



REBBE RESPONSA

The Rebbe's English Letters

The Power of Tzedakah

Issue 116
Devarim, 5785

A Word from the Publishers

We hereby present *Issue 116 of Rebbe Responsa*, a compilation of letters originally authored by the Lubavitcher Rebbe in English, culled from the *Rebbe Responsa* app.

As we now find ourselves on the eve of *Tisha B'Av*, presented in this week's edition is a collection of letters pertaining to the mitzvah of *tzedakah* – charity. In the first two letters, the Rebbe explains the great importance of charity during this period on the calendar, and its power to reverse Exile, as the verse states “Zion will be redeemed through justice, and all that return to her – through *tzedakah*” (*Yeshayahu*, 1:27).

The first letter in the booklet is being published here for the first time. For additional letters concerning *tzedakah*, see *Rebbe Responsa Issue 68 – [Charity Brings Wealth](#)*.

* * *

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 organized by both topic and date, the app makes finding the Rebbe's guidance and opinion simple and accessible.

May we very soon merit the complete redemption, when we will “come out to meet our righteous Moshiach, and the days of sadness will be turned into days of gladness, as promised by our holy Prophets in the holy Torah.”

The Rebbe Responsa Team

The Rebbe Responsa app is available for download on the App Store, Play Store, or at RebbeResponsa.com.

*To receive the weekly booklet, dedicate an issue, or submit a letter, email:
Editor@RebbeResponsa.com*

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1
Greater Show of Love
– *Newly Released* –

*Nine Days calls for greater mutual affection and increased tzedakah;
these offset tragic causes and hasten transformation to days of
rejoicing with Moshiach.*

By the Grace of G-d
7 Menachem Av, 5740
Brooklyn, N. Y.

Mrs. Sheina Bluma Liberman¹
5 W 86th Street
New York, N. Y. 10024

Blessing and Greeting:

I was pleased to receive your letter of Rosh Chodesh Av, and many thanks for the good wishes. In accordance with the saying of our Sages that “one who blesses others is blessed by G-d Himself,” may G-d bless you and yours in a generous measure in all your needs.

It was especially timely to receive your letter and enclosures during the period of the “Three Weeks,” particularly in the “Nine Days,” which call for a greater show of mutual affection among Jews, in keeping with the Mitzvah of Ahavas Yisroel, and increased efforts in all Mitzvos, especially Tzedoko in order to offset the causes which gave rise to the tragic events commemorated during this sad period, and hasten the time when these days will be transformed into days of rejoicing and festivity, with the coming of Moshiach Tzidkeinu.

Source: Photocopy of the original. This letter is published here for the first time, courtesy of the Cunin family.

¹ Mrs. Sheina Blume (Rose) Liberman (5664–5757 / 1904–1997), was married to Chaim Nachum (Norman) Liberman, and was the daughter of Rabbi Menachem Mendel Cunin, an early *Chabad* chassid, activist, and philanthropist in America.

Receipts are enclosed for your checks, and may the Zechus of the Tzedoko additionally stand you and all yours in good stead, especially to have much true Nachas, Yiddishe-Chsidishe Nachas, from each and all of your children, grand-children, and great-grand-children for many many good and healthy years.

With blessing,

M. Schneerson

RABBI MENACHEM M. SCHNEERSON
Lubavitch
770 Eastern Parkway
Brooklyn, N. Y. 11213
Hyacinth 3-9250

מונחם מנחם מ. שניאורסאהן
ליובאוויטש
770 איסטערן פארקוויי
ברוקליין, נ. י.

By the Grace of G-d
7 Menachem Av, 5740
Brooklyn, N. Y.

Mrs. Sheina Bluma Liberman
5 W 86th Street
New York, N. Y. 10024

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With blessing,

M. Schneerson

2

Tisha B'Av, Before Mincha

Tzedakah particularly important on Tisha B'Av to hasten redemption; especially significant before Mincha; Torah commitment and tzedakah bring consolation and Moshiach.

By the Grace of G-d
15th of Menachem Av, 5730
Brooklyn, N.Y.

The Campers and Counselors
Camp Emunah²
Greenfield Park, N.Y.

Greeting and Blessing

I was pleased to receive a report about your life and activities in the camp through Rabbi J. J. Hecht.³ He also turned in your Tzedoko collection of Tisha B'Av.

As I mentioned on the Shabbos before Tisha B'Av,⁴ which no doubt was conveyed also to you, Tzedoko is particularly important in connection with the day of Tisha B'Av to hasten the Geulo in accordance with the prophecy, "Zion will be redeemed through justice, and all that return to her—through Tzedoko."⁵ Especially significant is the Tzedoko before Mincha, when the prayer "Nacheim" is said.

