' from the tochachah of Bechukosai.

Practically speaking, in Eretz Yisrael, there are no extra Shabbosos available to use as a buffer, so there is no way to fulfill this precept, and Nasso will be leined before Shavuot. But in Chutz La'aretz, where this option is still available, the Tikkun Yissachar and Maharit teach us that it is more important and preferable that at least Chutz La'aretz fulfill this dictate than it is that they catch up to Eretz Yisrael's parasha cycle.[20] [21]

So it turns out that the issue it is not why Eretz Yisrael doesn't simply slow down for Chutz La'aretz, but rather that Chutz La'aretz will not speed up to catch up to Eretz Yisrael. This 'Buffer Zone' preference answers up for Acharei Mos/Kedoshim and Behar/Bechukosai. However, there is still the subject of not catching up by Chukas/Balak.

Pondering the Pearls of Parashas Pinchas

The Maharit, and later the Knesses Hagedolah, explain that since Chukas and Balak are not commonly read together, whereas Matos and Masei are (there is an important reason for this, addressed a bit further on),[22] we do not simply combine the former, as opposed to the latter, just in order to save what amounts to a discrepancy of one week.[23]

The Bnei Yisaschar[24] adds an additional reason. He explains that whenever possible, we attempt to ensure the public reading of Chalukas Ha'aretz, the apportioning of Eretz Yisrael, during the period of communal mourning known as Bein Hametzarim,[25] colloquially called 'The Three Weeks.' This period commemorates the heralding of the beginning of the tragedies that took place prior to the destruction of both Batei Hamikdash, from the breaching of the walls of ancient Yerushalayim on the 17th of Tamuz, until the actual destruction of the Beis Hamikdash on the Tisha B'Av.

The reason for these readings, which are found in the parshiyos of Pinchas, Matos, and Masei, to be leined specifically then, is to remind us of Hashem's promise, that although we are currently in golus, exile, nevertheless, 'le'aileh techalek ha'aretz,' we will still inherit Eretz Yisrael.

A similar assessment is given by the Minchas Yitzchak,[26] albeit regarding Korbanos, especially the Korban Tamid, which is also detailed in Parashas Pinchas. He explains that the Korban Tamid protected Klal Yisrael from sinning with Avodah Zarah.[27] When the Korban Tamid was no longer offered, it enabled the Yetzer Hara'ah of Avodah Zarah to strengthen; and it was due to this sinning that eventually led to the Beis Hamikdash's destruction.

As such, and since we no longer have Korbanos, but at least we still have their recital, in the vein of 'v'neshalmah parim sifoseinu', that our tefillos are their current replacement,[28] the leining of the Korbanos is specifically read during the Three Weeks, when we are mourning the destruction of the Beis Hamikdash. This serves to embolden and enable us to fight the reasons and causes for its destruction, and allow its rebuilding.

Moadim L'Simcha!

An additional point the Bnei Yisaschar raises is that Parashas Pinchas contains the Parashas HaMoadim, the reading detailing all the Yomim Tovim and their observances. He explains that this is also an apropos reading for the Three Weeks, to comfort us in our time of mourning. This is as the Navi Zechariah (Ch. 8:19) prophesized that when the Geulah comes, this period will be turned into one of great rejoicing ('l'sasson u'lsimcha ul'moadim tovim').

For all of the above-mentioned reasons, it is simply not worthwhile for Chutz La'aretz to make Chukas and Balak into a double Parasha merely to catch up to Eretz Yisrael, since if it would, then Parashas Pinchas will not fall out in the Three Weeks at all.

Indeed, in Eretz Yisrael this year, Parashas Pinchas falls out directly before the Three Weeks,[29] Therefore, it is proper for Chutz La'aretz to wait and not catch up to Eretz Yisrael until Matos/Masei,

thus ensuring that Parashas Pinchas be leined during Bein Hametzarim, and enabling us to glean and appreciate its veiled significance and promises for the future.

The Code for Consolation

The Maharit continues that the reason why Matos and Masei are generally combined is to a similar, yet reverse, reason to Bamidbar. As the Tur wrote, the code for this time of year is 'Tzumu V'Tzalu,' the fast of Tisha B'Av is directly before Va'eschanan. This is not merely by chance.

