This week we once again read about the splitting of the Reed Sea.

One of the basic tenents of Judaism is "The Enlivening of the Dead". Namely that some time after the arrival of Moshiach all the dead will return to life in physical bodies.

It's called "Tchias Ha'Maysim", and this week's section contains one of the clearest references to it in the Torah:

Immediately after the Jews crossed the Reed Sea and discovered that the entire army of Egyptians pursuing them had drowned, they sang an exquisite epic song of joy to G-d. But strangely, the Torah introduces this song in the future tense:

"Then WILL SING Moses and the Jewish people this song to G-d etc." (15:1)

From here, concludes the Talmud (Sanhedrin 91b), that Moses and the Jews WILL sing again - an obvious allusion to The Raising of the Dead.

But at first glance all this makes completely no sense! Why must the souls return to bodies, why not just let them be in heaven? And what has this got to do with Judaism, or the splitting of the sea? And most important: The Torah is a book of life. What has this got to do with us now?

Another question comes from the book 'Shnay Luchot HaBrit' (pg. 38 a.

parshat B'Shalach):

In the Talmud (Magillah 10b) it tells us that when the Jews were about to sing their praises at the sea, G-d reproved them saying "My creations (the Egyptians) are drowning and you want to sing?!!"

The 'Shnay Luchot HaBrit' explains that G-d didn't regret killing the Egyptians; after all, they were evil murderers and deserved to be destroyed.

Rather He was angry with the Jews for waiting with their song until they saw them dead!

G-d expected the Jews to rejoice before they crossed the Sea when He promised to destroy their pursuers, or even months earlier when He told them that they were going to be freed from Egypt.

But it seems that his explanation also doesn't make sense.

How could G-d expect these poor Jews to rejoice before crossing the sea?

These unfortunates had been slaves from birth; they had never seen joy in their lives! And now they were surrounded by death and danger! How could they rejoice. for miracles that didn't yet occur?!!

To understand all this here is a story.

A distraught Jew once came to the Gerer Rebbe and begged for a blessing to save his dying baby son. The doctors had given up. The boy was in a deep coma. The man showed the Rebbe the x-
rays and medical papers. Trembling silently, he stared at the Rebbe's face for a sign of encouragement.

The Rebbe examined it all for a few minutes, sifting through the papers and negatives, looking at them one by one, turning them this way and that. Then he stacked them neatly, handed them back and said with an encouraging look, "G-d will help".

The Chassid thanked the Rebbe profusely, backed gratefully backed out of the office, closed the door behind him and ran out of the building on wings of joy; the Rebbe was optimistic!

He ran to the store and bought whiskey, fish and cakes. He then ran to the synagogue inviting everyone to come to his home to celebrate; the Rebbe said that HaShem would help! His son would live!!

That whole night they rejoiced with the good news. They sang danced, said l'chiam and said words of Torah. The next morning he called the hospital and the doctors said there was an improvement. The child was feeling better!

A week later the boy was sitting up and two weeks later he was released, completely healthy! A MIRACLE!! Just as the Rebbe said!

That very day the Chassid appeared before the Rebbe with a big check and infinite gratitude.

"Thank you Rebbe, thank you!! You saved my son, I owe you everything!!" he said as he handed over the check.

"What's this?" said the Rebbe, "Your son?"

"Yes, of course Rebbe. You said that G-d would help, and He did!!! It was your blessing. Thank G-d! I went home and rejoiced the entire night after that blessing!"

"Ahh" smiled the Rebbe. "That? Well, thank G-d your son is better but it wasn't because of me. I didn't bless him. You gave me all those x-rays and papers that I barely understood. I saw that I couldn't do anything. So I just said 'G-d will help'. The fact is that I didn't do a thing.

"Your happiness was what cured your son."

This is what G-d demands from us also. That by being happy even in the worst situations, we can actually change everything (even the entire world!) for good.

[So it was in 1978 when the Lubavitcher Rebbe suffered a critically severe heart attack. The doctors were very pessimistic but the Rebbe ordered the Chassidim to be happy, as though he was already healed. And it worked!!]

This is the connection between the splitting of the sea, the Raising of the Dead, and joy.

The Lubavitcher Rebbe explains that the purpose of the 'Splitting of the Sea' was not to allow the Jews to get to the other side; according to many sources the Jews did not really even cross! They walked down the length of the sea and came out on the same side some distance away.

Nor was it to kill the Egyptians; any of the other plagues could have done that.

The sea split in order to prepare the Jews for receiving the Torah.

When the sea split the heavens split as well (see Rashi 14:21) and the Jews saw spiritual visions greater than even the greatest prophets (Rashi end 15:2)! This was a preparation for the even higher revelations awaiting them at Mount Sinai:

At Mount Sinai they would receive the Living Torah and experience the most intense shot of pure life and G-dliness possible - The Raising of the Dead!
And that is why they sang at the sea: Because they saw pure life - and life is pure joy.

Yes, there is no joy greater than life itself and the natural state of man is joy. We see that children, when their needs are provided, are happy, because they are filled with pure life.

In fact, man was created to live forever and were it not for the sin of the Golden Calf (and before that the sin of the Tree of Knowledge) there would be no death.

But now we are in exile and all this is concealed. How is it possible to be happy about pure life BEFORE it is revealed? The answer to this is also found in the Song at the Sea.

Before they began to sing, the Torah tells us (14:31) "They believed in G-d and in Moses His servant."

The belief in the Moses of every generation brings happiness. [And, in fact, the sin of the Golden Calf occurred because the Jews thought that Moses was gone.]

When we read the Chassidut and other writings of the Rebbes, especially of the last Lubavitcher Rebbe we can get a foretaste of pure life.

In fact, this is purpose of Moshiach; to encourage each and every one of us to live in a world of eternal Torah truth and joy. (Shtus d'kedusha) in order to BRING the redemption!

And in the merit of our Joy G-d will again split all the concealment and tragedy of exile and we will all sing a NEW song in TRUE Joy with....

Moshiach NOW!!

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