

By the Grace of G-d
5th of Nissan, 5735
Brooklyn, N.Y.

Mrs. Rose Goldfield
13 Yam Suf
Ramat Eshkol, Jerusalem

Blessing and Greeting:

I am in receipt of your correspondence, and trust that you received my regards through your brother R' Zalmen who was here for the Yud Shevat observance.

I must reiterate again what was said when you were here in regard to Bitochon in G-d that all that He does is for the good. It is not easy to accept the passing of a near and dear one, but since our Torah, which is called Toras Chesed and Toras Chayim, our guide in life, sets limits to mourning periods, it is clear that when the period ends it is no good to extend it - not good, not only because it disturbs the life that must go on here on earth, but also because it does not please the soul that is in the World of Truth.

A further point which, I believe, I mentioned during our conversation, but apparently from your letter not emphatically enough, is this: It would be contrary to plain common sense to assume that a sickness, or accident, and the like, could affect the soul, for such physical things can affect only the physical body and its union with the soul, but certainly not the soul itself. It is also self-evident that the relationship between people, especially between parents and children, is in essence and content a spiritual one, transcending time and space - of qualities that are not subject to the influence of bodily accident, disease, etc.

It follows that when a close person passes on, by the will of G-d, those left here can no longer see him with their eyes or hear him with their ears; but the soul, in the World of Truth, can see and hear. And when he sees that the relatives are overly disturbed by his physical absence, it is saddened, and, conversely,

when it sees that after the mourning period prescribed by the Torah a normal and fully productive life is resumed, it can happily rest in peace.

Needless to say, in order that the above be accepted not only intellectually, but actually implemented in the everyday life, it is necessary to be occupied, preferably involved in matters of "personal" interest and gratification. As I also mentioned in our conversation, every Jew has a most gratifying and edifying task of spreading light in the world through promoting Yiddishkeit. Particularly, as in your case, where one can be of so much help and inspiration to children and grandchildren, who look up to you and your husband for encouragement, wisdom, etc.

Here is also the answer to your question, what you can do for the soul of the dear one. Spreading Yiddishkeit around you effectively, displaying simple Yiddish faith in G-d and in His benevolent Providence, doing all the good work that has to be done, with confidence and peace of mind - this is what truly gratifies the soul in Olam haEmes, in addition to fulfilling you personal and most lofty mission in life as a daughter of our Mothers Sarah, Rivkah, Rachel and Leah, and thereby also serving as an inspiring example for others to emulate.

It is possible to enlarge upon the above, but knowing your family background and tradition, I trust the above will suffice. I might add, however, that one must beware of the Yetzer-hara who is very crafty and knows that certain people cannot be approached openly and without disguise. So he tries to trick them by disguising himself in a mantle of piety and emotionalism, etc., saying: You know, G-d has prescribed a period of mourning, which shows that it is the right thing to do; so why not do more than that and extend the period? In this way he may have a chance to succeed in distracting the person from the fact that at the end of the said period, the Torah requires the Jew to serve G-d with joy. The Yetzer-hara will even encourage a person to give Tzedoko in memory of the soul, learn Torah and doing Mitzvoth in memory of the soul, except that in each case it be associated with sadness and pain. But, as indicated, this is exactly contrary to the objective, which is to cause pleasure and gratification to the soul.

May G-d grant that, inasmuch as we are approaching the Festival of Our Freedom, including also freedom from everything that distracts a Jew from serving G-d wholeheartedly and with joy, that this should be so also with you, in the midst of all our people, and that you should be a source of inspiration and strength to your husband, children and grandchildren, and all around you.

Wishing you and all the family Chag Kosher v'Some'ach,

With blessing,