Parashas Va'eschanan contains the pesukim of 'Ki Soleed Banim U'vnei Vanim V'noshantem Ba'aretz' (Devarim Ch. 4:25), which although not a pleasant reading, as it is a tochachah (rebuke),[30] nevertheless, Chazal[31] glean that there is a hidden message of redemption buried within. V'noshantem in Gematria equals 852, letting us know that after 852 years of living in Eretz Yisrael, the Galus would start. Yet, we find that the Galus actually started two years early, after 850 years. This is because Hashem did not want chas veshalom to have to destroy us (ad loc. verse 26), and therefore, as a kindness, brought the Exile two years early, to ensure Klal Yisrael's survival.

Therefore, explains the Maharit, we commonly join up Matos and Masei to make certain that Parashas Va'eschanan is always immediately following Tisha B'Av as Shabbos Nachamu, thus offering us a message of consolation even amidst the destruction.

In conclusion, although it may seem complicated and confusing, on the contrary, each calendrical calculation is clearly consistent with the clarion call of our Chazal - Parasha combination and separation, synchronized to showcase hope and consolation when we need it most, as well as serve as a buffer from condemnation.

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Rabbi Spitz's recent English halacha sefer, "Insights Into Halacha - Food: A Halachic Analysis," (Mosaica/Feldheim) has more than 500 pages and features over 30 comprehensive chapters, discussing a myriad of halachic issues relating to food. It is now available online and in bookstores everywhere.

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[1] As addressed at length in previous articles titled 'Rosh Hashanah: The Universal Two Day Yom Tov, (and why Yom Kippur is Not)' and 'One Day or Two? What is a Chutznik in Eretz Yisrael to Do?'

[2] Although the famed Chacham Tzvi (Shu"t 167), and later the Shulchan Aruch Harav (Orach Chaim 496, 11; although he also cites that 'yesh cholkim', nonetheless, according to the common consensus, this first opinion is ikar - see also vol. 1, Mahadura Tinyana 68) ruled that even one merely visiting Eretz Yisrael over Yom Tov should keep only one day of Yom Tov like the natives (to paraphrase: 'when in Israel, do as the Israelis do'), nevertheless, the vast majority of halachic authorities, including the codifier of the Shulchan Aruch himself (Shu"t Avkas Rochel 26) and even the Chacham Tzvi's own son, Rav Yaakov Emden (Shu"t Sheilas Yaavetz vol. 1: 168), maintained that visitors' status is dependant on whether or not their intention is to stay and live in Eretz Yisrael, or to return to Chutz La'aretz, known as 'im da'atam lachzor' (see next footnote at length). We do however find that the one-day shittah is defended by the Aderes (Sefer Shevach Haaretz, 35) and Shoel U'Meishiv (Shu"t Mahadura Telitai vol. 2: 28), and heavily implied by the Avnei Nezer (Shu"t Orach Chaim 242: 27 and 33; 539: Hashmatos to Hilchos Yom Tov, 48 - end; he maintains that 'da'atam lachzor' should not apply even for visitors from Eretz Yisrael who are staying in Chutz La'aretz over Yom Tov) This shittah has also found support in certain Rishonim, including Rabbeinu Chananel's understanding of Rav Safra's opinion (Pesachim 51b - 52a), and the Ra'avan (Pesachim 162: 2; see Even Shlomo's commentary 37). Although, as shown later on, most contemporary authorities do not rule this way, nonetheless, Chabad chassidim generally follow the shittah of their Alter Rebbe, the Shulchan Aruch Harav, and only keep one day in Eretz Yisrael, no matter how long they intend on staying. [However, there are those who cite different minhagim as prevalent in Chabad psak for this inyan. See, for example, Rav Levi Yitzchak Raskin's extensive Kuntress Yom Tov Sheini, printed in his sefer Nesivim B'sdei HaShlichus vol. 1. Thanks are due to R' Nochum Shmaryohu Zajac for pointing this out.] Rav Yechiel Michel Tukachinsky (Ir HaKodesh V'Hamikdash vol. 3, Ch. 19: 8 and 11) reports that his grandfather-in-law, the Av Beis Din of Yerushalayim for the latter part of the nineteenth century, Rav Shmuel Salant, was notteh to this shittah as well. However, since he did not want to argue on his Rabbeim, including the Pe'as Hashulchan (see next footnote), who mandated visitors keeping Yom Tov Sheini, Rav Salant ruled that a Ben Chutz La'aretz should keep Yom Tov Sheini lechumrah, a shittah nowadays commonly referred to as 'A Day and a Half'. This refers to being makpid on not doing any Melachah De'oraysa on the second day, but also not doing the unique Yom Tov Mitzvos, i.e. making Kiddush etc. Rav Avraham Yitzchak HaKohen Kook (Shu"t Orach Mishpat, Orach Chaim 125; thanks are due to Dr. Moshe Simon-Shoshan for pointing out this important source) and Rav Yosef Dov (JB) Soloveitchik (as cited in Nefesh HaRav pg. 84) were also known to be proponents of this shittah, reporting that this was also the preferred shittah of the Rav's grandfather, Rav Chaim Soloveitchik of Brisk. [However, in this author's opinion, the misnomer for this shittah, 'A Day and a Half' is somewhat troublesome. Anecdotally, years ago, I met an older relative here in Eretz Yisrael on Yom Tov Sheini and noticed that she was performing Melachah. When I asked her about it, she innocently replied that her Rabbi told her to keep 'A Day and a Half'... and it was already after noon...] For more on Rav Shmuel Salant's shittah, see the annual Tukachinsky Luach Eretz Yisrael (Chol Hamoed Sukkos, footnote), Shu"t Lehoros Nosson (vol. 11: 26), Toras Rabbeinu Shmuel Salant (pg. 120), and Aderes Shmuel (Piskei Rav Shmuel Salant zt"l; Hilchos Yom Tov 129, and in footnotes at length, pg. 131-135).

