

Dan- Serpent & Salvation

Parsha Vayechi

לע"נ א"מ חנה בת אברהם דוד הכ"מ

Breishet - ch. 49

Zebulun ¹³ "Zebulun shall settle by seashores. He shall be at the ship's harbor, and his last border will reach Zidon.

Issachar ¹⁴ "Issachar is a strong-boned donkey; he rests between the boundaries. ¹⁵ He saw tranquility that it was good, and the land that it was pleasant, yet he bent his shoulder to bear and he became an indentured laborer.

* Dan ¹⁶ "Dan will avenge his people, the tribes of Israel will be united as one. ¹⁷ Dan will be a serpent on the highway, a viper by the path, that bites a horse's heels so its rider falls backward. ¹⁸ For Your salvation do I long, O HASHEM!

¹⁹ "Gad will recruit a regiment and it will retreat on its heel.

2 Artscroll Ste Chumak - Pg 280

17. נחש על דרך — A serpent on the highway. Rashi and Ramban apply the words to Samson, whose single-handed battle tactics corresponded closely to Jacob's description. Like a serpent leaving its lair to attack travelers and then slithering back to its hiding place, Samson waged a personal, guerrilla-like war against the Philistines, catching them by surprise and going into hiding before they could counterattack.

3

וַיִּפֹּל רִכְבוֹ — So its rider falls. The allusion is to Samson's final victory, when — blind and in chains — he pulled down the pillars of the Philistine idol's temple and caused it to collapse, killing himself and three thousand Philistines. Like a snake biting a horse and indirectly killing its rider, Samson struck indirectly at his tormentors [Judges 16:29] (Rashi; Ramban).

4 Samson's Struggle - R. Weiss - pg 13-20

Every person is endowed with unique talents and abilities which enable him to fulfill God's will.^{1a} Fortunate is the individual who is aware of his unique traits and realizes how to use them in fulfillment of the Divine plan, for that person knows how to properly channel all his efforts.

On very rare occasions, an individual has such a special mission in life that he must be informed of it through Divine revelation. His mission may be revealed to him through a prophet or an angel, as related in a number of episodes in the Bible, or he may become aware of his mission through his own Divinely guided insight into the words of the Torah.

5 Shimshon combined both forms of awareness. Before he was born, an angel had revealed to his parents that he would have a special mission in life. In addition, careful analysis of the pertinent passages in the Torah led Shimshon to realize that he was the one who had been chosen to fulfill the prophecy of the Patriarch Jacob. As he was a member of the tribe of Dan, he realized that the entire destiny of his tribe, as revealed in Jacob's blessing, would be fulfilled through his deeds.

6 Jacob had twelve sons, the progenitors of the twelve tribes of Israel. Each of these tribes was assigned a unique mission in the Divine plan for the Jewish people. To a large degree, the roles are described in the blessings that Jacob gave to his sons before his death. Jacob outlined the role that each tribe would have in the development of Jewish history, and, ultimately, of world history—until all mankind achieved the desired perfection of the Messianic era. As Jacob pronounced each blessing, he foresaw the entire future of that tribe.

7 When Jacob blessed Dan, he saw the entire course of events that would transpire during Shimshon's career. He foresaw Shimshon's parents, the angel who heralded his birth, his killing of the lion, his marriages, and all the other details of Shimshon's life.¹ Only after this vision did he confer his blessing (Genesis 49:16-18):

8 Note the final expression, "For Your salvation I hope, O God!" Jacob expressed no such wish to any other tribe. Clearly, he foresaw that the mission associated with Dan—that of Shimshon—would be particularly hazardous, both physically and spiritually. It would require a special element of Divine assistance.²

9 Even with all this Divine help and guidance, how does a single individual proceed to wage war against an entire nation? What kind of strategy would he have to use?

