

# הפטר פרשת שקלים

## HAFTARAH FOR PARASHAT SH'KALIM

2 KINGS 12:1–17 (*Ashk'nazim*)

2 KINGS 11:17–12:17 (*S'fardim*)

After the revolt in Judah that deposed Queen Athaliah (842–836 B.C.E.), the priest Jehoiada established the rule of King Jehoash—who had been hidden “in the House of the LORD” during Athaliah’s reign. Jehoiada solemnized the covenant between the Lord, the king, and the people, on the one hand, and between the king and the people, on the other. After a popular rampage that destroyed the temple of Baal, the priest set in motion the ascension of Jehoash as king (836–798 B.C.E.). These events (2 Kings 11:17–20) serve as the prologue to the ensuing report of the king’s reign, and constitute the opening section of the *haftarah* in the rite of *S'fardim*. *Ashk'nazim* recite only the subsequent royal report (2 Kings 12:1–17).

The main portion of the narrative concerns the attempts of Jehoash to provide for Temple repairs. His first instruction was apparently disregarded by priests who saw the cost of repairs as cutting into their income. The new regulations required that sacred funds be put directly into a storage bin, but also clearly stressed that sacred payments (for purification and reparation offerings) belonged to the priests alone.

Initially, the priests retained discretionary powers over “all silver” brought to the Temple. According to the narrative, the king then claimed jurisdiction over sacred donations—not only with regard to their disbursement but also with regard to their collection and use. (He decreed that the priests could receive and retain only the silver given in exchange for sacrificial offerings.) This hints at a balancing of powers between kings and priests of great historical interest.

### RELATION OF THE HAFTARAH TO THE CALENDAR

*Parashat Sh'kalim* (Exod. 30:11–16) is the first of

four special Torah passages added (*maftir*) to the regular *Shabbat* portion in the weeks before *Pesah*. The timing of its annual recitation depends on several considerations: on the New Moon of the month of *Adar* when it falls on a *Shabbat*; on the previous *Shabbat* when the New Moon of *Adar* falls on a weekday; and in a leap year, in the second (leap) month of *Adar*. (Its occurrence, in turn, sets the timing for the other three special Torah portions that follow: *Parashat Zakhor* is read on the *Shabbat* before *Purim*; *parashat Parah* is read on the *Shabbat* before *parashat ha-Hodesh* [described next]; and *parashat ha-Hodesh* is read on the *Shabbat* nearest the New Moon of *Nisan*—in which month *Pesah* falls. This sequence is specified in the Mishnah [Meg. 3:4], along with breaks or skipped Sabbaths as needed.)

The supplementary Torah reading refers to a poll tax of “half a shekel” (*maḥatzit ha-shekel*) for building the tabernacle in the wilderness. In ancient Temple times, this biblical one-time donation was regularized as an annual donation “required of everyone in Israel” and “announced on the first of *Adar*” (M Shek. 1:1). Setting the preparations one month in advance ensured that the new flock of animals sacrificed from the beginning of the month of *Nisan* would be paid for with the new *sh'kalim* (BT Meg. 29b). The public reading of this portion served to notify the populace to bring their donations of *sh'kalim*. The prophetic reading not only resembles the Torah portion by mentioning a payment of silver but also refers to the communal upkeep of a sacred shrine.

With the destruction of the Second Temple and the consequent end of sacrifices (in 70 C.E.), *parashat Sh'kalim* was recited “in remembrance” (*l'zeikher*) of the Temple. This occasion was used to solicit funds in support of Jewish religious and charitable institutions. The annual commemora-

tion came to mark the ongoing hope (in the absence of the Temple) that charity might serve as a substitute for sacrifice, as a gift leading to religious renewal and divine forgiveness.

**11** <sup>17</sup>And Jehoiada solemnized the covenant between the LORD, on the one hand, and the king and the people, on the other—as well as between the king and the people—that they should be the people of the LORD. <sup>18</sup>Thereupon all the people of the land went to the temple of Baal. They tore it down and smashed its altars and images to bits, and they slew Mattan, the priest of Baal, in front of the altars. [Jehoiada] the priest then placed guards over the House of the LORD. <sup>19</sup>He took the chiefs of hundreds, the Carites, the guards, and all the people of the land, and they escorted the king from the House of the LORD into the royal palace by the gate of the guards. And he ascended the royal throne. <sup>20</sup>All the people of the land rejoiced, and the city was quiet. As for Athaliah, she had been put to the sword in the royal palace.

**12** Jehoash was seven years old when he became king. <sup>2</sup>Jehoash began his reign in the seventh year of Jehu, and he reigned in Jerusalem forty years. His mother's name was Zibiah of Beer-sheba. <sup>3</sup>All his days Jehoash did what was pleasing to the LORD, as the priest Jehoiada instructed him. <sup>4</sup>The shrines, however, were not removed; the people continued to sacrifice and offer at the shrines.

