# [**Hasidic**](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ywGh0G3x-50) **Style Video Transcript**

[Singing in another language]

(Man 1) Faith is the opposite of knowing. Faith means I believe.

(Man 2) The beauty of Judaism is living for a larger being, living not just for the moment of where we are today.

(Man 3) Orthodox means following the Torah, the Old Testament, the way it was given without changing it.

(Matt Swerdloff) The connection to God is really, it's a lifestyle. It's the second I wake up I have a prayer. The last words before I go to sleep is a prayer.

(Solomon Rosenberg) My father and his father and his father and going back to when we received the Torah at Mount Sinai, that chain has not been broken. I'm frightened of losing that.

The Hasidics came to the United States after the Second World War and they were starting their new families. My grandfather had 11 children in the 30s in the Bronx and they all turned out to be Orthodox Hasidic Jews which was extremely unusual. There was, most of the people that were around them assimilated. My grandfather was strict. He stuck to the, to his upbringing in Europe.

The goal of a kid is to get them into starting to learn the Talmud. As a little kid at 6:30 in the morning I was up, went to pray, and then went straight to learn got home at 6:45, 7:00 o'clock, ate supper, did homework, and just do the same thing over again.

There was no, there's nothing else besides that.

(Moshe Hecht) Our soul is basically a rope that is connected to God and that rope is eternal. Nothing that I do in this world can sever me from my eternal connection with God. The real definition of Mitzvah is to connect. When I do a Mitzvah I make my connection with God stronger, but there is no sin in the world that I can commit that will ever sever the connection or make God love us less. Man can never judge another man saying that you are less of a Jew or less spiritually connected to God because you do or you don't do a certain Mitzvah. That is only for God to decide and we can never make those judgments.

(Solomon Rosenberg) If I didn't have to worry about what's gonna happen when I leave this world I don't think, I'd be totally out of control.

(Bronya Schaffer) One way or another we create rules and everybody lives by them and it's freeing.

(Matt Swerdloff) It was extremely difficult for my parents to raise kids totally in in such a secular world. And I think that's a major credit to my parents for what it is and the proof is in the pudding that we have nine kids my family and all of us are extremely religious.

(Solomon Rosenberg)There's a lot of identity in clothing and the Jewish religion from the days of Egypt always took pride in not changing the outside influences that change your identity.

(Moshe Hecht) In society today, in America or in the world, very much of how you are, you know, perceived is how you address. But when you have a group of people who basically dress the same, it's creating an opportunity to find their individuality beyond the actual physical address that they're wearing. It sort of forces you to sort of build that character and then people start to perceive people on a much deeper level.

(Matt Swerdloff) It was in North Carolina on a layover over there and a guy came over to me, staring and me.

And I'm like, "Hey, what's up? First Jewish person you ever saw?" He's like, "Yeah," he's like, he's like, "So underneath that thing is you know is your horns?"

I actually felt, I was like, "I finally got that person who asked me about the horns!" You know, you heard so much about it. So I was pretty pumped about that.

(Solomon Rosenberg) When I walk down the street, am I aware that I am different? Of course I'm aware because

I'm dressed differently. I remember the first time I went to a trade show in Galveston, Texas, it was I think, and I was gonna be the only Jew exhibiting metalwork- I was in the middle business- I felt uncomfortable. I almost wanted to put a cap on me sort of to try to blend in, but then I just said, "No. I am an Orthodox Jew, this is how I dress and no matter where I am and whatever I do, this is who I am." Now there's a lot of things that are straight out of the Old

Testament, for example the paes. It says that you should not shave the corners of your face.

(Matt Swerdloff) It's to say that God is on either side of us.

(Solomon Rosenberg) What I'm wearing now are Hasidic Sabbath clothes for a married man. Most of us, if you stop them in the street and ask why do you wear the shtreimel? They'd say this is just a tradition.

(Matt Swerdloff) When you get engaged and you get married, you usually get two shtreimels. And that's what you get until, for another twenty years until you marry off your  first kid then can get another one.

One cool thing about it is that you about it is that you never ever touch the sides. This is like a public service announcement, don't touch the sides of the shtreimel.

