

A CHALLENGING TIME

AN ETERNAL VICTORY

In honor of the yom tov of Hei Teves, the day we celebrate the Rebbe's victory in the *sefarim* case, and a day of utmost significance to us as Chassidim of *dor hashvi'i*, we present the following exclusive interview.

As cited at length in last year's Teves magazine, the Rebbe compared this trial and ultimate victory to that of the Alter Rebbe's arrest and liberation on Yud-Tes Kislev, and established this day as a *yom segula* and *eis ratzon* for all time.

In this spirit, A Chassidisher Derher brought together three shluchim who lived through the story as *bochurim* at the time, to recount their own recollections of how Chassidim experienced these events in the Rebbe's presence. **Rabbi Mordechai Glazman** of Riga, Latvia; **Rabbi Yosef Greenberg** of Anchorage, Alaska; and **Rabbi Avrohom Sternberg** of New London, Connecticut.

לזכות

הרה"ת ר' מנחם מענדל זוגתו מרת רבקה ובנם מאיר שלמה שיחיו מינקוביץ
בקשר עם נסיעתם בשליחות כ"ק אדמו"ר זי"ע לאוניברסיטת אלון, צפון קרוליינא
ולהצלחה מופלגה במילוי שליחותם

נדפס ע"י משפחתם



HEI TEVES THROUGH THE EYES OF THE BOCHURIM





THE SEFORIM THAT HAD BEEN STOLEN FROM THE LIBRARY.

Let's start from the beginning. The first time the Rebbe mentioned the issue of the sefarim was during the farbrengen of Yud-Beis Tammuz 5745. What are your recollections from that occasion?

Rabbi Greenberg:

To give some context to the story, let me say a few words about the change that we felt and the difference in the atmosphere that occurred with the onset of the mishpat.

I came to the Rebbe from Eretz Yisroel in 5742. In my mind, 5742, '43, '44, and '45 were one period of time; and from Yud-Beis Tammuz 5745 on, it was as if there was an entirely new Lubavitch.

The early years of the "Mems" (5740s) were exceptionally *geshmake* years. The Rebbe's farbrengens were long and beautiful, and they were held much more often than before—almost every Shabbos.

The Rebbe's reach was global. The weekday farbrengens were broadcast live on television and the Rebbe spoke openly to the non-Jewish world about *sheva mitzvos b'nei Noach*. The campaigns that the Rebbe initiated were of global proportions - Tzivos Hashem, *Sifrei Torah Haklali'im*, Rambam, etc.

On the one hand, Chassidim, and especially the bochorim, felt less of a personal connection with the Rebbe. There was no more personal *yechidus*, 'dollars' had not yet begun, and the only time one could come in close contact with the Rebbe was by panim, lekach, kos shel brocha. But on the

other, the Rebbe's *nesius* reached an entirely new page, impacting the whole world—literally. That was the feeling until Yud-Beis Tammuz.

With the onset of the court case, we began to feel a personal connection with the Rebbe again. Firstly, the Rebbe began the regular distribution of dollars, which was an opportunity to approach the Rebbe. Additionally, the entire experience brought about a sense of closeness between Chassidim and the Rebbe, as we shall explain later on.

Rabbi Sternberg:

In the days preceding the farbrengen of Yud-Beis Tammuz 5745, I became aware that Agudas Chassidei Chabad had been called in to the Rebbe for a *yechidus*. At the time we didn't know that it was Agudas Chassidei Chabad; rather we knew that a select group of *Chassidim* were called into the Rebbe's room on Rosh Chodesh Tammuz.

The reason I knew about it was not because it was the talk of town, at least not among my age-group of friends—I was fifteen at the time—but rather because my grandfather, Rabbi Zalman Gurary, was among those who were called in. He didn't speak to us about the *yechidus*; he just said that the Rebbe was going to talk about the subject discussed in the *yechidus* at the Yud-Beis Tammuz farbrengen.

While the *yechidus* wasn't public knowledge and there were various layers to what people knew, there was an awareness amongst some Chassidim that something major was going to happen during the Yud-Beis Tammuz farbrengen.

When the Rebbe spoke at the farbrengen, I immediately understood what the Rebbe was referring to. Even those who didn't grasp the meaning initially, understood within a day or two, after hearing the Rebbe spoke about it at the *yechidus klolis* on the eve of 15 Tammuz, and then again at the farbrengen the next day.

Rabbi Glazman:

As an example of the type of shock it was, many bochorim didn't go to sleep

We felt like we are sitting in the Rebbe's dining room, *un er gist ois di hartz* to his children, about a deep and painful issue...

the night after the Yud-Beis Tammuz farbrengen. First it was decided that we have to watch over the library, so that no one comes to steal—the Rebbe had just spoken about the library, and technically the perpetrator could return that very night and continue removing books!

We didn't know the details of the story yet, which *sefarim* had been stolen and from where. The Rebbe had mentioned the Baal Shem Tov's siddur, which we knew was located in the Frieddiker Rebbe's room, so we watched over the library located in the Frieddiker Rebbe's room. We would sit for full nights, learning *b'chavrusa*, in the hallway above *Gan Eden Hatachton*. This went on for a few weeks.

During the *yechidus klolis* to the guests that had come to spend Yud-Beis Tammuz with the Rebbe, the Rebbe asked that a property should be bought and a building should be built in Kfar Chabad, which will bear the name of the Frieddiker Rebbe.

