

בס"ד

ועל לבם אכתגנה
'I WILL WRITE
IT IN THEIR
HEARTS'

A TREASURY OF LETTERS FROM THE
LUBAVITCHER REBBE
RABBI MENACHEM M. SCHNEERSON



Memento
from the Wedding of
Shmuly and Fraidy שיחיו
Hecht

23 Adar, 5770

לזכות
החתן התמים הרב שמואל שיחי
והכלה פריידא תחי
העכט
לרגל נישואיהם בשעטומו"צ
יום ג', כ"ג אדר, תשי"ע



נדפס ע"י הוריהם
התמים ר' חיים וזוג' מרת מרים רבקה שיחיו העכט
הרה"ת ר' יצחק אהרן וזוג' מרת חנה שיחיו מאן
זקניהם
ר' מרדכי וזוג' מרת לאה שיחיו העכט
מרת יהודית דבורה תחי ברן

Please convey to your parents my wish for a kosher and happy Pesach, and the same [wish is extended] to all of you.

With blessings for success in the study of the Torah with the fear of heaven,

M. Schneerson

No. 968

This letter was sent to R. Shlomo Palmer, a philanthropist associated with the Lubavitch community in Chicago.

B”H, 6 Nissan, 5711.
Brooklyn.

Greetings and blessings,

Many requests for help are reaching me in connection with the approaching Pesach holiday, from the needy here and the needy in our Holy Land and in Europe. I know that year after year, we have received significant sums for *maos chitim* from institutions and individuals due to your efforts.

I hope that you will follow this desirable custom this year as well. As is easily understood, the more that [is given] and the earlier it is given, the more praiseworthy.

With blessing for a kosher and happy holiday,



No. 956

This letter was sent to an artist whose name was not released.

24 Adar II, 5711.

Your two letters — one undated and one from 22 Adar — were duly received. Nevertheless, because of my many preoccupations, I have not had the opportunity to answer them until now.

Enclosed is the *kuntres* from Purim¹ and also the *kuntres* from 2 Nisan² which I am sending you. Now, I will reply to your letters.

I was exceedingly happy to read that you are working with your artistic ability and are preparing an exhibition of which the press wrote positive reviews. Certainly, you will proceed in such [activities] and used the talent which G-d gave you to strengthen *Yiddishkeit* and the fear of G-d.

With regard to the fundamental aspect of your letter, that you lament your situation and circumstance, that you feel broken, and, at times, fall into despair, can't find a place for yourself and the like, and would therefore like to meet with me so that we can speak things over face to face.

It is a good thing for two good friends to meet and doing so brings about an elevation of spirits for both. Nevertheless, which of us could bear postponing [dealing with the issue] until then, while you are found in a situation of despair, heaven forbid?

You do not describe the factor that brings you to such an emotional state. Therefore I can't analyze the particulars and show that these reasons are just figments of imagination that have their source in the *yetzer hora*. My intent is that even if the

1. [*Sefer HaMaamarim 5711*, p. 177ff.].

2. [*Sefer HaMaamarim 5711*, p. 201ff.].

factor has a certain element of truth in it, that it is a reason for despair and fallen spirits is false; it is a trick of the *yetzer*. My revered father-in-law, the Rebbe, would call the *yetzer*, “the clever one,” because it approaches every one with words that he will heed.

As a basis, I must make a general statement that applies to the concept as a whole, supporting the idea with an adage of the Baal Shem Tov that my revered father-in-law, the Rebbe, quoted on many occasions:³ “Every Jew can derive a lesson in the service of G-d from everything that he sees or hears.” [From that starting point,] I would like to shed light on your instance in particular.

You are certainly aware that the primary skill of an artist in the craft of painting is to be able to withdraw from the external dimensions of an entity. [From that standpoint,] he looks past its external form and glimpses at the entity from within. He sees its inner and essential dimensions and then expresses them in the art [he produces].

This enables a person who looks at the painting that the artist produces to become aware of elements of that entity that he had not appreciated previously. For that inner dimension had been covered by less important facets. In this manner, the artist highlights the essence and the nature of the thing that he paints. As a result, the person who sees it, sees it in a different and true light and realizes that his previous [perception] was in error.

