



REBBE RESPONSA

The Rebbe's English Letters

Attending College

Part 1: The Dangers

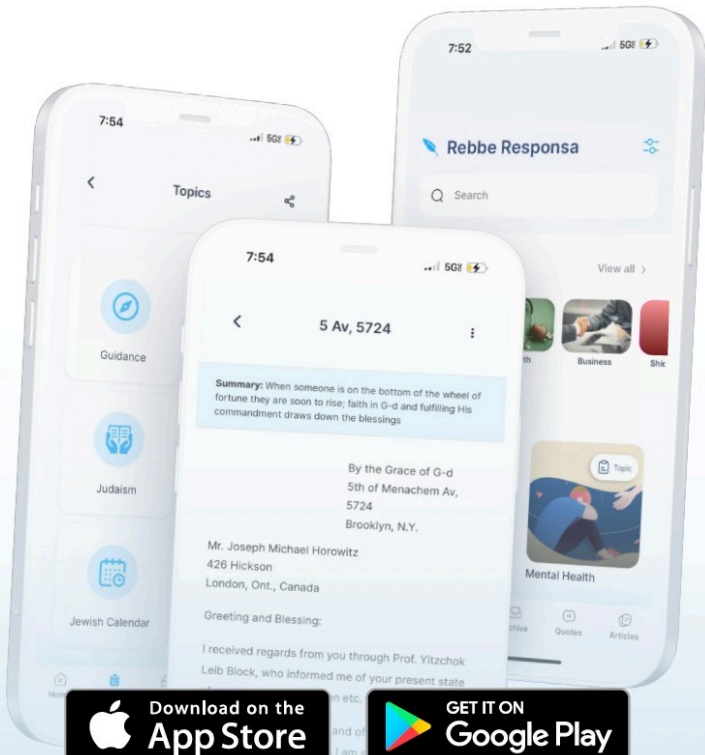
Issue 142
Beshalach, 5786



Rebbe Responsa

The Rebbe's English letters

Timeless guidance on
every topic and issue - at
your fingertips



ב"ה

A Word from the Publishers

We are pleased to present *Issue 142* of *Rebbe Responsa*, a compilation of letters originally authored by the Lubavitcher Rebbe in English, culled from the *Rebbe Responsa* app.

This issue presents the Rebbe's opposition to a Jew attending college in his formative years. This position rests on a fundamental reality: Jewish youth, as a minority without external barriers to assimilation, require years of undistracted Torah immersion to withstand the overwhelming cultural pressures of modern society.

The Rebbe's concern extends beyond curriculum to the campus atmosphere itself—an environment of pervasive influence fundamentally at odds with Torah values. He identifies universities as breeding grounds for moral erosion, where prevailing ideologies challenge the most elementary foundations of law, order, and ethics. Moreover, college represents a divergence from a Jew's sacred mission to illuminate the world with Torah and Mitzvos. The Rebbe further challenges the necessity of having a degree to earn a livelihood.

Next week's issue will examine circumstances where completing college becomes part of a Jew's mission, and abandoning it a divergence from it. These two installments present a selection of the Rebbe's correspondence on this subject; a fuller collection is available on the *Rebbe Responsa* app. To properly understand the Rebbe's position, readers are encouraged to study all available sources.

All Titles, Summaries, and Footnotes were added by the publisher unless otherwise noted.

* * *

The Rebbe's English letters represent a little-known facet of the Rebbe's Torah, containing profound wisdom and practical guidance expressed in clear, accessible language. We encourage you to download the *Rebbe Responsa* app, which offers the only comprehensive collection of the Rebbe's English letters available to date. With over 5,000 letters organized by both topic and date, the app makes finding the Rebbe's guidance and worldview simple and accessible.

May the study of these letters hasten the coming of Moshiach speedily in our days.

