

Introduction to Tractate *Šeqalim*

The Tractate explains the collection of the Temple tax (based in *Ex.* 30:11-16; Chapters 1-2), the financial controls instituted for the disbursement of the money for the running of the Temple service (Chapters 3-4), the list of the few permanent (salaried) positions in the Temple (Chapter 5), the collection of contributions for dedicated sacrifices, arrears of the Temple tax, and other dedications (Chapter 6), the rights of the Temple to money or animals found on the Temple Mount and in Jerusalem (Chapter 7), and general rules of behavior on the Temple Mount (Chapter 6) and in matters of purity (Chapter 8). The Tractate ends with a list of biblical monetary obligations, separating those bound to the existence of a Temple from those which are independent of it. The accounting is complicated by the tradition that for current expenses only the tax contributed for the year may be used; leftovers and arrears may be used for any needs of the Temple except for the prescribed sacrifices during the year.

The Tractate also exists in a Babylonian version. It is clear from that version that the Tractate was studied in the Babylonian Academies. In addition to a change of technical vocabulary from Yerushalmi to Babli terminology, there occasionally are major deviations in the text. The Babli text (B) used in the versions is that of the Venice edition of 1521; it is not found in the modern Babli editions. The readings of the very much shortened Munich ms. of the Babli (M) are given mainly if they indicate a reading different from that of B. The text of the scribe of the Leiden ms. of the Yerushalmi (S) is largely confirmed by extensive Genizah texts, edited by L. Ginzberg. At places where B deviates from S, both texts are given in full. In most instances the changes introduced in the Yerushalmi by the corrector of Venice *editio princeps* are unfounded conflations with the Babli text.

Against his declared intention and his practice for other Yerushalmi tractates, Ginzberg did not give the readings of the *editio princeps* differing from those of the Genizah fragments. He explains in the introduction to his

volume (p. v): “On the bottom of the page I note the differences compared to the *editio princeps*, Venice about 1522, except for Tractate *Šeqalim* since this Tractate is printed also in the editions of the Babli, and the differences are numerous, and I did not wish to bewilder the reader’s eye.” This probably means that he would have been forced to compare not single words but entire passages.