

SHABBAT SHALOM - YITRO- 2012

If it sounds too good, it probably isn't. Emotion often trumps 'saichel' and what was supposed to be a landmark score unfortunately becomes nothing more than landfill and a rough landing.

That is why there are 'cooling off period' laws and cancellation clauses in most legitimate transactions. Buying into something sight unseen, without details or under pressure is a recipe for disaster. We should never be our own lawyer, emotion clouds our judgment.

We know only too well the fallout created by 'signing on' to documents which either party really knew they could not live up to. Whether it was housing or huge credit lines to chase a dream, the money flowed until the well ran dry and both parties were deep into the hole. This was true of individuals and is currently affecting entire countries and subsequently the global economy. Experience has shown that even when we know the person or the person is high profile, stop-look-listen, and then hold your breath, hopefully we are making the right decision.

So here is the deal. You are sent a proposal to buy into a group with a set of rules and regulations, all sight unseen. The offering company is pretty solid and has a worldwide base. Its official representative has the right credentials. With all this being said, I have a gut feeling we would at least ask to see the prospectus and for some time to study it.

Yet, such appears not to be the case at Mt. Sinai when Moshe, representing his Boss, the Almighty, makes the Israelites an offer of the Torah and the Commandments to become a nation of Priests and the servants of the Almighty, Strange, no explicit terms and provisions at the time of offer; all this to be determined at a later date. Jews have a reputation of being quite shrewd and detail oriented when it comes to 'making deals' but these qualities are strangely absent at Sinai.

Without any requests for details or clarification, they respond, KOL ASHER DIBER HASHEM, NA'ASEH, it's a deal! While this denotes total faith and trust in Hashem and Moshe Avdo, in G-d and Moses, it flies in the face of normal due diligence. We know many a person who set themselves up as Godlike, promising the moon, but we never jump right in. We do it cautiously and systematically. So what is the implication of NA'ASEH at Sinai?

It is true that later on they add, NISHMA to the NAASEH, we would like to hear some of the details but NAASEH always precedes NISHMA, seemingly affirming their faith in the Source; no questions or clarification needed. No doubt, in Judaism 'doing' leads to better understanding. You can take all the theory available about driving or swimming but unless you try to navigate Decarie Circle at rush hour or jump into the deep end of the pool, you have no idea what driving or swimming are all about. By doing, you gain a greater appreciation as to what the goal or purpose of the action is all about. Yes, NISHMA, explanations and clarifications are significant but they remain meaningless without a NAASEH, its implementation, and that always seems to come first.

It should be noted that while NAASEH initially appears alone, NISHMAH, just listening, never does. it is never an acceptable situation on its own. To listen might be polite but only if and when there is to be an action plan or at least a re-action as a follow up.

The world for over three thousand years has acknowledged the Ten Commandments as basic to human civilization. Thou shalt not kill or steal or covet or use the name of G-d in vain: They all remain merely words if left without appropriate application or direction. All of the major world religions acknowledge some sort of connection to the Ten Commandments but the words have not prevented them from acting against the Jews time and time again. Not only was there no NAASEH, application, but I doubt if there was even NISHMA, an awareness of what they supposedly heard.

And so, right from the start, Na'aseh, doing 'tachlis'. The Na'aseh is not a response to a particular set of commandments or instructions, but the statement of a process for all time. We shall not sit on the sidelines making pretty speeches; no promises or statements to tell the people what they want to hear. Na'aseh, we will do what is appropriate to make our world, our society, our community a better place for all.

How to do it? NISHMA analyze, probe, discuss, but first and foremost, get into NA'ASEH mode! We have to make a determined effort to act and just re-act.

We just don't lament about the economy; we hang in there, even helping others along the way. We can and will weather the storm.

To support Israel at these crucial transition times means that we educate ourselves as to the politics of the moment and speak out for Israel's right to safety and security. We praise its open democratic process being played out for all to see, for better or for worse. We follow Canada's lead in proclaiming ourselves to be and actually being- Israel's best friend.

NA'ASEH has been our call letters from Sinai time and continues to be our calling card today and for ever more. And so-NA'ASEH- Let's get it going!

Shabbat Shalom

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Light Shabbat Candles: 4:56 PM; Shabbat Services-5:10 PM;

Shabbat Morning: 8:45 AM

Mincha- 5:00 PM followed by class in Parsha, Ma'ariv & Havdalah- 6:01 PM.

Sunday Services 8:00 AM – 5:10 PM