May G-d grant that in the Zechus of your Tzedoko in connection with the above, and the Tzedoko of all Jews, together with the Zechus of the Torah, which is indicated in the beginning of the

Source: Photocopy of the original.

² Camp Emunah, founded in 1953 under the guidance of the Rebbe, was the first Chabad girls overnight camp.

³ Rabbi Yaakov Yehudah (J.J.) Hecht (5684–5750 / 1923–1990) the director of camp Emunah. Rabbi Hecht also headed the NCFJE, which—under the auspices of Merkos L'Inyonei Chinuch—provided Jewish education to Jewish public school students through its various programs.

⁴ Published in *Likkutei Sichos*, Vol. 9, pp. 249–251.

⁵ *Yeshayahu*, 1:27.

verse mentioned above (in the word *Mishpot* – “justice”), that is to say, the daily life in accordance with the Torah and Mitzvos – should speedily bring the Nechama. Then you, with all other Jewish children as well as adults, will come out to meet our righteous Moshiach, and the days of sadness will be turned into days of gladness, as promised by our holy Prophets in the holy Torah.

With blessing,

M. Schneerson

RABBI MENACHEM M. SCHNEERSON
Lubovitch
770 Eastern Parkway
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HYcclnch 3-9256

מנחם מענדל שניאורסאהן
ליובאוויטש

770 איסטערן פארקוויי
ברוקליין נ. י.

By the Grace of G-d
15th of Menachem Av,
5730
Brooklyn, N. Y.

The Campers and Counselors
Camp Emunah
Greenfield Park, N. Y.

Greeting and Blessing:

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May G-d grant that in the Zechus of your Tzedoko in connection with the above, and the Tzedoko of all Jews, together with the Zechus of the Torah, which is indicated in the beginning of the verse mentioned above (in the word *Mishpot* - "justice"), that is to say, the daily life in accordance with the Torah and Mitzvoth - should speedily bring the Nechama. Then you, with all other Jewish children as well as adults, will come out to meet our righteous Moshiach, and the days of sadness will be turned into days of gladness, as promised by our holy Prophets in the holy Torah.

With blessing,

M. Schneerson

3

From One Hundred to Two Hundred

Tzedakah merit enables fulfilling pledges with ease; giving without apprehension; human nature desires growth in spiritual matters even more than material.

By the Grace of G-d
24 Av, 5739
Brooklyn, N. Y.

Mr. Reuven Dovid Kimball⁶
1537 Main Street
Springfield, Mass. 01103

Greeting and Blessing:

This is to acknowledge receipt of your letter of 21 Av, with the enclosure, as well as previous correspondence.

Receipt is enclosed for your Tzedoko in memory of your father Yehuda ben Moishe Z"l, and the Zechus of it will also stand you and yours in good stead, including the ability to fulfill your pledge to the Building Fund of the Yeshiva with ease and in good health and Hatzlocho. And since our Sages declare that "one Mitzvah leads to another Mitzvah,"⁷ you need not feel apprehensive about making further and larger pledges for such a good cause as helping spread Torah and Mitzvos in your community, in keeping with the saying of our Sages, "He who has one hundred desires two hundred,"⁸ etc. For, if such is human nature in regard to material goods, how much more so should one's ambitions be in regard to the true and eternal values.

With blessing,

M. Schneerson

Source: Photocopy of the original.

⁶ Mr. Jeffrey (Reuven Dovid) Kimball is a lawyer and active supporter and pillar of Lubavitch in Springfield, Massachusetts.

⁷ *Avos* 4:2.

⁸ See *Koheles Rabbah* 1:13; 3:10.

RABBI MENACHEM M. SCHNEERSON
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770 Eastern Parkway
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493-9250

מנחם מענדל שניאורסאהן
ליובאוויטש

770 איסטערן פארקוויי
ברוקלין, נ.י.

By the Grace of G-d
24 Av, 5739
Brooklyn, N. Y.

Mr. Reuven Dovid Kimball
1537 Main Street
Springfield, Mass. 0103

Greeting and Blessing:

This is to acknowledge receipt of your letter of 21 Av, with the enclosure, as well as previous correspondence.

Receipt is enclosed for your Tzedoko in memory of your Father Yehuda ben Moishe Z"l, and the Zechus of it will also stand you and yours in good stead, including the ability to fulfil your pledge to the Building Fund of the Yeshiva with ease and in good health and Hatzlocho. And since our Sages declare that "one Mitzva leads to another Mitzva," you need not feel apprehensive about making further and larger pledges for such a good cause as helping spread Torah and Mitzvos in your community, in keeping with the saying of our Sages, "He who has one hundred desires two hundred," etc. For, if such is human nature in regard to material goods, how much more so should one's ambition in regard to the true and eternal values.

