



לעילוי נשמת
 הבחור היקר והנחמד
 ברוך שניאור זלמן ע"ה
 בן יבלחט"א
 הרה"ת ר' אברהם אליהו שיחי'
 נלב"ע ל' ניסן ה'תשע"ח
 תנ"צ'ב'ה'

נתרם ע"י הוריו
 הרה"ת ר' אברהם אליהו
 וזוגתו מרת אסתר גאלדע
 ומשפחתם שיחי'
 פלאטקין



Lives are at Stake!

Kolel or Hafatza?

In this excerpt from a letter dated 19 Tishrei 5717, the Rebbe encourages yungerleit to involve themselves in saving Yidden from assimilation, and not to selfishly focus on their own continued studies.*



Regarding what you wrote about setting up a *kolel* for *yungerleit* in which they would learn after their wedding, and about the former *minhag* of yeshivos, in which the students would marry at a very advanced age—30 and older.

This *minhag* of delaying weddings in an orphaned generation¹ has already been decried. The Rishonim and Acharonim expound on [the impropriety of doing this]. See also the Alter Rebbe's Hilchos Talmud Torah *perek* 3 page 4, regarding studying Torah specifically in purity.²

Chabad yeshivos were never accustomed to delay marriages to the abovementioned age.

Regarding what you wrote about setting up a *kolel*, the Torah rules that a mitzvah that cannot be done by another person takes precedence over everything else. In recent generations, involvement in the field of *rabbanus* and the field of *chinuch al taharas hakodesh* and the like is a matter of saving and rescuing lives—literally.

To take tens of *yungerleit* who are capable of this [*rabbanus* and *chinuch*] and sit them down to learn Torah while hundreds and thousands cry out for help—albeit a silent, inward call—to be saved from the wicked waters that flow in the streets and, to our distress, have begun to flow into homes—it is very difficult to understand how one would permit this.

While for a talented few, [going to *kolel*] is ideal because for them sitting in *kolel* will enable them to work properly in saving Yidden, for the majority this is not the path.

If only the previous generation had focused more on saving Yidden from assimilation and from distancing themselves from the path of Torah and mitzvos, placing the burden of saving these souls on the shoulders of the yeshiva *bochurim* as soon as they left yeshiva, there would have been tens of thousands more students today in the yeshivos, shuls, and *batei midrash*.

There is no need to expound at length on something so disturbingly painful: There are still some *roshei yeshiva* that

hold of this approach, claiming that, “I have saved my own soul.”

Our *chachamim* have expounded at length about this in many places, including Zohar *chelek alef*, pages 67b and 106b, regarding Noach's behavior while the world was flooded.³ And Noach is different [than people today who would take his approach] because he lived before the Torah— and the mitzvah of *ahavas Yisroel*—was given.

Consider the following: If it were the son of the biggest *rosh yeshiva* or his only daughter who needed to be brought closer to Hashem and His Torah, would [the *rosh yeshiva*] still hide himself in an inner chamber and rely on a miracle [to save his child from assimilation], just so that he is able to learn Torah for a few more hours a day?

Regarding the few talented individuals belonging to the type mentioned above [who would benefit from *kolel*], this custom has existed among *anash* as well, for many years: to learn Torah after marriage, with Torah as one's occupation. However, this should not become the approach for the majority of people, based upon the above-mentioned aim of saving one's own soul...

...May you be blessed to have good news in all of the above and good health for your whole family speedily.

Because of the sanctity of Chol Hamoed, the Rebbe did not sign, and I sign in his name,

The secretary.⁴

1. This seems to refer to the post-Holocaust generation - Editor.
2. Meaning after marriage.
3. Noach was criticized for saving himself without attempting to bring others to the path of righteousness. Similarly, some individuals preferred to save themselves but ignore the Yidden threatened with assimilation.
4. Igros Kodesh vol. 14 pp. 30-31. Printed in part in Likkutei Sichos vol. 11 p. 243, and printed in part in Likkutei Sichos vol. 23 p. 443.