# "And Bnei Yisrael saw the great hand (of Hashem)... and they believed in Hashem." (14:31)

A Jew should strive to attain that sublime level of *emunah* in Hashem, so that he truly believes with a clarity of vision. Let us explain. We have the notion that "seeing is believing." This means that in order to really believe, one must see. Hence, belief in a given concept is a step lower than actually seeing it. This is not the *Torah* perspective. The *Chidushei Ha'Rim* asserts that as *Bnei Yisrael* stood at the shores of the Red Sea and experienced unprecedented miracles, they were privy to a revelation of Hashem which was unparalleled. The *Torah* states that first *"Bnei Yisrael saw"* miracles and only afterwards did they "Believe in Hashem." Belief followed visual perception! *Emunah* is a faith so strong that one actually senses its reality.

We see this phenomenon in practice. The most erudite secularist will concede that our "eyes" make mistakes. That which we perceive as reality is often a figment of our imagination. One example is the color of the ocean. Take a picture, and you will see blue. Stand from a distance and gaze at the ocean -- you will see blue. We know, however, that water has no color. The blue we see is the reflection of the sun against the water. Hence, seeing is not believing! Believing, true *emunah*, however, should be an unshakable and unmistakable form of vision.

This idea is expounded upon by the *Sfas Emes* who questions the "need" for *"they believed"* after *"they saw"*. What advantage is there in believing after the spectacle has been seen and confirmed? He responds that *emunah* is the application of what one sees and believes into the heart and mind of the individual, so that it becomes a resolute part of the person's ideological conviction. When one has *emunah sheleimah*, perfect faith, he is imbued with a "perception" that does not falter with the blandishments of the *yetzer hara*, evil inclination, or the vicissitudes of trial and travail. His belief is his perception of reality!