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Providential Slip

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Regarding his imprisonment and {subsequent} redemption on the 12th and 13th of Tammuz,¹ my father-in-law, the {Previous} Rebbe, once revealed the following.² He related how before his imprisonment in the discourses of the Rosh Hashanah — those delivered on Rosh Hashanah 5687 (1926) — he had spoken about the teaching of the Baal Shem Tov³ concerning Divine Providence.⁴ He discussed this matter, although it was unrelated to the subject of the discourse.⁵ (The Baal Shem Tov had taught that Divine Providence extends to everything, even to things within the realms of the inanimate, vegetative, and animal, and to every single detail.) The {Previous} Rebbe declared that if not for his earlier focus on the Baal Shem Tov's doctrine, he was doubtful whether he could have tolerated (withstood the torment and survived) imprisonment.

The Rebbe's remark calls for clarification: The innovation of Baal Shem Tov's doctrine of Divine Providence was, as mentioned, that all creations, even those within the inanimate, vegetative, and animal realms, are guided by Divine Providence.⁶ However, the fact that Divine Providence is exercised over humanity is a well-known principle, one with which all the earlier Jewish authorities concede (even before Baal Shem Tov's innovative doctrine).⁷ Agreement about Divine supervision was expressed particularly for “{the Children of} Israel, the people close to Him”⁸ and for religious Jews. All the more so when discussing leaders of the Jewish people, whose activities impact all

¹ {Of the Previous Rebbe.}

² Quoted in *Reshimot Hamaaser (Likkutei Dibburim)*, vol. 4, p. 1252) in the footnote.

³ The proof of the Alter Rebbe for this from *Chulin* (63a) is well-known. (See also *Likkutei Sichos* vol. 7, p. 63). See *Kuntres Hashgachah Pratis* at length (printed in *Likkutei Sichos* vol. 8, p. 277ff).

⁴ {In the Hebrew original, “*hashgachah pratis*.”}

⁵ In *Sefer Hamamorim* 5687 (Kehos 5741 — published based on an edited manuscript with additions written **in the Previous Rebbe's holy handwriting** —) this above-mentioned concept of Divine Providence is not mentioned. Perhaps it was omitted by the manuscript's author for the above reason, since it was not related to the (discussion in) the *Maamar* - despite the fact that it was said (as is known to be the case regarding numerous *mamorim*).

⁶ See *Likkutei Dibburim*, *ibid.* {See fn. 2 there at length: “...the Baal Shem Tov teaches, it is decided On High how many times the leaf or the wisp of straw will roll over, and to what place it will come to rest...”}; *Keser Shem Tov* (Kehot, ed.) *Appendix*, ch. 119 ff.; *Kuntres Hashgachah Pratis*, *ibid.*

⁷ See *Kuntres Hashgachah Pratis*, *ibid.*, (p. 278ff.).

⁸ {*Tehillim* 148:14.}

Jews, it is certainly self-understood that all of their affairs are guided by Divine Providence. Accordingly, why was the Baal Shem Tov's doctrine of Divine Providence crucial for the {Previous} Rebbe to endure his imprisonment?

Even more perplexing: Why was any emphasis placed on Divine Providence's role here regarding the Rebbe's imprisonment? His incarceration was related entirely to the fulfillment of the Torah and mitzvos, the dissemination of the Torah, the bolstering of Judaism, and the fulfillment of the Divine mission. **Obviously**, every aspect of this ordeal, including the events surrounding the Rebbe, was intertwined with Hashem's will, intention, and providence.

2.

NO BAD DESCENDS FROM ABOVE

On a simple level, we can explain that this is actually what the {Previous} Rebbe meant when he said, “{If not for this, I do not know if I could have} tolerated (withstood the torment and survive) the imprisonment”: Since the discourse had discussed Divine Providence, the Rebbe truly sensed that all the suffering of the imprisonment was orchestrated by Hashem. Consequently, his resilience in confronting his tribulations was fortified.

