

# בְּשַׁלַּח

## BESHALACH/WHEN HE SENT Shemot/Exodus 13:17-17:16

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This week's parasha has been called "**The Parasha of the Journey.**" Last week the **Israelites left Egypt**, and next week's parasha will have them **arriving at Mt. Sinai**. They will **stay** there at **Mt. Sinai** until **Bemidbar** (Numbers) **10**. Thus this week we are in that very interesting time frame of the **seven weeks** between **Passover** and the **giving of the Torah**, known as "**the counting of the omer.**"

The **nation's journey to Sinai** appears in a **simple chiastic structure**:

- A. **Threat** posed by Egypt
- B. **Discontent** over **water** at Marah
- C. **Request for food** at Sin, includes the giving of the **manna**
- B. **Discontent** over **water** at Rephidim
- A. **Threat** posed by Amalek

The **center event (C)** in our chiastic contains by far the **most details** in the text. There are several **literary parallels** between the **giving of the manna** and the **Passover sacrifice** which I would encourage you to search out on your own.

The first thing that is addressed in our parasha is the **choice of the route**:

*Shemot 13:17 Then it came to pass, when Pharaoh had let the people go, that Elohim did not lead them by way of the land of the Philistines, although that was near; for Elohim said, "Lest perhaps the people change their minds when they see war, and return to Egypt." <sup>18</sup> So Elohim led the people around by way of the wilderness of the Red Sea. And the children of Israel went up in orderly ranks out of the land of Egypt.*

**Why did Elohim not choose the shortest route** to Canaan? **Why** would He be **concerned about war** with the **Philistines** or anyone else for that matter? The fact is they would **soon encounter war** with **Amalek**, the **hated adversary of Israel**. Some of the rabbis teach that **Elohim** wanted to **avoid** having **Israel engage in war** while they were still **very close to Egypt**, since they may become **fearful** and **turn back** as verse 17 indicates. On the other hand, once they had entered a **certain distance** into the **wilderness**, they would be **too far away from Egypt** and **less tempted to return**.

But **why** would the **Israelites** even **think of returning to Egypt**? **Egypt** was the place where they **cried out in bondage**. The problem was, **psychologically**, they were **still a nation of slaves**. They were **not yet prepared to fight any battles**. What if they were **defeated** and **subjugated** by an **even crueler nation** than Egypt? So the **detour** was meant to **strengthen** them so that they would have **time** to become a **nation capable of fighting** for their **existence**.

**Rav Yoel Bin-Nun** expands on this **reason** for a **detour**. At this time **Egypt's kingdom and power** extended all the way to and **included** some of **Canaan**:

"...the **exodus** from Egypt was carried out with **Pharaoh's agreement** and approval...the **route** through the land of the **Philistines** was an **imperial, military road** under **Egyptian control**...If **Israel** were to **journey** on the road of the **land of the Philistines** it would have **demonstrated obedient, friendly behavior** towards **Pharaoh**, and **recognition** of his **continued patronage**. At the border they would present **Pharaoh's stamp of approval**, and likewise at every fortress along the way. The **commanders**

of the **Egyptian army** would **salute** and **open the barrier**, and then **report to Pharaoh** that his subjects, the **Israelites**, had **passed through by his license**. The **Israelites** would likewise dispatch **appropriate letters of thanks**....Were they to have **left Egypt** in this manner, **Pharaoh** would **never have pursued them**. He would **give them the mountain regions of Canaan** and make them **his agents, representatives of his sovereignty** there. At the **approach of war** the **nation** would **forfeit its independence** and **'return to Egypt'** – to behave like **subjects of Pharaoh's patronage**."

This explains why **passing through the land of the Philistines** was **not the right way** for the **Israelites** to **enter the Promised Land**. They were **still** somewhat **enslaved to Egypt** (symbolic of this **world**) and still **giving Pharaoh** some of the **credit** for **"letting them go."** When we get to the **Promised Land** it will be all **because the Father** has **arranged it**, and not because of any **"deals"** or **"compromises"** we make with the **world**. He wants **ALL the credit** for **acting on behalf of His people**.

