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By the Grace of G-d
11th of Nissan, 5735
Brooklyn, N. Y.

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

Greeting and Blessing:

In our letter of Rosh Chodesh Nissan we reflected on the subject of Zman Cheiruseinu, the Festival of Our Liberation, in its dual meaning: Liberation of the Jewish people and, with it, liberation of the Shechinah (Divine Presence), as it were - a concept already indicated in various texts of the Torah and more explicitly in Rabbinic sources. It is rooted in the fact that when Jews go into exile, the Shechinah goes (into exile) with them. Thus our Sages of blessed memory declared, "As they went into exile in Egypt, the Shechinah went with them".¹ Hence, liberation must likewise include both - "the people and G-d." Consequently, it was pointed out, true freedom must be expressed in terms of continuous striving for liberation and expansiveness (the exact opposite of bondage and restraint) in the everyday life - both in the area of man's duties to G-d and in the area of man's duties to man ("Good to Heaven and good to the creatures"), so as to achieve redemption of both "the people and G-d."

Pursuing the theme more deeply, at least in one aspect, it ought to be said that true liberation, in addition to being expressed in the said two areas of human endeavor, requires, moreover, that every action,² whether in the realm of "Good to Heaven" or "good to the creatures", must embrace elements of both, and also in the same measure of freedom and expansiveness in both.

Parenthetically, yet significantly, this is also a step towards achieving, in a deeper and more inclusive way, unity of the entire created Universe - which is, of course, the purpose of the Jew, as an individual, and as a member of the people which is characterized as one people on earth in the sense (according to a Chassidic interpretation³) that "it brings about unity (also) in the realm of earthly things."

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By way of illustration:

We see that when a Jew is about to celebrate the Seder in the best manner of "good to Heaven" - being inspired with gratitude to G-d for the Geulo

(redemption from Egypt), in which he experiences his personal redemption, as in the text of the Haggadah,⁴ "...Who redeemed us (in addition to⁵) and Who redeemed our ancestors" - he must begin the Seder⁶ with the announcement, "Whoever is hungry...", "whoever is needy...", immediately inviting to the Seder-table all those who are unable to celebrate the Seder by themselves.

Furthermore, the whole Seder is based on the commandment, "thou shalt tell⁷ thy son,"⁸ indicating an obligation to involve others⁹ in it, whatever their status, for -

Thy son includes all the four kinds of sons,¹⁰ and, moreover,

In light of the Sages' interpretation that thy sons includes thy disciples,¹¹ it really embraces everyone whom you can influence and bring closer to Yiddishkeit.

Similarly, we see in the case of Shovuos, the Festival of the Giving of Our Torah, where "Our Torah" (as in the case of "Our Liberation") has the dual meaning: Our Torah, which G-d gave us, and G-d's Torah; for G-d Himself, as it were, keeps the Torah and Mitzvos, as the Midrash interprets¹² the verse, "He tells His precepts to Jacob, His statutes and His judgments to Israel,"¹³ to the effect that these are His precepts, His statutes, and His judgments, namely, those which G-d Himself observes. So also in the area of Torah-study (of which it is stated that "Torah-study balances all the Mitzvos"), which the Jew studies as G-d's Torah, the Torah in which G-d "delights,"¹⁴ and which He "recites in unison with the student"¹⁵ - it is not enough that he learns for himself, but he has the obligation of "Thou shalt teach them diligently to thy children - thy students." Indeed, the highest form of Torah-study is study in assembly; and real understanding of Torah is achieved through teaching others, as the saying, "from my students I have learned most of all."¹⁶

Again, in the case of Succos, Shmini Atzeres and Simchas Torah, the Season of Our Rejoicing, which, as mentioned, implies the dual rejoicing of Jews (with G-d and with the Torah) and of G-d and the Torah (with the Jews) - it is required that the rejoicing should be in a manner of thou shalt rejoice with thy festival, thou, and thy son, and thy daughter, and thy man-servant and maid-servant, and the Levite, and the stranger, and the orphan and the widow in thy gates.¹⁷ In other words, the joy of the festival must permeate not only the person himself, but also his household, indeed all around him, even the "stranger" and all who are still standing "at the gates."

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Just as in the realm of "Good to Heaven," which must embrace also "good to the creatures," so in the realm of the latter, true liberation in inter-human relations is achieved when it is also "good to Heaven."¹⁸ For if an action in relation to other people is prompted only by one's own reason, or feeling, it is limited to, and in the measure of,¹⁹ one's intellect and feelings, - as this subject has been discussed at greater length elsewhere.

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Reference has been made above to the two pillars, Torah and Gmilus Chasodim (acts of loving-kindness), but the same is true also in the realm of the third pillar, Avodah, prayer.

As is known, the daily prayers have been instituted in place of the daily services in the Beis Hamikdosh, specifically that of the Korban-tomid,²⁰ which was offered twice daily, in the morning and evening. The Korban-tomid, though a burnt-offering "wholly unto G-d,"²¹ had to be a public sacrifice,²² in which all the people shared and were united through the "half-shekel" contribution.