[3] Although there are those who want to prove that the Shulchan Aruch meant to rule that a visitor to Eretz Yisrael should only keep one day, as in the Shulchan Aruch (Orach Chaim 496) he only mentions visitors from Eretz Yisrael in Chutz La'aretz, who need to keep a two-day Yom Tov like the locals [see, for example, Ir HaKodesh V'Hamikdash vol. 3, Ch. 19: 11, in the parenthesis, as an additional sevara of Rav Shmuel Salant's 'libo amar lo efshar'...], nevertheless, he personally put that notion to rest in his Shu"t Avkas Rochel (26), where Rav Karo explicitly ruled that the Yom Tov observance of visitors to Eretz Yisrael is dependant on whether they are planning on staying or not. [Indeed, in Ir HaKodesh V'Hamikdash Ch. 19: 8, Rav Tukachinsky himself strongly disavows the aforementioned notion.] Other poskim who rule this way include the Rav Yaakov Emden (Shu"t Sheilas Ya'avetz vol. 1: 168), the Pe'as Hashulchan (Hilchos Eretz Yisrael 2: 15, 21), the Chida (Shu"t Chaim Sha'al vol. 1: 55, and Birkei Yosef, Orach Chaim 496: 7), Mahar"i Chagiz (Shu"t Halachos Ketanos vol. 1: 4; however, his son argues quite extensively, including psakim from his grandfather, Rav Moshe Galanti, and 'Rabbanei Tzfas', that Bochorim should certainly only keep one day), the Pri Ha'adamah (vol. 3, pg. 17b, and in Mizbach Adamah, Orach Chaim 468: 4 s.v. ul'inyan; citing 'kol Rabbanei Yerushalayim' regarding a Bochor who plans on returning to Chutz La'aretz), Shaarei Teshuvah (Orach Chaim 496: 3, in the parenthesis, and end 5; he makes a sikum of the shittos), Chayei Adam (vol. 2, 103: 4), Aruch Hashulchan (Orach Chaim 496: end 5), Mishnah Berurah (ad loc. 13), Kaf Hachaim (ad loc. 38), and Rav Yechiel Michel Tukachinsky (Ir HaKodesh V'Hamikdash vol. 3, Ch. 19: 8 and 11, and in his annual Luach Eretz Yisrael ibid.; although he does seem to give equal credence to his grandfather-in-law, Rav Shmuel Salant's 'Day and a Half' psak). The vast majority of contemporary poskim rule this way as well. See Shu"t Igros Moshe (Orach Chaim vol. 3: 73 and 74 and vol. 4: 101), Orchos Rabbeinu (new print - 5775 edition, vol. 2, Ch. 'Yom Tov Sheini'; citing the Chazon Ish and Steipler Gaon), Shu"t Seridei Aish (new edition; vol. 1, Orach Chaim 51: 1), Shu"t Minchas Yitzchak (vol. 4: 1 - 4), Yom Tov Sheini Kehilchaso (pg. 108, footnote 5; citing many Rabbanim including the Tchebiner Rav, Rav Shlomo Zalman Auerbach, Rav Yosef Shalom Elyashiv, and Rav Chaim Pinchas Scheinberg, whose teshuvah is printed in the back of the sefer), Shu"t Shevet Halevi (vol. 5: 64), Shu"t Mishnah Halachos (vol. 4: 83), Shu"t Tzitz Eliezer (vol. 9: 30), Halichos Even Yisrael (Moadim vol. 1, pg. 287 - 288), Shu"t Yaskil Avdi (vol. 4, Orach Chaim 26), Shu"t B'tzeil Hachochmah (vol. 1: 60), Shu"t Yabea Omer (vol. 6, Orach Chaim 40: 1-3), Shu"t Ohr L'Tzion (vol. 3: Ch. 23: 5), Shu"t Knei Bosem (vol. 1: 28), Chazon Ovadia (Yom Tov, pg. 133: 12), and Yalkut Yosef (Moadim, pg. 460).