All of a sudden, the **drama** of the **exodus** is **interrupted** with an account of the **bones of Yosef (Joseph)**:

*Shemot 13:19 And Moshe took the bones of Yosef with him, for he had placed the children of Israel under solemn oath, saying, "Elohim will surely visit you, and you shall carry up my bones from here with you."*

Let's take a moment to look at the **differences** between **Moshe** and **Yosef**:

- **Yosef** begins **within the family of Jacob/Israel** and **moves outside** of it as he **rises to power in Egypt**
- **Moshe** begins as a **Prince of Egypt** and **moves into the family of Israel** when he **challenges the Egyptians**
- **Yosef** brings the children of **Israel back to Egypt**
- **Moshe** takes the **Israelites out of Egypt**
- **Yosef** gives all his **wisdom and energy to Egypt**
- **Moshe** gives all his **wisdom and energy to the Israelites**

With his very last breath, **Yosef** **professed his faith** that **יהוה** would **eventually return the Israelites** to their **homeland**, and made his **brothers swear** that his **remains** would be **taken** with them as well. In the **commentary** on **Vayechi**, we saw how **Yosef's bones** picture the **whole house of Israel**. Thus we can make the assumption that as **all of Israel leaves Egypt** (this world), she will do so **under the direction of Moshe** (Torah). However, it is not until the **last minute** that the **"bones of Yosef"** **join with Moshe**.

In **Shemot 14**, we are told of a **specific campsite**:

*Shemot 14:1 Now יהוה spoke to Moshe, saying:<sup>2</sup> "Speak to the children of Israel, that they turn and camp before Pi Hahiroth, between Migdol and the sea, opposite Baal Zephon; you shall camp before it by the sea.*

The **plagues of Egypt** had each been directed toward a specific **god of Egypt**. The **ArtScroll commentary** tells us that **Baal Zephon** was an **idol of Egypt** that had **not yet been destroyed**. The name translates as **"Lord of the North,"** but the **etymology** of **Zephon** points to something **"concealed"** or **"dark."** Indeed, they seem to be in the **territory of the evil one**. And that is probably why **Pharaoh** gave **chase**. He may have **thought** that **this god would work with him** to lay a **trap against the Israelites**.

Thus **Pharaoh** pursues his **former slaves**, and the **Torah** gives us some **information** about the **attitude of the Israelites**:

*Shemot 14:6 So he made ready his chariot and took his people with him.<sup>7</sup> Also, he took six hundred choice chariots, and all the chariots of Egypt with captains over every one of them.<sup>8</sup> And יִיָּהּ hardened the heart of Pharaoh king of Egypt, and he pursued the children of Israel; and **the children of Israel went out with a high hand.**<sup>9</sup> So the Egyptians pursued them, all the horses and chariots of Pharaoh, his horsemen and his army, and overtook them camping by the sea beside Pi Hahiroth, before Baal Zephon.*

What does it mean when it says that “**the children of Israel went out with a high hand?**” Many translations say that **Israel** left “**boldly.**” It seems to imply that they left in a very **public display of unflinching courage.** But....**comparing** this phrase with **other places in the Torah**, the phrase “**a high hand**” appears as a **negative expression**, implying **exaggerated pride.** For example, this is how a person who **intentionally commits a sin** is described:

*Bemidbar/Numbers 15:30 ' But the person who does anything with a high hand, whether he is native-born or a stranger, that one brings reproach on יִיָּהּ, and he shall be cut off from among his people.*

In Devarim, it is written that יִיָּהּ will **punish** an **enemy** who otherwise would take the **credit for a victory**:

*Devarim/Deuteronomy 32:27 Had I not feared the wrath of the enemy, Lest their adversaries should misunderstand, Lest they should say, "Our hand is high; And it is not יִיָּהּ who has done all this."*

