An aerial photograph of a tropical island with lush green vegetation and turquoise water. A complex network of thin white lines is overlaid on the image, connecting various points across the island and extending into the sky. The lines form a dense web, suggesting a network or infrastructure. The sky is filled with a pattern of small orange dots.

לזכות הילד צמח שי'
לרגל הולדתו, י"ב שבט ה'תשע"ו, שנת הקהל, והכנסו בבריתו של אאע"ה
שיגדל להיות חי"ל כרצו"ק ולנח"ר כ"ק אדמו"ר
ולזכות אחיו ואחיותיו ארלי לייב, ח' מושקא וליבא שיחיו
נדפס ע"י הוריהם
הרה"ת ר' מנחם מענדל וזוגתו מרת אריאלה שיחיו וועג

מבצע הדפסת תניא

TANYA TO THE WORLD

THE STORY OF THE
PRINTING TANYAS CAMPAIGN



Much of the material in this article is based on an interview conducted by the staff of A Chassidisher Derher with **Rabbi Sholom Jacobson**, a key individual involved in printing the Tanyas.

In the preparation of this article we were also assisted by the sefer "הוצאת ספרים קה"ת" and its author Rabbi Zushe Wolf.

YUD ALEPH NISSAN 5744 WAS APPROACHING; THE CAMPAIGN FOR PRINTING TANYAS ALL OVER THE WORLD WAS IN FULL SWING. IN HONOR OF YUD ALEPH NISSAN, THE REBBE REQUESTED THAT A NEW EDITION OF THE TANYA SHOULD BE PRINTED, WHICH WOULD INCLUDE ALL OF THE SHE'ARIM OF THE EDITIONS THAT HAD BEEN PRINTED UP TO THAT DATE.

THE REBBE ASKED THAT "...THIS PRINTING SHOULD BE NUMBER SEVEN HUNDRED AND FORTY FOUR (5744),

FOR A LARGER EFFECT

From the most 'wondrous' of the Rebbe's campaigns is the endeavor to print Tanyas in every country and in each and every city where Yidden live. To date, over six-thousand seven-hundred editions have been printed, and thousands of people have been touched by the wide-reaching and never-ending endeavor.

Throughout the years of the campaign, the Rebbe often explained¹ its meaning and goal.

If the whole idea is that everyone should study Chassidus, it would have been possible to simply send copies of Tanya to the Jews of each city and have them study from them. However, the Rebbe explained that it would not carry the same influence as a Tanya printed in their own city.

The Gemara states that חן המקום על יושביו—the residents of a city find favor in their home; therefore, the knowledge that a Tanya was printed in their own city will surely excite even those to whom had not previously learned Tanya, and even those who had never heard of the *sefer* before.

Additionally, when one opens the Tanya and sees that it was printed in their city, they will realize that it is *b'hashgacha pratis*, and will feel an obligation to learn and gain from it.

However, this *mitvza* is not simply a gimmick to get people to start learning Tanya. The campaign carries a much deeper meaning, in the fact that it's intention is an important step in preparing the entire world for the *geulah*.

Throughout the generations, the Yidden have merited a number of liberations and *geulos*, but in each instance, there were those that were left behind in exile. However, in regards to the upcoming redemption, the *possuk* states that ואתם תלוקטו לאחד אחד²—each and every Jew will be collected and brought along, with no one being left behind.

Being that every Jew is included in the *geulah*, it is obvious that every single Jew must also take part in the preparation for the *geulah*. How do we prepare for the *geulah*? When the Baal Shem Tov spoke with Moshiach, he was told that his arrival will take place לכשיפוצו מעינותיך חוצה—when

your wellsprings will be spread to the furthest places.

When we teach Chassidus to those that are distant from it, we have brought to them the waters of the *ma'ayan*—the wellsprings. But by printing the Tanya in that location, we have brought the well itself, and it can now go and flow from that location as well. The campaign to print Tanyas is in essence a mission to complete the work of *hafatzas hama'ayanos* and make the world ready for the coming of Moshiach.

THE BEGINNING

"As we are approaching Chai Elul, which is a special day in regards to spreading the wellsprings of Chassidus, which begins with the *Torah Shebiksav* of Chassidus, which is the *Sefer HaTanya*.

"And since there are countries, in which—for whatever reason—the Tanya has yet to have been printed, this request is to all of *anash* who live in those countries: They should immediately begin working on publishing the Tanya in their locations, so that they will be ready in time for

IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE CURRENT YEAR.” THE REBBE RESPONDED WITH A WIDE SMILE OF NACHAS AND SATISFACTION WHEN HE WAS TOLD THAT THEY ARE ALREADY MUCH FURTHER THAN THAT.

WHY WERE SO MANY TANYAS PRINTED? WHY SHOULD HUNDREDS OF TITLE PAGES BE INCLUDED IN ONE BOOK? IN THE FOLLOWING PAGES YOU WILL READ ABOUT ONE OF THE REBBE'S HIMMELDIKER CAMPAIGNS, UNLIKE ANY OTHER CAMPAIGN BEFORE.

Chai Elul, and they will already be able to learn in those *sefarim*.

“...It would be best, if by Chai Elul, copies of the printed *sefarim* will reach the *daled-amos* of *nessi doreinu*...”³

This is a *sicha* that the Rebbe said on Motzoei Shabbos Mevarchim Elul 5738, just several weeks before Chai Elul. The Rebbe had, in a few short sentences, launched a new campaign that was revolutionary in style; and Chassidim, who mostly had no experience in the field whatsoever, were now on a race against time to complete full editions of Tanya.

Throughout the years of the *nesius*, the Rebbe placed a great emphasis on Tanya, often referring to the fact that it is called the *Torah Shebiksav* of Chassidus. In addition to the countless instances that the Rebbe instructed people to learn Tanya, he had also personally worked on the Kehos editions of Tanya in the early years of the *nesius*, indexing and adding supplements to the *sefer*, applying painstaking effort to edit it and correct all of the printing mistakes that crept in over the generations to perfection. The Rebbe would also edit Rabbi Yosef Wineberg's weekly Tanya classes on



PRINTING TANYAS ON AN ISRAELI ARMY BASE NEAR THE SUEZ CANAL.

BY PRINTING THE TANYA IN THAT LOCATION, WE HAVE BROUGHT THE WELL ITSELF, AND IT CAN NOW GO AND FLOW FROM THAT LOCATION AS WELL.





JEM 110742

THE REBBE DISTRIBUTES A TANYA TO ALL MEN, WOMEN, AND CHILDREN FOLLOWING THE FARBRENGEN, YUD-ALEPH NISSAN 5742.

the radio⁴, and was deeply involved in publishing the translation of the Tanya in English. Later the Rebbe distributed the *sefer* to thousands of Chassidim on four different occasions.

Now however, with announcing the campaign to print the Tanya throughout the world, the Rebbe was beginning an entirely new phase.

THE INSTRUCTIONS

During that first farbrengen and in the period following it, the Rebbe gave a number of instructions for the new campaign. Firstly, the Rebbe pointed out that in previous editions of Tanya there had been a number of mistakes involving the *luach hatikkun* (the chart printed in the back of Tanya enumerating the mistakes that had

crept into the various editions of the Tanya over the generations). Since the first *luach hatikkun* had been published, a number of the mistakes had been corrected and added into the text of the Tanya, and deleted from the *luach* in later editions. However, during the more recent years, editions of Tanya were printed with the newer version of the Tanya's text, but with the old version of the *luach*, and also vice versa. The Rebbe emphasized that care must be taken to ensure that the proper *luachos* are printed in the new editions.

Regarding the price of the Tanya, the Rebbe said that the true price of the *sefer* is not measurable, and should therefore not be taken into account. At the same time, Torah and Mitzvos should not be 'free,' so there must be some price attached to it. Therefore,

the Rebbe said, it should be sold for a bit lower than the current price.

Being that anash, shluchim, and *askanim* throughout the world had little experience in publishing, the Rebbe immediately instructed those involved in the printing process of Kehos to create a uniform Tanya, which would be available for anyone to print. After a period of trial and error, going through the various prints of Tanya available, it was decided that the best version for use was the one printed in 5714, which had been personally edited and published by the Rebbe himself.

TAKING OFF

From those who worked at Kehos, Rabbi Sholom Jacobson became the one to prepare the Tanyas for print and designate numbers to each edition. He is also—to this very day—the one that Chassidim around the world contact in order to obtain an edition number, and to receive general direction and help in their printings.

Rabbi Jacobson relates:

"Once the printing plates were ready, the *mitvza* took off with a storm. Many anash, shluchim, and businessmen whose work brought them to locations with no established Chabad presence, printed the Tanya in their destinations. Often, people asking for the Rebbe's *bracha* for their trip were explicitly requested by the Rebbe to print the Tanya in the country they were headed to. In the Rebbe's words, "באם לא נדפס עדיין"—if it was not printed there yet.

"While country after country was being covered, there were some locations that needed unique attention due to their delicate circumstances. In the case of communist China, the government censors refused to allow the Tanya's publication without them going through the book prior. Upon the Rebbe's instruction to Rabbi Fishel

Katz (a traveling businessman who printed many editions of Tanya upon the Rebbe's request), they were given an English translation of the Tanya, and after a significant period of time the printing was approved and allowed to move forward.

"The country of Iran, which was ruled by the secular Shah, was known to be a safe place for Yidden. However, the Rebbe initially did not allow a printing to take place there. When the government was about to fall to Islamist revolutionaries, the Rebbe consented to the Tanya's publishing, and Rabbi Shalom Ber Hecht, who was in the country at the time directing Lubavitch activities there in an effort to save Iranian youth⁵, moved quickly to complete the project before it would be too late. After they concluded and exited the building with the fresh copies, a shell landed on the printing press and destroyed the entire building.

"As the volumes arrived in 770, the Rebbe paid them close attention. At many of the Rebbe's farbrengens in 770 in 5739, a recently printed Tanya could be seen on the Rebbe's table.

"A very special occurrence, which showed us that this project was entirely *himmeldik*, took place on Erev Yom Kippur 5739:

"After *kapparos*, the Rebbe instructed us to publish two editions of the Tanya before the end of Aseres Yemei Teshuvah (i.e. that day). No printing press was willing to do the job for us, so we needed to use the printers of Vaad L'hafotzas Sichos, which were in the offices above 770. We worked throughout the entire day while everyone else was busily preparing for Yom Kippur, toiling on the printing. Later in the afternoon, we were notified by *mazkirus* that one of the editions must be completed that day before Kol Nidrei, while the other could be completed after Yom Kippur. As Kol Nidrei approached, the Rebbe came downstairs into the shul and everyone recited Tehillim as usual. It seemed as though the Rebbe was waiting for the Tanya before Kol Nidrei would start. While the entire shul was packed with Chassidim dressed in their Yom Kippur finery, I ran through the crowd in my work clothes to bring the first copy—tied together with rubber-bands—to the

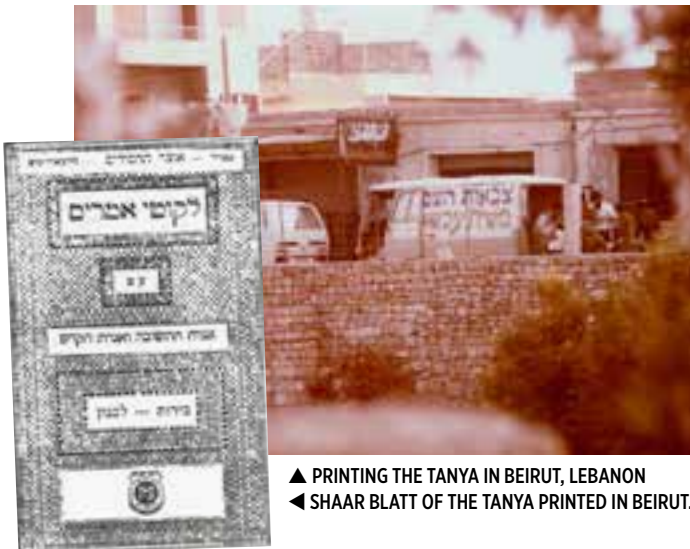
Rebbe. As I entered the shul, Rabbi Groner came down to take the Tanya, and after he placed it on the Rebbe's *shtender*, Kol Nidrei commenced."

PEACE IN THE GALILEE

In 5742, the Israel Defense Force invaded Lebanon, in what was called the 'Peace in the Galilee Campaign,' in order to stop the advances of the PLO in the area. While the army was there, a small group of Chassidim, led by Rabbi Leibel Kaplan and Rabbi Aharon Eliezer Ceitlin of Tzfas, worked tirelessly in the midst of the war to print the Tanya in the cities throughout Lebanon, in a project that provided the Rebbe much satisfaction. The Rebbe instructed them to print the Tanya in the capital city of Beirut, and even to attempt a printing within the Presidential Palace (see sidebar).

These instructions were part of a larger issue; the Rebbe was extremely unsatisfied with the way the war

I RAN THROUGH THE CROWD IN MY WORK CLOTHES TO BRING THE FIRST COPY—TIED TOGETHER WITH RUBBER-BANDS—TO THE REBBE.



▲ PRINTING THE TANYA IN BEIRUT, LEBANON
 ▲ SHAAR BLATT OF THE TANYA PRINTED IN BEIRUT.



had become politicized, and insisted that if the IDF would be allowed to immediately enter Beirut, they would be able to put an end to all of the terrorism based out of the city and leave quickly, thus saving many more lives and ensuring minimal risk. During the farbrengen of Yud-Gimmel Tammuz that year, the Rebbe walked in holding the Tanyas that had been printed in various cities throughout Lebanon, and spoke in length about the issue.

After a long *sicha* about the war, where the Rebbe said that the IDF needed to finish the war by finally conquering Beirut and putting an end to the terrorist activities, he turned to the topic of the Tanyas:

“The crowd likes something which is a *shturem*;

“Here, there is a simple proof that we are already within Beirut:

“Here on the table lies a Tanya that was printed in Beirut (as it is inscribed in the *shaar*) a few days ago, with enough time for it to arrive here so that it can be on the table during the Yud-Beis Tammuz farbrengen. [Saying these words, the Rebbe picked up a Tanya in hand.]

“The reason they were able to print it was because the IDF themselves made the proper arrangements for it to be possible.

“And together with the printing, they said *l'chaim*; *l'chaim* to the soldiers and *l'chaim* to *klal Yisrael*. They studied there from the Tanya, and they davened and gave tzedakah in a shul in Beirut, which was there before the founding of PLO, and will be there after their downfall.”⁶

EXPANSION

On the seventh night of Chanukah 5744, the Rebbe addressed a Tzivos Hashem rally in 770, and spoke about the connection between Chanukah and *pnimiyus hatTorah*. Towards the

★ THE ARAB STATES

The printing conducted by Rabbi Leibel Kaplan in Lebanon was not the first one in that country. Three years prior, just after the Rebbe announced the campaign, Rabbi Yosef Gerlitzky, then a shliach in Tzfas, decided that being that a Jewish community existed in Lebanon, it would be appropriate to print the Tanya there, notwithstanding the danger.

The Rebbe immediately approved of the idea, and constantly followed updates as to where they were holding.

The logistics were daunting. They first needed approval from the Southern Lebanese Army, which was then in control of the southern part of the country, and then also from the Chief of Staff of the Israel Defense Forces. Initially, the SLA refused to allow entry, and the Rebbe said that if they cannot gain admittance, an Arab should be entrusted with the task...

After a period of time, the necessary permits came through, and they traveled into a small town near the Israeli border, where they conducted the printing in a Christian school, hoping that they would not be as hostile as the Muslim population. Throughout the entire process, they were bogged down by constant blackouts and insufficient electricity, and ultimately a generator was transported all the way from Kfar Chabad to help them finish the job.

Security during the operation was also a constant issue, and at one point the Israeli officers forced them to leave until the next morning, when they would have adequate security personnel.

When the printing was finally concluded, it was the night of Erev Yom Kippur, and they began a race against time to get a few copies to the Rebbe before Yom Kippur would start in New York. They rushed to the Ben Gurion Airport, where the Tanya was passed to a passenger on a leaving flight, who in turn passed it on to a Lubavitcher waiting for him at JFK. That morning, after *kapparos*, the Rebbe asked where the Tanyas of Lebanon were holding, and was told that they are already on a flight to the United States. A short while later, the Tanyas arrived, and the Rebbe received them with a wide smile and open satisfaction. The Rebbe brought them into shul during *mincha* as well.

One of the *mazkirim* later told Rabbi Gerlitzky, “You have no idea how much *nachas ruach* you caused the Rebbe. He continuously flipped through the pages, and it was evident that the Rebbe was unusually *b'simcha* on that Kol Nidrei night.”

★ EGYPT

Another large project was the printing in *Mitzrayim*, which was conducted by Rabbi Yosef Hecht and Rabbi Yisrael Glitzenshtein, the shluchim in Eilat. In 5742, Rabbi Hecht wrote in a letter to the Rebbe that an Egyptian consul had opened in Eretz Yisrael, and asked if it would be proper to print the Tanya in the two cities that had Jewish communities: Cairo and Alexandria. The Rebbe replied that it would be a very good idea, but that they should approach the consul in a diplomatic way, through friends, etc., so that they will not suspect that there is an ulterior motive hidden behind the request.

After a few months without any progress, Rabbi Hecht received instructions from the Rebbe to try pressuring them through American channels, with the help of his uncle, Rabbi Avraham Dov Hecht, who had connections in the US Senate. These efforts proved more fruitful, and after a lengthy process of about two years, the consul contacted them with the proper permits.

While in Egypt, they were in constant contact with *mazkirus*, and they received continuous and detailed instructions from the Rebbe regarding all that was going on. The Rebbe instructed them on everything, from the amounts of Tanya that should be printed, to exactly how and where they should be distributed.

When Rabbi Hecht finally arrived in New York with the Tanya for Shavuos 5744, a full two years after beginning the efforts, the Rebbe devoted special attention during the farbrengen to the fact that a country that is hostile to Judaism and Jews in general, had allowed the publication to take place, and even assisted in various ways.

[It should be noted that ten years earlier, during the Yom Kippur War, two editions of Tanya were printed in *Mitzrayim*, as per the Rebbe's request.]

★ GRENADA

Rabbi Sholom Jacobson relates:

When the American armed forces entered Grenada in the winter of 5744 and Chaplain Yaakov Goldstein was dispatched to the front, he requested the Rebbe's *bracha* and received a directive to print a Tanya there. He traveled to Grenada with the negatives for the printing.

When he arrived there, Chaplain Goldstein solicited the assistance of some of his superiors in the army to help with the printing.

Not only was the Tanya printed by the American military and later

bound in traditional military camouflage coloring, it was also embossed with the symbol of the Department of Defense on it. Interestingly, the printing was concluded during Chanukah, the same time that the Rebbe gave the *hora'ah* to expand the *mitvza* on a much wider scale.

When the Rebbe received the *sefer*, he asked the *mazkir* for a magnifying glass, and peered intently at the Tanya and the symbol on the cover. Sometime later, the general that had taken care of the printing, Major General Jack M. Farris Jr., received a thank you letter from the Rebbe, where the Rebbe explained that the foundations of the United States are based on many of the ideas elucidated in this book.

A while later, the chief rabbi of the IDF, Rabbi Gad Navon, came for a *yechidus*, and noticed that Tanya on the table and gazed at it with a surprised look. Noticing this, the Rebbe smiled at him and said that "I also have an army."

TANYA PRINTED ON THE US ARMY BASE IN GRENADA, PRINTED WITH THE DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE SYMBOL AND A CAMOUFLAGE-COLORED COVER.



CHAPLAIN GOLDSTEIN IN GRENADA, WINTER 5744.



TOGETHER WITH THE PRINTING, THEY STUDIED THERE FROM THE TANYA, AND THEY DAVENED AND GAVE TZEDAKAH IN A SHUL IN BEIRUT, WHICH WAS THERE BEFORE THE FOUNDING OF PLO, AND WILL BE THERE AFTER THEIR DOWNFALL.

end of the *sicha*, the Rebbe surprised everyone with a new directive:

"According to what has been said numerous times about the connection between Chanukah and Yud and Yud-Tes Kislev, since Chanukah commemorates the miracle of the oil, which refers to *pnimiyus haTorah*, it would be appropriate to print the Tanya in all of the places that it has not yet been printed, and—in a way of *mehadrin min hamehadrin*—it should be done before the end of Chanukah.

"Those that will not be able to finish it by then, should do so before Chof-Daled Teves, and if not, they should finish before Purim Katan, or at least by Purim."

The Rebbe concluded the *sicha* with a *bracha* for the geulah's speedy arrival, finishing off that the printing



PRINTING OF THE TANYA IN THE KNESSET, 10 KISLEV 5751.



PRIME MINISTER YITZCHAK SHAMIR REVIEWS THE NEWLY PRINTED TANYA IN THE KNESSET.

of the Tanyas should be concluded after Moshiach's coming.

After this *sicha*, the Tanya campaign was brought to entirely new heights, and was run on a much broader scale. The organizing was done in a quick and efficient manner, and within a short period of time, many new editions of the Tanya were printed and arrived daily in 770.

As each one was brought to the Rebbe, he would give a twenty dollar *hishtatfus* in the effort (through *mazkirus*), with a note saying that “\$20 מקרן כ”ק מו”ח אדמו”ר” — Enclosed is twenty dollars from the *keren* of the Frierdiker Rebbe.” On later occasions, the Rebbe would write “מצו”ב כמפורסם — Enclosed, as is well known.” Rabbi Sholom Jacobson recalls that throughout that year, he would often receive a call from *mazkirus* before the Rebbe would go to the Ohel, wanting a list of all the new editions that had been printed, and where. Sometimes, after bringing the list to the Ohel, the Rebbe would give it back with further instructions.

Until then, the Tanyas had been printed just once in every country (aside from a few unique cases), and there had been a bit over one hundred new editions since the *farbrengen* in 5738. Now the *mitvza* was taken to new levels, and the Rebbe instructed

that the Tanya's be published in every single Jewish community. In some countries, there were even a number of *askanim* that took on the task to facilitate the publishings in as many cities and towns as possible.

Two individuals who were deeply involved in the Tanya campaign were Rabbi Shabse Alpern and Rabbi Leibel Zajac (both the rebbe's *shluchim* to Brazil). They recall that often, when one of them would arrive in 770 with a large quantity of editions, the Rebbe would shower them with *brachos*.

