

## Parshas Shekalim

The Shabbos before *Rosh Chodesh Adar*, we *lein Parshas Shekalim* (the beginning of *Parshas Ki Sisa*) as *maftir*<sup>1</sup>. (If *Rosh Chodesh Adar* falls out on Shabbos, we read *Parshas Shekalim* that same Shabbos).

The reason behind this is as follows: In the time of the *Beis Hamikdash*, messengers were sent out to *Klal Yisroel* on *Rosh Chodesh Adar* to remind them to give their *Machatzis Hashekel*. The funds collected were used for *korbanos* (and other public needs) that needed to be brought by the *tzibbur*. All *korbanos tzibbur* offered after *Rosh Chodesh Nissan* had to be purchased using these newly collected *shekalim*.<sup>2</sup>

According to the *Sefer Hachinuch*<sup>3</sup>, since nowadays we do not have the *Beis Hamikdash* nor the *shekalim* of old, our *minhag* is to read *Parshas Shekalim* to remember what used to be done in the days of the *Bais Hamikdash*.

*Mishnah Berurah*, quoting the *Levush*, writes that by reading *Parshas Shekalim*, it is considered as if we actually are bringing the *shekalim* to the *Beis Hamikdash* (“through our lips”).

The *Yerushalmi*<sup>4</sup> quotes another reason as to why we *lein Parshas Shekalim*: Hashem knew Haman was going to use *shekalim* to “buy” the right to destroy *Klal Yisroel* from *Achashveirosh*<sup>5</sup>. Therefore, we were given the *mitzvah* of *Machatzis Hashekel* as a way of combatting *Haman’s* plot. This is why we read *Parshas Shekalim* each year—to remember and enact *Machatzis Hashekel*, the *zechus* of which helped save us from *Haman’s* decree.

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<sup>1</sup> משנה מגילה דף כ"ט.

<sup>2</sup> משנה שקלים פרק א' משנה א'

<sup>3</sup> ספר החינוך מצוה ק"ה

<sup>4</sup> ירושלמי מגילה פרק א' הלכה ה' וכן במדרש תנחומא פרשת כי תשא אות ג'. ועיי' גמ' מגילה דף יג' :

<sup>5</sup> כדאיתא במגילת אסתר ג: ט "ועשרת אלפים ככר כסף אשקול על ידי עשי המלאכה להביא אל גנזי המלך."