The Patriarch Jacob had anticipated the problem when he prophesied, "Dan will be a snake on the road, a viper on the path." Three characteristics of a snake are significant here:

- A snake does not usually attack a person unless he feels threatened.
- A snake does not derive any pleasure from killing his victims; its poisonous fangs are only used as defensive weapons.
- A snake camouflages itself so as to blend in with its environment. In fact the Scriptural term *Shefifon* (viper) indicates a tiny, thin snake that can hardly be seen.

10 Shimshon's strategies for dealing with the Philistines resembled those of a snake in these three ways. First of all, he did not attack the Philistines until they oppressed his people. Secondly, he did not derive any pleasure from killing his enemies; he killed them only in defense of his people.

Most important, however, was the element of camouflage.⁷ Like the snake, Shimshon had to blend completely into his enemies' environment. The only way that a single, unaided individual could wage war against an entire nation would be by resorting to guerrilla warfare of a most unique kind.

11 Assuming that he was the one foreseen by Jacob, Shimshon also surmised that the Patriarch had also provided a clue as to how he could be successful in his campaign against an entire nation. Over and over he reviewed Jacob's words, extracting every shade of meaning from each nuance. He realized that he would have to be the "snake on the road," striking out from a camouflaged retreat, resorting to unique guerrilla tactics.

Shimshon realized that if he would openly battle against the Philistines, there would be no way in which he could emerge victorious. Even if he himself would not be vulnerable, the Philistines would be free to take revenge against the populace at large. For every Philistine that he killed, they would retaliate by executing a hundred Jews, very much as the Germans did during World War II. What would his victories avail if others would have to pay dearly for them?

12 Keeping this one concern in mind, we begin to understand many aspects of Shimshon's career.

In order to avoid retaliation, Shimshon had to camouflage his actions so perfectly that the Philistines would not even realize that their antagonist was fighting on behalf of the Jews. There was to be no indication whatsoever that Shimshon was taking up the cause of his compatriots. Quite the contrary—to the Philistines it would have to appear that he was a renegade and a traitor to his own people, so that they would think it futile to retaliate against other Jews.

15 Derash Moshe - R. Moshe Feinstein - pg 87
Rashi explains that Dan is represented by the judge Samson, who was the only one of the judges to emerge from the tribe of Dan. The Talmud explains the first verse to mean that Samson, who had descended from Dan, judged Israel justly just like the One, viz. Hashem. We compare Samson to Hashem so that we should not judge Samson irreverently because of the many incidents recorded about him, which appear to denigrate him. We must know that everything he did was for the sake of Heaven although we do not understand many of his deeds. This is very much like the deeds of Hashem Himself, many of which we do not understand, yet we have faith that His works are perfect.

16 One of the ways of studying the secrets of Torah is through gematriya—the numerical value of the letters. In gematriya, the Hebrew word for snake (שׂוֹן) has the numerical value of 358 which is equivalent to the numerical value of the word Messiah (מָשִׁיחַ).

17 Our Sages say: "It was known to God that Shimshon would follow his eyes. Therefore He made him a Nazirite so that he would not drink wine, for wine leads to promiscuity." (Bamidbar Rabbah 10:16)

Shimshon was born with a powerful urge to follow his eyes. One's eyes are the first bodily organs in the sequence that leads to sinning, for seeing leads to temptation, as our Sages teach: "The eye sees, the heart desires, and the limbs of action carry out [the sin]."

13 Only when we are aware of this basic strategy can we look beneath the surface; to begin to realize that the story of Shimshon is not an exciting adventure, but is the career of an out-

standing tzadik, who willingly sacrificed his private life in fulfillment of God's will.

Shimshon's strategy to masquerade as a renegade entailed many risks, both physical and spiritual. He would have to descend into a den of vipers and emerge unscathed. That was why when prophesying about Shimshon, the Patriarch Jacob exclaimed, "For Your salvation I hope, O God!"

The Midrash⁸ sees another shade of meaning in this verse:

14 The Patriarch Jacob saw [Shimshon] and thought that he would be Messiah. When he saw him die, he exclaimed, "Will even he die? For Your salvation I hope, O God!"

