



לעבן
מיט'ן
רבי'ן

“זתהי הוה יעקב אביהם”

The following essay revisits the entire story of Hey Teves, pointing out that all along, the Rebbe's approach to the issue was more than just a legal battle over the seforim. There was a major ruchniyus/dike aspect as well, alluded to very often in the Rebbe's sichos and ma'anos before, during, and after the court case.

The material collected here is comprised of the sichos and answers from the Rebbe, as well as first-hand accounts by bochorim in 770 at the time when these stories took place.

Let us preface that of the following statements, those quoted directly from the Rebbe (both from sichos or written responses) are obviously completely true and authentic. The rest of the comments reflect the speculation of Chassidim and their own understanding of things, and may be subject to differences of opinion.

DER BEINKEL IZ A GREISER!

The story of the *Yom-Tov* of Hey Teves took place in our own generation, but it is essentially connected to all of the preceding generations of Chabad as well – up until the Alter Rebbe, and even the Baal Shem Tov.

Although the robbery of the Seforim began around Yud Shevat the Rebbe was only officially notified about the theft of the *seforim* around Shavuos time in 5745. However, months before, on Yud Aleph Nissan of that year, the Rebbe addressed an idea which, in retrospect, seemed to be very much connected to the *seforim* saga.

In the farbrengen, which turned to be the last time the Rebbe farbrenged on Yud Alef Nissan, the Rebbe began the second *sicha* by posing a question: It is well-known that one of the worst *middos* according to the Torah (and especially *Mussar*) is *ga'ava* – haughtiness. If so, how is it possible that people gather here and participate in a farbrengen, which is being held in honor of one single person?

The Rebbe continued that the answer should be self-

Based largely on a farbrengen with Rabbi Chaim Shaul Brook of Vaad Hanochos B'Lahak in honor of Hey Teves, 5769.

THE STORY OF
HEY TEVES
FROM A
HIGHER
PERSPECTIVE

Erev Rosh Hashona, 5744

Each year on the night of Erev Rosh Hashona, the Rebbe held a Farbrengen – a way of welcoming the guests that had arrived to spend Yom Tov with the Rebbe.

But this time, something unusual happened: the Rebbe entered the Farbrengen with two new Seforim in hand, aside for his Siddur. The first was the most recent volume of Or HaTorah by the Tzemach Tzedek, and the other was the most recent volume of Igros Kodesh, by the Frierdiker Rebbe – *Chelek Hey*.

In the fourth Sicha, the Rebbe explained that since the publishing of these Seforim happened now its obviously *Be'Hashgocha Pro-tis*. Therefore he will now open each of them and discuss a short point from what is written there.

After explaining an idea from the Or HaTorah, the Rebbe opened the volume of Igros Kodesh and read the first letter.

The letter is dated from the period when the Frierdiker Rebbe was in Warsaw, Poland, under the brutal rule of the Nazis *YM" S*. In it he describes the desperate situation of himself and his family. The letter needed to be written in a language understood also by non-Jews, and in codes – out of fear of the censor, and so that it will reach its destination without delay.

This is what he writes:

"I currently don't have living quarters and find myself by a friend along with the entire family in one room. There I have no place for the books that were lent to me by Agudas Chabad... I would be pleased if Agudas Chabad would take them back."

Meaning, he wished that the Seforim and manuscripts should also be rescued from captivity, along with his own escape and that of the family.

The Rebbe then went on to explain the lesson in *avodas Hashem* that we can learn from the letter, and the connection with the time of Erev Rosh Hashonah.

How ironic is it that a year and a half's time before the eruption of the entire story of the *seforim*, the Rebbe read aloud at a farbrengen a letter from the Frierdiker Rebbe where he explicitly states that the *seforim* belong to Agudas Chabad – the longstanding claim which the Rebbe would later defend in court.