[4] As noted out by Rav Yirmiyohu Kaganoff, in a recent "Halacha Talk" article (Yated Neeman, Y Magazine, May 6, 2022, pg. 17), Chukas and Balak are actually never combined into a double parasha in Eretz Yisrael, but rather exclusively in Chutz La'aretz.

[5] Abudraham (Seder HaParshiyos). See also Biur HaGr"a (Orach Chaim 428: 4 s.v. l'olam) and Biur Halacha (ad loc. s.v. B'midbar Sinai).

[6] As pointed out by R' Yisroel Strauss, the great Eretz Yisrael/Chutz La'aretz Parashah divide notwithstanding, there are three times over this period when the same haftarah will be read by all worldwide: This upcoming Shabbos – 29 Nissan (Machar Chodesh), 24 Tammuz (1st week of Bein Hametzarim), and 2 Av (2nd week of Bein Hametzarim).

[7] Thanks are due to R' Yosef Yehuda Weber, author of Understanding the Jewish Calendar, for pointing this out. This monumental split, from Pesach to Matos-Masei, can only occur in a leap year when the last day of Pesach in Chutz La'aretz is on Shabbos. In his words, "this can only occur in two types of leap

years. 1. When Rosh Hashanah is on Monday and the year has 385 days [Marcheshvan and Kislef both have 30 days]. 2. When Rosh Hashanah is on Tuesday and the year [always] has 384 days.”