The next day, on Tes-Vov Tammuz, the Rebbe held another farbrengen, during which he spoke at length about the issue, and used terms that he hadn't during the farbrengen of Yud-Beis Tammuz.

However, even after these three *sichos*, the sharpest of all had yet to come:

On Shabbos Parshas Pinchas there was a very long farbrengen. The Rebbe would usually speak while looking directly forward, but during the *sicha* about the *sefarim*, he turned his head to his left side. I stood to the far right of the Rebbe's farbrengen place, so when the Rebbe turned toward his left and spoke quietly, I wasn't able to hear well. Additionally, the Rebbe sat completely back on his chair, which was very unusual, and his hand was on top of the table—also unusual for a farbrengen—banging at times, while speaking about the *sefarim*.

Rabbi Greenberg:

That Shabbos, was a relatively empty Shabbos, since many *bochurim* had left to the camps. During the farbrengen, when the Rebbe once again spoke about the *sefarim*, it was in a most extraordinary and heartfelt



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BARUCHEZAGUI

THE FRIEDDIKER REBBE'S YECHIDUS ROOM ON THE SECOND FLOOR OF 770, WHICH CONTAINED SOME OF THE MOST PRECIOUS CHAFOTZIM OF THE LIBRARY, INCLUDING THE BAAL SHEM TOV'S SIDUR.

way. The feeling we had was that we are sitting in the Rebbe's dining room, *un er gist ois di hartz* to his children about a deep and painful issue that was confronting Lubavitch.

The sight of the Rebbe's pain at that farbrengen is too difficult to describe. The Rebbe spoke out with an expression that spelled sadness and disbelief, that "I try to prepare a Rashi, but I can't concentrate

because I'm thinking what's going to be with the *binyan* [770]!"

Since the Rebbe was going through a very difficult time, and we saw how it affected the Rebbe with personal *agmas nefesh*, many of the *bochurim* who were in 770 during those years developed a special feeling of closeness to the Rebbe; something that the *bochurim* in 770 in the years before then probably didn't experience, since in their years everything was relatively calm, and there were no extraordinary issues.

The *agmas nefesh* and the pain that we saw during those *farbrengens* was something that we never saw before. We all knew that it was about the essence of the Rebbe's *nesius*. It wasn't about *mihu yehudi* or *shtachim*, or some other issue which we knew that the Rebbe, as *manhig Yisrael*, was dealing with.

This issue was so personal, and about the Rebbe himself, that it had a profound effect on us. It pained us terribly that the Rebbe, who dedicates day and night to strengthening and spreading Yiddishkeit and taking care of people from all corners of the world, is suddenly being disturbed so terribly by this issue that he feels unable to prepare a *sicha* on Rashi, and must turn to the Chassidim and pour his heart out about it.

We were also able to notice how this entire *parsha* negatively impacted the Rebbe's health.

During the months following Yud-Beis Tammuz, there were nonstop *farbrengens* in 770 continuously discussing the situation.



A NOTE FROM AGUCH DATED ROSH CHODESH KISLEV 5746 REPORTING TO THE REBBE ON THE HACHLOTOS THAT CHASSIDIM UNDERTOOK IN THE WAKE OF THE COURT CASE.

SICHA OF 15 TAMMUZ 5745

This issue lies on the shoulders of all of the Chassidim, since a *sefer* of a Yid, and even more so, a *nosi*, is a part of his life! His life does not consist of the bread he eats or the water he drinks, etc. but his spiritual life. For this is what the Alter Rebbe rules in *Igeres Hakodesh*, explaining that his life is the *emunah*, *ahavah*, and *yirah*. From where does the *tzaddik* take the *hisbonenus* for *emunah*, or *ahavah* and *yirah*? He takes them from the *sefarim* he studies!

And here all is silent; people are taking walks, learning Chassidus, learning the Chassidus of the Friediker Rebbe. They see what is going on but no one says anything!

...I give it over to every Chossid and all of the Chassidim *ad sof kol hadoros*! As I said before, I have done my part; I have spoken in this regard three times, and I have said privately that they should know that they are bothering—*zei tschepen zich*—with the Friediker Rebbe, the *nosi hador*, and with every Chossid and all of the Chassidim *ad sof kol hadoros*!

We felt that there was a fire burning in 770; a fire of a struggle for the Rebbe, and a fire of deep profound feeling for the Rebbe's pain. Everyone felt that this was a *milchama* of *Amalek* and *klipah*; *es hut gebrent*!

What do you remember from the period between Yud-Beis Tammuz and the onset of the trial?

Rabbi Sternberg:

At the time, as young *bochurim*, we didn't know what we could do. Beyond seeing the major *agmas nefesh* that the Rebbe was going through and saying Tehillim, we didn't know very much about what

was going on during the summer months following Yud-Beis Tammuz.

If I remember correctly, I became aware that there is an imminent court case, perhaps shortly after Tishrei. As Kislev came, we became more and more aware of the situation.

During that Tishrei (5746), we saw that things were beginning to change in the Rebbe's *hanhaga*. Throughout Tishrei, the Rebbe said a number of *maamarim*, the last one taking place on Shabbos Bereishis. During the Shabbos farbrengens in following weeks, however, the Rebbe only recited *maamarim k'ein sicha* (the content of a *maamar* but in a tone similar to a *sicha*). We didn't think much of it, since during those years, the *maamarim* during Shabbos farbrengens would be *k'ein sicha* more often than not.

