

## CAN YOU ANSWER THESE QUESTIONS?

1. Describe the path that the people of Israel took as they traveled through the Red Sea.
2. The Torah states that after the parting of the Red Sea the people of Israel finally, “believed in G-d and in Moshe His servant.” What unusual thing did they see at the Red Sea that they hadn’t seen during the miracles of the plagues?
3. What was the significance of the twelve wells and the seventy palm trees at Elim?
4. Why was Moshe commanded to hit the rock at Rephidim and not to speak to it?
5. What prompted Amalek to attack the people of Israel?

This and much more will be addressed in the eighth lecture of this series: **“Preparation for Revelation: From the Splitting of the Red Sea to the Battle of Amalek”**.

To derive maximum benefit from this lecture, keep these questions in mind as you listen to the lecture and read through the outline. Go back to these questions once again at the end of the lecture and see how well you answer them.

PLEASE NOTE: This outline and source book were designed as a powerful tool to help you appreciate and understand the basis of Jewish History. Although the lectures can be listened to without the use of the outline, we advise you to read the outline to enhance your comprehension. Use it, as well, as a handy reference guide and for quick review.

**This lecture is dedicated to the honor and merit of the Brin Family.**

THE EPIC OF THE ETERNAL PEOPLE  
Presented by Rabbi Shmuel Irons

Series XIV Lecture #8

PREPARATION FOR REVELATION: FROM THE SPLITTING OF THE RED SEA  
TO THE BATTLE AGAINST AMALEK

I. The Splitting of the Red Sea

A.

(1) וַיֹּאמֶר ד' אֶל מֹשֶׁה מַה תִּצְעַק אֵלַי דְּבַר אֶל בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל וְיִסְעוּ: וְאַתָּה הָרַם אֶת מִטְּךָ וּנְטָה אֶת יָדְךָ עַל הַיָּם וּבִקְעֵהוּ וַיָּבֹאוּ בְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּתוֹךְ הַיָּם בַּיַּבֶּשֶׁה: וְאֲנִי הֲנִי מְחַזֵּק אֶת לֵב מִצְרַיִם וַיָּבֹאוּ אַחֲרֵיהֶם וְאִפְבֹּדָה בְּפָרְעָה וּבְכָל חֵילוֹ בְּרָכְבוֹ וּבַפָּרָשִׁיו: וַיִּדְעוּ מִצְרַיִם כִּי אֲנִי ד' בְּהַפְכֹּדֵי בְּפָרְעָה בְּרָכְבוֹ וּבַפָּרָשִׁיו: וַיִּסַּע מֶלֶאךָ הָאֵל-לְהִימֵם הַהוּא לְפָנָי מִחֲנֵה יִשְׂרָאֵל וַיִּלְךְ מֵאַחֲרֵיהֶם וַיִּסַּע עִמּוֹד הָעֲנָן מִפְּנֵיהֶם וַיַּעֲמֵד מֵאַחֲרֵיהֶם: וַיָּבֹא בֵּין | מִחֲנֵה מִצְרַיִם וּבֵין מִחֲנֵה יִשְׂרָאֵל וַיְהִי הָעֲנָן וְהַחֹשֶׁךְ וַיִּאָּר אֶת הַלְּיָלָה וְלֹא קָרַב זֶה אֶל זֶה כָּל הַלְּיָלָה: וַיִּט מֹשֶׁה אֶת יָדוֹ עַל הַיָּם וַיּוֹלֶךְ ד' | אֶת הַיָּם בְּרוּחַ קְדָיִם עֲזָה כָּל הַלְּיָלָה וַיִּשָּׁם אֶת הַיָּם לְחַרְבָּה וַיִּבְקְעוּ הַמַּיִם: וַיָּבֹאוּ בְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּתוֹךְ הַיָּם בַּיַּבֶּשֶׁה וְהַמַּיִם לְהֵם חוֹמָה מִיַּמִּינָם וּמִשְׂמָאלָם: וַיִּרְדְּפוּ מִצְרַיִם וַיָּבֹאוּ אַחֲרֵיהֶם כָּל סוּס פָּרְעָה רָכְבוֹ וּפָרָשָׁיו אֶל תוֹךְ הַיָּם: וַיְהִי בְּאַשְׁמֹרֶת הַבֹּקֶר וַיִּשְׁקֹף ד' אֶל מִחֲנֵה מִצְרַיִם בְּעִמּוֹד אֵשׁ וְעֲנָן וַיִּהְיֶם אֶת מִחֲנֵה מִצְרַיִם: וַיִּסַּר אֶת אַפְּן מִרְכַּבְתָּיו וַיִּנְהַגְהוּ בְּכַבְדָּת וַיֹּאמֶר מִצְרַיִם אֲנוֹסָה מִפְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל כִּי ד' נִלְחַם לָהֶם בְּמִצְרַיִם: וַיֹּאמֶר ד' אֶל מֹשֶׁה נְטָה אֶת יָדְךָ עַל הַיָּם וַיִּשְׁבּוּ הַמַּיִם עַל מִצְרַיִם עַל רָכְבוֹ וְעַל פָּרָשָׁיו: וַיִּט מֹשֶׁה אֶת יָדוֹ עַל הַיָּם וַיִּשָּׁב הַיָּם לְפָנוֹת בְּקָר לְאִיתָנוּ וּמִצְרַיִם נָסִים לְקִרְאָתוֹ וַיִּנְעַר ד' אֶת מִצְרַיִם בְּתוֹךְ הַיָּם: וַיִּשְׁבּוּ הַמַּיִם וַיִּכְסּוּ אֶת הָרָכָב וְאֶת הַפָּרָשִׁים לְכָל חֵיל פָּרְעָה הַבָּאִים אַחֲרֵיהֶם בַּיָּם לֹא נִשְׂאָר בָּהֶם עַד אֶחָד: וּבְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל הִלְכוּ בַּיַּבֶּשֶׁה בְּתוֹךְ הַיָּם וְהַמַּיִם לְהֵם חוֹמָה מִיַּמִּינָם וּמִשְׂמָאלָם: וַיּוֹשַׁע ד' בַּיּוֹם הַהוּא אֶת יִשְׂרָאֵל מִיַּד מִצְרַיִם וַיִּרְא יִשְׂרָאֵל אֶת מִצְרַיִם מֵת עַל שִׁפְתַּי הַיָּם: וַיִּרְא יִשְׂרָאֵל אֶת הַיָּד הַגְּדוֹלָה אֲשֶׁר עָשָׂה ד' בְּמִצְרַיִם וַיִּירָאוּ הָעָם אֶת ד' וַיֹּאמִינוּ בְּד' וּבַמֹּשֶׁה עַבְדּוֹ: שְׁמוֹת יִד-טו-לא

And the L-rd said to Moses, Why do you cry to Me? Speak to the people of Israel, that they go forward; And lift up your staff, and stretch out your hand over the sea, and divide it; and the people of Israel shall go on dry ground through the midst of the sea. And I, behold, I will harden the hearts of the Egyptians, and they shall follow them; and I will get honor over Pharaoh, and over all his army, over his chariots, and over his horsemen. And the Egyptians shall know that I am the L-rd, when I have gotten honor over Pharaoh, over his chariots, and over his horsemen. And the angel of G-d, who went before the camp of Israel, moved and went behind them; and the pillar of the cloud went from before their face, and stood behind them; And it came between the camp of the Egyptians and the camp of Israel; and it was a cloud and darkness to them, but it gave light by night to these; so that the one came not near the other all the night. And Moses stretched out his hand over the sea; and the L-rd caused the sea to go back by a strong east wind all that night, and made the sea dry land, and the waters were divided. And the people of Israel went into the midst of the sea upon the dry ground; and the waters were a wall to them on their right hand, and on their left. And the Egyptians pursued, and went in after them to the midst of the sea, all Pharaoh's horses, his chariots, and his horsemen. And it came to pass, that in the morning watch the L-rd looked to the army of the Egyptians through the pillar of fire and of the cloud, and brought confusion to the army of the Egyptians, And took off their chariot wheels, that they drove heavily; so that the Egyptians said, Let us flee from the face of Israel; for the L-rd fights for them against the Egyptians. And the L-rd said to Moses, Stretch out your hand

over the sea, that the waters may come again upon the Egyptians, upon their chariots, and upon their horsemen. And Moses stretched forth his hand over the sea, and the sea returned to its strength when the morning appeared; and the Egyptians fled towards it; and the L-rd overthrew the Egyptians in the midst of the sea. And the waters returned, and covered the chariots, and the horsemen, and all the army of Pharaoh that came into the sea after them; there remained not so much as one of them. But the people of Israel walked upon dry land in the midst of the sea; and the waters were a wall to them on their right hand, and on their left. Thus the L-rd saved Israel that day from the hand of the Egyptians; and Israel saw the Egyptians dead upon the sea shore. And Israel saw the great work which the L-rd did upon the Egyptians; and the people feared the L-rd, and believed the L-rd, and his servant Moses. **Exodus 14:15-31**

(2) מה תצעק אלי. מבואר שמשה התפלל אע"ג שידע היטב כי הקב"ה יעשה ישועה לישראל מכ"מ נדרש לתפלה לפי דעתו. דזה כלל גדול במלחמה שמתנהגת בפעולת הטבע. אע"ג שברור שיהיו כמה מנצחים מכ"מ צריך תפלה כמו שהיה במלחמת עמלק שעלה משה בהר ואהרן וחור עמו ותניא במכילתא שגזר תענית ועמד בתפלה וכן במלחמת מדין שאמר ד' נקם נקמת וגו' מכ"מ אי' ברבה פ' מטות שהלכו י"ב אלף למלחמה וי"ב אלף לתפלה. והיינו משום שאע"ג שינצחו בברור לא ימלט שגם כמה מהמנצחים יהרגו כפי דרך הטבע וכמו שאמר דוד המלך כזה וכזה תאכל החרב. מש"ה נדרש לתפלה שתהא השגחה פרטית על כל א' בפ"ע לטובה שלא יארע שום נזק. . . אמנם כ"ז רק בעת שהניצוח הוא בדרך הטבע כמו מלחמת עמלק ומדין שהיה מלחמת תנופה. ומלחמת יריחו אע"ג דנפילת החומה היה נס נגלה מכ"מ אחר שנפלה החומה ועלה איש נגדו, היה מלחמה חזקה עם בעלי יריחו. משא"כ אם הכל בדרך נס וגם הישועה ברורה אין מקום לתפלה. והיינו שהתפלל משה כאן שאע"ג שידע שיהיה נס במקום הים מכ"מ עד שיגיעו לים ומצרים הולכים אחריהם ומורים חצים וכדומה קרוב שיהרגו כמה מישראל. מש"ה נצרך לתפלה. וא"ל ד' מה תצעק אלי. שאין השעה צריכה לכך. כי יהי נס גם בזה כמו שמבאר שעמד עמוד הענן ביניהם: העמק דבר יד:טו

