



Lost On The Way To Lubavitch

It became known to Reb Nechemya of Dubrovna that the Russian government was planning to raid the home of the Tzemach Tzedek in Lubavitch and search through his papers and books to seek out incriminating evidence against him. There was also talk of conducting an interrogation. (Due to the Tzemach Tzedek's ongoing opposition to the members of the "Haskalah," there was constant fear that someone would inform the government of supposed anti-Czarist sentiment in his writings.)

Knowing the danger and calamity if such a thing were to take place, Reb Nechemya quickly called a wagon driver and put a plan into motion.

"Take this letter I have prepared to Lubavitch," he instructed the driver. "When you arrive at about 1:00 a.m., give this letter over to the Rebbe. If he is sleeping then instruct the attendant to wake him."

The wagon driver looked at a clock and noticed that it was about 10:00

p.m. He was surprised about the arrival time because according to his calculations, even arriving before day break would be remarkable.

He set out on his journey and immediately a deep exhaustion washed over him and he fell asleep. When he woke up, he was in Lubavitch and the time was... just after 1:00 a.m!

He went straight to the Tzemach Tzedek's home and informed the *shamash* that he had an urgent letter with him.

"The Rebbe is sleeping. Give me the letter and I will take care of it."

The wagon driver remembered his explicit instructions and replied, "Then please wake him."

"Give me the letter and I will take care of it. You have nothing to worry about," answered the *shamash*.

The messenger realized that he would take the letter and wait until the morning to take care of it. "No. My instructions are to give it to the Rebbe directly and if he is asleep he should be woken up."

With no choice the *shamash* knocked on the door and shortly after the Rebbe came out and read the urgent content of the letter.

The Rebbe instructed him to wait a short while and returned to his room.

Soon after, he reemerged and instructed the wagon driver, "Go back to Dubrovna but make sure to use the side roads that run through the forest; do not go on the main thoroughfare."

As he made his way through the forest, he began hearing the sound of bells ringing and he realized it was an official government carriage. Such was the law in Russia, every official wagon needed to be accompanied by loud ringing.

After some time he noticed that he was riding side by side with the government wagon.

"Halt!" Someone inside ordered, "Do you know the way to Lubavitch?"

"To Lubavitch?" He responded, "You are headed in the opposite direction from Lubavitch." At that moment the idea entered

his mind to keep them away from their destination and so he gave them a roundabout, backwards route that would keep them on the road for much unnecessary time.

His plan worked.

The government officials reached a distant village and concluded that they would have no choice but to remain there, rest up and switch out their horses.

A full day elapsed before they reached Lubavitch, enough time for the Chassidim to get rid of anything that might be misconstrued as incriminating papers and prepare answers to the expected questions.

Reb Nechemya concluded the story by saying: This was all in the merit and power of the Tzemach Tzedek: The fact that the wagon driver had a speedy unnatural trip and that, on his own accord, he was quick to send the government officials on the wrong route to Lubavitch. **1**

(Likkutei Sippurim
(Perlow) #9)