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FREE RENDITION

מנחם מענדל שניאורסאהן
ליובאוויטש

770 איסטערן פארקוויי
ברוקלין, נ. י.

By the Grace of G-d
Rosh Chodesh Nissan
5735, Brooklyn, N. Y.

To the Sons and Daughters of
Our People Israel, Everywhere
G-d bless you

Greeting and Blessing:

The highlight¹ of the month of Nissan - the Month of Geulo² (Redemption) - is the festival Pesach, which is denoted in our sacred liturgy as Zman cheiruseinu, "Festival of Our Liberation."

In the plain sense, cheiruseinu means "our liberation," i.e. the collective liberation of all the individuals belonging to our people.

However, as we can see from a similar text, Zman simchoseinu - "Festival of Our Rejoicing" - the Alter Rebbe interprets³ the plural form (also) in a dual sense: the rejoicing of the Jews and the rejoicing of G-d.

Accordingly, the term "our liberation" may also be understood in a dual sense: the liberation of the Jews from Egyptian bondage as well as the liberation, as it were, of the Shechinah (Divine Presence), as this is indicated in the Hoshana prayer:⁴ "as You saved the people and G-d....," and in the words v'hotzeisi⁵ es'chem ("I will liberate you") which, according to Tradition, may be read also v'hutzeisi it'chem ("I will be liberated with you").

This means that Jewish liberation, individually and collectively, is two-fold: the Jew's liberation and the liberation, as it were, of the Shechinah⁶, of the G-dliness that is in every Jew - the Divine soul, which is a spark of G-dliness itself.⁷

The said liberation is reflected in, indeed achieved through,⁸ the Jew's daily conduct in a manner of true freedom and expansiveness (true - because it is rooted in Toras Emes, the Law of Truth), in both aspects of his life.

To use an expression⁹ that relates to human life in general: - "Good to Heaven and good to the creatures."¹⁰

In other words, freedom and expansiveness in the area of "Good to

Heaven" (man's duties to G-d), as well as in the area of "Good to the creatures" (man's duties to man).

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To elucidate the above:

The events and concepts of Yetzias Mitzraim and Zman cheiruseinu present many didactic aspects of moral instruction for the Jewish people as a whole and for every Jew individually, at all times and in all places, as in the case of all matters of Torah, the source of eternal values and instructions.¹¹

The moral lesson of Yetzias Mitzraim, which we are commanded to remember every day,¹² is that every Jew must constantly strive¹³ to free himself from Mitzraim (bondage), from all restraints¹⁴ and inhibitions that limit the fullest Jewish expression and development, for he could be better and finer were it not for various impediments.

Obviously, the first thing is to free oneself from the evil practices of Mitzraim, in the area of "turn away from evil" (the don't-Mitzvos) and from hindrances in the area of "do good" (the do-Mitzvos) in the actual conduct of the every-day life.

At the same time, there is in every do-Mitzva which one fulfills, and in every don't-Mitzva which one heeds, the al-pi-din (complying only to the limit of the law) and lifnim mishuras ha-din (going beyond the limit of the law), which is also an imperative¹⁶ of our eternal Torah. And since all matters of Torah and Mitzvos, goodness and holiness, derive from, and were commanded by, G-d, the Infinite, they are also infinite. Hence, however satisfactory one's level of Yiddishkeit, Torah and Mitzvos, it could be - and therefore must be - better and higher, in accordance with the principle that "all things of holiness should be on the ascendancy"¹⁷ (maalin b'kodesh). If one makes no effort, and does not strive hard, to advance to a higher level, beyond his habitual routine which becomes second "nature" (teva, fixed form, imprint) -- he has not yet achieved true freedom.

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This, then, is one of the basic teachings of Yetzias Mitzraim, Zman cheiruseinu: The liberation from Egypt was a double one: the physical liberation of the Jews from Egyptian bondage, coupled with the liberation of their Jewish soul, as it is written: Draw and take unto yourselves - "draw back from idolatry";¹⁸ reject it completely.

