

# THE HEBREW KEY

## #19 – The Half Shekel

1 Shekel = 20 Gerahs  
½ Shekel = 10 Gerahs = 1 Beka

### Exodus 30:11-16

Adonai said to Moses, “When you take the census of the people of Israel, then each shall give an atonement for his soul to Adonai when you number them, that there be no plague among them when you number them. Each one who is numbered in the census shall give this: **half a shekel** according to the shekel of the sanctuary (**the shekel is twenty gerahs**), **half a shekel** as an offering to Adonai. Everyone who is numbered in the census, from twenty years old and upward, shall give Adonai’s offering. The rich shall not give more, and the poor shall not give less, than the **half shekel**, when you give Adonai’s offering to make atonement for your souls. You shall take the atonement money from the people of Israel and shall give it for the service of the tent of meeting, that it may bring the people of Israel to remembrance before Adonai, so as to make atonement for your souls.”

“soul” = נפש = 430 = שקל = “shekel”

### Matthew 17:24-27

When they came to Capernaum, the collectors of the half-shekel tax went up to Peter and said, “Does your teacher not pay the tax?” He said, “Yes.” And when he came into the house, Yeshua spoke to him first, saying, “What do you think, Simon? From whom do kings of the earth take toll or tax? From their sons or from others?” And when he said, “From others,” Yeshua said to him, “Then the sons are free. However, not to give offense to them, go to the sea and cast a hook and take the first fish that comes up, and when you open its mouth you will find a shekel. Take that and give it to them for Me and for yourself.”

### Exodus 30:11

Adonai said to Moses, “When you take the census of the people of Israel, then each shall give an atonement for **his soul** to Adonai when you number them...”

נפשו  
(*naphsho*)

נ (*nun*) = “fish”

פ (*peh*) = “mouth”

ש (*shin*) = 1<sup>st</sup> letter of “shekel” (שקל)

ו (*vav*) = “hook”

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## REFERENCES:

**Genesis 24:22** When the camels had finished drinking, the man took a gold ring weighing a *beka*, and two bracelets for her arms weighing ten gold shekels.

**Exodus 38:26** A *beka* a head (that is, half a shekel, by the shekel of the sanctuary), for everyone who was listed in the records, from twenty years old and upward, for 603,550 men.

**Genesis 3:24** He drove out the man, and at the east of the garden of Eden he placed the cherubim and a flaming sword that turned every way to guard the way to the Tree of Life.