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Shekalim Daf 5

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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 Mishna states that one (*when bringing the donations from those who lived outside of Yerushalayim*) may exchange *shekels* for gold *darkons* (*which were minted coins*) on account of the burden of the journey (*but coins which are not minted or other objects of value cannot be sent to Yerushalayim, for we are concerned that it will decrease in value and hekdesh will then suffer a loss*).

Just as there were collection boxes in the Temple (for the *shekalim*), so too there were collection boxes in the provinces.

If people of a city sent their *shekalim* (*for the sacrifices of the year*) with a messenger and they were stolen or lost from the messengers, the halachah is as follows: If the new funds were already divided and started to be taken when they came to *Beis Din*, they (*the messengers*) swear to the treasurers of the Temple (*that they were not negligent*). If the new funds were not yet divided and taken, the messengers swear to the people of the city, who must give new *shekalim*. If the *shekalim* were found or returned,

they are *kodesh* and cannot be used for next year. (5a)

The Gemora says that using pearls (which are easier to carry) cannot be used, since the stones may depreciate in value, and Hekdesh will ultimately lose out. This is the same reason why one may not redeem items from Hekdesh with utensils, as opposed to money.

The Gemora makes a few intricate inferences from the Mishna:

\* Collection boxes were found both in and out of the Beis Hamikdosh, where people would insert their *machtzis hashekel*. These boxes resembled a shofar, since they were narrow on top and wide at the bottom, to avoid theft of the money. The added "service" of placing the boxes outside the Beis Hamikdosh was only for the current year's coins. But if one was tardy with his donation, one would have to journey to Yerushalayim to perform this mitzva.

\* A city could collect *shekalim* from all its inhabitants, and then appoint a messenger to bring the money to Yerushalayim. If subsequently the money was stolen or lost from the messenger, he would take an oath that he didn't embezzle the money, and the loss will be Hekdesh's. This is only true if Hekdesh's treasurers already used the funds towards korbanos. But if the money was still unused, the messenger would swear to the individual people who entrusted him with the funds, and they will have to donate once again. The Gemora says that this is only true if the messenger was a *shomer chinam* (he was watching it for free), but a paid messenger will be liable for stolen or lost objects. But Rav Abba feels that even a paid messenger is exempt, since this case is similar to an armed robbery or an object lost at sea, where even a paid messenger is exempt. (5a)

The Gemora continues discussing the case when the *shekalim* were stolen or lost, and the messenger must take an oath before being acquitted of the allegations. The fact that the messenger swears to the treasurer can only work according to Rabbi Shimon, who says that if one is responsible for the value of Kodshim, they are considered his property. Here too, the treasurers took possession of the *shekalim*, thus they are held responsible.

Rabbi Yochanon argues this point, and says that this works according to the Chachomim as well.

Chazal were so concerned for the "safety" of Temple property that they mandated an oath here.

The *Gemora* asks: This explains why the Mishna first said that the messenger swears to the treasurers, and then to the city's inhabitants. However, according to Rabbi Eliezer (the first opinion), why is the messenger swearing to the treasurers - the *shekalim* do not belong to them?

Rabbi Eliezer answers that the treasurers are "awarded" this oath so that they don't suspect the messenger of stealing, and that the messenger shouldn't be perceived as a sinner. (5a – 5b)

The next Mishna discusses the case when one gives his friend a shekel to bring to the Beis Hamikdosh, but the latter takes it for himself. If Hekdesh's treasurers already used the funds, then the person has transgressed the halacha of *Me'ilah* (unauthorized use of Hekdesh.) The sin has been committed even before any korbanos were purchased with the funds and sacrificed – says Rabbi Shimon – since the Kohanim are very quick to perform the Service.

When one commits *Me'ilah*, he has to benefit from the Hekdesh. The benefit here (simply speaking, just donating a coin isn't considered pleasurable) is that since Beis Din could have taken a collateral from him had he not donated his shekel, and now he is exempt from that, this is a derived benefit. (5b)



## INSIGHTS TO THE DAF

The Kli Chemda asks a very basic question. Why did the Torah prescribe that a poor person should not bring less than a machatzis hashekel, and a wealthy man should not bring more – regardless of each person's economic situation? The Torah generally disallows adding or detracting from a mitzva (Bal Tosif and Bal Tigra.)

He derives a proof from our first mishna. The *shekalim* were stolen or became lost, and were returned or found after the people donated another shekel. The halacha is that both coins are considered **this** year's shekolim, and the second one cannot be considered an early donation for next year. Only in the mitzva of Shekolim – where the Torah openly says that one cannot give more or less than the required amount – does the prohibition of Bal Tosif and Bal Tigra **not** apply. Otherwise, how could the replacement shekolim be used for this year's donation? In all other mitzvos however, the prohibition of Bal Tosif and Bal Tigra will apply.

## DAILY MASHAL

### Maseches Shekalim in Place of Machatzis HaShekel

Today, we have no Beis HaMikdash and we are unable to bring the machatzis hashekel. However, our study of Maseches Shekalim takes the place of this mitzva.

A hint for this can be found in the Gemara (Megilla 13b): “It was known before the Holy One, Blessed-be-He, that Haman was destined to offer Achashverosh shekalim to destroy the Jewish people. Therefore, Hashem prepared our *shekalim* first, to counter Haman’s. As we learn: ‘On the first of Adar [Beis Din] announces about Shekalim.’”

We can interpret this Gemara to mean, “Hashem prepared our shekalim... as we learn.” By learning the Mishna and Gemara, it is considered as if we offered the shekalim (Elef HaKsav).