



FROM
Manuscript
TO
Masterpiece



**MAARECHES OTZAR
HACHASSIDIM**

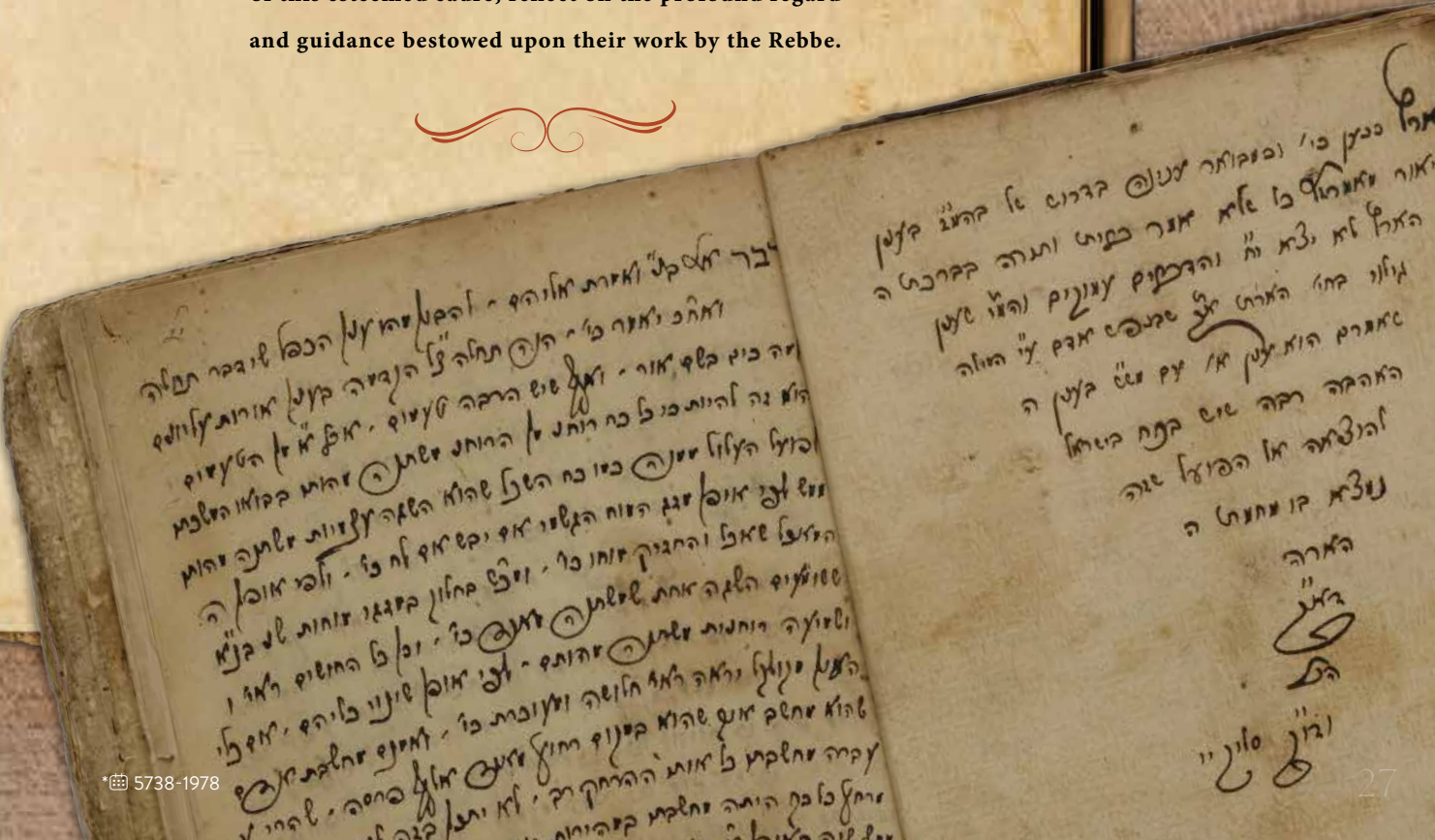


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Publishing the sacred teachings of Chassidus from *Rabboseinu Nisieinu* in official printed editions for public consumption is an effort in which the Rebbe was deeply immersed from shortly after arriving in America and throughout the years. In 5738, a trove of *seforim* and *kesovim*, previously inaccessible, were rescued from Poland and arrived at 770, prompting the Rebbe to assemble a new team of experts to identify each item and prepare them for print. Here, in an exclusive interview with A Chassidisher Derher Magazine, Rabbi Gavriel Schapiro and Rabbi Eliyahu Matusof, members of this esteemed cadre, reflect on the profound regard and guidance bestowed upon their work by the Rebbe.



