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ברוקלין, נ. י.

FREE TRANSLATION

By the Grace of G-d
Third day, Twice blessed with Good¹
Sedra: "This is the blessing² which
Moshe blessed,"
Sixth³ day of the Seventh Month,⁴
5744. Brooklyn, N.Y.

To the Sons and Daughters of
Our People Israel, Everywhere,
G-d bless you all!

Greeting and Blessing:

To begin with a blessing — may you all be blessed with a
Chasimo uGmar Chasimo Toivo.

Coming from Rosh Hashanah and Shabbos-Shuvah —
with Rosh Hashanah, by reason of its occurrence this year (on
Thursday and Friday), taking us straight into Shabbos-
Kodesh, Shabbos-Shuvah,

And pursuant also to the second point relating to the
occurrence of Rosh Hashanah this year in the week of the
Sedra Haazinu —

As these two points were discussed respectively in the
letters of Erev Shabbos-Kodesh Chai Elul and Motzoei
Shabbos-Kodesh 25 Elul;⁵

To which may be added — at least very briefly — some
insights into the special relevance of Rosh Hashanah to:

a) the fifth day⁶ of the week (Thursday), whose *Shir*
(Song of the Day) from the Book of Tehillim (Psalms)
contains a reference to the Rosh Hashanah Mitzvo, the verse:
Sound the Shofar on the New Moon; and to the sixth day⁷ of the
week (Friday), whose *Shir* opens with the verse: *The L-rd reigns*,

clothed in Glory, which was brought about by the first man, Adam, through inducing the whole of the created world to accept the sovereignty of the Creator by his call: *Let⁸ us worship and bow down, let us kneel before HaShem our Maker*, and

b) to the Sedra Haazinu, which was pronounced to serve a “testimony⁹ to the children of Israel” before the Heavenly Court,¹⁰ where “judgment¹¹ is clemency” — especially on the Day of Judgment, Rosh Hashanah, when HaShem “rises¹² from (and leaves) the seat of Judgment and sits down in the seat of Mercy,” and grants all Jews to be immediately inscribed and sealed¹³ in the Book of the Righteous, inasmuch as by the Torah’s testimony “Your people are all righteous”;¹⁴

The Sedra (Haazinu) which was given together with the assurance that “it shall not be forgotten,”¹⁵ but will forever be remembered, and reaffirmed from generation to generation, namely, “Ask¹⁶ your father and he will tell you, your grandfathers and they will tell you, too”; remembered particularly on Rosh Hashanah, the Day of Remembrance (*Yom Hazikoron*).

Pursuant to all above, we will now take note of yet a third point in regard to the occurrence of Rosh Hashanah this year, namely, it being the “head” (*Rosh*) of a *Leap Year* — a year of 13 months, and blessed with more days¹⁷ — more not only than in an ordinary (Lunar) year, but more also than in a Solar year containing 365 days.

* * *

The purpose¹⁸ of a Jewish Leap Year¹⁹ has to do with the nature of the Jewish Torah-Luach (Calendar), the calculation of which is based on the moon, and the calendar year consists of 12 lunar months.

However, inasmuch as the Torah requires that the Jewish festivals occur²⁰ in their due season: Pesach in the “Month of Spring” (Nissan), Succos in the “Season of Ingathering” in the autumn (Tishrei), and so on; and whereas the annual seasons are determined by the sun — it is necessary to make up the difference between the Lunar Year and Solar Year. This takes place every two or three years,

when the difference of accumulated days adds up to about a month, by adding a 13th month to that year (giving us two months of Adar, Adar *Rishon* and Adar *Sheni*). In this way it is assured that our Festivals will always occur within their due season of the year.

* * *

It has often been mentioned that a person should derive²¹ an instructive lesson from everything in his experience with a view to improving his conduct and quality of life, so as to carry out all the better the basic Jewish tenet: *I was created to serve my Creator*.²² Such an object lesson is particularly in order in connection with the Leap Year event which determines the dates of the Jewish month and of every Jewish festival throughout the year.

