
Language of the Soul

The Rebbe's Maamarim

Approaching Gimmel Tammuz, we present the following in-depth look at the Rebbe's maamarim. The first installment of this series appeared in our Nissan issue, covering the history of the Rebbe's maamarim and their publication. With the preparation of this article, we were greatly assisted by Rabbi Sholom Charitonov, Rabbi Yosef Gourarie, Rabbi Osher Farkash, and Rabbi Moshele Gourarie, וזכות הרבים תלוי בהם.

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לחיזוק ההתקשרות לכ"ק אדמו"ר זי"ע
ולזכות הילדה שייגדל תחי'
לרגל יום הולדתה י"ג תמוז
נתרם ע"י ולזכות הוריה
הרה"ת ר' שלום דוב בער וזוגתו מרת חיה מושקא
שיחיו
שוחאט

LEVI FREIDIN VIA JEM 308453 (13 TISHREI 5736)

What Ahavah? What Yir'ah?

It was an ordinary Shabbos Mevorchim, several weeks after Yud Shevat 5712. The visiting crowds had long gone, and the farbrengen was held in its regular, smaller format.

A special guest was present. Reb Moshe Gourarie was a famed *maskil* from Tel Aviv, and was one of the heads of Agudas Chassidei Chabad of Eretz Yisroel. It was his first visit since *Kabolas HaNesius* a year earlier. He was joined by Reb Efraim Wolff, *menahel* of Tomchei Temimim of Lod, as well as Reb Moshe Ashkenazi.¹

Twelve months had passed since the Rebbe had formally assumed the *Nesius*, but vestiges remained of the Rebbe's previous refusal. In Cheshvan that year, the Rebbe had told Reb Shmuel Zalmanov that he would not assume the *Nesius* over Chabad institutions in Eretz Yisroel until a full year had elapsed, on Yud Shevat 5712.²

Of course, the Rebbe responded to letters from Eretz Yisroel with *brachos* and advice, but throughout that initial

year, he refrained from sending specific directives to the institutions. The Rebbe was to revolutionize the landscape of *hafotzas hamaayanos* in the Holy Land, but that all began after Yud Shevat.

The farbrengen began with a maamar.

It was a very *avoda'diker* maamar, beginning with the words *Lo Sihiyeh Mishakeilah*.³ Drawing on a maamar of the Mitteler Rebbe in *Toras Chaim*, the Rebbe spoke about the necessity of *hisbonenus*, how it was critical to ensure that it birthed true *Ahavah* and *Yir'ah*, and how this *Ahavah* and *Yir'ah* needed to be protected and preserved. These are topics discussed throughout *Toras HaChassidus*, from the Alter Rebbe until the present day. But then the Rebbe pivoted with a question.

How does one avoid complacency? With such high levels of *avodah*, how does one ensure that he continues to grow?

To answer the question, the Rebbe invoked the saintly leader of our people, Rabban Yochanan ben Zakai. Before his passing, he shocked his talmidim by saying, "איני יודע, באיזה דרך מוליכין אותי איתי, I don't know down which path I am going to be led."⁴

Was he really unsure whether he was worthy of Gan Eden? Did he really suspect that his life might have not been lived correctly?

As he answered the question, the Rebbe grew emotional.

Rabban Yochanan ben Zakai was so devoted to his shlichus at every moment that he never had the opportunity to



THE REBBE DELIVERS A MAAMAR, 19 KISLEV 5714.



pause and evaluate his *avodah*—let alone be satisfied with it. A true *Oved Hashem* understands that the moment he pauses his shlichus, he is—at that moment—not serving the *Melechi Malchei Hamelachim*.

The Rebbe began to sob. Leaning his holy head on his right hand, he paused, unable to continue for several moments.

Such a person can never be satisfied. “When such a person is asked if he is satisfied with his *avodah*, he cries out bitterly: “וואס מיר רצון? וואס מיר תענוג? וואס מיר אהבה? וואס מיר יראה?”

What Ratzon? What Taanug? What Ahavah? What Yir’ah? How can I think about *madreigos* when I need to stand at the ready for my shlichus in every moment?”

In a powerful letter to Chassidim in Eretz Yisroel, Reb Moshe Gourarie described the scene.

