



DIDAN NOTZACHEN

A HEI TEVES FARBRENGEN

לע"נ
אבינו הרה"ח הרה"ת ר' יוסף מנחם
מענדל ב"ר יצחק ע"ה
ואמנו מרת זיסל דבורה בת ר' אלי הכהן
ע"ה
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תנ"צ'בה



RABBI MENDEL
KAPLAN



RABBI YITZCHOK
RASKIN



RABBI YOSSE
NEMES



The Feelings of a Bochur

RABBI MENDEL KAPLAN

In the summer of 5745*, I was a young *bochur* in the *masmidim* program of Gan Yisroel New York. On Yud-Beis Tammuz, we were in the shul watching the live broadcast of the Rebbe's *farbrengen*. It was then that the Rebbe spoke of the *sefarim* for the first time.

At the time, most of us really didn't understand what the Rebbe was talking about. Additionally, I was very young at the time and it was difficult for me to make sense of all the details. I'm not sure exactly when, but a few weeks later we began to hear "*The vaad of Aguch went into yechidus*" and things like that. Eventually, we began to understand what exactly was transpiring, and only then did we understand what the Rebbe was saying at the *farbrengen* of Yud-Beis Tammuz.

When Tishrei came around, the pain was felt. Everyone had heard of the way the Rebbe expressed himself about the *sefarim*. By then we all knew that we would soon be going to court.

At that time, many people began saying extra *Tehillim*, *minyanim* were being organized, and so on. I remember a *farbrengen* sometime in the beginning of 5746*, our *mashpia* was speaking of the fact that the court case was to begin on Yud-Tes Kislev. We all felt there's something "otherworldly" going on.

When the trial started, everyone was getting on buses and going to the courthouse. Generally speaking, *bochurim* of my age didn't go every day, but we went a few times. The atmosphere at the time was as if we were on trial. It was something personal, of utmost importance to each and every one of us.

Every night in 770, everyone would be discussing the events of that day, trying to hear from anyone who knew exactly what happened in court during that day. "Our lawyer said so-and-so." "So-and-so testified..." and so on. Everyone was very involved. I remember seeing documents from the court that a relative of mine got his hands on. Everyone was eager to hear any detail they could procure. We were not bystanders, this became our life.

We were observing half-day fasts, starting the days early with *Tehillim minyanim*. At this point, the whole saga became a focal point of our lives.

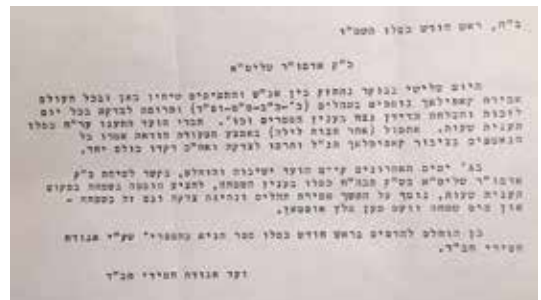
On Zos Chanukah, the Rebbe spoke of the *kitrug*, about the Alter Rebbe during his arrest ahead of Yud-Tes Kislev, telling us how we are to understand what *kitrug* there could possibly be on Lubavitch today. We knew how pivotal the situation was. We knew we were not living through a normal point in time, that something *himeldik* was going on.

During the winter, the episode took a toll on the Rebbe's health. To witness the pain this was causing the Rebbe, hurt us tremendously. There was a strong sense of pain everyone shared.

The first victory was on Yud-Gimmel Kislev. The other side tried as much as they could to have the Rebbe testify in court. Needless to say, the notion of the Rebbe having to go through this situation was unthinkable. When we heard the news—'*didan notzach!*' The judge ruled that the Rebbe won't testify in court!'—the excitement was felt in the air! I remember a few days later, on Friday night, an older *bochur* in 770 was getting together a group of *bochurim* to dance through the streets of Crown Heights to be sure everyone was aware that *didan notzach!*

One incident from that period that stands out in my mind occurred on Simchas Torah 5747*. During one of the *hakafos*, the crowd was chanting '*didan notzach*' again and again. The Rebbe stopped encouraging the crowd, instead, the Rebbe stood leaning on his *shtender* and was gazing deeply at the crowd. It felt as though *hakafos* were on pause for those few minutes. Personally, it felt very frightening.

On the morning of Hei Teves I was at home. My



A REPORT TO THE REBBE FROM AGUCH IN THE WEEKS LEADING UP TO THE COURT CASE WITH THE VARIOUS HACHLOTOS UNDERTAKEN BY ANASH AND BOCHURIM TO MERIT A DIDAN NOTZACH.



RABBI MENDEL KAPLAN AS A YOUNG BOCHUR IN 5745*
RECEIVING KOS SHEL BRACHA FROM THE REBBE.

