

## **"And they came to Ailam, and there were twelve springs of water and seventy date palms and they camped there on the water." (15:27)**

In *Parashas Masei*, as the *Torah* recounts *Bnei Yisrael's* travels and enumerates the places in which they camped, the *Torah* does not deem it appropriate to mention any of the great miracles that transpired for their benefit. The *Torah* does, however, mention their encampment in Ailim, a place where they found such material benefits as twelve springs and seventy date palms. *Ramban* notes this, citing a *Mechilta* that states that these twelve springs were created specifically for the benefit of the twelve tribes. He goes on to assert that the seventy date palms were exclusively set aside in order that the seventy elders sit in their shade to contemplate and give praise to Hashem.

We may suggest that the *Ramban* is alluding to a profound concept. As Hashem prepared *Bnei Yisrael* for the receiving of the *Torah*, He sought to imbue them with respect for the *Torah* and its scholars. Indeed, during the early moments of Creation, Hashem was already preparing for the venerable seventy elders who were the paradigm of *Torah* scholarship by designating a place for them for each according to his due reverence. *Bnei Yisrael* had to appreciate the importance of the *Torah* and its disseminators before that could be deemed ready to receive the *Torah*. In order to inculcate in us the proper regard for *Torah* scholars, the *Torah* reports the seemingly innocuous encampment in Ailim, and the miracles which transpired there a second time.