

RABBI MENACHEM M. SCHNEERSON

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ליובאוויטש

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ברוקלין, נ. י.

By the Grace of G-d
Rosh Chodesh Menachem Av
5733. Brooklyn, N.Y.

Mr. Mordechai Shoel Landow
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Greeting and Blessing:

Our contact has been on matters of a higher level, or, in Chabad language - "inward" matters. To me, as I hope also to you, this means a continuous contact, even during intervals between correspondence, for where there is a meeting of minds and thoughts, the contact transcends time and distance.

This being the case, and since my thoughts are with you, I want to share with you in a matter that has preoccupied my mind in recent weeks, namely, the inadequacy of attention given to the Chinuch of children of pre-Bar (Bas)-Mitzvah age, down to the very little ones. Even in circles where serious attention is given to older boys and girls, there is a prevalent tendency to take the Chinuch of the little ones more lightly.

This attitude is rather surprising, for the Torah has quite strong views on the role of the youngsters. Suffice it to cite the rule laid down by our Sages that as soon as a child begins to speak, his father must begin to teach him Torah, specifically the verse *חורו ציוה לנו משה מורשה קהילת יעקב* - "The Torah which Mosheh commanded us is the heritage of the congregation of Jacob" (Deut. 33:4). At first glance, there is a very long way between a two-year old toddler, just beginning to speak, and the Torah which Mosheh Rabbeinu received at Sinai when he was 80-odd years old and at the height of his greatness. Yet, this is precisely what the Rabbis had in mind: to put this toddler in immediate relationship with the Torah which Mosheh received at Sinai. So much so, that the Alter Rebbe, founder of Chabad, begins the Laws of Talmud-study in his Shulchan Aruch with this very rule laid down by our Sages.

In view of the above, I have addressed two special messages to pre-Bar (Bas)-Mitzvah children, as per enclosed copies, which I trust you will find illuminating.

Needless to say, I am certain that you will not suspect me of an indirect appeal for money. For, as you know, it is our understanding that your priority is specifically bound up with Miami, whence the voice of Torah will hopefully reverberate to the far corners of the earth. What I am after, and I make no secret about it, is, the children: *חן לי הנפש* -

"Give me the persons" - in this case, the children; not to me, of course, but to Torah, in accordance with the commandment which Jews recite twice daily: "And you shall teach them (words of Torah) diligently unto your children" - meaning talmidim, school children.

With blessing for Hatlocho in all your activities, both general and personal, aided by Zechus Horabim, and looking forward to hearing good news from you at all times.

M. Schneerson