1. In the Bo'of Vayikra, in the passage where the Torah first mentions the major festivals of the year, we find the intrusion of a seemingly irrelevant verse, one which seems out of context in this list of great holidays. Our Rabbis already wondered at the fact that after the mention of Pesach and Shevuot, and before the mention of Rosh Hashanah, Yom Kippur and Sukkot, the Torah introduces an extraneous verse, one which seems to have nothing whatever to do with the MOADIM, or holidays.

When reaping the harvest, you may not reap the whole field, but must leave a "peiah," a corner of the field unharvested; and the "leket," the gleanings of the harvest, the ears of corn which fell to the ground were to be left there. And this LEKET & PEIAH, the gleanings and the corner, were to be left for the poor man and the stranger, for the needy and the alien who have not their own fields.

Our Sages, contemplating the mention of PEIAH & LEKET in the context of the Holidays, ask:

Why did the Torah see fit to mention LEKET & PEIAH in the middle of the portion of the MOADIM, with Pesach and Shevuot on one side, and R.H. & Y.K. on the other?

Many answers have been offered to this question posed by the Rabbis. All of them are worthy of deep study. This morning, however, I invite you to consider what I believe is the intention of the Torah in this juxtaposition of the Mitzvot of TZEDAKAH (for LEKET & PEIAH are really forms of TZEDAKAH or charity-giving) and the Festivals.

2. We live in an age which has an unusual flare for the dramatic and the spectacular. Our interest is directed almost solely to headlines and lead-articles. The big things in life, the flashy glamors, they attract us, while the prosaic, everyday matters are regarded as too dull to merit our consideration. In an age of space-travel, only that which goes farthest fastest is deemed worth discussing, and yesterday's missile is passe. As one wit in the Pentagon is supposed to have informed his subordinates concerning rockets, "If it works -- it's obsolete!"

In this kind of world, only a daring rescue becomes a virtue, while a kind helping hand is worthless. Only a dramatic act of courage is worth emulating, not an unspectacular deed of generosity. And at the same time, only the violent acts of murder or pillage must be avoided, not the small sins which attract no public comment. In this kind of culture, we read the best sellers, but neglect the classic literature which does not strike us as sensational. We devour every new report about the mysterious Dead Sea Scrolls, even the some of us have yet to read thru the far older and more important Bible for the first time. We have, in other words, decided to live on the peaks of life, and have neglected the fertile plains below.

And nowhere is this attitude more pernicious and more dangerous than when it comes to Religion and religious observance. For here too are we inclined to bring our worship of the big and dramatic and spectacular. Here too we may emphasize the great acts and cavalierly dismiss the trivial, to stress the glorious break-throughs of the spirit and demean the constant, slow struggle of the human heart and mind and soul to rise upwards. Thus do American Jews tend to concentrate on the so-called High Holidays and overlook the less dramatic Shevuot. -- we call it a "minor" holiday -- and certainly Shabbos. We hear of Adult Courses on "Customs and Ceremonies" which deal with the great turning points of life of birth and marriage and death, and which leave all inbetween forgotten and neglected. We begin to think that Judaism consists of Bris and Chuppah and Shivah, but that we may ignore such details as Tefillin and Talmud Torah.
and Taharas Hamishpachah, which are marked by quiet dignity and unobtrusive modesty.

And it is to forewarn us against this concentration upon the big issues to the exclusion of the seemingly trivial that the Torah inserts the mention of LEKET & PETAH imbetween the great festivals of Judaism. Remember, the Torah tells us, that no matter how important the big holidays are — they are meaningless unless the Jew pays attention to the daily requirements as well, the simple things as LEKET & PETAH. Yes, the themes of the MOADIM are world-shaking — Revelation on Shevuot, Redemption on Passover, Judgment on R.H., Repentance on Y.K. Yet all of these lofty themes are to naught if the poor man remains outside, cold and hungry and forlorn, because you choose to neglect the prosaic and plain and paltry and petty mitzvah of LEKET & PETAH. The great things are great indeed, the Torah means to tell us, but a man stands and falls on the small things. What determines the success or failure of the spiritual life of the Jew are not his grasp of the great theological concepts or even his participation in the synagogue festival service or High Holidays — but his everyday LEKET & PETAH, his daily Jewishness; not his rare splurge of kindness as much as his constancy in TZEDAKAH not by his conduct in great public events, as much as by his tefillin and tefillah, even in the privacy of his parlor, by his consideration for wife and children and neighbors, by his kasjrat and his study of the Torah. In a word, the Torah counsels us to beware of the spectacular only and to concentrate as well on the substantial.