**Why do you cry to Me? (Ex. 14:15):** It is evident from here that Moshe prayed. Even though he knew that the Holy One, blessed be He, would save the Jews, nonetheless, he felt that he was required to pray. [Prayer] is an essential element when waging war, since [war] is conducted [normally] in accordance with the laws of nature. Even though [Moshe] was sure that the [Jews] would be victorious, nevertheless, prayer was needed [in order to affect a victory] just as in the war against Amalek, when Moshe went up on to the mountain together with Aaron and Hur. The Mechilta instructed us that [the reason was because] [Moshe] declared a fast day and he stood up in prayer. Similarly, [that was the case] with the war against Midian, when G-d said (Num. 31:2), "Avenge the people of Israel of the Midianites; [afterwards shall you be gathered to your people]." [Even though they were assured of a victory], it is stated in the Midrash Rabbah, Parshas Mattos, that twelve thousand men went out to engage the enemy in battle and twelve thousand were engaged in prayer. The reason is that although they were assured that they would be victorious, it is inevitable that some [soldiers] would be killed, as is the natural course of events, as King David said (Samuel II 11:25), ". . . for the sword devours one as well as another." For that reason, prayer is required, so that there should be a special Divine Providence for every single individual so that they all experience a positive outcome and not one of them be harmed. . . . However, all of this is only relevant when the victory is a natural one, as in the case of the wars against Amalek and Midian where there was actual fighting [literally lunging]. Also the battle over Jericho, even though the walls falling down was an open miracle, nevertheless, after the wall fell down, each man fought face to face with his enemy, and the battle against the residents of that city was a fierce one. Whereas in a situation where everything is done

supernaturally and the victory is assured, prayer has no place. The reason why Moshe [initially] prayed, even though he knew that there would be a miracle at the sea, was because [the Jews were in a state of danger] during the interim, while they were still being pursued by the Egyptians who shot arrows and other projectiles against them, with a great likelihood that many would be killed. For that reason, prayer was needed. G-d then told him, “Why are you crying to me?” for it wasn’t necessary at the time because there would be a miracle even during this time, as the pillar of cloud [that led them by day] came between them. **Haamek Davar, Exodus 14:15**

(3) הרם את מטך. כאשר הניח משה את המטה בשעת תפלה כדאי' בברכות דכ"ג ב' לא יאחו אדם תפילין בידו וס"ת בזרועו ויתפלל. וכן המטה היה דבר שבקדושה שהרי נקרא מטה הא-להים ע"כ אמר לו ד' הרם את המטה: ונטה את ידך. לפי האמור למעלה במכת ברד וארבה שאע"ג שאמר ד' למשה נטה ידך. הכונה נטיית יד עם המטה. ומכש"כ כאן שאמר ד' הרם את מטך. הדבר מובן שמש"ה צוה כן כדי להטות בו. אבל הרי מבואר להלן להיפך ויט משה את ידו. אלא הענין דהמטה היה מיועד לכל דבר נסיי שבנגלה ג"כ וע"כ נקרא אותות. משא"כ ידיו של משה היו מועילות כמו ידיו של אלישע הנביא ליהורם המלך שיהי' נס נסתר לישועה והיה הרצון של הקב"ה לתלות קריעת הים בהכנת ישראל. אם יקפצו לתוך הים יהיה נקרע פתאום בנס נגלה. ואם לא יקפצו יהי מתייבש בסיבת הרוח מעט מעט. ויהי נס נסתר. וכמש"כ לעיל בפסוק אהיה אשר אהיה. ובס' דברים ל"ג י"ב בברכת משה לבנימין הראיתי לדעת ברייתא במכילתא שהיו מחולקים בדעות שבט יהודה ובנימין אם לקפוץ בתוך הים בעודנו במלאתו או לא. יע"ש בארך. ע"כ א"ל ד' שיעשה שני דברים נטיית היד בעצמו ונטיית המטה. והנה מיד שהחלו העם לנסוע הטה משה את ידו לבדו כדי שתהי' רוח קדים עזה כל הלילה שהולכים ממקום שעמדו עד שפת הים ממש. ונטיית המטה הי' ג"כ מיד או כבואם לים ועוד לא הספיקה השעה לייבש בטבע הרוח. וקפץ שבט יהודה או שבט בנימין כמבואר מחלוקת במכילתא והועילה נטיית המטה להבקע בנס נגלה: העמק דבר שמות יד:טז

**And lift up your staff (Exodus 14:16):** Since Moshe had put down his staff at the time when he prayed, as it is stated in Berachos 23b, “One should not hold *tephillin* in his hand, nor a *Sefer Torah*, in his arms, and pray.” Similarly, the staff was a holy object, as it was called, “the Divine staff.” That is why G-d told him, “Lift up your staff.” **And stretch out your hand (ibid.)** According to that which was stated above in the plagues of the hail and the locusts, even though G-d told Moshe, “stretch out your hand,” the intention was that he do so together with the staff. Most certainly, then, that would be the case here, where G-d [specifically] told him, “lift up your staff.” It would only follow logically that it was for that purpose that G-d did tell him to lift up his staff. Yet, however, it is evident from Scripture, that it was just the opposite, “And Moses stretched out his hand [without the staff].” Rather, the explanation is that the staff was designed to bring about an openly miraculous effect. That is why the staff is referred to as, “signs.” (See Deuteronomy 26:8 and the interpretation quoted in the Passover Haggada) Whereas the hands of Moshe could bring about a hidden miracle, as was the case with the hands of Elisha, the prophet, and Yehoram, the king, which brought about a salvation. It was the will of the Holy One, blessed be He, to make the miracle of the splitting of the sea contingent upon the preparation of the Jewish people. If they would jump into the sea, then the sea would instantly split as an open miracle. If they wouldn’t have jumped, then the sea would become dry as a result of the wind, which would dry it a little at a time. This is how I interpreted the verse, “I shall be whom I shall be.” In my work on Deuteronomy 33:12, the blessing of Moshe to Binyamin, I showed that according to the Mechilta the tribes of Yehudah and Binyamin disagreed whether one should jump into the sea while it was still full or not. (Look there for a lengthy exposition) Therefore, G-d told him that he should do two things: One, stretching out just the hand [without the staff], and two, stretching out the staff. Behold, as soon as the people began to travel, Moshe just

stretched out his hand by itself, [without the staff,] in order that the strong easterly wind should blow the entire night, as they traveled from where they were standing to the actual sea shore. The stretching of the staff also took place immediately or when they actually came to the sea and the wind had not yet had sufficient time to naturally dry out [the sea bed. It was then that] either the tribe of Yehuda or Binyamin jumped into the sea, as is explained in the Mechilta, and the stretching out of the staff had the power to instantly split the sea, creating an open miracle. **Haamek Davar, Exodus 14:16**

(4) ובקעהו. כבר פי' התוס' ערכין דט"ו שלא היה קריעת י"ס לרוחב הים מעבר לעבר כמו שהיה בירדן. שהרי גם אח"כ הלכו על שפת הים. ועוד כמה קושיות. אלא לא נצרכו לעבור מעבר לים. כ"א להלוך בצד הים. רק משום שהמצרים היו אחורי ישראל ומצדיהם. ולא יכלו ישראל להלוך. ע"כ עשה הקב"ה שביל באורך הים עד שעמדו באיזה מרחק ויצאו שוב לאורך הים: העמק דבר, שמות יד:טז

**And divide it (ibid.):** Tosephos in Eruchin 15a has already explained that the sea did not split widthwise, as was the case with the Jordan river [in the time of Joshua], for even afterwards the Jews traveled [south] following the path of the sea shore. In addition there are other difficulties [if one maintains that they traveled widthwise]. The truth is that they didn't need to go through the sea from one end to the other, but only to travel by the side of the sea. It was only because the Egyptians were behind them and by their sides and prevented them from traveling that the Holy One, blessed be He, had to make a semicircular path along the length of the sea until they had distanced themselves somewhat [from the Egyptians] and they then resumed their travels along the sea shore. **Haamek Davar, Ex. 14:16**

(5) וישע ד': העיד הכתוב כי עד עתה לא נושעו מיד מצרים תשועת עולמים, כי המכות לא פעלו עליהם רק לפי שעה, וכמו שמבואר ממה ששבו וירדפו אחריהם, וע"י נסי הים ומפלתם לא הרימו ראש להלחם עם ישראל עד ימי שישק שמסרם ד' לידו בחטאם, ועז"א וישע ד' ביום ההוא. מלבנים, שמות יד:ל

**Thus the L-rd saved Israel that day from the hand of the Egyptians (Ex. 14:30):** Scripture bears witness that up until that moment, the Jews were not yet permanently saved from the Egyptians, for the plagues only had a temporary effect upon them, as is evident from the fact that they recanted and pursued them. But through the miracles of the sea and their defeat, the Egyptians didn't muster the courage to wage war against Israel until the reign of Shishak, when G-d gave [Israel] over to them because of their sins. For that it is written, "Thus the L-rd saved Israel that day." **Haamek Davar, Ex. 14:30**

(6) וירא ישראל את היד הגדלה אשר עשה ד' במצרים וייראו העם את ד'. א"א לפרש שראו הנס שעשה. דא"כ יותר היה ראוי לומר אשר עשה ה' לישראל. שהרי עיקר הנס היה הצלת ישראל ולא טביעת מצרים. ותו מה שייך לזה הראיה ויראה. וכי משום הצלה ונס הגיע פחד ד'. וגם מה זה נתפעלו עתה בקריעת י"ס יותר מי"מ בפלא. אלא הענין כמו שדרשו במכילתא והגדה היד הגדולה שהיו חמשים מכות או מאתים מכות. והגיע לכל א' מרודפי ישראל מיתה משונה לפי מעשיו שהרעו לישראל בהיותם בקרבם. ואנו אומרים בברכת ק"ש את רודפיהם ואת שונאיהם בתהומות טבע. היינו חיל המלוכה נקראו רודפיהם שלא משנאה עשו אלא בעבודת המלוכה. אבל שאר המון מצרים מכונים שונאיהם. ומי שנתחייב ע"פ רשעו נטבע וגם מת בהשגחה במיתה הראויה לעונשו. ומזה בפרט נודע להם השגחתו ית' בפרטות על כל יחיד אפילו על גוים מכש"כ על עמו. מש"ה וייראו העם: העמק דבר, שמות יד:לא

**And Israel saw the great work which the L-rd did upon the Egyptians; and the people feared the L-rd, and believed the L-rd, and his servant Moses. (Exodus 14:31):** It is not possible to explain [the phrase, “And Israel saw,” to mean] that they saw the miracle that He had wrought, because if that were so, it should have been written, “Which the L-rd did to Israel,” as the essential miracle was the salvation of Israel and not the drowning of the Egyptians. In addition, the term, “saw” is inappropriate, [for it is something which they themselves experienced]. Furthermore why would the salvation of Israel lead to “fear” of the L-rd? [On the contrary, it should lead to love.] In addition, why were they so astounded now by the splitting of the Red Sea more than the miracle of the exodus. Rather, the explanation is as follows: The Mechilta and the Hagadah [of Passover] elucidate that there were actually fifty or [perhaps] two hundred plagues [at the Red Sea]. Each one of the pursuers experienced a painful and unusual death in accordance with the evil which they did to Israel when they were in their midst. We actually say in the benediction after “Shema”, “He drowned their pursuers and enemies in the deep water.” The “pursuers” is referring to the royal army, as they were motivated in their pursuit not by hatred but rather as a fulfillment of royal service. The rest of the masses of Egypt [who pursued them], however, did so out of hatred. [Although] they were all condemned because of their evil to be drowned, each one of them was Providentially killed in a manner befitting his respective crime. From this in particular they became aware of the specific Divine Providence, affecting every individual by himself, even non-Jews, and certainly Jews. For that reason it is stated, “and the people feared the L-rd.” **Haamek Davar, Exodus 14:31**

(7) ויאמינו בד' ובמשה עבדו. שעד כה היה מקום עדיין לחשוב אולי כח משה בכשוף או בידיעת שמות הקודש גדול כ"כ לעשות כל המכות וגם קריעת י"ס. אבל עתה שראו הגמול לכ"א בהשגחה כפי מעשיו האמינו כי אך יד ד' הוא. ומשה הוא עבדו ולא עושה מדעתו ח"ו: העמק דבר יד:לא

**And [the people] believed the L-rd, and His servant Moses. (Exodus 14:31):** Up until now it was possible to think that perhaps Moshe's powers of sorcery or his knowledge of the Holy Divine Names was so great that it was through them that he was able to bring about the plagues and the splitting of the Red Sea. But now that they saw how justice was served and how each one Providentially received their punishment based upon their specific crimes, they came to firmly believe that the hand of G-d wrought all of this and that Moshe was His servant and didn't do any of it on his own, G-d forbid. **Ibid.**

B.

