

## The Uniqueness of the Year 5781 – תשפ"א - Henry Ehreich

ראש השנה תשפ"א – 19-20<sup>th</sup> September 2020

This coming year תשפ"א is the rarest of occurrences. There is a total of 14 various ways of how the yearly Jewish calendar can be set. 7 of them are regular years, and 7 of them are leap years - 14 in total. Each of these 14 ways has a 3-letter code. By knowing this code, one can figure out the entire year; exactly what day of the week each Yom Tov will fall, when Rosh Chodesh will be, whether it's a leap year or not, which Parsha will it be each week, etc. The code for this coming year is תז"א This is the rarest of all 14 codes. The last time this occurred was 20 years ago and the time before that was 44 years ago. Here are some of the rare phenomenon which we will be witnessing this coming year:

### #1 \*תפילת ותודיענו 5 פעמים בשנה אחת\* (Kiddush and Havdalah Together)

This year we will be making Kiddush & Havdala together, a total of 5 times throughout the year:

ליל אחרון של פסח - 5, ליל סדר ראשון של פסח - 4, ליל שמחת תורה - 3, ליל שני של סוכות - 2, ליל שני של ראש השנה - 1

### #2 \*אין שבת חול המועד כלל\* (NO Shabbos Chol Hamoed All Year)

This is good news for the children: No Shabbos Chol Hamoed this year - not Succos nor Pesach. This means more time to go to the zoo, the bumping cars, or the merry-go-round...

### #3 \*שבת מקץ אינו שבת חנוכה\* (Parshas Miketz is NOT Shabbos Chanukah)

This year is the rare occurrence of Chanukah starting on a Friday - which means that שבת פרשת מקץ is not Chanukah - which brings the reading of the weekly Parsha Haftarah, which is almost never read, since the Haftarah of שבת חנוכה almost always supersedes it. But this year is an exception. Remember the wisdom of המלך שלמה ordering to cut the baby in half in order to determine who the real mother is? That's the story of the Haftarah which we haven't read for 20 years...

### #4 \*עשרה בטבת שחל בערב שבת\* (Assoro B'Teves on Friday)

The only fast which can occur on a Friday is Assoro B'Teves. This fast cannot be pushed off for a later date as other fasts are, since the Pasuk refers to עשרה בטבת which Chazal interpret as meaning that this fast must be on the 10th day of Teves no matter what day of the week it falls. This causes the rare occurrence a Sefer Torah being taken out on Friday at Mincha and fasting until after Kiddush.

### #5 \*שבת זכור שחל בפרשת תרומה\* (Shabbos Parshas Zochor is not on Shabbos Parshas Tetzaveh)

In a regular year - not a leap year, שבת פרשת תרומה is always שבת זכור - except for this year when it will be פרשת תרומה instead. While this has no practical ramifications, it is nevertheless an extremely rare occurrence.

### #6 \*פורים שחל בערב שבת\* (Purim on Friday)

If Purim every year is not hectic enough, we will now have the rare occurrence of Purim on a Friday - and yes - it is still before the clock is moved - so you better be ready to light Shabbos candles at 5:20pm - by hook or by crook... Better start the day at the crack of dawn, in order to pack into this short Friday the reading of the Megilla, sending Mishloach Manos, eating a Seudas Purim, manage to get a bit drunk as well, plus running around to all the teachers and family... If your head is starting to spin already - you have an option - buy a ticket to ארץ ישראל... If you're in ארץ ישראל - then it's a different story - as we will now explain:

### #7 \*פורים המשולש\* (The Triple Purim)

If you ever planned to go to Eretz Yisroel for Purim - this is the year to go. Why? Because since Purim in ירושלים is always a day later than for us - namely on the day we call פורים - therefore when Purim is for us on Friday - then in ירושלים it's on Shabbos - which results in the phenomenon of פורים המשולש literally meaning "The Triple Purim". What this means is as follows:

Just like we have now Rosh Hashana falling on Shabbos, as well as Succos on Shabbos, where the Shofar is not blown and the Lulav is not shaken - as the Gemara explains the reasoning - the same reasoning applies when Purim falls on Shabbos as well - the Megilla is not read. What happens is - Purim instead of being 1 day - ends up being 3 days instead! How so? - This is how it works: The 6 Mitzvos of Purim are divided into 3 days: Friday is קריאת המגילה and Mishloach Manos, Shabbos על הניסים is said and עמלק is read a second time, and Sunday is סעודת פורים and משלוח מנות is sent. Yerushalayim is clearly the place to be this year!...

### #8 \*ערב פסח שחל להיות בשבת\* (Erev Pesach on Shabbos)

But the Yom Tov which has the most Halachic ramifications is the phenomenon of Erev Pesach occurring on Shabbos. Here are some aspects of Pesach which will now be different than every year:

**בדיקת חמץ (Bedikas Chometz)** Cannot be the night before Pesach as usual since it's Shabbos, so it must be on Thursday night instead.

**שריפת חמץ (Burning of Chometz)** Can obviously not be on the day of Erev Peasch, and must instead be on Friday morning. But כחמירא is said, and no Chametz is nullified. Why? Because while every year, there is of course no Chametz to be had after the burning, this year however, not only is Chametz permitted afterwards - but one is actually obligated to eat Chametz afterwards. Why? Because on Shabbos one must eat both at night and day some Challa. One cannot substitute Challa for Matza, as it is forbidden to eat Matza on Erev Pesach. But how the Challa is eaten is a bit complicated... (This all depends on customs, some with Yekkish customs will eat Matza on Friday Night)

**בוקר שבת ערב פסח (Shabbos Erev Pesach Morning)** Everyone must daven Shacharis on Shabbos at the crack of dawn, in order to be finished eating Challa before אכילת חמץ at 9.25am in the morning. Any Chametz left over afterwards must quickly be flushed down the toilet before סוף זמן at 10.44am as burning is not possible on Shabbos and only then is כחמירא said. Anyone who wishes to eat סעודה שלישית afterwards, cannot eat not Challa nor Matza, and must eat other foods instead.

**סדר ליל פסח מוצאי שבת (Seder Night on Motzoi Shabbos)** On Shabbos it is forbidden to do any preparations for the Seder whatsoever, until the זמן מוצאי שבת - besides taking a good nap...

Just one last thought, although not that unusual, but פרשת וילך will not be leined at all in 5781

(May this year, with its curses, come to an end, may the new year and its blessings commence)