AT THE FARBRENGEN OF EREV ROSH HASHONA 5744. NEAR THE REBBE ARE THE NEW SEFORIM WHICH THE REBBE BROUGHT TO THE FARBRENGEN.

understood, but nevertheless, we'll specify it clearly: the honor in this regard is not of one single individual, but that of the entire movement which he represents; an unbroken chain of Chabad Chassidus spanning over the last two hundred years, beginning with the Alter Rebbe. The one who was chosen to head the movement is not here just to "be in charge," but rather to serve the people of the movement - "לא שררה אני נותן לכם אלא" "עבדות אני נותן לכם".

This is similar to the *Yom-Tov of Simchas Torah*, the Rebbe explained. On the *Yom-Tov of Simchas Torah* the Torah wishes to dance, so we, the *Yidden*, must serve as its hands and feet. So too with regards to Chassidus Chabad, there must be one individual who serves as the unifying force and ensures productive activity amongst all the members of the movement. The leader in our generation is the Frierdiker Rebbe. But since the Frierdiker Rebbe is on high, he needs someone to serve on his behalf here in this world and oversee all the activities of his movement. Thus one individual was chosen to do that job. Who that one individual is, is of little importance.

To better illustrate this point the Rebbe told the following story:

When we were children in *cheder*, they would tell a story of a Rav who was very small in body but had a very prestigious position. When asked how is it befitting that a man so small serves a position of

such magnitude, he answered, "True, I may be small, but the chair is very big!" ("Der beinkel is a greiser!")

The Rebbe explained: the work and Torah of the Frierdiker Rebbe is great and must be carried on; the one who is actually filling the position is not of all that much significance.

Therefore, concluded the Rebbe, it isn't an issue that we celebrate the birthday of one individual, for the main thing is the continuity of the work of Chabad Chassidus – something which is pertinent and very much of concern to the entire movement as a whole!

In a sense, it seemed as though the Rebbe was addressing this to forewarn an issue that would soon arise. Namely, that a Rebbe is not merely an individual person, but one who "belongs" to all Chassidim, as the Rebbetzin famously stated during her deposition.

SEFORIM MISSING

Now for a bit of history:

As mentioned, the theft began around Yud Shevat time. The first one to notice that something was wrong was Rabbi Yitzchok Wilhelm, the Librarian of the Frierdiker Rebbe's library, who immediately contacted Rabbi Chaim Baruch Halberstam to discuss the matter. It was decided that a telephone system would be installed in the library, sending a ring to the WLCC office any time the door to the library is opened.

Unfortunately, the system didn't work, because when the next break-in happened, the phone line was busy transmitting the Rebbe's farbrengen on hook-up. It was then that the crew realized that the thief was someone who knew to come only during the Rebbe's farbrengen, when his entrance would go unnoticed.

Rabbi Halberstam discussed the matter with the Rebbetzin, who suggested that a surveillance camera be installed in the library.

Indeed, a short while later the results came in and Rabbi Halberstam and Rabbi Wilhelm sat together to watch the recording. The thief had his face partially covered but Rabbi Halberstam immediately recognized him and realized that this matter was far from simple.

In a sense, it seemed as though the Rebbe was addressing this to forewarn an issue that would soon arise...

He quickly ran to the Rebbe and Rebbetzin's home and shared the sad news with the Rebbetzin: they had finally caught the thief, and it was none other than the Rebbetzin's own nephew.

THE ISSUE GOES PUBLIC

Shortly thereafter, the Rebbe called a meeting with the members of Agudas Chassidei Chabad, most of whom were elderly Chassidim, inviting also an additional two younger Chassidim, Rabbi Avraham Shemtov and Rabbi Yehuda Krinsky.

