

Laws of Shekalim Chapter 1 (Auto Translated)

English

Auto Translated

Shiur Overview

Lecture Summary — Laws of Shekalim, Chapter 1

Structure of the Rambam's Book — Why is Shekalim in Sefer Zemanim?

The Rambam places the Laws of Shekalim in Sefer Zemanim, with the heading "In every year."

Simple explanation: The half-shekel is a mitzvah that is dependent on time — it is done once a year.

Novel insights and explanations:

One might have thought it belongs to sacrifices (since the money goes for sacrifices), but because it is an annual obligation on all Jews, the Mishnah already placed it in Seder Moed, and the Rambam in Sefer Zemanim. This is perhaps connected to the fact that the fundamental definition of the law as an annual mitzvah doesn't come from a verse alone — the "zemanim" aspect is the dominant definition.

Halacha 1 — The Essential Obligation of Machatzit HaShekel

"It is a positive commandment from the Torah for every Jewish man to give a half-shekel every single year. Even a poor person who lives from charity is obligated, and he borrows from others or sells the garment on his shoulders and gives the half-shekel of silver. As it says, 'The rich shall not give more and the poor shall not give less.'"

Simple explanation: Every Jewish man is obligated to give a half-shekel every year. Even a poor person who lives from charity must give — he should borrow or sell his garment. The verse "The rich shall not give more and the poor shall not give less" shows that it is a fixed amount, not according to wealth.

Novel insights and explanations:

1) "Every man" — what is the novelty?

The Rambam writes "every man of Israel" — seemingly every mitzvah applies to all of Israel, what is the novelty? The explanation: "Every man" comes from the language of the verse "and each man shall give" and means that there is no distinction between rich and poor — unlike other donations where it says "as his heart moves him" according to how much one has. Here it is not dependent on wealth.

2) The Rambam doesn't bring a verse for the essential obligation:

The Rambam doesn't bring the verse "and each man shall give an atonement for his soul... a half-shekel" (Exodus 30:12-13) as the source for the essential mitzvah, and also not for the law of "every single year." The only verse he brings ("The rich shall not give more and the poor shall not give less") is only for the law that the poor person is also obligated. So too in Sefer HaMitzvot. This is similar to what we've already seen in the

Laws of Sukkah, that the Rambam doesn't always bring the verse. The reason is not clear.

3) The fundamental problem — where does it say in the Torah that it's every year?

In the Torah there is no verse at all that says that the half-shekel is an annual mitzvah. The verse "When you take the census" speaks of a counting, not of an annual obligation.

Sources for the annual obligation:

- **The Sages' tradition:** Rabbi Avraham Ibn Ezra and Rabbi Avraham son of the Rambam say that the Sages received a tradition that the "atonement for his soul" is an annual obligation.

- **Gemara Megillah:** Derivations from "this is the burnt offering of each month in its month" — that one must bring sacrifices from new shekalim every year.

- **Three terumot:** Rashi in Parashat Terumah brings a Midrash that the word "terumah" appears three times, which indicates an annual mitzvah.

- **Nehemiah and Divrei HaYamim:** There it clearly states that they accepted upon themselves to give every year, and it says "the levy of Moshe" — Rashi explains that it refers to the Ki Tisa that Moshe commanded. This shows that Divrei HaYamim already understands the Chumash as an annual mitzvah.

- **Mishnah Shekalim:** The first Mishnah — "On the first of Adar they announce about the shekalim" — places it immediately as an annual matter.

A logical reason why it must be every year:

The purpose of shekalim is for communal sacrifices, and the budget of the Beit HaMikdash is set up on an annual accounting (three times a year terumat halishka). Therefore it must inherently be an annual matter — similar to prayer, where the Rambam says "it is a positive commandment to pray every day" even though it's not stated explicitly in the Torah, because we understand that prayer is something that must be every day. So too the half-shekel — if we understand that the purpose is sacrifices, it must therefore be every year. Similar to tefillin — "one must regularly put on tefillin" means every day, even though it's not stated explicitly.

4) The purpose of shekalim — counting Jews or sacrifices?

In the verses one can learn that the half-shekel is a way of counting Jews so that there won't be a plague. But the Sages don't reckon with this — they say that the essential purpose is "to atone for your souls," which means sacrifices that are for atonement. It doesn't make sense that every year Jews were counted through shekalim — the counting was only special times (by King David, in the desert after plagues). Afterwards it became an annual matter whose essential purpose is communal sacrifices.

Gemara Megillah — "Command the children of Israel... My offering, My bread": The Gemara derives that "Command the children of Israel" regarding sacrifices means that one must command the Jews — but the kohen is the one who brings the sacrifices? The answer: One commands the Jews that they should pay for it, that the communal sacrifices should come from the Jewish people.

5) A poor person who lives from charity — why isn't there a charity fund for shekalim?

In the Laws of Pesach it states that the charity fund gives the poor person wine and matzah. But by shekalim such an institution is not mentioned. This is because the charity fund distributed food (wine, matzah), not money. It would have been very strange for a charity fund to distribute money so that Jews could fulfill an obligation — that's not charity in that sense, it's a personal obligation.

But in Chapter 2 (and Chapter 3) we see that there was indeed a private custom — a Jew gave for his poor neighbor ("one who takes a shekel for himself and for the poor person"). But this is a private donation, not an institutional distribution. And one must see that one must grant merit to the poor person — it speaks of the obligation of the giver, not of the poor person's obligation.

6) "Borrows from others" — does it mean borrow or ask?

A question is raised: if "borrows" means to take a loan, isn't that not his own money? The answer: when one borrows money and buys something with it, it's yours — you just need to repay the debt.

A second explanation: "borrows" doesn't necessarily mean to take a loan, but rather "asks at the doors" — going from house to house asking for money, as the Rambam writes explicitly in the Laws of Chanukah (Laws of Shabbat). There he adds "asks at the doors" — whether that person gives him a loan or a gift. This is the simple meaning: do what a poor person does — exert yourself.

Why does "borrows" = taking a loan fit specifically here — because of the law of "one doesn't give little by little": Later in the halacha it states that one cannot give the half-shekel bit by bit ("one doesn't give the donation... little by little, but rather gives it all at once and at one time"). A poor person who finds a penny here and there cannot pay little by little — he must borrow an entire half-shekel at once, and afterwards repay it little by little.

7) "Sells the garment on his shoulders" — what does this mean practically?

Does this mean literally that he should go naked? This doesn't mean literally to sell all garments — it means: do what you can, exert yourself maximally. It's an expression of "be very diligent."

8) [Digression: Is there a rule of what percentage of wealth one must give for a mitzvah?]

The Gemara in Bava Kamma page 9 says "up to a third" — but this is not a practical rule that is applied everywhere. In all the laws that we've already learned in the Rambam, such a rule is not stated. Every mitzvah has its own definitions. By shekalim it doesn't say "a poor person gives all his wealth" — it only says that he should do what a poor person does (go asking, borrow, sell a garment). This is a specific obligation of effort, not a percentage of wealth. The other side holds that there are

indeed rules (based on Bava Kamma 9), but the measure is disputed.

9) Giving at once — source:

Where is the source that one cannot give in installments? Perhaps the Rambam learns it from "shall not give less" — he should not give small coins until it accumulates, but rather he should accumulate by himself and then give the entire amount at once. Or perhaps from "this they shall give" — one giving.

10) Practical question — what if he brings it piece by piece?

If someone lives next to the treasurer and keeps bringing small coins — when it's finished, has he then fulfilled? Seemingly he must bring the entire coin at once. But he can technically make a deposit with the treasurer, or borrow and pay at once. It may be a matter of honor of the Temple.

Halacha 1 (continued) — The Half-Shekel According to the Coin of That Time

"This half-shekel, its mitzvah is that one should give half of the coin of that time, even if that coin is larger than the shekel of the sanctuary... and one never weighs less than the half-shekel of the time of Moshe Rabbeinu which weighs one hundred and sixty barleycorns."

Simple explanation: The mitzvah of the half-shekel is to give half of the main coin that is current in that time. If that coin is larger than the shekel of the sanctuary, one gives half of the larger coin. But never less than the original half-shekel from Moshe Rabbeinu's time (160 barleycorns).

Novel insights and explanations:

1) A fundamental novelty in the meaning of "half-shekel":

The Rambam learns that "shekel" in the Torah doesn't mean a specific amount of silver, but rather means **the main coin** ("primary coin") of that time — like "dollar" means the base coin of a country. This is an opinion among the Tannaim. This means, "half-shekel" = half a "dollar" of that period, not a fixed weight of silver.

2) Question — how does one determine what is "the coin of that time"?

If there are different denominations (like \$1, \$5, \$20), which is "the coin"? The conclusion: "shekel" means the base unit — the "one" of the currency system, not the largest or smallest.

3) "The rich shall not give more" — how does it fit?

If one must give according to the coin of that time, and this can be more than the shekel of the sanctuary, how is this not "give more"? The answer: "The rich shall not give more and the poor shall not give less" means that **everyone should give the same** — it should not be "as his heart moves him" where everyone gives differently. When the price goes up, it goes up for everyone equally — the poor person too. This is not "give more" because everyone gives the same. If the Sages institute that everyone gives more, this is not a contradiction to "shall not give more."

4) The mechanism of "and one never weighs less":

This works like a scale — **upward yes, downward no**. When the coin becomes larger, one gives half of the larger one. When the coin becomes smaller such that half of it will be less

than 160 barleycorns, **one can no longer give a half** — one must give a whole coin or more, in order to reach the minimum.

5) Historical examples of changing coins:

"In the time when the coin of the time was drachmas, each person gave half of its shekel, a sela..."

