

What was the goal of the miracles of the exodus from Egypt?

Why do you think it was necessary for God to create these miraculous events?

Who were they for?

(Students can suggest many answers- for the Egyptians, for the Jewish nations to show God's power, etc)

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Dear teacher: All answers and teacher notes are in red. This lesson is meant as an individual or group independent study assignment, but the beginning and ending questions should be discussed and reviewed in a classroom setting.



Open [hatanakh.com/en](http://hatanakh.com/en) to Exodus 14:13 Tanakh page (on the homepage click on the blue “Read Tanakh” button)



Look at Ibn Ezra's commentary (find it on the left side of the page under “Commentary”)

What does he say about the state of Bnei Yisrael's mentality prior to the splitting of the sea?

Bnei Yisrael still had a slave mentality- psychological state of viewing Egypt as their masters despite being physically free from slavery. “...this generation which had just left Egypt had grown up under the yoke of Egyptian slavery, and their spirit was downtrodden.” They couldn't be expected to go fight against Egypt when they still considered themselves slaves.

English Translation of Iben Ezra: "We may ask: how could a great camp of six hundred thousand people fear their pursuers? Why would they not fight for their lives and for their children? The answer [is that] the Egyptians were masters to Bnei Yisrael; this generation which had just left Egypt had grown up under the yoke of Egyptian slavery, and their spirit was downtrodden. How could they now fight against their masters, with Bnei Yisrael lowly and untrained in war?"

# 2

The text in the Torah presents us with clues as to the development of the narrative. In his article “Divine Therapy at the Red Sea”, Rabbi Elchanan Samet discusses this development within the structure of the text.

He divides Shemot chapter 14 into two sections, verses 1-14, and 15-31, and each section is divided into 6 units.

Recreate the chart below and fill in the text from the verses, in Hebrew or English.

	Section 1	Section 2
UNIT 1	1-4	15-18
UNIT 2	4-8	19-22
UNIT 3	9	23
UNIT 4	10	24-25
UNIT 5	11-12	26-30
UNIT 6	13-14	31

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Closely examine your completed chart. What patterns do you see? What linguistic or thematic parallels do you notice between the groups of verses of the two sections?

Students can suggest many possibilities. See Rabbi Samet's article for the answers (section E)

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Now turn to Rabbi Samet's article "Divine Therapy at the Red Sea" (you can find it on the Tanakh Exodus chapter 14 page on the left under the "articles" section, or by typing the title into the search bar) and **read section E** of the article. Summarize his insights on each of the sections. What development does he notice throughout the text?

The screenshot shows the HaTanakh.com website interface. At the top, there is a search bar with the text "Search HaTanakh.com" and a dropdown menu set to "All". The page is titled "Exodus | Chapter 14 | Verse 1". A sidebar on the left contains a list of articles under the heading "Articles (13)". The article "Divine Therapy at the Red Sea" by Rabbi Elchanan Samet is highlighted with an orange arrow. The main content area displays the beginning of the text for Exodus 14: (1) And the LORD spoke unto Moses, saying: (2) 'Speak unto the children of Israel, that they turn back and encamp before Pi-hahiroth, between Migdol and the sea, before Baal-zephon, over against it shall ye encamp by the sea. (3) And Pharaoh will say of the children of Israel: They are entangled in the land, the wilderness hath shut them in. (4) And I will harden Pharaoh's heart, and he shall follow after them;

**Read section F** of the article. According to Rabbi Samet, what was the goal of the process of the exodus from Egypt?



How did the miracles of the exodus from Egypt succeed in psychologically freeing Bnei Yisrael from their slavery?

“We may say that Israel had indeed been taken out of Egypt, but Egypt had not yet been taken out of them. Their "armed" exodus from Egypt, their exodus "with a high hand," was to a large extent only an external veneer. From a psychological perspective, "the Egyptians were masters to Bnei Yisrael" still, and "their spirit was downtrodden; how could they now fight against their masters?" It was at the Red Sea that Bnei Yisrael were freed psychologically from their fear of the Egyptians. In order to be healed of this psychological enslavement, from this fear of the Egyptians, it was not sufficient that Bnei Yisrael "saw Egypt dead upon the seashore." The process of rehabilitation has no short-cuts. Sometimes even a physical illness cannot be cured if the condition does not clearly present itself. But in the psychological realm, there is an even greater need to reveal the problem lurking within, hidden even from the consciousness of the sufferer himself, in order that we may heal him”

Besides the miracles performed by God, there were some rituals described in Exodus chapter 12 that Bnei Yisrael had to actively perform prior to the exodus.

How do you think that each of these actions, listed below, could contribute to their psychological exodus from Egypt and from their slave mentality?

### Sanctifying the month

How does the idea of sanctifying time and establishing holidays relate to freedom from slavery? (slaves do not have control over their own time, free people do)

### Korban Pesach

See Rashi's words (12:6): משכו וקחו לכם משכו ידיכם  
מאלילים וקחו לכם צאן של מצוה

How does Rashi's comment illustrate the transformation from Egyptian slaves to worshippers of God?

(Rashi learns from the words “pull and take out” the idea of removing themselves from the idol worship of Egypt and using that same enthusiasm and dedication to worship God by bringing the korban Pesach)

## **Blood on the Doorpost**

Why did God command Bnei Yisrael to put blood on their doorposts? What could this act by Bnei Yisrael symbolize?

(This was done by Bnei Yisrael to mark their houses so that God would not kill their firstborns during the final plague- so that God would “pass over” their houses. This act symbolizes Bnei Yisrael’s separation from the Egyptians, that the nation themselves had to actively mark. By doing so they are stating that they are no longer to be considered their slaves and are no longer associated with them)