

# A Taste of Text: Source based learning for Shabbat

*This weekly sheet is brought to you by Rabbi Dr. Moshe Freedman of the New West End United Synagogue in conjunction with Shapell's/Darché Noam*

## PARSHAT VAYAKHEIL/SHEKALIM

### DVAR TORAH: REST FROM SPEECH

Instead of opening the Shabbat section of our Parshah with 'Six days do work,' the Torah says, "Six days work is done – תַּעֲשֶׂה מְלָאכָה," using a passive form of the root עשה. In contrast, the Ten Commandments use active words: "Six days you should labor – תַּעֲבֹד – and do all of your work – מְלָאכְתָּךְ כֹּל וְעָשִׂיתָ כָּל מְלָאכְתָּךְ." Why does the Torah here speak of 'work being done' instead of 'doing work'?

Harav Chaim Ibn Atar, זצ"ל (1696-1743, Morocco, Israel) answers (Or Hachaim on Shemot 35:2) that the Torah here refers to getting work done through others. The formulation of this verse supports the opinion quoted in the Mechilta (Bo Parshah 9) that there is a biblical level prohibition against telling non-Jews to do work on our behalf on Shabbat. Six days work can be done through a non-Jew, but on Shabbat it is forbidden.

In his essays on the Chumash, Harav Shalom Shwadron, זצ"ל the Brezhaner Rov (1835-1911, Galicia) puts this comment of the Or Hachaim into a broader context. One of the reasons given by the Torah for keeping Shabbat is, "For six days G-d made the heavens, the earth, the sea, and everything within them. On the seventh day He rested and was renewed" (Shemot 20:11). G-d rested, so we rest. By resting on Shabbat we strive to emulate and imitate G-d.

How did G-d create the world? He spoke. "וַיֹּאמֶר אֱלֹהִים יְהִי אוֹר, וַיְהִי אוֹר" – "G-d said, 'Let there be light, and there was light'" (Bereishit 1:3). "בְּדִבְרֵי ה' שָׁמַיִם נִעְשׂוּ" – "Through the word of G-d the Heavens were made" (Tehillim 33:6). "כִּי הוּא אָמַר וַיְהִי" – "For he spoke and it came into being" (Tehillim 33:9). How did G-d rest on Shabbat, He refrained from creating through speech.

It follows that the most G-d-like way of refraining from work on Shabbat is to refrain from work-related speech. The (rabbinic level) Shabbat speech laws now take on new significance: through not asking a non-Jew to do work for us and not speaking about business matters we imitate G-d refraining from creating the world through speech.

"א"ר אבהו 'שבת לה' – שבות כה'. מה הקב"ה שבת ממאמר. אף את שבות ממאמר" Rabbi Avahu, in the Talmud Yerushalmi (Shabbat 15:3), understands that when G-d, in the Torah, calls Shabbat a "Shabbat to G-d" (Shemot 20:10), He teaches us to rest the way He does. Just as G-d rests from speech, so do we. This is also what G-d means when He says, "Keep My Shabbatot" (Shemot 31:13); we should rest as G-d does, through speech. Some of our sources take it a step further – not only should we refrain from speaking about work on Shabbat, but we should make sure our speech on Shabbat is fundamentally different than on weekdays. Rabbeinu Tam (Tosafot on Shabbat 113a) says that we should actually speak less about mundane matters on Shabbat than we do on the weekdays.

There is a corollary: If refraining from speech on Shabbat is G-d-like, so is positive creative speech during the other six days of the week.

## SOURCE GUIDE: BETZALEL & AHALIAV, YEHUDAH & DAN

Betzalel, of the tribe of Yehudah, leads the building of the Mishkan, but Hashem asks him to partner with Ahaliav, from the tribe of Dan. This partnership is surprising, in light of what we know about the tribe of Dan's connection with idolatry, both in the generation of the desert and in subsequent generations. Harav Shlomo Fisher, שליט"א, in Drashot Beit Yishai (Purim, Drashah 3), describes the special relationship between Yehudah and Dan, as well as the special role the tribe of Dan played.

