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The Festival Torah Lectionary

By Hakham Dr. Yosef ben Haggai

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The Jewish Festival Lectionary is perhaps the most ancient of all Lectionaries with some minor modifications since its inception at Mt. Sinai. The Festival Torah readings are totally independent of the Annual or Triennial / Septennial weekly Torah Lectionaries.

When a Festival, or minor festival, or a special Shabbat takes place, the normal weekly Torah Lectionary is set aside and, the Festival Torah Lectionary comes into effect. This is a key principle in all Jewish Lectionaries, and one that many fail to recognize and / or adhere to.

Therefore, **there is no such literal “Triennial Lectionary” in practice,** but the norm is that the outcome must be two cycles of “Triennial Lectionary” + “Festival Torah Lectionary” = Septennial lectionary cycle.

It is therefore impossible to have strictly two, three and a half year cycles or an annual Torah Lectionary divorced from the Festival Lectionary.

The weekly Torah Readings in a normal Triennial Lectionary does not supersede the Festival readings unless the Festival Lectionary demands that the weekly Torah Seder be read, but the Festival Ashlamatah always supersedes the “weekly” prescribed Ashlamatah. Having said this, a case may be made that the weekly Torah Sedarim and Ashlamatot immediately before or after a festival or fast provides a hint that a festival or fast will arrive, or arrived before that particular Shabbat.

The following table details the specific passages for both the Torah and the Ashlamatot (Haftarah) readings.

