

Notes: March 1, 2014

Start: 10 AM

Order of service:

1. Meet and Greet
2. Introduction (if new people)
3. Ma Tovv
4. Jeri's Drash
5. Liturgy – Sh'ma +
6. Announcements
7. Praise and Worship Songs
8. Message
9. Aaronic Blessing
10. Kiddush
11. Oneg

Children's Blessing:

Transliteration: *Ye'simcha Elohim ke-Ephraim ve hee-Menashe*

English: *May God make you like Ephraim and Menashe*

Transliteration: *Ye'simech Elohim ke-Sarah, Rivka, Rachel ve-Leah.*

English: *May God make you like Sarah, Rebecca, Rachel and Leah.*

Introduction: Shabbat Shekalim

There have been special Shabbats established to recognize certain times, or to better state times of preparation for something significant to come.

Seven months ago we recognized another special Shabbat...does anyone remember what it was?

Shabbat Shuvah literally means "Sabbath of Return," but it is also a play on the phrase "Shabbat Teshuvah" (Sabbath of Repentance). It is the Shabbat that occurs between Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur and is a time for reflection leading up to the atonement of Yom Kippur.

Shabbat Shekalim (Sabbath of the Shekels) recalls the census taken in the wilderness, described in Exodus 30:11-16, which is the maftir portion (final portion of the parashah).

The people are to donate a half-shekel (a silver coin) as a tax to provide for the maintenance of the Tent of Meeting and its service, and the coins are counted instead of the people.

Exo 30:11 Adonai said to Moshe,

Exo 30:12 "When you take a census of the people of Isra'el and register them, each, upon registration, is to pay a ransom for his life to Adonai, to avoid any breakout of plague among them during the time of the census.

Exo 30:13 Everyone subject to the census is to pay as an offering to Adonai half a shekel [*one-fifth of an ounce of silver*]- by the standard of the sanctuary shekel (a shekel equals twenty gerahs).

Exo 30:14 Everyone over twenty years of age who is subject to the census is to give this offering to Adonai —

Exo 30:15 the rich is not to give more or the poor less than the half-shekel when giving Adonai's offering to atone for your lives.

Exo 30:16 You are to take the atonement money from the people of Isra'el and use it for the service in the tent of meeting, so that it will be a reminder of the people of Isra'el before Adonai to atone for your lives."

On Shabbat Shekalim, we also read a [haftarah](#) portion from II Kings 11:17-12:17, which also makes reference to the census money and the use of it for [Temple](#) maintenance (see II Kings 12:5-6).

Y'hoyada was the cohen at the time of King Yho'ash:

2Ki 11:17 Y'hoyada made a covenant between Adonai, the king and the people, that they would be Adonai's people, and [*a covenant*] between the king and the people.

2Ki 11:18 Then all the people of the land went to the house of Ba`al and broke it down; they completely smashed its altars and images and killed Mattan the priest of Ba`al in front of the altars. Next, the cohen appointed officers over the house of Adonai.

2Ki 11:19 He took the captains of hundreds, the Kari, the guards and all the people of the land; and they brought the king down from the house of Adonai, going by way of the gate of the guards to the royal palace. There he sat on the throne of the kings.

2Ki 11:20 All the people of the land celebrated, and at last the city was quiet. That is how they killed `Atalyah with the sword at the royal palace.

2Ki 11:21 (12:1) Y'ho'ash was seven years old when he began his reign.

2Ki 12:1 (12:2) It was in the seventh year of Yehu that Y'ho'ash began to rule, and he ruled forty years in Yerushalayim. His mother's name was Tzivyah, from Be'er-Sheva.

2Ki 12:2 (12:3) Y'ho'ash did what was right from Adonai's perspective throughout the lifetime of Y'hoyada the cohen, who instructed him.

2Ki 12:3 (12:4) Nevertheless the high places were not taken away; the people still sacrificed and presented offerings on the high places.

