

2 Kislev 5774
Nov. 5, 2013



Shekalim Daf 18

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Daf Notes is currently being dedicated to the neshamah of

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May the studying of the Daf Notes be a zechus for his neshamah and may his soul find peace in Gan Eden and be bound up in the Bond of life

The *Gemora* cites a *braisa*: The table was placed in the inner half of the House, on the north side, two and one half cubits away from the wall; the Menorah was opposite it, to the south, two and one half cubits away from the wall. The Golden Altar stood in the exact middle of the House, dividing the House in half, extending somewhat outward. They were all situated inwards of the first third of the House.

The *braisa* continues that King Shlomo made ten *Menoros* (besides for Moshe’s). [The *Menoros* were all on the south side of the Sanctuary.] You cannot say that five were on the north side and five were on the south side, for the Menorah is only valid when it is situated in the south; rather, Moshe’s was in the middle, and five were on its right and five were on its left.

The *braisa* adds: They lit, however, only on the *Menorah* made by Moshe, as it is written: *And the Menorah of gold, with its lamps, to kindle in the evening.* [Both of these expositions are based on the singular form written in the Torah.]

Rabbi Yosi the son of Rabbi Yehudah said: They also lit all the *Menoros*, as it is written: *And the Menoros with their lamps, to kindle them as required before the Inner Sanctum...the finest gold.*

The verse (discussing King Solomon’s ten *Menoros* which he placed in the Sanctuary) states: *And the flowers, lamps, and the tongs (used to lift the used wick out of the oil) were of gold, finishing gold.*

Rav Yehudah cites a *braisa* in the name of Assi: Solomon made ten *Menoros*, and each one was made from one thousand *kikar* of gold. This gold was placed one thousand times into a kiln (to burn away impurities) until the gold was purified into one *kikar*.

The *Gemora* cites a dissenting *braisa*: Rabbi Yosi the son of Rabbi Yehudah states that there was once an incident when the *Menorah* of the Temple was more than the *Menorah* made by Moshe by a Kurdikian gold *dinar*. They put it into a kiln eighty times, and it did not decrease at all!

The *Gemora* explains: Being that it had already been purified well in the days of Solomon, it will not lose anything. [However, in the beginning of the purification of gold, it can lose a *kikar* at a time.] (18a1 – 18a2)

The collection boxes in the Beis Hamikdosh

There were thirteen containers in the Beis Hamikdosh, each resembling a shofar – narrow at the top and wide at the bottom – in order that people shouldn't stick their hands inside to steal some money.

The containers were used for the following purposes:

1. New shekolim, for this year's korbanos
2. Old shekolim, for people who didn't contribute last year
3. *kinnin* (a korban brought by a woman who has given birth, or by a man or woman who is *tomei* with *ziva*)
4. bird offerings for an *olah*
5. wood (for the altar's fire)
6. incense
7. gold for the *kapores*
8. six containers for general contributions

New *shekalim* are the *shekalim* of each and every year. Old *shekalim* are referring to those who did not bring their *shekalim* last year, and therefore bring it this year.

Bird pairs refer to mature turtledoves, and young olah birds refer to young pigeons. Those are all olah offerings; these are the words of Rabbi Yehudah. And the Sages say: Bird pairs are (obligatory offerings) one olah and one chatas, and young olah birds refer to (donated) olah offerings. (18a2 – 18a3)

The minimum amount for a donation

Here are the minimum amounts for a donation, based on the item donated:

- wood – 2 logs, each one thick as a large *amah*, and tall as a short *amah*. (There were varying *amos* measurements, some smaller and some larger.)
- frankincense – 1 handful
- gold – 1 dinar, only if the donor mentioned the dinar coin by name. Otherwise, he can donate even the amount of a small fork.