The Rambam recounts the history: when drachmas were the main coin, one gave a sela (= half a drachma). When selas were the main coin, one gave half a sela (= 2 dinars). When half a sela (tevaim) was the main coin, one gave the entire half-sela (not half of it), because half of it would have been less than the minimum. **"And Israel never weighed less than the half-shekel of the Torah."**

The Raavad's question: How can it be that at the beginning of the Second Temple (when they came up from exile) they used larger coins (drachmas), and later smaller ones? This looks like they were richer at the beginning and poorer later — which is illogical.

Answer from commentators (Ramban): At the beginning of the ascent of the Second Temple a small population came up (as it states in Ezra/Nehemiah). Because there were fewer Jews, each individual had to give more in order to cover the communal sacrifices.

Historical answer: The drachma was a Persian coin. When they came from Media/Persia, they used the coins from there which were larger. This is not a sign of wealth but of the currency system of Persia. According to the Rambam this is simple — if the coin of that time is a drachma, one **must** give half a drachma, even though it's much more than the shekel of the sanctuary.

The Rambam's source: All this is built on a **Mishnah** which says that sometimes one gave drachmas, then selas, then tevaim.

Halacha 2 (in the Rambam's order) — Silver Mentioned in the Torah / Measure of Coins

"The amount of silver mentioned in the Torah... it is silver, it is the shekel mentioned everywhere in the Torah"

Simple explanation: The Rambam goes into a general explanation of how much is a shekel / silver in the Torah, because here comes the first place where monetary measures are practically relevant.

Novel insights and explanations:

1) The Rambam's method — establishing all measures once:

Just as in the Laws of Eruvin the Rambam brought all the measures of food in one place, so too here he brings all the measures of money. Until the Laws of Shekalim there wasn't a place where monetary value was actually relevant (Choshen Mishpat comes later, Laws of Eruvin speaks of size/weight not value).

2) Silver = shekel:

The Rambam establishes that "silver" and "shekel" in the Torah mean the same thing. Not that shekel is one type of money and silver is another. Examples: seducer and rapist — fifty silver; motzi shem ra — one hundred silver; one who kills a slave — thirty shekel.

3) Why is it called "shekel hakodesh"?

The Ramban and others struggle with the question of what is holy about the shekel. The Ramban suggests that this is the same inquiry as why it's called "lashon hakodesh" — what is holy about the language? The Ramban's answer: it's called that because it's used for mitzvot / regarding holiness. The Rambam has a different approach to this.

4) An interesting observation — shekel vs. silver:

Silver means silver (the material), shekel means a weight/measure (a coin). When speaking of holiness it's called "shekel" (shekel hakodesh), and when speaking of secular/fines it's called "silver" (fifty silver). It doesn't say "silver hakodesh" but "shekel hakodesh". Perhaps the holiness establishes the measures — just as a king establishes a coin, so the Temple establishes the measure, and afterwards it's used for secular matters too.

Halacha 2 (continued) — The Weight of the Shekel and the Addition of the Sages

"The weight of the shekel is three hundred and twenty barleycorns. The Sages already added to it and made its weight like the weight of the coin called sela in the time of the Second Temple, and how much is the weight of the sela — three hundred and forty-eight average barleycorns."

Simple explanation: The original shekel weighed 320 barleycorns. The Sages added a sixth, and made the shekel equal to a sela of the Second Temple, which weighs 348 barleycorns.

Novel insights and explanations:

1) Barleycorn is not a practical measure for today:

Because barleycorns vary in size, one cannot actually measure with them today. The Rambam in Mishneh Torah doesn't give any practical instruction on how to calculate the measures in current times, although in Perush HaMishnayot he does bring various calculations (he mentions "dirham" — a coin — and calculates how much it is).

2) An important principle about Mishneh Torah:

This fits with the principle that although Mishneh Torah is ostensibly the only book one needs, it is not a practical book for a rabbi. Practical decisions — how to calculate measures in this time — is not the Rambam's "job" in this book. What is stated in the Gemara he must bring, but a practical decision for a specific time and place belongs to the local rabbi.

3) The source of 320 barleycorns:

In the Gemara it says "gargerim" (not barleycorns). The Rambam in Perush HaMishnayot says that he received a tradition from his father that it means barleycorns. This is a tradition, not a simple reading of the Gemara.

4) The derivation for the addition of the Sages:

The verse says "twenty gerah shall be the shekel" — the word "shall be" indicates that the weight of the shekel can change, and therefore the Sages had permission to add.

5) Why specifically a sixth?

Two approaches: (a) A sixth is the measure of overcharge — up to a sixth is not a mistaken transaction, meaning it's the maximum one can add without it becoming something else; (b) Practically — there was a coin called sela, and it would have

been difficult for people to give "a drop less than a sela", therefore the Sages adjusted the shekel to the sela.

6) "The rich shall not give more" — a difficult question:

If the Torah says that a rich person may not give more, how can the Sages add? The answer: The Sages didn't increase the half-shekel — they made the shekel itself larger. That is, one still gives a "half-shekel", but the shekel itself is now more. This is called "a neat trick."

7) If the Sages made it as an enactment — then with other coins in other times one will need to reckon with the sela, not with the original shekel.

Halacha 3 — The Breakdown of Coins

"The sela is four dinars, the dinar is six maah, and the maah is what is called in the days of Moshe Rabbeinu a gerah... The maah is two pundiyon, the pundiyon is two issar, and the prutah is one-eighth of an issar. It comes out that the weight of the maah (which is the gerah) is sixteen barleycorns, and the weight of the issar is four barleycorns, and the weight of the prutah is half a barleycorn."

Simple explanation: The Rambam gives the entire chart of coins: sela = 4 dinars; dinar = 6 maah (= gerah); maah = 2 pundiyon; pundiyon = 2 issar; issar = 8 prutot. A prutah weighs half a barleycorn.

Novel insights and explanations:

1) "Twenty gerah the shekel" doesn't match the sela:

If a sela = 4 dinars, and a dinar = 6 maah (= gerah), it comes out that a sela = 24 gerah, not 20. This is specifically the addition of the Sages — the original shekel was 20 gerah, but after the addition a sela is 24 gerah. The gerah itself remained at its original weight.

2) Are we speaking of actual weight of silver or of value?

Are all the coins (down to the prutah) made of silver, or were the smaller ones made of a cheaper material with the value of that much silver? The Rambam speaks of actual weight, because he will soon bring the weight of everything.

3) Practical measures in current coins:

A dinar comes out to about 4.5 grams of silver (about like a quarter which weighs 5.5 grams). A sela is about 18 grams. A gram of silver costs today about \$2, meaning a half-shekel (= half a sela = 2 dinars = about 9 grams) comes out to about \$18-20. According to different opinions for the custom of half-shekel on erev Purim, it ranges from \$2.50 to more than \$10.

Halacha 4 — The Drachma (Drachmon)

"And there was another coin whose weight is two selas, and it is called a drachma."

Simple explanation: A drachma is a coin that weighs two selas (= 8 dinars).

Novelties:

1) The drachma in the chart:

A shekel (= sela rabbinically) = 4 dinars; a drachma = 2 selas = 8 dinars. The drachma is double a sela.

General Note — The Purpose of This Chart

"And these fixed coins that we mentioned and explained the weight of each one, they are what are measured with everywhere. And we have already explained them so that there will be no need to explain their weight in every place."

Simple explanation: The Rambam sets up the chart once so that he won't need to repeat the measures every time coins appear in halacha.

Halacha 2 (in the Rambam's order of obligation) — Who is Obligated in the Half-Shekel

"Everyone is obligated to give the half-shekel — kohanim, Levites, and Israelites, and converts, and freed slaves. But not women, nor slaves, nor minors. And if they gave, we accept from them."

Simple explanation: Everyone is obligated — kohanim, Levites, Israelites, converts, and freed slaves. Women, slaves, and minors are exempt, but if they give, we accept it from them.

Novel insights and explanations:

1) Source for the exemption:

The language "and each man shall give an atonement for his soul" — "man" excludes women, slaves, and minors.

2) Kohanim, Levites, converts, freed slaves:

Later there will be distinctions regarding kohanim (special laws), but fundamentally they are obligated. A convert receives the status of a Jew, and a freed slave too — because after conversion/freedom they have the full status of an Israelite.

3) Gentiles — we don't accept from them:

"But gentiles who gave a half-shekel — we don't accept from them."

The distinction between gentiles and women/minors: with the original half-shekel (to count the Jews) one could not have accepted from women/minors because it would have confused the counting of "men from twenty years and up." But now, when the essential matter is only to cover for the sacrifices, we accept from them — "we accept from them." But a gentile has no connection at all to the daily offering, therefore we don't accept.

Halacha 2 (continued) — A Father Who Begins Giving for His Son

"A father who began to give the half-shekel for his son, he no longer stops, but rather gives for him every single year until he grows up and gives for himself."

Simple explanation: If a father begins giving the half-shekel for his son, he may not stop — he must continue giving every year until the son grows up and gives himself.

Novel insights and explanations:

1) The definition — like a vow:

This is like a **vow** — a good thing that one began, one must continue. It only needs to be done once (not three times like a regular vow).

2) Not the mitzvah of chinuch:

This is **not the mitzvah of chinuch** in the regular sense, because the child doesn't have his own money — the father

gives on his behalf. With chinuch the child himself must fulfill.

3) A merit in communal sacrifices:

From this we see that there is a **merit** that the daily offering should also be in the child's name. This is the reason why once one has begun, one cannot withdraw — one takes away the child's merit.

4) A principle — charity/consecration for another:

From this we learn that one can give **charity or consecration for another** — as people say "give a donation in my name."

Halacha 3 — Shekalim Only Applies When the Temple Stands

"For shekalim only apply when the Temple stands. When the Beit HaMikdash exists, shekalim are given both in the Land and outside the Land."

Simple explanation: The half-shekel only applies when the Beit HaMikdash stands. But then it applies everywhere — in the Land of Israel and outside the Land.

