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Shekalim Daf 4

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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

Halachah 4 · MISHNAH: Although the Sages said that we do not seize collateral from women, slaves, and minors,<sup>1</sup> however, if they contributed a shekel of their own accord, we (the Temple treasurers) accept from them. Conversely, in the case of an idolater or a Cuthean who contributed a shekel, we do not accept it from them. And likewise, we do not accept from them pairs of birds sacrificed in the purification ritual of a *zav*, pairs of birds of a *zavah*, or pairs of birds of a woman who gave birth, or chatas-offerings or asham-offerings. This is the general rule: With regard to anything that can be brought to the altar as a vow or as a free-will offering, the Kohanim accept it from them, and with regard to anything that cannot be brought as a vow or as a free-will offering, we do not accept it from them. And this principle was similarly articulated by Ezra,<sup>2</sup> as it is stated: [But Zerubavel, and Yehoshua, and the rest of the heads of fathers’ houses of Israel, said to them:] It is not for you and us to build a house for our God; [but we ourselves together will build for Hashem].

[The *Mishna* introduces the *kalbon*, a small service fee paid to the money changers by some people who donate a half-

shekel.] And these are the people who are obligated in the *kalbon*: Levi’im, Yisraelim, converts, and emancipated Canaanite slaves, but not Kohanim, women, Canaanite slaves, or minors. One who contributes a shekel on behalf of a Kohen, on behalf of a woman, on behalf of a slave, or on behalf of a minor, is exempt from the *kalbon* (as they are exempt to begin with). If one contributed a shekel on his own behalf and on behalf of another,<sup>3</sup> he is obligated in one *kalbon*.<sup>4</sup> Rabbi Meir says: He must pay two *kalbonos*.<sup>5</sup> One who gives the collection agent a *sela* (two Mishnaic Shekalim), and takes a shekel (as change) is obligated in two *kalbonos*. One who contributes a shekel on behalf of a poor person (and receives a half-shekel as change), on behalf of his neighbor, or on behalf of a resident of his city is exempt from the *kalbon*.<sup>6</sup> Partnered brothers, who are obligated in the *kalbon*, are exempt from *ma’aser beheimah* - the animal tithe - (for the livestock they inherited).<sup>7</sup> And when they are obligated in *ma’aser beheimah*, they are exempt from paying the *kalbon*.<sup>8</sup> And how much is a *kalbon*? A silver *ma’ah*; these are the words of Rabbi Meir. And the Rabbis say: It is only half a *ma’ah*. (3b4 – 4a2)

<sup>1</sup> As they are not obligated to contribute.

<sup>2</sup> When he recorded the Jewish leadership’s rejection of the Cutheans’ request to assist the Jews in the construction of the Second Temple.

<sup>3</sup> I.e., he contributed one whole shekel to discharge both his own obligation and that of someone else.

<sup>4</sup> The half-shekel coins rise in value in the month of Adar. When one donates a full-shekel coin to “pay” for two people, the Temple is in fact losing, and the *kalbon* – the difference in value between the shekel and two half-shekel coins - serves as compensation to the Temple.

<sup>5</sup> Rabbi Meir maintains that every person who contributes a half-shekel must pay an additional *kalbon* as well.

<sup>6</sup> The Sages did not obligate in the *kalbon* those who use their own money to fulfill the obligation of another. But if one loaned them a half-shekel, rather than paying it on their behalf, he is obligated to pay the

*kalbon*. Since the recipients of the loan must repay the money, it is as though the half-shekel were paid from their property rather than the lender’s.

<sup>7</sup> If they have fully divided among themselves their late father’s assets, if they jointly pay a whole shekel from those assets to discharge both of their obligations, they are obligated in the *kalbon* like any other two private individuals. In this case, they are exempt from the animal tithe for the livestock they inherited. Since they have completely divided between them all inherited assets, they are considered purchasers of the livestock, and a purchaser is exempt from the animal tithe.

<sup>8</sup> But when they have not completely divided the assets, and they are therefore obligated in the animal tithe, as the livestock is considered in their father’s possession, they are exempt from the *kalbon* for their joint payment, as in the case of one who pays on behalf of another.