The drashah opens with the Vilna Gaon's comment, that the text of Al Hanisim should have exactly 54 words, corresponding to the number of times Haman appears in Megillat Esther and the total number of letters in the names of Haman's sons. 54 is also the numerical value of Dan:  $50=ד, 4=ד$ .

### A. Yehudah and Dan: 4 Partnerships

Betzalel, from the tribe of Yehudah, worked with Ahaliav from the tribe of Dan:

<p><b>1. Shemot 31:2, 6</b>                  (2) See, I have called by the name of Betzalel son of Uri, son of Chur, of the tribe of Yehudah ... (6) Behold, I have given with him Ahaliav son of Achisamach, of the tribe of Dan ...</p>	<p><b>שמות לא:ב, ו</b>                  (ב) רָאָה קָרָאתִי בְשֵׁם בְּצַלְאֵל בֶּן אֹרִי בֶן חוּר לְמַטֵּה דָן... (ו) וְאֲנִי הִנֵּה נֹתְתִי אֹתוֹ אֶת אֶהֱלִיאֵב בֶּן אַחִיסָמָךְ לְמַטֵּה דָן ...</p>
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King Shlomo, from Yehudah, also had a partner from Dan. Here is the message sent by the king of Tzor:

<p><b>2. Divrei Hayamim II 2:13</b>                  [The craftsman from Tzor (Tyre) that would be sent to assist King Shlomo with the building of the Beit Hamikdash] is the son of a woman (Rashi – She was a widow) of the daughters of Dan (Rashi – from the tribe of Dan) and his father is a man from Tzor (Rashi – He was a Jew living in Tzor). He knows how to work with gold, silver, copper, iron, stones, wood, [fabric dyed with] indigo, techelet, linen, and crimson, and how to make all sorts of engravings. He can do all sorts of craftsmanship, whatever he will be assigned by your wise men and the wise men of my master David your father.</p>	<p><b>דברי הימים ב' ב:יג</b>                  בֶּן אִשָּׁה (רש"י – אלמנה היתה) מִן בְּנוֹת דָן (רש"י – משבט דן) וְאָבִיו אִישׁ צֹרִי (רש"י – יהודי היה יושב בצור) יוֹדֵעַ לַעֲשׂוֹת בְּזָהָב וּבַכֶּסֶף בְּנֹחֶשֶׁת בְּכַרְזֵל בְּאֲבָנִים וּבְעֵצִים בְּאֲרָגָן בְּתַכְלֵת וּבַבּוּזָן וּבַכַּרְמִיל וּלְפָתֵחַ כָּל פְּתוּחַ וְלִחְשָׁב כָּל מַחְשָׁבֶת אֲשֶׁר יִנְתֵּן לוֹ עִם חֲכָמָיִךְ וְסַכְמֵי אֲדָנֶי דָּוִד אָבִיךָ.</p>
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Dan's son Chushim partnered with Yehudah to bring about Esav's downfall:

<p><b>3. Tosafot Gitin 55b</b>                  In the Yerushalmi: At first, [the Romans] made decrees against Yehudah because they had a tradition from their ancestors that Yehudah killed Esav, as it says (in Yaakov's parting words to Yehudah), "Your hand is on the neck of your enemies" (Bereishit 49:8). We also learn in the Sifrei: "His hands fought for him" (Devarim 33:7, alternate translation: were sufficient for him) refers to when he killed Esav. That which we learn in the end of the first chapter of Sotah (13a): Chushim son of Dan took a stick and hit Esav on the head, his eyes disconnected and fell on Yaakov's legs – perhaps [Esav] didn't die through that hit until Yehudah came and killed him.</p>	<p><b>תוספות גיטין נה:</b>                  ... בירושלמי: בראשונה גזרו גזרה על יהודה לפי שמסורת בידם מאבותם שיהודה הרג עשו דכתיב "ידך בעורף אויביך" (בראשית מט:ח). ותניא נמי בספרי: "ידיו רב לו" (דברים לג:ז) בשעה שהרג את עשו. ובסוף פרק קמא דסוטה (דף יג.) דאמר: חושים בן דן שקל קולפא ומחייא ארישיה דעשו ונתרו עיניה ונפלו אכרעיה דיעקב – שמא לא מת באותה הכאה עד שעמד עליו יהודה והרגו.</p>
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One more astounding partnership:

