

A MOUNTAIN OF PRIDE

The founding of Nachalas Har Chabad

Nachalas Har Chabad—called so because of Avraham Avinu, who is associated with “Har” [the mountain of Moriah]. Avraham was an “one-and-only”—he stood on one side, while all the inhabitants of the world stood against him. Nevertheless, he was not intimidated because he was connected to the one and only Hashem, eventually revealing this within the entire world as well.

So, too, are the Yidden who have recently emigrated from behind the Iron Curtain: They held on to [the values and teachings of] Avraham Avinu—the “הר”—and thus they merited that Hashem took them out and brought them to a restful place of inheritance (“אלֵהֵם אֶל-הַמְנוּחָה וְאֶל-הַנַּחֲלָה”), until they finally reached Nachalas Har Chabad.

May they acclimate well, with joy and gladness of the heart. And may this serve as a good beginning for their brothers and sisters whom they left behind, that they too should experience an exodus from the narrow straits to the ultimate expansion...

(Purim 5729)

לזכות
 הרה"ת ר' דניאל זונדל הלוי
 וזוגתו מרת ראובנה לאה
 ומשפחתם שיחיו
 גרודניצקי

Towards the end of the 5720s*, a crack opened up in the Iron Curtain and many Jewish families who had been stranded in the G-dless regime for decades were finally able to emigrate to Eretz Yisroel. This was especially true for the Jewish communities of Georgia and Bukhara (Uzbekistan), both part of the Soviet Union at the time.

Many of these Yidden knew only the basics of Yiddishkeit, yet they were committed heart and soul to Torah and mitzvos with *mesiras nefesh*—under the most dire circumstances. The Rebbe was concerned that when they arrived in Eretz Yisroel, this spirit should not be dampened, *chas v'shalom*. For this reason, the Rebbe wanted as many new emigres as possible to settle in Chabad communities, where they would see authentic Jewish life celebrated out in the open every day.

Many of the new arrivals settled in Kfar Chabad. The Rebbe also commissioned the building of the Shikun Chabad neighborhood in Lod for this purpose.¹ But when it became clear that the limited space in these neighborhoods was running out, the

Rebbe wanted a new neighborhood to be established.

The veteran Chabad activist, Rabbi Binyomin Gorodetzky, was dispatched to Eretz Yisroel to scout out and find a suitable place to establish a new Chabad settlement.

Time was of the essence. Members of the Israeli government made it clear that since there was no more room in the Chabad neighborhoods, the new immigrants from Georgia would be dispersed all over Israel—something that the Rebbe wanted to avoid at all costs.

Finally, a suitable location was found in the city of Kiryat Malachi. A cluster of buildings stood empty with 600 apartments waiting to be inhabited, and Rabbi Gorodetzky saw this as the perfect opportunity.

On 23 Shevat 5729*, the Rebbe agreed that “this suggestion of Kiryat Malachi is appropriate,” and that 10 young families from Kfar Chabad should move there immediately and establish a *kollel*. At Rabbi Gorodetzky’s behest, the government agreed to pay the salaries of these young families from the Department of Education budget—in



THE AREA OF NACHLAS HAR CHABAD AT THE TIME OF ITS ESTABLISHMENT.

* 5720S-1960S, 5729-1969

compensation for their assistance with the new immigrants.

As part of his shlichus to see this matter through, Rabbi Gorodetzky arrived at Kfar Chabad looking for *yungerleit* to move to Kiryat Malachi and help the new immigrants.

“Rabbi Gorodetzky told us that whoever holds the Rebbe’s wish dear should jump at this opportunity,” recalls Rabbi Avraham Alter Heber. “In those days, shlichus was still a novelty and not necessarily the norm. But his words had a strong impact on us. A group of *yungerleit* met together in Reb Efroim Wolff’s office where we decided to ask the Rebbe what to do. Our representative, Rabbi Yitzchok Yeruslavsky [today the *rav* of Nachalas Har Chabad] telephoned the Rebbe’s *mazkirus* and said that he is standing with a group of *yungerleit* that are considering the move to Kiryat Malachi.