[8] Although whether Kriyas HaTorah is considered a ‘Chovas Yachid’ or ‘Chovas Tzibbur’ is a famous “chakirah” of Rav Chaim Soloveitchik of Brisk (cited in Birkas Shmuel, Yevamos 21; see also Eimek Bracha, Kriyas HaTorah 3), as well as a seeming machlokes Ran and Ramban in the beginning of Maseches Megillah (3a in the Rif’s pagination; see also Biur Halacha 143:1 citing the Chayei Adam vol. 1, 31: 11), nonetheless, the consensus of contemporary poskim is that Kriyas HaTorah is indeed a Chovas HaTzibbur. See Peulas Sachir on the Maaseh Rav (175), Shu”t Igros Moshe (Orach Chaim vol. 1: 28), Shu”t Tzitz Eliezer (vol. 18: 5), Mikraei Kodesh (Purim 7), Orchos Rabbeinu (vol. 1, Hosafos pg. 10), Halichos Shlomo (Moadim vol. 2, Pesach Ch. 10: 22), Shu”t Yabia Omer (vol. 9, Orach Chaim 28), Yalkut Yosef (Kitzur Shulchan Aruch, Orach Chaim 135: 5), and Yom Tov Sheini Kehilchaso (Ch. 9:13-17) at length, quoting Rav Moshe Feinstein, Rav Shlomo Zalman Auerbach, Rav Elazar Menachem Mann Shach, and Rav Yosef Shalom Elyashiv. Although Tosefes Maaseh Rav (34) relates that when the Vilna Gaon was released from jail, he read all four of the parshiyos he missed at one time, on the other hand, when someone pointed this Maaseh Rav out to Rav Shlomo Zalman Auerbach, after telling a questioner that he is not obligated to find a double-parasha-ed minyan as leining is a Chovas HaTzibbur, Rav Shlomo Zalman retorted rhetorically, “do you truly believe that you are on the Vilna Gaon’s level to perform all of the Minhagei HaGr”a?!” (Halichos Shlomo, ad loc. footnote 90). On the other hand, it is important to note that the Rema (Orach Chaim 135: 2; citing the Ohr Zarua, vol. 2, Hilchos Shabbos 45) rules regarding if an entire tzibbur did not lein one week, that they would be required to make it up the next week along with the current Parasha. In a related sheilah, Rav Ovadia Yosef (Shu”t Yabia Omer, ibid; see also Yalkut Yosef, Kitzur Shulchan Aruch, Orach Chaim, 143: 6), who relates a historical precedent (as cited in sefer Birchos Hamayim Orach Chaim 135, and Shu”t Mekor Yisrael 105) from a severe snowstorm in Yerushalayim in 1787, that lasted from Wednesday through Shabbos - when the entire city was blanketed with so much snow that it was impossible for anyone to have possibly attended, except for one shul that managed to open. The psak given was that the tzibbur should lein a double parasha the next week. See also Rav Yechezkel Michel Tukachinsky’s authoritative Luach Eretz Yisrael (5775; Minhagei Hashanah, Nissan: footnote 6). Although there is some debate [see Magen Avraham (135:4 citing the Shu”t Maharam Mintz 85) that a tzibbur can only go back one parasha, and the Olas Tamid (Orach Chaim 282) and Knesses Hagedolah (Hagahos HaTur ad loc.) ruling that way as well; however the Elyah Rabba (282:2), citing the Hagahos Minhagim (Shabbos, Shacharis, 41) arguing that a tzibbur should make up as many parshiyos as were missed, and the Magen Gibborim (Elef Hamagen ad loc. 4), Chida (Shu”t Chaim Sha’al vol. 1:71, 5), Maharam Schick (Shu”t Orach Chaim 335; also citing the Chasam Sofer and Rav Nosson Adler), Maharsham (Daas Torah ad loc.), and Aruch Hashulchan (ad loc. 6) explicitly ruling like the Elyah Rabba; the Mishnah Berurah ad loc. 7 and Kaf Hachaim (ad loc. 5) cite both sides of this debate with no clear-cut hachra’ah, but seem to imply they favor the latter opinion as well] as to how many parshiyos a tzibbur can be expected (or allowed) to ‘make-up’ in one go, nonetheless, recently, many poskim have ruled regarding our quite contemporary case of coronavirus-related shul closures, when the vast majority of the world did not have access to minyanim for several months, when the tzibbur was able to get back together, it was preferable that they lein all the missing parshiyos together. These poskim include Rav Moshe Sternbuch (in his weekly Parasha Sheet Shavuos 5780; he wrote that there is a ‘Maaleh’ to do so), Rav Yitzchak and Rav David Yosef (in Rav Yitzchak Yosef’s teshuva dated 28 Nissan 5780; Rav David cosigned on it, adding ‘Mitzvah rabba lefarsem’), and Rav Moshe Heinemann (in a shiur given soon after Purim 5780; available on the Star-K website). [On the

other hand, Rav Asher Weiss (Minchas Asher B'Tekufas HaCorona, Tinyana 34) wrote that in his opinion, it is preferable for the tzibbur not to catch up on all the parshiyos, as aside for the Acharonim who held that a tzibbur shouldn't make up more than one parasha, there are others who may hold that in this situation the tzibbur may actually be pattur. That, along with the extended risk of people not keeping to the medical guidelines during this extensive kriyah, was reason enough for the tzibbur to davka not catch up on all the missing kriyos]. In fact, in my neighborhood, in 2020, on Parashas Bamidbar there was a special minyan leining all of 'Toras Kohanim' – the whole Sefer Vayikra and Parashas Bamidbar for the tzibbur that missed all the Kriyos. A related interesting sheilah arises for groups of Israeli vacationers in Chutz La'aretz whether they may keep their keviyus of a parasha ahead and read that b'tzibbur as the only kriyah while in Chutz La'aretz, or whether they must keep the minhag hamakom b'tzibbur, even though they may have leined that parasha the previous Shabbos. See this author's recent maamar in Kovetz Mah Tovv Ohalech Yaakov (vol. 4; Tishrei 5780) titled "B'Inyan Keviyus HaParshiyos B'Makom Nofesh B'Chu"l."

