

Note: The original document, which was written in Yiddish and Hebrew by Ralph's uncle Pinhas (last name may be Chubarova), follows the translation.

Translation of Letter to Ralph Kallin (1)

[A great deal of Hebrew]

Thursday February 1, 1934

To my honored and esteemed nephew Refael may his light shine and to my honored and highly educated niece Hayke

I am informing you that we received your letter of November 28. Since I was not well I was unable to respond. Now that God be blessed has healed me and I have recovered my health I am answering you that I received your letter with great joy since you write that you are all alive and well and making a living, with all the relatives, thank God. So may God be blessed help you that you may all be well as Jacob our father asked God for bread to eat and clothing to wear so we ask you that you will not forget your relatives your uncle Pini and your aunt Brakha you should remember us.

About my life in my old age. I can write you that it is not good. I earn very little. My children are scattered far and wide. My house was burned down over a year ago and my children earn very little and cannot help me. Everything has become more expensive. Thirty rubles for a pud of [?] There is a saying. "When an ox costs only a groshn [penny] if you do not have a groshn, you cannot buy an ox."

We ask you, our relatives, to help us as much as you can. If I God forbid, do not deserve to be helped, we ask that you help us by means of others. As we have learned: "The work of the righteous is done by others and for this God be blessed will pay double the amount in the future." I also ask my friend Henikh may his light shine, Mr. Melmahn if it is possible to take part in the good deed, to help me, and as reward God be blessed will send you much success in all your endeavors, Amen. Since Passover will soon be here ____ the good deed which cannot be measured.

[Last section mostly in Hebrew with quotes from Talmud with which I am not familiar. There are also words in Russian]

Refael! You want to know how my family is getting along. Beni, my oldest son is now in Kiev with semistvey[?] wife and two children. He cannot help me. Reyzi, my second daughter now lives in Ekaterinoslav with her husband and two children. They also cannot help me. Sarah was recently married to Leybl Ferdman in Ekaterinoslav. David the carpenter also moved there with his whole semostvey. There his daughter Rahel became ill, alas, and died. So Leybl, his son-in-law, married my daughter. They want me to contribute to their household and they cannot help me.

I have a daughter Zisel and a son Moshe who are not married. They are now in Ekaterinoslav and work at menial jobs. They barely make ends meet. They would like me, as old as I am, to help them out. This is the story of my children.

Now I shall write you about how religious matters are in our town. We have no shokhet (ritual slaughterer), no rabbi, no Beth Midrash, no bath house. We have around 50 semistveym [households?]. Ten of these 50 are supposedly Jewish. If you do not understand what this means, ask your father-in-law Tsevi and he will tell you. So we rented a house where we pray every Shabbat and when someone has a yortsayt we make a minyan. A lot of Jews raise pigs, and many do not know when it is Shabbat. The town has become coarse and ignorant. The molodetz [young folk] enjoy such a bolazsheni [?]. On Shabbat he goes with the gypsies [?]. He is not afraid of anyone. On Shabbat he rides where he wants to, lives freely, as Solomon said, “[I do not recognize the quote but it deals with Shabbat]” We already have three uncircumcised boys. We, and the other towns, do not have religious weddings but are inscribed in zaks [?] that is by the government appointed rabbi and they go home. In komnite[?] at the selianur [?] Not long ago they went to the priests to register although the gentiles were razshestvaya [?] on the tokh [?] and celebrated a holiday. Nobody interfered. The younger generation cannot pray, even a word. We have a new generation of gentiles who have no idea what it means. If they see a Jew praying they ask, “What is this?” We hear from the four corners of the world the wars of Amalek (traditional foe of Israel) and the end of days. The world has another roof [?] Although in this world there is another spirit, another roof[?]. We hope that with time the Jewish spirit will also change, the Jews will reconsider and repent, both the first, and the latter, and they will return to blessed God.

Today is Tuesday, parashat Yitro [first week of February] 1934

Rashi asks, what news did one hear? Rashi answers, the war of Amalek and the parting of the Red Sea.

Refael, you want to know how many Jews are in Pyataho, so I shall write you.