(Mimi Hecht) Because the Chabad individual is a lot more integrated in the world you'll see us seemingly a lot more modern, but then if you were to sit down and talk to us like you are right now, you would just see we're connected to our heritage and connected to our tradition. I mean, this is a wig. So every single day I'm covering my hair. Why? Because I believe that my hair is something that's sacred, especially as a married woman, carries my femininity, a lot of my identity, and my own concept of beauty are in my hair.

(Moshe Hecht) On Shabbos, I wear a fedora and I wear sort of a thinner black coat.

For now, the Chabad movement, in Russia we didn't have the shtriemel in Russia. They were typically less wealthy. If you see a Jew in Russia three hundred years ago they're probably wearing something like this.

(Solomon Rosenberg) This is the Sabbath bekishe. We wear this for prayers and for very special occasions.

There's even a significance of first putting on your right side and the left side. Under this we wear tzitzit. All of us wear this all week under your shirt and only the fringes you'll see them sticking out.

In the Torah, it says that you should put fringes on to the corners of your garments, and it is to remember that God is on all the four corners of the world.

This is the gartel. Over the years, we've developed the gartel as the garment that we put on for prayers. It's also to separate the heart from the lower part of your body.

If you were to choose one piece of clothing that really differentiates the Hasidim and the non Hasidic Orthodox, it's the gartel. We have two of these: one is for the arm and inside in here, are the scrolls of Shema, and this is against the heart. One will go on the head.

(Chana Shaffer Minkowitz) I mean there are certain basic guidelines like most of the arm is supposed to be covered past the elbow, you're supposed to wear something that covers your collarbone area, and you're supposed to wear skirts, not pants, that cover the knees.

(Solomon Rosenberg) I would not walk an inch without my yarmulke, so sort of a sign of humility. There's something over me, I'm under it.

(Mimi Hecht) The reason for modest dress is about protecting something that's holy. Something that's holy shouldn't be flaunted or you shouldn't draw attention to the outside of something. It's really about what's underneath.

There's the knowing the guidelines and then there's the whole life force behind it, the whole soul of it, that dignified way of being and a very respectful way of being respectful of yourself and respectful of other people.

(Bronya Schaffer) This ideal of modesty, it's the opposite of ostentation. In Jewish life, that which is most sanctified, most precious is most private. Even go to the synagogue and you see the sefer Torah which is the most precious object in Jewish life. It's not openly displayed in the middle of the auditorium. It's covered with a beautiful mantle and crown placed on it and placed in the in the arc with the curtain drawn until it's used and that's what's so precious.

Growing up girls are girls and I think there are certain innate ways that we judge ourselves and we judge our bodies and we want to look good.

(Mimi Hecht) I do read magazines, I know what's going on, on TV, I know celebrities. So for me, I do compare and I do like lust after what's the latest look, but in general, because I was raised with living modestly, not just as a set of laws but actually preserving what's what's worthy about me, I have, I think, a healthy sense of confidence about myself.

(Solomon Rosenberg) There's the body, the body just wants to have a good time. Then there's a spiritual side of us that follows the rule and wants to do what's right and we're in the middle, always being pulled. Eyes for us are considered something that are sacred and the eyes is that entry is a doorway into your soul. So the Jewish man will protect his eyes and try to stay as close to where he wants to be, not to tempt himself to anything.

(Matt Swerdloff) I never gave a hug once to a woman. It was not something that I do. When I meet someone for the first time, you just learn how to do. You put your hands behind you, so then when they put the hand out you just be like, "Oh just my religion, just don't shake hands." And 99.9 of them are like, "Oh okay, that's cool."

As we're little kids we know that we're gonna be, we're gonna get married when were 19, 18, 19, 20, 21.

(Solomon Rosenberg) Because of the separation of the genders, there's really no real opportunity for a boy to meet a girl on a casual basis. So it's all done through recommendations.

(Moshe Hecht) There is there is more of a dating process in Chabad, typically a few weeks. We're encouraged to get to know the person, discover that connection.

