

RABBI MENACHEM M. SCHNEERSON

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מנחם מענדל שניאורסאהן

ליובאוויטש

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ברוקלין, נ.י.

By the Grace of G-d
11th of Tishrei, 5749
Brooklyn, N.Y.

Mr. Reuven David Kimball
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Greeting and Blessing:

It was a pleasure to meet with you and our other distinguished friends on the day before Erev Yom Kippur.

A personal meeting between Jews should always be a good, pleasurable and productive event. When it coincides with the other two auspicious dimensions, namely, time and place -- it is certain to have all three elements: goodness and sweetness to themselves, and usefulness to other fellow Jews, in the fullest measure.

To focus on the dimension of time -- what could be a more auspicious time than the period between Rosh Hashana and Yom Kippur, at the beginning of an especially auspicious year, an Ibbur Year (Jewish Leap Year), a year that has thirteen months.

The essential aspects of our Jewish Leap Year have been discussed on various occasions. One point, which cannot be overemphasized, is particularly relevant at this time of year. It has to do with the Torah concept of time.

Normally, the lunar year, (which is the basis of our Luach, the Jewish calendar) lags behind the solar year by about eleven days. In order that our festivals should occur in their due season (Pesach in the spring; Succos in the autumn, etc.) the time lag is made good by the inclusion of an extra month every two or three years. This makes an Ibbur Year, which not only evens out the score, but surpasses the solar year by as many as eighteen, nineteen, or twenty days, as the case may be.

While the Ibbur Year is a recurring phenomenon involving highly intricate calculations and details that affect Jewish life in totality, it also provides a simple object lesson. Every Jew has been endowed with the capacity to recoup and complete those "lost" days which, for one reason or another, have not been fully utilized in terms of Yiddishkeit, Torah and Mitzvos.

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This means, in effect, that a Jew has the spiritual strength to make himself "master over time." Indeed, he can gain mastery over time not only in terms of the present and the future, by setting for himself the highest standards of conduct, but he can also rectify his past.

This is why the above lesson of the Ibbur Year is particularly relevant in the Ten Days of Return, the Asseres Yemei Teshuva, -- the period in time that has been assigned for Jews to return even closer to their true essence.

The same period, inasmuch as it begins with Rosh Hashana, marks the origin and creation of the world. It is written, "the world was built on Chessed (kindness)." The Creator, the Master Builder, in His kindness, among other things, set the stage for created man to become a builder of worlds -- our old world as well as "new worlds." We Jews have been particularly privileged to be builders, especially where our children are concerned: בנין/בניין banayich -- "your children," bonayich -- "your builders." Each child, boy or girl, brought up in the way of Yiddishkeit, Torah and Mitzvos, is a Binyan adei-ad, "an everlasting edifice" -- a world in his/her own right, as well as a builder of worlds.

This is why our recent meeting, during the Ten Days of Return, at the "head" of the current new Ibbur Year, for the purpose and cause of building new worlds, must become meaningful and vitally important.

With prayerful wishes for Hatzlacha in all above, and for a joyous Succos festival, and

With esteem and blessing,