The *Mishnah* opened up by saying that even though we don't seize collateral from children who are exempt, if they came forth themselves to donate, we accept their donation. The Gemora infers from here that regarding demanding from them, we do not demand. But here (in the previous Mishnah) you said that we demand from them, and here (in our Mishnah) you say that we do not!? The Gemora answers that it depends on the maturity of the child. Here (in the previous Mishnah) is where he has grown two pubic hairs (then we can demand from him) but here (in our Mishnah) is where he has not brought two hairs (and therefore, we do not demand from him). (4a3)

The *Mishnah* stated that in the case of an idolater or a Cuthean [who contributed a shekel, we do not accept it from them]. Rabbi Ba said: The Mishnah's ruling (that both half-shekels and mandatory offerings are not accepted from Cutheans) should be interpreted according to the opinion of the one who said that a Cuthean is considered like an idolater. As the Tannaim disagreed with regard to this matter: A Cuthean is like an idolater; these are the words of Rebbe. Rabban Shimon ben Gamliel says: A Cuthean is like a Jew in all matters. Rabbi Lazar said: No, the statement of the Mishnah concerning mandatory offerings applies only to idolaters, as in this instance the Mishnah is not referring to Cutheans.<sup>9</sup> And indeed it was taught likewise in a *Baraisa*. [It is written: When a man of you brings an offering.] The phrase "a man" comes to include converts. "Of you" (a restricting phrase) comes to exclude renegades.<sup>10</sup> [Hence, the Cutheans, who are classified as converts, bring mandatory offerings.] The Gemara wonders: It appears that the Mishnah disagrees with Rabbi Elazar, for it stated: we do not accept

from them pairs of birds sacrificed in the purification ritual of a *zav*, pairs of birds of a *zavah*, or pairs of birds of a woman who gave birth. But are there pairs of birds offered in the purification ritual of a *zav* or of a *zavah* among the idolaters?<sup>11</sup> Rather, it must be that the first clause of the Mishnah<sup>12</sup> applies to idolaters, and the latter clause<sup>13</sup> is referring to Cutheans. The Gemara concludes: Indeed, it is so; the first clause of the Mishnah is referring to idolaters, and the latter clause is referring to Cutheans. (4a3 – 4a4)

Rabbi Yochanan said with regard to idolaters: In the beginning (during the construction of the Temple), we do not accept from them neither a specific article,<sup>14</sup> nor a nonspecific article.<sup>15</sup> But at the end,<sup>16</sup> we accept from them a nonspecific article, but we do not accept from them a specific article. Rabbi Shimon ben Lakish said: Whether it is in the beginning or at the end, we do not accept from them neither a specific article nor a nonspecific article. The Gemara asks: A *Baraisa* apparently disagrees with the opinion of Rabbi Yochanan: We do not accept from them consecrated property and donations for the maintenance of the Temple.<sup>17</sup> The Gemara answers: Rabbi Yochanan would resolve it, and explain that the *Baraisa* indeed addresses the *halachah* of donations both at the start and at the end of the construction of the Temple, but only with regard to specific articles.<sup>18</sup> Alternatively, you may interpret the *Baraisa* to be referring to the beginning time only, for even his money (which is not regarded as a specific article) you must cast into the Dead Sea.

It was stated above that Rabbi Shimon ben Lakish said: Whether it is in the beginning or at the end, we do not accept

<sup>9</sup> The *halachah* with regard to Cutheans on this matter is subject to the general disagreement as to whether they have the status of Jews or idolaters.

<sup>10</sup> One who has committed idolatry or who deliberately violated the entire Torah, or he has desecrated the Shabbos in public.

<sup>11</sup> The *halachos* of purification from ritual impurity do not apply to idolaters, and they do not observe them at all, and would therefore not be offering any sacrifices for purist sake. Evidently, the Mishnah is referring only to Cutheans, and would thus be in direct opposition to the opinion of Rabbi Lazar!?

<sup>12</sup> Concerning the half-shekels.

<sup>13</sup> Which deals with mandatory offerings.

<sup>14</sup> I.e., any item meant to be left intact.

<sup>15</sup> E.g., silver or a material that is incorporated into the structure and is not distinct.

<sup>16</sup> Once the construction has been completed.

