

From The Mussar Movement Volume 1, Part 1, pages 256 - 257.

In one of his letters he wrote: "Behold open rebuke that comes from hidden love is good. I have come to rebuke you and to urge you, with all due respect, to strain your efforts to the utmost, each according to his intelligence and his abilities, to reinforce the study of Musar, with all strength and power. What is most important is to incline the hearts of the leaders of the people, upon whom the entire people of Israel wait in expectation, and to whose authority they bow, that they should direct their efforts thereto, in so far as it is in their power. It is a simple matter, if you will but set your hearts to it, to do it intelligently for the sake of the truth, to obtain fit and proper letters from them.

"Let this not be insignificant in your eyes — to bestow merit upon the public, to rouse them to the great struggle, the war against the evil inclination which cannot be prosecuted and sustained without proper Musar study. All Torah study and worship without the fear of G-d is merely a rote performance which can be overturned by the slightest breeze, as the Rabbinic dictum avers: `Anyone whose fear of sin precedes his wisdom, his wisdom shall endure.

"Consequently, who cannot appreciate how very necessary it is to study Musar in these times of ours, when it is difficult to earn a living, and when D-vine service has declined? Who will maintain its lot — who will close up its breaches? — if not the study of Musar which heals (lit. purifies) all maladies of the souls of those who study it with proper depth?

"Happy, then are you, since this mitzvah has been vouchsafed to you. It is a great gift of G-d, may Ht be blessed. Accept it in love and perform it with alacrity and all your might and main. You will receive all reward for all of them in this world and the next."