BS”D

June 6, 1947

Dear Menashe,

Yesterday we received from you (formal) a letter. Such a warm and brotherly letter you have never written before. Michael had tears in his/her eyes. I was also very happy, it is really nice that you yourself touch upon the questions which I have thought a lot about. Menashe, you say that a lot of people are afraid to go to a new country and to be with strangers. Yes, that is true. You say I should come to you and (but) I don’t know what kind of person you are. Yes, that is true. But I would like to say to you: Since I am only 25 years old (July 1st is my birthday), and it’s only been 2 years since we got married (July 10th is our 2nd anniversary), I have already been through a hard path in life. Yes, for these 2 years, we have changed jobs twice and 9 places of residence. We have already lived with Uzbeks, Russians, Poles and Jews and now with Germans (Note: Perhaps written from a DP camp). We have lived with good people and bad people. We have lived with our own people and with strangers. And the conclusion is that nowhere was good.

As you see, we have always lived with “them” and not only with them, only “by” them (Note: in their place as strangers), meaning that they have always been our landlords/bosses. As you can understand, it wasn’t so easy. I remember how we left from Shteinbach’s house from Landsberg, where we lived over a month, and we traveled away to Frankfurt to the Rebinskis. And we knew that in that room we would be living with the cousin and in the kitchen I would be at a German woman’s place, and I had a thought – sometimes “with” those people and sometimes “by” other people. And now, in truth, as we dream about America, and we hope about everyone, a little part of me is ripped inside – there, too, we won’t live in our own place again.

I really apologize if I shouldn’t have written this at all. In fact, I wouldn’t have wanted to say anything, but you yourself touched upon the questions. You understand and believe that you are doing the best thing. But, dear Menashe, life has already shown many times that good HOLGEN (?? Results??) don’t always come out of good wishes. One can try to do one’s best, and it can result in the exact opposite, since people are quite different and what seems good to one person, looks bad to another.

I don’t want to say that in our case, it will not be good. No, the opposite. As far as I know you (from the letter, from what Michael said), it will be successful for us at best. I would like to add something to this.

Menashe, exactly as what we have been through with residences, that’s exactly how we were both POTSUSN (??) from the materialistic point of view. There was a time when we didn’t even have a shirt, a decent pair of shoes, no money, no perspectives (NOTE: no hope). We have been through all of this. . And due to this I have reached a conclusion: That I can live with Michael and earn well, and also in poor (conditions). We are no longer afraid of difficulties. I am prepared in advance for everything, and in every earning (job?) I will get organized (NOTE: manage/adjust) in the most comfortable way possible. Neither I nor Michael are materialistic. Money is not a G-d for us (NOTE: not the most important thing). Of course, you should not think that we will XX (tend?) to spend as much as possible. No. We want to live, not harvest (??) money, like many other people do. We work in order to live; we do not live for work. And in addition I say (?), we are prepared for any kind of job, whatever it may be. We just dream and dream of this. With G-d’s help, we will come to America, Michael always says that Menashe and Esther and their child will absolutely meet us at the ship. And of course, Menashe will make due with (?) a car. And there will be many from the family (actually who he doesn’t really know) and then we will go home to Menashe’s place. Michael takes my hand says “Here you have your home to live with your wife with happiness and good fortune.” Oh, this is our dream. And after that, I want you to arrange a job for Michael. If necessary, I am prepared to also go to work. I believe that with a little practice, I wouldn’t be a half-bad specialist.

These are our dreams about America. And after that, may everything be good, may G-d give health. I would like the time to come when we can thank you for all you are doing for us.

When will we come to America? That’s still a question. I just want to tell you not to be worried. Michael and we have already gotten accustomed to the idea that we will stay here this winter. Menashe, you XXX. (You shouldn’t be worried about us?). We have a nice and comfortable little house “by” the Germans, a shared kitchen, very comfortably organized. I have everything a housewife needs in her home. We have also very nicely gotten used to living with the Germans. We live easily. Michael is not working. He only studies English. We go to the movies and the theater often; we read books. I believe that Michael’s stomach problems will be over (be resolved). A big part of our lives is taken up by the mail (NOTE: The mail is very important to us). And therefore we run straight to the post/post office. It’s very different when we receive a letter from you our my sisters.

Yes, a little now about my sisters. In a previous letter, Michael already wrote a little; I will add to that. First there’s Dora, who is living in Kyiv now, younger than me by two years. I went through the most difficult and hungriest years of the war with her. A little later, the elder sister was liberated from the Leningrad Blockade and came to us in Tashkent. During the war, I was sick with malaria for three whole years. It was the two sisters who shared with me the latest little piece of bread and didn’t let me leave the Institute (NOTE: my studies) and go to work. XX when they were only girlfriends, I should never forget. The first 9 days was when I received the first letter from them. You can understand how important that was for me. And furthermore don’t take this badly if I ask you to (forward?) many times the mail for them (from them)? The mail goes better to America. Because she has surely written more to me than to America. And I’ve only received one card in 9 months.

It pleases me that you want to answer them yourself. I thank you very much for that. But be aware of the Russian censor and don’t write everything you’re thinking. I am sending you their address so you can send me their postcard. (Note: this is not clear to me.)

It seems that’s all (Note: for now). There will come a time and we will also be in America. On the other hand, it seems (?) that it will go slowly but surely. This means that 99 times it can be successful and one time not. We were afraid of the one time. Therefore we have (registered under?) the Polish quota.

Be well. Regards to Esther and the little one(s). Regards from Michael,

Lyena (Lena)

We took the photo on May 21st on the 3rd anniversary of our acquaintance (NOTE: of meeting you).

(IN DIFFERENT HANDWRITING): Menashe, Put in the second letter a few marks in Sarneh’s name XXX. When you put it in, send it under his name and XXXX not under my name (?). Under my private address, it takes no more than 5-6 days. Write me how long a letter takes to get to you. Menashe, I remind you once again, when you send a package, put inside the dry sausage/wurst which you sent once at the beginning.