

And Moshe took the bones of Yosef with him (13:19) – Rashi cites the Midrash that Yosef made the family order their children to swear in each generation to take the bones of Yosef out with them. Why would the Shavuah taken originally not be binding on the future generations? **Rav Schachter Shlita** would answer in the name of the **Rochachover** that there is a difference between a Shavuas Yachid and a Shavuah for the Tzibbur. Before the Maamad Har Sinai there was no concept of Tzibbur and therefore no way to guarantee that future generations would follow the path of the original Shavuah. Therefore they took a new oath each generation until Maamad Har Sinai.

They fell to the depths like stone (15:5) – At certain points the Egyptian people are identified as lead, stone and straw. Why such different descriptions of the ways the Egyptians died? **Rashi** explains that the differences reflected the different styles of the way they experienced punishment. Those who were less evil to the Jews died faster. The worse suffered in the process of their deaths. **Rav Shteinman ztl.** explains that this is why in the Shiras HaYam at times the Egyptians are thought of in the single and at other times they are identified in the plural. When they were united as a nation and acted nationally, the single form of pronoun is used. When the people were segmented and their response to Bnei Yisrael diverse, they are identified in the plural because they acted as individuals.

The nations heard and trembled (15:14) – Why is it so important to know how the nations reacted to the news of Kriyas Yam Suf? It seems to get a disproportionate amount of focus in the Shirah, Why? **Rav Belsky ztl.** explains that the word Az appears twice in the Shirah. It highlights the two ways one can handle moments that s/he is not prepared for in life. In the first way, Az is harnessed by Bnei Yisrael to see the glory of Hashem and to appreciate it. In the other way – the way of the other nations, it is a means of becoming overwhelmed and not rising to the occasion – choosing to be overtaken and immobilized by our fear. The method we use depends on how we can handle the world with a higher power running it.

And Miriam took the drum (15:20) – After all of the joint singing why do we single out Miriam's contribution? **Rav Volch Shlita** explains that the significance is not the song. Singing in the moment is a natural response to a miracle. The trick is to remember the event afterward. Miriam's continuation of the song is the guarantee that even in the future the song and its impact will not be lost on the people. Whenever a chance to thank Hashem will come, songs will be sung by Bnei Yisrael to recognize the greatness due Hashem.

There He gave them law and statute (15:25) – **Rashi** explains, based on the gemara in Sanhedrin, that this means that God commanded the Jews to observe three mitzvot even BEFORE receiving the rest of the Torah at Sinai. The three mitzvot were Shabbat, para aduma, and dinim (which Rashi later explains to refer to kibbud av va-em). **Rav Amital ztl.** would use this Rashi to help Chozrei B'Teshuva to learn a place to begin. He advised a three part approach:

1. Start by observing Shabbat. If it is too hard to be a Jew seven days a week, then try at least one day a week.
2. Pick any mitzva bein adam le-chaveiro such as kibbud av va-em and observe it scrupulously. It is important to stress that Halakha does not relate only to matters between man and God, but also legislates interpersonal ethics.

3. Para aduma: you must choose a mitzva which you don't understand and observe it as well. One must realize that despite all the rationale behind the mitzvot, ultimately we cannot understand everything and we do not base our observance only on our rational appreciation of the mitzvot.

They came to Eilim and there they found 12 wells and 70 date palms (15:27) – Why was this so significant? Moreover 70 palm trees is not such a large number why is it significant? **Rav Simcha Zissel Broide ztl.** explained that there is a strong connection between the 12 and the 70 here and the 12 Shevatim and the 70 Zekanim. The significance is crucial. The dependence we have as a nation on the preservation of the ideals of the Shevatim and the Kavod due to the Zekanim is what keeps us strong. Already as the fledgling nation was growing, we were reminded to remain strong contributors from our position of strength and be rooted in a Torah life that is led by the fruit of the labors of the Zekanim.

And Amalek came (17:8) – How could the nation about whom it is written that they saw the hand of Hashem become the nation attacked by Amalek? **Ohr HaChaim** explains that they were lazy in their study of Torah – that they didn't remain trained for the battles it required so they fought a different battle – that of Amalek. **Kli Yakar** adds that the power of Amalek is like the power of the fly – it is a weak creation until it is placed on an open wound. When that happens it can place a deadly infection that can bring a whole body down. **Rav Nosson Tzvi Finkel ztl.** adds that this is what happened with Amalek. They were like a fly who sought out and found the piercing in the armor. That is why we deal with them so harshly.

Haftarah: She told him that I will go with you but your glory will not be your own because Hashem will deliver (lit. Sell) Sisra into the hand of a woman (4:9) – Which woman is she referring to? **Redak** assumes that the reference is to Yael but he is troubled with the explanation choosing instead to reference the fact that if she, Devorah, were to go it would be assumed that the victory was hers and not Barak's. Hence, the woman referenced here is Devorah. **Ralbag** too, assumes that the reference is to Devorah. **Rav Meir Simcha of Dvinsk ztl.** asks a different question – to whom was Sisra "sold"? He explains that it was Yael who had to give up her marriage to Chever HaKeinee as a result of the Sisra episode – this was the cost of defending the Jewish nation and it was to her that the Possuk referred.