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father called and said “Mendel, I hear it’s *didan notzach*.” I vividly remember my feelings when hearing those words. “What?! Really?!” It was unbelievable! Although I was still a fairly young *bochur* at the time, the joy and celebration felt very real, even to me. I ran over to 770 as fast as I could. I was literally shaking with joy when running to 770.

Living through the day of Hei Teves, I say to myself, I know exactly what it will feel like when Moshiach comes. You must understand, at the time that’s precisely what we felt! No one needed any *marshke* to be joyous. The normal state of being at that moment was an expression of the most intense joy one can only imagine. It was a very real and very raw *simcha*. You felt just so happy. No one who lived through that day will ever forget it. There’s no question Hei Teves 5747* was the happiest day of my life!

In hindsight, this was a tremendous expression of *hiskashrus* of Chassidim. The way the *simcha* exploded on Hei Teves, was a direct outcome of how much we felt connected to the ongoings the year earlier. The story of the *sefarim* had become our story, the *niggun* “*Didan Notzach*” became our *niggun*. After living through everything we lived through, our feelings on Hei Teves were like a dam that burst open and the water came gushing out.

When the Rebbe came downstairs for Mincha, 770 was on fire! The deepest emotions of joy were pouring forth from

within everyone present. Many people had driven in from nearby, 770 was full. The *chazzan* sang the davening in a Yom Tov tone.

The next day I was in the small *zal* upstairs in 770, standing right behind the Rebbe during Maariv. After Maariv, the Rebbe turned around and began a *sicha*. Being that no one was expecting a *sicha*, there was no microphone at the beginning of the *sicha*. The Rebbe spoke of the time being an *eis ratzon*, and that everyone can send in requests for the Rebbe to bring to the Ohel the next day. I don’t know if any *bochurim* had the presence of mind to ask for anything personal, or simply wrote that Moshiach should finally be revealed. The feeling at the time was that the *sitra achra* had been defeated.

By the next evening, many guests started to arrive from further places around the world, especially from Eretz Yisroel. There was a big *farbrengen* arranged for that night. The atmosphere in 770 was electrifying. I remember sitting at that *farbrengen* with friends, it was an atmosphere of pure *simcha*, everyone felt happy in the Rebbe’s *simcha*. Everyone was on a high for a week straight, nonstop *l’chaim*, *farbrengens*, dancing, and so on.

After a week of celebrating, the Rebbe said a *sicha*, in which the Rebbe instructed us on how to prepare ourselves over the next 30 days leading up to Yud Shevat. We had never heard the Rebbe speak this way before, about *hachanos* for

*📅 5747-1987, 5745-1985

Yud Shevat. The feeling at the time was that it's almost done, the Rebbe is now preparing us for Moshiach's coming.

The victory of Hei Teves was followed by an appeal. Although the situation was severe, we were sure it was going to be good. It had to be. Thus, we didn't feel pressure the way we did during the original trial. When we heard the news of *didan notzach* the second time, on Chof-Hei Cheshvan 5748*, we were of course joyous, but it wasn't the same as the first *didan notzach*. Hei Teves was raw emotion.

As Hei Teves 5748* approached, everyone was nervous about what would be. Would the Rebbe accept the day as a Yom Tov? Reb Yoel didn't want to give in a *maamar* for the Rebbe to be *magiha* in honor of Hei Teves, instead Reb Dovid Feldman prepared it and gave it in. *Bochurim* put a *hagdasha* on that week's Haoros Ubiurim. As well, a sign was hung up on the back wall of 770. Everyone was very anxious as to how the Rebbe was going to react. At the farbrengen the next day, the Rebbe spoke of Hei Teves, and thus the Yom Tov of Hei Teves was born—*Didan Notzach!*

The Shluchim's Involvement

RABBI YITZCHOK RASKIN

Shabbos Mevarchim Nissan 5747* was during the appeal. The Rebbe spoke of the case with great pain, and said that he's giving it over to the shluchim. On Motzei Shabbos, I received a phone call about a group of shluchim who organized a meeting for the next day in New York. I drove in from Vermont to attend the meeting. At the time, I was on shlichus for only a few years, so I was one of the youngest shluchim present at the meeting.

It was decided during the meeting to form a committee of shluchim, six shluchim from within the USA and six shluchim from abroad. I was drafted as one of the six American shluchim. For almost two weeks we stayed in New York, organizing our plan of action.

Our work was divided in two. One part was with regards to the case itself, to be in touch with Rabbi Krinsky and Rabbi Shemtov, to see that for any help the lawyers would need in preparing the case, such as help with research, we would be there to assist.