Shortly after arriving in America in 5701, the Rebbe was appointed by the Frierdiker Rebbe (in 5702) to oversee Kehot Publication Society, the publishing arm of Lubavitch, along with Merkos L'inyonei Chinuch and Machne Israel.

In 5703, Maareches Otzar HaChassidim—an editorial board—was founded, focusing on editing and preparing the teachings of *Rabboseinu Nisieinu* for publication by Kehot.

The Rebbe played a central role in this initiative, tirelessly searching for *kesovim* of Chassidus from previous Rabbeim, meticulously preparing them for publication, and expanding the dissemination of Chassidus. The Rebbe personally carried through every aspect of the process, from inception to completion, often signing his name in the introductions of the publications.

As time went on and the workload increased, additional manpower was needed. The Rebbe recruited Reb Yehuda Leib Groner (still a *bochur* at the time) who assisted the Rebbe with this work and continued to do so for many years into the Rebbe's *nesius*.

In 5722, with ever-increasing demands on the Rebbe's time, Reb Aharon Chitrik was appointed to work part-time and gradually began to take over many of the projects. One of his earliest projects was collecting, organizing and preparing the *kesovim* of the Tzemach Tzedek to be published as Ohr Hatorah.

The Rebbe provided thorough guidance to Reb Aharon, instructing and teaching him how to sort through and edit the raw texts. The Rebbe mentioned Reb Aharon at farbrengens, expressing gratitude for recently published *seforim* or referring to works that Reb Aharon had submitted for review, often conversing with him in-between the *sichos* and saying *l'chaim*. The Rebbe also held Reb Aharon accountable, inquiring on numerous occasions why certain publications had not been released sooner, something which the Rebbe demanded regularly in relation to the printing of *seforim*.

A NEW ERA

In 5738, following an extensive organized effort, a portion of the Agudas Chassidei Chabad Library, which had been held captive in Poland, was finally released and brought to 770.¹ The shipment contained a substantial collection of *seforim* and *kesovim* featuring many previously unavailable *maamarim*, and new versions, including some original *kesovim* penned by the Rabbeim themselves.

At the farbrengen on Shavuos 5738, the Rebbe mentioned a newly released *maamar*, explaining that there are many more *maamarim* and *kesovim* of the Rabbeim and made the following announcement:

“...Because there are those who are experts in *kisvei yad*, in finding *marei mekomos*, and in comparing various versions etc. (unfortunately, for several reasons,

ONE OF THE FIRST PUBLICATIONS OF MAARECHES OTZAR HACHASSIDIM WAS THE KUNTRES 'CHANOCH LANAAR'. IN THE INTRODUCTION, THE REBBE WRITES THAT THE GOAL IS TO PUBLISH A COLLECTION OF BOOKLETS, EACH ONE DEVOTED TO ONE OF THE RABBEIM, BEGINNING WITH THIS KUNTRES OF THE REBBE RASHAB. THE REBBE CONCLUDES WITH THE HOPE THAT THEY WILL SOON OBTAIN THE MEANS NECESSARY TO PUBLISH THE FAMOUS HEMSHECHIM OF 5666 AND 5672. IN ITS FIRST FEW YEARS, ONLY KUNTREISIM OF THE RABBEIM WERE PUBLISHED, BUT SOON FULL SEFORIM OF THE RABBEIM WERE PRINTED AS WELL. IT WAS THREE DECADES BEFORE THE HEMSHECHIM OF 5666 AND 5672 WERE PUBLISHED.



there are few such people), those who have experience in this field should reach out to the *Mazkirus*, and, *bézaras Hashem*, as soon as possible a staff will be formed who will engage in publishing the Torah of *Rabboseinu Nesieinu*, and the sooner the better.”²

Shortly after the Rebbe delivered this *sicha*, Reb Gavriel Schapiro was called to a meeting with Rabbi Hodakov and Reb Aharon Chitrik, and was asked to join the *maareches*. Assuming that the request came from the Rebbe, Reb Gavriel readily agreed.

Up to this point, aside from Torah Ohr and Likkutei Torah, only four volumes of the Alter Rebbe’s *maamarim* had been published. When Reb Gavriel joined the team, he began to work on the rest of the Alter Rebbe’s *maamarim*, preparing them for print and publishing them on a regular basis. This was the first time that the *maareches* had full-time staff.

Two years later, in 5740, after his engagement, Reb Eliyahu Matusof was hired to join the team, followed by Reb Zisel Piekarski.

