

The Hired Gun

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Reb Pinchas was teaching Breslov wisdom to the youth in Kiblitsh, and many townsfolk were upset.

The kosher butcher in Kiblitsh was known as Chaim Katsav. He was also known as “Chaim *She’yeish Bo*” (Chaim Who’s Got It), because he was a giant of a man and extremely strong. Money meant everything to him, and he was easily swayed. The entire town feared him.

Some parents decided to pay Chaim to take Reb Pinchas out the picture ... by any means necessary. They were convinced that even death would be a fitting punishment for his sin of “converting” their youth to Breslov, and would also send a powerful message to steer clear of Breslovers in the future.

They explained to Chaim that he would be well-paid in this world and the next to “take care of” Reb Pinchas. “After all, you have lived a very coarse life. If you do this simple

mitzvah, you'll earn eternal reward! It will be easy since he is very frail. All you need to do is give him one little cuff and he won't trouble us ever again."

"I will do it this very Shabbat when he is sitting with his students during the third meal," promised Chaim.

On Shabbat afternoon, Chaim went to take care of the matter. When he entered the room, Reb Pinchas immediately understood why he was there. He began speaking powerful words of *chizuk* (encouragement) that he hoped would soothe Chaim's weary soul. "I can wait a little to hear what he is saying first; it's no rush," reasoned Chaim.

As he began to hear the wonderful words Reb Pinchas shared, Chaim became enthralled. Reb Pinchas was saying that there was hope for every single Jew, no matter what! No matter what he had done, he could rectify everything and become a good Jew!

Chaim began to feel great regret for believing that it would be a mitzvah to kill this pure Jew. He also wondered whether this message could possibly apply to him. He had lived a very unworthy life. Could even he repent and become a righteous Jew?

With burgeoning hope in his heart and tears in his eyes, he approached Reb Pinchas... *(to be continued)*

Based on Siach Sarfey Kodesh V:213