

# TREASURES

## FROM THE CHABAD LIBRARY

Rare Volumes, Manuscripts, Letters, Documents,  
Sacred Objects, Marriage Contracts,  
Portraits & Photographs

selected from the  
Central Chabad Lubavitch Library  
and Archive Center

*Compiled by*  
Rabbi Shalom Dovber Levine



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## PREFACE

The collection of the Central Chabad Lubavitch Library is a veritable treasury of Judaic manuscripts, rare volumes, historic pamphlets, archives, portraits, photographs, letters, documents, marriage contracts, sacred and rare objects of all sorts.

Since 1977, when I was privileged to be appointed to direct the library, I have published some of this material, from time to time, in various publications, alongside overviews of the item's provenance. At first they appeared in the periodical *Yagdil Torah* (Kehot, 1977-1986), and later in the weekly *Kfar Chabad* and other periodicals such as *Heoros Uve'urim*, *Pardes Chabad*, *Heichal HaBaal Shem Tov*, *Or Yisroel* and others.

I am now pleased to present many of these in the present, handsome volume, with additions and corrections to the original material. They have been categorized in sections according to subject-matter, and within each section the chapters generally follow chronological order.

The variations in writing style and depth of treatment between many of the book's chapters, are due to the fact that they have been written over the course of 30 years, and published in various publications.

The volume opens with an introduction that provides an overview of the history of the library and its collection of historic treasures. Concluding the volume are a subject index and an index of personalities.

The English section, compiled by Rabbi Daniel Goldberg, includes a translation of the introduction, and summaries of each of the volume's chapters, often with additional background information and chronology that may otherwise be unfamiliar to the general reader.

**Shalom Dovber Levine**

18 Elul 5769  
Brooklyn, New York

## NOTE ON TRANSLITERATION & CHRONOLOGY

Most Judaic works published in English base their transliteration of Hebrew words on Sefardic pronunciation. Here, however, we have chosen to base most transliterations on the Ashkenazic pronunciation used by Chasidim and most north-eastern European Jews in previous generations and largely to this day. Although the transliterations do not always precisely reproduce pronunciation as actually used, they are close enough to reflect customary use.

In the English section, the dates given generally follow the civil calendar. As is known, the new Jewish year usually starts during September, while the new civil year starts during the Jewish month of Teves, leaving a three-four month gap in between. When a Jewish year is specified—in this work's Hebrew chapters and introductions, or in historical sources—if the actual Jewish date or at least month is known, our notation of the civil year reflects the actual year. When, however, no precise date was known by this translator, we assumed the Jewish year given to be identical to the civil year starting in January, although the event—birth, decease etc.—may have occurred during the Jewish year's first three-four months, and therefore may actually belong to the last months of the civil year previous to the one noted.

## CONTENTS

Introduction .....	2
--------------------	---

### HISTORY OF THE CHABAD REBBES

1. Registration of Rabbi Schneur Zalman of Liadi in the Liozna Communal Record as a member of the Burial Society .....	10
2. Reply of Rabbi Schneur Zalman recorded in a letter by his disciple, Rabbi Aaron of Staroshele .....	10
3. Early manuscript biographies of Rabbi Schneur Zalman .....	10
4. Letter by Rabbi DovBer of Lubavitch, sending support for his relatives & others .....	11
5. Letter by Rabbi Shmuel of Lubavitch about his trip to Switzerland for health reasons .....	12
6. Letter by Rabbi Yosef Yitzchak of Avrutch to his brother Rabbi Shmuel of Lubavitch .....	12
7. Certificate of exemption from military service granted to Rabbi Shalom DovBer of Lubavitch in his youth .....	13
8. Rabbi Shalom DovBer's internal Russian passport .....	14
9. Diary of Rabbi Yosef Yitzchak of Lubavitch, late summer, 1914 .....	14
10. Rabbi Yosef Yitzchak's account of the move from Lubavitch to Orol and Rostov, fall 1915 .....	15
11. Two letters by Rabbi Shmuel DovBer of Borisov .....	15
12. Reply by Rabbi Shalom DovBer of Lubavitch, and money (bills) he gave Chasidim .....	16
13. The seven-branched "Menorah of Chasidus" .....	16
14. Two letters by R. Yaakov Kopel, secretary to Rabbi Yosef Yitzchak .....	17
15. Rebbetzin Shterna Sarah's entry visa and a letter to her son .....	17
16. The "Riiwendschel" Fund .....	17
17. Gifts & good wishes for Rabbi Yosef Yitzchak's 50th wedding anniversary .....	18
18. Letters sent by Rabbi Yosef Yitzchak's secretaries to Rabbi Avraham Elya Akselrod .....	18
19. Rabbi Yosef Yitzchak's personal diary, fall, 1944—early winter, 1945 .....	18
20. Excerpts from Rabbi Yosef Yitzchak's personal diary, End of 1948 to early summer, 1949 .....	19
21. Communal requests for blessing submitted to Rabbi Yosef Yitzchak of Lubavitch .....	19
22. "The Society of Temimim" .....	20
23. Letters by Rabbi Meir Shlomo Yanovsky & Rebbetzin Rochel to the seventh Rebbe & Rebbetzin and the Rebbe's brother .....	20

24. Letters to Rabbi Sholom Shlomo Schneerson's widow and their daughter, the future poet, Zelda Mishkovsky . . . . .	21
25. Documents relating to the 1941 rescue of the seventh Rebbe & Rebbetzin from Europe . .	21
26. Letter by Reb Yisrael Aryeh Leib, brother of the seventh Rebbe, to their mother, Rebbetzin Chana Schneerson, and letters written by the Rebbe in his brother's name . . . .	22
27. Invitation by Chasidim in the Holy Land & France for the Lubavitcher Rebbe to visit them, 1953 . . . . .	22
28. Correspondence about the Tefillin Campaign between the Lubavitcher Rebbe & Rabbi Yitzchak Hutner . . . . .	22
29. Blessings & good wishes for the Lubavitcher Rebbe's 70th birthday . . . . .	23

#### RABBIS AND THE RABBINATE

30. Rabbi Yehuda Ibn Attar, Chief Rabbi of Fez, Morocco . . . . .	26
31. Rabbi Yaakov Ibn Tzur (Yaabetz), Rabbi of Fez & Meknes . . . . .	26
32. Rabbi Nosson Hurvitz, Rabbi of Polotzk . . . . .	26
33. Rabbis of the town of Lubavitch, & biography of Rabbi Yissachar Ber Hurvitz . . . . .	27
34. Letter of recommendation by R. Mordechai Bannet on behalf of R. Yehuda Assad . . . .	30
35. The Chabad Rabbis of Romen, Ukraine . . . . .	30
36. Rabbinic appointment for Rabbi Schneur Ettin . . . . .	31
37. Chabad Rabbis of Bobruisk, White Russia . . . . .	32
38. Chabad Rabbis of Horki, & Rabbi Zalman Neimark's Rabbinic positions . . . . .	32
39. Three letters by Rabbi Yitzchok Elchonon Spektor, Rabbi of Kovno, Lithuania . . . . .	33
40. Letters & pidyonos by Rabbi Yehoshua Nimoytin . . . . .	33

#### SHECHITA AND SHOCHTIM

41. Responsum of Rabbi Menachem Mendel, written by his son, Rabbi Yisroel Noach. . . . .	36
42. Responsum of Rabbi Hillel of Paritch . . . . .	36
43. Documents relating to Reb Yechiel Michal Zusnitz, Chasidic shochet of Birz, Lithuania . .	37
44. Letter by first Rebbe of Gur, author of <i>Chiddushei HaRim</i> . . . . .	37
45. Communal contract with a butcher in Poltava, Ukraine . . . . .	38

#### RARE DOCUMENTS PERTAINING TO RABBINIC COURT RULINGS

46. Legal documents & Rabbinic court decisions—Fez, Morocco, 1697-1708 . . . . .	40
47. Legal documents & Rabbinic court decisions—Fez, Morocco, 1710-1722 . . . . .	40
48. Legal documents & Rabbinic court decisions—Fez, Morocco, 1723-1728 . . . . .	40
49. Arbitration agreement & Rabbinic court decision, 1816, by Rabbi DovBer of Lubavitch with his brother & his uncle . . . . .	40
50. Arbitration decision by Rabbi DovBer of Lubavitch concerning publication of the Talmud and Turim . . . . .	41
51. Mediation by Rabbi DovBer of Lubavitch on behalf of the inheritance of orphans . . . . .	42