However, this explanation is not entirely smooth. If the premise of the above explanation is correct, it would have been more befitting to emphasize in his discourse (not so much the idea of Divine Providence, but) the principle that “no evil descends from Above,”⁹ or so forth. Likewise, the author of *Tanya*¹⁰ gives step-by-step advice on how a person can withstand suffering until he reaches the point that he can accept it willingly and joyfully. As our Sages teach,¹¹ “Just as a person recites a blessing for his good fortune {so must he also recite a blessing

⁹ *Shlah* (p. 106b) and in numerous places in Chassidus (see *Tanya*, “*Igeres Hakodesh*,” ch. 11). In *Bereishis Rabbah* (ch. 51, par. 3) {the wording is} “nothing bad....” And see *Midrash Tehillim*, ch. 149.

¹⁰ *Tanya*, “*Likkutei Amarim*,” ch. 26; “*Igeres Hakodesh*,” ch. 11, ch. 22; see *Likkutei Sichos*, vol. 1, p. 284 ff.

¹¹ *Berachos* 54a (in the mishnah).

for his misfortune}.... The Gemara elaborates:¹² “One should accept {misfortune} with joy.”¹³

3.

THE JOY OF SELF-SACRIFICE

In reality, it is clear why the Rebbe had not mentioned **this** principle {that no evil descends from Above} to enable him to withstand the impending suffering of the imprisonment later:

With his whole heart and soul, the Rebbe was invested and devoted to Hashem and the observance of Torah and mitzvos to the extent that his own life was insignificant. It is thus understood that his physical affliction could not have brought him to a state where he would have been unable to endure it.¹⁴ He did not think about himself; therefore, he did not perceive {his torment as} “evil descending {from Above}.”¹⁵

However, on this basis, a question arises: Why did the Rebbe emphasize the hardship of his imprisonment?¹⁶

The opposite should have been the case. After all, the imprisonment and its accompanying suffering, in line with the infamous religious persecution in

¹² *Berachos* 60b.

¹³ Wording of *Tanya*, “*Likkutei Amarim*,” ch. 26.

¹⁴ In his talk of the 3rd of Tammuz 5687, before departing to exile in Kostroma, the previous Rebbe said (*Sefer HaMaamarim* 5687 p. 196; *Sefer HaMaamarim Kuntreisim* vol. 1, 176a; *Likkutei Dibburim* vol. 4, p. 1384): “May G-d give us the necessary fortitude not to be affected by physical suffering and, on the contrary, to accept it with joy....” However, it appears that this was said (primarily) in regards to his chassidim (who were not on his level) to strengthen them etc., as the talk continues “every punishment which we must suffer for maintaining a *cheder*, for studying the Torah, or for observing its *mitzvos*, should reinforce us....”

¹⁵ Like the known story regarding Reb Zushe of Anipoli {who was terribly poor and suffered tremendously throughout his life}, that he wondered why the Maggid sent one of his disciples to him to learn how to accept suffering with joy, saying, “I do not suffer at all that I would {have an opportunity to} accept suffering with joy. I have never lacked anything!” (See *Likkutei Sichos* vol. 3, p. 1081 ff.).

¹⁶ See *Likkutei Dibburim*, vol. 1 (29a) regarding the Alter Rebbe’s imprisonment, that those three hours {immediately following his release} during which he sat in the home of an outspoken opponent, etc., distressed him more than his entire imprisonment. For once he had vindicated his cause... his bodily needs were of no concern to him. While imprisoned, having been in the company of the Maggid, and having heard the Baal Shem Tov, the Rebbe, one can well imagine, would not have minded remaining {in prison} for another three hours or another whole day....

communist Russia, was a consequence of his holy work of disseminating the Torah and strengthening Judaism throughout the entire country. Accordingly, his abject suffering should have inspired a sense of joy because he had merited,¹⁷ through his work, **this** level of self-sacrifice — torment and (the fear of) death for so many days!

This **resembles** what we find regarding Rabbi Akiva¹⁸ who was brutally murdered {by the Romans} in the sanctification of Hashem. As his life was ebbing amidst tremendous suffering, he felt only bliss. When questioned by his disciples about his equanimity, he explained that his entire life, he had painfully longed for this opportunity to fulfill the mitzvah of sacrificing oneself for Hashem...¹⁹

4.