“The Rebbe’s cries could move even a heart of stone... Tears streamed down onto the table... I never understood the meaning of a *hazazas hanefesh* (deep shuddering of the soul) until that moment... Truth be told, the Rebbe’s cries were so intense and so deeply personal—we were so overwhelmed and moved that I don’t remember his exact wording. But the *kavanah* is absolutely clear to me—that every moment, hour, and day is precious.”⁵

A New Language

In previous generations, a sicha from a Rebbe was a rare event. The Frierdiker Rebbe farbrenged with some regularity, but the Rebbe Rashab and Rebbe Maharash did so only

three or four times a year, and the Tzemach Tzedek and his predecessors perhaps even less. The primary medium with which the Rebbe communicated his Torah was the maamar.

With the Rebbe’s *Nesius*, this changed drastically. The Rebbe blessed us with an incredible wealth of sichos. At every farbrengen, sicha after sicha poured forth, the *chozrim* and *manichim* scrambling to keep up.

What, therefore, is unique about the maamarim? As a chossid who wants to learn the Rebbe’s Torah, why can’t I suffice with the study of sichos?

“I often learn Chassidus with individuals who are well versed in *Sifrei Machshavah*,” says Rabbi Osher Farkash, mashpia of Yeshivas Lubavitch in Buenos Aires, “and there is one noticeable reaction that I get time and again. While many *seforim* delve into the world of *Mussar* and *Machshavah*, Chassidus is unique. Chassidus gives a window into *Elokus*. One fellow told me, ‘I learned Kabbalah and I learned Mussar, but *Elokus*...that I found only in Chassidus.’

“It’s true that learning sichos can be far easier than maamarim. The subject material in sichos is generally familiar and easy to understand. Maamarim, on the other hand, employ a distinctive terminology. Chassidus Chabad is a unique universe introduced by the Alter Rebbe—based on Zohar, the Kabbalah of the Arizal, and so on—which delves into the esoteric worlds of *Seder Hishtalshelus*. Engaging with that world necessitates serious background knowledge and an understanding of the core concepts.

“However, to learn sichos alone would be a fundamental misunderstanding of the Rebbe’s role.

“The Rebbe is *nossi* of Chassidus Chabad. The goal of



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Chassidus is—as the Rebbe explained—to bring Moshiach, through fulfilling the dictum received by the Baal Shem Tov from Moshiach, to bring the *maayanos* of *prinius hatorah* to the ultimate *chutzah*. Chassidus is the medium of that flow.

“We often focus on the ‘*chutzah*’ of space, i.e., bringing *Elokus* to the farthest corners of the world, but in our own internal selves, the *mind* is the place farthest from *Elokus*. Our minds are cold and cynical and Toras HaChassidus gives us the tools to transform that space into a warm home for *Elokus*. That is, itself, a primary goal of *hafotzas hamaayanos*.

“What the Alter Rebbe gave us was a *neshama* language. The essential connection between our *neshamah* and the Aibershter is something that transcends logic and understanding, and yet the Alter Rebbe gave us the terminology with which we can engage with it.

“Learning the Rebbe’s *sichos*, therefore, cannot replace learning the Rebbe’s *maamarim*.

“Likkutei Sichos does include explanations of Chassidus. In fact, certain concepts of Chassidus are illuminated primarily through explanations in Likkutei Sichos. However, that is not its primary focus. Likkutei Sichos is primarily in the realm of *nigleh*; Chassidus is always included, because—as the Rebbe often pointed out—one cannot properly understand *nigleh* without understanding the corresponding ideas in *prinius haTorah*. Likkutei Sichos is a world in which *nigleh* is *illuminated* by Chassidus—it is not Chassidus itself.

“Chassidus explains the difference between *oros* and *keilim*, the ‘light’ or ‘energy’ contained in any given matter,

and the ‘vessel’ or ‘medium’ which gives structure to the *ohr* and helps it be expressed further. I think this is a good *mashal*. In Likkutei Sichos, the *ohr*, the Rebbe’s ideas of *prinius haTorah* are en clothed in a *keili*; they are dressed and covered in a concept of *Nigleh*. But the pure light of Chassidus is found in the *maamarim*.”

What’s Going On In Lubavitch

When the Rebbe issued the call that every Jew should put on tefillin, new scenes began to unfold throughout the world: Lubavitchers with their personal 4x4 *battim*, putting tefillin on secular-looking Jews, who often knew next-to-nothing about Tefillin, or Yiddishkeit altogether.