52. Letter by Rabbi DovBer of Lubavitch to arrange a Rabbinic lawsuit . . . . . 42
53. Rabbi Menachem Mendel's son asks Rabbi Hillel of Paritch,  
and then Rabbi Aaron of Belinitz, to be his representative judge . . . . . 43
54. Promissory notes (*vekselen*) written in Lubavitch, 1854-1858 . . . . . 43

### BOOKS AND PUBLISHING

55. Third edition of Rabbi Schneur Zalman's Siddur . . . . . 46
56. Letter by first Rebbe of Gur, author of *Chiddushei HaRim* . . . . . 47
57. Rabbi Yehuda Leib's letter to Rabbi Shmuel Betzalel,  
about the second edition of *Likkutei Torah* . . . . . 48
58. Itemized bill for the 5th edition of *Likkutei Torah*—1904 . . . . . 49
59. Publication and sale of first volume of *Tzemach Tzedek* . . . . . 50
60. Letter from Rabbi Shlomo Hakohen, Rabbi of Vilna,  
about his *Binyan Shlomo* . . . . . 50
61. Rabbi Shalom DovBer seeks to establish a Torah Research Library . . . . . 51
62. Three letters by Rabbi Yisrael Meir Kagan, author of *Chofetz Chaim* . . . . . 51
63. Rabbi Yosef Yitzchak requests return of his library confiscated in Moscow . . . . . 52
64. Publishing the works of Rabbi Yosef Rozen, the Rogatchover Gaon . . . . . 53
65. *Tehillim* of Rabbi Levi Yitzchak and Rebbetzin Chana Schneerson . . . . . 54

### RARE MANUSCRIPTS

66. Manuscript pages of the Babylonian Talmud, Tractates *Sanhedrin & Shavuot* . . . . . 58
67. Manuscript pages of the Babylonian Talmud, Tractate *Kiddushin* . . . . . 58
68. Tractates *Chaggiga & Yoma*, published in Spain before the Expulsion;  
Manuscript of Rashi on Tractate *Menachos* . . . . . 58
69. Manuscript of early Halachic code, *Orchos Chaim*,  
in otherwise non-extant later version of first section . . . . . 58
70. Original manuscript of *Or Yakar*,  
Rabbi Moshe Cordovero's commentary on *Zohar* . . . . . 59
71. Original manuscripts of Arizal's *Shemona She'arim*—  
compiled by Rabbi Chaim Vital & arranged by Rabbi Shmuel Vital . . . . . 60
72. The Baal Shem Tov's manuscript siddur and the original manuscript of a letter . . . . . 60
73. Manuscript of Torah insights by Rabbi Yehonason Eibeschutz . . . . . 61
74. Books with handwritten notes by Rabbi Schneur Zalman of Liadi . . . . . 61
75. Manuscript notes on *Shulchan Aruch* by Rabbi Akiva Eiger . . . . . 62
76. Manuscript of poetry by Rabbi Moshe Sofer, author of *Chasam Sofer* . . . . . 62
77. Manuscripts by Rabbi Avraham Abbale of Vilna . . . . . 62
78. Manuscripts of *Eishel Avraham* by Rabbi Avraham Dovid of Buczacz . . . . . 63
79. Rabbi Menachem Mendel asks a question to his grandfather, Rabbi Schneur Zalman . . 64

80. <i>Tanach</i> that belonged to Rabbi Menachem Mendel, author of <i>Tzemach Tzemach</i> . . . . .	65
81. Letter accompanying responsum of Rabbi Dovid Luria . . . . .	66
82. Letter by the sons of Rabbi Menachem Mendel, author of <i>Tzemach Tzemach</i> about settling their differences and ownership & publication of his manuscripts . . . . .	66
83. Letter by Rabbi Shmuel of Lubavitch . . . . .	67
84. Envelopes with Rabbi Shmuel's handwriting . . . . .	67
85. Torah correspondence of Rabbi Mordechai Schneur Zalman Schneersohn with Rabbi Yosef Tumarkin . . . . .	67
86. Notes on the Jerusalem Talmud by Rabbi Shalom DovBer of Lubavitch . . . . .	68
87. Rabbi Shalom DovBer's corrections of the Haftorah blessings . . . . .	68
88. Handwritten comments on the margins of <i>Zohar</i> by Rabbi Levi Yitzchak Schneerson . . . . .	69
89. Calendar of laws & customs according to <i>Nusach Ha'Arizal</i> and Chabad Customs— as edited by the Lubavitcher Rebbe, Rabbi Menachem M. Schneerson . . . . .	69

#### PORTRAITS AND PHOTOGRAPHS

90. Portrait of Rabbi Yosef Hatzaddik, Rabbi of Pozna . . . . .	72
91. Portrait of Rabbi Akiva Eiger . . . . .	72
92. Original portrait of Rabbi Menachem Mendel, author of <i>Tzemach Tzedek</i> . . . . .	72
93. Photo of Rabbinic Convention, Korostin, Ukraine, 1926 . . . . .	73
94. Three photos of Rabbi Yosef Rozen, the Rogatchover Gaon . . . . .	73
95. Photos of Rabbi Levi Yitzchak and Rebbetzin Chana Schneerson . . . . .	74
96. Pictures of Rabbi Yosef Yitzchak of Lubavitch with the Rebbe, Rabbi Menachem M. Schneerson . . . . .	74
97. Students of Yeshivas Tomchei Temimim, Warsaw-Otwock . . . . .	75
98. Views of Lubavitch World Headquarters, 770 Eastern Parkway, 1943-1945 . . . . .	75
99. The Rebbe's study in the early 1940s . . . . .	75

#### SACRED AND HISTORIC OBJECTS

100. <i>Tefillin</i> belonging to the Chabad Rebbes . . . . .	78
101. A sleeve, a skullcap & an <i>atara</i> . . . . .	78
102. Walking sticks belonging to the Rebbes . . . . .	79
103. The woodwork of Rabbi Shmuel of Lubavitch . . . . .	80
104. The satchel of Rabbi Shmuel of Lubavitch . . . . .	81
105. Antique scrolls . . . . .	81
106. Sacred objects from the archive of Rabbi Chaim Keves . . . . .	82
107. The private office of Rabbi Yosef Yitzchak of Lubavitch . . . . .	82
108. Rabbi Yosef Yitzchak's propeller pencil . . . . .	83
109. Prayer-stands used by the Lubavitcher Rebbe, Rabbi Menachem M. Schneerson . . . . .	83
110. Parchment Haftoros scroll in the Rebbe's room . . . . .	84

### STRENGTHENING TRADITIONAL JUDAISM

111. The decree to ban “Jewish” clothing . . . . . 86
112. Three letters received by Rabbi Yehuda Assad . . . . . 87
113. Letter by teachers & principals of the Vitebsk cheder-schools  
against secular studies in cheder-schools . . . . . 87
114. Letter from the Jews of Romen against compelling Rabbis  
to obtain diplomas of secular knowledge . . . . . 88
115. A coded letter by Reb Zalman Butman to Rabbi Yosef Yitzchak of Lubavitch  
about victims of the Soviet purges . . . . . 88