(Matt Swerdloff) A lot of trust goes into the parents. So your parents will vouch for every single girl and, you know, a girl is mentioned, it goes first to your mother and it'll go to your father and I'm telling you right now the research that they do is up the wazoo. I can't tell you how many phone calls are made and it's not just about who this girl is but it's a compatibility with my son. You have a list of questions in your head that you want your wife to be and you want to see, does this girl kind of match up with that? And if, there's going to be negatives, there's going to be positives. The whole point of this whole thing is that the positives outweigh the negatives.

(Solomon Rosenberg) My brother's mother-in-law would see my wife walk to school every day, my wife is a school teacher, and she said this looks like a good match for (Yiddish name), that's my Yiddish name.

(Moshe Hecht) I saw a picture of her on Facebook, right away wanted to date her. At the same time, her father was calling me-

(Mimi Hecht) He was a reference for somebody that my friend wanted me to go out with, so my father was calling him asking him

(Moshe Hecht) And then I just heard about her-

(Mimi Hecht) Because he knew this guy.

(Moshe Hecht) And then I was like, "Hold on a second. That guy, he's an iffy guy."

(Solomon Rosenberg) My future father-in-law allowed me to come to his house to meet his daughter and we sat across the table and spoke for about two and a half hours.

(Moshe Hecht) So I was like, "I don't know about that guy but I want to date your daughter," and then at the same time I met her brother, which her brother told her about her, so it was all these stars aligned and brought us together.

(Solomon Rosenberg) We met three times a week apart and after the fourth time my father-in-law came into the room and he said, "So? Are you satisfied?" I said, "Listen, if I wasn't that satisfied I wouldn't be here," and he asked her, "Are you satisfied?" She said, "Yes," and we were engaged.

(Moshe Hecht) I mean we had a very, very strong connection. We were…

(Mimi Hecht) Lost in love.

(Moshe Hecht) Yeah we were completely in love.

(Solomon Rosenberg) And we did not see each other until we got married three and half months later. By the time we walked to the wedding, the total amount of time that I had seen my, my bride was about maybe 10 hours and here we are 29 years later. We're married and we have grandchildren. Our divorce rate is a fraction of the national divorce rate.

When we go into marriage, we go in knowing that we think we're a workable couple but it's not perfect.

A woman is treated as something sacred, she's something holy. It's like the worst thing in the world if anything is one-sided and it's not consensual, a million percent.

(Bronya Schaffer) I was very taken by the ideals of feminism. A woman has full autonomy, Jewish law does not dictate a woman's body.

(Mimi Hecht) Jewish women were kind of like the biggest feminists there are out there and our husbands are as well in the way that they praise us and honor us and see us as the foundation of life. A big portion of our society tells you that to be a powerful woman, you need to be more like a man. Which obviously to me that sounds much more caging than freeing. Judaism creates space for a woman to tap into what might not be popular right now but what is innate.

The creative power of, you know, bearing children, not that that's all the Jewish woman has to do, but that is a big, big emphasis.

(Bronya Schaffer) The way in which Judaism dealt with women's sexuality was very, very different for the rest of the world. It recognized that women have sexual desire and sexual feeling and a man is obligated to bring his wife satisfaction.

On the law books of Judaism your husband is committed to providing all your physical needs and the sexual pleasure.

(Interviewer) Okay... Everybody asks this. What is the thing with the sheet?

(Bronya Schaffer) [Laughs] I knew you were going to ask that. Pure mythology, because what Jewish law says is that when a couple is making love there should be nothing between them. It should be, you know, skin to skin, lips to lips, face to face.

You cannot be someone who talks the talk but doesn't walk, you have to do both. The only way that it's going to keep and only way that it's going to last if comes from your partner-

(Matt Swerdloff) Nowadays the world is such a instant gratification type of world out there, but there's a purpose why we're here. There's a reason why we're here, there's something to it. Everybody out there has to believe in something bigger.

(Solomon Rosenberg) It's the job that we were given handed down generation to generation this is what God wants from us.

(Moshe Hecht) There's a beautiful thought that at for every tear that mankind sheds,

God sheds one as well.

There's a spiritual representation of a cup and when that cup will be filled with God's tears, that's when the Messiah will come.

(Bronya Schaffer) We depend on each other and we're responsible for each other. Human beings need community. There are people who are alone, and we're not.

[Music]