



RABBI JUDAH

MISCHEL

Mashpiah, OU-NCSY
Executive Director, Camp HASC

SHAVUOT



Dedicated L'IluY Nishmas HaChaver
Shlomo Michael ben Meir z'l

It All Makes Sense

After his release from Siberian gulag, the *gaon* Rav Yechezkel Abramsky, zt'l, 'Reb Chatzkel' moved to the United Kingdom and became the Rosh Beis Din of London and Rabbi of the Machzike HaDas community. The author of the twenty four volume commentary to the Tosefta, *Chazon Yechezkel*, Reb Chatzkel was a beloved *talmid chacham* respected by Jewish scholars and academics of all stripes.

While in London, Dayan Abramsky maintained a personal relationship with a professor of Jewish studies who was not *shomer Torah u-mitzvos*. When Dayan Abramsky encouraged his acquaintance to lay *tefillin* the fellow agreed on condition that they learn the reasoning behind the mitzvah, its meaning and depth. Of course, Dayan Abramsky agreed, and suggested that first he try laying tefillin every day for a month, and then they would examine the rationale and philosophical underpinnings behind the mitzvah.

The professor reluctantly agreed, though he continued to seek out answers from the Rav and was bewildered at his steadfast insistence to put off learning about the mitzvah. One morning, a couple of weeks after laying tefillin each morning, the Yid appeared at Dayan Abramsky's home, eyes filled with tears: "*Rebbi, ich farshtei shoin altz — it all makes sense,*" he cried, "*it all makes sense!*"

כל אשר דבר ה' נעשה ונשמע

"Whatever God has spoken, we will do and we will hear!" (*Exodus, 24:7*)

Naaseh v'nishma places acceptance of Hashem's will, action, fulfilment of mitzvos before understanding. It expresses the recognition that, although they are God-given, our intellectual abilities are finite. While we are encouraged to strive to comprehend them and their inner 'reasons', the first step in our relationship with Hashem is to recognize that Torah and mitzvos are simply obligatory, even when we do not understand.

Our sages (*Shabbos, 88a-89b*) tell us that the Jewish People received special rewards for preceding the word *na'aseh*, "we will do (the mitzvos of the Torah)" to *nishma*, "we will hear (and understand them)." At that

moment, six hundred thousand brilliant angels descended and crowned every Jew with two crowns: one for *na'aseh* and one for *nishma*. Furthermore, in response to the statement of *na'aseh v'nishma*, Hashem called *Am Yisrael* בני בְּכוֹרֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל, “My first-born child” (*Shemos*, 4:22).

As we approach the light, the area our shadow covers becomes smaller

This term of tremendous honor gives us the awareness that the covenantal relationship is both a privilege and responsibility. We, as individuals and a vast community, are defined by our faithful acceptance of the *ratzon Hashem*, readiness to obey and perform Hashem's commandments, even before knowing the details.

When Rav Avrohom Yeshaya Karelitz, zt'l, the Chazon Ish arrived at the fledgling settlement of Bnei Brak in 1933, streets were unpaved and there were barely a couple of hundred families living there. As the development grew, street names, sidewalks and streetlights were added sparsely throughout the neighborhood. The home of the

Chazon Ish was an epicenter of activity in the town, and a street light was installed right in front of the *gadol's* apartment.

Soon thereafter, the Chazon Ish shared an insightful comment with his family urging them to take note: “When walking down the block, far from the light, one's shadow extends over a wide area. As we approach the light, the area our shadow covers becomes smaller; when standing directly below the light, barely any shadow is cast at all.”

Said the Chazon Ish, “The same is true regarding the light of the Torah. The closer we are to the *ohr haTorah*, the more we see how limited the scope of human knowledge and understanding is.”

Declaring *Naaseh v'nishma* is the defining moment in our development as a nation. In *talmud Torah*, the study of our holy Torah, we muster all of our intellectual and analytical abilities to study, question and unfold understandings of the text. Shavuot celebrates the prerequisite: receiving the *ohr haTorah*, the no-strings attached acceptance of Hashem's will, whether or not it seems to make any sense. May we open our minds and hearts fully to receive this incomparable gift! ■



Oded
Lewensohn,
Adv. & Notary

לבִּינְסוֹן רַז וְשׁוֹתִי מְשָׂרָד עוֹרְכֵי דִין וְנוֹטָרִיוֹן

Lewensohn Raz & Co.
Law Offices & Notary

Estates, Probate,
and Inheritances*

Real Estate
Transactions

Tama 38 and Renovation
Construction Projects

* Durable Powers of Attorney for Health and Financial Matters



Moshe Raz,
Adv.

27 Keren Ha'Yesod St., Jerusalem | Tel: 02-6731000 | Email: office@lawlr.co.il | www.lawlr.co.il