

## Clarification of the Holy Shlo's Commentary

# “Machatzis HaShekel” — Shabbos, Rectifies the Sin of the “Egel” On Shabbos Yisroel Carry the Throne of Glory Themselves

This coming Shabbos, on which we welcome in the month of Adar, is called “Shabbos Shekolim.” This name relates to the fact that we read the passage concerning the “Machatzis hashekel,” found in parshas Ki Siso, on this Shabbos. Based on the Mishnah (Megillah 29a), the Shulchan Aruch states (O.C. 685, 1 and 5): **“ראש חדש אדר שחל להיות בשבת קורין — בפרשת שקלים, חל להיות בתוך השבת מקדימין לשעבר”** — if Rosh Chodesh Adar falls on Shabbos, we read the passage discussing the “Shekolim”; if Rosh Chodesh Adar falls on a weekday, we read that passage on the Shabbos preceding Rosh Chodesh. The Gemoreh (Shekolim 2a) explains that in the times of the Beis HaMikdosh, they would announce the collection of the “Shekolim” on the Rosh Chodesh Adar immediately preceding the month of Nissan: **“באחד באדר”** **משמיעין על השקלים**.

It was necessary to do so, because starting from Rosh Chodesh Nissan, all of the communal offerings had to be purchased from coins collected for the new year. It states in the Torah (Bamidbor 28, 14): **“זאת עולת חודש בחדשו לחדשי”** **“השנה”** — This is the “olah” offering for the start of the new month, for the months of the year. The Gemoreh states (Rosh HaShoneh 7a): **“אמרה תורה חדש והבא קרבן מתרומה חדשה”** — the Torah instructed us to renew the sacrificial service and to bring the offering from a new collection of funds. Expounding a “gezeirah shoveh, the Gemoreh deduces that the renewal of the sacrificial service begins on the first of Nissan; from that day onward, all of the communal offerings must be purchased with new funds.

Since we have an established practice to begin reviewing the laws of each occasion thirty days beforehand, the appropriate time to announce the collection of the new coins is specifically on the first day of Adar — thirty days before the first day of Nissan. To commemorate this event -- **“באחד”** **“משמיעין על השקלים”** — we read the passage of the “half-shekel” on either Shabbos Rosh Chodesh Adar or on the Shabbos on which we bless the month of Adar.

Therefore, it is only appropriate that we examine the mitzvah of the “Machatzis hashekel” as it is described in parshas Ki Siso (Shemos 30, 12): **“כי תשא את ראש בני ישראל לפקודיהם, ונתנו איש כופר נפשו לה' בפקוד אותם ולא יהיה בהם נגף בפקוד אותם, זה יתנו כל העובר על הפקודים מחצית השקל -- בשקל הקודש, עשרים גרה השקל מחצית השקל תרומה לה”** — When you will take a census of Bnei Yisroel according to their counts, every man shall give Hashem an atonement for his soul when counting them, and there will be no plague among them when counting them. This is what they shall give — everyone who passes among the counted — half of the shekel, by the holy shekel, the shekel is twenty geirah, half of the shekel as a portion to Hashem. Rashi explains: **“זה יתנו, הראה לו מטבע”** **“של אש ומשקלה מחצית השקל ואמר לו כזה יתנו”** — Hashem showed Moshe a sort of coin of fire whose weight was half a shekel and told him, “They should give a coin like this.”

The source for this idea is the Midrash Tanchuma (Nosso 11); the Midrash adds that HKB”H took this sort of fiery coin from beneath the Throne of Glory. The commentaries question why HKB”H chose to show Moshe a fiery coin from beneath the Throne of Glory. Is there any shortage of half-shekel coins in this world that HKB”H could have shown him?

### “When you elevate the heads” Is an Amazing Allusion to Shabbos

Let us begin our exploration with the illuminating words of the Chidushei HaRim in Sefer HaZechus (Ki Siso). He explains that the possuk (Shemos 30, 12): **“כי תשא את ראש בני ישראל”** — when you elevate the heads of Bnei Yisroel — alludes to Shabbos Kodesh. He writes that the concept of “elevating the heads” (which simply translated refers here to taking a census of the people) is a reference to Shabbos. When a sign is elevated, it is taken to the next level up. On Shabbos, all of Yisroel's desires become one — directed solely to satisfy Hashem's will. They unite in the mystery of one.