2Ki 12:4 (12:5) Y'ho'ash said to the cohanim, "All the funds for sacred purposes which are brought to the house of Adonai — the half-shekel tax, the taxes on persons in a man's household, and all the offerings anyone voluntarily brings to the house of Adonai —

2Ki 12:5 (12:6) the cohanim are to receive from whoever personally makes contributions to them; and they are to use these funds to repair the damaged parts of the house, wherever damage is found.

2Ki 12:6 (12:7) But twenty-three years into the reign of King Y'ho'ash, the cohanim had still not repaired the

damaged places in the house.

2Ki 12:7 (12:8) So King Y'ho'ash summoned Y'hoyada the cohen and the other cohanim and said to them, "Why aren't you repairing the damaged places in the house? Therefore, you are no longer to take money from those who contribute it personally to you; you must hand it over to be used for repairing the damage in the house."

2Ki 12:8 (12:9) The cohanim agreed not to receive money from the people, and they would no longer be responsible for repairing the damage to the house.

2Ki 12:9 (12:10) Then Y'hoyada the cohen took a chest, drilled a hole in its lid and set it by the altar, on the right, as one enters the house of Adonai; and the cohanim in charge of the entry put in it all the money brought into the house of Adonai.

2Ki 12:10 (12:11) When they saw that there was a large amount of money in the chest, the king's secretary and the cohen hagadol would come up, count the money found in the house of Adonai and put it in bags.

2Ki 12:11 (12:12) Then they would give the weighed-out money to those supervising the work in the house of Adonai, who would use it to pay the carpenters and construction-workers doing the work in the house of Adonai,

2Ki 12:12 (12:13) on masons, stone-workers, timber, worked stone and everything else needed for repairing the damaged places in the house of Adonai.

2Ki 12:13 (12:14) But none of the money brought into the house of Adonai was used to make silver cups, snuffers, bowls, trumpets or other articles of gold or silver for the house of Adonai;

2Ki 12:14 (12:15) because they gave the money to those doing the work, thus restricting its use to repairing the damage in the house of Adonai.

2Ki 12:15 (12:16) Moreover, they did not require an accounting from the supervisors given the money to pay the workers, because they dealt honestly.

2Ki 12:16 (12:17) Money from guilt offerings and sin offerings, however, was not brought into the house of Adonai; it went to the cohanim.

Shabbat Shekalim occurs on the [Rosh Chodesh](#) of the month before the month of [Nissan](#) (that is, the Rosh Chodesh of [Adar](#) or Adar II in [leap years](#)), or on the last Shabbat before that Rosh Chodesh. Nissan is the month when [Pesach](#) ([Passover](#)) occurs. Shekalim is read at this time because, according to tradition, the half-shekel census was taken on the first of Nissan, and the reading is meant to be a reminder of the upcoming census.

What does this day tell us?

There are many lessons to be learned from this brief passage.

- The fact that both rich and poor contribute the same amount reminds us that both rich and poor are equally valued in the eyes of the Divine.
- The fact that we count coins instead of people reminds us that people are not to be thought of as mere numbers on a ledger.
- The fact that the census contributions are used to maintain the Tent of Meeting reminds us of the importance of contributing to the upkeep of the [synagogue](#) (a favorite theme for [rabbis!](#)).

When asked by the religious leaders about the half-shekel, Yeshua said He was exempt from paying it, but paid it anyways.

He provided not only His portion but also Kefa's

Mat 17:24 When they came to K'far-Nachum, the collectors of the half-shekel came to Kefa and said, "Doesn't your rabbi pay the Temple tax?"

Mat 17:25 "Of course he does," said Kefa. When he arrived home, Yeshua spoke first. "Shim`on, what's your opinion? The kings of the earth — from whom do they collect duties and taxes? From their sons or from others?"

Mat 17:26 "From others," he answered. "Then," said Yeshua, "The sons are exempt.

Mat 17:27 But to avoid offending them — go to the lake, throw out a line, and take the first fish you catch. Open its mouth, and you will find a shekel. Take it and give it to them for me and for you."

What does this passage tell us:

In the case of Messiah, both rich and poor paid it.

The counting of the coin, representing individuals in this case included Yeshua.

The half-shekel was the equivalent of 1-2 days wage. Consider today, our tax amnesty, when it is determined we have paid our taxes in relation to the number of days one works is approximately 150 days.