Novel insights and explanations:

1) "When the Temple stands" = in time:

"When the Temple stands" means **when the Beit HaMikdash exists**, not simply "next to the Beit HaMikdash" (geographically). This is different from other laws where there is a distinction between the Land of Israel, Jerusalem, and the Temple.

2) Simple reason:

It makes simple sense because the entire matter is for sacrifices — without a Beit HaMikdash there are no sacrifices. A Jew in Babylonia also had to have a share in the sacrifices — he sent his coin to Jerusalem.

Halacha 4 — The Order of Collecting Shekalim

"On the first of Adar they announce about the shekalim, so that each person should prepare his half-shekel and be ready to give. On the fifteenth they sit, the money-changers in every province and province and request gently — whoever gives, they accept from him, whoever didn't give, they don't force him to give. On the twenty-fifth they sit in the Temple to collect, and from here onward they force whoever didn't give until he gives. And whoever doesn't give — they take collateral from him, and take his pledge against his will, even his garment."

Simple explanation: First of Adar — they announce. Fifteenth of Adar (Shushan Purim) — money-changers sit in every city, ask gently, but don't force. Twenty-fifth of Adar — money-changers also sit in the Temple, and from then on they force, take collateral, even his garments.

Novel insights and explanations:

1) Like a modern campaign:

The order is exactly like a **modern campaign**: first an announcement (a gathering where they say it's going to be), then gentle asking, then becoming stricter, then forcing.

2) A Torah obligation — and therefore one needs a whole process:

This is a **Torah obligation** — not like a voluntary campaign for a mikveh. And therefore one needs a whole process of persuasion! One must arouse the public, give sermons (Shabbat Shekalim), remind.

3) Why take collateral and not just the money?

One approach: "take collateral" actually means we take the money. A second approach: we take something else so that he himself should bring it, because it must be a **giving** — an act of giving. **Maharik ben Chaviv** speaks about this. It remains unclear.

4) Connection to Purim:

Perhaps the public is in a good mood between Purims — the fifteenth of Adar is Shushan Purim.

Halacha 5 — From Whom We Don't Take Collateral

"Whoever is not obligated in shekalim — we don't take collateral from him. And we don't take collateral from kohanim ever, for the sake of peace, but if they give — we accept from them, and we request from them."

Simple explanation: Whoever is not obligated (women, minors) — even if they began giving, we don't take collateral. Kohanim — although they are obligated — we also don't take collateral from them, for the sake of peace. We ask them, but we don't force.

Novel insights and explanations:

a) Minors/women:

Although we learned that once one begins one must not stop (like a vow), but **taking collateral is only with a complete obligation**. When the obligation is only because one accepted upon oneself a good thing, there is no coercion.

b) Kohanim — a broad discussion:

Dispute in the Mishnah (Shekalim): One says "any kohen who weighs sins", another says "any kohen who doesn't weigh sins". The kohanim made themselves a derivation from "and every meal-offering of a kohen shall be entirely consumed, it shall not be eaten" — that their portion in sacrifices has a different definition.

"The kohanim expound this verse for themselves" — the language of the Mishnah shows that the Sages **did not hold that it's a legitimate position**. It's self-interest — they say it for themselves.

Why "for the sake of peace"? Several explanations:

1. **Sefer HaChinuch's direction:** The kohanim were **too close** to the Beit HaMikdash. There is an advantage in a certain distance — "all who are close" (as with Nadav and Avihu). The kohanim felt like "too close relatives."

2. **Kohanim are the original teachers of halacha** — "they shall teach Your laws to Yaakov and Your Torah to Israel." When they say that the halacha is that kohanim are exempt, one cannot simply dismiss their position. The Sages say: you are right (or almost), but do you also want to be a part.

3. **The kohanim's claim:** They already do the service with their bodies — "I already volunteer enough, I'm already a volunteer for the organization, I also have to give money?"

4. **"For the sake of peace" also means:** Who would force? Other kohanim! One cannot make a **civil war** among the

kohanim themselves.

[Digression: Historical note] — Historically kohanim (Hasmoneans) had various issues, and there were Sadducees

among them (as we learn in Pesachim, Yoma). This "for the sake of peace" is one of the things where they tried to avoid conflict with the kohanim.

Full Transcript

Laws of Shekalim Chapter 1 Law 1 — The Mitzvah of the Half-Shekel: The Obligation, the Amount, and the Status of the Poor Person

Introduction: Why Does the Mitzvah of Shekalim Belong in Sefer Zemanim?

Speaker 1:

We are learning the holy Torah, we are learning about the mitzvah called shekalim. Yes, we are learning the Rambam, Hilchos Shekalim.

The Rambam placed Hilchos Shekalim under Sefer Zemanim, and as its heading is "bechol shanah" (every year). It is a mitzvah that is dependent on time, it is something that must be done once a year.

One could have looked at it as something that has to do with korbanos (sacrifices), because it is money for korbanos. That's perhaps how one would think more logically, it is the money from which korbanos are taken.

But since it is a mitzvah that is upon all Jews to do every year, the Rambam, but even before that in the Mishnah itself, placed it in Seder Moed, and in the Rambam in Sefer Zemanim. And this is its heading, "bechol shanah."

Positive commandment. The laws of shekalim contain one positive commandment, and that is for every person to give a half-shekel. That every person, as you will say in a minute, every Jew, should give a half-shekel bechol shanah, every single year. And because it is a mitzvah of every single year, it is a mitzvah in Sefer Moed, **and the explanation of this mitzvah is in these chapters.**

Gratitude to the Sponsors

And when one speaks about shekalim, we must thank those who give the shekalim so that we can continue with our shiur. First and foremost, the sponsor of the shiur, our friend R' Yoel Eli Weltzberger. May the merit of Torah protect him and all the supporters of the shiur.

Speaker 2:

The Rambam says, a positive commandment from the Torah... yes? Yes, I agree.

Speaker 1:

I already thought that specifically when one speaks about shekalim you won't speak about who gives money, because it's already too "in your face," as they say. We're not looking for fancy rhetoric, we're simply looking to... the gratitude, to thank whom we must thank. Enough.

Law 1: The Obligation Upon Every Man of Israel

Speaker 1:

The Rambam says, **a positive commandment from the Torah for every man of Israel to give**, that every Jew from... every Jew among the Jews... every man among the Jews, yes? Every Jewish man. Yes. Should give **a half-shekel every single year.**

This is apparently the language of the Torah, because it says "venasnu ish" (every man shall give), perhaps that's why he brings the "kol ish" (every man). I mean, every mitzvah in the Torah is upon kol ish miYisrael, it's not a novelty but the mitzvah.

What does the language of the verse mean here? And the verse presumably means to say "kol ish," that there is no distinction between a rich person and a poor person. Unlike our terumah (donations) where it says "asher yidvenu libo" (as his heart motivates him), according to the money one has. This is not dependent on how much one has.

The Obligation Upon the Poor Person Who Lives from Charity

Now, the Rambam says, immediately he says, this is perhaps an explanation of the words "kol ish," **"and even a poor person who lives from charity is obligated."** This has nothing to do with, all other mitzvos of tzedakah (charity) are if you have. If you have tzedakah you must give, if you have terumah, if you have this you must give terumah, ma'aser (tithes).

But here there is a concept that even an ani hamisparnes min hatzedakah (a poor person who lives from charity), he lives from other people's charity, he is obligated to give a half-shekel.

Why Is There No Charity Fund for Shekalim?

It's interesting, because other times when it says "ani hamisparnes min hatzedakah," what I remember is in the laws of Pesach, there it is relevant regarding the kupah shel tzedakah (charity fund) giving to him, the tamchui (soup kitchen).

Here it doesn't say such a thing, it doesn't say that there was an organization among Jews that gave money to be able to give a half-shekel. But later in Chapter 2 we will indeed see that there was on a private basis, a Jew gave for his neighbor who is poor.

But it doesn't say here that one should... it says what he should do, but actually what he should do also shows that it seems the kupah shel tzedakah used to distribute food. So when there is wine, or when there is a question of wine or matzah, they say to give him.

But I don't believe they distributed money to be able to give money. There is such a kupah too, but it doesn't say here. I mean that it would be very strange to have a kupah shel tzedakah distribute money for Jews to be able to give charity. It's not charity, it's an obligation that everyone has. It is charity in practice.

What Should the Poor Person Do? — "Borrows from Others" or "Sells His Garment"

"Borrows from others," so what should he do if he doesn't have? He should borrow from another, or he should **"sell his garment,"** he should give away the last thing he has, **"and give the half-shekel."** Because poverty is not an exemption.

About this he brings the verse, let's finish, **"as it is said: the rich shall not give more and the poor shall not give less,"** that the mitzvah of the half-shekel is different from other mitzvos which are according to "asher yidvenu libo," according to ability, that the rich person also should not give more than a half-shekel, and the poor person should not give less than a half-shekel.

In any case we see here that the poor person must also give, so he is even obligated to give away his garment, unlike other mitzvos, a person doesn't have to give away more than how much, even not charity, other mitzvos also have limits to how much a person must give away, but here he must give away even his last...

Discussion: What Does "Borrows from Others" Mean?

Speaker 2:

Yes, in short, you say "sho'el" means borrow, there's a problem, because he borrows, it's not his money.

Speaker 1:

Presumably the answer is, it could be he borrows, but he must be a poor person, he must be a borrower. The commentators here argue that yes, they learned in other places too, where it said other...

Now, obviously why isn't it his money? It's his money to spend. If you borrow money and you buy something, it's yours. You just have to return the money. He will return and...

Answer: "Borrows" Makes Sense Because One Cannot Give Little by Little

It could be, look at the last piece, perhaps it will explain why it can indeed mean borrow. It can mean borrow, because a poor person can sometimes find a nickel that he has, or a penny. But part of the law of the half-shekel that we learn right here, is that one cannot give it little by little.

So, a poor person can also always get a penny, find somewhere a penny, and he will pay little by little. So, "sho'el" can indeed mean borrow.

