



Come with Me

After the rise of Communism in Russia, the Frieddiker Rebbe was on the Russian secret service watch list for a while before his arrest in 5687. His house in Rostov was raided several times and he was taken in for questioning.

(Based on the Frieddiker Rebbe's letter; Igros Kodesh vol. 8 p. 60)

The Rebbe was saying *kaddish* for his father, finishing *shacharis* at the *amud*, when guards armed with guns, knives, and lots of ammunition, dressed in full black and red uniform, arrived to take him to the "*cheka*"—later known as GPU—for questioning.

Two of them were Jewish, one was not. The Rebbe had helped one of them in the past by finding him a job and lending him money to start a business. They were cursing. Had it not been for the gentile guard, they would have forced the Rebbe to leave before the end of davening.

The Rebbe said *mishnayos* and *kaddish*, took off his tallis and tefillin, and was led away by the guards; one on either side and one behind—the way enemies of the state are led away.

The board of religious research had already discussed Yiddishkeit with Rabbis Berman and Goldenberg. Now, they wanted to speak to the Rebbe. The Rebbe insisted on speaking Yiddish and told the anti-semitic board that no one would make him veer from his principals.

Pointing a gun at the Rebbe, the questioner said, "This toy makes principals change and the mute talk." The Rebbe answered, "That toy can scare only those who have one world and many G-ds. I, who has one G-d and two worlds, am not afraid of your toy."

"We didn't call you here to change your principals. Let's hear what they are and see where we can agree."

"I speak only Yiddish, especially with Jews."

"And how did you know we are Jewish?"

The Rebbe could discern a Jew. Once, when walking with his father in the streets of Kiev, the Rebbe asked a fancy dressed young man—in Yiddish—for directions. The man was upset the Rebbe could tell and the Rebbe explained he had a Jewish nose.

"Do you practice religion out of conviction or faith?" they asked.

"Conviction," answered the Rebbe.

"Maybe you can convince us."

"I could. But not on one foot. You can't expect an astronomer to explain to you in the middle of the street how the stars work, and you can't ask me to explain, in a sentence, my beliefs. You have to come with me into the astronomy towers and see the stars from there. Come to my tower: eat kosher, put on tefillin and keep Shabbos. Your minds will clear, and then you'll understand."

"No. we will not do something we don't understand. Explain first, do second."

"And do you understand how the food you eat turns to fat and blood that make your body? First keep Torah, then understand how it works." The board was impressed. **T**



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