“Rabbi Hodakov responded that, ‘From here [i.e. from the Rebbe] there will be no explicit directive asking specific people to move there. Whoever decides to take on this mission has the Rebbe’s *bracha*.’

“Immediately, we all decided to move.”

“Today it seems so simple,” Mrs. Rochel Heber relates. “The Rebbe wants you to go, you take the shlichus. But this concept was still foreign back then. We were just married. My husband came home from *kollel* in Kfar Chabad one day and told me that the Rebbe wants 10 families to move to Kiryat Malachi. Where is that on the map? I had no idea. It was far from everyone and a move like that would certainly bring along many challenges. But the Rebbe wanted it, so we did it. We moved to Nachalas Har Chabad just before Purim 5729*...”

On Erev Shabbos Parshas Zachor, the Rebbe sent a message that a *farbrengen* should take place in the new neighborhood over Shabbos.



THE TELEGRAM FROM THE REBBE APPROVING THE LOCATION FOR NACHLAS HAR CHABAD.



A GROUP OF THE YUNGERLEIT WHO MOVED TO NACHLAS HAR CHABAD.

The Rebbe especially instructed that the legendary *mashpia*, Reb Shlomo Chaim Kessleman, should lead the *farbrengen*, along with other elder Chassidim, *rabbonim*, and *askanim*.

With that, Nachalas Har Chabad was founded.

The Name

As mentioned, the Rebbe explained the meaning of the name of the new neighborhood during the *farbrengen* of Purim 5729*. In many letters to the residents of Nachalas Har Chabad and other *sichos* and *yechidusen*, the Rebbe explained each word of the three-part name, giving it special significance.²

Chassidim also took note of the fact that the *roshei teivos* of the three words נחלת הר חב"ד are the same letters as the name חנה, a possible reference to the name of the Rebbe’s mother.

How To Establish A Village

A short while later, the Rebbe requested that two *sifrei Torah* from the shul of 770 be chosen and brought upstairs into his room. Meanwhile new *mantelach* were sown for them, with the words in *lashon hakodesh* saying, “ביהכ"נ חב"ד בנחלת הר חב"ד באה"ק”, “תובב"א, נשלח על ידי כ"ק אדמו"ר שליט"א (ליובאוויטש)”. One of the two *sefarim*

was small, and a white *mantele* was prepared for it, whilst the other was regular-sized, and a dark black *mantele* was made for it.

After the new accessories were ready, the two *sefarim* were returned to their original place.

The date to see off the special cargo was set for Yud-Aleph Nissan.

Before leaving for the Ohel, the Rebbe went downstairs to the main shul with Rabbi Binyomin Gorodetsky and members of *mazkirus*, Rabbis Hodakov, Klein and Groner. The Rebbe approached the *aron kodesh* where a waiting Rabbi Y. Gordon was greeted with a smile, and handed him \$200 for the *sefarim*.

The Rebbe gave one *sefer Torah* to Rabbi Hodakov and the other to Rabbi Gorodetzky, and together they went upstairs into the small *zal*.

Once there, they handed the *sefarim* to the Rebbe, who in turn gave them back to Rabbi Hodakov to place in the *aron kodesh*. Then the Rebbe left for the Ohel. Upon his return, the *sifrei Torah* were brought outside, and

the Rebbe accompanied them wearing his silk *kapote* (which is traditionally reserved for Shabbos and Yom Tov), and his *gartel*. A car was waiting and Rabbi Klein placed the two *sefarim* inside.

In keeping with previously made agreements, Rabbi Hodakov was to accompany the convoy until the airport, and Rabbi Gorodetzky would

continue the journey until Eretz Yisroel.

