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מנחם מענדל שניאורסאהן
ליובאוויטש

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ברוקלין, נ. י.

By the Grace of G-d
28th of Teveth, 5721
Brooklyn, N. Y.

Miss Sarah Rifkah Posner
c/o Garelik
Via Giulio Uberti, 41
Milan

Blessing and Greeting:

I received your recent letter, and the previous one. Needless to say, I was somewhat taken aback by the tone of your letter. It is a good illustration of how it is possible for a person to read and to learn and to receive instructions from books and teachers, and yet when it comes to actual experience, all this instruction goes by the wayside.

I refer to the things which you have surely learned in books of Mussar, and especially Chassidus, about the tactics of the Yetzer Hara to instill a spirit of depression, discouragement and despondency, in order to prevent the Jewish person from fulfilling his Divine mission. This is the most effective approach, and if the Yetzer Hara would attempt to dissuade the person directly from fulfilling his mission, he would not be easily misled. However, instead, the Yetzer tries to discourage the person in all sorts of ways, using "pious" arguments, which, unfortunately, often proves effective, at least in some degree.

This is exactly what has happened in your case, and I am surprised that you do not realize it. The proof is that from the information that I have received, I can see that you have accomplished a great deal more than you imagine. Incidentally, at the Annual Dinner of the Lubavitcher Yeshiva last night, Rabbi Lookstein spoke of his visit in Milan and how impressed he was with the Lubavitch work there, and his address was one of the highlights of the Dinner.

Let me also add another important and essential consideration. You surely know of the saying of the Baal Shem Tov that a soul comes down to live on this earth for a period of 70-80 years, for the sole purpose to do another Jew a single favor, materially or spiritually. In other words, it is worthwhile for a Jewish soul to make that tremendous journey and descent from heaven to earth in order to do something for one fellow-Jew. In your case the journey was only from the U.S.A. to Milan, and can in no way be compared with the journey of the soul from heaven to earth, and however pessimistic you might feel, even the Yetzer Hara would have to agree that you have done not only a single favor but numerous good deeds, and even only your work with the children of the Gan would have justified it. Considering further that every beginning is difficult, especially where there is a change of place, environment, language, etc., and yet the beginning has proved so successful, one is surely justified in expecting that as time goes on and the initial difficulties are minimized and overcome, there will be a more

Final thought: that if you do find yourself in such a frame of mind, you should try to conceal it and not write about it. For our Sages have said "when a person has an anxiety, he should relate it to others," for getting something off one's chest is in itself already a relief.

One should also bear in mind, as the Old Rebbe has stated most emphatically in the laws of learning and teaching Torah, that a person who is engaged in teaching children should especially take care of his health, since it directly affects the success of the work. I trust, therefore, that you are looking after yourself in matters of diet and rest, etc., and that you will always be in a state of cheerfulness and gladness.

Hoping to hear good news from you,

With blessing,

M. Schneerson

or spiritually. In other words, it is worthwhile for a Jewish soul to make that tremendous journey and descend from heaven to earth in order to do something once for a fellow Jew. In your case the journey was only from the USA to Milan and can in no way be compared with the journey of the soul from heaven to earth. However pessimistic you might feel, even the *Yetzer Hara* would have to agree that you have done not only a single favor, but numerous good deeds, and even only your work with the children of the Gan [kindergarten] would have justified it ... not to mention the fact that your arrival in Milan has undoubtedly considerably encouraged also your sister and brother-in-law and has inspired other young people on similar missions.

Ever since I got this letter, it has been one of my “rechargers.” It’s a letter that I read very often and quote from.

The Rebbe was so responsive to my feelings. He knew exactly how to speak to me, how to relate to my every emotion, and how to communicate his caring. And, of course, it made me feel very, very good.



On the envelope, “Express, Special Delivery” is written in the Rebbe’s hand.

Courtesy of Sara Rivka Sasonkin