The Rebbe Responsa Team

Table of Contents

A Question of Jewish Survival4

Jewish youth require years of undistracted Torah study to survive as a minority with no barriers to assimilation; college culture and influence are vastly at odds with Judaism, causing deep inner conflict and religious erosion

Don't Trust Yourself8

My previous letter was restrained and addressed colleges with large Jewish student bodies – out-of-town colleges are more dangerous; staying strong in high school is not an indicator; setting a bad precedent

Root of the Disorder11

Opposition to college attendance is not based on the turmoil and disorder prevalent on modern campuses, but on their underlying root cause; added negative influence on campuses in the Holy Land

Mission Divergence.....13

Attending college is a divergence from a Jew's life purpose and task; spiritual risks involved in modern college life; influence friends to realize these points

Candidacy Confusion16

Surprised by the insistence that a rabbinic candidate must be a university graduate despite the moral decline of universities

What About Economic Security?.....18

The question of persuading a yeshiva student to attend college – inner conflict should be avoided; the material benefits are not guaranteed but spiritual dangers are certain

A Good Investment21

Yeshiva study before entering the world is a good investment, not a waste of time; G-d provides parnasah, and you will make a vessel for it when the time comes

To receive Rebbe Responsa at your local shul or in your inbox, reach out to us at Editor@RebbeResponsa.com

1

A Question of Jewish Survival

Jewish youth require years of undistracted Torah study to survive as a minority with no barriers to assimilation; college culture and influence are vastly at odds with Judaism, causing deep inner conflict and religious erosion

[Beginning of Adar I, 5722]

I am in receipt of your letter in which you ask my opinion about the advisability for graduates of a Yeshivah (Day School) to continue their sacred studies in conjunction with college attendance.

By way of preface, let me state at once that my views on the subject under question apply not only to students of Yeshivoth, but to all Jewish youth, since all are children of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, and the souls of all were present at Sinai and received the Torah and Mitzvoth. This is, indeed, the basis of my view which will be outlined below, after some introductory observations.

Jews have always been “a minority among the nations,”¹ even in the best of times. At the same time “their laws differ from those of any other people,”² and they differ not only in regard to special occasions, or special aspects of life, such as Shabbos, or Rosh Hashana and Yom Kippur, but they differ in their way of life, and in every aspect of the daily life. For the Jew, the Torah and Mitzvoth are the guide of daily life and the source of life and true happiness, and this is the simple meaning of “Toras Chaim” — Law of Life, and the definition of the Mitzvoth as the essence of Jewish life, “whereby Jews live.”

It is clear that being in the minority, Jews must have special reinforcements from childhood on, in order to be able to hold their own in the face of overwhelming odds.

Source: This letter was sent to an editor of the *Jewish Press* and appeared in the Feb. 9 (5 Adar I) issue of the paper. See the following letter, where the Rebbe clarifies several points in this letter.

¹ *Devarim* 7:7.

² *Esther* 3:8.

If it was difficult enough to live as a Jew in countries where Jews were persecuted, confined to Ghettos, etc., there was one redeeming factor at least, namely that under those circumstances Jewish adherence and loyalty to the Torah and Mitzvoh was not put to the test. An individual Jew could sever his ties with his people, but that involved a sudden and complete break; it was therefore rare and extreme. But in the free countries, and under present economic and social conditions, there are no outside barriers separating Jew from gentile; the road to assimilation is wide open, and the danger is all the greater since the process is a gradual one. No sudden break with tradition is entailed, but a gradual deviation, step after small step, leads in that direction. There is a well-known parable for this, about the boy who strayed from the road and later found himself in the midst of the woods. He got there by making a small false step off the road, which led to another, and yet another.

The conditions and environment in a country such as this call, therefore, for an even greater spiritual reinforcement of the Jewish boy and girl than ever before and elsewhere. This reinforcement must be of such strength and duration that the Jewish child will always be conscious of the fact that no matter what the environment is, he is the bearer of the sacred tradition of the Divine Torah and Mitzvoh, and belongs to a people that is holy and different. For this, it is essential that right from the earliest childhood to adolescence the Jewish child should receive the fullest possible Jewish education, throughout his formative years.

Hence, when a Jewish boy completes his compulsory education, it is an absolute must that for a couple of years, at least, he should dedicate himself to the exclusive study of the Torah and sacred subjects, in a most conducive atmosphere of a Yeshivah, without distraction of secular studies, all the more so as the teen-age years are crucial and formative and of lasting effect, in the chrystallisation of the character.