When the farbrengen of Yud-Tes Kislev came around, and then too, the Rebbe did not say a *maamar* with a *niggun* prior, it came as a big shock; we understood that something serious was going on.

At the same time, we witnessed special *giluyim*. In the end of Cheshvan the Rebbe was *magiah* the *maamar* “*V'avraham Zaken*,” which came as a total surprise¹.

I remember during the Rosh Chodesh Kislev *seudas hoda'ah* that Rabbi Meir Harlig organized, a few of the members of Agudas Chassidei Chabad—Rabbi Moshe Pinchas Katz, and perhaps Rabbi Mordechai Mentlick too—shared with the Chassidim what had happened during the *yechidus* that had taken place a few days earlier. They recounted how the Rebbe had banged his hand on the wall and emphasized that this wasn't just about the seforim from the library, but a *milchamah* against the Frierdiker Rebbe, the Rebbe Rashab, and went on and named all the rabbeim until the Baal Shem Tov.

This was the first time that I heard it spoken about in public, in such an open forum, in front of a packed shul. Up until then, there had been quiet meetings and discussions, but never in such a public way. The words spoken that night had a tremendous effect on the audience.

During the days leading up to the court case, there was a possibility that the Rebbe would be asked to give testimony for the court. What can you tell us about that period?

Rabbi Greenberg:

In the days leading up to the ruling on this issue, we felt a terrible fright; we felt as if we were going back to the days of the Alter Rebbe. It seemed, in our imagination at least, the fact that the Rebbe, who is the *nasi hador*, will be forced to testify, was almost akin to arrest, *r"l*; the thought was incomprehensible.

Therefore, when the news came on Yud-Gimmel Kislev that the Rebbe is not going to testify, the *simcha* was out of this world. In my mind it was much more than the entire *simcha* of Hei Teves. As

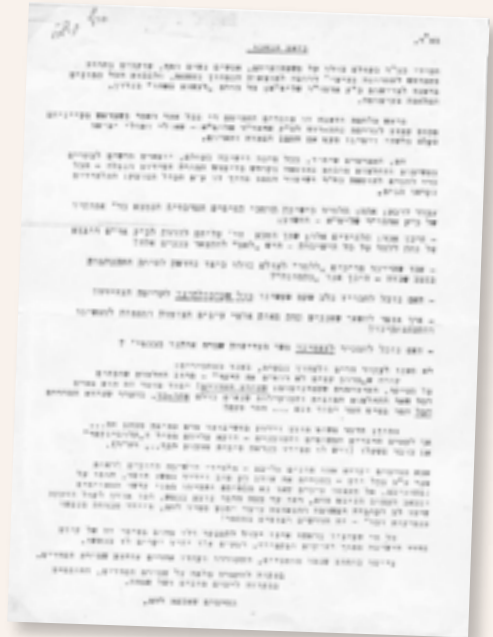
much as the *simcha* on Hei Teves was bigger and more established, the *simcha* on Yud-Gimmel Kislev was in a way much stronger, due to the terrible foreboding of a bad outcome that we had felt beforehand.

We danced and said *l'chaim* that entire day and night, and on the next night, Rabbi Avraham Shemtov, who was very involved in the preparation and presentation of the case, came to farbreng with us. It was only during that farbrengen that the realization of what had happened began to sink in, and we farbrenged joyously through the night.

Rabbi Sternberg:

When we heard that the court would rule on the issue of the Rebbe's testimony on Yud-Gimmel Kislev, the Chassidim accepted a half-day fast upon themselves.

At 11 o'clock in the morning, we heard that the Rebbe would not have to testify. We immediately began dancing and a whole



A NOTE DATED WINTER 5746 CIRCULATED AMONGST THE BOCHURIM ENCOURAGING THEM TO ACCEPT HACHLOTOS TOVOS UPON THEMSELVES.

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string of celebrations began. First, that night there was a farbrengen in Oholei Torah, then the next night Rabbi Avraham Shemtov farbrenged in the small *zal*.

Even after Rabbi Shemtov left the farbrengen—at two or three in the morning—we continued sitting for the rest of the night. Farbrengens were also held every night throughout the following week.

Rabbi Greenberg:

When I think about the events of Yud-Gimmel Kislev, then three weeks of the court case—beginning with the farbrengen of Yud-Tes Kislev—culminating with the events of Zos Chanukah, those three weeks of the *mishpat* had an immense impact on us. We really became connected to the Rebbe by living through this entire period of time in his presence.

Almost every day of the court case the Rebbe went to the Ohel. When the Rebbe would go to the Ohel, he would fast until he got back, usually in the evening, which meant that the Rebbe fasted for most of the days during those three weeks. Meanwhile we, the *bochurim*, would go to court, where we would sit quietly and with discipline, listening closely to the proceedings. Of course, many older chassidim would also come to the court, like Rabbi Mordechai Mentlick, who would sit during the entire proceeding with a *kapota* and *gartel*. Those *bochurim* who understood English would jot down notes, which they would pass on to us foreigners. The courtroom was set

up almost like a shul, filled mostly with Lubavitchers; men—who were the majority of the crowd—on one side, and woman on the other.

We filled up the room to the point that there was almost no space left for anyone else, and the opposing side requested that the judge ban us from attending. The judge responded that he has no reason to do so; on the contrary, he said, they are sitting so respectfully...