Another one of the first locations to respond with a vast number of printings was Eretz Yisrael. As Shabbos Parshas Bo 5744 approached, just one month after the Rebbe intensified the *mitvza*, Rabbi Menachem Wolf, the director of Kehos in Eretz Yisrael, arrived in 770 carrying seventeen new editions of Tanya. That Shabbos (which was not a typical time for the Rebbe to hold a *farbrengen*) the Rebbe held a special *farbrengen* in honor of the new arrivals, and spoke at length about the campaign. It was during this *farbrengen* that the Rebbe gave a number of the instructions mentioned at the end of this article.

The *mitvza* was a recurring theme throughout the *farbrengen*, to the extent that the Rebbe connected the

daily *shiurim* of that day with the idea of printing Tanyas. The Rebbe concluded the *farbrengen* encouraging that the *mitvza* should grow to even more places, and gave *mashke* to whoever took upon himself to initiate new printings. Some time later, the Rebbe edited the *sicha* from this *Farbrengen* about the *mitvza*, and it came out as a special publication titled “Regarding the efforts to print the Tanya in every city and town where there are Yidden.”⁸

PRINTING IN CROWN HEIGHTS

Later that week, another unique printing took place. On Friday afternoon, Erev Yud Shvat, Rabbi Zalman Shimon Dvorkin, the rav of Crown Heights, gave the Rebbe a Tanya that was printed in Crown Heights in the upper floors of 770. This Tanya was printed directly in the printroom of Vaad L'hafotzas Sichos, and every resident of Crown Heights participated with one dollar. The Rebbe too, had sent two dollars as a participation.

When they brought the Tanya to the Rebbe, he blessed Rabbi Dvorkin and all members of the community with long life. The Rebbe then asked if they had already learned from

the Tanya, and was answered in the positive.

That night was Yud Shvat. Thousands of Chassidim gathered in 770 to spend the special day with the Rebbe; to hear him lead the *tefillos* of Shabbos and to participate in the special farbrengen that would take place on Shabbos afternoon.

When the Rebbe walked into the big farbrengen, he brought the new Tanya with him, and began the farbrengen by learning and explaining a passage of Tanya. The Rebbe went on in the second *sicha* to explain the lesson one can learn from the name of the place where the Tanya was printed, “Crown Heights”—*כתר עליון*.

BRAZIL

On Thursday morning, 13 Adar I, Rabbi Shabse Alpern arrived in New York carrying one hundred editions

of Tanya, which were printed in cities and towns throughout Brazil. As the Rebbe returned from *krias haTorah*, he was greeted by the sight of the Tanyas on a table in *Gan Eden Hatachton*, bound in leather and encased in a elegant clear plastic box. Standing there were Rabbi Alpern and Rabbis Benyamini and Michaan, who were instrumental in the project as well.

The Rebbe inquired how many Tanyas were in the box, and when they responded that there were one hundred, the Rebbe—clearly pleased—thanked them, and wished them that “may we merit to go towards Moshiach with these Tanyas.” The Rebbe also gave each of them fifty dollars to give to tzedakah, and before returning to his room he asked them if they will be staying for Shabbos. When they answered in the affirmative, the Rebbe said that there will probably be a farbrengen.



CB HALBERSTAM via JEM 85326

THE REBBE RECEIVES NEWLY PRINTED TANYAS FROM RABBI LEIBEL ZAJAC, 7 TISHREI 5752.

During the farbrengen that Shabbos,¹⁰ the Rebbe spoke with sadness about a number of issues that were taking place then in the world, and the general feeling during the farbrengen was downcast. But then the



THE REBBE LEAVES 770 FOLLOWING THE FARBRENGEN OF YUD-ALEPH NISSAN 5744 HOLDING THE SPECIAL EDITION OF TANYA. INSET: THE TANYA PRINTED FOR YUD-ALEPH NISSAN 5744.

אויפצובויען א גאנצע שטאט

In 5752, Rabbi Leibel Zajac, along with Reb Zalman Chanin, organized a wide ranging project to print the Tanya all over the Former Soviet Union. Among the locations that they did printings was the Frieddiker Rebbe's apartment in Leningrad, and in the fortress where the Alter Rebbe was held in prison.

When they arrived in New York on the third night of Chanukah, they were told that the Rebbe would receive them in his room for a private *yechidus* the next day, before he leaves to the Ohel.

As they stood in Gan Eden Hatachton, the Rebbe opened the door and smiled at them and his face was shining with an unusual glow. The Rebbe motioned to them to enter; while they were walking in, Reb Zalman whispered to Rabbi Zajac that he shouldn't hand the Rebbe the bag, due to its weight. The Rebbe overheard him, and told them with a smile "A Tanya *iz nit shver*—A Tanya is not heavy," and directed them to place the bag on a chair located near the door.

During the *yechidus*, the Rebbe thanked them profusely, saying twice that it is the best *Chanukah gelt* that one could receive, and asked Rabbi Zajac how much he owed him (\$20 per edition) for the Tanyas that he had just printed, in addition to his previous projects.

Two minutes after they walked out, Rabbi Groner called them back and said the Rebbe wants them to come back in. The Rebbe asked to see the Tanya that was printed in the Frieddiker Rebbe's apartment, and held it continuously while he asked them detailed questions about the state of the apartment and where exactly in it they had printed it. They told the Rebbe that they had printed it in the room where—as rumor had it—the Rebbetzin had warned the Rebbe about the arrival of the KGB agents on the night of the Frieddiker Rebbe's arrest. The Rebbe inquired of them how many windows were in the room, and they answered that there were two of them. The Rebbe then asked if those windows are facing the main street, and they answered in the affirmative.

Before they left, the Rebbe presented them with a new mission. He pointed out that the last Tanya was number 3,899, which means that there were only a bit more than a hundred left until four thousand. The Rebbe asked them to conduct the remaining printings in Russia, before the end of Chanukah!

The Rebbe then said that "there are probably another one hundred cities where the tanya can be printed, and if not, it is worth building an entire city just to print a Tanya there!"

Rebbe added that there are also good *besuros*—a shliach has arrived together with one hundred new editions of Tanya, which have been printed in רובו ככולו—the majority of an entire

country. He has not just elevated a specific city, or even many cities. He has raised an entire country to a new level of *hafotzas hama'ayanos*.



FAR OUT IN NOWHERE

The Tanyas from South America continued streaming in. During the year before, Rabbi Dovid Weitman, also of Brazil had printed Tanyas in a number of South American countries. He then asked the Rebbe if he should print the Tanyas in Suriname and French Guiana, two small countries on the northern coast of the continent, although he knew of only a handful of Yidden living there. After receiving the Rebbe's consent, Feivel Rabinowitz—a *bochur* coming closer to Yiddishkeit at the time—was dispatched to conduct the operation, and on Friday, Erev Rosh Chodesh Adar II, he arrived in 770 with the Tanyas.

During the farbrengen on Shabbos, the Rebbe paid special attention to Feivel, calling him over and giving him *mashke* in honor of the printings. The Rebbe also, once again, spoke about it during the *sicha*. He praised the fact that the Tanya had been printed even in such a distant location, with such a small number of Yidden,



CHABAD LUBAVITCH OF LONG ISLAND

A TRUCK PRINTING TANYAS THROUGHOUT THE NEW YORK METROPOLITAN AREA.

and had been brought to 770, which, in the Rebbe's words, "is the *daled amos* of the [Frierdiker] Rebbe, where for the last ten years of his life in this world, he did his *avodah*—he *davened*, learned Torah and performed the mitzvos, and did his activities of *hafatzas hama'ayanos*; and 'holiness never leaves its place...'"

The Rebbe continued:

"This is the appropriate time to mention once again the proposal and *bakasha nafshis* to print the Tanya... in every place where there are Yidden, even a place where there is just one Yid... We have spoken many times that the upcoming *geulah* will be in a way that not even one Yid is left behind."¹¹

THE TITLE PAGES

Amongst the thousands of editions of the Tanya that have been published to date, two stand out: The first one was printed in honor of Yud-Aleph Nissan 5742, and the second was

published two years later, for Yud-Aleph Nissan 5744.

The period before Yud-Aleph Nissan 5742 was one filled with anticipation and excitement. The Rebbe was reaching *shmonim shanah*, and chassidim around the world prepared themselves for the auspicious occasion, and many had special *matanos* with which to present the Rebbe on the momentous day.

Rabbi Simon Jacobson of Vaad Hanachos Hatmimim wrote to the Rebbe with a suggestion to print a special *Kovetz Yud Aleph Nissan* (in accordance with an earlier instruction from the Rebbe), which would contain various *divrei Torah* and *maamarim* that have a connection with *shmonim shanah*. In addition to other instructions about the *kovetz*, the Rebbe added an interesting proposal: He instructed that a new edition of the Tanya be printed, which would include all of the *shaar blatts*—the title pages—of the editions which had been printed until then, a total of one hundred and sixty four, in their original size. The Rebbe also wrote

that they should print ten thousand copies of that Tanya, and to keep its existence a secret.

When Yud-Aleph Nissan arrived, thousands of Yidden crammed into 770 to be present at the Rebbe's *farbrengen*. After long hours of *sichos*, a *maamar*, and uplifting *niggunim*, the Rebbe surprised the crowd by thanking all those who had made the effort to participate in the *farbrengen* that lasted many hours, and said that the way to express his thanks was by distributing this special edition of Tanya.

After the Rebbe recited the *bracha acharonah*, the distribution began. First to the men and then to the women; with everyone filing by the Rebbe's *farbrengen* place, and the Rebbe handing each one the Tanya while gazing at them with his glowing countenance. By the end of the *chaluka*, which concluded at 6:10 in the morning, the Rebbe had distributed close to seven thousand Tanyas.

GROWING COLLECTION

Two years later, the Rebbe once again instructed that the Tanya be printed.

Rabbi Jacobson relates: “We sent letters throughout the world encouraging people to send in copies of the *shaar blatts* of their editions so that they can be included in the new printing. The text for the letters was edited by the Rebbe.

On Shabbos Mevarchim Nissan, the Rebbe spoke publicly about the printing, urging that the copies be sent in immediately, and added that those printings that will be completed before Rosh Chodesh Nissan will be able to get into the new Tanya.

At the end of that year’s farbrengen, the Rebbe said that the distribution would happen differently. Since the previous *chalukah* had caused long lines and much *balagan*, this year the members of the Kolel will act as the Rebbe’s shlichim to distribute the Tanyas, so that it will be conducted in an orderly and quick fashion. After the Rebbe finished distributing the boxes of Tanyas to the Kolel members, he himself approached one of them on the way out of the shul and asked for a Tanya.

During the next farbrengen, on Shabbos Hagadol, the Rebbe once again returned to the subject of the Tanyas, and announced that a *kuntres milu’im*, a supplementary booklet, should be printed, which will include all of the new *she’arim* of Tanyas that

had been printed since Yud-Aleph Nissan.

A few months later, as Yud-Beis Tammuz approached, the *kuntres* was published. It contained three hundred seventy six new *shaar blatts*, which had been published in just over three months.

During the Yud-Beis Tammuz farbrengen¹², the Rebbe addressed a question:

People are asking, the Rebbe said, what exactly is the significance of printing all of the *shaar blatts* in one volume? The answer, the Rebbe said, is as follows:

In regards to the upcoming *geulah*, there is a bit of a delay, for the *geulah* must encompass every single Jew wherever he is in the world. Therefore, if there is even one Jew who is not yet ready for the *geulah*, it is not able to

A TZINOR FOR THE REBBE'S BRACHOS



Rabbi Levi Vogel, shliach in S. Augustine, Florida, relates:

“I had wanted to print the Tanya in my city for a while, until finally in the beginning of Elul, the year was almost over, and we felt that we have to go ahead with it. We decided to print it in the old city, since our Chabad House is just outside the official municipal lines of the city.

“I started to look for a proper print shop that would be able to do the job. When I came to one particular shop, I met the owner, an Israeli Jew, and his partner, who just happened to be in from NYC, and *b’hashgacha pratis* were both on location that day. They agreed to help with my project and allowed me to do whatever was necessary. A little later they came by to see what I was doing, and when I explained to them the importance of my job, they got so excited that it was being done in their store that they decided on the spot

to sponsor the project. After the printing, we learned together from the newly printed Tanyas.

“Amazingly, within a few short days, I began to see much more success in my shlichus, and specifically in that particular area of town, starting a Jewish student group on the college campus there, and establishing *shiurim* with people who previously refused to have anything to do with me. Managers at a local hall suddenly agreed to rent me their space for a large discount, and all over I began to see more and more *hashgacha pratis* and success.

“During Aseres Yimei Teshuva I was at the Ohel, where I met a friend, who is also a shliach, and while we were talking he shared with me that he felt that his Rosh Hashanah had been a very weak event, and very few Yidden had shown up for davening.

“I told him about my experience with printing Tanyas; how I too was having hardships, and once I fulfilled this *hora’ah* of the Rebbe, I began to see much more success, and I encouraged him to do the same.

“He immediately got to work, and managed to print the Tanya within the next few days. Sure enough, Yom Kippur was a tremendous success; a very large crowd came to partake in the davening, and the effect of printing Tanyas was immediately apparent.”

come. An additional fact regarding the *geulah*, is that we know that it will be brought about—as Moshiach told the Baal Shem Tov—when the wellsprings of Chassidus will spread out.

Consequently, instead of waiting for the *chutzah* to come to the *maayan*, there has been a concentrated effort to bring the *maayan* to the *chutzah*, by printing the Tanya in every city and location that has Yidden. With the printing however, there is still a need to unite all of the Yidden together through *pnimiyus haTorah*; for while the printing itself has brought the Yidden closer to the wellsprings, there are still differences in time and space between the different locations.

This *achdus* is attained through the printing of all of the *she'arim* in one uniform volume. By all of the editions being included in one volume, we unite all of the Yidden through *pnimiyus haTorah*.

THOUSANDS OF EDITIONS

As time went on, the Tanyas continued streaming in, and before Rosh Hashanah 5745, the Rebbe asked that yet another *kuntres miluim* be published. This volume contained the *shaar blatts* of editions 1,377 through edition two thousand, which had all been printed in the few months prior. When the Rebbe entered the farbrengen of Erev Rosh Hashanah, he brought with him this new volume.

During the years following the campaign, until this very day, the Tanya continues to be printed in countries and cities throughout the world. To date, almost forty years since the Rebbe announced the campaign, over six-thousand, seven-hundred editions of the Tanya have been published in countries, cities and towns around the globe.

There were numerous instances where the Rebbe directly connected the printing of Tanya in new locations to *brachos* and *yeshuos* for the people that worked on it and the locations where they were printed.

The printing of Tanyas is a project designed specifically to fulfill the directive of Moshiach, לכשיפוצו מעיינותיך חוצה, to spread Chassidus throughout the world through bringing the *maayan* itself to those distant locations. There is no need to elaborate on how important it is for each and every one of us to take part in this *mitvza*, ultimately bringing about the desired result *b'karov mamosh!* ①

1. For the full *sichos* on the topic, see the following farbrengens: Shabbos Parshas Bo (Toras Menachem 5744 vol. 2 page 815), Shabbos Parshas Terumah 5744 (Toras Menachem 5744 vol. 2 page 1036-8), Shavuos 5744 (Toras Menachem 5744 vol. 3 page 1937), and Yud Beis Tammuz 5744 (Toras Menachem 5744 vol. 3 page 2195).

2. Yishayahu 27:12
3. Sichos Kodesh 5738 vol. 3 p. 302
4. See A Chassidisher Derher, Kislev 5776
5. See A Chassidisher Derher, Nissan 5773
6. Toras Menachem 5742 vol. 2 p. 1851
7. Toras Menachem 5744 vol. 2 . 724
8. Likutei Sichos vol. 26 p. 320
9. Toras Menachem 5744 vol. 2 p. 863
10. Ibid. p. 1095
11. Ibid p. 1156
12. Toras Menachem 5744 vol. 4 p. 2194

FOR THOSE INTERESTED IN PRINTING THE TANYA IN A CITY WHICH HAS NOT YET MERITED TO A PRINTING, EMAIL MIVTZATANYA@GMAIL.COM OR LOG ON TO WORLDWIDETANYA.COM



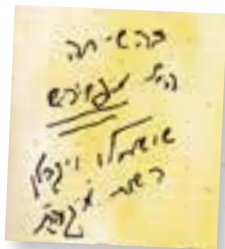
THE REBBE AT THE CONCLUSION OF THE DISTRIBUTION OF TANYAS, YUD SHEVAT 5750.

LEVI FREIDIN /via JEM 238244

SOME OF THE REBBE'S INSTRUCTIONS FOR PRINTING THE TANYA

UNDER KEHOS

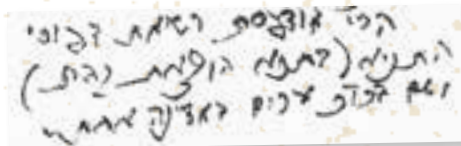
At the outset of the campaign and often while speaking about it at farbrengens, the Rebbe instructed that the printing must be done with the permission of, and under the auspices of Kehos.¹



EVERY SINGLE CITY

While the initial campaign had been to print the Tanya in every country, the Rebbe later expanded the initiative to include any city with Yidden, and even if there was only one Yid there.

When the Rebbe was explicitly asked whether they may print more than one edition per country, the Rebbe replied “הרי מודפסת רשימת דפוסי התניא (בתניא הוצאת קהת) ושם בכ”כ ערים במדינה אחת—In the back of the Kehos Tanya there is a list of all editions of Tanya, and in it there are a number of cities in one country.



PROPER NUMBER

Each edition of Tanya has a number, indicating which number printing it is. On one occasion, fifty new Tanyas were given to the Rebbe, and when the Rebbe sent them—as usual—twenty dollars for each edition, he added on the *tzetel* that the numbers had not been added, and in the future they should be added so that it will be a *davar metukan*. The Rebbe was very meticulous about adding the proper number and often looked for it when a new Tanya arrived.



SIZE OF THE TANYA

In the winter of 5744, Rabbi Sholom Jacobson asked the Rebbe on behalf of one of the shluchim if they may print the Tanya in a larger format (6x9) than it had been until then, so that it will be similar to the size of regular *seforim*, and the Rebbe responded that “אין צורך—there is no need.” Before the words where he had written that it should be like a ספר רגיל, the Rebbe added אין התניא ספר רגיל. However, years later, the Rebbe allowed the size to be enlarged so that the printing would be finished quicker. Similarly, when the Rebbe gave out Tanyas on Yud Shvat 5750, and then again on Yud-Tes Kislev 5751, the format was larger, so that they would be able to finish the printing in time.



AMOUNT OF COPIES

When the campaign was announced in 5738, the Rebbe said in the sicha that one thousand copies should be printed in each location. Later, in 5744, the Rebbe sent the printers the following three instructions. “1) מספר טופסים צ”ל (2) ללמוד בו בפו”מ בהמקום, (3) עכ”פ 100 עותקים—to learn from it in the place of the printing, to have adequate copies for the people of the city (and the shul), and to print at least one **hundred** copies.



WHAT TO STUDY

In a sicha in 5745,³ the Rebbe said that in the first study session that is conducted after the printing, Perek Lamed Beis should be learned; for there the Alter Rebbe speaks about the concept of Ahavas Yisrael, even to those who are most distant, and their only *mayleh* is the fact that they are *briyos*—creations of Hashem.



COPY MACHINE

Rabbi Jacobson relates: With the fall of the Iron Curtain, one of the shluchim asked me to write to the Rebbe, saying that he wanted to print the Tanya in the town of Lubavitch, but since there is no proper printing press in the city, he asked the Rebbe if he may print it on a copy machine that he will bring along. The Rebbe agreed, and added in his handwriting “וכן בכל מקום”—so can be done in every place” and added, “as long as there will not be mistakes.” Later during printing, we understood why the Rebbe added this point: It was often very hard to acquire the necessary paper, ink, and printing presses, and the editions that were printed there were often plagued with numerous errors. However, as a general rule, the Rebbe never objected to the use of a copy machine when printing the Tanya.

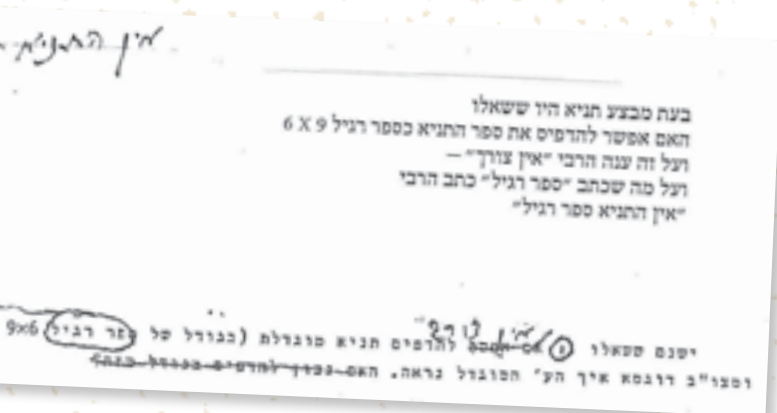


NOT A FUNDRAISER

On Shabbos Parshas Ki Sisa 5744,⁴ the Rebbe instructed that the printing of Tanyas should not be used as a fundraiser for other activities or institutions; the work and cost should be for the printing alone.



1. Likutei Sichos vol 26 p. 325
2. Ibid.
3. Toras Menachem 5745 vol. 5 p. 2916
4. Toras Menachem 5744 vol 2 p. 1091





the WRITTEN TORAH

לקוטי שיחות



לחיזוק ההתקשרות
לכ"ק אדמו"ר זי"ע
נדפס ע"י
הרוצה בעילום שמו



“ANA NAFSHI KSAVIS Y’HAVIS” SAYS THE GEMARA. CHASSIDUS EXPLAINS THE MEANING: HASHEM PUT HIS ESSENCE INTO THE TORAH—KEVAYACHOL. BY STUDYING TORAH WE CONNECT WITH HASHEM HIMSELF.

The Rebbe writes in Hayom Yom:
“True hiskashrus is by learning the Rebbe’s Torah”;
our Rabbeim put themselves into their writings.