Do you hear? Look at the next piece, as the Rambam says, **"and one does not give the great terumah,"** that part of the mitzvah of the half-shekel is that one should give a half-shekel all at once. One cannot give it to the gabbai'im (collectors), coming each period of time giving another few cents and another few cents until it accumulates to a half-shekel. **"Little by little, rather one gives it all at once and in one time."**

The mitzvah of the half-shekel is that one should give a whole half-shekel. It's an extra law, but here it automatically also fits with "sho'el me'acherim" (borrows from others), and he will later repay little by little.

Another Interpretation: "Sho'el" = "Begging at the Doors"

I don't know, I see for example in the laws of Shabbos, where the Rambam also says about Chanukah it says similarly, right? But "sho'el umochér kesuso" (borrows and sells his garment), there the Rambam translates, he adds a word, "sho'el al hapsachim" (begs at the doors). "Sho'el" means go for money. Whether that person gave him a loan, or a gift, I don't know.

I mean that the translation, but apparently he is correct, the one who does "sho'el" does this, that the translation of the word "sho'el" is go to the houses, basically. It's a shortening of "sho'el al hapsachim" or such a thing.

The Main Point: The Poor Person Is Obligated to Make an Effort

And this is, I want to emphasize, because it seems to me that this is what the poor person here is obligated to do. There isn't, one must look in other places, I don't believe there is really here such a rule that says how much percentage of a person's money he must spend to do a mitzvah.

I don't know, he must do mitzvos. There are no such rules in the Gemara. One doesn't agree.

Speaker 2:

What there is, is how rich you need to be. You're talking about everything. I remember something that there is such a concept.

Speaker 1:

You remember things, I know that people remember things, and from that I say that I disagree. Forgive me, you know what? In short, I hold that it's more a matter of effort.

Go, what does a poor person do? What do you do when you don't have money to buy a sefer (book)? Do the same thing. Usually, it doesn't say what one usually must do. Not every mitzvah is one so obligated, as you say.

The main point means that there is a distinction such as a korban oleh veyored (sliding-scale offering), where there is indeed, "im dal hu ve'ein yado masseges" (if he is poor and his hand cannot reach), there are the laws. It could be also you are correct regarding such as the other terumah that says later, "asher yidvenu libo," that perhaps there it means such as a poor person gives less, it's more like... do you understand?

There are two different laws here. There is one law that says there is a measure, everyone must give a half-shekel, "no less and no more." And it's not so clear to me, because soon we saw that they did indeed begin later to give more.

So it seems that the Rambam, the law, understood more that this means to say that there is no exemption. Someone who is poor could not say "bidlei dalus" (due to poverty) what he should do. How will he have money? Someone doesn't have? Go for money.

What does a poor person do when he doesn't have money? Ah, you don't have money? You know what? Sell your garment. What does he mean, he will go around naked afterwards? It doesn't mean that. It means, I'm giving you advice, make a strong effort.

Discussion: Is There a Rule of How Much Percentage One Must Spend for a Mitzvah?

Speaker 2:

So the Gemara says in Masseches Bava Kamma daf tes (page 9) that a person must spend for a mitzvah up to a third. There is there a small sugya (discussion), up to a third of the mitzvah how much one must spend.

Speaker 1:

Okay, so you have simply other interpretations in the Gemara. Let's learn a shiur on that. I say that there is indeed something of a concept of how much a person must give away. Such concepts exist, but it's not across the board that there is a law like that. Every mitzvah has its parameters of how much one must.

We have already learned, let's learn, we are learning the Rambam. We are holding here at the, I don't know, fifteenth or twentieth laws, but many mitzvos already learned. By none of

them has such a thing been stated yet. We have indeed seen by each thing extra. On the contrary, extra, extra, extra by each mitzvah. Every mitzvah that the people were not from the people.

It seems that there is no such law. Because this I say, there is no such rule. One speaks about the Gemara, there is such a thing, and in the poskim (halachic authorities) one doesn't speak here about such from that. There are poskim, here it says that other people who don't hold like me, they hold that there are rules. I don't hold of rules. I hold that each thing one must calculate extra.

Now. What I want to say is, lest you say that here it says something according to his ability at all. It doesn't say according to his ability at all, it says according to his ability another thing, according to this ability. There is no such parsha (section) of korban oleh veyored, or it's not according to his wealth and the like.

But precisely what he must do, there is no law that he must spend more than his money. It doesn't even say ani nosen kol mamono (a poor person gives all his wealth), it doesn't say that. It says even a poor person who has no livelihood, he should do what a poor person does, he should go to the houses, go borrow, go sell his garments.

What does selling his garments mean? Do you think there is somewhere a flea market where one sells garments? Yes, certainly there is such a thing. Every time a poor person doesn't have money, he sells his shirt, then the pants, then the... I don't know exactly what it means practically. It means do what you can. You must make a strong effort.

Speaker 2:

You haven't yet explained. Say the law further. Say very clearly. I can say it for you if you want strongly. On the contrary, make it clear. What are you saying?

Speaker 1:

I said exactly what I'm saying.

Speaker 2:

But it says there later that we see that there was such a custom that people gave for their poor neighbor. People gave a whole shekel for themselves and for their neighbor who doesn't have money. "Hanotel shekel alav ve'al he'ani" (one who takes a shekel for himself and for the poor person), so in Chapter 3 on him.

Speaker 1:

Yes, that would be a nice thing. But perhaps one must see there, that one who gives merit must give merit for that person and give it to him. Here we speak about the obligation of the poor person, not from the...

Question: Why Doesn't the Rambam Bring Any Verse?

I must say one important thing. The Rambam should have brought a verse here. He doesn't bring in the introduction, okay, in the introduction he doesn't always bring verses. But here there isn't a single verse. It doesn't say from where is there a mitzvah upon all of Israel to give a half-shekel. It also doesn't say from where bechol shanah veshanah (every single year).

It's a very important thing that doesn't appear at all in the verse. The Rambam not here and not in Sefer HaMitzvos, I saw he brings earlier this language.

Law 1 – The Positive Commandment to Give a Half-Shekel Every Single Year

The Rambam's Language

Speaker 1:

It says the source that the half-shekel is bechol shanah veshanah. That is, that one must give a half-shekel, it actually says, everyone knows in Parshas Ki Sisa "venasnu." Venasnu itself "kofer nafsho zeh yitnu machatzis hashekel" (the atonement for his soul, this they shall give, a half-shekel).

The Rambam doesn't bring here the verse. Also interesting, that we have already seen in the laws of Sukkah, not always does the Rambam bring the verse, I don't know clearly why.

The Fundamental Question – Where Does It Say in the Torah That It's Every Year?

But more interesting is, that here, there are commentators on the simple meaning, or I don't know others who are more on this, it doesn't say properly in the Torah ever that there is a mitzvah of every year. And "ki sisa es rosh" (when you take the count), whatever it means, then they will give kofer nafsho (atonement for his soul). There is at all no parsha in the Torah where it says that there is a mitzvah of every year to give a half-shekel.

What you said, and that's why it's at all in Sefer Zemanim. As the definition of the law, there is no single verse in the entire Torah that I know that says such a thing. Rather thus the Sages received, that this says...

Speaker 2:

Is it a law from Sinai?

Speaker 1:

The Rambam says something with it.

Speaker 2:

No, he brings here in the introduction the language it's a law from Sinai also. Venasnu ish, it doesn't say.

Sources for the Annual Obligation

Speaker 1:

The Sages received, he brings here later the...

Speaker 2:

What does that mean?

Speaker 1:

Rabbi Avraham ibn Ezra and Rabbi Avraham ben HaRambam, who say that the Sages received that the kofer nafsho is something of an annual obligation.

There is in the Gemara in Megillah drashos (homiletical interpretations) from... there is in the Gemara Megillah drashos from "**zos olas chodesh bechodsho**" (this is the burnt offering of each month in its month), that one must bring the korban of a new year, some such sort of drashos that say that one must have new shekalim every year.

But there are other drashos of three terumos that Rashi brings in Parshas Terumah, that there is a midrash that it says three times the word terumah, one sees that there is every year.

But it's interesting that the Rambam was not worried about this. He plainly brings it so. What he brings is yes, in the book what is this?

Speaker 2:

They say in Nechemiah and in Divrei HaYamim (Chronicles) it indeed says clearly that they accepted that there is a mitzvah.

It says in the verse they received every year, and it also says "ma'aseh Moshe" (the work of Moses).

Speaker 1:

How does it say "ma'aseh Moshe"?

Speaker 2:

In Divrei HaYamim. And Rashi translates "ma'aseh Moshe," the Ki Sisa that Moses already commanded. So, that the verse in Divrei HaYamim already says clearly that there is a mitzvah every year in the Chumash.

Speaker 1:

It's interesting that the Rambam doesn't write here "mipei hashemu'ah" (from the oral tradition), or something so one knows that it's every year. One doesn't see at all worried about the question.

Speaker 2:

No. The Mishnah places it in right away the first Mishnah is that it's an annual thing from be'echad be'Adar (on the first of Adar), mash'mi'in al hashekalim (they announce about the shekalim), and so on. Again, it's certain that the mitzvah is every year. And the names speak about this a verse.

The Logic of Why It's Every Year – The Purpose Is Korbanos

Speaker 1:

Interesting, the truth is that one can perhaps think what sense is the mitzvah for every year? We see here all the laws that are a mitzvah every year, but perhaps the mitzvah will always be shekalim for the Beis HaMikdash. It turns out that it's made into an annual, they placed it into an annual accounting, once a year there is three times a year. All these laws will stand later that the finances of the Beis HaMikdash is an economy of once a year. One can make a once in three years budget, but the budget of the Beis HaMikdash is set up on once a year, and then is when one collects the...

