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FREE TRANSLATION

מנחם מענדל שניאורסאהן

ליובאוויטש

770 איסטערן פארקוויי

ברוקלין, נ.י.

By the Grace of G-d  
Fifth<sup>1</sup> Day of the Week of  
Tazria, Rosh Chodesh  
Nissan, <sup>2</sup>5749<sup>3</sup>. Brooklyn, N.Y.To the Sons and Daughters of  
Our People Israel, Everywhere

G-d bless you all !

Greeting and Blessing:

Rosh Chodesh Nissan - as it occurs on its pertaining  
day of the week - always <sup>coincides</sup> with the first day of Pesach on  
the same day of the week. This year it occurs on Thurs-  
day, the day of the week when the Exodus<sup>4</sup> from Egypt took  
place.

Pesach is the first<sup>5</sup> one of all our festivals, especial-  
ly of the Sholosh Regolim, the Three Pilgrimage Festivals:  
Pesach, Shovuos, and Succos.<sup>6</sup> It is the first ~~not only~~ in  
time, ~~but~~ also, and predominantly, first and foremost in  
preeminence. This is underscored also by the fact that  
Shabbos and the Festivals are "a memorial to the deliverance  
from Egypt."<sup>7</sup> Indeed, Pesach is the foundation<sup>8</sup> of them all.

The Three Festivals are bound together by a shared  
content and by features and laws which apply equally to  
all three. At the same time, however, each of them possess-  
es specific features, laws and customs which give each  
~~each~~ of them a distinct character and designation: Pesach -  
the Festival of Our Liberation;<sup>9</sup> Shovuos - the Festival of  
the Gift of Our Torah; and Succos - the Festival of Our

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Rejoicing - over and above the joy shared by all three festivals (mo'adim l'simcho). <sup>10</sup>

The essence of Shabbos and Yom-Tov is that - in addition to the holiness of Shabbos and the joy of Yom-Tov permeating these days - their holiness and <sup>joy</sup> inspiration can be extended into the ordinary weekdays, to permeate <sup>it</sup> the day-to-day life of every Jew, man, woman, and child, throughout the year.

The current year (5749) has a special distinction: It is a Leap Year <sup>12</sup> ~~(in our Jewish Calendar)~~ - a year that has an extra <sup>13</sup> (intercalated) month, whereby the Pesach festival attains perfect stature as Chag Ho'oviv, the Spring Festival.

All the above-mentioned (and many more unmentioned here) features contain numerous general and specific instructive lessons - from sublime ideas to practical actions <sup>14</sup> - for the festival days themselves as well as for all days ahead throughout the year. On several aspects we will dwell briefly in our following remarks.

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The subject matter of the Leap Year is generally familiar to many. We have had many occasions <sup>15</sup> to discuss it, inasmuch as the Leap Year is not a rare phenomenon. It occurs? appears? <sup>16</sup> seven times in the course of every 19-years' cycle, which ensures that Pesach should occur every year in the Spring season, <sup>17</sup> as specified by the Torah. The intercalation (ibbur) is necessary, since "our people Israel count the annual months by the moon," <sup>18</sup> and inasmuch as the lunar year

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is by a number of days<sup>19</sup> shorter than the solar year, the added month in every second or third year<sup>20</sup> "balances" the account.

Not so well known, however, is ~~a hidden aspect~~<sup>The "instruction"</sup> of the Leap Year, namely, the linkage of "sun" and "moon"<sup>21</sup> which are two dissimilar ~~bodies~~<sup>creations</sup>: the sun is day, the moon is night; <sup>22</sup> the sun radiates its own light, the moon reflects the sun's light; <sup>23</sup> sun and moon have their own specific functions, <sup>24</sup> and they act in their own time.

In the realm of the spiritual and the symbolic, the sun is characterized as mashpia (benefactor), while the moon is the mekabel (beneficiary); <sup>25</sup> "giver" and "taker."

So it is also in human life: there are "givers" and "takers." The giver and the taker are two distinct worlds, and, aside from the fact that one gives and the other takes, they seemingly have no other connection with one another. Thus, by way of example, it is possible for a Jew, while giving Tzedoko to a poor man, to think that essentially he has nothing in common with that poor man; hence, at a time when he is busy with himself, especially in matters of Torah, or Mitzvos, or prayer, when he is striving to shine forth like the sun with the light of Torah and Mitzvos (Ner Mitzva v'Torah Or)<sup>26</sup> - he may think that this is no time to be distracted by a poor man, be he poor in the literal sense, or poor in Yiddishkeit,<sup>27</sup> etc. --

Comes the Leap Year and teaches, reprimands, and demands that this is not so. <sup>28</sup> "sun" and "moon" are not

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two separate worlds, but rather - by virtue of their having been created by one and the same CREator<sup>creator</sup> of the world and both being part of the one and the same universe - the two have indeed a close connection and linkage with one another; moreover, the connection is a constant one, a deep, underlying connection, as evidenced also in nature: the sun never ceases to radiate<sup>29</sup> its light, and even when it is night in one place, it is at the same time day in another place.

Furthermore, it is only through the linkage of "sun"<sup>u</sup> and "moon," of mashpia and mekabel, that the Divine design is fulfilled.

Especially when it concerns two Jews, both of whom being members of the same "one people on earth,"<sup>30</sup> separated only in their bodies, while by virtue of their Neshomo, "truly a part of G-dliness above,"<sup>31</sup> they are indeed all one.<sup>32</sup>

The Leap Year also emphasizes that a benefactor and beneficiary (whether the benefit is material, such as helping a fellow-Jew in Parnosso, and the like, and certainly when the benefit is in terms of spiritual values) are a very closely related pair, who<sup>M</sup>/Divine Providence has brought together - just these two - in a certain place, at a certain moment, in order that the giver should give to precisely that taker, and ipso facto "take" from

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specifically ~~from~~ that taker; and, by the same token, the taker should take from that giver, while "giving" <sup>to him</sup> ~~the other~~, and directly to him; - indeed, giving to the giver more than the giver <sup>33</sup> gave to him, as Torah declares: "More than the benefactor benefits the beneficiary, the beneficiary benefits the benefactor."

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May G-d grant that everyone, in his/her preparations for Pesach, should take a moment to reflect on the above-mentioned point, especially in connection with the pronouncement <sup>every</sup> one will make at the beginning of the Pesach-Seder: "Let anyone who is hungry, come and eat; everyone who is needy, come and share the Pesach Seder, ..." -

And we should all merit to celebrate our true Liberation in its fullest sense - the true and complete Geulo through Moshiach Tzidkeinu, <sup>34</sup>

And the fulfilment of the prophecy, <sup>35</sup> "And of Zion it shall be said --- <sup>36</sup>

With esteem and blessing for  
a Kosher and joyous Pesach <sup>36</sup>

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