One noteworthy aspect in this connection is that although both²³ the sun and the moon were created "to give light on the earth,"²⁴ they differ radically in the manner in which they carry out this function. The sun's light comes down to earth without change²⁵ from day to day;²⁶ whereas the moon's light on earth undergoes *uninterrupted* change from day to day, from the day of its "rebirth" (*Molad*), or "New Moon," at the beginning of the month, waxing fuller each day in the first half of the month until it reaches completeness in the "full moon;"²⁷ then gradually diminishing in the second half of the month, until it is completely obscured, which is only a prelude to yet another New Moon, with renewed and growing strength. Moreover, and this, too, is a most significant point: All these changes in the moon come from²⁸ the influence of the sun, from which it derives its light.

Inasmuch as the Torah, *Toras Emes*, declares that a human being is a "world" (*olam*) in itself,²⁹ indeed, a "complete world"³⁰ (*olam malei*), complete in all details, it is understandable that the two natural phenomena, the "changeability" of the moon and the "constancy" of the sun, would be reflected in human life. Thus, every person has two natural tendencies characterizing his creative life: Selecting for himself a world outlook and establishing for himself basic

principles and rigid uncompromising goals, such as wisdom to the maximum degree, developing good character traits in the fullest measure, high standards of justice and ethics, and so forth; while at the same time experiencing a tendency to change, innovate, create (even in relation to his own life of yesterday), to the best of his ability.

At first glance these two tendencies — changeability and stability — appear to be contradictory. However, since a human being is a “complete (not a split) world,” they not only do not “fight” each other, but, on the contrary, complete each other, and both together enable him to attain his life’s goal and purpose — in the way the Leap Year brings orderliness and completeness into our Jewish calendar.

* * *

To explain the above briefly, let us cite a simple example:

Day after day, throughout his life, a Jew begins the day with the recital of *Modeh ani* — “I give thanks to You . . .,” then proceeds with *Birchot Hashachar* (Morning Blessings), *Psukei d’zimra* (Verses of Praise), the *Shema* with its blessings, the first three and last three blessings of the *Amidah*, etc. These are the same every day.

On the other hand, the *eternal* Torah requires that the “middle blessings” of the *Amidah* have to be changed:³¹ on Rosh Hashanah they are different than on any other day of the year; those of Shabbos differ from those on weekdays, and so forth; while the *Shir shel Yom* (Psalm of the Day)— is different on each day of the week.

Similarly in regard to the regular Torah sections: There are those which are the same every day, viz., in *Torah-shebiktav* (the section on the Priestly Blessings) and in *Torah-shebe’al-Peh* (*Eilu Devarim*, *Eizehu Mekoman*;) while there are those that have to be studied on special occasions, such as the Festival laws on the particular festivals, specific timely laws (pertaining to specific activities to make sure they are in accord with the teachings of the Torah), and the like.

More in this vein, in general: The basic principle that “the Torah shall not be changed”³² goes in unison with the

principle of *l'hagdil*³³ *Torah ulha'adirah* (to expound the Torah and make it more profound); and in regard to Mitzvot: "You shall neither add to,³⁴ nor detract from them" goes together with *Hiddur-Mitzva* (added measure of excellence in performance) and *l'ha'alot b'kodesh*³⁵ (keeping all matters of holiness on the ascendancy).

For these are two dimensions that *complement* and complete each other.

Thus, the same degree of strength and dedication is to be shown both in matters that are in the category of constancy and sameness (as symbolized by the sun) as well as in the category of change (as symbolized by the moon), both being derived from *Torah-Or* (the Torah is Light), which "shall not be changed," and as willed by the Creator that every Jew should be a "complete world."

Certain it is that He gives every one the necessary powers,³⁶ to the degree of selflessness, to develop in him/her both dimensions; one has only to actualize them in their fullest harmony and completeness.

