

B”H

Tes Iyar 5763

The Rebbe, MH”M, Answers a Young Girl’s Heartfelt Plea

A young girl in the Chicago Anash community who has been denied continued access to the local Lubavitch Cheder has been under pressure from her parents to consider attending the local Bais Yaacov school. All she really wants is to be allowed to return to the Cheder, to be in a Lubavitch environment, back with her friends.

Frustrated and scared, she decided on her own to write to the Rebbe for advice. An excerpt from her letter is as follows:

"... I would like the Rebbe's advice if I should go to a school I do not want to go to. The school is called Bais Yaakov, and my parents want me to go there, but I am scared that I will not come out being Lubavitch ..."

She selected a volume of the Igros (in English), and inserted her letter. The point of insertion happened to be in the middle of a three-and-a-half page letter to a girl in England, written (as quoted from the Rebbe’s letter) “in the present days between Pesach, the festival of liberation from slavery, and Shavuos, the festival of our receiving the Torah”.

In an amazing display of how the Rebbe continues to actively guide us in a very practical and real way, the page of the Rebbe’s letter facing this young girl’s heartfelt plea is reproduced on the following page. To those who deny the Rebbe’s innocent kinder access to the Rebbe’s schools, please take note of what the Rebbe himself has to say about the situation! To cause pain to the children is terrible, but to cause pain to the Rebbe...? Enough!

You have no doubt heard of my position on such a question, which I have reiterated many times, and is based on the fact that an educational institution, regardless of its character, and regardless of the student's purpose, has a two-fold influence, namely in the area of knowledge "accumulation," as well as in influencing the character, views and beliefs of the students, to the extent of having an impact also on the observance of Mitzvos, etc. Clearly the second aspect of an educational institution is not less important than the first, and perhaps much more important, especially in our day and age where the outside influences are unfortunately negative, while the home influence is no longer as exclusive as it used to be. There is no need to go into the factors which have brought about the present state of affairs, but the facts are there.

In the light of the above, it is my considered opinion that insofar as the continuation of your studies is concerned, even if you remain close to your home under the good influence of your parents and home atmosphere, it is important that you should study in an institution wherein the influence in regard to Torah and Mitzvos is a positive one. According to my knowledge, a good institution on this level in England is the Gateshead Seminary for Girls.

Certainly if you plan to study outside England, I would recommend either the Bais Rivka Seminary near Paris, or the one in Kfar Chabad, or the Bais Yaakov Seminary in Jerusalem or Bnei Brak. The other institutions which you mention are, in my opinion, completely unsuitable for you, especially in the light of the situation as it has developed lately, and where no improvement seems likely in the near future in the natural order of things, but perhaps a deterioration. The subject is too painful to discuss in detail.

I wish to add a further point, which I think is also essential.