And when it comes to Likkutei Sichos—the “Torah She’biksav” of the Rebbe’s Torah—it couldn’t be more evident. The Rebbe invested hours upon hours of his precious time, meticulously reviewing and editing the ideas that would guide Klal Yisroel in our generation; illuminating every field of Torah and crystallizing our path in avodas Hashem.

In preparation of this article, we held interviews and were greatly assisted by individuals who were involved in Likkutei Sichos over the years: Rabbis Leibel Altein, Sholom Jacobson, Berel Lipsker, Yosef Minkowitz, Dovid Olidort, Leibel Schapiro and Nachman Schapiro. זכות הרבים תלול בהם.

Dictionary

LIKKUT: *Sicha* as it was prepared and published weekly (though they are often simply called a “*sicha*”).

MUGA: Edited and approved by the Rebbe.

CHELEK/KRACH: Volume.

PART 1: HISTORY

Throughout his *nesius*, the Rebbe put a strong emphasis on Chassidim *chazzering* Chassidus publicly. Every Shabbos and Yom Tov, *bochurim* and *yungeleit* would fan out from 770 to various shuls in the New York area to deliver an *inyan* in Chassidus, and during the *farbrengens* in the early years, the Rebbe would occasionally point to a certain concept discussed in the *sichos* and instruct the *bochurim* that this is the material they should present in the shuls.¹

Before Pesach 5718, three *bochurim* (Rabbi Nachman Sudak, Rabbi Moshe Bogomilsky and Rabbi Leibel Raskin) formed a *vaad* called *Machlaka Lchazzaras Dach B'vatei Knesiyos*.

“In my room in 770,” Rabbi Raskin later related,² “I had all the *hanachos* from the beginning of the *nesius* (by Reb Yoel Kahan), from 5710, so I was able to search for a *sicha* appropriate to *chazzar* in a shul. We used to print sixty copies, which were given to those who went to the shuls. After each Shabbos I would give a *duch* to the Rebbe, listing the shuls and which *sicha* was *chazzered*.”

“For Shavuos, we arranged, for the first time, a *tahalucha* to Boro Park. Before Shavuos I submitted to the Rebbe a list of the shuls where *sichos* would be *chazzered*, together with the selected *sicha*.”

“Erev Shabbos Parshas Bamidbar (Shavuos was on Sunday and Monday) Rabbi Hodakov called me and asked if I submitted a *sicha* to the Rebbe. I answered that I did. He then



CIRCA 5714, RABBI PINNY LEW

showed me the *sicha*, and it was *muga* by the Rebbe!”

This was significant. Ever since the earliest months of the Rebbe’s *nesius*, when the Chassidim had first realized that the Rebbe wouldn’t be penning his own Torah, there had been a concerted effort that the Rebbe should agree to edit, and thus approve, the *sichos* and *maamarim* that were transcribed by Chassidim themselves—largely without success. The Rebbe explained on a number of occasions that with all the issues and challenges he was dealing with in the Jewish nation as a whole, and with individuals in particular, he simply did not have the time to do so.³

Although the *bilti-muga* versions of the *sichos* and *maamarim* were somewhat accessible to the Chassidim, they could not be printed in official *sefarim* or even officially published without being approved by the Rebbe (though this changed somewhat in the later years). For many years, the Rebbe’s *sichos* and *maamarim* were largely inaccessible to anyone outside of Lubavitch, and even for “*eigeneh*” they were difficult to get hold of, almost like collectors’-items.

“It is impossible to describe the enormous *simcha* that we had, that we were *zoche* to such an *ohr gadol!*” Rabbi Raskin related. “We immediately

printed five hundred copies by stencil. That Shavuot and the *tahalucha* were very special. Even though it was raining like a *mabul*, the *hisorerus* by *anash* and the *temimim* was tremendous. This was particularly thanks to the *mugadike sicha* (with the theme of “our children are our guarantors”).

“Consequently, for Shabbos Parshas Nasso I submitted another *sicha*. Thursday night I came to Rabbi Hodakov to inquire about the *sicha*. He told me: “On the Rebbe’s desk there are more than eight hundred letters, a large portion of them dealing with matters of *pikuach nefesh*, so what is more important, to answer these letters or to be *magiah a sicha*?!”

“I answered: “The *sicha* will strengthen *chazzaras Dach* in the shuls, and this will help in the work of the Rebbe!”

“Rabbi Hodakov told me to wait. After contacting the Rebbe by phone, he called me back and informed me that in a half-an-hour the Rebbe will return the *sicha—mugah!*”

“I asked: Which name should we give to these *sichos*-pamphlets? He suggested: תוכן ענינים ברא"ח לחזור בבתי כנסיות. [Roughly translated: Concise concepts in Chassidus for delivery in shuls].”

This continued for a year. Every week, the *vaad* would choose a *sicha* that had been said in previous years, and prepare it for publishing, adding *marei mekomos* and writing it in a more reader-friendly format, after which they would give it to the Rebbe for editing. The Rebbe would edit it, and after incorporating the Rebbe’s

comments, they would send in a second draft. After a second round of editing by the Rebbe, they would prepare the final version and copy it in mimeograph. Thousands of copies were sent all over the world, devoured by Chassidim and others alike.

Rabbi Shimon Lazaroff, today the head shliach of Texas, was a young bochur at the time. He relates: “I became their marketing man: before the Rebbe’s big farbrengens on Yud-Tes Kislev and so on, I would go around and sell the booklets for five cents. This helped cover the cost of printing.”⁴

After a year, it stopped. These *likkutim* were later published as two *sefarim*, and, for the first time, they received the name Likkutei Sichos (lit. collections of *sichos*). These later became Chelek Alef and Beis of Likkutei Sichos.

A few years passed. In honor of Parshas Bereishis 5723, the Rebbe began again editing *sichos* prepared by Reb Yoel (perhaps this was in honor of “shnas haKan”—the 150th year since the *histalkus* of the Alter Rebbe, which the Rebbe *koched* in very much⁵) and this continued for another year, until Simchas Torah 5724. These *sichos* were published as chelek Gimmel and Daled of Likkutei Sichos, and are in a similar format of the *sichos* in chelek Alef and Beis.

“I LEARN THROUGH THE ENTIRE SICHA!”

A few years later, towards the end of 5727, a group of *bochurim* and *yungeleit* decided that the time had

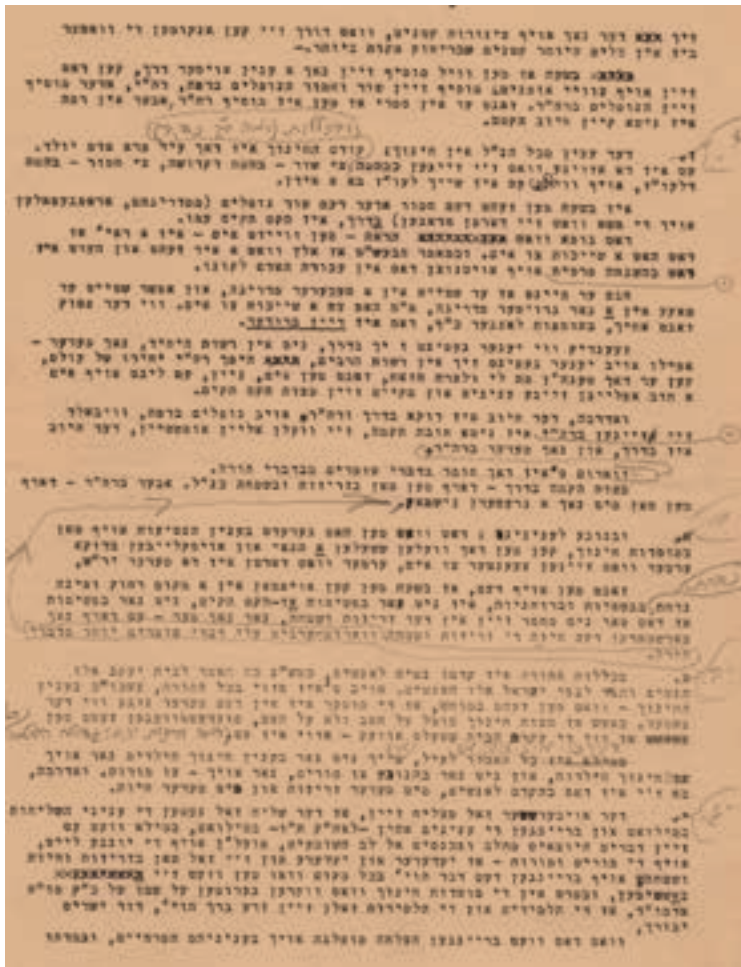
“On the Rebbe’s desk there are more than eight hundred letters, a large portion of them dealing with matters of *pikuach nefesh*, so what is more important, to answer these letters or to be *magiah a sicha*?!”

come to begin publicizing the Rebbe’s *sichos* on a new level. Every week, they would take a *sicha* that had been previously edited by the Rebbe (in 5718 or 5723) and print thousands of copies, sending it throughout the world. The *bochurim* in 770 would form an assembly line to collate and staple the pages, and prepare them for shipping. Rabbi Bentzion Shemtov, an elder Chossid at



VAAD HANOCHOS B'LAHAK

“TOCHEN INYONIM B'DACH”, THE FIRST BOOKLETS PRESENTING THE REBBE’S MUGADIKE SICHS.



that time, was very involved in this initiative, constantly *koching* in and helping fundraise for the “*shichos*” (as he would pronounce it). For the first time, the pamphlets were published with the Kehos logo—a significant step (though the published *sefarim* of Likkutei Sichos were always published by Kehos).

Before Shabbos parshas Mikeitz 5729, after two years of reprinting old *sichos*, they realized that they had run out of *sichos* for that week, Miketz. By that time they were sending out ten thousand copies a week. A new *sicha* was prepared by Reb Yoel—the first Rashi *sicha*

prepared for a *likkut*—and they asked the Rebbe to review and edit it. The Rebbe agreed.

When it came to Shemos they ran out again, and the Rebbe edited another *sicha*, and this continued periodically throughout the year. By the beginning of the following year (5730), they had run out completely. Reb Yoel submitted a new *sicha* for Shabbos Bereishis and waited to see if the Rebbe would agree to begin a full new year of *hagaha*. On the night of Hoshana Rabba, the Rebbe gave out the new *sicha*.

A new era had begun. The Rebbe started giving out an edited *sicha* every week, and

these *sichos* were eventually republished in chelek Hei through Tes of Likkutei Sichos. They continued coming out for another two years.

At the end of the summer of 5731, the Rebbe sent out a very sharp *maane* where he described how he had made a “*bechina ruchnis*” [“a spiritual test”] to decide whether he should continue editing the Likkutei Sichos, and the test was failed. The *sicha* for Shabbos Bereishis would come out—but, the Rebbe emphasized, this was only for the guests. It seemed that the age of *mugehdike sichos* was over.

Although most people didn’t know what was going on, in the following weeks a number of *eltare* Chassidim wrote letters describing the critical importance of the *sichos* for *hafatzas hamaayanos*, and how it was *nogea* to Chassidim around the world. They begged the Rebbe to continue.

Then, to everyone’s shock, on Simchas Torah the Rebbe said a *sicha* directly addressing the issue. Although it is quite a sharp *sicha*, it is also one of the few times that the Rebbe revealed how he himself viewed the Likkutei Sichos.

The Rebbe said that all the people who had sent in letters explaining the greatness of Likkutei Sichos had missed the point. “All these explanations on the greatness of Likkutei Sichos are out of place, for I *know* how good it is—to the contrary, I can add *nofech m’dilei* (a ‘personal twist’), especially since ‘a person cares for the toil of his hands.’”

Then the Rebbe revealed something particularly powerful. “I learn through the entire *sicha* from beginning to end, with all

the footnotes, after it's printed—in addition to the work on it before!”

And yet, the Rebbe said, being that this was something that he had initiated, he had decided to put a test to see whether he should continue, “a type of test which by rules of nature should have been passed.” This test had been set for a number of other things that the Rebbe had initiated, the Rebbe added, including reciting a *maamar* at every farbrengen; reciting a *maamar* for *bochurim* on Chanukah; teaching *niggunim* on Simchas Torah; and more.

But this test failed. Emphasizing again and again how he knew very well the significance of Likkutei Sichos, the Rebbe spoke about the “the pain and *tzubrochenkeit*” he felt from stopping all these

“I learn through the entire sicha from beginning to end, with all the footnotes, after it's printed—in addition to the work on it before!”

things, but being that, as the Gemara says, “an abundance of good cannot be received”—sometimes giving too much can be counterproductive—it will have to stop.⁶

“There were more *tzetzlach* back and forth, with Chassidim trying to somehow push it through,” Rabbi Nachman Schapiro relates. “We went to Rabbi Hodakov, and on his advice we prepared a list of proposed *sichos* for the following year, but the Rebbe answered unequivocally: As was spoken at the farbrengen. We should ask rabbonim [about what the *vaad*'s

future should be, as the Rebbe will no longer be editing the *sichos*].”

“We went to Reb Zalman Shimon Dvorkin, and he told us that being that this is an issue of *hafatzas hamaayanos*, we must continue printing *sichos*. So we began publishing *sichos* that had been *muga* and published in various outlets over the years, like in *Di Yiddische Heim*; sometimes we would print letters. From time to time, the Rebbe would go over the *sichos* after they were already published and add various comments and *hagahos*, but it wasn't routine.”

RENEWAL

At the end of the year, the *vaad* had a meeting and decided it was time to try again. After a whole discussion about whether the *sichos* should be written in Yiddish or Lashon Hakodesh, they settled on Lashon Hakodesh and began working. (They went back and forth over the years; when they asked the Rebbe—at a later date—which language was preferable, he responded: אין נפקא מינה, it makes no difference.)

“Throughout the entire summer,” Rabbi Leibel Schapiro says, “we worked on a number of *sichos* to give to the Rebbe, on the first *parshiyos* of the year. At the end of the summer, we sent the batch of *sichos* to the Rebbe,



19 TISHREI 15741, LEVI FREIDIN via JEM 1901012

FATHER AND SON, REB ZUSHE AND LEVI WILMOVSKY, STUDY THE NEWLY PRINTED LIKUT ON A BENCH IN FRONT OF 770.



11 NISSAN 5732, JEM 103644

and wrote that this was what we had prepared—like a sample of what we were planning on doing—and we were asking that the Rebbe should be *magiah*.

“We didn’t get a response from the Rebbe about it. Then came Tishrei, a very busy time in 770. Nothing happened.”

Before Hoshana Rabba, they sent in another few *parshiyos*. “We knew from years before that if there was something waiting for the Rebbe’s *hagaha*, he was often *magiah* it overnight on Hoshana Rabba,” Rabbi Leibel Schapiro continues. “This was probably after the Rebbe

completed Chumash Devarim, before Tehillim. Before the Rebbe would go downstairs for Tehillim, Rabbi Groner would enter the Rebbe’s room to bring out all the letters and *tzetlach*, so we all stood outside waiting and hoping for the *hagaha*. Rabbi Groner came out and...nothing. We were so disappointed.

“So we decided that at *kos shel bracha* after Simchas Torah, all of us, the entire Vaad Lehafotzas Sichos, would go by the Rebbe as a group—to show ourselves, to make a presence. This included three people who worked on the *sichos*—me, Rabbi Nachman Schapiro, and Rabbi Leibel Kaplan a”h—and the two people who managed the *gashmiyus*: Rabbi Zalman Chanin and Rabbi Sholom Jacobson.

Rabbi Sholom Jacobson says, “When he saw us—we hadn’t even said anything—the Rebbe gave us a bottle of *marshke*, and with a big smile he said, “*Dos iz*

far dem neiyem vaad [this is for the new vaad].”

Rabbi Leibel Schapiro continues: “Simchas Torah was Monday and Tuesday, which meant that we only had a few days for the Rebbe to send back the *sicha* for Shabbos Bereishis. So the next day, on Isru Chag, we came to 770 early (not such an easy thing after Simchas Torah...) and waited for Rabbi Groner to come out from the Rebbe’s room. He came out and...Nothing.

“Then we took a risk. We sent in—again—the *sicha* for Shabbos Bereishis to the Rebbe, and attached to it a small *tzetel*: This is the *sicha* we are putting out for Shabbos and we are asking the Rebbe to be *magiah* it. This was a risk because the Rebbe could respond, how are you giving it out for Shabbos if it’s unedited?! What is that supposed to mean?

“A few hours later, the *sicha* came out, fully *muga*.”

"That night was Simchas Torah in 770... the bochurim were literally dancing the entire night."

“That night was Simchas Torah in 770,” Rabbi Nachman Schapiro says. “The *bochurim* were literally dancing the entire night.”

From then on, the Rebbe continued being *magiah* a *sicha* each week.

“A few weeks later, on Shabbos parshas Va’eira, Rabbi Hodakov called the entire *vaad* into his office,” Rabbi Leibel Schapiro relates. “I was very nervous; I didn’t know what he wanted. We had just prepared our first complicated Rashi *sicha* (during this cycle), and we were afraid we hadn’t done a good job.

“We walked into his office. Rabbi Hodakov handed us the *sicha* that the Rebbe had sent out *muga* (which was unusual, since it was usually sent out with Rabbi Groner or Rabbi Klein). “As a *hakaras hatov* for what you’re doing,” Rabbi Hodakov said, “the Rebbe wants to give you the job of publishing a new edition of Kesser Shem Tov.” The due date was three weeks later, on Chof-Daled Teves. We

worked very hard, and finished right before the deadline.”

After two years (5733-5734), it stopped again, with the *likkut* of Noach 5735 being the last to be *muga*, though this time the Rebbe didn’t explain why. Some speculated that the Rebbe didn’t want to create a *chazaka*

by giving out *sichos* for three consecutive years. At the end of 5735, they tried again, sending in another *sicha* for Shabbos Bereishis 5736, this time in Yiddish—and the Rebbe edited it. From then on, the Rebbe edited a *sicha* every week until Vayakhel 5752.

A NEW KOCH

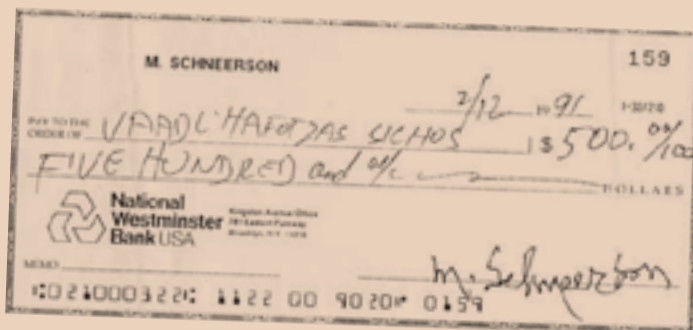
Rabbi Nachman Schapiro relates: “Following Yud Shevat 5732, a few months after the Rebbe stopped being *magiah* the *sichos*, Rabbi Leibel Altein and I—we were both yeshiva *bochurim* at the time—arranged a *seder sichos* as a *hachana* for Yud-Alef Nissan, the first *seder sichos* ever. For seventy minutes after *seder*, groups of *bochurim* would learn and discuss the *sichos*, and at the end of the week we wrote down our *haaros* and typed them up on stencils. This was the first time there were official “*haaros*,” questions and answers on *sichos* solely from *bochurim*, *mir hubbun ge’tzitet*, we were very nervous about what the Rebbe’s reaction would be. Instead of giving them to Rabbi Groner, we asked Rabbi Mentlik, the *rosh yeshiva* of 770, to give it in from the *hanhalah*.

“During the summer, we gathered all the *haaros* on Likkutei Sichos that had been written between Yud Shevat and Yud-Alef Nissan, and printed them in a booklet, Kovetz Ha’aros Hatmimim. To our surprise, the Rebbe gave a tenth of the expenses—on his own initiative—and wrote that this was because he considered it as one of the *ayin alef mosdos*.⁷ When the Rebbe started being *magiah* the *sichos* again in 5733, Rabbi Mentlik said it’s possible that one of the reasons the Rebbe started again was due to the *koch* in Likkutei Sichos created by the *haaros* of the *bochurim*.”

SPONSORSHIP

Rabbi Sholom Jacobson relates: “The Rebbe would sponsor the *likkut* three times a year: Vov Tishrei, in memory of his mother, Rebbetzin Chana; Yud-Gimmel Iyar, in memory of his brother, Reb Yisroel Aryeh Leib; and Chof Av, in memory of his father, Horav Levi Yitzchok; and from 5748, also on Chof-Beis Shevat, in memory of the Rebbetzin.”

In the earlier years the Rebbe would pay with a check, but in the later years the payment was with cash. The Rebbe would ask how much it cost, and he would give that amount. Once, when the price remained at \$150 over several years, the Rebbe smiled and asked why they weren’t raising the prices, as everyone raises prices once in a while, and added that he wants to pay the full price. (The Rebbe then choose to give \$250.)



PART 2: The Process

We asked members of Vaad L'hafatzas Sichos, Rabbi Leibel Schapiro, Rabbi Nachman Schapiro, Rabbi Leibel Altein, and Rabbi Dovid Olidort, to give us an inside look at the process of preparing Likkutei Sichos. But first, a short background on the difference between a *likkut* (as a *sicha* in Likkutei Sichos was called) and a regular *sicha* at a farbrengen. (It should be noted that the process below does not pertain to the first volumes of Likkutei Sichos, which are more or less the *sichos* exactly as they were said.)

During a farbrengen, the Rebbe would speak about a wide range of topics, including *pilpulim* in *nigleh*, Rashi *sichos*, explanations in Chassidus, and so on. After each farbrengen, a

group of *manichim* (transcribers) would write down the *maamarim* and *sichos* word for word. These were usually printed in booklets after they were said, and later in the series of Sichos Kodesh, Toras Menachem-Hisvaaduyos, and Sefer Hamaamarim, and were not *mugah* by the Rebbe.⁸ However, sometimes a single topic could be covered in several places. For example:

- The Rebbe would often speak about a topic—a complex Rashi, for example—over several weeks.
- The Rebbe would answer questions posed by various people (often the *manichim*) in letters and handwritten notes.

- It was a fairly typical occurrence for the Rebbe to speak about the same topic a few times over the years, adding different angles or proposing new explanations.

In a *likkut*, all the *sichos* on a given subject were collected together and formatted as a single *sicha*.

