

Secrets to Having Faith When You're Filled With Fear

Recently, I was blessed with the opportunity to babysit the youngest two of my four grandchildren overnight. This was not the first time we babysat for these two, but it was the first time we had a bad storm during the night. My youngest grandson (almost 2 years old) cried for a few minutes and then went to bed, sleeping like a log. He takes after his *tzade* (grandfather). But my nearly 4-year-old granddaughter went to bed and was quiet until the first boom of thunder. As soon as the thunder roared, she jumped out of bed, screaming. I was still awake, so I walked into her bedroom and attempted to comfort her. She wanted the lights on, so I put a nightlight in the room (a second one we already had one in there). She was still upset and scared, so I spoke to her and explained in the simplest terms I could about thunder. But no matter how much I explained it to her, she was not going to go back to sleep.

So I did what all good *tzades* do, I made a pallet next to her bed and laid down on the floor next to her. That settled her down, and she closed her eyes and went to sleep for a few minutes. Then the next thunder boomed, and she jumped out of bed, only this time I was there, and she immediately calmed down and lay back down in her bed. She closed her eyes and was soon asleep again. But after a few minutes, more thunder came, and again she woke up, again she saw me there and settled down and closed her eyes. Only this time, after a few seconds, her little hand slipped out from under the blanket and reached for mine. She grasped one of my fingers in her hand and slowly pulled my hand close enough to her bed so she could hold my hand while she slept through the rest of the night's storm.

As I was lying there thinking about her simply wanting assurance that I was there, my mind went to a passage from

Deuteronomy 31 where Moses is commissioning Joshua to take leadership of the children of Israel. As Moses spoke to Joshua he, as I did with my granddaughter explained what had happened to Israel and what was going to happen to Israel. Yet three times in the chapter, Moses practically proclaimed the same statement.

“Chazak! Be courageous! Do not be afraid or tremble before them. For Adonai your God—He is the One who goes with you. He will not fail you or abandon you” (Deut. 31:6).

My granddaughter taught me an important lesson. It isn't a lack of faith when we reach out to G-D in moments of weakness of fear. It is actually a proclamation of our faith. We aren't reaching out because we are in doubt, we are reaching out because we know when we do reach we will touch Him. Because we know He is right there. {eo}

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