



REBBE RESPONSA

The Rebbe's English Letters

When Joy Feels Distant

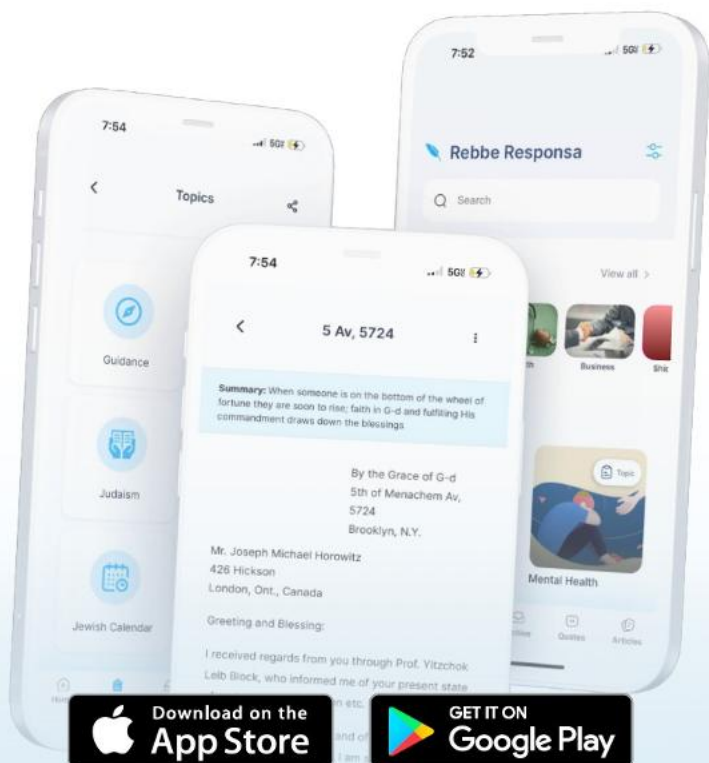
The joy of Shemini Atzeres and Simchas Torah
when life feels far from joyful



Rebbe Responsa

The Rebbe's English letters

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every topic and issue - at
your fingertips



ב"ה

A Word from the Publishers

We are pleased to present Issue 176 of Rebbe Responsa, a collection of the Lubavitcher Rebbe's English.

In this week's booklet, the Rebbe addresses the joy demanded of every Jew on Shemini Atzeres and Simchas Torah, even in the darkness of Golus and amid personal hardship, and how one can carry that joy into everyday life when life itself feels far from joyful.

* * *

To enjoy the full collection of the Lubavitcher Rebbe's English letters, we encourage you to download the *Rebbe Responsa* app. With over 5,000 letters organized by both topic and date, the app makes finding the Rebbe's guidance and worldview on a vast array of topics simple and accessible.

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

The Rebbe Responsa Team

13 Tishrei, 5787

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1

Rise Above Golus

The darkness of Golus cannot dampen the joy of Sukkos, for a Jew's life is illuminated by the light of Torah and Mitzvos; the deep trust in G-d's revealed goodness and in the coming of Moshiach that unites every Jew

FREE TRANSLATION

By the Grace of G-d
Between Yom Kippur and Succos¹
Sedra: Brochah,² Year: Hakhel
5741. Brooklyn, N.Y.

To the Sons and Daughters of our
People Israel, Everywhere,
G-d bless you all!

Greeting and Blessing:

In these days of preparation for the Festival of Succos,³ Zman Simchoseinu,⁴ and coming from The Holy Day,⁵ unique in the year,⁶ when all Jews were granted the Chasimo uGmar Chasimo Toivo for a good and sweet year — good also in our understanding,⁷ being the revealed and obvious kind of good, it is appropriate to reflect on the following thought:

Although we are still in Golus, when “darkness covers the earth,”⁸ because the light of Torah-Or,⁹ the true light that is found only in Torah (“there is no light but Torah”¹⁰), has not irradiated, fully and pervasively, the world and its everyday affairs, which is reflected also in its attitude, sometimes even actions, towards Jews;

Source: Photocopy of the original.