[9] As pointed out by Rav Kaganoff in his aforementioned article, citing Rav Chaim Na'eh (Ketzos Hashulchan Ch. 72, footnote 3), a traveler from Eretz Yisrael to Chutz L'aretz during this period, will not need to read Shnayim Mikra V'echad Targum again (as he already did it the pervious week), but a Chutznik travelling to Eretz Yisrael will need to catch up on the skipped/missed parasha, as in Eretz Yisrael they will be a week ahead. For more on the halachos of Shnayim Mikra, see previous article titled 'Understanding Shnayim Mikra V'echad Targum.'

[10] For example, the Abudraham (Seder HaParshiyos s.v. eilu) mentions Shlach and Korach are combined as regular double-Parshiyos; which to the extent of this authors' knowledge is not currently practiced.

[11] Knesses Hagedolah (Orach Chaim 428, Haghos on Tur s.v.kishe'ira), Magen Avraham (ad loc. end 6; citing the precedent and rulings of the Maharit and Tikkun Yissachar; see following footnotes), and Mishnah Berurah (ad loc. end 10).

[12] In an interesting side point, the Gemara (Megillah 29b) mentions an alternate minhag, that of the Bnei Maarava (Eretz Yisrael), "D'maski L'Deoraysa B'tlas Shnin," that they only complete the Torah every three years, as opposed to our common minhag of doing so every year. Lest one thinks that this minhag was only extant during Talmudic times as the Rambam (Hilchos Tefilla Ch. 13: 1) already wrote in the 1100s that it is not the minhag pashut, on the other hand, we find that famed traveler Binyamin of Tudela (Masa'os Rabi Binyamin M'Tudela; Adler / London edition pg. 63) related that in the early 1170s, in Egypt there were two different co-existing Kehillos, that of the mainstream community finishing the Torah annually, and that of the Bnei Eretz Yisrael, splitting each parasha into three and only concluding the Torah every three years. Indeed, we do find differing views of the parshiyos and their keviyus in the works of several Rishonim. For example, the Chida, at the end of his Shu"t Chaim Sha'al, quotes Kitzur Teshuvos HaRosh as cited from sefer Chazei Hatenufa (54), that the main point is to ensure that the Torah is completed every year. Hence, it is within the rights of 'Chacham B'Iro' to decide where to stop, as in his opinion, our parasha setup is not halacha kavua, but rather minhag. The Ohr Zarua (vol. 2, Hilchos Shabbos 45 s.v. maaseh) seems to concur with this assessment as well, stating that there is no keviyus which parasha must specifically be leined on which Shabbos. Yet, it must be stressed that this is not the normative halacha. Thanks are due to Rabbi Moshe Taub for pointing out several of these important sources.

[13] Shu"t Maharit (vol. 2, Orach Chaim 4), also quoting the Tikkun Yissachar (pg. 38 a -b), based on Tosafos (Megillah 31b s.v. klalos) and the Levush (Orach Chaim 428: 4).

[14] The Tikkun Yissachar (pg. 32b) explains that as Eretz Yisrael observes Pesach for seven days, exactly as prescribed in the Torah, as opposed to Chutz La'aretz, which observes an eight-day Pesach due to Rabbinic decree (as detailed at length in previous articles titled: 'Rosh Hashanah: The Universal Two-Day Yom Tov (and Why Yom Kippur is Not)' and 'One Day or Two? What is a Chutznik in Eretz Yisrael to Do?'), which in turn pushes off the calendar, the Eretz Yisrael Luach is deemed the ikar one and 'Bnei Ha'Ikari'im' certainly do not have to be concerned with the calendar of 'Bnei HaMinhag'. Indeed, regarding a year with similar calendrical structure, but not a leap year [so the 'split' occurred with earlier parshiyos and concluded much earlier; this was addressed in a previous article titled 'Parasha Permutations 5778'], the Tikkun Yissachar (ad loc. s.v. hagahah) relates that the Sefardic Chachamim of Tzfas agreed to separate Tazria and Metzora to be on par with the rest of the world. However, the response of the Rabbanim from the rest of Eretz Yisrael was not long in coming. They utterly rejected the idea, and demanded that they only catch up at Behar / Bechukosai, as that was already the established minhag for generations. The exact quote of the sharply worded rejoinder of the Rabbanim is "Zehu Minhag Avoseinu U'Kadmoneinu B'Yadeinu Mei'Olam V'Shanim Kadmoniyos."

