



It occurred to me that Halacha allows for one to fulfill the Mitzvah of Zechiras Amalek, to mention and remember what Amalek did to us, not only by the reading of Parshas Zachor on the Shabbos before Purim, but even with as part of Shvii or Maftir of Ki Taytzay as part of the regular Shabbos Torah reading in Elul. Moreover, Halacha even allows one to fulfill the Mitzvah with the reading of Parshas Beshalach, either as the Torah reading on Purim (see Mishnah Brurah 685:16), or as part of the annual cycle. Why is Parshas Shekalim different in that it must be read on the Shabbos on or before Rosh Chodesh Adar, when we read it multiple times before Nissan, in the Mincha Shabbos, Monday and Thursday reading leading up to Parshas Ki Tisa as well as on the Shabbos morning reading.

The Gemara (Megillah 29a) quotes the Mishnah (Shekalim 1:1) that on the 1st of Adar we publicize about Shekalim. It then explains that because in Nissan we must bring Korbanos from the new collection of Shekalim of that year, we begin publicizing the Shekalim on the 1st of Adar so that there should not be a lack of Shekalim in the Mikdash. However, Rashi on the Gemara translates 'publicizing the Shekalim' as a proclamation by Beis Din, not that this 'publicizing the Shekalim' is the public Torah reading of Parshas Shekalim on the Shabbos on or before the 1st of Adar. Rav Ovadiah Bartenura also explains the Mishnah the same way as Rashi. The Rambam similarly lists these two ideas as separate Halachos. The 'publicizing of Shekalim' is brought in Hilchos Shekalim (1:9) and the reading of Parshas Shekalim in Hilchos Tefillah (13:20). It is evident from the Gemara that the public Torah reading of Shekalim occurred even while the Mikdash was in operation.

The Pri Tzaddik on Mishpatim/Shekalim cites the Tanchuma (Ki Tisa 3) that as part of the oral tradition, Moshe Rabbeinu taught Klal Yisroel Torah and gave them the Parshiyos and Sedros that they should read each Shabbos, Rosh Chodesh and for all of the Chagim. In each Parsha, Moshe's name is mentioned with the words וידבר ה' אל משה לאמר. Regarding Parshas Shekalim the Midrash says that Moshe asked Hashem: After I die will I be mentioned? Hashem answers: Just as you stand today and give them Parshas Shekalim and you lift their heads, so too each year when they read the Torah before me, it will be as if you are standing there at that time lifting their heads. As it says, "Hashem spoke to Moshe saying: When you will lift up the head..." (Shemos 30:11-12).

One might ask why Moshe did not express concern to Hashem over Korbanos. The Pri Tzaddik cites the Gevul Binyamin who quotes a Midrash that Eliyahu HaNavi who is Pinchas ben Elazar ben Aharon HaCohen continues to offer Korbanos in the Beis HaMikdash today for us as well as Shekalim from the treasury that were hidden there. Thus, Korbanos are still active today but Shekalim are not. However, there are other aspects of Avodah, such as Shemen HaMishcha that are inactive today that Moshe did not express concern over. Also, why is Moshe concerned about the time immediately after his death and not in times when there would be no Mikdash?

The Pri Tzaddik cites the Peskita Rabti (Parsha 10) that when Moshe came down from Har Sinai with a crown of light, whereas Bnei Yisroel lost their crowns after Chet HaAigel HaZahav, Hashem told Moshe that he should 'lift their heads' – Ki Tisa – and then He will continue to keep their heads upright. It is the giving of the Shekalim that allows Moshe to restore these crowns to Bnei Yisroel. This is why Moshe was concerned about after his death even when the Mikdash was extant. Even if they would give the Shekalim in the Mikdash, Moshe himself would not be there to 'lift up their heads' and restore their crowns. This is why Hashem said that if they read Parshas Shekalim in the lead up to Chodesh Adar, Hashem would deem it as if Moshe was their himself 'lifting their heads' and the crowns would be restored.

As the Pri Tzaddik puts it, the Torah is called Toras Moshe, since Moshe incorporates all 600,000 souls of Yisroel and the letters in the Torah. When we read Parshas Shekalim, the letters that we read, which are connected to the Nefesh of Moshe, forms a reality as if Moshe Rabbeinu himself is standing up the heads of Yisroel and restoring their crowns. He continues to explain based on the Gemara (Kiddushin 40a) that when a person desires to do a Mitzvah but is unable to due to extenuating circumstances, it is deemed as if the Mitzvah was fulfilled. This is how the reciting of the Pesukim about Korbanos, along with the desire to perform them, is considered in the eyes of Heaven as if the Korbanos were brought. Similarly, a desire to give the Machatzit HaShekel to the Mikdash, along with the reading of Parshas Shekalim, immediately prior to the month of Adar, is considered by Hashem as if it was done, allowing both Moshe Rabbeinu to restore our crowns and to allow Eliyahu HaNavi to offer Korbanos that were acquired with the Shekalim that we generated.

May it be His will that we should merit to see the Korbanos and the Mizbayach and the rebuilding of the Beis HaMikdash speedily in our days.