



# דרכים בפרשה

בשלח



אז ישיר משה ובני ישראל את השירה הזאת

***Then Moshe and the Bnei Yisroel sang this song***

After witnessing one of the greatest miracles of their history as a nation, the Bnei Yisroel were so grabbed by the moment that on the spot at that very moment, they sang the great song of Az Yashir. Rashi notes the discrepancy in the language switching from past tense to future tense (אז- then; ישר- will sing). He explains אז ישר- with regard to the usage of the future ישר, the meaning is: *then* — i. e. when he saw the miracle it entered his mind that *he would sing* a song.

In his second *p'shat*, Rashi quoted the well-known Midrash: אבל מדרשו אמרו רבותינו ז"ל - "מכאן רמז לתחית המתים מן התורה" - from here (i.e. from the fact that the future tense is used) we may derive a hint that the tenet of the *techiyas hameisin* is from the Torah.

It needs to be understood why specifically at this time was it important to teach this idea. We will present three ideas:

Rav Yechezkel of Kuzmir zt"l (17 Shevat 5637) explains that a Yid needs to constantly live with *emunah*, and without it, the Yid has no *kiyum* (lit- cannot exist). The Bnei Yisroel had just witnessed at the Yam more miracles than even the great *Nevi'im* would be able to see. -ויראו העם The nation saw! Everything in the world was open to them with nothing hidden. No longer did there remain a challenge to their *Emunah* because it was all crystal clear. But that is not how it works. *Emunah* is

something that one must constantly toil at. When one level is gained, Hashem send another test, all along giving us the ability to become even stronger in our faith in Him. So specifically at that moment, they were introduced to an idea that they could not see. In the future there would be a phenomenon called *techiyas hameisim* that they needed to believe would occur. This was something that they could not see but needed to believe and is in fact one of the basic beliefs of Yiddishkeit.

This idea is also a *chizzuk* to our own personal growth in *emunah*. After concluding one test of *emunah*, we can rest assured that there will always be more to come because *emunah* is and needs to be a constant battle.

A second explanation was offered by Rav Aharon Belzer zt"l. It was just after the war and he was sitting with some chassidim on Shabbos Shirah. He wanted so much to enliven their spirits in song and dance, but alas, the sense of depression and sadness was too great to bear due to the terrible losses that each and every one of them suffered at the hands of the Nazis *yemach shemom vizichram*. So, he began to speak about the parsha and he asked our question: Why specifically discuss *techiyas hameisim* after the Kriyas Yam Suf? Incredibly, he explained that with 4/5<sup>th</sup> of the Yidden having perished during makkas choshech, it could be assumed that every Yid lost a loved one. Then the miraculous escape

and Kriyas Yam Suf occurred. Not having had sufficient time to even mourn properly, it must have been difficult to sing. Should they sing? Could they even sing? They witnessed the greatest miracles but likely they weren't "feeling it". It was at that moment that they were taught *techiyas hameisim*. Yes, there will be a time that they would all be together again and that all the losses would finally make sense. And with that incredible new *emunah* of *techiyas hameisim* they were now able to move on. (We can also learn from here that one shall not wait until later, when things are even better, to thank Hashem. Rather, one must seize the opportunity when it arises).

The Maharal writes (G" A 15:1) that *shirah* by definition is an emotional response that stems from the heart and is uncalculated. The gemara tells us that Chizkiyahu Hamelech could have been Moshiach but he failed to sing *shirah* when he was meant to. The Rosh Hayeshiva, Rav Gifter zt"l asks (Pirkei Torah): so just get up and sing *shirah* afterwards; why was all lost? The Rosh Hayeshiva explained that singing and praising later on is nice, but that is not *shirah*, because *shirah* must be a spontaneous emotional outburst that even defies any current situation.

We can now understand why the *shirah* began with the word אז. As Rashi explained in his first p'shat, it was at that moment which they decided to sing. The actual song may have been determined later (ישיר), but at that very moment the emotional response and decision was that we will sing!

With this approach, we can now understand why *techiyas hameisim* is introduced here. The seforim point out that a tefillah devoid of emotion is considered dead. -לא המתים יהללו י-ה.

praise to Hashem must be alive and vibrant. Perhaps, when the Bnei Yisroel spontaneously sang their *shirah*, uncalculated, with an outburst of emotion, they were learning the secret of how to infuse life into the way we sing to HaShem. The Rambam writes at the beginning of *hilchos tefillah* that *tefillah* used to be informal and without structure. It was based on a person's inner emotions to Hashem at that very moment. As Klal Yisroel had weakened spiritually and tefillah was in danger of being lost, Ezra instituted formalized tefillah. As great and important as this was, the flip side of it was that we lost the spontaneous nature of it.

The Torah is reminding us that although we now have structure, we shall not forget about adding that geshmak and zest into our tefillos. מכאן רמז לתחיית המתים – from here we learn, that even at a time when perhaps we feel a bit out of it, we should think about the אז ישיר, shouting out emotionally to Hashem, thus bringing ourselves back to life.

**Good Shabbos, מרדכי אפפעל**



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