PURSUING SELF-SACRIFICE

To elaborate: In his discourses,²⁰ the Rebbe discusses the difference between the self-sacrifice of Rabbi Akiva and that of our forefather Avraham: Rabbi Akiva declared,²¹ “All my life I was distressed: ‘When will I have the opportunity to fulfill {the command to sacrifice oneself for Hashem...?}’” — Because of its great preciousness, Rabbi Akiva sought out and pursued the chance to fulfill the mitzvah of self-sacrifice **for its own sake**. After all, through self-sacrifice, a person attains the highest levels of communion and unity with Hashem.

In contrast, Avraham did not chase self-sacrifice (as an end for itself). His interest was publicizing G-dliness to the world {as the verse states}: “There he

¹⁷ Note what the Previous Rebbe related regarding the Alter Rebbe, that he experienced great joy over the fact that he merited to sit in prison, and sacrifice his life for the teachings of the Baal Shem Tov and the Maggid (see *Likkutei Sichos*, vol. 1, p. 73).

¹⁸ *Berachos* 61b.

¹⁹ The opposite of pain is pleasure, as is known (*Igeres Hakodesh* ch. 29 (p. 149b); *Siddur Im Dach*, 157a-b; *Hemshech* 5666, p. 107.; et al.).

²⁰ End of discourse entitled *HaChodesh Hazeh* 5700; and at length in the winter discourses of that year (s.v., “*Bereishis*” and “*Vayorech Hashem*”); *Sefer HaSichos* 5703, “Talk delivered on Pesach,” par. 67.

²¹ *Berachos* 61b.

proclaimed {וַיִּקְרָא} the name of Hashem, L-rd of the universe”²² {and the Talmud comments}, “Do not read it as וַיִּקְרָא — he *proclaimed*, but as וַיִּקְרִיא — he *caused others* to proclaim.”²³ Avraham was dedicated to publicizing G-dliness. If this required self-sacrifice, so be it; he would surrender his life.

For this reason, Rabbi Akiva was delighted by the torment of his self-sacrifice. Finally, he reached his goal — surrendering his life to Hashem. On the other hand, Avraham’s mindset was different. When he was imprisoned,²⁴ he was distressed because he would not accomplish the task of publicizing G-dliness in the world.

5.

SELF-SACRIFICE ONLY AS A MEANS

The same was true of the Rebbe, whose liberation we are celebrating: From the perspective of his personal perfection and welfare, his situation, as described above — reaching the pinnacle of self-sacrifice to the point of literal physical suffering — filled him with immense joy.

However, his work was not for (the greatness of) self-sacrifice for its own sake, but to fulfill his mission in this world — to disseminate Torah, mitzvos, and the inner dimension of Torah, etc.²⁵ He was dedicated to this cause, determined that nothing would stand in his way, even when this required self-sacrifice at every step of his Divine service (as we saw clearly throughout his leadership, especially in that country {the Soviet Union} before his imprisonment). It is, therefore, understood why he suffered tremendously from his imprisonment.

Even though he reached great spiritual heights during that time, as mentioned above, it caused him much pain and suffering. This was because the

²² Bereishis 21:33.

²³ Sotah 10a ff.

²⁴ See Bava Basra 91a; Pirkei D'Rabbi Eliezer, ch. 26.

²⁵ See Likkutei Sichos, vol. 1, p. 73 regarding the Alter Rebbe, while he was imprisoned.

imprisonment and the associated suffering thwarted him from carrying out his mission of drawing Jews closer to Hashem and His Torah.

6.

EMPLOYEE VS. BUSINESS OWNER

However, we must clarify further: The Rebbe did not (only) perform this “great work in which I toiled in spreading Torah and strengthening Judaism”²⁶ because it was **his** mission. He did so because it was the Divine will. Since the imprisonment was not his “fault,” G-d forbid, but entirely a consequence of this consummate dissemination of Judaism with total self-sacrifice, obviously, it was the Divine will that the Rebbe should be imprisoned and endure all the concomitant suffering, Heaven protect us. Accordingly, the question returns: How could he have been pained by this?

The explanation: There are two approaches in the soul’s work to fulfill its Divine mission. This is comparable to the two possible approaches by human beings in their earthly work. One approach is that a person does his work as an **employee**: He is indeed totally dedicated to doing his work faithfully, even to the degree that he does it altruistically. Nevertheless, the person is an employee, not **his** enterprise or business. In contrast, when the owner performs the work, it is very personal for him. It is **his** enterprise, his personal business.