Each night the bochurim would farbreng, and overall, there was an immense feeling that each and every one of us is fighting for the Rebbe, our father.

Then came Chanukah; Zos Chanukah was a milestone, it was history *mamash*.

That year Zos Chanukah was on a Sunday. Earlier during Chanukah, the Rebbe asked that the Chassidim should farbreng so a farbrengen was arranged for Motzoei Shabbos, the eve of Zos Chanukah. On Shabbos afternoon, the Rebbe held a farbrengen.

Then, towards the end of the farbrengen, the Rebbe surprised everyone and said that he is going to farbreng on Motzaei Shabbos and that the Chassidim should farbreng instead on Sunday morning. That was unheard of; it never happened in 770 before, that a farbrengen should start in the morning and go on all day.

The next morning we began farbrenging, and we continued throughout the day until the Rebbe returned from the Ohel and came



LIBRARY OF AGUDAS CHASIDEI CHABAD



RABBIS SHOLOM BER LEVINE AND YITZCHOK WILHELM REVIEW THE DOCUMENTS TO BE USED IN THE COURT-CASE.

in for *mincha* and *maariv*. After *maariv* we heard that the Rebbe would soon come in for yet another *farbrengen*.

That night 770 looked as it usually did after a whole night of *farbrenging*. When the Rebbe came in, there was such excitement in the room; the crowd was after *l'chaim*, it was like *Simchas Torah*.

Then, during the *farbrengen*, the Rebbe compared the situation to Yud-Tes Kislev, and spoke about the *taanos limalah*. In our eyes it took the *mishpat* to a much higher level².

There was a full year in between the trial and the victory on Hei Teves; can you share with us what exactly took place during that period?

Rabbi Sternberg:

Throughout the long wait, the *sefarim* were constantly on our minds. We were always imagining to ourselves what the celebration would look like, when we finally arrived at *didan notzach*.

On Shabbos Mevorchim Adar Sheni, when the Rebbe came down to shul on Friday night, we saw that he was in terrible pain. Before the end of *maariv*, the *bochurim*

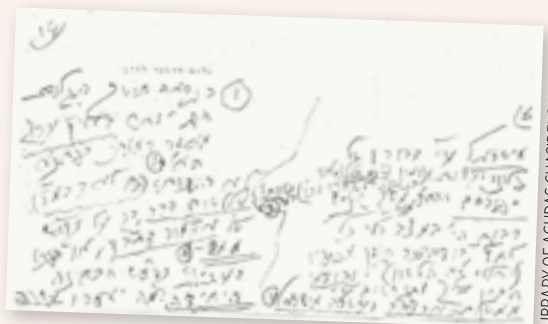
set up tables along the *shvil* so the Rebbe would be able to lean on them on his way out. The next morning it was decided that *shacharis* would take place in the small *zal*.

But despite the pain, the Rebbe came down to *farbreng*, and said an unusually long and profound *hadran* on Rambam—for about an hour and a half—in honor of the *siyum harambam* on the second cycle, which took place during that period.

Rabbi Greenberg:

That year was a very stressful period; we constantly *farbrenged*, sitting for entire nights discussing what will be, when is it going to be, will it be a full victory, etc. The judge had said it will take three months for a verdict to come out, then he postponed it for another month and then another month. Meanwhile we were losing our patience; we didn't know what was going on.

At the time, rumors were



SOME OF THE REBBE'S HANDWRITTEN NOTES TO RABBI SHOLOM BER LEVINE, INSTRUCTING HOW TO PROCEED WITH THE COURT CASE.

LIBRARY OF AGUDAS CHASIDEI CHABAD

circulating that courts side more often with the individual against corporations, and therefore there is a strong possibility that the ruling will not be in our favor. This was despite there being all the proofs in the world for our case, and Rabbi Berel Levin producing over 10,000 documents from the library. We were equally concerned about how the non-Jews at the court will view this; for after all, they may not grasp what a Rebbe is, etc.

During this same period, the Rebbe spoke at farbrengen after farbrengen, with the biggest *shturem*, about the importance of going on shlichus and building *Batei Chabad*. The Rebbe spoke, most significantly on Zos Chanukah and on Hei Teves, that the claim of the opposing side that Chabad is not active should be answered by adding and doing more activities of *hafatzas hamaayanos*, to the point that it will be incomparably more - (באין ערוך) than before. It was at that period that the book of recording the Chanukah menorah lightings of Chaunkah 5746—Let There Be Light—was published at the Rebbe’s request,

and many other new initiatives were started as well.

Rabbi Glazman:

For that entire year we lived with it. At every *chasunah* that took place then, the *chossan* would speak about it; there was even a *bochur* that was constantly collecting *mashke* for when the *didan notzach* would happen; and there were others who said Tehillim every day. Everyone was anxiously awaiting the outcome.

The Rebbe’s *sichos* during that period, in which he spoke time and again about shlichus, had a tremendous effect on the *bochurim*. It is safe to say that ninety percent of the *bochurim* my age that were in 770 during this period went on shlichus.



THE ALBUM “LET THERE BE LIGHT”, PRINTED AT THE REBBE’S BEHEST, HIGHLIGHTING CHABAD’S ACTIVITIES OF CHANUKAH 5746.



