



## EMUNAH THAT IS REAL

*Harav Y. Reuven Rubin Shlita*

Hashem has granted me the merit to share time with youngsters from a wide array of mosdos. I try to create time when I can just share in their ideas and how they bond with their yiddishkiet. It is with this store of experience that I would humbly offer some comments on one specific aspect.

As we move through the parshios of Bereishis we find enormous life lessons, given to us through the stories of our holy ancestors. It is for this reason that the first sefer of the Torah is called Toras Avos, Lessons of our Fathers, for their experiences are depicted for us so that we can gain eternal guidance.

In parshas Vayeira we find Yaakov Avinu undertaking a forced exile because of the hate engendered by his brother Eisav. As he takes to the road a vital aspect of our connection to Hashem takes place. The concept of Maasei Avos Siman Labanim does not only mean that the actions of the fathers are a sign for what will transpire with their children. The avos intentionally initiated spiritual forces that would continue to be potent for all generations so that Klal Yisrael would benefit in later times when they found themselves in similar situations. The Chidushei Harim used this concept to explain a Medrash that tells us that when Yaakov was on his way to Padan Aram, he contemplated the fact that when Eliezer went to find a shidduch for Yitzchak, he went out with ten camels loaded with wealth. Yaakov, however, did not have even a single ring or bracelet in his possession. At that point Yaakov said, "Me'ayin Yavo Ezri?," perhaps all is lost for me?! He then regained his composure and reassured himself, saying, "Ezri Me'im Hashem."

At first glance, this Midrash is very hard to understand, as it seems to imply that Yaakov had a moment of weakness in his Emunah in Hashem. To even contemplate such a thought would be totally outrageous, as the Avos Hakedoshim were on such a high spiritual level that they were considered a merkavah for the Shechinah in our world, meaning that they were in a constant state of d'veikus.

The Chidushei Harim explains that the Midrash does not mean that Yaakov Avinu had a doubt in his Emunah for even a moment. What actually happened was that Yaakov realised that he was in a

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situation in which a person might doubt his Emunah, as he was in a situation where he truly had nothing. He then thought to himself “how could I have had such an unworthy thought, that I have nothing?” He concluded that Hashem must have planted this thought in his mind in order to give him the opportunity to strengthen the Emunah of the later generations of Klal Yisrael who would find themselves a similar situation, and would be in need of Chizuk. By strengthening his own Emunah when he was in this situation, he would be able to infuse Emunah into all of his descendants, so that they would be able to make it through similar difficult situations without faltering. Here we see that Maasei Avos Siman Labanim is more than just an omen for what will happen later – it is a chesed that the Avos did for the later generations.

This illuminating dynamic is often lost on a world filled with the materialistic drives of a culture steeped in selfishness. Emunahas Hashem is often seen as background music to stories of old that don't really have impact on our daily lives. The Piesnetzna Rebbe Ztl writes that each Yid should write a journal of how Hashem has shown His love throughout his life. The Rebbe explains that this will serve as a vivid reminder to each of us of how much our emunah can mean in our real lives. At the same time it will be a testimony to your children of the miracles that formed their family and the wonders that have touched their loved ones. We all need chizuk, especially in a world filled with the noise of immorality.

This week is the yahrzeit of my late Rebbetzin, Rebbetzin Chaya Sarah bas Rav Shlomo Yechiel or as we all knew her, Chaiky A'H. When it came to bitochen and emunah she was an illuminating star. Every life is knitted together with episodes which are meant to challenge and strengthen our inner connection with Hashem. Chaiky was born into a holocaust survivor family, that in of itself was created out of sheer faith in the Eibishter. When we married, we had dreams of living a tranquil life in Eretz Yisroel, but Hashem had other plans, and within months after the chasanah we were going to America, totally penniless. From the humble start, living in an attic apartment in Boro Park, she built her family, and in no small way, her husband as well. She stood as a graceful custodian of our kedusha. The Eibishter sent us on a trajectory that would take us to the White House, to meetings with the highest elected officials, and then in a detour that only Hashem could choreograph, to Manchester England. Here she created Kiddush Hashem with each moment of every new adventure. One thing kept us all focused, Mommy's and soon Boruch Hashem, Bubby's total commitment to that which she learnt from her parents. That everything is from Hashem, and that His love will carry us forwards. It was never easy, packing bags, changing direction, meeting new friends and colleagues, and doing it all with flair and wisdom. She reached out to thousands and helped them no matter their circumstances or background. Her strength came from that inborn power that Yaakov instilled in all his children. The boost of emunah and ahavas Hashem that our ancestors lived with and thrived. Boruch Hashem she was blessed to see children, grandchildren and great grandchildren following in her footsteps, bringing chizuk to further generations through her example.

Yes, our challenges are unique, yet, so are each one of our souls, so, please write your own journals of living emunah and inscribe therein the lessons for your children's children. In this way, they (and you) will be inspired with a sense of true emunah, one that lives in your heart on a daily basis.

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