

The CHAGIM in PARSHAT PINCHAS

As you 'should' have noticed, every time that we doven MUSAF (i.e. on shabbat, rosh chodesh, & yom-tovim), we always include a quote from Parshat Pinchas.

Similarly, the Torah reading on every rosh chodesh and yom-tov is either entirely from Parshat Pinchas, or at least the 'maftir' section!

To understand why, the following shiur undertakes a simple analysis of chapters 28->29 in Parshat Pinchas.

INTRODUCTION

Even though we find several presentations of the Jewish Holidays throughout Chumash, their presentation in Parshat Pinchas is quite unique. In fact, our shiur will show how the primary topic of this unit may not even be the holidays!

[It will help us understand why these holidays are 'repeated' in Sefer Bamidbar, even though they were already discussed in Parshat Emor /i.e. Vayikra 23.]

We begin our study by identifying the precise unit under discussion and its structure.

AN ORGANIZED UNIT

Just about every time that Chumash presents a unit of "mitzvot" - it begins with a very short introductory narrative - the most common form being "va'yadaber Hashem el Moshe lay'mor", or something similar.

This standard format allows us to easily identify chapters 28 & 29 as a unit, as it begins with that opening phrase (see 28:1), and the commandments continue until the end of chapter 29.

Note as well 30:1 we find what constitutes the concluding verse of this unit, for it describes Moshe's fulfillment of God's command in 28:2, that Moshe should command these laws to Bnei Yisrael!

In the opening verse God instructs Moshe (see 28:1-2):
"Command Bnei Yisrael and tell them - keep the laws of My [daily] offerings..."

In the closing verse (see 30:1):
 "And Moshe spoke to Bnei Yisrael [telling them] everything [all the laws] that God had commanded him."
 [Note a very similar structure between Vayikra 23:1 and 23:44.]

This alone already indicates that all of the laws included between these opening and closing verses forms a unit.
 [Note how the chapter division of Chumash seems to have made a major mistake here, for 30:1 should really have been 29:40! Note how the 'parshia' break of Chazal is much more accurate (as usual)! This 'mistake' probably stems from a misunderstanding of the opening pasuk of Parshat Masei, and how it connects to the last verse of Parshat Pinchas.]

As we browse through the content of chapters 28->29, it seems as though its primary topic is the holidays, for they begin in 28:16 and continue all the way until 29:39. Note as well how these holidays are presented in the order of their lunar dates, i.e. beginning with Pesach and concluding with Succot .

Nonetheless, when we consider that this unit begins in 28:1, we must assume that the first fifteen psukim share the same theme. By taking a closer look, the connection becomes rather obvious, for the first topic is the daily "olah" offering - a lamb - offered once in the morning and once in the evening (see 28:2-8). These laws are followed by the commandment to offer an 'additional' "olah" every Shabbat (see 28:9-10), and more elaborate "olah" on every Rosh Chodesh [first day of the lunar

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Now, to determine what thematically ties this unit together, we need only list the topic of each of its individual "parshiot" in search of a logical progression:

As we will see, the progression is very logical:

PSUKIM	TOPIC / The laws of:
=====	=====
28:1-8	the DAILY korban TAMID
28:9-10	WEEKLY korban MUSAF for SHABBAT
28:11-15	MONTHLY korban MUSAF for ROSH CHODESH
28:16-25	a special korban MUSAF for CHAG HA'MATZOT
28:26-31	a special korban MUSAF for CHAG SHAVUOT
29:1-6	a special korban MUSAF for YOM TRU'AH
29:7-11	a special korban MUSAF for YOM KIPPUR
29:12-34	a special korban MUSAF for each day of SUCCOT
---	* [note how each day is a separate parshia!]
29:35-38	a special korban MUSAF for SHMINI ATZERET
29:39	the summary pasuk

The progression within this unit is very straightforward. We begin with the DAILY "korban tamid", followed by the WEEKLY "musaf shabbat", followed by the MONTHLY "korban rosh chodesh, followed by the YEARLY schedule of korbanot offered on the chagim, beginning with the first month, etc. It is for this reason that the FIRST pasuk of each of these 'holiday' "parshiot" begins with the precise lunar date.

THE KEY PHRASE: "AL OLAT ha'TAMID..."

As you review these parshiot, note how each parshia relates in some manner to the daily "olat tamid". The opening parshia describes it, while each and every parshia that follows concludes with the statement "al olat ha'tamid" or "milvad olat ha'tamid".

The Torah goes out of its way to emphasize that each of these korbanot are to be offered IN ADDITION to the daily OLAH offering! In fact, that is why we call the offering a 'MUSAF!' - The word "musaf" stems from the verb "l'hosif" = to add on. These special korbanot are offered in ADDITION to the daily korban TAMID, and hence their name - a korban MUSAF.

Therefore, this unit begins with the KORBAN TAMID and then continues with the detail of each korban MUSAF that is offered in addition to the daily "olat tamid". Hence, a more precise definition for this unit would be KORBANOT TMIDIM u'MUSAFIM.