The Rebbe spoke with the group about the recent events, stating clearly that all of the *seforim*, *k'sovim*, and the building of 770 belonged to Agudas Chassidei Chabad, and that he planned to discuss

BIZBUZ HA'OTZROS

The Rebbe stated many unknown things about the Ba'al Shem Tov's siddur although the thief never touched it. Perhaps the explanation is: *Chassidus* explains that during the time of battle, the king will dispose of his most precious treasures in order to reach victory. Similarly, throughout the *seforim* saga, the Rebbe revealed many facts and secrets about our Rabbeim that we would never have known otherwise.

THE BAAL SHEM TOV'S SIDUR

The Rebbe related:

It seems as though the [Frierdiker] Rebbe suspected that perhaps one day someone would tamper with or even sell the *siddur*, making a fortune by selling one page at a time. So he sent me to make photocopies of each page!

I always was, and in fact still am, afraid of touching that *siddur*. The [Frierdiker] Rebbe told me not to touch it without immersing in the *mikvah* beforehand. But at his behest, I indeed copied each page so that in case someone would tamper with it, we can track down all the pages.

LOST SLEEP

Another Fascinating story:

When the [Frierdiker] Rebbe began building his library while still in Russia, there were many professors and academics who would come and visit the library, to research various topics. The Lubavitch movement strives to be a light unto the nations, and the [Frierdiker] Rebbe assisted even the non-Jewish personalities who would seek help. Included in his library, the [Frierdiker] Rebbe held some books that are contrary to Torah values as well.

There was one *Chossid* in Leningrad who thought he would act as "*Pinchas hakano'i*" and burned one of those books. After hearing about it, the [Frierdiker] Rebbe summoned that *Chossid* and told him that his act was one of

a "*Chossid shoitte*" and chastised him harshly for what he had done.

Some people think that holding such books is inappropriate and they question the [Frierdiker] Rebbe for having owned them. There are issues that I asked the [Frierdiker] Rebbe about and I was given an answer, while others were left unanswered. Some questions bothered me to the extent that I could not sleep at night. But this issue never bothered me that much. I knew that if the [Frierdiker] Rebbe held on to these books, it was definitely not a problem.

An issue that does bother me though, to the extent that I can't sleep at night, is this story with the *seforim*. I sit at night trying to prepare a Rashi for the farbrengen but my thoughts are constantly disturbed because I'm worried about the building [of 770].

THE REBBE RASHAB'S TZAVA'A

During the farbrengen of 15 Tammuz, the Rebbe related a very interesting personal story, which, under normal circumstances, he presumably would not have shared with the public:

At one point in time, I was notified that the Rebbe Rashab wrote a *tzava'a*. One of the things he mentions there is that some of his *seforim* are to be passed on to his granddaughters' husbands after they get married. Hearing this, I went to the [Frierdiker] Rebbe and asked that the *seforim* be given to me, in accordance with his father's instructions.

I won't say that the [Frierdiker] Rebbe was upset with me for my proposal, but he definitely was not happy with me.

From here we see how precious the Rabbeim's *seforim* were to the [Frierdiker] Rebbe: despite a clear directive from his father to give away certain *seforim*, the [Frierdiker] Rebbe could not bring himself to part with a *sefer* that his father had used.

this issue in public at the upcoming Yud-Beis Tammuz farbrengen. (Bear in mind that in those years, the Rebbe's major weekday farbrengens were broadcast live via satellite around the world. Meaning, the Rebbe intended to bring the issue to the attention of a global audience.)

The Rebbe openly discussed the issue of the *seforim* a total of five times: at the Yud-Beis Tammuz farbrengen, at the *yechidus klolis* with the guests on 14 Tammuz, at the farbrengen of 15 Tammuz, at the farbrengen on Shabbos Parshas Balak, and then for the last time on Shabbos Parshas Pinchas.

The following are some partial quotes from the Rebbe's words regarding this matter, collected randomly from all of the above-mentioned farbrengens. To

better understand, it is encouraged to read the *hanochos* of these *sichos*, as most of them have been published throughout the years.

LIVE BOMBS!

