

# Spiritual Healing in the Torah

By Rebbetzin Chana Bracha

## Parashat Devarim

### How do We Repair the Israelites' Lack of Emunah?

#### Tapping Into Flashes of Experiencing Divine Providence in Our Lives

We need a lot of emunah (faith) to live in Israel. When we were first married, I tried to make a budget. I would write our estimated income (Aliyah support, tutoring, my husband's occasional private patients...) on one side of the paper and our expenses on the other. No matter how hard I tried, I couldn't get the numbers to match up. So, I crumbled the paper and threw it in the garbage, raising my arms to Hashem, praying, "Hashem please take care of us!" and it worked. I don't know exactly how since we both were full-time yeshiva students. Whenever people would ask "How do you manage financially?" I would raise my head on high and respond: "Hashem!" We lived this way for seven full years, and this experience –

etched so strongly in my soul – has been imprinting the rest of our lives. Whenever facing thorny challenges not knowing how to untangle myself from worry and pain, I tap into my latent emunah buried in my experiential memory of living directly by the hand of Hashem.

Although we know it, our yetzer hara often makes us forget that Hashem is in charge of everything, and since He is ultimately good, everything that happens to us must be for the good. When we feel abandoned to chance, we can strengthen our emunah by tapping into our past experiences of being keenly aware of the Divine supervision in our lives. This is one of the main reasons for keeping the Jewish holidays instructing us to constantly commemorate Hashem's miracles during the Exodus from Egypt, the giving of the Torah, the deliverance from the Greeks and from Haman and his Henchmen etc.

#### Do we Believe in the Miracles that we Ourselves have Experienced?

Emunah is not only vital for living in Israel but is also the main principle of life in general, as it states: Chabakuk came and established the 613 mitzvot upon one, as it states: "The righteous person shall live by his faith" (*Chabakuk 2:4*); (*Babylonian Talmud Makkot 24a*). Yet the Israelites – during their journey in the wilderness – struggled greatly with their emunah. Although they had experienced Hashem's repeated miracles, being nourished by the heavenly manna and quenching their thirst from the miraculous well, they expressed their wavering faith through constant complaint and fear of conquering the Promised Land. In the first chapter of the Book of Devarim, Moshe admonishes the Israelites for their lack of faith in Hashem their G-d:

**ספר דברים פרק א פסוק כט ואמר אלקים לא תערצון ולא תיראון מהם: (ל) השם אלהיכם ההלך לפניכם הוא ילחם לכם ככל אשר עשה אתכם במצרים לעיניכם: (לא) ובמדבר אשר ראית אשר נשאך השם אלהיך כאשר ישא איש את בנו בכל הדרך אשר הלכתם עד באכם עד המקום הזה: (לב) ובדבר הזה אינכם מאמינים בהשם אלהיכם:**

"I said to you, "Do not be broken or afraid of them. Hashem, your G-d, Who goes before you He will fight for you, just as He did for you in Egypt before your very eyes, and in the desert, where you have seen how Hashem, your G-d, has carried you as a man carries his son, all the way that you have gone, until you have come to this place. But regarding this matter, you do not believe Hashem, your G-d (*Devarim 1:29-32*).

Why did Moshe say: "In **this matter** you do not believe in G-d"? Moshe referred to the miracles when Hashem lifted the whole Jewish people out of Egypt just as a father carries his son. Yet, the Israelites did not even believe the miracles they themselves had experienced. This is alluded to in *the Zohar's* well-known parable about the son who asks a stranger if he has seen his father, being oblivious that his father is carrying him on his shoulder. This is the meaning of "in this matter you did not have faith in Hashem your G-d." In view of the continued miracles performed constantly by G-d there was no excuse for this lack of faith (Ohr Hachaim, *Devarim* 1:32). A child being carried on his father's shoulders doesn't necessarily see his father, likewise whenever we feel a lack of faith and distanced from Hashem, we are unmindful of Hashem's perpetual protecting presence carrying us through the hardships of our lives.