(1) אַז יִשִּׁיר מֹשֶׁה וּבְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל אֶת הַשִּׁירָה הַזֹּאת לַד' וַיֹּאמְרוּ לֵאמֹר אֲשִׁירָה לַד' כִּי גָאָה גָאָה סוֹס וּרְכָבוֹ רָמָה בָּיָם: עֲזִי וְזַמְרַת יְיָ-הֵי וַיְהִי לִי לִישׁוּעָה זֶה אֵ-לִי וְאֲנֹהוּ אֵ-לֹהֵי אָבִי וְאֶרְמְמָנְהוּ: ד' אִישׁ מִלְחָמָה ד' שְׁמוֹ: מִרְכַּבַּת פְּרָעָה וַחֲבִילוֹ יָרָה בָּיָם וּמִבְּחַר שְׁלֹשִׁי טַבְּעוֹ בָּיָם סוּף: תְּהַמַּת יְכַסִּימוּ יָרְדוּ בְּמִצּוֹת כְּמוֹ אֶבֶן: יְמִינָה ד' נֶאֱדָרִי בְּכַח יְמִינָה ד' תִּרְעֵץ אוֹיֵב: וּבִרְבִּי גְאוּנָה תְּהַרֵּס קִמְיָה תִּשְׁלַח חֲרֹנְךָ יֹאכְלֵמוּ כְּקֶשֶׁת: וּבְרוּחַ אַפִּיךָ נַעְרָמוּ מִיָּם נִצְבּוּ כְּמוֹ נֶד נְזִלִים קִפְאוּ תְּהַמַּת בְּלֵב יָם: אָמַר אוֹיֵב אֶרְדֶּף אֲשִׁיג אֲחַלֵּק שָׁלָל תִּמְלָאמוּ נִפְשֵׁי אַרְיֵק חֲרָבִי תִּזְרִימוּ יָדַי: נִשְׁפָּת בְּרוּחְךָ כִּסְמוּ יָם צָלְלוּ כְּעוֹפְרַת בָּמִים אֲדִירִים: מִי כְּמִכָּה בְּאֵלֶם ד' מִי כְּמִכָּה נֶאֱדָר בְּקֹדֶשׁ נוֹרָא תְּהַלֵּת עֲשֵׂה פְּלֵא: נְטִית יְמִינָה תְּבַלְעֵמוּ אֶרֶץ: נְחִית בְּחֶסֶדְךָ עִם זֶה גְּאֻלְתָּ נְהַלְתָּ בְּעֶזְךָ אֵל נוֹה קְדֻשָּׁךָ: שְׁמַעוּ עַמִּים יִרְגְּזוּן חֵיל אֲחִזוּ יִשְׁבִּי פְּלִשְׁתִּי: אַז נִבְּחָלוּ אֱלֹפֵי אֲדוּם אֵילֵי מוֹאָב יֹאחֲזֵמוּ רַעַד נִמְגּוּ כֹל יִשְׁבִּי כְּנַעַן: תִּפְּל עֲלֵיהֶם אִימָתָה וּפְחַד בְּגִדְל זְרוּעֶךָ יִדְמוּ כְּאֶבֶן עַד יַעֲבֹר עִמָּךָ ד' עַד יַעֲבֹר עִם זֶה קְנִיתִי: תְּבֹאמוּ וְתִטְעֵמוּ בְּהַר נִחְלָתְךָ מְכוּן לְשִׁבְתְּךָ פְּעֻלְתְּךָ ד' מְקֻדֶּשׁ ד' כּוֹנֵנוּ יְדִידֶךָ: ד' | יִמְלֵךְ לְעֵלָם וְעַד: כִּי בָּא סוֹס פְּרָעָה בְּרִכְבוֹ וּבְפָרְשָׁיו בָּיָם וַיִּשָּׁב ד' עֲלֵהֶם אֶת מִי הָיָם וּבְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל הִלְכוּ בִּיבְשָׁה בְּתוֹךְ הָיָם: וַתִּקַּח מִרְיָם הַנְּבִיאָה אַחֲוֹת אֶהְרֹן אֶת הַתֶּף בְּיָדָהּ וַתִּצְאֵן כָּל הַנְּשִׁימִים אַחֲרֶיהָ בְּתַפִּים וּבְמַחְלֵת: וַתַּעַן לָהֶם מְרִים שִׁירוֹ לַד' כִּי גָאָה גָאָה סוֹס וּרְכָבוֹ רָמָה בָּיָם: שְׁמוֹת טו:א-כ

Then sang Moses and the people of Israel this song to the L-rd, and spoke, saying, I will sing to the L-rd, for He has triumphed over the arrogant (gloriously); the horse and his rider has He thrown into the sea. The L-rd is my strength and song, and He has become my salvation; this (He) is my G-d, and I will praise Him; my father's G-d, and I will exalt Him. The L-rd is a man of war; the L-rd is His name. Pharaoh's chariots and his army has He thrown into the sea; his chosen captains also are drowned in the Red Sea. The depths have covered them; they sank to the bottom as a stone. Your right hand, O L-rd, is glorious in power; Your right hand, O L-rd, has dashed in pieces the enemy. And in the greatness of Your excellency You have overthrown those that rose up against You; You sent forth Your anger, which consumed them as stubble. And with the blast of Your nostrils the waters were gathered together, the floods stood upright as a heap, and the depths were congealed in the heart of the sea. The enemy said, I will pursue, I will overtake, I will divide the plunder; my lust shall be satisfied through them; I will draw my sword, my hand shall destroy them. You blew with Your wind, the sea covered them; they sank as lead in the mighty waters. Who is like You, O L-rd, among the mighty? who is like You, glorious in holiness, fearful in praises, doing wonders? You stretched out Your right hand, the earth swallowed them. You in Your mercy have led forth the people whom You have redeemed; You have guided them in Your strength to Your holy habitation. The people shall hear, and be afraid; sorrow shall take hold of the inhabitants of Philistia. Then the chiefs of Edom shall be amazed; the mighty men of Moab, trembling shall take hold of them; all the inhabitants of Canaan shall melt away. Fear and dread shall fall upon them; by the greatness of Your arm they shall be as still as a stone; till Your people pass over, O L-rd, till the people pass over, whom You have purchased. You shall bring them in, and plant them in the mountain of Your inheritance, in the place, O L-rd, which You have made for You to dwell in, in the Sanctuary, O L-rd, which Your hands have established. The L-rd shall reign forever and ever. For the horse of Pharaoh went in with his chariots and with his horsemen into the sea, and the L-rd brought again the waters of the sea upon them; but the people of Israel went on dry land in the midst of the sea. And Miriam the prophetess, the sister of Aaron, took a tambourine in her hand; and all the women went out after her with tambourines, dancing. And Miriam answered them, Sing to the L-rd, for He has triumphed gloriously; the horse and his rider has He thrown into the sea.

**Exodus 15:1-21**

2) אשירה לד' תחלה ספר עקר הפלא, איך בתחבולות עשה לו מלחמה ושם דרך אויביו חשך וחלקלקות עד שהיה פרעה כיונה פותה לכנוס תוך הים, שכבר בארנו שזה היה ע"י התחבולות מה שעמקי מצולה והתהום התנשא והיה כמסלה כבושה רמה ונשאה באמצע הים עד שחשב פרעה שהוא ארץ מישור ויבשה. ויש גבור ויש איש מלחמה. הגבור מנצח ע"י גבורתו, והאיש מלחמה הוא היודע תכסיסי מלחמה, שמעקרי תכסיסי מלחמה הוא לרמאות את האויב בתחבולות עד שילכד בפח יקוש . . . ופה במה שהיאנה את המצריים לכנוס אל הים הראה שהוא איש מלחמה. ז"ש אשירה לד' כי גאה גאה, ר"ל במה שעשה תחבולה עד שנתגאה פרעה לרדוף בים סוף, וזה היה ע"י התחבולה שסוס ורוכבו של פרעה רמה בים שהלכו בדרך רם ונשא מן המים וחשבו שהוא יבשה. מלבים, שמות טו:א

**I will sing to the L-rd (Exodus 15:1):** Initially [Moshe] related the essential miracle of how [G-d] strategically waged war and paved a way for His enemies that was dark and slippery, [tricking] Pharaoh, who was like a naive dove, to enter into the sea. We have already explained that it was part of the [Divine] strategy that the sea bed be lifted up and become as flat as a paved road, to the extent that Pharaoh was convinced that it was actually flat dry land. Now there is a [difference between a] “warrior” and “a man of war” (master of warfare). A “warrior” achieves

victory through his strength and courage. A “man of war” is one who is a master of strategy and tactics, for one of the essentials of waging war is to be able to fool the enemy and to ensnare him into a trap. . . . In this situation, because He was able to trick the Egyptians to enter the sea, He showed that He is a “man of war” (master of warfare). This is the meaning of the verse (ibid.), “I will sing to the L-rd, for He has triumphed (gloriously) over the arrogant,” i.e. through His strategy, Pharaoh arrogantly pursued them through the Red Sea. This strategy brought “the horse and his rider” of Pharaoh through the “sea bed” which He “lifted up”, which led them to believe that it was actually dry land. **Malbim, Exodus 15:1**

(3) זה א-לי – בכבודו נגלה עליהם והיו מראין אותו באצבע ראתה שפחה על הים מה שלא ראו נביא. רש"י שמות טו:ב

**This is my G-d (Exodus 15:2):** In His glory, did He reveal Himself to them [to the extent that] they would point to Him with their finger. A maidservant by the sea saw more than a [future] prophet (Ezekiel). **Rashi, Exodus 15:2**

(4) וכן אמרו (מכילתא שירתא ג) ביורדי הים, שאמרו “זה א-לי ואנוהו” ראתה שפחה על הים מה שלא ראה יחזקאל הנביא, זכות להם בעת הנס הגדול שהאמינו בד’ ובמשה עבדו. רמב”ן שם

Similarly, the Mechilta states regarding those who went down to the [Red] Sea, those who said, “this is my G-d, and I will praise Him”: A maidservant by the sea saw more than Ezekiel, the prophet. The merit that they had at the time of the great miracle, that they believed in G-d and His servant Moshe, [caused them to have such a revelation]. **Ramban, ibid.**

