

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
25th of Elul, 5724
Brooklyn, N. Y.

Mr. Shmuel Baron
5010 Barclay Ave.
Montreal, Que., Canada

Greeting and Blessing:

I received your letter of the 16th of Elul.

I believe I have already written to you before that both in regard to efforts to influence others, and also to help oneself, it is good to consult with G-d fearing friends, especially such as have had experience in such matters.

With regard to your question about free will, the Rambam explains it at length in the laws of Teshuva, Chapters 5 and 6. The meaning of free will is simply that a person is quite free to act, speak and think, and always has a free choice to do so either to the good, or otherwise. Thus it is also emphasized in the Torah, "Behold I have given you etc., choose life." There is no contradiction between human free choice and Divine knowledge, for the opposite of free choice is not knowledge but compulsion. In other words, Divine knowledge in no way affects human freedom, and does not compel. One of the illustrations which will make it easier to understand this subject is that of a person who is clairvoyant, and could foretell events in the future, or a psychologist who knows a friend very well, and could foretell his reactions, although limited to a short period of time. Clearly such foreknowledge does not affect the events and actions that come to pass. But G-d is unlimited in time and knowledge, and His knowledge extends to all times and places, but never affects freedom of man's actions.

Enclosed is a copy of my general message for Rosh Hashonah of this year. In it you will find answers also to some of your other questions.

Wishing you a Kesivo vaChasimo Toivo

With blessing

By *Avraham Shmuel*