

May 16, 2001

23 Iyar 5761

Rabbi Dr. Norman Lamm  
President Yeshiva University  
500 W. 185th Street  
New York, NY 10033

Dear Rav Lamm Shlita,

I really do not know where to begin this letter or even how to begin. Should I begin with the days when we were both at Yeshiva, some 48 years ago? You, a young musmach, known as an outstanding, highly respected and admired favorite student of the Rov, Z.T.L. and of Rov Lifschitz, Z.T.L. I recall you walking in the halls near the bais medrash with a gemorah tucked under your arm and us, the younger pre-pre semicha students admiring your achievements and scholarship.

Or should I start when you were kind enough to visit Beth Jacob in 1959 for the first REW lecture series "Bain Kesser L'esser," and you gave an erudite and inspiring lecture on the need for a kosher mechitzah in a shul (at the time, we had only separate seating and were planning to build a new shul), and with our limited budget, in an act of chesed on your part, you accepted our honorarium of fifty dollars plus expenses.

Or should I begin by telling you forthright what a true help and inspiration you have been to me these past 44 years, counseling, advising, listening to my "krechting," venting my frustrations or stam lending me your ear to share a "gut vort," or a moment of nachas and always enjoying your sharp witticisms.

I remember when you first met Jerome Schottenstein A.H. in Herb Schiffs office on N. 4th Street. You were looking for a modest gift for yeshiva.

Therefore, my dear friend, I must tell you the news of your imminent departure as Rosh Yeshiva and President of Yeshiva University, has created for me a terrible sense of loss and consternation. I feel the compass of Torah Umada and Torah Im Derech Eretz Philosophy if not all of American Orthodoxy is like a compass which lost its magnetism, its strong point of direction. You were blessed by Hashem with so many strengths and traits in order to be the true spokesperson and courageous leader for American Orthodoxy in the 20/21st Century and to have the ability to keep the balance for American Orthodoxy with integrity and remain true to torah and halacha at all times. And who will lead now? Who will be the memaleh makom?

And yet I know how deserving you are for the decision you made, obviously for personal reasons. "*Magiah L'cha*" and as we shall call out this shabbos *chazak chazak, v'nischazaik*.

Again, on a very personal note of *hakaras hatov*, thank you for everything, both your written and spoken words of encouragement to myself, your friendship to Ruth and to our children and all the members of our family will be eternally appreciated. Our special regards to your dear *asihes chayil*, Mindy.