| **OCCASION** | **TORAH READING** | | **HAFTARAH READING** |
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| **Weekday**  **Pesach, first day** | Exodus 12:21-51   1. 12:21-24 2. 12:25-28 3. 12:29-36 4. 12:37-42 5. 12:43-51   (M) Numbers 28:16-25 | | Sephardim:  Joshua 5:2 – 6:1 + 27  Ashkenaz:  Joshua 3:5-7;  Joshua 5:2 – 6:1 + 27 |
| **Shabbat**  **Pesach First Day** | Exodus 12:14-51   1. 12:14-16 2. 12:17-20 3. 12:21-24 4. 12:25-28 5. 12:29-36 6. 12:37-42 7. 12:43-51   (M) Numbers 28:16-25 | | Joshua 5:2 – 6:1 + 27 |
| **Pesach, second day** | Leviticus 22:26-23:44   1. 22:26 – 23:3 2. 23:4-14 3. 23:15-22 4. 23:23-32 5. 22:33-44   (M) Numbers 28:16-25 | | II Kings 23:1-9; 21-25 |
| **Pesach**  **1st of the Intermediate Days** | Exodus 13:1-16   1. 13:1-4 2. 13:5-10 3. 13:11-16   (M) Numbers 28:18-25 | | Song of Songs 1:1 – 2:17 |
| **Pesach**  **2nd of the Intermediate Days** | Exodus 22:24 – 23:19   1. 22:24-26 2. 22:27 – 23:5 3. 23:6-19   (M) Numbers 28:18-25 | | Song of Songs 3:1 – 4:16 |
| **Pesach**  **3rd of the Intermediate Days** | Exodus 34:1-26   1. 34:1-10 2. 34:11-17 3. 34:18-26   (M) Numbers 28:18-25 | | Song of Songs 5:1 – 6:13 |
| **Pesach**  **4th of the Intermediate Days** | Numbers 9:1-14   1. 9:1-5 2. 9:6-8 3. 9:9-14   (M) Numbers 28:18-25 | | Song of Songs 7:1 – 8:14 |
| **Pesach**  **Shabbat of the Intermediate Days** | Exodus 33:12-34:26   1. 33:12-16 2. 33:17-19 3. 33:20-23 4. 34:1-3 5. 34:4-10 6. 34:11-17 7. 34:18-26   (M) Numbers 28:18-25 | | Sephardim:  Ezekiel 37:1-14  Some Ashkenazim:  Ezekiel 36:37–37:17 |
| **Pesach, 7th day** | Exodus 13:17-15:26   1. 13:17-22 2. 14:1-8 3. 14:9-14 4. 14:15-26 5. 14:26 – 15:26   (M) Numbers 28:18-25 | | II Samuel 22:1-51 |
| **Weekday**  **Pesach, 8th day** | Deuteronomy 15:19 – 16:17   1. 15:19-23 2. 16:1-3 3. 16:4-8 4. 16:9-12 5. 16:13-17   (M) Numbers 28:18-25 | | Isaiah 10:32 – 12:6 |
| **Sabbath**  **Pesach, 8th day** | Deuteronomy 14:22-16:17   1. 14:22-29 2. 15:1-6 3. 15:7-11 4. 15:12-18 5. 15:19-23 6. 16:1-8 7. 16:9-17   (M) Numbers 28:18-25 | | Isaiah 10:32 – 12:6 |
| **Yom HaShoah** | Normal weekly Torah Seder | | II Samuel 1:17-27 |
| **Yom Ha-Atzmaut** | Normal weekly Torah Seder | | Isaiah 60:1-22 |
| **Lag BaOmer** |  | | Nazareans add in their private study and discussions: Ephesians 1:1 – 6:24 |
| **Shabuot, first day** | Exodus 19:1 – 20:23   1. 19:1-6 2. 19:7-13 3. 19:14-19 4. 19:20 – 20:14 5. 20:15-23   (M) Numbers 28:26-31 | | Ezekiel 1:1-28; 3:12  Ruth 1:1 – 3:7  Azharot:  The Positive  Commandments |
| **Weekday**  **Shabuot, second day** | Deuteronomy 15:19-16:17   1. 15:19-23 2. 16:1-3 3. 16:4-8 4. 16:9-12 5. 16:13-17   (M) Numbers 28:26-31 | | Habakkuk 2:20-3:19  Ruth 3:8 – 4:22  Azharot:  The Negative  Commandments |
| **Shabbat**  **Shabuot, second day** | Deuteronomy 14:22 – 16:17   1. 14:22-29 2. 15:1-18 3. 15:19-23 4. 16:1-3 5. 16:4-8 6. 16:9-12 7. 16:13-17   (M) Numbers 28:26-31 | | Habakkuk 2:20-3:19  Ruth 3:8 – 4:22  Azharot:  The Negative  Commandments |
| **Fast of the 17th of Tammuz** | Exodus 32:11-14; 34:1-11   1. Ex. 32:11-14   (2) Ex. 34:1-4  (3) Ex. 34:6-11 | | Isaiah 55:6 – 56:8 |
| **Shabbat immediately after 17th of Tammuz –**  **Shhabat Dibre Yirmeyahu**  **1st Penitential Sabbath** | Normal weekly Torah Seder | | Jeremiah 1:1 – 2:3 |
| **Last Shabbat of Tammuz –**  **Shabbat Shim’u**  **2nd Penitential Sabbath** | Normal weekly Torah Seder | | Sephardim:  Jeremiah 2:4-28 + 4:1-2  Ashkenazim:  Jeremiah 2:4-28 + 3:4 |
