



להתזודע

ולהגלות מחמדי התורה בכל דף בשי"ם

Shekalim Daf Vav

“EACH MAN WILL GIVE AN ATONEMENT FOR HIS SOUL”

בשקלים דף ו'. כתיב זה יתנו כל העובר על הפקודים, ר' יהודה ור' נחמיה, חד אמר לפי שחטאו במחצית היום, יתנו מחצית השקל. וחרנה אמר לפי שחטאו בשש שעות ביום, יתנו מחצית השקל דעבד שיתא גרמסין. ר' יהושע בי ר' נחמיה בשם ר' יוחנן בן זכאי לפי שעברו על עשרת הדברות, יהיה נותן כל אחד ואחד עשרה גרה. ר' ברכיה ר' לוי בשם רבי שמעון בן לקיש, לפי שמכרו בכורה של רחל בעשרים כסף, יהיה כל אחד ואחד פודה את בנו בכורו בעשרים כסף, ר' פנחס בשם ר' לוי לפי שמכרה בכורה של רחל בעשרים כסף, ונפל לכל א' וא' מהם טבעה, לפיכך יהיה כל אחד ואחד נותן שקלו טבעה.

-א-

Giving the Machatzis Hashekel as an atonement of the Chet Ha'Eigel

Klal Yisrael erred in thinking that “Anochi Hashem Elokecha” referred specifically to Moshe/This mistake stemmed from a lack of unity/The half shekel versus a full shekel is meant as a message regarding unity/Shekalim to purchase communal offerings/Why the pauper gives the same as the wealthy man/The way to bring unity to Klal Yisrael is through our hearts being one with Hashem

-פני דוד להחיד"א, אלשיך, חתם סופר-

✎ The *Pnei Dovid*¹ comes to explain this that *Chazal* say how the *Machatzis Hashekel* is given as an atonement for the *Chet Ha'Eigel*. He raises how we see from the *Medrash*² that *Moshe Rabbeinu* defended *Klal Yisrael* using the commandment of “*Anochi Hashem Elokecha*”. *Moshe* argued that the singular text of “*Elokecha*” indicates the command was directed to him alone and not to the rest of *Klal Yisrael*. He thereby used this as a defense for *Klal Yisrael* arguing that they never transgressed the commandment as it was meant only for him.

In truth, this argument is what caused *Klal Yisrael* to sin. When they came to make the *Eigel* they worried they would be punished for transgressing “*Anochi Hashem Elokecha*”. However, they then reasoned that the singular wording indicated the commandment had been directed only to *Moshe*. This argument was the spring board for them to follow through with their sin.

However, in reality this can be pushed off and we can say the reason for the singular wording is quite the opposite. It wasn't intended to include only *Moshe Rabbeinu* and exclude the rest of *Klal Yisrael*. On the contrary, the unique singular wording does include everyone and was intended to allude to the fact that all of *Klal Yisrael* are considered to be one soul. This is because we all originate from the source known as “*Knesses Yisrael*”, and there all souls are considered as one.

This is similar to where the *Torah* states³ “*Kol hanefesh l'Beis Yaakov ha'baah Mitzraimah shiv'im*”. In reality there were 70 people who went down to Egypt, yet the *Torah* dubs them as one soul using singular wording. So too we can say that when *Hashem* used singular wording in his commandment of “*Anochi*” his intention was to refer to the singular unit that makes up the entirety of *Klal Yisrael*.

Therefore, we must say that when *Klal Yisrael* sinned they weren't properly unified. As such, they didn't feel as if they were one soul, and couldn't see themselves being referred to as one unit. This in turn is what caused them to interpret the commandment of “*Anochi*” to refer specifically to *Moshe* and not them. The singular wording threw them off in thinking that if *Hashem* had wanted to include them as well He should have used the plural version instead. It comes out that the lack of unity in *Klal Yisrael* at the time was directly responsible for their dreadful error.

Indeed, the *Alshich Hakadosh*⁴ explains *b'shem* the *Rash Ben Alkabetz Z"l* that this is why we give a half *shekel* instead of a full one. The intention is to teach *Klal Yisrael* the importance of our unity, and that no person should think of themselves as separate from the group. Rather we should all see ourselves as halves, and only consider ourselves to be whole when joined together with everyone else. We give the half *shekel* to drive this home. [His words stop here.]

It is because of this that we bring communal offerings with the *Machatzis Hashekel* funds. The atonement of offerings works exclusively when *Klal Yisrael* is joined together, and that is why we bring a singular *korban* dubbed a “communal offering”. It alludes to our unity.

This is also why the *Torah* states “The wealthy man shouldn't increase, and the pauper shouldn't decrease”.

Wealth and honor are external factors that have no relevance to our souls. A soul is a piece of *Hashem* above, and this part of is equal whether wealthy or poor. We are all children of *Hashem*, and through our all giving the same half *shekel* this then allows us to feel the inherent unity. It is with this form of contribution that it is proper to purchase offerings to atone for all of *Klal Yisrael*.