The *sefarim* were welcomed with joy and dancing immediately upon their arrival at Ben Gurion Airport, and the formal *hachnasas sefer Torah* in Nachlas Har Chabad took place a week later, on 19 Nissan. Hundreds of guests and well-wishers from across



LIBRARY OF AGUDAS CHASIDEI CHABAD

THE REBBE ESCORTS THE SIFREI TORAH AS THEY ARE PLACED IN A CAR FOR THE AIRPORT EN-ROUTE TO NACHLAS HAR CHABAD.



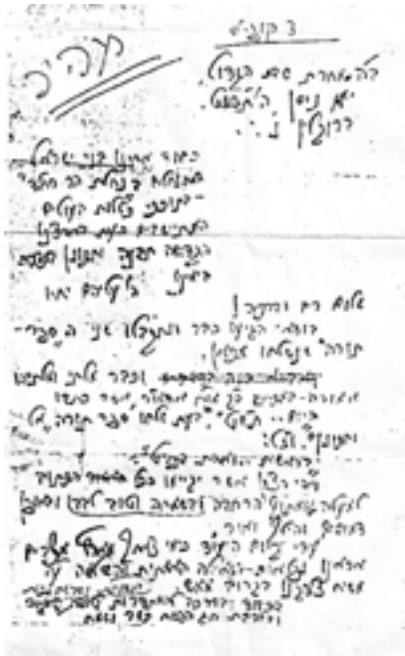
LIBRARY OF AGUDAS CHASIDEI CHABAD

HACHNOSAS SEFER TORAH IN NACHLAS HAR CHABAD FOR THE SIFREI TORAH SENT BY THE REBBE.



JEM 109192

THE SIFREI TORAH FOR NACHLAS HAR CHABAD.



A HANDWRITTEN LETTER TO THE MEMBERS OF NACHLAS HAR CHABAD EXPLAINING THE SIGNIFICANCE OF SENDING THE SIFREI TORAH.

Eretz Yisroel came to participate in the special occasion.

As for the reason for the special gift of the *sifrei Torah*, the Rebbe sent a letter, echoing what the Frierdiker Rebbe had written when he sent a Sefer Torah some 20 years earlier to the residents of Kfar Chabad.

In his letter, the Frierdiker Rebbe explained that the *sefer* was being sent to serve as a reminder to those, whom *hashgacha pratit* had brought to live in the “land upon which Hashem’s eyes [gaze] from the beginning of the year until the end of the year,” that they must set up their lives to be in complete accordance with Torah. They are to provide an uncompromising education for their children, and eventually spread their influence to their neighbors, both near and far.³

Growth

Throughout the ensuing years, the Rebbe continued encouraging the settling and growth of Nachlas Har Chabad in every way possible.

In 5731*, a group of *anash* emigrated from the Soviet Union and



CELEBRATING THE OPENING OF THE NEW COMMUNITY.

settled there. The Rebbe sent them a letter saying he was pleased with the good news that they were able to move to Eretz Yisroel, and with doubled good news (“בשורה טובה על בשורה טובה”) that they settled in Nachlas Har Chabad.

During the month of Tishrei 5732*, a large group of newly arrived immigrants who had settled in Nachlas Har Chabad were invited by the Rebbe to come to 770 for the festive month and celebrate with the Rebbe, at the Rebbe’s cost. (This was a standard practice that the Rebbe availed to all recent immigrants from the Soviet Union in those years.)

At the end of the month, the Rebbe held a special *yechidus* for this group, again stressing how important it is to settle in Nachlas Har Chabad and to encourage others to do the same.

Challenges

Like every endeavor of *kedusha*, the founding of Nachlas Har Chabad met its line of challenges. At some point in 5730*, rumors were circulating that the Rebbe did not intend for Nachlas Har Chabad to be a community for ordinary *anash*.

