



SIMCHAT SHMUEL

BY RABBI SAM SHOR

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Our *Sedra*, *Parshat Beshalach*, recalls the incredible miracle of *Kriat Yam Suf*, the Splitting of the Sea of Reeds. There are numerous rabbinic teachings in both the *Midrash* and the *Talmud* that depict the scene as the sea was actually parting into twelve sections, and each tribe walked on its own path amid the waters.

The ***Birkat Avraham***, the **Slonimer Rebbe zy'a**, comments on the verse: “*Uvnei Yisrael halchu bayabasha b'toch haYam*”- “*And the Jewish People walked on dry land within the Sea...*” The Rebbe explains that the word ***b'toch*** (*within*) is equal in *gematria* to the word ***chatach*** (one who divides or distributes), a reference to the fact that *Hashem Yitbarach* is indeed the source of *parnasa*-sustenance and stability. A person might often feel that he or she is drowning in debt or stress, that the waters of trouble are surrounding them on all sides, and they might not see or intuit any natural way out from under the pending

waves that they fear will engulf them. In such circumstances, says the Rebbe, a Jew must always recall and be strengthened by remembering the great miracle at the Sea, and realize that *Hakadosh Baruch Hu* is the One who will bring them out of the depths.

The same is true, the Rebbe continues, in spiritual matters. At times, one feels as if they are walking on dry land, they feel spiritually uninspired- dried out within the sea of *Kedusha*. In such instances, a person must recognize that even those spiritual dry spells are also from the *Ribono Shel Olam*, and thus be strengthened to persevere, and continue to cross the proverbial sea, to immerse themselves in the Sea of *Kedusha*, even when they might feel at the moment as if they are walking along on dry land. *Hashem* is there with us, even when we might be struggling.

May we all merit to embrace, and be strengthened by these two beautiful teachings from the *Birkat Avraham of Slonim zy'a*, and have the fortitude to face life's challenges, with the faith and confidence that *Hashem* is indeed there together with us, every step of the way. ■


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