He is referring to the fact that on Shabbos Kodesh all of Yisroel unite with the will of HKB”H. This is expressed in a statement in the holy Zohar (Terumoh 135a): **“רזא דשבת איהי”** — **שבת דאתאחדת ברזא דאחד** — the mystery of Shabbos is that on Shabbos everything is united in the mystery of one. HKB”H signifies this fact to Moshe with the statement: **“כי תשא”** — **את ראש בני ישראל** -- when you elevate the heads of Bnei Yisroel. In other words, if you wish to elevate Yisroel, connect them with the sanctity of Shabbos which is alluded to by the words: **“כי תשא את ראש”**. If one elevates each letter of the word **ש** to the letter that follows it in the aleph-beis, the result is **שב”ת**. The letter following “reish” is “shin”; the letter following “aleph” is “beis”; the letter following “shin” is “tov.” Thus, we have the letters of the word **שב”ת**.

### The Machatzis HaShekel Alludes to Shabbos Kodesh

Accepting the Chidushei HaRim’s premise, how does this allusion to Shabbos Kodesh in the beginning of the text relate to the continuation of the text where HKB”H commands us to donate a half-shekel: **“זה יתנו כל העובר על הפקודים מחצית”** — **השקל בשקל הקודש** — this is what they shall give, everyone who passes among the counted, half of the shekel, by the holy shekel. What is the connection between the half-shekel and Shabbos Kodesh?

It appears that the matter can be explained based on the commentary of the Teshuos Chen authored by the great Rabbi Gedaliah of Linitz, a student of the holy Ba’al Shem Tov. Concerning the following possuk in parshas Ki Siso (Shemos 31, 15): **“ששת ימים יעשה מלאכה וביום השביעי שבת שבתון קדש”** — **לה”** — for six days work may be done and the seventh day is a day of complete rest, holy unto Hashem — he writes:

**“ש’בתון ק’ודש ל’ה’ ראשי תיבות שק”ל... ומחצית השקל היא, שבשבת כביכול הקב”ה מקבל תענוג מגוף המאכל, ובשבת היא חציו לכם וחציו לה’, והקב”ה מקבל תענוג אפילו מחצי זה, וזהו מחצית השק”ל שאפילו החצי הזה הוא ש’בתון ק’ודש ל’ה’.”**

The first letters of the words **ש’בתון ק’ודש ל’ה’** spell out the word **שק”ל**. Now, on Shabbos, half of our pleasure comes from earthly delights — such as food — and half comes from spiritual activities. HKB”H derives pleasure, on Shabbos, even from the half that comes from earthly delights. This earthly half represents the “Machatzis hashekel”; even that half constitutes part of the sanctity of Shabbos -- **ש’בתון ק’ודש ל’ה’**.

Following this sublime lead, I would like to propose my own explanation as to how Shabbos is alluded to by the mitzvah of “Machatzis hashekel.” The Midrash states (B.R. 11, 8): **“תני רבי שמעון בן יוחאי, אמרה שבת לפני הקב”ה, רבונו של עולם לכולן יש בן זוג ולי אין בן זוג, אמר לה הקב”ה כנסת ישראל היא בן זוגך”** — Rabbi Shimon ben Yochai taught: Shabbos pleaded before HKB”H, “Master of the Universe, every day has a mate except for me.” HKB”H responded to her, “The congregation of Yisroel is your mate.” The sefer Korban Shabbos (Chapter 1, 5) explains that RaShB”Y is teaching us that Shabbos Kodesh constitutes the people of Yisroel’s mate.

