

ONE DAY, THEY WILL TELL A STORY...

CHANIE WOLF

IT WILL BE LIKE the story of the nation battered and grieving from the oppression of Egypt. When the suffering was unbearable, the cruelty was only intensifying, and despair was rampant. When the hope for Redemption

had been stilled—except in the hearts of the women, who prepared tambourines with which to celebrate it; who valiantly guarded the holiness of their homes and retained their distinct dress, language and names in an immoral culture. When a brave young girl of five stood up to her father, the leader of the generation, and challenged him not to surrender to exile, promising that her mother would give birth to the Redeemer. And when her baby brother lay in a basket in the river, making a mockery of her prophecy, she stood by, steadfast, waiting to see her vision come true.

It will be like the story of the nation threatened with annihilation by

the Persian Empire. When one righteous young woman found herself in a tragic situation, chained to the depraved monarch as his queen. When rather than wallow in her misery or submit to the temptations of her royal lifestyle, she remained true to her identity, to Hashem and to her Rebbe. And when needed she rose to the occasion, recognizing her divine purpose and risking her own life to bring salvation to her people.

One day, they will tell a story. Only this time, it will be our story.

They will tell of the last generation of *galus*, after thousands of years, millions of *neshamos* and innumerable *mitzvos*. They will describe that day, the tenth of Shvat in the year 5711, when a small group of *chassidim* was charged with the mission of bringing the purpose of creation to fruition. How the Rebbe, the seventh Shepherd, like

When they will say, "In the zechus of righteous women we were taken out of galus," will they be talking about us? Will they be talking about me?

Moshe Rabbeinu, guided and empowered them to bring the hearts of the people back to Hashem, one by one. How through one campaign after another and with the general call of "Ufaratzta!" they were given the mandate and the tools to conquer the world.

They will learn all the sichos, maamarim and letters through which the Rebbe nourished the neshamos of his flock, enabling them to see themselves and the world from a transcendent perspective. To believe in Hashem's guiding Hand when they were concerned about health, finances, or security, and to create spiritual vessels for the brachos they needed. To see marriage, parenting and vocation from a perspective of, "What does Hashem want from me?" To embrace Hashem's vision of a home in the physical world and devote their lives to achieving it.

They will likely utilize the Chassidic allegory of the pit to describe what it was like to live in *galus*—how having only ever known the reality of the dungeon to which

their ancestors had been cast, the real world seemed a fantasy the optimists held onto in desperation. And how the Rebbe, like an individual from the outside, helped them recognize that the true reality was the one from which he had arrived.

They will study the Rebbe's prophetic words about the imminence of the *Geulah* and the need for *chassidim* to open their eyes and see it unfolding. They will explore his directives to bring it about—learning about Moshiach and *Geulah*; striving to create *Geulah* in their personal lives; increasing *ahavas Yisroel* and *tzedakah*; preparing to accept Melech HaMoshiach.

They will tell of the hardships, the challenges, the pain and the fears. They will speak of the deep concealment of chassidim not being able to see the Rebbe for too many years. They will describe the unprecedented temptations, the social pressures, the emotional fragility of a sensitive generation. They will tell the story of a coronavirus, widespread devastation and a world gone mad. How, in the words of the holy Ruzhiner, the fire that had descended for Eliyahu Hanavi on Har HaCarmel seemed to descend again—only this time, instead of validating those who believe in Hashem, it was on the wrong side. They will probably tremble at the enormity of the test.

And they will speak about us.

What will they say? Will our names be part of the story of bringing the *Geulah*? Will they speak of our *emunah*, of our unshakeable trust in Moshiach's coming? Will they note our faithful adherence to the instructions of our Rebbe to the point of *mesiras nefesh*? Will they recognize how rather than caving to depression or despair we looked to fulfill our mission within the challenges, ensuring that our homes remained bastions of joy and *chassidishe* warmth?

Will they praise our courage in retaining our *tzniusdik* dress and way of life without compromise, despite the modern trends and peer pressure? Will they be awed by how we boldly defied Pharaoh's decree that all children be cast into the Nile of secularism? Will they learn about a Miriam, an Esther, an ordinary-woman-turned-heroine of our times?

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During the decree of Purim, Mordechai told Esther: "If you remain silent at this time, relief and deliverance will arise for the Yidden from another place—but you and your father's house will perish. Who knows whether you have attained royal status for a time such as this?"

There is no question that the Geulah will arrive, with or without our help. "Relief and deliverance will arise for the Yidden from another place." We are promised this in the Torah. And the Rebbe, whose word we can rely on, has assured us that it is near. Somehow or other, we will wake up very soon to a reality in which Hashem is fully revealed, we are learning Torah from Moshiach, and the world is filled with only revealed good.

The question is only "you and your father's house": Will each of us have the zechus to be a part of making it happen? Will our thoughts, words and actions have helped it come sooner and with less turmoil? Will we be able to face the Rebbe and say, "I lived up to your trust in me"? Will our efforts justify the royal status, the spiritual wealth and exalted mission with which we have been endowed as chassidim of the Rebbe?

As the Rebbe expressed on that momentous day in Shvat¹:

"Moshe could have built the Mishkan alone, just as Dovid could have built the Beis HaMikdash alone—but they wanted to allow the whole Beis Yisroel to share in this privilege. In the same way, when my revered father-in-law, the Rebbe [Rayatz], commissioned the writing of the Sefer Torah with which to greet our Righteous Moshiach, he said that he did not want to do this alone: he desired the participation of all Yidden, in order to bring merit upon the entire Klal Yisroel. It goes without saying that all of us, and the entire Klal Yisroel, need to participate in the construction of a dwelling-place for Hashem in this world below..."

One day, they will tell a story. May we be proud of our role in it.

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¹ Hosafos to Likkutei Sichos Vol. 2, p. 501; Translation from Proceeding Together Vol. 4