

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

מנחם מענדל שניאורסאהן
ליובאוויטש

770 איסטערן פארקווי
ברוקלין, נ. י.

By the Grace of G-d
15th of Cheshvan, 5733
Brooklyn, N. Y.

Greeting and blessing:

This is to acknowledge receipt of your correspondence.

You write that you would love to learn what it means to walk in the presence of G-d, etc. I trust that you know of the so-called Seven Commandments given by G-d to Noah and his children. These are: (1) the establishment of courts of justice; (2) the prohibition of blasphemy; (3) of idolatry; (4) of incest; (5) of bloodshed; (6) of robbery; (7) of eating flesh cut from a living animal. These Seven Commandments which G-d gave to the children of Noah, i.e. to all mankind, are the basic laws, with far-reaching ramifications, which embrace the whole life of the society as well as of the individual, to ensure that the human race will be guided by these Divine laws of morality and ethics, and that the human society will indeed be human, and not a jungle.

To be sure, Jews, the children of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, have later been given many more Divine commandments which obligate them, but not the rest of mankind. However, this in no way diminishes the fact that gentiles can and must attain complete fulfillment through the observance of the above mentioned Seven Commandments of Man, with all their ramifications, for, inasmuch as they are G-d-given, they provide the vehicle whereby to attain communion with G-d, and thus "walk ever in the presence of G-d," as you write in your letter.

I would like to make an additional essential point. If there was a time when some thinkers thought that there was no need to connect the laws of ethics and morality with Divine authority, inasmuch as these are rational principles, the fallacy of this thinking is now abundantly clear. For we have seen, in our own day and age, a whole nation which had boasted of great philosophic advancement and ethical systems sink to the lowest depth of inhuman depravity and unprecedented barbarism. And the reason for this was that they thought that they could establish a morality and ethics based on human reason, not subject to the authority of a Supreme Being, having themselves become a super race, as they thought. There is surely no need to elaborate on the obvious.

SENS JWD

From what has been said above, it is clear that no individual can rest content by his own observance of the Divine Commandments, but it is his responsibility to his friends and neighbors, and society at large, to involve them in the observance of the Divine Commandments in the daily life and conduct.

Wishing you success in your efforts to achieve true fulfillment,

With blessing, *m. Schmeerson*