In a similar vein, the Maharsha in Chidushei Aggados addresses the Gemoreh (Bove Kamma 32b): **“אמר רבי חנינא, בואו ונצא לקראת כלה מלכתא, ואמרי לה לקראת שבת כלה”** — Rabbi Chanina would say, “come, let us go out to greet the bride, the queen!” Others reported that he would say, “. . . to greet the Sabbath, the bride, the queen!” The Maharsha comments: **“דדרך החתן לצאת לקראת הכלה, כמו שכתוב (דברים לג ב) ה’ מסיני בא, יצא לקראתם כו’ כחתן היוצא”** — **להקביל פני הכלה כו’ כפירוש רש”י”** — it is customary for the “chosen,” the groom, to go out to greet the bride.

Additionally, the Zohar hakadosh explains (Vayikro 7b): **“דדכר בלא נוקבא פלג גופא אקרי”** — a male without a female is only considered half a person. It is now clear how the “Machatzis hashekel” alludes to Shabbos, and why HKB”H commanded Yisroel to donate a half-shekel. For, we have learned that **שק”ל** stands for **ש’בתון ק’ודש ל’ה’** — the holy Shabbos which is Yisroel’s mate. It turns out, therefore, that Yisroel themselves represent a “Machatzis hashekel.” They form a whole together with Shabbos; they cannot achieve completeness or rectification without their union with Shabbos.

### Shabbos Observance Atones for the Sin of the “Egel”

This also allows us to explain why bringing the “Machatzis hashekel” — which alludes to Shabbos, Yisroel’s mate — acts as atonement for the sin of the “egel.” The possuk states: **“ונתנו איש כופר נפשו לה”** — every man shall give Hashem an atonement for his soul. The Midrash Tanchuma teaches (Ki Siso 10): **“מחצית השקל, על שחטאו בשש שעות בחצי היום”** — the “Machatzis hashekel” signifies that they sinned at midday -- six hours into the day. Chazal state (Shabbos 118b): **“כל המשמר שבת כהלכתו אפילו עובד עבודה זרה כדור אנוש מוחלין לו”** — one who observes Shabbos is forgiven even for the serious transgression of idolatry.

The Yearos Devash explains (Part 2, Drush 3) that idol-worship is a denial of Hashem, whereas Shabbos observance is the root of “emunah,” belief in Hashem. For, it is written in our parsha (Shemos 31, 16): **“ושמרו בני ישראל את השבת... כי ששת ימים עשה ה' את השמים ואת הארץ וביום השביעי שבת וינפש”** — Bnei Yisroel shall observe the Shabbos . . . that in a six-day period Hashem made the heavens and the earth, and on the seventh day He relaxed and He rested. This explains why the “Machatzis hashekel,” which represents Shabbos, atones for the sin of the “egel,” which was a form of idol-worship.

How nicely this explains the meaning of the Midrash. Moshe had difficulty understanding the mechanism of the “Machatzis hashekel.” HKB”H responded by taking a sort of fiery coin out from under the Throne of Glory, showing it to Moshe, and saying: They should give one like this. Now, concerning Shabbos, the Gemoreh elucidates (Shabbos 10a): **“אמר לו הקב"ה למשה, מתנה טובה יש לי בבית גנזי ושבת שמה, ואני מבקש ליתנה לישראל”** — HKB”H said to Moshe, “I have a special present in my treasure-house and it is called ‘Shabbos’; I want to give it to Yisroel.” We see that the essence of Shabbos is stored above in HKB”H’s treasure-house; yet, due to his tremendous generosity, he extends the sanctity of Shabbos down to Yisroel below on earth.

This then was Moshe’s difficulty. He could not comprehend how the half-shekel could serve as atonement for the sin of the “egel.” Therefore: **“נטל הקב"ה כמין מטבע של אש מתחת”** — HKB”H took the sanctity of Shabbos which was stored in His treasure-house and showed it to Moshe. The sanctity of Shabbos, represented by the “Machatzis hashekel,” is Yisroel’s other half and mate. HKB”H indicated that by remembering and sanctifying the Shabbos, Yisroel would be giving irrefutable testimony that He created the world. In this manner, they would make amends for the idolatrous act of making the “egel.”