Continuation of Lecture on Shekalim

From this I think that perhaps practically I cannot argue with the Chachamim (Sages) who say the simple meaning. I'll just say that... the truth is that we see in general in the Torah that from the shekalim they give the korbanot (sacrifices), we don't really see this clearly either.

Speaker 2:

Lechaper... yes, lechaper ulchaper (to atone... to atone).

Speaker 1:

Ah, that's the... and therefore it must be regularly.

The Purpose – Counting Jews or Sacrifices?

I mean, seemingly what the deeper problem is, that in the pesukim (verses) one can learn that it's a way of counting the Jews, so that there shouldn't be a plague, one should count in the manner of machatzit hashekel (half-shekel). But the Chachamim don't reckon with this, they say that the main purpose of it is that it should be "lechaper al nafshoteichem" (to atone for your souls), meaning there should be korbanot from this, which the korbanot are lechaper al nafshoteichem.

Speaker 2:

Okay, that makes sense.

Speaker 1:

I mean, it doesn't make sense that they counted the Jews every year based on the shekalim. It was by David HaMelech, it was the few times that they counted the Jews. And in the desert

there was probably a special need to count the Jews, because there were plagues and the like. The Rashi there that they counted them after every time there was a plague.

But afterwards it became an annual thing, where the main purpose of it is that there should be korbanot, the korbanot are public korbanot.

The Analogy of Tefillah – A Mitzvah That Must Be Every Day

So I'm thinking now, that perhaps this is similar to we had the same problem, which is tefillah (prayer) for example, yes? It doesn't say anywhere in the Torah that it's once a day. Perhaps the Ramban did say, "mitzvat aseih lehitpalel bechol yom" (a positive commandment to pray every day). Could be similar.

That means, why? Because we understand that tefillah is something that must be every day. The same thing if it says in the Torah that one must have shekalim, as you say, even if it's perhaps not clear that it says so, let's say it does say so, but therefore it must be every year, because afterwards there is such a law that one must bring in Nissan already from the new ones, but that's already detailed laws.

Seemingly, that it's every year, that's something like a... as people say there's a mitzvah to put on tefillin every day. How do we know? There's no mitzvah, one must regularly put on tefillin. Regularly means every day. Do you understand such a sort...

Gemara Megillah – "Tzav et Bnei Yisrael... Korbani Lachmi"

Speaker 2:

He brings there in the Gemara in Megillah that "**tzav et bnei Yisrael**" means "**korbani lachmi**" (command the Children of Israel... My offering, My bread). That the "korbani lachmi," the daily korbanot, is something that one must command the Jews. When does one command the Jews? It's only the kohen (priest) who deals with this. One commands the Jews that they should give, pay for it, that it comes from the Jews. Done.

Speaker 1:

Okay.

Discussion: Why Can't One Give in Installments

Speaker 2:

What is actually the reason or the source that one cannot give it in installments, it must be all at once?

Speaker 1:

I thought it's interesting. It could be the Rambam also learned this from "**lo yimat**" (he shall not diminish). "Lo yimat" - he should not give small coins until it accumulates, rather he should accumulate in his pocket until the whole amount, or he should borrow and then pay back in smaller coins. Not clear.

Speaker 2:

I see that he says, perhaps this means "**zeh yitnu**" (this they shall give), one must give... one sees it like a...

Speaker 1:

Yes, that's interesting. He must know exactly what it means, because if he lives next to the gabbai (treasurer) and he keeps bringing to the gabbai coins, when it finishes, then he has fulfilled the mitzvah of machatzit hashekel. So the point is that he should bring the whole coin at once?

Speaker 2:

So it seems. That means not that he should bring in the month of Nissan a little bit and later more. One can bring throughout

the year, yes? So we see later, if one delayed from the first of Adar one can do it.

So when he doesn't follow the halachah for example, he keeps bringing small coins, when he has brought the whole amount, then he has seemingly fulfilled it.

Speaker 1:

No, can he make a deal with the gabbai, it's a deposit then until... later we don't see it that way, otherwise you should collect yourself and give us the whole thing at once. But it could be a matter of honor for the Mikdash (Temple).

Speaker 2:

He can do, he can technically, you're saying that he hasn't, they make some sort of solution, he goes and borrows and now gives it. Not clear. But we also see yes that there is, later we'll see about the level the... what's it called? The... the... the... let's see soon.

Halachah 2 – Measurements of Money Mentioned in the Torah

The Rambam Goes to Calculate the Amount

Speaker 1:

Now, the Rambam says further. Now the Rambam is going to try to calculate the amount, how much is the machatzit hashekel? And since it says here, we're talking about money, shekalim are mentioned in the chapters. Shekel beshekel... well, what is the language of the verse? **Machatzit hashekel... shekel beshekel hakodesh** (half-shekel... shekel by the shekel of the sanctuary). And the shekel that is known, the known shekel hakodesh, the shekel that the kodesh (sanctuary) uses.

Speaker 2:

Very good.

Why Is It Called "Shekel Hakodesh"?

Speaker 1:

He actually brings that the Ramban and others struggle with why it's called shekel hakodesh? What is holy about the kodesh? About the shekel.

Speaker 2:

Ah, the Ramban brings, poses that this is the same question as why it's called lashon hakodesh (the holy tongue). What is holy about the language? And the Ramban argues, there's the Rambam's position against him, the Ramban argues that it means because this is used for mitzvot. This is used regarding kodesh. Everything that's used in kodesh.

Speaker 1:

Hey, it's used in the grocery too.

Speaker 2:

Okay, it doesn't have. It's used in kodesh. Yes.

The Rambam's General Approach – Kesef = Shekel

Speaker 1:

So the Rambam is going to bring here the general approach that translates kesef (silver/money) to the shekel in the Torah, and therefore all measurements. Just as we've already seen in Hilchot Eruvin the Rambam brought all measurements of food, everything he wants to say once, here come the measurements of money.

Speaker 2:

Aha.

Speaker 1:

And they actually didn't have yet, they already had when it was relevant to money, seemingly not yet, so here is the right place. Interesting, until Hilchot Shekalim there wasn't money. It said that one must buy, ah, I don't know, some measurement of money was already there. And Choshen Mishpat is relevant later, and Hilchot Eruvin it's relevant many times. Meaning, all the food how much one must give for the eruv is always in weight or in the size of the bread, not in value. Here we're going to talk about value.

The Rambam's Language: ***"Minyan Kesef Ha'amur BaTorah"***

The Rambam says, **"minyan kesef ha'amur baTorah"** (the count of money mentioned in the Torah). Here it doesn't say the language kesef, here it says the language shekel, but many times it says kesef. This week he said, ones umefateh (seducer and rapist) where one must give fifty kesef, or motzi shem ra (defamer) also one hundred kesef. And one who kills a slave is also here a measurement, how much is the measurement? Thirty shekel? Some such language. Kesef.

The Rambam says, **"hu kesef hu shekel"** - when it says in the Torah kesef it means shekel, **"hane'emar bechol makom baTorah"** (that is mentioned everywhere in the Torah). This itself has already clarified that everything that says in the Torah is the same. That it's not that shekel is one type of money and kesef is another type of money, rather kesef and shekel is the same money.

An Interesting Observation – Shekel vs. Kesef

Seemingly, it's interesting, could be that when one speaks of kodesh one calls it shekel, and when one speaks of chol (mundane), like fines, one calls it kesef? It's an interesting thing, because it doesn't say kesef hakodesh, it says shekel hakodesh. It's an interesting thing. Perhaps like the kodesh establishes.

Speaker 2:

What is the difference between shekel and kesef?

Speaker 1:

Kesef means silver, doesn't speak of money. Shekel is a coin. Kesef means silver, yes. How much silver? Shekel means a weight, a certain weight. Which weight? The weight that the kodesh is accustomed to reckon. As if there is a coin just as the king establishes the measurement. So perhaps the kodesh establishes the measurements, and then it's used already for chol. But could be that the measurement shekel is something that is like the Mikdash as if makes.

Anyway, when it says kesef it means...

Halachah 2 (Continued) – The Weight of the Shekel and the Addition of the Sages

Its weight, the weight of the shekel, is **three hundred and twenty se'arah** (barley grains), three hundred and twenty se'arah.

This is also still not really a measurement that we can measure with today, because se'arah also changes the sizes of se'arah. So he's now going to say further more, one can relate it to certain coins.

The Rambam in Mishneh Torah Doesn't Speak About Current Measurements

Wait, wait, wait. First of all, I want to say an interesting thing. The Rambam in this book doesn't say at all how to calculate current times. In his book Perush HaMishnayot he does bring various... First of all, it doesn't say, even se'oro doesn't say in the Gemara. The Rambam says in Perush HaMishnayot, he brings here that it's a mesorah (tradition), he received from his father that it's se'orim (barley grains). It says, in the Gemara it says gargerim perhaps, but the Rambam received that it's se'orim. There isn't any... And there in Perush HaMishnah he says, he thought yes the drachma or drachma, I don't know what the drachmas have, he calculated how much it is. But in Sefer Mishneh Torah he's not engaged in this at all.

This fits very strongly with what I always say, that although Mishneh Torah seemingly is the only book one needs, it's not a practical book that the rabbi needs. But to decide which measurement in this time, which is literally a practical application that the rabbi would have had to write, it's not his engagement at all. And if the rabbi didn't hold such a ruling, what says in the Gemara he must say, but if this is a drachma, go ask the local rabbi he'll tell you. The Rambam says, he happened to also be a rabbi, he knew this, but it's not his job in this book.

Addition of the Sages: From 320 Se'orim to 348 Se'orim

The Rambam says, but I have seen, soon he arrived. Later he's going to say more. The shekel is the weight of silver of three hundred and twenty. But he says, **kevar hosifu chachamim alav** (the Sages already added to it), the Chachamim added to the measurement, **ve'asu mishkalo kemishkal hamatbe'ah hanikra sela bizman bayit sheni** (and made its weight like the weight of the coin called sela in the Second Temple period). They said that the measurement of a shekel, a whole shekel, is the measurement of a sela. **Vechama hi mishkal hasela?** (And how much is the weight of the sela?) It's **three hundred and forty-eight average se'arah**.