### LETTERS CONCERNING FUNDRAISING FOR CHARITY

116. Three letters by an emissary of the Holy Land, Rabbi Moshe Yisrael . . . . . 92
117. Letters by an emissary of the Holy Land, Rabbi Yom Tov Crispo . . . . . 92
- 118-119. Letters of endorsement by Rabbi Schneur Zalman of Liadi . . . . . 93
120. Letter of acknowledgement by Rabbi Avraham Kalisker . . . . . 93
121. Letter by Rabbi DovBer of Lubavitch urging support  
for a respected Rabbi settling in the Holy Land . . . . . 94
122. Letter by Rabbi DovBer of Lubavitch regarding a request to settle in the Holy Land . . . 94
123. Letter of blessing for a sick woman by Rabbi DovBer of Lubavitch . . . . . 95
124. Letters by Rebbes of the Chernobyl Chasidic dynasty . . . . . 95
125. Letter by Rabbi Menachem Nochum of Tolna . . . . . 96
126. Letters by Rebbes of the Ruzhin Chasidic dynasty . . . . . 96
127. Letters by Rabbi Yisroel Dov, Rebbe of Vilednik . . . . . 97
128. Letter by Rabbi Menachem Nochum, son of Rabbi DovBer of Lubavitch . . . . . 97
129. Letters by Rabbi Chaim Schneur Zalman of Liadi . . . . . 98
130. Letter by Rabbi Nochum Dovber of Avrutch . . . . . 98

### ADVICE AND BLESSINGS

131. Rabbi Menachem Mendel’s reply through his secretary . . . . . 102
132. Letter by Rabbi Aaron of Staroshele . . . . . 102
133. Rabbi Shmuel’s reply through his secretary . . . . . 102
134. Rabbi Shmuel’s reply to Rabbi Shmuel DovBer of Borisov . . . . . 102
135. Letter of Rabbi Yitzchak Dovber of Liadi . . . . . 103

### COMMUNITIES AND SYNAGOGUES

136. Extracts of *pinkas* (community record) of Hrodishtch . . . . . 106
137. Letter by Rabbi DovBer of Lubavitch about building a synagogue . . . . . 107
138. Pinkas of the *Chevra Shas* (Society for Talmud Study) of Nikolayev, Ukraine . . . . . 107
139. Pinkas of *Malbish Arumim* Society of Lubavitch . . . . . 108

### YESHIVOS AND ORGANIZATIONS

140. Appeal letter for yeshiva of Rabbi Avraham Dovid Lavut in Romanovka . . . . . 112
141. Appeal letter from the Rabbis of Nikolayev,  
for Yeshivas Tomchei Temimim in Lubavitch . . . . . 112
142. Yeshivas Tomchei Temimim of Vilna . . . . . 112
143. Reb Yochanan Gordon & *Gemilas Chesed Shomrei Shabbos* . . . . . 113

### ENGAGEMENT AND MARRIAGE

144. Ancient marriage documents . . . . . 116
145. *Tanaim* document of Rabbi Shalom DovBer's engagement . . . . . 116
146. Invitation by Rabbi Yisroel Noach to his son's wedding . . . . . 117
147. Invitation by first Rebbe of Gur, author of *Chiddushei HaRim*,  
to his grandchildren's wedding . . . . . 117
148. Marriage contract of Rachel Leah, daughter of Rabbi Shlomo Zalman of Kopust . . 118
149. Letter of Rabbi Sholom Dovber, Rebbe of Retchitze . . . . . 118
150. Books received by the Lubavitcher Rebbe as wedding gifts . . . . . 118
151. Rebbetzin Shterna Sarah's letter about the wedding of the Lubavitcher Rebbe  
& her granddaughter, Rebbetzin Chaya Mushka . . . . . 119
152. Rabbi Leib Sheinin, Rabbi of Dokshitz, Lithuania,  
inspires Reb Yochanan Gordon to attend the Lubavitcher Rebbe's wedding . . . . . 119
153. *Tanaim* document in the handwriting of Rabbi Yosef Yitzchak of Lubavitch . . . . . 120

### MOSHIACH AND REDEMPTION

154. The Sefer Torah to greet Moshiach . . . . . 122





## THE LIBRARY

The the Library of Agudas Chasidei Chabad—Ohel Yosef Yitzchak—Lubavitch, the Central Chabad Lubavitch Library and Archive Center, is located at the world headquarters of the Chabad Lubavitch movement at 770 Eastern Parkway, Brooklyn, New York.

This is one of the most prominent Judaic libraries, containing about 250,000 published volumes, most of them rare. Around 200,000 of these are in Hebrew and Yiddish, and about 50,000 in other languages.

In addition, the Library contains:

- Several thousand manuscripts, mostly on Chabad Chasidic philosophy, either actual manuscripts of the Chabad Rebbes, or copied by Chasidim for their own study and inspiration.
- A large archive of correspondence and writings relating to the Chabad philosophy and movement, including the vast collection of letters written by Rabbi Yosef Yitzchak Schneersohn, sixth Lubavitcher Rebbe.
- A collection of sacred objects bequeathed by the Chabad Rebbes, as well as various items presented, as gifts, to the Lubavitcher Rebbe, Rabbi Menachem M. Schneerson, during his years of leadership.
- A collection of photographs of Chasidim and Chabad activities sent to Rabbi Yosef Yitzchak and his successor, Rabbi Menachem M. Schneerson, during their years of leadership.
- A large collection of news clippings relating to the Chabad movement and Jewry in general.
- Announcements, flyers and brochures of all sorts that were sent to the Lubavitcher Rebbe, Rabbi Menachem M. Schneerson.

The Chabad Research Center is assigned the task of re researching the manuscript and archive collections, and the fruits of their labors are published in the volumes of discourses, addresses and letters of the Chabad Rebbes, by Kehot Publication Society, the Lubavitcher Publishing House.

The only section of the Library open to general researchers is the collection of published volumes, of which a detailed, computerized catalogue is available. This catalogue can be accessed by the public at:

<http://chabadlibrary.org.catalog>

The Library also maintains an active exhibition hall, where items from the various collections are selected for display.



## HISTORY

Throughout the history of the Chabad movement, a central collection of books and manuscripts was in the possession of the Rebbe of every generation.

In earlier generations—end of 18<sup>th</sup> century and early 19<sup>th</sup> century—this collection was relatively small. Little remains of the original collections, for almost all books and manuscripts were either destroyed in the frequent fires plaguing small towns in those days or were lost in various other upheavals and crisis situations over the generations.

The bulk of the existing collection began to form in the third generation of Chabad—during the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century—and progressively expanded over time to become one of the world's most prominent Judaic libraries.

Our only knowledge of a library during Chabad's first generation is an extant list of about 100 published volumes seized for inspection from the home of the movement's founder, Rabbi Schneur Zalman of Liadi (1745-1812), known as the "Alter Rebbe," during his arrest by the Czarist government on trumped up charges. It is assumed that only part of his library was seized—for the purpose of seeking evidence of subversion, from which investigators could deduce the likely content of the rest of the library.

Based on this list, it seems that Rabbi Schneur Zalman's entire collection comprised no more than a few hundred books. Even a collection of that size was large for Russia in those days, but it was still too small to be called a "library."

At the end of Rabbi Schneur Zalman's life, two fires ravaged his home. The first, in 1810, claimed many of his manuscripts, including those of his *Shluchan Aruch* (his revision of the standard code of Jewish law). The second was during the War of 1812, when the Rebbe, accompanied by his family and many followers, fled before Napoleon's advancing forces. The refugees traveled from place to place until the Rebbe passed away on 24<sup>th</sup> Teves, 5573 (1812).

At the end of summer, 1813, Rabbi Schneur Zalman's son and successor, Rabbi DovBer Schneuri (1773-1827), known as the "Mitteler Rebbe," settled in the White Russian town of Lubavitch. He built a large synagogue and a house for himself. According to a police report made after an 1825 search of his home, he possessed a library of 611 volumes contained on the shelves of four book-cases.

During Chabad's third generation, under Rabbi DovBer's son-in-law and successor, Rabbi Menachem Mendel Schneersohn (1789-1866), known for his major Talmudic-Halachic work, *Tzemach Tzedek*, a more substantial collection took form. It became the nucleus of the central Chabad collection, which continued to grow during following generations.