Many prominent rabbanim publicized their support for the *mitvza*, but many others did not. Often, they were simply baffled. It was a strange idea—*bochurim* and Torah learners, who could otherwise be occupied with their own *avodas Hashem*, go out to do a single mitzvah with an uneducated Jew, who might immediately proceed to eat a *treife* sandwich in the next kiosk. What could possibly be the point?

Among Chassidim too, the Rebbe’s approach to *hafotzas hamaayanos* was new. All the Rabbeim were involved in strengthening Yiddishkeit in their generations, but the

sense that it was the personal obligation of every chossid, and an overriding concern that could divert time from one's personal *avodas Hashem*, became far more accentuated in recent generations.

But for Chassidim, it wasn't baffling.

With access to '*neshamah*' language, a chossid has a different appreciation for the power of a mitzvah and the preciousness of a *neshamah*. With an understanding of Chassidus, one immediately realizes the value of the Rebbe's approach. Although novel and revolutionary, it was also here all along. The window to this awareness lies in the Rebbe's maamarim.

The Rebbe's *chozer* Reb Yoel Kahan loved to repeat how a *bochur* once told him, "I learn the Rebbe Rashab's maamarim for *haskalah*, the Frierdiker Rebbe's maamarim for *avodah*, and the Rebbe's maamarim for *hiskashrus*."

There were many amusing aspects to this statement, but Reb Yoel would often make the point that a chossid's objective is not just to *do* what the Rebbe says, but to *think* like the Rebbe *thinks*. If the Rebbe's maamar isn't for *haskalah* or *avodah*, what exactly does one's *hiskashrus* consist of? The maamarim of each generation give a chossid the ability to adopt and internalize the *avodah* he is supposed to carry out; to be a chossid of the Rebbe means to live with the Rebbe's maamarim.

The Singular Focus

When Reb Meilach Zweibel *a"h* arrived in New York to learn at 770, he was already well-versed in Chassidus, having spent several years learning from the famed Mashpia, Reb Shlomo Chaim Kesselman in Lod. But listening to the Rebbe's maamarim, he was surprised to hear a recurring focus on a theme he hadn't heard before: *Atzmus*.⁶

The world of Chassidus Chabad expanded continuously over its seven generations, each Rebbe elucidating different aspects in greater detail or focus. In the Rebbe's maamarim, one such aspect is the focus on the core of the universe, of Torah, and of a Jew: the essence of Hashem, *Atzmus*.

In one's journey of *avodas Hashem*, one can strive for a long list of spiritual *madreigos*; a person might contemplate the greatness of Hashem and cultivate a desire to cleave to Him; a higher level is where he uncovers the latent *Ahavah Hashem* hidden within which will draw him to Torah and Mitzvos on a deeper level. One could strive for the *bittul* of the *Eved Ne'eman* or the *Eved Poshut*. But in the Rebbe's maamarim, as in the maamar described above, *Lo Sihiyeh*

Mishakeilah, there is often a desire to transcend *all* of these *madreigos*.

In *Lo Sihiyeh Mishakeilah*, the Rebbe doesn't specifically spell out the underlying meaning of that approach, but in another maamar, the Rebbe points out that all the 'rungs' of *avodas Hashem* are actually preparations for the true moment of connection—the mitzvah itself. *Ahavah* and *yir'ah*, or *kabolas ol* and *bitul*, are ways in which we prepare ourselves to be worthy of reaching the ultimate connection. The connection *itself*, however, is when a mortal in this lowly world has the opportunity to fulfill the sublime desire of the Most High by fulfilling a physical mitzvah in a physical way.⁷

This could sound revolutionary to the ears of someone who never learned Chassidus. If one's goal is to be a *frumme* Yid who serves Hashem, Torah and mitzvos are meaningful because they are the means which make that possible. If a person will observe one single mitzvah without adopting a fully *frum* lifestyle, what would be the point? Following the Rebbe's approach, a mitzvah is not a means to an end; it is, inherently, the purpose itself. In simple terms, some might see the ultimate goal as "being a *frumme* Yid," with Torah and mitzvos making that possible. A chossid will say the opposite: the ultimate goal is for Torah and mitzvos to be observed, and "being a *frumme* Yid" makes that possible, giving the opportunity to do ever more Torah and mitzvos.