Note: The English renditions of the Rebbe's *Michtavim Klali'im* (circular letters addressed to every Jew) were edited by the Rebbe. The Rebbe's original Hebrew endnotes are published at the end of the letter.

The Yiddish version of this letter (with slight variations) is printed in *Likkutei Sichos*, vol. 19 pp. 564 ff.

and among some Jews — in their attitude towards Jewishness — Yiddishkeit.

Both aspects being interrelated. For, as has often been pointed out, when Jews, as individuals or as a group, proudly adhere to their Jewishness¹¹ and show it — that is also the way that earns them the respect of the Gentile world and a friendly and helpful attitude,

In addition to the essential thing, that by adhering to Yiddishkeit in actual practice of learning Torah and doing Mitzvos, thus diminishing till to completely eliminate the only cause of the Golus (as we clearly affirm in our prayer — “Because of our sins we have been exiled from our land”¹²) — the Golus is shortened and eventually brought to an end by the true and complete Geulo through Moshiach Tzidkeinu, —

Nevertheless, the fact of still being in Golus must not, and does not, dampen the joyful preparations for Succos, much less the actual joy of Yom Tov, particularly the Festival of Succos (including Chol-hamo’ed, Shemini Atzeres, and Simchas Torah¹³) which has been singled out and designated as “The Season of Our Rejoicing”,¹⁴

For, as in the case of Golus Mitzrayim,¹⁵ when at the height of the surrounding darkness “there was light for *all* the children of Israel in their dwellings,”¹⁶ a Jew’s life, wherever he may dwell, is illuminated in all its aspects by the light of the Torah and Mitzvos. And by intensifying this light in his daily life, the Jew is also hastening the Geulo and sooner to welcome Moshiach Tzidkeinu

* * *

And here comes in the additional factor, which is also one of our fundamental beliefs and basic principles of our Torah — *Bitochon* (trust) in G-d,¹⁷ the true and absolute Bitochon in Him who is the Master of all the universe, whose Divine Providence extends to each and everyone individually,¹⁸ and specifically, and in detail —

The Bitochon, first of all, that He surely granted the Chasimo uGmar Chasimo Toivo¹⁹ in everything and in every detail, including also, indeed — especially the fulfillment in our own very days of the hope, heartfelt yearning, and most fervent daily expectation, namely, the “coming of Moshiach, for whose coming I wait every day.”²⁰

* * *

The Bitochon, the basis of which is the *simple* belief²¹ of every Jew — since all Jews are “believers the sons of believers”²² who inherited this belief from our Father Abraham, the Father of Believers²³ — unites and unifies all Jews. Moreover, — this belief is the very same in all Jews, in all the ten categories into which Jews are classified by the Torah,²⁴ from “heads” to the “drawer of water,” though in all other aspects they differ and to the extreme.

It is this Bitochon that makes a spiritual *Hakhel of the people*²⁵ a reality, unifying all Jews into one *kohol*,²⁶ one entity — since their common simple belief also *pervades* and moves everything in which they differ (as indicated in the verse): listening to, learning, keeping and doing all the words of the Torah.

This is also reflected in the “essence of The Day (Yom-Kippur)”²⁷ — the unique and only day in the year,²⁸ which of all the festivals ordained in the Torah, is celebrated for one day only, both in and outside of Eretz Yisroel.

The day which all Jews conclude on the same culminating “resume” and proclaim it with profound inspiration and in a loud voice:²⁹ *Shema Yisroel* — Hear, O Israel, Hashem is our G-d, Hashem is One, Blessed be the name of His glorious Kingdom forever and ever; Hashem He is G-d!”³⁰

The same unifying principle is reflected also in the Festival of Succos, in combining together the “Four Kinds” (Esrog, Lulav, Myrtle, and Willow), symbolizing *all* different types of Jews,³¹ into one Mitzvah,³² which is created by virtue of a Jew unifying them,

And also in the Succah itself, concerning which the Torah says:³³ “It is possible for *all* Jews to sit in one Succah.”

