

The RYS Daily 2/14/07 Germany IX

From The Mussar Movement, Volume 1, Part 1, page 254.

Yet even at this stage, he did not sever his connections with Russia, the land of his birth. He maintained his regular correspondence with his disciples of the Nevayzer Bet Midrash in Kovno. Some of his letters to them have survived, constituting a valuable memorial of those days, and only through them do we possess some conception of R. Israel's Musar system.

A large portion of these letters deal with the Elul season and the High Holidays, these solemn times affording him the greater opportunity to stimulate and strengthen the G-d fearing conduct of his disciples. In his letters to the outstanding ones among them he set down detailed instructions how they were to conduct their entire lives. Principally he dwelt on the compelling necessity of studying Musar, of setting aside special periods and a specific Musar House for this purpose, and he enumerated the conditions under which this study was to be conducted and the methods of approach to it. He set down the basic principles of Musar doctrine and delineated the main features of his approach with all the effort and struggle it called forth, taught them about the process of life, and all the deeds he required of them. Furthermore, he offered them guidance in their Talmudic study as well, the obligation to acquire scholarly mastery of the keen Talmudic dialectic, the necessity of clarifying the true halachic conclusions, and to have a broad grasp of all divisions of the Halachic discipline, the need for sustained, repeated reviewing of the material, etc.

Earlier issues of The RYS Daily are at <http://www.stevens.edu/golem/llevine/salanter/>