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Shekalim Daf 2

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Background to Shekalim

The Torah at the beginning of Parshas Ki Sisa commands us the mitzvah of giving *shekalim*, where each male aged twenty and above must give half of the *shekel* coin. These donations went towards the purchase of the numerous public *korbonos* that would be brought throughout the year. The Beis Hamikdosh had other expenses which were covered by the *shekalim*, such as the ingredients for the *ketores* and the *lechem haponim*, as well as the wages for those who produced them.

The Time of the Giving of the Shekalim

The *Mishna* starts by telling us that on the first day of Adar, Beis Din would send out messengers to every city with a Jewish population, reminding the people to give their *machtzis hashekel*.

On the first of Adar proclamation is made regarding the *shekalim* and *kilayim* (*the prohibition against planting together different species of vegetables, fruit or seeds – the proclamation serves as a warning to uproot any shoots of other seeds that appear among the grain*). On the fifteenth of Adar, they read the Megillah in the walled cities and they would be sent out to repair the roads, fix the streets, measure the mikvaos (*ensuring that they contained forty se’ah of water, and fix them*), attend to all the needs of the public, they would mark the graves and they would also go out to inspect the fields for *kilayim*. (2a1)

The Gemora asks: Why did they proclaim on the first of Adar regarding the *shekalim*? The Gemora answers: The

Jews had to bring the *shekalim* in their designated time, so that the funds for the public offerings brought during the new year would be withdrawn from the new annual contributions in its proper time, on the first of Nissan.

The Gemora offers two reasons why specifically this date. The first opinion is of Rabbi Shmuel bar Rav Yitzchok, who says that this donation should take place on the same date of the inauguration of the Mishkon. It is written [in Parshas Pekudei]: And it was in the first month in the second year on the first of the month that the Tabernacle was erected. [The Torah writes that the Mishkon was inaugurated on Rosh Chodesh Nissan.] Rabbi Tavi in the name of Rabbi Yoshiya quoted Rav Kahana's opinion that there is a *gezeirah shavah* between the word “*chodshei*” used in *kiddush hachodesh* (referring to Rosh Chodesh Nissan,) and the word “*chodshei*” used in general *korbonos*. Therefore, the Beis Hamikdosh’s supply of *korbonos* should be replenished on Rosh Chodesh Nissan.

Rabbi Yonah noted that Rabbi Tavi omitted the first half of the *braisa*. If we only had the second half of the *braisa* that Rabbi Tavi brought, then it would appear that one would be obligated to donate a *machtzis hashekel* **every** month of the year. Because it is written: This is the olah of the new moon at the renewal. The torah teaches otherwise, by writing: In its month for the months of the year – in one month the new funds are withdrawn for the entire year. The *braisa* continued by suggesting that one could donate the half *shekel* at **any** month one chooses. Until the *braisa* concluded, based on the *gezeirah shavah* between the word “*chodshei*” used in *kiddush hachodesh* (referring to



Rosh Chodesh Nissan) and the word “*chodshei*” used in general *korbanos* –that the mitzvah can only be performed in Nissan. (2a2 – 2a3)

What is the meaning of the word used in the Mishnah ‘mashmi’in’? Rav Huna explains that the word ‘mashmi’in’ means to proclaim. The *Gemora* cites a Scriptural source: they issued a proclamation throughout Judah and Jerusalem – this proves that there was a custom to remind people to bring the *shekalim*. (2a3)

Which Adar?

There is a *Mishna* which states: The only differences between Adar I and Adar II are *mikrah megilah* and *matanos l’evyonim*.” Rabbi Simon said in the name of Rabbi Yehoshua ben Levi: The announcement of the *shekalim*, and the announcement to uproot *kilayim* is also a difference between them (and these proclamations are made in the second Adar). Rabbi Chelbo, Rav Huna and Rav in the name of Rabbi Chiya the Great said that all people fulfill their obligation (of reading the Meggilah) on the fourteenth (of Adar), for that is its [main] time of reading. Rabbi Yosi supports this statement (of R’ Yehoshua ben Levi): Why did the Rabbis institute that we must issue a proclamation regarding the Shekalim? It is so the Jews will bring their Shekalim at at the designated time. Now, there are sixty days from Rosh Chodesh Adar I until Rosh Chodesh Nissan. If the people were warned about *shekalim* in Adar I [i.e., this early], they may forget to do it in the right time. The same is true for *kilayim*. Why did the Rabbis institute that we must issue a proclamation regarding the Shekalim? It is so the [forbidden] shoots will