Perceiving every facet of Shimshon's life, Jacob automatically associated each action with those destined for the Messiah. Jacob saw the entire Messianic drama unfolding through the person of Shimshon and he assumed that this would result in the ultimate perfection of the world which the Messiah would bring about. Then, when the drama abruptly came to an end with Shimshon's death, Jacob realized that Shimshon had lost his chance of being the Messiah. Jacob immediately expressed his hope for God's salvation and the ultimate coming of the true Messiah. This is the real significance of the comparison of the careers of Shimshon and David—the former, the potential Messiah and the latter, the progenitor of the messianic line who was himself labeled Messiah. Shimshon's actions conformed to God's will so closely that Jacob himself assumed he was the promised Messiah. Shimshon's acts were not those of a plain avenger; they were acts worthy of none other than the Messiah himself!

18 In the Garden of Eden before the sin, Adam and Eve lived in a state of holiness in the absence of any evil inclination. If they had retained their state of purity and withstood the temptation to eat the forbidden fruit, the purpose of Creation would have been fulfilled. But Adam and Eve were vulnerable to influence from the outside. The external influence was represented by the snake. With skill and cunning, the snake convinced Eve that by eating the fruit of the "tree of knowledge of good from evil," man would acquire a greater field of choice between good and evil. Then, by choosing good over evil, he would be serving God on a higher plane. Eve accepted this argument and believed that by violating God's command and eating from the fruit of the forbidden tree she would actually be doing a mitzvah.

19 How could Eve have made such a mistake in judgment? Scripture provides the answer: "And the woman saw that the tree was good for food and that it was tempting to the eyes..." In the words of our Sages "The eyes are two scouts and purveyors of sin."¹

When Adam and Eve ate the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good from evil, they became susceptible to desires and temptation. Before the sin, all of Adam's and Eve's actions had been pure fulfillments of God's will. They were not ashamed of their bodies because they had no physical desires, only intellect and wisdom. The evil inclination was an outside force. But as soon as they ate the forbidden fruit, they became ashamed, because the evil inclination had become part of them. From then on, the influence of temptation and desire was a factor in all their decisions and actions.

The sin of Adam and Eve introduced temptation into a world of purity. Now that evil had become an intrinsic part of man, it would be very difficult for a person to discern whether any decision of his stemmed from his pure reason or from his evil inclination. Man's purpose now became the conquest of the evil inclination within him. If he could do that he would return to the state of Adam and Eve before the sin.

21 At the giving of the Torah, through the spiritual light of the Word of God, Jewry eradicated all evil inclination from within themselves and rose to the level of Adam before his sin. They reached the Messianic level of purity of vision when with our eyes of flesh we will be able to discern God's spiritual realm. Had they remained on that level, the purpose of Creation would have been accomplished. But in order to ensure free choice, a powerful negative spiritual force was unleashed to challenge their pure reason and holiness. Just when the complete subjugation of the evil inclination was imminent, that force mustered all its strength and swayed Jewry to commit the sin of the Golden Calf. The ideal of perfection was not attained. Free will had once more led to the choice of evil.

24 Shimshon would have the potential for sanctifying his eyes, those "scouts of sin." If Shimshon sanctified those eyes completely, he would thereby rectify the sin of Adam and Eve, which had brought temptation to the world, and he would usher in the Messianic era. But Shimshon would also have a strong urge to follow his eyes.

Where one feels weakness and temptation, therein lies his greatest strength. The evil inclination is strongest in the area of a person's greatest potential strength for two reasons. In order to ensure the balance of free will, the evil inclination has to be as strong as one's potential for good. The stronger the tendency to sin in one area, the greater is the potential for greatness. Secondly, the purpose of the struggle with evil is to bring out our hidden potential. By overcoming the challenge hurled at us, we bring out our hidden strengths and come closer to perfection.

