

Part I

לזכות

החתן הרה"ת ר' חנני' שי' ניאזוף

והכלה מרת צירל מושקא תחי' ברענאן

לרגל חתונתם בשעתו"צ ביום הבהיר י"א שבט ה'תשע"ו

נדפס ע"י הוריהם

הרה"ת ר' אוריאל וזוגתו מרת חנה טויבע ניאזוף

הרה"ת ר' ליפא שמואל וזוגתו מרת מלכה ברענאן

retain CHASSID

THE RIGOROUS PROCESS OF
CHAZZARA AND HANACHA IN EACH GENERATION



ing US

In the preparation of this article series, we conducted extensive interviews with many key individuals involved in chazzering, transcribing, and printing the Rebbe's Torah, as well as printing the Torah of the Rabeim.

They are: **Rabbi Chaim Shaul Brook**, director of Vaad Hanachos BLahak; **Rabbi Dovid Feldman**, chozer and maniach and editor-in-chief of Vaad Hanachos BLahak; **Rabbi Simon Jacobson**, chozer and maniach - Vaad Hanochos Hatmimim; **Rabbi Eliyahu Matusof**, senior editor at Otzar Ha'Chassidim; **Rabbi Dovid Olidort**, chozer and maniach and senior editor at Kehot Publication Society.

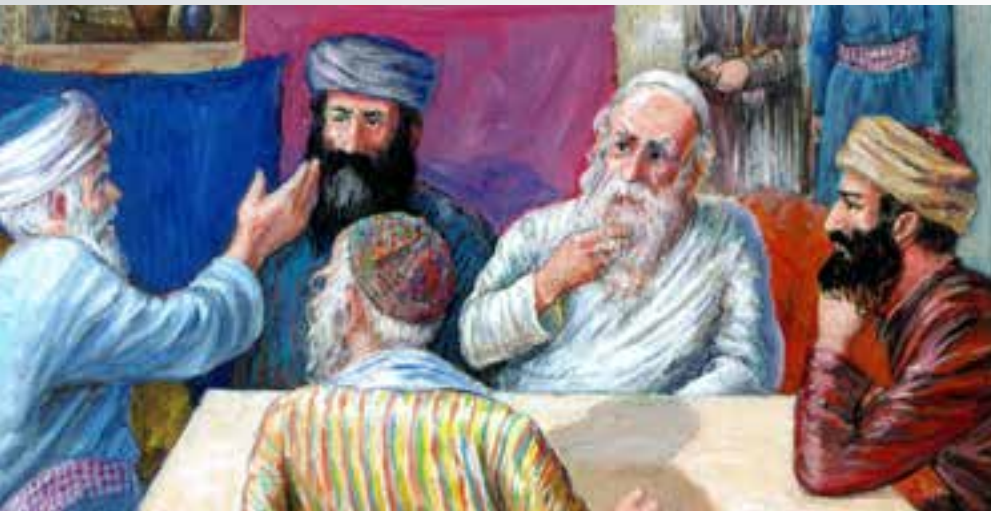
On behalf of our readership, we thank them for bringing their extensive expertise to bear on this vast topic, sparing neither time nor effort in their assistance. זכות הרבים תלוי בהם.

Throughout the history of Chassidus, the spoken teachings of the Rebbeim have been learned and retained through a two-step process, which, over time, developed a lexicon of its own.

First there was Chazzara (repeating), when a chozer (repeater) would chazzer (repeat) the Rebbe's teaching for the benefit of the listeners. A chozer would chazzer the teachings as accurately as possible - which, depending on the Rebbe, could last up to several hours at a time.

Then came the next step, hanacha (transcribing), when a maniach (transcriber) would write a hanacha (transcript) of the Rebbe's teachings.

In this article series, we examine the history, development, and experience of this nearly impossible endeavor.



Ancient History

Although the idea of *chazzara* might seem like a concept invented by Chassidus, it is in fact one of the oldest institutions of Jewish life, intertwined with Torah Shebaal Peh from its earliest beginnings. Today we may take it for granted, but for thousands of years, none of Torah Shebaal Peh, including all the *halachos*, *midrashim*, *limudim* or *pessukim*, *gezeiros* and *minhagim*, were allowed to be written down. Everything from the most exotic story in Midrash about Adam and Chava, to the nitty gritty *halachos* of *tzaraas*, to the *takanos* of Ezra,

had to be memorized by heart, a task of gargantuan proportions.

This was done through a process reminiscent of the *chazzara* we are familiar with today, as can be seen in the Gemara's description of the first transmissions of Torah Shebaal Peh by Moshe Rabbeinu right after hearing it from Hashem. Moshe would repeat the lesson four times, first to his brother Aharon, then to (Aharon and) Aharon's sons, then to (Aharon, his sons, and) the *zekainim*, then to (Aharon, his sons, the *zekainim* and) the rest of the Yidden, all of whom had by that point gathered in Moshe's tent. Then Aharon, his sons, and

the *zekainim*, would each repeat the lesson again, with every single person eventually hearing the lesson a total of four times. This was important not only because it may have taken several times to *understand* the *halachos*, but also because this was their one and only chance to remember the *halacha* and preserve it for perpetuity.