now be recognizable. On Rosh Chodesh Adar I, the shoots are too ripe, and it’s quite difficult to tell which are *kilayim*. [Therefore, the announcement of the *shekalim* and *kilayim* should be done on Rosh Chodesh Adar II, only one month prior to Nissan.]

Rabbi Chizkiyah asked: If that is so,¹ then with regard to the people of Babylonia² the court should proclaim about the new shekels at the beginning of winter, so that the Jews would bring their shekels in the proper time, and thus the collection of the Temple treasury chamber will be collected from the new shekels at its appropriate time, on the first of Nissan?³

Rabbi Ulla raised a difficulty in the presence of Rabbi Mana:⁴ But we learned in a Mishnah (*Shekalim* 3:1): On three times in the year the shekels were collected from the chamber:⁵ Fifteen days before [*biferos*] the festival of Pesach, fifteen days before the festival of *Shavuos*, and fifteen days before the festival of *Sukkos*. Rabbi Ulla continued and said to Rabbi Mana in explanation:⁶ With regard to those who are near Jerusalem (whose shekels arrived before the first of Nissan), the collection for their coins is fifteen days before Pesach, while the collection for those who are farther away is fifteen days before *Shavuos*; and the collection for those who are even farther away than they are is fifteen days before *Sukkos*.

Rabbi Mana said to Rabbi Ulla: [The different collections of the chamber do not reflect the different times of the shekels’ arrival, but rather] the entire collection of shekels arrives at one time.⁷ And why then did the Sages say that

¹ That the reason these proclamations are made in Adar II is because otherwise (if they would’ve been made in Adar I), there would be time for procrastination.

² Who live at a great distance travel from Jerusalem,

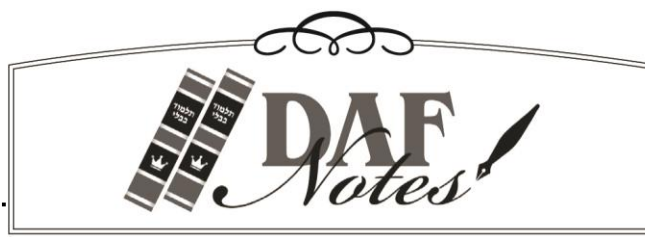
³ It should be necessary to issue the proclamation earlier for distant locations.

⁴ Rabbi Chizkiyah’s statement indicates that in each place the proclamation should be issued in accordance with the time it takes for the shekels to reach Jerusalem from there.

⁵ For the purchase of communal offerings.

⁶ In light of this Mishnah, shouldn’t we say that the proclamation for shekels was issued in all places on the same date, the first of Adar, whereas the ceremony of the collection of the Temple treasury chamber was performed at three different times, in accordance with the arrival of the shekels to the Temple from different locations.

⁷ by the first of Nissan, and in accordance with the opinion of Rabbi Chizkiyah.



the money is collected from the chamber on three times in the year? In order to publicize [*pumbei*] the matter. (2a4 – 2b1)

Mussar That Can Be Learned From the Behavior of Klal Yisroel

Rabbi Yehudah bar Pazi said in the name of Rabbi Yehudah HaNasi: Can we read the following verses and not be afraid? On the one hand, when the Torah commanded the Bnei Yisroel to build the Mishkan, the verse states: “And they came, both men and women, as many as were willinghearted (*“nedivei lev”* - generous donors), and brought...an offering of gold to Hashem.” However, in contrast for an evil purpose - with the *Chet Ha’egel* (the sin of the Golden Calf), the Torah says: the entire nation parted with their jewelry.