At the same time, we were working on the *ruchniusdike* aspect of the case, to inspire Chassidim to see what they can do on a spiritual level to ensure the Rebbe's victory. I held meetings with the *bochurim* of 770, to encourage them to inspire their fellow *bochurim* to add in their learning, as per the words of Chazal "השכם והערב עליהם" (wake up early and spend more time learning Torah to overcome your enemies). Among other things, we printed a

booklet called "*Kuntres Shnei Maamarim*," with the *maamarim Reishis Goyim Amalek* (the last *maamar* of the Rebbe Rashab) and *Basi Lgani* (the last *maamar* of the Frierdiker Rebbe) which the Rebbe connected to each other.

Among the shluchim, we held a few conference calls, to inspire fellow shluchim to add in their *shurim* and *mitvzoim*. There was a big *hisorerus*, everyone felt they wanted to help, so it was channeled to try and bring the Rebbe as much *nachas* as we can.

Another thing the committee felt necessary to do was to print a book in English detailing the Rebbe's position on the *sefarim* case. A writer was hired, and eventually the book "Despite All Odds" was printed. It was a huge undertaking. Most of our work was done quietly, behind the scenes.



THE SIGN HANGING IN 770 ABOUT HEI TEVES ONE YEAR LATER, IN 5748*. AT THE BEGINNING OF THE SHABBOS FARBRENGEN, THE REBBE LOOKED TOWARDS THE SIGN AND BEGAN SPEAKING ABOUT "DIDAN NOTZACH."



The Rebbe recognized the committee, and various things the Rebbe spoke of, the committee facilitated. On various occasions of disagreements between *mosdos*, the Rebbe instructed those involved to turn to the committee.

We regularly wrote a *duch* to the Rebbe, and the Rebbe would answer.

It's interesting to note that during an earlier period as well, while the original trial over the *sefarim* was going on, the Rebbe also requested that the shluchim should get involved:

At the farbrengen of Zos Chanukah 5746*, the Rebbe said that the other side was claiming that Lubavitch is not active *chas v'shalom*. This led to a huge *shturem* of *mivtza Chanukah*. The Rebbe gave this task over to the shluchim.

On a most basic level, it seems that those who will carry out the task of making Lubavitch more active are those who do the Lubavitch activities around the world—so the shluchim were a natural choice.

However, on a deeper level, perhaps it could be said that when a father is suffering, the natural response for him is to want his children to know. Just as it was a few months later on Chof-Beis Shvat, I received a telephone call that the Rebbe wanted the shluchim to be informed of the *histalkus*. We are the Rebbe's children. Thus, as the appeal was going on and the other side was trying to drag it out as much as they could,

the Rebbe wanted his children to understand what he's going through and to get involved.

This phenomenon was revealed as well on Hei Teves 5748*. The Rebbe thanked many shluchim who had traveled to be with the Rebbe on this day. Some, the Rebbe even asked if their wives had come too.

The whole episode of Hei Teves brought out the love Chasidim have for the Rebbe. I remember Rabbi Mentlik standing in the courtroom wearing his *gartel*. He was a Chossid who didn't understand a word of what was going on, but he felt that he had to be there.

Today after Gimmel Tammuz, *zaro bachayim*, there's no question that the strongest way to be connected with the Rebbe is to be on the Rebbe's shlichus.

Although not directly related to our topic at hand, I would like to conclude with a short story about the Rebbe's concern for his shluchim:

When my father was to move out on shlichus to Morocco, my grandfather was very concerned about it. In *yechidus*, he cried bitterly to the Rebbe. At one point during the conversation, he asked the Rebbe, "What will be with the *chinuch* of his children?" The Rebbe responded in a serious tone, "דאס לאז פאר מיר—this, leave to me."

Hei Teves Today

RABBI YOSSI NEMES

At the time of Hei Teves, I was on shlichus in South Africa and it was very difficult to explain to *baalei batim* there the importance of what was going on. At the time, it was really focused only on the Rebbe's pain and *agmas nefesh*, and Hei Teves we were celebrating the Rebbe's *simcha*. Today, I feel the victory of Hei Teves was a pivotal moment in history that changed our lives forever.

A few years after Gimmel Tammuz, I was in Kfar Chabad for a Shabbos. After davening, Reb Shalom Feldman was farbrenging about *hiskashrus* to the Rebbe. "*Hiskashrus* is one thing," Reb Shalom said. "Just as the Rebbe put everything aside for us, we must put everything aside for the Rebbe."