This entire explanation and description [relates] to one of the fundamental elements of a person’s service to his Creator.

As we know from the Torah as a whole and *Chassidus* in particular, the entire Creation stems from “the word of G-d.”⁴ At all times and at every moment, “the word of G-d” brings [all existence] into being and maintains it. It is only because of

3. [HaYom Yom, Entry 9 Iyar; Igros Kodesh of the Rebbe Rayatz, letter #756, Heb. Vol. 3, p. 289.]

4. [See Tanya, Shaar HaYichud VebaEmunah, ch. 1.]

of our Sages in the *Mishmah*⁴⁴ to look generously upon others, every one should influence his circle of friends and acquaintances and bring them closer to the matters to which my revered father-in-law, the Rebbe, זי"ע, devoted so much self-sacrifice.

For the upcoming Pesach holiday, I wish all of you and your households, a kosher and happy Pesach.

With blessings for both material and spiritual good,

No. 967

This letter was sent to the students of the Yeshivat Achei Temimim in Pittsburgh.

B”H, 4 Nissan, 5711.
Brooklyn.

Greetings and blessings,

I received your participation in the *maos chittim* campaign through my friend, your *Rosh Yeshivah*, the chassidic mentor, R. Sholom Posner.

I am happy to see that you do not forget your brethren both in this country and overseas and have stepped up to help them according to your potential.

You are certainly aware that at the beginning of the *Seder*, the children take the position of prominence, asking *Mah Nishtaneh*. Also, the *Haggadah* speaks of four types of children: One that is wise.... In general, children who study are not included in the category of those who do not know how to ask or who are simple. Nevertheless, so that they belong to the category of “One who is wise,” it is necessary to study the Torah with *frumkeit* and conduct oneself in a *frum* manner. Nevertheless, since there is no upper limit to wisdom, I wish that you make ongoing progress in your studies so that much satisfaction will be derived from you.

44. [See Avos 5:13.]

With respect and with the blessing that your rule over your kingdom be extended, for “Who are our kings? Our Rabbis.”⁴² May your strength in our holy Torah be increased.

No. 966

This letter was sent to the congregants and the *gabaim* of the *Nusach Ari* synagogue in Rochester.

B”H, 3 Nissan, 5711.
Brooklyn.

Greetings and blessings,

I was happy to have received your greetings and also to have received your participation in the *maamad*⁴³ fund that was conveyed. Enclosed is a receipt.

I was very pleased to be informed that the above could be considered not only as a financial contribution, but also as a sign of your participation in and identification with the great and very widespread work which was started and carried out by my revered father-in-law, the Rebbe, וצוקללה"ה נב"ים זי"ע, and which is still being carried out in the spirit that he established.

In order to carry out this important work, we must have the support of all those who have a sensitivity for the great necessity of this work. In particular, this applies to those who had, in any way, the merit to come into contact with my revered father-in-law, the Rebbe, וצוקללה"ה נב"ים זי"ע, and therefore feel personally the obligation and the good fortune to help maintain all of the initiatives that he found and directed.

The assistance can be given in two ways: through giving money and through participating personally in the work. I hope that your assistance will involve both facets, as reflected by your abovementioned participation. In line with the guidance

42. [See *Gittin*, 62a.]

43. [*Maamad* refers to money given to a Rebbe by chassidim to use at his discretion.]

G-d’s power of *tzimtzum* (contraction) and might that “the word of G-d” is hidden and only the external aspects are visible.

The concept of *avodah* (Divine service) is based on the simple faith that “there is nothing else aside from Him.”⁵ This is the standpoint from which one approaches every aspect of life. Every person, each one according to his capacity, endeavors to bring out the G-dliness that is present in every entity to a greater extent and to reduce, to whatever extent possible, the concealment and veiling with which the external dimensions [of existence] cover the G-dliness within them.

Similar concepts apply with regard to every person individually. [It is written:]⁶ “You are children to G-d your L-rd.” With regard to this, *Tanya* (ch. 2) states: “Just as a son is drawn down from the brain of his father, so too, every Jewish person is drawn down from G-d’s thought and wisdom... and He and His wisdom are one.” This is the fundament element, the essence and the nature of all Jews, including you.