CHOOSING THE TOPIC

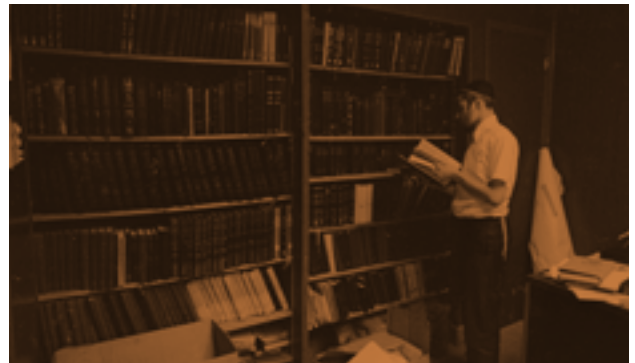
The first order of business was choosing the topic. “We had a folder with lists of all the *sichos* on any given *parshah* that we thought could become a *likkut*,” Rabbi Leibel Altein relates. “For *parshas Bereishis*, for example, there was a list of all the *sichos* for Bereishis, and so on. Before preparing each week’s *likkut*,



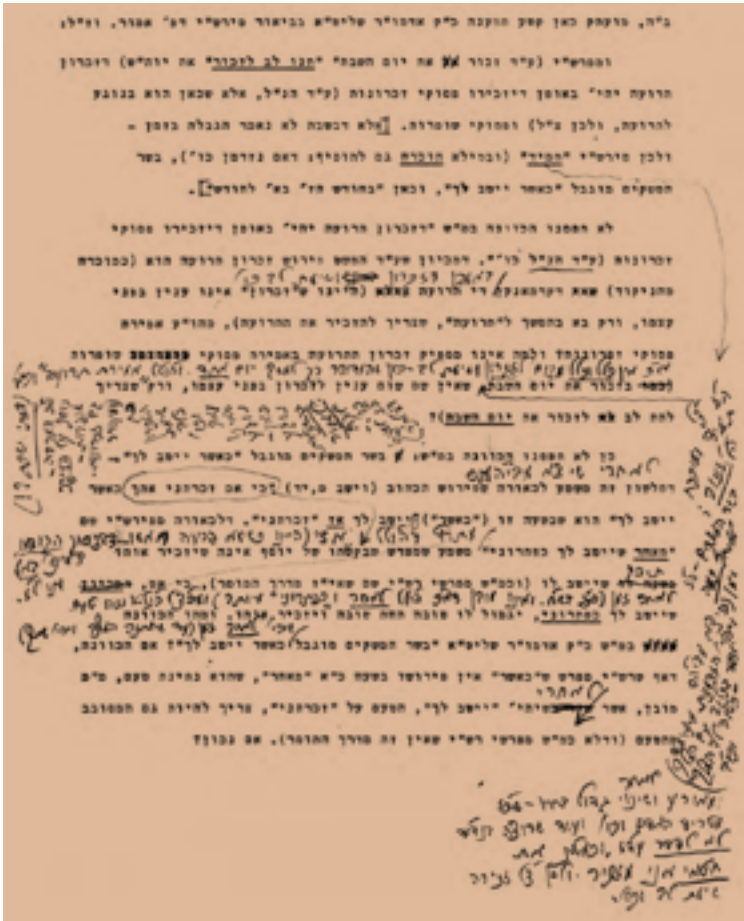
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THE REBBE'S HANDWRITTEN RESPONSE TO A QUESTION FROM THE MANICHIM ON THE SICHA OF SHABBOS PARSHAS BHAALOSCHA 5727 (PRINTED IN LIKUTEI SICHOV VOL. 12 P. 103).

we would check the lists, go through the *sichos*, and decide on a topic. The lists were always growing.” In addition, a list was made of *sichos* on topics that can be connected to a particular *parshah* or *yom tov*, even if the *sicha* was said on a different date. It was very rare for the Rebbe to choose or reject a *sicha*, though it did happen occasionally. One example is the *sicha* about the recitation of the *korbanos hanesi'im* from Shabbos Vayikra 5747. Although the Rebbe had already edited another *sicha* for the week—and although the *farbungen* was *muga* anyway, since by then the Rebbe was *magia* the *farbungen* every week—the Rebbe wanted them to prepare it for a *likkut*.⁹ (It

should be noted that this *sicha* discusses the eternal nature of *nesiei Yisroel* and the eternity of *hiskashrus*—and this was during the appeal over the *sefarim* case, after the victory on Hei Teves.)

PREPARING FOR HAGAHA

Once the editors at the *vaad* had learned the subject very thoroughly with all its sources, it was time to write it up.

There were certain guidelines from the Rebbe through many years of editing. Following are some examples:

The *sicha* should be accessible and understood by everyone, including those unfamiliar with Chassidus. “The Rebbe wanted the *sicha* to always

begin with the *nigleh*,” Rabbi Altein says. “I remember that in one of the first *sichos* I worked on, the Rebbe told us to flip over the entire *sicha* so that it would begin with the *nigleh*.”

“As the years passed, the Rebbe put a stronger emphasis on this. The Rebbe wanted that even the writing-style should be one of *nigleh*. For example, there was once a *sicha* regarding the difference between *bechor*—the first-born animal that must be given to a Kohen, and *maaser*—the one in ten animals that is also give to a Kohen. During the *farbungen* the Rebbe had said that the *kedusha* of *bechor* comes *m’lemaala lemata*, directly from above, whereas the *kedusha* of *maaser* is *m’lemata lemaala*, through the involvement of the person. That’s how we wrote it up for the *likkut*, which was in the late 5740s. The Rebbe was unhappy that we used the phrases *m’lemaala lemata* and *m’lemata lemaala*—we should have used a *nigleh* phrase (like *kadosh mishmaya* and *kadosh b’yedei adam*).¹⁰ We had used this phrase countless times previously, but, more and more, the Rebbe wanted it to be accessible for the *chutzah*.

“Another time, we used a term which had been used thousands of times in Likkutei Sichos. The Rebbe wrote “היכן מצאו ביטוי זה?” Where did you find such an expression in *shas* and *poskim*?

- **Not to use extreme phrases.** Rabbi Leibel Schapiro relates: “If we wrote “*eino muvan klal*” (completely not understood), the Rebbe would cross out the words “*klal*”; “*kashe me’od*” (very difficult to understand),

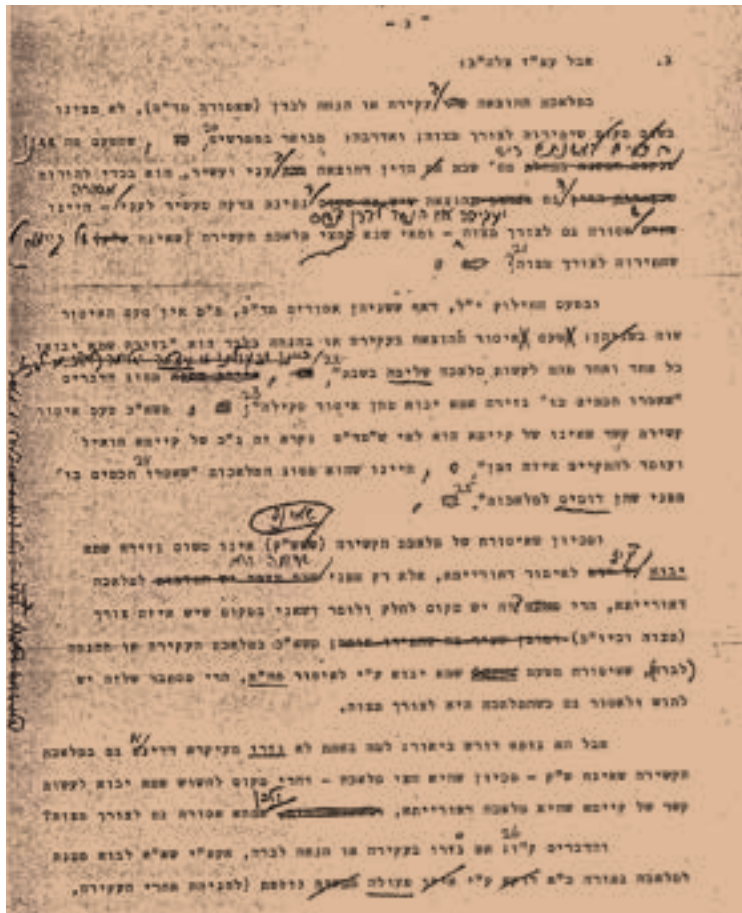
When he walked in, the Rebbe closed them and said 'Gib zei. Ein ladavor sof—Give it to them, there will be no end to this otherwise...'

he would cross out “meod”; “*pashut legamrei*” (completely obvious) cross out *legamri*. So if it ever does say such a phrase in a *sicha*, you know that it is a very strong question or very simple *inyan*.”

- **Style:** It should be written in a writing format—not as a spoken word that had been transcribed.
- **Side issues:** “If there were complicated issues, which were not directly related to the subject at hand, the Rebbe would take them out. Even something was pertinent to the *sicha*, the Rebbe didn’t want overly complex topics. The Rebbe wrote once: מדוע מכניסים? ענינים מסובכים כאלה? Why are you putting in such complicated subjects?”
- **Torah-Language:** “The Rebbe said that he wants it to be a Torah-language, not a writer-language. So, for example, instead of writing ‘*s’iz nishta kein tzeit*’ (‘there is no time’) we should use the phrase ‘*ein hazman grama*.’”

FIRST HAGAHA

The first draft was typed on a typewriter with wide-spaced lines in order to give the Rebbe



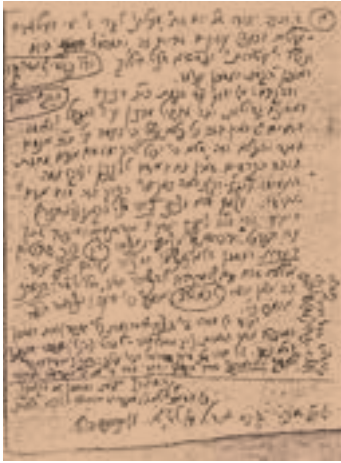
THE FIRST HAGAAH ON THE SICHA OF SHABBOS PARSHAS SHLACH 5722 (LIKKUTEI SICHS VOL. 14 P. 14).

ample space to edit, and then it was submitted to the Rebbe.

The Rebbe spent many hours being *magiah* the *sicha*—as is evident from the drafts of these *sichos*—and he would often bring it home with him. “A member of *mazkirus* once told me that the Rebbe spent ten hours one week being *magiah* the *sicha*!” recalls Rabbi Leibel Schapiro. “Rabbi Binyamin Klein told me that once when he went into the Rebbe’s room, the Rebbe was in the midst of being *magiah* the *likkut*, with sheets of paper strewn across his desk. When he walked in, the Rebbe closed them and said ‘Gib zei. Ein ladavor sof—Give it to them, there will be no end to this otherwise...’ When you

think about the value of every moment of the Rebbe’s time, and how much time he dedicated to Likkutei Sichos, you realize how important it was to the Rebbe...”

“You cannot imagine how the Rebbe was *medayek* in every word—changing a word, an expression, and so on—and how many concepts the Rebbe added and changed,” Rabbi Nachman Schapiro says. “One time, the Rebbe added a line, and it wasn’t clear to us where it belonged. So we wrote a *tzetel*: seemingly the *kavana* [the Rebe’s intent] in this line is such and such and therefore it seems to belong in such and such a place. The Rebbe answered: כמה כוונות בזה; there are several meanings in this...”

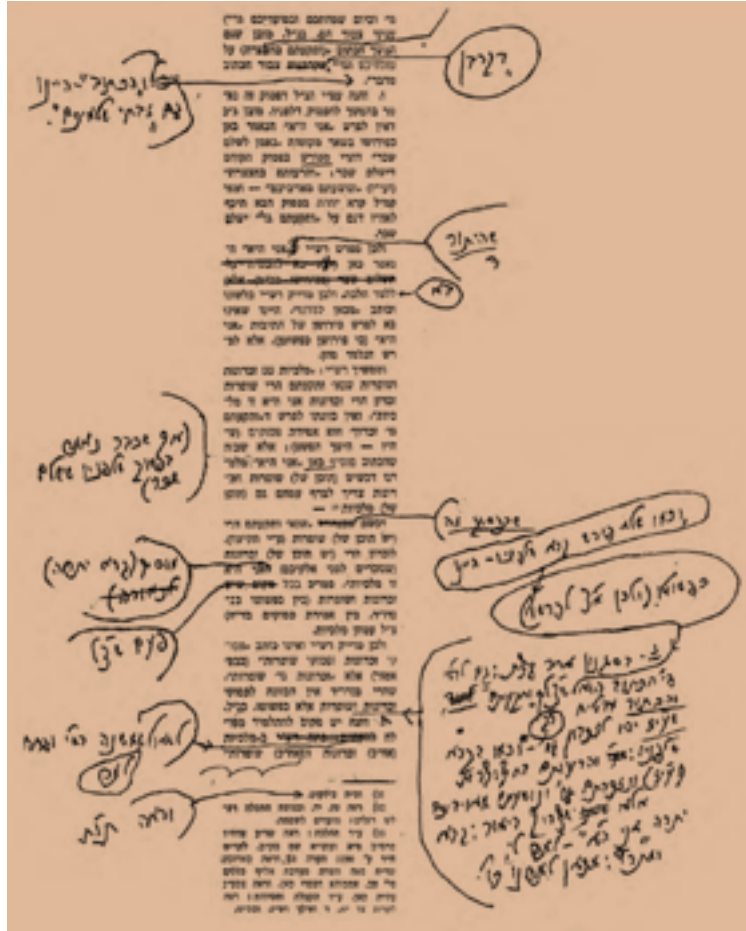


THE REBBE ADDS AN ENTIRE SE'IF TO THE SICHA FULL WITH FOOTNOTES IN HIS HOLY HANDWRITING (LIKKUTEI SICHS VOL. 11 P. 183).

Rabbi Dovid Olidort relates: “In the *likkut* of Nasso 5742¹¹ you’ll notice something interesting. Towards the end of the *sicha*, there is a new title: ‘Additional **points** for added explanation,’ after which there are another few pages. When the *sicha* was sent in for *hagaha*, the Rebbe added, in his own handwriting, a further question on the *sicha*, and went on to write an entire *se’if* with a profound explanation on the nature of Shabbos in levels beyond this world.”

“The Rebbe was often sharp when working with us,” Rabbi Leibel Schapiro recalls. “There were many things that the Rebbe simply fixed without comment, but if he expected us to know better, he would write sharply. On the one hand, there was trepidation. From when a *sicha* was sent to the Rebbe until it came back I couldn’t sleep at night—who knows what the Rebbe would say... But we also felt a tremendous *kiruv*.

“The Rebbe would keep us on our toes, so we were careful in how we wrote it.”

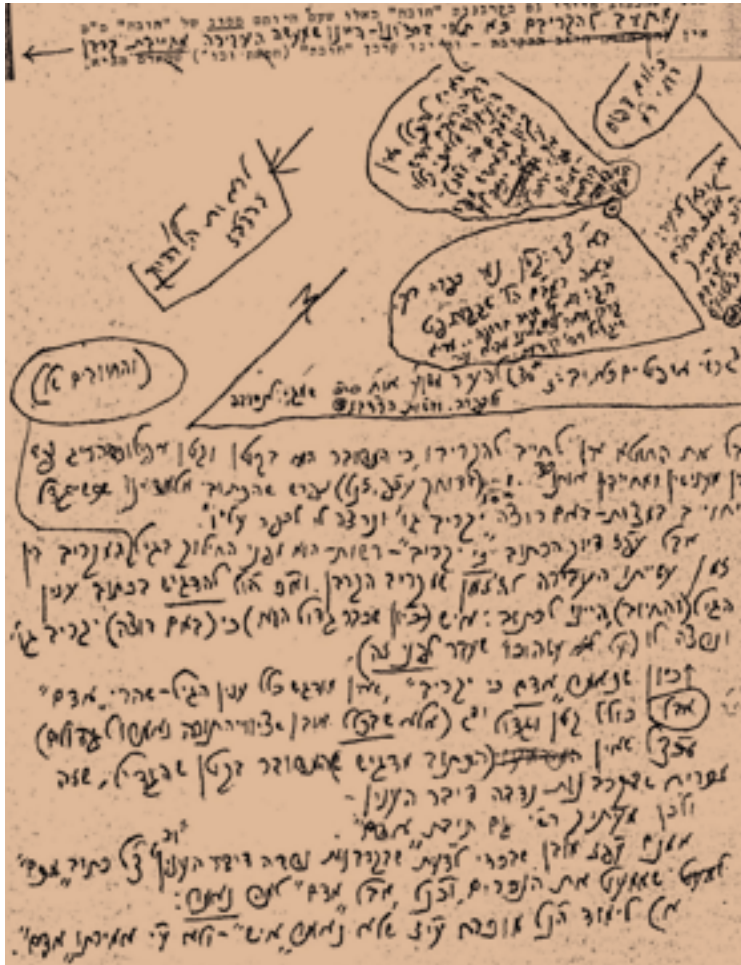


THE SECOND HAGAHA ON THE LIKKUT OF BHAALOSCHA 5734 (LIKKUTEI SICHS VOL. 13 P. 26). THE REBBE ADDED A FULL SE'IF (!) OF THE SICHA IN HIS HOLY HANDWRITING.

This was also an opportunity to clear up any questions people had on the *sicha*. “The Rebbe set up a system that several people should look over the *sichos* before *hagaha*,” Rabbi Altein says. “Only if all those examining the *sicha* agreed that a certain matter indeed needed clarification from the Rebbe, we would ask the Rebbe. Often, based on the Rebbe’s answer, we would need to rewrite a piece of the *sicha*. We would send in the section, and the Rebbe would either approve it or fix it further. There were instances that this went back and forth three or four times until we received final approval.”

SECOND HAGAHA

Once the Rebbe completed the first round of edits, the *hagahos* were incorporated into the *sicha*, and they would go to the printer to be typeset in the Likkutei Sichos font on galleys—long, thin sheets of paper, each a column-wide. First they would check it over themselves for mistakes, and then they would send it into the Rebbe for a second round of *hagaha*. “Many times,” Rabbi Altein says, “it was clear that the Rebbe waited for the second *hagaha* to deal with certain issues. There were sometimes huge differences and additions during these *hagahos*—full paragraphs and *se’ifim!*”



THE REBBE ADDS EXTENSIVELY TO THE SICHA PREPARED FOR THE WEEKLY LIKUT IN HIS HOLY HANDWRITING (PRINTED IN LIKKUTEI SICHOV VOL. 12 P. 5-6).

Rabbi Sholom Jacobson recalls one such occasion: “After the incident of Shemini Atzeres 5738, we weren’t sure whether the Rebbe would be *magiah* the *sicha* for Shabbos. However, just a couple days after Simchas Torah, the Rebbe commented to Rabbi Groner, ‘*M’darf noch magiah zain di sicha af shabbos*’—I still have to be *magiah* the *likkut* for Shabbos.

“In the second *likkut* that year, of parshas Noach¹², notwithstanding the health situation (the difficulty was evident in the Rebbe’s handwriting), the Rebbe himself added an entire *se’if* against learning in college.”

Although it was very rare, there was occasionally a third round of editing. After incorporating the Rebbe’s final *hagahos*, the *likkut* was sent to print in time for Shabbos.

Over Shabbos, the entire Lubavitcher community learned and *koched* in the new revelation of Torah from the Rebbe. The Rebbe would frequently come into shul with the *likkut* tucked into his *siddur*, and, on occasion, he would discuss the *likkut* during the *farbrengen* on Shabbos.

“The first and foremost reason to learn the Rebbe’s Torah is *hiskashrus*,” says Rabbi Leibel Schapiro. “*Ana nafshi*

kesavis yehavis; the Rebbe put his essence into his Torah. This is especially true with *Likkutei Sichos*, considering the countless hours the Rebbe spent saying the *sichos* and editing them.” (It should be noted that on the subject of *hiskashrus*, the most constant theme the Rebbe spoke about in the years 5710-5711 was about learning the Rebbe’s Torah.)

“We would wait for the *likkut* every week,” relates the shliach Rabbi Yossi Lew, who was a *bochur* in 770 in the 5740s. “The Rebbe didn’t *farbreng* every week, so this was often the only fresh thing we had. I remember that even as children, we would *koch zich* in the fonts and the *hagdashos*...”

“When we were *bochurim* in 770, on Friday night we didn’t go home to eat—we didn’t go *anywhere*—until we finished learning the *likkut*. There were many *chavrusos* on Friday night learning the *likkut* together. We often learned it much more than once; sometimes it was because there was an especially difficult piece, and other times it was especially powerful and inspiring. One *sicha* that stands out in my mind as very powerful is the *likkut* from Shavuot 5743¹³ which discusses the eternity of Torah, notwithstanding the fact that the medicines of the Gemara and the Rambam do not apply anymore. That *sicha* was such a *bombe*; I remember that when I was saving my grandfather, Reb Zalman Jaffe’s place for the *farbrengen* on Shabbos, I was standing next to Reb Yoel. He was learning the *sicha* over and over and over again...”



DURING THE SECOND HAGA'AH, THE REBBE ADDS A LENGTHY EXPLANATION IN THE SHULEI HAGILYON, AN ASTERISK UNDER THE FOOTNOTES (LIKKUTEI SICHOS VOL. 14 P. 87).

“Throughout the entire week, we would continue learning the *sicha*, writing in the *hàaros* if we didn’t understand something, and the Rebbe would sometimes discuss the *hàaros* during the *farbrenge*!”

“In addition to everything else,” says Rabbi Leibel Schapiro, “when you learn Likkutei Sichos, you literally become a true *lamdan* in *nigleh* and a true *maskil* in Chassidus. There are so many *inyanim* in *nigleh* discussed there, so many *sugyos*—if you only knew the *sugyos* the Rebbe discussed in Likkutei Sichos you’d be a *gaon*! And it also gives you a *mehalech* in learning, a style of thinking, when you’re learning anything else in Torah.

“There are many *inyanim* in down-to-earth *hashkafa*—how to approach life—that are not clearly spelled out in the standard *maamarim* of Chassidus. How to view the *Aibershter*; how to approach Torah and mitzvos; what a *Yid* is; what a *neshama* is, and so on.

“I once met a *yungerman*, not a Lubavitcher. ‘You know,’ he tells me, ‘until Chof-Zayin Adar, I would come to 770 everyday for *mincha-maariv* to look at the Rebbe. I wasn’t a Chosid, I never

even wrote to the Rebbe, but that’s what I did.’