Indeed, each of the holidays are mentioned within this unit, but not because the holidays are its primary topic. Quite the contrary; the holidays are mentioned, for on each holiday an 'additional' korban is to be offered.

BETWEEN EMOR & PINCHAS

With this background, we can better understand the difference between the presentation of the chagim in Parshat Emor (see Vayikra chapter 23) and their presentation here.

In contrast to Parshat Pinchas whose primary topic is korbanot, the primary topic in Parshat Emor is the holidays. In fact, that is precisely its title: "moadei Hashem..." - God's appointed times (23:1,4)! That unit details the nature and specific laws for each holiday. For example, the prohibition to work, the need to gather ("mikraei kodesh"), and special mitzvot for each holiday, such as: offering the "omer", the "shtei ha'lechem", blowing shofar, fasting, succah, lulav & etrog etc. [To verify, review Vayikra 23:1-44.]

[Btw, that parsha **does** include certain korbanot, such as those which come with the "omer" and "shtei ha'lechem". But again, those korbanot are special for that day and hence, relate to the special nature of each of those holidays.]

Notice as well that each holiday in Parshat Emor includes the mitzvah of "v'hikravtem ishe la'Hashem" [you shall bring an offering to God/ see 23:8,25,27,36]. However, this commandment appears quite ambiguous for it doesn't specify which type of korban is to be offered.

Parshat Pinchas solves this ambiguity, by telling us precisely

what that offering should be. To prove how, note a key summary pasuk found in Parshat Emor:

"These are God's appointed times set aside for gathering IN ORDER to offer a - ISHE LA'HASHEM -, an OLAH, MINCHA, ZEVACH, & NESACHIM, - on EACH DAY - DVAR YOM B'YOMO." (See Vayikra 23:37, compare with 23:4)

What does "dvar yom b'yomo" refer to? Most likely to the precise details for these korbanot as recorded in Parshat Pinchas! [Note Rashi on that pasuk (23:37), that is exactly what he says!] [Using computer jargon, we could say that Parshat Emor is 'indexed' to Parshat Pinchas - or, if each "v'hikravtem ishe" in Emor was in 'hyper-text', it would link to its respective URL address in Parshat Pinchas. [e.g. 23:8->28:19, etc.]

Also, if you look carefully at the names of the chagim in the opening pasuk of each parshia in Parshat Pinchas, you'll notice that each specific name reflects the primary aspect of the chag as it had already been described in Parshat Emor! [That comparison is quite straightforward, but beyond the scope of this shiur.]

With this background, the presentation of the holidays in Parshat Pinchas is quite easy to understand. Each holiday is introduced by its lunar date and name (based on its more detailed description in Parshat Emor). This introduction is followed by the complete details of the korban MUSAF for that holiday, including the type of each korban, and the number of animals that are to be offered. Other than those details (of the korban MUSAF), Parshat Pinchas does not add in any new laws for any of the "chagim".

THE INTERNAL STRUCTURE OF PARSHAT HA'MUSAFIM

Let's return now to Parshat Pinchas to take a look at the actual korbanot and what they're all about.

Even though the korban MUSAF of each holiday is presented in a separate parshia, the set of korbanot for each holidays are quite similar. Note how each set contains:

- * an OLAH offering of PARIM, AYLIM, & KVASIM;
- * the appropriate flour & wine offerings, [better known as "MINCHATAM V'NISKAM";
- * and a CHATAT offering of a SEIR IZIM (a goat).

The following table compares the specific korbanot of each chag. [If you have the time (and patience), I recommend that you try to work it out first on your own.]

As you review this table, note how similar most of the MUSAFIM are. However, note as well where and how they differ!

CHAG / OLAT:	PAR	AYIL	KEVES	/ SEIR	CHATAT
ROSH CHODESH -	2	1	7		1
CHAG HA'MATZOT	2	1	7		1
[same for all 7 days]					
SHAVUOT -	2	1	7		1
ROSH HA'SHANA	1	1	7		1
YOM KIPPUR -	1	1	7		1
[same as R.H.]					
SUCCOT (day 1) -	13	2	14		1
SUCCOT (day 2)	12	2	14		1
SUCCOT (day 3) -	11	2	14		1
SUCCOT (day 4) -	10	2	14		1
SUCCOT (day 5) -	9	2	14		1
SUCCOT (day 6) -	8	2	14		1
SUCCOT (day 7) -	7	2	14		1
SHMINI ATZERET -	1	1	7		1

As you study this chart, note how one can easily identify certain groups of holidays. Let's organize them as follows:

GROUP ONE: [the 2-1-7-1]

Rosh Chodesh, Chag ha'Matzot, and Shavuot

Note how all three are connected to YETZIAT MITZRAYIM!

[Rosh Chodesh - based on Shmot 12:1, and Shavuot can be considered the conclusion of Pesach.]

GROUP TWO: [the 1-1-7-1]

Rosh ha'Shana, Yom Kippur, and Shmini Atzeret

Note, that all three are in Tishrei! Since the first two are 'days of judgement', then we must conclude that Shmini Atzeret must also be a 'day of judgement'!