So they added another several and twenty, four and twenty, eight and twenty se'orot they added.

The Learning from "Yiheyeh" and the Measurement of One-Sixth

The commentators say that the Gemara has a learning that one can add, because it says "zeh yiheyeh" (this shall be). Where does the language "yiheyeh" say? "Esrin gerah yiheyeh hashekel" (twenty gerah shall be the shekel). That "yiheyeh" means that the weight of the shekel can change, the Chachamim added.

And the measurement of how much the Chachamim added is shetut (one-sixth), is a sixth. Could be that shetut is always the measurement of ona'ah (overcharging), I don't know exactly, they wanted to make sure that one doesn't come to a concern that there shouldn't be enough. But it can also be practical, that because there was a coin called sela, and that was actually a bit more, they adjusted it so you know, it's simply very practical.

But perhaps the Chachamim also made the sela thing? Chachamim were also appointed over the coins? I don't know. In reality is that all these coins that the Chachamim speak of, the Romans also used them and so forth. But here could very well be that there was a coin sela, and it's very difficult for each individual to say bring a machatzit hashekel, give exactly a drop less than a sela. And it's in the measurement of shetut, which this is the measurement that changes something, that means a shetut isn't any... means not such a thing a mekach

ta'ut (mistaken transaction). And they found the derash (exposition) from "yiheyeh," and they say that this is it.

Question: "He'ashir Lo Yarbeh" — How Can the Sages Add?

But it comes out that it changes the obligation. What means that we spoke earlier that perhaps it's not by all obligations, perhaps one must make it a shekel, but in any case, it now becomes obligated... They made it like a takanah (enactment), they didn't make it in a way that now for practical reasons one should... because when there will be another coin, one will already have to reckon with the sela. Soon we'll see actually what Rambam says about Hilchot Machatzit HaShekel, perhaps we'll understand there better, because it's very difficult for me now.

It says in the Torah "he'ashir lo yarbeh" (the rich shall not give more), there come those who are adding. I don't understand how he works this out. They're not adding to the machatzit hashekel, they make that a shekel itself should be more. Where, it's a cool trick. You get it? It's funny.

Halachah 3 — Breakdown of Coins: Sela, Dinar, Me'ah, Pundiyyon, Isar, Prutah

Now the Rambam says, what is each one of these things? What is this a sela and a shekel? How much is it?

The Rambam says, sela, the sela that the Rambam says that the sela is approximately a shekel, is **arba'ah dinarim** (four dinars). The coin appears many times in the... I mean even today there is the word dinar in Arabic countries. Arba'ah dinarim. Also in Spanish one says dinero for money.

Okay, and a dinar is, this is brought in the Gemara, **shesh ma'in** (six me'ah). A me'ah kesef is a sixth of a dinar. **Vehame'ah hu hanikra bimei Moshe Rabbeinu gerah** (and the me'ah is what was called in the days of Moses our teacher gerah), it says "esrim gerah hashekel" (twenty gerah the shekel).

How Does "Esrin Gerah HaShekel" Fit with the Sela?

This comes out like this, esrim gerah, if a sela is four dinars, and a dinar is six me'in, it comes out that a shekel is twenty gerah, "esrim gerah hashekel." It's interesting, because how does this fit that the sela is that the Chachamim added? It doesn't fit now, it's more. It doesn't fit.

Speaker 2: Why? You're saying that something fits, it doesn't fit your math. It's only four times six, four times six?

Speaker 1: No, it's twenty-four. Right? Four times six is twenty-four, not twenty. Well. It's more, that's what I'm saying. They added. And what is the sela? That means, the gerah remained. A me'ah is a gerah, but a dinar is six me'ah, and a sela is four times that, comes out twenty-four. A dinar is twenty-four gerah, not twenty gerah. This is the addition that the Chachamim added.

The Smaller Coins: Pundiyyon, Isar, Prutah

And how does one measure a me'ah? **Me'ah is shnei pundiyyonim** (two pundiyyons). What is it? A me'ah, yes good.

Speaker 2: The value, or are we talking here about actual weight of silver?

Speaker 1: Now we're talking about coins. I mean that it could be... each one of these coins had some certain weight, but I don't know if they were all from silver. It could be that this was already from a cheaper material, but this is the value of so much and so much in silver. I mean that we're talking

here about a whole weight. Soon he's going to go in and tell us the weight of everything.

Okay, **pundiyonim is shnei isarim** (two isars). **Vehaprutah hi achat mishmoneh ba'isar** (and the prutah is one of eight in an isar), one isar is eight prutot. **Nimtza mishkal hame'ah, vehi hagerah** (it is found that the weight of the me'ah, and it is the gerah), is **sixteen se'orot, umishkal ha'isar** (and the weight of the isar) is **four se'orot, umishkal haprutah** (and the weight of the prutah) is **half a se'orah**.

That means, the Rambam goes down from 384, which is the two hasela, he makes a sixth of that, and so forth. It comes out that one prutah is half a se'orah in weight.

Discussion: The Size of Coins

So a shekel had to be a heavy large coin, that it could be dozens of coins, the size of dozens of prutot. So prutot had to be tiny tiny, very tiny. But we don't have the size. I mean to say, let's say a dollar coin doesn't weigh like a hundred pennies, it weighs like eight pennies. Once it was yes, I guess. There were very large coins, very large pieces.

It's not so big, because I'm going to check you already. As he says here, also the other one from below says that it comes out approximately... I have four and a half grams. Actually not so big. Four and a half grams is a dinar, it's already the largest... That means, one before the largest, right? A sela has four dinars. So a sela was like approximately eighteen grams. Eighteen grams is quite heavy. Yes, but it's not huge. Yes, it's bigger than any coin that we can today, right? I don't know.

Speaker 2: How many grams does your quarter weigh?

Speaker 1: I have no idea. I can ask the internet.

Okay, we're going further. It's not so much money. I checked that he says that a gram of silver costs today about two dollars. And a quarter weighs exactly five and a half grams, that means approximately like a dinar is there.

Yes, when people try to figure out the custom of giving machatzis hashekel erev Purim, it doesn't come out. According to the greatest machmir it's somewhere like more than ten dollars, and according to the smaller one it's two and a half dollars. If one would make a cube of silver, it would be a little bigger than a dinar, it would be five, six grams.

In short, it's not so much. A machatzis hashekel comes out very little, that is approximately twenty dollars something it is today. Yes, it's interesting to calculate... let's say with... it depends how big Klal Yisrael is, but if Klal Yisrael is small, there were times when Klal Yisrael was small, I don't know how it would have covered all the baalei batim. One goes to learn about this, about this exactly one goes to learn. Wait, let's see. It's actually a problem, there was a solution for this.

In short, this is the weight. Have we already learned this piece?

Halacha 4 — The Drachmon

Says the Rambam, besides this there was another coin. **"V'haya od matbei'a acheres shehi b'mishkala shtei sela'im"**, it weighed two sela'im, **"v'hi hanikra drachmon"**.

Speaker 2: Two sela'im means two dinar?

Speaker 1: Bigger, yes? It's two sela'im, not a half dinar.

Speaker 2: It's between a sela and a dinar.

Speaker 1: No, it's eight dinar. Bigger. Two sela'im. A sela is four dinar, a drachmon is two sela'im, it's already eight dinar. It's much bigger.

Sometimes one calls this a drachmon, if I remember it, look in English, a drachmon is also a larger coin. It's already double. Much bigger.

Speaker 2: A shekel is... what is my chart? A shekel and a sela is the same thing, that means a list miderabbanan, that's four dinar, and a drachmon is two shekel. So a drachmon is as big as a half shekel?

Speaker 1: It's two shekel. A sela is a half drachmon. "Mishkala shtei sela'im", two times as big. Correct. Yes, says the Rambam further, it's double.

General Note — The Purpose of the Chart

Now, **"V'elu hamatbe'os hakevu'os lahem she'amarnu u'veirarnu mishkal kol echad mehem, hem shemesharin bahem b'chol makom"**. Everywhere in halacha where one needs to estimate coins, he will use the chart. **"U'kvar beirarnum kedai shelo yihyeh tzorekh lefaresh mishkalam b'chol makom"**. One goes many times in...

Halacha 1 (continued) — Machatzis Hashekel According to the Coin of That Time

Speaker 1: Correct? Yes. Says the Rambam further, it's double. Now, **"V'elu hamatbe'os kinyan lahem she'amarnu, u'veirarnu mishkal kol echad mehem"**, how much each one weighs, **"hem shemesharin bahem b'chol makom"**, everywhere in halacha where one needs to estimate coins he will use the chart. **"U'kvar beirarnu"**, it was explained here, **"kedai shelo yihyeh tzorekh lefaresh mishkalam b'chol makom"**, one goes many more times throughout all of Torah in the Rambam to calculate shiurim. So these are the shiurim. This is regarding all others, as was said to us ones u'mefateh.

Now, now we return to our machatzis hashekel. Says the Rambam, **"Machatzis hashekel zo mitzvasa sheyiten machatzis matbei'a shel oso hazman"**. One should give a half of the coin that is popular, that is accepted at that time. **"Afilu ala oso matbei'a gadol mishkal hakodesh"**, if the coin that is used is bigger than a shekel hakodesh, one should give more than a shekel hakodesh. One should give a half of the contemporary coin, one should not transgress, see it on asher lo yarbeh, it is explained to the contemporary time.

Innovation: "Machatzis Hashekel" Means the Main Coin of That Time

On the contrary, this means that what it says machatzis hashekel, even though in the Torah there is a certain number, machatzis hashekel, shekel hakodesh, it's a certain amount of silver, it even says in the Torah. But the Rambam learns, and it seems this is one opinion among the Tannaim, that this doesn't mean that the mitzvah is to give that amount of silver. The mitzvah is to give a coin called shekel, or in other words, the main coin of that time.