“And then he told me the story behind it. After he got married, he started having questions in *emuna*. He realized that it wasn’t going in the right direction. One time, he was sitting in shul between *mincha-maariv*, and he randomly picked up a *sefer* on the table. Turns out it was a Likkutei Sichos, and the page he flipped to was speaking about one of the main issues he was dealing with. The Rebbe spoke about it in such a way that everything became absolutely clear, he said, and he started looking more and more. ‘The Rebbe saved my life,’ he told me, ‘and that’s why I went to see the Rebbe every day.’ Such a story helps you appreciate what Likkutei Sichos really is.” **T**

1. For more on this subject, see Derher Adar 1 5776 (Issue 41), Darkei Hachassidus “Chassidus Reaches the Outside.” See also Derher Sivan 5776 (Issue 45), “Tahalucha.”
2. In a letter to Rabbi Hodakov in 5748. The actual letter addresses Rabbi Hodakov directly, but for the sake of clarity we have changed it from second person to third person.
3. See, for example, Igros Kodesh vol. 5 p. 313; Igros Kodesh vol. 6 p. 164.
4. See interview with A Chassidisher Derher, Iyar 5777.
5. See “The Story of Shnas Hakan”; Derher Shevat 5773.

THE REBBE LEAVES 770 WITH A VOLUME OF LIKKUTEI SICHOS, 5 TISHREI 5738.



IN A FUTURE ISSUE WE WILL
 EXPLORE THE CONTENT OF
 SEFARIM OF LIKKUTEI SICHOS.

LEVI FREIDIN VIA JEM 2714

6. Sichos Kodesh 5732 p. 73-76.
7. See Derher Nissan 5776, “Leben 5732;” Igros Kodesh vol. 27 p. 33; 498.
8. See Derher Adar II 5776 (Issue 42) “Retaining Chassidus.”
9. Printed in Likkutei Sichos vol. 32 p. 19.
10. For the published *likkut*, see Likkutei Sichos vol. 34 p. 79.
11. Vol. 23 p. 50.
12. Later printed in vol. 15.
13. Later printed in vol. 23.



the WRITTEN TORAH

לקוטי שיחות



PART 2

לזכות
החייל בצבאות ה'
זלמן יודא שיחי'
שכטר
לרגל יום הולדתו, ה' אלול
נדפס ע"י משפחתו שיחיו



IN THE PREVIOUS ARTICLE OF THIS TWO-PART SERIES, WE FOCUSED ON THE HISTORICAL SIDE OF LIKKUTEI SICHOS: WHEN IT BEGAN, HOW IT WAS PUBLISHED, AND THE REBBE'S INTIMATE INVOLVEMENT. IN THIS ARTICLE, WE ATTEMPT TO TOUCH ON THE CONTENT OF LIKKUTEI SICHOS.

There are many sefarim of the Rebbe's Torah itself—Likkutei Sichos, non-edited sichos, maamarim, igros, reshimos, and so on—and they all share the most critical common denominator: through learning his Torah, we become mekushar with the Rebbe himself in the closest way possible, for the essence of our mind becomes one with him.

In this series, we have trained our focus on Likkutei Sichos.

OUR CAPACITY

Reb Shmuel Ber Borisover (otherwise known as *Rashda*^m) was one of the most famous Chassidim of the Tzemach Tzedek and Rebbe Maharash. Counted among the greatest *maskilim* (thinkers in Chassidus) of his time, he was also known as an exceptionally clever and wise Chossid.

He once said: “In comparison to Reb Hillel Paritcher’s depth of intellect, the cat and I are equal.” Then he explained: “One might think that I mean to say that just as the cat understands me, I understand Reb Hillel. No! The cat and I are exactly the same!” In other words, one might think that he intended to explain how distant he was from Reb Hillel’s level, but not that he and the cat were literally equal. So he added that he and the cat were literally the same; equally distant from Reb Hillel’s level.

Then Reb Shmuel Ber concluded. “And to compare the depth of Reb Hillel’s intellect to that of the Rebbe [the Tzemach Tzedek], this, no words can describe....”¹

The Rebbe’s Torah is *Elokus*, fundamentally beyond the reaches of human understanding; we were gifted entry into the chambers of the king, but we dare not presume mastery or even true familiarity. Attempting to write any type of meaningful review of

Likkutei Sichos is an inherently impossible endeavor.

Furthermore, Likkutei Sichos is not a single *sefer* on a single subject; there are so many different types of *sichos*: *Rashi sichos*, *Rambam sichos*, *Chassidus sichos*, *sichos* on the *parsha*, *sichos* on Midrash, and on and on. It encompasses and incorporates all layers and approaches of Torah.

However, in the spirit of inspiring and reinvigorating our readership in the study of Likkutei Sichos, we have asked several Chassidim to provide us with their thoughts, insights, and reflections on the subject.

The following conversations touch on the many disparate aspects of Likkutei Sichos, from which, we hope, the reader will come away with a deeper appreciation and understanding of this infinite treasure the Rebbe gave us.

THE REBBE’S TANYA

Rabbi Zushe Alperowitz says, “In order for a person to truly understand the Rebbe’s *hashkafa* and outlook, the Rebbe’s *kuk*—whether it’s on Torah, mitzvos, the greatness of a Yid, the purpose of the world, and so on—he must learn Likkutei Sichos. The Rebbe’s outlook is something you internalize from all the different types of *sichos* in Likkutei Sichos: the *Rashi sichos*, *Chassidus sichos*, the *nigleh sichos* and so on—and not only

because every *sicha* includes themes in Chassidus; the Rebbe’s *hashkafa* is expressed throughout the entire Likkutei Sichos, in all the different subjects.”

“The Alter Rebbe’s *sefer* is Tanya,” Rabbi Yosef Gurary says. “The Alter Rebbe had a *shita*, an approach, and where did he record it? In the Tanya. To put it in other words: **the sefer** of the Alter Rebbe is Tanya. So although he said *maamarim*, where one can find major foundational concepts in Chassidus, if you would have to pick one *sefer* where the Alter Rebbe recorded his *shita*, that would be the Tanya.

Similarly, Likkutei Sichos is the Rebbe’s Tanya, at least in my opinion. The Rebbe said *maamarim* and delivered Torah in many ways. But where did the Rebbe record his *shita* in everything? That would be Likkutei Sichos.”

Rabbi Alperowitz says, “When you learn a *maamar* after you learn the *sichos*—then you can understand the *maamar* better, you understand what the *maamar* is really saying. And the same is true with *Igros*, where the Rebbe expresses his *hashkafa* in a more practical way: when you learn *Igros* after you learn the *sichos*, you understand what’s behind it, *why* the Rebbe approaches things in certain ways.”

“One example is the concept that a *tzadik* cannot do an *aveira*,” Rabbi Leibel Shapiro

"Likkutei Sichos is the Rebbe's Tanya, at least in my opinion. The Rebbe said maamarim and delivered Torah in many ways. But where did the Rebbe record his shita in everything? That would be Likkutei Sichos."

says. “In the *velt* this is not so clear. Avrohom can do an *aveira* sometimes *ch”v*...Moshe Rabbeinu can make a mistake... The Rebbe taught us true *emunas tzadikim*, something that you do not find much elaboration on anywhere else.”

IMMERSING IN THE REBBE'S OUTLOOK

“One also begins to comprehend the idea of true *ahavas Yisroel*, as was expressed in the Rebbe’s constant *limmud zchus* on Yidden,” Rabbi Shapiro adds. “As much as we know that Reb Levi Yitzchok Berdichever was the defender of the Yidden, one might say that the Rebbe was even more so. The Berdichever would do it on a simpler level—when he saw a *poshuter Yid*, he would explain how everything he did was good, showing the Aibershter how good the Yidden are and that they deserve all the *brachos*. But the Rebbe did this **based on the words of the Torah itself**: Hashem must give *parnassa* to Yidden **based on the words of Torah**; every Yid must have only good **based on the words of Torah**.

“I’ll tell you a story. This happened in 5734, after I had already moved to Miami, and I was still working on Likkutei Sichos. The way it used to work was like this: I would prepare the *sicha* from Miami, send it to New York, and the members of Vaad Lehofatzas Sichos had someone type it up. Then they gave it to the Rebbe for the first round of *hagaha*, and then later for the second *hagaha*. I would not see the *likkut* again until it



CHOF AV 5734, V SCHILDKRAUT via JEM 108668

Marei Mekomos: The Rebbe had a special passion for *marei mekomos*. When he took the helm of Kehos in the early 5700s, *maamarim* began coming out with *marei mekomos* for the first time in history, written mostly by the Rebbe himself. During the process of working on the *likkutim*, the Rebbe was particular that every single item, even the most self-understood concepts and known *pesukim*, should have a source—and with tremendous precision. So singular was the Rebbe’s exhaustive sourcing that the Rebbe even addressed the fact that the *possuk* “*Bereishis bara*” needed a *marei makom* to “בראשית א, א.”¹⁰

Rabbi Leibel Altein relates: “In one *sicha*, it was brought down that the title *K’naani* can mean a *socher*, a merchant (in addition to referring to the *K’naani* nation). We wrote the source that is often quoted in Chassidus, from the *possuk* in Hoshea: ‘*K’naan biyado moznei mirma*.’¹¹ The Rebbe added: ‘*Pirush Rashi parshas Vayeshev*’ [38:2], and wrote, ‘וכי אף אחד מכם אינו? לומד חת”ת?’ [Does not one of you learn Chitas?!]...” [It should be noted that the Rebbe often emphasized using Rashi as a source since he is *p’shuto shel mikra*.]

“The Rebbe also taught us not to quote anything unless it was confirmed,” Rabbi Leibel Shapiro relates. “When the Rebbe himself added *ha’aros*, he would either check it up himself or instruct us to do so. I remember one occasion, when the Rebbe quoted from the Radvaz (on Rambam), and added that we should check the source (for accuracy). It turned out to be word for word from the Radvaz...”

One often finds the most exotic, unknown *sefarim* quoted in the *ha’aros*. “One time,” Reb Yoel Kahan relates, “the Rebbe quoted several lines from the *sefer* Ressisei Laila by Reb Tzadok HaKohen of Lublin. But he requested that since he didn’t have the *sefer* nearby, we should double-check the *lashon*. When we went to the library to look it up, we discovered that the quote matched up almost perfectly! This is a *sefer* from previous generations, and yet the Rebbe had quoted it from memory.” (It was published later in *Likkutei Sichos* vol. 5 p. 86.)

was completed and I received it in the mail (it was sent to me right away). The first thing I always did when I got the *likkut* was compare the final product with the original version that I had prepared, in order to see what the Rebbe had fixed. Later on, when I came to New York for some reason or another, I would go to the Vaad office and look through the Rebbe’s *hagahos*.

“One time, I prepared a *sicha* from Shabbos parshas Shelach 5732, a *Rashi sicha* about

the episode of the *meraglim*. Without getting into too many details, the Rebbe explained that Rashi was trying to resolve the following question in *pshuto shel mikra*: we see in the story of the *meraglim* that although the Aibershter wanted to destroy that whole generation immediately, Moshe Rabbeinu davened for them and saved their lives; instead, they slowly passed aover the next forty years. The *meraglim* themselves, on the other hand, died right away. The question arises: if

Moshe Rabbeinu’s *tefilla* saved the rest of the Yidden from immediate death, why didn’t it save the *meraglim* from immediate death, as well?

“The Rebbe explained that, according to Rashi, this is what the *possuk* is emphasizing with the words וַיִּשְׁבוּ וַיִּלְכְּדוּ עִלְיָו, that the *meraglim’s* agenda was against **him**—Moshe Rabbeinu; meaning that the *meraglim* were fighting against Moshe personally. Being that they were battling Moshe *himself*, his *tefilla* could not help them—*ein kateigor naase saneigor* [lit.: a prosecutor cannot serve as a defender].

“In the *yeina shel Torah*—the Chassidus section of the Rashi—the Rebbe explained that just as Moshe Rabbeinu davened for the Yidden, there is a Moshe Rabbeinu in every generation who davens for every Yid—the *nossi hador*—and he went on to elaborate on why every Yid needs the *tefilla* of the *nossi hador*. But, the Rebbe continued, just as the *tefilla* of Moshe could not help the *meraglim*, the *tefillos* of the *nossi hador* cannot help those who fight against him, because *ein kateigor naase saneigor*.

“In short, that is what the Rebbe said at the farbrengen.

“I had actually been involved in writing the farbrengen when the Rebbe had originally said it, and I prepared the *likkut* as the Rebbe had said it at the farbrengen. When I received the finished product, I saw that the entire last piece—that the *tefilla* of the *nossi hador* does not help for those who fight against him—had been removed.

“If you read the *sicha* (in *Likkutei Sichos* vol. 13 p. 44

ff), it almost feels like it stops abruptly, because you are expecting the *hora'ah* from the Rashi to be parallel to the Rashi itself. The *sicha* begins by saying that just as Moshe Rabbeinu davened for every Yid, the *nossi hador* davens for every Yid. So you expect it to say that just as Moshe Rabbeinu's *tefilla* did not help the *meraglim*, the *nossi hador's tefilla* cannot help those who fight him. But it's not there—the climax is missing.

“Now, sometimes the other members of the Vaad would edit the *sicha* I had sent them before they submitted it to the Rebbe, so I immediately called them up to find out what had happened—why did they take it out?

“They told me that they had given the *sicha* to the Rebbe as is. In the first round of *hagaha*, the Rebbe crossed out the entire piece, and wrote that this piece does not fit. In general, when the Rebbe wrote this type of *hagaha*, it would mean that the Rebbe did not approve of the way it was written, and members of the Vaad would rewrite it differently for the second round of *hagaha*.

“That's what they did—they rewrote the same thing in different words and sent the *sicha* to the Rebbe for the second *hagaha*. The Rebbe crossed it out again, but this time he explained: “הרי זה היפך כל החסידישע אפליג. ישרף הנייר ולא ייאמר. This is against the entire Chassidische way of thinking. The paper should be burned and [its content] never mentioned.”

“In other words, it's against any kind of *chassidische* approach to say that there is a person whom the Rebbe's *tefilla* cannot help.



CHESHVAN 5740, LEVI FREIDIN via JEM 193266

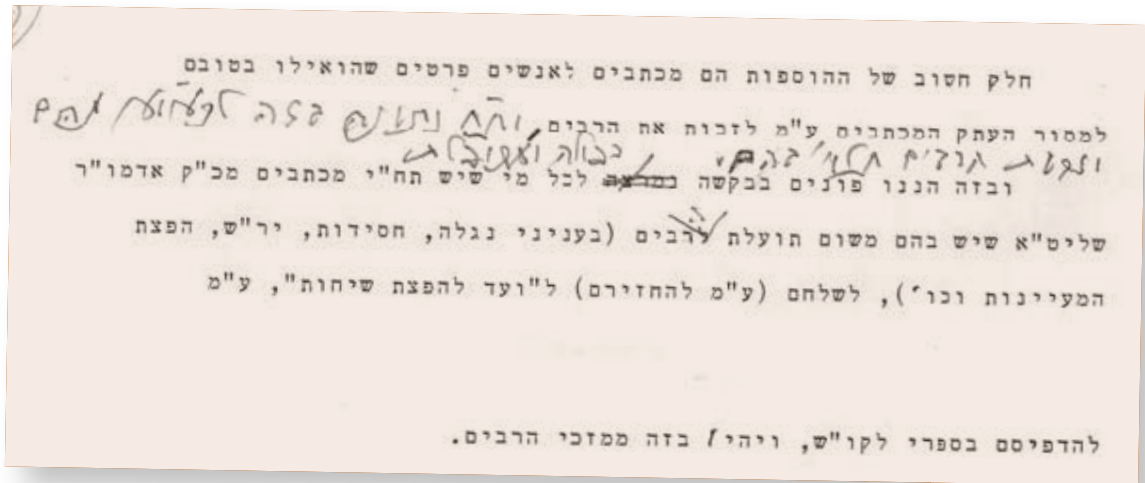
THE REBBE LEAVES HIS HOME FOR 770. OFTEN, THE REBBE TOOK THE GALLEYS OF THE LIKKUT HOME WITH HIM, WORKING ON IT OVERNIGHT.

“It had to be said at the original *farbrenge* for whatever reason—perhaps as some type of *hora'as shaah*, or something related to the happenings on-high—such an occurrence wasn't rare in my experience. Whatever the explanation may be for this—and also for why the Rebbe crossed out the piece regarding the *nossi hador* but not about Moshe Rabbinu himself—this illustrates the *ahavas Yisroel*

of the Rebbe and the power of the Rebbe's *tefilla*. How can you even imagine that there is someone who cannot be helped by the *nossi hador*?!”

INNOVATIONS IN CHASSIDUS

“There is an interesting two-fold nature at the heart of Likkutei Sichos,” Rabbi Dovid Olidort says. “Historically, it was born as a vehicle for *hafatzas*



THE REBBE'S HANDWRITTEN HAGAHOS ON THE PESACH DOVOR OF LIKKUTEI SICHOS VOL. 15.

hamaayanos, to provide material to *chazzer* Chassidus in shuls. It is the place where the Rebbe explained Chassidus for the *chutzah*, in a way that is relevant and accessible to all, so that even a layman who never learned Chassidus can understand it.

“At the same time, Likkutei Sichos is where the Rebbe explained some of his deepest *chiddushim* in Chassidus. In fact, for many decades Likkutei Sichos was the *only* place where one could find *mugadlike* Chassidus from the Rebbe, because up until the late 5740s, only a handful of *maamarim* were *muga*.

“A major component of the Rashi *sichos* were the explanations of *yeina shel Torah* (‘the wine of the Torah’), the Chassidus in Rashi, and the Rebbe learned profound fundamentals in Chassidus from some of the most simple-seeming Rashis. For example, from the way Rashi words his commentary in Parshas Tazria on the meaning of the word *teshev*—she shall remain,’ the Rebbe learns fundamental concepts in the nature of the

revelations of *Elokus* before the *tzimtzum*.”³

“By learning Likkutei Sichos, you begin appreciating the fact that every word in Torah is *true*, it’s an *inyan Eloki*,” Rabbi Leibel Shapiro says. “Every word in Chumash is exact, every expression in Gemara is exact, even the *dibbur hamaschil* of Rashi is exact—in *p’shat*, Kabbalah, on all levels. The *velt* doesn’t look at it that way—big deal, Rashi wrote this word or that word, are you really going to ask a question on the *dibbur hamaschil*? But the Rebbe taught us how every word of Rashi is the word of Hashem. In the *sichos* you see the *emes* of Torah. There are other *sefarim* that do it from time to time, but nothing compared to Likkutei Sichos.”

NIGLEH AND CHASSIDUS AS ONE

Rabbi Gurary says, “In Likkutei Sichos, all parts of Torah come together: *nigleh* and Chassidus; *p’shat*, *remez*, *drush*, and *sod*—demonstrating how the entire Torah is one single entity.

“As an example, let’s take the integration of *nigleh* and Chassidus. The Rebbe explained on multiple occasions that the primary *chiddush* of the Tzemach Tzedek was the fact that he brought *nigleh* and Chassidus together and revealed how they are a *Torah achas*. A single *maamar* of the Tzemach Tzedek is built out of a mix of Mikra, Mishnah, Gemara, *agadeta*, *nigleh*, and Chassidus.”⁴

It can be said that the true culmination of this idea is seen in the Rebbe's Torah, where the Rebbe shows in such an evident way how Chassidus and nigleh are a single entity—like a guf and neshama, a body and a soul...

Hosafos: In the back of every *sefer* of Likkutei Sichos (besides vol. 1 and 3) there are *hosafos* (“appendixes”), which consist of two components:

Sichos: Any *sicha* that was *muga* by the Rebbe for whatever reason throughout the years was included in the back of Likkutei Sichos. (This continued until the Rebbe began editing the *farbrengens* every week, and they were published separately in *Sefer Hasichos*.)

Letters: Until the Rebbe began the initiative of printing *Igros Kodesh* in the 5740s,¹² the only organized place one could find the Rebbe’s letters was in the back of Likkutei Sichos. Until today, letters from the late 5730s-5750s (which have not yet come out in *Igros*) can only be found in Likkutei Sichos.

The letters in the *hosafos* are organized by *parshah* and *yom tov*, and although it takes some getting used to, you can easily find a letter on any given topic based on the *parshah* or *yom tov*. Some examples:

- Science and Torah—Bereishis (The creation of the world)
- Chassidus and *hafatzas hamaayanos*—Yud-Tes Kislev and Yud-Beis Tammuz
- Mourning—Vayechi (The passing of Yaakov Avinu)
- Medical—Mishpatim (where it says the *possuk* “*Verapo yerappe*”)
- Chinuch - Emor (Rashi quotes *Chazal* that “*Emor. V’amarta*” teaches us that the elder should teach the younger).