This is expressed not only in the Rebbe's general approach to *hafotzas hamaayanos*, but also as an approach to *avodah pnimis*—working on oneself. In the maamar *Lo Sihiyeh Mishakeilah*, the Rebbe described a person who is so consumed by devotion to his shlichus, that it encompasses his entire personality. "*Vos mir Ahavah, vos mir Yir'ah*" — not because *Ahavah* and *Yir'ah* are unworthy goals, of course, but because his *avodah* consumes him to the extent that he has no time to evaluate whether or not he has achieved them.

"This reflects a theme in *avodah* which recurs throughout the Rebbe's Torah," says Rabbi Yosef Gourarie of Yeshivas Lubavitch in Detroit, "from the very beginning of the *Nesius* until the final maamar of *V'atah Tetzaveh*. It's not an approach that ignores one's *pnimius* and negates the importance of *avodah*. Rather, the Rebbe approaches the same goal from an opposite direction. The *avodah* begins by revealing one's *etzem* (the innermost point of the *neshamah*)—and that revelation is what permeates one's *kochos hagluyim* (everyday faculties) and inhabits his entire being.

"In previous generations, the general focus was on *avodah pnimis*—learning Chassidus, internalizing *Elokus*, leading to *ahavah* and *yir'ah*. Separately, there were moments of *mesiras nefesh*—such as under Communism—when one's *etzem hane-shamah* was revealed. But the Rebbe's perspective combined the two.

"One interesting example is the Rebbe's approach to



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davening. Chassidus explains that davening is a ladder; it begins with *hoda'ah* and *Pesukei Dezimra*, goes a level higher in *Birchos Krias Shema*, and reaches a pinnacle in the moments of *Shmoneh Esreh*.

“The Rebbe, however, focused on a moment which comes before all of those levels—saying *Modeh Ani*.⁸ This simple declaration is a moment of true connection for the *neshamah*, and that *giluy* can be channeled into the rest of our davening, elevating the entire *tefilah* from the outset. The Rebbe once explained that the most important moment of davening, in a certain sense, is the *'shteln-zich'* — when a person dons his *gartel*, leaves all his material concerns behind, and positions himself for davening. That’s a moment of *giluy etzem haneshama*.⁹

“In the terminology of Chassidus, the Rebbe constantly focuses on the fact that an *Atzmus*-connection is achieved specifically in the lowest spiritual levels. An oft-repeated phrase is *'kol hagavoah gavoah biyoser, yored limatah matah yoser'* (the higher something is in its spiritual source, the lower it will descend when reaching down here in this world) and *'na'utz techilasan bisofan'* (the beginning/highest levels manifest in the end/lowest).

“This is a concept that reappears throughout the Rebbe’s *sichos* and *maamarim*, with greater frequency in the

later years. *Vatah Tetzaveh* makes this exact point. As the Rebbe explains there, previous generations achieved high levels of *mesiras nefesh*, but there was one thing they lacked: it didn’t permeate their *kochos hanefesh*, their regular day-to-day selves. Reaching this goal is the highest expression of *giluy Elokus*.”

In the Heavenly Realms

“When speaking of the *maamarim* versus the *sichos*,” says Rabbi Gourarie, “there is definitely an element of mystery. The world of *maamarim* is something that can’t quite be defined in a purely logical sense.

“Much of the Rebbe’s teachings in Chassidus were actually delivered in *sichos*; in fact, the Rebbe’s *sichos* on Chassidus—topics in *Likkutei Sichos* are often far more spelled out and down-to-earth. The ideas which might be regarded as the fundamental concepts of *dor hashvi'i* are often more accessible in the *sichos*, while the *maamarim* are more esoteric.

“If *maamarim* are simply the exposition of the ideas of

Chassidus, we would be hard-pressed to explain why the Rebbe chose to sometimes deliver them through maamarim, and sometimes through sichos.

“However, it would be a mistake to learn a maamar purely as an intellectual exercise. Reb Hillel Paricher once famously argued with the Tzemach Tzedek over the meaning of his own maamar, because—he explained—the maamar is a moment when *Shechinah midaberes mitoch grono*, it’s a revelation of *Elokus*; afterward, Reb Hillel maintained, he was learning his own *pshat*.

