

314

By the grace of G-d, ...

Elul 5th, 5712

Brooklyn, N.Y.

My Dear Mr. :

I have received your letter of August 7th, in which you express your very deep appreciation for the education and upbringing which your youngest son ~~XXXXXX~~ has received at the Yeshivah in the last four years, which you recognize to be the finest thing that could have happened to him, for which you feel thankful to me. Thanks are not due to me, of course, but to the almighty who has given you such a fine son, whose desire is to be a 'vessel' to receive the right upbringing in Torah with Yirat Shamaim, rooted in Chasiduth. To him also gratitude is due for the recognition stemming from this Chinuch that one is steadily to advance along this road like all things connected with Kedushah which must rise higher and higher toward the infinite. This is particularly true in the age of youth and adolescence, the impressionable age, when the right education and upbringing is bound to bring ever-growing fruit for the whole life.

Pursuant to the above, and to the spirit of your letter, I must say that I was greatly surprised and chagrined to read the conclusion of your letter which is so contradictory to its introduction, that you wish ~~to remain in~~ to remain in ~~the~~ ^{the} ~~Yeshivah~~. This is all the more disappointing in view of the fact that only this summer he has become Bar-Mitzvah, when the Jew just enters into his obligatory life of Torah and Mitzvot. At this critical stage you consider uprooting him from the environment and upbringing which has been so beneficial to him, because you and your wife cannot be separated from him any ^{more} ~~more~~.

I fully appreciate, of course, the feelings of parents, especially towards such a son as ~~XXXXXX~~, and separation undenaible is a great hardship. On the other hand, it is also self-evident that

when it concerns the moulding of one's son's character and upbringing which is to last him for for the rest of his life and thereafter, the temporary separation of a few years is comparatively negligible considering the reward and what is at ^tsake.

the paramount factor is this:

At all times, and more so nowadays, everything should be done to spare one's child any crisis in his life, for there are enough crisis in life beyond our control. In as much as your son has become so attached to the Yeshivah environment and has benefited from it so much, has many friends among the students, etc., there can be no doubt that to take him away from it and placing him in another environment, even one even one of Torah with Yirat Shomaim, but surely not identical with this one, is bound to create a crisis, which will be both apparent and hidden, deep in his innermost being, which may have lasting lasting effects, G-d forbid.

Being also acquainted with the general estate of Torah education in America, I know that there is a basic difference in the approach to the whole problem between here and there, and the transition would by no means be a smooth one, involving either a cardinal change or a breach, G-d forbid, an experience which should be avoided even in the case of an adult, let alone a child, especially such a sensitive one as your son.

I must therefore emphasize again that you must weigh the physical and especially spiritual wellbeing of your son against the temporary separation from him. there is also the advice of our Sages, רמב"ם 'Go into exile to a place of Torah' (Abot 4:13). let me finally add that, based upon my observations and life experience,

I am certain that when parents concede to the above saying of our Sages, 'Eh despite their personal sacrifice, it is amply rewarded with the joy and happiness of their children.

I trust you will bear with me for being so outspoken in this problem, since I consider it my duty, having personal knowledge of the factors and knowing your son intimately. I cannot over-emphasize the importance of his return to New York before Rosh hashanah, for that special atmosphere that prevails here at that time, where he longs to be together with his friends, during prayers and at meal time, and be inspired together with them by all that he sees, hears and feels here.

I pray that you make this decision without undue difficulty, and the Almighty will surely reward you with much joy from him and your other children.

Our Sages say that the words of the Torah 'And ye shall teach them diligently unto thy children' refer also to one's disciples; and truly the students are treated here like one's own children. I shall therefore feel greatly relieved to hear that you have made the right decision with regard to

Wishing you and your a

בתיבה וחתימה טובה

M. Schneerson