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Yeshivat Ateret Yerushalayim

IN THE HEART OF THE OLD CITY OF JERUSALEM

Ha-Rav Shlomo Aviner on...

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May our Rabbi, the Moshiach (Messiah), live?

Continuation of "Is the Rebbe the Moshiach?"

Chabad Rabbis who do not believe that the last Rebbe is the living Moshiach have never declared: May our Rabbi, the King Moshiach, live. For example, at the conferences for "Shelechim" (Chabad Rabbis located throughout the world), which are very important gatherings in which many Chabad Rabbis participate, they did not declare even once: May our Rabbi live.

The "Godists" who believe that the last Rebbe is G-d are absolutely rejected by Chabad Rabbis. We are not even talking about a group, but one man, who tried to kill another Chabad Rabbi, was released by the court and is now hospitalized with an emotional disorder.

There are "Messiahists" who present the letter of Ha-Gaon Ha-Rav Aharon Soloveitchik in English, "that it is impossible to place outside of Orthodoxy the belief that the Rebbe, who is deceased, will rise and be the Moshiach." After some time, however, he retracted in a public letter. He explained and emphasized that belief that the Messiah will arise from among the dead is not true and contrary to Judaism, and someone who believes it is perhaps a heretic, but certainly errs and causes others to err (see "Sha'aruryat Ha-Adishot" of Prof. David Berger, pp.73-75). It is possible that the first time they related things to him which were not precise. There

is certainly a place for the belief that even after death a person is still alive, like the prophet Eliyahu and Chanoch.

The last Rebbe said many times that the tenth "Nasi" (leader) would be the Moshiach, as it is written, "The tenth will be holy" (Sichat Yamim Rishonim of the year 5707, p. 14; Sichat Yom Bet De-Rosh Hashanah, p. 25; *ibid.*, p. 27). As it known, the last Rebbe was the ninth "Nasi". The Ba'al Shem Tov was the first, the Magid of Mezeritch was the second, the Ba'al Ha-Tanya (the first Lubavitcher Rebbe) was the third and the last Rebbe was the ninth in the chain of Chabad. This means that he was the ninth from the Ba'al Shem Tov.

In his will, written after his Rebbetzin passed away, the Rebbe said that for every question one should turn to the Chabad Beit Din of one's local (Motza'ei Shabbat Kodesh Terumah, 2 Adar, pp.401-405). You learn two things from here: A. The Rebbe knew that he would leave this world and they would need to turn to a Chabad Beit Din. B. He did not say or even hint that it was possible to turn to him through "Igrot Kodesh" ("Holy Letters" – if people have a question, they open his collection of letters and the answer will be on that page).

The "Messiahists" claim that even after his death, the soul of the Rebbe continues to help and guide his flock, and will not abandon it. This is certainly so. The Ba'al Ha-Tanya wrote the same thing about Rabbi Menachem Mendel of Vitebsk and Rabbi Levi Yitzchak of Beredichev, that their souls are still close after their deaths, and on the contrary without limits (Igrot Kodesh at the end of the book "Ha-Tanya"). It is never hinted, however, that this will be through "Igrot Kodesh." The Rebbe found ways for them to turn to him: The Chabad Beit Din.

Close to the illness which struck the Rebbe in the Adar 5762, he wrote a note: "There is absolutely no obligation to search for who is the Moshiach...But it is a positive Torah mitzvah to love each and every Jew, and the rejection of dispute at its essence and one should obviously not do so willingly, its opposite, and this is easy to understand." This means that one should not engage in Messianism and dispute, but the love of Israel.