This was how it was done for over a thousand years, as the leaders of each generation passed on this plethora of oral tradition to the leaders of the next generation, and they to the next. And this got harder and harder with each progressive generation, since the material they had to remember kept growing; each generation was *michadesh gezeiros* and *takanos* of their own, which themselves had to be remembered. To be sure, writing wasn't completely out of the question—that would be impossible. Rather, each person would take notes, and based on that he would later share and expound upon in his teachings to his own disciples.¹ Torah Shebaal Peh survived from generation to generation in this manner, as thousands upon thousands of *halachos* and Midrashim were transmitted without the aid of a single official text.

In the time of the Roman Empire, Rabbi Yehuda Hanassi realized that, due to the difficulties of *galus*, the tradition was on the verge of being broken; he therefore decided to write (or gather²) a brief summation of the *halachos* of Torah Shebaal Peh, and this became the Mishnah. He was followed several generations later

by Ravina and Rav Ashi who transcribed the Gemara. (Other Tana'im, also authored the various *sefarim* of Midrashim).

Once Torah Shebaal Peh became a text-based system of learning, the need for memory and *chazzara* became obsolete. From this point on, the major expounders and teachers of Torah wrote their ideas down on paper, beginning with the *teshuvos* of Rabbanan Savoro'i and the Geonim, and continuing with the innumerable *sefarim* of the Rishonim and Acharonim. But there was one exception—Kabbalah.

Kabbalistic Custom

Even after the rest of the Torah had been transcribed, Kabbalah continued to be transmitted orally—and secretly—from generation to generation, as it had been from the times of Moshe Rabbeinu (and before). Although there were some Kabbalah *sefarim*, like the Zohar, they could not completely replace the oral tradition, since they are extremely difficult to decipher without extensive training from teachers.

Furthermore: the few *sifrei Kabbalah* that did exist were not actually written by their authors, but are rather the transcriptions of their Talmidim. For example, the Zohar is the transcripts of Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai's teachings by his *talmid* Reb Abba. Centuries later, the Kisvei Ha'Arizal were written down by his students, primarily Reb Chaim Vittal.

This tradition continued after the birth of Chassidus. The Baal Shem Tov didn't write his own Torah. In fact, there aren't really

any official *hanachos* either; his most famous *sefer*, Kesser Shem Tov, is a collection of his teachings that were quoted in the various *sefarim* of his students. The first one to publish Torah from the Baal Shem Tov was his talmid, Reb Yaakov Yosef of Polonoye, known as the "Toldos Yaakov Yosef."

It was in the times of the Maggid that the idea of *hanachos* of Chassidus was born. Reb Levi Yitzchak of Berdichev, Reb Yechiel Michel Zlotshover, and Reb Shmelke of Nikelsburg, were among the more famous *manichim*, and from some of their writings the *sefarim* Maggid Devarav L'Yaakov and Or Torah were later printed.

(It should be noted that the word "*hanacha*" as referring to a transcription is exclusively of Chabad vocabulary; a loose translation of the Yiddish expression "לייגן אויפן כתב" - placing on paper.)

One of the Maggid's *talmidim* recounts how the Maggid asked him to get involved in writing *hanachos*, and their exchange offers unique insight into the value of transcribing the words of a Rebbe:

One time, the Rebbe asked me why I am not writing what I hear. I answered the above answer [[that

the holy words of the Rebbe...are words that stand at the height of the world...which not every mind can comprehend...lofty wisdoms that cannot be said with the mouth...]. I also added that I saw the work of other transcribers, and they fall very short of capturing the Rebbe's intent...He said to me, "Nevertheless, however it is written, it is all good, in order that it be a remembrance for avodas Hashem."

And here we come to the crucial passage:

I said to him, "Why does the Rebbe want and desire this?" And this is what he answered me: "Is it small in your eyes this that Dovid Hamelech asked for [in Tehillim] Agura b'ohalecha olamim [I shall dwell in Your tent to eternity], meaning in both worlds?"²³

The Maggid was referring to Chaza"l's *limud* on this *possuk*, that Dovid Hamelech was asking Hashem that he live in "worlds"—plural—which is accomplished if, after he passes on, people repeat Torah in his name. Dovid Hamelech was requesting of Hashem: "*Ribono Shel Olam! May they repeat teachings in my name in olam hazeh!*" So too, the Maggid was telling his *talmid*, these *hanachos* will serve to perpetuate the Maggid's Torah forever.

Torah Shebaal Peh survived over a thousand years in this manner, as thousands and thousands of halachos and midrashim were transmitted without the aid of a single official text.

Counting Words

THE ALTER REBBE

In the court of his teacher the Magid, the Alter Rebbe served in the role of both *chozer* and *maniach*, repeating the Magid's teachings and transcribing them as well.

Subsequently, when the Alter Rebbe began leading the Chassidim and saying Chassidus himself, he created the official positions of *choizer* and *maniach*, appointing specific Chassidim to each post.

Now, it is important to note that although they may sound interchangeable, a *chozer* and *maniach* occupy two distinct roles.

A *chozer* is someone that has the quick mind to immediately grasp and remember the Rebbe's Torah upon hearing it for the very first time. He also has a smooth tongue and can repeat it to the other Chassidim so they can understand it as well.

The exact demands of this role would change over time: the Alter Rebbe was particular that the

chozrim remember every word of the *maamar*, to guard the *lashon harav*, whereas the Mittlerer Rebbe did not require—or even want—the Chassidim to focus so much on the exact language.⁴

Additionally, since every Rebbe had a unique style of teaching Torah, it often took a different type of person (to understand it and *chazzer* it. Just because someone was a *chozer* in one generation didn't mean he could be a *chozer* for the new Rebbe.