Since G-d desired that the soul not receive “bread of shame,”⁷ He gave the Jews the potential for *avodah* — and not simple *avodah*, but labor, toiling with one’s body and soul. Through this *avodah*, one will receive all forms of good, including the highest levels. And all this will be justly earned.

The [Alter] Rebbe explains another point in *Tanya*: One should not think that there are certain individuals for which the above will not be realized. This, [the Alter Rebbe] states cannot be. Ultimately, even from [Divine service] that is not carried out for G-d’s sake, one will certainly come to Divine service carried out for G-d’s sake,⁸ for “No one will be [eternally] estranged from Him”⁹ (*Tanya*, the conclusion of ch. 39).

5. [*Devarim* 4:35.]

6. [*Devarim* 14:1.]

7. [See *Talmud Yerushalmi, Orlah* 1:3; *Tanna D’vei Eliyahu*, ch. 20; *Likkutei Torah, Vayikra*, p. 7d. The intent is that man’s spiritual attainments should not come to him as gifts from Above, but rather as the products of his own labor.]

8. [*Pesachim* 50b.]

9. [*II Shmuel* 14:14.]

As such, we must watch ourselves to insure that the secondary matters do not cover up the fundamental dimension of man and his ultimate purpose.

The fact that a person has difficulties, challenges and matters which he must refine are intermediaries that enable him to come to the ultimate purpose, i.e., that his soul should manifest [its true nature], what it was before “You created it.”¹⁰ On that level, “the soul that You gave me is pure.”¹⁰ [Indeed,] it will reach even higher levels, because “One hour of *teshuvah* and good deeds in this world surpasses the entire life of the world to come.”¹¹ Consequently, one cannot let the difficulty in overcoming the challenges or even the descent if from time to time one fails, prevail over the happiness one must feel as “My son, My firstborn, Israel”¹² and from the promise that we have from G-d Himself that “Your nation are all righteous.”¹³

Accordingly, if there is a Jew — and certainly if he has heard of the light of *Chassidus*, and how much more so, if he has studied the teachings of *Chassidus*, and even to a greater degree when G-d has visited suffering upon him — who writes that he is, heaven forbid, in despair and can’t find a place: not only does this run contrary to our faith; it also runs contrary to logic.

G-d promises with all His strength and power that “No one will be [eternally] estranged from Him.” And it is not required that a person do anything beyond the power that he possesses, (for “the Holy One, blessed be He, does not approach His created beings with unfair demands”).¹⁴ [Instead, he desires a person] to act according to his own potentials. Afterwards, the person is told,¹⁵ “It is sufficient for you to make an opening for

10. [The wording of the blessing *Elokai Neshamah* recited each morning.]

11. [*Avos* 4:17.]

12. [*Shmos* 4:22.]

13. [*Yeshayahu* 60:21; cited by *Sanhedrin* 10:1.]

14. [*Avodah Zarah* 3a.]

15. [See *Shir HaShirim Rabbah* 5.]

No. 965

This letter was sent to a Torah authority whose name was not released.

B”H, 29 Adar II, 5711.
Brooklyn.

Greetings and blessings,

I was visited by an elderly and G-dfearing Rabbi who fights for the sake of Yiddishkeit on behalf of his community, with self-sacrifice. Among his concerns are also matters involving *kashrus*.

At present, a battle has broken out in your community with regard to the salting of meat before three days pass.⁴⁰

I was shocked to hear that those who differ with the above-mentioned Rabbi support their position and reinforce it on a rumor that you gave clear permission to use frozen meat and, furthermore, stated that the time that meat is refrigerated is not counted in the reckoning [of three days].

The battle against the aforementioned Rabbi is being conducted, not only by ordinary people, but by etc., etc.

Knowing the situation as you do, it is superfluous to elaborate on the terrible breach that could arise from this ruse, particularly with regard to *kashrus* which is given over to women and cooks.

