

RABBI MENACHEM M. SCHNEERSON

Lubavitch
770 Eastern Parkway
Brooklyn 13, N. Y.

HYacinth 3-9250

מנחם מענדל שניאורסאהן
ליובאוויטש

770 איסטערן פארקוויי
ברוקלין, נ. י.

By the Grace of G-d
12th of Tammuz, 5720
Brooklyn, N. Y.

Mr. H. A. Goodman
27, Lordship Park
London, N.16

Greeting and Blessing:

This is to acknowledge receipt of your letter of the 8th of Sivan, in which you touch upon the influence of Chabad and various other loyalties and obligations, etc.

There is, of course, the general principle that the larger sum already includes the smaller one, or, as our Sages expressed it, "In the sum of 200, 100 is included." I refer to the teachings and way of life of Chassidus. For Chassidus did not come to minimize in any way, G-d forbid, but to add to and strengthen all matters of Torah and Mitzvoth by instilling a spirit of vivacity and enthusiasm into all aspects of Jewish life. The Baal Shem Tov, whose 200th anniversary of the completion of his life's work we have just observed on the 1st day of Shavuoth, placed the emphasis on serving G-d with joy and on the awareness of G-d's Providence which extends to everyone, and in every detail, in particular - two basic principles which go hand in hand together. For, when one reflects on G-d's benevolent Providence, and His constant watchfulness and care, etc., there is no room for anxiety, and the Jew can indeed serve G-d with joy and gladness of heart.

Although you will suspect me of being favorably inclined to the Chassidic point of view, and I will not deny it, ~~and~~ in any case it would be futile to deny it, nevertheless the fact is that Chassidus, far from creating a conflict in the matter of allegiance to the Torah and Mitzvoth, is the ingredient which gives the necessary flavor and zest to all matters of Torah and Mitzvoth, and can only strengthen and vitalize all positive forces in Jewish life.

I say this in all sincerity and with the fullest conviction, and I hope that you will accept these words in the spirit that they are given, especially as I am writing this letter on the auspicious Day of Liberation of my father-in-law of saintly memory, whose life and work fully reflect the above. You are surely familiar with the conditions of Jewish life in Soviet Russia in those days, when, under the pressure of extreme religious persecution, many spiritual Jewish leaders fled from that country, and my father-in-law remained to carry the banner of the Torah and Mitzvoth almost singlehanded. His work was not confined to the Chassidic community, as you know, but to all sections of Jewry, including what you call "the other camp," supporting, materially and spiritually, rabbis, yeshivoth and religious institutions also of the other camp, and with the same selflessness and peril to his personal safety, as he worked for the Chassidic community. This he did from the profound conviction that there

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are no two camps in the Jewish people; that the Jewish people is one people, united by one Torah, under one G-d. This is a tradition that goes back to the founder of Chabad, and the founder of Chassidus in general, who emphasized that the Chassidic movement is not the property of any particular group, but the heritage of all our people, and that there will come a day when this will be realized in the fullest measure.

It is remarkable that when one reads the letters and bans by the early opponents to the Baal Shem Tov and his teachings, and if ~~one~~ does so without prejudice and with an open mind, it should make everyone a Chosid. In fact, the greater the attachment and veneration of the Gaon of Wilno, the chief opponent of Chassidus in those days, the greater and more loyal a Chosid one should become. The reason is plain, for those letters also state the reasons for opposing the Chassidim, namely, the fear that they may weaken the foundations of the Torah and Mitzvoth. How wrong these apprehensions were is obvious. Stop any Jew in the street, even one of the most stalwart adherents to "the other camp," and ask him, "What is a Chosid and what is his way of life?" he will unhesitatingly reply something like this: "A Chosid is a bearded Jew with long sidelocks, dressed in an old-fashioned way, who puts on two pairs of Tefillin, prays much longer, boycotts the movies, careful to eat only Shemura on Pesach, etc., etc." Further commentary is unnecessary.

I trust this will suffice on the subject matter, since this is the first time we have directly touched upon this question.

With best wishes of the Day, the Day of Liberation of my father-in-law of saintly memory, may his merits stand us all in good stead, and

With blessing

M. Schneerson

I must touch upon another, and even more delicate, matter concerning the teachings of Rabbi Samson Raphael Hirsch whom you mention in your letter. There has been a tendency lately to apply his approach in totality, here and now in ^{U.S.} America! While it is understandable that ~~there are~~ the direct descendants of Rabbi Hirsch or those who were brought up in that philosophy, should want to disseminate his teachings, I must say emphatically that to apply his approach to the American scene will not serve the ~~best~~ interests of Orthodoxy in America, with all due respect to his philosophy and approach which were very forceful and effective in his time and in his milieu. R. Hirsch wrote for an audience and youth which was brought up on philosophic studies, and which was permeated with all sorts of doctrines and schools of thought, and disciplined in the art of intellectual research, etc. Thus it was necessary to enter into long philosophic discussions to point out the fallacy of each and every thought and theory, which is incompatible with the Torah and Mitzvoth. There was no harm in

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using this approach, inasmuch as the harm had already been there, and if it could strengthen Jewish thought and practice, it was useful, and to that extent, effective.

However, here in the United States we have a different audience and a youth which radically differs from the type whom Hirsch had addressed originally. American youth is not of the philosophic turn of mind. They have neither the patience nor the training to delve into long philosophical discussions, and to evaluate different systems and theories. When they are introduced to all sorts of ideas, including those that are diametrically opposed to the Torah and Mitzvoth, and there are many of them, since there are many falsehoods but only one truth, this approach can only bring them to a greater measure of confusion. Whether or not the final analysis and conclusions will be accepted by them, one thing is certain, that the seeds of doubt will have multiplied in their minds, since each theory has its prominent proponent bearing impressive titles of Professors, PhD's, etc.

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Besides the essential point and approach is "Thou shalt be wholehearted with G-d, thy G-d." The surest way of remaining a faithful Jew is not through philosophy but through the actual experience of the Jewish way of life in the daily life, fully and wholeheartedly. As for the principle "Know what to answer the heretic," this is surely only one particular aspect, and certainly does ~~not~~ not apply to everyone. Why introduce every Jewish boy and girl to the various heretics that ever lived?

The whole problem is a delicate one, and I have written the above only in the hope that you may be able to use your influence with certain circles in Washington Heights, that they should again re-examine the whole question and see if the Hirsch approach should be applied to the American scene. My decided opinion is, of course, that it should not, and I hope that whatever measure of restraint you may accomplish through your influence will be all to the good. I hope to hear good news from you also in regard to this.