The idea behind this tax was not only to support the work being done to maintain the Temple, but was a simple to administer census.

Number of half shekels = Number of people

With regards to being rich or poor, does this not remind us of Sha'ul's words...

Rom 3:20 For in his sight no one alive will be considered righteous on the ground of legalistic observance of Torah commands, because what Torah really does is show people how sinful they are.

Rom 3:21 But now, quite apart from Torah, God's way of making people righteous in his sight has been made clear — although the Torah and the Prophets give their witness to it as well —

Rom 3:22 and it is a righteousness that comes from God, through the faithfulness of Yeshua the Messiah, to all who continue trusting. For it makes no difference whether one is a Jew or a Gentile,

Rom 3:23 since all have sinned and come short of earning God's praise.

It is not a question of what you have or what you don't have, but rather what you have been given.

Rom 3:24 By God's grace, without earning it, all are granted the status of being considered righteous before him, through the act redeeming us from our enslavement to sin that was accomplished by the Messiah Yeshua.

Rom 3:25 God put Yeshua forward as the kapparah for sin through his faithfulness in respect to his bloody sacrificial death. This vindicated God's righteousness; because, in his forbearance, he had passed over [*with neither punishment nor remission*] the sins people had committed in the past;

Rom 3:26 and it vindicates his righteousness in the present age by showing that he is righteous himself and is also the one who makes people righteous on the ground of Yeshua's faithfulness.

Something that is available to all, without regard of status or ethnicity...

Rom 3:27 So what room is left for boasting? None at all! What kind of Torah excludes it? One that has to do with legalistic observance of rules? No, rather, a Torah that has to do with trusting.

Rom 3:28 Therefore, we hold the view that a person comes to be considered righteous by God on the ground of trusting, which has nothing to do with legalistic observance of Torah commands.

Rom 3:29 Or is God the God of the Jews only? Isn't he also the God of the Gentiles? Yes, he is indeed the God of the Gentiles;

Rom 3:30 because, as you will admit, God is one. Therefore, he will consider righteous the circumcised on the ground of trusting and the uncircumcised through that same trusting.

Rom 3:31 Does it follow that we abolish Torah by this trusting? Heaven forbid! On the contrary, we confirm Torah.

On a side note, next week I will go into greater detail regarding this passage of Romans...

Shabbat Shekalim happens once a year.

It should be a reminder to us as believers that we were bought and paid for in the same manner that the half-shekel was used to maintain the Temple.

We were bought and paid for, in order to serve Him.

Our responsibility is service to our King.

Are you serving Him?

One might ask, how does one serve the King...

What are the King's orders?

To Kefa, He said to feed His sheep.

To the talmadim He instructed them to go into all the nations...

What about us?

We are a continuation of these initial instructions.

We are to take care of one another as a community would do...

Act 2:44 All those trusting in Yeshua stayed together and had everything in common;

Act 2:45 in fact, they sold their property and possessions and distributed the proceeds to all who were in need.

Since many of the first believers were visitors from other countries who had not come to Yerushalayim prepared to take up life there, an immediate need arose for those with local property and resources to use them to care for their new brothers and sisters in the Messiah. These verses certainly teach unselfishness, unpossessiveness and hospitality as traits to be cultivated everywhere and always, but I don't think they constitute God's special seal of approval on communal living as lifestyle or socialism as politics.

Act 2:46 Continuing faithfully and with singleness of purpose to meet in the Temple courts daily, and breaking bread in their several homes, they shared their food in joy and simplicity of heart,

Act 2:47 praising God and having the respect of all the people. And day after day the Lord kept adding to them those who were being saved.

Gal 3:26 For in union with the Messiah, you are all children of God through this trusting faithfulness;

Gal 3:27 because as many of you as were immersed into the Messiah have clothed yourselves with the Messiah, in whom

Gal 3:28 there is neither Jew nor Gentile, neither slave nor freeman, neither male nor female; for in union with the Messiah Yeshua, you are all one.

Gal 3:29 Also, if you belong to the Messiah, you are seed of Avraham and heirs according to the promise.