I am taking the liberty of suggesting to you that you publicize a denial of that rumor in a way that is appropriate to the norms of this country.⁴¹ I will be grateful to you if you could notify me of the steps that you took in this regard.

40. [See *Shulchan Aruch, Yoreh De’ah* 69:12, which states that meat becomes forbidden if it is not salted within three days after the animal was slaughtered. There are some authorities who maintain that this prohibition does not apply if the meat was frozen during those three days, but the overwhelming majority of authorities maintain that the freezing does alter the ruling.]

41. [I.e., giving it substantial publicity.]

No. 964

The name of the person to whom this letter was sent was not released.

B”H, 27 Adar II, 5711.
Brooklyn.

Greetings and blessings,

I was happy to hear from your letter that all your affairs are going well, about your fixed times for the study of the Torah, and that your daughter... is studying well.

With regard to your study of *Gemara* and the fact that you gave up your fixed study sessions, because it is difficult for you to probe to its depths.

I think that you should renew the fixed schedule for studying *Gemara* and the worry and angst from the fact that the study and understanding is difficult — and yet you continue to study, because it is G-d’s wisdom and will³⁹ — will remove other worries and angst, e.g., those of your livelihood and health.

Tomorrow, I will — with G-d’s help — visit the gravesite of my revered father-in-law, the Rebbe. I will mention you all, [requesting] blessings and success in everything that you need.

I hope that you will continue to relate good tidings to me. Concluding with blessings for material and spiritual good.

Enclosed is the *kuntres* for *Beis Nissan*.

Me the size of a needle point and I will make an opening for you the size of the opening of the Entrance Hall [of the *Beis HaMikdash*].”

The above is what G-d says. A person, however, says: “I have a different reckoning,” and as a result, falls into despair. He lifts up his hands in dejection, convincing himself that the situation continually proceeds to get worse.

The question is [— to borrow a Talmudic phrase¹⁶ — When there is a conflict between] the words of the master and the words of the student, whose words should be heard? You must pose this question to yourself. To you, it appears one way, but G-d says something else. Now, is there a question who is correct?

This is sufficient for laying out my arguments.

With regard to actual conduct, you must know that you are one of the members of the congregation of chassidim. As a natural consequence, you are bonded with the tree of life.¹⁷ The nature of this bond is reflected in the verse:¹⁸ “And you who are clinging to G-d your L-rd are all alive today.” In the *kuntres* published for *Beis Nissan*,¹⁹ the Rebbe cites our Sages’ statement:²⁰ “Even on the day when the entire world will die, you are alive. And just as you are alive today, you all will also be alive in the World to Come.” Thus you have a personal promise from our Sages that “you are all alive today and will also be alive in the World to Come.”

As a result, we must use our time for the Torah and its *mitzvos* with the fear of G-d and, you should use the talent which G-d granted you to bring about benefits for the fear of G-d.

16. [*Kiddushin* 42b, et al.]

17. [This term is used to refer to the Rebbeim and also to the inner dimension of the Torah.]

18. [*Devarim* 4:4.]

19. [*Sefer HaMaamarim* 5711, p. 204, 211.]

20. [*Sanhedrin* 90b.]

39. [See *Tanya*, ch. 5.]

These are among the things which we cannot postpone until the following day, because on the following day, we will have to do those things destined for tomorrow. Thus the things destined for today must be done today. In order to do everything [asked of one], one must know that all obstacles are the counsels of the *yetzer hora*. One must bring his faith into his intellect (mind) and feeling (heart) and in actual practice in thought, speech, and deed.

When you will apply yourself to the above, even if it will appear to you that you can make an opening only the size of a needle point, G-d will grant you success and make the opening as large as that to the Entrance Hall of the *Beis HaMikdash*.

I hope that you will not reckon with the fact that my answer chided you so much and will soon write back with happy tidings that you are acting in the spirit of the concepts spelled out above.

With blessing, while awaiting good tidings in the very near future,

No. 959

This letter was written as an introduction to the *kuntres* published in honor of 2 Nissan, 5711.²¹

B”H

There is a well-known statement of the Rebbe [Rashab], the anniversary of whose passing²² falls soon, that the role of his students is to become “lamps to diffuse light.”