This would have been my opinion even if college entailed no more than the distraction of secular studies. Actually there is much more involved. Theoretically a college and its faculty should not try to impose any particular views, much less a way of life, on the students. Actually however, the student cannot help being impressed, on the conscious and subconscious level, by the views, outlook and way of life of his professors. These, as well as the whole atmosphere of a college, are unfortunately, not compatible with the

Jewish way of life, and frequently if not always quite contradictory to it. This is so even in colleges which are theological, or having so-called religious studies. Needless to say, the whole atmosphere of college is in violent conflict with the Shulchan Aruch way of life, whereby the Jew is totally committed — in every detail and aspect of his personal daily life — to the Torah and Mitzvoth and the service of G-d, as is written “You shall know Him in all your ways,”³ to which a whole chapter in Shulchan Aruch, Orach Chaim (Ch. 231) is devoted: note there.

In other words, the Jewish boy (or girl) entering college, yet desiring to retain the Jewish way of life in accordance with the Torah, finds himself tossed about in the raging waves of conflict between two contradictory worlds. He is at a further disadvantage in finding himself in the minority camp, since those sharing his views and convictions are few on the college campus, while the forces pulling in the opposite direction are overwhelming; forces he must confront at every turn — among the student body, faculty members, text books, newspapers and periodicals. It is very doubtful whether even an adult and mature person who is subjected to such “shock treatment” day after day, would not be shaken; how much more so a teen-ager.

Needless to say, I am aware of the argument that many Yeshivah boys attending college, or even college graduates, remain loyal to the Torah and Mitzvoth. The answer is simple. The number of such students and graduates who have not been seriously affected is relatively small indeed, much smaller than imagined. They are so exceptional that the wonder of it attracts attention, since those that go astray under college influence are taken for granted, while the one that still puts on Tefillin calls forth amazement. One may use the analogy of the shoe-shine boy who became a millionaire and everyone talks about him. It is not because he was a shoe-shine boy that he attained success, and no one will suggest that in order to become a millionaire one should start in the shoe-shine business. The greater the exception and sensation, the greater is the proof of the rule.

Some people ask, is there really such a conflict between attending college and remaining an observant Jew. I can speak from experience and personal knowledge, having attended various

³ *Mishlei* 3:6.

colleges and seen the painful inner upheavals of Jewish students, and having for many years been the confidant of Jewish students who are otherwise reluctant or ashamed to open their hearts, I can therefore state with the fullest measure of conviction and responsibility that he who sends his child to college during the formative years subjects him to shock and profound conflicts and trials and invites quite unforeseen consequences.

In view of all the above, it is my definite and considered opinion that all Jewish children, upon completing their compulsory secular education, should devote at least several years to the exclusive study of the Torah, without the interference of other studies, not even training for a trade, in order to obtain the maximum insurance against all risks and dangers that their future life may hold, when they attain adulthood and settle down to a family life.

To put the matter in bolder relief, by way of illustration. Take the general attitude to polio, G-d forbid, and the precaution taken against it. Fortunately, the incidence of polio is not widespread, and where it strikes, it cripples only a part of the physical body; yet though the odds are farfetched it would be reckless not to take the necessary precaution. Unfortunately, the victims of college education are numerous indeed and most widespread, by far in the majority, and the harm is even more far-reaching.

Another point which is often the subject of misconception — the importance attached to a college degree from the economic point of view. Statistics show that the majority of college graduates eventually establish themselves in occupations and businesses not directly connected with their courses of study in college. The moral is obvious.

2

Don't Trust Yourself

My previous letter was restrained and addressed colleges with large Jewish student bodies – out-of-town colleges are more dangerous; staying strong in high school is not an indicator; setting a bad precedent

By the Grace of G-d
8th of Adar I, 5722
Brooklyn, N. Y.

Miss ...
East St. Kilda – Melbourne Vic.
Australia

Blessing and Greeting:

This is to acknowledge receipt of your letter of February the 8th.

My views regarding the advisability of Jewish young men and young women to attend college have been amply stated in my correspondence on the matter with others. A letter of mine on the subject was also published in the press. You will find a copy enclosed.⁴

I would like to add that, for obvious reasons, I have couched my views in relatively mild terms, since one must use a certain amount of discretion in a letter which is published. In truth, my negative attitude towards college attendance is much stronger than indicated in the letter, and it is based on numerous instances which came to my attention, so that I speak from wide experience.