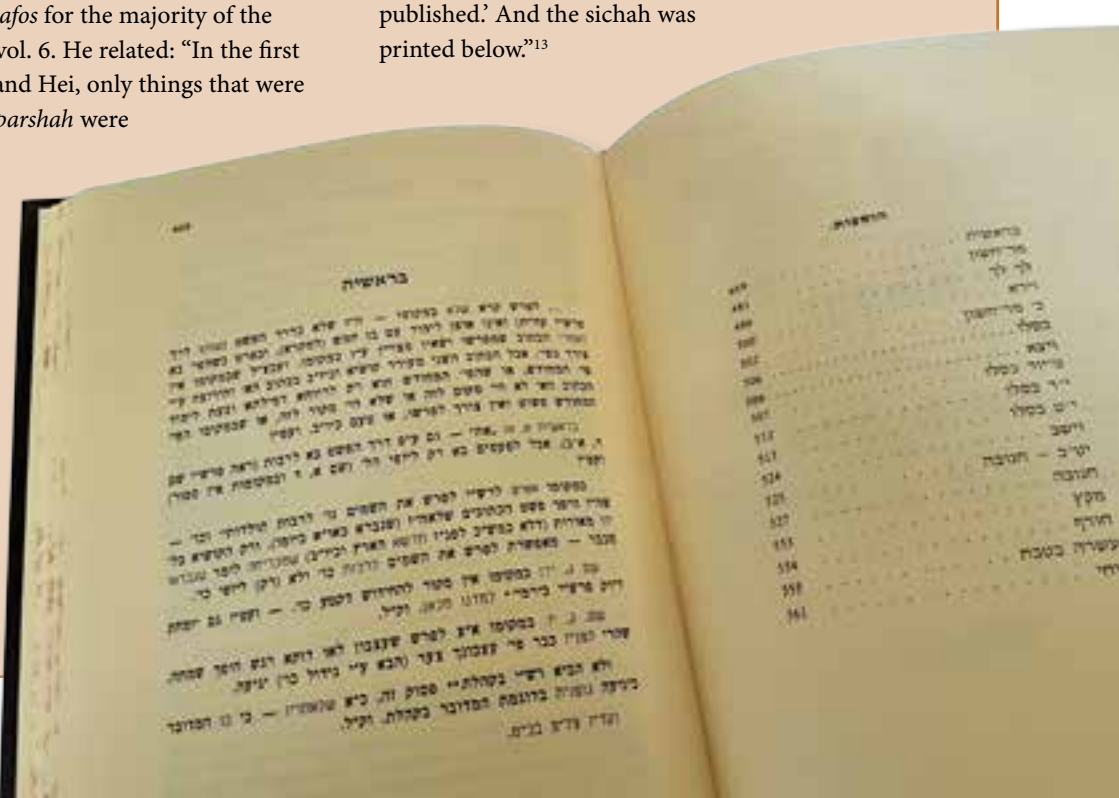
Rabbi Yosef Minkowitz was in charge of collecting and organizing the *hosafos* for the majority of the *seforim*, starting with vol. 6. He related: “In the first volumes, Beis, Daled, and Hei, only things that were **directly** related to the *parshah* were included. But we realized that the Rebbe’s *sichos* and letters are getting lost! There were so many *sichos* that the Rebbe was *magiah* here and there for Bitoon Chabad, Kovetz Lubavitch, and so on, and most people didn’t have access to them! So

I started collecting and publishing them in the *hosafos*. In addition, I searched through thousands of letters from the Rebbe in people’s archives or that I had copies of, and we published them even if they only had a slight connection to the *parshah*.”

Before each *sefer* was printed, the Rebbe would go through it, occasionally adding *hagahos* to the letters. There were other times when the Rebbe was involved in creation of the *hosafos* as well, as Rabbi Yosef Minkowitz relates: “In 5709, Rabbi Betzalel Wilshansky wrote a letter to the Rebbe from Australia asking what one should do when crossing the International Date-Line during *sefiras ha’omer*. This was before the *nesius*, but already then they knew that the Rebbe would have an answer.

“The Rebbe wrote a beautiful letter explaining the entire *inyan*, going through all the questions that come up, all the scenarios, and so on—but the conclusion was different from Likkutei Sichos *chelek gimmel!* I wasn’t sure what to do. On the one hand, I can’t print a letter that contradicts a *sicha*, but it was such a *geshmake* letter. I wrote in to the Rebbe and asked what to do.

“The Rebbe said to print the letter and print the *sicha* a second time together with the letter, and he wrote up a short piece to be inserted between them. It was written in third person, as if by the editors: “The above letter represents the original *svara* and analysis, but afterwards he analyzed it again and came to a conclusion. To give the full picture (*l’shleimus ha’inyan*), we are reprinting this *sicha* although it was already published.’ And the *sichah* was printed below.”¹³



“But, the Rebbe explained in a *sicha*⁵, that the Rebbe Rashab—through Tomchei Temimim—brought the unification of *nigleh* and Chassidus to a new level, in a fashion that was a *chiddush* even in relation to the Tzemach Tzedek: Although the Tzemach Tzedek cites concepts from both *nigleh* and Chassidus in his *maamarim*, they remain separate entities; they are two distinct elements in one *maamar*; the Rebbe Rashab’s *chiddush* in Tomchei Temimim was to take it a step further, unifying *nigleh* and Chassidus in a way that it truly becomes a *Torah achas*, a single Torah.

“It can be said that the true culmination of this idea is seen in the Rebbe’s Torah, where the Rebbe shows in such an evident way how Chassidus and *nigleh* are a single entity—and not simply because they belong under the same umbrella of ‘the Torah.’ Rather, they are like a *guf* and *neshama*, a body and a soul. Just as the *guf* and *neshama* are two elements of a single living person, *nigleh* and Chassidus are two indivisible layers of the same Torah.

“This is something you see all over in Likkutei Sichos. Let’s take a *Rashi sicha*, for example. The first step in a *Rashi sicha* is that the Rebbe is *mechadesh* that Rashi is saying something new in *p’shat*—something that we would not have seen on our own. In other words, as a result of the Rebbe’s approach in learning Rashi, a new *p’shat* is born. This new *p’shat* often leads to a new *halacha* (as the Rebbe always quoted from the Shalah Hakadosh, Rashi contains “wondrous concepts in *halacha*”). So the first thing is,



8 TISHREI 5741, LEVI FREDIN via JEM189083

when the Rebbe learns a Rashi the way he does, a new *din* in *nigleh* is discovered, which we would not know without this Rashi. And then the Rebbe explains the Chassidus-aspect in the Rashi—how *this same concept* is reflected in Chassidus, either in understanding a concept in the *haskala* (philosophy) of Chassidus, or in *avodas Hashem*. The *yeina shel Torah* isn't an external add-on—it's the *inner layer* of the *p'shat* and *halacha*.

“The Rebbe does this with Rashi, Rambam, *hadranim*—the entire Likkutei Sichos is filled with this! The examples go on and on.

“In fact, the Rebbe’s integration of Chassidus and *nigleh* reaches such an extent, that the boundaries between *nigleh* and Chassidus begin fading: the Rebbe will utilize Chassidus in order to explain *nigleh*, and *nigleh* to explain Chassidus.

“For example, when elaborating on a concept in *nigleh*, the Rebbe will often show how Chassidus shows a new depth in this concept, and that it is necessary to understand the Chassidus-aspect in order to truly understand the *nigleh*-aspect. One small illustration: The laws of *tumah* and *tahara* (purity and impurity) are extraordinarily complex and detailed, and many of them seem to be classic *gezeiros hakasuv*, decrees of the Torah without explanation. Dishes and vessels made out of metal or wood become *tamei* when they are touched by impurity in any manner, whereas those made out of earthenware (*kli cheres*) become *tamei* only if the impurity enters through the *inside*. And if this earthenware vessel is sealed (*tzamid pasil*) it cannot become *tamei* from any impurity, even dead bodies—except if a *zav* moves it. When the Rebbe learns these same *halachos* according to Chassidus, suddenly all these seemingly random rules are in the perfect order, to teach us amazing lessons in *avodas Hashem*.⁶

“The same is true the other way: the Rebbe will often use concepts and terms from *nigleh*—like *kamus* and *eichus* (quantity and quality) *tzibur* and *yachid* (community and individual), and such Rogatchover-style concepts—in order to clarify an *inyan* in Chassidus. The Rebbe will even use actual *dinim* in *halacha* in order to explain Chassidus.”

THE REBBE'S METHOD OF LEARNING



In the *pesach davar* of the Likkutei Sichos, the editors wrote: “A large portion of the *hosafos* come from letters written to private people who shared a copy of their letters for the benefit of the public. We are hereby requesting that anyone who has in his possession letters of the Rebbe should send them...”

In volume 15, the Rebbe himself edited this paragraph (the Rebbe’s words are in bold). “A large portion of the *hosafos* come from letters written to private people who shared a copy of their letters for the benefit of the public. **Thanks is given to every single one of them, and the merit of the public is theirs.** We are hereby requesting **with a double and redoubled** [request] that anyone who has in his possession letters of the Rebbe should send them.”

It is this multicolored nature of Likkutei Sichos that creates the tiferes, the beauty. Not only that all the different colors are contained together in a single area, but that they become synthesized into one single inyan—and that's what creates the beauty.

Rabbi Moshe Wolberg says, “I once heard from Reb Yoel Kahn in the name of Reb Chaim Tzimmerman (a brilliant *gaon* who would often come to speak to the Rebbe in learning): Every person who learns has a certain *gang*, a specific method in learning. There are many different approaches: there's a Brisker approach; a more Polisher approach; a Rogatchover-style approach; and so on. When presented with a *kashya*, a question in learning, most people will try to resolve it by employing their personal approach.

“But not everything in the world can be painted with a single brush! Not everything can be explained with one single *gang*!

“The Rebbe, on the other hand—Reb Chaim Tzimmerman said—*employs* all the approaches, but is not limited to any specific one. In one place

the Rebbe will say a profound logical *vort* (a ‘*higayon'dike vort*’), and in another place he'll discuss a very *baalebatish* *svara* (a more practical way of thinking). In one *sicha* he will display a certain *sharfkeit* (e.g. a clever, innovative connection to another *sugya*), and in another he will state that the version was not printed correctly and offer suggestions for how it should be. [These types of approaches to learning are difficult to clearly define, but see below for some examples. Ed.] In other words—the Rebbe's approach is that there's room for everything.

“There are certain questions the Rebbe asked that were based on a penetration into the depth of the logic. One example that comes to mind: The Rogatchover makes a list somewhere of various things in Torah where the *shiur* is *mashehu*; the minimum size is anything above zero. Most things in Torah need to be a certain size in order to count: you have to eat a certain amount of matzah to fulfill the mitzvah in Pesach; you are only liable for eating on Yom Kippur when you eat a certain amount; and so on. But there are a few areas where the minimum size is ‘anything.’ The list includes, among other things: *ir hanidachas*; the prohibition of *avoda zara*; certain prohibitions of Shabbos; and so on.

“The Rebbe points out that there is an inconsistency in this list—*avoda zara* and Shabbos do not belong together. There are two reasons why the minimum amount could be ‘anything.’ Regarding Shabbos, it's because even a very small amount is considered to have consequence; while the amount

that is considered consequential for matzah is larger, the amount to be considered consequential for shabbos is much smaller. But with *avoda zara*, it is an entirely different rationale: there is no minimum amount needed for it to be prohibited. In other words, with Shabbos, the minimum amount that is prohibited is very small, anything. In *avoda zora*, there is no minimum amount—*anything* is prohibited. So they are not the same.⁷

“On the other hand: there are places where the Rebbe will elaborate at length on a ‘*leshitasaihu*’ of two *tannaim*—where he would go through the entire Shas, showing how one idea underlies so many different positions of the same Tannaim (see below).

“And then there was the way the Rebbe dealt with ascertaining the correct version in a *sefer* (which in itself is unique; most *sefarim* that deal with *lomdus* would not be comfortable getting into the nitty-gritty of varying versions). The Rebbe often explained that if you see two versions of a line in a *sefer*, and one of them makes less sense—that one is often more likely to be correct. Why? Because the way it used to work was that when a *sefer* was published, a *bochur zetzer* (copy editor) would go through it and fix any mistakes. Sometimes, this *bochur zetzer* would feel overconfident and “fix” a word that may have seemed strange or repetitious but was in fact correct. The Rebbe used this *svara* in many places. This is not a *logical* leap, a *lomdishe svara*—it's a *baalebatish svara*, a more technical, practical way of thinking—it involves



YUD-TES KISLEV 5746, YOSSI MELAMED v/a JEM 128831



PAMPHLET CONTAINING A RECENT SICHA THAT THE REBBE WAS MAGIAH. SICHOES PUBLISHED AS SUCH WERE INCLUDED IN THE HOSAFOS.

contemplating the reality of how things *happened*, and that mistakes in *sefarim* weren't made on their own, but by actual human beings.

"And in the very same Likkutei Sichos, the Rebbe will discuss the difference between the examples the Friediker Rebbe gives for the effect of Chassidus; if it's like a bright ember or pearls of the sea.⁸

"So in Likkutei Sichos, one sees all all kinds of approaches: *lomdus*, *sharfkeit*, questions on seemingly minor details, *baalebatishе svaros*, *p'shat*, *remez*, *drush* and *sod*. And everything

is true, you just have to know when to use it. The Rebbe's approach is to find the truth in every part of Torah—he's not coming to say a '*vort*,' but to clarify the truth of the idea.

"It is this multicolored nature of Likkutei Sichos that creates the *tiferes*, the beauty. The idea of *tiferes*, as Chassidus explains it, is not only that all the different colors are *contained* together in a single area, but that they become synthesized into one single *inyan*—and that's what creates the beauty.

"Reb Yoel would always offer the example from when

the Rebbe spoke the *sichos* of '*leshitasaihu*,' where vastly different rulings by the same *tanna* are found to have a single underlying principle. The most famous of these is the argument between Beis Shamai and Beis Hillel—whether to look at the potential or the actuality (the *koach* or the *poel*)—which the Rebbe discussed numerous times throughout the years. The *inyan* itself was an amazing thing, but the Rebbe took it a step further: if all these different rulings share the same principle, the Rebbe asked, why do these *tannaim* need to repeat the argument over and over again? In Gemara-language, what's the *tzrichusa*? And then the Rebbe went on to find subtle differences in each *sugya* that necessitate repeating the argument. (There were, in fact, certain *sugyas* where a given set of *tannaim* did not express their opinion, and the Rebbe explained that this was because it was obvious from their general *shita*.)

"Asking for a *tzrichusa* means two things: first of all, you're taking it seriously. If it's simply a *p'shetel*, an intellectual exercise—be happy that you said a *p'shetel*! When you start looking for the *tzrichusa*—when you start asking why it needs to be repeated—that means that this is very real. This isn't just a cute connection, it's so real that you're asking why you need both.

"Second, it illustrates that you're not sufficing with "*hafshata*," the abstract intellectual innovations. In general, when you say a big *lomdus* there are often many loose ends—there's a little *kashya* here, a little *kashya* over there—and it's not really considered an

issue. But even after the exciting connection, the Rebbe would get into the *tzrichusa*, delving into the intricate details of each *sugya* and explaining why it's important to be repeated. Because the Rebbe was looking for the *emes*.⁹

AN APPROACH OF BITTUL

Rabbi Isser Zalman Weisberg⁹ says:

“What I find is that the Rebbe learned in a way of *bittul*—what is the Torah trying to say? Many *roshei yeshivos* use Gemara and *rishonim* to express *their geonus*, to show how they can innovate a *lomdus*. The Rebbe's approach was one of *emes*, of *bittul*—what did Rashi mean? What did the Gemara mean to say? Just like the Rebbe's *derech* in Rashi was *pshuto shel mikra*, the Rebbe's approach to Gemara was to look for the *pshuto shel Gemara*—what is the Gemara trying to say?

“In the Reshimos, for example, or in Igros, you see how the Rebbe takes apart a *sugya*. I would say that it's more of an old-fashioned style of learning, similar to the Maharsha. The Rebbe dissects all the various opinions in the *sugya*, all the Tosfos'n, analyzing how it fits in with the words of the Gemara—and you see that he's not just looking to come out with a regular *geshmake lomdus*. As the Rebbe Rashab says in Kuntres Eitz Hachayim, the true approach to learning is to search for the *emes*, and very often, the true answer is not the most exciting one. Of course, there are many questions that can only be resolved with a Rogatchover, with a *lomdus*, or with another

type of approach—but that wasn't the goal. The Rebbe's goal was finding the truth.

“This was also expressed in the fact that the Rebbe would utilize all types of contemporary tools in learning. The whole idea of using *kisvei yad* in Rashi was revolutionary when the Rebbe began using it (though it has become much more accepted today in the *velt* as well). In the past, a *sefer* didn't even have a *mafteach*, a table of contents—because it's a modern invention! But the Rebbe was very fond of bibliographies, tables of contents, *mafteichos*, footnotes—all seemingly modern approaches—because he utilized every path to find the truth.

“This also comes from the idea of *shleimus haTorah*, the totality of Torah. There were many great *geonim* and *poskim*—even in the modern age—who never looked into the later *acharonim*. Even if they would have access to the modern tools of technology, they wouldn't be interested—they learned the *sugya*, they had the confidence in how they learned it, and that was enough. Do you have to look into all the latest *acharonim*...? This is a valid approach taken by *gedolei Yisroel*, most radically by the Rogatchover himself. But the Rebbe was very interested in what everyone had to say on the topic, and if someone pointed out that a certain *sefer* discussed the topic, the Rebbe put it in to Likkutei Sichos [usually prefaced by *‘He'irani chochom echad'*]. The Rebbe wanted to take everything in—every *acharon* was important, every person who learns Torah is important—everything that a *talmid vasik* innovates is part of Torah.”

“There's a certain person I know—today he is a prominent shliach—who doesn't come from a Lubavitcher family,” Rabbi Wolberg relates. “When he was a young *bochur*, somehow or another he got in touch with a local shliach and ended up learning in the Lubavitcher yeshiva in New York. However, he had some problems with the yeshiva and was considering leaving.

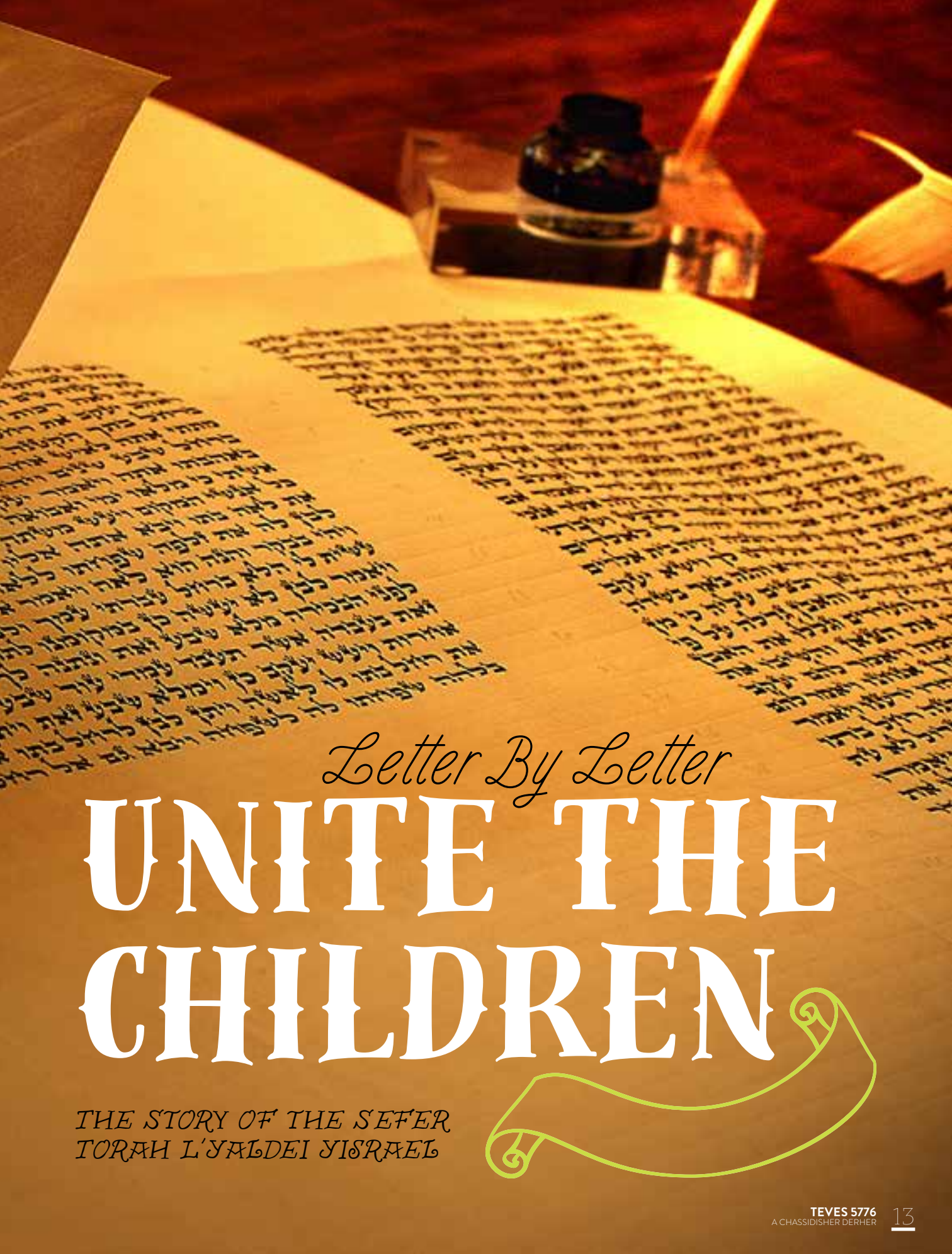
“Another older *bochur* tried to be *mekarev* him and started learning Likkutei Sichos with him. What made the key difference to this young *bochur* was the fact that the Rebbe was worried about all the subtle little details—that every element was reckoned with and dealt with; the Rebbe showed you that every element in Torah—every nuance, every expression, every *diyuk*—is important. He felt that the Rebbe wasn't trying to say a ‘vort’—he was really looking to find the truth of the Torah. And that changed his life.” T

1. Reb Yoel Kahn, *B'darkei Hachassidim* p. 86-90.
2. Bamidbar 14:36.
3. Vol. 7 p. 88. See Sefer Ha'arachim-Chabad volume 3 pages 70-72.
4. See e.g. Toras Menachem 5742 vol 4 p. 2295.
5. Likkutei Sichos vol 20 p. 395.
6. See Likkutei Sichos vol. 38 p. 72.
7. Likkutei Sichos vol. 29 p. 155.
8. Likkutei Sichos vol. 20 p. 171.
9. As a bochur in 770, with the Rebbe's tremendous encouragement, Rabbi Weisberg began writing up the Rebbe's *sichos* for *veltische* Torah-publications. The Rebbe was *magiah* all of the *sichos* that he prepared.
10. Sichos Kodesh 5741 vol. 1 p. 270 ff.
11. Hoshea 12:3.
12. See A Chassidisher Derher Tammuz 5776 (Issue 46).
13. Likkutei Sichos vol. 7 p. 285-294.



In the preparation of this article we were greatly assisted by **Rabbi Shmuel Greisman**, director of the Sefer Torah L'Yaldei Yisroel, and the album "Ois B'Sefer Torah".