Over time, however, the collection endured many crises:

- Much of the collection, including important manuscripts, was ravaged by serious fires that plagued the town of Lubavitch.
- After the passing of Rabbi Menachem Mendel and of his son and successor, Rabbi Shmuel (1834-1882), some published volumes in their collections were inherited by heirs other than their successors.
- Most of the collection accumulated by the Chabad Rebbes—especially by Rabbi Shmuel's son, Rabbi Shalom DovBer (1860-1920), and the latter's son, Rabbi Yosef Yitzchak (1880-1950)—was sent for safekeeping to Moscow during World War I. In 1924, this collection was confiscated by the new Soviet regime, forcing Rabbi Yosef Yitzchak to start building a new library.
- After the 1939 Nazi invasion of Poland and eventual rescue of Rabbi Yosef Yitzchak to New York, his new collection remained in Poland. His strenuous rescue efforts finally succeeded in getting it transported—in the midst of World War II—to New York at the end of summer, 1941.
- From 1985 to 1987, a protracted court battle was successfully conducted against a relative of Rabbi Yosef Yitzchak, who claimed inheritance rights for parts of the library.

Despite all these crises, most of this great and rare collection assembled by the Chabad Rebbes over several generations remained intact. The largest portion is now housed in the Central Chabad Lubavitch Library.



The Library today has three sections: 1) The Lubavitch Collection; 2) The Collection of Rabbi Yosef Yitzchak; 3) The Collection of the Lubavitcher Rebbe, Rabbi Menachem M. Schneerson.

### THE LUBAVITCH COLLECTION

Most of the books accumulated by the Chabad Rebbes from the early 1800s to 1915 are presently in the Russian State Library.

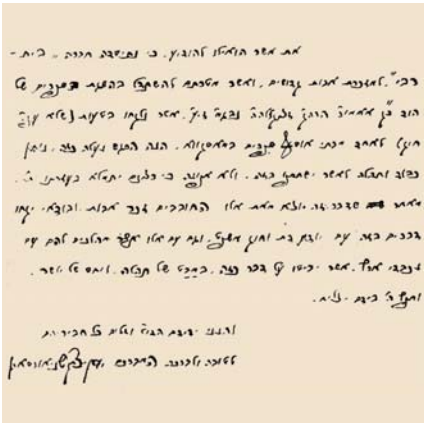
In fall, 1915, as German forces approached, Rabbi Shalom DovBer and his family were forced to leave Lubavitch. He moved to Rostov, in south Russia. He sent most of his collection to Moscow for safekeeping, planning to retrieve it after the war. In 1920, however, he passed away in Rostov, before the end of the Russian civil war that followed World War I.

As peace gradually returned to the land, his son and successor, Rabbi Yosef Yitzchak, finally had an opportunity to request the return of the collection. The new Soviet regime, however, nationalized the warehouse and gave the Lubavitch Collection to the Russian State Library (then called the State Rumyantsev Museum). Only about 100 of the collection's volumes had accompanied Rabbi Shalom DovBer and Rabbi Yosef Yitzchak to Rostov—for study or because of sentimental value—and these accompanied Rabbi Yosef Yitzchak on all his later wanderings, to Leningrad, Riga, Warsaw, Otwock, and Brooklyn. Today they are held in a special bookcase in the Chabad Library.

During the years following, Rabbi Yosef Yitzchak attempted through various means to seek the release of his original library, but was unsuccessful.

In 1981, at the first signs of a new era in the Soviet Union, the Lubavitcher Rebbe, Rabbi Menachem M. Schneerson—who had succeeded his father-in-law, Rabbi Yosef Yitzchak, in 1950—renewed efforts to reclaim this sacred collection. For more than a decade, he energetically pursued this goal, sending special representatives and twice dispatching a special delegation for a prolonged mission to the Soviet Union to seek the collection's retrieval. Unfortunately, the collection remains in the Russian State Library to this day.

These efforts continue today in the hope, faith and conviction that it will be recognized by all that these sacred books must return to their rightful place, the Library of Agudas Chasidei Chabad—Ohel Yosef Yitzchak—Lubavitch.



### THE COLLECTION OF RABBI YOSEF YITZCHAK

When the Lubavitch Collection was confiscated in 1924 and given to the Russian State Library, Rabbi Yosef Yitzchak began to rebuild his library anew. He started by acquiring the entire collection of Shmuel Winer, a bibliographer and collector of rare books whose personal collection comprised about 5,000 valuable, antique and rare volumes, scrolls, marriage contracts, and the like. The Rebbe continued to expand and supplement his library by acquiring volumes of Judaica and Hebraica of all kinds.

In 1927, Rabbi Yosef Yitzchak was arrested by the Soviet authorities and eventually sent into exile. Miraculously, he was set free, but was forced to leave the Soviet Union later that year. At first he was denied permission to take his new book collection. He firmly refused, however, to leave without it, and even-



tually his collection was permitted to accompany him to Riga, Latvia.

From there, and later from his home in Warsaw and later in Otwock, Poland, the Rebbe requested his followers everywhere to help enrich the “Lubavitch Library” with volumes of all kinds.

When World War II began in 1939, Rabbi Yosef Yitzchak was trapped in Nazi-occupied Warsaw. Several months later, he was rescued along with his family and some members of his secretariat, returning first to Riga and finally, at the end of winter, 1940, arrived in New York.

The library, however, remained in occupied Poland. It took a year and a half for his tireless efforts to succeed in getting the library transported to New York from Europe, through Sweden, at the end of summer, 1941.

The ground floor of the new Lubavitch World Headquarters at 770 Eastern Parkway, Brooklyn, New York, became the home of Rabbi Yosef Yitzchak’s Collection, where it remains to this day.

## THE COLLECTION OF THE LUBAVITCHER REBBE, RABBI MENACHEM M. SCHNEERSON

In early summer, 1941, the Rebbe’s second son-in-law, Rabbi Menachem M. Schneerson, arrived with his wife, Rebbetzin Chaya Mushka, in New York. Soon after, Rabbi Yosef Yitzchak appointed him head of Merkos L’inyonei Chinuch (the Central Organization for Jewish Education). Rabbi Menachem Schneerson established a separate library on the premises to serve that organization’s needs.

After Rabbi Yosef Yitzchak’s passing on 10<sup>th</sup> Shevat, 5710 (January 28<sup>th</sup>, 1950), the mantle of leadership passed to his son-in-law, who became the seventh Rebbe of Chabad-Lubavitch. The Rebbe continued to expand his new collection, and, in 1967, as this collection grew, the building adjacent to the headquarters was acquired for the purpose of housing this special collection.

Two distinct libraries were now maintained at Lubavitch World Headquarters between 1968 and 1985—the Collection of Rabbi Yosef Yitzchak on the ground floor of 770 Eastern Parkway, and the Lubavitcher Rebbe’s Collection in the annex.

During 1985 to 1987, the aforementioned litigation was conducted, in which a relative of Rabbi Yosef Yitzchak claimed inheritance rights over part of the Rebbe’s collection. The United States Federal Court ruled that all books illegally removed must be returned to the library, for the Rebbe retained no personal ownership of the books, but all belonged to the Library of Agudas Chasidei Chabad (the association of Chabad Chasidim).

After the court victory, the Rebbe directed that both collections be merged into a single central library entitled the “Library of Agudas Chasidei Chabad—Ohel Yosef Yitzchak-Lubavitch,” and that the library annex be renovated and expanded to join to the main building. The Rebbe also launched a campaign for new book acquisitions.

Construction began in 1989, and was completed in 1992. Also completed then was a master catalogue of both collections, enabling the reading room to be opened to researchers. Since then, the library comprises both collections in a single facility. In 1994, the exhibition hall was opened to the public.



## THE MANUSCRIPT COLLECTION AND ARCHIVE

Parallel to the collections of published volumes through the seven generations of the Chabad movement, the Manuscript Collection also grew from generation to generation. The bulk of this collection comprises manuscripts of Chabad Chasidic philosophy.

The writing of Chabad manuscripts began during the era of Rabbi Schneur Zalman's leadership, when no works of Chabad philosophy had yet been published. When the Rebbe's center was in Liozna, he delivered public discourses regularly on holidays and on the last shabbos of every month. After his release from imprisonment in 1798, and especially after he moved to Liadi in 1801, he delivered discourses every Shabbos. The discourses were transcribed by his brother, Rabbi Yehudah Leib (Rabbi of Yanovitch and author of *Sh'eiris Yehuda*), and others, including the Rebbe's sons. The transcripts were copied and widely disseminated among the thousands of Chasidim. Even the Rebbe's central work, the *Tanya*, was originally disseminated during the early 1790's as handwritten copies of the Rebbe's manuscript, until it was published in a more complete edition in 1796.