25 Shimshon's challenge was to sanctify his eyes. For this purpose he was given a strong urge to follow his eyes, as well as the special protection of *nezirus* to assist him in the battle.

Shimshon was aware of Jacob's prophecy, and he dedicated his life to the eradication of his evil inclination by sanctifying his eyes. To a very large extent, he succeeded. He climbed to the level of *Ruach HaKodesh*, and the *Shechinah* was as manifest upon him as a chiming bell. He was able to perform miracles in full view of thousands of witnesses. Even when God left him, he was able to pray for great miracles in the merit of one of his sanctified eyes.

But Shimshon made the same mistake that David later made. He believed that having vanquished his base instincts, he was immune to temptation. He made decisions based solely on his pure eyes. But in reality he had not reached the level of our Patriarchs—of being able to withstand one's evil inclination without God's help. Thereafter the snake-like evil inclination continued to camouflage itself as a good impulse and delivered the final blow when Shimshon grew convinced that by yielding to Delilah, he was preserving household harmony.

Shimshon had failed in his mission. Since he himself was now ever so slightly tainted, he would not be able to elevate his people and the world to perfection; he could not usher in the long-awaited Messianic era. And when Jacob perceived this, he exclaimed, "For Your salvation I hope, O God!"

22 From then on it remained for a single individual—the Messianic King—to bring Jewry and ultimately all of mankind to spiritual perfection.

To accomplish this, the Messianic King must first conquer his own evil inclination. The *נחש* must eradicate the *נחש* within himself. He can only achieve this breakthrough with the assistance of God through the observance of His Torah. Then, like a brain sending out impulses to the whole body, he will influence Jewry through the invisible ties that our souls have to one another.

In order for the Messiah to bring spirituality to the entire world, he will be very close to God; he will be the conduit for God's influence over all mankind. Any spiritual taint in him will act as a barrier between himself and God, and will consequently clog the conduit of spirituality for the entire world.

23

When Jacob blessed his sons, who were the founders of the tribes of Israel, he foresaw that the period in which Shimshon would live would be one of the times most suitable for the coming of the Messiah, and that Shimshon would have the potential to be that Messiah.

26 רבין ב"ר אבהו - סו

ושפיתו [3]. ויתכן לפרש כי הוא תפלת שמשון * כי ראה יעקב אחרית השופט הזה האחרון. כי הוא הנושך והמפיל והרוכב אחור, והוא המתפלל: לישועתך קייתי ה', שכן התפלל: זכרני גא וחוקני גא אך הפעם הזה האלהים, ואע"פ שמת בכללם, הנה זאת חשועתו שיגמם מאיביו וימות עמהם, כי בזה היה חפץ, כמו שאמר: המות נפשי עם פלשתים *

27

Drash Mate

Then the Torah describes the greatness of Samson's faith in Hashem, that, although he was incredibly strong, he relied solely on the salvation of Hashem, and he did not become proud of his physical prowess or his political power. Therefore, when the men of Judah wished to deliver him into the hands of the Philistines, he implored them that they themselves should not harm him (*Shoftim* 15:12), for he did not wish to utilize his strength against his own people, knowing that the strength had been granted him by Hashem only to save Israel from the Philistines, but not to harm Israel.

Likewise, when he slew the thousand men with the jawbone of the donkey, he said, "You granted the salvation through Your servant (ibid. 18)."

Even after his strength had waned, he still trusted in Hashem that He would help him, as is evidenced by his final plea, "Give me strength now but this time" (*Shoftim* 16:28). He pleaded with Hashem to help him at this time, just as He had saved him in the past. When he was strong and mighty, he trusted only in Hashem and not in his own might. This is a lesson for all of us, to realize at all times, even when Hashem grants us strength and riches, that we are in His hands, and there is no difference to Hashem whether He has not yet given us strength and riches, or whether He has already given us strength and riches. If we deserve His bounty, it will be granted us; otherwise, it will be taken away.