Photos: Children's Sefer Torah; JEM/The Living Archive



Letter By Letter

UNITE THE CHILDREN

THE STORY OF THE SEFER TORAH L'YALDEI YISRAEL



THE FIRST THREE DAYS

Tuesday, evening of 11 Nissan

Yud-Alef Nissan 5741 was one of those farbrengens. The atmosphere was capable of sweeping you away from this world and transporting you to a higher place. But at the same time, there was hyper-awareness of reality. One of the topics of the farbrengen was the recent attempted murder of President Ronald Reagan, which had left America traumatized and desperately seeking answers. After giving the president his personal *brocha* for a speedy recovery, the Rebbe spoke at length about the lessons that must be learned by the United States as a country, the president as it's leader, and by Yidden as well.

Then the Rebbe said a *maamar*, after which came a *sicha* about the *mitvzoim* and specifically *mitvza Pesach*. Towards the end of that *sicha*, the Rebbe suddenly made an announcement¹:

“We spoke earlier about *ma'alin bakodesh*, growing in holiness. Therefore, after a pause for saying *l'chaim* with *simcha*, *t'rua* and *kol gadol*, we will pick up [the farbrengen] and discuss a new idea.” Smiling, the Rebbe continued, “Not a new *gezaira*, *chas v'sholom*, rather a proposal and plea. As will be explained soon, *umitoch simcha vetuv leivov! L'chaim!*”

The assembled crowd was shocked. When was the last time the Rebbe had made such a dramatic announcement? What could the Rebbe have in mind?

After a short pause, The Rebbe's father's *hakafo*s *niggun* was started, and the Rebbe led the fiery singing, repeating the middle stanza over and over. The nervous anticipation grew by the minute.

The Rebbe began the next *sicha* by prefacing that, for the past few



months, he had constantly been speaking “with a *shturem*” about Tzivos Hashem (established earlier that year), uniting all Jewish children throughout the world under a common banner—Tzivos Hashem—and a common goal—to spread Yiddishkeit in their homes, their surroundings, and beyond.

However, the Rebbe said, children live in a physical world where it is difficult to feel this unity. Moreover, there are some Jewish children who may not know about it altogether. For this reason, he continued, other

ideas were proposed to make them feel united; a common uniform, a common symbol, and other similar ideas.

True unity, though, is achieved through Torah. Therefore, the Rebbe announced, we are now proposing an utterly novel *mitvza*: to write a sefer Torah written solely for children, boys and girls, before bar and bas mitvza; each child getting their own letter. This will demonstrate to the child in a real, physical way that he is connected to all other Jewish children; and through the Torah.



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In order to highlight this idea of unity, the Rebbe said that the Torah should be written in Eretz Yisroel, the one and only Yiddishe land. And more specifically, in *Yerushalayim ir hakodesh*, a city that belongs to all Yidden together, uniting them all as one - as the *possuk* says, "עיר שחוברה לה" "יחדיו".

In order to avoid *nahama diksufa* (meaning that something received for free is not as cherished as something one paid for), each child will pay one U.S. dollar, or its equivalent in foreign currencies, for the letter. The Rebbe

THE REBBE'S HAGAHOS ON A PRESS RELEASE ANNOUNCING THE NEW SEFER TORAH FOLLOWING THE FARBRENGEN OF YUD ALEPH NISSAN 5741.

appointed the Beis Din Rabbanei Chabad in Eretz Yisroel—"my representatives"—to oversee the writing of the Torah and to work out the halachic details. The main thing, the Rebbe said, is that the Torah should be written with the highest level of *kashrus*, and even more importantly—it should be written as fast as possible.



Wednesday, 11 Nissan

In Eretz Yisroel, where they were listening to the farbrengen via live hook-up, it was already daytime. The farbrengen had begun at 9:30 pm Eastern time, which was 3:30 am in Eretz Yisroel. By the time this *sicha* was said, it was 12:30 am in New York, which meant that it was 6:30 am in Eretz Yisroel. The Beis Din

Rabbanei Chabad immediately called an emergency meeting in the Colel Chabad offices in Yerushalayim for that very day. Despite the short notice, and with the rabbanim living all over Eretz Yisroel, every single one of them made it over to Yerushalayim.

The task before them wasn't a simple one: writing a Torah, especially a nice one, is an intense project involving many details, which usually takes months of preparation. But they didn't have time for extensive planning; as the Rebbe said, it had to happen as fast as possible.

During the meeting, the rabbanim chose Rabbi Shlomo Aharon Henig as *sofer*, and they decided that the Torah would be in the Alter Rebbe's *ksav*. As soon as the decision was made, not a moment was wasted. They called Rabbi Henig over to the office and *right on the spot* he began writing the *sefer Torah*. The project that the Rebbe had launched just hours ago was already underway!

When the Chassidim from all over Eretz Yisroel gathered for the yearly Yud-Alef Nissan farbrengen the following evening in Kfar Chabad,

under the fresh impression of the Rebbe's powerful words about the new *mitvza*, Rabbi Mordechai Ashkenazi shared the thrilling news—the writing had begun!

Back in New York, Yud-Alef Nissan was unfolding pretty much like every year. The Rebbe went to the Ohel; after which he returned to 770, davened *mincha*; and then a group of elder Chassidim delivered a special birthday *brocha*.

Suddenly, Rabbi Groner came out of the Rebbe's room looking for Rabbi Hodakov. Rabbi Hodakov went into the Rebbe's room and emerged with surprising news—there would be another farbrengen!

This caught everyone off guard, since there had already been a farbrengen for Yud-Alef Nissan the previous night. It was so out of ordinary that many of the guests that had come to New York for Yud-Alef Nissan had already returned home to prepare for Pesach. The crowd at the farbrengen was quite small, but the excitement was palpable, as the Chassidim waited to see what would happen.

"First of all, we open with good news," the Rebbe began². "Yesterday we spoke about writing a *sefer Torah* for Jewish children... Today the news arrived that the writing of the first *sefer Torah* has already begun, on Yud-Alef Nissan. The first line was already



LEADING RABANIM OF ERETZ YISROEL MEET IN BEIS SHAZAR IN Kfar CHABAD ON 18 NISSAN 5741, TO DISCUSS HOW TO IMPLEMENT THE REBBE'S NEW MITVZA.



CHILDREN SURROUND THE SOFER, RABBI SHLOMO AHARON HENIG AS THE FIRST SHEET OF PARCHMENT IS WRITTEN.



THEY CALLED RABBI HENIG OVER TO THE OFFICE AND RIGHT ON THE SPOT HE BEGAN WRITING THE SEFER TORAH.



JEM/THE LIVING ARCHIVE

RABBI SHMUEL GREISMAN STANDS NEAR A MAP IN HIS OFFICE, TALLYING THE NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS FROM AROUND THE WORLD.

written on a beautiful, high quality parchment.”

The first part of the *sicha* involved the spiritual significance of writing a *sefer Torah*, and then the Rebbe turned to the practical aspects, giving many practical guidelines about the new *mitvza*: how to pick a letter for each child; how to design the certificates; and more.

Thursday, 15 Nissan

The following day, people throughout the world who had heard the Rebbe’s urgent instructions at the farbrengen, were clamoring to buy letters for their children. However, there was a bit of a problem: no one really knew how to go about it, since the *mitvza* hadn’t been officially set up yet. And so, in every community, one person was designated to collect the forms and hold on to the money until they knew what the next step would

be. (The Rebbe would clarify this a few days later, see below.)

That day, the Rebbe again went to the Ohel, and after *mincha* it was announced that there would be yet another farbrengen! Three farbrengens in a row! Although this farbrengen wasn’t a total surprise, since it was Yud-Gimmel Nissan, the Tzemach Tzedek’s *yahrtzeit*, it was still an unprecedented phenomenon.

The shul downstairs had been cleaned for Pesach by now, and the *gabbaim* warned everyone not to bring in *chametz*; in fact, even the ‘*mezonos*’ on the Rebbe’s table were kosher for Pesach. At 9:30 pm Eastern time the farbrengen began.

The first half of the farbrengen was focussed on the *yahrtzeit* of the Tzemach Tzedek, but in the *sichos* following the *maamar*, the Rebbe spoke at length about the new *mitvza*. The Rebbe said that they should make

sure that the writing of the Torah continues on the following day—Friday—so that there would be a full three days, a *chazaka*, of writing before the sofer is forced to break for Pesach. Thus concluded three whirlwind days of farbrengens, inspiration and excitement—and now it was time to get to work.

SETTING IT UP

After witnessing the Rebbe’s urgency for the project, Lubavitcher Chassidim worldwide rolled up their sleeves. Enrollment forms were immediately printed and sent around the world, and as the days went by, more and more people signed up.

The official coordination of the *mitvza* was put in the hands of the Beis Din (who were later instructed that the *mitvza* should not be associated with any other Chabad *mosad*), and they subsequently set up



THE ORIGINAL CERTIFICATE (RIGHT) CONFIRMING THE CHILD'S LETTER IN THE TORAH, DESIGNED PER THE REBBE'S DETAILED INSTRUCTIONS. (LEFT) THE CURRENT VERSION OF THE SAME CERTIFICATE.

the *Vaad L'ksivas Sefer Hatorah Shel Yaldei Yisrael*, asking Rabbi Shmuel Greisman to take charge.

The Beis Din called a meeting of rabbanim and *askanim* in Beis Shazar in Kfar Chabad to discuss how the *mitvza* should be coordinated in the smoothest and quickest way possible. They decided on the basic parameters of the outreach effort, and a few people were assigned to assist Rabbi Greisman in the activities, each taking on different responsibilities; publicity, outreach, finances, etc.

If he had been harboring any doubts about his new position, Rabbi Greisman was quickly made to realize what he had gotten himself into. The next day, he received a phone call from the Rebbe's *mazkir*, his brother-in-law, Rabbi Binyomin Klein, with an astonishing message. The Rebbe had told him the following: "Call your brother-in-law—he is involved in the *Sefer Torah*—and ask him how many children have bought a letter. Not how many letters the *sofer* wrote, but how many children bought a letter in the Torah."

Rabbi Greisman answered that he would look at the lists and let him know, and when Rabbi Klein called him back the next day, Rabbi Greisman gave over the tallies. Later on, Rabbi Klein called him back to tell him that the Rebbe had been surprised by the numbers. "This is with the whole *shturem*!?" [I.e. Why isn't there more?] The Rebbe told Rabbi Klein that he should call Rabbi Greisman back the next week for another update. From then on Rabbi Greisman sent Rabbi Klein a weekly *duch* for the Rebbe. In fact, several times when Rabbi Klein went into the Rebbe on Friday, the Rebbe himself asked whether the *duch* was ready yet.

DOWN TO THE LAST DETAIL

In contrast to most other *mitvzoim* and projects that the Rebbe initiated, where the Rebbe would generally give broad *hora'os* and leave the technical details up to the Chassidim, here the Rebbe was involved at every step of the way. Throughout the process the Rebbe displayed an intimate,

empathetic understanding of a child's mindset and inner life, guiding every part of the *mitvza* based on what would excite, motivate, and involve the children.

One issue involved the certificates the children would receive for buying the letters, which the Rebbe addressed at length in the *farbrenge*n of *Yud-Beis Nissan*³. As was often the case, these weren't just simple instructions; rather, in a lively *sicha*, the Rebbe provided fascinating, down-to-earth insight into a seemingly mundane process.

FULL DISCLOSURE?

There is a custom in many communities, the Rebbe began, that when someone buys a letter in a *sefer Torah*, he receives a certificate indicating which letter is his. This is done because without a certificate, the person buying the letter would have no way to discern whether he was actually assigned his own letter or not. The certificate confirms that he actually has a letter.

However, it can happen that when a person receives his certificate and discovers which part of the Torah his letter is in, he is miserably disappointed. *What type of letter did I buy? Look at what word it's in!* The letter that he bought, the letter that belongs to him, *his* letter in the *sefer Torah*, is in a negative word or *parsha!*

One might argue that it shouldn't really matter; all words in the Torah are holy! These words are just as crucial to the completeness of the *sefer Torah* as Hashem's names. Who cares what letter you received?

And yet, the fact remains that we are dealing with human beings, and you cannot compare having a letter in the words "*v'achos lotan timna*" to having a letter in the name of Hashem. This difference is even recognized in *halacha*; when a *sofer* writes the names of Hashem, he must be in a higher

level of holiness than when he writes the rest of the Torah.

Thus, when you let people know the exact letter they received, it will often cause anxiety and dismay. Besides for causing a Yid pain—which must always be avoided—there is another issue involved: the very fact that a Yid is scared can affect his *mazal*.

Instead, the Rebbe suggested, the certificate should only name the *parsha* that the letter is in—to confirm that a letter was indeed assigned to this individual—without stating the actual word it is in.

Following this proposal, the Rebbe gave another, related *hora'ah*. The decision of which letter goes to whom should not be left up to a person in the office, rather it should be done by *gorel*, which, as we know, is *al pi Hashem*.

It quickly became evident that the Rebbe viewed the certificate, and even its design, as a crucial part of the *mitvza*, spending several *sichos* and many *maanos* giving instructions on every detail. For example, the Rebbe said that the certificate must be beautifully designed, because this would show the children the importance and significance of having a letter, and also encourage other children seeing the certificate to buy a letter for themselves. As such, the certificate must be nice enough that a child should want to hang it on his wall and show it off to his friends. In fact, when the *vaad* sent the Rebbe a first draft of the certificate, he rejected it on the grounds that the color and quality of the paper weren't good enough.

Other instructions included: the certificates should be signed at the bottom (either by one of the rabbanim, or by the *mazkir Beis Din*) in order to emphasize their value and importance; it should include a picture of the *choma* surrounding Yerushalayim,

they should all be in *Lashon Kodesh*, regardless of where they are being sent (with the exception of the children's names, if applicable). The Rebbe also instructed that it include pictures (or drawings) of the *mekomos hakedoshim* in Eretz Yisroel, and specifically placed the picture of the Kosel at the top right side of the page.

THE CHILD HIMSELF

Since the goal of the *mitvza* is that each child should have a letter in the *sefer Torah*, one might imagine that it doesn't matter who actually fills out the form to buy the letter, whether it's the father, mother, sibling, or child himself. However, the Rebbe instructed⁴ that the children should do it themselves, giving two reasons: firstly, this would draw them in and get them involved. Secondly, although a child's intent has no significance according to *halacha*—"a child has no *machshava*"—his action is very significant—and especially when the work is so difficult. "When a child sits down to write," the Rebbe described, "he sticks his tongue out between his

teeth, deliberates to himself, and rolls up his sleeves. Then he looks at his pen or pencil and thinks about how to turn it, after which he labors to ensure that the shape of the letters should come out right. And then there are some children who are *mehader* and want their signature to come out nice, so instead of just signing a regular signature, they draw a picture with a toy, and the like." For a child, writing is a big deal!

This work that the child invests will arouse the deepest fondness from Above, and therefore, although the handwriting may be hard to read, and it might even be difficult to discern whether the child was trying to write an *Alef* or draw a picture of two buckets of water hanging on a stick (as the *melamdim* used to describe an *alef*), it's all worth it. However, the Rebbe added, if after all their labor, the form is still not legible, the parents should add a note clarifying the contents.

Regarding infants and small children, who can't do it themselves, the Rebbe said that all of the steps of



SEPHARDIC CHIEF RABBI OF ISRAEL MORDECHAI ELIYAHU FILLS IN A LETTER AT THE SECOND SIYUM, CHOF AV 5746.

signing up—completing the forms and putting them into envelopes—should be done in front of them. Because, as Torah has always said and science recently concluded as well, even newborns are affected by their surroundings, and they will thereby be included in the *mitvza*.

Women are central to the *mitvza*, the Rebbe said⁵, because as the *akeres habayis*, the mainstay of the home, a mother is more involved with her children than the father. Also, the child should be doing this on his own—spending his own dollar—and a woman is much more effective at convincing and motivating children than a man.

HITTING THE STREETS

The task before the Chassidim was staggering—to recruit over three hundred thousand children; a mind boggling number! The scale of the *mitvza* and audacity of the goal was unprecedented. But after so many spirited *sichos* from the Rebbe, after such urgent galvanizing and encouragement, they got down to business. Final brochures and forms were printed, and chassidim used every avenue available to enlist children, spreading across New York in cars and station wagons with mounted loudspeakers and going door to door in communities, standing on street corners in Manhattan handing out brochures, and publishing advertisements in all the Jewish newspapers.

And this was only in New York. Across the United States and throughout the world, shluchim were signing up all the children they could find, as fast as was humanly possible. When the shluchim in Morocco wrote to the Rebbe that they had managed to sign up 827 children by the 17th of Iyar, they received a remarkably warm *maane*: “At every opportunity (*bichol*



THE ORIGINAL REGISTRATION FORM FOR CHILDREN TO PURCHASE THEIR OWN LETTER IN THE TORAH.

eis mitzoi) I will mention them at the *tziyon*.” Following this, they took a *hachlota* to double and triple their activities going forward.

In Eretz Yisroel, the center of it all, the activities were in high gear; men, women, and children all pitched in to enroll as many children as possible.

The activities weren’t limited to *bochurim* or newly married *yungelait*, or even to shluchim and *baalei batim*. Lubavitcher rabbanim too, threw themselves into the *mitvza*, visiting various rebbes, *roshei yeshivos*, and rabbanim all over America and Eretz Yisroel to sign up their children. *Gedolei Yisrael* from all across the political and religious spectrum signed up their children and grandchildren, and many came out with letters supporting the *mitvza*, encouraging their followers to follow their example. The Belzer Rebbe signed up his child and called to all his Chassidim to do the same; Rabbi Moshe Feinstein signed up not only all of his grandchildren, but all the *talmidim* in his *mosdos*; the Baba Sali published a letter promising his personal *brocha* for every child that signs up; and Rabbi Weiss of the *Eida Hachareidis* in Yerushalayim said that he would make a list of all his grandchildren and send

it in. *Kol koreh’s* encouraging people to join the *mitvza* were signed by dozens of *gedolei Yisroel* and distributed throughout the Jewish world.

The *mitvza* reached so far, that when a group of N’shei Chabad went to meet the Skverer Rebbetzin in New York to ask her to enroll her children, she replied that there was no need—her father, the Munkatcher Rebbe, had already signed them up together with his other grandchildren! Instead, she committed to encouraging the women of Skver to sign up their children. “Only the Lubavitcher Rebbe could come up with such a *mitvza*,” her father, the Munkatcher Rebbe remarked.

Throughout the Jewish world, and even more so in Lubavitch, this was the burning *mitvza* of the month. It was the topic of conversation on everyone’s lips, the focus of all



mitzvoim, and even the subject of their Torah learning. On Acharon Shel Pesach, when the Rebbe delivered⁶ his annual contribution to the Kinus Torah, the topic he spoke about was the mitzvah of writing a *sefer Torah*.

UPPING THE ANTE

Then the Rebbe took it up a notch. At the farbrengen of Rosh Chodesh Iyar, the Rebbe set⁷ the first deadline—the end of the year, so that the Torah would be completed by the end of the *shnas Hakhel*. This, of course, upped the ante for recruiting the children; now they were down to five months to find all three hundred thousand children! But it also created a very practical problem: a *sofer* simply cannot write a Torah in such a short time. So the Rebbe proposed a simple solution: recruit another *sofer*. After the first *sofer* estimates how much he will be able to finish by the end of the year, the second *sofer* can immediately begin writing from that point on.

Following the Rebbe's directives, the Beis Din appointed Rabbi Shimshon Kahane from Kfar Chabad, a *sofer* whose handwriting was similar to Rabbi Henig's—a quality which the

AN AIRPLANE CIRCLED OVERHEAD, DROPPING LEAFLETS AND BALLOONS WITH TAGLINES ABOUT THE SEFER TORAH.



Rebbe had said to look for—to write the second half of the Torah.

The activities of *shluchim*, *baalei batim*, and *bochurim* throughout the world took on a new urgency, as they raced against the clock to recruit enough children to complete the Torah by the end of the year; which came out to about fifteen thousand children a week! Little did they know that this was still only the beginning.

A TIME OF DANGER

On Yud-Gimmel Iyar (a few weeks later) the Rebbe sent out a *michtav klali*⁸ addressed to the entire Jewish nation. The physical and spiritual well being of Jews and Judaism throughout

the world is in danger, the Rebbe wrote, and there is one solution to this crisis: ..ונתתי גשמיכם... ונתתי שלום בארץ... If we learn Torah and fulfill mitzvos, Hashem will provide us with all we need, and bless us with peace. Specifically, the Rebbe proposed, people should arrange *kinusim* of Yidden, for children too, at every opportunity, where they will add in Torah, tefillah, and tzedaka. The Rebbe then added plea to all of *klal Yisrael*—"a *bakasha nafshis*, in all *leshonos* of *bakasha*, that Yidden should unite by fulfilling the mitzvah of *ve'ahavta l'reiacha kamocho*."

At first, there was no evident connection between these gatherings and the *sefer Torah* for children. Then, a few days later, a directive arrived from the Rebbe's *mazkirus*, stating that it was especially crucial to sign children up for the *sefer Torah* in the weeks between Lag B'omer and Shavuot.

The Chassidim's activities intensified. One remarkable scene was in Meron on Lag B'omer. As people started pouring into the city on Erev Lag B'omer, the Lubavitchers were ready. Dozens of booths were set up all over, manned by groups of volunteers shouting into megaphones and inviting people over. Other volunteers were sprinkled over the entire area, distributing brochures to the milling crowds and directing them towards the booths. An airplane circled overhead, dropping leaflets and balloons with taglines about the *sefer Torah*.

The demand was incredible. Throngs of people congregated around the booths to sign up their children. All schisms and boundaries fell away, as Ashkenazim and Sephardim, blue collar workers and professionals, regular people and prominent public figures, all joined in on the *mitvza*. Innumerable amounts of people were reached and letters sold.



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A FLOAT PROMOTING THE SEFER TORAH L'YALDEI YISROEL PASSES BY THE REBBE AT THE LAG B'OMER PARADE OF 5743.

The activities on Lag B'omer were but one example of the Chassidim worldwide heeding the Rebbe's call. But, as far as the reasoning behind it all—on that the Chassidim were still in the dark. Why the sudden urgency? What was the emergency?

That next Shabbos, and in the following farbrengens, the Rebbe explained at length.