With blessing,

M. Schneerson

4

“But I’m a Socialist”

Personal socialist ideology shouldn’t prevent exploring Judaism; Torah contains great principles of social justice; tzedakah based on justice not just compassion; “He who has pity on the poor, lends unto G-d.”

By the Grace of G-d
3rd of Adar, 5734
Brooklyn, N.Y.

Miss ...
Institute of Cancer Research
London, S.W.3, England

...It came as something of a surprise to me to read in your letter that Socialism prevented you from learning about Judaism. It is noteworthy that one of the first laws dealt with in the Torah, immediately after the Revelation at Sinai, was the legislation relating to an individual who sold himself into slavery. Some of the laws are designed to protect the individual’s material and spiritual well-being, personal dignity and so forth, to the extent that our Sages observed that, “He who acquires a slave, acquires a master for himself.” In any case, the maximum period of servitude could not exceed six years. Furthermore, the Torah emphasizes the basic principle that all Jews have only one master, namely G-d Himself, stating, “For you are My servants, whom I have brought out of the land of Egypt.” In other words, whatever the difference in the material position, all are basically free and the only servitude they have to render is to G-d.

Similarly, the concept of tzedoko, the help that one has to give to another both materially and spiritually, is based not simply on human compassion, which is a relative term, but on justice. Moreover, in this connection, it is written, “He who has pity on the

Published: *The Letter and the Spirit*, Vol 5, p. 204.

Note: Letters printed in *The Letter and the Spirit* are from the Archives of Rabbi Nissan Mindel, the Rebbe’s personal secretary who was entrusted with transcribing the Rebbe’s orally dictated responses. The archive consists of secretarial copies that may not include final edits and corrections or may include unsent letters.

poor, lends unto G-d." (Prov. 19:17). This means that when a person helps a poor man, he makes G-d his debtor, so to speak, for G-d takes upon Himself the obligation to repay the money and effort expended in behalf of the poor man and to do so in a generous measure.

This is hardly the place to enlarge upon this topic, but I trust that it will suffice to indicate the great principles of social justice which the Torah has made basic to Judaism. In any case, you could discuss these matters further with your Lubavitch friends which you mention.

I trust that you will go from strength to strength in your advancement in Judaism and at a more rapid pace, in order to make up for lost time in the past. It is well to bear in mind that since you have a special influence in a certain circle, every personal advancement of yours will be multiplied in the persons who will benefit from it.

Wishing you a happy and inspiring Purim,

With blessing,

5

Spiritual Poverty Too

Gemilus Chassodim as a Yeshivah student: Assisting the rich in forms other than money, and charity to the spiritually poor; when to give; not attending college; merit of learning Chassidus

B.H.
Chanukah, 5723
Brooklyn, N.Y.

Mr. Mordecai Yosef Shimon Berger⁹
Telshe Yeshiva
Wickliffe, Ohio.

Sholom uBrocho:

I received your letter, in which you ask how can you observe the Mitzvah of Gemilus Chassodim being at the Yeshiva.

Surely you know that, as it is explained in the Gemoro and many other sources, Gemilus Chassodim can be observed not only with money but in many other ways, and, moreover, not only in regard to the poor, but also the rich.¹⁰ Even Tzedoko, which is to help the poor, is not limited to those who are poor materially, but also to those who are poor spiritually.¹¹ Needless to say, the plain meaning of the words — in terms of money — is not to be excluded.

Furthermore, and this is essential, if there is no poor man present, it is possible to hand over the money to a Gabbai-Tzedoko, who is the representative of the poor (or to put it in a box) to be turned over to the poor eventually.

Published: *Letters From the Rebbe*, Vol. 7, pp. 50-51.

⁹ Rabbi Mordechai Yosef Shimon (Motti) Berger (5707-5773) was drawn to the Rebbe at age seventeen and eventually became a devoted Lubavitcher chassid. He later served as the Rebbe's shliach to Ottawa for over thirty years.

¹⁰ *Sukkah* 49b.

¹¹ See at length in letter dated [18 Elul, 5710](#).

The auspicious and opportune times to give Tzedoko is before prayer,¹² and before fulfilling any Mitzva in general.¹³ Of course, when a poor man is present and asks for a donation, that is when one also fulfills the commandment “you shall not shut off your hand from your needy brother.”¹⁴

With regard to the question of College for Yeshiva boys, my opinion is well known, and it has been amply publicized, and all the aspects are discussed.¹⁵ I trust my position is known to you.