Discussion: What Does "The Coin of That Time" Mean?

Speaker 1: It's a bit hard for me to understand, because what is the coin is twenty thousand shekel? How does one decide that the coin is she'b'oso zman? Do you understand that? Do you understand my question?

Speaker 2: Like someone says... like someone says... like someone says, by more it doesn't work for him.

Speaker 1: No, soon we'll see, this will be said explicitly. Like always... Yes, the next, I'm just asking a question, if there's a mitzvah, there's an obligation, right? If the coin, the shekel becomes bigger, one must give half of the bigger shekel. As it is today from the Rambam. Mitzvasa, that means the obligation, goes according to the coin she'b'oso hazman. But I don't understand what this means, because someone will say, a shekel isn't a dollar. Do you understand what I'm saying? A shekel is a dollar? What is a dollar? What is it if one makes something other numbers?

That is, shekel is after all a certain amount. It seems that this is the main thing, that everything is a half of that. It seems so, because in the verse it's implied "b'shekel hakodesh", that what one estimates it on is b'shekel hakodesh. And why should one bring in the coin of that time? I don't know, it's not clear.

Speaker 2: Again, okay, because it doesn't necessarily mean that one must bring the shekel hakodesh. The Torah says how much it was then. But if someone wants... not that someone wants. If today a shekel, the shekel hakodesh has changed as if, that's basically what happened, right? The shekel hakodesh itself will change.

Speaker 1: Is it more teretz? The shekel hakodesh is a certain thing that was in that time, and in the midst of what was the shekel hakodesh. He said, the shekel hakodesh weighed twenty gerah, it doesn't say because it weighs, you feel it from the others. It's all relevant to mishkal me'ah v'shishim se'arah. This is the Rambam, this doesn't say in the verse, right? Good, but I say, so once the Rambam has given us the shiur, then one can always look. From the shiur, from the hamel. Or peh.

But the Rambam learns that it doesn't work that way. This one must understand has to do with the Rabbanan who were established on shekel. Because the Rambam seems with the proofs. The same, like yosifu chachamim, is also yosifu each generation should one give... I don't know.

I say that what I would translate from the Rambam is that when the Torah says you make a shekel. That's how I understand now. Shekel means dollar. Okay, shekel doesn't mean shekel. Over letocha. A half dollar. Popular is not the correct translation, which is legitimate. There isn't, you can't make another dollar, they'll arrest you. But he also doesn't mean that one must go with the most expensive coin of that time. There isn't any expensive certain coin that is...

Speaker 2: No. Now I also catch on. It says from matbei'a shel oseh hazman. Because you make matbei'a shel oseh hazman, it says from a dollar or from a twenty? A twenty isn't a coin. A twenty is twenty dollars, right? It seems that shekel, that's the one.

Speaker 1: If there's huge inflation, this can become very small, but it can become biggest. Ulan reinu shokel, can't be. But let's say above, it can be that a dollar becomes very expensive. And one dollar is worth, but it will always be, even...

Speaker 2: Ah, a question arises, it says in Torah "esrim gerah". Apparently, the gerah has also... if a gerah is twenty shekel, like a dollar becomes an eruv, still a quarter will be a quarter of that. The whole financial system changes at once, it doesn't change only one coin, because everything is dependent on one coin, which is like the main one. Okay.

The Minimum: "U'le'olam Eino Shokel Pachot"

Speaker 1: So that's how it seems from the Rambam. It's the Rambam, but a minimum must always remain. It's always must... **"U'le'olam eino shokel"**. It means, "u'le'olam eino shokel" he doesn't mean in reality. Forever halachically one will not be able to bring a coin that weighs less than machatzis hashekel of the time of Moshe Rabbeinu, shemishkalo me'ah v'shishim se'arah. And if the coin of that time won't weigh that much, one will actually have to go to the higher coin. But here one doesn't need to go with the doubt, right? What the Chachamim made, a half shekel from the Chachamim is already more than one hundred and sixty, but here one goes back to what was indeed then, the minimum.

Halacha 6 — History of the Changing Coins

And so the Rambam actually relates historically, you'll know, the history of the Jews, says the Rambam, **"Bizman shehaya matbei'a shel zman darchmonos, haya kol echad v'echad nosen b'machatzis shekel shelo sela"**. Yes, that means, we learned earlier that drachmon is two sela'im, and one gave a drachmon which is a half sela. Sorry, a sela which is a half drachmon. That means, once, this is an interesting change, that it was double. So says the Rambam. The Rambam says that there were periods when it was, finally, completely double, not almost. There were periods when one stopped, one used a larger coin called drachmon. If so, he says that historically in Persia, he says that it was a Persian coin.

The Ra'avad's Question and Answers

The Ra'avad wonders, how can it be that the Jews came up the second time to the Beis Hamikdash, they were richer. They had bigger coins, and commentators want to say that because they came from Media, where there the coins, ran differently. In other words, let's be, the Ramban says so, the Ramban doesn't say what was when, so perhaps in general the Ramban, no question on the Ramban.

If the coin is drachmon, one must give half of that, or the drachmon is much bigger, indeed, that one must give. When the coin was sela, then one gave... Yes, if the coin is a sela, one gives a half of that, a chatzi sela, which is two dinar. A sela is four dinar, it comes out one gives a half sela, right? Yes. If the coin is a half sela, that means it becomes even smaller, then one can't give half of that. Why? Because half of that will be less than the shekel from the days of Moshe, from the me'ah v'esrim se'ah. One had to give the half sela itself, because that came out a bit more than me'ah v'esrim se'ah.

"U'me'olam lo shaklu Yisrael pachot machatzis shekel shel Torah". The chatzi shekel shel Torah is the minimum, and it came out according to the coin. Many times one gave much more than that, but never less than that.

Innovation: The Mechanism of "Above Yes, Below No"

But here it's interesting, because this happens when the coin becomes smaller. The Rambam has now related, here the coin became smaller, a sela became a half sela, one gives the whole, not a half. One gives, yes, two dinar, whatever it is, the whole two dinar, not...

But I say the point isn't that one should look which coin now exists and one should give specifically a half. The machatzis hashekel is a kind of scale. What does machatzis hashekel mean? Above yes, not below. If the coin becomes bigger than anything, one must give a half of that. But if it becomes smaller, then one can no longer give a half, because it will be

too small. Then one must give a whole coin, more than a coin, whatever it is, at least the minimum of the coin of Moshe.

Discussion: History or Halacha?

Speaker 2: So, is there like a halacha? Is there like a history here?

Speaker 1: The Rambam says the whole Torah, because this actually changed, and this is built on the Mishna that says in the Mishna that once one used to give darchmonos, afterwards one gave sela'im, afterwards one gave teva'in, and there is what says even matbe'os. Teva'in is what the Rambam calls a kind of chatzi sela. Yes, it's a language of coin, but it's the third level. And according to the Rambam this is much bigger.

The Ra'avad didn't understand how it can be that one was richer and became poorer. So he decided in logic. When one sits in the land, one settles, the land settles. One came back from exile, and they had exactly then more money.

So other commentators say here, I remember it's said differently, that actually, no, on the contrary, this is what you mentioned earlier, that one had to, at the time of the beginning of the aliyos, in Bayis Sheni one had to give more because there were fewer Jews. If there are fewer Jews it comes out that it's not enough that each one gave only the half shekel. So he brings from... ah, the Ramban. The Ramban explains so, that there were many... a small group came up, so it says there in Divrei Hayamim, yes? One had to give more. So this is truly the reason why one will give more. Ah, interesting.

But the others, more historically, translate differently. That drachmon is what was actually in Persia. It can be later also, it can be it was... one could once use another coin, I don't know exactly, but about this when it was the rule of Persia one had to give there money.

Speaker 2: Ah, it was actually bigger?

Speaker 1: On the contrary and on the contrary, one must. So it's implied in the Rambam.

Discussion: "He'ashir Lo Yarbeh" — How Does It Fit?

Speaker 2: What does one do with the "he'ashir lo yarbeh"? That I still don't understand clearly.

Speaker 1: "He'ashir lo yarbeh" means that all should be on the same page. That's the point. It shouldn't be "lefi asher yidvenu libo", but everyone gives more, the poor person also gives more. That will also be the point, that when the price goes up, one doesn't say that the poor person can give the minimum according to what was by Moshe Rabbeinu. The price rises, so it seems. The "he'ashir lo yarbeh v'hadal lo yam'it" is that each one should give the same amount. But one may, if the Chachamim are metaken that the whole world will give twenty, one must give twenty. That's not a problem. Okay.

Halacha 7 — Who Is Obligated in Machatzis Hashekel

Now, now the Rambam goes to say who is obligated in the mitzvah of machatzis hashekel. Says the Rambam, "**Hakol chayavin litan machatzis hashekel, kohanim, levi'im, v'Yisre'elim**". Later one will see distinctions regarding kohanim, we have a bit of other halachos, but obligated fundamentally is everyone, kohanim, levi'im, Yisraelim. And also converts, when one becomes a convert he gets the halacha like a Jew, and also freed slaves, when he is freed he gets a law like a Jew.

"**Aval lo nashim v'lo avadim v'lo ketanim**", as it says "ish", yes? "**V'nasnu ish kofer nafsho**". But says the

Rambam, "**V'im nasnu**", if women and slaves and minors give yes, "**mekablin mehem**", one takes it from them.

Halacha 1 (continued) — Who May Give Machatzis Hashekel and Who Not

Money is good. It can be that when the original machatzis hashekel, when it was to count the Jews, one couldn't take from them, it would mix up the counting, yes? One shouldn't count the men u'nei esrim u'ma'alah, and so on.