A *maniach*, on the other hand, is the transcriber. He requires more of a smooth pen than an easy mouth, and there is less of a need that he remember the entire Torah the first time around, since he can listen to the *chozrim* before transcribing.

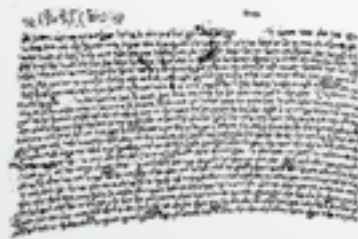
In later generations, the lines delineating these roles became a bit less firm—many of the most talented *chozrim* were also the most prolific *manichim*—but, in the times of the Alter Rebbe, not one of the official *chozrim* was a *maniach*, nor was there a *maniach* that was also an official *chozer*.

Whereas *chazzara* was a constant fixture of Chassidic life from the Alter Rebbe onwards, the role of the *maniach* ebbed and flowed from generation to generation, depending on the need. During the Alter Rebbe's times it was crucial, since, with

the exception of the Tanya, he didn't write any of his Chassidus himself. (The only *maamorim* written by the Alter Rebbe himself can be found in Torah Or parshas Chayei Sarah and Teruma). He relied solely on the *manichim*: his brother, the Maharil, whom he hired for this task; Reb Pinchas Raizes; the Mittlerer Rebbe; his son Reb Moshe; and the Tzemach Tzedek.

The Frieddiker Rebbe describes *chazzara* in the Alter Rebbe's court:

After the [Alter] Rebbe concluded saying his Torah and left the room, the chozer went up to the bima and repeated the Torah word for word. He would repeat it—bilashon harav—several times, until the participants were able to grasp the Torah, each on his own level. Some understood the whole Torah, some half, and there were some who, even after much effort, were only able to understand a third or a fourth. This was repeated day after day throughout the week, with the chozer repeating the Torah that the Alter Rebbe had said on Shabbos, three or four times a day. Once they fully grasped the maamar, the chozer would begin explaining—according



After the [Alter] Rebbe concluded saying his Torah and left the room, the choizer went up to the bima and repeated the torah word for word. He would repeat it - bilashon horav - several times, until the participants were able to grasp the torah, each on their own level.



to his ability—the ideas said in the Torah.

Over the Alter Rebbe's thirty four years of *nesius* there were three official *chozrim* appointed by the Alter Rebbe, each occupying his position for roughly eleven to twelve years.

Opening The Floodgates

THE MITTELER REBBE

During the Mittlerer Rebbe's *nesius*, the style of saying *maamarim* changed drastically. First of all, the *maamarim* were much longer; the Mittlerer Rebbe would speak for forty five minutes to an hour at a time.⁵ And, unlike the Alter Rebbe who spoke once or twice a month, these *maamarim* were two or three times *every Shabbos*. Furthermore, while the Alter Rebbe would recite one

self-contained *maamar* each time, the Mittlerer Rebbe would often say long *maamarim*, some taking several weeks to complete. For example, the *maamar* *Lehavin Inyan Rosh Hashana* of 5580 was said over three *Shabbosim* and *Rosh Hashana*, and the Mittlerer Rebbe spoke two or three times on each occasion. So one single *maamar* could have spanned six to twelve hours!⁶

Of course, the whole concept of *chazzra* changed then as well. The Alter Rebbe's *maamarim*, especially in the early years of his *nesius* and even later, were relatively short, while the *maamarim* of the Mittlerer Rebbe were much longer and thus harder to remember.

By the Alter Rebbe, the Chassidim focussed on remembering the short *maamarim* word for word, and delving into them during the week. But now it

was a tremendous feat just to wrap one's mind around it altogether.

In this era, *hanachos* by Chassidim seem to have for the most part fallen by the wayside. In fact, no *sefer hanachos* was known to exist until recently (in the 5740s), when a single *sefer* of *hanachos* happened to land in the hands of Lubavitch by way of *sefarim* dealers. Presumably, this was because the Mittlerer Rebbe himself would transcribe the *maamarim* after *Shabbos* for the Chassidim to learn from, making additional *hanachos* superfluous.

But often—primarily in the early years of his *nesius*—the Mittlerer Rebbe's *hanachos* were not of his own *maamarim*; they were *maamarim* from the Alter Rebbe upon which his *maamarim* had been based. For this reason, in the *bichlech*, the binders Chassidim kept of the Mittlerer Rebbe's *maamarim*, there are several



“For tuberculosis it is good to change air. He should come here and hear Chassidus, and then he will have what to speak.”

maamarim titled a “Maamar that the [Mittler] Rebbe said,” but they are really *hanachos* of the Alter Rebbe’s *maamarim*.

For most of the Mittler Rebbe’s *nesius* there was only one *chozer*, Reb Moshe Shlomo, who was actually trained into this role many years earlier.