[15] According to the Abudraham (pg. 372, Seder HaParshiyos), and Tikkun Yissachar (pg. 38a), and cited lemaaseh by the Levush (Orach Chaim 428: 4), Knesses Hagedolah (ibid. s.v. shittah 44), and Elyah Rabbah (ad loc. 5), the reason why Parashas Tzav generally falls out on Shabbos Hagadol, the Shabbos immediately preceding Pesach, is that it mentions the halachos of Kashering Keilim (Vayikra Ch. 6: 21), albeit regarding the Korban Chata'as, as 'haga'alas keilim chometz lamud m'Korbanos'. Although in a leap year Parashas Metzora is usually read directly before Pesach, it is also in sync, as it mentions 'kli cheres yishaver', which is quite apropos for Pesach as well.

[16] According to the main commentaries on the Tur and Shulchan Aruch, 'Pikdu' means 'commanded', hence it is referring to Parashas Tzav, which also means 'command.' 'Pischu' is referring to Pesach. 'Sigru' means 'closing,' referring to Parashas Metzora, as a Metzora must be closeted for at least a week. 'Minu,' 'count', refers to Parashas Bamidbar, which deals mainly with the counting of Bnei Yisrael. 'Atzru,' 'stop', refers to Shavuos, by referring to its name that it is called by in the Torah, 'Atzeres.' 'Tzumu,' 'fast', refers to the fast of Tisha B'Av. 'Tzulu', 'daven', refers to Parashas Va'eschanan, as it starts with Moshe Rabbeinu's entreaties to Hashem. 'Kumu', 'stand', refers to Parashas Nitzavim, literally 'standing'. And 'Tik'u', 'blow' refers to Rosh Hashanah, when the Mitzvas Hayom is to blow the Shofar.

[17] These mnemonics are cited and accepted lemaaseh by all later authorities as well, including the Shulchan Aruch, Levush, and Aruch Hashulchan (Orach Chaim 428: 4).

[18] Tosafos (Megillah 31b s.v. klalos), and later seconded by the Levush (Orach Chaim 428: 4). The Levush explains that the "buffer week," with its different parasha, prevents the Satan from using the tochacha to prosecute us on the judgment day.

[19] 'Tichleh shana u'klaloseha, tachel shana u'birchoseha'. See Gemara Megillah (31b).

[20] However, as pointed out by Rav Dovid Heber in his recent The Intriguing World of Jewish Time (pg. 162, footnote 12), "It should be noted that even in Chutz La'aretz there are cases when we lein Parashas

Nasso before Shavuot since there is no other option. This happens in leap years when the first day of Rosh Hashanah is on Thursday.”

[21] Interestingly, and on a side point, this setup might cause a world-record for longest Kriyas HaTorah, a potential whopping 335 pesukim, in the following scenario. Some ‘Chutzniks’ go to Eretz Yisrael next year for Shavuot. On Erev Shavuot, in Chutz La’aretz they lein Bamidbar and in Eretz Yisrael they lein Nasso. Anyone who does this will miss Bamidbar, so they might make a special combination minyan for these visitors. The grand total of Bamidbar (159 pesukim) plus Nasso (176 pesukim) equals 335 pesukim – a potential new record! Thanks are due to Rabbi Dovid Heber of the Star-K and author of Shaarei Zmanim, for pointing this out.

[22] In the words of Rav Yirmiyohu Kaganoff in his aforementioned article, “Truthfully, we should view Matos and Masei as one long parasha (making the combination the longest parasha in the Torah) that occasionally needs to be divided, rather than viewing it as two parshiyos that are usually combined.”