But now, when the main matter is only to cover for the korbanos, "**mekablin mehem**". No, good, makes sense. They're not obligated, but they can give.

But from whom does one not take at all? "**Aval hagoyim shenasnu machatzis hashekel ein mekablin mehem**", because the non-Jew has no connection to the korban tamid. A woman may yes. A woman, a minor may yes.

Halacha 2 — A Father Who Begins Giving for His Child

Says the Rambam further, "**Ha'av shehitchil litan al bno machatzis hashekel**", if a father wants to begin giving so the child should also have a merit in the machatzis hashekel, once you've begun, you've obligated yourself, "**shuv eino posek ela nosen alav kol shana v'shana**". One can't do once yes, once no. Once one has entered into the obligation, it's a category like a neder, a good thing that if one has done one should do it further.

So he brings here, I think that one only needs to do it once, not do it three times. "**Ad sheyigdal v'yiten al atzmo**", until he grows up. It doesn't say that the minor gives himself, because he doesn't have his own money. Clearly it says that the father gives for him then.

It seems there's a mitzvah of chinuch. Chinuch isn't relevant to this, because the child doesn't have money. The father gives in his merit. It seems there's a certain merit that the korban tamid is also in your name. Perhaps for this, once you've begun, you don't get out of it.

Here one sees that one can give tzedakah or a hekdesch for another, as people say "give a donation in my name".

Halacha 3 — Shekalim Is Only Practiced When the Temple Stands

When is one obligated? The Rambam, here comes something interesting that he hasn't said until now. All these halachos were only when there was a Beis Hamikdash, "**she'hashekalim einam nohagim ela bifnei habayis**". Bifnei habayis means when there is a Beis Hamikdash. Apparently simple, because it goes for the korbanos. At the time when the Beis Hamikdash exists.

But "bifnei habayis" means when there is a Beis Hamikdash (Temple), not just "bifnei habayis," next to the Beis Hamikdash. Different from what we learned earlier, there are things that were "bamikdash" in Jerusalem or in Eretz Yisrael, with a "talui ba'aretz" that they go to learn.

So "**bizman sheBeis Hamikdash kayam, nosnim hashekalim bein ba'aretz bein bechutz la'aretz**" (when the Temple exists, they give shekalim both in the Land and outside the Land), and they sent it to Jerusalem, and they sent it to Eretz Yisrael, and when the Beis Hamikdash is destroyed there is no halacha of... because everything is there in the Beis Hamikdash, it makes sense. A Jew who lives in Bavel, he is exempt from bringing korbanos (sacrifices), but he must also

have a share in the korbanos, so he sends a coin in the mail, however.

Halacha 4 — The Order of Collecting Shekalim

Good, now the Rambam will say the order of when they collect the shekalim.

Rosh Chodesh Adar — The Announcement

The Rambam says, "**be'echad be'Adar mashme'in**", he doesn't say "mashmi'in," he says "mashme'in," they announce, they inform the public that now is the time to prepare the shekalim, "**kedei sheyachin kol echad ve'echad machatzis hashekel shelo**" (so that each and every one should prepare his half-shekel). As he said that one must give a whole coin at once, start collecting now, don't come ten times to the gabbaim (collectors). "**Veyiheyeh asid liten**" (and he should be ready to give), should be ready. So the announcement is, they should prepare the pouches.

15 Adar — The Moneychangers Sit in the Cities

"**Bachamishah asar bo**" (on the fifteenth of it), the fifteenth of Adar, that is Shushan Purim, "**yashvu hashulchanim bechol medinah umedinah**" (the moneychangers sat in every province), the moneychangers, those who collect the money, the gabbaim, sat in every city of Jews, "**vetov'in benachas**" (and they request gently), they began to ask nicely, they didn't yet demand with strictness, but "**kol mi sheyiten anu mekablin mimenu, mi shelo nasan ein kofin oso liten**" (whoever gives, we accept from him; whoever didn't give, we don't force him to give), they don't yet force, they shouldn't buy. They don't yet confiscate.

25 Adar — The Moneychangers Sit in the Mikdash and They Force

"**Bachamishah ve'esrim bo**" (on the twenty-fifth of it), the 25th of Adar, "**yashvu bamikdash ligbos**" (they sat in the Temple to collect), then they began, they already sit in the Mikdash. That means for fifteen days they only sit in the distant places. Now they also sit "bamikdash," "**umikan va'eilach, kofin es mi shelo nasan ad sheyiten**" (and from here on, they force whoever didn't give until he gives). Whoever hasn't yet given should already give.

"**Vechol mi shelo yiten, mamashkenin oso**" (and whoever doesn't give, they take collateral from him), they take out from him a mashkon (pledge), they take something from him as security, "**velokachin avuto**" (and they take his pledge), they take his collateral, "**be'al korcho, va'afilu kesuso**" (against his will, even his garment).

Question: Why Do They Take Collateral and Not the Money?

Ah, they don't take the money? It's interesting. They take something from him until he brings the money. Interesting. Why doesn't he take the money directly? But for one thing, except to check if he has the money, surely they take the money.

Ah, he says that "mamashkenin oso" means they take the money. Not clear. There is a dispute among the Acharonim whether perhaps the word means that they take something so that he should give, because they need it to be given? So there are those who argue this. The Maharai ben Chaviv says he speaks about this. Not clear.

Observation: The Order of a Campaign

Okay. So, until here, this is the order. Here you see, I caught, I saw today that there is a campaign. First they make some kind of gathering. What do they do at the gathering? Nothing. They

say that it's going to be. Afterwards they begin to ask nicely. Afterwards there is perhaps a step where they already pursue.

So, the Rambam says further. It's interesting, because it's literally a Torah obligation. It's not a campaign for a mikveh where there's no obligation that Jews should give. I mean, it's a nice thing, but you can't confiscate. This is literally an obligation, it's written in the Torah.

Nevertheless, there is a whole order, they must convince the Jews. They say, they must say a nice drasha (sermon) on Rosh Chodesh Adar, apparently on Shabbos Shekalim. There is the dollar year with, whoever gave. But there is unfortunately a thing that the poor people, one must work hard. Therefore one must force, one must force. On the contrary, not the forcing, I'm speaking of the donation campaign that goes here.

This that they make a whole... it seems that even though they will later force, even though it's literally a mitzvah, it doesn't go like that. They must arouse the public, remind them, give drashos.

The Rambam says further, "**kol mi she'eino chayav bishekalim**" (whoever is not obligated in shekalim) — it could be therefore they give it between Purim, the public is in a good mood, the public is happy. No, before this we learned "be'echad be'Adar mashmi'in al hashekalim," they read Shabbos Shekalim, the whole thing.

Halacha 5 — Who They Don't Take Collateral From

Minors and Women Who Began Giving

Yes, "**kol mi she'eino chayav bishekalim**" (whoever is not obligated in shekalim), the one who is not obligated, as we learned earlier a minor or a woman, he gives every year, "**ein mamashkenin oso**" (they don't take collateral from him). Even though we learned that once one began giving one shouldn't stop, but the taking of collateral is only when there is a complete obligation. When the obligation is always, I don't know, because one accepted upon oneself that a good thing one shouldn't stop, but there is no forcing on this.

Kohanim — For the Sake of Peace

And another halacha, "**ve'ein mamashkenin es hakohanim le'olam**" (and they never take collateral from the Kohanim). We learned that Kohanim are also obligated. But "**mipnei darchei shalom**" (for the sake of peace), in the Mishnah it says that the Kohanim somehow convinced themselves for some reason that they don't need to give, because Kohanim have a different halacha, also regarding mincha, "**vechol minchas kohen lo se'achel**" (and every meal-offering of a Kohen shall not be eaten). Kohanim held that they are in a different category.

Just to explain, interesting, it seems in Sefer HaChinuch, that because the Kohanim had... so I looked at it, they were too close with the Beis Hamikdash. There is something of a certain distance, like "kol hakarov" (all who are close), as it says there by Nadav and Avihu, there is a certain respect that comes from being away from something. The Kohanim felt somehow like too-close in-laws. Therefore, "mipnei darchei shalom" they don't take from them.

"**Ela sheyitnu mekablin mehem, vetov'in osam**" (but if they give, we accept from them, and we request of them), they ask them, but they don't take collateral.

The language of the Mishnah is, that yes, there was a dispute, do you have what to say "kol kohen sheshokel chota" (every Kohen who weighs sins)? Another said no, "kol kohen she'eino

shokel chota" (every Kohen who doesn't weigh sins). **"Ela shehakohanim dorshin mikra zeh le'atzman"** (but the Kohanim expound this verse for themselves). The Kohanim made themselves a drasha for their own benefit.

That means, in other words, if we looked at it, Kohanim were great Jews. There is a dispute among the Poskim, the opinion of the Kohanim is that they don't need to, the opinion of the Chachamim is that they do need to. He sees that the Mishnah didn't hold that the opinion of the Kohanim is legitimate. He says, it's bias, they say it for themselves?

And nevertheless, one can't fight with Kohanim. Kohanim are the original teachers of halacha, right? **"Yoru mishpatecha leYa'akov veTorascha leYisrael"** (They shall teach Your ordinances to Jacob and Your Torah to Israel). And they say that the halacha is that Kohanim are exempt, so they say, you

know what? The Chachamim come and say, you're right, you're exempt, but do you also want to be a part.

It could also be that "mipnei darchei shalom" is that who would force? Apparently the Kohanim. One can't make a civil war among the Kohanim themselves.

But one can also simply hear that the Kohanim felt like they already do the service with their body. I already volunteer enough. I'm already a volunteer for the organization, I also have to give money? Have you heard such a thing?

So, must go. But here you see, it's interesting. I mean, now I say historically, it's well known that the Kohanim, the Chashmonaim, what questions came up. We learn Pesachim, Yoma, there were Tzedokim (Sadducees). Here is one of the, they tried to make "mipnei darchei shalom."