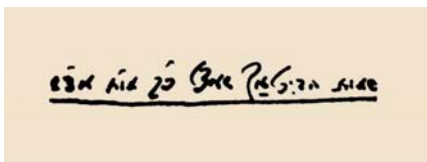
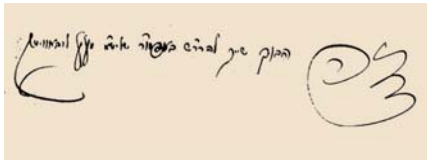
Chasidim strove to collect as many of these discourses as they could, usually binding the few dozen they managed to obtain in a volume or two. Even so, these collected manuscripts did not yet constitute a collection. It was Rabbi Schneur Zalman's grandson and eventual successor, Rabbi Menachem Mendel, author of *Tzemach Tzedek*, who worked hard to gather as many manuscripts as possible, especially following Rabbi Schneur Zalman's passing. He was able to gather most of his grandfather's discourses, forming the basis of the Chabad Manuscript Collection, which remained at the center of Chabad leadership during the following generations.

In every generation this collection grew. The Rebbes sought to acquire manuscripts of the Rebbes of previous generations, or transcripts of their discourses that were not in the collection. Every Rebbe also wrote many of his own discourses, and Chasidim likewise wrote transcripts (which might differ from the Rebbe's manuscript because, when delivering a discourse orally, he may have said it at greater length or briefer length than when he wrote it), copies of which often became part of the Rebbe's collection. Thus, the collection of manuscripts grew and passed from every Rebbe to his successor.

Even this collection was not entirely safe from depletion. Fires in Lubavitch destroyed many volumes of manuscripts, and after every Rebbe's passing, a few volumes passed into the possession of heirs other than his successor. The bulk of the collection, however, remained at the Chabad movement's center in every generation. Even the few volumes passing into the possession of other heirs were in most cases ultimately acquired by the Rebbes of following generations or by their followers and were returned to the collection.

The Manuscript Collection was preserved until the Nazi invasion of Poland in 1939. After Rabbi Yosef Yitzchak left Poland, the collection was lost. Decades later, however, its location was rediscovered in a library in Warsaw, and efforts were made to retrieve it. With Divine help, it was returned to the Central Chabad Library at the end of 1977.

Today, the Library has some 3,000 manuscript volumes, of which over 100 are in the handwriting of the Chabad Rebbes themselves. In addition, the Li-



brary's vast archive has about 100,000 letters and documents of seven generations of Chabad Rebbes, as well as letters written to them, plus thousands of other historic letters and documents.

A special team of the Chabad Research Center studies these manuscripts and compile and publish the discourses, public addresses and letters of the Chabad Rebbes. The publishing is in the hands of the Lubavitcher Publishing House, Kehot Publication Society.

## THE EXHIBITION HALL

The Library is open to researchers, rabbis, lecturers and authors who visit the library to examine rare books unavailable elsewhere.

Nevertheless, in order to satisfy public demand to view some of the Library's treasures, a special hall has been designated solely for exhibits. Periodically the librarians select a specific theme to which the new exhibition is dedicated. Presented at these exhibitions over the years have been books, manuscripts, artifacts, paintings, photographs, and the like, relating to each of the Chabad Rebbes and to every area of Chabad activity, in addition to other great Jewish leaders, particularly leaders of the general Chasidic movement.

Other displays have included the Library's outstanding collection of Pass-over Haggados, *kesubos* (marriage contracts), and first editions of Chasidic books published in early generations.

These exhibits attract individuals and families, schoolchildren and students, tourists and visitors from all backgrounds who are interested in viewing priceless books, artifacts and other treasures of the library, which bring to life Chasidic history and Jewish history in general.





# Rare Manuscripts

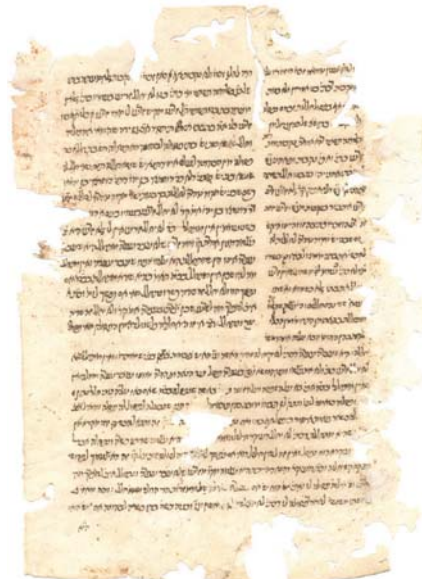


66. MANUSCRIPT PAGES OF THE BABYLONIAN TALMUD, TRACTATES SANHEDRIN & SHAVUOS

Before the start of Hebrew printing in the last third of the 15th century, all Torah works were handwritten. In the Chabad Library, besides the large collection of manuscripts relating to Chabad Chasidism (mainly from the 19th and 20th centuries), there are also several early manuscripts from before the dawn of Hebrew printing.

Here we present three manuscript folio (double-sided) pages of the Babylonian Talmud, written on parchment. In standard published editions, these correspond to tractate *Sanhedrin* 103b-104a, and tractate *Shavuos* 47a-49a.

The text of these folios, together with comparison to published editions, has already been publicized in the periodical *Yagdil Torah*.



67. MANUSCRIPT PAGES OF THE BABYLONIAN TALMUD, TRACTATE KIDDUSHIN

Another manuscript in the Library has ten folio pages from tractate Kiddushin, apparently written in Spain about 1470-1480. It is noteworthy that although the published editions of the Talmud have Rashi's commentary accompanying the text, this is virtually unknown in surviving manuscripts of the Talmud. Indeed, there is some similarity between this manuscript's page format and one of the earliest published editions of the Talmud, printed in Spain before the 1492 expulsion and later continued in Fez, Morocco. Nevertheless, this manuscript's many textual differences prove it was copied not from that edition but from an earlier manuscript.

Here, too, the text of these folios, together with comparison to published editions, has already been publicized in the periodical *Yagdil Torah*.



68. TRACTATES CHAGIGA & YOMA, PUBLISHED IN SPAIN BEFORE THE EXPULSION; MANUSCRIPT OF RASHI ON TRACTATE MENACHOS

The Library has 17 folio pages of tractates *Chagiga* and *Yoma* from one of the first published editions of the Babylonian Talmud, printed in Spain around 1482. On the title page of tractate *Chagiga*, a contemporary wrote a section of Rashi's commentary on tractate Menachos, corresponding in standard published editions to pages 40a-41a, which has variations from the standard published text.

Here, too, the text of these folios and of the manuscript, with comparison to standard published editions, has already been publicized in the periodical *Yagdil Torah*.

69. MANUSCRIPT OF EARLY HALACHIC CODE, ORCHOS CHAIM, IN OTHERWISE NON-EXTANT LATER VERSION OF FIRST SECTION

The Library once received an ancient volume, originating in Yemen, with



a thick, soft cover. The cover was carefully taken apart, to reveal 20 folio pages of a medieval manuscript in Spanish Rabbinic Hebrew script, written in Spain around the middle of the 15<sup>th</sup> century. It was part of the first section of *Orchos Chaim*, by Rabbi Aaron of Lunel (Provence, southern France), who passed away around 1325. The manuscript thus dated to just over a century after the author's passing

Generally, the manuscript's text corresponds to the published edition (Florence, 1750), with only slight variations. In many places, however, the manuscript has additions to the published text.

The existence of two versions of *Orchos Chaim* has been demonstrated by the publisher of its second section (Berlin, 1902). In 1306, after the king of France expelled the Jews, Rabbi Aaron wandered from place to place until he settled on the Spanish island of Majorca. There he learned much Torah wisdom from Rabbi ShemTov Falco, the island's Rabbi, who is quoted 15 times in the second section—although not even once in the first section's published version.