[23] However, the Mahari mentions that in a year such as ours, the minhag in Syria was to catch up by Chukas/Balak. He bases it on the Tikkun Yissachar, who mentions a certain Chacham, Harav Saadya Dayan Tzova (presumably a Dayan in Aram Tzova – Aleppo, Syria), who combined Korach and Chukas, an interesting combination that, as the Tikkun Yissachar notes, the rest of the world never combines. However, my esteemed father-in-law, Rabbi Yaacov Tzvi Lieberman, informed me based on his years of learning in Kollel there, that the Chaleb (Syrian) community in Mexico City still follows this unusual combination of Korach and Chukas.

[24] Bnei Yisaschar (vol. 1, Maamarei Chodshei Tamuz - Av, Maamar 2: 2).

[25] This three-week season is referred to as such by the Midrash Rabbah (cited by Rashi in his commentary to Eichah Ch. 1, verse 3).

[26] Minchas Yitzchak al HaTorah (newer edition, vol. 2 pg. 185, Parashas Pinchas s.v. uvazeh).

[27] He proves this from different maamarei Chazal from Taanis (26a), Yoma (62b), Sanhedrin (56b), as well as the Kli Yakar (Pinchas Ch. 28: 4). His actual maamar was explaining why the fact that Batlu HaTamid on Shiva Assur B’Tamuz is reason enough for fasting.

[28] Hoshe’a (Ch. 14: 3). See also Gemara Taanis (27b), Megillah (31b), and Yoma (86b).

[29] This does however, create an additional interesting discrepancy. In Eretz Yisrael, Pinchas falls out prior to the Three Weeks, thus enabling the leining of its not so commonly-read haftarah “V’yad Hashem” (Melachim I, Ch. 18:46), which is only read when Matos and Masei are read separately. [Indeed, according to Rav Dovid Heber of the Star-K (The Intriguing World of Jewish Time, pg. 173), according to most minhagim, “V’yad Hashem” is the third rarest-read haftarah, only leined on average once in ten years.] Otherwise, as usually is, Pinchas is part of the The Weeks and hence the first haftarah of the ‘Tlas D’Paranusa’ – “Divrei Yirmiyahu” is its commonly read haftarah. Ergo, in Chutz La’aretz, this haftarah will not be read this year, as there Pinchas is read a week later than in Eretz Yisrael, and hence is part and parcel of the Three Weeks. This minhag is based on the Pesikta, an early Midrash cited by many early authorities including Tosafos (Megillah 31b s.v. rosh) and the Abudraham (Seder Parshiyos V’Haftaros), who continues the teachings of Chazal as to the proper haftarah readings starting from the Fast of Shiva Assur B’Tamuz. During the ‘Three Weeks’ from 17 Tamuz until Tisha B’Av, we read ‘T’lasa

D'Paranusa', 'Three Readings of Misfortune.' After Tisha B'Av (starting with Shabbos Nachamu, dubbed so due to its haftarah, Nachamu Nachamu Ami) until Rosh Hashanah, 'Shiva D'Nechemta', or 'Seven Readings of Consolation' are read. This is followed by a reading of Teshuva, during the Shabbos between Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur, aptly named 'Shabbos Shuva,' for its repentance themed haftarah starting with 'Shuva Yisrael.' The Abudraham as well as Rabbeinu Tam, conclude that these special haftarah readings are so important, that they are never pushed off! This topic was discussed at length in a previous article titled 'Of Haftaros and Havdalah: Shabbos Rosh Chodesh Av 5781.'

[30] In fact, it is also the Kriyah for Shacharis on Tisha B'Av itself [see Rema (Orach Chaim 559:4)], thus making it read twice in the same week, perhaps to let its hidden message sink in.

[31] Gemara Sanhedrin (38a), cited by Rashi on the pasuk. See also Sifsei Chachamim (ad loc.).

Disclaimer: This is not a comprehensive guide, rather a brief summary to raise awareness of the issues. In any real case one should ask a competent Halachic authority.

L'iluy Nishmas the Rosh HaYeshiva - Rav Chonoh Menachem Mendel ben R' Yechezkel Shraga, Rav Yaakov Yeshaya ben R' Boruch Yehuda, and I'zchus for Shira Yaffa bas Rochel Miriam and her children for a yeshua teikef u'miyad!