In a recent conversation with A Chassidisher Derher Magazine, Rabbis Gavriel Schapiro and Eliyahu Matusof graciously shared the following recollections:

The three of us worked full-time under the leadership of Reb Aharon Chitrik. Additionally, a few part-time staff were hired to identify and organize the *kesovim*.

The Rebbe provided us with several of his own extra *seforim* that were duplicates, such as Torah Ohr, *Es’halech Liozna* (a collection of the Alter Rebbe’s *maamarim* delivered in Liozna, beginning with a *maamar* on the *possuk* “*Es’halech lifnei Hashem*”), and Hanochos HaRa”P (transcriptions of the Alter Rebbe’s *maamarim* by Reb Pinchas Reizes), to use for reference as we worked. The *seforim* contained the Rebbe’s handwritten corrections and notes in the margins. We felt deeply honored and privileged that the Rebbe entrusted these to us, underscoring the Rebbe’s profound care for our efforts.

Working full-time in *Maareches Otzar HaChassidim*, we struggled to provide for our families, earning only half of what the average school teacher made at the time. At one point we asked the Rebbe if we should consider teaching part-time in local institutions to ease our financial burden. The Rebbe instructed us not to take additional positions and to continue dedicating all of our time to publishing *Chassidus*, adding that we should request a raise from Rabbi Hodakov.

A STRUCTURED APPROACH

The Rebbe had specific plans for the sequence in which *maamarim* should be published, how each *sefer* should be structured, and who should be assigned which responsibilities. The first thing with which the Rebbe tasked us was preparing and publishing the *maamarim* of the Alter Rebbe. Apart from those previously published, the Rebbe possessed numerous unpublished *maamarim* of the Alter Rebbe in the library.

The Rebbe organized the publishing efforts with precision, meticulously planning who should work on what and efficiently dividing all tasks. The Rebbe entrusted us with the responsibility of working on much of the *Chassidus* of the Alter Rebbe, the *Mitteler Rebbe*, the *Tzemach Tzedek* and the *Rebbe Maharash*. Reb Aharon Chitrik was working on the *Ohr Hatorah* of the *Tzemach Tzedek* before we were hired, but when we joined the team the Rebbe told him to leave the rest of *Ohr Hatorah* to us under his supervision, and he should focus on the *Likkutei Biurim* on *Tanya*. The *Chassidus* of the Rebbe *Rashab* and the *Frierdiker Rebbe* was entrusted to others under the supervision of Reb Leibel Groner.

We worked under the directorship of Reb Aharon,

and all our correspondence with the Rebbe would always be through him. We would write a *tzetel* with our questions, and he would bring it to *Mazkirus*.

DIRECTION AND DELEGATION

We faced numerous challenges regarding how to publish the *maamarim*. For example, we encountered many *kesovim* that might have been Chassidus from the Alter Rebbe or from Chassidim of that era who wrote Chassidus as well, such as Reb Zalman Zezmer, Reb Aizik Homiler, Reb Hillel Paritcher, in later generations Reb Shmuel Ber Barrisover and others. We needed to learn how to differentiate between them.

We had hundreds of *kisvei yad* without any markings of what they were and who wrote them. For instance, we could have a paper that was possibly a *maamar* of the Alter Rebbe, or one of the sons of the Tzemach Tzedek – we had no way to know. Some *maamarim* also existed in multiple versions recorded by different people, and we needed to choose which versions to prioritize. Additionally, we were uncertain whether to organize the *seforim* by year or by topic. We presented these dilemmas, along with many others, to the Rebbe, and we were fortunate to receive precise instructions.

The Rebbe guided us throughout the years, sharing general principles on how to carry out the work while also entrusting us with the liberty to make our own decisions.

Often, when the Rebbe received a newly discovered “*bichel*”³ of Chassidus from someone, the Rebbe would send it to us for verification. We still have a *maamar* “*Shuva Yisroel*” with the Rebbe’s holy handwriting on it. At the top of the page, the Rebbe wrote, “שובה ויראלי – תקס”ו”, and on the side of the page, the Rebbe wrote, “מהיר. לברר הנדפס בס’ תקס”ו” – Urgent. [This should be] clarified, was this printed in Sefer [Hamaamarim] 5566?”

There were instances in earlier years, when *maamarim* were being prepared before the Rebbe had the original *Ksav Yad Kodesh* of the Rabbeim, where the Rebbe made certain suggestions to the text, e.g. if a certain word in the *bichel* seemed out of place, the Rebbe would make a footnote suggesting another possible version. Now that we had the original *ksav yad*,

we could see the original precise wording written by the Rabbeim, allowing us to verify whether the exact wording was the same or different from the Rebbe’s suggestions.