I must make a further observation that my letter was written and published in New York City, taking into account even universities and colleges in New York City, in which there is a very sizeable body of Jewish students, boys and girls, among them a goodly number of religious students, who even have organized there daily afternoon and evening services, etc., and, in general, can arrange their own social life without mixing too much with the non-Jewish student body. Moreover, my views take into consideration even universities existing in cities as N.Y. with a Jewish population

Source: Photocopy of the original.

⁴ The previous letter.

which may be as high as 25%. In other words, my negative attitude towards the colleges and universities apply even under the most favorable conditions; how much more so to universities and colleges which are not so favorably situated from the Jewish point of view.

You write that you have the fullest confidence that you could resist the negative influences, etc., and as proof you cite the fact that you have attended high school for a number of years without it having a detrimental effect on you.

In reply to this, let me, first of all, tell you that high school cannot be compared with university. In the case of the former, the Jewish boy or girl attending high school receives a greater influence at home than at school, while in the case of university, the reverse is true, and the influence of the home becomes progressively smaller, while the influence of the university and the university atmosphere becomes greater.

However, what is even more essential is the fact that while self-confidence is a good thing, one should not be foolhardy and take chances. As you know, every Jew, including the greatest Tzaddik who has lived most of his life in saintliness, still prays **every** day, at the beginning of the morning prayer, "Bring me not into circumstances of temptation."

It is clear from your letter that you have a desire to attend university and that you would consider it a "painful sacrifice" to give up the idea. In view of this, I would like to add a point which will perhaps make it easier for you to accept the true reality of the situation. As you know, you and your family, together with other families who fairly recently immigrated into Australia, have brought about a revival of Jewish religious life, a revival which is presently progressing steadily. Thus, the broad sections of Jewry in Melbourne and Australia follow with keen interest everything that takes place in your circle and group. If one who is a representative of this circle would break through the fence which has been recognized by this circle as vital to its work and purpose, such a breach is not only a personal matter but one that would have **wide** repercussions, and it would be viewed as a living example to follow. The consequences would be not only to encourage young men and women who have had considerable Jewish background, to follow this example, but would serve as a "green light" to young people who have no such background.

What I mean to say, in other words, is that by doing the right thing you will be fulfilling a responsibility not only to yourself and your family, but also to many other families in your community, and this will be all to your own good as well as to the good of many others.

I was pleased to read about your activities in Mesibos Shabbos, and also in the Yeshiva. Since G-d rewards in kind, and in a generous measure, your good works for the benefit of others in the vital field of education will stand you in good stead to advance in your own education and stature, along the path of the Torah and Chasidus, to avoid temptation and pitfalls, and to enjoy G-d's protection at all times.

Hoping to hear good news from you,

With blessing,

By Nissan Mindel

RABBI MENACHEM M. SCHNEERSON
Lubavitch
770 Eastern Parkway
Brooklyn 13, N. Y.
HYacinth 3-9250

מנחם מענדל שניאורסאהן
ליובאוויטש
770 איסטערן פארקוויי
ברוקלין 13 נ.י.

By the Grace of G-d
8th of Adar I, 5722
Brooklyn, N. Y.

SALE OF PLACES - Melbourne Vic.
Australia

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This is to acknowledge receipt of your letter of February the 8th.

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as N.Y.

3

Root of the Disorder

Opposition to college attendance is not based on the turmoil and disorder prevalent on modern campuses, but on their underlying root cause; added negative influence on campuses in the Holy Land

By the Grace of G-d
Erev Lag B'Omer, 5729
Brooklyn, N.Y.

Miss ...
Chicago, Ill. 60645

Blessing and Greeting:

Your letter with enclosure reached me with some delay. In it you refer to my opinion in regard to the question of the place where you should continue your studies.

You write that you assume my negative stand in regard to some of the possibilities which you had in mind is due to the disorders which are now taking place in various campuses. Actually this is not the reason for my being opposed to attendance at a university, although no doubt the disorders and turmoil on the campuses aggravate the situation. My negative view of college and university education is based on the negative tendencies which it fosters, of which the disorders are only one symptom. That the disorders themselves are an outgrowth of the system of university education can be seen also from the fact that they are not part of the disorders which have taken place in the cities, etc., but have a peculiar characteristic of their own and are the effect of the atmosphere and a certain aspect of university education, reflecting a breakdown of the most elementary foundations of law and order, morality, ethics, etc.