ON THE BRINK

The world is shaking and trembling, the Rebbe said⁹, sitting on the brink of total destruction. One phenomenon he pointed out was the unlimited power of destruction the nuclear bomb had given to individual evil actors. In days bygone, causing major destruction took sophisticated planning and large groups of people. But in today's world, one maniac can destroy the entire planet with the push of a button! When normal people have access to such destruction, you can at least try predicting what they're going

to do next; but when you're dealing with a madman, this is impossible—you can never imagine what crazy idea will fall into his head. The fate of the world depends on the next move of some crazy king in Africa or elsewhere, or some other *meshugene* roaming around ready to sneak into a nuclear bunker.

The Rebbe also pointed to the shooting of the president as evidence of the fraying fear of authority in the world. *The president himself was shot*—and, after a few weeks of excitement in the newspapers, everyone goes back to their normal day to day lives, as if nothing ever happened! *That's an old story, they say, there are new stories on the table now; and anyways who cares about what some crazy guy did?* How can you casually brush off what happened when the threat is not gone?! He is likely to be released and do it again!

The situation in the world, the Rebbe concluded, is getting worse

by the week, and no one knows what tomorrow will bring. It is only Hashem's kindness that is saving the world from utter destruction.

Why does Hashem allow this? Why do the madmen of the world have free reign? It must be, the Rebbe said, because Hashem wants the Yidden to wake up and strengthen their fulfillment of Torah and mitzvos.

But, more specifically, the discord of the greater world stems from discord in the Jewish world, in multiple arenas. Some people are engaging in smear campaigns against other Yidden with no regard to the truth or impact of their words. Others aren't satisfied with sticking to their own field of work, instead trampling over other people's work and causing discord among Yidden.

"How much *sinas chinam* can you have?" the Rebbe cried. "*Viful iz der shiur?*"

What can be done? First of all, the Rebbe said, all Yidden must

IN DAYS BYGONE, CAUSING MAJOR DESTRUCTION TOOK SOPHISTICATED PLANNING AND LARGE GROUPS OF PEOPLE. BUT IN TODAY'S WORLD, ONE MANIAC CAN DESTROY THE ENTIRE PLANET WITH THE PUSH OF A BUTTON!



add in *ahavas chinam*. But this isn't enough. Something more must be done; something to unite all Yidden together, a *mitzva* that will join them as one. And this, the Rebbe explained, was why there was a special push to buy letters in a unity *sefer Torah*.

This unity *sefer Torah* is specifically for children because when older people make a *sefer Torah*, *Beis Din Shel Ma'alah* can always come looking for problems and deficiencies; but when children make a *sefer Torah*, the *Beis Din Shel Ma'alah* has no power, for they are *hevel she'ain boi chet*—breath with no sin. *Al tigu bimeshichoi!* Hashem commands the *Beis Din Shel Ma'alah*, do not touch the *tinokos shel beis rabbon!*

Since this is the way to bring peace to the world, all *hagbalos* and

limitations on the *mitzva* are now removed, and it must be done with the greatest *shturem* and *zrizus!*

ON BLACK AND WHITE

On Shabbos Parshas Naso¹⁰, the Rebbe upped the ante once more. Considering that “fear of flesh and blood” can be more motivating than the “fear of heaven”, the Chassidim would now be held personally accountable to the Rebbe. The Rebbe instructed that every person should compile a list of how many letters were purchased in their area by Shavuos and send it “here, to the *reshus* of the Friediker Rebbe, *nesi doreinu*, in the city of his Ohel and *tziyon*.” (Since only a short time remained until Shavuos, another list should be

compiled before Yud-Beis Sivan as well.)

No one wanted to come up short, and the following day, Erev Shavuos, a day of hectic Yom Tov preparations and harried housework, Chassidim did the almost unthinkable and went out to sign children up for the *sefer Torah*. In the late afternoon hours of Erev Shavuos, the Rebbe received the lists he requested. (During the *farbrengen* on Shavuos, after again speaking at length about the *mitzva*, he asked that, aside for the list compiled before Yud-Beis Sivan, another list should be sent in by Tes-Vov Sivan.)

Later on, it was revealed that this period marked a turning point in the history of the Yidden living in Eretz Yisroel. On Erev Shavuos, as Lubavitcher Chassidim signing children up and sending their lists to the Rebbe, a squadron of planes was taking off from Israel to bomb Saddam Hussein's nuclear plants in Iraq. It took only a minute and twenty seconds to decimate the plants completely, and an hour and a half later, all the planes and pilots were back in Israel, unharmed. Saddam Hussein's perverse aspirations were gone forever, and the shadow of nuclear devastation was removed from over Israel for years to come.

As senior military officers would later relate, they were up against incredible odds from every conceivable angle, both military and diplomatic. For example, the planes were sold to them by America solely for peaceful purposes, with Americans standing by full-time to ensure this, and yet, somehow, with all the frenzied preparations, they did not pick up on what was happening. Additionally, the planes were brand new and untested, yet not a single one had failed during flight. Also, they carried the exact amount of fuel necessary to get to Iraq and back, leaving zero room for error; yet every single plane made it back. And perhaps the most famous part of

Throughout this time period, the Rebbe would ask almost every boy and girl who came into *yechidus* whether they had a letter in the *sefer Torah*. If there was a group of children, the Rebbe would ask the first child passing by, “Do you have a letter in the *sefer Torah* for *yaldei Yisroel?*” And then he would ask the following ones, “And you?” “And you?”

These questions were directed at *shluchim* as well: one Erev Shabbos, as the Rebbe was walking into 770, he turned to Rabbi Shlomo Cunin and asked him whether every child in California has a letter yet.

The *mazkirim* related that on many occasions, when families would request a *brocha* for a child's health, the Rebbe would tell them to inquire whether he or she has a letter in the Torah. In one *maane*, the Rebbe writes, “Surely in the merit of their daughter *tichye*, they bought a letter in the *sefer Torah* which is being written in *Yerushalayim Ir Hakodesh*, within the [Old City] walls, and may she have lengthy and good years.”

BEHIND THE IRON CURTAIN

No matter the time and context, the Jewish community of the USSR was always on the Rebbe's mind, and this *mitvza* was no exception. Throughout the farbrengens in these months, the Rebbe encouraged people to purchase letters for their relatives living behind the Iron Curtain, since this would unite them with their brothers and sisters throughout the world, transcending all physical barriers and limitations.

In a later *sicha*¹¹, in order to demonstrate the lasting impact of the *mitvza* in general, the Rebbe brought an example from a child living in the USSR who, having no prior knowledge about Yiddishkeit, is approached about buying a letter in the *sefer Torah*. After hearing a speech about how there is this thing called a “*sefer Torah*,” and how this *sefer Torah* has a connection to him, he goes home to his parents and asks them [and here the Rebbe switches to Russian], “*Shta tokaye sefer Torah?*” [“What is this *sefer Torah*?”].

His parents, having grown up in a small Russian *shtetl* under communist rule, don't either know what a *sefer Torah* is. So they, in turn, look for someone else who might know—a *zeide*, *bubbe*, or an older Yid in the *shtetl*—and ask them the same question, “*Shta tokaye sefer Torah?*” This person tells the child what a *sefer Torah* is; sneaks into a shul to show them one in the *aron kodesh*; and explains to him how Torah is a personal *hora'ah* for him, notwithstanding the fact that neither he, his father, nor his mother, have ever seen one their entire lives. Thus, the effect of telling a child about the *sefer Torah* isn't limited to the *sefer Torah* itself - it can be a springing board to spark their interest in Yiddishkeit and its fulfillment.

The Rebbe continued that, unfortunately, these children don't exist only in the USSR. Even in other countries, which are not under communist rule—even in the United States—there are children who have never seen a *sefer Torah*. When they are told that all Jewish children—no matter who raised them, how they were raised, or where their parents belong—have a letter in the *sefer Torah*, it will bring them closer to Yiddishkeit.

the episode occurred as they flew over the Mediterranean. From his yacht, the king of Jordan saw the planes flying overhead and immediately called the Iraqis to warn them, but his warning was ignored. And flying into Iraq and over the nuclear plants, they were expecting to encounter some type of resistance, but not one anti-craft missile was shot their way. These are only the revealed miracles that the Israeli Air Force experienced in planning and executing this daring operation.

Chassidim at the time felt that, perhaps, this was what the Rebbe's *shturem* had been all about. As with the Yom Kippur War and countless times before and after, the Rebbe anticipated the crisis and spiritually prepared the Jewish nation for what was to come.

FINISH IT OFF!

Towards the beginning of the *mitvza*, the Rebbe had set Erev Rosh Hashanah as the goal for recruiting all the children and completing the *sefer Torah*; an extremely ambitious objective. However, as the weeks passed and the Jewish nation got caught up in the storm of excitement, the Rebbe pulled back the deadline, first setting it for the end of Sivan, then for Yud-Beis Tammuz. Ultimately, all the letters were sold



RABBI ZALMAN GURARY ADDRESSES THE CROWD AT THE FIRST SIYUM.



THE SEFER TORAH IS CARRIED OUT OF THE TZEMACH TZEDEK SHUL BEGINNING THE PROCESSION TO THE KOSEL FOR THE GRAND EVENT.

by the end of Tammuz. Less than four months after the Rebbe had first introduced the idea, over three hundred thousand children had signed up for a letter in the *sefer Torah*!

Looking at the lists of children that were included in this Torah, the organizers came to realize the magnitude of what had occurred before their very eyes. The children came from every sector and stratum of the Jewish world—Chareidim, Modern Orthodox, and non-religious; extreme *kana'im* and anti-religious fanatics; Chassidim and Litvaks—there was not a part of the Jewish world that hadn't participated. And they came from all types of communities throughout the world—from big urban cities with large Jewish communities, to small towns without a rabbi; from the suburbs of California to the wastelands of Russia; from New York to Africa to the Arab world.

THE REBBE'S DESIGN

Seeing the *sefer Torah* of *yaldei Yisrael*, one notices that it doesn't look like a regular *sefer Torah*, with two items standing out in particular: the huge, towering crown, and the unique *mantel*. This isn't a coincidence, as both were designed by the Rebbe.

The story of the crown actually began towards the beginning of the *mitvza*. In one of the *farbrengens* where the Rebbe spoke about the *sefer Torah*, he also spoke about giving *tzedaka* in a manner of *lechtachila ariber*. Following this *sicha*, Rabbi Zalman Gurary, a prominent Chassid, decided that he would donate the crown, and when he reported this to the Rebbe, the Rebbe told him that it should be designed like the *sefer Torah shel Moshiach* (which the Rebbe had personally designed years earlier). Rabbi Gurary asked if he could change one thing: the crown on the *sefer Torah shel Moshiach* was only partially made



of gold, and he wanted to make this one of pure gold. The Rebbe agreed.

A photograph was taken of the original crown, based off which a sculptor managed to create an identical crown of gold. Later on, about a week before the *siyum*, the Rebbe gave the *hora'ah*, through *mazkirus*, that Rabbi Gurary should bring the crown to Eretz Yisroel and place it on the *sefer Torah* as his *shliach*.

The story of the Torah *mantel* is even more unusual; the Rebbe designed every detail of it himself, down to the dimensions of the *luchos*

(see sidebar), and gave \$118 for each of the Torah *mantelach*—white and blue—on behalf of himself and the Rebbetzin.

A PERSONAL SHLIACH

During the *farbrengen* of Shabbos parshas Va'eschanan, on 15 Av, the Rebbe announced¹² that the date of the *siyum* had been set for Chof Av, and word got out that the Rebbe would be sending a special *shliach* to Eretz Yisroel, Reb Zalman Shimon Dvorkin, the rov of Crown Heights. On the morning of 17 Av, Rabbi Dvorkin was

Below is a rare document with the Rebbe's handwritten design for the new *mantel*.

On top, the Rebbe titles the page as **design on the mantel**
Both on the white mantel for Tishrei, and on the t'chailles

Under that is a sketch of the *luchos*, along with dimensions: on top of each *luach*, the Rebbe writes (**three tefachim**)—which comes out to six *tefachim* widthwise—and on the side, the Rebbe writes (**six tefachim**). Unlike most *mantelach* with *luchos*, where they are merely one element of the design, here the *luchos* cover most of the *mantel*, and stretch around the sides of the Torah.

Under the *luchos*, the Rebbe writes the *possuk* **Torah Tziva Lanu Moshe Morasha Kehillas Yaakov**, adding that **this is only if it's possible to fit it in the width of the luchos and no more**, i.e. if the *possuk* shouldn't extend wider than the *luchos*.

Then the Rebbe added that **On every one of the atzei chayim** should be written **the possuk Aitz... [chayim hi lamachazikim] boh**. And also the *possuk* **Torah Tziva...[lanu Moshe morasha kehillas] Yaakov**.

It is interesting to note that at one point an idea arose to fashion the *atzei chayim* out of silver, to which the Rebbe answered, "*Aitz chayim* is wood, not silver."



called into the Rebbe's room, where he was given a few things to take along on his trip: \$1,200 to participate in the expenses of the *sefer Torah*; \$118 for each of the covers (as mentioned above); money to be distributed as *tzedaka* in Eretz Yisrael; and a bottle of *mashke* from a *farbrenge*n in Russia (which had been sent to the Rebbe earlier). The Rebbe also directed him, as his *shliach*, to write a letter in the *sefer Torah* that was being completed, as well as in the second *sefer Torah*, which was just being started, and emphasized that he would be going as a *shliach*—of the Rebbe and of all *rabbanim*—not as a *rov*.

When they were done, the Rebbe escorted Rabbi Dvorkin until the door of *Gan Eden Hatachton*, following him with his eyes until he left 770.

That afternoon, Rabbi Dvorkin was sent off amidst song and dance, accompanied to the airport by a group of prominent members of *anash*, including Rabbi Hodakov, Rabbi Mordechai Mentlik, and others. After a short *farbrenge*n in the airport, Rabbi Dvorkin was driven directly to the foot of the plane. (Upon his return, Rabbi Dvorkin went into *yechidus*, and the Rebbe asked about all the various details of the *shlichus*.)

THE SIYUM

After weeks and weeks of tireless preparation, the big moment finally arrived.

The *siyum* commenced in the Tzemach Tzedek shul in Yerushalayim, where hundreds of Chassidim gathered for the ceremony completing the Torah, which would later be followed by a parade to the Kosel. Dozens of different *rabbonim*, *roshei yeshivos* and *rebbe*s were present for the celebration, and honored to fill in the letters in the Torah. Afterwards Rabbi Dvorkin, as the Rebbe's *shliach*, wrote in the final letter. As the *rabbonim* were completing the Torah



RABBI ZALMAN SHIMON DVORKIN, WHO WAS SENT AS THE REBBE'S PERSONAL SHLIACH TO THE FIRST SIYUM, MAKES A L'CHAIM AND FILLS IN A LETTER OF THE ALMOST COMPLETE TORAH.

11 Scenes of the second Siyum Sefer Torah L'Yaldei Yisroel, Chof Av 5746 11



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1. CHILDREN SURROUND THE SOFER IN THE TZEMACH TZEDEK SHUL IN THE OLD CITY OF YERUSHALAYIM, AS THE LAST LETTERS ARE FILLED IN. THE SIYUM IS ABOUT TO BEGIN. 2. RABBI ZUSHE WILMOVSKY, THE PARTIZAN, MAKES A L'CHAIM WITH THE CHILDREN. 3. THE SEFER TORAH IS ESCORTED AMIDST SINGING AND DANCING THROUGH THE WINDY STREETS OF THE OLD CITY OF YERUSHALAYIM TOWARD THE KOSEL PLAZA. 4. THRONGS OF MEN, WOMEN, AND CHILDREN JOIN THE CELEBRATIONS AT THE KOSEL PLAZA. 5. CHILDREN JOIN THE NEW SEFER TORAH ON THE PODIUM. 6. THE DAIS IS FILLED WITH LEADING RABONIM AND REBBES OF ERETZ YISROEL IN CELEBRATION OF THE NEW SEFER TORAH.



Kosel, where thousands of people from all over Eretz Yisrael were waiting to greet them. The *sifrei Torah* of the Kosel were taken out to greet the new one, and, following the reading of *Ata Horeisa*, seven huge *hakafos* were made, as tourists and passersby alike joined in the excitement. Tears filled their eyes and joy filled their hearts.

Following a speech by a representative of the children, the Torah was returned to the Tzemach Tzedek shul, where a *seuda* and *farbrenge* took place. They *farbrenge* until 3:30 am, when it was time to listen to the hook-up of the Rebbe's Chof Av *farbrenge*, during which the Rebbe spoke at length about the new *sefer Torah*.

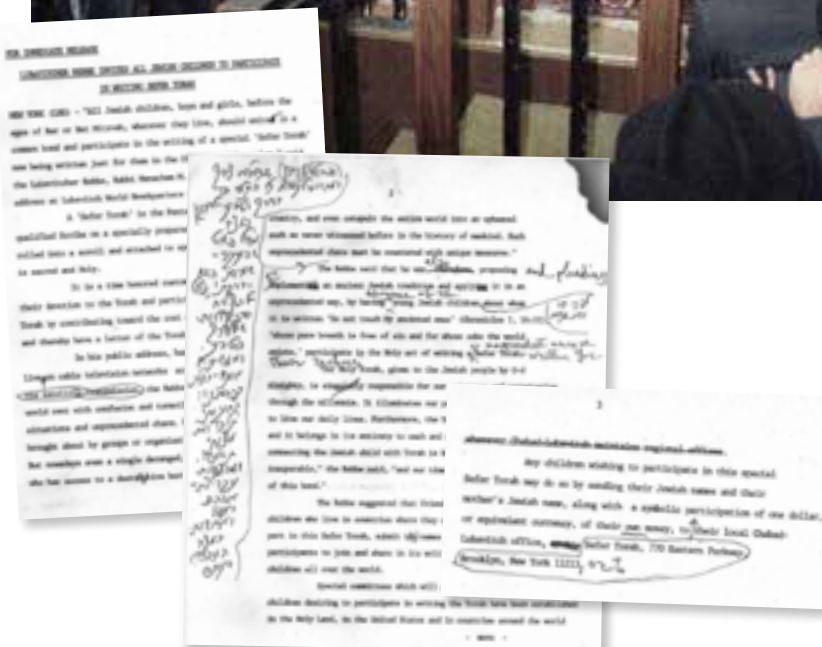
NEW FRONTIERS

At the *farbrenge* of erev Rosh Hashanah a few weeks later, the Rebbe related¹³ that someone had come to him with a complaint: “*Viful iz a shiur* to speak about writing a *sefer Torah* for *yaldei Yisrael*? We have to be more concerned about those who are connected to *hevel sheyesh boi chet* - the adults?!”

“This complaint”, the Rebbe said, “was accepted [by me].”

Thus, the campaign of *sifrei Torah haklolyim* began. It turned out that the *sefer Torah* for *yaldei Yisrael* was only the first stage in a project of an even grander scale: that every Yid, no matter their age and even if they have already passed on, should have a letter in a *sefer Torah*. The Rebbe explained that it had started with children because Jewish unity—the goal of the *sifrei Torah*—is easier achieved by children, but upon accomplishing this with children, it could now be taken to the adults.

Unlike the *sefer Torah* for *yaldei Yisrael*, which was under the Rebbe's direct supervision, the *Torahs* for adults were commissioned by several different organizations, mainly

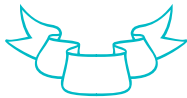


THE REBBE'S HAGAHOS ON A PRESS-RELEASE ABOUT OIS B'SEFER TORAH.

inside the Tzemach Tzedek shul, the street outside began filling up with people; by the time the parade was to begin, it was overflowing, with barely any room to move. The gates of the shul opened, a *chupa* was unfurled, and the procession began.

Leading the parade were the children, carrying burning tapers, followed by the rest of the crowd, and accompanied by a marching band and heavy security. They weaved their way through the narrow streets of Yerushalayim until they arrived at the

ON MANY OCCASIONS,
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TORAH.



Tomchei Temimim and Beis Rivka. It is beyond the scope of this article to discuss this wide-reaching *mitvza*, but suffice it to say the Rebbe spoke about it tirelessly throughout the following year, and spent countless *sichos* *shtureming* about it without rest. It became one of the *mitvzoim haklolyim* mentioned at every *farbrengen*.

Stressing the importance of acquiring a letter in one of the *sifrei Torah*, the Rebbe quoted¹⁴ the *possuk* in Daniel, ובעת ההיא ימלט עמר כל הנמצא, כתוב בספר. Meaning, although the world is going through difficult times, the Yidden will be okay, for Hashem protects them. But the condition stipulated in the *possuk* is that they be inscribed in Hashem's *sefer*; the *sefer Torah*. (Shabbos parshas Mikeitz 5742).

Sifrei Torah continue to be written today. The office of *sifrei Torah* for *yaldei Yisrael*, which has completed five *Torahs* to date, is run by Rabbi Shmuel Greisman, and the office for *sifrei Torah haklolyim* is under the direction of Rabbi Moshe Oirechman. The sixth *sefer Torah* for *yaldei Yisrael* is coming close to completion, with less than a hundred thousand letters remaining, and the aim is to finish it by this summer.

Although this is one of the *mitvzoim* in which the Rebbe invested so much time, energy, and effort, it is also one that is easy to overlook, since—unlike the other *mitvzoim*—it

is a one time event, per person. So take a moment and think: Do you have a letter in the *sefer Torah haklali*? Do your siblings or children have one in the *sefer Torah* for *yaldei Yisrael*? Then, aside for your family, reach out to friends, acquaintances, *mitvzoim* friends, and beyond, and introduce them to this opportunity. In addition to fulfilling the Rebbe's directives—the primary motivation in every *mitvza*—the spiritual effects and rewards are tremendous, and it is the greatest gift you can give them. **T**

1. Sichos Kodesh 5741 vol 3, p. 129.
2. Ibid. p. 139.
3. Ibid. p. 145-148.
4. Ibid. p. 188-193.
5. Ibid. p. 487.
6. Ibid. p. 315.
7. Ibid. p. 423.
8. Likutei Sichos vol 22. p. 321.
9. Sichos Kodesh 5741 vol 3, p. 476.
10. Ibid. 581.
11. Likutei Sichos vol 23. p. 296-297.
12. Sichos Kodesh 5741 vol 4, p. 424.
13. Ibid. P 765.
14. Hisva'aduyos 5742 vol 2, p. 624.

WHERE CAN I SIGN UP?

Sefer Torah for Yaldei Yisrael:

KidsTorah.org

Sefer Torah Haklali:

www.chabad.org/409282

Remember that the forms should be filled in by the children themselves, or, with infants, in front of them.