[e.g. "tfilat geshem" etc.]

GROUP THREE: [the {13->7}-2-14-1]

The seven days of Succot

This is the most interesting group, for (unlike "chag ha'matzot") even though each day of Succot is the same holiday, for some reason the number of PARIM decreases daily.

DOUBLE NATURE

In addition to this obvious division into three groups, there remains another interesting phenomenon in the above chart. For some reason, the OLAH offering on Succot seems to be DOUBLE. On every other holiday we offer one AYIL and seven KVASIM, but on each day of Succot we double that - offering TWO and FOURTEEN instead! Furthermore, in regard to the PARIM, there's an 'explosion'. Instead of either one or two, we find THIRTEEN! More puzzling is the fact that each day we bring one less.

So what's going on with the korbanot on Succot?

One could suggest that Succot should not be considered a separate category, but rather a COMBINATION of the other two. Let's explain why.

On the one hand, Succot could be included in Group One, for that group contains the other two "shalosh regalim" (i.e. Chag ha'Matzot and Shavuot). On the other hand, Succot could also be included in Group Two, for that group contains all of the other holidays that fall out in the seventh month (i.e. "chagei Tishrei").

[Thematically as well, Succot fits into both groups. On the one hand it is a thanksgiving holiday (like the holidays in Group One), where we thank God for our fruit harvest /that's why we recite the Hallel. On the other hand, it is also a time of awe (like the holidays in Group Two), for we anticipate the rainy season which will determine the fate of the forthcoming year/& that's why we recite the "Hoshanot"].

This 'double nature' of Succot can explain why its korbanot are DOUBLE - two AYLIM instead of one; & fourteen KVASIM instead of seven. But what about the PARIM? According to this interpretation, we should only bring THREE on each day of Succot. So why do we bring an 'extra' ten on the first day, an extra nine on the second, etc.

It's rather cute, but if we add up all the 'extras', i.e.

10+9+8+7+6+5+4 we find that we've added 49 [=7x7] PARIM. In relation to the "chagim", finding significance in the number seven (or its multiple) should not surprise us. There are many instances in Chumash when 'seven' relates to our recognition that it God who controls what we perceive as nature (see shiurim on both Parshat Breishit and on Parshat Emor).

Our recognition that God controls nature is most critical on Succot - for it sits at the junction (and 'overlap') of the agricultural year, i.e. at the end of the previous year (the autumn fruit harvest) and beginning of the new year (the upcoming rainy season).

Furthermore, should we add these 49 PARIM to the original 21 PARIM [3x7days], we find that a total of SEVENTY parim are offered during SUCCOT. Chazal point out that these seventy bulls are representative of the seventy nations of mankind. [See shiur on Parshat Noach and the 'Migdal Bavel 'vort'.]

[If you want to find additional meaning to the number 7 or 49 [=7x7] in relation to the 7 days of Succot in the 7th month, ask your local kabbalist. - "v'akmal".]

In summary, we have shown how what appears to be a rather monotonous list of korbanot may actually be hiding some very fundamental aspects of the "chagim". Hopefully, next time you doven MUSAF, it will make your tefilah a bit more meaningful.
shabbat shalom,
menachem

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FOR FURTHER IYUN

1. If you are not familiar with the structure of tfilat Musaf, after the standard opening three brachot, we recite a "piyut" which describes our sorrow (& our fault) over the fact that the Bet ha'Mikdash no longer stands (e.g. "mpnei chataeinu", or tikanta shabbat..." etc.). That "piyut" concludes with our wish that the Bet ha'Mikdash will be rebuilt so that we can once again offer the korbanot - then we quote the actual korban from Parshat Pinchas and a brief description of its NESACHIM. This is followed by yet another piyut (e.g. "yismchu b'malchutcha" or "melech rachaman...") and then concludes with the bracha of "kedushat ha'yom" (e.g. "mkadesh ha'shabbat", or "yisrael v'hazmanim').

2. Note that in regard to lighting Chanuka candles, Bet Shamai's shita that we begin with eight and conclude with one is based on a comparison to PAREI ha'CHAG - i.e. the PARIM of Succot.

3. The only korban that doesn't change for any holiday is the "seir izim I'CHATAT". This korban serves as atonement for any possible sin of Am Yisrael in the Mikdash. The "seir izim" is chosen as it is symbolic of the sin of the brothers of Yosef when they used a "seir" to 'cover up' their sin. See Ramban! As its purpose is atonement, only one offering is necessary per set, and hence it is not doubled in Succot as are the other korbanot.

4. See previous shiur on Rosh Ha'shana for a more complete explanation of why Tishrei (at the beginning of the rainy season), serves as a time when all mankind is judged.

5. Note machloket between Ramban (and everyone else) concerning whether this korban MUSAF was offered in the desert or only once Bnei Yisrael entered the land. Relate it to his "shita" of "yeish mukdam u'muchar ba'Torah". [Ramban on 28:1 & on Vayikra 3:2.] Relate this to the above shiur.