### The Shlo HaKadosh’s Amazing Revelation

Let us now entertain an incredible idea, a valuable gem, provided for us by HKB”H in the writings of the Shlo hakadosh (Ki Siso). Although mentioned earlier in the name of the Chidushei HaRim, this idea was presented first by the Shlo hakadosh. They both indicate that the possuk: **“כי תשא”** — when you elevate the heads of Bnei Yisroel — is an allusion to Shabbos Kodesh; however, the Shlo hakadosh provides us with an insight as to why Shabbos observance makes amends for the sin of the “egel.” He writes:

**“ובנתנית התורה אמר הקב"ה למשה אחוז בכסא, כדאיתא בפרק רבי עקיבא (שבת פח:), כי אז ישראל נעשו כסא, וזהו סוד כי תשא את ראש בני ישראל, והוא על דרך מה שכתבתי במקום אחר, בפסוק (בראשית ד ז) הלוא אם תטיב שאת ואם לא תטיב לפתח חטאת רובץ, שהוא על דרך דאיתא בחגיגה פרק אין דורשין (דף יג:): שהחיות הנושאות הכסא מזיעות מאימת הכסא, וזיעה זו שופכת על ראש רשעים, וזהו גיהנם עיין שם.**

אבל אם ישראל זכאים הם נושאות הכסא, ולכך נבראו שהם ישבו במעלה העליונה, להיותם הכסא בסוד האבות הן המרכבה, ואז לא יש גיהנם כי לא יש זיעה. זהו שאמר הלא אם תטיב שאת, כלומר תשא אתה את הכסא. ואם לא אזי ישאו אותו המלאכים ויזיעו ויהיה גיהנם, זהו לפתח חטאת רובץ”.

In the process of giving the Torah, Moshe ascended to the heavens and was instructed by HKB”H to grab hold of the Throne. As a result of this act, Yisroel became part of the Throne. This is the deeper meaning of the possuk: **“כי תשא”** — when you elevate the heads of Bnei Yisroel. Elsewhere, the Torah states (Bereishis 4, 7): **“הלוא — אם תטיב שאת ואם לא תטיב לפתח חטאת רובץ”** — Surely, if you improve yourself, you will be forgiven. But if you do not improve yourself, sin rests at the door. The Shlo interprets this possuk as dealing with who performs the task of bearing the Throne of Glory — the heavenly “Chayos” or Yisroel.

Before delving any deeper into the words of the Shlo hakadosh, a brief introduction is necessary. The Gemoreh (Chagigah 13b) expounds on the following possuk (Daniel 7, 10): **“נהר דינור נגד ונפק מן קדמוהי וגו'”** — a river of fire was flowing forth from before Him, i.e. from before the Throne of Glory. The Gemoreh asks: **“מהיכן נפיק”** — where does it originate from? i.e. what is the source of this river of fire?

The Gemoreh answers: **“מזיעתן של חיות”** — from the sweat of the “Chayos.” There is a prestigious group of heavenly angels known as “Chayos hakodesh” — which literally means beasts of the holy realm. This name reflects the fact that they were created in the images of beasts — a lion, an ox, an eagle and a cherub; they were assigned the exalted task of carrying the Throne of Glory upon which HKB”H sits, so to speak. Due to their immense fear of HKB”H, they would perspire; their perspiration formed “nahar dinor” — the river of fire.

Next, the Gemoreh asks: **“ולהיכן שפיק”** — where does the stream of fire empty? **על** — **אמר רב זוטרא בר טוביה אמר רב, על** — **ראש רשעים בגיהנם”** — Rav Zutra the son of Tuvia said in the name of Rav: upon the heads of the wicked in Gehinnom.

We learn from this Gemoreh that the fire of Gehinnom emanates from the sweat of the “Chayos hakodesh” who bear the Throne of Glory.

### The Purpose of Creation Is that Yisroel Bear the Throne of Glory

The Shlo teaches us an incredible insight. The ultimate purpose of creation is that the people of Yisroel themselves, and not the “Chayos,” carry the Throne of Glory — by means of their Torah study and good deeds. The Shlo finds substantiation for this amazing premise in the words of the Midrash (B.R. 47, 6): “האבות הן הן המרכבה” — the Patriarchs are the true Chariot. They transport HKB”H, so to speak. With their tremendous sanctity and devotion, they bore the Throne of Glory that HKB”H sits upon, so to speak. We find a wonderful allusion to this idea in the writings of the Megaleh Amukos on parshas Vaeschanan (252). He points out that the numerical value of the words **מרכבה שלימה** (267+385), meaning perfect Chariot, equals **אברהם יצחק יעקב דוד** (652=248+208+182+14), the four legs of the chariot.