A special point,²³ among others, has been made of the half-shekel levy as alluding to the moral lesson that a Jew is complete only together with another Jew. This is further underscored by the instruction that before a Jew begins his morning prayer, even if he prays in solitude, he should first say, "I accept upon myself the Mitzvas-asseh of Love your fellow-Jew as yourself."²⁴

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Inasmuch as the Geulo from the present Golus (exile) is destined to be "as in the days of your going out of Egypt,"²⁵ which, as mentioned above, was in a manner of redeeming "the People and G-d," it is self-evident that the way to hasten its coming is through efforts and deeds in both areas: in that of "Good to Heaven" - to help redeem the Shechinah from Golus, and in that of "good to the creatures" - to ensure that no Jew should, G-d forbid, be lost in the Golus,

Efforts and deeds in the service of G-d embracing all three pillars, Torah, Avodah and Gmilus Chasodim, with true freedom in the above-mentioned sense.

May G-d grant that by virtue of the Jews being "all of us like one," we should promptly see the open realization of "bless us, our Father,"²⁶ and the realization of "in that day will G-d be One and His Name One,"²⁷ through the service of "one people on earth," and the realization of "G-d is my King since the days of old, working salvation in the midst of the earth,"²⁸ with the coming of the true and complete Geulo through our righteous Moshiach.

With esteem and blessing for a
Kosher and Happy Pesach

/Signed/ MENACHEM SCHNEERSON

(1) מגלה כט, א. ספרי למסעי לה, לד (ומסיים: לאדום שכינה עמהם. וידוע הדיוק שבכ"מ בדא"ח מביא גלו למצרים ובכ"מ - גלו לאדום). (2) לכאורה קשה ממ"ש (בצוואת הריב"ש ו) באו"ת לה"מ ד"ה צדיק כתמר, אבל ראה שם ד"ה מותר להתגרות דגם צדיק זה עוסק בגמ"ח. ויתרה מזו - דמתגרים בו כו" עיי"ש. וראה זח"א סז, ב. ולהעיר גם מהפס"ד (רמב"ם הל' תשובה פ"ג, ה"ד) דצריך כל אדם שיראה עצמו כל השנה כולה כאילו הוא וכן כל העולם חציו זכאי וחציו כו" עשה מצוה אחת הרי הכריע א"ע ואת כל העולם כולו לכף זכות וגרם לו ולהם תשועה והצלה. (3) אגה"ק ס"ט. (4) בברכת (שבמקום ברכת) הנסים דחה"פ (רש"י בס' האורה. אבודרהם). פסחים קטז, ב. (5) ואדרבא מקדימה לגאל את אבותינו. (6) קודם ל"והגדת לבנך" (ובתור הקדמה לזה - שלכן נכלל בסימן "מגיד"). (7) שלכן נקראת הגדה (אבודרהם). (8) שמות יג, ח. וראה פרש"י שם (ובהגדה) שבבן הכי קטן - שאינו יודע לשאול - הכתוב מדבר. ובירוש' פסחים (פ"י, ה"ד) שהוא למטה מבן טיפשו. (9) אז על עצמו בתור צווייטער. וראה פרש"י עה"פ זכור את יום השבת (שמות כ, ח): תנו לב (וידועים דברי הרמב"ם הל' חומ"צ רפ"ז (ובסה"צ מ"ע קנז) דלמדים זכור דיצי"מ מזה דשבת. וראה פסחים קיז, ב. שמו"ר ס"פ בא. מפרשי הרמב"ם שם). (10) שכולל כל העולמות (אריז"ל בסידורו ובכ"מ. וראה לקוטי לוי"צ לזח"א ע"פ). (11) דברים ו, ז ובספרי שם (הובא בפרש"י שם). (12) שמו"ר פ"ל, ט. (13) תהלים קמז, יט. ובסידור בפסוד"ז ד"ה זה: מגיד ל' המשכה ממהות למהות שלא בדרך עילה ועלול. (14) משלי ח, ל. תניא קו"א סד"ה דוד זמירות. לקו"ת ד"ה זה. סד"ה ויצא, תרס"ו. - ולהעיר שבכתוב (שם) ג"כ ב" העניינים: שעשועים גו' לפניו גו' את בנ"א. וראה סד"ה ואהי" אצלו, תר"ל. (15) תדבאר רפי"ח. יל"ש איכה רמז תתרלד. וראה לקו"ת נצבים סד"ה כי המצוה הזאת. (16) תענית ז, א. (17) דברים טז, יד. (18) יתרה מזה בכתר ש"ט (ס"ו. ד"ה והדבר) דע"י תקריבון אלי מברר ספקות כו". (19) להעיר מד"ה אשר ברא, תרפ"ט פ"ד ואילך. (20) ברכות כו, ב. וגם מוספים. (21) שמואל א ז, ט. (22) אבל יש גם תפלת נדבה והיא במקום קרבן יחיד (טוש"ע או"ח סק"ז). כן להעיר שתפלת ערבית שכנגד איברים ופדרים שלא נתעכלו דקרבים כל הלילה - גם דקרבת יחיד דינם כן. (23) בינה לעתים ועוד. (24) אדה"ז בסידורו (משא"כ בפע"ח ש"ה פ"א "שיקבל עליו"). וראה שיחת ל"ג בעומר תש"ח (לקו"ד ח"ג) בזה מהבעש"ט, הה"מ ואדה"ז. (25) מיכה ז, טו. וראה אוה"ת עה"פ (ע"פ הזהר ומד"ר. עיי"ש) בסופו - דיהיו נפלאות גדולות יותר מביצי"מ. (26) בברכת שים שלום, סיום וחזרתם כל תפילת עמידה. ראה תניא פ"ב. (27) זכרי' יד, ט. (28) תהלים עד, יב. ובב"ר (פס"ו, ג) דמתקן השכר קודם הפעולה, מקדם.