### **We Need to Strong Rectified Emunah to Enter the Land of Israel**

According to Rashi "this matter" in which the Israelites lacked belief refers to Hashem's promises to bring them to the Land of Israel. Likewise, Rebbe Natan of Breslev expounds: *Parashat Devarim* is replete with words of rebuke for the Israelites causing their own delay to linger in the desert for forty years. This was due to the sin of the Golden Calf and the sin of the spies who blemished emunah, as it states, "But regarding this matter, you do not believe Hashem, your G-d (*Devarim* 1:32). The main tikkun (rectification) for entering the Land of Israel is emunah. This is "The strength of His works He related to His people, to give them the inheritance of the nations" (*Tehillim* 111:6). Since "the entire earth belongs to the Almighty; He created it and gave it to whomever He deemed proper, it follows that when He wished, He gave it to them, and when He wished, He took it away from them and gave it to us" (Rashi, *Bereishit* 1:1). Due to the Israelites' lack of emunah in this principle, they caused their delay in entering Israel. This lack of Emunah also brought about the destruction of the temples and it strengthened the other side to expel the Jewish people from our land. To this day the nations still say: "You are thieves, by taking hold of the Land of Israel." Israel's blemished emunah in Hashem's justified power to give us the Land of Israel empowers their claim. All exiles and destructions are caused by the Israelites' lack of emunah in our right to the Land of Israel. Therefore, we read *Parashat Devarim* with Moshe's rebuke about this matter (*Devarim* 1:32) the Shabbat before the ninth of Av, when we mourn for the exiles and destructions of the temples. The following shabbat we read *Parashat Va'etchanan*, to draw down the immense gift that Moshe granted us through his numerous prayers to come to the land of Israel (*Likutei Halachot, Hilchot Chol Hamo'ed, Shomer Sachar* 4). The current Aliyah surge indicates that more and more Jewish people are beginning to believe in our deserving the Land of Israel. This will with – the help of Hashem – silence the malicious claims against our inherent right to the Promised Land.

### **Only Through Emunah Can we Succeed**

Whenever we are on the way to holiness and achieving great achievements, the doubts of 'the other side' attempt to confuse us and make us lose our connections with Hashem and kedusha.

To succeed in anything, we must believe in what we are doing. By strengthening our emunah in Hashem, we can learn to believe in whatever Hashem guides us to do. EmunaHealing is all about emunah. To succeed in EmunaHealing it is vital to believe in the power of spiritual healing. Even if we are beginners and our work is only 40% accurate, we still need to believe in our ability to channel Hashem's healing power.

Gradually, very gradually we learn to become more accurate, and our channel will become more and more pure. Without this emunah we will be unable to achieve the desired results. For example, when I first started doing my annual juice fast, it didn't work, because I stopped believing 100% that the juice fast was good for me. I was not in a supportive environment, my husband the Dr. doesn't believe in juice fasts, and people were telling me that I looked horrible... I became more and more doubtful, and this lack of emunah affected my immune system, so I contracted an ear infection. In subsequent years, I have learned to protect myself from negative comments of others and believe in the efficiency of my annual juice fast to cleanse my body. Baruch Hashem, with this positive attitude and emunah in what I am doing I have experienced amazing healing results.

### **EmunaHealing Exercise for Tuning into Hashem's Perpetual, Protective Presence**

1. Settle yourself in a beautiful comfortable place where you can be alone with yourself and with Hashem. Breathe deeply and become aware of your thoughts.
2. Do you have any fears and worries that suck your energy and weaken you? Allow all these fearful worried thoughts to surface into your conscious mind. Explore them without judging them. Validate their existence and breathe into them.
3. Whenever we harbor negative thoughts, we are oblivious to Hashem's presence in our lives. Remind yourself that Hashem is with you even within your fears and worries. Envision yourself as a child on the shoulders of your Almighty Father. Until recently you were unaware that you are riding on Hashem's shoulders. Now breathe into this image of being carried by your Almighty Father, feeling supported and cared for.
4. While continuing to breathe mindfully recall a potent memory where you clearly felt Hashem's presence in your life. What did it feel like when you became aware of the divine supervision in your personal life. Tune into the feeling of emunah you had then.
5. Breathe into the emunah you had when you felt so supported by Hashem and amplify it. Can you tap into this feeling of faith right now?
6. Now meditate on the miracles you have experienced in your life, as you tune into your personal miracles imagine turning up the volume of your emunah as you would turn up the volume on your speaker or phone.
7. Imagine placing the emunah you experienced in the past into your handbag and bringing it into your present life. Can you superimpose your past emunah unto your current fearful and worried thoughts?
8. If your emunah could speak what would it tell your fears and worries? Give your emunah its proper voice and allow it to assuage all your fears and worries. You may want to extend this speech into a dialogue between your emunah and your negative thoughts. Imagine how they would respond to your voice of emunah but allow your emunah to get the last word!