When the thief wished to sell his goods, he wanted to make as much money as possible, so he approached his buyers with a witty proposal: these *seforim* are not just regular books, they belonged to, and were handled by a great and holy *tzaddik*, the Lubavitcher Rebbe. He hoped to fool the buyers into believing that purchasing these *seforim* was a good idea.

But in fact, the Rebbe explained, these *seforim* are like live bombs! When one wants to send a bomb to someone else, he doesn't say clearly that it's a bomb; he

“The last time I used the phrase ‘bli pirsum’ was in 5687”

What is the role of a Rebbe?

Rabbi Yehuda Krinsky relates:

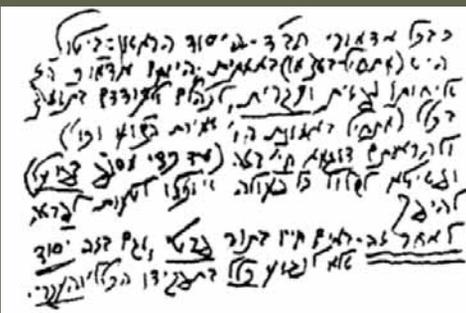
At one point, the Rebbe spoke with me at great length concerning some of the aspects of the court case over the *seforim*. In addition to our conversation, the Rebbe also handed me a few pages of these points in his own holy handwriting. Presumably, due to the importance of the subjects we discussed, the Rebbe chose not to rely only on my memory, so that everything would be clear. An excerpt from those pages:

“As with all Chabad Rebbes – the first foundation is: truthfully nullifying one's own existence (starting with himself). Being a Rebbe, it is his integral and primary mission, to guide and strengthen [the Chassidim] in Torah and Mitzvos in general (beginning with belief in Hashem, keeping [the laws of] Shulchan Aruch, etc.) and to show them a living example of this (even when it requires the extent of actual *mesirus nefesh*). It is self understood that a Rebbe must also withhold all actions that may mistakenly be explained contrary [to the above]. [Only] after this comes the Rebbe's private life, and in this aspect as well, the foundation is not to interfere at all with his general and primary purpose.

“The primary proof which overcomes all the arguments of the opposition: the letter from the inheritor [the Frierdiker Rebbe] which officially declares that [the library] belongs to Agudas Chassidei Chabad.

“To think that he wrote the letter only to deceive [the European governments], (is foolish, and) one who says so creates a great *Chillul Hashem*. One who says this (intentionally) deserves excommunication, G-d forbid.

“In other words (and the main point), all the legal certificates, letters, etc., clearly express that [the *seforim*] belong to Agudas Chassidei Chabad – the opposing views are merely words transmitted orally [without any written proofs].”



“כבכל אדמו"רי חב"ד היסוד הראשון: ביטול היש (מתחיל בעצמו) באמיתית. היותו אדמו"ר ה"ז שליחות נפשית ועיקרית, לנהלם ולעודדם בתומ"צ בכלל (מתחיל באמונת ה' שמירת השו"ע וכו') ולהראותם דוגמא ח' בזה (עד כדי מסירות נפש בפועל) ופשיטא לשלול כל פעולה שיוכלו לטעות לפרשם להיפך. לאחר זה באים חייו בתור פרטי וגם בזה יסוד שלא נוגע כלל בתפקידו הכללי והעיקרי...”

“הרא"י 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 (במזיד) 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.”

tries to convince the receiver that it's a "sweet apple," a desirable thing. Then, at any given moment, the bomb could explode. In a similar vein, the buyers were told that the *seforim* are holy and precious, something they should wish to keep in their possession. The truth is, though, that whoever brings them into his home brings in a live bomb, and only time could tell when it will explode.

Pointing at his holy eyes, the Rebbe said: "I see it with my own eyes. I know that these *seforim* are live bombs, and I therefore feel it my duty to warn everyone: don't keep them in your possession!"