| **Shabbat before Tisha B’Ab -**  **Shabbat Chazon**  **3rd Penitential Sabbath** | Normal weekly Torah Seder | | Isaiah 1:1-27 |
| **Tisha B’Ab evening** | No Torah Reading | | Lamentations 1:1 – 5:22 |
| **Tisha B'Av, Morning** | Deuteronomy 4:25-40 | | Jeremiah 8:13-9:23 |
| **Tisha B'Av afternoon** | Exodus 32:11-14; 34:1-11  (1) Ex. 32:11-15  (2) Ex. 34:1-4  (3) Ex. 34:6-10 | | Hosea 14:2-10;  Micah 7:18-20 |
| **1st Shabbat of Consolation**  **Shabbat Nachamu 1** | Normal weekly Torah Seder | | Isaiah 40:1-26 |
| **2nd Shabbat of Consolation**  **Shabbat Nachamu 2** | Normal weekly Torah Seder | | Isaiah 49:14 – 51:3 |
| **3rd Shabbat of Consolation**  **Shabbat Nachamu 3** | Normal weekly Torah Seder | | Isaiah 54:11 – 55:5 |
| **4th Shabbat of Consolation**  **Shabbat Nachamu 4** | Normal weekly Torah Seder | | Isaiah 51:12 – 52:12 |
| **5th Shabbat of Consolation**  **Shabbat Nachamu 5** | Normal weekly Torah Seder | | Isaiah 54:1-10 |
| **6th Shabbat of Consolation**  **Shabbat Nachamu 6** | Normal weekly Torah Seder | | Isaiah 60:1-22 |
| **7th Shabbat of Consolation**  **Shabbat Nachamu 7** | Normal weekly Torah Seder | | Isaiah 61:10 – 63:9 |
| **Other Fast Days** | Exodus 32:11-14; 34:1-10 | | Isaiah 55:6 – 56:8 |
| **Weekday**  **Rosh Hashanah, first day** | Weekday: Genesis 21:1-34  (1)  Gen. 21:1-4  (2)  Gen. 21:5-12  (3)  Gen. 21:13-21  (4)  Gen. 21:22-27  (5)  Gen. 21:28-34  (M) Numbers 29:1-6 | | I Samuel 1:1-2:10 |
| **Shabbat**  **Rosh Hashanah, first day** | Shabbat: Genesis 21:1-34  (1)  Gen. 21:1-4  (2)  Gen. 21:5-8  (3)  Gen. 21:9-12  (4)  Gen. 21:13-17  (5)  Gen. 21:18-21  (6)  Gen. 21:22-27  (7)  Gen. 21:28-34  (M) Numbers 29:1-6 | | I Samuel 1:1-2:10 |
| **Rosh Hashanah, second day** | Weekday: Genesis 22:1-24  (1)  Gen. 22:1-3  (2)  Gen. 22:4-8  (3)  Gen. 22:9-14  (4)  Gen. 22:15-19  (5)  Gen. 22:20-24  (M) Numbers 29:1-6 | | Jeremiah 31:1-19 |
| **Shabbat Shuvah** | Normal weekly Torah Seder | | Sefardim:    Hosea 14:2-10;    Micah 7:18-20  Ashkenazim:    Hosea 14:2-10;    Joel 2:15-17    **These Ashlamatot must be recited by the greatest Torah scholar available to the congregation.** |
| **Fast of Gedaliah** | Exodus 32:11-14; 34:1-11  (1)  Ex. 32:11-14  (2)  Ex. 34:1-4  (3)  Ex. 34:6-11 | | Isaiah 55:6 – 56:8 |
| **Weekday**  **Yom Kippur morning** | Leviticus 16:1-34  (1) Lev. 16:1-6  (2) Lev. 16:7-11  (3) Lev. 16:12-17  (4) Lev. 16:18-24  (5) Lev. 16:25-30  (6) Lev. 16:31-34  (M) Numbers 29:7-11 | | Isaiah 57:14-58:14 |
| **Shabbat**  **Yom Kippur morning** | Shabbat: Leviticus 16:1-34  (1)  Lev. 16:1-3  (2)  Lev. 16:4-7  (3)  Lev. 16:7-11  (4)  Lev. 16:12-17  (5)  Lev. 16:18-24  (6)  Lev. 16:25-30  (7)  Lev. 16:31-34  (M) Numbers 29:7-11 | | Isaiah 57:14-58:14 |
| **Yom Kippur afternoon** | Leviticus 18:1-30  (1)  Lev. 18:1-5  (2)  Lev. 18:6-21  (3)  Lev. 18:22-30  (M) Lev. 18:22-30 | | Ashkenazim:    Jonah 1:1-4:11;  Sefardim:    Jonah 1:1–4:11 &    Micah 7: 18-20 |
| **Succoth, first day** | Leviticus 22:26-23:44  (1)  Lev. 22:26 – 23:3  (2)  Lev. 23:4-14  (3)  Lev. 23:15-22  (4)  Lev. 23:23-31  (5)  Lev. 23:32-44  (M) Numbers 29:12-16 | | Zechariah 14:1-21 |
| **Succoth, second day** | Leviticus 22:26-23:44  (1)  Lev. 22:26 – 23:3  (2)  Lev. 23:4-14  (3)  Lev. 23:15-22  (4)  Lev. 23:23-31  (5)  Lev. 23:32-44        (M) Numbers 29:12-16 | | I Kings 8:2-21 |