In this manuscript, however, Rabbi ShemTov is mentioned once (after his passing), revealing it as part of the second version as the author rewrote it in Majorca. Rabbi Yosef Karo (1488-1575), author of the *Shulchan Aruch*, in his work entitled *Beis Yosef*, quotes *Orchos Chaim* over 200 times. He too had that later version before him, as evidenced by one of his quotes that appears verbatim in the published version of *Orchos Chaim's* first section, except that Beis Yosef's quote adds the words "...and so, too, writes Rabbi ShemTov," showing it is from the later version.

The publisher of the *Orchos Chaim's* second section shows that Beis Yosef's contemporary, Rabbi Meir Katzenellenbogen (1482-1565, known as Maharam Padua), also had before him the first section in its later version, and in his time there were unsuccessful efforts to publish it.

Although incomplete—and damaged by the ravages of bookworms and glue used in binding the book—the Chabad Library's manuscript is unique in being the only known example of the first section's final version.

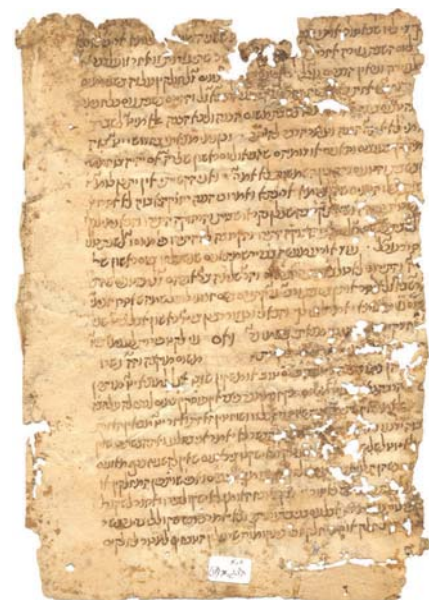
Here, too, the text of this manuscript, together with comparison to the published edition, has already been publicized in the periodical *Yagdil Torah*.

## 70. ORIGINAL MANUSCRIPT OF OR YAKAR, RABBI MOSHE CORDOVERO'S COMMENTARY ON THE ZOHAR

Rabbi Moshe Cordovero (1482-1570), renowned as "Ramak," studied Torah under Rabbi Yosef Karo and later was appointed a judge of the Rabbinic court of Safed in Galilee. He studied Kabbalah under his brother-in-law, Rabbi Shlomo Alkabetz (c.1505-1584), author of the *Lecha Dodi* recited on Shabbos evening. Ramak was the greatest Kabbalist of his day, and one of the greatest of all time. Rabbi Yitzchak Luria (1534-1572), the Arizal, came from Egypt in order to study under Ramak shortly before the latter's passing.

Ramak authored many works, mainly Kabbalistic, but his lengthiest work was *Or Yakar*, an in-depth commentary on all parts of the *Zohar*, the central work of Kabbalah. Only in recent decades have parts of this commentary been published.

The Chabad Library has Ramak's original manuscript of *Or Yakar* on the



*Zohar's* first section, which expounds the Book of Genesis. The manuscript, in three volumes totaling almost 400 folio pages, is described here, together with evidence indicating that it is indeed the author's original manuscript.

The Library also has several other manuscripts of Ramak's works—including part of his *Pardes Rimonim* that was copied during his lifetime—but they are not the author's original manuscripts. These, too, are described here.

Also shown are published volumes of Ramak's works that were studied by Rabbi Shalom DovBer, fifth Lubavitcher Rebbe, shortly before his passing in 1920, as noted by his son and successor, Rabbi Yosef Yitzchak, in handwritten comments.

## 71. ORIGINAL MANUSCRIPTS OF ARIZAL'S SHEMONA SHE'ARIM – COMPILED BY RABBI CHAIM VITAL & ARRANGED BY RABBI SHMUEL VITAL



After the passing of Rabbi Moshe Cordovero in 1570, the Arizal headed the circle of Kabbalists in Safed. During the barely two years until his own passing, he revealed his comprehensive system of mystic Jewish thought, which was later accepted as the pre-eminent school of Kabbalah. After his passing, his disciples agreed to accept as authoritative only the transcripts of his leading disciple, Rabbi Chaim Vital (1543-1620).

His transcripts, however, covered a wide range of mystical subjects and were in no systematic order. The subjects were so exalted that Rabbi Chaim was reluctant to let them be copied until he organized the voluminous material properly. After spending many years on this task, he then reworked the material in a second edition, accompanied by his explanatory comments and elaborations where necessary.

Eventually, in stages before and after his passing, most of both editions were copied. Part was organized into works originally disseminated in manuscript and published only in the 1780's as *Eitz Chaim* and *Pri Eitz Chaim*. In the decades after Rabbi Chaim's passing, however, his son Rabbi Shmuel, a judge of the Rabbinic court of Damascus, Syria, rearranged his father's first edition into a compilation divided into eight sections, known as *Shemona She'arim* (literally "Eight Gates").

Of Rabbi Shmuel Vital's original manuscripts of these eight sections, six are now in the Chabad Library. Reproduced here are Rabbi Shmuel's notations at the start and end of each section, including dates when he started and completed them (1649-1653).

Also in the Library are numerous copies of each of the eight sections, made from the original, before they were published in the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

## 72. THE BAAL SHEM TOV'S MANUSCRIPT SIDDUR & THE ORIGINAL MANUSCRIPT OF A LETTER

The Chabad Library has two original manuscripts of Rabbi Yisrael Baal Shem Tov (1698-1760), founder of the Chasidic movement:

1) His handwritten Siddur, in which prayers are accompanied by *kavanos* (mystical meditations) as taught by the Arizal. In this Siddur, the Baal Shem

Tov prayed his daily prayers, and his disciples penned in their names for him to keep in mind during prayer. A description of the Siddur and details of its historical background and later ownership are given elsewhere.

2) A letter the Baal Shem Tov wrote to his disciple, Rabbi Yaakov Yosef, Rabbi of Polonnoye, author of *Toldos Yaakov Yosef*. It was first published in 1935 in *HaTomim* (a periodical issued during the 1930's by Yeshivas Tomchei Temimim of Warsaw, Poland), accompanied by a description of its historical background by Rabbi Yosef Yitzchak, sixth Lubavitcher Rebbe.



### 73. MANUSCRIPT OF TORAH INSIGHTS BY RABBI YEHONOSON EIBESCHUTZ

Rabbi Yehonoson Eibeschutz (1690-1764), who served as Rabbi of the three associated communities of Altona-Hamburg-Wandsbek, Germany, for the last 14 years of his life, was one of the greatest Torah giants of his period. He was a prolific author and great preacher, whose scholarly works are studied to this day. For most of his life, in all the communities where he lived, he headed a famous yeshiva of hundreds of Talmudic students, who often made notes of his scholarly lectures. Some of these have been published, while other manuscripts await publication.

The Chabad Library has three manuscripts of his Torah explanations.

One, described here in detail, consists mainly of insights on Scriptural verses, primarily by Rabbi Yehonoson, but including also Torah explanations by other prominent contemporaries. It also includes several pages of Rabbi Yehonoson's explanations of Talmudic tractate *Beitza*.

The introduction to this chapter demonstrates that these Talmudic explanations were written by one of Rabbi Yehonoson's students, between 1750, when he became Rabbi of Hamburg, and 1753. Also discussed is these explanations' relationship to other, usually different, explanations of the tractate by Rabbi Yehonoson published elsewhere, showing that all were written by students and are not the author's original written explanations—to which he refers in one place—which apparently are no longer extant.

The language of this transcription is not always clear and has occasional misspellings. Other mistakes were clearly made by the manuscript's copier. Part of these Talmudic explanations has been published in *Yagdil Torah*.

The other two manuscripts include Rabbi Yehonasan's insights on Scriptural verses. One was written in Prague during his years there as the community's official preacher and head of a yeshiva. The other was written after his passing, and includes also several explanations by other prominent scholars, mainly older contemporaries.