It is all very well for an individual student to say that he or she will keep aloof from the university atmosphere, etc. In practice this is impossible, for one is no more than a human being, and it is

Published: *The Letter and the Spirit*, vol. 3, p. 94.

Note: Letters printed in *The Letter and the Spirit* are from the archives of Rabbi Nissan Mindel, the Rebbe's secretary entrusted with transcribing the Rebbe's orally dictated responses. The archive consists of secretarial copies that may not include the Rebbe's final edits, as well as drafts and unsent letters.

impossible for an individual not to be influenced by an institution which one attends in a regular capacity. For it is not a question of attending a lecture for some fifty minutes, and then feeling quite detached from the institution, professors, students, and so forth. Actually every person is subject to influence, especially when it comes in a consistent and prolonged way. And young people are particularly receptive to outside influence.

Unfortunately the negative aspects connected with the institution of so-called higher learning, are to be found also in the universities in the Holy Land, with the additional detrimental factor, namely the negative attitude towards Torah and mitzvos. Even among some of the best institutions in the Holy Land, including those you mention in your letter, it is not always the general policy that counts, but the actual atmosphere amongst the students, which often is at great variance with the expectations of the founders. The actual position is unfortunately much worse than may appear from notices and news items in the press, because, for obvious reasons, not all the facts are given publicity.

It is not my nature to criticize anybody, or any institution. If I have been critical in my remark above, it is only because I am impelled to try to convince you to avoid a serious pitfall. For this reason this letter has been written to you in confidence, although, of course, you may show it to your parents. Moreover, it has been written with considerable restraint, only to the extent that it was necessary to explain to you my opinion and advice.

In light of the above, the sum total of my opinion is that of all the possibilities that you have for continuing your studies, the best choice would be for you to attend a Bais Yaakov or Bais Rivka seminary, and as a next best, Stern College.

May G-d, Whose benevolent Providence extends to each and everyone individually, lead you in the way that is good for you in every respect.

I trust that you are active in spreading Yiddishkeit among your friends, and in your surroundings in general. This is surely the duty of each and every Jew, especially the younger generation, whom G-d has endowed with a liberal measure of energy and enthusiasm, as well as courage and strength to go against the stream.

Hoping to hear good news from you,

With blessing,

4

Mission Divergence

*Attending college is a divergence from a Jew's life purpose and task;
spiritual risks involved in modern college life; influence friends to
realize these points*

By the Grace of G-d
28 Cheshvan, 5715
Brooklyn, N.Y.

Miss Basia Posner ת"ב⁵

Blessing and Greeting:

Your father has conveyed to me your inquiry as to what my attitude would be to the idea of your going to college. Incidentally, I was pleased to note that you are in an environment where the idea of your going to college has met with surprise, and I am somewhat surprised myself that you did not fully share the same attitude as that of your environment.

Source: Photocopy of the original.

⁵ **Mrs. Bassie Garelik (née Posner)** is the daughter of Rabbi Sholom Posner, a longtime Lubavitch emissary in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. In 1958, she and her husband, Rabbi Gershon Mendel Garelik, were sent by the Rebbe as his emissaries to Milan, Italy, where she remains active to this day in strengthening and maintaining Jewish life and observance.

Mrs. Garelik corresponded frequently with the Rebbe and merited his guidance in both her personal life and communal endeavors. For additional letters addressed to her, see the footnotes to [this letter](#) in the *Rebbe Responsa* app.

Behind the Letter: Mrs. Garelik later recalled that after graduating high school at the age of sixteen, she considered attending college. At first, she did not intend to consult the Rebbe, feeling the matter was too minor to warrant his attention. However, after a friend of her brother convinced her that such a step should not be taken without the Rebbe's guidance, she wrote to her father for advice. Although her parents had no objections to her attending college, her father nevertheless forwarded her question to the Rebbe.

