

# MAFTIR AND HAFTORAH SUMMARY FOR SHABBOS HACHODESH

*by Rabbi Aron Tendler*

## Maftir HaChodesh

This week, in addition to the regular Parsha, we read the section known as HaChodesh. The additional sections of Shekalim, Zachor, Parah, and Chodesh are read prior to Pesach for both commemorative and practical reasons.

This additional section from Shemos, Parshas Bo, Chapter 12, is read on the Shabbos before the month of Nissan, or on the Shabbos of Rosh Chodesh Nissan. This section is an account of the very first Mitzvah given to the Jewish people as a nation. It includes the concept of Rosh Chodesh - the New Moon, as well as the basic laws of Pesach and the Paschal Lamb. Being that Pesach starts on the 15th of Nissan, this section is read about two weeks before Pesach begins. As with Parshas Parah, Chazal wanted the reading of this Parsha to be a reminder that Pesach is almost upon us! Only two more weeks to make the necessary arrangements to get to Yerushalayim and bring the Paschal Lamb! Only two more weeks and your house had better be in order! (are you panicked yet?)

It is interesting that Hashem selected the Mitzvah of the New Moon as the first national Mitzvah. Basically, the Mitzvah required two eye witnesses to testify before Beis Din that they had seen the tiny sliver of the new moon's crescent that is the very first exposure of the moon's new monthly cycle. The Beis Din would then declare the start of the new month.

The most obvious consequence of this procedure was the 29 or 30 day month, otherwise identified by a one or two day Rosh Chodesh. A two day Rosh Chodesh is comprised of the 30th day of the previous month and the 1st day of the new month. A one day Rosh Chodesh means that the preceding month was only 29 days long making Rosh Chodesh the 1st day of the new month. This would have an immediate effect on the scheduling of Yomim Tovim and other calendar ordained activities. It underscores from the very inception of the nation that the Beis Din, representing the Rabbinic leadership of the nation, were the single most important factor in guaranteeing the practice of Torah throughout time. It was as if G-d would wait for Beis Din to notify Him when His Yomim Tovim were to be.

---

## Summary of The Haftorah:

### Haftorah HaChodesh

#### *Ezekiel Chapter 45*

This week's Haftorah is from Yechezkel - Ezekiel Chapter 45 and is related to the reading of Parshas Hachodesh. The latter chapters of Yechezkel describe the future Bais Hamikdash and the service that will take place once Mashiach has come and the Jews have returned to Eretz Israel. The Haftorah describes the offering that the Prince (the King or the High Priest) will bring on Rosh Chodesh - the New Moon.

This selection from Yechezkel is especially appropriate for the Shabbos that precedes or coincides with the beginning of the month of Nissan. The month of Nissan is known as the month of redemption. Our exodus from Egypt took place in the month of Nissan. The Mishkan was first assembled on Rosh Chodesh Nissan. The Mizbeach was inaugurated into service during the first 12 days of Nissan. Therefore, we hope that this year, in the month of Nissan, we will again merit to be redeemed from exile, rebuild the Bais Hamikdash, and again inaugurate the Mizbeach by bringing the Rosh Chodesh offering in the service of G-d.