In line with the aspiration which you express in your letter, I trust you have a regular shiur in Chassidus every day, with increased time on Shabbos. We have been assured that when a person sanctifies himself a little in his daily life here below, he is sanctified a great deal from On High,¹⁶ and may you go from strength to strength in all matters of Torah and Mitzvoth, in accordance with the teachings of the Chanukah lights which we light in growing number from day to day.

With blessing,

¹² See Alter Rebbe's *Shulchan Aruch* Siman 92:10.

¹³ See *HaYom Yom* 6 Tammuz.

¹⁴ *Devarim* 15:7.

¹⁵ The previous year, the Rebbe addressed this issue at length in a widely publicized [letter](#) printed in the *Jewish Press*. See also letter dated [8 Adar II, 5722](#).

¹⁶ *Yuma* 39a.

6

Customers and Donors

Conducting new business in accordance with G-d's Will; Keeping a tzedakah pushka for customers

By the Grace of G-d
2nd of Shevat, 5740
Brooklyn, N.Y.

Mrs. Pesha Moskovitz
269 Avocet Court
Foster City, Calif. 94404

Blessing and Greeting:

Your letter of Jan. 14th, with the enclosure, reached me with some delay. In it you write about the forthcoming opening of your new business on the 14th of Shevat. May G-d grant that it should be with Hatzlocho.

Although you do not mention it, I am certain that the business will be conducted in strict observance of Shabbos and Yom Tov. For, if this is a "must" in the conduct of the home, it is no less imperative that the Parnosso should be a Kosher one, in accordance with G-d's Will, which also insures that the income will be spent on good and healthy and happy things, both materially and spiritually...

Receipt is enclosed for your Tzedoko, and may it additionally stand you and yours in good stead, particularly that you and your husband should have true Yiddish Nachas from your children, in good health and ample sustenance.

Hoping to hear good news from you in all above,

With Blessing,

M. Schneerson

P.S. It would be well that you should keep in your business place a Tzedoko Pushka, into which you as well as your customers could

put in a coin, which will further widen the channels to receive G-d's blessings in all needs.

7

Frequency is the Key

Trust and natural channels of healing; frequent Tzedaka contributions is a Segula for successful medical treatment; frequent small sums over lump donations

By the Grace of G-d
13th of Shevat, 5724
Brooklyn, N. Y.

Mrs. . . .

London N.16, England

Blessing and Greeting:

After not having heard from you for a long time, I received your letter of January 19th in which you write about your health. No doubt you are under the care of a specialist. May G-d grant that this should serve as a channel to receive G-d's blessings, as it is written "and G-d will bless you in all that you do."¹⁷ Needless to say, your strong trust in G-d, Who is the Healer of all flesh and works wondrously, will make the recovery speedier and more complete.

As it is explained in our holy sources, it is a good Segula for successful medical treatment, to make frequent contributions to Tzedoko. The important thing here is not so the amount, but rather whatever amount is given to Tzedoko, it should be made into many frequent contributions, rather than in one lump sum.

As requested, I will remember you and your husband and children in prayer, and may you have good news to report.

With blessing

By Nissan Mindel¹⁸

Source: Photocopy of the original.

¹⁷ *Devarim* 15:18

¹⁸ The Rebbe's personal secretary.

P.S. Enclosed is a copy of my message to Chabad women. Although it was written in connection with Chanukah, its message is timely throughout the year. I trust you will find it stimulating.

8

Charity in Your Will

Will should include tzedakah provision as personal mitzvah rather than leaving for heirs; suggestion of one-fifth of net before full estate evaluation.

By the Grace of G-d
6th of Shevat, 5728
Brooklyn, N.Y.

Mrs. Sarah Rifka Rosenbloom¹⁹
501W. 120th St.
New York N.Y. 10027

Blessing and Greeting:

I duly received your letter with the enclosed copy of a proposed Will...

May G-d grant that you should have good news to report in all the above.

With blessing,

M. Schneerson

Source: Photocopy of the original.

¹⁹ Mrs. Sarah Rivkah Rosenbloom (d. 5747) was the wife of Professor Paul (Pesach Betzalel) Rosenbloom. The couple became observant through their connection with Rabbi and Mrs. Feller, the Rebbe's emissaries to Minnesota. Mrs. Rosenbloom later helped found F.R.E.E. (Friends of Refugees of Eastern Europe), an organization assisting Jewish Soviet émigrés. See "The Rebbe's Man in Mathematics: Professor Paul Rosenbloom," *A Chassidisher Derher*, issue 102 (Shevat 5781), [pp. 43-55](#).