<sup>5</sup>Jehoash said to the priests, "All the money, current money, brought into the House of the LORD as sacred donations—any money a man may pay as the money equivalent of persons,

**יא** <sup>17</sup>וַיִּכְרֹת יְהוֹיָדָע אֶת־הַבְּרִית בֵּין יְהוָה וּבֵין הַמֶּלֶךְ וּבֵין הָעָם לַהֲיוֹת לָעַם לַיהוָה וּבֵין הַמֶּלֶךְ וּבֵין הָעָם: <sup>18</sup>וַיָּבֹאוּ כָּל־עַם הָאָרֶץ בֵּית־הַבַּעַל וַיִּתְּצוּהוּ אֶת־מִזְבְּחֹתָיו מִזְבְּחֹתָיו וְאֶת־צִלְמֵי שִׁבְרֵי הַיֵּטֵב וְאֶת מַתָּן כֹּהֵן הַבַּעַל הִרְגוּ לִפְנֵי הַמִּזְבְּחוֹת וַיִּשֶׁם הַכֹּהֵן פְּקֻדֹת עַל־בֵּית יְהוָה: <sup>19</sup>וַיִּקַּח אֶת־שָׂרֵי הַמַּאֲוֹת וְאֶת־הַכָּרִי וְאֶת־הָרָצִים וְאֶת אֶת־הַמֶּלֶךְ מִבֵּית יְהוָה וַיָּבֹאוּ דֶרֶךְ־שַׁעַר הָרָצִים בֵּית הַמֶּלֶךְ וַיָּשֶׁב עַל־פֶּסֶא הַמְּלָכִים: <sup>20</sup>וַיִּשְׂמַח כָּל־עַם־הָאָרֶץ וְהָעִיר שָׁקֵטָה וְאֶת־עַתְלִיהוּ הַמִּיתוּ בַּחֲרֹב בֵּית מֶלֶךְ הַמֶּלֶךְ: ס

**יב** \* בֶּן־שֶׁבַע שָׁנִים יְהוֹאָשׁ בְּמָלְכוֹ: פ <sup>2</sup>בְּשֶׁנֶת־שֶׁבַע לַיהוֹאָשׁ מָלַךְ יְהוֹאָשׁ וְאַרְבָּעִים שָׁנָה מָלַךְ בִּירוּשָׁלַם וְשֵׁם אִמּוֹ צִבְיָה מִבְּאֵר שֶׁבַע: <sup>3</sup>וַיַּעַשׂ יְהוֹאָשׁ הַיֹּשֶׁר כְּעֵינֵי יְהוָה כָּל־יָמָיו אֲשֶׁר הוֹרָהוּ יְהוֹיָדָע הַכֹּהֵן: <sup>4</sup>רַק הַבָּמֹת לֹא־סָרוּ עוֹד הָעָם מִזְבְּחִים וּמִקְטָרִים בַּבָּמֹת:

<sup>5</sup>וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוֹאָשׁ אֶל־הַכֹּהֲנִים כֹּל כֶּסֶף הַקִּדְשִׁים אֲשֶׁר־יֹבֵא בֵית־יְהוָה כֶּסֶף עֹבֵר אִישׁ כֶּסֶף נַפְשׁוֹת עֲרָכּוֹ כָּל־כֶּסֶף

**2 Kings 11:19. gate of the guards** Hebrew: The entrance to the Temple area through which the king passed (see 1 Kings 14:28). *sha-ar ha-ratzim*; literally, "gate of the runners."

\* Ashk'nazim start here.

or any other money that a man may be minded to bring to the House of the LORD—<sup>6</sup>let the priests receive it, each from his benefactor; they, in turn, shall make repairs on the House, wherever damage may be found.”

<sup>7</sup>But in the twenty-third year of King Jehoash, [it was found that] the priests had not made the repairs on the House. <sup>8</sup>So King Jehoash summoned the priest Jehoiada and the other priests and said to them, “Why have you not kept the House in repair? Now do not accept money from your benefactors any more, but have it donated for the repair of the House.” <sup>9</sup>The priests agreed that they would neither accept money from the people nor make repairs on the House.

<sup>10</sup>And the priest Jehoiada took a chest and bored a hole in its lid. He placed it at the right side of the altar as one entered the House of the LORD, and the priestly guards of the threshold deposited there all the money that was brought into the House of the LORD. <sup>11</sup>Whenever they saw that there was much money in the chest, the royal scribe and the high priest would come up and put the money accumulated in the House of the LORD into bags, and they would count it. <sup>12</sup>Then they would deliver the money that was weighed out to the overseers of the work, who were in charge of the House of the LORD. These, in turn, used to pay the carpenters and the laborers who worked on the House of the LORD, <sup>13</sup>and the masons and the stone-cutters. They also paid for wood and for quarried stone with which to make the repairs on the House of the LORD, and for every other expenditure that had to be made in repairing the House. <sup>14</sup>However, no silver bowls and no snuffers, basins, or trumpets—no vessels of gold or silver—were made at the House of the LORD from the money brought into the House of the LORD; <sup>15</sup>this was given only to the over-