28 We detect this principle in the wording of the *birkas Kohanim*, the priestly blessing: *יְבָרְכֶךָ ה' וישמרך*, May Hashem bless you and safeguard

you (*Bamidbar* 6:24). *Rashi* explains that Hashem will bless you with physical possessions, and He will guard you from robbery. Thus, although Hashem grants a person blessings and wealth, He also must bless him that that wealth will be preserved. Otherwise, the recipient will lose it. Consequently, one must always trust in Hashem. This we learn from Samson, who trusted in Hashem at all times.

What sort of blessing is it when a father calls his son a "snake"? The Zohar (ibid.) points out that Yaakov was referring to the symbolism of the primordial snake of Adam and Chava. Just as the snake instigated Adam and Chava to sin, so did Dan embrace idolatry in the days of Yeravam son of Nevat (Melachim I 12:19), when Yeravam set up an idol in Dan's territory.

The Gemara elaborates further (Sanhedrin 96*). Avraham Avinu's pursuit of Lot's captives ended in the territory of Dan:

וירדף עד דן
And pursued as far as Dan (Bereishis 14:14).

תשש כחו ראה בני בניו שעתידין להעבוד ע"י
There Avraham's strength waned, for he saw that at a future time his children would set up an idol there (Sanhedrin 96*).

Although that particular territory was not yet designated for Dan, Avraham, through Ruach Hakodesh, was spiritually weakened by that foreshadowing vision, and already felt the pervading "tumah" of the avodah zarah.

31 One of Klal Yisrael's earliest incursions against Hashem occurred in the midbar, when the son of Shelomis bas Divri, of Sheivet Dan, cursed Hashem:

ויקב בן האשה הישראלית את השם ויקלל
...And the son of the Israelite woman pronounced the Name, and cursed (Vayikra 24:11).

In the midbar the Clouds of Glory expelled Sheivet Dan from their protective custody, due to Dan's inclination to idolatry;

The first instance of public idol-worship in the early settlement of Eretz Yisrael occurred in the territory of Dan; it involved Micha and the grandson of Moshe Rabbeinu (Shoftim 18). "Pesel Micha" — "the idol of Micha" — seemed to be instrumental in helping Dan conquer his portion of Eretz Yisrael. Micha's priest, Yonasan, and his offspring, remained as the idol-priests in-residence up until the time Dan was exiled from Eretz Yisrael by Sancheriv. In fact, Yeravam ben Nevat peddled his proposed idolatrous temple to all the Shevatim, only to be rejected by all — except Sheivet Dan. Dan embraced the idolatrous concept (Bamidbar Rabbah 2:10).

32 What sort of blessing did Yaakov give Dan, comparing him to the snake of idolatry? One would think that Yaakov should have steered Dan in another direction. What then, is the actual meaning of "Dan shall be a snake in the way"?

It is known that Dan's fixed traveling position in the midbar was in the northern section of the camp:

דגל מחנה דן צפנה לצבאתם
The standard of the camp of Dan shall be on the north side by their armies (Bamidbar 2:25).

It is also known that Dan occupied the northern-most territory of Eretz Yisrael (Yehoshua 19:40, Bechoros 55*). There is a significant correlation between Dan's northern positions, his idolatry, and Yaakov's blessings

ויהי למס עובד. לתם למלכים עיבור תנואחיו, כדכתיב (ש"ה ח י טו) ואת שדומים עשך. והו עיקר הפשט. ובשורת עושר הוא לשבט יששכר: טו דן ידין עמו. המפרשו על שמשון לא ידע צעומה פשוטו של מקרא כלל. וכי יעקב צא להתנצלות על אדם אחד שנפל ביד פלשטים, וינקרו את עיניו ומת עם פלשטים צענין רע. חלילה חלילה. אך על שבטו של דן נחבא שהיה מאסף לכל המחנות, וגם ביהושע (ו ט) כתיב והמאסף הולך אחר הארון. ולפי שהיה הולך כל הימים בין צימי משה בין צימי יהושע אחר כל הדגלים, והיה צריך להלחם עם כל האומות הרודפים אחריהם לונז הנחשלים אחריהם בדרך, ולהנקם מן האומות, כי גבורים היו, לכך אמר יעקב דן ידן עמו, ינקום נקמת עמו כאחד כל שבטי ישראל היה נוקם נקמתם, ומשמרם מרודפיהם. כמו כי ידן ה' (את) עמו וגו' (דברים לג טו) דם עבדיו יקום ונקם ישיר לנרו (שם טז מג). וכמו ידן גבורים מלא גיוות ז יהי. שבטו של דן נחש עלי דרך, להרוג את האומות:

מתן ראש על ארך רצה (מהלים קי ו):

33 The Midrash relates (Pirkei D'Rebbe Eliezer 3) that the northern section of the world was created by Hashem in an imperfect state. "He created the northern side, but did not complete it. He said,

רוח פנס הצפון ברא ולא גמרו. אמר, שכל מי שיאמר שהוא אלוה, יבוא ויגמר את הפינה הזאת
Whoever considers himself a deity — come and complete it (also see Yalkut Iyov 913).

In fact, tzafon (north) is another name for the yeitzer hara (Sukkah 52*).

The purpose of creation is the exercise of man's bechirah (free-will). This can only be accomplished by including the possibility of man's "judgment error" in creation. By leaving the northern border of the universe unfinished, Hashem left room in man's mind for the worship of idolatry. The Maharal

(Chidushei Aggados, Bava Basra 25*) explains that it was impossible for the universe to have been created perfect; there had to be imperfection in creation. Hashem is perfect — but He wanted His creation to leave room for doubt in man's mind. Hence, the "northern side" is symbolic of Hashem's (seeming) competition — idol worship. The fact that Dan always occupied the "northern side" is consistent with his position as the proponent of idolatry in Klal Yisrael. For "from the North emanates darkness to the world" and Sheivet Dan heralds that darkness (Midrash Rabbah, Bamidbar 2:10; see Rabbeinu Bechaya, Shemos 32:4).

34 Yaakov understood that in order for the full Glory of Hashem to ultimately be revealed, in the Messianic era, the involvement of the Shivtei Kah was essential. The greatest Kiddush Hashem will come about when all humanity perceives Hashem as the One and only true Deity. It was thus imperative that one of the Shivtei Kah be involved with idolatry in Olom Hazeh, so that when the ultimate rejection of idolatry occurs Sheivet Dan will lead the way. For humanity's complete recognition of Hashem to occur, the children of Yaakov must be directly involved. At this time, the "northern side" of the universe will be completed in order to demonstrate the sovereignty of Hashem; at the same time the Sheivet which occupied the 'northern side' will teach humanity how to reject idolatry. Eisav, the arch-enemy of Klal Yisrael, the embodiment of Avodah zarah in Olom Hazeh, was killed by Chushim the son of Dan (Sotah 13*); this was to symbolize Dan's future as the initiator of the rejection of avodah zarah.

The supreme sacrifice, the acceptance of idol-worship, was made by Sheivet Dan. Yaakov recognized this in Dan's blessing, and wished him the strength to withstand this ordeal. The only Sheivet capable of withstanding this ordeal was Dan — for Dan had the strength derived from the Midas Hadin — the divine attribute of judgement, which is associated with strength.

37 Artscholl-Siddur - 295
For Your salvation do I long, HASHEM. The Kabbalists find in this three-

word prayer mystical combinations of letters spelling the Divine Name that provides salvation against enemies. In order to arrive at the combination of letters yielding this Name, the three words of this prayer must be recited in three different orders (R' Bachya).

38

Recite three times— Behold, the Guardian of Israel neither slumbers nor sleeps.*3

* Recite three times— For Your salvation do I long, HASHEM.*4 I do long, HASHEM, for your salvation. HASHEM, for Your salvation do I long.

