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ברוקלין, נ. י.

By the Grace of G-d
16th of Shevat, 5721
Brooklyn, N.Y.

Yavneh
Mr. Joel Levin, Pres.
84 Fifth Avenue
New York, N.Y.

Sholom uBrocho:

know

I appreciate your letting me/about the forthcoming first National Convention and its program, and this is in response to your request for a personal message to the Convention.

I trust that in the light of our conversation when you visited with me, the Convention will center its attention primarily on practical ~~mitzvot~~ rather than on theoretical discussion. For although it may be tempting to discuss and debate lofty matters and ideals, our Sages have taught us in the Mishnah that the essential thing is the deed. The key-note should be on action, as the Wisest of All Men said, "The end of the matter, after all has been heard: Fear G-d and keep His commandments, for this is the whole of man."

And when it comes to practical ~~mitzvot~~ of Jewish life, it is necessary to bear in mind the admonition of our Sages: "Do not engage in weighing the Mitzvot of the Torah, as to which is the least important and which the most important." The goal should be a full and all-embracing Jewish life, in accordance with the Torah, the Law of Life (Torath Chayim), a total commitment not only to Jewish law, but also to tradition and custom, for "Minhag Yisroel is Torah."

This coming Shabbos we shall read about the Revelation at Mount Sinai and the Giving of the Torah. It is significant that after the first two commandments which are the foundation, the rest of the Ten Commandments proceed immediately with do's and don'ts of a practical nature, with things that have to do with our daily life and experience. The emphasis on the supremacy of the practical over the theoretical is further underscored by the precedence of Naaseh before v'Nishma.

With the above in mind, and with firm resolution and concerted effort, I hope and pray the Convention will be fruitful in bringing the message and experience of true and full Yiddishkeit, undiluted and unabridged, to the widest possible circles.

With blessing,

M. Schmerson

(over)

P. S.

No doubt you know that we recently observed the Yahrzeit of my father-in-law of saintly memory (on Yud Shevat), on which occasion there was the customary Get Together. The enclosed is a copy of my opening remarks, which I trust will be of interest to you and the Convention at large, especially as the subject is related to that of this letter.

Encl.
