

**Short Song, Deep Meaning**  
**Beshalach - 5768**

**Shmot 15:20-21**

<p>Miriam the prophetess, Aaron's sister, took the drum in her hand, and all the women followed her with drums and dancing. Miriam chanted for them, "Sing to G-d for His great victory, horse and rider He cast in the sea.</p>	<p>וַתִּקַּח מִרְיָם הַנְּבִיאָה אֶחָת אֶהָרָן, אֶת-הַתֹּף--בְּיָדָהּ; וַתִּצְאֶן כָּל-הַנְּשִׂיִם אַחֲרֶיהָ, בְּתַפִּיִּים וּבְמַחֲלֹת. וַתַּעַן לָהֶם, מִרְיָם: שִׁירוּ לַיהוָה כִּי-גָאֹה גָאֹה, סוּס וָרֶכֶב רָמָה בַיָּם.</p>
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What is the nature of Miriam's song?

**Alter Shmot 15:20**

The women here sing out the opening lines of the song we have just heard as a kind of antiphonal [responsive] refrain.

**Rashi Shmot 15:21**

<p>Moses chanted a song for the men; he would chant for them and they would answer him. And Miriam chanted a song for the women.</p>	<p>משה אמר שירה לאנשים, הוא אומר והם עונים אחריו, ומרים אמרה שירה לנשים.</p>
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**Alter Shmot 15:20**

The custom of women going out in song and dance to celebrate a military victory was common in ancient Israel and the surrounding peoples and figures significantly in the David story.

**Rashi Shmot 15:20**

<p>So confident were the pious women of Israel in that generation of the miracles that G-d was about to work for Israel, that they brought drums with them out of Egypt.</p>	<p>מובטחות היו צדקניות שבדור שהקדוש ברוך הוא עושה להם נסים והוציאו תופים ממצרים</p>
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**JSB Shmot 15:20-21**

The women dance and play music led by Miriam who summons them, or all the Israelites, to sing G-d's praises

**Alter Shmot 15:20**

One surmises that she is called prophetess because the singing and dancing are an ecstatic activity, and one of the established meanings of the Hebrew term for

prophet is an ecstatic who typically employed dance and musical instruments to induce the prophetic frenzy.

### **Lubavitcher Rebbe**

The men sang--sang their joy over their deliverance, sang their yearning for a more perfect redemption--but something was lacking...

What was lacking? Give your answer based upon the opinions above as to the nature of Miriam's song as well as based on a comparison of Az Yashir and Miriam's song. Use the grid below to guide you in your comparisons.

	<b>Az Yashir</b>	<b>Miriam's song</b>
Language		
Content		
How was the song sung?		
Who is involved?		
Other		
Other		