“The Rebbe once pointed out that the Frierdiker Rebbe would say a maamar about Amalek every Parshas Zachor, despite the fact that he didn’t necessarily offer a new insight into the matter—because destroying Amalek is a critical point of every person’s *avodah*, so it needed to be emphasized repeatedly. A maamar is not just the Rebbe explaining something—it is a moment of *giluy Elokus* which is directed at that specific time and place.¹⁰

“The difference between a sicha and a maamar seems analogous to the difference between the Bavli and Yerushalmi. We primarily follow the Bavli because of how thorough each *sugya* is; the Yerushalmi does not include nearly as much discussion. However, the Rebbe would often point out that this very factor also indicates that the Yerushalmi exists on a higher spiritual level; the Bavli includes far more arguments because it was written in the darkness of golus, *‘bimachashakim hoshivani.’* (‘He made me dwell in darkness’ — which refers to Talmud Bavli). Similarly, the Rebbe’s perspective in Likkutei Sichos is spelled out far more clearly, but the maamar is where it is expressed in a more *ruchniusdiker* way.”

In the Rebbe’s presence, a maamar was a *ruchniusdiker* moment.

“I vividly recall my anticipation to hearing my very first maamar,” says Rabbi Farkash. “It was 5742. I was ten years old, and my father had brought me for Tishrei for the very first time.

“For a long time, I had learned about those special moments, when the Chassidim sing a solemn niggun, everyone rises to their feet, and the Rebbe says the maamar in a special tune. It was impressed upon me that *shechinah midaberes mitoch grono*, the maamar is a new revelation of *Elokus*; the Rebbe would even wrap his hand in a handkerchief to bind himself to *Olam Hazeh* during those moments.

“Naturally, I paid close attention. I was far too young to understand the Rebbe’s words, but the entire setting made a very deep impression on me. I made sure to know every *dibbur hamaschil*. On Erev Rosh Hashanah, it was *Zeh Hayom Techilas Maasecha*. On Rosh Hashanah, the Rebbe said *Bayom Hahu Yitaka*, and on Shabbos Shuvah,

THE NIGGUN AND THE DIBBUR HAMASCHIL

The Rebbe once noted that he was bothered by the fact that the Rabbeim would begin the maamar without any preface, despite the Gemara’s teaching—cited in Tanya—that Rabbah would always begin on a lighter note with a *milsa dibedichusa* (a humorous anecdote) before teaching Torah.

The answer, the Rebbe said, lies in the niggun. The singing of a niggun can take many forms, but when it is sung in a manner that elevates one’s emotional state and inspires a *pesichas hamochin* (opening the mind), it serves the function of the *milsa dibedichusa*.¹¹

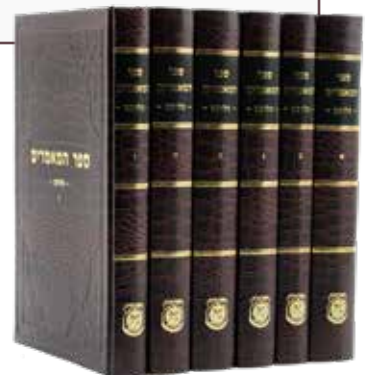
On a different occasion, the Rebbe recounted—in the name of the Frierdiker Rebbe—that the Mittlerer Rebbe was once asked why every maamar starts with a *dibbur hamaschil*, instead of simply proceeding to explain the idea in Chassidus, which is the focus of the maamar (such as *‘lehavin inyan...’*). He responded that the *possuk* is the maamar’s ‘passport’.

The Rebbe commented that the Frierdiker Rebbe did not explain further, and suggested his own explanation:

“Torah transcends time and space,” the Rebbe said. “That’s why one can learn the halachos of *korbanos* while in *chutz laaretz* (a place where a *korban* is forbidden to be brought) and at night-time (a time when a *korban* is not sacrificed), and yet it is ‘as if he brought a *korban*.’ So, in order to bring the maamar down into time and place, the maamar begins with something that is associated with the time and space.”¹²

ORIGINAL 6 VOLUME SET OF ‘MELUKAT’, THE REBBE’S MUGADIKE MAAMORIM.