Based on this understanding, the Shlo professes that, indeed, the true intention from the beginning of creation was that the people of Yisroel in their sanctity should bear the Throne of Glory — by means of their meritorious deeds. Thus, the “Chayos hakodesh” would not carry the Throne, would not generate perspiration, and the fire of Gehinnom would not be formed. This would eliminate Yisroel’s exposure to the fire of Gehinnom.

This explains very nicely why the fire of Gehinnom is aimed at the wicked and not the righteous. For, it is due to the wicked and their evil ways that it was necessary for the heavenly “Chayos” to transport the Throne of Glory. Consequently, they are subjected to the fire of Gehinnom generated by the sweat of the “Chayos.” The righteous, on the other hand — who serve Hashem with their Torah study and performance of mitzvot — transport the Throne of Glory themselves, in place of the “Chayos.” Thus, they are not exposed to the “Chayos” perspiration and are not subjected to the fire of Gehinnom.

In this manner, we can interpret HKB”H’s words to Kayin (Bereishis 4, 7) as follows: “הלא אם תטיב שאת” — if you do good and are meritorious, then “שאת” — you will merit carrying the Throne of Glory; as a result, you will not be subjected to the fire of Gehinnom generated by the sweat of the “Chayos.” “ואם לא תטיב” — if, however, you do not mend your ways, the “Chayos hakodesh” will necessarily transport the Throne of Glory and generate perspiration; **לפתח חטאת**

“רובץ” — this will necessitate your lying in the fire of Gehinnom, which emanates from the “Chayos” perspiration -- a reality brought about by your sinful ways.

### A Magnificent Combination of the Shlo with the Rama of Pano

I am enthused to propose a combination of the Shlo’s incredible idea with an idea of the divine kabbalist’s, the Rama of Pano, in his work Asarah Maamaros. The Rama of Pano reveals to us that although it may appear as if the “Chayos hakodesh” are transporting the Throne of Glory, in truth, that is not the case; the Throne of Glory is, in fact, carrying them. This phenomenon is actually described in the piyut for the Mussef prayer on Rosh HaShoneh in the kedusheh of Keser: “נראות נושאות והם נושאות עם כסא” — they appear to be carrying but they are being carried along with the Throne.

Actually, the Throne only carries its carriers whilst Yisroel are properly serving Hashem and pleasing Him. When, however, they are not serving Hashem properly, chas v’shalom, and there are many wicked people among them, they cause significant distress and turmoil above. This latter scenario is depicted by the possuk (Devorim 32, 18): “צור ילדך תשי ותשכח” — “אל מחוללך” — You ignored the Rock Who gave birth to you, and forgot G-d Who brought you forth. Rashi comments: “כשבא להיטיב לכם אתם מכעיסין לפניו ומתישים כוחו מלהטיב לכם” — when He comes to do good to you, you anger Him and weaken His resolve to do good on your behalf.

Due to HKB”H’s distress whilst sitting atop the Throne of Glory, the Throne no longer carries its carriers. In fact, just the opposite is true; it becomes a heavier burden for the “Chayos hakodesh.” The increased burden causes them to toil and expend more effort resulting in their perspiration. As we have learned, their perspiration forms “nahar dinor,” the river of fire. Seeing as this perspiration is a result of the wicked people’s actions below — transgressions which increased the burden of the Throne upon its heavenly carriers — it is only fitting, measure for measure, that this sweat is emptied out on the heads of the wicked in Gehinnom. This is the gist of the Rama of Pano’s revealing insight.