MAN OF TRUTH

Another point stressed by the Rebbe in the *sichos* was the fact that the thief and his team wished to claim that the Frierdiker Rebbe only wrote that the *seforim* belonged to Agudas Chassidei Chabad as a tactic to help bring them out of war-torn Europe. In truth however, he never really meant that they belonged to the community. In other words, they ascertained that the Frierdiker Rebbe was capable of saying one thing and meaning something else, *chas v'sholom*.

The Rebbe decried this notion in the strongest possible terms, painfully protesting against the great *chilul Hashem* that comes along with claiming such an idea. (See the Rebbe's handwritten note in this regard).

HU BACHAYIM!

A vital point discussed by the Rebbe during these *sichos* was the theme of "*Hu Bachayim*"; the [Frierdiker] Rebbe lives on! Hence, there is no room for discussion about a "*yerushah*," that the *seforim* should be distributed amongst the heirs.

Basing his words on the *gemora's* statement *מה זרעו בחיים, אף הוא בחיים* "מה זרעו בחיים, הוא בחיים," the Rebbe articulated: You see a *Chossid* walking in the street? That is "*Hu Bachayim*." So long as there are Chassidim who study his Torah and fulfill his instructions, then he is very much alive.

This is why the [Frierdiker] Rebbe did not write a will regarding the *seforim*. By preceding Rabbeim there were instances where the *seforim* and other possessions were divided amongst the children, as was the case by the Tzemach Tzedek. But the [Frierdiker] Rebbe did not do so, because *Hu Bachayim!*

THE REBBE'S VERY LIFE!

At the farbrengen of 15 Tammuz, the Rebbe said:

"This issue is not one of concern only to me personally, but to every single *Yid* who is a *Chossid* of the [Frierdiker] Rebbe; no matter where he lives, be it here or in Eretz Yisroel. In fact, some of the *seforim* were actually brought to Eretz Yisroel and sold to dealers there in a most audacious manner. Selling *seforim* that belong to the [Frierdiker] Rebbe is a dangerous act. The seller is actually tearing away a part of the [Frierdiker] Rebbe's very life, then and now!"

When addressing the issue of the *seforim* on Shabbos Parshas Pinchas, the Rebbe mentioned that by *hashgocha protis*, the theft began around Yud Shevat; the day of the [Frierdiker] Reb-

The Rebbetzin's Role



On 13 Kislev the Rebbetzin had a deposition in her home. It was her powerful words that "My father and the *seforim* belong to Chassidim" which tipped the scale in our favor, as the Rebbe explained in a *sicha* after her *histalkus*.

We will bring a few short excerpts from her words:

When the Rebbetzin was asked if her father owned anything personal, she responded: "No, not at all; perhaps his clothing. Personal? Only his *tallis* and *tefillin*."

When they asked the Rebbetzin if she had spoken to her sister about the library recently, she responded: "Yes. I told her that I heard people had broken into the library, and that Barry came in there and took *seforim*. My sister said, 'But Barry is not a thief!' To which I responded, 'So why did he go in there secretly?'"

"I continued: 'Our father was a very organized individual. He knew how to write very well and was free to write as he wished. Had he intended to give us the library, he would have written some sort of note indicating what should be done with the *seforim*'"

Then the Rebbetzin said some very difficult words to hear:

"I told my sister: 'We had a sister who perished in the concentration camps and is no longer with us. With regard to this matter, consider it as if I am not here, as if I passed away. Do as you please.' With that, I hung up the telephone."

This chilling statement reminds us of the *mesirus nefesh* performed by the Alter Rebbe's daughter, Rebbetzin Devorah Leah, who took upon herself to give away her very life so that her father may continue spreading Chassidus.

When the Rebbetzin was asked if she had told her sister that Barry could take the books but the matter should be kept secret - "*Bli pirsum*," she responded:

"The last time I used the phrase '*bli pirsum*' was in 5687, when my father was exiled in Kostrama. I had called my sister, who was at our home in Leningrad, and notified her that we were coming home for Shabbos, adding that the matter should be kept quiet - *bli pirsum*."

