

Baal Shem Tov

During the 17th century, European Jewry was devastated by the Khmelnitskiy pogroms during the years of ת"ח-ת"ט. Entire communities were destroyed and the war displaced thousands. A short while later Shabtai Tzvi misled thousands of Yidden into believing that he was Moshiach. He eventually converted to Islam in ת"י, further demoralizing the Jewish world. During this time period the Baal Shem Tov was revealed to the world.

After receiving a blessing from Eliyahu Hanavi¹, Reb Eliezer (100 years old) and his wife Sarah (90 years old), from the town of Tloste², welcome their only child to the world on Chai Elul. The boy is named Yisroel.

The Baal Shem Tov travels together with a *tzaddik nistar* for two years. He is entrusted to the care and mentorship of the *tzaddik nistar* Reb Meir for a period of four years. During this time he joins the "Machane Yisroel," the group of *tzaddikim nistarim* under the leadership of Reb Adam Baal Shem.⁴

On his 16th birthday, Eliyahu Hanavi reveals to the Baal Shem Tov the preciousness of the *avodas Hashem* of simple Yidden. Thus begins the practice of inquiring about the well being of Yidden to cause them to respond "*baruch Hashem*."⁶

The Baal Shem Tov is hired as a *melamed* in the town of Brody by Reb Gershon Kitover and marries Reb Gershon's sister, Chana.⁸

On Chai Elul,¹¹ following intense pressure from Achiya Hashiloni and Reb Adam Baal Shem,¹² the Baal Shem Tov reveals himself and begins teaching Chassidus and performing many miracles.

תס"ד

At the tender age of 5, the Baal Shem Tov is orphaned from his father and mother. Reb Eliezer's final instructions to him are: Yisrolik, fear no mortal or thing—only Hashem. Love every Yid with the depths of your heart and the passion of your soul, no matter who it is.³

תע"ב

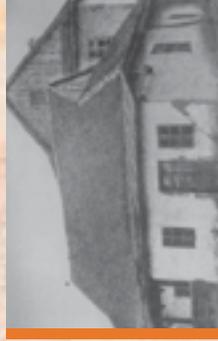
At the age of 14, the Baal Shem Tov introduces a new *shita* of *ahavas Yisroel* to the *tzaddikim nistarim*. Reb Meir later blesses him with the *roshei teivos* of that year תע"ב - תבא עליך ברכה עליך.⁵

תע"ו

The Baal Shem Tov is appointed *rossi* of the *tzaddikim nistarim*⁷ and instructs them to become *melamedim* wherever needed. He is hired as a *melamed* in Tloste.

תכ"ד-
תצ"ד

On Chai Elul,⁹ the Baal Shem Tov begins learning with Achiya Hashiloni.¹⁰



THE BAAL SHEM TOV'S
SHUL IN MEZIBUZH.

The Baal Shem Tov settles in the town of Mezibuz which would serve as the capital of Chassidus throughout his *nesivus*.

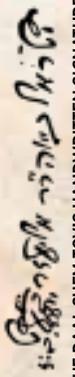
ה'ת"ק

On Chai Elul, the Alter Rebbe was born to Reb Boruch and Rebbeztin Rivkah following a *brocha* from the Baal Shem Tov. The Baal Shem Tov was in a joyfully exalted mood, did not recite *tachanun* and announced at the *seudas mitzvah* that a *neshamah chadashah*—a new *neshamah* that's never been on earth before—descended to illuminate the world with *nigleh* and Chassidus.¹³

תק"ה

The Maggid meets the Baal Shem Tov for his first time and becomes a devoted *talmid*.¹⁵

תק"ב


THE BAAL SHEM TOV'S HANDWRITTEN SIGNATURE.

An imposter named Yaakov Frank proclaimed himself the successor of Shabtai Tzvi and attracted a group of believers called the Frankistim who caused much trouble for the Jewish community of Poland. The Baal Shem Tov participates in a highly publicized debate against them and is victorious. The day is proclaimed a Yom Tov.¹⁸

תק"ט

The Baal Shem Tov and his *talmidim* nullify a *cherem* proclaimed against them and issue a statement forgiving their opponents the following Erev Yom Kippur.¹⁶

תק"י

The Baal Shem Tov is instrumental in annulling a decree forbidding the recitation of *Aleinu* in the city of Lvov.¹⁷

On the first day of Shavuot, the Baal Shem Tov was *mistalek*. The *kevurah* occurred on the second day of Yom Tov¹⁹ in the city of Mezibuz.²⁰

תק"כ

More details of the information provided in this timeline have been published in English in "The Great Mission" by Kehot Publications.

1. Sefer Hasichos 5697 p. 161.
2. In various sources Okup is referred to as the Baal Shem Tov's birthplace (Hatomim vol. 1 p. 14). The Rebbe Rashab explains that Tloste was a city that had once been surrounded by a protective wall. As the wall collapsed, it left behind it a trench—*"okup"* in Russian. The Baal Shem Tov's parents, who lived in abject poverty, could not afford housing within the city limits and were forced to live in these trenches.
3. Likkutei Dibburim vol. 3 p. 770. Sefer Hasichos 5703 p. 165.
4. Sefer Hasichos 5703 pages 165-168.
5. Igros Kodesh, Rebbe Rayatz, vol. 4 p. 292.
6. Sefer Hasichos 5703 p. 167.
7. Likkutei Dibburim vol. 3 p. 389.
8. Sefer Hatoldos, Baal Shem Tov, vol. 1 p. 35
9. Likkutei Dibburim vol. 1 p. 31.
10. See Hatomim vol. 1 pages 19-20 for a description of Achiya Hashiloni's first revelation to the Baal Shem Tov.
11. Likkutei Dibburim vol. 1 p. 31.
12. See Hatomim vol. 1 pages 12-18 for a lengthy description of this time period. See also Likkutei Dibburim
13. Sefer Hasichos 5703 p. 167.
14. Keser Shem Tov page 4. Toras Sholom page 113. Likkutei Dibburim vol. 2 page 618. Likkutei Sichos vol. 15 page 282.
15. Hatomim vol. 1 page 120.
16. Hatomim vol. 1 page 125.
17. Likkutei Dibburim vol. 4 page 1167-1170.
18. Hatomim vol. 2 page 558. Gimzei Nistaros, Bichovsky, #59. The Rebbe explains that since the *histalkus* of the Baal Shem Tov occurred before the first anniversary of this event, the Yom Tov was never properly established. Igros Kodesh vol. 19 p. 81. See also Hisvaaduyos 5742 vol. 4 p. 1909 for a discussion of the exact date of the Yom Tov.
19. Likkutei Sichos vol. 4 p. 1031. See Notes *29 and 30.
20. Hayom Yom 6 Sivan.