



RABBI MENACHEM M. SCHNEERSON
Lubavitch
770 Eastern Parkway
Brooklyn 13, N. Y.
NY 11213

UNKNOWN TO THE
RECEIVED

770 Eastern Parkway
Brooklyn 13, N. Y.

By the Grace of G-d
25th of Nissan, 5725
Brooklyn, N. Y.

Mr. Israel Hakohen Richer
5622 Elmer
No. Hollywood, Calif.

Greeting and Blessing:

Your letter reached me with considerable delay. In it you ask my opinion or advice as to the choice of a place where an orthodox Jew, a family man, should settle with his family.

The advice has already been given by our Great Teacher, the Rambam, that a Jew must do everything possible to live in a community and in a neighborhood of Shomer Torah and Mitzvot. The importance of this advice is emphasized by him in continuing to say that if there is no possibility of avoiding an unsuitable place, it is better to live in caves, or in the desert, rather than in unsuitable company (Hil. Deos, beg. of Ch. 6). Note also that the Rambam speaks there of an adult Jew, and one who is not necessarily bound to maintain a close contact with the environment, etc. How much more so in our society where willy-nilly it is necessary to maintain a close contact with the environment, and how much more so where children are involved, in view of their vulnerability to unsuitable influences. It should be remembered also that the education and upbringing of children does not begin with the age of Bar Mitzva, or Bas Mitzva, but at a very early age, and that the impressions and influences received at that age are lasting.

I would like to add also the point that even in selecting a suitable place, it should be remembered that in all matters of goodness and Yiras Shomayim, there is no limit, and there is always room for a higher level. If parents always desire not only the good, but the best for their children, and not only 100% but even 101%, the same should apply in regard to their spiritual interests, with which also their material interests are ultimately bound up. Therefore, even if there may appear some difficulties in sight, at any rate in the initial period, it is well worth to disregard such difficulties in order to attain the very best in the way of a neighborhood and environment.

With blessing

M. Schneerson