

RABBI MENACHEM M. SCHNEERSON

Lubavitch

770 Eastern Parkway,
Brooklyn 13, N.Y.

By the Grace of G-d
28th of Sivan, 5717
Brooklyn, N.Y.

Greeting and Blessing:

I was pleased to receive regards from you through your father, who also turned over to me your letter.

You ask, Why were there so many prophets in the past and not now? The question is similar to the one that might be asked, Why was there a Beth Hamikdosh in the past and then was destroyed (and, as we say in our prayers, "Because of our sins we were driven from our land"). For, in the Beth Hamikdosh of old, our people saw wonderful miracles every day, which we no longer see at present. Similarly, at that time there were many prophets who were the direct messengers of G-d, which was also something in the nature of an open miracle. But sins have the effect of covering up G-dliness in this world, for, when we do not do as G-d wants us to do, He hides His face, and does not show miracles openly.

You also asked, Why is a Mezuzah necessary on the doors of the house, as it has the first two portions of Shema, which we say several times every day? The answer is that one of the reasons of the Mezuzah is that a Jew puts out a sign that his house and all that is in it belongs to G-d, and was given to him by G-d, for this is the meaning of the Shema. The Mezuzah has to remind the Jew of this every time he leaves the house and enters the house. It would not be enough to just say the Shema, for the "Sign" appears in the Mezuzah only.

In reply to your question whether I speak all languages in the world, the answer is no, unfortunately I do not.

Now that the school term is practically over, I trust that you have made a suitable program of studies also in your vacation time. For a Jew, whether grown-up or child, must never take a vacation from studying the Torah and living according to its commandments every day, including vacation time. I hope, therefore, that your program includes some study about the weekly portion of the Torah and the observance of the Mitzvot, and I hope that you will also use your good influence with your friends to do the same.

With blessing,

By