<sup>17</sup> This statement does not distinguish between the initial period of construction of the Temple and afterward, or between specific and nonspecific articles.

<sup>18</sup> Therefore, the *Baraisa* does not contradict the opinion of Rabbi Yochanan.

from them neither a specific article [nor a nonspecific article]. The Gemara asks: A *Mishnah* apparently disagrees with the opinion of Rabbi Shimon ben Lakish, as it was taught: All agree that idolaters may vow and be the subject of a vow.<sup>19</sup> The Gemara answers: You may resolve it by explaining that this *Mishnah* is referring to a vow to bring an olah-offering (which all agree an idolater may do). The Gemara asks: It works out well that idolaters may vow, as this can be interpreted as speaking of an olah-offering. However, the statement that idolaters can be the subject of a vow cannot be referring to an olah offering (for an idolater will not be obligated to bring an olah based upon a vow that he did not make). The Gemara answers: Rather, the Mishnah is referring to a case when a Jew said: It is upon me to donate an olah-offering, and an idolater heard and said: What this person said is likewise incumbent upon me.<sup>20</sup> (4a4 – 4a6)

The Gemara asks: [But if the Mishnah is referring to a burnt-offering] doesn't the idolater bring libations with it?<sup>21</sup> And the surplus money dedicated to libations goes toward the payment for the sacred vessels. It would therefore emerge that the idolater brings a nonspecific article (which contradicts Rabbi Shimon ben Lakish's opinion). Rabbi Yosi the son of Rabbi Bun responded: But didn't we learn that idolaters can be valued (as a subject of an erech-vow)<sup>22</sup> and may value to the Temple the fixed sum of others.<sup>23</sup> Doesn't the sum valued go toward the Temple maintenance?<sup>24</sup> Rather, the explanation is as they say there: When an idolater pledges money to the Temple, he intends it for Heaven (in general),<sup>25</sup> and the pledge comes into the maintenance of the Temple fund on its own. You can likewise say even here,<sup>26</sup>

[that when he brings money for the libations,] he intends it for Heaven, and the funds come into the Temple maintenance fund on their own.<sup>27</sup> (4a6 – 4b1)

Rabbi Shimon ben Lakish explains his ruling (that the Temple construction and its upkeep was restricted exclusively to Jews) from the verse: It is not for you and us to build a house for our God [but we ourselves together will build for Hashem]. Rabbi Chizkiyah said that Rabbi Simon asked: Now, since it has been concluded (that contributions are not accepted from idolaters for the maintenance of the Temple), it can be inferred (from another verse) that even contributions toward the<sup>28</sup> stream of water,<sup>29</sup> or for the walls of the city and for their towers are not accepted from them. As it is written (that Nechemyah said to his enemies): [The God of Heaven, He will prosper us; therefore, we His servants will arise and build] but you have no portion [nor right, nor remembrance in Jerusalem. (4b1)

[There is a dispute in the Mishnah with regard to one who contributes a whole shekel on behalf of himself and another. The first *Tanna* maintains that he is obligated in one kalbon, while Rabbi Meir rules that he must pay two kalbonos.] What is the reason for Rabbi Meir's opinion: As Rabbi Meir said: Just as one's shekel is mandated by the Torah, so too, his kalbon is mandated by the Torah. Rabbi Meir therefore holds, with regard to one who gives exactly a whole shekel, half for himself and half for another, that he is obligated in one kalbon for each half. As Rabbi Meir said: [When Moshe was instructed in the *halachos* of the shekel contribution] the Holy One, Blessed be He, took out a kind of coin of fire from

<sup>19</sup> An idolater who vows to donate his own value to the Temple and a Jew who vows to donate the value of an idolater must donate that sum to the Temple maintenance fund. This shows that pledges are accepted from idolaters, which contradicts the opinion of Rabbi Shimon ben Lakish.

<sup>20</sup> Since the idolater did not vow independently but tied his statement to that of someone else, it is considered as though a vow were uttered in reference to him.

<sup>21</sup> Olah-offerings must be accompanied by libations.

<sup>22</sup> This was stated by Rabbi Meir.

<sup>23</sup> This was stated by Rabbi Yehudah.