The distinction between the owner and the dedicated employee is not so striking during work hours: Both the owner and employee work with complete dedication and diligence. The distinction between them is apparent only later — when the work is completed or at night, between one work day and the next.

Then, when the work is not being performed, and the business is not running, an employee sleeps peacefully: He conscientiously did all he could have done. He feels that the fact that the work or the business is not running as it should be is not something that he can, or is obligated to, help with. His

²⁶ Wording of the Previous Rebbe in his letter dated the 15th of Sivan 5688 (*Sefer HaMaamarim* 5688, p. 146).

conscience is clear. Sleep, though, eludes the owner; he cannot be calm if the business fails.

7.

WHEN HASHEM'S DESIRE IS MY DESIRE

Similarly, there are two levels of souls and two approaches to fulfilling the Divine intent behind their mission in this world:

One approach is that a person is completely dedicated to fulfilling his mission. He is not motivated by his own self-interest but by his desire to fulfill Hashem's will. He does this to the point of self-sacrifice. However, when he has done all he can, and he can't accomplish more, it is inconceivable for him to be pained by this. This is all the more true because "the Torah exempts a person, in circumstances beyond his control,"²⁷ from **his** responsibilities. This applies here in particular since he knows that everything is directed by Divine Providence. Consequently, Divine Providence orchestrated and choreographed this predicament — determining how capably he would perform this work and how successful it would be. Accordingly, there is no reason or cause for pain.

However, when a Jew is connected and bound with Hashem to the extent that the Divine will and intent become **his** will and intent,²⁸ then his work is not (just) a matter of carrying out the Divine mission. He feels that the mission is his personal concern and, furthermore, constitutes his whole identity.

Consequently, even when the Rebbe did everything he could, he felt great pain as an "owner" because the goal was not accomplished completely.

²⁷ {*Avodah Zarah* 54a.}

²⁸ See *Hemshech* 5666 at length, p. 326 ff., regarding the self nullification of the simple servant and of the faithful servant {*eved pashut* and *eved ne'eman*}.

8.

“BUT WE WERE NOT SUCCESSFUL!”

This idea was exemplified in an episode at one of the rabbinical conferences. This particular conference was convened in Petersburg during the time of the Rebbe Rashab, the father of the Previous Rebbe whose freedom we commemorate. In general, such conferences were held in connection with the government requirement that all rabbis and teachers have a certain level of secular education.²⁹ Obviously, all Jewish leaders strongly opposed this decree. However, the government officials warned that if the leader did not capitulate and accept the decree, the government would incite pogroms against the Jews, Heaven forbid. The Rebbe Rashab then delivered a very sharp talk at the conference. After he finished his talk, he fainted. Due to the sharpness of his speech (and also his protest against the government officials and their threats of pogroms), he was placed under (house) arrest.

After the Rebbe was released, one rabbi visited the Rebbe Rashab and saw him sitting and crying. He said to the Rebbe: “Lubavitcher Rebbe! Why are you crying? We did all that we could!” The Rebbe responded: “But we were not successful {in averting this decree}....”

9.

ONLY THE REBBE COULD ACCOMPLISH IT

The above narrative reflects the Divine service of the Rebbe. He was permeated by the Divine will and intent for Torah and mitzvos to be disseminated so that this world would be made into a dwelling place for Hashem. Therefore, when his work was impeded due to his imprisonment (and the continuation of the work was jeopardized), he suffered great pain and agony.

²⁹ See *Sefer Hasichos* 5702 p. 111 ff. for the specifics.

Additionally, and to preface: The meaning of the verse,³⁰ “And the man Moshe was exceedingly humble more than any person on the face of the earth,” is well known — it does not mean that Moshe was unaware of his virtue (due to which he received the Torah at Sinai, redeemed the Jewish people from Egypt, etc.). Rather, it means the opposite — his humility stemmed from the fact that he perceived his superlative qualities. Nonetheless, he believed that had someone else been blessed with these same abilities, that other person would achieve far more, as explained elsewhere.³¹

Similarly, the Rebbe undoubtedly recognized his abilities, for this awareness was essential for him to utilize them properly. He also knew that to disseminate Torah and strengthen Judaism successfully, he needed to personally direct these efforts, as no one else could complete the mission. Accordingly, it is clear how much pain and agony his imprisonment caused him.