This, then, is one of the object lessons of the Leap Year: To reflect, especially in these days of introspection and Teshuvah, on the said two qualities, carefully review the achievements of each, and adjust and harmonize them so as to achieve the utmost fulfillment and utilization of all the capacities which G-d gives everyone to carry out his/her soul's mission of "serving my Creator," and do this — as in the case of all matters of Torah and Mitzvot — with joy and gladness of heart.

* * *

May G-d grant that the reflection on the above-mentioned topics should result in a strengthened commitment to Torah in both aspects: its unchangeable completeness together with *la'hagdil Torah ulha'adirah*; and to the Mitzvot, likewise in both aspects: strict adherence, without change or compromise, together with *Hiddur-Mitzva* and *l'ha'alot b'kodesh* — in an *evergrowing* measure;

And that the concerted efforts in this direction should

bring an added measure of Hatzlocho in general, and in the above areas in particular, descending from above to each and every one in the Chasimo uGmar Chasimo Toivo, in the kind of good that is revealed and evident, each and everyday of the year, especially in this year of affluence in days, the Leap Year,

Including the essential blessing that this Rosh Hashanah, Day of Judgment, will very soon indeed bring the fulfillment of the prayer: "Arise³⁷ O G-d, judge the earth, for You possess (rule) all the nations," as part of

The blessing of the true and complete Geulo through Moshiach Tzidkeinu, speedily in our own days, now.

With esteem and with blessing for a
Chasimo uGmar Chasimo Toivo,
/Signed: Menachem Schneerson/

