



## **A Jew's Essence** **Part I: Every Jew a Free Man**

12 Tammuz, 5745-1985

The event we are commemorating is the Rebbe's release from prison.

From this event we learn a lesson: A Jew is created with purpose, a mission. But in order to fulfill his essence and his mission, he must be free, with no constraints. Especially as is known, that with the Exodus from Egypt – G-d removed from Jews the function of slavery, and from then on they became "free people."

So, when another event occurs that emphasizes this truth – seemingly the Rebbe was imprisoned by a regime which was extremely powerful, – the USSR being a world power in the region. And at that time the majority of world Jewry and the Jewish establishment was there, causing Russia to be the most powerful nation in the world.

And they had imprisoned him; and this single Jew displayed, while in prison, that he was unmoved by them. In all areas relating to G-d, His Torah and Mitzvot, he was entirely free.

As he stated, and immediately published, in his famous talk on the third of Tammuz – the day he was sent into exile by the government.

Exile is one of the most severe punishments, as written in Sefer Hachinuch, "it is comparable to death."

So, on his way into exile, – and he certainly knew why he was being sent there, not by his own will, but because the government forced him. At that very moment, he proclaimed – and later it was publicized, and it reached us, as well: "Only our bodies, not our souls, were sent into exile – and even that, only because G-d subjected them to exile.

Therefore it is clear that even while we are in exile, the exile has no power over a Jew, in anything related to Judaism – because such matters come from G-d, and G-d did not send us into exile to violate His will.

So, a Jew is totally free.

And the Rebbe's attitude caused that a short time later, in place of three years in exile, his sentence was changed to a very short period of time; and on the 13th of Tammuz he was liberated – the same people who had confined him, freed him. And they freed him openly before the entire world, in a way that was greatly publicized, even in the USSR itself.



From this we learn a practical lesson: When a Jew goes out into the world, or is born into the world, into an environment unfamiliar with Judaism, he was “a captive of his circumstances,” didn’t know of Yiddishkeit.

We are told: This a temporary imprisonment, – this is not his essence this is not his environment, not his true self. And certainly, “no Jew will be left behind.” G-d will not allow His child, or even His servant, to be ‘imprisoned’ – since this captivity is contrary to G-d’s essence, and therefore contrary to the essence of a Jew; and as such, it is incompatible with the true nature of a Jew.

We must only reveal his true nature. He needs only to be awakened, “from his worldly slumber,” as Maimonides says, and be reminded who he truly is.

And this is one of the lessons from the Rebbe’s liberation: When we recognize and contemplate that there was a Jew who was imprisoned for a number of days, and he was subsequently sent into exile – seemingly he was not victorious, not freed, but he was given the severe punishment of exile. And afterwards those people who had imprisoned him, freed him publicly and ceremoniously.

So the Jew must know; do not err and think that this event was an exception, since the Rebbe was a public figure who was needed by so many – the Rebbe himself announced and informed, wrote it and published it, that “G-d did not liberate me alone, but every single Jew – even those who are Jewish by name only.

It was not an individual day with an individual redemption. Rather, as the Rebbe himself explained: “G-d did not only liberate me, – in that very same liberation that freed him, all of Jewry was freed” – every single Jew was freed in that same redemption!