(5) מי כמכה באלם ד’. מכאן ואילך הוא שבח לגבורת ד’ להיטיב. ואמרו מי כמכה באלים. וכבר ביארנו בשם המכילתא דא-ל הוא רחמים. היינו כח להיטיב. ואמרו דכח ד’ להיטיב הוא גדול מכל הכחות: מי כמכה נאדר בקדש. עוד שבח נעלה שהוא נאדר בקדושה שהוא מופרש מהליכות הטבע. ולא כן כל כחות אינם אלא תחת הטבע: נורא תהלות. שיש מורא לנו להללו. באשר הוא עושה פלא. שאין אנו מבינים עליהם. באשר המה פלא. וא”כ א”א להללו. שכל שאינו מובן להמדבר בשכלו כי כן הוא אסור להלל את ד’ בלשון נוכח. . . . נטית ימינך וגו’. מבאר מאמר הראשון מי כמכה באלם ד’. שבנטיה אחת נבלעו כל המוטלים בארץ ובאו לקבורה שהוא חסד גדול ואיזה כח יעשה כזה או יזדקק להיטיב להרוגיו ולהביאם לקבורה: נחית וגו’. עתה יבאר מי כמכה נאדר בקודש. עד שנחית בחסדך וגו’ ממצרים ותנהלם בעזך אל נוח קדשך. שיהיו גם המה מופרשים מהליכות הטבע כחק בהמ”ק נוח קדשו שנסים תדירים בו. והוא ואות על אשר הוא נאדר בקודש. עד אשר גם עמו אשר קנה. מופרשים ג”כ מהליכות עולם הטבע. העמק דבר, שמות טו:יא-יג

**Who is like You, O Lord, among the mighty? (Exodus 15:11):** From this point, [“Who is like you, O Lord, among the mighty?”] and on, [the song] is devoted to the praises of G-d’s power to render good. We have already explained, based upon the Mechilta, the word “E-I” (mighty) refers to His power to render good. And [our Sages] have said that G-d’s power to do good is the strongest of all powers. **Who is like You, glorious in holiness (ibid.):** In addition, there is another special praiseworthy quality and that is that He is glorious in holiness, i.e. that He is separate from the laws of nature whereas all of the other powers are subject to the laws of nature. **Fearful in praises (ibid.):** because we are fearful of praising Him, because He **does wonders**, of which we have no understanding, as they are wondrous. Therefore, it is impossible to praise Him directly, for it is forbidden to praise G-d directly for anything that is not intellectually



comprehensible to the speaker. . . . **You stretched out Your right hand, the earth swallowed them. (Ex. 15:12):** This corresponds and elucidates, “Who is like you, O L-rd, among the mighty,” for in one outstretching [of the Divine “hand”] all of those who were lying on the ground were [simultaneously] swallowed up by the ground and were buried, a tremendous act of kindness. What [other] power [on earth or in the heavens] could do such a thing or even become involved to bestow good [in some way] to those whom he killed and yet bring them to burial? **You have guided them in Your strength to Your holy habitation (Ex. 15:13):** This is the explanation of the phrase, “who is like You, glorious in holiness”, for You have guided them in Your kindness etc. from Egypt and guided them in Your strength to Your holy habitation, in order that they, too, will become separated and not be bound by the laws of nature, as was the case in the Holy Temple, His holy habitation, where there were constant miracles. This was a sign that He is so “glorious in holiness (separation from nature)” that even His people, which He acquired, also became set apart from the laws of nature. **Haamek Davar, Exodus 15:11-13**

6) שמעו עמים וגו'. מבאר מה שאמר נהלת בעזך. והנה מה שאמר בחסדך, מובן לכל עין רואה שגבר חסדו על עמו בעמוד אש וענן וספוק כ"צ. אבל פי' בעזך לא נתבאר מה גבורה היה בהליכות ישראל לארצם. ואמרו שמעו וגו': אז נבהלו אלופי אדם. אמרו כאן לשון אז. באשר לבסוף בהגיע לאדום בסמוך בכניסה סרה הבהלה. שהרי רצה מלך אדום לצאת בחרב לקראתם. והסיבה לזה מבואר בס' דברים. שכ"ז גרם מעשה מרגלים ונגזר על ישראל לסבוב את ארץ אדום ובקשו מהם מתלה לעבור בהם. והיו סבורים שאין באמת כח לישראל לעבור בהם בע"כ. וסרה בהלתם. עד שנהרגו סיחון ועוג חזר הפחד כמבואר שם. מש"ה אמרו אז: אימתה ופחד. אימה על הרחוקים ופחד על הקרובים. רש"י בשם המכילתא. וע' מש"כ בזה ס"פ עקב בס"ד: ותטעמו. יהיו מושרשים שמה: בהר נחלתך. זהו כלל א"י שהיא גבוה מכל הארצות: מכון לשבתך. הוא הר הבית אשר שם מתנהג מלכות שמים. כדאי' במס' ר"ה פ"ד דשם כתיב בחצוצרות ובקול שופר הריעו לפני המלך ד'. מש"ה נקרא זה המקום מכון לשבת כמו לשון המקרא השמים כסאי. דמשמעו דשם הוא מושבו ית' להשיג על הבריאה. כמו כן מכונה הר הבית שהוא מכון לשבת: מקדש. שהוא לפני עזרות והיכל: א-דני. שם תמיד שדוד הטבע ועשרה נסים קבועים. וכבר נתבאר דשם א-דני הוא שדוד הטבע: כוננו ידיך. כדאי'תא בכתובות ד"ה שבו נכלל כ"י שתי ידות ארץ ושמים. וכ"ה במכילתא. והיינו דשם מתפרנסין ע"י עבודה וריח ניחוח שני עולמות. לחם לאשי ד'. ולחם לישראל כידוע. וכתיב מקדש בדגש הקו"ף שלא כמנהגת לכפול הענין. ששני מקומות מכון לשדוד הטבע. בהמ"ק שמקורו לעבודה. וד"א של הלכה קבועה. וכדאי' ברכות די"ז ב' דחזי יקרא דאורייתא וע"ש בתוס' ד"ה תרי: ד' ימלוך לעולם ועד. התפללו שתהי' מלכותו לע"ו. היינו שיהי' ניכר לכל העולם שהוא ית' מנהיג במלכות שמים. וזה התפלה יתקיים לימות המשיח שיהיה ד' למלך על כל הארץ. העמק דבר, שמות טו:יד-יח

**The people shall hear, and be afraid . . . (Exodus 15:14):** This verse explains the phrase, “You have guided them in Your strength.” Now the phrase, “in Your mercy (or kindness),” was unmistakably fulfilled when His kindness was showered upon His people by [giving them] the pillars of fire and clouds and His taking care of their every need. But the phrase, “You have guided them in Your strength,” is not self explanatory. In what way was His strength manifest in their travels to their land? To this Scripture states, “The people shall hear, and be afraid.” **Then The chiefs of Edom shall be amazed (Ex. 15:15):** The term, “then” is used because at a later date, when [the children of Israel] reached the borders of Edom this amazement had already dissipated, as is evident from the fact that the king of Edom wanted to go against them in armed battle. Why [their attitude changed] is evident from the account in Deuteronomy. It all came about because of the incident of the spies (*meraglim*). As a result, it was decreed that the Jews travel around the perimeter of the land of Edom. When they [finally] asked them for permission

to pass through their land, they (Edom) were of the opinion that the Jews didn't possess the strength or courage to force their way through. Therefore, their amazement dissipated. This lasted until Sichon and Og were killed. It was then that their fear returned . . . For that reason it is stated, "then". **Fear and dread shall fall upon them (Ex. 15:16):** Rashi comments, based upon the Mechilta, that fear was felt by those who were at a distance and dread was felt by those who were close by. **And plant them (ibid.):** that they should take root there. **In the mountain of Your inheritance (ibid.):** This refers to the entirety of the Land of Israel which [Scripture considers it to be] higher than any other land. **Which You have made for You to dwell (sit) in (ibid.):** This is referring to the Temple Mount wherein the kingdom of Heaven is in [full] reign, as it is stated in the fourth chapter of [the tractate] Rosh HaShanah which quotes the following verse (Psalms 98:6), "With trumpets and the sound of a shofar make a joyful noise before the L-rd, the King." For that reason that place is called [a place], "Which You have made for You to sit (dwell) in." This is similar to the language of the verse (Isaiah 66:1), "[Thus says the L-rd,] 'The heaven is my throne, [and the earth is my footstool']," which means that He sits there [in Heaven] in order to supervise the Creation. Similarly, the Temple Mount is referred to as [the place] "which You have made to sit there." **Sanctuary (ibid.):** This refers specifically to the [Holy of Holies] which is situated within the Courtyard and Sanctuary (*Heichal*). **O L-rd (ibid.):** There [in the Temple] the laws of nature were constantly being set aside [besides for] the ten constant miracles (Yoma 21a). **Which Your hands have established (ibid.):** This is to be understood, in a manner of speech, to refer to the two Divine hands, Heaven and earth (Kesubos 5a), which are manifest there, as it is stated in the Mechilta. [This is so because], both worlds are being sustained through the Divine service and "pleasant smell". The [sacrifices] serve as "food" (*lechem*) for the Divine fire and "food" (*lechem*) for Israel, as is well known. The word *Mikdash* (Sanctuary) is written with a *dagesh* (stress) in the letter *kuf*, which is not the normal spelling, in order to hint to a double "Sanctuary". One is referring to the Holy Temple, whose function is Divine Service. The other is referring to the four cubits of *halacha kevu'a* (the place where the final ruling of Torah law is articulated - See Berachos 8a. See also Berachos 17b). . . . **The L-rd shall reign forever and ever (ibid.):** They prayed that His kingdom shall be forever, i.e. that it should be evident to the whole world that He, may He be blessed, rules through the kingdom of Heaven. This prayer will be fulfilled at the times of Moshiach when "He shall be king over all the earth." (Zechariah 14:9) **Haamek Davar Exodus 15:14-18**

7) כי בא: וכ"ז יהיה ע"י שנפתח המקור לכל הנסים בעת קי"ס שמאז יזל מים מדליו, וד' ימלוך וחושב נסי הים בג' ענינים: א) מה שבא סוס פרעה שהיו בזה כמה נסים להטעות את פרעה שיחשוב ששם הוא יבשה כנ"ל. ב) וישב עליהם את מי הים, שגם בזה היו כמה נסים כנ"ל. ג) ובני ישראל שבעוד שבצד שהלכו המצררים שב הים למקומו בצד ישראל הלכו ביבשה, וכנ"ל. מלבנים, שמות טו:יט

**For the horse of Pharaoh went in with his chariots and with his horsemen into the sea (Exodus 15:19):** Through the miracles at the time of the splitting of the Red Sea, the source of all miracles opened up and from then on "water flowed from His buckets" and G-d began to rule over the world. Scripture lists three miracles: 1) **The horse of Pharaoh went in.** There were many miracles associated with that event in order to trick Pharaoh into thinking that he was on dry land. 2) **And the L-rd brought again the waters of the sea upon them (ibid.)** There were also many miracles associated with that event. 3) **But the people of Israel went on dry land in the midst of the sea (ibid.)** During the time that on the Egyptian side the water returned back to its place, on the side of the Israelites, **the people of Israel went on dry land**, as it is written before. **Malbim, Exodus 15:19**