It seems that we can combine the idea of the Shlo’s with that of the Rama of Pano. In truth, the “Chayos hakodesh” always bear the Throne of Glory; for, they were created for that purpose. Nevertheless, when Yisroel serve Hashem properly — engaging in Torah study and fulfilling mitzvot — then they carry the Throne themselves by means of their good deeds. As a result, the “Chayos” do not need to exert any effort while

carrying the Throne. In fact, under those circumstances, the Throne actually carries them — as expressed by the poet: **“נראות נושאות והם נושאות עם כסא”**.

Yet, when Yisroel do not act in accordance with the Omnipresent’s will, chas v’shalom, then they do not possess the merit or the power to bear the heavenly Throne. In that event, the heavenly “Chayos” must bear the burden of the Throne alone; this causes them to sweat due their exertion and their fear. This perspiration forms the fiery stream that falls upon the heads of the wicked in Gehinnom. Thus, the explanations of the Shlo and the Rama of Pano coincide beautifully.

This also provides us with an exquisite explanation for our Sages’ statement (Yoma 86a): **“גדולה תשובה שמגעת עד כסא”** — Repentance (teshuvah) is so great that it reaches the Throne of Glory. For, when a person sins, the deleterious effects reach the Throne of Glory; as a consequence of their sins, Yisroel do not bear the Throne, but rather the “Chayos hakodesh” do. Despite past transgressions, if Yisroel perform sincere wholehearted teshuvah, they can resume carrying the Throne. So, we see clearly that the effects of a Jew’s teshuvah reach the Throne of Glory.

### On Shabbos Kodesh Yisroel Bear the Throne of Glory

Let us now return to the words of the Shlo hakadosh. He goes on to elucidate the possuk: **“כי תשא את ראש בני ישראל”** — when you elevate the heads of Bnei Yisroel — in the following succinct manner:

**“וזהו שרמז בכאן כי תשא את ראש, כשתהיה ראש אז אתה תשא [את כסא הכבוד], ובתיבת ראש נרמז סוד שבת, שלימת הבנין שלמעלה, שהוא בת זוג של ישראל, ובן זוג של ראש, רצוני לומר אותיות השניות הוא שבת.”**

According to the Shlo, HKB”H was conveying two points to Moshe. Firstly, that he should elevate Yisroel to a high enough level — the level of **“ראש”**, the head — so that they merit to bear the Divine Throne. This point is conveyed by the words **“כי תשא”**. The word **“תשא”** derives from the infinitive **“לשאת”** which means both to lift up and to carry. Secondly, HKB”H conveyed to Moshe that the spiritual elevation is accomplished by means of Shabbos observance. This is alluded to by the fact that the letters of the aleph-beis that follow the letters of the word **ראש** form the word **שבת**. In other words, **“כי תשא את ראש”** -- when you elevate the letters of the word **ראש**, you get **שבת**.

At first glance, the connection may not be apparent. Although these two points are both conveyed by the same phrase -- **“כי תשא את ראש”** -- what is the connection between Shabbos and the fact that Yisroel transport the Throne of Glory? It appears, however, the Shlo hakadosh concealed a priceless bit of information in this sacred notion. On Shabbos Kodesh, Yisroel are elevated to such a high level of sanctity that they themselves bear the Throne of Glory rather than the “Chayos hakodesh.”

So, this is how the Shlo connects the two points. Firstly, Yisroel must be elevated to the level of **“ראש”**, so that they are able to bear the Divine Throne. Secondly, they can achieve this exalted level by observing Shabbos.

Come and see a truly amazing revelation. Based on this insight of the Shlo’s, we can shed light on the well-known truth that on Shabbos Kodesh even the wicked are allowed to rest from the fire of Gehinnom. This fact is derived from the holy Zohar’s (Ekev 273a) elucidation of the possuk (Shemos 35, 3): **“לא תבערו אש בכל מושבותיכם ביום השבת”** — you shall not light fire in any of your dwellings on Shabbos — this includes the fire of Gehinnom.

According to the Shlo’s explanation, Yisroel bear the Throne of Glory themselves on every Shabbos Kodesh — not the “Chayos.” As a result, there is no perspiration dripping down from the heavenly “Chayos”; for, there is no exertion on their part. Therefore, there is no fire of Gehinnom being generated on Shabbos Kodesh even for the wicked.

