

By the Grace of G-d
20th of Sivan, 5734
Brooklyn, N.Y.

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Sholom uBrocho:

This is to acknowledge receipt of your letter of 16th of Sivan, in which you ask for a clarification of an "explanation" attributed to me.

Needless to say, I was surprised that you should have given any credence to the purported statement, especially since we had occasion to meet and talk some years ago. At any rate, the enclosed copy on the subject matter will surely clarify it.

Inasmuch as everything is by Hashgocho Protis, it occurred to me that the strange misunderstanding ought to serve an *other* useful purpose, namely, to give me an opportunity of writing to you on the topic that follows, which I should have done much sooner in any case. I trust you will accept my remarks in the spirit that they are offered.

Several prefatory remarks are in order.

First, every person with multiple demands on his attention, must, of course, have a set of priorities. However, it is well known that Pikuach Nefesh takes precedence over everything; even Pikuach Nefesh of a single individual, a fortiori Pikuach Nefesh of a "Rabbin."

Secondly, one of the most serious problems of our time - indeed, of all times, except that it has never been more acute than now - is the state of confusion and prevailing misconceptions regarding vital issues, to the extent of - to quote our Prophets - calling light - darkness, and darkness - light.

Thirdly - on the positive side - our young generation thirsts for a true way of life to a degree never surpassed, and is groping in dark alleys for lack of proper guidance.

Finally, there is the upheaval of the so-called holocaust which weighs so heavily in our present generation. The "final solution" projected by that unmentionable Yimach Shmo was a brutal one, aiming at physical destruction. But there

"also" ✓

is a more subtle method which is ~~no less~~ destructive, namely, spiritual destruction through assimilation and inter-marriage, a sense of inferiority complex and a desire to ape the gentile, on the part of many Jewish circles.

All of the above is, of course, not new to you, but it leads up to the point I wish to make here.

I am aware of your influence in various circles. Even in areas where there are other good influences at work, no one has a right to withhold his share; how much more so in areas not accessible to others. I had therefore expected that a person of your standing would come out with a loud, urgent and persistent S.O.S. call to stem the tide of assimilation, in whatever form, and to help the lost souls to find their way to authentic Jewish values, and authentic Jewish experience, in the utmost measure. But if there have been such urgent S.O.S. calls, the echoes have escaped me.

The above is not to say that there is any question of your making good use of time and influence. But, as mentioned above, we are confronted with a massive problem of Pikuach Nefesh, which has top priority. Especially as it concerns young people, every one of whom will before long establish a home and family, and the future of that family will be largely determined by the amount of influence the young man and woman now receive.

I am, of course, not unaware of the arguments and realizations so frequently heard about the modern times, and the need for new approaches and adjustments, etc. But surely, in our more than tri-millennial history all sorts of new approaches have been experimented with, and they all failed. It is high time to revert to the time-honored and tested and proven way, which alone has enabled our people to survive for over 3000 years under the most adverse circumstances, and in the face of overwhelming odds, a tiny nation in a hostile world. This is the way of total commitment to Torah and Mitzvoth in the daily life.

On the basis of our personal acquaintance, I am certain that no further elaboration is needed. Undoubtedly, you have often reflected along the above lines. I am confident, therefore, that you will accept my remarks in the spirit of the saying of our Sages, "encourage the energetic," and your voice will ring out loud and clear for full commitment to Torah-true Yiddishkeit in the daily life, the authentic Torah from Sinai, free from dilution and compromise.

With esteem and blessing,