

# HALOCHOSCOPE

**This week's question:**

**If someone has to arrange a business deal or surgery during the months of *Shevat* or *Adar Rishon*, or between *Adar Rishon* and *Adar Shaini*, is there any advantage to schedule it during *Adar Rishon*? Is this the same as scheduling it in *Adar Shaini*?**

**The issues:**

**A) *Adar Rishon* and *Adar Shaini***

**B) *Mishenichnas Adar*, opportune times**

**A) *Adar Rishon* and *Adar Shaini* [excerpted from *Halochoscope* XXII:17]**

The Jewish calendar is based on lunar months and a solar season/year. There are just over twelve lunar months in four solar seasons. The *Yomim Tovim* are tied to both the lunar months, by date, and the the solar year, by season. *Pesach* must occur during *Aviv*, after the vernal equinox. *Sukos* must always occur at the *Tekufas Hashanah*, following the autumnal equinox. A lunar cycle is about twenty-nine to thirty days. Twelve of these cycles add up to about 354 days. A solar season is just less than 92 days and six hours. Thus a full year cycle is about 365 days plus a few hours. Every four years, a day is added, to adjust for the discrepancy. This really adds a little too much. Every four centuries, the additional day is not added, to adjust for this (Y2K).

Initially, the months were consecrated by the testimony of witnesses. If the witnesses arrived in time, the month would be consecrated on the thirtieth day after the last *Rosh Chodesh*. If they did not come in time, the previous month would be *meubar*, pregnant or bulging, by an extra day. The annual discrepancy of 11 days, is accounted for by adding a month every few years. The additional month is *Adar*. As the year progressed, it would become clear that *Sukos* of the following year would need to be pushed off. Until the last day of *Adar*, a month could be added, known as *ibur shanah*, leap year. As the Sanhedrin was seen to be on the verge of being abolished by the Romans, they consecrated all future months according to *sod haibur*, a secret formula handed down. This is our modern day calendar. They also added all future *Adars*, based on a formula of seven leap years in a nineteen year cycle. The code is called '*guch adzat*' the Hebrew mnemonic for years 3-6-8-11-14-17-19. (The actual method is debated by the Talmud. This slightly imperfect method is the one we follow. 5784 is year 8 in the cycle.)

Which *Adar* is the main one? For the *mitzvos* of Purim, the conclusion is that the second *Adar*, closer to *Pesach*, is the main one. This juxtaposes the two redemptions celebrated then. During which *Adar* should *yahrzeit* be observed for one who passed away during a regular *Adar*? *Yahrzeits* seem to have originated in *Ashkenaz*. Thus, the later *Ashkenazic* poskim debate this. Their focus is the fast, rather than *kaddish*. Some say that

the main *Adar* is the second one, similar to *Purim*. Others say that the main *Adar* is the first, as we shall see. Yet others maintain that one really should adopt both fasts, but that he should not feel compelled to do so.

The *Shulchan Aruch*, compiled by the leader of *Sepharadic* Jewry, rules that the second *Adar* is primary. Many *Sepharadim* follow this view. The *Rema*, primary *Ashkenazic* authority, rules that the first *Adar* is primary in relation to *yahrzeit* observances. It is praiseworthy to observe both. Most *Ashkenazic* Jews follow this view.

The fast observances are really a form of *neder*, adopted vow. *Nedarim* are uttered according to the mindset of the person. An ambiguous word follows the way ordinary people use that word, rather than the way it is used by the Torah. The Talmud debates one who undertook a vow "until the end of *Adar*". This is compared to a document that had plain *Adar* written in. In one view, the writer meant *Adar Rishon*, because that is the standard. In the other view, he meant *Adar Sheini*. This same debate would apply to a *neder*. The Talmud further qualifies this. If he did not know that there was going to be an *Adar Sheini*, such as in the times that the calendar was not fixed, both sides agree that he meant *Adar Rishon*. Otherwise, the one side holds that he means *Adar Sheini*. *Rambam* follows this view. In practice, there are varying views on this. For *yahrzeit* purposes, many cite *Rambam's* ruling as a source for observing *Adar Sheini*.