We find the same regarding Moshe: After Hashem decreed that “you will not bring this congregation to the land which I have given them,”³² he was pained and prayed profusely,³³ beseeching Hashem to allow him to lead the Jewish people into the land of Israel. His prayers were so incessant that it could have been said about Moshe: “How obstinate is this pupil!”³⁴ It is understood that Moshe’s intention was not for his personal benefit. Instead, his “desire”³⁵ to enter the Land of Israel was, as a “faithful servant,”³⁶ to complete the Master’s (Hashem’s) mission for the good of the Jewish people:

Moshe knew that the Temple’s eventual destruction and the Jewish people’s subsequent forced return to exile, etc., would be linked to the fact that Yehoshua had brought them into Israel {and not Moshe}.

³⁰ *Bamidbar* 12:3.

³¹ *Maamar “Vayaar Ha’am”* 5710 (*Sefer HaMaamarim* 5710, p. 236). And see *Maamar Zachor* 5665, ch. 8; *Likkutei Sichos*, vol. 13, p. 30 ff., at length.

³² *Bamidbar* 20:12.

³³ See the midrashim on the beginning of *parshas Va’eschanan*.

³⁴ *Sotah* 13b; Rashi on *Devarim* 3:26.

³⁵ *Sotah* 14a.

³⁶ Shabbos morning prayers based on *Bamidbar* 12:7.

This is why he prayed so intensely for permission to enter the land. Had Moshe been the one to lead the Jewish people into the land of Israel, they would have remained there permanently, the Temple would not have been reduced to ruins, and they would never again be subjugated to other nations.³⁷

10.

THE PAIN OF CONCEALMENT

However, this is still unclear: Everything is guided by Divine Providence and Divine intent. Hashem's ultimate intent — that through the dissemination of the Torah and strengthening of Judaism, G-dliness will be revealed to the extent that the world will become a dwelling place for Hashem — will certainly be accomplished. This itself proves that even the imprisonment, etc., was not imposed to weaken this work, G-d forbid. On the contrary, it was meant to fortify the dissemination of Judaism.³⁸ This indeed became evident later. After the release of the Rebbe, the work of strengthening Judaism was invigorated. This led to the Rebbe leaving that country. His departure enabled his efforts in disseminating the Torah and strengthening Judaism to be greatly intensified and expanded, reaching the entire world.

[This is similar to when the Jewish people entered the land of Israel. Although practically they were not led by Moshe but by Yehoshua, which allowed for the eventual destruction and exile, this was ultimately for the good of the Jewish people. This brought about that all G-dly revelations would be drawn down through the efforts of the Jewish people, and as a result, the revelations at the time of the Future Redemption will be far greater.]³⁹

³⁷ *Shaar HaTeshuvah* (of the Mittlerer Rebbe) beginning of vol. 2; *Or HaTorah*, “*Va’eschanon*,” p. 65, 92, 93 ff. (from *Or HaChaim* and the *Megaleh Amukos*); and see the explanation of the *Or HaTorah*, *ibid.*, of the Talmudic statement in *Sotah* 14a.

³⁸ As the Rebbe concluded in his talk of the 3rd of Tammuz {5687, before leaving to exile} (*Sefer HaMaamarim* 5687 p. 197; *Sefer HaMaamarim Kuntreisim*, vol. 1, 176a; *Likkutei Dibburim*, vol. 4, p. 1384): “I hope to G-d that the punishment which I must temporarily suffer will, with G-d’s help, inject fresh vigor in {our} eternal {mission of} strengthening Jewish life....”

³⁹ See *Shaar HaTeshuvah* (of the Mittlerer Rebbe) beginning of vol. 2; *Or HaTorah*, “*Va’eschanan*,” p. 65, 92, 93 ff. (from *Or HaChaim* and *Megaleh Amukos*). And see the explanation in *Or HaTorah*, *ibid.*, of the Talmud’s statement in *Sotah* 14a.