We asked the Rebbe how to proceed, and the Rebbe explained that he did not have the *ksav yad* in front of him when writing those parts. Therefore, the Rebbe instructed us to align the text with the original *Ksav Yad Kodesh* now that we had it. However, we only made changes after consulting the Rebbe directly; we did not take the liberty to alter anything independently. The Rebbe’s humility was profound, allowing us to make decisions and giving us significant freedom to carry out our work as we saw fit.

DEDICATION AND AFFECTION

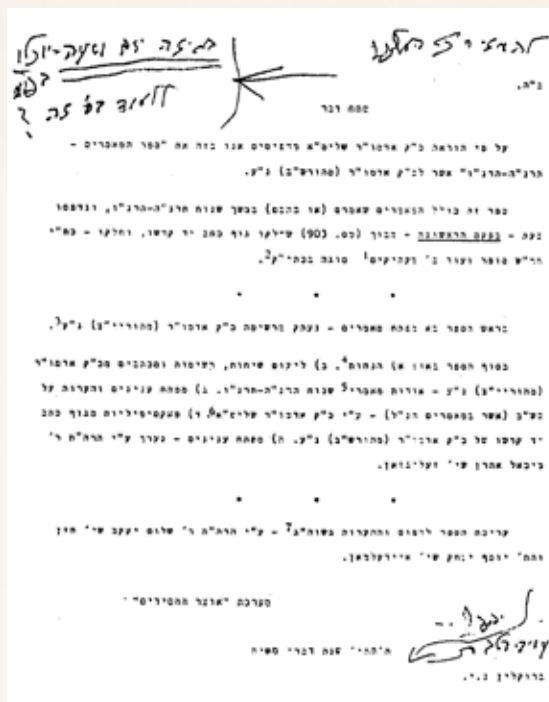
During our work, we realized that many of the indexes for *bichelach* of Chassidus that were previously published were handwritten by the Rebbe. Seemingly this task could have been accomplished by someone else, but the Rebbe was so deeply involved in the effort that he invested his own time in even the smallest details.

Among the *seforim* that we published, there were specific *seforim* in particular that the Rebbe showed



RABBI GAVRIEL SHAPIRO (LEFT) AND RABBI ELIYAHU MATUSOF (RIGHT) EXAMINING *KISVEI YAD* AS THEY WORK ON PUBLISHING THE *MAAMARIM* OF THE MITTELER REBBE, CESHVAN 5752.

“Often, the Rebbe would respond with, “*Mosai yilmedu zeh bepoel.*” In other words, the Rebbe was eager to know when the *sefer* would be available to the public.”



THE PESACH DOVOR TO ONE OF THE SIFREI HAMAAMARIM OF THE REBBE RASHAB. THE REBBE WROTE IN A DATE OF PUBLICATION: **ב' י"ג שבט ה'תש"ג** - עשירי בטבת - יהפך לשמחה באיזה יום ושעה - יוכלו בפו"מ: **באיזה יום ושעה - יוכלו בפו"מ: [בפועל ממש] ללמוד בס' [ספר] זה? זיה?** "ON WHICH DAY AND HOUR WILL [PEOPLE] BE ABLE TO ACTUALLY LEARN FROM THIS SEFER?"

special appreciation for. One example was *Sefer Hamamarim 5570* of the Alter Rebbe; at the end of the *sefer* we included a list detailing the city where each *maamar* was delivered. For example, *Yisro* was delivered in Rotchov, *Veyikchu Li Teruma* in Berditchev, and so forth, along with references to the *kisvei yad* from which we gathered this information. The Rebbe expressed great satisfaction about this, and requested that we do the same in future *seforim*.

Shortly after the *sefer* of the Alter Rebbe's *maamarim* on *Kesuvim* was published, the Rebbe spoke at a *farbngen*⁴ with great enthusiasm about the new *sefer*, recalling how in the time of the Alter Rebbe the merit of receiving just one *maamar*, no matter how brief, would produce great joy and be cause for a *farbngen*. How much more so now the Rebbe continued, when Chassidus flows like water, the release of an entire *sefer* printed in *lashon harav* (the original words) of the Alter Rebbe

should evoke immense joy. In previous generations, this occasion would call for its own dedicated *farbngen* with words of Chassidus flowing like water. The Rebbe went on to expound on the first *maamar* of the *sefer*, on the *possuk* "*Toras Hashem Temima.*" The Rebbe's enthusiasm for the new *sefer* was evident and palpable.