Interestingly, at a Yud-Beis Tammuz farbrengen in 5739, the Rebbe based some of the *sichos* on the statement that was made in connection with the Frierdiker Rebbe's release: "*Bli pirsum*." At the farbrengen, no one realized that the Rebbe was actually quoting a statement from the Rebbetzin.

be's *histalkus*, and the story broke around Yud-Beis Tammuz, his *yom huledes* and *chag hageulah*. For the one who stole the *seforim*, said the Rebbe, the day of *histalkus* is indeed timely: he thinks that the [Friediker] Rebbe passed away thirty-five years ago and is no longer with us anymore. But a Yid who is a believer knows that such thought is nonsense.

MONETARY COMPENSATION

The following incident relayed by the Rebbe helps shed light on the entire episode of the *seforim*, and how the Rebbe perceived it not merely as a dispute over a valuable library, but as a much deeper issue:

Some of the Chassidim had suggested that instead of going through the hassle of retrieving the *seforim* rightfully, perhaps it would be better to compensate the thief with the money he wanted, and save the *seforim* that way.

The Rebbe strongly criticized this idea publically, questioning in disbelief how a *frummer Yid* could possibly think up such idea.

Clearly then, the Rebbe's primary concern with regard to the *seforim* saga was not a monetary loss. Plainly put, the opposing side refused to admit that the Lubavitch movement continues after the Friediker Rebbe's *histalkus*. They wished to put the Rebbe's *nesius* and the whole of *Dor Hashvi'i* in question, *chas ve'sholom*.

In fact, during a *yechidus* with the members of Aguch a few months later, the Rebbe clearly stated that the fight is not only over the *seforim*, but rather over the "*Beinkel*" as we'll soon explain.

THE MISSING NIGUN

On 15 Tammuz, the Rebbe returned from the Ohel relatively early, davened *mincha*, and then came down to *farbreng* just as *shkia* set in.

The Rebbe began by saying that he wished to *farbreng* in honor of 15 Tammuz, and to begin the *farbrengen* by reciting the [Friediker] Rebbe's *geulah ma'amorim*, which were printed in time for Yud-Beis Tammuz this year.

"As is customary," the Rebbe said, "we'll preface the words of Chassidus with a *nigun*. But since this is a matter which concerns not only our generation but all future generations as well as the preceding ones, we will sing *niggunim* from all the Rabbeim, beginning with the Baal Shem Tov."

It was at that moment that something dramatic took place: Reb Yoel Kahan started a *nigun* from each of the Rabbeim and the crowd sang them all together. But when he finished the "*Beinoni*" from the Friediker Rebbe and began to sing the Rebbe's *nigun* of "*Ata Ve'chartonu*", the Rebbe immediately began with the *ma'amor* (*ke'ein sicha*) almost stopping him abruptly, preferring that his own *nigun* not be sung.

NEW ERA

During the time period that the Rebbe was speaking about the *seforim* so openly, Chassidim observed that to an extent, a new era had begun in Chabad. The Rebbe implemented some drastic changes in conduct. On the one hand, the Rebbe stopped some of the most basic customs, but on the other, he added some new major initiatives, perhaps in connection with the trial over the *seforim*.

The Rebbe ceased to recite *ma'amorim* in their usual tune. After Tishrei, 5746, all the *ma'amorim* were "*ke'ein sicha*".

(This is with the exception of two occasions in 5749).

On the other hand, the Rebbe began to frequently be *magiha ma'amorim* in honor of *Yomim Tovim*, something that came completely from the Rebbe himself.