P.S. Inasmuch as you invite my suggestions in regard to the Will, a matter which in this country is an accepted practice to make it early in life, and it is a Segula for long life²⁰—I will offer the following suggestions, although I do not, of course, touch upon any of the aspects relating to investments and the commercial handling of the estate, etc.

Firstly, there is in my opinion an omission of an essential point, namely the matter of Tzedoko. To be sure, those who will, after one hundred and twenty years, inherit their share of the estate will, please G-d, make provisions for the distribution of tzedakah of their own good will. Nevertheless it is a personal Mitzvo to provide for Tzedoko rather than to leave it for others to do so, even the closest members of the family. Moreover, the provision for Tzedoko should be one of the first clauses of a Jewish Will.

Needless to say, the amount of Tzedoko provided for in the Will should be according to the generosity of the testator. But if you wish my opinion in this matter, I would suggest that the amount so provided should be חומש (one fifth) of the net estate, with the proviso that the distribution of the Tzedoko should not be delayed until the whole estate is properly and fully evaluated, but that a proportionate amount of any and all distributions under the Will should automatically be deducted for Tzedoko...²¹

²⁰ See also *Igros Kodesh*, Vol. 4, letter 1091 and Vol. 11, letter 3652.

²¹ For the Rebbe's further comments on the will, see the full letter on the Rebbe Responsa app.

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

חברת מנחם מנדל שניאורסון
לתיאוריות

770 ארבעת הפרקים
ברוקלין 13

By the Grace of G-d
6th of Shevat, 5728
Brooklyn, N. Y.

Mrs. Sarah Rifka Rosenbloom
501 W. 120th St.
New York, N. Y. 10027

Blessing and Greeting:

I duly received your letter with the enclosed copy of a proposed Will.

First of all, I wish to refer to the first part of your letter in which you write about the birthdays of yourself, husband and children. I wish each and every one of you Hatlocho materially and spiritually. These generally go hand in hand together, and insofar as a Jew is concerned they not only go together, but with the supremacy of the spiritual over the material. Such supremacy does not mean the negation of the material but, on the contrary, to make the material a vehicle for all things good and holy. I particularly send you my prayerful wishes that you and your husband should bring up your children - with the speedy resolution of the problems which you mention - to a life of Torah, Chupah and Good Deeds, in good health and happiness, with much Hatlocho for your husband in his field, and for you in yours.

The present days, approaching the Yahrzeit of my father-in-law of saintly memory, at whose holy resting place each one and all of you will be remembered, are especially auspicious.

May G-d grant that you should have good news to report in all the above.

With blessing,

m. Schneerson

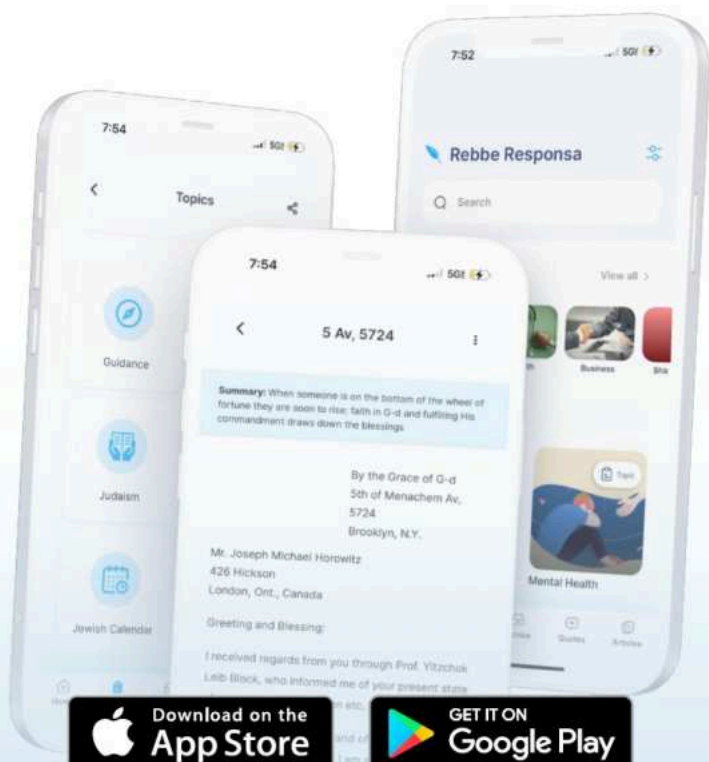
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Rebbe Responsa

The Rebbe's English letters

Timeless guidance on
every topic and issue - at
your fingertips





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