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Free Rendition

חמם מענדל שניאורסאהן
ליובאוויטש

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ברוקלין, נ. י.

By the Grace of G-d
In the Days of Sefirah, 5737
Brooklyn, N. Y.

The 22nd Annual Convention
National Council of N'shei uBnos Chabad
Brooklyn, N. Y.

Blessing and Greeting:

This year's Convention takes on an added significance in that it is taking place in the "Year of Chinuch."

The Mitzva of Chinuch is, of course, a continuous one and is not limited to any particular time, year or month. Indeed, we repeat twice daily, morning and night, "and you shall teach (Torah and Mitzvos) diligently to your children," which our Sages of blessed memory interpret as referring to all (school) children, meaning that the Mitzva of Chinuch is an everyday, continuous duty. Nevertheless, this does not preclude special emphasis on Chinuch in special times.

An analogy for this can be cited from a case in point, relating to the Convention itself which is taking place on Shabbos Mevorchim Sivan. The central aspect of the month of Sivan is the Festival of Shovuos, the "Season of the Giving of Our Torah." Though the Torah and Mitzvos have no particular "season," for they are "our life and the length of our days" - every day, every moment, and each day we receive and accept the Torah anew; yet there is the "season" of Kabbolas haTorah, when we receive the Torah with renewed dedication and special enthusiasm that add vitality to our Kabbolas haTorah every day.

Similarly the "Year of Chinuch" is meant to induce a special effort in all phases of Torah education, both of the self and of the children and everybody else in one's surroundings. Such a special all-out Chinuch effort is the challenge and opportunity of the present time.

A further point common to both the Convention and Mattan Torah^{Season} comes to light from the fact^{That} the Convention is taking place in the days of preparation for Kabbolas haTorah, since the Jewish women had a most prominent part in it. As has often been pointed out, our Sages emphasize the women's role in Mattan Torah in that they were approached first when the Torah was about to be given to all our people. This is indicated in the verse (G-d telling Moshe Rabbeinu): "Thus you shall say to the House of Jacob (meaning, the women) and speak to the sons of Israel (the men)."

In Chinuch, too, the mother comes first, when the development of

the newborn child in the first years after birth is exclusively in the hands of the mother, and only later, when the child begins to speak, the father begins to teach the child "the Torah which Moshe commanded us." Indeed, even in later years the mother has a greater influence on the children, the young and the older ones alike, because of her special close and loving relationship. We see this also in the Mitzva of Kibbud Av v'Em ("honoring father and mother"), where the Torah pointedly forewarns, "Everyone shall fear (respect) one's mother and father" - with emphasis on the mother (first). For inasmuch as the relationship between the mother and her children is permeated with love, the Torah underscores the duty of "fear" (respect) toward the mother in particular, as Rashi explains on the spot.

Since the Creator has entrusted the Jewish wife and mother with a special responsibility - coupled with a special privilege - in both areas, of Torah in general and Chinuch in particular, it is clear that He has endowed them - as well as the Jewish daughters preparing for their singular and most important role as Akeres Habayis - with special capacities to carry out their Divine mission in life, in the fullest measure, and with joy and Chasidic warmth and light.

I trust that the Convention will bring out the said points with appropriate emphasis that will be translated into good resolutions and, above all, actual deeds, since "the essential thing is the deed."

May G-d bless the Convention with Hatzlocho, to exceed all expectations in the above direction, materially and spiritually. This will also widen the channels for the flow of G-d's blessings to all participants and their families, in all their material and spiritual needs.

With blessing for Hatzlocho
and good tidings,

/Signed: Menachem Schneerson/