The Rebbe frequently inquired why our work was not ready yet, prompting us to hastily submit a printed draft or a specially bound *sefer* to the Rebbe for review. Often, the Rebbe would respond with, "*Mosai yilmedu zeh bepoel?*" (When will this actually be [available to be] learned?) In other words, the Rebbe was eager to know when the *sefer* would be available to the public.

On numerous occasions, as the Rebbe entered shul on Friday night, the long yellow galleys—drafts we had submitted to the Rebbe for review—could be seen protruding from the Rebbe's *siddur*. We often received our submitted drafts back from the Rebbe with revisions

and notes.

Before any *sefer* was released, the Rebbe would edit the *pesach dovor*, and would inscribe the date.

QUALITY FIRST

After we finished publishing the set encompassing about ten years of the Alter Rebbe's *maamarim*, the Rebbe instructed us to begin working on the *maamarim* of the Mitteler Rebbe. The Rebbe wrote a *tzetel* saying that the Mitteler Rebbe made a bigger effort than other Rabbeim, that his Chassidus should actually be learned, and the Rebbe finished the *tzetel* with the word "*vedal*" (this is sufficient for the wise)—a term that the Mitteler Rebbe often uses.

We found ourselves facing a dilemma. The Mitteler Rebbe frequently mentions writings from Kabbalah, and many of the ideas that he discusses are elaborated on in other places, such as Hemshech Ayin Beis, and the Rebbe's *maamarim*. Accordingly, to do a complete job, we would have to diligently prepare footnotes to reference these sources. Moreover, the Mitteler Rebbe personally transcribed all of his *maamarim*, but not all of the original *kesovim* were available to us. For some *maamarim*, we relied on alternative versions, necessitating footnotes to indicate discrepancies in wording between the two versions.

We estimated that completing each *sefer* would require between six months and a year, while the Rebbe wished for *seforim* to be ready more rapidly.

Another factor that we took into account was that as the production time per *sefer* would be significantly longer than average, the production cost per *sefer* would also increase several times over, and we knew that Kehot had very limited financial resources at the time. Unsure of how to proceed, we wrote a *tzetel* outlining our concerns and asked whether we should proceed without preparing footnotes for the Mitteler Rebbe's *maamarim*, and without an index at the end of each *sefer*, to reduce the time it would take to prepare.

The Rebbe wrote back that "כפשוטו" (obviously) we should continue with all of the footnotes and indexes as was done in the Alter Rebbe's *maamarim*, and the Rebbe crossed out the words "או לא" (or not) in our letter, emphasizing that the *seforim* should be published in full. Upon receiving this instruction, we promptly

began our work and eventually published the complete set of Maamarei Admur Ha'emtzoi.

A COMPREHENSIVE INDEX

On Sunday, Rosh Chodesh Kislev 5741, we were summoned together with Reb Aharon Chitrik to Rabbi Hodakov's office. Rabbi Hodakov said that the Rebbe wanted an index prepared for all of the Alter Rebbe's *maamarim*. We were told (as per the Rebbe's instruction) to recruit additional staff for this project and submit a daily report to the Rebbe. Rabbi Hodakov added that the Rebbe instructed that the *sefer* should be printed by Yud Tes Kislev!

Rabbi Hodakov also conveyed that the Rebbe

THE MAAMARIM MUST BE LEARNED!

During a *yechidus* with Reb Nissan Nemanow in 5741, the Rebbe said:

"The Gemara relates that there was a king that made obstacles, to prevent the Yidden from [going up to the Beis Hamikdash for] *aliya l'regel*. Later, another king, Hoshea Ben Eilah, annulled the decree, but the people still didn't go up, and for this they were punished; this had demonstrated that the real reason why the Yidden didn't go up was due to a lack of interest.

"Similarly, we printed so much Chassidus from the Alter Rebbe, the Mitteler Rebbe [the Rebbe named all the Rabbeim]; now there are no more excuses for not learning Chassidus. I can be slighted for this ("כאפין א שועל")—but I will continue to do it anyways..."

insisted the work not be done for free and that we would be paid from a fund established by the Friederiker Rebbe.

We worked tirelessly beyond our regular hours to complete the task. We recruited additional staff, and began working. The Rebbe wanted this *mafteiach* to encompass all of the Alter Rebbe's Chassidus, so that when someone wanted to look up what the Alter Rebbe says on any given topic, he could have everything in front of him. Although the Rebbe had already compiled a *mafteiach* for Tanya, Torah Ohr and Likkutei Torah, we included those entries in this *sefer* as well, copying them word for word and inserting them in the appropriate places.