In the early תתק”ג—about twenty years before he would become Rebbe—the Mittler Rebbe was charged with overseeing the *talmidim* learning in Liozna; he did this together with the Maharil, the Alter Rebbe’s brother. As their *menahel*, he would test the *talmidim* on their knowledge of the Alter Rebbe’s *maamarim* and also give them lengthy explanations of his own. He was very particular that they remember each word of the Alter Rebbe’s short, succinct *maamarim*, but when testing them on his own explanations, he focused only on the content, not requiring that they recall the precise words he used. However, there was one *talmid*, Reb Moshe Shlomo, who—after learning by the Mittler Rebbe for two years and getting used to his style of speaking—managed to *chazzer* even these long explanations, in the Mittler Rebbe’s original words.

Some twenty years later, after the Alter Rebbe was *nistalek* and

the Mittler Rebbe settled in Lubavitch, Reb Moshe Shlomo, who was living in nearby Rudnia at the time, fell very ill with tuberculosis. For a year and a half, he endured tremendous pain, and his father-in-law would constantly send *tzetzlach* to the Mittler Rebbe asking him for a *bracha*. But his condition saw no improvement. On Lag B’omer 578 (which, incidentally, was famous for being the Yom Tov that the Rabbeim, especially the Mittler Rebbe, would perform *mofsim*), the Mittler Rebbe was sitting with the Chassidim for a *seuda*, when the father-in-law approached with a *tzetel*. He was crying from the depths of his heart that this is already the second month that Reb Moshe Shlomo cannot speak due to his weakness.

The Mittler Rebbe looked intently at the *tzetel*, and said: “For tuberculosis it is good to change air. He should come here and hear Chassidus; then he will have what to speak.”

The father-in-law immediately rushed home to Rudnia, and found Reb Moshe Shlomo sitting up in bed in a very good mood. When he asked him why, Reb Moshe Shlomo answered that he himself didn’t know the reason, but out of the blue, he suddenly felt healthier. Upon hearing the Mittler Rebbe’s



words from his father-in-law, Reb Moshe Shlomo was filled with new life.

On a Thursday night, he was transferred into a wagon and set out for the trip to Lubavitch. After arriving, before *licht bentchen* on Friday evening, three *yungeleit* carried him into shul for the *maamar*. Over Shabbos, he *chazzered* publicly each *maamar* the Mittler Rebbe said, and on Shavuos that year the Mittler Rebbe crowned him as the official *chozer*. He obviously went on to have a full recovery.

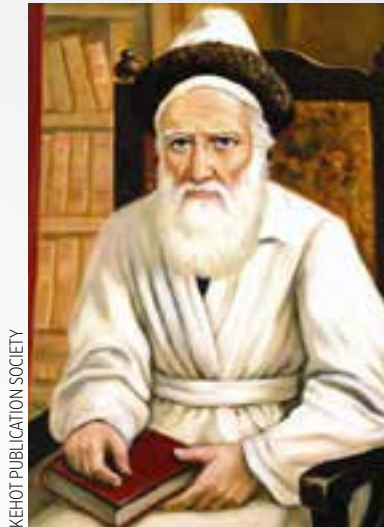
Although there were other people who *chazzered* the Mittler Rebbe's Torah, Chassidim especially enjoyed Reb Moshe Shlomo's *chazzara*, since he managed to retain most of the *divrei harav*—a feat that astounded his listeners.⁷ He remained *chozer* until the Mittler Rebbe's *histalkus*, after which he moved to Niezen, site of the Mittler Rebbe's *tziyon*, where he stayed for the rest of his life, living off of a monthly stipend sent to him by the Tzemach Tzedek.

Some *hanachos* of the Mittler Rebbe's *maamorim* written by the *manichim* were ultimately printed in “Maamorei Admur Ha'emtzoi - Hanachos ז"ע תקע.”

A Challenging Mix

THE TZEMACH TZEDEK

With the Tzemach Tzedek, the style of *maamarim* changed once again. Unlike any of the Rabbeim before or after him, his *maamarim* are full of quotes from



KEHOT PUBLICATION SOCIETY

Midrash, Zohar, and *agadeta*, often explaining each *possuk* according to different *meforshim*. Although all the Rabbeim's *maamarim* are peppered with quotes of Midrashim, these were different. The Tzemach Tzedek doesn't quote the typical Midrashim and Zohars that most people are familiar with. He quotes obscure Midrashim and unknown pieces of Zohar, which are rarely quoted in regular *sifrei nigleh* or Chassidus. Most people would have a hard enough time deciphering these quotes as they're already written in Or Hatorah, for example, let alone remembering them as they were said.

For this reason, in the early days of his *maamorim*, the Chassidim, even those with a very quick grasp and who should have made for very good *chozrim*, had a very difficult time picking up on the *maamarim*, despite the fact that they weren't as long as the Mittler Rebbe's. Even the Tzemach Tzedek's eldest children, the holy Reb Boruch Sholom and Reb Yehuda Leib, were unable to master the *maamarim*. (The Rebbe Maharash was not yet born.) Even after a full year passed by, during

which there was much time to get used to the Tzemach Tzedek's style, *chazzara* still didn't do well. The Chassidim only managed to *chazzer* the general concepts, but not the *divrei harav*, a situation that bothered them terribly.

In honor of Shavuos 5589 (ט"קפ"ט), about a year and a half after the Mittler Rebbe's *histalkus*, many of the greatest Chassidim of the time gathered in Lubavitch, bringing with them a huge crowd of Chassidim from towns far and near. Along with them came a Chossid by the name of Reb Nochum.

