

RABBI MENACHEM M. SCHNEERSON

Lubavitch
770 Eastern Parkway
Brooklyn, N. Y. 11213

493-9250

מוחם מענדל שניאורסאהן

ליובאוויטש

770 איסטערן פארקוויי

ברוקלין, נ. י.

By the Grace of G-d
25th of Elul, 5738
Brooklyn, N. Y.

To All Participants in the
First Chassidic Festival
Caracas, Venezuela

Greeting and Blessing:

I was pleased to be informed about the forthcoming first Chassidic Festival in Venezuela. May G-d grant that it should be with the utmost Hatzlocho.

To "serve G-d with joy" is, of course, one of the basic tenets of Judaism and the Jewish way. Indeed, every Jew who counts his blessings, and the greatest blessing of all - the distinct privilege of serving G-d through the fulfillment of His Torah and Mitzvoth, and spreading the light of G-dliness in the world at large, has ample reason for great rejoicing, and for serving G-d in all his ways with enthusiasm and vitality. However, the very repetitiousness of the daily prayers and daily Mitzvos tends to make their performance somewhat mechanical.

The nature of song and melody is rather different in that the more familiar they are, the more readily one responds to them, and their rhythmic repetition, especially in community singing, tends to intensify the feeling and uplift the soul. Moreover, melody and song are contagious, striking a responsive cord in all within hearing and inducing them to join in the uplifting experience.

one of the reasons

This is/why melody and song have such an important place in Chassidic life. The spirit of enthusiasm and joy must permeate a Jew's daily life and all his activities; ~~particularly~~ Torah study, prayer and the performance of all the Mitzvos, and, not least, one's efforts to spread Yiddishkeit in the environment with joy and gladness of heart.

And although your Chassidic festival is taking place during the Solemn Days of the Ten Days of Teshuvah (Return, Repentance), it has been explained that Teshuvah is one of the greatest gifts that the Almighty has given us, in order to enable a person to restore the proper balance in his daily life, and to prepare the way for continuous advancement in all matters of goodness and holiness, Torah and Mitzvos. Thus, the Mitzvo of Teshuvah, though necessarily associated with earnest introspection and profound regret for past failings, it is surely cause for the greatest possible rejoicing, since it carries the Divine assurance that

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sincere Teshuvah - return to one's Jewish roots and essence - is always accepted.

May G-d grant that the Chassidic Festival should achieve all its objectives in the fullest measure, as indicated above.

With prayerful wishes for a Kesivo vaChasimo Tovo, for a good and sweet year, materially and spiritually,

With esteem and
blessing,

M. Schneerson