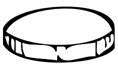
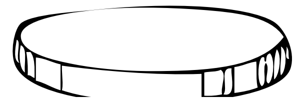
Old Testament Coinage

Before the invention of coinage, precious metals were used as part of a barter system. Money became popular during the seventh century B.C., but it never completely replaced the old system. From early times, gold, silver, and copper had been popular exchange items. Gradually, a system of standardization developed.

The metals were weighed out and quality checked. Some of the names of metal weights became the names of coins, which at first were roughly circular and impressed with a seal. Their weight seldom exceeded that of the silver or gold shekel.

Silver coins

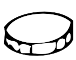
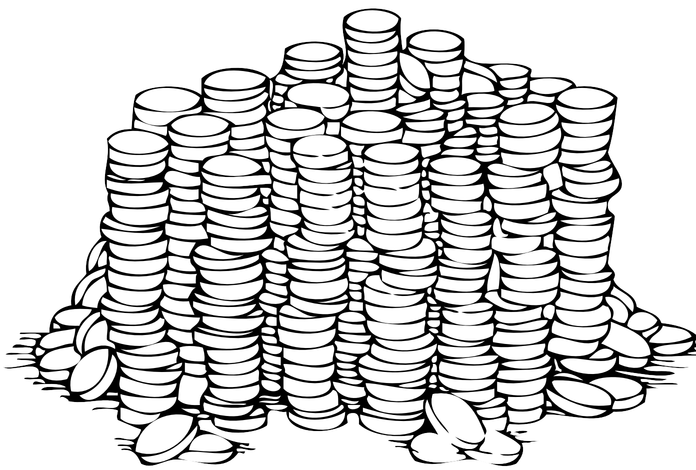
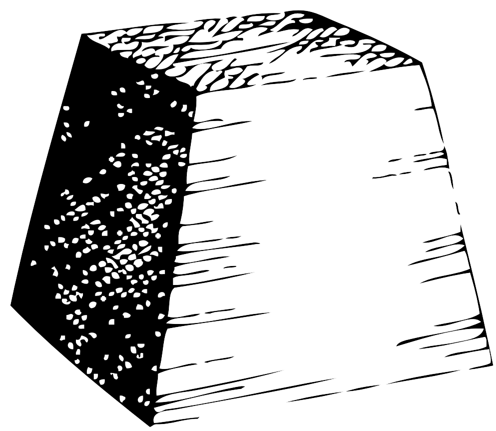




Gerah

20 gerahs = 1 shekel

1 shekel

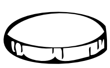
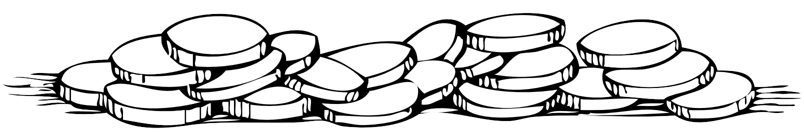
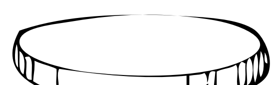




Shekel

3,000 shekels = 1 talent

1 talent

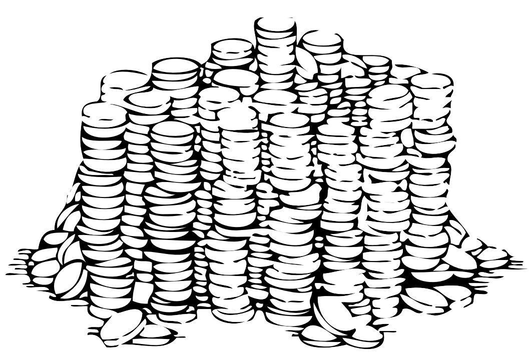
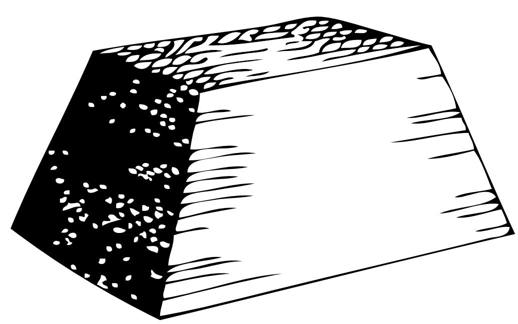
Gold coins

Gerah

20 gerahs = 1 shekel

1 shekel

Shekel

3,000 shekels = 1 talent*

1 talent*

*A talent of gold was just over one-half the size of a talent of silver, but a talent of gold had the same weight as a talent of silver.