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מנחם מענדל שניאורסאהן
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By the Grace of G-d
24th of Teves, 5742
Brooklyn, N. Y.

To All Participants in the
Twentieth Annual Chabad Women's
Mid-Winter Convention
L.A., Ca.

Blessing and Greeting:

On this anniversary of the Yahrzeit-Hilulo of the Alter Rebbe, it is particularly fitting to begin this message with the familiar teaching of his to the effect that "a Jew should live with the time" - meaning the "Torah-time" of the weekly Sedras.

Accordingly, we must seek inspiration and guidance for the event of the week, namely the Convention taking place in the week of Parshas Yisro, in this Sedra which is highlighted by Mattan Torah.

The connection that immediately comes to mind is one that has often been emphasized. But just as the Torah itself, as we read the same Sedra every year over and over again, must always be regarded "as new" - with all the enthusiasm and interest of novelty and new discovery, so must all its teachings be regarded as new, though we have heard and learned them before.

We have in mind the point brought out by our Sages about the important role of Jewish women in connection with Mattan Torah, as indicated by the fact that they were approached first - before the men - about accepting the Torah.

Needless to say, this was not simply a gesture but ~~xxxxxxxxxxxx~~ an indication that Jewish women have a primary role in the preservation of the Torah and Mitzvoth from generation to generation. This is, obviously, a great responsibility. However, since G-d has chosen the Jewish women for this responsibility, it is certain that He has endowed them with all that it takes to carry it out in the fullest measure.

In recent generations, for various reasons and circumstances, the role of Jewish women in the preservation of Torah and Mitzvoth in Jewish life - not only in their own homes, but also in the community at large - has been particularly accentuated. Our Rebbes and Nessiim consistently reminded Chabad women of the said responsibility and urged them to serve as the avant-garde to show the way to other Jewish women and daughters how to carry out their G-d-given role with enthusiasm and dedication, assuring them of Hatzlocho in these sacred efforts.

The record of Neshel u'Bnos Chabad has indeed been an enviable one. But, in light of the Chassidic saying, "Good is good, but better is better," and since there is always room for improvement in all matters of goodness and holiness, Torah and Mitzvoth, and, further, in keeping also with the saying of our Sages, "Encourage the energetic" - I hope and trust that the Convention will further stimulate all branches and chapters of the Neshel u'Bnos Chabad to redouble their efforts for even greater accomplishments.

With prayerful wishes for Hatzlocho and good tidings in all above,
and

With blessing,

M. Schneerson