

THE CHASSIDIC TAKE ON SCHECHITA

By the Grace of G-d
29th of M. Av, 5712
Brooklyn, N.Y.

Mr. Chayyim Zevi Gaventi
Chairman, Shechitah Board
London, England.

Sholom u'Brocho:

I was pleased to learn that the marriage of your son Nossan Notta will be solemnized on the 19th day of Elul. I wish you and Mrs. Gaventi Mazzaletov and lots of Nachas from your children.

I take this opportunity to tell you that it has been a source of gratification to me to learn of the cooperation which you, as Chairman of the Shechitah Board, and Rabbi Weinstein, as Rosh Hashochetim, have always shown towards the Shochetim belonging to our Chassidic following. I trust that you will continue to take a growing interest in their problems and will do your utmost for them, so that they, in turn, could do their utmost for your community.

There is a well known saying of the Baal Shem Tov, which I often heard quoted by my father-in-law of sainted memory, to the effect that every experience in one's life is a lesson in better human conduct and worship of G-d.

The function of Shechitah is to prepare the flesh of kosher animals and birds to be fit for human consumption and to transform it into human flesh and blood. For, what was at first but animal flesh, now, after the necessary preparation by Shechitah, is raised to the standard of being part of the human being.

Every Jew, as pointed out in the Tanya, has a spiritual duality: a 'Divine' soul and an 'animal' soul. The purpose is that the 'animal' soul should be so sublimated as to not only not interfere with the functions of the Divine soul, but should itself be elevated into a vehicle for the Divine soul. The way to accomplish this is not through seeking ways and means of our own limited intelligence, but to follow the road prescribed for us by G-d in the Torah, through the precepts and practices of our religion.

This is one of the lessons of Shechitah, for it is only by fulfilling the laws of Shechitah that the animal is transformed into the human, as mentioned above.

With prayerful wishes,

Cordially yours