* * *

May G-d grant that Just as on Yom Kippur, after the many prayers and the culminating resume (followed by the recital of Kaddish — “Exalted and hallowed be His great Name,” etc.), one Tekiah³⁴ is sounded³⁵ — a *Tekiah Gedolah*, according to custom, followed by the loud proclamation: L’shanah haba’ah biYerushalaim!

—

So may every Jew in the midst of Klal Yisroel, after the many prayers throughout the long Golus, including (five times during the day of Yom Kippur³⁶) the daily prayer, “May our eyes behold Your

return to Zion in mercy,” and, while still in Golus, Jews demonstrating that “We Your people and sheep of Your pasture, we will constantly pray thanking You,”³⁷

(Repeat, may every Jew, man and woman) very soon indeed hear the sound of G-d's Shofar Gadol³⁸ announcing our liberation, followed immediately by – “Bring us... to Jerusalem³⁹ Your Holy House with everlasting joy.”

With esteem and blessing for Chag Same'ach – Zman Simchoseinu

/Signed: Menachem Schneerson/

1) הן ימי שמחה שבהן היו מחנכין את המזבח בימי שלמה (ש"ע אדה"ז חאו"ח סו"ס תרכ"ד - ממג"א מהרי"ל). וראה פ"ח וס"ל האריז"ל במקומו. לקוטי לוי"צ לזח"א ע' א. - להעיר משיחת כ"ק אדמו"ר (מהורש"ב) נ"ע (מבוא לפוקח עורים ע' 8): די' ימים שבין יום כפור לסוכות .. איז אין די' אותיות שם הוי' וואס אין אדם. וראה גם סה"מ ה'תשי"א ע' 42. 2) להעיר אשר בקביעות שנה זו היא במשך ג' שבועות. 3) ויק"ר פ"ל, ז. 4) לשון רבים - ראה לקו"ת שמע"צ פ"ד, ד ואילך. 5) להעיר משבת קי"ט, א. זח"ב מז, א. ונת' באוה"ת להצ"צ עה"פ (ישעי' נח, יג) לקדוש ה' המכובד (נ"ך ע' רעה). סהמ"צ להצ"צ קעט, א. 6) תצוה ל, י. אחרי טז, לד. 7) כהמדייקים בפיוט סוף נעילה ודהושענות לחבר "לנו" ל"הטוב", משא"כ בקרא (תבוא כח, יב) דמפרט שהטוב נגלה. 8) ישעי' ס, ב. 9) משלי ו, כג. 10) תענית ז, ב. 11) להעיר מטוש"ע או"ח בתחלתו: לא יתבייש מפני בני אדם המלגעים. 12) נוסח תפלת מוסף דיו"ט. 13) ראה שו"ע אדה"ז או"ח סתק"ט ס"ו. 14) ראה יל"ש אמור רמז תרנד בתחלתו: אתה מוצא שלש שמחות כתיב בחג. וראה לקו"ת ח"ד ע' 418 ואילך. 15) שכל המלכיות נקראו ע"ש מצרים ע"ש שהם מצירות לישראל (בר"ר פט"ז, ה). 16) בא י, כג. 17) ראה חובת הלבבות שער הבטחון. עיקרים מאמר רביעי פמ"ו ואילך. - ראה כש"ט (הוצאות קה"ת) הוספות אות מא. ביאור"ז לאדהאמ"צ (וארא לו, ד ואילך) ולהצ"צ (שם ע' קצ ואילך). אוה"ת נ"ך ע' רו ואילך. 18) ראה כש"ט הוספות אות קיט ואילך. וש"נ. 19) ראה אגה"ת רפ"א. 20) עיקר ה"ב מה"ג עיקרים. 21) ראה כש"ט הוספות אות קנה. וש"נ לקו"א להמ"מ סקפ"ט (הוצאות קה"ת - מ"ח, סע"ד ואילך). וראה תורת אדה"ז ממוצאי יוה"כ פ"ק תקנ"ו (היום יום יא תשרי). ובכ"מ. 22) שבת צו, א. 23) ראה שהש"ר פ"ד, ח ג. - ועפ"י יומתק פרש"י לך טו, ו דרך לאברהם נחשבה האמונה לזכות, דלהשאר בא בירושה. וראה סד"ה תשורי מראש אמנה תרפ"ט (סה"מ קונטרסים ח"א נד, ב). 24) ר"פ נצבים. לקו"ת כאן (מוז"ב פב, א). 25) וילך לא, יב. ואפילו קטני קטנים (ראה ירושלמי חגיגה בתחלתה). 26) ראה בארוכה מכתבי עש"ק ח"י אלול וימי הסליחות ה'תש"מ. 27) ראה רמב"ם הל' תשובה פ"א ה"ג. לקו"ש ח"ד ס"ע 1149 ואילך. 28) ראה תוד"ה עד אחת - מנחות יח, א. 29) מהרי"ל בסדר נעילה. 30) שו"ע אדה"ז או"ח סתרכ"ג ס"י. וש"נ. 31) ויק"ר פ"ל, יב. 32) נוסף על שכל אחד מד' מינים אלה מורה על ענין האחדות - סידור רסד, ד ואילך. המשך וככה תרל"ז פפ"ז. 33) סוכה כו, ב. וראה ד"ה בסוכות תשבו (סה"מ תשי"א). 34) והוא מבחי' שופר גדול (לקו"ת ר"ה ס, ג). 35) שו"ע שם ס"א. 36) ראה לקו"ת ס"פ פינחס. 37) תהלים עט, יג. 38) דוקא - לקבץ גם גופו ולהעלות לדבקה בו בגוף ונפש (ד"ה שובה תרמ"א. וראה לקו"ת ר"ה נט, ואילך). 39) ראה לקו"ת שם ס, ב.