(1) פרש"י בראשית א, ז. ובאוה"ת (בראשית לג, ב. משפטים ע' א'קנז. ועוד) מקשר זה עם טוב לשמים וטוב לבריות — קידושין מ, א. וראה פיה"מ להרמב"ם פאה בתחלתה. מכתב כ"ק אדמו"ר (מוהרש"ב) נ"ע בסה"מ תש"ט ע' יח (השני). מכ' ומאמר כ"ק מו"ח אדמו"ר שם. ובפרש"י שם בסופו — דגם העבר נעשה טוב. (2) להעיר, אשר בקביעות שנה זו היא במשך ג' שבועות, רובו של חודש תשרי. ולהעיר מתורת אדה"ז: מען בעדארף לעבן מיט דער צייט . . מיט פרשת השבוע כו' («היום יום» ב' חשון. סה"ש תש"ב ע' 29 ואילך). (3) ושיעור חומש דיום זה הוא: וליוסף אמר, הוא ספירת היסוד, ספירה הששית דז"א. (4) הוא «המשובע (ויק"ר פכ"ט, ח) והמשביע ברוב טוב לכל ישראל על כל השנה» — תורת הבעש"ט («היום יום» כ"ה אלול. כש"ט (הוצאת קה"ת) הוספות אות לא. וש"נ). וראה גם ד"ה יו"ט של ר"ה ה'תש"י בתחלתו. (5) שבו נברא העולם. ראה מכתב דמוצש"ק כ"ה אלול. וש"נ 7 (6) תהלים מזמור פא. ר"ה לא, א. מסכת תמיד בסופה. ולהעיר, אשר מזמור זה הוא גם שירו של יום ראש השנה — ר"ה ל, ב. (7) תהלים מזמור צג. ר"ה לא, א. מסכת תמיד שם. (8) תהלים צה, ו. (9) וילך לא, יט ובפרש"י שם. (10) ראה פרש"י ריש פ' האזינו. (11) תקו"ז בהקדמה («פתח אליהו»). ובנגלה דתורה «ושפטו העדה והצילו העדה» — ר"ה כו, א. (12) ויק"ר פכ"ט, ג: בשעה שישראל נוטלין את שופריהן ותוקעין לפני הקב"ה, (הוא) עומד מכסא הדין ויושב בכסא רחמים כו'. פסיקתא דר"כ פסקא כג (בחודש השביעי). וראה גם ויק"ר שם, ד, ו. כתבי האריז"ל במקומם (תק"ש). וראה ד"ה תקעו תרפ"ח בתחלתו. ד"ה עלה אלקים תש"ח בתחלתו. (13) ר"ה טז, ב. (14) ישעי' ס, כא. (15) וילך לא, כא (וקאי על השירה הזאת) ובפרש"י שם. (16) האזינו לב, ז. (17) מספר ימים הכי גדול שאפשר להיות בשנה, שפ"ה — לא שפ"ג או שפ"ד כבשאר שנות עיבור. (18) בהבא להלן ראה רמב"ם הל' קידה"ח רפ"א ורפ"ד. ולהעיר שבעיבור נאמר «סוד» העיבור. וראה רמב"ם שם פי"א ה"ד. ובירושלמי סנהדרין פ"א ה"ב: בסוד עמי לא יהיו זה עיבור. — נתבאר בלקוטי לוי"צ לפסוקים כו' ע' קטו. בנוגע להשלימות דשנת העיבור — להעיר מומלכי צדק מלך שלם — אוה"ת לך עו, ב ואילך. ולהעיר מפרש"י וישלח לג, יח. מו"נ בסופו. (19) סוכה כט, א. ב"ר פ"ו, ג. וראה אוה"ת בראשית ד, ב ואילך. ובכ"מ. — וצע"ק לשון הרמב"ם ריש הל' קידה"ח: והשנים שאנו מחשבין הם שני החמה. (20) תשא לד, כב (ובסנהדרין יג, א). ראה טז, א (ובפרש"י שם. ר"ה כא, א. סנהדרין שם, ב). (21) תורת הבעש"ט כש"ט (הוצאת קה"ת) הוספות סי' קכו. «היום יום» ט' אייר. תורת הה"מ לקו"א (הוצאת קה"ת) סי' ריג. (22) משנה וגמרא סוף מסכת קידושין. (23) בראשית א, טו. (24) ועד שהשמש «ממתקת» הפירות והלבנה «מבשלת» הפירות (פרש"י פרשתנו — דשיעור יום זה — לג, יד). (25) ראה תו"א ד"ה בחודש השלישי (סז, ג). תו"ח שמות שעא, ב ואילך. אוה"ת יתרו ע' תשפו ואילך. סה"מ תרכ"ז ע' קלב. וראה ס' הליקוטים — דרושי דא"ח צמח צדק — ערך לבנה ע' ת ואילך. וראה או"ת להה"מ עה"פ ועינינו מאירות כשמש, סי' רצז (הוצאת קה"ת). (26) היינו בהלהאיר. (27) זח"א קנ, רע"א. ח"ב פה, א. עד"ז שמו"ר פט"ו, כו. (28) זח"א רלו, סע"ב. שם רמט, ב. ובכ"מ. (29) עולם קטן זה האדם — תקו"ז תס"ט (ק, ב. קא, א). וראה תנחומא פקודי ג. אדר"נ ספל"א. (30) סנהדרין לז, סע"א במשנה. (31) להעיר משו"ע אדה"ז הל' שבת סי' רס"ח ס"ב. וי"ל. ואכ"מ. (32) עיקר הט' מי"ג העיקרים. וראה רמב"ם הל' יסוה"ת רפ"ט. הל' מלכים פי"א סוף ה"ג. פיה"מ סנהדרין פ' חלק יסוד התשיעי. (33) ראה חולין סו, ב. רמב"ם הל' ת"ת ספ"ב (גרסתו בב"ב כא, א ?). (34) ואתחנן ד, ב. (35) ברכות כח, א. וש"נ. (36) כי אינו מבקש כו' אלא לפי כחן של כאו"א — במדב"ר פי"ב, ג. (37) תהלים פב, ח.