So based on the **above two verses** in the **Torah** where “**a high hand**” appears, it is clear that this is an **expression** conveying **exaggerated pride.** It is probable that the **Israelites left Egypt** with a feeling of **satisfaction**, almost as if they took **some credit for their redemption.** This could have something to do with why they were **immediately pursued by Egypt.** It was another **educational experience** in learning **dependence on the Almighty.** Any **pride** that they had was soon **replaced by fear of the Egyptians:**

*Shemot 14:10 And when Pharaoh drew near, the children of Israel lifted their eyes, and behold, the Egyptians marched after them. So **they were very afraid**, and the children of Israel cried out to יִיָּהּ.*

Their “**high hand**” which was followed by a **fear of the Egyptians**, will evolve into a **fear of Elohim** as they witness what the great “**hand of Elohim**” does against **Egypt:**

*Shemot 14:31 Thus Israel saw the great hand which יִיָּהּ had done against Egypt; so the people feared יִיָּהּ, and believed יִיָּהּ and His servant Moshe.*

The **detour** that the **Israelites have taken** through the **wilderness** has **not prevented** them from engaging in **war.** They soon find themselves in an **impossible situation.** There was a **ridge of mountains terminating at the sea on each side** and the **Egyptians had closed off** any potential way of **escape**, hemming them in completely. In the **face of conflict**, the **truth** of why יִיָּהּ had **not wanted** to take them **through the land of the Philistines** “**lest the people change their minds when they see war and return to Egypt,**” now becomes clear:

*Shemot 14:11* Then they said to Moshe, "Because there were no graves in Egypt, have you taken us away to die in the wilderness? Why have you so dealt with us, to bring us up out of Egypt? <sup>12</sup> "Is this not the word that we told you in Egypt, saying, 'Let us alone that we may serve the Egyptians?' For it would have been better for us to serve the Egyptians than that we should die in the wilderness."

This is not good. They seem to prefer serving the Egyptians versus trusting in the One who has redeemed them and brought them to this point! Moshe responds to their fear with words that ring through the ages as a strength to our own faith today:

*Shemot 14:13* And Moshe said to the people, "Do not be afraid. Stand still, and see the salvation (Yeshua - יְשׁוּעָה) of יהוה, which He will accomplish for you today. For the Egyptians whom you see today, you shall see again no more forever. <sup>14</sup> "יהוה will fight for you, and you shall hold your peace."

This particular battle with the Egyptians will be waged with the Israelites standing on the sidelines, "holding their peace." He says, in effect, do nothing. יהוה /Yeshua will do it all. The victory against the Egyptians was a divine act, not a human one. What Moshe literally says to the people in verse 13 is:

"Stand still and see the Yeshua (יְשׁוּעָה) of יהוה!!"

יהוה told Moshe to speak to the Israelites and order them to move forward. The sea parted and from here the story is well-known. It was truly a very literal crossing, but I'd like to take a look at some of the symbolism of the divided sea. The divided sea reminds us of the ancient ceremony of covenant making, known as the "cutting of a covenant." In the ceremony animals are divided and the parties to the covenant walk between them. We read of this in the cutting of the Abrahamic covenant:

*Bereshith/Genesis 15:9* So He said to him, "Bring Me a three-year-old heifer, a three-year-old female goat, a three-year-old ram, a turtledove, and a young pigeon." <sup>10</sup> Then he brought all these to Him and cut them in two, down the middle, and placed each piece opposite the other; but he did not cut the birds in two.... <sup>12</sup> Now when the sun was going down, a deep sleep fell upon Abram; and behold, horror and great darkness fell upon him. <sup>13</sup> Then He said to Abram: "Know certainly that your descendants will be strangers in a land that is not theirs, and will serve them, and they will afflict them four hundred years. <sup>14</sup> "And also the nation whom they serve I will judge; afterward they shall come out with great possessions. <sup>15</sup> "Now as for you, you shall go to your fathers in peace; you shall be buried at a good old age. <sup>16</sup> "But in the fourth generation they shall return here, for the iniquity of the Amorites is not yet complete." <sup>17</sup> And it came to pass, when the sun went down and it was dark, that behold, there appeared a smoking oven and a burning torch that passed between those pieces. <sup>18</sup> On the same day יהוה cut a covenant with Abram, saying: "To your descendants I have given this land, from the river of Egypt to the great river, the River Euphrates --