RABBI MENACHEM M. SCHNEERSON

Lubavitch
770 Eastern Parkway
Brooklyn, N.Y. 11213
493-9250

FREE TRANSLATION

מנחם מענדל שניאורסאהן
ליוכאוו'יש

770 איסטערן פארקוויי
ברוקלין, נ.י.

By the Grace of G-d
Between Yom Kippur and Succos¹
Sedra: Brochah,² Year: Hakheil
5741. Brooklyn, N.Y.

To the Sons and Daughters of our
People Israel, Everywhere,
G-d bless you all!

Greeting and Blessing:

In these days of preparation for the Festival of Succos,³ Zman Simchaseinu,⁴ and coming from The Holy Day,⁵ unique in the year,⁶ when all Jews were granted the Chasimo uGmar Chasimo Toivo for a good and sweet year - good also in our understanding,⁷ being the revealed and obvious kind of good, it is appropriate to reflect on the following thought:

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Both aspects being interrelated. For, as has often been pointed out, when Jews, as individuals or as a group, proudly adhere to their Jewishness¹¹ and show it - that is also the way that earns them the respect of the Gentile world and a friendly and helpful attitude,

In addition to the essential thing, that by adhering to Yiddishkeit in actual practice of learning Torah and doing Mitzvos, thus diminishing till to completely eliminate the only cause of the Golus (as we clearly affirm in our prayer - "Because of our sins we have been exiled from our land"¹²) - the Golus is shortened and eventually brought to an end by the true and complete Geulo through Moshiach Tzidkeinu, --

Nevertheless, the fact of still being in Golus must not, and does not, dampen the joyful preparations for Succos, much less the actual joy of Yom Tov, particularly the Festival of Succos (including Chol-hamo'ed, Shemini Atzeres, and Simchas Torah¹³) which has been singled out and designated as "The Season of Our Rejoicing";¹⁴

For, as in the case of Golus Mitzrayim,¹⁵ when at the height of the surrounding darkness "there was light for all the children of Israel in their dwellings,"¹⁶ a Jew's life, wherever he may dwell, is illuminated in all its aspects by the light of the Torah and Mitzvos. And by intensifying this light in his daily life, the Jew is also hastening the Geulo and sooner to welcome Moshiach Tzidkeinu

*

*

*

2

When Life is Painful

Joy on Shemini Atzeres and Simchas Torah even when there seems to be little reason for it; drawing G-d's blessings for revealed reasons to be happy; trust that G-d cares for one's own "small world"

By the Grace of G-d
2 Cheshvan, 5713
Brooklyn 13, N.Y.

