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By the Grace of G-d
17th of Teveth, 5722
Brooklyn 13, N.Y.

To the Participants in the Annual Celebration of
the Lubavitcher Yeshiva "Achei Tmimim,"
Roxbury, Mass.

Greeting and Blessing:

On the occasion of the forthcoming Annual Banquet of the Yeshiva, I hope and pray that this important event will fulfill, and even exceed, all expectations, financially and spiritually.

It is customary to connect the events of the week with the weekly Torah portion. It will, therefore, profit us to reflect on the initial verse of the Sidra Bo, corresponding to the date of the Annual Celebration:

And G-d said unto Moshe: Go in unto Pharaoh; for I have hardened his heart...that I might show these My signs to him. And that you may tell in the ears of your son, and of your son's son, what things I have wrought in Egypt...that you may know that I am G-d.

What is the connection between warning Pharaoh and his "hardening of the heart?" And why is this so important that we are commanded to impress it on our children and children's children? The following explanation will bring out, in some measure at least, the timely message of this passage of the Torah.

The physical world, in which man's life has its setting, runs along well ordered lines, the so-called laws of Nature, whereby the Creator constantly guides the universe to its minutest detail. But the very orderliness of the universe effectively obscures the guiding hand of Divine Providence, providing a basis for the "hardening of the heart" by those who deny G-d. And since none is as blind as he who will not see the truth, the hardening of the heart may persist even in the face of signs and wonders which loudly proclaim G-d's Providence.

The lesson in Divine Providence contained in the events which brought about the liberation and Exodus of our people from Egypt, was intended, of course, not only for the world at large, but also, and specifically, for the Jewish people, for all times, and in all places. That is why we are commanded to tell it to our children and children's children, even while we are still under the pressure and persecution of a Pharaoh.

But the problem of the "hardening of the heart" is even more likely to arise under "normal" and pleasant conditions, than under persecution. The blessings of democracy and freedom in a country such as these United States are all too readily taken for granted. One often hears that this is "the land of opportunity," but how often do we remember that opportunity comes from G-d? It is against such hardening of the heart that the Torah warns us:

And you say in your heart, "My power and the might of my hand has gotten me all this wealth." But you shall remember G-d, your G-d, for it is He that gives you power to get wealth, etc. (Deut. 8:17-18).

Our elementary duty to our children goes beyond the obligation to provide them with the opportunity to acquire a certain amount of knowledge of the Torah. The children must be given the opportunity to be brought up and trained to use this knowledge in the actual daily life; to experience and live the Jewish way of life, in complete harmony with the true Jewish outlook. This is the primary function of the present-day Yeshiva, a function that lies mainly in the realm of the practical rather than

the purely academic. This is the guiding principle of all Lubavitcher Yeshivoth, including your Yeshiva "Achei Tmimim."

It is not too much to expect of every right-thinking Jew in your community to be a partner in this vital endeavor and to support the Yeshiva, on the occasion of the Annual Banquet as well as at all times, and in a steadily growing measure. All the more since such participation is prudent investment not only in the future of our children and of the community at large but also in terms of G-d's blessings for themselves and their families, materially and spiritually.

With blessing,

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