The Rebbe responded to these claims very sternly in *yechidus*, saying

that “whoever is dampening the spirits of the immigrants who already live in Nachlas Har Chabad or even ordinary citizens who wish to move there—they should know that they are waging war against the [Frierdiker] Rebbe. The [Frierdiker] Rebbe stood up to the wars waged against him in Russia and he emerged victorious; he will certainly be victorious in Eretz Yisroel as well!”⁴

Step By Step

The Rebbe guided the community of Nachlas Har Chabad through its infancy and into major growth.

Once, when the chairman of Tzach in Eretz Yisroel, Reb Yisroel Leibov was in *yechidus*, the Rebbe asked him why there is no “*vaad*” (administrative committee) for the neighborhood of Nachlas Har Chabad like there is in Kfar Chabad.

A committee was formed and Reb Mordechai Gorodetzky was chosen to serve as its chairman. A short while later when he was in *yechidus*, Reb Mordechai asked the Rebbe to be relieved from his position, citing his lack of time and experience. The Rebbe responded, “You have the *zechus* to be the chairman. Who could forgo such a thing?”



A RECEPTION EVENT FOR NEW IMMIGRANTS FROM GEORGIA AND BUKHARA WHO SETTLED IN NACHLAS HAR CHABAD.

A Holy Community And A Good Leader

The Rebbe extended many *brachos* to Nachlas Har Chabad and its residents, sometimes in unprecedented terms.

Once, before embarking on a trip to Eretz Yisroel, Reb Shlomo Aharon Kazarnovsky was in *yechidus* and the Rebbe spoke to him for some time about Nachlas Har Chabad. The Rebbe explained the significance of each word of the three-part name, and

said: “The neighborhood of Nachlas Har Chabad is שם צוה ה' את הברכה—Hashem commands His blessing there. We need only to open the spigot and the blessings will flow freely...”

The legendary rav of Nachlas Har Chabad, Rabbi Yitzchok Yehuda Yeruslavsky, was privileged to hear many important statements from the Rebbe about the neighborhood. Once, while in *yechidus*, the Rebbe told him, “May you have success in everything that you wrote about, both the private and communal matters. May

Nachlas Har Chabad be a true ‘holy community’ (קהילה קדושה) as it should be, and you should be a good spiritual leader as you should be...”

Nachlas Har Chabad thrived through the years as a beacon of light in the south of Eretz Yisroel. Not only was it a physical and spiritual haven for the Georgian and Bukharian immigrants, it served, and continues to serve, as the “mountain” of Chabad—the headquarters where Yiddishkeit and the wellsprings of Chassidus are spread to the entire surrounding area.

In *yechidus* with the longtime *mashpia* of Nachlas Har Chabad, Reb Michoel Misholovin, the Rebbe expressed his wish that the neighborhood would eventually turn into an “empire.” With the ensuing years, this wish has indeed become a reality. Nachlas Har Chabad is the Rebbe’s empire of the south.

1. See introduction to Yemei Temimim vol. 3.
2. See Likkutei Sichos vol. 14, p. 219; et. al.
3. The letter appears in Likkutei Sichos vol. 24 p. 390.
4. The *yechidus* was published at the time by the rav of Kfar Chabad, Reb Shneur Zalman Garelik.

Highest Standards

Rabbi Nosson Wolff relates:

In the early stages of the founding of the “Nachalah,” a small day school was established, consisting mostly of the children of *anash* who were newly arrived immigrants from the Soviet Union. Naturally, people were afraid that given the conditions of these children’s upbringing, the academic level of study would not reach the usual standard for a Lubavitcher school. But it turned out that nothing could have been further from the truth.

I remember how the *rosh yeshiva* of Tomchei Temimim 770, Rabbi Yisroel Yitzchok Piekarsky, came to visit Eretz Yisroel and the Rebbe told him to make a stop in Nachlas Har Chabad and test the students of the day school. Rabbi Piekarsky was in awe of his findings. He told me, “We need to bring the *melamdin* from New York to train here and learn how to educate so well!”



THE TALMUD TORAH IN THE EARLY YEARS OF NACHLAS HAR CHABAD.