SICHA SUMMARY

Likkutei Sichos, Vol. 25

Yud-Tes Kislev

The Letter:

After his miraculous release from Czarist prison, the Alter Rebbe wrote several letters to other chassidic leaders, including letters to Rabbi Levi Yitzchak of Berditchev and Rabbi Boruch of Mezhibush. A dominant theme of these letters was the effect the events had on the Russian officers and dignitaries who had witnessed them:

"Because God has wrought a great deliverance and has accomplished great things in the land, and has wondrously and greatly magnified His great and holy Name, which has been exalted and sanctified publicly, and especially in the eyes of all the ministers and all the nations throughout all the provinces of the king. Even in their eyes, the matter is extraordinarily wondrous. And they responded and said concerning this: "This has come from G-d; it is wondrous in our eyes.""

The Question:

The spiritual significance of the Alter Rebbe's release lies in the supernal drama surrounding the Alter Rebbe's public spreading of chassidic teaching. The Czarist imprisonment was a manifestation of the heavenly apprehension of these secrets being revealed to the masses. The release was, therefore, Heavenly confirmation that this work was valid and necessary.

Yet the Alter Rebbe highlights the influence and effect of these events on the gentile population as the main theme of his release, and not the seemingly more critical spiritual victory of the publicization of chassidut.

The Explanation:

Every redemption that occurs to the Jewish people is a stage in the realization of the complete, future redemption. The essence of the Messianic era is the tangible revelation of the Divine reality to the entire created realm, until even physical flesh can perceive the oneness of G-d. Thus, the final redemption necessitates the refinement and education of the wider world and its

citizens, not just the Jewish people. As the Rambam describes, the Messianic era is a time when all people of the world will call upon the name of the one G-d.

This is the meaning of the Baal Shem Tov's conversation with Moshiach recorded in a letter to his brother in law, in which the soul of Moshiach told him that he will arrive "when your wellsprings spread outward." The revelation of the teachings of Chassidus, which make knowledge of the Divine unity accessible and tangible, is, in essence, the process of redemption itself.

This is why the Alter Rebbe highlights the influence on the nations of the world through his release in his letters. The 19th of Kislev was an important stage in the development of the revelation of Chassidus and the coming of the Messianic era. Therefore, this was expressed in the fact that the nations of the world were exposed to the Divine reality through the Alter Rebbe's miraculous release. The effect on the world was not a byproduct of the miracles, it was the objective.

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