In her letter to her father, Mrs. Garelik wrote that while she wished to attend college, she would not do so if the Rebbe felt it was inadvisable. Although she saw nothing inherently wrong with going to college and was uncertain whether such a question was typically brought to the Rebbe, she was certain of one thing: she wanted her life to be guided by the Rebbe and was committed to following whatever he thought was best. (Interview with Mrs. Bassie Garelik, *Living Torah*, vol. 255.)

It is surely unnecessary to explain to you at length that every Jew and Jewess, young and old, has a purpose and task to accomplish in his or her life. The task, broadly speaking, is to illuminate the world with “Ner Mitzvoh v’Torah Or”⁶ in every-day life. After so many Jews lost their lives in recent years, among them the best and choicest of our people, the responsibility of those whom G-d in His mercy has spared is increased many-fold. It is therefore more obvious than ever that no Jew has a right to give of his time, and even more so of his heart and mind, to matters which not only do not help but are very likely to hinder in the fulfillment of his sacred task and purpose. One of these matters would be to spend several years in college, and especially in a college environment. While it is true that in recent years, in certain colleges, especially in New York, there are groups of orthodox Jewish students, young men and women – and may G-d help them to come out of it unharmed, at any rate not worse than they were when they entered college – we have a rule not to rely on miracles. It is certain, however, that college will not help fulfill the true and inner desire of the Jew to carry out his abovementioned task and purpose in life, so that even at best it would be an irretrievable loss of time and energy.

It is therefore my sincere hope that you will discard the idea, and do so not only because – as you told your father that you wish to be guided by me – but also because you will recognize that the idea does not represent your own true thinking and desire. I hope, moreover, that you will use your good influence in this direction with your friends who might entertain a similar idea in the mistaken belief that it might be a good idea.

With blessing,

M. Schneerson

⁶ *Mishlei* 6:23.

RABBI MENACHEM M. SCHNEERSON
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מוחם מענדל שניאורסאהן
ליובאוויטש

770 איסטערן פארקוויי
ברוקלין, נ. י.

By the Grace of G-d
28 Cheshvan, 5715
Brooklyn, N.Y.

Miss Basia Pesner

Blessing and Greeting:

Your father has conveyed to me your inquiry as to what my attitude would be to the idea of your going to college. Incidentally I was pleased to note that you are in an environment where the idea of your going to college has met with surprise, and I somewhat surprised myself that you did not fully share the same attitude as that of your environment.

It is surely unnecessary to explain to you at length that every Jew and Jewess, young and old, has a purpose and task to accomplish in his or her life. The task, broadly speaking, is to illuminate the world with 'Ner Mitzvah v'Toreh Or' in every-day life. After so many Jews lost their lives in recent years, among them the best and choicest of our people, the responsibility of those whom G-d in His mercy has spared is increased many-fold. It is therefore more obvious than ever that no Jew has a right to give of his time, and even more so of his heart and mind, to matters which not only do not help but are very likely to hinder in the fulfillment of his sacred task and purpose. One of these matters would be to spend several years in college, and especially in a college environment. While it is true that in recent years, in certain colleges, especially in New York, there are groups of orthodox Jewish students, young men and women - and may G-d help them to come out of it unharmed, at any rate not worse than they were when they entered college - we have a rule not to rely on miracles. It is certain, however, that college will not help fulfill the true and inner desire of the Jew to carry out his abovementioned task and purpose in life, so that even at best it would be an irretrievable loss of time and energy.

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With blessing

M. Schneerson

5

Candidacy Confusion

Surprised by the insistence that a rabbinic candidate must be a university graduate despite the moral decline of universities

By the Grace of G-d
22nd of Adar Sheni, 5730
Brooklyn, N. Y.

Mr. ...

Greeting and Blessing:

This is to acknowledge receipt of your letter of March 24th, as well as your previous letter, with the enclosures.

Let me again reiterate my prayerful wishes to you and to the Bar-Mitzva boy, that together with your wife you should have much true Yiddish Nachas from him and all your children, that is Nachas based on our eternal Torah, Toras Chaim, meaning that it is both the true guide in life, as well as the source of a happy and worthwhile life, in addition to being also the source of eternal life.

I read with interest your remarks about the vacancy for a spiritual leader in your Young Israel Synagogue, as well as the letter from the Selection Committee.