VOL. 1 CONTAINS THE MAAMORIM EDITED BY THE REBBE BEFORE 5746.
VOL. 2, THE MAAMORIM OF 5747 - 5748.
VOL. 3 THE MAAMORIM OF 5749.
VOL. 4, THE MAAMORIM OF 5750.
VOL. 5, THE MAAMORIM OF 5751.
VOL. 6, THE MAAMORIM OF 5752.



* 5742-1982, 5746-1985/1986, 5747-1986/1987, 5748-1987/1988, 5749-1988/1989, 5750-1989/1990, 5751-1990/1991, 5752-1991/1992

a maamar *kein sicha*—*K'neshet Ya'ir Kino*.

“All the maamarim of that Tishrei are ingrained in my memory.”

Certain maamarim during the year carried extra symbolism. The Rebbe would conclude the moments of Rosh Hashanah with a maamar—often timed to coincide with *tzeis hakochavim*—in which every one of the Rabbeim was mentioned, channeling their presence into the new year. These mentions would also be present in the *Basi Lgani* maamarim every Yud Shevat. Another special moment in the early years was the ‘Maamar Matan Torah’ on Shavuot night, which the Rebbe would deliver in the wee hours of the morning, corresponding to the time of Matan Torah on Har Sinai.

There were also extraordinary occasions that remain engraved in Chassidim’s memories.

There was the time, on Purim 5713, when the Rebbe told a story, followed immediately by a maamar, that was later connected to the death of Stalin *ym”sh*. On the 150th Yom Hilula of the Alter Rebbe, the Rebbe held a special farbrengen and delivered a maamar timed specifically to the moment of the Alter Rebbe’s *histalkus*. There was a maamar (Mayim Rabim) connected to the Sinai campaign in 5717, and a maamar (Hallelu Es Hashem) during the very moments of an important United Nations resolution about Eretz Yisroel in 5731.

In such moments, there was a palpable feeling among Chassidim that the Rebbe was not just teaching Torah; with his holy words, he was rearranging matters in the heavenly spheres.

The ‘Voice’ In the Maamar

Maamarim, in general, follow a specific format, established by the Alter Rebbe. The maamar begins with a *dibbur hamas’chil*, which is followed by questions. The *dibbur hamas’chil* itself is usually one that was introduced by the Alter Rebbe. A new *dibbur hamas’chil* in later generations was a rare occurrence.

The commonality goes even deeper. In the maamarim of the Rabbeim, you will rarely find a citation attributed to a previous Rebbe; it is a given that the entire maamar is closely associated with the teachings of the previous Rabbeim, and follows their language and *tochen*.

The Mittlerer Rebbe’s maamarim, for example, draw on the maamarim of the Alter Rebbe and expand upon them, but no distinction is made between the *lashon* of the Alter Rebbe and the Mittlerer Rebbe’s additions. The Rebbe Rashab’s

maamarim are often based on a maamar of the Mittlerer Rebbe, but his citations are likewise not clearly identified. The Frierdiker Rebbe’s maamarim frequently cite the Rebbe Rashab’s maamarim at length, but without clarifying what comes from the Rebbe Rashab and what is an added *biur*.

In a sense, the maamarim of all previous generations speak in one voice—that of the Alter Rebbe. The entire Chassidus Chabad is one organism, one unified *giluy ohr*, from the Alter Rebbe until the present generation.

In this aspect, however, the Rebbe’s maamarim are often different. The Rebbe draws on all the chassidus of previous generations but does not do so in their voice. Instead, the Rebbe cites them explicitly, telling you what is from the Alter Rebbe and what is from other Rabbeim, delving into their words and weaving them into an entirely new structure.

The Rebbe also instructed that Chassidim learn in a similar fashion; instead of focusing on one specific maamar and its unique *giluy Elokus*, the Rebbe asked that maamarim be compared to one another in a *pilpul*-like style, on an intellectual level, just as one would approach *nigleh*. Until our generation, this was almost unheard of.

Despite this unique characteristic, the Rebbe’s maamar is usually based on one specific maamar of the previous Rabbeim. These are usually noted in the footnotes of the published Sifrei Maamarim, and were often written by the Rebbe himself in the margins of *hanachos*.

Rabbi Sholom Charitonov, Mashpia in Oholei Torah, shared this fascinating anecdote about those maamarim:

“If you follow the Rebbe’s *sichos* and maamarim throughout the years, you could notice a pattern that seems to go through all of *Rabboseinu Nesieinu*.