Similarly, for a good purpose (heading to Har Sinai) it is written: Moshe brought the people forth,⁸ but for an evil purpose (by the Meraglim - the sin of the Spies), it is written: All of you approached me.⁹

Thirdly, for good (when Bnei Yisroel crossed the Yam Suf - the Reed Sea), it is written: then Moshe and the Children of Israel sang.¹⁰ However, for an evil purpose (when the Meraglim returned with their negative report of Eretz Yisroel), the Torah writes: And the entire congregation raised etc.¹¹

And finally, Rabbi chiya bar Abba said: Tzefanyah Hanavi admonished the Jews for rising early to worship the

Golden Calf, as it is written: they rose early and corrupted; and every act of corruption that the Jews would perform, they would perform it early in the day.¹² (2b1)

Rabbi Abba bar Acha said: You cannot comprehend the accurate nature of this people, as donations are solicited for the Golden Calf and they give; and later, donations are solicited for the Tabernacle, and they also give.

Rabbi Yosi bar Chanina [looks at the events in a more positive way] taught a Baraisa: You shall make a cover of pure gold. Let the gold of the cover come and provide atonement for the gold of the Golden Calf. (2b1 – 2b2)

For What Were the Shekalim Used?

Rabbi Chaggai said in the name of Rabban Shimon bar Nachman: Three donations are stated in this passage:¹³ The donation for the sockets,¹⁴ the donation of shekels for communal offerings; and the donation for the building of the Tabernacle. When the verse states: “Speak to the children of Israel, that they take for Me a donation”, this is the donation of sockets. “Of every man whose heart makes him willing, you shall take My donation”; this is the donation of shekels. “And this is the donation which you shall take from them”; this is the donation of the Tabernacle.

The Gemara notes: The donation of the Tabernacle goes to the Tabernacle, and whatever they want, they may bring. The donation of shekels is for the communal

⁸ Moshe Rabbeinu needed to force the Jews to approach Har Sinai.

⁹ Everyone approached Moshe Rabbeinu to approve of the sending of the spies.

¹⁰ Moshe Rabbeinu started singing the Shirah, and only afterwards did the entire Jewish nation join.

¹¹ The torah records that everyone cried simultaneously.

¹² In contrast, only the vigilant arise early to fulfill mitzvos, as when it came time to donate to the Mishkan, they did so later on in the morning.

¹³ In both Parshas Teruma (where the Torah talks about building the Mishkan,) and Parshas Ki Sissa (where the Torah talks about the *machatzis hashekel*,) the word *terumah* is mentioned three times. The Gemara learns that this teaches us that three donations were given: 1) for the Mishkan’s building, 2) for the various *korbonos*, and 3) for the *adanim* (the base of the Mishkan’s *kroshim* pillars.)

¹⁴ In which the beams of the Tabernacle building were placed.



offering; whatever amount they want to give for the acquisition of the various communal offerings, they may do. [Every Jewish male participates in this collection] They all have an equal share in the communal offerings. As for the donation of the sockets, it is brought for the making of sockets. In this case the verse states: "The rich shall not give more, and the poor shall not give less".¹⁵

Rabbi Avun said: In this passage as well, three donations are stated: "Half a shekel for an offering to Hashem"; "Shall give the donation of Hashem"; "They give the donation of Hashem". (2b2 – 2b3)

More Details About Adar II

The *Mishnah* said that *mikrah megillah* takes place on the fifteenth of Adar [and the Gemora immediately noticed that this contradicts general knowledge that the Megillah is read on the fourteenth]. But how can this be so? Didn't Rabbi Chelbo say citing Rav Huna citing Rav, in the name of Rabbi Chiya the Great: All fulfill the obligation to read the Megillah on the fourteenth of Adar, which is the fixed time of its reading.¹⁶

The Gemora answers that our *Mishna* refers to the inhabitants of walled cities from the time of Yehoshua Bin Nun, who are required to read on the fifteenth. The *Mishna* is hinting to us that the mitzvos that occur on the fifteenth of Adar (such as the announcement of the *shekalim* and *kilayim*) – must be performed on Adar II, and are not operative in Adar I.