And although both were achieved "with a high hand" - including inner freedom, yet, upon their departure from Egypt, the Jews immediately began their steady rise, each day rising to a higher spiritual level and true freedom,

until they attained the highest level of freedom with the receiving of the Torah, as our Sages observe: chorus al ha-luchos ("engraved on the Tablets")- read cheirus al ha-luchos¹⁹ ("freedom in and with the tablets").

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May G-d grant that just as at the time of the Exodus from Egypt, "the children of Israel went out with a high hand" - with self-esteem and free spirit, so may also today, every Jew, everywhere order his daily life in complete freedom, with dignity and joy,

And may we very soon merit the situation that "it will be only good for the Jews²⁰ (ach tov l'yisroel) and march out from the present Golus "with our young and our old... with our sons and our daughters..." and with all possessions,²¹ and proudly go forth to welcome our Righteous Moshiach, with the true and complete Redemption.

With esteem and blessing for a
Kosher and joyous Pesach,
Festival of Our Liberation,

/Signed/ MENACHEM SCHNEERSON

(1) כשמו חודש הגאולה - שהייתה בפסח. וראה ר"ה (ד, א) דגם לר"ה ניסן שייכות מיוחדת לרגל דפסח. (2) שמו"ר פט"ו, יא. וראה אוה"ת להצ"צ עה"פ החודש הזה (ע"ר סד ואילך). (3) לקו"ת דרושים לשמע"צ (פח, ד. פד, א). (4) בס"ה הושענות ד"ה כהושעת. וראה ירוש' סוכה פ"ד, ה"ג. מגלה כס, א. ד"ה מצה זו תר"ם בתחלתו. (5) ראה לקוטי לוי"צ לזח"ב ע"פ פב. (6) מלשון ושכנתי בתוכם (תניא פנ"ב וראה שם פי"ז). (7) תניא רפ"ב, וראה סד"ה גדולים מעשה צדיקים, תרפ"ה. (8) ראה סוטה (ט, ב): וכן לענין הטובה ובתוד"ה מרים (שם יא, א). רש"י עה"ת ס"פ בהעלתך. (9) קדושין מ, א. (10) אף הרחוקים כו' (תניא פ' לב). (11) זח"ג נג, ב. (12) ביום ובליילה (רמב"ם הל' ק"ש פ"א ה"ג. שו"ע אדה"ז ר"ס סז. ועוד). (13) בל' התניא רפמ"ז: בכל דור ודור וכל יום ויום חייב אדם לראות עצמו כאילו הוא יצא היום ממצרים, ועפ"ז מובן הרמב"ם (הל' מצה פ"ז, ה"ז): בכל דור ודור חייב אדם להראות א"ע כאילו הוא בעצמו יצא עתה משעבוד מצרים. ולהעיר שהרמב"ם מוסיף ג"כ להראות (אף שיש מביאין נ"א - לראות) - ראה פסחים קטז, ב. (14) ראה סידור ש' התפליין (ח, ד): פי' ענין יצי"מ. ובכ"מ. (15) ע"פ ב"ר פט"ז, ד. (16) ב"מ ל, ב. ובכ"מ. (17) ברכות כח, א. ובכ"מ. וראה ד"ה ויגש תרס"ז (ע' תצא ואילך). (18) שמות יב, כא. ובמכילתא שם. תיב"ע. ועוד. (19) עירובין נד, א. (20) תהלים עג, א. (21) שמות יו"ד, ט. (ולהעיר מפע"ח שער חהמ"צ פ"ו סד"ה מה נשתנה). שם, כו. ובשמו"ר רפי"ח: אפילו... טלף אחד. וראה צוואת הריב"ש (סי' קט - בהוצאת קה"ת). כתר ש"ס (סרי"ח) ואור תורה להה"מ ד"ה התורה חסה על ממונם של ישראל.