| **Shabbat &**  **Succoth first or second day** | Leviticus 22:26-23:44   1. Lev. 22:26-23:1 2. Lev. 23:1-3 3. Lev. 23:4-8 4. Lev. 23:9-14 5. Lev. 23:15-23 6. Lev. 23:24-32 7. Lev. 23:33-44   (M) Numbers 29:12-16 | | If first day of Succoth:  Zechariah 14:1-21  If second day of Succoth:  I Kings 8:2-21 |
| **First Intermediate**  **Weekday of Succoth** | Numbers 29:17-22   1. Num. 29:17-19 2. Num. 29:20-22 3. Num. 29:23-25 4. Num. 29:17-22 | |  |
| **Second Intermediate**  **Weekday of Succoth** | Numbers 29:20-26   1. Num. 29:20-22 2. Num. 29:23-25 3. Num. 29:26-28 4. Num. 29:20-26 | |  |
| **Third Intermediate**  **Weekday of Succoth** | Numbers 29:23-28   1. Num. 29:23-25 2. Num. 29:26-28 3. Num. 29:29-31 4. Num. 29:23-28 | |  |
| **Fourth Intermediate**  **Weekday of Succoth** | Numbers 29:26-31   1. Num. 29:26-28 2. Num. 29:29-31 3. Num. 29:32-34 4. Num. 29:26-31 | |  |
| **Intermediate Shabbat**  **during Succoth** | Exodus 33:12-34:26   1. Ex. 33:12-16 2. Ex. 33:17-19 3. Ex. 33:20-23 4. Ex. 34:1-3 5. Ex. 34:4-10 6. Ex. 34:11-17 7. Ex. 34:18-26   (M) Shabbat 1st Int. Day  Num. 29:17-22  Shabbat 3rd Int. Day  Num. 29:23-28  Shabbat 4th Int. Day  Num. 29:26-31 | | Ezekiel 38:18 – 39:16 |
| **Hoshana Raba** | Numbers 29:29-34   1. Numbers 29:22-29 2. Numbers 29:29-31 3. Numbers 29:32-34 4. Numbers 29:22-31 | |  |
| **Weekday**  **Shemini Atzeret** | Deuteronomy 15:19-16:17   1. Deut. 15:19-23 2. Deut. 16:1-3 3. Deut. 16:4-8 4. Deut. 16:9-12 5. Deut. 16:13-17   (M) Numbers 29:35-30:1 | | I Kings 8:54-66  Ecclesiastes 1:1 – 12:14 |
| **Shabbat**  **Shemini Atzeret** | Deuteronomy 14:22-16:17   1. Deut. 14:22-29 2. Deut. 15:1-6 3. Deut. 15:7-11 4. Deut. 15:12-18 5. Deut. 15:19-23 6. Deut. 16:1-8 7. Deut. 16:9-17   (M) Numbers 29:35–30:1 | | I Kings 8:54-66  Ecclesiastes 1:1 – 12:14 |
| **Simchat Torah Evening** | Deuteronomy 33:1-26   1. Deut. 33:1-7 2. Deut. 33:8-12 3. Deut. 33:13-17 4. Deut. 33:18-21 5. Deut. 33:22-26 | |  |
| **Simchat Torah Morning** | Deuteronomy 33:1 - 34:12  Genesis 1:1-2:3   1. Deut. 33:1-7 2. Deut. 33:8-12 3. Deut. 33:13-17 4. Deut. 33:18-21 5. Deut. 33:22-26   Chatan Torah:  Deut.33:27 -34:12  Chatan B’resheet:  Gen. 1:1-2:3  (M) Numbers 29:35-30:1 | | Joshua 1:1-9 |
| **Chanukah First Day** | Numbers 7:1-17   1. Num. 7:1-3 2. Num. 7:4-11 3. Num. 712-17 | | Yehudit (Judith) 1:1 – 2:28  1 Maccabees 1:1 – 2:48  Psalm 30 |
| **Nazareans** add in their private study and discussions:  Genesis 1:1-5; & 1 John 1:1-10 | | |
| **Chanukah Second Day** | Numbers 7:18-29   1. Num. 7:18-20 2. Num. 7:21-23 3. Num. 7:24-29 | Yehudit (Judith) 3:1 – 5:17  1 Maccab. 2:49 – 4:40  Psalm 30 | |
| **Nazareans** add in their private study and discussions:  Isaiah 5:20-24; & 1 John 2:1-11 | | |
| **Chanukah Third Day** | Numbers 7:24-35   1. Num. 7:24-26 2. Num. 7:27-29 3. Num. 7:30-35 | Yehudit (Judith) 5:18 – 7:16  1 Maccab. 4:41 – 6:27  Psalm 30 | |
| **Nazareans** add in their private study and discussions:  Isaiah 42:18; & 1 John 2:12-29 | | |
| **Chanukah Fourth Day** | Numbers 7:30-41   1. Num. 7:30-32 2. Num. 7:33-35 3. Num. 7:36-41 | Yehudit (Judith) 7:17 – 8:27  1 Maccab. 6:28 – 8:32  Psalm 30 | |
| **Nazareans** add in their private study and discussions:  Isaiah 42:16; & 1 John 3:1-24 | | |
| **Chanukah Fifth Day** | Numbers 7:36-47   1. Num. 7:36-38 2. Num. 7:39-41 3. Num. 7:42-47 | Yehudit (Judith) 8:28 – 10:23  1 Maccabees 9:1 – 10:32  Psalm 30 | |
