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מנהל מערך שניאורסאהן
ליובאוויטש

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ברוקלין, נ. י.

By the Grace of G-d
In the Days of Sefirah, 5733
Brooklyn, N.Y.

To the Chairmen and Participants in the
Second Annual Chassidic Song Festival
Toronto, Ont.

Greeting and Blessing:

I was pleased to be informed of the forthcoming get together for an evening of Chassidic atmosphere and inspirational Chassidic melodies.

There is a well-known saying by the Alter Rebbe, author of the Tanya and Shulchan Aruch and founder of Chabad: "The tongue is the quill of the heart; the song is the quill of the soul."

This thought is particularly fitting in the present days of Sefirah, in preparation for the Festival of Shovuos, when we celebrate our receiving the Torah at Sinai. For the Mitzvah of Counting the Omer has its origin in the heartfelt and soulful longing of our ancestors towards the great day of Mattan Torah, which even the wonderful experience of the Liberation from abject slavery could not dim. On the contrary, they realized that their physical liberation from bondage would be meaningless without the true spiritual liberation which awaited them upon receiving the greatest Divine gift -- the Torah and Mitzvot.

However, as in every aspect of Yiddishkeit, the essential thing is the deed. Inspiration and spiritual uplift, to be truly meaningful and fruitful, must be translated into actual deeds.

It is therefore gratifying to know that this is also the essential purpose of your forthcoming Chassidic Song Festival, namely, to provide tangible support for the institutions and activities engaged in securing the existence of our people and the dissemination of the Torah and Mitzvot, which go hand-in-hand together. Moreover, the present situation demands more than merely keeping these activities on a high level; they must be further expanded and continually increased to meet the challenges of our day.

May this endeavor, as all your endeavors in this direction, be with unqualified Hatzlocho, and be carried out in an ever growing measure with joy and gladness of heart.

With blessing

M. Schneerson