<p><b>4. Yalkut Shimoni Bereishit – Chapter 49 – Section 160</b>                  "Yehudah is a lion cub" (Bereishit 49:9) – This refers to the Mashiach descended from David, who came from two tribes. His father was from Yehudah and his mother from Dan. Both tribes are referred to as lion cubs, for it says, "Yehudah is a lion cub" (Bereishit 49:9), and Dan is called "a lion cub" (Devarim 33:22).</p>	<p><b>ילקוט שמעוני בראשית - פרק מט - רמז קס</b>                  "גור אריה יהודה" (בראשית מט:ט) – זה משיח בן דוד שיצא משני שבטים. אביו מיהודה ואמו מדן. ושניהם נקראו אריה שנאמר, "גור אריה יהודה" (בראשית מט:ט), ודן נקרא "גור אריה" (דברים לג:כב).</p>
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## B. Dan & Idolatry

These Yehudah-Dan partnerships on lofty projects are surprising, given what we know about Dan. Here is one of a group of sources about how rampant idolatry was in the Tribe of Dan:

<p><b>5. Midrash Tanchuma Ki Tetzei Chapter 10</b> [Amalek attacked] "All the weak ones who were straggling after you" (Devarim 25:18) ... The Rabbis say that this refers to the tribe of Dan who were spit out by the Cloud (protecting the Jews in the desert), for they were all idolaters.</p>	<p><b>מדרש תנחומא כי תצא פרק י</b> "כל הנחשלים אחריו" (דברים כה:יח) ... ורבנן אמרי שבט דן שפלטו הענן היו כולם עובדי עבודת גלולים.</p>
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Rav Fisher collects a number of similar passages: the Targum on Shemot 17:8; a comment by the Baal Haturim at the end of Parshat Ki Tetzei; a quote from the writings of the Arizal; the Targum on Bamidbar 22:41 and 11:1; Rashi on Sanhedrin 103b; and Rashi on Yechezkel 16:15 all speak of Dan's idolatry.

## C. Dan: "The Gatherer of All of the Camps"

How do we explain this dichotomy? How is Dan both the partner of Yehudah in great enterprises yet full of idolaters at the fringes of the camp? The answer lies in a passage in the writings of Rav Nachman of Breslov, זצ"ל, summarized by Rav Fisher. The tribe of Dan is referred to as "מאסף לכל המחנות" – "The one who gathers in all of the camps" (Bamidbar 10:25). Rashi makes a comment that sounds offbeat:

<p><b>6. Rashi on Bamidbar 10:25</b> "The gathering of all of the camps" – The Talmud Yerushalmi says that because the tribe of Dan had a large population they traveled last, and if anyone lost anything, the people of Dan would return it to them.</p>	<p><b>רש"י על במדבר י:כה</b> מאסף לכל המחנות - תלמוד ירושלמי לפי שהיה שבטו של דן מרובה באוכלוסין היה נוסע באחרונה וכל מי שהיה מאבד דבר היה מחזירו לו.</p>
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What were these "lost objects" Dan collected and returned? Rav Nachman says these were the lost souls that others had given up on (see Yirmiyahu 50:6, where Israel is referred to as "lost sheep"), and Dan found and returned. They are also the subject of a passage in Yechezkel:

<p><b>7. Yechezkel 34:2-6</b> (2) 'Oh shepherds of Israel ... (4) You have not healed the sick; you have not bandaged the broken; and you have not searched for the lost one ... (5) They have scattered without a shepherd and are become food for the animals of the field ... (6) My sheep stray on all the mountains and on every high hill and My sheep have scattered over the entire face of the world and no one seeks them out and no one looks for them.</p>	<p><b>יחזקאל לד:ב-ו</b> (ב) הוי רעי ישראל ... (ד) ואת החולה לא רפאתם ולנשברת לא חבשתם ואת הנדחת לא השבתם ואת האבדת לא בקשתם ... (ה) ותפוצינה מבלי רעה ותהינה לאכלה לכל חית השדה ... (ו) ישגו צאני בכל הקרים ועל כל גבעה רמה ועל כל פני הארץ נפצו צאני ואין דורש ואין מבקש.</p>
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The tribe of Dan took out these lost souls and tried to reconnect them with their Creator, Hashem, the G-d of Israel. But intense contact with such people at the fringes took its toll on Dan, and they ended up having many idolaters themselves (Rav Fisher quotes Harav Tzadok Hakohen Rabinowitz, זצ"ל, of Lublin (1823-1900), in his Tzidkat Hatzaddik – that those who try to bring merit to sinners don't escape being affected; but those who instead ignore them are considered as if they sinned themselves). Dan and Yehudah were both warriors against evil – but Yehudah were normal soldiers at the forefront of the battle, whereas the men of Dan were guerilla warriors, ambushing evil at the fringes of the camp. They did difficult and dangerous, often thankless, work, trying to return lost souls to their Maker.

