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770 איסטערן פארקוויי
ברוקלין, נ. י.

By the Grace of G-d
8th of Elul, 5723
Brooklyn, N.Y.

To the Participants in the Ground Breaking
for the New Main Building in Camp Gan Israel
and the Administration and Campers, in particular

G-d Bless You All

Sholom uBrocho:

It is with inner pleasure that I associate myself with you in the Ground Breaking celebration, taking place this coming Sunday, the 12th of Elul. The scheduled time is auspicious for more than one reason, especially as it occurs within the week of the 18th of Elul. For, Chai Elul is the birthday of the two great luminaries, Rabbi Israel Baal Shem Tov, whose name Camp Gan Israel bears, and Rabbi Schneur Zalman, the "Old Rebbe" and founder of Chabad, whose spirit is the guiding light of the Camp.

I hope and pray that this auspicious occasion will stimulate the steady expansion of the Camp, with a view to increasing its absorptive capacity. In this day and age, and in this country in particular, the educational benefits and lasting inspiration which Camp Gan Israel has to offer, should be made available to the maximum number of children.

In view of the fact that the Ground Breaking ceremony is expressly related to the occasion of this year's 150th Yahrzeit Anniversary of the Old Rebbe, I will quote one of his teachings, expressed in a very few words but containing a most profound and comprehensive doctrine:

Commenting on the teaching of our Sages, "He who saves one Jewish soul is deemed as if he had saved a whole world," the Old Rebbe stated: "One must see a Jew in the state in which he appears in his root of roots On High, where every soul stands with all the generations of its descendants, down to the Coming of Moshiach, the True Redeemer. Hence, when one renders a service to a Jew, the benefit is one that extends to all those souls, to the end of all generations" (Hayom Yom, 16th of Elul).

This brief but profound teaching inspires a desire to act kindly towards every Jew; it should certainly inspire a desire to help Camp Gan Israel, which is itself conducted in the spirit of this teaching. The help given to Camp Gan Israel is an everlasting benefit to every one of its campers, in body as well as in soul. Such benefit, moreover, given as it is to children at an early age, is eventually multiplied manifold, as is readily understandable from the well-known analogy of a seed or sapling, in which a little extra timely care is incomparably rewarded when the seed or sapling becomes a fully grown fruit-bearing tree. It is a benefit which, in the words of the Old Rebbe, is "extended to all those souls, to the end of all generations."

I send my prayerful wishes for the success of this occasion, and may it soon be possible to celebrate the completion of the new building. May G-d also grant that the good efforts of all participants be for them a channel through which to receive G-d's blessings, everyone according to his or her needs, materially and spiritually.

With the traditional blessing of

Kesivo vachasimo toivo,

M. S. Shapir