

RABBI MENACHEM M. SCHNEERSON

Lubavitch
770 Eastern Parkway
Brooklyn 13, N. Y.

HYacinth 3-9250

מנחם מענדל שניאורסאהן

ליובאוויטש

FREE RENDITION

770 איסטערן פארקוויי

ברוקלין, נ. י.

By the Grace of G-d
25th of Elul, 5719
Brooklyn, N.Y.

To my Brethren
Sons and Daughters of our People
Wherever you are -
G-d be gracious unto you -

Sincere Greetings and Blessing:

These days at the end of the outgoing year, and on the eve of the new year, may it bring blessings to us all, call for self-evaluation in respect of the year about to end, and - in the light of this self-appraisal - for making the necessary resolutions for the coming year.

Such a "balance sheet" can be valid only if the evaluation of the full extent of one's powers and opportunities was a correct one. Only then can one truly regret, in a commensurable degree, the missed opportunities, and resolve to utilize one's capacities to the fullest extent from now on.

The period of time before and during Rosh Hashanah is not only the occasion which demands spiritual stock-taking in general, but it also begs for a profound inner appreciation of the tremendous capacities which one possesses, as a man - the crown of Creation, and as a Jew whom the Creator has given His Divine Law of Life (Toras Chayyim). For Rosh Hashanah is the day when Man was created.

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When Adam was created, the Creator immediately apprized him of his powers and told him what his purpose in life would be:

"Replenish the earth, and conquer it; and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth." (Gen. 1:28).

Man was given the power to conquer the whole world and to rule over it, on land, sea and in the air, and he was enjoined so to do; this was his task.

How was this "world conquest" to be attained, and what is the purpose and true meaning of it? This is what our Sages tell us and teach us in this regard:

When G-d created Adam, his soul - his Divine image - permeated and irradiated his whole being, by virtue of which he became the ruler over the entire Creation. All the creatures gathered to serve him and to crown him as their creator. But Adam, pointing out their error, said to them: "Let us all come and worship G-d, our Maker!"

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The "world conquest" which was given to man as his task and mission in life, is to elevate the whole of Nature, including the beasts and animals, to the service of true humanity, humanity permeated and illuminated by the Divine image, by the soul which is veritably a part of G-d above, so that the whole of Creation will realize that G-d is our Maker.

Needless to say, before a man sets out to conquer the world, he must first conquer himself, through the subjugation of the "earthly" and "beastly" in his own nature. This is attained through actions which strictly accord with the directives of the Torah, the Law of Life - the practical guide in every-day living, so that the material becomes permeated and illuminated with the light of the One G-d, our G-d.

G-d created one man and on this single person on earth He imposed the said duty and task. Herein lies the profound, yet clear, directive, namely, that one man - each and every man - is potentially capable of "conquering the world."

If a person does not fulfil his task, and does not utilize his inestimable divine powers - it is not merely a personal loss and failure, but something that affects the destiny of the whole world.

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In these days of introspection, we are duty-bound to reflect that each and every one of us - through carrying out the instructions of the Creator of the World which are contained in His Torah - has the capacity of conquering worlds. Everyone must therefore ask himself, How much has he accomplished in this direction, and to what extent has he failed, so that he can make the proper resolutions for the coming year.

G-d, Who looks into the heart, on seeing the determination behind these good resolutions, will send His blessing for their realization in the fullest measure - in joy and gladness of heart and affluence, materially and spiritually.

With the blessing of Kesivo Vachasimo Toivo for a happy and sweet year,

/Signed/ Mendel Schneerson
/Lubavitcher Rabbi/