At the Red Sea, the Israelites passed "between the pieces" (the waters, instead of the halves of the animals) in a renewing of the covenant made with Abram. The rabbis teach that Israel entered into covenant with יהוה by three rites – circumcision, immersion, and sacrifice. We just saw how the passing through the sea symbolized a renewing of the covenant. In 1 Corinthians 10 we also see how their passage related to the mikveh (baptism):

*1 Corinthians 10:1* Moreover, brethren, I do not want you to be unaware that all our fathers were under the cloud, all passed through the sea,<sup>2</sup> all were baptized into Moshe in the cloud and in the sea,

**Baptism** was not a **Renewed Covenant** concept, but the **body of water** where this occurs is referred to as a “**mikveh**” in the **Hebrew Scriptures**. A **mikveh** always symbolized a **change in status**. A **cleansed leper** must undergo a **mikveh**. Any **unclean person** must be **immersed** in order to **complete the cleansing process**. In our parasha, **Israel walked through the waters** as they underwent the **status change** from a **lowly bunch of slaves to the holy people belonging to יהוה**.

The **mikveh (baptism)** has the same meaning when applied to the **Renewed Covenant**. We are **commanded** to be **baptized** because it **represents our change from sinful individuals to co-heirs with the Messiah**. We are **grafted** into the **nation of Israel**, and become **part of the royal priesthood**. Also, as **1 Corinthians** says, all were **baptized into Moshe** meaning **all take on the yoke of Torah or the yoke of Messiah...no difference**:

*Matthew 11:28* "Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.<sup>29</sup>  
"Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls."<sup>30</sup> "For My yoke is easy and My burden is light."

Well things are going well. The **Israelites have crossed the sea safely** and the **Egyptians are gone**. In a sense, the **miracle at the sea** was **like seeing the god of Egypt die**. Next they will sing the **beautiful Song of Moshe**, attesting to the **greatness of the Elohim** who has **delivered them**. The **second verse** has a line that is very significant because it is the **only verse in the Hebrew Scriptures repeated in all three sections of the Tanakh**:

**Torah** - *Shemot 15:2* יהוה is my strength and song, And He has become my salvation (Yeshua - ישוע)...

**Nevi'im** (Prophets) - *Isaiah 12:2* Behold, El is my salvation, I will trust and not be afraid; 'For YAH, יהוה, is my strength and song; He also has become my salvation (Yeshua - ישוע).'

**Ketuvim** (Writings) - *Psalms 118:14* יהוה is my strength and song, And He has become my salvation (Yeshua - ישוע).

They now leave their **sea experience** and continue their **march** into the **wilderness**:

*Shemot 15:22* So Moshe brought Israel from the Red Sea; then they went out into the Wilderness of Shur. And they went three days in the wilderness and found no water.<sup>23</sup> Now when they came to Marah, they could not drink the waters of Marah, for they were bitter. Therefore the name of it was called Marah.<sup>24</sup> And the people complained against Moshe, saying, "What shall we drink?"

The **Rabbis** point out that it **does not say** in the text that they were **thirsty**. There was **water** at **Marah**, but they didn't want to drink it because it was **bitter**. It is suggested that **what they really wanted was to experience יהוה** again like they did at the **Red Sea**! The **Almighty** understands their **longing** and **responds**:

*Shemot 15:24* And the people complained against Moshe, saying, "What shall we drink?"<sup>25</sup> So he cried out to יהוה, and יהוה showed him a tree. When he cast it into the waters, the waters were made sweet. There He made a statute and an ordinance for them. And there He tested them,

The tree is cast into the waters and the waters were made sweet. What is the connection then with the "statute and ordinance?" And how are they being "tested?" First, the tree...in Bereshith we had two trees in the Garden of Eden. Life was the result of eating from the first tree. Eating from the second tree brought death. The sages teach that the tree of life is the Torah:

*Proverbs 3:13* Happy is the man who finds wisdom, And the man who gains understanding...<sup>18</sup> She is a tree of life to those who take hold of her, And happy are all who retain her.