42 והיינו שבמאה"כ אנכי ה' אלקיך אשר הוצאתיך מארץ מצרים, שהיא מצות האמנת השם כמש"כ הרמב"ם, נכלל גם הציווי לצפות לישועה, דכשם שאני רוצה שתאמינו בי שהוצאתי אתכם מאמ"צ כך רצוני שתאמינו בי שאני ה' אלקיכם ואני עתיד לקבץ אתכם ולהושיעכם. ויש להוסיף בזה ע"פ דברינו שבציווי האמונה יש ב' חלקים, אנכי ה', ואלקיך, אנכי ה' ענינו עצם האמנת השם, ועוד שהוא אלקיך, שהש"ת הוא האלקים שלך, כי אהבתי אתכם אמר ה', והן גאלתי אתכם אחרית כראשית להיות לכם לא', דהיינו שהוא ית' אלקים שלך, ולעולם לא יעזוב אותך לאיבוד, והוא יחלץ ויוציא אותך מכל המיצרים ומכל הגלויות, ושב וקבצך מכל העמים. וזהו המקור לציווי על צפית לישועה. ומבואר עפ"ו למה שאלת צפית לישועה היא מן התביעות הראשונות והעיקריות ליהודי ברינו, כיון שגם זה מיסודי האמונה, וכשם ששואלים אותו נשאת ונתת באמונה כך שואלים גם צפית לישועה, שזה בכלל ציווי האמונה.

43 * ולכן השאלה צפית לישועה היא מן השאלות המיוחדות הנתבעות מן האדם בתחילת דינו, שהצפיה לישועה היא סוד הגאולה. וזהו שאמר יעקב לישועתך קויתי ה', שגילה בזה שיש גאולה ע"י קיווי אפילו קודם הקץ, ואף אם לא יהיו ראויים להגאל, שע"י שמקוים ומצפים לישועה ממשיכים את הגאולה ואת שם הוי"ה. בענין זה שייך הן לגאולת הכלל והן לגאולת הפרט, הן לגאולה בגשמיות והן לגאולה ברוחניות, שהכל בקיווי. הצפיה לגאולה, האמונה והבטחון שיש ליהודי בהש"ת שמכחם הוא מאמין ומקוה, זה ממשיך את הגאולה.

ואפשר לפרש הפסוקים האלה בשבח דן שיהיה ראש דגל כאחד מן המיוחדים שבשבטי ישראל הן אמת שלא יגיע למדרגת יהודה כי הוא יהיה למדרגת הארי הן במדרגת הנחש הנושך עקבי סוס ולזה היה יהודה נוסע בראשונה הן באחרונה להגן על העם מן הניסות הבאים אחריהם לונב את הנחשלים ולכן המסילו לנחש עלי דרך ולשפוטון עלי אורח שהנחש מכניס זנבו באמצע גופו בדרך סן יזנבוהו עוברי דרכים ומגביה ראשו לראות אם יבא מי שזיקתו כן היה דן בהיותו מאסף לכל המחנות מגין על ישראל מגין מן האויבים שלא יזנבוהו וכנחש ישן עקבי סוס האויב באופן שיפול רוכבו אחור ולפי שהוא נוסע באחרונה ושאר השבטים בבא עליהם האויב לא יוכלו לעזור ולהצילו אפר במלחמותיו המיד לישועתך קויתי י"י כלומר איני מקוה לתשועת שבטי ישראל שישועוני כי כבר נסעו הם ראשונה ונשארתי אני לבדי באחרונה רק לישועתך קויתי י"י שתשיעני.