And how history has proven the importance of the little things, the LEKET & PETAH amidst the MOADIM. The generation of Noah was destroyed by the flood because, Tradition teaches — of Gezel Pachos mishaveh Perutah, petty pilfering! The whole Egyptian exile began because of a mere 2 "slaim" worth of silk which Jacob gave his favorite Joseph more than his brothers, thus incurring their jealousy. The founder of Christianity began with a tiny sin — rejecting NETILLAS YADAYIM. Reform started its career of truncating our Tefillah by eliminating only the Yekum Purkar.

Today we read from the Torah the ASSERESS HADIBROS, the Ten Commandments. There was a time, when the Temple was on Zion's heights, that they were recited daily as part of the service. Why do we not recite them now today during our regular daily services? The Talmud answers that the Sages revoked this requirement, and actually forbade it because of TAAROMESS HAMANNIM, because of the heretics — they, the heretics, probably the early Christians, said they were going to observe only the big things, only the Ten Commandments, but that there was unimportant. Have you not heard that in our own day? "I'm religious enough — I observe the Ten Commandments." Aside from the fact that Shabbos is one of the Ten Commandments, and usually not observed by people who are satisfied with only ten of the 613 commandments, this is a typically Christian attitude. It pats up the big, and dismisses the trivial. Murder, adultery, stealing are acknowledged as sins. But what of the minor sins — what of this wilful ignorance of Judaism: what of this unJewish diet and vocabulary and whole pattern of unJewish living? So what our Rabbis told us about the Ten Commandments that we read on Shevuos — that better not to read them at all if that is going to be all of our Religion, that better no Ten Commandments if we are going to neglect less dramatic mitzvos, that's just what the Torah meant when after Shevuos in the list of Moadim it mentioned in the unglorious but extremely vital mitzvos of LEKET & PETAH. The Yiddish writer Peretz put it in his own way: no man ever stubs his toe against a mountain. It's the little things that bring a man down. So it is with us friends. None if us will ever commit murder. But someone may casually wound the pride of a friend by a word of LASHON HARA. No one here will ever bow to an idol. But someone may deny a smile to a neighbor who is starved for friendship. No one here is going to rob a bank. But someone may neglect to provide the LEKET & PETAH for a needy family. And it is these un conspicuous little things, rather than the giant themes of the MOADIM or Ten Commandments, which ultimately decide our fate. That is why such seeming trifles are of such concern to the HALAKHAH — for trifles make perfection — and perfection is no trifle.
other examples

1. [Handwritten text]

2. Michelangelo: "Tristes were perfectum, a perfectum is no trifle."

3. Jesus omits "little" obscn. 7:01

4. (Proctor) Reform (Kidron 21:1111)

5. air-water

6. [Handwritten text]

7. significant small trump 02:10-11, with 1:14 plant in trivia, not drama - not situational, convey with them... smallest deed w.cosmic meaning...

8. Henry Norris Russell - Princeton astronomer - "dependence on enormous being a q.d..."

9. Bishop in duty vs. "Hebrew consciousness" - C. Epstein
1. "only when [given] regular, habitual religion - then will be able, the men, in dramatic allegiance...."

3. (Samuel Smiles - "self-help", p. 391): "as daylight can be seen through every small break, so little things will illustrate a person's character."

4. (Lao. Tzu): "The journey of a thousand miles begins with me step."

5. (Adelaide Ann Proctor):

   Our dark cloud can hide the sunlight;
   Loose me string, the years are scattered;
   Think me thought, a soul way push;
   Say me word, a heart way touch.

6. (Purin stress 13, 91; 12, 10/12,)

7. (Purin): Nobody ever stubs his toe against a mountain.

8. (Sik): "In the Provo, by this method, 2 can be multiplied to 15, and 1 to 15 can be divided by 2."

9. (Sik) 1. 2. 3. 4. 5. 6. 7. 8. 9. 10. 11. 12. 13. 14. 15.