Trees are also compared to people who are righteous because "their delight is in the Torah":

*Psalm 1:1* Blessed is the man Who walks not in the counsel of the ungodly, Nor stands in the path of sinners, Nor sits in the seat of the scornful;<sup>2</sup> But his delight is in the Torah of יהוה, And in His Torah he meditates day and night.<sup>3</sup> He shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, That brings forth its fruit in its season, Whose leaf also shall not wither; And whatever he does shall prosper.

Yeshua is the word made flesh, thus He is also the Tree of Life. Water is also symbolic of the word:

*Ephesians 5:25* Husbands, love your wives, just as Messiah also loved the assembly and gave Himself for her,<sup>26</sup> that He might sanctify and cleanse her with the washing of water by the word,

Waters that are bitter need to be sweetened by the Tree of Life which is the Torah and the Messiah. Moshe demonstrated to them how to sweeten the water, and then gave them a statue and an ordinance as a test. Shemot continues on with what will happen if they pass that test:

*Shemot 15:26* and said, "If you diligently heed the voice of יהוה your Elohim and do what is right in His sight, give ear to His commandments and keep all His statutes, I will put none of the diseases on you which I have brought on the Egyptians. For I am יהוה who heals you."

So at this stop at Marah, יהוה has shown them how He can provide for their basic necessities (water) and at the very same time He has begun to talk about Torah and the benefits of obedience! I love how He describes Himself as "יהוה who heals you" (יהוה רפואה). Perhaps those who teach that the Torah has been done away with ought to rethink that idea!

The next place is an oasis stop:

*Shemot 15:27* Then they came to Elim, where there were twelve wells (ayin - עין) of water and seventy palm trees; so they camped there by the waters.

Date palm trees represent the flourishing of the righteous:

*Psalm 92:12* The righteous shall flourish like a palm tree....<sup>13</sup> Those who are planted in the house of יהוה Shall flourish in the courts of our Elohim.<sup>14</sup> They shall still bear fruit in old age; They shall be fresh and flourishing,

The **number 12** represents the “**tribes**” and **70** stands for the “**nations**.” The “**well**” is the word “**ayin**” (עַיִן) and also means “**eyes**” or places for “**seeing**” or “**revelation**.” This **oasis** has it all! הַרְרָה has provided them with a picture of **His complete provision** which will not only include **them** (represented by the number 12), but the **righteous from the nations** (number 70). This was a place of **encouragement** for them as they **journeyed** toward the **Mountain**.

At their next stop, they again resort to **grumbling**:

*Shemot 16:1 And they journeyed from Elim, and all the congregation of the children of Israel came to the Wilderness of Sin, which is between Elim and Sinai, on the fifteenth day of the second month after they departed from the land of Egypt.<sup>2</sup> Then the whole congregation of the children of Israel complained against Moshe and Aharon in the wilderness.<sup>3</sup> And the children of Israel said to them, "Oh, that we had died by the hand of הַרְרָה in the land of Egypt, when we sat by the pots of meat and when we ate bread to the full! For you have brought us out into this wilderness to kill this whole assembly with hunger."*

The text does not say that they were **hungry**. They seem to be **complaining** because they have left their **oasis** and now they are “**in the wilderness**.” Instead of being **hungry at the moment**, they are **afraid for their future**. They reminisce about **Egypt** where they had **assurance of food for tomorrow**. That is what they **miss** and that is **why they begin to complain**. The **wilderness** is a **place with no means of subsistence**. It is a place where the **children of Israel** will have to **learn** that it is the **heavenly Father** who will **feed and sustain them**.