<sup>24</sup> Yes it does! And Rabbi Shimon ben Lakish maintains that we do not accept an idolatrous contribution to the upkeep of the Temple!?

<sup>25</sup> Rather than for any specific use in the Temple.

<sup>26</sup> With regard to the surplus money from the libation of an idolater's olah-offering.

<sup>27</sup> Consequently, it is permitted to accept the libations of an olah-offering from an idolater, as the remaining money was never specifically designated for this purpose.

<sup>28</sup> Maintenance or repair of .....

<sup>29</sup> Which ran through the Temple courtyard; the Kohanim would use this water to wash sacrificial parts and they would use it to dispose of unwanted substances.

under His Throne of Glory and showed it to Moshe and said to him: This they shall give, i.e., like this (in volume and weight) they shall give (of metal).<sup>30</sup> (4b1 – 4b2)

The Mishnah stated that one who gives the collection agent a *sela* (two Mishnaic Shekalim), and takes a shekel (as change) is obligated in two kalbonos. Rabbi Elazar said: This is the opinion of Rabbi Meir, as Rabbi Meir said: One [kalbon is for the] shekel that he gives, and one is for the Biblical requirement.<sup>31</sup> For it was taught in a Baraisa: These are obligated in a kalbon, etc. [One who gives a *sela*, two Mishnaic Shekalim), and takes a shekel (as change), he must pay one kalbon. But Rabbi Meir says: He must give two kalbonos. And Rav said: No, this ruling of the Mishnah is a statement accepted by all, as everyone agrees that one [kalbon is for the] shekel that he gives, and one is for the shekel that he takes.<sup>32</sup> And according to Rav's logic, the kalbonos are three.<sup>33</sup> In support of this claim, the Gemara relates: When Rabbi Yirmiyah came, he said that Rabbi Shmuel bar Rav Yitzchak said in the name of Rav: There are three kalbonos: One for the shekel that he gives, and one for the shekel that he receives, and one that applies for the Biblical requirement. (4b2 – 4b3)

[The Mishnah stated that a certain type of partnership between brothers renders them obligated in the kalbon and exempt from the animal tithe, while another form of partnership renders them obligated in the animal tithe and

<sup>30</sup> Since not all weights of coins are equal, and some coins might be slightly smaller than the one shown to Moshe, it is therefore necessary by Torah law to add a kalbon.

<sup>31</sup> But according to the first Tanna, he is only required to give one kalbon.

<sup>32</sup> He is obligated to add two kalbonos, even according to the first Tanna. This is because it is regarded as two distinct transactions; one is the paying of his half-shekel with the full shekel, and the other is his receiving the change. If he would have done any one of these transactions with a moneychanger, he would have needed to pay a kalbon.

<sup>33</sup> Rabbi Meir would add a third kalbon based upon the Biblical requirement.

<sup>34</sup> They are therefore partners in the normal sense, rather than co-owners of the original inherited estate, and regular partners are obligated in the kalbon and exempt from the animal tithe. The Torah specifically exempts partners from the animal tithe.

exempt from the kalbon.] The Gemara elaborates: The case of partnered brothers who are obligated in the kalbon and exempt from the animal tithe is referring to when they divided up the estate of their deceased father and afterward re-entered into a partnership.<sup>34</sup> Conversely, the case where they are obligated in the animal tithe and are exempt from the kalbon is referring to brothers who have not divided their father's estate between them at all.<sup>35</sup>

Rabbi Lazar said: These words (that when they divided and re-entered into a partnership that they are now exempt from the animal tithe) refer to a case where they divided kids for rams and rams for kids,<sup>36</sup> but where they divided kids for kids and rams for rams,<sup>37</sup> the *halachah* is that the group of animals each brother takes is considered his share from the outset.<sup>38</sup> However, Rabbi Yochanan said: Even if they divided the estate in the manner of kids for kids and goats for goats, they are considered like purchasers.<sup>39</sup> They are therefore exempt from the animal tithe, as we learned in a Mishnah there: That which is bought or given to the owner as a gift is exempt from the animal tithe. (4b3 – 4b4)

#### INSIGHTS TO THE DAF

##### *Value of the Shekel*

The above-mentioned medrash about the coin of fire allows for another interpretation in the reason for the *kalbon*. The

<sup>35</sup> It is therefore considered as though their father were still the sole owner of the estate and is contributing the shekel for the pair of them. As stated earlier in the Mishnah, one who contributes his own money on behalf of another is exempt from a kalbon. Meanwhile, as the estate is under a single ownership, the animal tithe must be separated from the livestock.