The Gemara relates: Rabbi Yosah and Rabbi Acha were sitting together. Rabbi Yosei said to Rabbi Aha: [The

statement that all fulfill their obligation on the fourteenth indeed means that all may read the Megillah on the fourteenth.] Yet is it logical to say so only after the fact, i.e., if they neglected to do so on the fifteenth, the inhabitants of a walled city have fulfilled their obligation by reading on the fourteenth? [what then can he be teaching us?] Rather, the residents of walled cities need not read the Megillah on the fifteenth [if he has already read it on the fourteenth].

Rabbi Yosah raised an objection to Rabbi Acha. But wasn't it taught in a *Baraisa*: In a place where they were accustomed to read the Megillah on two days,¹⁷ they read it on two days?¹⁸ Rabbi Acha said to him: I too hold like that.¹⁹

[Rabbi Acha, however, did not explain how Rabbi Chelbo's statement that all fulfill their obligation on the fourteenth is reconciled with the *Baraisa*.] Rabbi Mana said: And this is so; (there is no contradiction from the *Baraisa*). If, after reciting the Megillah on the fourteenth of Adar, one does not want to read it again on the fifteenth, perhaps we listen to him, i.e., allow him not to read it again? If you say so, you have turned out to have directly with your hands uprooted the proper time for the recitation of the Megillah in walled cities (which is the fifteenth of Adar).²⁰ (2b3 – 2b4)

It was taught in a *Baraisa* that Rabban Shimon ben Gamliel says: All the mitzvos that are operative in the Second Adar are not operative in the First Adar, apart from the

¹⁵ Every male from age twenty upward donated the fixed sum of a half-shekel, which was used for the making of the sockets.

¹⁶ This ruling apparently includes even the inhabitants of walled cities.

¹⁷ Due to doubt over whether or not that city was surrounded by a wall in the days of Yehoshua, such as Tiberias.

¹⁸ Yet you claim that even in a place where the Megillah must definitely be read on the fifteenth, if it was read on the fourteenth the residents are not obligated to read it again.

¹⁹ I.e., that residents of a walled city should read the Megillah on the fifteenth, even when they had already read it on the fourteenth.

²⁰ Therefore, it is appropriate for one who has already read on the fourteenth to read again on the fifteenth.

prohibitions against eulogy and fasting on Purim, which apply equally in both this month and that one.²¹

Rabbi Ba and Rabbi Yirmiyah in the name of Rav, and similarly, Rabbi Shimon in the name of Rabbi Yehoshua ben Levi said: The *halachah* is in accordance with the opinion of Rabban Shimon ben Gamliel. Rav Huna the Great from Tzippori said: Rabbi Chanina instituted the custom in Tzippori in accordance with this opinion of Rabban Shimon ben Gamliel. The Gemara infers: Rav Huna did not say that according to Rabbi Chanina the *halachah* is in accordance with the opinion of Rabban Shimon ben Gamliel, i.e., as a definitive ruling; rather, he meant that Rabbi Chanina merely instituted the custom in practice, even though it is not the definitive *halachah*.

The Baraisa continues: However, with regard to the issue of dating legal documents, the following practice is followed. One writes First Adar [in the first Adar], and in the Second Adar, simply Adar. Rabbi Yehudah says: In the First Adar one writes simply: Adar, whereas in the Second Adar one writes: Second Adar. (2b4 – 3a1)

INSIGHTS TO THE DAF

The Cheshek Shlomo wants to understand the exact procedure of the proclamation of the *shekalim*. He believes that even in the times of the Beis Hamikdash – when *shekalim* were actually donated – every shul read Parshas *Shekalim* on Rosh Chodesh Adar, thereby publicly proclaiming the upcoming mitzvah. He also notes that it seems from Rashi in Meseches Megilla (about Parshas *Shekalim*) that messengers actually travelled from city to city to tell the Jews about the *shekalim*. (The Korban Ha'edah on our *Mishna*, and the Targum Rav Yosef on the *posuk* in Divrei Hayamim that the Gemara brings as a proof, both seem to say this latter point as well.) If so, asks

²¹ It is prohibited to give a eulogy or to fast on the fourteenth and fifteenth of both the First Adar and the Second Adar.

the Cheshek Shlomo, why did they proclaim twice, both messengers and the reading of the Torah? He answers that the messengers were needed for those small towns that had a population of less than ten, and couldn't read from the Torah. And even in the larger cities where the Torah was read, the reading provided them with the details of the mitzvah.

