



PHOTO: JEM/THE LIVING ARCHIVE / 104489

GRADUAL MIRACLES

For 18 days, world Jewry held its breath. The Lubavitcher Rebbe was arrested by the brutal Soviet regime, his fate unknown. Finally, the news was released that he would not receive a prison sentence. Instead, on Gimmel Tammuz 5787, the Frierdiker Rebbe was sent to exile in the remote village of Kostrama for three years.

At first, people didn't know what to make of this development. While less limiting (and dangerous) than prison, a multi-year exile was still quite severe. The isolation would be hard and there was always the possibility that the Soviets would change their minds.

Ten days later, Chassidim received the good news that the Rebbe would soon be released completely. Retrospectively, it became clear that

Gimmel Tammuz was in fact the first step to his redemption. Later still, it was revealed that the sentence of exile was itself a commutation of sorts—the original proposed sentence was capital punishment *r"l*.

As the leader of Yiddishkeit in Russia, this would have far-reaching implications. It wasn't just about one person's life; the fate and future of Yiddishkeit, and especially Chassidus, was at risk. The reprieve allowed the Rebbe to continue in his holy work. This is why this day is celebrated every year.

However, this begs the question: Why the various stages in the order of events?

Releasing a prisoner, in particular of this level, was not something

the Soviet government would do in natural times; the Rebbe's freedom was a clear miracle. Therefore, when Hashem made this miracle, why was it in stages? Why was there first a partial release on Gimmel Tammuz, and only later the full release?

More specifically, the Rebbe was notified on Yud-Beis Tammuz that he would be released. However, for bureaucratic reasons he was only allowed to leave on the next day, Yud-Gimmel Tammuz.

And as we know, in a broader sense, the story was far from over on Yud-Gimmel Tammuz. The Rebbe was banished from Russia shortly afterwards. More importantly, many of the restrictions against religion remained in place for a long time

to come. Some of them have only recently been abolished—60 years later! (1927-1991, תרפ"ז-תנש"א, א)

Nothing in the world is random, and certainly not that which happens with the *nossi hador*, especially as it affects his communal work. This all brings us back to the question—why the gradual miracle rather than a one-time, full and permanent change?

Over three millennia earlier, on the same day that the Frierdiker Rebbe was sent to exile, *b'nei Yisroel* were at war. They had finally reached Eretz Yisroel and were conquering the land under the leadership of Yehoshua. At one such battle, the fight went on for hours and the sun began to set. The Yidden had the upper hand, but nightfall would give the enemy time to regroup and attack or escape. Yehoshua commanded the sun to stop in place, and it did. The daylight continued for as long as was necessary, until the Yidden won. Only then did the sun set.

Another miracle related to this day is in the *parsha*, when Aharon's leadership was challenged. Hashem instructed the leaders of each *shevet* to place a stick in the *Mishkan*, "and the one whom I choose, his stick wil sprout" [Bamidbar 17:17]. The next morning Aharon's stick miraculously "brought forth sprouts, produced blossoms and borne almonds" [Ibid. 17:23]. Although for this effect it would have been enough for there to suddenly appear almonds on a stick, Hashem instead orchestrated that things should grow in the natural order (just greatly sped up—what usually takes a long period of time occurred overnight).

In all three of the above stories, there seems to be a reluctance to simply break the rules of nature. Hashem instead adjusted the rules of nature themselves to allow the

goal to be reached without absolutely contravening the natural rules.

The Mishna in Avos [6:11] says, "Everything that the Hashem created in this world, He created only for His honor." The purpose of everything's existence is in order to honor Hashem. This is especially understandable based on the famous revelation of the Baal Shem Tov, that the world is constantly being recreated. Creation was not a one-off event, and now Hashem is passive in creation—rather, for every thing to exist right now it must be created again.

The significance of this, and possibly the reason why the world was created this way, is so that we should realize that our actions really matter. When we do a mitzva, besides the fact that we are doing what Hashem wants, we are actually achieving something tangible. If creation would have been a one-off, our actions would seem less important.

When you have a drink of water and make a *bracha*, the water itself expresses the idea of Hashem's power in the world. When, a while later, you have another cup, it reveals this concept anew. Because creation is constant, the differences of time and space have an effect.

Just as things are orchestrated this way in the natural order of the world, Hashem does the same with miracles.

Rather than *ignoring* the protocols of nature, Hashem utilizes them to fit that which is needed at the time.

Instead of making almonds suddenly appear on Aharon's stick, they grew in the natural order (blossoms, then buds, and finally fruit); just in a sped up process. Rather than Yehoshua avoiding the war entirely, Yidden had to go and fight. They were miraculously assisted by the extra hours of sunlight, but the battle still had to be won with physical effort.

מוקדש
לחיזוק ההתקשרות לכ"ק אדמו"ר

נדפס ע"י ולזכות
הרה"ת ר' שלמה יהודה הלוי
וזוגתו מרת שטערנא שרה
וילדיהם מנחם מענדל הלוי,
ראובן הלוי, חיה מושקא,
יוסף יצחק הלוי, ומרים מארייאשא
ליצמאן

ולע"נ חמיו ואביה
הרה"ח הרה"ת ר' שמחה ירחמיאל
בן ר' מרדכי שכנא ע"ה
צירקינד
גלב"ע כ"ד תמוז ה'תשע"ה



This is possibly also why the release of the Frierdiker Rebbe had to be in stages. Although definitely a miraculous event, it had to have some hold in nature as well. The ones who arrested the Rebbe were the very same ones who ultimately "realized" that they must let him go. But for them to realize this "on their own" took some time. First they had to understand that capital punishment *r"l* was not correct, and eventually that even exile was wrong.

Even after all this, the same government and its policies remained largely in place for several decades to come. Only in the last few years has there been major policy change.

In the past few days, there was even a vote on whether to rename the city where the Rebbe was arrested from Leningrad (named after a leader of Communism) back to its original name of Petersburg (named for the Czar in power when the city was built). Although Jewish life in Czarist Russia had its challenges, it cannot be compared to the organized campaign against Yiddishkeit waged by the Communists. The fact that they are now deliberating a change to the original name is a further step in the Frierdiker Rebbe's triumph, and a *geula* for all Yidden at large. **1**

(Based on *sichas Rosh Chodesh Tammuz and Shabbos parshas Korach* 5751; *Sefer Hasichos* 5751 vol. 2, p. 649)