SOME OF THE HISTORICAL DOCUMENTS USED FOR THE COURT CASE.
LIBRARY OF AGUDAS CHASIDEI CHABAD

Rabbi Greenberg:

It wasn't just because of the Rebbe's talk; it was because of the personal feeling that people felt for the Rebbe, so what the Rebbe said affected them in such a deep way. The Rebbe had spoken many times about shlichus, but nevertheless some people still felt that shlichus was not necessarily a way of life for every Chossid. During the years of the *mishpat*, however, *the oilam hot zich ufgehoiben*—we were uplifted—specifically as a result of the way the Rebbe shared this struggle with us. We developed that deep connection; we connected so strongly with the Rebbe that even the 'regular' guys felt the need to go on shlichus.

On Yud-Alef Nissan that year, the Rebbe didn't farbreng as he usually did. Instead, when he came back from the Ohel, he started distributing dollars. There had been a number of occasions during the winter that the Rebbe had suddenly began giving out dollars, and whoever was in 770 then had merited to receive them; but this is

when the Rebbe started giving out dollars on a weekly basis.

It was a long year of waiting and waiting. Yud-Tes Kislev 5747 came closer and we were sure that by then the victory would be sealed, for that had been the day—*b'hashgacha pratis*—that the court case had begun the previous year, and it was a day of *nitzachon* for Chassidim in general. However, we were sorely disappointed. At the time, the new Rabbonim had been installed in Crown Heights. One of their first actions was to sign a *kol koreh* encouraging all *anash* to come and say the whole Tehillim on Yud-Tes Kislev morning.

That year Yud-Tes Kislev fell out on a Sunday, and the whole Crown Heights came to 770. The shul was packed, and everyone recited the entire Tehillim together.

Then, by the farbrengen, we saw from the Rebbe that *didan notzach* was imminent. At the end of the farbrengen, the Rebbe urged the building of more and more *Batei Chabad*, saying that it should be in a manner of "*Didan notzach, holech v'kovesh*, to the last corners of the world." That gave us a feeling that victory isn't too far away.

Let's move on to Hei Teves...

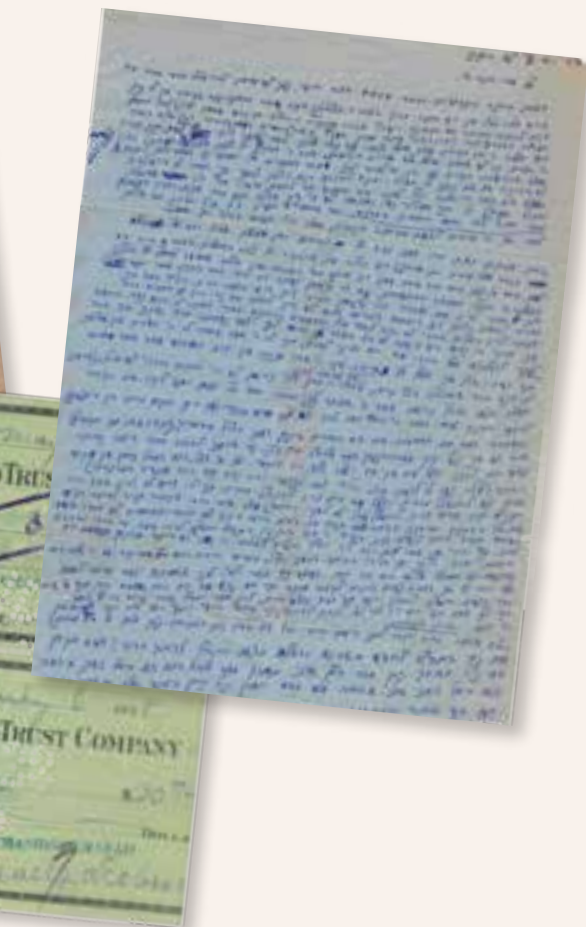
Rabbi Glazman:

On Hei Teves I was in the dining room of the yeshivah, and there was a rumor that there was a ruling from the judge, and it was *didan notzach*. We ran to 770, some other bochurim and I, and we went straight to the *mazkirus* office and asked Rabbi Binyomin Klein if it was true. He looked at us as if he didn't know anything; I think he knew already, but he didn't want to say.

Outside people already started dancing. It was a very small crowd but it was very lebedik; as time passed more and more people came, and the *oilam* grew bigger. Never in my life have I experienced such *simcha*; it is very hard to describe the feeling of happiness and the *simcha* that we experienced on that day.

Later, we danced days and nights, and while there were many other days of *didan*

During the years of the *mishpat*, the *oilam hot zich ufgehoiben*, and we connected so strongly with the Rebbe that ninety percent of us went on Shlichus



notzach victories, the *simcha* of that day was just extraordinary; it was out of this world.

Rabbi Sternberg:

On the morning of Hei Teves we were in yeshiva, preparing for a test. The Rebbe had spoken on Shabbos Chazon about the importance of *aseh lecha rav*, and the need to be tested from time to time on what you learned. Therefore our *hanhala* at Oholei Torah had introduced tests to *zal* age bochorim; for *mesivta* it was already quite common, but in *zal* it was previously unheard of. That morning, we sat down, received a paper, and before we had a chance to write anything, someone ran in shouting “*Didan notzach*”. We immediately ran out of the room and starting racing towards 770. As we passed the store of WLCC, we heard the blasting music, and then we knew it was for sure true. (Earlier there had been a number of false alarms, so we were initially in doubt as to whether this time it was true or not.) When we arrived at 770, people were already dancing outside, and before we knew it there was live music and *mashkeh* on sight.