Accordingly, why did the imprisonment cause {the Rebbe} pain and agony?

The explanation:

During the imprisonment, the hard work of disseminating the Torah was suppressed. It could not be carried out even in the manner it was done before the imprisonment. This itself was painful — not only painful from the vantage point of the Jewish soul here in this world, but (also) painful Above, due to the concealment of G-dliness.

As known, the purpose of *tzimtzum*⁴⁰ (as the Rebbe discussed in a discourse⁴¹ that he delivered on the 12th of Tammuz) is for a later revelation. Moreover, the anticipated revelation is the entire reason for the *tzimtzum*. Nevertheless, “the *tzimtzum* itself is the antithesis of what He wants.” Hashem desires G-dly light to be revealed.

11.

THE NEED FOR THE BAAL SHEM TOV

Based on all of the above, we can understand the connection between the Baal Shem Tov’s doctrine regarding Divine Providence (that it applies even to the inanimate, vegetative, and animal realms and every single detail of each of these and all of their related activities) and the {Rebbe being able to} “tolerate (withstand the torment and survive) the imprisonment.”

We can suggest that the meaning {and reference of the Rebbe’s declaration} was not to the doctrine itself, *per se* — that Divine Providence also extends to the inanimate, vegetative, and animal realms. Instead, the Rebbe was referring to the novelty that emerges from the Baal Shem Tov’s doctrine concerning the Divine Providence existing **over humanity**:

⁴⁰ {The contraction and withdrawal of Divine *light* to enable Creation.}

⁴¹ *Maamar* “Al Kein Yomru Hamoshlim” 5691 (*Sefer HaMaamarim Kuntreisim*, vol. 1, 192a ff.).

In a discourse⁴² delivered for the 12th of Tammuz, the Rebbe explains that according to the Baal Shem Tov, Divine Providence does not only mean that every small movement of every created entity is guided by the Divine Providence of the Creator. It also means that every individual movement of the created entity “has a general relationship to the general purpose of Creation...; even a slight movement of a single blade of grass fulfills the Divine intention in the creation of the world.”

This reveals a significant new insight that also pertains to Divine Providence over humanity:

Even according to the authorities who opine that Divine Providence only applies to humanity and that there is only a general providence over the inanimate, vegetative, and animal realms (“a providence over the species, not the individual”),⁴³ this only relates to things that have no bearing outside these species themselves. However, when an individual creature (of the inanimate, vegetative, and animal realms) “has some bearing on the providence of humanity,” even these authorities agree that Divine Providence will extend even over this particular detail in such cases. However, according to those authorities, Hashem does not decree that a particular fish should die or live. Rather, He decrees regarding this person, his activities and livelihood.... And similarly, there is providence for a person regarding his animals, for example, whether his ox will be fat... whether his jug will break.”⁴⁴

According to their approach, it turns out that Divine Providence only extends to humanity since it is the purpose of all Creation (“{the world was created} for the Jewish people who are called the first”).⁴⁵ Therefore, Divine Providence applies to **all** the affairs of humanity (even when it relates to the inanimate, vegetative, and animal realms).

⁴² *Maamar “Al Kein Yomru Hamoshlim”* 5696 (*Sefer HaMaamarim Kuntreisim*, vol. 2, 369b).

⁴³ Wording of the Rambam, *Moreh Nevuchim* vol. 3, ch. 17. However, see the Mittlerer Rebbe’s interpretation of this (*Derech Chaim* 13a-b).

⁴⁴ *Shomer Emunim*, end, quoted in *Kuntres Hashgachah Pratis* (printed in *Likkutei Sichos* vol. 8, p. 277 ff.).

⁴⁵ {Rashi on *Bereishis* 1:1.}

It is, therefore, understood that there is also a difference between these approaches, even regarding the Divine Providence of matters concerning people themselves: In these matters where the superiority of people is evident since their involvement in them makes them the purpose of Creation, the Divine Providence over people is manifest. In contrast, when it comes to something that is of secondary importance {in the fulfillment of a person's role} and does not reflect the superiority of humanity {for example, a person picks a fruit to eat}, Divine Providence does not extend to **this thing** in its own right. Instead, Divine Providence extends this subordinate thing only proportionate to its relevance to the person.⁴⁶

In contrast, the Baal Shem Tov opined that every detail of creation, even a “slight movement of a single blade of grass,” intrinsically carries “a general relationship to the **overall** purpose of Creation” and “fulfills the Divine intention in the creation of the world.” Therefore, beyond question, Providence certainly extends to anything relevant to the person. Meaning, every one of those things, **in its own right**, completes the Divine intention.