There were six chests used for voluntary communal offerings. What was the money used for? They would purchase olah offerings with it. The meat would go to Hashem and the hides would go to the Kohanim. Yehoyada the *Kohen* taught the following teaching. The verse states: *It is an asham, it is an ashom asham la'hashem*. (However, we know that the *asham* is eaten by Kohanim.) This teaches that if a *chatas* or *asham* was proclaimed invalid and sold, and the money was used to buy an *olah*, the meat goes to Hashem but the hide goes to the *Kohanim*. It emerges that we have fulfilled both verses: *asham la'hashem* – for the meat went to Hashem; *it is an ashom* - for the hide goes to the Kohanim. And it is also written: Asham money and chatas money shall not be brought to the House of Hashem; they shall be to the Kohanim. (18a3 – 18a4)

Kinnin in Yerushalayim

The Gemora says that in the city of Yerushalayim there were no collection boxes for *kinnin*, since one of the women may die, and then it would emerge that money which must be left to die will be mixed with the other money remaining in the chest.

The Gemora challenges this from a *braisa*: A woman who is under the obligation of bringing an offering of a bird-pair (in connection with a birth or she is a



zavah) brings money which she puts into the collecting box, performs ritual immersion and is permitted to eat consecrated food in the evening. We are not concerned that the Kohen was lazy (for we hold that there is a legal presumption that an agent carries out his mission), and we are not concerned that perhaps there is money which must be left to die will be mixed with the other money remaining in the chest.

The *Gemora* answers: Rabbi Yehudah was only concerned by a chatas where the owner certainly died (however, where it is not definitely known, he is not concerned).

The *Gemora* asks: And even if we would be concerned, let us choose four zuzim (the price of a bird) to be the money for the woman who died, and throw them into a river, and the remaining money will be permitted?

The *Gemora* answers: Rabbi Yehudah does not maintain that there is retroactive clarification (and the money which was chosen was not really that of the dead woman; the money designated for her is in fact still in the chest).

The *Gemora* rules that if one declares that he will bring wood for the Altar, he may bring one block. This is proven from the fact that two Kohanim carried two blocks (indicating that each block was a korban by itself).

Rabbi Yehoshua ben Levi said: The logs (*for the pyre on the Altar*) were an amah thick, using an expanded amah; and an amah long, using a shortened amah.

Rabbi Choni, however, said in the name of Rabbi Ami that their thickness was that of the instrument of which a scale hangs.

Rav Shmuel bar Yitzchak said: Since the place of the pyre in the Altar was only one amah by one amah, the blocks were a length of a shortened amah (for otherwise, they would protrude into the space designated as the Kohanim's walkway). And it was taught like this in a *braisa*: The amah of the base (on the bottom of the Altar; it was an amah high and an amah wide); the amah of the ledge (a decorative band surrounding the Altar at its halfway point; it was an amah wide); the amah of the karkov (the walkway for the Kohanim on the top of the Altar was an amah wide); the amah of the horns (which protruded on all four corners of the top of the Altar; they were one amah high, one amah wide and one amah long); and the amah of the pyre.

The *Mishna* had stated: If one declared that he will donate frankincense, he may not bring less than a scoopful.

The *Gemora* notes that this is because the word 'remembrance' mentioned by (the flour of) a minchah offering refers to a scoopful, so too 'remembrance' mentioned by the frankincense refers to a scoopful.

The *Gemora* asks: But by the showbread, it (the frankincense) is two scoopfuls!?

Rabbi Ila answers: We learn that the frankincense must have a scoopful from the sinner's flour offering. Just as there, if the scoopful is deficient it is invalid,



so too by the showbread, if the frankincense is deficient it is invalid. [This proves that each scoopful of levonah is an independent korban by itself.]

The *Gemora* cites an argument regarding the case where one donates an unspecified levonah offering, and he is therefore required to bring a scoopful – whose hand is the scoopful measured with? One opinion says that it is the hand of the largest Kohen that is serving that day, whereas the other one maintains that it is measured with the hand of the one who donated it. (18a5 – 18b5)

The six general-donation collection boxes

The *Gemora* cites the *Mishna* which states that there were six donation boxes in the Bais Hamikdash, for donations.