At *mincha* the Rebbe came downstairs to daven in the big shul. We assumed

something would happen, although we didn’t know exactly what. We were singing *Ashrei*, but many people thought that perhaps it wasn’t appropriate, and that the Rebbe didn’t approve, so they began ‘shushing’ the singing. All of a sudden, the Rebbe turned to Rabbi Groner and asked him for a Chumash, which basically confirmed that there would be a *sicha*. After that, the singing continued unabated.

Chazoras hashatz was said with a *yom-tov’diker* tune, and afterwards the Rebbe said a *sicha*.

Rabbi Greenberg:

Right after the *sicha*, a few friends and I went on *mitzvoim*. Because in the *sicha* the Rebbe had said clearly that he wants there to be *taparu da plachu*—actual *maaseh b’poel*—we took a taxi to the public library on Eastern Parkway to put on tefillin with Yidden. We were there until *shkiah* and then returned to 770 to start farbrengning.

Rabbi Sternberg:

We danced all night, and the next day there was no *seder hayeshivah*. However, it wasn’t clear yet that the celebration would continue. They had announced that on Thursday night there would be a full *seudah*,



THE REBBE LEAVES 770 FOR THE OHEL.



AFTER THE NEWS OF DIDAN NOTZACH ARRIVES, HEI TEVES 5747.

but that day it looked like things were back to normal.

Then, on that Wednesday afternoon, the Rebbe came back from the Ohel, and as usual davened *mincha* upstairs in the small *zal*. Suddenly, after davening, the Rebbe started talking. Due to the fact that the *sicha* was a surprise, there was no microphone on site for the first few minutes. In that *sicha*, the Rebbe spoke about the time being an *eis ratzon*, and that everyone should write and bring in *panim* which he will bring to the Ohel. So many people from all over the world sent in *tzetlach*, that when the Rebbe went to the Ohel the next day, he took fourteen full sacks with him. After such a special *sicha*, the dancing and *farbrenging* obviously continued that entire night as well.

The events of Thursday night had already been planned, and by then, many guests had arrived from Eretz Yisroel and other places. At the *farbrengen* on Shabbos, the Rebbe made a somewhat veiled reference to the

victory, and on Motzoei Shabbos there was also singing and dancing all night.

What stood out in my mind was the fact that in middle of the *sicha* on Sunday, which was Asarah B'Teves, the Rebbe thanked all those who had come to join in the Rebbe's *simcha*. That to us was an indication that the *simcha* isn't yet over, so immediately after the fast we danced again through the night.

Then came Monday night.

In the *sicha* on Monday night, the Rebbe said that with a month left to Yud Shevat, everyone should begin the preparations and proper *hachanah*; every *bochur* must take three tests, which would be submitted to the Rebbe. That whole week leading up to that *sicha*, the Rebbe said a *sicha* each day, and all the energy behind the great rejoicing had been with the Rebbe's encouragement; then on Monday the Rebbe told us it was now time to continue back on our regular schedule.

During those few weeks, the *shemiras hasedarim* was unbelievable. *Bochurim* were



CHABAD'S ATTORNEY MR. NAT LEWIN JOINS THE FESTIVITIES IN 770 IN THE WEEK FOLLOWING HEI TEVES 5747.

learning like they never learnt before, and the general atmosphere was very serious and special.

Meanwhile, we found out that an appeal was being filed. During the entire following year, there was tension in the air. Although we were not nearly as involved or worried as before, people were still nervous about what would happen.

There were a few times over that period that the Rebbe spoke about the *mishpat*; sometimes just hinting to it, and on other

occasions more clearly. On Shabbos parshas Vayikra, in Nissan 5747, was the main occasion that the Rebbe spoke very strongly about the issue, and then the Rebbe gave it over to the shluchim. After that Shabbos, the Vaad Hashluchim got involved, and started dealing with the issues that the Rebbe had spoken about.

At the time, I remember that the Rebbe sent out a bottle of *mashkeh* with Rabbi Krinsky, saying that since the shluchim are here, they will probably *farbreng*.

One of the ideas that the shluchim came up with was to print a book about Lubavitch and its accomplishments around the world, to be able to present to the judge, and to show the world in general.

It was right after Pesach, and a lot of *bochurim* got involved with the preparations for the Lag B'omer parade. The *bochurim* that weren't involved in that, got involved in preparing the book.

When the shluchim wrote to the Rebbe about their plan, the Rebbe wrote to them that such a book would take a very long time to publish, and in the meantime something should come out within *yomim echadim*—a few days—so that by the time the professional book comes out, in a year or two, there will already be something.

The shluchim received many instructions from the Rebbe regarding the book. At one point, Rabbi Berel Shemtov, who was involved in the Vaad, had us call every shliach in the world to create a database of statistics—how many shluchim there are, how many children he reaches, how many institutions he has, etc. We also calculated how many *sefarim* Kehos printed throughout the years. We were planning to include all the statistics in the book, along with a worldwide total.

By the time we had finished, we had gathered what we thought was an extremely impressive list of Lubavitch *mosdos* and a great number of people who participated in the *peulos*. But when we submitted it to the Rebbe, we received an answer stating that basically there is nothing worth publishing. The Rebbe said that there are so many more Jewish children in the world; the numbers

need to be much greater, being that there are so many more Jewish children who do not yet receive a Jewish education. There was still a lot more work that needed to be accomplished.

