

RABBI MENACHEM M. SCHNEERSON

Lubavitch
770 Eastern Parkway
Brooklyn 13, N. Y.

HYacinth 3-9250

מנחם מענדל שניאורסאהן
ליובאוויטש

770 איסטערן פארקוויי
ברוקלין, נ. י.

FREE RENDITION

By the Grace of G-d
Erev Rosh-Hashanah
5719, Brooklyn, N.Y.

X To the N'shei uBnois Chabad Branches
Everywhere -

G-d bless you all

Blessing and Greeting:

On the threshold of the new year, may it bring blessings to us and all our people, I wish you all collectively, and each one of you individually, a good and sweet year.

This includes, of course, the blessing of success in the work of each Branch, both as regards the growth of membership as of the quality of the work.

And - need it be said - in matters of the Torah and Mitzvoh, of goodness and holiness, there is always room for continuous improvement, no matter how good the present is.

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X Since the basis of your work is Ahavas Yisroel - love of Jews - as explained at great length in the teachings of Chassidus and, especially, in the saintly talks of our Rabbis the leaders of Chabad,

X I bring you here an excerpt of a talk by my saintly father-in-law - a story once related by the saintly Tzemach Tzedek, whose birthday it is today, Erev Rosh Hashanah; may his Zechus protect us and all our people.

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The story related by the Tzemach Tzedek is one that he had heard from his grandfather, the Old Rebbe, who in turn had heard it in Meseritch. It is about the Baal-Shem-Tov:

It was the custom of the Baal-Shem-Tov before he revealed himself (as the leader of the new movement), and also in the early years after his revelation, to travel and visit small rural Jewish communities. There, in the market place, he would gather around him the plain Jewish folk, men, women, and children, and relate to them stories. Mostly these were stories from the Aggadoth (Midrashim) of

Chassidus

our Sages. He would explain the story to them at length, or he would use the subject matter as the basis of a story of his own, so that the moral of it would be firmly impressed on their minds.

During one such occasion the Baal-Shem-Tov spoke on the subject of Ahavas Yisroel. He emphasized how great this love should be in view of the great love which G-d has for every Jew, giving the following illustration:

There lived a Jew in that town, called R. Yaakov, who knew the Talmud, Gemoro, Rashi and Tosefos by heart, and used to learn it from memory. (This was not unusual in Jewish townlets in those days).

Learning from memory requires, of course, greater concentration than learning from a book. One day as he was learning from memory, concentrating on a difficult Tosefos, his little son came up to him and said something clever to him. R. Yaakov marveled at the child's cleverness, interrupting his learning. Such is the far-reaching effect of a child.

Similarly - continued the Baal-Shem-Tov - G-d, ~~too, is, as it were,~~ engaged engaged in, and attached to holy matters (as our Rabbis state). Yet when a Jew turns to G-d with a prayer and request, He interrupts His preoccupation and attends to the prayers and requests of His children.

When G-d said to His angels that He wanted to create Man, the angels asked what kind of a creature that would be. Hearing the answer, they said, "What is man that You should be mindful of him?" What good will such a creature do?

But when the Jew rises early in the morning, runs to Shul to pray, then becomes immersed in business worry all day, yet tears himself away from all his affairs to run to Shul for Minchah, and between Minchah and Maariv he stays to learn Ein-Yaakov, davvens Maariv, then carries with him the lesson of Ein Yaakov into his home and repeats it to his family -

Then G-d summons the angels and tells them of His pride in Man that He had created, saying to them:

"You angels are not weighed down by such burdens and obligations as having to support a wife and children; you do not know anxiety is and have no taxes. But Man has all these burdens which I placed

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on him, requiring him[↑] to support his wife and children (in accordance with the laws of the Torah), and he is weighed down by obligations and taxes, and the yoke of the Golus. Yet - see how wonderful is his daily conduct!"

Reflecting on this, and calling forth in one's mind the image of G-d's pride in every good deed of the Jew - will bring far-reaching results in one's personal conduct.

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As has been frequently pointed out, the talks and stories related by the Neslim (the Heads of Chabad) are intended as guidance and instruction for every one who hears them. At the same time they bring added strength, stimulation and blessing, to help ~~them~~ one materialize them into personal experience. It remains only up to the listener to fulfil this in accordance with the intention.

May G-d help every one to act accordingly and to be blessed with success in all respects.

With the blessing of Kesivo Vachasimo
 Toivo to each one of you and the members
 of your household -

/Signed/ Menachem Schneerson