### 74. BOOKS WITH HANDWRITTEN NOTES BY RABBI SCHNEUR ZALMAN OF LIADI

In 1986, the Library received a copy of Responsa of Rabbi Yosef Kolon (c.1420-1480), published in Lvov, in 1798, with a sticker in it written by Rabbi Yosef Yitzchak, sixth Lubavitcher Rebbe, attesting to its having once belonged to Rabbi Schneur Zalman of Liadi, and noting his comments written in it.



Clearly it had been in Rabbi Yosef Yitzchak's library before World War II. These comments have since been published, most recently in Rabbi Schneur Zalman's Halachic responsa (#60) in the new edition of his *Shulchan Aruch* (Brooklyn, 2007).

Rabbi Schneur Zalman is known to have written comments in at least three other Halachic works. They are recorded in responsa *Tzemach Tzedek*, by his grandson, Rabbi Menachem Mendel, from where they, too, have been republished in the new edition of Rabbi Schneur Zalman's responsa (#61-63). The original books with his comments, however, are no longer extant.

### 75. MANUSCRIPT NOTES ON SHULCHAN ARUCH BY RABBI AKIVA EIGER

Rabbi Meir Ashkenazi was the Rabbi of Shanghai, China, from 1921 until the Communist Revolution, when the once important Jewish community there emigrated. In 1949, after he moved to New York, he sent Rabbi Yosef Yitzchak, sixth Lubavitcher Rebbe, a volume of the second section of *Shulchan Aruch, Yorah De'ab*, published in Amsterdam in 1711.

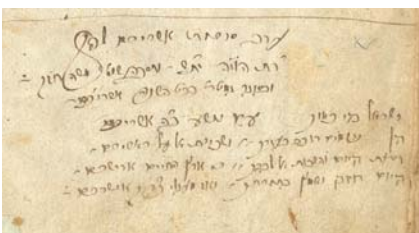
This volume had belonged to the renowned Rabbi Akiva Eiger (c.1762-1837), Rabbi of Pozna (Posen), Germany (now Poland), who had noted in it his learned comments. Most of his comments are written in Rashi script, and for the most part, are signed "Akiva."



### 76. MANUSCRIPT OF POETRY BY RABBI MOSHE SOFER, AUTHOR OF CHASAM SOFER

Rabbi Moshe Sofer (1763-1839), Rabbi of Pressburg (now Bratislava, Slovakia), one of the great Torah leaders of his generation and a prolific author, is renowned by the name of his Halachic responsa, *Chasam Sofer*. In his youth, he wrote Hebrew poetry inspired by Torah themes. A collection of his poems was published after his passing under the name *Shiras Moshe* (Pressburg, 1858).

In the Library's possession is a manuscript of poetry written by the *Chasam Sofer*. Reproduced in this chapter are two poems not included in the published volume.



### 77. MANUSCRIPTS BY RABBI AVRAHAM ABBALE OF VILNA

In the Library's possession are manuscripts of seven Halachic responsa, all unsigned, in the same handwriting, and all written in Vilna in the years 1833-1834. Most are addressed to their recipients. On comparison to the handwriting in a responsum—included in a different manuscript in the Chabad Library—that is explicitly written by Rabbi Avraham Abbale Pasveller (b. Pasval, 1764, d. Vilna, 1836), head of the Rabbinic court of Vilna, it appears that he wrote all seven of these responsa, too. Also in the Library is a Halachic query to him from a Rabbi of Horodna (Grodno, Lithuania).

One of these seven responsa is published elsewhere with differences and additions and is signed by the above author. The Library's seven responsa were prob-

ably Rabbi Avraham Abbale's original versions written for his records, which he then copied—with elaborations occurring to him at the time of writing—and signed before sending the final versions to his correspondents.

The responsum published elsewhere is addressed there to “Rabbi Avraham Leib, head of the Rabbinic court of Pasval.” In the Library's original version written by the author, however, it reads “Rabbi Avraham Abbale, head of the Rabbinic court in Pasval.” Although this recipient had the same name as our author, he is clearly a different person. He is also the recipient of a responsum in a published collection by another author.

The editor of the *Be'er Avraham* responsa by our author (Jerusalem, 1980), assumes, however, that the recipient in that other collection was identical to our author. On this basis, he concludes that our author originally served as Rabbi of Pasval at an early age, and already then was considered—according to the exalted titles given by the author of the responsum in that other collection—to be a scholar of extraordinary stature.

On the basis of the manuscript in the Chabad Library, however, that assumption and conclusion seem to be wrong. More likely, the two Rabbis of the same name were actually cousins, named after a common grandfather.

*Be'er Avraham* reproduces a facsimile of a manuscript of scholarly insights by our author, the original of which is in Moscow. At first glance the handwriting appears to differ from the Chabad Library's manuscript. Closer examination, however, reveals them to be written by the same person, but the Moscow manuscript was written at a younger age and in more orderly fashion than the other.

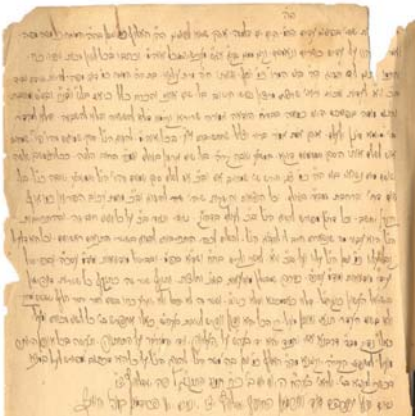
Based on that facsimile, another anonymous manuscript in the Chabad Library can be identified as our author's. The volume, consisting of scholarly insights on Talmudic-Halachic subjects, comprises parts of other manuscripts that have been bound together, and in some places refers to other volumes of the author's writings.

How did these manuscripts—from a Rabbi of “Misnagdic” Vilna at the height of the great controversy—get into the Chabad Library? An authoritative history notes that, after Rabbi Avraham Abbale's passing, three large chests of his manuscripts passed on to his stepson, whose son later inherited them. The son's father-in-law, apparently a Chabad Chasid, was related to the family of the Chabad Rebbes, and through him the manuscripts came into the possession of Rabbi Menachem Mendel, author of *Tzemach Tzedek*.

## 78. MANUSCRIPTS OF EISHEL AVRAHAM BY RABBI AVRAHAM DOVID OF BUCZACZ

Rabbi Avraham David (c.1770-1841) served as Rabbi of numerous communities for over half a century. In 1790, he became Rabbi of Yazlovitch, and from 1814 until his passing was Rabbi of Buczacz. Every day he had a practice of writing down all Torah insights that occurred to him. Over time, tens of thousands of papers accumulated, including his insights on all four sections of Shulchan Aruch, verses of Scripture, the Talmud and a wealth of other Torah subjects, none of which were published in his lifetime. From 1871 to 1933, many of his writings on *Shulchan Aruch* were copied, organized and published by his heirs, as were some of his other writings.





The Chabad Library has three manuscript volumes copied by his great-grandson from the author's original writings. One is written in no particular order but just numbers the insights copied as they came to the copier's hand. Its subjects include all four sections of *Shulchan Aruch*, conclusions of Talmudic tractates, insights on Scriptural verses, Talmud, the Siddur etc. Noted next to some paragraphs are the words "published" or "copied." Another includes mainly the author's comments on *Choshen Mishpat*, fourth section of the *Shulchan Aruch*. A third includes various subjects, some already published.

Certain extracts from these manuscripts were published in an issue of the journal *Yagdil Torah*. Later, at the request of *Machon Yerushalyim* (publisher of carefully prepared editions of works of Torah scholars of previous generations), copies of the manuscripts were sent for inclusion in their new comprehensive edition of the *Shulchan Aruch* now in the process of being published, which includes *Eishel Avraham*—comprising all the author's comments on *Shulchan Aruch*.

## 79. RABBI MENACHEM MENDEL ASKS A QUESTION TO HIS GRANDFATHER, RABBI SCHNEUR ZALMAN OF LIADI

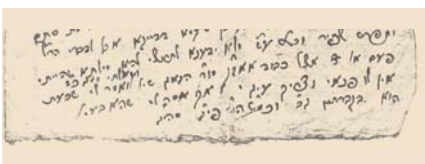
Over the years, many fires in Lubavitch unfortunately consumed untold numbers of irreplaceable manuscripts, particularly of Rabbi Menachem Mendel, author of *Tzemach Tzedek*. Despite these great losses, however, so much of his voluminous writings have survived that they have provided material for publication of close to a hundred volumes to date. These embrace the spectrum of Torah subjects, from profound explanations of Scripture, Talmud, Midrash and Halachic works to his own erudite and carefully argued Halachic responsa, and from Jewish philosophy and Kabbalah to Chasidus.