### “He Ascended on the Seventh Day and Sat down on His Throne of Glory”

Next, let us see how these ideas coincide with the formula instituted in our Shabbos morning prayers: **“לא אל אשר אשר שבת מכל המעשים ביום השביעי נתעלה וישב על כסא כבודו”** — to the G-d Who rested from all activity, Who ascended on the seventh day and sat down on His Throne of Glory. This formula suggests that HKB”H only sits atop His Throne of Glory on Shabbos Kodesh. This idea is also expressed in the passage from the Zohar hakadosh (Terumeh 135a) that some say customarily on Friday night before the Shabbos evening prayer: **“קוב”ה אחד לעילא לא יתיב על כורסייא דיקרא עד דאתעבידת איהי ברזא דאחד”**.

An explanation for this concept is found in the Zohar Chodosh (Bereishis 22a). In fact, HKB”H already sits on His Throne of Glory during the six weekdays; however, He only does so completely on Shabbos. We can understand

this in light of our discussion above. On Shabbos Kodesh, HKB”H ascends to sit upon His Throne of Glory, because it is borne by Yisroel, His holy people, rather than by the “Chayos hakodesh.” This is the reason why the recitation of **”ישמחו”** **”במלכותך שומרי שבת וקוראי עונג”** — they shall rejoice in Your sovereignty, those who observe the Shabbos and call it a delight — was instituted during three of the Shabbos prayers. For, Bnei Yisroel’s rejoicing in HKB”H’s sovereignty is enhanced on Shabbos, since He is sitting down on the Throne that they are carrying.

In this manner, we can finish up our explanation of the Shlo hakadosh’s assertion. Shabbos observance –which HKB”H alluded to with the words **”כי תשא את ראש”** affords atonement for the sin of the “egel,” because when Bnei Yisroel received the Torah at the Revelation on Sinai, they merited to carry the Throne of Glory. This was a fulfillment of the condition **”אם תטיב שאת”** — if you are meritorious, you will be privileged to carry the Throne.

Yet, when they committed the sin of the “egel,” they caused a defect in the Throne of Glory. The Midrash explains (S.R. 3, 2) that at Matan Torah Bnei Yisroel saw the ox that is part of the Divine Chariot; it is one of the four “Chayos hakodesh” that carry the Throne of Glory. This motivated them to make an image resembling an ox. So, in the sin of the “egel,” they worshipped the ox in the Chariot, thereby creating a defect in the Throne of Glory. Subsequently, they were no longer qualified to bear the Throne; that task was relegated solely to the “Chayos.”

We have now gained a deeper appreciation of why HKB”H commanded Moshe: **”כי תשא את ראש בני ישראל”** — that they should elevate the letters of the word **”רא”ש** to the letters of the word **”שב”ת**. For, on Shabbos, Yisroel bear the Throne themselves; this act constitutes a rectification of the sin of the “egel” — which caused a defect in the Throne of Glory. This is also why HKB”H commanded the donation of a “Machatzis hashekel.” He was conveying the message that Yisroel are only part of a whole that is completed by their spiritual mate — Shabbos. They only achieve wholeness and perfection on Shabbos, when they merit once again to bear the Throne of Glory themselves.

We now stand enlightened with regard to the Midrash’s statement that Moshe had difficulty comprehending the concept of the “Machatzis hashekel.” He could not comprehend how Yisroel would achieve atonement for the sin of the “egel” in the merit of Shabbos — represented by the “Machatzis hashekel.” To which HKB”H responded by taking a sort of fiery coin from beneath the Throne of Glory and showing it to Moshe. Then He said, “They should give one like this.” HKB”H conveyed to Moshe that in the merit of Shabbos, represented by the half-shekel, Yisroel would once again merit to carry the Divine Throne. Therefore, he specifically took the fiery coin from beneath the Throne of Glory — as it were, from the very place where the Throne is carried. Thus, they would rectify and atone for the sin of the “egel” which necessitated that the “Chayos” carry the Throne.



**לזכות ולרפואה שלימה של בנציון בן רחל ושמואל אהרן הי”ו**