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## CHAPTER III.

MISHNA: (a) At three periods of the year money is drawn from the treasury (of the Shekalim); viz.: Half a month before Passover, half a month before Pentecost, and half a month before the Feast of Booths. The same dates are also the terms for the obligation of cattle-tithing, so says R. Aqiba. Ben Azai says: "The dates for the latter terms are the twenty-ninth of Adar, the first of Sivan, and the twenty-ninth of Abh." R. Eliezer and R. Simeon both say: "The first of Nissan, the first of Sivan, and the twenty-ninth of Elul." But why do they say the twenty-ninth of Elul why not the first of Tishri? Because that is a feast-day, and it is not allowed to tithe on a feast-day; therefore they ordained it for the preceding day, the twenty-ninth of Elul. [a1](#)

(b) The money drawn from the treasury was brought in three chests, each of three Saahs' capacity. On these chests was written: Aleph, Beth, Gimmel. R. Ishmael says: "They were marked in Greek: Alpha, Beta, Gamma."--The one that drew the money was not allowed to enter (the treasury) with a turned-up garment, nor with shoes nor sandals, nor with Tephillin, nor with an amulet, in order that, in the event of his becoming impoverished, it should not be said that he was thus punished on account of transgression against the treasury; or if he became rich, that he enriched himself by means of money drawn from the treasury. For a man must stand as unblemished before his fellowman as before his God, as it is written [Numbers xxxii. 22]:

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[paragraph continues] "And ye be thus guiltless before the Lord and before Israel"; and [Proverbs iii. 4]: "So shalt thou find grace and good favor in the eyes of God and man." [b1](#)

(c) The members of the family of R. Gamaliel used to enter, each one with his shekel between his fingers, and throw it before the one who drew the money from the treasury, and the latter immediately placed it into the chest (which he took out).--The one who came in to draw the money did not proceed before he had said to the bystanders: "I will now proceed to draw," and they had answered: "Draw, draw, draw," three times. [c1](#)

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(d) After the man had completed the first drawing, he covered the balance with a cover (of fur); the same was done after the second drawing; after the third drawing the balance remained uncovered; for (the covering in the first two instances) was done only in order not to draw by mistake again what had already been drawn from. The first drawing was performed in the name of the whole land of Israel, the second in the name of the cities near the boundaries, and the third in the name of the inhabitants of Babylon, Media, and all distant lands in general.

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## Footnotes

[12:a1](#)

### CHAPTER III.

MISHNA *a*. The dates of the time for cattle-tithing have nothing to do with the time for drawing the money; for as to that time, all agree upon the dates stated in the Mishna, and the difference of opinion concerning the time of cattle-tithing is explained in the Palestinian Talmud and in Tract Rosh Hashana of the Babylonian Talmud.

[13:b1](#) MISHNA *b*. In this Mishna the manner of drawing the money from the treasury is described: how it was accomplished, that the Shekalim for which communal sacrifices were bought should be taken from the treasury in such a manner that all the contributors should have a share in them. The mode of procedure was as follows: About the middle of the month of Nissan, when the money from all Israel had been collected, the treasurers, amid great ceremony, would open the rooms where the boxes in which the money had been deposited by the collectors were situated, and bring out all the boxes contained in the rooms. These boxes were in turn opened, and their contents thrown into three cases, each of which had nine Saahs' capacity, and were covered with a cover. The remainder, after filling the three cases, was called the remainder of the room (and what was done with this will be told later). After the performance of this ceremony one man was selected, while the others withdrew, and he was to transfer the money to be expended, from the cases into three small chests, each having three Saahs' capacity and marked with three letters: Aleph, Beth, Gimmel; or, Alpha, Beta, Gamma.

[13:c1](#) MISHNA *c*. After this ceremony, the man, being almost nude--for he had no garments on in which he could conceal a coin, no shoes, no sandals, no hat, no hose; in fact, nothing that would afford a hiding-place for money--would take the chest marked Aleph and bring it up to the first case, and fill it up, after which he would cover the case. Then he would take the chest marked Beth, fill it from the second case, cover the case, and proceed in the same manner with the chest marked Gimmel, from the third box, which contained nine Saahs' capacity; but in the last instance he would leave the case uncovered, as a sign whence to commence filling the chests at the second drawing of money in the same order as before, using the third case first, then the second, and lastly the first. This was done in order that the money should be thoroughly intermingled [p. 14](#) and everybody have a share in the sacrifices bought with it. The first drawing took place on the fifteenth of Nissan, and sacrifices were purchased for the Passover. The next drawing was held fifteen days before Pentecost; and Pentecost only lasting one day, not so many sacrifices were needed, and the money lasted until fifteen days before the Feast of Booths, when the last lot of money was withdrawn from the cases and placed in the chests. The expenditure of the money was also made in the order of chests, chest Aleph being emptied first, etc.; and the intention was to place Jerusalem first, the surrounding territory next, and all the other places where Israelites dwelt last.

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