There was a study done by a National Lottery Research company that recently polled men and women to determine what things they forget easily. Men seem to forget quicker than women and the study concluded that men rely on women more to remember things, which they in fact do. The study determined that on average we forget 2-4 things per day. Some of the top things people forget were these:

A) Letting a hot cup of tea or coffee go cold.
B) Where you put your car keys or wallet or sunglasses.
C) What you went to the store to shop for.
D) To take the washing out of a washing machine.
E) To take food out of a freezer.
F) To charge your mobile device.
G) To replace the toilet paper roll.
H) Where you parked your car.
I) Watering the plants.
J) Pin numbers and passwords.
K) A birthday or anniversary.
L) Putting garbage bins out on the right day.

The study concluded that our modern day hectic lifestyles and daily pressures plus all of the new technologies are adding to the forgetfulness process.

When we come to this text of Scripture in Exodus, we come to a passage in which Israel forgets about God in just three days. Now she cannot possibly blame this on the hectic pace she is under, because she is just plodding along through the wilderness following the leading of God. She saw an amazing display of God’s presence when He saved her and destroyed her enemies. And, in three days from that moment, she forgot about God.

**GOD’S PEOPLE NEED TO MAINTAIN THEIR GREAT CONFIDENCE AND TRUST IN GOD AFTER GREAT VICTORIES BECAUSE IT IS SO EASY TO **FORGET** ABOUT GOD AND DOUBT GOD AND THAT ANGERS GOD.**

After the great national deliverance and this great song of praise was sung by Moses and the sons of Israel, there were four results:

**RESULT #1 – The Red Sea deliverance story was again **repeated**. 15:19**

I think this is important because this again emphasizes what this nation of Israel actually saw God do.

**Verse 19** recap the praise song and the facts of what happened. The particular point of this verse is to emphasize that all of the horses, chariots and horsemen were destroyed. This would be a reference to the fact that their impressive military weaponry was easily toppled by God.
Those Egyptians had arrogantly chased after the Israelites with their impressive military force and they went right out into the sea and the covenant keeping Jehovah of Israel brought the waters down on all of them and they all drowned.

Israel had walked on dry ground through the sea and the Egyptians had all drowned in the same sea.

Now the entire nation had seen that. They saw the horses, they saw the chariots, and they saw the horsemen all drown. All the men saw it and so did all of the women.

**RESULT #2** – The deliverance story was celebrated by Miriam and all the women.

15:20-21

This is the first and only mention of Miriam by name in the entire book of Exodus. She was the older sister of Moses.

Now Miriam is identified as a prophetess. She is the first woman in the Bible to be called a prophetess. Moses is writing this after the events actually took place and by then Miriam was identified as a “prophetess.”

Now in the O.T. there are certain women who have this title; some are good godly women and some not so good and godly. Deborah (Judges 4:4); Huldah (II Kings 22:14); Isaiah’s wife (Is. 8:3) and Anna (Lk. 2:36) are godly examples. On the other hand, “Nodiah” (Neh. 6:14) and “Jezebel” (Rev. 2:20) are examples of ungodly women.

Now there is no question that Miriam did play a major role in helping Moses in the Exodus (Micah 6:4) as did Aaron. She was the young girl who had watched over Moses when he was in the bulrushes and she actually ran and got her mother to become his nursemaid.

By virtue of the fact that she is a “prophetess,” we may assume that she did get some revelatory instruction from God that she passed on to the people. We don’t know what data she did get from the Lord, except what is recorded here.

She is identified as being Aaron’s sister. One question worth asking is why isn’t she identified as Moses’ sister?

1) Some believe it is because Aaron was the oldest brother, three years older than Moses (Ex. 7:6-7) and Moses is linking her to the oldest in the family.

2) Some believe that by linking her to Aaron, she is functioning in priestly roles.

3) Another possibility is found in Numbers 12:1-2. Aaron and Miriam had dared speak against Moses and it is possible that they are being linked together here for that reason.

Apparently Miriam was musically inclined. She was, as one writer said, the Fanny Crosby of the Torah.
She took a timbrel or tambourine in her hand and all the women went out after her with timbrels and with dancing because of the great victory that God had given Israel. Miriam taught these women a little chorus that said, “sing to the LORD for He is highly exalted and the horse and rider He has hurred into the sea.”

There are rare moments of great victory for Israel when God had given a great national victory over enemies that Israelite women sang and played tambourines and danced (Judges 11:34; I Sam. 18:6). It was common in Israel’s history for women to sing praises to God and dance when God had given their men victory (I Sam. 18:6-7).

There is no hint that this was ever practiced in the N.T. church. In other words, there is no evidence whatsoever that any church in Biblical times had women dress in slinky chiffon dresses and come out with tambourines and dance around the building. This was a very peculiar moment in Israel’s national history.

Now clearly the point of verse 1 and verse 20 is “all” the men and “all” the women were involved in this great epoch worship moment because they all had seen God deliver them. That is what makes the next verses so depressing.