Reb Nochum, who had been a young Chossid in the times of the Mittler Rebbe, had been very proficient at *chazzering* his *maamorim* (though he never was an official *chozer*). Now, in general, whenever he would travel to visit the Rebbe, he would stop off at the various cities and towns along the way and urge them to join him on his trip to the Rebbe. On the way back, he would stop off on those same towns to *chazzer* the Chassidus he had heard, and recount what he had seen by the Rebbe. This was the general custom of Chassidim in those days, but since he was such a talented *chozer*, the Chassidim were filled with special excitement every time he visited, treating him with a royal welcome and spending hours and hours hearing Chassidus and *farbrenging* together.

In his first *yechidus*, the Mittler Rebbe told him (among other things) that he should learn *agada*, since this is the way to “know He who said, and the world came

He continued chazzering the maamor throughout the night, until they had to break in order to make kiddush before sunrise.



into being.” Reb Nochum would often recount that during the *kodesh kodoshim tentzel*—the dance following *yechidus*—“the Rebbe’s words from the *yechidus* were ringing in my ears,” and he didn’t waste a moment. “That night, I began learning Midrash Rabba from Bereishis, and Ein Yaakov from Brachos.”

Now Reb Nochum had come on his first trip to the Tzemach Tzedek, for Shavuot, which was a three day Yom Tov, as it fell out on Sunday and Monday.

When the Tzemach Tzedek said the first *maamar*, on Friday night, much of it was based on a *pirush* of the Ibn Ezra, and it contained many references to Nach, Zohar, and Midrash. But, unlike everyone

else, Reb Nochum took it in like a sponge, since—following the instructions of the Mittlerer Rebbe so many years earlier—he was fluent in all the sources quoted in the *maamar*. In fact, unlike most people who were having a hard time following, he enjoyed it tremendously.

Following the *maamar*, Reb Nochum went out to the courtyard with a group of Chassidim, and, standing in one of the corners, *chazzered* the *maamar* word for word, without a single mistake. He continued *chazzering* the *maamar* throughout the night, until they had to break in order to make *kiddush* before sunrise. After eating the *seuda* and going to mikveh, he *chazzered* the *maamar* once more. The same thing happened with all the ensuing *maamarim* over the next days of Shavuot.

Word of his *chazaros* spread like wildfire among the Chassidim, and suddenly he was the most sought after man in town. The great, elder Chassidim—Reb Pesach Malastuvker, Reb Yisacher Ber Mi’Lubavitch, Reb Aizil Homiler, Reb Hillel Paritcher, and Reb Notte Mi’Manastrishtzine—each asked Reb Nochum to visit where they were staying to *chazzer* the *maamar*, and they were astonished by his rendition.

The elder Chassidim decided to ask the Tzemach Tzedek to appoint him as official *chozer*, and thus return *chazzara* to its

former glory. When Reb Nochum's father-in-law, who had supported him since his marriage, heard the exuberant praises and acclaim for Reb Nochum's *chazzara*, and how he was being proposed for the official job as *chozer*, he offered to continue supporting him if he moved away to Lubavitch to become a *chozer*, in the same

manner as before⁸. The Tzemach Tzedek's sons supported the elder Chassidim's idea to request that Reb Nochum be appointed as *chozer*, and the Tzemach Tzedek agreed. He was the *chozer* for the next twenty eight years, during which time he trained many *talmidim* in the art of *chazzara*. When he passed on, his

appointment was passed to his finest student, Reb Nochum from Homil.

As far as *hanachos*, the situation was similar to the Mittlerer Rebbe; not many *hanachos* were written of his maamorim, presumably since he would give out a *ksav* after Shabbos; and these maamorim were often the Alter Rebbe's, though this was the case primarily in the early years of his *nesius*. Nevertheless, we do have quite a few *hanachos* of his *maamarim*, which constitute a small percentage of Or Hatorah, and the *maamorim* in "Maamarei Admur HaTzemach Tzedek - תרי"ד-תרט"ו," and they also include many more that have not yet been published.

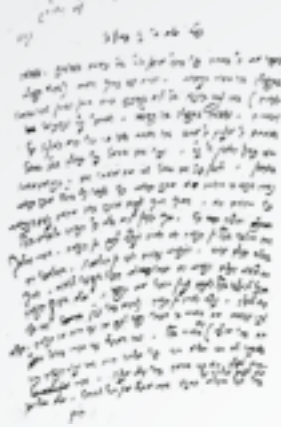
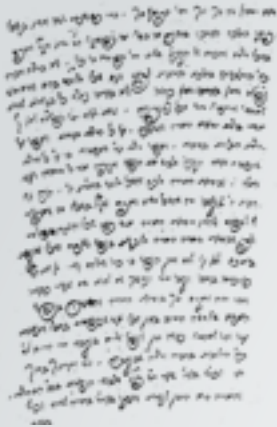
The Rebbe Maharash wrote *hanachos* of his father's *maamarim* as well.



Concise But Deep

THE REBBE MAHARASH

With the onset of the Rebbe Maharash's *nesius*, the style of *maamarim* changed once more. He spoke succinctly and wrote even shorter.⁹ The Friediker Rebbe categorizes his *maamarim* as *miut hamachzik es hameruba* (small but contains much), and the Chassidim treated each word as a source of wisdom, elaborating and expanding upon each nuance. The Friediker Rebbe brings an example to this by saying that he heard *chazzara* of a certain *maamar* from two famous Chassidim, the Radat"z and Reb Dov Zev Kozivnikov, together with their own, long explanations.