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40 איתא בחז"ל (שבת לא.) בשעה שמכניסים אדם לדין לאחר מיתה שואלים אותו, נשאת ונתת באמונה, קבעת עתים לתורה, צפית לישועה. ופירשו רבותה"ק ענין השאלה הראשונה נשאת ונתת באמונה, היינו האם עסקת בענין האמונה באותו אופן שאדם עוסק בעניני משא ומתן, שהוא שקוע בהם ראשו ורובו איך להגדיל ולהשיב את רכושו, כך צריך יהודי לעסוק בענין אמונה, להשקיע כל כחותיו ומחשבתו איך להגדיל ולחזק ולהרחיב את האמונה. ומבואר לפ"ז מדוע זו השאלה הראשונה ששואלים אותו, כי אמונה היא יסוד היסודות של יהודי. וכן מובן מה ששואלים אותו קבעת עתים לתורה, כי גם זה העיקר אצל יהודי. אך צ"ב מהו ענין השאלה המיוחדת ששואלים צפית לישועה, למה היא מן השאלות העיקריות.

41 וי"ל בזה ע"פ דברי הסמ"ק שמבאר דהמקור לחיוב של צפית לישועה הוא מכלל המצוה דהאמנת ה', וז"ל במצוה א': לידע שאותו שברא שמים וארץ הוא לבדו מושל מעלה ומטה ובד' רוחות כדכתיב אנכי ה' אלוקיך וכו', הקב"ה מנהיג את העולם והוא הוציאנו ממצרים ועשה לנו כל הנפלאות וכו', ובה תלוי מה שאמר חכמים ששואלין לאדם לאחר מיתה בשעת דינו צפית לישועה והיכן כתיב מצוה זו, אלא ש"מ בזה תלוי שכשם שיש לנו להאמין

שהוציאנו ממצרים דכתיב אנכי ה' אלקיך אשר הוצאתיך, ועל כרחין מאחר שהוא דיבור [וציווי]. הכי קאמר כשם שאני רוצה שתאמינו בי שאני הוצאתי אתכם כך אני רוצה שתאמינו בי שאני ה' אלוקיכם, ואני עתיד לקבץ אתכם ולהושיעכם וכן יושיענו ברחמינו שנית כדכתיב ושב וקבצך מכל העמים וגו'. ע"כ.

39

40 איתא במדרש (ב"ר צח"ג) עה"פ לישועתך קויתי ה', הכל בקיווי. יסורין בקיווי. קדושת השם בקיווי, זכות אבות בקיווי, תאוותו של עוה"ב בקיווי,

תנינה בקיווי, סליחה בקיווי וכו', ומביא פסוקים עכ"ו, ואף הגאולה העתידה תהיה בקיווי כדברי יעקב כאן לישועתך קויתי ה'. וכדמדרגם ביונתן, לפורקניה דמשיח בן דוד דהוא עתיד לפרוקיה ית בני ישראל ולאפקותהון מגלותא ולפורקנא סכיאת

נפשי. ופירשו המפרשים בכונת המדרש, דמי שיש לו אמונה ובטחון בהש"ת והוא מקוה ומצפה לישועת ה', הריהו משיג הכל בקיווי אע"פ שאינו הגון ואינו כדאי, שע"י קיווי ניצול מיסורין וזוכה לסליחה ותנינה וכו', וזה גם נבואת יעקב אבינו על הגאולה, דאף אם לא יהיו כדאים וראויים לגאולה, אם יקוו לגאולה ימשיכו ע"י הקיווי את הגאולה העתידה. וכדרך שאנו מתפללים, כי לישועתך קוינו כל היום ומצפים לישועה, הקיווי והצפיה לישועה זה סוד הגאולה, שאף אם לא יהיו ראויים לכך יגאלו בזכות הקיווי לישועתך קויתי ה'. וכדברי מדרש שוח"ט (תהלים מ) עה"כ קוה קויתי ה' ויש אלי וישמע שועתי, וזה שאמר הכתוב (ישעיה כה) ואמר ביום ההוא הנה אלקינו זה קוינו לו ויושיענו, אין ביד ישראל אלא שיקוו שיגאלם הקב"ה בשכר קוה קויתי ה' וכו', ואם עושים כן נושעים שנאמר (ישעיה מט) אשר לא יבושו קווי.