## II. The Difficult Journey: From the Red Sea to the Battle with Amalek

## A.

(1) וַיִּסַּע מֹשֶׁה אֶת יִשְׂרָאֵל מֵיַם סוּף וַיֵּצְאוּ אֶל מִדְבַּר שׁוּר וַיֵּלְכוּ שְׁלֹשֶׁת יָמִים בְּמִדְבַּר וְלֹא מָצְאוּ מַיִם: וַיָּבֹאוּ מְרַתָּה וְלֹא יָכְלוּ לְשַׁתֵּת מֵיָם מִמֶּרָה כִּי מְרִים הֵם עַל בֶּן קְרָא שֶׁמָּה מְרָה: וַיֵּלְנוּ הָעַם עַל מֹשֶׁה לֵּאמֹר מַה נִּשְׁתָּה: וַיִּצְעַק אֶל ד' וַיֹּרְהוּ ד' עֵץ וַיִּשְׁלַךְ אֶל הַמַּיִם וַיִּמְתְּקוּ הַמַּיִם שֶׁשָׁם לוֹ חֵק וּמִשְׁפָּט וְשֶׁם נִסְהוּ: וַיֹּאמֶר אִם שָׁמוֹעַ תִּשְׁמַע לְקוֹל | ד' א--לְהִיךְ וְהִיָּשֵׁר בְּעֵינָיו תַּעֲשֶׂה וְהֶאֱזַנְתָּ לְמִצְוֹתָיו וְשָׁמְרָתָּ כָּל חֻקָּיו כָּל הַמְּחֻלָּה אֲשֶׁר שָׁמְתִי בְּמִצְרַיִם לֹא אֲשִׁים עֲלֶיךָ כִּי אֲנִי ד' רַפְּאֵךְ: וַיָּבֹאוּ אֵילָמָה וְשֶׁם שְׁתִּים עָשְׂרָה עֵינַת מַיִם וְשִׁבְעִים תְּמָרִים וַיַּחֲנוּ שָׁם עַל הַמַּיִם: וַיִּסַּע מֹשֶׁה וַיָּבֹאוּ כָּל עַדַת בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל אֶל מִדְבַּר סִין אֲשֶׁר בֵּין אֵילָם וּבֵין סִינַי בְּחַמְשָׁה עָשָׂר יוֹם לַחֹדֶשׁ הַשֵּׁנִי לְצֵאתָם מֵאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם: שְׁמוֹת טו:כב-טז:א

So Moses brought Israel from the Red Sea, and they went out into the wilderness of Shur; and they went three days in the wilderness, and found no water. And when they came to Marah, they could not drink of the waters of Marah, for they were bitter; therefore its name was called Marah. And the people murmured against Moses, saying, What shall we drink? And he cried to the L-rd; and the L-rd showed him a tree, which he threw into the waters, and made the waters sweet; there He made for them a statute and an ordinance, and there He tested them, And said, If you will diligently listen to the voice of the L-rd your G-d, and will do that which is right in His sight, and will give ear to His commandments, and keep all His statutes, I will put none of these diseases upon you, which I have brought upon the Egyptians; for I am the L-rd that heals you. And they came to Elim, where there were twelve wells of water, and seventy palm trees; and they encamped there by the waters. And they took their journey from Elim, and all the congregation of the people of Israel came to the wilderness of Sin, which is between Elim and Sinai, on the fifteenth day of the second month after their departing out of the land of Egypt. **Exodus 15:22-16:1**

(2) וְלֹא יָכְלוּ לְשַׁתֵּת מַיִם. אַחַר שֶׁרָאוּ מַיִם בִּקְשׁוּ לְשַׁתֵּת לְתַעֲנוּג. וּמִצְאוּ שֶׁהֵם מְרִים. וְשׁוֹב לֹא יָכְלוּ לְהִתְאַפֵּק: וַיֵּלְנוּ הָעַם וְגו' מַה נִּשְׁתָּה. כֹּאשֶׁר נִצְמַא. אֲמַנִּם לֹא צִמְאוּ בְּאֵמַת. ע"כ לֹא הִתְלוֹנְנוּ כָּל הָעַם כְּמוֹ לְהִלָּךְ ט"ז ב' גְּבִי לַחֵם: הֵעֵמַק דְּבַר, שְׁמוֹת טו:כג,כד

**They could not drink of the waters (Ex. 15:23):** After they saw water, they desired to drink in order to derive pleasure. But they only found bitter water there and weren't able to quench their thirst. **And the people murmured against Moses, saying, What shall we drink? (Ex. 15:24):** Since we are thirsty. But they weren't actually thirsty (in need of drink). For that reason it is not written, "And the whole congregation of the people of Israel murmured," as it is written in regards to bread. (See Ex. 16:2) **Haamek Davar, Exodus 15:23-24**

(3) וַיֹּאמֶר אִם שָׁמוֹעַ תִּשְׁמַע לְקוֹל ד' – ע"ד הַפֶּשֶׁט יֹאמֶר אִם תִּקְיִים אֶת הַתּוֹרָה לֹא תַחֲלֶה לְעוֹלָם בְּשׁוֹם חוֹלִי לֹא בַחֲלִי הַטֶּבַע שֶׁהֵם מִצְד הַמֵּאכֲלִים הַנִּכְנָסִים בְּגוֹף וְלֹא בַחֲלִי הַמְקָרָה שֶׁהֵם הַבָּאִים מִחוּץ לְגוֹף. וְמַה שֶׁהַזְכִּיר לְקוֹל ד' א--לְהִיךְ הַכּוֹנֵה בְּזֶה עַל עֲשֵׂרֶת הַדְּבָרוֹת שֶׁהֵיוּ כּוֹלֵן קוֹלוֹ כְּעֵנִין שִׁכְתוֹב (דְּבָרִים ד) קוֹל דְּבָרִים אֲתֵם שׁוֹמְעִים, כִּי כָל הִי דְּבָרוֹת שֶׁשִּׁמְעֵנוּ מִפִּי שְׁמִיעַת אוֹזֵן כְּעֵנִין שִׁכְתוֹב (שְׁמוֹת כ) וַיְדַבֵּר א--לְהִים אֶת כָּל הַדְּבָרִים הָאֵלֶּה לֵאמֹר, וְאַחֲרֵי כֵן הַזְכִּיר ג' חֻלְקֵי הַמִּצְוֹת שֶׁהֵן הַמוֹשְׁכָלוֹת וְהַמְקוֹבְלוֹת וְהַחֻקִּים: וְהִיָּשֵׁר בְּעֵינָיו תַּעֲשֶׂה – אֵלּוֹ הַמִּשְׁפָּטִים שֶׁהֵם הַמִּצְוֹת הַמוֹשְׁכָלוֹת וְכֵן כָּתוּב (נַחֲמִיָּה ט) וַתִּתֵּן לָהֶם מִשְׁפָּטִים יִשְׂרָאֵל, וְהֶאֱזַנְתָּ לְמִצְוֹתָיו אֵלּוֹ הַמִּצְוֹת הַמְקוֹבְלוֹת שֶׁלֹּא יִמְצָאֻם שׁוֹם אָדָם בְּשִׁכְלוֹ וְצָרִיךְ הוּא לְהַתְּבוֹנֵן בָּהֶם וּלְהַטּוֹת לָהֶם אֹזֵן, וְלִכְךָ אָמַר וְהֶאֱזַנְתָּ לְמִצְוֹתָיו, וְכָתוּב

(משלי טו) אֶזֶן שֹׁמֵעַת תּוֹכַחַת חַיִּים: וּשְׁמַרְתָּ כָל חֻקָּיו – אֱלוֹ הַחֻקִּים שֶׁאֵין טַעַמָם נִגְלָה לְכָל. וַיֹּאמֶר הַכְּתוּב אִם אַתָּה מִקְיִים כָּל זֶה תִּהְיֶה נֹשְׁמֵר מִכָּל חוּלִי, אֵין צְרִיךְ לֹאמֵר שֶׁתִּהְיֶה נֹשְׁמֵר מִכָּל מִינֵי מַחְלַת מִצְרַיִם אֲשֶׁר יִדְעַת וְרֵאִיתָ בְּעֵינַיִם שֶׁנִּתְיַסְרוּ בָהֶם וְעַל כֵּן יִפְחָדִם בְּאוֹתָהּ מַחְלָה, כִּי אֵף מִן הַחוּלִי הַבֵּא לְאָדָם מַחוּלִי בְּטַבֵּעַ וּבְנוֹהֵג שֶׁבְעוֹלָם תִּהְיֶה נֹשְׁמֵר: כִּי אֲנִי הֵשֵׁם רוֹפֵאךְ – אֲשֶׁמֹר בְּרִיאוֹתְךָ שֶׁלֹּא יִבֵּא שׁוֹם חוּלִי עֲלֶיךָ כִּלְלֵ: רַבֵּינוּ בַחֲיִי, שְׁמוֹת טו:כו

And [He] said, “If you will diligently listen to the voice of the L-rd your G-d, [and will do that which is right in His sight, and will give ear to His commandments, and keep all His statutes, I will put none of these diseases upon you, which I have brought upon the Egyptians; for I am the L-rd that heals you.] (Ex. 15:26): On a simple level this means that if you fulfill the Torah you will never experience any sickness, neither the natural sicknesses which are a result of [certain] foods entering the body, nor unnatural sicknesses which come from sources outside of the body. The phrase, “the voice of the L-rd your G-d,” refers specifically to the Ten Commandments which were all expressed through His voice, as it says (Deuteronomy 4:12), “[And the L-rd spoke to you out of the midst of the fire;] you heard the sound of the words, [but saw no form; you only heard a voice,]” for we literally heard with our ears all of the Ten Commandments directly from His Mouth, as it says (Ex. 20:1), “And G-d spoke all these words, saying.” Afterwards, He mentions the three subdivisions of the commandments, i.e. those which are anticipated by human logic (*muskolos*), those which were specially given (*mikubolos*) [which are not anticipated by human logic but can be understood after careful analysis], and those that readily defy human understanding (*chukim*). **And will do that which is right in His sight (ibid.):** This refers to the *mishpatim*, those commandments that conform to human logic. Similarly it is written (Nehemiah 9:13), “. . . and You gave them right ordinances (*mishpatim yesharim*) . . .” The phrase, “and will give ear to His commandments,” refers to those commandment which were specially given, as no man would invent them through his logic. One needs to think deeply regarding them and to bend one’s ear to listen to them carefully. For that reason it is written regarding them, “and will give ear to His commandments,” as it is written (Proverbs 15:31), “The ear that listens to the reproof of life abides among the wise.” The phrase, “and keep all His statutes,” refers to those laws whose reasoning is not revealed to the masses. Scripture says regarding them that if you keep all of them, you will be protected against every form of sickness. It goes without saying that you will be protected from all of the ills of Egypt of which you have knowledge and saw with your eyes, which caused you torment [for fear of catching them,] and you therefore dread, but you will also be protected against any natural sicknesses. **For I am the L-rd that heals you (ibid.):** I will guard your health so that there will absolutely be no sickness [amongst you]. **Rabbainu Bachya, Exodus 15:26**

