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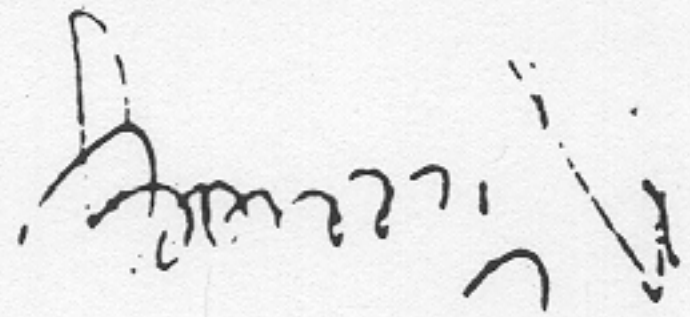
ב"ה, יו"ד כסלו חש"מ
 ברוקלין

האברך ארי' ליב שי'

שלום וברכה!

במענה על ההודעה ע"ד הכנסו בקרוב לגיל מצות,

הנה יהי רצון מהשם יתברך אשר מבן שלש עשרה למצות יגדל לבן חמש עשרה וכו' כפסק המשנה (אבות פרק ה'), ויוסיף התמדה ושקידה בלימודו בתורה, בתורת הנגלה וכן בתורת החסידות ויהדר בקיום המצות, והשם יתברך יצליחו להיות חסיד ירא שמים ולמדן.

בברכה


נ.ב.

הבא לקמן נכתב בשפת המדינה בכדי שתוכל, אם תרצה, להראות לחברייך שי', ברוח מצות ואנבת לרעך כמון, שאם בכל ענין צריך להיטיב לאחרים, על אחת כמה וכמה בעניני היהדות, התורה ומצותי'.

At first glance, it is strange that the day of Bar Mitzvah, which is so important that the Zohar declares that for the Bar Mitzvah boy it is almost like the Day of Mattan Torah, when Jews first received the Torah and Mitzvos, yet, insofar as Tachnun is concerned, which is omitted even on the so-called "Minor Holidays," if it does not occur on Shabbos or Yom-Tov (or any other day that Tachnun is not said) - Tachnun is said by the Bar Mitzvah boy, as on any ordinary weekday.

One of the explanations is as follows:

When one considers that human capacities are limited in general, especially the capacities of a boy at the start of his fourteenth year, yet he must assume all the duties and responsibilities of a full-fledged Jew, and, moreover, fulfil them with joy, in keeping with the rule: Serve G-d with joy - the question begs itself: How is he going to carry out all that is expected of him? Especially, being a member of a people which is a small minority among the nations of the world; and even in this country, where one has every opportunity to carry out all religious duties, most people are more interested and engaged in the material aspects of life?

The answer is that the Torah and Mitzvos have been given by G-d, the Creator of the world, and of man, and He knows all the difficulties that a Jew may encounter. G-d has surely provided every Jew with the necessary strength to overcome any and all difficulties to live up to G-d's Will, for G-d would not expect someone to do something which is beyond his capacity.

If, however, there should be a moment of weakness, when carrying out G-d's Will is not in the fullest measure of perfection, G-d, in His infinite goodness, makes it

possible to "say Tachnun" - to do Teshuvah. Indeed, as the Alter Rebbe explains, Teshuvah is basically for lack of perfection in Avodas nashem.

Therefore, on the first day of becoming a full-fledged Jew, and after fulfilling the very first Mitzvah, namely, Shema, by which a Jew declares his total commitment to G-d and obedience to all His commandments, the Bar Mitzvah boy does say Tachnun the following morning and afternoon (provided it is not Shabbos or Yom Tov etc.), for the essence of Tachnun is Teshuvah, and there is the assurance that "Nothing stands in the way of Teshuvah."

This knowledge will, moreover, also stand him in good stead when he will involve himself in the great Mitzvah of v'ohavto lre'acho komoicho, to bring the alienated closer to Yiddishkeit. For remembering the rule that "Nothing stands in the way of Teshuvah," he will eagerly and compassionately apply it to them, especially as in most cases ^{the} failure to observe fully the Torah and Mitzvos is due ^{to} extenuating circumstances.

With all the above in mind, and being fortunate in growing up in a family where Yiddishkeit is a living experience in the everyday life, you will start out on your way of life as a full-fledged Jew with confidence, and will proceed from strength to strength, and be a source of true pride and joy to your dear parents and family, and to all our Jewish people.