

Beshalach 2013

1.

Which preceded split water or dry land?

“Moshe stretched out his hand over the sea, and Hashem moved the sea with a strong east wind all the night, and He turned the sea to damp land and the water split.” (14, 21)

"ויט משה את ידו על הים ויולך יקוק את הים ברוח קדים עזה כל הלילה וישם את הים לחרבה ויבקעו המים."

Targum Yonason Ben Uziel explains that **there were 12 different paths in the sea when it split, corresponding to the twelve shevatim** (tribes). With this idea we can understand an important halacha better. The Gemara in Berachos (34b) says that one should daven in a place that has windows. The Shulchan Aruch (siman 90 sif 4) quotes the Zohar who says that it is good to daven in a place that has minimally 12 windows. The explanation of this Zohar is that these 12 windows correspond to the 12 different paths we took while crossing the sea of Reeds. **These 12 windows serve as a path for the prayers of each individual tribe to travel through. The windows symbolize that each tribe has its own window, but in the end their tefilos all end up in the same place, in shamayim (heaven); just like all the shevatim emerged on the other side of the Yam Suf together as well.** Similarly, the Mishna Berurah (siman 68 sif katan 4) writes that the 12 gates in shamayim correspond to the 12 shevatim. Each shevet has its independent gate and its distinct custom.

Nachalas Tzvi page 174:

The pasuk seems to be out of order. It should have said that Hashem split the water and then that it turned into dry land!? Rashi quotes the Shemos Rabbah that interestingly relates that not only did the Yam Suf split, but all the water in the world split also. The Nachalas Tzvi explains that initially the pasuk referred exclusively to Yam Suf, and then the pasuk referred to all the waters in the world. Meaning, **when the pasuk says the sea was turned into dry land, the pasuk is exclusively referring to Yam Suf alone. When the pasuk continues and mentions Hashem splitting the water, this refers to all the water in the world.** Therefore this ingeniously explains and answers the previous dilemma of the seemingly erroneous pasuk.

The Kli Yakar offers an additional answer. He explains that first a wind came from under the ground and dried up the land. Afterwards the water split.

2.

Hallel, shira, angels and humans

The Aruch L'ner quotes the Gemara in Rosh Hashana (32b) that says the angels asked Hashem ‘why isn’t Hallel recited on Rosh Hashana?’ Hashem answered and said ‘is it possible that the books of the living and the dead will be open, with such a serious judgement pending, and people should be singing a shira?’

The Aruch L'ner asks why the Malachim care about what humans are involved with.

The Gemara in Chulin (91b) states that angels are not permitted to sing a song to Hashem until the Jews sing first. Therefore, they wanted to know why the Jews weren't singing Hallel, because they wanted to sing to Hashem.

However, the Gemara in Sanhedrin (39b) relates that when the Egyptians were drowning in the Yam Suf, the angels wanted to sing a shira. Hashem said to them 'my creations are drowning and suffering in the sea and you want to sing a shira?'

We see from this Gemara that the angels were not allowed to sing even at junctures when the Jews were permitted to sing. Meaning, that when the Egyptians were drowning in the Yam Suf, the Jews were singing Az Yashir and the angels were forbidden to.

The angels knew that at a time when Hashem is punishing the world they can't sing, e.g. Rosh Hashana. Over here, though, the Malachim weren't asking why the Jews weren't singing so that they could sing as well. Rather, they were saying that since the Jews know their din (judgement) will have a successful outcome on Rosh Hashana, they should be saying Hallel. Hashem responded that nevertheless, when the books of life and death are open in front of Me you can't be singing Hallel. However, by Kriyas Yam Suf, the books weren't open so the Jews were allowed to sing a shira. But the Malachim still couldn't sing a shira because there were punishments being brought to the world.

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