But when his father, the Rebbe Rashab, explained this *maamar* in one of his own *maamarim*, it then dawned on him that all the lengthy explanations of these Chassidim were brief relative to what the *maamar* really contained.¹⁰

There is scant information about *chazzara* by the Rebbe Maharash, and *hanachos* were again pretty much obsolete, since he transcribed his own *maamarim* (although there are some *hanachos* from the Rebbe Rashab and other Chassidim, some of which are printed in *Toras Shmuel*). But in the next generation, the need for *hanachos* emerged anew.



The Longest Maamarim

THE REBBE RASHAB

It is generally presumed that the Alter Rebbe and the Rebbe were the only Rabbeim that did not write their own *maamarim*. But this is only partially accurate. Although the Rebbe Rashab wrote prolifically, penning eight hundred and seventy of his *maamarim*,

there are another seven or eight hundred *maamarim* that he did not write, and were either lost or transcribed by *manichim*. His *sichos* were written by *manichim* as well.

His *maamarim* were much longer than his father's. He once commented that although the style of his *maamorim* are like the Mittler Rebbe, he is a Chossid of his father, the Rebbe Maharash.¹¹ But while the Mittler Rebbe would only speak for forty five

minutes to an hour at a time, often saying one *maamar* over several sittings, the Rebbe Rashab would speak for an hour and a half to two hours straight. Reb Shmuel Batumer describes *chazzara* in Lubavitch during the time of *Tomchei Temimim*:

After the Rebbe completed the maamar, everyone davened kabbolas Shabbos, after which most of the talmidim and guests went home for seduas Shabbos. But a number of the talmidim and guests remained and gathered together to chazzer the maamar, which they would chazzer exactly as it was said... [Reb Shilem Kuratin, the main choizer] would begin chazzering the maamar and they [the bochorim that were good chozrim] would help him. It took them a while until they managed to piece together the maamar, and when they were done, they davened and ate seduas Shabbos. Although the hour was late, they were afraid that the maamar would slip from their grasp (since they had only reviewed it once), so they gathered again after the seuda and reviewed it a second time. Then they went to sleep for a bit.

Early the next morning, Reb Shilem and his [chazzara] assistants, together with a few of the prominent guests, would go to the Rebbe's house, where Reb Shilem would chazzer the maamar before the Rebbe.

Rabbi Yisroel Jacobson describes the scene:

The chozrim would go in before davening, at about eight in the morning... They would usually wait in the room where people waited for yechidus, waiting until the Rebbe Rashab would open the door. The people that went in for chazzara were: a few bochurim, the chozrim; some of the guests who were knowledgeable in Chassidus; and yechidei segula.

Every time, the Rebbe would ask: is chazzara necessary? The question was asked differently every time, and sometimes it was with a serious face and sometimes with a smile on his lips. Also, when he would see a new face, he would ask whether every person was truly necessary to be there.

When the Frierdiker Rebbe was in Lubavitch, he would also go in for chazzara, and the Rebbe Rashab would tell someone to call him and notify him that it was starting. The Frierdiker Rebbe would stand in the hallway, behind almost everyone else, so everyone would turn slightly side-ways so that their backs weren't towards him. The door was often locked so no other people could enter.

Reb Shmuel Batumer describes how the actual chazzara worked:

If they missed words or mixed up how things were connected, the Rebbe would remind and rectify

them, sometimes also explaining a difficult inyan in the maamar.

Afterwards, Reb Shilem went out and chazzered the maamar again, since by now he knew it well, chazzering it beautifully... By the end of davening and seudas Shabbos, his helpers were also able to chazzer the maamar, yet everyone wanted to hear specifically from Shilem. Shabbos was passed on the maamar; food and sleep were secondary.

Farbrengens – Toras Sholom

The Rebbe Rashab generally held farbrengens only a few times a year. The *sichos* he said during those farbrengens were not properly transcribed and the only remnants of these precious talks were the journals and transcripts of lone Chassidim who had jotted down the Rebbe Rashab's words from their own memory shortly after the farbrengens. These were scattered about in the private possession of Chassidim, and it was the Rebbe who, years later, took to the task of searching out whatever was available in various locations.

In the 5700s, the Rebbe set out on a project to collect all these *sichos* and publish them in what became "Sefer Hasichos - Toras Sholom."

There was a substantial amount of transcriptions written by the Frierdiker Rebbe himself which served as a basis for the collection, but most of the *sefer* was compiled from the writings of the elder Chassidim. The largest collection of all was received from Reb Eliyahu Simpson who handed



the Rebbe his own notebook full of transcriptions he had written between the years 5662-5666 while studying in Lubavitch.

The Rebbe meticulously edited these notes, comparing the various *hanachos*, and producing the final product.

In his introduction to the published *sefer*, the Rebbe made note of the difficulties he had contended with:

“In many instances, we were unable to ascertain who wrote the transcriptions, and we therefore cannot be certain how accurate they are. Nevertheless, one must bear in mind that the writers were

genuine Chassidim who held every word of their Rebbe as most holy. Hence, it is without doubt that they made their best attempt to stay true to their Rebbe’s actual words without adding or omitting anything.”