אֲשֶׁר יַעֲלֶה עַל לֵב-אִישׁ לְהֵבִיא בֵּית יְהוָה: <sup>6</sup> וַיִּקְחוּ לָהֶם הַכֹּהֲנִים אִישׁ מֵאֵת מִכְרוֹ וְהֵם יִחְזְקוּ אֶת-בֵּדֶק הַבַּיִת לְכָל אֲשֶׁר-יִמָּצֵא שָׁם בִּדָּק: <sup>פ</sup>

<sup>7</sup> וַיְהִי בִשְׁנַת עֶשְׂרִים וּשְׁלֹשׁ שָׁנָה לַמֶּלֶךְ יְהוֹאָשׁ לֹא-חֲזְקוּ הַכֹּהֲנִים אֶת-בֵּדֶק הַבַּיִת: <sup>8</sup> וַיִּקְרָא הַמֶּלֶךְ יְהוֹאָשׁ לַיהוֹיָדָע הַכֹּהֵן וְלַכֹּהֲנִים וַיֹּאמֶר אֲלֵהֶם מִדּוּעַ אֵינְכֶם מְחַזְּקִים אֶת-בֵּדֶק הַבַּיִת וְעֵתָה אֶל-תִּקְחוּ-כֶסֶף מֵאֵת מִכְרֵיכֶם כִּי-לִבְדֶּק הַבַּיִת תִּתְּנֶנּוּ: <sup>9</sup> וַיֹּאמְרוּ הַכֹּהֲנִים לְבִלְתִּי קַחַת-כֶּסֶף מֵאֵת הָעָם וּלְבִלְתִּי חֲזֹק אֶת-בֵּדֶק הַבַּיִת:

<sup>10</sup> וַיִּקַּח יְהוֹיָדָע הַכֹּהֵן אֲרוֹן אֶחָד וַיִּקֵּב חֹר בְּדִלְתּוֹ וַיִּתֵּן אֹתוֹ אֶצֶל הַמִּזְבֵּחַ בַּיָּמִין מִיָּמִין בַּבּוֹא-אִישׁ בֵּית יְהוָה וַנִּתְּנוּ-שָׁמָּה הַכֹּהֲנִים שְׁמֵרֵי הַסֵּף אֶת-כָּל-הַכֶּסֶף הַמּוֹבָא בֵּית-יְהוָה: <sup>11</sup> וַיְהִי כִּרְאוֹתָם כִּי-רַב הַכֶּסֶף בְּאֲרוֹן וַיַּעַל סֹפֵר הַמֶּלֶךְ וְהַכֹּהֵן הַגָּדוֹל וַיִּצְרוּ וַיִּמְנוּ אֶת-הַכֶּסֶף הַנִּמְצָא בֵּית-יְהוָה: <sup>12</sup> וַנִּתְּנוּ אֶת-הַכֶּסֶף הַמֵּתָכֵן עַל-יַד יְדֵי עֹשֵׂי הַמְּלָאכָה הַפְּקָדִים הַמִּפְקָדִים בֵּית יְהוָה וַיּוֹצִיאוּהוּ לַחֲרָשֵׁי הָעֵץ וְלַבְּנִים הָעֹשִׂים בֵּית יְהוָה: <sup>13</sup> וְלַגָּדְרִים וְלַחֲצֵבֵי הָאֶבֶן וְלַקְנוֹת עֲצִים וְאֲבָנֵי מַחְצֵב לְחֲזֹק אֶת-בֵּדֶק בֵּית-יְהוָה וּלְכָל אֲשֶׁר-יֵצֵא עַל-הַבַּיִת לְחֻזְקָה: <sup>14</sup> אֲףִי לֹא יַעֲשֶׂה בֵּית יְהוָה סָפוֹת כֶּסֶף מְזֻמָּרוֹת מְזֻרְקוֹת חֲצִצְרוֹת כָּל-כְּלֵי זָהָב וְכָל-כֶּסֶף מִן-הַכֶּסֶף הַמּוֹבָא בֵּית-יְהוָה: <sup>15</sup> כִּי-לְעֹשֵׂי הַמְּלָאכָה יִתְּנֶנּוּ וַיִּחְזְקוּ-בּוֹ

**2 Kings 12:10. a chest** A cash box, located near the temple gates in ancient Mesopotamia, was a standard feature of temple organization during the first millennium B.C.E.

seers of the work for the repair of the House of the LORD. <sup>16</sup>No check was kept on the men to whom the money was delivered to pay the workers; for they dealt honestly.

<sup>17</sup>Money brought as a guilt offering or as a purification offering was not deposited in the House of the LORD; it went to the priests.

אֶת־בֵּית יְהוָה: <sup>16</sup>וְלֹא יִחְשְׁבוּ אֶת־  
הָאֲנָשִׁים אֲשֶׁר יִתְּנוּ אֶת־הַפֶּסֶף עַל־יָדָם  
לָתֵת לַעֲשֵׂי הַמְּלָאכָה כִּי בְּאֵמֶנָה הֵם  
עֹשִׂים:

<sup>17</sup>כֶּסֶף אָשָׁם וְכֶסֶף חַטָּאוֹת לֹא יוֹבֵא בֵּית  
יְהוָה לַכֹּהֲנִים יְהִי: פ