It is now also understandable how the giving of the *Machatzis Hashekel* atones for the *Chet Ha'Eigel*. The whole root and cause for the sin stemmed from the fact that *Klal Yisrael* (at the time) couldn't understand how the singular commandment of "*Anochi*" could refer to them. This lack of understanding was a direct result of their lack of unity, and cause them to err in thinking the commandment referred only to *Moshe*. Now though, through the giving of the *Machatzis Hashekel* it becomes clear that there is a singular unit representing our true identity.

This is also why the *pasuk* states "*L'chapeir al nafsho-seichem*" with the plural wording. The whole purpose of the *Machatzis Hashekel* is to atone for our having considered ourselves to be separate. We erred in thinking there are many souls in *Klal Yisrael*, and this is what caused us to sin. Therefore, we correct this mistake with the *Machatzis Hashekel* and atone for our "souls".

The *Chasam Sofer*⁵ uses the words of the *Alshich* to explain why *Moshe* had trouble understanding the *mitzvah* of the *Machatzis Hashekel* until *Hashem* showed him a coin of fire underneath His throne. He writes that *Moshe's* difficulty

was in understanding how one member of *Klal Yisrael* could achieve complete unity with the others. *Moshe* reasoned it to be impossible for a mere mortal to align himself and draw close to him all the other opinions of the *Klal*.

In truth, we can already see from the *Chovos Ha'levavos* that a person shouldn't waste time trying to draw other people to him. Instead it is incumbent upon every one of us to draw close to *Hashem* Himself and exert ourselves in being desired by Him. This in turn will cause *Hashem* to be pleased with us, and He will then cause the other members of *Klal Yisrael* to desire a connection with us as well. When a man becomes a lover of *Hashem* and makes peace with Him, *Hashem* then causes all people to do the same with him also.

This is what *Hashem* was doing when he showed *Moshe* a coin of fire underneath His throne. He was telling *Moshe* that the way to unify isn't through extending effort in drawing others to oneself (as if he is using his half of the coin to attract the other half). Rather the key is to look up at the *Machatzis Hashekel* in heaven and work to make oneself whole with *Hashem*. This makes it as if one becomes a partner with *Hashem*, and creates an inherent unity. That unity then branches out and joins all of *Klal Yisrael* to each other. It is like we say in the *Shabbos Tefillah* "You are one and Your name is one, and who is like Your nation *Yisrael* the one nation in the land". The unity of *Klal Yisrael* is drawn after the unity of *Hashem* Himself, and this is what *Hashem* was showing *Moshe*. [1]

NOTES

[1] The *Kli Yakar*^א comes to explain why we atone for the *Chet Ha'Eigel* specifically through giving a half *shekel* and not a full one. He writes that the *Chet Ha'Eigel* was directly responsible for the *Luchos* being broken in two. Therefore, we give a "broken" *shekel* to atone for this act of breaking.

He continues by citing the *gemara* in *Berachos*^ב concerning the *pasuk* "*V'di zahav*". The *Dvei Rebbi Yanai* there explain the *pasuk* by saying that *Moshe* argued with *Hashem* on the basis that He had provided *Klal Yisrael* with an abundance of gold and silver. Because of their immense physical wealth, this is what caused them to sin. They continue by stating that a lion doesn't roar due to a box filled with straw, but rather one containing meat. Additional, *Rebbi Oshiah* there compares the situation to a weak and feeble cow which is fed bran, and

then kicks its owner. The cow argues it is this very food that caused it to kick.

He then asserts that this abundance of gold caused *Klal Yisrael* to desire more. They weren't satisfied with what they had and desired the image of an ox. The face of an ox can be found on the left of the "Heavenly Chariot" as the *pasuk* states^ג "*Mi'tzafon zahav ya'asah*", and they reasoned the ox's *mazal* would help enrich and grant them even more gold. The source for this is where the *Torah* states^ד "*V'rav tevuos b'koach shor*", and even *Yosef* who fed the entire Egypt was dubbed "The firstborn ox".

The *Kli Yakar* concludes with a well-known point that in order to get rid of something one must uproot it from the source. Doing so automatically causes the issue to fall apart.

א. פ' כי תשא
ב. דף ל"ב.

ג. (איוב ל"ז)
ד. (משלי י"ד)

The Machatzis Hashekel atoning for Yosef's sale and the Chet Ha'Eigel

The influence of the Satan and Eiruv Rav caused the Chet Ha'Eigel/ Yosef's holiness repels all external influences/Yosef's sale was directly responsible for the Chet Ha'Eigel/The holiness of the shekalim have the power to repel the evil effects of plague ch'v

-שם משמואל-

There is a dispute amongst the *Amoraim* concerning whether the *Machatzis Hashekel* is meant to atone for the *Chet Ha'Eigel* or *Yosef's* sale down to *Mitzrayim*. The *Shem Mi'Shmuel*⁶ asserts that in truth we can say everyone agrees to each other and each *Amorah* was just relaying a different piece of information. In reality the atonement was meant for both sins.