SIMCHA

Beginning on Rosh Hashonah, the Rebbe encouraged Chassidim to be *be'simcha* in an unprecedented manner. At the Rosh Hashonah *farbrengen*, which generally bore a more solemn atmosphere, the Rebbe instructed the crowd to sing a *Simchas Torah nigun*, and the Rebbe stood up at his place and clapped along in ecstasy. This was the first time in many long years that the Rebbe stood up during a *farbrengen* and this repeated itself several times over the following months.

DIDAN NOTZACH!

On Shabbos Parshas Vayetzei, Yud Kislev, the Rebbe spoke again about *simcha* and that it carries with it the power to do away with all the undesirable issues we encounter.

That night, the Chassidim danced away. It was on that occasion that the words "*Didan Notzach*" were fitted to an old Chabad *nigun* (by Rabbi Berel Lazar – later to become Russia's chief rabbi) which became an instant hit.



LUBAVITCH ARCHIVES

A RARE PICTURE OF RABBI HODAKOV AND RABBI SHEMTOV BRINGING IN THE SEFORIM WHEN THEY WERE RETURNED TO 770 ON BEIS KISLEV 5748.



As a matter of fact, at the farbrengen of Yud Shevat, 5746, the crowd sang this *nigun* vigorously, and the Rebbe actually sang the words along with them in undertone. (This is visible on the video recording of the farbrengen.)

WE WILL BE VICTORIOUS!

During that same farbrengen of Shabbos Parshas Vayetzei, Rashag approached the Rebbe and suggested perhaps settling for a compromise with the opposing side. The Rebbe became very serious and answered loudly, moving his holy hands all the while: “It’s not a fight against me! It’s a fight against the Alter Rebbe, the Mit-teler Rebbe...” (The Rebbe specified all the Rabbeim.)

Rashag told the Rebbe that he really wishes to abstain from testifying and the Rebbe replied: “I will go testify and you will go testify. We will see this matter through until the end, and we will be victorious!”

Those standing nearby heard the Rebbe’s stern words, and everyone around saw the Rebbe speaking passionately, moving his hands fiercely along.

“My thoughts are constantly disturbed because I’m worried about the building of 770”

DEM BEINKEL!

On the morning of 13 Kislev 5746, a few days before the actual trial began, the Rebbe summoned the members of Aguch for a *yechidus* in his room. Some of the members of the delegation still hoped for the possibility that a compromise would be made and the matter would not have

to go to court.

The Rebbe responded very sharply and totally rejected the idea. The *bochurim* stood outside and were able to hear the Rebbe’s passionate response, although they could not make out the exact words. Later on it was told that the Rebbe had said: “Did you say *Tehillim* for this issue? Did you fast? You speak of settling for to a compromise? They want the *Beinkel!*”

Later that day, the court ruled that the Rebbe does not have to testify, and all sensed that the victory had already begun. It was a step in the right direction towards a complete *Didan Notzach*.

FREQUENT VISITS TO THE OHEL

The trial began on Yud-Tes Kislev. The Rebbe went to the Ohel each and every day while the trial endured, from Sunday to Thursday (except Rosh Chodesh). It’s interesting to note that with him during these visits, the Rebbe brought along many old *duchos*, reports written by Chassidim of the Chabad activities worldwide, some of which had been written even in the 5730’s.

NOT ACTIVE?

A very important subject mentioned

by the Rebbe quite a few times regarding the *seforim* episode was the claim raised by the opposing side that (Agudas) Chabad is not active. Although the Rebbe proved time and again how baseless this accusation really was, the Rebbe still called on the Chassidim to intensify their

That night, the Rebbe held a surprise farbrengen where he explicitly addressed the claim raised against Chabad that they are not active, explaining that although this claim is ridiculous, nevertheless, we'll take it as an indication to do even more than until now.

Chassidus in the proper manner, we must take that as an indication to intensify our efforts in *Hafotzas Hama'ayonos*.

