

For many years he had suffered much pain from a severe physical condition, and from this time forward he did not forsake his bed.

The new Soviet danger weighed heavily on the Jewish population in general and the yeshiva bachurim, in particular. They remembered all too clearly the ominous warning issued them not long before. When the Yeshivas Kletsk moved to Vilna, the Soviet commissar assembled all the people in the marketplace in Kletsk and declared, 'Your yeshiva is well known to us, since its founding in Slutsk. When we captured Slutsk, the Yeshiva fled to Kletsk. When we captured Kletsk, it fled to Vilna. But when we capture Vilna, where will it flee? Where will it find refuge?'

Even in his last days, Rav Chaim Ozer did not abandon his many responsibilities. He urged all his visitors not to lose hope and sparked them with his yet powerful flame - his indomitable Torah spirit. But his poor health had been taxed too heavily and his condition worsened. The truth spread quickly throughout Vilna and soon it seemed as if the very walls of the city were weeping bitter tears of anguish. On the fifth of Av, 1940, Vilna, Eastern Europe, all of the Orthodox Jewish World, were struck at their very foundation with a blow from which they could never recover - the passing of the Godel Hador - Rav Chaim Ozer Grodzensky, zechar tzaddik levracha.

Among the papers that were discovered in his home after his death, the following, written Erev Yom Hakippurim, 1934, may perhaps, be regarded as his spiritual legacy:

- 1) To constantly examine the record books to eliminate any errors in the accounts of others and those of charity, for those matters between man and his fellow man are the most demanding.

- 2) To study, each day, for at least one hour, a sefer 'mussar' as, for example, 'Sharei Tshuvah'