

אגרות קודש כ"ק אדמו"ר מה"מ בפרסום ראשון

By the Grace of G-d
Rosh Chodesh Cheshvan
5715, Brooklyn, N.Y.

Dear Mr.

I received the publication 'Main Currents in Modern Thought,' in which your article appeared. As no writing accompanied it, I assume that everything is well with you and your children.

Presumably, the purpose of sending me the said journal was to receive my reaction, and a sincere and frank reaction at that. Hence I trust you will not take exception to my remarks.

Let me illustrate my reaction by the following hypothetical situation. Suppose that a great mathematician is living in a neighborhood where people are destitute and starving. Suppose, further, that this mathematician devotes himself entirely to the pursuit of his studies, which in itself may be commendable enough as a means to intellectual perfection. But, clearly, under the circumstances it is not his immediate personal obligation, nor is it the command of the hour generally.

Similarly, I say, with all due respect and intending no offense, G-d forbid, there are around us everywhere tens of thousands and hundreds of thousands of Jewish children, children by virtue of age, or 'children' in terms of knowledge, who are starving for spiritual nourishment, and whose souls are crying out from their innermost recesses: S.O.S. Here is a truly life-saving obligation, since the Jew's life is inseparably bound up with his source in the Torah, given with the Revelation at Sinai. I cannot help thinking, therefore, that it is the command of the hour generally, and your personal mission in particular - as you have often heard from my father-in-law of saintly memory - to attend first and foremost to this inner soul-cry of these spiritually destitute Jewish children.

Needless to say, this is not intended to minimize whatever help may be rendered to mankind as a whole. But as in the private life of every person, his first obligation is to ~~his~~ support his wife, children and parents, and his secondary obligation to others, which is understandable enough, since they are his immediate kin, and he is also compensated by them in many ways; so in the case of one's family in a wider sense - his own people. Furthermore, the saying of our Sages is well known to the effect that one's obligation is commensurate with one's ability, and as the Mishnah rules - a wealthy man bringing a poor man's offering is not deemed to have offered at all.

-2-

I repeat, I trust you will excuse me for my frank remarks, especially as they will not come to you as a surprise, since you have heard them many times from my father-in-law of saintly memory.

To continue with some encouraging news, you will be glad to hear that the appeal which reached us several years ago from North Africa, has not remained unheeded. To the best of our ability we have answered the call and have been able to provide Jewish education for some 4000 children so far, not without much effort, indebtedness, etc. We realize the inadequacy, however, and we are constantly striving to extend our services.

May I conclude with the blessing, which my father-in-law used to give at this time of the year, for a healthy winter both materially and spiritually, inseparable in the whole of nature and evident ~~to~~ so in the Jew.

Cordially yours,