4) ושם שתיים עשרה וגו'. הודיע הכתוב זה הענין שהכין הקב"ה תחלה אותו מקום כדתניא במכילתא והובא ברמב"ן ר"א המודעי א' כיון שברא הקב"ה את עולמו ברא י"ב מבוועין נגד י"ב שבטים ושבעים תמרים נגד שבעים זקנים ומה ת"ל ויחנו שם על המים מלמד שהיו עסוקים בדברי תורה שניתן להם במרה. ובלי ספק שבא לכוונה דוקא בזה המקום אחר עסק שהיה במרה. ללמדנו ענין שנוגע לדבר שניתן לדעת במרה. והיינו דכמו שהודיע משה אשר זהו דרכה ש"ת להסתפק בצמצום. אבל זה אינו אלא בתחלת בואו לכח התורה המכונה דרכה ש"ת. אבל אחר שזכה והשיג מעלת התורה זוכה להתפרנס בריוח ובדברים המרחיבים דעת להוסיף לקח בתורה. וכדאי' במס' ע"ז ספ"א העוסק בתורה נכסיו מצליחין כו' וע' מש"כ ס' בראשית כ"ו ה' ומש"ה כמו שניתן להם במרה מדת הצמצום והסתפקות כך ניתן להם אחר שעסקו בתורה באילם שתיים עשרה עינות מים והוא בריוח גדול. ושבעים תמירים שהוא פרי המסוגל לתורה כדאיתא בתענית דף ט' ב' דאמר עולא מלא צנא דרובשא בזוזא ובבלאי לא עסקו באורייתא. העמק דבר, שמו"ט:כו

**And they came to Elim, where were twelve wells of water, and seventy palm trees; and they encamped there by the waters. (Exodus 15:27):** Scripture is telling us that the Holy One, blessed be He, had initially prepared this place, as we learned in the Mechilta, as quoted by Ramban, “Rabbi Elazar HaModai said: When the Holy One, blessed be He, created the world, He created twelve wells, which correspond to the twelve tribes, and seventy palm trees, which correspond to the seventy elders. What is Scripture teaching us by the words, “and they encamped there”? This teaches us that they were involved [at the time] studying the laws that were taught to them at Marah.” Without a doubt, this is coming to inform us that this place (Elim) was specifically designated to be their place after the incident of Marah, to teach them an [important] lesson. Now just as Moshe had informed them that the “way of Torah” is to make do with limited pleasures, [so too did he inform them that] this only applies at the time when a person is initially embracing a life of [excelling in] Torah study, which is referred to as, “the way of Torah” (*darko shel Torah*). But after one has merited and achieved the heights of Torah, he then merits to be provided with a [relatively] more luxurious lifestyle, having things that open up his mind which will enable him to further grow in Torah study, as it says in Avodah Zarah (19b), “He who is involved in Torah study will enjoy material success.” . . . For that reason, just as Marah was the model of living within a modest lifestyle, and making do with less, so too the alternate model was given to them in Elim, a place with twelve wells, which was luxurious [in comparison to their previous situation], together with the seventy date palms, a fruit that is specially fit for Torah study, as is stated in Taanis (9b): Ulla said, “How could the Babylonians who can purchase a whole basket of honey for only one zuz not be involved in Torah study?” **Haamek Davar, Exodus 15:27**

B.

(1) וַיִּלּוּנוּ כָּל עֵדֶת בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל עַל מֹשֶׁה וְעַל אֶהֱרֹן בְּמִדְבָּר: וַיֹּאמְרוּ אֲלֵהֶם בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל מִי יִתֵּן מוֹתָנוּ בְּיַד ד' בְּאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם בְּשִׁבְתָנוּ עַל סִיר הַבָּשָׂר בְּאֲכָלְנוּ לֶחֶם לְשִׁבְעָה כִּי הוֹצֵאתֶם אֹתָנוּ אֶל הַמִּדְבָּר הַזֶּה לְהָמִית אֶת כָּל הַקְּהָל הַזֶּה בְּרָעָב: וַיֹּאמֶר ד' אֶל מֹשֶׁה הַנְּנִי מִמַּטֵּיר לָכֶם לֶחֶם מִן הַשָּׁמַיִם וַיֵּצֵא הָעָם וַלְקָטוּ דָבָר יוֹם בְּיוֹמוֹ לְמַעַן אֲנִסְנוּ הַיֵּלֶךְ בְּתוֹרַתִי אִם לֹא: וְהָיָה בַּיּוֹם הַשְּׁשִׁי וְהַכִּינוּ אֶת אֲשֶׁר יִבְיֹאוּ וְהָיָה מִשְׁנֵה עַל אֲשֶׁר יִלְקָטוּ יוֹם | יוֹם: וַיֹּאמֶר מֹשֶׁה וְאַהֲרֹן אֶל כָּל בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל עֲרֹב וַיִּדְעַתֶּם כִּי ד' הוֹצִיא אֶתְכֶם מֵאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם: וּבִקֹּר וּרְאִיתֶם אֶת כְּבוֹד ד' בְּשִׁמְעוֹ אֶת תְּלַנְתִּיכֶם עַל ד' וְנִחַנּוּ מָה כִּי תִלְוּנוּ עֲלֵינוּ: שְׁמוֹת טוֹב-ז

And the whole congregation of the people of Israel murmured against Moses and Aaron in the wilderness; And the people of Israel said to them, Would to G-d we had died by the hand of the L-rd in the land of Egypt, when we sat by the meat pots, and when we did eat bread to the full; for you have brought us forth into this wilderness, to kill this whole assembly with hunger. Then said the L-rd to Moses: Behold, I will rain bread from heaven for you; and the people shall go out and gather a certain portion every day, that I may test them, whether they will walk in My Torah, or not. And it shall come to pass, that, on the sixth day, they shall prepare that which they bring in; and it shall be twice as much as they gather daily. And Moses and Aaron said to all the people of Israel, At evening, then you shall know that the L-rd has brought you out from the land of Egypt; And in the morning, then you shall see the glory of the L-rd; because He has heard your murmurings against the L-rd; and what are we, that you murmur against us? **Exodus 16:2-7**

(2) מִי יִתֵּן מוֹתָנוּ בְּיַד ד'. הֵינּוּ בַעַת שֶׁהָיָה יָד חֲזָקָה זֶה הַדְּבָר עַל יִשְׂרָאֵל שֶׁהָיָה בְּשִׁלְשֵׁת יָמֵי אַפְלָה וְהָכִי מִפְּרֶשׁ בְּמַכִּילְתָא לְוָאֵי מַתְנֵנוּ בְּשִׁלְשָׁה יָמֵי אַפְלָה שֶׁל מִצְרַיִם. וְהָנָה לְשׁוֹן הַתְּלוּנָה בְּכָלֵל פְּלֵא. וְלָמָּה לֹא אָמְרוּ מִי יִתֵּן וְעַבְדְּנוּ אֶת מִצְרַיִם וְכִמוֹ שֶׁאָמְרוּ בְּתְלוּנָה הַרְאֵשׁוֹנָה כִּי טוֹב לָנוּ עֲבוֹד אֶת

מצרים ממותנו במדבר. ותו ק' דיוק הלשון כי הוצאתם אותנו להמית את כל הקהל הזה ברעב. והכי מיבעי להמיתנו ברעב. או כי הוצאתם את כל הקהל הזה להמיתם ברעב. ותו קשה למה התלוננו כאן גם על אהרן יותר מתלונתם בעמדם על הים. אלא כך הענין שכאן לא התלוננו על עיקר יציאת מצרים לחשוב תועה שמשה עשה הכל מדעת עצמו ח"ו כמו שהיו סבורים לפני קריעת י"ס. שהרי אח"כ כתיב ויאמינו בד' ובמשה עבדו. הרי האמינו אשר ד' הוציאם. אלא כך היתה התלונה על משה ואהרן שחשבו כי ברצון ד' היה להוציא עדה קטנה של זקני הדור וצדיקים מעיקרם שהיו במצרים ולא כל המון העם אשר כמה מהם באמת לא רצו לצאת לולי משה ואהרן החוצבים להבות אש בדבריהם ועל שפתייהם לקחו לבכסם ופתום לצאת גם המה. אבל בל"ז היו מתים גם המה בתוך הרבה שלא נתרצו גם אח"כ לצאת ומתו בג' ימי אפלה שכך עלה ברצון שלא ישאר מזרע ישראל פרסה במצרים. וחשבו אשר אם עלו רק עדה קטנה היה די להסתפק בצאן ובקר עד בואם אל ארץ נושבת. אבל משה ואהרן הוציאו המון רבה מד"ע כמו שהוציא משה ערב רב בלי רצון ד' כידוע. ובזה הגיעו שאין מקום להתפרנס במדבר ובע"כ ימותו כולם אפילו זקני הדור והעדה שהיו ראויים לצאת. וזהו דבריהם בדיוק מי יתן מותנו ביד ד' כמו כל המתים בדבר בשביל שלא רצו לצאת: העמק דבר טז:ג

**Would to G-d we had died by the hand of the L-rd [in the land of Egypt] (Exodus 16:3):**

This is referring to the time of the "strong hand" i.e. the pestilence that affected Israel during the three days of darkness. And this is how the Mechilta explains it, "We wish we would have died during the three days of darkness." Now the use of the phrase, "murmured," is unusual. Furthermore, why didn't they say, "We wish that we would be still be slaves in Egypt," as they said in their original complaint [by the Red Sea] (Ex. 14:12), "For it had been better for us to serve the Egyptians, than that we should die in the wilderness"? In addition, the phraseology, "for you have brought us forth into this wilderness, to kill this whole assembly with hunger," seems imprecise. It should have been phrased either, "to kill us with hunger," or "for you have brought forth this whole assembly into this wilderness, to kill them with hunger." Moreover, why did they also murmur here against Aaron, whereas at the Red Sea they didn't? Rather, the explanation is as follows: Here they weren't complaining about the Exodus itself, harboring the mistaken notion that Moshe had done this all on his own, the thought that they had entertained prior to the splitting of the Sea, for subsequently it is written (Ex. 14:31), "And they believed in the L-rd and in Moses His servant." Behold they believed that G-d had taken them out! Their complaint against Moshe and Aaron, however, was that they thought that G-d's desire was to take out a small group of the elders of the generation and those who always remained righteous in Egypt, but not all of the masses of people, many of whom would never have left hadn't Moshe and Aaron inspired them with their fiery oratory and convinced them that they too should leave. But without them, they too would have died together with the many who didn't want to leave, even after [their oratory] and died in the three days of darkness, for that was G-d's plan, that no one of Israel should remain in Egypt. These people figured that if only a small group had left, their sheep and cattle would have sustained them [in the wilderness] until they reached civilization. But Moshe and Aaron, [in their opinion,] had taken out this tremendous group of people on their own, just as Moshe had taken out the mixed multitude on his own, without Divine permission, as is well known. But this brought about the present situation that there wasn't sufficient means to provide for all these people in the wilderness and as a result they would all die, even the elders of the generation and the "whole assembly" that were actually worthy of leaving. Their words, then, are phrased precisely: "Would to G-d we had died by the hand of the L-rd [in the land of Egypt]" like all of those who died in the pestilence [of the three days of darkness] because they didn't want to leave. **Haamek Davar, Exodus 16:3**

C.

