1. Hashem took the Jews out of Egypt with the purpose of bringing them all to the Promised Land. This would be the first national Aliya to Eretz Yisrael. Because this Exodus was for a greater purpose than merely liberating the slaves, Hashem did not want to accept the mixed multitude of non-Jewish slaves who wanted to join the Israelites and escape from Egypt. Moshe decided to accept them despite the problems and dangers involved (Numbers 11:4, 5). Moshe apparently relied on the "Hand of God" to solve the problems of bringing these non-Jews from Egypt to Israel. As we read and analyze these stories, understanding very well that the Biblical narrative frequently foretells events that will transpire in Jewish history, we cannot help but see this same "Hand of God" in the current exodus of Jews from the Soviet Union. There is a reported non-Jewish element that has joined the Soviet aliyah to Israel, usually in the form of intermarriage. The voice of God rejects intermarriage; but let Moshe we felt compelled to accept these olim and hope that with the help of God the absorption into Israel would be smooth and that many Jewish families will be redeemed.

2. Upon exiting Egypt, God decides to lead the people in a circuitous route to Eretz Yisrael and not straight up the Sinai seacoast through Philistine country. The reason mentioned in the Torah is that the people will desire to return to Egypt once they are confronted with a military enemy. Commentaries rush to add their own embellishments to the Torah-given answer. For example, the Midrash claims that had the people entered Israel right away, they would plunge themselves immediately into the task of working the land and building homes for themselves. In essence they would immediately become materialistic and neglect the Torah. Hence it was necessary to travel in the desert, within a non-material environment, with all physical needs divinely provided. They could now become inspired with the Torah. The Rambam (Guide for the Perplexed 3:24) also felt that the 40-year sojourn in the wilderness was necessary to educate the Jews into becoming more self-confident and spiritually strong. They needed time to lose the slave mentality that was drummed into them from their experience as slaves.

3. Why does the Torah say that Bnei Yisrael believed in Hashem and in His servant Moshe? (14:31). It seems strange to equate Hashem and Moshe, and to say that the people believed in them both. The same combination of words, "in Hashem and in Moshe" occurs in one other place (Bamidbar 21:5) and there, too, Rashi notes the incongruity when the people complain against "Hashem and Moshe" that they should have remained in Egypt. The Baal Haturim provides a profound Torah insight. Whoever rebels against his Torah teacher is as if he had rebelled against Hashem, and one who puts his trust in the teachers of Torah is as one who puts his trust in Hashem. The Torah teachers of each generation represent Hashem, and one cannot profess loyalty to Hashem while being disloyal to His representatives.

Which person who gained fame through an incident in the week’s Parsha was the ancestor of Boaz?

4. "All of the sickness that I placed on Egypt I shall not place on you, for I am Hashem, your healer." (15:26). The Chatam Sofer explains that there are two types of doctors: (1) a doctor who comes whenever someone is sick and is paid for each visit; (2) a "house doctor" who is always on call, and receives a set fee for his services regardless of how many visits he makes. The difference between the two doctors is that the first one benefits more when the patient is sick, while the second one prefers to see the patient healthy. This is what Hashem said: Since I am your regular healer, I would rather keep you healthy. Therefore, you must hearken to My voice and observe My commandments, and you will be spared the sicknesses with which I afflicted the Egyptians.

5. "And when they came to Marah, they could not drink of the waters of Marah, for they were bitter...And they came to Elim, where there were twelve springs of water, and seventy palm trees, and they encamped there by the waters." (15:23, 27). Man is, by nature, shortsighted. A person lives in the present and is unable to know what the future has in store for him. This often causes one to be anxious and to worry about the outcome of events and circumstances, even when the results are destined ultimately to be in his best interest. The Jewish people arrived at Elim after leaving
Marah. Had they only known that an oasis with an abundance of fresh water was available for them just down the road from the bitter water station of Marah, they certainly would not have confronted Moshe and complained, “What shall we drink!” But because man is limited and narrow in his view of time and place, he always desires to have his needs immediately fulfilled and settled. Nevertheless, we should realize that this contributes to much unnecessary frustration and tension. A perspective of confidence and trust in Hashem and recognition that “all that Hashem does is for the best” helps one maintain his or her composure even in the interim as situations are in the process of unfolding. (Chafetz Chaim)

6. “And go out and wage war against Amalek.” (17:9). Why did Moshe admonish the people when the Egyptians were pursuing them at Yam Suf, “Hashem will fight for you, and you remain silent” (14:14), while, when Amalek attacked them, he encouraged them to go to war? The Pardes Yosef explained that in a war for physical survival a person must place his trust in Hashem to save him. However, in a war for spiritual survival, when the very foundations of Yiddishkeit are threatened, one cannot sit idly by and place his hopes in Hashem; he must take an active role to assure the preservation of the Torah. Therefore, when being attacked by the Egyptians who were interested in physically annihilating Klal Yisrael, Moshe told the people to rely on a Divine salvation. However, the war of Amalek was an attack on the sanctity of the Jewish people and their adherence to the Torah. Therefore, Moshe commanded them to actively strike back at the enemy to defend the honor of Hashem.

SHABBAT HALACHAH

The appropriate time to begin Se'uda Shlishit is after half an hour after Chatzot (chatzot = the middle of the halachic day.) If one began to eat before that time and continued afterwards, he fulfilled his obligation. Under normal circumstances one would not fulfill the Mitzvah of Se'uda Shlishit if it is eaten before Chatzot. However, in extenuating circumstances—for instance, when Erev Pesach falls on Shabbat and one can eat neither bread nor Matzah after Chatzot— we rely on the opinion that permits Se'uda Shlishit in the morning. It is generally preferable to daven Minchah before beginning Se'uda Shlishit. One should begin Se'uda Shlishit before sunset. If he was unable to do so, he may begin until half an hour before the conclusion of Shabbat (Tzeit Hakochavim). These Halachot can be found in Orach Chaim 291:2, M.B. 7; 299:1; 444, M.B. 8.

HAFTORAH
(p. 281 Hz) (p. 434 S) (p. 850 Hi) (p. 1152 AS)
JUDGES 

Just as the Jews sang a song of praise and thanksgiving when their evil Egyptian oppressors drowned at the crossing of the sea, the Haftorah contains Devarah's song which she composed after the death of the wicked general Sisera. The relationship between the Jews and Hashem follows a cyclical progression during the period of the Judges – faithfulness with its concomitant salvation and independence followed by a rejection of their unique mission and destiny with its usual result of a loss of prosperity and sovereignty. The events of the Haftorah occur at a time when Yisrael was being oppressed by Jabin the King of Canaan, and his general Sisera. The most accurate translation of Sisera's name is "the silencer." He received this appellation because he used his nine hundred chariots to silence any attempted rebellions. His policy to confiscate all weapons, to the point that "neither shield nor spear, neither defensive nor aggressive weapon were to be seen among the forty thousand of Israel" (5:8) allowed for the ruthless oppression of the Jews which included constant abuses and violence. (Hirsch)