The Sefer Hachinuch seems to disagree with this approach. He writes at the end of Mitzvah 105, "And now, due to our many sins, that we don't have a Beis Hamikdash and *shekalim*, the entire Jewish nation has been accustomed **to remember this matter** by reading every year in shul this parsha." According to the Chinuch, Parshas *Shekalim* is categorized as a *zecher l'churban*, and not that actual proclamation required by the *Mishna*, as was suggested by the Cheshek Shlomo.

Introduction to Maseches Shekalim Talmud Yerushalmi

With the onset of Maseches *Shekalim*, we turn our attention from the cycle of Talmud Bavli to the single tractate of Talmud Yerushalmi studied in the course of Daf Yomi. Many tractates of *Mishnayos*, such as *Shekalim* and most of Seder Zeraim, have a Talmud Yerushalmi commentary, but no Talmud Bavli. Among them all, *Shekalim* alone was included in the Vilna printing of Talmud Bavli for some reason. Thereby, Yerushalmi *Shekalim* merited to be included in the study of Talmud Bavli Daf Yomi as well.

For the next twenty-one days, we will become familiar with the unique form of Aramaic language found in the Yerushalmi, and with a host of many Amoraim from Eretz Yisroel, whose names do not appear in the Talmud Bavli. Unfortunately, we lack here the commentaries of Rashi,



Tosefos and the other Rishonim whose light guides our path throughout the Talmud Bavli. However, other commentaries were written in later generations, such as *Korban Eida*, by R' David of Dessoi; *Pnei Moshe*, by R' Moshe Margolis of Vilna, and *Taklin Chaditin*, by R' Yisroel of Shakalov, student of the Vilna Gaon; and *Pei'as HaShulchan* and *Pnei Zakein* by R' Yitzchak Isaac Saprin, the first Kamorna Rebbe zt"l.

Machatzis HaShekel

As its name implies, Maseches *Shekalim* deals primarily with the mitzvah of machatzis hashekel. Each Jewish man was required by Torah law to bring half a shekel to the Beis HaMikdash each year, to pay for the communal korbanos. The overseers of the Beis HaMikdash regularly took sums of money, entitled "*terumas halishka*," from this fund to pay for the korbanos. Money that was left over was used for other expenses of the Beis HaMikdash.

Overview of the masechta

The first chapter deals with the obligation to give machatzis hashekel, the manner in which it was collected, and the *kalbon*: the exchange fee that was collected when two people brought a whole shekel together.

The second chapter adds certain details about the obligation to give machatzis hashekel. It also discusses what was done with left over money that had been donated for machatzis hashekel or for other korbanos, but not needed for that purpose.

The third chapter discusses the *terumas halishka*, mentioned above.

The fourth chapter discusses how the *machatzis hashekel* money was used. Other details of korbanos are also discussed here. From here on, the masechta digresses from the topic of *shekalim*, to discuss other matters pertaining to the Beis HaMikdash.

The fifth chapter lists the people who were appointed to supervise the various duties of the kohanim. It also discusses how an individual goes about purchasing a korban.

The sixth chapter discusses the boxes used to store money in the Beis HaMikdash, the tables, the places where people were required to prostrate themselves, and commitments made for the sake of korbanos.

The seventh chapter discusses animals, money or meat found in Yerushalayim; and several details relevant to sanctifying things for the sake of the Beis HaMikdash.

The eighth and final chapter continues the discussion of articles found in Yerushalayim, in regard to maintaining the purity required there.