The Rebbe, in addition to revising the existing text, also added footnotes where he saw it necessary, and inserted them at the end of the *sefer*. (In subsequent editions, these were included at the bottom of the pages throughout the *sefer*.) Several sections of the transcriptions were not published at the time, as per the Frierdiker Rebbe’s request, and one will

occasionally see the words “לא ניתן להעתיק” (“Not to be reproduced”) in the Rebbe’s emendations of the text.

Even after the *sefer* was published, the Rebbe still requested of elder Chassidim to send in whatever they had written or remembered from the Rebbe Rashab’s *sichos*, to be included in subsequent editions.¹²

The Rise of Sichos

THE FRIEDIKER REBBE

The Frierdiker Rebbe wrote all of his *maamorim*, so in this regard the job of a *maniach* was again obsolete, but *chazzara* continued. But the biggest change in the time of the Frierdiker Rebbe didn’t regard the *maamorim* - it regarded the *sichos*.

Throughout the generations of Chassidus, we do not find an emphasis on the Rebbe *farbrenging* and saying *sichos*. There were only a few solitary *farbrengens* throughout the year—Yud-Tes Kislev, Purim, Lag Baomer—and that was it; and there are few, if any, *hanachos* of these *farbrengens*.

This all changed with the Frierdiker Rebbe, who would *farbreng* much more often, recounting Chassidishe *maasos*, inspiring the Chassidim, and saying over words of Chassidus. The *hanachos* of these *sichos* fill several volumes, some of which were written by the Frierdiker Rebbe himself. Reb Yechezkiel (“Chatche”) Feigin and Reb Mordechai Mentlik were among



the prominent *chozrim* and *manichim* of the *sichos*. Our Rebbe would ensure that all the Frierdiker Rebbe's *sichos* were always transcribed.

The Rebbe's Role

About the Frierdiker Rebbe's years in the United States, Rabbi Shalom Chaskind relates how the Rebbe took charge of the *chazzara*:

"The Rebbe would go over to the bochurim or Chassidim that were able to do *chazzara* and split up the responsibility for remembering and transcribing the *sichos*—"You remember from this point of the *sicha* until this point," etc.

"One Shabbos, Mr. Yosef Palmer was a guest in 770, and the Frierdiker Rebbe asked that I serve the food at the table. The Rebbe and Rashag were also present at the *seuda*. When we went downstairs, the Rebbe turned to me and told me to transcribe the Frierdiker Rebbe's words on Motzei Shabbos, and he *chazzered* the *sicha* for me. But I couldn't keep up, and told him that I wouldn't be able to write a *hanacha* from hearing it only once. So the Rebbe *chazzered* it a few more times until I got it."

The Rebbe also played a leading role in the actual *chazzara* following the *sichos*.

Rabbi Yosef Goldstein relates the following:

"In those days the Frierdiker Rebbe's voice was very weak, and it was very difficult to understand what he was saying at the *farbrengens* [making *chazzara* all the more difficult]. After the *farbrengens*, the Chassidim would gather for *chazzara*, and the



REB CHATCHE (YECHZKEL) FEIGIN HY"D.

Rebbe would sit there the entire time. Any time a question arose about the precise wording of the *sicha*, the Rebbe was the one who resolved it."

Over the years, the Rebbe worked tirelessly to gather every bit of information on *sichos* of the Frierdiker Rebbe. In countless letters printed in *Igros Kodesh*, we find that when the Rebbe wasn't together with the Frierdiker Rebbe, he would constantly ask various Chassidim to send copies of the *sichos*, and when he was together with him, he would be the one sending out these *sichos* to Chassidim.

In a letter sent to Rabbi Yisroel Jacobson from the year 5698 (תרח"ץ), while the Rebbe was living in Paris, he writes:

"I take this opportunity to remind you about the *maamorim* of Shavuot last year which you borrowed from me; you will certainly return them now. Also, I would greatly appreciate if you would send me a copy of the *maamor* given to you in Perchtoldsdorf... You promised me while in Vienna that... you would search for some remnants of the *sichos* and *maamorim* of the [Frierdiker] Rebbe while he visited



REB MORDECHAI MENTLIK.

the United States [in 5690]. You will certainly fulfill this promise as well..."¹³

While the Rebbe was away in Paris in 5707 to greet his mother, Rebbetzin Chana, he wrote again to Rabbi Jacobson:

"Thank you for the few lines about Shvi'i and Acharon shel Pesach in the [Frierdiker] Rebbe's house; although you were concise where it would have been good to elaborate much more..."¹⁴

Even when the Rebbe was present, he still requested *hanachos* of the Frierdiker Rebbe's talks when possible. In 5708, Rabbi Ezriel Zelig Slonim wrote to the Rebbe of a *sicha* they had heard together in the Frierdiker Rebbe's sukkah in Riga thirteen years earlier. The Rebbe replied:

"You mentioned a story told by the [Frierdiker] Rebbe about the Rebbe Maharash and the Belzer Rav (from the *sichos* in Riga). Would you be able to send me a transcription of the *sichos* on that Sukkot, whatever you remember?"¹⁵