The words of *tzaddikim* are precise in all their details. This is especially so with regard to statements by the *nesi'im* of the Jewish people concerning their disciples and concerning those who are connected to them. Hence, the term “lamps to diffuse light” is a guide, in several vital respects, to those who are

With blessings for success in your holy work and that you be able to feel the great pleasure it generates,

No. 963

This letter was sent to R. Chayim Yaakov Helman.

B”H, 27 Adar II, 5711.
Brooklyn.

Greetings and blessings,

I received the checks sent by you and your wife; enclosed is a receipt.

I heard a lot about you. I am happy that you remain bonded with the same connection as always. At present, after the passing of my revered father-in-law, the Rebbe, every one must feel more powerfully the responsibility that has fallen upon all of us. This should call forth deeper powers to carry out the great, holy tasks that my revered father-in-law, the Rebbe, left us so that they be successful both materially and spiritually.

Surely, you have fixed sessions for Torah study. You should hold fast to them and increase them to the degree that you can. You should also increase your acts of *tzedakah* and kindness and your efforts to influence others.

With blessings for proper health and for long life for you and your wife.

Enclosed is the *kuntres* for *Beis Nissan*.

21. [Subsequently reprinted in *Sefer HaMaamarim 5711*, p. 202.]

22. [In the original Heb./Aram., *baal hahillula*.]

After receiving your notice, I sent a condolence letter to Mr. It would be advisable to arouse him to strengthen his efforts on behalf of the *yeshivah*³⁸ for the benefit and memory of the soul of his father. Also, he should print in his memory a book of the *sichos* or the *maamarim* of my revered father-in-law, the Rebbe. This brings about a great — indeed, an inestimable — benefit and advantage for the soul. Certainly, you will find the appropriate words to explain all this to him.

I was happy to hear that the student... is already at home. You will surely visit him in the coming days and explain to him the great obligation there is to establish fixed times for the study of the Torah and *Chassidus* as well. These are the mediums for health in a physical sense, for [physical health] comes after improving one's spiritual health.

With regard to the situation in the *yeshivah*: On several occasions, I told you that everything will be successful and that there will be mediums to accomplish this. The matter can be hastened by increasing the number of students and increasing the strength of the efforts to implant the fear of heaven and [the importance of] actually observing *mitzvos* in their hearts.

I was very happy [to read] your story of what you did with the students this past Purim. Certainly, you will do something similar over the coming Pesach holiday in an appropriate manner.

Tomorrow, I will — with G-d's help — visit the gravesite of my revered father-in-law, the Rebbe. I will mention you, [requesting blessings] for great success in your material concerns and in your holy work which my revered father-in-law, the Rebbe, charged you with. He *certainly* also gave you the opportunities and the powers to bring the matter from a state of potential to actual fact.

38. [I.e., Yeshivas Achei Temimim, the branch of the Lubavitcher *yeshivah* established in New Haven.]

connected with the speaker. Let us therefore consider a few of the characteristics of a luminous lamp:

The lamp itself is the *source* of the light — a luminary, albeit in miniature.

Moreover, a lamp comprises oil and a wick. Metaphorically, the oil represents the Torah and its *mitzvos*.²³ The wick represents man — that is, the body,²⁴ or, more correctly, the level of his soul called *nefesh*,²⁵ which is “the body's partner.”²⁶ From a more inward perspective, [this soul-level] refers to the Divine soul that is vested in the animal soul.²⁷

Another characteristic of a lamp: when the wick is lit, and becomes one with the oil, the light of the lamp is diffused in many modes of light.²⁸ In general, there are two modes of light:²⁹ “black light” and “white light,” which represent respectively [two phases in man's Divine service] — elevating [his soul] and, [reciprocally,] drawing down [spiritual light].³⁰

Finally, the light of a lamp is uniquely effective when one is searching among hidden cracks and crannies, probing the heart's innermost recesses.³¹

The metaphorical messages of the above characteristics are clear and self-evident — but what matters most is their practical application. When one applies them in his life according to the directives of the Rebbe [Rashab], one's [inner] lamp lights up the particular portion of the world's materiality that he is obligated to refine and elevate,³² and in particular, it lights up

23. *Zohar* III, 187a; see also *Tanya*, ch. 35ff.