Needless to say, I was quite surprised to note that the candidate should be a university graduate. I had hoped that in this year of 1970, or rather in the year 5730, the said condition would be best left out altogether. To be sure, a Rabbi's qualifications must include knowledge of the spoken language, in order to be able to communicate also with such young people who do not know the language of our ancestors. However, seeing what the universities have been able to produce recently, and especially seeing that they have been the breeding places for open rebellion against established institutions, etc., I do not think that it should be a primary requirement of a spiritual leader who is to lead and guide the perplexed of our generation.

It is true that a number of Lubavitch and Chabad Rabbis are university graduates, and many of them have accomplished wonders in their congregations and communities, but I must add at once that their accomplishments were due not because of their being university graduates, but in spite of their having been subjected to the college and university atmosphere for a number of years.

I do not wish to enlarge on what is a painful subject. Nor do I wish to imply that we will not search for the candidate you specify. However, I trust that you will use your influence not only in your own community, but also wherever it can be effective, in the direction indicated.

Although what follows should be self evident, I nevertheless want to mention it specifically, and that is that what was said above is not intended, G-d forbid, as a reflection upon the children who, together with their Jewish education, are attending college. I hope and pray that it will not affect them in any way, and will serve only a good purpose. The main point that I wish to make is that a Jewish congregation, which like all Jewish congregations are traditionally called Kehila Kadisha, should not make it a primary prerequisite of a candidate for the position of spiritual leadership that he should be a university graduate.

Our mutual friend Rabbi ... has informed me that you plan a visit to the Holy Land in the near future. So I want to wish you Hatzlocho, and I trust that you will also visit Kfar Chabad, in which you have a substantial investment. I have in mind not only your financial investment there, but more so your personal interest and share in the good work they are doing there.

Wishing you Hatzlocho also in all your affairs, and hoping to hear good news from you always,

With blessing,

P.S. The letter of the Selection Committee has been forwarded to the office of the Lubavitcher Yeshiva from whom you will no doubt hear direct.

6

What About Economic Security?

The question of persuading a yeshiva student to attend college – inner conflict should be avoided; the material benefits are not guaranteed but spiritual dangers are certain

By the Grace of G-d
23rd of Sivan, 5718
Brooklyn, N. Y.

Greeting and Blessing:

I received your letter, in which you write your ideas about your son's future, and you ask me to use my influence with him to urge him to go to college.

I am sure you will agree with me that in the case of everyone without exception, the first basic condition for happiness in life is – peace of mind and the least amount of inner conflict. This has always been a fundamental principle, and it is even more so in our present generation, with its world-shattering events, confusions, conflicting ideas and ideologies. Nothing speaks more forcefully about the existing state of mind of present-day youth than the unheard-of rebellion against society in the form of juvenile delinquency and demoralization of character, all of which is a symptom of our confused age.

Therefore, the first and best thing one can do to help one's child is to endeavor to spare him inner conflicts and to help him cultivate good religious and moral principles, so that he would not fall prey to harmful influences. This is especially important at the critical age of youth, when one's character and world outlook are being formed and stabilized.

With this brief introduction, I return to what you consider such a problem, namely, your attempt to persuade your son to go to college and his reluctance to do so. I am sure his motives are of his purest nature, desiring to dedicate a certain period of time to the exclusive study of the Torah. At his age, to try to force him to give up something which he rightly considers in his best interests,

something that is good and holy which he desires very much, would certainly upset him and inevitably endanger his peace of mind. Even if he should not show outward signs of resentment, he might well develop such a feeling subconsciously, which is sometimes even worse. It is also doubtful whether such attempts to make him change his mind would be successful.

But would his attendance in college be in his best interests? You think that a college education would give him greater security economically. Actually only a small percentage of college graduates directly derive their income from their college degree. In the final analysis, however, one cannot make calculations and plans about the future without taking G-d into account. For, after all, G-d is not only the Creator of the world, Whose direct Providence extends to every individual and detail, and success or failure is from Him; but He is also the Giver of the Torah, and it would obviously be illogical and impossible that when a Jewish boy dedicates a few years to the exclusive study of G-d's Torah, it would lessen his chances for happiness in life.