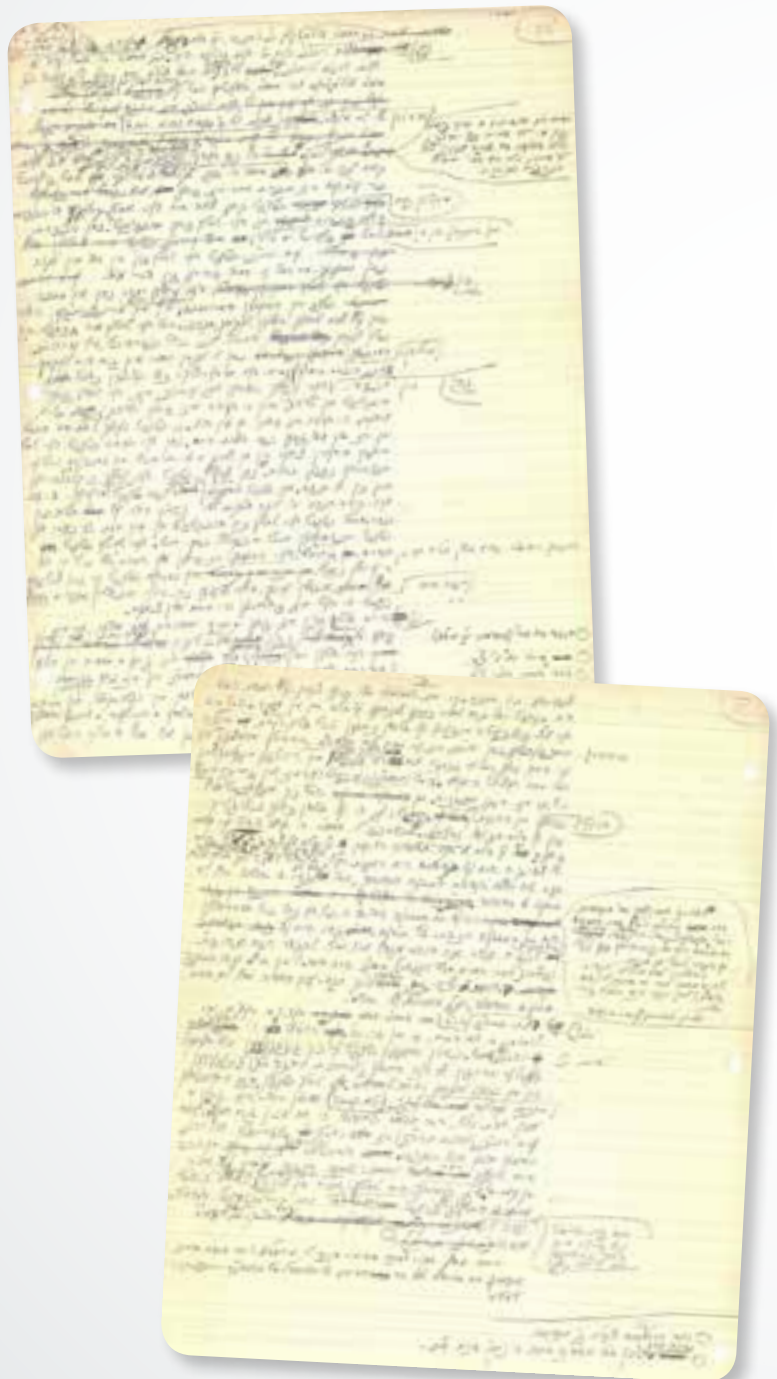
As chairman of Kehos, the Rebbe also sent out all the *maamorim* and *sichos* of the Frierdiker Rebbe to Chassidim and others all over the world. A

I couldn't keep up, and told him that I wouldn't be able to write a hanacha from hearing it only once. So the Rebbe chazzered it another one or two times until I got it.

mere glance at any of the Rebbe's letters from 5702 and on teaches us how the Rebbe really wished for these copies to be taught and disseminated in each community. The Rebbe would often add at the end of a letter: "מוסגר פה קונטרס. ובטח יזכה בו את הרבים" - "Enclosed herein is the *kuntres*... You will certainly please the public with it..." Part of the Rebbe's relentless effort that the *maayonos* of Chassidus should reach every corner of the globe, ushering in the coming of Moshiach. **T**

For the story of chazzara and hanacha of the Rebbe's maamorim and sichos in dor hashvi'i, look out for part II in next month's magazine אי"ה.

1. Rambam, Hakdama to Mishneh Torah.
2. See Likutei Sichos vol. 12 p. 89; Igros Kodesh vol. 25 p. 64
3. Hakdama to Or Torah of the Maggid p. 16.
4. Reshimos Hayuman p. שסג
5. Likutei Diburim vol. 1 p. 192.
6. Ibid.
7. Divrei Yimei Hachozrim, p. 7-9.
8. Though, the Frierdiker Rebbe notes, Reb Nochum eventually had plenty of parnassa from his job as *chozer*.
9. See Bosi Legani 5711 ois vov; Igros Kodesh Admur Mehurayatz vol. 2 p. שכד.
10. Likutei Diburim vol. 3 p. תמט
11. Sichos Kodesh 5740 vol. p. 479
12. See Igros Kodesh. vol. 21 p. 80. More about the story behind Toras Sholom appears in the Derher weekly newsletter Vol. 3 Issue 17-18 (Adar 5773).
13. Igros Kodesh vol. 1 p. 16
14. Ibid. vol. 2 p. 204
15. Ibid. p. 324



THE REBBE'S HAGAHOS ON A HANOCHA OF THE FRIERDIKER REBBE'S SICHA OF 13 TISHREI 5705.