| **Nazareans** add in their private study and discussions:  Psalm 43:3; Proverbs 20:27; 1 John 4:1-12 | | |
| **Chanukah Sixth Day**  **(also Rosh Chodesh Tevet)** | Numbers 28:1-15   1. Num. 28:1-5 2. Num. 28:6-10 3. Num. 28:11-15 4. Num. 7:42-47 | Yehudit (Judith) 11:1 – 12:20  1 Maccabees 10:33 – 11:59  Psalm 30  Proverbs 7:1-27 | |
| **Nazareans** add in their private study and discussions:  Psalm 27:1; Psalm 119:105; & 1 John 4:13-21 | | |
| **Chanukah Seventh Day** | Numbers 7:48-59   1. Num. 7:48-50 2. Num. 7:51-53 3. Num. 7:54-59 | Yehudit (Judith) 13:1 – 14:19  1 Maccabees 11:60 – 13:47  Psalm 30 | |
| **Nazareans** add in their private study and discussions:  Isaiah 9:1-2; & 1 John 5:1-12 | | |
| **Chanukah Seventh Day**  **2nd Day Rosh Chodesh Tevet** | Numbers 28:1-15   1. Num. 28:1-5 2. Num. 28:6-10 3. Num. 28:11-15 4. Num. 7:48-53 | Yehudit (Judith) 13:1 – 14:19  1 Maccabees 11:60 – 13:47  Psalm 30  Proverbs 7:1-27 | |
| **Nazareans** add in their private study and discussions:  Isaiah 9:1-2; & 1 John 5:1-12 | | |
| **Chanukah Eighth Day** | Numbers 7:54-89   1. Num. 7:54-56 2. Num. 7:57-59 3. Num. 7:60-89 | Yehudit (Judith) 15:1 – 16:25  1 Maccab. 13:48 – 16:24  Psalm 30 | |
| **Nazareans** add in their private study and discussions:  Zechariah 14:6-7; & 1 John 5:13-21 | | |
| **First Shabbat of**  **Chanukah** | Normal weekly Torah Seder  (M) The reading from Numbers for this day of Chanukah. | Zechariah 2:14 – 4:7  Psalm 30 | |
| **Nazareans** add in their private study and discussions:  3 John 1-14 (and if only Sabbath in Chanukah add: 2 John 1-13) | | |
| **Second Shabbat of Chanukah** | Normal weekly Torah Seder  (M) The reading from Numbers for this day of Chanukah. | Sephardim: I Kings 7:13-26  Ashkenazim: I Kings 7:40-50  Psalm 30 | |
| **Nazareans** add in their private study and discussions:  2 John 1-13 | | |
| **Shabbat Shekalim** | Exodus 30:1-38   1. 30:1-5 2. 30:6-10 3. 30:11-16 4. 30:17-21 5. 30:22-25 6. 30:26-33 7. 30:34-38   (M) Shabbat Mevar’chin Ha-Hodesh read appro-priate Torah section, otherwise same as the 7th reading. | Psalms 49  Sephardim:  II Kings 11:17–12:17  Askenazim:  II Kings 12:1-17 | |
| **Shabbat Zakhor** | Deuteronomy 24 :19 – 25:19  (1) 24:19-22  (2) 25:1-4  (3) 25:5-7  (4) 25:8-10  (5) 2511-13  (6) 25:14-16  (7) 25:17-19  (M) 25:17-19 | Psalms 109  Sephardim:  I Samuel 15:1-34  Ashkenazim:  I Samuel 15:2-34 | |
| **Purim** | Exodus 17:8-16   1. 17:8-10 2. 17:11-13 3. 17:14-16 | The Book of Esther | |
| **Shabbat Parah** | Numbers 19:1 – 20:13   1. 19:1-3 2. 19:4-6 3. 19:7-10 4. 19:11-16 5. 19:17-22 6. 20:1-6 7. 20:7-13   (M) 20:7-13 | Psalms 51  Sephardim: Ezekiel 36:16-36  Ashkenazim: Ezekiel 36:16-38 | |
| **Shabbat Ha-Chodesh** | Exodus 12:1-20 + regular weekly portion (Annual)  Exodus 11:1 – 12:28 (triennial)   1. 11:1-3 2. 11:4-10 3. 12:1-5 4. 12:6-10 5. 12:11-13 6. 12:14-17 7. 12:18-20   (M) 12:18-20 | Psalms 77  Sephardim:  Ezekiel 45:18-46:15  Ashkenazim:  Ezekiel 45:16-46:18 | |
| **Shabbat Ha-Gadol** | Normal weekly Torah Seder | Malachi 3:4-24 | |
| **Shabbat & Rosh Chodesh** | Numbers 27:15 – 28:25   1. 27:15-17 2. 27:18-20 3. 27:21-23 4. 28:1-9 5. 28:10-14 6. 28:15-18 7. 28:19-25   (M) 28:23-25 | Isaiah 66:1-24 | |
| **Shabbat immediately**  **preceding Rosh Chodesh** | Normal weekly Torah Seder | I Samuel 20:18-42 | |

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