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מנחם מענדל שניאורסאהן
ליובאוויטש

770 איסטערן פארקווי
ברוקלין, נ.י.

FREE RENDITION

By the Grace of G-d
7th of Teveth, 5717
Brooklyn, N.Y.

To All Participants in the
Annual Dinner Celebration of the
United Lubavitcher Yeshivoh
Tomche Tmimim in America,
G-d bless you all

Greeting and Blessing:

I send my greetings and blessing to all participants in the annual Torah-celebration of the United Lubavitcher Yeshivoh in America this coming Sunday.

Recalling the well-known dictum of Rabbi Schneur Zalman, the author of the Tanya and Shulchan-Aruch and the founder of Chabad Chassidism, to the effect that "a Jew should live with the times," i.e. according to the time and spirit of the weekly Sidrah of the Torah, I wish to dwell briefly on the first portion of the Sidrah Shemoth (in the book of Exodus), which is the "Torah-time" when the celebration is taking place.

We are told in this first portion of the book of Exodus how a handful of Jews - seventy souls - managed to survive on the foreign soil of Egypt, in the midst of an overwhelmingly powerful and hostile people. They survived not by imitating their non-Jewish neighbors and trying to hide their identity, but, on the contrary, by realizing that they were different and by guarding, most zealously and uncompromisingly, their identity and spiritual independence. Our Sages pointed out this secret of survival in their commentary on the first verse of the Sidrah, And these are the names of the children of Israel who came to Egypt: "Because they did not change their names and their customs, they were redeemed from Egypt." Moreover, not only did they manage to survive in such adverse circumstances, but they multiplied in number and grew strong in spirit, until they received the Torah at Sinai, bringing light to the entire world and accomplishing the purpose of Creation.

This portion of the Torah, giving us the story of the first Jews in the first Goluth (exile), contains the secret of Jewish survival in all dispersions and in all generations. The lesson should, especially, be remembered in our own day, when the Goluth has become so tragically devastating both physically and spiritually. Jews dispersed throughout the world are everywhere surrounded by a demoralized and hostile world, a world in which basic principles of humanity and justice are trampled upon, a world so confused that darkness is mistaken for light, and light for darkness, a world living in fear of atomic self-destruction, G-d forbid.

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In this dark Goluth, we Jews must realize more than ever before, the teaching of our Torah, Torath-Chayim (the Law of Life), that only through the preservation of our identity and spiritual independence, based on the solid foundations of our Torah and Mitzvoth and nurtured through an uncompromising Torah-true education of our children, can we ensure the survival of our people, spiritually and physically, and, moreover, grow and prosper.

In the light of the above, it is clear why the existence and continued growth of the Lubavitcher Yeshivoh is of vital importance to every Jew, and to our people as a whole. For in these institutions, permeated as they are with the spirit of their founder, my father-in-law of saintly memory, the spirit of non-compromise in Torah education, the spirit of self-sacrifice, of love and loyalty to our people, our Torah and our G-d - in these institutions and in this spirit thousands of students (may their number grow) are brought up and educated. Here is the home of Tmimim - whole Jews, Jews with a feeling of responsibility for fellow-Jew and for the community in which they live.

Everyone must therefore consider it his personal duty, to himself as well as to his family and to his people, to support the Yeshivoh Tomche Tmimim with the utmost generosity, and to further its continued growth.

In the merit of this, everyone individually and our people as a whole, will earn the fulfilment of G-d's blessing kein yirbeh v'chein yifrotz, the blessing of growth and prosperity despite adverse circumstances, and we shall merit the true and complete Redemption through our Righteous Messiah, speedily in our time.

With esteem and blessing,

/Signature/

Rabbi Menachem M. Schneerson