1. Prastermahn or Frastermahn
2. Yudel the shtulmakh [Chairmaker?]
3. Rivka, Nehama's or Nehemya's daughter
4. Sarah Leah Malksandravke
5. Moshe Kagan
6. Shmilik Yosef Yehiel
7. Mahhsashke Apremde_
8. Shlomo Froman's sister
9. Vigder Ferdmahn

10. Menahem Zaslavsky
11. Dov Bander
12. Leyb
13. Avraham Monis
14. A son of Zalin Leyb
15. Shlomo Holtman
16. Avraham Zsherkvske
17. Eli Bazivsk
18. Tsiril Klash_mahn
19. Ya'akov the tailor
20. Yosef Kramer
21. Pinhas Tshabariv
22. Moshe Simha
23. Yehoshua Notis
24. Nahum Fanerbinsk
25. Avraham Bazavske
26. Bela Notis son [Note: Notis may be a surname or name of father, i.e., son of Note]
27. Yosef Shayes
28. Yosef _alanske
29. Azriel Borshteyn
30. Hayyim the son-in-law of Nahum Hayat
31. Yehiel Gribelyak
32. Moshe Krentsil
33. Taba [or Shaba] Ferdman
34. Yehoshua Ferdman
35. Yeshayahu Ferdman
36. Yosef Zakatinske
37. Avraham a tailor
38. Hershel the baker

39. Helke Kagan

40. Hasi Alekter

Kalman died young of hunger. Also by us died of hunger Ya'akov Kemelmahn's wife

Also the old [lady] Lipern died of hunger. The bride Sarah ___[?]and there began the year and its curses[?] With this I end my letter and once again since it will soon be Passover God willing do not forget your uncle and aunt.

I and Aunt Brakha greet you dear nephew Refael may your light shine and also dear niece Hayke and esteemed in-law Tsevi and his wife Seme, also Tsiril and family [refers to Ralph and Ida Kallin, Ida's parents Harry and Sema Kallin, and Ida's sister, Celia Cinis -- all lived in Springfield, MA].

[note: Greetings have many abbreviations in Hebrew denoting honored, esteemed, may s[he] live long, etc.]

We also send greetings ot our esteemed friend Henikh and family. We greet Rosa and husband and children. Write us how are Roza, Betshike the ____ (?) and child [refers to Rose Fox and her son Benjamin, who lived in Hartford, CT; Rose was Ralph Kallin's sister].

Original Document

The pages that follow were found in this envelope.



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והנה יהיה לך וסמכותי אלה ודע כי כל מה
הוא ויפצח (ויפצח) מן הטובים, שם מלאך רעף על
לוייתו, והוא ויפצח מן הטובים והוא על קוין למה
לש קוין רב, על קוין בחרו, על קוין אחר, והוא
הוא ויפצח למדן מן הטובים, והוא מן הטובים
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Handwritten text in a cursive script, likely Hebrew, on aged paper. The text is arranged in three lines. The first line contains approximately 10 characters, the second line contains approximately 12 characters, and the third line contains approximately 10 characters. The paper shows signs of age, including discoloration and some wear at the edges.

קודם כל אנו רוצים לומר
 שהתורה היא פתח חיים
 לכל אדם וכל עם.
 וכל מי שרוצה לחיות
 בדרך ה' עליו ללמוד
 ולשמר את מצוותיו.
 כי היא תביאנו אל
 ארץ זבת חלב וסוכה.
 ואלה המצוות אשר
 צוה ה' את ישראל
 לעשותם.

אנו רוצים לומר
 כי התורה היא
 אור הנפש והחיים.
 וכל מי שרוצה
 לחיות בדרך ה'
 עליו ללמוד ולשמר
 את מצוותיו.

אנו רוצים לומר
 כי התורה היא
 אור הנפש והחיים.
 וכל מי שרוצה
 לחיות בדרך ה'
 עליו ללמוד ולשמר
 את מצוותיו.

- 1) ואלה המצוות אשר צוה ה' את ישראל לעשותם.
- 2) כי היא תביאנו אל ארץ זבת חלב וסוכה.
- 3) ואלה המצוות אשר צוה ה' את ישראל לעשותם.
- 4) כי היא תביאנו אל ארץ זבת חלב וסוכה.
- 5) ואלה המצוות אשר צוה ה' את ישראל לעשותם.
- 6) כי היא תביאנו אל ארץ זבת חלב וסוכה.
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- 11) ואלה המצוות אשר צוה ה' את ישראל לעשותם.
- 12) כי היא תביאנו אל ארץ זבת חלב וסוכה.
- 13) ואלה המצוות אשר צוה ה' את ישראל לעשותם.
- 14) כי היא תביאנו אל ארץ זבת חלב וסוכה.
- 15) ואלה המצוות אשר צוה ה' את ישראל לעשותם.
- 16) כי היא תביאנו אל ארץ זבת חלב וסוכה.

(17) זלתי בוועלעך
 (18) לעבן קאווענע
 (19) וועך צו זענען
 (20) זאלן קוועט
 (21) פארן גלויבונג
 (22) זעה ליבה
 (23) זאלן זען
 (24) זאלן פווערדיג
 (25) זענען בוועלעך
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