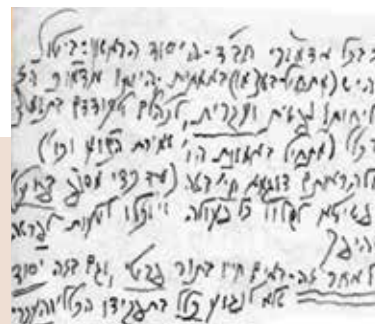
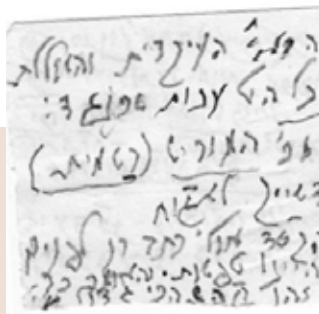
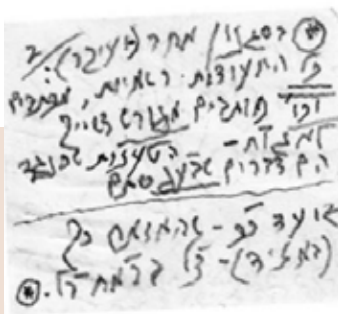
When I think of Hei Teves in hindsight, this line sums it up. During the *sefarim* case, the Rebbe wasn't fighting a war on his own, rather he included us in it. The Rebbe's response to the attack on Lubavitch, on *dor hashvi'i*, was that of "*mashlich chayov mineged*." The Rebbe put everything aside for us.

During that time the Rebbe spoke a lot about the eternal life of the *nossi*. The Rebbe spoke in terms that he never used earlier, the idea of *noch mehr lebendiker*—even more alive, and so on. The victory of Hei Teves actualized this idea.

The *hiskashrus* the Rebbe has with us and we have with the Rebbe today, is an outcome of the victory of Hei Teves.

It's brought down regarding Yud-Tes Kislev, that the Alter Rebbe could have avoided the whole ordeal. Reb Levi Yitzchok of Berdichev suggested that the Alter Rebbe 'burn down' the whole S. Petersburg. The Alter Rebbe went on *mesiras nefesh*, putting himself aside in order for Chassidus to be spread the way it was after Yud-Tes Kislev.

I feel the same is true regarding the story of Hei Teves. The Rebbe could have been *mevatel* the *kitrug* and avoid all the suffering that came along with it. Yet the Rebbe wanted it to play out in a natural manner, with all the *mesiras nefesh* that came along with it. This



נוגע כלל בתפקידו הכללי והעיקרי... "הראי' העיקרית והשוללת כל הטענות שכנגד: מכתב המוריש רשמית דשייך לאגודת חסידי חב"ד. הקס"ד אולי כתב רק לפנים (היינו טיפשות) והאומר כך זהו חילול השם הכי גדול ועד כדי כך שהאומר כך (במידת) צריך להיות ברמ"ח ר"ל. ובסגנון אחר (ועיקר): כל התעודות רשמיות, מכתבים וכו' כותבים מפורש דשייך לאגודת חסידי חב"ד - הטענות שכנגד הם דברים שבע"פ סתם

THE REBBE'S HANDWRITTEN NOTE FOR THE LAWYERS, DETAILING THE ROLE OF A REBBE AND THE ABSURDITY OF THE CLAIM BY THE OTHER SIDE THAT THEY HAVE A RIGHT TO INHERIT THE SEFARIM.

כבכל אדמו"רי חב"ד היסוד הראשון: ביטול היש (מתחיל בע"צמו) באמיתות. היותו אדמו"ר ה"ז שליחות נפשית ועיקרית, לנהלם ולעודדם בתומ"צ בכלל (מתחיל באמונת ה' שמירת הש"ע וכו') ולהראותם דוגמת ח"ב בזה (עד כדי מסירות נפש בפועל) ופשיטא לשלול כל פעולה שיוכלו לטעות לפרשם להיפך. לאחר זה באים חייו בתור פרטי וגם בזה יסוד שלא



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THE REBBE SPEAKING AT THE FARBRENGEN OF YUD-TEVES KISLEV 5746*, THE EVENING BEFORE THE COURT CASE BEGAN.

way, the idea of *hu bachayim* was brought down into our world.

In Chassidus it's explained that when a king is at war, he takes out the most precious treasures that have been passed down throughout the generations in order to be victorious. During the time leading up to Hei Teves, the Rebbe revealed things that none of the Rabbeim have done in the past. For example, the Rebbe detailed the role of a Rebbe on paper¹. Similarly, the Rebbe shared a very personal story of when he asked the Frierdiker Rebbe for specific *sefarim*, reminding the Frierdiker Rebbe of the *tzava'a* of the Rebbe Rashab. For the Rebbe to share such a story is unimaginable, literally *bizbuz ha'otzros!*

Everyone knows of the Rebbetzin's deposition, how she famously said "they (the *sefarim*) belong to the Chassidim," and the impact this had on the judge. Yet, very few pay attention to the *mesiras nefesh* the Rebbetzin had during this deposition, and to speak so boldly. Together with the Rebbe, the Rebbetzin put her own self totally aside for the victory of Hei Teves.

This is *hiskashrus* for me. We owe it to the Rebbe that we put ourselves totally on the side and do whatever we can to bring the *geulah bepoel!* **T**

1. See Derher Weekly, Vayigash 5772.