<sup>36</sup> Where one brother took possession of only kids and the other brother took only rams.

<sup>37</sup> So that each takes some of both types in the normal manner.

<sup>38</sup> This is accomplished through the principle of *bereirah* – that it has been retroactively clarified as to which animals belonged to which brother from the outset. Accordingly, no transaction between them has occurred. Consequently, when they reestablished the partnership, the estate reverted to its original status as a single entity, and therefore the animal tithe must be separated.

<sup>39</sup> It is as though each brother has sold his share to the other.

reason we have been citing is the service fee for the money changers. But another reason is that the shekel coin's value during the generation that received the Torah has depreciated in later generations, and therefore one must add a little extra money to reach a full Torah shekel value. This is the unique opinion (daas yochid) of Rav Meir. The Torah Temima points us to a Tosafos in Menachos 29a. The Gemora there lists three things that Hashem showed Moshe: the Menorah; Rosh Chodesh; and *tumas sherotzim*. All three contain the word "zeh" (this), meaning that Hashem showed Moshe exactly what He meant (due to the difficulties in comprehension of these mitzvos). Tosafos asks why this Gemora doesn't include our shekolim, where the same word "zeh" is used, which is the source of our Gemora's medrash. Tosafos offers a few answers (including that Moshe Rabbeinu couldn't fathom how such a small monetary amount can atone for the large *chet ha'egel*.) But the Torah Temima adds his own answer, that it is only Rav Meir who insists that later generations give the full Torah shekel amount. The majority opinion is that one gives the current shekel amount, and therefore the Gemora in Menachos didn't include the coin of fire in its list of the items that Hashem showed Moshe.

#### DAILY MASHAL

##### *Coin of Fire*

HaShem showed Moshe a coin of fire and told Moshe, they should "give a coin like this." A coin is like a fire, it can do great good, give warmth and light, or harm, burn and destroy.

Daf Digest relates: A man went up to Heaven. His good and bad deeds were weighed and the bad were greater. However, one of the judges noted that the man had once given a coin to a poor family and the coin had saved them. The Heavenly court decided in his favor. Another man in Heaven had his deeds weighed and the good outweighed the bad, but one of the judges recalled that he had stolen a coin from a poor family and they all died. The man should have been condemned, yet the Heavenly judges also decided in his

favor. Why? The judges decided to concentrate on the intention of each man. The first man intended to help the family, the second man only intended to steal a single coin. He had no intent to harm a whole family and should not suffer for having done so.

##### *The Complexity of the shekel Coin*

By: Rabbi Doniel Stoum

The Yerushalmi (Shekalim 1:4) relates in the name of Rabbi Meir that G-d took out a 'fiery coin' from beneath His Throne of Glory and showed it to Moshe declaring, "like this you shall give". The commentators question why this was necessary. What was so complex about a tax of a half-shekel that Moshe couldn't comprehend without a Divine demonstration? When G-d commanded that each Jew offer a half-shekel as atonement, it was to symbolize that the physical giving was only half the job. Were they commanded to give a full shekel, they might feel that the act of giving was itself a complete act and they have now achieved full repentance. The half-shekel reminded them that the remainder of their 'giving' was on a very personal level, within the heart and soul of each individual. When G-d originally commanded Moshe to instruct the Jews to contribute the half-Shekel, Moshe wondered why they were not expected to give a complete Shekel. G-d showed Moshe a coin of fire to symbolize that indeed each Jew was expected to give a complete Shekel. However the second half of the coin had to emanate from the internal flames of passion within one's heart.