The order of the masechtos

Shekalim is found after Pesachim in the order of *Mishnayos*, before Seder Moed continues with the other Yomim Tovim, in Masechtos Yoma, Sukka and so on. The Rambam (introduction to his commentary on the *Mishna*) explains that this follows the order found in the Torah. First Pesach is discussed in Parshas Bo, then *Shekalim* in Parshas Ki Sisa, and then the other Yomim Tovim, in Parshas Emor. Rav Sherira Gaon offers a different explanation. Each year, the Machatzis HaShekel was collected during Adar and first used in the Beis HaMikdash in Nissan. Therefore, it is relevant to Pesachim, and placed subsequently (introduction of Tosfos Yom Tov). It is interesting to note that although the *Mishnayos* and the Talmud Bavli follow this order, in the Talmud Yerushalmi *Shekalim* appears after Yoma.

DAILY MASHAL

CONNECTION BETWEEN THE SHEKALIM AND KILAYIM

The *Mishna* states: On the first of Adar proclamation is made regarding the *shekalim* and *kilayim*. What is the connection between the *shekalim* and *kilayim*?

The Satmar Rebbe used to say: It is well known that the obligation to donate a half-shekel to the Beis Hamikdash and not a whole shekel implies that a person is not complete by himself. He must join together with other Jews and only then will he be considered a whole person. At the same time, one must be wary about bonding with a wicked person. It is written in Avos d'Reb Nosson (30:3): One who unites with an evil person even if he himself does not engage in the same manner as him will receive punishment similar to the retribution that will be administered to the wicked person. One who unites with a righteous person even if he himself does not perform virtuous acts will receive reward similar to the reward of the righteous person.

The proclamation and inspecting of the *kilayim* is to promote this concept. The Torah prohibits various mixtures of crops from growing together, so too, one must be careful as to whom his friends are.

Rabbi A. Leib Scheinbaum quotes from Horav Yosef Chaim Sonnenfeld. He explains that a person must strive to cultivate relationships. As the Tanna says in Pirkei Avos 1:6, Knei lecha chaver, "Acquire for yourself a friend." One who lives as an individual lives as an incomplete person. He is missing a part of himself. Nonetheless, one must maintain criteria with regard to his relationships. He must be sure to associate only with those people who are appropriate. Just as certain admixtures of crops are forbidden, so, too, is it unwise to develop an affiliation with people of questionable or incompatible character. The positive effect of a good friend - and, conversely, the negative effect of a bad friend - cannot be emphasized enough.

Dr. Nosson Chayim Leff cites a Sfas Emes who offers a different explanation. "On the first day of Adar, we inform people about their obligation to donate a half shekel to the Beis HaMikdash and about *kilayim* (that is, the

obligation, when planting one's field, to avoid mixing seeds of different plants, such as grapes and wheat)."

The Sfas Emes poses a basic question: Why were these announcements made specifically in the month of Adar? The Sfas Emes answers that the month of Adar resembles the month of Elul in certain important ways. We know that Elul is the month before the end of one year and the beginning of a new year that begins with Rosh Hashana. Thus its position as a potential turning point in our lives makes Elul a propitious time for doing teshuva, for repenting. So, too, the Sfas Emes tells us, the month of Adar immediately precedes the new year that begins in Nisan. Thus, Adar is also well placed for a person to look inside himself and do teshuva. Because of its importance, Adar is a good time for making the key announcements mentioned in the *Mishna*.

But, notes the Sfas Emes, there is an important difference between teshuva in Adar and teshuva in Elul. In Elul, we do teshuva from *yirah* (fear or a sense of awe). By contrast, in Adar, we can more easily do teshuva out of a sense of love (*ahava*) for HaShem. Indeed, that is why we experience heightened joy, *simcha* - in Adar. When Adar comes, our expansiveness and good feeling toward HaShem increase. That is the reason for our obligation to donate half a shekel to the Beis HaMikdash. Obviously HaShem does not need our donations. What He wants is to give us the opportunity to awaken our good feelings and dedication toward Him. (Note, incidentally, that the Sfas Emes has just given us a whole new perspective on giving *tzedaka*. The conventional view sees us giving *tzedaka* because of our commitment to observe *mitzvos*. Ultimately, love for HaShem may enter the process. But that happens only if we work on ourselves diligently enough to do the *mitzvah* not by rote and or out of social pressure but rather because of our love for HaShem. By contrast, the Sfas Emes sees the process as beginning from our love and good feelings to HaShem.)