The poskim debate celebrating a communal or private *Purim* (annually commemorating deliverance from a danger) in a leap year. Some poskim conclude that it must be observed in *Adar Sheini*. This view presumes that this was in the mind of the one adopting it. However, others distinguish between the observances undertaken. The Torah considers *Adar Sheini* to be the primary *Adar*. A *Purim* should be observed then. This also connects the deliverance of the individual to *Pesach*, just as the Talmud says of *Purim*. A fast should rather be pushed off and observed on the later date. A *mitzvah*, such as distributing *tzedakah* (similar to sharing the *todah*) should be done at the earliest opportunity. Therefore, this part should be observed in *Adar Rishon*. Something that is not too much extra bother should be observed in both *Adars*. [See *Psachim* 50b-51a *Megillah* 6b *Rosh Hashanah* 8a-b 19b-21a (*Perek* 2) *Moed Katan* 25a-b *Kesubos* 48a *Nedarim* 16a 63a-b *Kidushin* 31b-32a *Sanhedrin* 10b-13b 46b-48a *Krisos* 28a, *Poskim*. (*Rambam Kidush Hachodesh*.) *Tur* BY DM Sh Ar OC 427 568:7 (MA20) 686:3 (MA5, *Baer Hetev* 5, *Chasam Sofer*, MB8, *Dirshu* 28) 697:(MB2, *Dirshu* 5) YD 214:1 220:8 (*Shach* 17) 240:4-5 9 242:1 25-28 348:2-3 364:7 402:12 *Rema* EH 126:7 CM 43:28, commentaries.]

#### **B) *Mishenichnas Adar marbin besimcha***

The often quoted: "*Mishenichnas Adar marbin besimcha*, when *Adar* begins, one increases joy", is cited by the Talmud in an interesting context. It is really discussing *Av*, a sad month. It says: Just as when *Av* begins we reduce joy, so too, when *Adar* begins we increase joy! Therefore, one who must schedule litigation with a gentile should avoid his gentile adversary during *Av*, when his *mazal* is bad. In *Adar*, he should make himself available, because *baria mazla*, *mazal* is good. In practice, the Talmud specifies things to reduce during the month of *Av*. The only contrast to *Adar* is scheduling litigation.

Based on the Talmud's comparison, by studying the concept of *raia mazla* during *Av*

we may explain the concept of *baria mazla* during *Adar*. [excerpted from *HalochoScope* XXI:36] According to a *Midrashic* reference, one must avoid being out alone in the open during the late morning and early afternoon hours during the Three Weeks. Some say that this applies even more to the period between *Rosh Chodesh Tamuz* and the 16<sup>th</sup>, based on the prevalence of harmful forces. This seems to refer to putting oneself in harm's way, or in a dangerous situation. If it applies specifically to *Bain Hametzarim*, it means that at a time of 'punishment' adversarial forces in Heaven can indict people more easily. We avoid inviting further punishment. Accordingly, people have adopted a practice to avoid the kind of travel after which one usually recites the *brocha hagomel*. This thanksgiving blessing is recited by those who have been saved from danger. The basic four obligants include: one recovering from grave illness, one released from captivity or jail, and those traveling by sea or across a desert, when they arrive safely.

One would not place himself in this situation at a time of 'punishment'. The reasons cited for this are *raia mazla*, that the fortunes of the Jews are bad at this time, and *din*, the fact that it is a time when judgment is visited on us. Thus, one should avoid litigation with a gentile during this period. Hashem might look more favorably on the other side.

One may also not strike a child to discipline him, or anyone else, during the entire period. Surgery is a form of striking a person. If it is done to remedy, it still puts one in danger. If surgery involves a life-giving part of the body, such as the heart, or anything in the vicinity of these, or if there will be heavy bleeding, it is dangerous. Furthermore, there are risks due to anesthesia and infection, and other complications. Thus, many patients will recite *hagomel* even after minor surgery, depending on these factors. One should, therefore, avoid scheduling surgery during *Bain Hametzarim*. Routine medical procedures and emergencies should be attended during this time, with a prayer for heavenly protection and success. [See Sh Ar OC 551:1 18 (*Levush*), commentaries.]

By extension, the heavenly court looks favorably upon the Jews during *Adar*. Accordingly, this would be a good time for litigation. It might be a good time for striking a deal, where each side looks to gain the advantage. [It is never a good time to take serious risks with one's health or to strike a child.] If surgery is needed, it would appear that it is better to schedule it at this time. Since the risk must be taken anyhow, to avert a more serious risk of doing nothing, this would be the best time for it.