The Rebbe also elaborated on the *possuk* of "ותחי רוח יעקב אביהם" from that day's *Chitas*. Chassidim understood that the Rebbe's spirit had been revived, so to

Dancing with Tears

After many years of not doing so, the Rebbe stood up and danced at farbrengens a total of five times during the year 5746. Pictured here is the Rebbe dancing at the farbrengen of 15 Tammuz, 5746, where the Rebbe clapped vigorously to the *nigun* of "Nye Zhuritz". Notice the seriousness on the Rebbe's face as tears flowed from his holy eyes.



efforts in *Hafotzas Hama'ayonos* in unprecedented measures. It was during this time-period that the Rebbe spoke fervently about establishing Chabad Houses in all corners of the globe.

In addition, the Rebbe spoke a lot about printing Chassidus.

At the farbrengen of Shabbos Chanukah, the Rebbe made mention of the fact that some of the *ma'amorim* that had recently been printed were part of a hidden collection of the Rabbeim's writings, which were never disclosed to anyone. That being said, how can we take the tremendous responsibility of publishing such treasures? Here the Rebbe mentioned the famous *moshol* from the Alter Rebbe about grinding the precious stone in the king's crown in hope of saving his only child.

After stressing the importance that everyone must learn these words of Chassidus, the Rebbe concluded: "But even if people won't learn from them, I am not intimidated, I will continue printing more and more, in the spirit of "כאשר יענו אותו, כן ירבה וכן יפרוץ".

These words from the Rebbe were almost a clear indication that a *kitrug* had formulated on high after the Rebbe had accomplished an unparalleled breakthrough in the dissemination of Chassidus.

The Rebbe also spoke at great length about the *kitrug* on the Alter Rebbe before Yud-Tes Kislev, continuing the explanation at an additional surprise farbrengen the following night.

IT'S A SPIRITUAL MATTER

Later that winter, towards the end of Adar I, the Rebbe began davening *shacharis* on Shabbos in the small *zal* upstairs because the Rebbe was walking with great difficulty. Still, the Rebbe came down for the regular *Shabbos mevorchim* farbrengen and said a very long, complicated "*hadran*" on Rambam.

During the following week, Reb Nissan Mindal asked the Rebbe "*Vi filt der Rebbe?*" (How is the Rebbe feeling?), to which the Rebbe responded, "*S'iz mer geistish vi fizish...*" (It's more of a spiritual issue than a physical one).

"ותחי רוח יעקב אביהם"

The joy and celebration in Lubavitch that met the verdict on Hey Teves is well known and beyond the scope of this article. We will suffice with mentioning that the Rebbe, in his *sicha* on Hey Teves after *mincha*, made reference to the *kitrug* raised on the Alter Rebbe, and drew a lesson regarding the story of the *seforim* as well. Since the claim against us was that we are not sufficiently active and don't use the *seforim* and *k'sovim* of

speak, as we had finally emerged victorious.

The next day on 6 Teves, the Rebbe spoke and again mentioned that *possuk*. It was then that the Rebbe declared this time as an "*eis ratzon*" and encouraged everyone to write in requests for *brochos* in whatever they needed. If it wasn't clear enough yet, the Rebbe indicated unambiguously that indeed the *seforim* saga was a heavenly ordeal and the positive ending marked a true *Yom Tov*.

HEY TEVES

From all the above we can discern that the story of Hey Teves was far from a simple battle over a valuable library, but a real spiritual issue which the Rebbe perceived as very serious. The way the Rebbe spoke about the issue with such passion and his refusal to settle for any compromise, as well as the renaissance of Chabad activity the Rebbe prompted in its wake, all attest to that.

In conclusion, let us pray that the *seforim* and *k'sovim* of *Rabboseinu Nesi'einu* which still remain in captivity in Russia will finally return to their proper home², and may their *geulah* bring about the final גאולה האמיתית והשלימה תיכף ומיד ממש! ■

1. Hisvaaduyos 5745 vol. 3 p. 1692

2. See Sichas Hey Teves, 5752