



From the desk of  
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## Office of the Rabbinate of Elad, Rosh HaAyin and Herzelia

Religious Court of Elad \* Batei Hora'ah \* Religious Services \* Marriage Licensing \* Kashrut \* Mikvaot \* Eiruvim

## TORAT

## Parashat Ki Tisa

## HAMELECH

### Give Half a Shekel

Our *parashah* opens with *Parashat Shekalim*. Once a year, all Jews are enjoined to give half a *shekel* to the *mishkan* / *mikdash*. The money collected was used to purchase communal offerings.

It is interesting to note that the amount given was half a shekel. This is to indicate that each Jew should feel as if he is only a part. He has no *shleimut* unless he joins up with other Jews.

And the rule is that the wealthy man gives a half a shekel as does the poor man. No one can give more or less towards this campaign. Everyone is equal in Hashem's eyes.

Sometimes people ask, "How much is he worth?" These people judge others based on their financial assets. Hashem judges based upon true values.

### We're All One

The Arizal says that all Jews together are like one body. Each individual is only one limb or less. It is important to accept upon oneself the *mitzvah* of *ve'ahavta lerei'acha kamocha* before davening so that our *tefillot* can rise to Heaven *besheleimut*.

Additionally, when saying *vidui*, we do so in plural form, for we must atone for all Yisrael. That is why we also say everything on the list, even if we know that we personally did not stumble in certain areas. Somebody did, so we are all held responsible, to a certain degree. We are all one, and that oneness requires atonement.

Each person's deeds affect everyone, in both directions. One should always look at it as if his merit and debits are equal. His very next move can tip the scales.

Rabbi Yosef Giktalla was once quite ill. He dreamt that an accounting was being made in Heaven. He came out perfectly equal. Upon awakening, he quickly donned his *tefillin* so as to get one more *zechut*. Indeed, his condition improved drastically.

The Rema says to wait to do *kiddush levanah* in *Tishrei* until after Yom Kippur, when people are generally happier. Levush suggests doing it before Yom Kippur so as to get one more *mitzvah* on your side of the scales before the sealing of the judgment.

Gm. Kedushin also says that a person should view the entire world as hanging in the balance, with half merits and half debits. Your next move can impact the entire world! That is an awesome responsibility. We are all obviously interconnected.

### Odom Brings a Korban

The Torah introduces the *parashah* of *korbanot* with the words *Odom ki yakriv*. This refers to Odom HaRishon. One of the main functions of *korbanot* is to achieve atonement for misdeeds. Odom HaRishon's sin obviously affected all of mankind for all generations. So too, each person should realize that his sin did much more damage



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than is visible to the human eye. (Sefer Me'or VaShemesh)

### The Tenth Man

Yes, we are all one. We need each other. A beautiful shul with nine Jews does not bring the Shechinah. Put the seven Ushpizin [Avraham, Yitzchak, Yaakov, Moshe, Aharon, Yosef and David] in a room. Add Shlomo Hamelech and Yehoshua bin Nun. They still cannot say *Kaddish*, *Kedusha*, or *Borchu*. Send in Shmerel the *Shnorer* or Berel the Shoemaker and now they have a *minyan* and can say any *davar shebikedushah*. Do not underestimate the power of each Jew. Do not belittle the *koach* of the *klal*.

Most elements in the plant and animal world come in pairs which complement each other and work together as a unit to perform their function. This teaches us that man, too, was not meant to live life as an individual, but to view himself as part of a greater whole.

### The Unusual Eulogy

Hillel taught: What you do not appreciate being done to you, do not do to others. That is the basis for the entire Torah. (Shabbat 31a) Targum Yonatan brings this in Vayikra (19:18).

Rabbi Eliezer ben Harkenus taught (Avot 2:10): Your friend's honor should be as dear to you as your own.

There was once a rich man who did not give *tzedakah*. When he passed away, his sons approached the local Rav and asked him to eulogize. The Rav said, "What can I say of him?"

He did not learn Torah, he did not do mitzvot, he did not support worthy causes. I am sorry, but I have nothing to say."

The sons left and the Rabbi returned to his learning. He was learning Chullin 92a and came to the Gemara which compares Klal Yisrael to a grapevine. The branches are the supporters of Torah, the grape clusters are the Talmidei Chachamim, the leaves are the simple folk who work in the fields and thereby provide for all. The twirly twigs do not do much. They parallel the empty ones of Israel.

The Rabbi stopped and thought: What is the point of these empty ones?

Then he thought of an answer. The Talmidei Chachamim are so steeped in Torah that it is difficult for them to get their minds off of their learning when they find themselves in locations where Torah learning is to be avoided. That is where the emptyheads come in. They never sinned in that area. Not once did a Torah thought enter their minds as they sat in the bathroom or bathhouse! So we need them to atone for the wise men who could not control their brains from thinking Torah thoughts in impure surroundings.

The Rav took this as a message that he was meant to eulogize. So he informed the family that he has what to say. He said over this novel explanation at the funeral.

So let us appreciate each other and find our role as part of a greater whole.

**Shabbat Shalom from your other half,  
Mordechai Malka**