It is interesting how the **Torah describes their location**. They are in the **wilderness, halfway between Elim and Sinai**. The **Torah stresses** this point of **being halfway there...away from Egypt, but not yet having reached their goal**. The **future** is still **fuzzy**, and the **destination** is **not yet in sight**. **Psychologically** it's just a **tough place to be**. Can you **relate** to this at all?

The **Almighty responds** to their **complaint**:

*Shemot 16:4 Then הַרְרָה said to Moshe, "Behold, I will rain bread from heaven for you. And the people shall go out and gather a certain quota every day, that I may test them, whether they will walk in My Torah or not."<sup>5</sup> "And it shall be on the sixth day that they shall prepare what they bring in, and it shall be twice as much as they gather daily."*

**Yeshua** tells us in the Gospels that **He is the manna**:

*John 6:33 "For the bread of Adonai is He who comes down from heaven and gives life to the world..."<sup>35</sup> And Yeshua said to them, "I am the bread of life. He who comes to Me shall never hunger..."*

Concerning the **gathering** of the **manna**, **Shemot 16:4** literally reads that they should “**gather a word a day in its day**.” **Yeshua** told us how to **pray** for that:

*Matthew 6:11 Give us this day our daily bread.*

The **Israelites** are told that the **bread** is not only to **feed them**, but it is a “**test**” to see **if they will walk in His Torah or not**. The sages generally say that it is a **test to see whether they will follow Shabbat or not**, but the **test** could also be to see if they are **willing to depend on their new Master** for their **every day**

needs. They still had a **slave mentality**, and now they would have to **switch** who their **Master is**. As we have already read, they were **still looking back longingly at Egypt**. In **Egypt**, they were able to **see with their eyes tomorrow's sustenance**. Now it became a **matter of faith**. Would **יהוה** provide for them **daily in the wilderness**? It was truly a **"test" of faith**. It could also become a **"test"** for us, even though we have reassurance:

*Matthew 6:31 "Therefore do not worry, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What shall we wear?'"<sup>32</sup> "For after all these things the Gentiles seek. For your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things."<sup>33</sup> "But seek first the kingdom of Elohim and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you.*

It's like the **Father wants His children to remain on the edge of insecurity** at all times. It might be why the **manna** was called **"bread from heaven."** We can **stress** about our **earthly needs**, but if we have a **relationship of trust and obedience** with **Him**, we can be **assured** that He will **provide** for us. **Shabbat** seems to **walk hand-in-hand** with the **provision of our daily manna**. The **manna** and the **Shabbat** are both a **gift** when **faith is expressed**.

**Proof** that **יהוה** was with them in the **wilderness** was given through a **very public revelation** of **His Shekinah glory**. Notice that it was **only when they "looked toward the wilderness"** that they were able to see **His glory**:

*Shemot 16:10 Now it came to pass, as Aharon spoke to the whole congregation of the children of Israel, that they looked toward the wilderness, and behold, the glory of יהוה appeared in the cloud.*

The **children of Israel move on** and end up in a place where they really are **thirsty**:

*Shemot 17:1 Then all the congregation of the children of Israel set out on their journey from the Wilderness of Sin, according to the commandment of יהוה, and camped in Rephidim; but there was no water for the people to drink.<sup>2</sup> Therefore the people contended with Moshe, and said, "Give us water, that we may drink." And Moshe said to them, "Why do you contend with me? Why do you tempt יהוה?"<sup>3</sup> And the people thirsted there for water, and the people complained against Moshe, and said, "Why is it you have brought us up out of Egypt, to kill us and our children and our livestock with thirst?"*

The **Israelites** were **thirsty**, but they **did not turn to יהוה** for their needs. **Instead**, they **looked back again towards Egypt**. They **forgot** the appearance of **His Glory** just a few days earlier. They **forgot** all the **miracles** He had performed thus far. Instead they **turn on Moshe** and **demand** that **HE take care of their needs**. **Moshe** is **desperate**, but **יהוה** answers him:

*Shemot 17:4 So Moshe cried out to יהוה, saying, "What shall I do with this people? They are almost ready to stone me!"<sup>5</sup> And יהוה said to Moshe, "Go on before the people, and take with you some of the elders of Israel. Also take in your hand your rod with which you struck the river, and go.<sup>6</sup> "Behold, I will stand before you there on the rock in Horeb; and you shall strike the rock, and water will come out of it, that the people may drink." And Moshe did so in the sight of the elders of Israel.<sup>7</sup> So he called the name of the place Massah and Meribah, because of the contention of the children of Israel, and because they tempted יהוה, saying, "Is יהוה among us or not?"*



The **memory** of the **Israelites' ingratitude** is incorporated into the **name** of the **place** where they **complained**. **Moshe** named the place **Massah** (testing) and **Meribah** (quarreling). The **thirst** of the **Israelites** has been **quenched**, but this time they will suffer a **consequence** for their **doubt** and **lack of faith**:

*Shemot 17:8 Now Amalek came and fought with Israel in Rephidim.*

There is an **obvious connection** between **Amalek** and **their faithless attitudes**. The **Almighty** has given them **one miracle after another** to **show them** that **He will care and sustain them** as long as they **trust and obey Him**. Now it is time for Him to give them a **glimpse** of what **life would be like without His divine protection**. **Amalek** is their **consequence** for **not learning the lessons** along the way.

Before we take a look at **Amalek**, I'd like to point out something in **Shemot 17:7**. Their last statement is translated, "Is יהוה among us or not?" In **Hebrew** it looks like this:

הֲיֵשׁ יְהוָה בְּקִרְבָּנוּ אִם-אֵין

**Literally**, it can translate:

Is יהוה **within us**, or not?

I believe יהוה is **teaching them** that He **not only is aware of where they are**, but **His strength** is "within" them! They are **able to fight His battles** because of **His Divine Presence**. They would **never be alone or without Him!**

Some of **Moshe's last words** expressed this thought:

*Devarim/Deuteronomy 31:8 "And יהוה, He is the one who goes before you. He will be with you, He will not leave you nor forsake you; do not fear nor be dismayed."*

So who is **Amalek**? **Amalek** appears several times throughout Scripture as an **enemy of the people of יהוה**. His **goal** is to **disrupt the great Divine process**, starting with the exodus from Egypt and leading up to their entry into Canaan, by **severing it at its weakest point**:

*Devarim 25:17 "Remember what Amalek did to you on the way as you were coming out of Egypt,<sup>18</sup> how he met you on the way and attacked your rear ranks, all the stragglers at your rear, when you were tired and weary; and he did not fear Elohim.*

The **Father** loves the **weak and the powerless** and this **attack** made **Amalek** the **eternal enemy** of יהוה and of **Israel, His nation**. This **war** was **not one of self-defense**, waged because **Amalek's people** were **trying to protect themselves**. Instead, it was the **calculated plan** of a nation **attempting to disrupt יהוה's plan** concerning the **nation of Israel**. **Amalek** chose to **attack Israel** between **Egypt and Mt. Sinai**, a most **vulnerable point** in their **journey**.

The **battle against Amalek** takes place **simultaneously** in **two locations** – on the **battlefield**, where **Yehoshua** (Joshua) is **leading the war**, and at the **top of the mountain**, where **Moshe** is **leading a different battle** (attempting to keep his arms raised). The story itself testifies to the **connection** between these **two events**:

*Shemot 17:10 So Yehoshua did as Moshe said to him, and fought with Amalek. And Moshe, Aharon, and Hur went up to the top of the hill.<sup>11</sup> And so it was, when Moshe held up his hand, that Israel prevailed; and when he let down his hand, Amalek prevailed.*