RESULT #3 – The nation Israel was led by Moses into the wilderness where they grumbled. 15:22-26

The word “grumble” means to murmur and complain in a very stubborn and obstinate way (William Gesenius, Hebrew Lexicon, p. 434). The same people who had been praising God, we find just three days later grumbling about God. In exactly the same chapter that features great worship and praise to God, we come to a moment of great doubt. Isn’t that so like us? We have great worship one day and great despair a couple days later. We have a moment of great triumph and then in just a few days we are at some low point of desperation.

Now there are three main facts of what happened that are clearly developed here:

Fact #1 - Moses led Israel from the Red Sea out into the wilderness of Shur. 15:22a

Now this is important to see—the Israelites are being led by Moses. They are not following some unknown novice, they are following a man who has been greatly used by God and those plagues and the parting of the sea were directly connected to him. Moses is the man who went and led them out of Egypt. So if you are following Moses, you are following a powerful man of God. You would think that is all the people would need to know. We are following Moses and he will lead us to where God wants us to go.

F. B. Meyer said we can almost picture the march on Day One (Studies in Exodus, p. 178). They have sung their song of victory. They had seen God deliver them and off they went. There must have been a great sense of freedom and victory and there must have been a sense that God was looking out for them. They had great anticipation of great things to come.
They are now moving south toward Sinai. This puts her in the Sinai Peninsula. The reason I think that is significant is because some have taken the position that Israel crossed the Red Sea at the Gulf of Akabah on the east side of the Peninsula and not at the Gulf of Suez on the west side. Had she crossed on the east side, she would not have been in the wilderness of Shur.

The wilderness of Shur was a large, rugged sparsely populated wilderness area located in the northern part of the Sinai Peninsula.

**Fact #2** - Moses led Israel _three_ days out into the wilderness and there was no fresh water.  
15:22b

Day two was probably another exciting day, but it wasn’t as exciting as Day one. In fact, they are following God and it doesn’t seem to be as glamorous as Day two. They are traveling through dry country and God is not just having new fresh rivers appear, because He is leading them to the land He has for them and He is taking them through land He has already created.

By Day three, the group was getting tired and thirsty and now as we come to Day three, Israel comes to her first great test. After Israel experienced the first great victory, she came to her first big test.

We can expect the same thing. After we have had a victory from God, we, too, can expect to come to some faith test to show whether or not we really trust God.

Now keep in mind that God is the One leading this nation. So we may assume that God wants this nation right where she is so she can experience what He wants her to experience, which specifically is His provisions. She is moving south in the wilderness.

**Fact #3** - Israel came to a place named Marah because the _waters_ were bitter.  
15:23-26

Now a concern for water is a very real concern, especially if you are three days out in a wilderness. When we used to go into the mountains, we were always on the lookout for water for the horses. It is critical to camp in places that have water. So if you are three days out and not finding water, it is a very real concern.

Apparently, they were approaching Marah and excited about getting a new supply of water but when they got there they panicked because the water was “bitter” (marah). It was undrinkable water. According to verse 23, the water was “bitter” and contained some high level of minerals and salt that apparently made this water undrinkable.

According to verse 24 the people were very concerned, which would be a normal response. The problem is certainly not in asking about the water situation. The problem is they started “grumbling at Moses.” They could have come to Moses and requested that He go to God and ask about water; after all, just three days prior to this they literally saw God part the Red Sea.
But instead of thinking “we will get to see God do something great again,” they start “grumbling.”

Moses was God’s representative so in all reality they are murmuring against God rather than trusting the God who had just saved them.

We will all face some Marah’s in life. It is part of growth. We will all face some bitter things that will stretch our faith and when we trust God and let God know we are depending on Him, it thrills Him; but when we murmur and complain it is a disgrace to Him.

**According to verse 25, Moses did what all the people should have done; he cried out to the LORD.**

When Moses cried out to the LORD, God showed Moses a tree and by throwing the tree into the water it became sweet to drink. Think of it; one tree transformed bitter water into sweet water.

**There is a tree that can transform a bitter life into a sweet life. That tree is Calvary.**

According to verse 26, at this place God made a legal decree that if His people would give heed to His Word, God promised that He would be Israel’s doctor and not bring any judgmental kind of thing like a disease on Israel. The diseases that He is referring to here are the destructive plagues.

God is not telling the people that they will never get sick or die. He is promising them that as long as they trust Him and obey Him, He will care for them. He will never do anything like He did to the Egyptians. They never have to worry about plagues or being led into a sea as a nation and drowning. They will always be able to depend on God for His help.

**RESULT #4 – The nation Israel was led to Elim. 15:27**

After the events that took place in Marah, God led Israel to Elim. It is approximately 22-25 miles between Marah and Elim to the south.

When they got there, there were twelve springs of water and there were seventy date palms. So once Israel had passed the test, God took them to a very plush place to camp.

**PRACTICAL CONSIDERATIONS:**

1) **In our spiritual lives we may expect a great emotional low after a great emotional high.**

2) **God puts His people to the test to see if they really trust Him.**

3) **God shows His people along the way that He is caring for them.**
4) God wants His people obeying His Word and when they do they experience His blessings.

5) God always leads His people to the best places in life.