If, as we have said, the material benefits of a college degree are doubtful, there can be no doubt, however, as to the obvious dangers when a Yeshiva boy is subjected several times during the week to such radical changes of atmosphere and ideology as exist between the Yeshivah and the college, where the majority of students are gentiles, and the majority of the Jewish students are unfortunately not religious, etc. It is impossible for a student to avoid contact with fellow students and professors. Hence, even if your son would have liked to go to college, it would have been highly problematical as to the advisability of it, as it is impossible to foresee what conflicts and dangers it would entail. But now that you are fortunate that your son does not want to do it but rather devote his time to the Yeshiva and to remain in its healthy and conflict-free atmosphere, surely he should be encouraged in his wise determination.

I am aware, of course, that there are boys who together with their Yeshiva education attend college. I have occasion to meet with them and I can assure you that very few come out unscathed from the tremendous conflicts involved. Even those who on the surface appear to be wholesome, have no peace of mind, and very, very few indeed of those who mixed Yeshiva with college have remained completely wholesome inwardly as well as outwardly.

I trust that the above few lines will suffice to help you realize how happy you should feel that your son has decided to avoid pitfalls and to remain in the exclusive and wholesome atmosphere of the Yeshivah. You should encourage him in this, so that he may learn with complete serenity, and you will be assured of real Nachas from him, and not only spiritually but also materially, when the time will come.

With blessing,

M. Schneerson

2

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With blessing

M. Schneerson

7

A Good Investment

Yeshiva study before entering the world is a good investment, not a waste of time; G-d provides parnasah, and you will make a vessel for it when the time comes

By the Grace of G-d
20th of Kislev, 5722
Brooklyn, N. Y.

Mr. Chono Zvi Gorman
401, Hendon Way
London, N.W.4

Greeting and Blessing:

I received your letter of the 7th of Kislev.

With regard to learning at the Yeshivah, you are certainly right in thinking that "If not now, when?" especially at your age. Since this is a matter which affects and influences the rest of one's life, it is clear that the time dedicated to Yeshiva learning before entering the world, is surely a very good investment, and should by no means be considered as a loss of time, G-d forbid.

As for the matter of Parnosso, surely ultimately Parnosso is something that depends on G-d's benevolent Providence, and as we say in Grace after meals "Who feeds the whole world in His goodness, grace, kindness and mercy." Of course, it is necessary to prepare a vessel or channel for Parnosso in the natural way, but before doing that it is absolutely necessary to strengthen the foundations of one's future life, and in a case like yours, it should be at least a year or two of exclusive study at the Yeshiva.

I trust that you know of the significance of Yud Tes Kislev and that you participated in its observance.

Wishing you a happy and inspiring Chanukah,

With blessing,

By Nissan Mindel

Coming next week...

Completing College

In the second installment of this series, we will examine another aspect of the Rebbe's approach to college education: his correspondence with individuals who had already invested significant time in pursuing a college degree.

At first glance, these letters may seem to contradict those presented here. In these communications, the Rebbe encourages the recipients to complete their studies, and, in some cases, even to pursue advanced coursework. In several instances, the Rebbe actively persuaded individuals to finish their degrees, and in one remarkable case, he provided financial assistance in the form of a scholarship.

However, this position aligns with the overarching worldview expressed in many of the earlier letters: everything in this world must be utilized in the service of G-d—including time spent on secular studies and the attainment of academic degrees.

Before concluding, we urge readers to carefully consider the context of the forthcoming letters and the circumstances of the individuals who received them. Notably, many of these recipients came from secular backgrounds and were already married.

The upcoming issue will feature several previously unpublished letters addressing this subject.

לע"נ
הרה"ת הרה"ח
הרב לימא ב"ר נפתלי הערץ
מינקאוויטש ע"ה

נלב"ע ט"ו טבת ה'תשפ"ו
ת.נ.צ.ב.ה.

במלאות שלושים לפטירתו

ע"י מאיר שמחה ושיינא שיחיו מינקאוויטש

לע"נ
הרה"ת הרה"ח
הרב שלום בן יואל דוב
לפידות

נלב"ע י' שבט תשל"א

ולע"נ
הרה"ת הרה"ח
הרב יהושע העשל בן אהרן אליעזר
צייטלין

נלב"ע י"א שבט תשמ"ח

לע"נ מרת רבקה בת הר"ר שלמה