Mr. ...

Greeting and Blessing:

I have received your letter of October 16, 1952. Although you do not mention it, I trust that you spent Shemini Atzeres and Simchat Torah in a happy and inspired mood, in accordance with the precepts of our Torah. Even if there were circumstances which seemed to interfere with such a happy mood and it was necessary to feel happy merely by way of resignation because the Torah commanded it, to be happy, nevertheless the very fact that one is happy on these festivals, despite interference of reason, brings G-d's blessings in such improved circumstances that one can also see good reason for being happy. May the Almighty help this come about very soon.

You write that you are undergoing a difficult period in your life. As I told you personally when you were here, you should be strong in your faith in G-d, Who directs the destinies of the whole great universe, that He will also take care of your problems connected with your own small world, in a way that is best for you, for your wife and children, materially and spiritually.

You mentioned that your children wanted to receive individual blessings. In my view, children who attend the Yeshiva have to receive this together with the other Yeshiva boys, and the occasion

Source: Typed copy.

This letter was written to an individual experiencing severe financial difficulties, as well as medical issues affecting his wife and children.

for it was Shemini Atzeres and Simchath Torah, about which they have undoubtedly written to you.¹

I am looking forward to hearing good news from you in every way. With all good wishes,

Cordially yours,

P.S. No doubt you have received the check for \$1,000.00. In accordance with your instruction, your first check for \$500.00 was today deposited.²

Your contribution towards a farbrengen was turned over to those who take care of these matters, and will be used accordingly.

¹ In the early hours of Simchas Torah 5713, the Rebbe conducted additional Hakafof with the yeshiva students and had every bochur present honored with reciting a possuk; see *Torah Menachem*, vol. 7, pp. 103-104; *A Chassidisher Derher*, issue 110 (187), pp. 10-11.

² The Rebbe had previously given the recipient a loan for expenses connected with his home, to be repaid over the following months.

3

Every Reason for Joy

G-d provides adequate reasons to be joyful on Simchas Torah; ensuring the joy of Yom Tov lasts for the entire year

By the Grace of G-d
27th of Tishrei, 5728
Brooklyn, N.Y.

Mr. Shneur Zalmon Jaffe
105, Cavendish Rd.
Kersal
Salford 7, Lancs.
England

Greeting and Blessing:

I can, of course, fully rely on the One Above that having ordained for each and every one of us a Zman Simchosenu, including Simchas Torah, He has certainly provided the adequate reasons for such joy to be fully expressed by Jews everywhere, including Manchester, and particularly in your own immediate environment.

Nevertheless, inasmuch as there are different degrees and levels insofar as Simcha itself is concerned, and the purpose of every Yom Tov is to carry over the spirit and joy of the Yom Tov into the rest of the year, which is especially true of the Yom Tov of Simchas Torah – I will be happy to hear from you explicitly that you and your family and community at large did indeed have a truly joyous and inspiring Simchas Torah, so that the joy and inspiration will be felt throughout the year.

May G-d grant that the joy be even greater than expected, both in regard to material as well as spiritual matters, including matters of business and Parnosso.

With blessing,

M. Schneerson

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

מנחם מענדל שניאורסאהן
ליובאוויטש
770 איסטערן פארקווי
ברוקלין, נ. י.

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27th of Tishrei, 5728
Brooklyn, N. Y.

