

## **"And the Bnei Yisrael went into the sea on dry land." (14:22)**

The *Mechilta* describes the scenario and dialogue that took place among the tribes prior to the splitting of the sea. *Bnei Yisrael* were standing by the shores of the Red Sea with the Egyptian army literally breathing down their necks. Suddenly, they began to argue about who should go into the water first. Each tribe vied for the opportunity to be the first to enter the Red Sea. During the negotiations, Nachshon ben Aminadav of the Tribe of Yehudah, jumped into the threatening waters. The tribe of Yehudah was indeed lauded for this singular act of devotion. As is stated in *Tehillim 114*, "Yehudah became His sanctuary, Yisrael His dominions." Indeed, for his decisiveness and alacrity in taking the first plunge, Yehudah was crowned as king over *Bnei Yisrael*. His unique act notwithstanding, the members of each of the tribes were also willing to jump into the water!

We may suggest the following: Meetings are essential, and a consensus of opinion is necessary to accomplish something. When *Klal Yisrael* is trapped between the forbidding waters of the Red Sea and the approaching Egyptian army, however, it is not a time to make speeches and convene meetings. It is a time for action and commitment, not rhetoric and hyperbole. All too often when action on behalf of *Torah* causes is mandated, be it for organizational, communal or individual needs, we become bogged down with meetings, speeches and votes. The problem at hand festers, and, in most cases, grows out of proportion. We must recognize that the *Bais Ha'Mikdash* was built in Yehudah's portion due to his commitment to action and practice. Similarly, *Klal Yisrael* will grow vibrantly only if we put our faith and commitment into active participation and practice.