##### *The Soul of Prayer*

By: Rabbi Eliyahu Hoffman

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Hashem showed Moshe a half-shekel coin of fire, taken from beneath the Throne of Glory. "This is what they should give," He said. (Talmud Yerushalmi, Shekalm 1:4) Apparently Moshe had some difficulty understanding the mitzvah of *machtzis ha-shekel*, donation of a half-shekel, until Hashem was forced to demonstrate it to him. We find similar comments regarding the construction of the Menorah and

consecrating the new moon. However, those cases are indeed complex, whereas giving a half-shekel coin seems like a pretty straightforward mitzvah. What exactly didn't Moshe understand? And why indeed is the mitzvah a half-shekel and not a full one? Also, it seems funny that the coin was found "beneath the Throne of Glory," not normally the place one would think to look for coins. And why was it made of fire?

Early mefarshim note that the word shekel has the same numerical value (430) as nefesh, spirit – the lowest level of the Jewish soul. This is significant: The funds collected from the half-shekels were used to purchase communal offerings. Since the destruction of the Beis Ha- Mikdash (Holy Temple), our prayers stand instead of the sacrifices. The word nefesh is connected to prayer: *"I pour out my spirit (nafshi) before Hashem"* (Shmuel-1 1:15). *"To you, Hashem, I pick up my spirit"* (Tehillim/Psalms 25:1). The fact that nefesh and shekel share the same numerical value is not coincidental; it alludes to the fact that the two share one function.

*"And for me, my prayer is to You Hashem, at an acceptable time"* (Tehillim 69:14). Why does the Psalmist begin the verse with the conjunction "and" – implying there's someone else besides 'me'? Sefer Chasidim (1157-8) writes that every Jew has a malach/mazal (angel) that defends him in prayer before the Heavenly Court, and asks Hashem to accept the prayers of his charge with compassion. This malach also awakens the soul of his guarded one, encouraging him to pour out his heart before Hashem with concentration and enthusiasm. This malach/mazal, the Bobover Rebbe shlita explains, is not necessarily an angel in the traditional sense. When man's soul is 'hewn from beneath the Throne of Glory' and placed within a body, it doesn't move from one place to the next as would a material object. Rather, it expands its reach from its origin to the body with which it connects. This, explains the Ba'al Tanya, is the meaning of (Devarim/Deuteronomy 32:9), *"For Hashem's portion is His nation; Yaakov is the rope of His inheritance."* 'Hashem's portion' refers to the soul, which we are taught is "the G-dly portion within man." The soul is like the rope; no matter how long, it remains tethered to its source. Thus, the Rebbe explains, the malach which initiates

prayer on our behalf, and awakens us to pour out our hearts, is the out-of-body portion of our soul, which remains forever connected to its source – Hashem – and can never be corrupted by our shortcomings. This fits in with the Sefer Chasidim's description of this malach/mazal: Ba'al Tanya writes that man's soul is sometimes referred to as mazal, from nozel, to flow, because it flows from its source beneath the Throne into man's body, and through it all goodness flows from heaven to earth. This may also explain why even those completely distant from G-d, in their most testing moments, inevitably turn to prayer. Prayer, which stems from the soul, remains intimately connected with its upper source, and is at times the one uncorrupted source of purity in an otherwise tainted existence.

Note that it is shekel which has the same numerical value as nefesh, and not machtzis ha-shekel, the half shekel. The shekel, like the sacrifices it supports, represents prayer. It is half inasmuch as our this-worldly prayer is only part of the picture. Our 'better half' resides beyond our physical existence, keeping us connected with a higher calling.

Perhaps this explains what puzzled Moshe, and Hashem's answer. It was not the 'how' of the half-shekel but the 'why' – why is this mitzvah to be done with a half coin? Hashem responded by showing him a fiery coin – it is significant that coin (matbeah) is also used by Chazal to represent prayer (kol ha-mishaneh mi- matbeah she-tav'u Chachamim/whoever changes the liturgy from the one established by our Sages...). The coin, which corresponds to the soul (shekel=nefesh), was made from fire: prayer is not something to be done by rote, but rather an expression of the fiery heart, a revelation of man's deepest emotions and desires. The 'coin' was taken from beneath the Throne of Glory, the source of all Jewish souls. It is only a half coin, because the prayer we express is preceded by the prayer of our upper soul, which stirs our hearts to pray. The month(s) of Adar is a most opportune time to take inventory of our prayers – what we're putting in to the 'pushka' and what we're taking out. Have a good Shabbos.