24. *Zohar* and *Tanya*, *loc. cit.*; see also *Bereishis Rabbah*, sec. 62b.

25. [I.e., the lowest of the soul's five levels.]

26. *Tikkunei Zohar*, sec. 14b of the Introduction, and *Tikkun* 21 (p. 49b).

27. *Torah Or* (*Parshas Miketz*, p. 33b ff.), *s.v. Tanu Rabbanan Mitzvas Ner Chanukah*, sec. 5. See also (*op. cit.*, p. 40b), *s.v. Ki Atah Neri*; *et al.*

28. *Berachos* 52b; *Tikkunei Zohar*, *Tikkun* 7 (p. 50a); *Zohar* I, 41b and II, 216a; *et al.*

29. *Zohar* I, 51a; *Torah Or*, *loc. cit.*, at length.

30. [In the original, *haalaah* and *hamshachah*.]

31. The Alter Rebbe's *Shulchan Aruch*, sec. 433:1; *Pesachim* 8a.

32. [Lit., “the part of the world that relates to him.”]

his own animal soul and Divine soul. This illumination is the ultimate purpose for which the soul descended to This World, and on it depends the ultimate purpose of the era of *Mashiach* and the Resurrection of the Dead.³³ May this come speedily, in our own days, *Amen*.

Menachem Schneerson

25 Adar II, 5711 [1951],
Brooklyn, N.Y.

No. 961

This letter was sent to the congregants and the *gabaim* of the *Nusach Ari* synagogue in Chicago.

B”H, 25 Adar II, 5711.
Brooklyn.

Greetings and blessings,

Your participation in the *maos chittim*³⁴ campaign was received via the distinguished chassidic mentor, Rabbi Shlomo Zalman Hecht. Enclosed is a receipt.

I would to ask you to convey my thanks and blessings to the donors and the members of their households.

The present time is between the holidays of Purim and Pesach which are both referred to as “redemptions” by our Sages.³⁵ There is, however, a difference between them. The redemption of Purim caused the Jews to be saved from [Haman’s] decree, but they remained in exile³⁶. In contrast, the redemption of Pesach brought the Jews to a state of freedom. Therefore, Pesach is called “the season of our freedom.”

33. See *Tanya*, ch. 37, at length.

34. [Literally, “money for wheat,” i.e., *tzedakah* originally given to enable the recipients to purchase wheat for the Pesach *matzos*. At present, the meaning of the term has been expanded includes all of the needs of the holiday.]

35. [*Megillah* 6b.]

36. [See *Ibid.* 14a.]

The beginning of the celebration of Pesach starts with the announcement: “let all who are hungry come and eat; let all who are needy, come and celebrate Pesach.” In other words, even before we begin our own *seder*, we tell all those who are needy that we will give them everything they need. Afterwards, we proceed to the *seder*. This generates the merit for us to truly celebrate “the season of our freedom.” This is one of the effects generated by *tzedakah* in general and *maos chittim* in particular. We accomplish more for ourselves by giving *tzedakah* or *maos chittim* than we do for the recipient of these funds.³⁷ For by making these gifts, we merit to be freed from material and spiritual worries and each one of us individually truly celebrates the season of our freedom. And — speedily in our days — we will all merit the collective season of our freedom when G-d will take us all out of exile with *Mashiach* who will bring us the true and ultimate redemption.

With wishes for a kosher and happy Pesach and for all sorts of material and spiritual good,

No. 962

This letter was sent to R. Moshe Yitzchak Hecht, the *Rebbe’s shliach* in New Haven, Conn.

B”H, 27 Adar II, 5711.
Brooklyn.

Greetings and blessings,

I duly received your letter. The suggestion regarding the confederation of the synagogues in New England is very, very appropriate. Nevertheless, because of various reasons, it is still preliminary. When we will meet face to face, with G-d’s help, we will discuss the matter at length.

37. [See *Vayikra Rabbah* 34:8.]