As we got closer to finishing the project, we printed our completed work on long yellow galleys and submitted it to the Rebbe. The Rebbe reviewed it, and returned it with corrections and additions (including some on what we quoted from the Rebbe's *mafteiach* on Torah Ohr and Likkutei Torah). With many people working on the project, inconsistencies were common, and the Rebbe diligently pointed them out to ensure the work was streamlined and uniform. At one point, the Rebbe asked that all the galleys for the entire *sefer* be given to him by 11:00 p.m. that day, and the Rebbe took home a paper bag full of the galleys, returning them the next

morning with many additions and corrections.

When the *mafteiach* was nearly ready for print, the Rebbe prepared a page of credits to be included in the *sefer*, listing everyone who participated in the preparation of the *sefer*. The Rebbe included his own name alongside everyone else's in alphabetical order, refusing to allow any extra-special mention with his name.

Shortly after the project was completed, during Chanukah, the Rebbe sent a dollar to each person whose name was printed in the back of the *sefer*, including the printer. The Rebbe remarked, "For a *sefer*, one must pay."

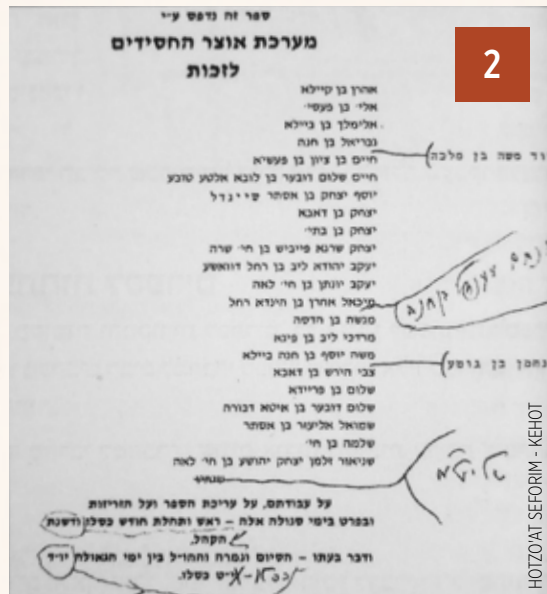
REWARDING EFFORTS

Originally, Derech Mitzvosecha was a *sefer* with small Rashi letters. The Rebbe instructed us to rework it in a larger version with block letters. We redesigned the typesetting and added numerous footnotes with sources, as each *perek* is based on *derushim* from the Alter Rebbe.

Regarding the index, we mentioned to the Rebbe that there was already a small index in the old Derech Mitzvosecha that the Rebbe had published, and expressed our reluctance to change it. However, the



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1. THE FIRST EDITION OF MAFTAI CHOCH OF THE ALTER REBBE'S MAAMARIM.
2. THE REBBE ADDS HIS NAME ALONGSIDE THE NAMES OF ALL WHO PARTICIPATED IN THE PREPARATION OF THE SEFER.

Rebbe insisted that we create a more detailed index. We complied and created a more comprehensive one.

The *sefer* reached the Rebbe before Pesach 5751, fully bound and ready to go on the shelves. Upon receiving it, the Rebbe expressed tremendous satisfaction and approval. We received an answer from the Rebbe on Erev Pesach⁵, and we were overjoyed to receive it. The Rebbe sent a long and elaborate bracha addressed to all who worked on the new Derech Mitzvosecha. We could clearly sense the Rebbe's great pleasure in our efforts to make Chassidus more accessible. This made all the pressure and hard work worthwhile.

AFTER HOURS

Rabbi Eliyahu Matusof relates:

Occasionally, on Erev Shabbos, I would head home 15-30 minutes before *licht bentchen*. Once, I was carrying a big paper bag because I knew I would need to stay home on Motzei Shabbos, but I still wanted to be able to work. The Rebbe rode by in the car and looked toward me intently.

The Rebbe pushed us to work to the best of our abilities and even what we thought was beyond our abilities. However, on the rare occasion when someone went overboard, the Rebbe would remind them to stay within reason as well. Reb Aharon Chitrik often worked on Motzei Shabbos, which he once mentioned in a letter to the Rebbe. The Rebbe responded, saying that Motzei Shabbos is a time to be spent with family.

“We could clearly sense the Rebbe’s great pleasure in our efforts to make Chassidus more accessible. This made all the pressure and hard work worthwhile.”