ראו כי ד' נתן לְכֶם הַשֶּׁבֶת עַל כֵּן הוּא נָתַן לְכֶם בַּיּוֹם הַשְּׁשִׁי לֶחֶם יּוֹמִים שָׁבוּ | אִישׁ תַּחֲתָיו אֵל יֵצֵא אִישׁ מִמְּקוֹמוֹ בַּיּוֹם הַשְּׁבִיעִי: וַיִּשְׁבְּתוּ הָעָם בַּיּוֹם הַשְּׁבִיעִי: וַיִּקְרְאוּ בֵּית יִשְׂרָאֵל אֶת שְׁמוֹ מִן וְהוּא כְזֹרַע גֹּד לְבָן וְטַעְמוֹ כְּצִפְיַחַת בְּדָבָשׁ: וַיֹּאמֶר מֹשֶׁה זֶה הַדְּבָר אֲשֶׁר צִוָּה ד' מֵלֵא הָעֹמֵר מִמֶּנּוּ לְמִשְׁמֶרֶת לְדֹרֹתֵיכֶם לְמַעַן | יִרְאוּ אֶת הַלֶּחֶם אֲשֶׁר הָאֲכַלְתִּי אֶתְכֶם בַּמִּדְבָּר בְּהוֹצִיאִי אֶתְכֶם מֵאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם: וַיֹּאמֶר מֹשֶׁה אֶל אַהֲרֹן קַח צִנְצֻנֹת אַחַת וְתֵן שָׁמָּה מֵלֵא הָעֹמֵר מִן וְהִנֵּחַ אֹתוֹ לִפְנֵי ד' לְמִשְׁמֶרֶת לְדֹרֹתֵיכֶם: כֹּאֲשֶׁר צִוָּה ד' אֶל מֹשֶׁה וַיִּנְיַחְהוּ אַהֲרֹן לִפְנֵי הָעֵדוּת לְמִשְׁמֶרֶת: וּבִנְיַיִשְׂרָאֵל אָכְלוּ אֶת הַמָּן אַרְבָּעִים שָׁנָה עַד בָּאָם אֶל אֶרֶץ נוֹשֶׁבֶת אֶת הַמָּן אָכְלוּ עַד בָּאָם אֶל קְצֵה אֶרֶץ כְּנָעַן: וְהָעֹמֵר עֲשֵׂרִית הָאִיפָה הוּא: שְׁמוֹת טו:כט-לו

See, because the L-rd has given you the Sabbath, therefore He gives you on the sixth day the bread of two days; abide you every man in his place, let no man go out of his place on the seventh day. So the people rested on the seventh day. And the house of Israel called its name Manna; and it was like coriander seed, white; and its taste was like wafers made with honey. And Moses said, This is what the L-rd commands: Fill an omer of it to be kept for your generations; that they may see the bread with which I have fed you in the wilderness, when I brought you out from the land of Egypt. And Moses said to Aaron, Take a pot: and put an omer full of manna in it, and lay it up before the L-rd, to be kept for your generations. As the Lord commanded Moses, so Aaron laid it up before the Testimony, to be kept. And the people of Israel ate manna forty years, until they came to a land inhabited; they ate manna, until they came to the borders of the land of Canaan. And an omer is the tenth part of an ephah. **Exodus 16:29-36**

(2) בשעה שאמר ירמיה לישראל מפני מה אין אתם עוסקין בתורה אמרו לו אם אנו עוסקין בתורה במה נתפרנס באותה שעה הוציא להן צנצנת המן ואומר להם הדור אתם ראו דבר ד' המדבר הייתי לישראל אם ארץ מאפליה מדוע אמרו עמי רדנו לא נבוא עוד אליך (ירמיה ב) אבותיכם שעסקו בתורה ראו מהיכן נתפרנסו ואתם עסקו בתורה ואני אפרנס אתכם מזה. מדרש תנחומא פ' בשלח כא

At the time when Jeremiah said to Israel, "Why aren't you involved in Torah study?" they said to him, "If we become involved in Torah study, who is going to support us?" At that moment he brought out to them the pot of manna and said to them, "O generation, see the word of the L-rd. Have I been a wilderness to Israel? A land of darkness? Why do my people say, We are free; we will come no more to you? (Jeremiah 2:31) - See how our forefathers, who were [totally] involved in Torah study, were supported! If you involve yourselves with Torah study, I will support you from this same source." **Midrash Tanchuma, Parshas Beshalach, 21**

D.

(1) וַיִּסְעוּ כָּל עַדְת בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל מִמִּדְבַּר סִין לְמִסְעֵיהֶם עַל פִּי ד' וַיַּחֲנוּ בְּרִפְיִדִים וְאִין מִים לְשִׁתָּת הָעָם: וַיִּרְבַּ הָעָם עִם מֹשֶׁה וַיֹּאמְרוּ תָנוּ לָנוּ מִים וְנִשְׁתֶּה וַיֹּאמֶר לָהֶם מֹשֶׁה מַה תִּרְיֹבוּן עִמָּדִי מַה תִּנְסוּן אֶת ד': וַיִּצְמָא שָׁם הָעָם לַמִּים וַיִּלְךְ הָעָם עַל מֹשֶׁה וַיֹּאמֶר לָמָּה זֶה הָעֲלִיתָנוּ מִמִּצְרַיִם לְהַמִּית אֹתִי וְאֶת בְּנֵי וְאֶת מִקְנֵי בְצָמָא: וַיִּצְעַק מֹשֶׁה אֶל ד' לֵאמֹר מַה אֶעֱשֶׂה לָעָם הַזֶּה עוֹד מֵעַט וּסְקָלְנִי: וַיֹּאמֶר ד' אֶל מֹשֶׁה עֲבֹר לִפְנֵי הָעָם וְקַח אֶתְךָ מִזִּקְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל וּמִטָּף אֲשֶׁר הִכִּיתָ בוּ אֶת הַיָּאֵר קַח בְּיָדְךָ וְהִלַּכְתָּ: הֲנֵנִי עֹמֵד לִפְנֶיךָ שָׁם | עַל הַצּוּר בְּחָרֵב וְהִכִּיתָ בַּצּוּר וַיִּצְאוּ מִמֶּנּוּ מִים וְשָׁתָה הָעָם וַיַּעַשׂ כֵּן מֹשֶׁה לְעֵינֵי זִקְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל: וַיִּקְרָא שֵׁם הַמָּקוֹם מִסֵּה וּמְרִיבָה עַל רִיב | בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל וְעַל נִסְתָּם אֶת ד' לֵאמֹר הִישׁ ד' בְּקֶרְבָנוּ אִם אֵין: שְׁמוֹת יז:א-ז

And all the congregation of the people of Israel journeyed from the wilderness of Sin, after their journeys, according to the commandment of the L-rd, and camped in Rephidim; and there was no water for the people to drink. Therefore the people complained to Moses, and said, Give us water that we may drink. And Moses said to them, Why do you strive with me? why do you test the L-rd? And the people thirsted there for water; and the people murmured against Moses, and said, Why have you brought us up out of Egypt, to kill us and our children and our cattle with thirst? And Moses cried to the L-rd, saying, What shall I do to this people? they are almost ready to stone me. And the L-rd said to Moses, Go on before the people, and take with you of the elders of Israel; and your rod, with which you struck the river, take in your hand, and go. Behold, I will stand before you there upon the rock in Horeb; and you shall strike the rock, and water shall come out of it, that the people may drink. And Moses did so in the sight of the elders of Israel. And he called the name of the place Massah, and Meribah, because of the chiding of the people of Israel, and because they tempted the L-rd, saying, Is the L-rd among us, or not? **Exodus 17:1-7**

(2) ואין מים לשתות העם. לעם מיבעי או לשתיית העם אלא בא ללמד כי באמת עוד לא צמאו כלל וכמו במדבר שור כמש"כ לעיל ט"ו כ"ד אבל העם אמרו כי אין מים לשתות ומשה הבין הדבר ע"כ אמר: מה תריבון עמדי. לאיזה תועלת הלא לא אוכל לעשות מאומה מבלי דבר ד'. ואם רצונכם להגיש התלונה לפני ד'. מה תנסון את ד'. הלא הוא יודע שאין אתם צמאין רק אתם חפצים לנסותו. ובזה שתקו: ויצמא שם העם למים. הגיע עונש המנסים שהשיגם צמאון באמת וכדתנן שלהי מס' פאה מי שא"צ ליטול ונוטל אינו מת מן הזקנה עד שיהי נצרך לבריות שנא' ודורש רעה תבואנו. והכי תניא בכתובות דף ס"ח המסמא את עינו והמצבה את כריסו כו' אינו נפטר מן העולם עד שיבא לידי כך. וכך הגיע להקובלים על צמאון בחנם שהגיעו לידי כך אלא לדורות אין העונש בא מיד אלא בימי זקנה. משא"כ במדבר במקום גלוי שכינה הגיע הדין מיד. וכדבר ד' במן שיהי' דבר יום ביומו. וכמש"כ שם: למה זה העליתנו ממצרים להמית אותי. לא אמרו הוצאתנו ממצרים כלשון התלונה לעיל י"ד י"א ט"ז ד'. דבאמת כבר האמינו בד' שברצונו ית' יצאו וכמש"כ לעיל בתלונה שלפני המן. אלא התלוננו על משה שבסיבתו כולם מתנהגים למעלה מן הטבע כאשר כן הוא באמת ומש"ה מי שאינו ראוי למעלה זו שנדרשת זהירות יתירה הרי הוא חסר צרכיו וזה גורם להמית אותי וגו'. ומש"ה החלו בל"ר העליתנו היינו כל הקהל וסיימו בל"י להמית אותי היינו כל יחיד המתלונן על עצמו. ובזה מובן מה שכאן התלוננו על משה לבדו ולא על אהרן משום שהבינו שרק מדת משה הביאם לזה: העמק דבר, שמות יז:א-ג

**And there was no water for the people to drink [literally: no water to drink “the people”]. (Ex. 17:1):** It should have said, “for the people,” or “for the drinking of the people.” It chose this phraseology in order to teach us that in truth they were not yet at all thirsty, just as was the case in the Shur wilderness, as I wrote above (Ex. 15:24). The people merely said (complained) that there was no water to drink. Moshe understood the full import [of their complaint] and consequently he said, “**why do you strive with me?**” What purpose is there? Behold I cannot do anything without a communication from G-d. And if you want to present your complaint before G-d, “**why do you test the L-rd?**” You really know that you’re not thirsty. You just want to test Him. With this they became silent. **And the people thirsted there for water (Exodus 17:3):** Those that tested G-d received their punishment, as they truly now experienced thirst, as we learned at the end of the tractate Peah: He who doesn’t need to take [from charity] and nonetheless takes, will eventually become needy before the end of his life, as it says (Proverbs 11:27), “. . . but evil comes to him who searches for it.” Similarly we learned in Kesubos 68, “[One who fakes poverty by] pretending to blind his eye or swell his belly [from hunger] . . .



will succumb to that condition before he leaves this world.” Similarly, those who complained unnecessarily about thirst eventually suffered from that condition. The only difference is that normally the punishment is not meted out immediately but only in old age. Whereas in the desert, where the Divine Presence was manifest, the judgement was meted out immediately, as it was by the manna, which fell each day, [but with the degree of its accessibility varying each day based upon the righteousness of the gatherer,] as I wrote there. **Why have you brought us up out of Egypt, to kill me (us) and my (our) children and my (our) cattle with thirst? (Exodus 17:3):** They didn’t say, “[why did you] take us out of Egypt,” the expression used in previous complaints (Exodus 14:11, 16:4), as they already believed that it was G-d’s will that they leave, as we wrote above regarding the complaint that was made before [the coming down of] the manna. Rather, their complaint was registered specifically against Moshe, who was the cause that they should be dealt with in a supernatural way, which was truly the case. Consequently, a person who was not worthy of such a special [relationship with G-d], which demanded great forethought and care, would be lacking his basic needs, which led to, “kill me (us) and my (our) children and my (our) cattle with thirst.” For that reason, they began their [sentence] in the plural form (“brought us up out of Egypt”) referring to the entire community, and ended the sentence in the singular form (“to kill me (us) and my (our) children and my (our) cattle with thirst”). In other words, every individual was bemoaning their own fate. With this we can understand why here they only complained about Moshe, but not about Aaron, because it was only because of the special quality of Moshe did they come to this [supernatural] relationship. **Haamek Davar, Exodus 17:1-3**

