

RABBI MENACHEM M. SCHNEERSON

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By the Grace of G-d
9th of Elul, 5718
Brooklyn, New York

מנחם מענדל שניאורסאהן
ליובאוויטש

770 איסטערן פארקוויי
ברוקלין, נ. י.

Mr. Nathan Vogel
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Greeting and Blessing:

I received your letter postmarked August 14th. In it you write about _____ and also observe that in my letter to you you did not find an explanation in connection with her operation. However, every specialist in that field will tell you that the operation to which you refer is indeed connected with the reproductive organs. Therefore, the connection with the laws of Taharas Hamishpocho readily suggests itself.

As for the best way of influencing her in the right direction, obviously a personal conversation is more desirable than a letter. But if that is impossible, then there is no other choice but to try writing to her, unless you know someone in the place where she lives who could speak to her and try to influence her in the right direction.

In your letter you ask how can my statement that every addition in Torah and Mitzvoth brings additional Divine blessings, be reconciled with the Rabbinic statement that there is no reward for a Mitzvah in this world. In this connection let me point out to you the following: Firstly, that the said Rabbinic statement obviously does not refer to such Mitzvoth which are mentioned in the Mishna and Braysa which we say during the morning blessings, whose fruits are enjoyed in this world. Secondly, and this would refer specifically to the terms "vessel" and "channel," which I used, in the sense that even though this does not create the reward of the Mitzvah, nevertheless the very performance of the Mitzvah removes the obstacle that would have otherwise been created through the non-performance of the Mitzvah, preventing the flow of G-d's kindness to reach the person. This, therefore, refers to the flow of G-d's benevolence of the kind which is given even to children and to other people who are not duty-bound to observe Mitzvoth. In other words, G-d is always ready, willing and able to bestow blessings upon His creatures, whether merited or not, but the sin of commission or omission acts as a barrier. Therefore, the more Mitzvoth one performs, the more obstacles and barriers are removed to receive the flow of G-d's benevolence.

With regard to your question as to how to begin the study of Chassidus, surely Rabbi Dubov who lives in Manchester, could help you, and explain to you anything difficult. At any rate, generally speaking, one begins to study Chassidus with the Tanya, starting the third part of it, Iggeres Hateshuvo (especially pertinent this time of the year),

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going on to the second part, Shaar Hayichud Vehoemuno; going on from there to Kuntres Umaayon, etc. After you have done the above, you will be well on your way to continue your studies of Chassidus.

You ask if it is right that a Chassid should decry those who are opposed to the Chassidic movement, etc. Needless to say, I see no benefit in decrying or criticizing others, especially when one can find so much to criticize in one's own self, namely, the "animal soul" and all those things connected with it, from which no one is absolutely immune.

wishes

With prayerful ~~wishes~~ for a Kesivo Vachasimo Toivo, and

With blessing,

M. Schneerson