RESOLVING CONFLICT WITH JOY

In 5744 we published a new version of Likkutei Torah in a fresh and cleaner format, and with many new *marei mekomos*, which the Rebbe encouraged us to do. Shortly after it was released, the Rebbe spoke about the new *sefer* at a *farbrengen*⁶, expressing great satisfaction. The Rebbe made a big deal about the *sefer*, saying that a special *farbrengen* should be held in its honor, with those who worked on it encouraging everyone to learn in general, and especially from the new *sefer*.

As the Rebbe instructed, we held a *farbrengen* in honor of the new *sefer*. At this event, we organized a special *chaluka*. We printed cards for people to fill out, committing to learn one *parsha* from the *sefer*, and then submitted the cards to the Rebbe.

At that time, a dispute arose between the printer and Kehot regarding the printing costs. As we were rushing to have the *sefer* printed as soon as possible, we submitted it quickly and then had to return to the printer to make certain changes while he was already preparing it for print. This added more work for the printer and required additional time on his part.

That night, the dispute with the printer was resolved,

as the printer agreed to forgo the additional payment he had requested. It seemed to us that the Rebbe had resolved the entire issue through positive influence.

When the first copies of this edition of Likkutei Torah came from the printer, we realized that the designer who did the typesetting had made a mistake in the page numbers, and the error was corrected in subsequent copies. The Rebbe stated that this correction should be noted in the back of all future copies that are printed, and the printer should be paid an additional amount for this correction.

RACING AGAINST TIME

Once, we wrote to the Rebbe informing him of our plans to print the *maamarim* from the Tzemach Tzedek on Gemaras and topics, such as *Adam, Ohr Ein Sof, Heichal Kodosh Kodoshim, Hilula Derashbi*, and we titled it *Ohr Hatorah Al Maamarei Razal V'Inyonim*.

We had a question: many of these *maamarim* had already been published in previously released *seforim* of the Tzemach Tzedek, Derech Mitzvosecha, and *Ohr Hatorah*, such as "Lehovin Mitzvas Ahavah," "Inyan Tekias Shofar," and "Lehovin Inyan Habrachos." We wrote a letter to the Rebbe and attached a list of all the *maamarim* from the Tzemach Tzedek on Maamarei Chazal and Inyonim, detailing which were new and which had already been printed. We concluded our letter by asking if we should include every *maamar*, including those already printed, in order to provide a comprehensive collection. The Rebbe responded:

"הרי רבים הם - ולכן רק לציין בכרך הבע"ל [הבא עלינו לטובה] שמאמר פ' [לוני] נדפס בס' פ' [בספר פלוני] (אולי בהוספת מספר הפרקים וכיו"ב)

(They are many - and therefore it only should be noted in the upcoming volume that such-and-such *maamar* was printed in such-and-such *sefer* (perhaps [also] adding the number of chapters and the like.)

The Rebbe added:

"ובודאי ליום הולדת [אדמו"ר הצ"צ] יוכלו רבים וגם באה"ק ללמוד בהספר"

"**Certainly**, many will be able to study in the *sefer* - including in Eretz Hakodesh - by the birthday [of the Tzemach Tzedek]."

UNTIL MOSHIACH AND BEYOND

Rabbi Eliyahu Matusof relates:

My father, Reb Shlomo Matusof, was a shliach in Morocco, and the Rebbe took a keen interest in every detail of my father's children. For my older brother Yossel, the Rebbe was directly involved in every aspect of his shlichus. At first, the Rebbe wanted him to go to Iran, but ultimately the Rebbe instructed him to move to France. The same level of involvement was true for my second brother.

When I got married, Reb Binyomin Gorodetsky, who often spoke with the Rebbe about the shlichim in Europe, told my father about a conversation he had with the Rebbe regarding my employment.

Reb Binyomin said to the Rebbe that he estimated that my job working in the *seforim* was likely temporary, to which the Rebbe responded, "There is enough work to do until Moshiach and after Moshiach."



We still had a lot of work ahead of us, including creating all the *marei mekomos* and ensuring everything was correct and properly edited. It was Tammuz, and the Rebbe wanted the *sefer* to be studied in Eretz Yisroel by the Tzemach Tzedek's birthday on Erev Rosh Hashanah, not only printed but also distributed.

UP TO CAPACITY

Reb Aharon Chitrik shared in an interview with Kfar Chabad Magazine (#500):

The Rebbe expected each of us to invest the utmost energy in our work. When the Rebbe saw that we were truly giving it our all, he allowed us the time we needed. There was a period when every Erev Shabbos, I submitted all the work I had accomplished that week to the Rebbe. Each week, I would submit more or less the same number of pages, and the Rebbe did not inquire why the work was not completed sooner. Only when we fell behind and were not putting in our maximum effort did the Rebbe push us to work faster.