(3) והכית בצור. שאם היו זוכים היה די בדבור אבל עתה יצטרך להכות ולא אמר והכית את הצור רק הכית בצור היינו שיפעול השתנות בצור עצמו כי הצור והחלמיש לא נמצאו בתוכו מעיני מים כמו שנמצאו בסלע שאמר (בפ' חוקת) ונתן מימיו, כי הסלע שהוא רך יש לו מים של עצמו לא כן הצור הקשה והיה מוכרח שהצור עצמו נתהפך למים. מלבי"ם, שמות יז:

**And you shall strike (in) the rock (Ex. 17:6):** Had they merited, it would have been sufficient [to produce the water just] with speech. But now he needed to strike [the rock]. Now it doesn’t say, “strike (*ess*) the rock,” but “strike (*b'*) *in* the rock,” i.e. affect a change in the rock itself, for in igneous rock (*tzur*) [such as granite or basalt] you will not find underground streams [or artesian wells] as you will find in limestone (*sela*), as it says (Numbers 20:8), “and it shall give forth its water, for limestone, which is soft, [often] contains its own [source of] water. Whereas igneous rock (granite) is hard and he was forced to turn the stone itself into water. **Malbim, Ex. 17:6**

(4) היש ד' בקרבנו אם אין. הדבר פלא איך נסתפקו אחרי רואים עמוד אש וענן ועוד הרבה נסים דכ"ע ידעי דלא עביד אלא קוב"ה. וגם כבר כתיב ויאמינו בד' ובמשה עבדו. אמנם יש ע"ז שני אופנים צודקים. חדא שידעו היטב שכעת ד' הולך עמם ועושה נסים. אבל כ"ז אינו אלא בעוד משה חי וקים והקב"ה מוליך לימין משה זרוע תפארתו. אבל לא לעולם חוסן משה קיים בישראל. ואנו מחויבים להאמין שגם בלי נסים נגלים הקב"ה והשגחתו שורה בקרבנו. ועל דבר זה נסתפקו היש ד' בקרבנו בלי כח משה. ומשגיח עלינו בהליכות הטבע ובשביל חסרון אמונה זו בא מלחמת עמלק ביחוד כאשר יבואר לפנינו. שנית נסתפקו אם יודע ד' מה שבקרבם אם צמאים המה או לא. וכ"ה ברבה היש ד' בקרבנו במעין שלנו. ובאמת שני האופנים הללו תלויים זב"ז. אם הקב"ה יודע מחסור כל אדם ממילא מובן שיכול לתקנו בהשגחתו. אע"ג שאינו ראוי לנס נגלה. העמק דבר, שמות יז:

**Is the L-rd among us, or not? (Exodus 17:7):** This thing is amazing. After they saw the pillar of fire and so many other miracles, which were obviously the work of the Holy One, blessed be He, how could they still harbor doubts? There are, however, two valid approaches. One is that they knew very well that presently G-d was walking amongst them and performing miracles. But all of this would only last as long as Moshe was alive and well, with the power of the glory of the Holy One, blessed be He, at Moshe's right side. But Moshe would not live forever and we are required to believe that even without open miracles, the Holy One, blessed be He, and His Providence, rests in our midst. Regarding this they were in doubt, "Is the L-rd amongst us?" without the power of Moshe, and will He supervise us in a natural way [when Moshe is gone]? Because of this lack of faith, the war with Amalek specifically came. The second approach is that they were in doubt whether G-d knew what was happening with them. [Did He really know whether] they were thirsty or not? This is the interpretation in the Midrash Rabbah, "Is the L-rd amongst us,' i.e. regarding our water source (lit. fountain)." The truth is that both explanations are interdependent. If the Holy One, blessed be He, knows what everyone is lacking, it would automatically follow that He would be able to improve their situation through His Providence, even though they weren't worthy of an open miracle. **Haamek Davar, Exodus 17:7**

E.

(1) וַיָּבֹא עֲמֹלֵק וַיִּלָּחֶם עִם יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּרֵפִידִם: וַיֹּאמֶר מֹשֶׁה אֶל יְהוֹשֻׁעַ בְּחַר לָנוּ אַנְשִׁים וְצֵא הִלָּחֶם בְּעֲמֹלֵק מִחַר אֲנָכִי נֹצֵב עַל רֹאשׁ הַגִּבְעָה וּמִטָּה הָאֵל-לֵהִימָּן בְּיָדֵי: וַיַּעַשׂ יְהוֹשֻׁעַ כְּאֲשֶׁר אָמַר לוֹ מֹשֶׁה לְהִלָּחֶם בְּעֲמֹלֵק וּמֹשֶׁה אֶהְרֹן וְחֹזֵר עָלָיו רֹאשׁ הַגִּבְעָה: וְהָיָה כְּאֲשֶׁר יָרִים מֹשֶׁה יָדוֹ וְגִבֹר יִשְׂרָאֵל וְכֹאֲשֶׁר יִנָּיֵחַ יָדוֹ וְגִבֹר עֲמֹלֵק: וַיְדִי מֹשֶׁה כְּבָדִים וַיִּקְחוּ אָבֶן וַיְשִׁימוּ תַחְתָּיו וַיֵּשֶׁב עָלֶיהָ וְאֶהְרֹן וְחֹזֵר תָּמְכוּ בְּיָדָיו מִזֶּה אֶחָד וּמִזֶּה אֶחָד וַיְהִי יָדָיו אָמוּנָה עַד בֹּא הַשָּׁמֶשׁ: וַיַּחֲלֵשׁ יְהוֹשֻׁעַ אֶת עֲמֹלֵק וְאֶת עֲמוֹ לְפִי חָרָב: וַיֹּאמֶר ד' אֶל מֹשֶׁה כְּתֹב זֶאת זְכוּרֹן בְּסֵפֶר וְשִׁים בְּאָזְנֵי יְהוֹשֻׁעַ כִּי מָחָה אֶמְחָה אֶת זְכוּר עֲמֹלֵק מִתַּחַת הַשָּׁמַיִם: וַיְכֹן מֹשֶׁה מִזְבֵּחַ וַיִּקְרָא שְׁמוֹ ד' | נְסִי: וַיֹּאמֶר כִּי יָד עַל כָּס י-ה מִלְחָמָה לְד' בְּעֲמֹלֵק מִדֶּר דֶּר: שְׁמוֹת יוֹז-טז

Then came Amalek, and fought with Israel in Rephidim. And Moses said to Joshua, Choose for us men, and go out, fight with Amalek; tomorrow I will stand on the top of the hill with the rod of G-d in my hand. So Joshua did as Moses had said to him, and fought with Amalek; and Moses, Aaron, and Hur went up to the top of the hill. And it came to pass, when Moses held up his hand, that Israel prevailed; and when he let down his hand, Amalek prevailed. But Moses' hands were heavy; and they took a stone, and put it under him, and he sat on it; and Aaron and Hur stayed up his hands, the one on the one side, and the other on the other side; and his hands were steady until the going down of the sun. And Joshua discomfited Amalek and his people with the edge of the sword. And the L-rd said to Moses, Write this for a memorial in a book, and recite it in the ears of Joshua; for I will completely put out the remembrance of Amalek from under heaven. And Moses built an altar, and called its name A-donai-Nissi; For he said, Because the L-rd has sworn that the L-rd will have war with Amalek from generation to generation. **Exodus 17:8-16**

(2) וַיֹּאמֶר מֹשֶׁה אֶל יְהוֹשֻׁעַ. רֵצָה מֹשֶׁה רַבִּינוּ לְהִרְאוֹת לְיִשְׂרָאֵל כַּח הַשְּׁגַחַת ד' עֲלֵיהֶם גַּם בְּלִי נֹס נִגְלָה ע"כ סִידֵר מִלְחָמָה זֹו בְּסִדֵּר הַטְּבַע. וּבִאֲשֶׁר לֹא נֹוצַר מֹשֶׁה רַבִּינוּ לִכְךָ. ע"כ צוּה אֶת יְהוֹשֻׁעַ: בְּחַר לָנוּ אַנְשִׁים. גְּבוּרִים כְּדֶרֶךְ מִלְחָמָה בְּדֵה"ט . . . שֶׁהֵמָּה מְסוּגָלִים בִּיחֹוד לְמִלְחָמָה טְבַעִית כְּמִש"כ כ"פ: . . . וְכֹאֵן הַצְּלִיחַ יְהוֹשֻׁעַ וְאַנְשָׁיו וְנִתְגַּבְּרוּ בְּהַשְּׁגַחַת פְּרִטִית לְפִי חָרָב. מִשׁוּם שֶׁהַשְּׁתַעֲבָדוּ לְבַבָּם לְאַבִּיהֶם שְׁבַשְׁמִים וְנִתְגַּבְּרוּ: הַעֲמַק דְּבַר, שְׁמוֹת יוֹז

**And Moses said to Joshua (Exodus 17:9):** Moshe Rabbainu (our teacher) wanted to show Israel the power of Divine Providence, even without an open miracle. For that reason he arranged that this battle should be fought naturally, [not miraculously]. And since Moshe Rabbainu was not especially gifted in this regard, he commanded Yehoshua [to lead the troops]. **Choose for us men, and go out, fight with Amalek (ibid.):** These men were warriors and could fight a natural (non-supernatural) war. . . . and were specially gifted to fight such a war. . . . Here Yehoshua and his men were successful and their swords vanquished their enemy through Divine Providence. But their success was solely due to the fact that they had fully committed themselves to serve their Father in Heaven. **Haamek Davar, Ex. 17:9**

(3) כתב זאת זכרון בספר. . . מאז יצאו ישראל ממצרים ומוכן היה לקבל את התורה. הרע לאוה"ע ביותר. ועמלק הוא ראשית גוים השונה את ההשגחה תכלית שנאה. . . והבטיח הקב"ה כי תגיע שעה שימחה זכר עמלק היינו תכלית תעודתו שתהי' הליכות הטבע חפשי בלי השגחה לפי מעשים. זה הרצון יהי נשכח מאוה"ע והיה ד' למלך על כל הארץ. וזהו ימות המשיח שיגיע ב"ב. . . העמק דבר, שמות יז:ד

**Write this for a memorial in a book (Exodus 17:14):** . . . From the time Israel left Egypt and were prepared to receive the Torah, the nations of the world were extremely distressed, but Amalek was the first of the nations that hated Divine Providence with absolute hatred. . . . The Holy One, blessed be He, promised that there will come a time that the memory of Amalek will be blotted out, i.e. those whose goal is that the world should run naturally, free of Divine intervention and retribution. [There will come a time when] that wish will be forgotten from the nations of the world and G-d will rule over the world. That will occur at the time of Moshiach. **Haamek Davar, Exodus 14:14**