

RABBI MENACHEM M. SCHNEERSON

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מנחם מענדל שניאורסאהן

ליובאוויטש

770 איסטערן פארקוויי
ברוקלין, נ. י.

By the Grace of G-d
12th of Nissan, 5741
Brooklyn, N. Y.

Dr. David Tuvia Chase
1 Financial Plaza
Hartford, Conn. 06103

Greeting and Blessing:

On the occasion of the forthcoming Yom-Tov Pesach, I send you my prayerful wishes that the Festival of Our Freedom bring you and yours true freedom, freedom from anxiety material and spiritual, from anything which might distract from serving G-d wholeheartedly and with joy, and to carry over this freedom and joy into the whole year.

Wishing you and yours a Kosher and happy Pesach,

With blessing,



P.S. It was a pleasure to see you at the Farbrengen on the occasion of the 11th of Nissan, and exchange l'Chayim blessings.

Although it is not customary nor proper to ask for a birthday gift, but considering our special relationship, I venture to do so, being confident that you will treat it in the proper spirit.

The birthday gift that I have in mind, which I would consider an honor, as well as a great pleasure, is that you devote a quarter of an hour of your time every weekday morning and dedicate it for the sacred purpose of putting on Tefillin, with the appropriate prayer that goes with it, such as the Shema and the like. The latter need not necessarily be recited in Hebrew. If you can manage this in ten minutes, I am prepared to forego five minutes and let it be only ten minutes of your time.

In addition to the thing itself, being one of the greatest Mitzvoth, as our Sages said that the whole Torah was compared to it, the Mitzvo of putting on Tefillin on the left arm, facing the heart, and on the head, the seat of the intellect, has the special Divine quality of purifying the heart and the mind, emotion and reason, and bring them into the proper balance and harmony. While this is important for every Jew, it is certainly of special significance to one whose activities normally involve a great deal of mental and emotional strain, and it is highly important to have them in the proper balance for the utmost degree of efficiency.

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Dr. David Tuvia Chase

The above is of additional significance in your case as chairman of the Board of the Rabbinical College of America, in which you have had such remarkable Hatzlocho, with G-d's help, and have been able to involve many others to follow in your footsteps. Thus, this "birthday gift" would also have a salutary impact on the Rabbinical College, its administration and students, and further widen the channels for all concerned to receive G-d's blessings materially and spiritually.

I trust that you put on Tefillin every morning in any case, and the reason I am asking the above is only that you should make it a definite point on your calendar, to make sure that your preoccupation with your personal business and the business of the Rabbinical College would not distract you even once to overlook the putting on of Tefillin. And this will be my reward.

P.P.S. Although in matters of the Rabbinical College, I usually send a copy to our distinguished mutual friend Rabbi Moshe Herson, I am not sending him a copy of this letter, considering its personal nature. I leave it to you whether you wish to show it to him.

On the Rebbe's birthday, Mr. David Chase, Chairman of the Board of the Rabbinical College of America, came to a Farbrengen (gathering) which was addressed by the Rebbe. The next day the Rebbe sent Mr. Chase the accompanying letter. In a P.S., the Rebbe asked Mr. Chase for a "birthday gift". Mr. Chase was very taken by the request and said to Rabbi Moshe Herson, "I can't let the Rebbe down". He started to put on Tefillin daily and, with G-d's help, faithfully continues to do so (Mr. Chase, on his own, subsequently added the wearing of a Talis to his daily regimen). At the time, Mr. Chase asked the Rebbe if he would personally supply him with three pairs of Tefillin so he would always have a pair readily available, regardless of which home he was in and where he was traveling. The Rebbe did in fact supply three pairs of Tefillin which were promptly delivered by Rabbi Moshe Herson. In the second letter the Rebbe explains the connection between Pesach and Tefillin, mentioned in the first letter, and the intent of the PS.