In general, the Rebbe wanted our work to be done swiftly, for *seforim* to be published as soon as possible, often specifying dates when a *sefer* should be available to the public, such as for an upcoming Yom Tov. Likewise, the Rebbe always responded to our letters the same day or the next day, almost always marking his response with "*mohir*," meaning it should be relayed immediately.

Often, when the Rebbe set a finishing time, we would submit the *sefer* to the Rebbe by that date, but before it was bound. Here, the Rebbe was instructing us that it should be distributed to everyone before Erev Rosh Hashanah! It was a tremendous task, but the Rebbe gave a due date, and we worked extremely hard, with more people getting involved, and we got the job done in time for distribution.

A day before Erev Rosh Hashanah or so, we rushed to the printer, waited for one bound copy, and then sped to the airport. Unfortunately, the car delivering the *sefer* to the airport was involved in an accident with a truck. When we arrived at the airport, the door to the airplane had been closed, and most likely the *sefer* only arrived after Rosh Hashanah.

WORKING AMIDST SACRED TREASURES

Around the year 5741, since our work required constant access to *kisvei yad* in the library, we set up our office in the library's *kisvei yad* room. (Prior to this, we had been working for a period of time in Rebbetzin Shterna Sarah's room on the second floor of 770, and then in an office next door, at 788 Eastern Parkway.) We would work there during the week and, before Shabbos, we cleared out in preparation for the Rebbe and Rebbetzin to stay there over Shabbos.

Upon returning Sunday morning, we often found the Rebbe's *gartel* and *seforim* on the table. Ordinarily, the Rebbe would return *seforim* to their places after use, but here the space was tight, and there wasn't a proper place for the *seforim* to be put back. We used to reach out to Rabbi Yehuda Krinsky, who attended to the items the Rebbe had left behind.

ENCOURAGING INDEPENDENCE

The Rebbe was deeply involved in every detail of our work, overseeing everything, and we learned a great deal from the manner in which the Rebbe directed us and the operation at large. The *seforim* brought the Rebbe profound joy and satisfaction. It felt like the Rebbe had entrusted us with his personal life's passion and work, something the Rebbe would have continued



ON THE SAME PAGE?

When Reb Aharon Chitrik published the first installment of *Likut Pirushim* on Tanya Perek Aleph, he sent a draft of the booklet to the Rebbe. On the top of the *shaar blatt*, it said *Likkutei Amarim Tanya* with references, *Likut Pirushim*, and other versions, and then it stated that it was edited by Reb Aharon Chitrik. The Rebbe circled (to remove) the section where he wrote his name, and wrote, "למה לו האחריות, כשבע' [על השער] באותיות גדולות תניא – Why is he taking the responsibility [of adding his name] when on the [same] page in big letters is printed Tanya?"

to do himself if not for time constraints.

In the final years before Gimmel Tammuz, the Rebbe's direct involvement in the detailed aspects of our work was much less frequent. Instead, the Rebbe's instructions became more general, while continuing to encourage quicker progress. For example, upon submitting a specific question, the Rebbe once wrote, "Was such done in the past?" This indicated that we should derive instruction and principles from the guidance we had received previously.

When we printed the *Drushei Chasunah* from the Mitteler Rebbe, it spanned two volumes. We considered including the *nusach* of the *birchos nisuin* either at the beginning or end; as all the *maamarim* were based on these words, it would have been beneficial for the reader to have it easily accessible. The Rebbe responded, "*Halo lo naasoh al derech zeh be'ovar*," meaning, "Hasn't this never been done in the past?" The Rebbe was teaching us to refrain from introducing new elements and

encouraging us to begin operating independently, without needing to seek direction each time.

It is our heartfelt wish that we should continue to learn and internalize the Chassidus of our Rabbeim as the Rebbe so deeply wished, revealing our individual *Moshiach haproti* (the spark of *Moshiach* within each one) and hastening the coming of *Moshiach hakloli* and the revelation of תורה חדשה מאתי תצא—the new Torah of *Moshiach*, may it be speedily in our days.

1. See "Rescue of the Library", *Derher Adar II* 5776 p. 10.
2. *Sichos Kodesh* 5738 vol. 2, p. 466.
3. Binder of handwritten copies of Chassidus that were copied and collected by Chassidim.
4. *Hisvaaduyos* 5745 vol. 2, p. 1163f.
5. Printed in later prints of *Derech Mitzvosecha* p. 4.
6. *Likkutei Sichos* vol. 26, p. 384-5.