“For the first fifteen years, from 5711 until 5724, the Rebbe’s maamarim are usually based on the Chassidus of the Rebbe Rashab. A significant amount is based on *Hemshech Ayin-Beis*, which was not available in print at the time. When the Frierdiker Rebbe had made his first visit to America, he entrusted the *kisvei yad* to the Rebbe, and the Rebbe had made photocopies of them.¹³

“During those same years, the Rebbe would often dwell on a *sicha* of the Frierdiker Rebbe during the farbrengens.

“During the year 5725, there was a break of sorts, with a specific focus on Likkutei Torah, which was republished that year. The Rebbe gave a directive to learn the entire Chassidus Parsha every week, and at the weekly farbrengen, he would ask anyone who would finish it before *Havdalah* to say *l’chaim*. That year, it was common to see *bochurim* making *Havdalah* in the wee hours of the morning. Before the end of the year, the Rebbe also instructed that the section on Shir Hashirim be learned before Simchas Torah¹⁴. The maamarim of that year are primarily based on those *seforim*.

“The year 5726 marked one hundred years from the



YOSSI MELAMED VIA JEM 125061 (19 KISLEV 5745)

beginning of the Rebbe Maharash’s *Nesius* [which began on 13 Nissan 5626], and for the next four years, until 5730, the Rebbe’s maamarim were closely aligned with the maamarim from those same dates 100 years earlier. This was also the period when the Rebbe began Rashi sichos, and perhaps there is a connection, as the Rebbe Maharash was known to have many Chassidim who were simple Jews, Chumash-Rashi Yidden.

“Beginning in 5731, the Rebbe began to focus on Ohr Hatorah of the Tzemach Tzedek. These were the same years the Rebbe began the sichos on his father’s Torah on Kabbalah; again, perhaps there is a connection because the Tzemach Tzedek’s maamarim similarly contain many citations from Kabbalah.

“From 5738 through 5748, the Rebbe focused on the Chasidus of the Alter Rebbe and Mittlerer Rebbe—that’s also when the Rebbe asked to print the *Mahadura Kama* of the Tanya.

“After the Rebbetzin’s *histalkus* on *Chof Beis Shevat*, the orderly style at farbrengens slowly changed and eventually the Rebbe ceased saying maamarim altogether. But, in a certain sense, I think one can compare those years to a ‘*Balshemskeh hanhaga*’ (wondrous conduct).

“The Rebbe had a special focus on the miracles of *Shnas*

Nissim and the years that followed, and the Rebbe spent long periods of time in dollars distributions and giving out *kuntreisim*. During special farbrengens, such as at the end of Yom Tov, the Rebbe no longer asked for the Alter Rebbe’s niggun to be sung—the last time was on Shabbos Erev 24 Teves 5749. Instead, the Rebbe asked to sing the niggunim of all the Rabbeim—beginning with the Baal Shem Tov and Maggid. Perhaps, in those years, the Rebbe was bringing things back to the Baal Shem Tov.”

Which Maamarim Should I Learn?

“An important distinction,” says Rabbi Farkash, “is the edited (*mugadike*) maamarim versus the non-edited maamarim.

“In the later years, when Reb Yoel prepared the maamarim

for the Rebbe to edit, the Rebbe wanted every maamar properly constructed and presented as a *davar shalem*, bringing in ideas from other maamarim and clarifying matters which were perhaps left unsaid during the maamar's delivery. The Rebbe also himself invested countless hours in adding, clarifying, and perfecting the ideas.

“As a result, the *mugadike* maamarim are far more structured. The *hanachah* of a regular maamar is often lighter and easier to understand, especially for a beginner—they reflect the *ohr*, the *geshmak* and warmth of the Rebbe's delivery style. I often recommend to beginners to learn the non-*mugadike* maamarim from the beginning of the *Nesius*, 5711-12; each maamar is a fundamental concept in *avodas Hashem*, and they are not too complex or *kabbalah'dik* for beginners.

“For someone that is a bit more learned, I often recommend Sefer Hamaamarim Melukat 2 (in the series printed according to the years of their release). When one seeks to understand the *pshat* of the maamar on a deeper level, the *mugadike* maamarim are phenomenal in their clarity; every question is answered, every concept is elucidated. I would argue that if someone is well-versed in Melukat, he will have clarity in all the fundamental concepts of Toras Hachassidus.