As pointed out in the **chiastic** at the beginning of this commentary, we **started** our parasha with **the battle against Pharaoh** and his army, and we **end with the battle against Amalek**. These **events** are only a **few weeks apart** yet there are **major differences**:

The **battle** against **Egypt**:

1. When the **enemy approaches**, the **Israelites shout and panic**
2. **יהוה will fight for you**, and you shall remain silent
3. **Moshe leads** the people
4. The **victory** is the result of a **double miracle**
5. The **battle takes place at night**

The **battle** against **Amalek**

1. **No one panics** at **Amalek's approach**
2. **The nation fights its own war**
3. **Yehoshua leads** the army
4. The **victory is achieved through natural means** (military battle)
5. The entire **battle takes place during the day**

The **battle against Egypt** represents the **completion of physically leaving Egypt**. The **war against Amalek** represents the **first stage** of what will be an **ongoing battle to conquer the Promised Land**. The **conclusion** of that **battle** is pictured in the **book of Revelation, fought by Yeshua**. Therefore it is **Yehoshua, a type and shadow of Yeshua, who fights the battle at Rephidim!**

Let's return to the **raised "hands" of Moshe**. **Moshe's "hands" did not perform a miracle**. They **simply pointed upward**. His **raised "hands" directed the eyes**, and therefore the **minds**, of the **Israelites to heaven**. This is what gave them the **courage, the inner strength, and the faith to prevail**. It is **another lesson to be learned**. The **"hand" of Elohim** is always **working**, albeit in a **hidden way** in the **midst of our physical reality**. His **"hand" provides for Israel** in accordance with their **level of faith**. **Faith** is always played out by **actions**. When the **sons of Israel are distant from the Father**, they bring **trouble upon themselves**. **Isaiah** speaks of the **circumstances** that keep the **Divine "Hand" from acting on Israel's behalf**:

*Isaiah 59:1 Behold, יהוה's hand is not shortened, that it cannot save; Nor His ear heavy, That it cannot hear.<sup>2</sup> But your iniquities have separated you from your Elohim; And your sins have hidden His face from you, So that He will not hear.*

יהוה's **"hand"** operates within the **physical**, through **hidden miracles**. I believe that we just saw an **incredible example** of that in the **battle that the Israeli's fought in Gaza**. In **one accord** the **troops humbled themselves** and **sought the Almighty**. **Divine protection and miracles** were noted over and over again by **those who were there**.

When **faith becomes weak** and **people question** – **"Is Elohim in our midst"** – the **"hands" of Moshe become weak**. In turn, this causes a **lack of help** to be **received from the Almighty**. On top of the mountain was **Moshe (Torah)**, **Aharon (future high priest)**, and **Hur (tribe of Judah)**. The coming

together of this **trio** will **strengthen the military efforts of Yehoshua (Yeshua) and His soldiers on the battlefield.** This will bring about **victory over Amalek!**

*Shemot 17:16 for he said, "Because אֱמֹלֵק has sworn: אֱמֹלֵק will have war with Amalek from generation to generation."*

The **final battle against Amalek at Armageddon** will be **fought by Yeshua and His armies.** He will **hand defeat** to those who **come against Him:**

*Revelation 19:11 Now I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse. And He who sat on him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness He judges and makes war. <sup>12</sup> His eyes were like a flame of fire, and on His head were many crowns. He had a name written that no one knew except Himself. <sup>13</sup> He was clothed with a robe dipped in blood, and His name is called The Word of Adonai. <sup>14</sup> And the armies in heaven, clothed in fine linen, white and clean, followed Him on white horses. <sup>15</sup> Now out of His mouth goes a sharp sword, that with it He should strike the nations. And He Himself will rule them with a rod of iron. He Himself treads the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty Elohim. <sup>16</sup> And He has on His robe and on His thigh a name written: **KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS.***

It sure is good to know the **end of the story! Baruch HaShem!**

**Shabbat Shalom!**

**Ardelle**