12.

THE IMPRISONMENT ITSELF BROUGHT STRENGTH

This is also the explanation of the above-mentioned talk of my father-in-law, the {Previous} Rebbe:

The novelty of the Baal Shem Tov's doctrine regarding Divine Providence brought about the keen awareness that since the imprisonment and its accompanying suffering were guided by Divine Providence, it follows that, in addition to the fact that it would result in the fulfillment of the Divine intention through the increased efforts and strengthening in the dissemination of Judaism **after the redemption** from the imprisonment as discussed above, the

⁴⁶ All the more so from the fact that according to *The Guide for the Perplexed*, there is no Divine Providence over fools and evildoers, because the providence is according to the cleaving of the mind (see the *Kuntras*, cited above).

imprisonment *itself* and accompanying suffering, etc., also “fulfill the Divine intention in the creation of the world” — to reveal G-dliness in the world.

This novelty and advantage were clearly expressed by the imprisonment itself. It brought about even greater awakening and self-sacrifice at that time among Jews, in general, and among the Chassidim of the Previous Rebbe and those connected to him, in particular. Everyone was inspired to strengthen themselves in the Rebbe’s work of upholding Judaism.

Furthermore, this was accomplished even within the prison walls: The “stance” of the Rebbe, with tremendous strength in his demeanor **there**, was that he would be utterly unintimidated by the enemies of, and opposition to, holiness. Moreover, he refused to consider them as something real. In fact, he saw them as “literal nothingness.” This is exactly how he conducted himself throughout his entire time in prison.⁴⁷ **Within the prison itself**, he revealed that “there is nothing aside from Him {Hashem}.”⁴⁸

As elucidated on numerous occasions, the Rebbe’s resolve and consciousness overturned the opposition to the extent that the jailers had to release the Rebbe.

⁴⁷ See *Sefer Hasichos* 5701, p. 138 ff.; *Likkutei Sichos* vol. 4, p. 1061 ff.

⁴⁸ {*Devarim* 4:35.}

13.

A LESSON FOR EVERY JEW

“These days shall be commemorated and celebrated {וְנַעֲשִׂים – lit., ‘done’},”⁴⁹ and “the body follows the head”⁵⁰ — the Rebbe’s conduct that he shared with us is an instruction and strengthens the Divine service of every Jew:

Firstly, we must know that nothing may disturb or prevent us from fulfilling the Rebbe’s mission of disseminating the Torah and strengthening Judaism. This lesson is especially poignant. Suppose we tarry in carrying out the mission with the necessary alacrity. In that case, we may momentarily impede our righteous Mashiach’s arrival, and the Divine Presence will continue languishing in exile.

On the other hand, we must know that in any situation in which a Jew may find himself, even when he sees no possibility, G-d forbid, of successfully disseminating Judaism and the teachings of Chassidus, he must not despair. We must remember that this scenario was also orchestrated by Divine Providence. If there is “toil,” however, then there will also be “success.”⁵¹ Even in this situation, we will find something that will bring about the revelation of G-dliness with palpable clarity.

Ultimately, we can all carry out our *avodah* openly {and unrestrained}. This will very quickly lead to the coming of our righteous Mashiach. “The glory of Hashem will be revealed, and all flesh together will see that the mouth of Hashem spoke.”⁵²

— From a talk delivered on the 13th of Tammuz, 5711

⁴⁹ {*Esther* 9:28;} see the *Ramaz* in *Tikkun Shovavim*, quoted and explained in *Lev David of Chida*, ch. 29 {who cites *Arizal*’s interpretation of this verse: Every year, when these days are commemorated, the original events are spiritually reenacted, with the same type of Divine revelations being drawn down anew but from a higher source}.

⁵⁰ *Eruvin* 41a.

⁵¹ *Megillah* 6b.

⁵² *Yeshayahu* 40:5.