“*Chelek Beis* is the first full volume of the *mugadike* maamarim as they were prepared by Reb Yoel in the later years [Volume 1 includes the regular maamarim which the Rebbe edited earlier, on special occasions throughout the years of the *Nesius*], and are in my experience, the most accessible volume of Melukat for beginners.

“In general, something unique about the Rebbe's maamarim is that he presents everything clearly and concisely.

“The world of Chassidus is endless. From the Alter Rebbe, every Rebbe expanded the horizons, leading to an endless expanse of ideas—the Mittlerer Rebbe in Toras Chaim, the Hemshechim of later generations, and on and on—yet, in a wondrous way, the Rebbe's maamarim elucidate these ideas and sum them up with incredible clarity.

“In previous generations, an idea in Chassidus could be elaborated in many maamarim, often without a real final resolution, but in our generation, we received the same ideas—with the full depth and profundity—in just a single maamar or two.

“There is another aspect of the Rebbe's maamarim—which is perhaps more technical—in that they are very structured. Every maamar has a theme, a start and a finish, questions and answers, and so on, making it much easier to ‘own’ and connect with a single maamar. There are almost no *hemshechim*.

“Reb Yoel once shared with us that on Motzei Rosh Hashanah 5725, he saw Reb Elye Simpson arriving from Boro Park—where he was the Rov of a Shul—for Kos Shel

Bracha. As he walked into 770, he was met by Reb Berel Rivkin, who was exiting the farbrengen. ‘You missed the maamar!’ Reb Berel exclaimed. ‘It's been fifty years since we've had such a maamar!’

“The maamar during the farbrengen was on the topic of *ohr* and *koach*. Reb Berel had learned together with Reb Elye in Tomchei Temimim in Lubavitch, and they had both heard the Rebbe Rashab's *hemshechim* on this same topic. For an entire winter in תרע"ה, the Rebbe Rashab had delivered the *hemshech* (as part of *Hemshech Ayin-Beis*), yet, there were still elements that were left unclarified. But when the Rebbe had delivered the maamar, ‘in forty-five minutes the Rebbe clarified the entire matter.’



In the Maamar V'Atah Tetzaveh, the last maamar we were *zoche* to receive from the Rebbe to date, the Rebbe speaks about the role of Moshe Rabbeinu and the *Nesi'im* of later generations, and their role in revealing the inherent *emunah* within every Yid:

“The same is true of the Moshe in our generation, *der Rebbe der shver*. His role is to inspire and uncover the *emunah* in the *etzem haneshama* of every Jew—so that *afterward* they will perform their *avodah* with their own strength.”

We find ourselves in a moment of *afterward*, a moment of *golus*. However, as the Rebbe said after Yud Shevat, “*Der Rebbe hot altz bavorent*.” There is no doubt that by learning and internalizing (*derher'n*) the Rebbe's maamarim, we will be able to carry out the *avodah* ourselves. “And through this,” as the Rebbe concludes, “we will merit very soon to the *Geulah Ha'amitis V'Hashleima*.” **T**

1. See “I Have Planted A Cedar in Eretz Yisroel,” *Derher Cheshvan* 5784.

2. *Yimei Melech* vol. 3 pg. 1225.

3. *Toras Menachem* vol. 4 pg. 323.

4. *Brachos* 28b.

5. *Yimei Melech* vol. 3 pg. 1229.

6. As heard from family members.

7. *Margelah Bepumei* 5740.

8. *Kuntres Inyanah Shel Toras Hachassidus* ois 11.

9. *Likkutei Sichos* vol. 2 pg. 349.

10. *Ki Sisa* 5742. *Toras Menachem* 5742 vol. 2 pg. 1003.

11. 11 Shevat 5724. *Toras Menachem* vol. 39 pg. 50

12. *Shabbos Chol Hamoed Sukkos* 5721. *Toras Menachem* vol. 29 pg. 45.

13. It should be noted that in 5723, marking 150 years since the Alter Rebbe's histalkus, the Rebbe delivered several maamarim based on the Alter Rebbe as well.

14. For the complete story of the Rebbe's koch in learning the Chassidische Parsha, see “Living With the Times,” *Derher Adar II* 5784.