All in all, that “*yomim echadim*” book took over a year to be published, and was called ‘Lamplighters.’

Tishrei 5748 passed, and then, on Thursday, Chof Cheshvan, the Rebbe distributed the *Kuntres Heichaltzu* of the Rebbe Rashab. The next Tuesday, we suddenly heard that there was another *didan notzach*; that the appeal had been won, and the *sefarim* would be coming back. Unlike the doubt and uncertainty we felt the first time around, this time it was clear that this is going to be a celebration. We danced the whole night Tuesday, and the celebration went all the way to Shabbos, which also happened to be the first Kinus Hashluchim Haolami.

The scene of that Shabbos is something I will never forget. First, the look on the Rebbe’s face on Friday night when he entered the shul for Kabbalas Shabbos. Then the farbrengen the next day, during which the Rebbe spoke in beautiful terms about the shlichus of our generation, and he also said that he will give money towards the debt of all of the shluchim. When the Rebbe left the shul after *maariv*, the crowd didn’t want to leave. For an hour and a half we were standing in our places dancing to the *Rosh Chodesh Kislev Niggun*. It was an unbelievable *gehoibener* atmosphere; it is difficult to describe the feeling and the electricity in the room on that evening.

The next day, the Rebbe handed the *Kuntres Rosh Chodesh Kislev* to all of the shluchim. By then we were already thinking about the return of the *sefarim*, which was scheduled to take place the next day.

At some point, we heard that Agudas Chassidei Chabad had wanted to hold a parade and a massive event with the *sefarim*’s return. But the Rebbe had stated that just as the second set of *luchos* were given בַּחֲשׂוֹי, so to the returning of the *sefarim* should be done quietly.

Nevertheless, we were still anticipating a big farbrengen that night, and Reb Berel Lipsker was collecting money for *mashke*; there was much excitement in the air.

In the morning, we were all standing around waiting for the *sefarim* to arrive, and for the Rebbe to leave to the Ohel. Reb Michael Teitelboim was running around in 770, trying to send anyone he recognized from Oholei Torah back to *seder*. But we didn’t listen; who wanted go to *seder* when the *sefarim* are about to return...

Rabbi Greenberg:

Since the Rebbe had written that the return should be quiet, Reb Dovid Raskin was also going around telling the 770 *bochurim* to go inside and learn. He obviously understood that the Rebbe did not want us standing around when he came out to leave to the Ohel. However, we couldn’t contain ourselves. In addition, all the yeshivos had come in for the occasion, and those who hadn’t yet arrived were in the process of doing so as quickly as possible.

Rabbi Glazman:

The Rebbe came out, and began giving out tzedakah to the children there. Suddenly, we saw the Rebbe walk passed

When the Rebbe left the shul after *maariv*, the crowd didn’t want to leave; we were standing in our places dancing to the tune of the Rosh Chodesh Kislev Niggun, for a full hour and a half!



THE REBBE HANDS OUT “KUNTRES ROSH CHODESH KISLEV 5748” EXCLUSIVELY TO SHLUCHIM AT THE KINUS HASHLUCHIM.



RABBIS AVRAHAM SHEMTOV, YEHUDA KRINSKY, AND SHOLOM BER LEVINE (L-R) IN THE COURT WAREHOUSE TO RETRIEVE THE SEFORIM, BEIS KISLEV 5748.

When a
chossid
learns the
Rebbe's
Torah, and
lives with
the Rebbe's
hora'os,
the Rebbe
lives within
him, in the
Rebbe's
words,
"ad sof kol
hadoros!"

the open car door, towards the *bochurim* gathered around, and he began to speak in very strong terms about the fact that we had been waiting outside for so long and how this is so different than the true meaning of *didan notzach*. The pain on the Rebbe's face was evident; the Rebbe had never, throughout all the years of the *nesius*, expressed himself this way to the *bochurim*.

In fact, as soon as we realized what was going on, most *bochurim* made it their business to disappear from the scene as soon as possible, scattering in all directions to be out of the Rebbe's line of sight.

(The next Shabbos the Rebbe referred to this occurrence, saying that he had been asked why he had to express himself so harshly.)

Needless to say, no one was around when the *sefarim* came back. I happened to be passing by on my way back from lunch in 1414 to 770, and the entire area was empty of people.

All the celebrations that came afterwards were on a much smaller scale. This was due to the Rebbe's words on Beis Kislev, as well as the fact that the appeal that took place wasn't publicized, and the majority of the

Chassidim didn't even know about them while they were going on.

The main day of celebration, which became etched in the calendar of the Chassidim, was Hei Teves. This was actually established by the Rebbe himself, both through the *sichos* that day and in the days following, as well as the next year, when the Rebbe mentioned it by the *farbrenge*.

(Right before Shabbos, Hei Teves 5748, a few *bochurim* had put up a large sign on the back wall of 770, marking the celebration of the *yom tov* of Hei Teves. Some of the elder Chassidim were unsure if the Rebbe would appreciate it due to what had happened on Beis Kislev. In the end, during the *farbrenge* the Rebbe spoke about the *nitzachon*, and from then on Hei Teves has been engraved in the calendar of every Chossid).