The building of the Mishkan requires both Yehudah and Dan, and there Yehudah took the lead. But the tribe of Dan took the lead in defeating Amalek, and Yehudah finished it off. Amalek tried to penetrate Israel through attacking those lost souls on the fringes, and Dan is Amalek's nemesis. That is why, as the Vilna Gaon says, the numerical value of Dan corresponds to the 54 times Haman is mentioned in the Megillah.

## FIERY COIN BY RABBI GIDON SHOSHAN

Each year, as we approach the holidays of Purim and Pesach, we celebrate four special Shabboses that accentuate the themes of this holiday season. This week, the week of Parshas Shekalim, marks the first of these four. We will read the Torah's commandment to enact a census not by conventional headcount, but by each man donating one half-shekel coin to the Temple fund and calculating the population based on the total amount.

In this special reading, the Torah indicates that the act of giving this small donation atones for the soul of its donor. The Or Hachaim explains that the giving of this coin, specifically the half-shekel, atoned for the sin of the Golden Calf. The sin of the Golden Calf created a deep fissure between the Jewish People and G-d, and the half shekel served as an expression of reconnecting. Rather than each person giving a full shekel, we each are instructed to give a half – a half that is only completed by another Jew. Thereby we express our need for dependence on our relationship with other Jews and with G-d.

The Midrash tells us that when G-d commanded Moshe regarding the half shekel, G-d showed Moshe a vision of a fiery coin, an example of the half-shekel to which he was referring. The great Chasidic master, Harav Elimelech of Lizhensk, זצ"ל, asked: Why did G-d show Moshe a coin made of fire?

Rav Elimelech's answer is an essential insight we must carry with us each day. He said that G-d was reminding the world that money is just like fire – essential, but with potential for both building and destroying. We depend on fire for everything, for cooked food, for warmth in winter, for every appliance of metal, plastic, or earthenware. Without fire, we would hardly be able to survive. But fire is also the world's most dangerous force. Without supervision, fire can destroy and kill – the speed of its spreading almost impossible to contain. Money, said Reb Elimelech, is just the same. Without money, we would have nothing. It is essential and can accomplish so much good. But, the havoc that it can wreak, the ways in which it can be used to destroy, are fierce and can be deadly.

As we well know, this can be true within communities and even more so within marriages and family relationships. An individual, family, or community blessed with affluence is blessed with influence. The enormous responsibility that comes with these blessings dare not be misused to control others or manipulate those whom we love most.

May it be G-d's will that we each enjoy the blessings of His bounty, and be as kind and giving to others as G-d is to us!

We mourn the tragic death of Major Eliav Gelman, ה"י, killed during a terrorist attack last week.  
We continue to pray for a **רפואה שלימה**, a complete healing, for all those wounded in the attacks against our People.

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*This publication is compiled by the staff and Rabbonim at **Shapells/Yeshivat Darché Noam** for men and **Midreshet Rachel v'Chaya Seminary** for women in Jerusalem. Find out more about the **married couples' programme** and the **Pathways Israel** and **Pathways Plus** programmes offered at [www.darchenoam.org](http://www.darchenoam.org) +972-2-651-1178, 5 Beit Hakerem Street, Jerusalem.*

To dedicate a Taste of Text, please email Rabbi Freedman at  
[rabbi.dr.moshefreedman@gmail.com](mailto:rabbi.dr.moshefreedman@gmail.com)

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