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Greeting and Blessing:

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Nevertheless, inasmuch as there are different degrees and levels insofar as Simcha itself is concerned, and the purpose of every Yom Tov is to carry over the spirit and joy of the Yom Tov into the rest of the year, which is especially true of the Yom Tov of Simchas Torah - I will be happy to hear from you explicitly that you and your family and community at large did indeed have a truly joyous and inspiring Simchas Torah, so that the joy and inspiration will be felt throughout the year.

May G-d grant that the joy be even greater than expected, both in regard to material as well as spiritual matters, including matters of business and Parnosso.

With blessing, *m. Schneerson*

4

Is the Life Conducive to Joy?

How to carry the joy of Tishrei into one's life when life itself may not be conducive to joy; the power to rise above one's circumstances with a Bitachon mindset; advice not to leave Eretz Yisrael for an uncertain fresh start

By the Grace of G-d
10th of Cheshvan, 5741
Brooklyn, N.Y.

Mr. ...
Bnei Brak

Greeting and Blessing:

Your letter reached me with considerable delay. I regret that my acknowledgement has been further delayed. However, it is timely nevertheless, and has a bearing on your letter, particularly in response to your observation regarding certain negative aspects of places and individuals, etc.

The timeliness that I am alluding to is in the fact that we are coming from the month of Tishrei, which is so rich in religious experience, and in the variety of its festivals concluding with the “Festival of Our Rejoicing,” which itself concludes with Simchas Torah. And, as in the case of all festivals, their purpose is to have a lasting inspiration for all days ahead.

At first glance, the question one may ask as it is also evident from your letter is — how can everyone be expected to carry the Joy of Zman Simchoseinu and Simchas Torah into the everyday life, considering that it is an emotion which is affected by conditions and circumstances of time and place, which are not always conducive to joy, and, in any case, also affected by the subjective

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

reactions of individuals who have to cope with them, some of whom may be more optimistic, or less optimistic by nature?

But since the Torah is both a Toras Chaim and Toras Emes, providing true instruction and it addresses itself to all Jews – it is clear that basically it is within the power of every Jew to live up to it. And it is largely up to the individual to make the most of the conditions and circumstances in which he lives, as it is written – טוב פת חרבה ושלוה בה מבית מלא זבחי-ריב (משלי יז:א).

In other words, it is possible to have a houseful of "feasts" (riches), yet torn by strife, as it is also possible to have a dry morsel of bread, yet coupled with tranquility. Such tranquility is the result of the person's true bitochon in G-d, the Master of the world, whose benevolent Providence extends to each and everyone individually, including himself. And this also brings G-d's blessing into the home that the "dry morsel of bread" should turn into a house full of riches and tranquility.

Needless to say, this letter is not intended as an admonition, especially as I do not know you personally. But I am speaking from observation, knowing of many similar cases which have been turned around largely by the individuals themselves having the proper approach. Actually, what has been said here is not new, as the subject has been adequately discussed and explained in the works of the Sages and teachers of our people, especially by the Guide for the Perplexed, the Rambam and those who followed him.

Now in regard to a practical question in your letter, namely, the idea of leaving Eretz Yisroel in order to make a fresh start elsewhere. In my opinion, apart from the problems connected with this idea, as you state in your letter, it should in any case not be advisable, considering the energy and expense such a move would entail, as well as the adjustment to new circumstances etc., the outcome of which is quite uncertain and unforeseeable. Rather would it be more advisable to put all this effort into a resolute effort to improve the situation in your present place, which, I trust, would in a sustainable measure eliminate the negative aspects which now prompt you to think of moving as the hoped for solution.

With blessing,



**Dedicated for the
safety and security of
our brothers and sisters
in the Holy Land**

May the miraculous protection
of the Guardian of Israel continue
to shield them, and may we merit
the fulfillment of the promise:

*"I will give peace in the land, and
you shall lie down, and none shall
make you afraid..."*

By Anonymous



Distribution of the Rebbe Responsa booklet has been made possible by
the generous support of the Baal Shem Tov Path Foundation

אימתי קאתי מר לכשיפוצו מעיינותיך חוצה

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Editor@RebbeResponsa.com | +1 (347) 788 1304