Rabbi Greenberg:

In truth, even the strong tone in which the Rebbe expressed himself to us on Beis Kislev gave us a certain sense of closeness. The fact that the Rebbe expressed himself to us in that way gave us a feeling that we have a close bond, like a father who corrects the way of his child. "I told you this morning



BEIS KISLEV 5748, THE STOLEN SEFORIM FINALLY RETURN HOME TO 770.

not to do this,” the Rebbe was almost explaining to us. “Tell me, do you think this is the meaning of *didan notzach*? Does this really make sense to you?”

Looking back at those years, how do you think the story of Hei Teves affects us after Gimmel Tammuz?

Rabbi Greenberg:

Looking back at the years of the *mishpat*, it is clear that the essence of the court case was about the future.

Now after Gimmel Tammuz, we can have a better understanding of what the Rebbe was speaking about during the entire case.

At the time, the Rebbe was constantly emphasizing that “*hu bachayim*,” the Frieddiker Rebbe is here with us and still guiding us. It was not understood why the Rebbe went to such great lengths to explain this concept in so heartfelt a manner, emphasizing it again and again. When the Rebbe spoke of the seforim, he spoke about this point of “*hu bachayim*” more than anything else, when in fact this explanation wasn’t even used in court.

Now we are able to understand what this was all about.

The Rebbe was teaching us that a Rebbe is *nitzchi*, everlasting, and that his *hashpa’ah* continues even many years after the *histalkus*. He was telling us that the future of Lubavitch and 770, and all that comes with it, is still in the Rebbe’s hands, and can continue to grow and become *b’ein aroch* to what it was before, even though today we cannot see the Rebbe physically.

In other words, it was like a *שטר שיצא* עלינו ערעור, which is ever stronger after it is confirmed. We received guidance on how to carry on that *hiskashrus* to times and situations that we had never imagined would exist.

The concepts of *nitzchiyus* and *hu bachayim* were established and made clear during *didan notzach*, to the point that even a non-Jewish judge established—within *olam hazeh hagashmi*—that the Rebbe *lebt*. That is what is so important and special about Hei Teves.

The Rebbe taught us then, and in numerous *sichos* in the following years, that Lubavitch will continue, and that every Chossid has the opportunity to be an extension of the Rebbe. The Rebbe explained that since there are those that do not believe in “*hu bachayim*,” the Aibershter



FIRST ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION OF HEI TEVES, 5748.

places, within *olam hazeh*, representatives of the Rebbe, who act as hands and feet in his stead.

Those *sichos* tell us that the Rebbe lives on through his *sefarim*, his *chafeitzim*, and his Chassidim. When a Chossid learns the Rebbe's Torah, and lives with the Rebbe's *hora'os*, the Rebbe lives within him—in the Rebbe's words—“*ad sof kol hadoros!*” ❶

1. During the following years, the Rebbe would often edit a *maamar* on the occasion of yom tov and *yomei d'pagra*; however, at the time it was totally out of the ordinary.

2. To see more on the Rebbe's comparison between Yud-Tes Kislev and Hei Teves, see *A Chassidisher Derher Magazine* Teves 5775.

12 TEVES 5747

All those that have just declared *didan notzach* surely had in mind that the ‘*didan*’ is the [Friediker] Rebbe *nessi doreinu*. Therefore they must remember that everything that comes as a continuation to *didan notzach* is the *nitzachon* of the *nosi hador*.

...And this is the *hora'ah* from the words of the Midrash:

How can we be victorious over, and eliminate the evil spirit? When Yidden gather together to help each other...and shout *didan notzach*. For without this, they may have not won over the evil *ruach*. But through declaring “*didan notzach, didan notzach,*” as per the will of the *nosi hador*, we are able to overcome and completely eradicate the *ruach*.

This concept is quite simple, and does not need to be elaborated upon. Especially due to the fact that the celebration comes as an outcome to everyone's feeling that the [Friediker] Rebbe, the *nosi hador*, has been victorious in his battle, and they must therefore dedicate themselves even more to fulfill his directives.



TIMELINE OF THE EVENTS CONNECTED TO 'DIDAN NOTZACH'

ראש חודש תמוז תשמ"ה

The Rebbe calls a yechidus with Agudas Chassidei Chabad, speaking for the first time about the stolen sefarim.

י"ב תמוז תשמ"ה

The Rebbe speaks publicly about the case for the first time, and continues to speak about it during the yechidus klolis on ליל ט"ו תמוז, the farbrengen of ט"ו תמוז, and Shabbos parshas Balak and Pinchas.

י"ג כסלו תשמ"ו

Didan Notzach! The Rebbe is not required to testify.

י"ט כסלו תשמ"ו

The trial begins.

ה' טבת תשמ"ז

Didan Notzach! The court rules that the sefarim belong to the Chassidim, initiating seven days of celebration. The decision was appealed by the other side.

כ"ה חשוון תשמ"ח

Didan Notzach! The appeal is overruled.

כ"ז חשוון תשמ"ח

The judge rules that the sefarim should be returned to 770.

ב' כסלו תשמ"ח

The sefarim are returned to 770.

כ"ז תשרי תש"נ

The judge rules that the Rebbe does not need to testify in the case following the appeal.

י"ט טבת תש"נ

Didan Notzach! The final court case ended.

כ"ח אלול תש"נ

The last remaining sefarim are returned to the library.

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