The *Gemora* asks why there were six, and offers these answers:

1. To avoid strife between the different families of *Kohanim* serving each week, one box was assigned to each day's family. (Chizkiyah)
2. For six types of animals offered as donations:
 - a. Bull
 - b. Calf
 - c. Ram
 - d. Sheep
 - e. Kid
 - f. Goat

[This follows Rebbe, who says that one may not fulfill a pledge of a small animal with a larger one.] (Bar Pedayah)

3. Shmuel says they were for six types of extra funds:
 - a. From a *chatas*
 - b. From an *asham*
 - c. From the *asham* of a nazir
 - d. From the *asham* of *metzora*
 - e. From the *minchah* offered for a *chatas*
 - f. From the *chavitin* loaves of the *Kohen Gadol*
4. Since there were many coins for donated sacrifices, many boxes were needed, to prevent the coins from rotting. (Rabbi Yochanan)

INSIGHTS TO THE DAF

The six containers correspond to the six Batei Avos

Since each *Beis Av* had its own collection box, this would prevent any animosity between these groups. Rashi explains that the money in these boxes was only used if the *mizbe'ach* was not used (i.e., there were no private korbanos needed anymore that day,) and in order to keep the *mizbe'ach* "busy", extra korbanos would be purchased and offered.

Now, that each *Beis Av* will have its own box, no one group would fight with the other (for lack of funds,) since the money didn't belong to that group, which was of a different day.

DAILY MASHAL

How Many Days of Daf Yomi for Shekalim?

Our schedule allows for twenty-one days to learn the twenty-one pages of Shekalim, according to the print layout of the Vilna Shas. However, when we examine the first Daf Yomi calendar, originated by R' Meir Shapira, we find that he allotted only eleven days for Shekalim.

The reason for this discrepancy is that R' Meir Shapiro based his schedule on the Slovita printing of Shas, in which Shekalim was printed with fewer commentaries. As such, it took up only eleven pages. Later, when the Vilna Shas was reprinted with Maseches Shekalim and its commentaries, less space remained on each page for the Gemara text. Shekalim then grew to twenty-one pages. R' Meir Shapiro was a grandson of the publishers of the Slovita Shas, and therefore made use of their printing in arranging his schedule. Years later, the Daf Yomi schedule was amended, to schedule Shekalim according to the Vilna Shas. How did this change take place?

R' Shmuel Blum, vice president of Agudas Yisroel of America, shared with us the background to this incident. When R' Yosef Tzvi Aharonson, a renowned *talmid chocham* from Kovna moved to America, he opened a shul in the Flatbush area of Brooklyn where he delivered a Daf Yomi shiur. In those days, Shekalim was still learned over the course of eleven days, and R' Aharonson saw that his students were having a hard time grasping the material. The unique language

of Yerushalmi, coupled with the large amount of material learned each day, posed a great difficulty to Daf Yomi students. To counter this problem, he authored a commentary to Shekalim entitled "Sheklai Yosef," in which he explained the masechta based on the opinions of the various commentaries. Furthermore, he approached the Gedolei HaDor to suggest that the Daf Yomi schedule be adapted to follow the Vilna printing of Shekalim. Thereby, Shekalim would be spread out over twenty-one days, allowing sufficient time to digest the material. Many Gedolim, including the Steipler Gaon and the Beis Yisroel of Gur, gave their approval to his plan. However, some students of R' Meir Shapira protested that the original Daf Yomi schedule accepted by Klal Yisroel has the status of a *neder* to perform a mitzva, which cannot easily be annulled. This claim was presented to R' Moshe Feinstein. After some consideration, he concluded that adapting the schedule to allow Daf Yomi students to better understand the material is not considered breaking a *neder*. This incident took place just before the conclusion of the seventh cycle of Daf Yomi. For a number of weeks, Daf Yomi calendars were not available for the new cycle, since people were waiting to hear the decision of R' Moshe Feinstein before printing the calendars for the eighth cycle. Our thanks to R' Shmuel Blum for sharing with us this interesting anecdote of Daf Yomi history.