In our case, the question is whether *Adar Rishon* is the same as *Adar Shaini*. The issue is twofold: if *Adar Rishon* is nothing special, there is no reason to schedule something in *Adar Rishon* rather than in *Shevat*. Moreover, one should indeed delay scheduling to *Adar Shaini*. If *Adar Rishon* is indeed special, one should certainly prefer it to *Shevat*. Is it equal to *Adar Shaini*, or not as special? Should one schedule the event in *Adar Shaini* if possible, or are they the same?

The discussion in the earlier section was based on *lashon benai Adam*, what people have in mind when they speak and undertake a vow. This would not seem to relate to our issues. Here the issue is whether there is good *mazal* in *Adar Rishon*. On the one hand, the Talmud specifies that there is no difference between the two *Adars* besides the *mitzvos* of *Purim*. Even those are in dispute. Even the view that the main *mitzvos* of

*megilah* and *seuda* are observed in *Adar Shaini*, leaves open the possibility that *matanos la'evyonim* may be performed in *Adar Rishon*. This needs to be explained. Is it really *Adar*, just that the *mitzvos* of *Purim* get pushed closer to *Pesach*? Or is it more like a second *Shevat*, just that to call it such would sound strange? Since it makes the year a month longer, it is like adding a month on to the last month.

From that Talmud passage, it appears that *Adar Rishon* is like *Adar* in a regular year. It seems that either *Adar* has the special favorable *mazal* of *Adar*. Although we interpreted the *yahrzeit* debate as a question of *neder* and *lashon benei Adam*, it is also possible to relate it to the judgment of the survivors on the *yahrzeit*. One would fast to assure a positive judgment. The judgment might have more to do with the *mazal* of the day. If so, this would explain why there is an opinion that one should fast on both *yahrzeits*. The *mazal* is that of the day and the month. Since both *Adars* have that *mazal*, this should be the ruling. Indeed, some say that *Adar Rishon* also has the *mazal* of fish, which is considered a *mazal* of good fortunes and the promise of plentiful production. We also celebrate *Purim Katan* and *Shushan Purim Katan* in *Adar Rishon* as special days.

It should be noted that when the leap years were fixed based on observation, it was possible to make the extra month during *Adar* as well. If this was done after *Purim*, it meant that they had already observed *Purim* in what would now be *Adar Rishon*, which has its own set of problems. Either way, if one scheduled litigation during the first part of the month before it became *Adar Rishon*, he was counting on the *barai mazla*. Accordingly, we should assume that *baria mazla* applies to *Adar Rishon* either way. [It is possible that until determined otherwise, it had *baria mazla*. When it became *Adar Rishon* it reverted to ordinary *mazal*.] Based on this, there is no difference between the two *Adars*. One need not schedule litigation or surgery specifically in *Adar Shaini*.

Others maintain that the special *mazal* only applies to *Adar Shaini*. The *mazal* is connected to the miracles of *Purim* and *Pesach*, with *Purim* connected to *Pesach* in the common theme of *geulah*, redemption. Accordingly, there is nothing special about *Adar Rishon*. In matters such as these, we might apply the Talmudic ruling that one who believes in the auspicious ideas is dealt with in this way [Psachim 110b]. Thus, if one feels that *Adar Rishon* has *baria mazla*, he will get it. [See Taanis 29a-b, Poskim, Magen Avraham 686:4 MB8 (Dirshu 26), commentaries. Nitei Gavriel Purim 11:1 notes 1-4.]

In conclusion, since there are differing opinions, one may choose which view to follow. Once he makes that choice, he should schedule accordingly.

*On the Parsha ... Chag Hamatzos you shall guard ... to make it in the month of aviv, ripening grain (spring) ... To arrange a leap year if necessary [Sforno] ... , for in that month you left Egypt [23:15].* Why is the agricultural cycle mentioned as well as leaving Mitzrayim? Perhaps the Exodus was connected to both the lunar months of Israel, and the solar year of Mitzrayim. Accordingly, a bit of *Adar* would always be included due to the solar month. Thus, perhaps, the fortunes of the Exodus spill over into the *Adar* closest to *Nissan*.

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