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מנחם מענדל שניאורסאהן
ליובאוויטש

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ברוקלין, נ. י.

By the Grace of G-d
Erev-Shabbos-Kodesh
Parshas Yisro, 5739
Brooklyn, N. Y.

To All Participants in the
Hasidic Song Festival
Evanston, Il. 60201

Greeting and Blessing:

It is significant that the Hasidic Song Festival is taking place on the first day of the week of Parshas Tetzaveh, when we read the portion of the Ner Tamid - "to cause it to light up continually."

Our Sages explain that this Divine commandment also alludes to lighting up "the soul of man, the Lamp of G-d," which must shine continuously with the light of the Torah and Mitzvos, "for a Mitzvah is a Lamp, and the Torah is Light."

Indeed, inasmuch as the Torah and Mitzvos are "our life and the length of our days," it is obvious that just as life itself is a continuous process, so there must be no interruption in the life-giving source that vitalizes and illuminates the whole being of a Jew and his conduct in the everyday life.

The commandment of lighting up the Ner Tamid thus reminds us that it is the duty and privilege of every Jew to make a conscious effort to light up his, or her, soul, as well as the souls of other Jews with a Divine inspiration that should be reflected in the everyday life and conduct - in thought, speech and deed - to be in complete harmony with the Will of G-d, in the spirit of "serving G-d with joy" in the fullest measure. Song and melody are the sublimest vehicles through which the soul attains such inspiration, as the Alter Rebbe, Founder of Chabad, greatly emphasized, which is why they have such an important place in all Hasidic gatherings and similar occasions.

May G-d grant that this Hasidic Song Festival should serve as a lasting source of inspiration to each and all participants, to illuminate your souls, and the souls of Jews all around you, with the light of Torah and Mitzvos, permeated with Hasidic fervor and joy, for an evergrowing commitment and dedication to the Torah way in all aspects of the everyday life.

I extend prayerful wishes to each and all of you for Hatzlocho in all above, and for a brighter life in all respects, materially as well as spiritually.

With blessing, *M. Schneerson*