Every Jew has within him a latent devotion to HaShem. What we need is an activity to express that devotion. The obligation to give the half shekel to the Beis Hamikdash

provides such an opportunity. And because Adar gives us an opportunity to express that love for HaShem, we feel more joy!

At this point, the Sfas Emes injects a note of severe caution into the ma'amar by citing a dvar Torah from his grandfather, the Chidushei Harim. The pasuk in Shir HaShirim (7:2) says: "Mah yafu pe'ahmayich bane'alim, bas nadiv." (ArtScroll: "But your footsteps were so lovely when shod in pilgrim's sandals, O daughter of nobles.").

The Chidushei HaRim read this pasuk in the following non-pshat manner: The generosity and expansiveness of spirit (he is reading "pe'ahmahyich as "pulse rate," i.e., "spirit") of the Jewish people as the descendants of Avraham Avinu (whose great chesed and magnanimity entitled him to the sobriquet "the Nadiv," i.e., the "benefactor") is so great that it must be locked up ("min'al" = lock). That is, this love can be so overpowering that it has to be watched and controlled lest it go outside, i.e., be misdirected. (Anyone familiar with the devotion and love that too many Jews in Russia and Poland harbored for communism will concur in this comment of the Chidushei HaRim.)

The Sfas Emes continues, addressing a question that may have bothered you earlier. The *Mishna* quoted above juxtaposes two things. First, it specifies awakening people's hearts to nedivus, expansiveness. The *Mishna* conveys his message by requiring all of us to make a donation to the Beis Hamikdosh. Then the *Mishna* warns us to be careful to avoid kilayim. What is the connection between these two items in the *Mishna*?

The Sfas Emes answers this question by offering us a non-pshat reading of the word 'kilayim'. He reads the word as an allusion to "locking up" (as in "beis ha'kela" = prison). People must be warned to be careful with their idealism and generosity.

The Sfas Emes concludes: Every year when we read the parsha of *Shekalim*, our hearts are awakened to give all to HaShem. Unfortunately, we do not have the Beis HaMikdosh and thus cannot give our all as an offering. But in any case, HaShem's love for us is awakened, and we can do teshuva with simcha.

I saw another explanation offered by the members of the St. Louis Kollel. The Talmud in Megillah 13b states in the name of Rish Lakish, "It was well known beforehand to Him at Whose word the world came into being, that Haman would one day pay shekels for the destruction of Israel. Therefore, he anticipated his shekels with those of Israel, and so, we have learned "on the first of Adar, a proclamation is made regarding the *shekalim* and the mixed seeds (kilayim).

The Shem MiShmuel explains the connection between the shekels of Bnei Yisroel and those of Haman. He cites his father who says that the mitzvah of *shekalim* alludes to the giving over of a person's ten powers for the love of Hashem. (See Gur Aryeh, beginning of Parshas Terumah.) The shekel weighed ten gairah, an allusion to these ten powers a person possesses. It was from silver, kesef, which comes from the word nichsapha, desire or longing. The giving over the silver shekel represented the desire to give over, in love these ten powers. Haman's main intent was not to merely wipe out Bnei Yisroel for the sake of eradicating them. Rather, his intent was that the seventy nations of the world should take over Bnei Yisroel's role in the world and replace them in their special relationship to Hashem. His *shekalim* therefore, were very similar in intent to Beni Yisroel's. He handed over a fortune to Achashverosh in order to bring about the replacement of Bnei Yisroel by the 70 nations. His *shekalim* were also given over, as if to say, in love of Hashem. "*Shekalim*" comes from the word "to weigh." Hashem weighed the pure intent of Bnei Yisroel, in contrast to Haman's intent that was not completely pure. His underlying intent was really to destroy Yisroel, and it was only clothed with the intent of the 70 nations gaining a closer relationship with Hashem.

This explains the connection in the *Mishna* between *shekalim* and the prohibition to mix seeds (kilayim). The *shekalim* have to be pure without any mixed intentions. Our avoda during Adar is to purify our intentions that we should truly desire to give over of ourselves all our powers for Hashem's service, without any selfishness.