He goes on to explain that we can say the *Chet Ha'Eigel* was drawn after and directly caused as a result of the earlier sin involving *Yosef's* sale. To understand this he first explains that when *Klal Yisrael* sinned with the *Eigel* their transgression wasn't a voluntary action which they committed of their own volition. On the contrary, they were influenced by evil forces both on the materialistic and spiritual field. In a materialistic way they were negatively influenced by the *Eiruv Rav* and in a spiritual sense they were confused by the *Satan*. The *Satan* made it appear as if *Moshe* lay on a bed in the sky, and also caused the surrounding area to be dark and gloomy implying that he had died. *Klal Yisrael* though most certainly wasn't inherently capable of committing such an act, and it was only through these external influences that they transgressed.

In *Zevachim*⁷ we see that in the times of *Mishkan Shilo* one was able to eat *kodshim kalim* in any spot where the *Mishkan* was visible. On the other hand, in the times of the *Beis Hamikdash* this was only allowed within the city wall. The *gemara* there later⁸ explains that the reason was because the *Mishkan Shilo* resided in the portion of *Yosef*, and *Yosef* was

extremely scrupulous in avoiding feasting his eyes on what didn't belong to him. Therefore, he merited that in his portion one should be able to eat as far as the eye can see. The *Shem Mi'Shmuel* then continues *b'shem* his father the *Avnei Nezer Zt'l* that *Yosef* was renowned for keeping a distance from anything that wasn't his. In return he merited to repel all evil forces from having an influence on him. This is why by the *Mishkan Shilo* it was possible to eat anywhere within eyeshot without a boundary. In *Yosef's* territory evil influences have no power. The whole reason we aren't allowed to eat outside of specific boundaries is for fear that external influences will negatively affect the holiness of *kodshim*. However, in *Yosef's* territory this isn't necessary. On the contrary, evil forces are repelled by him (because of his avoiding what didn't belong to him). It is like we find concerning *Shabbos* where all negative forces are repelled and flee from it.

Through this he writes that if not for *Yosef* having been sold, he would have been able to influence and spread his power to the rest of the *shevatim*. If this would have happened then all of *Klal Yisrael* would have been capable of repelling evil forces, and the *Chet Ha'Eigel* would have never happened. As we have seen, *Klal Yisrael* wasn't really capable of committing such a transgression and it was only the influence of evil forces that caused it. However, because *Yosef* was sold his power never spread, and that is how the sin was able to come to be.

This is why *Hashem* told *Klal Yisrael* to bring *shekalim* to be counted through them, and to also atone for their sins (the two mentioned) thereby stopping the plague. The *Zohar Hakadosh*⁹ explains that blessing doesn't rest on something counted, and therefore the *Sitra Achara* has the power to affect it. This in turn allows a plague to occur. However, *Yosef's*

NOTES

This concept can be seen where the *Midrash Tanchuma*⁷ asserts that *Hashem* wanted the mother of the calf to come clean its mess. The *Parah Aduma* was seen as the mother of the *Eigel*, and through going to the source that action itself would become fixed. Therefore, it was incumbent upon us to fix our sin from the root, and as we have said it stemmed from an abundance of gold and strong materialistic desire. As such,

ה. (חקת ח')

Hashem ordained that we should give a half *shekel* alluding to the fact that one with strong materialistic desire is in a perpetual state of having only half of his cravings. We see this idea where the *Midrash* states¹ "If one has 100 he desires 200 and if 200 then 400". It comes out that such a person always has only half of his desires, and this is why we give the half *shekel* to atone for having been in such a state.

ו. (קהלת רבה א')

power is to repel the *Sitra Achara*, and that is why he never feared an evil eye. Additionally, as we have said *Klal Yisrael* would have also achieved this power if not for *Yosef's* sale, and it directly caused the *Chet Ha'Eigel*. Therefore, to atone for *Yosef's* sale *Hashem* asked us to bring *shekalim* to be counted

with, and in this way the *Sitrah Achara* would be incapable of harming us. It then acted as an alternative to *Yosef's* power and simultaneously acted to atone for the *Chet Ha'Eigel* thereby inherently atoning for *Yosef's* sale as well. In this way both sins were atoned for through this one action.

מראי מקומות

- (1) להחיד"א (פ' כי תשא אות ה') (2) (שמות רבה מ"ג ה') (3) (בראשית מ"ו) (4) (ריש פ' כי תשא) (5) בדרשות (שנת תקס"ט ד"ה אם) (6) (משפטים תרע"ב) (7) דף קי"ב:
(8) דף קי"ח. (9) (קפ"ז ע"ב)

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