Virtually all his writings published until now, however (excluding his transcripts of discourses of his grandfather, Rabbi Schneur Zalman) were written after Rabbi Schneur Zalman's passing in 1812, when Rabbi Menachem Mendel was aged 23. His earliest dated writing until now has been a Halachic discussion concerning a divorce, written in 1813.

In several responsa, Rabbi Menachem Mendel mentions what he had heard from Rabbi Schneur Zalman or even what he witnessed in his childhood when the family lived in Liozna—from where they moved when he was 11 years old. But all were written in later years, not close to when he heard or witnessed what he writes.

The manuscript presented here, however, is unique. Rabbi Menachem Mendel's Halachic discussion in this four-page manuscript concludes with a problem he could not resolve, and he writes how he asked his grandfather about it—and refers to Rabbi Schneur Zalman with the blessing customary for someone still alive.

Also presented here is a Halachic comment Rabbi Menachem Mendel wrote close to the end of his life. For over six years until his passing before Pesach, 1866, he was sick and mostly bedridden. Chasidim addressed their requests to him through notes written on their behalf by his attendants, and he replied, either orally or in writing, in brief. Few writings remain from these years, and they clearly show how his hand trembled.



This comment concerns whether we wear *tefillin* on Chol Hamoed (the intermediate days of Pesach and Sukkos). He wrote the main discussion in earlier years and, after his passing, it was published in the *Tzemach Tzedek*. During his last years, however, he added this comment, of which his works' editors were apparently unaware and therefore did not include it. Interestingly, the comment notes that the custom now is not to wear *tefillin* on Chol Hamoed, "and that is also the opinion of the Explanations of the Gaon, Rabbi Eliyahu [the Vilna Gaon], may his memory be blessed..."

## 80. TANACH THAT BELONGED TO RABBI MENACHEM MENDEL, AUTHOR OF TZEMACH TZEDEK

The Hebrew Scriptures are usually referred to as *Tanach*—an acronym for *Torah* (the Five Books of the Pentateuch included in every Torah scroll), *Nevi'im* (books written by the Prophets), and *Kesuvim* ("Writings"—sacred books written at a lower level of Divine inspiration than prophecy).

The volume of *Tanach* featured here was published in Amsterdam in 1666-1667. On its first page, Rabbi Shalom DovBer, fifth Lubavitcher Rebbe, has written a quote from *Sifsei Y'sheinim* (Amsterdam, 1680, by Rabbi Shabbasai Bass, 1641-1718—probably the first work of Jewish bibliography), stating that this edition was carefully edited by Jewish and non-Jewish scholars and "has no mistakes at all." Inside the cover is a sticker, on which is written a note by Rabbi Yosef Yitzchak, sixth Lubavitcher Rebbe, that this volume belonged to Rabbi Menachem Mendel, author of *Tzemach Tzedek*, who used to read from it the Haftorah (portion from books of the Prophets that is read after the weekly Torah portion on Shabbos, festivals, and fastday afternoons).

Although his grandfather, Rabbi Schneur Zalman of Liadi, rules in his *Shulchan Aruch* that it is not required to read the Haftorah from a complete book, Rabbi Menachem Mendel apparently preferred to follow the stricter opinion of some Halachic authorities that it is best to read it from a complete book of the Prophets or *Tanach*.

Despite the above quote from *Sifsei Y'sheinim*, Rabbi Menachem Mendel did find several items to note and correct here:

1) Occasional differences of custom on which verses or portions of the Prophets are read as the Haftorah on certain occasions. Interestingly, Rabbi Menachem Mendel's written notes on this in his *Tanach* do not always accord with Rabbi Shalom DovBer's notes about the custom of his father, Rabbi Shmuel, nor with the "Order of the Haftorah according to Chabad Custom" as listed by the Lubavitcher Rebbe, Rabbi Menachem M. Schneerson, based on his father-in-law Rabbi Yosef Yitzchak's directions.

2) In some places Rabbi Menachem Mendel notes the location of each weekly Torah portions' divisions into seven *aliyos* (readings), which are not marked in this *Tanach*.

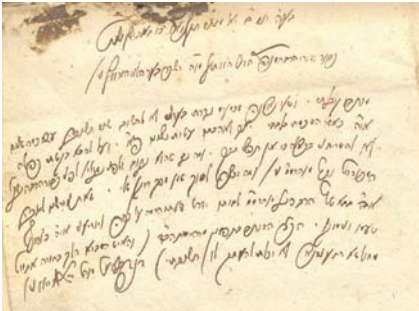
3) Occasionally, Rabbi Menachem Mendel comments on mistakes in this *Tanach* or textual differences according to other authorities. All these comments are shown here.

Evidently Rabbi Menachem Mendel used this *Tanach* also for listening to regular public Torah readings and for frequent study. The pages of the book of



*Tehillim* (Psalms) are especially well used, showing that he frequently recited *Tehillim* from this volume.

### 81. LETTER ACCOMPANYING RESPONSUM OF RABBI DOVID LURIA



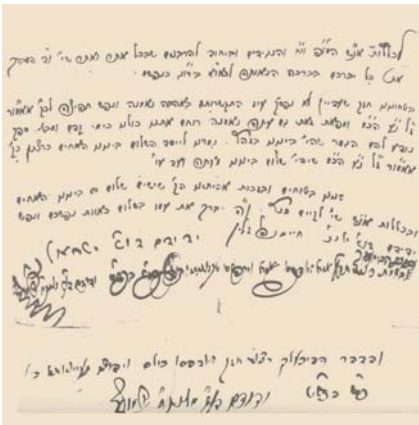
The Chabad Library has a manuscript of a responsum by Rabbi Dovid Luria, Rabbi of Old Bikhov and a prolific author of learned Torah works. It was sent to Rabbi Yissachar Ber, who was then Rabbi and Halachic authority in the town of Lubavitch (see above, chapter 33). The responsum has been published in the journal *Yagdil Torah*. Reproduced here is Rabbi Luria’s accompanying letter.

The query was about the validity of a divorce document—a subject of great complexity—and notes that the author was being asked because Rabbi Menachem Mendel, author of *Tzemach Tzedek*, was then away from Lubavitch (visiting several Chasidic communities).

Rabbi Luria writes that, in general, he had decided to stop issuing Halachic responsa for several years. He was replying now only because of his affection for Rabbi Yissachar Ber (who, it should be noted, had earlier served as Rabbi of New Bikhov, a neighboring community). He asked, however, not to bother him with such requests in future, “particularly as you are close [to] and [stand] before great ones, before the respected, great, renowned Rabbi, our teacher R[abbi] M[enachem] M[endel, author of *Tzemach Tzedek*]... and why do you want to anoint with oil from my empty can?”

He asked that, when Rabbi Menachem Mendel would return home, he should send him his opinion on this subject, together with his reasoning. He further writes that, because of the Fast of 9<sup>th</sup> Av, which had been observed the previous day, he was too weak to write a copy of the responsum for himself, and was now rushing to catch the mail.

### 82. LETTER BY THE SONS OF RABBI MENACHEM MENDEL, AUTHOR OF TZEMACH TZEDEK REGARDING SETTling THEIR DIFFERENCES AND OWNERSHIP & PUBLICATION OF HIS MANUSCRIPTS



After Rabbi Menachem Mendel’s passing in spring, 1866, there were differences of opinion between his sons, which were resolved that summer by a *Din Torah* (Rabbinic lawsuit) before a panel of the most prominent Chabad Rabbis.

The letter presented here describes the peace accord between them. Omitted are sections dealing with their disagreements—which are no matter of public concern—except for the sections about whether to divide their father’s manuscripts. Signed by the third and fourth of the Rebbe’s sons, Rabbi Chaim Schneur Zalman (1814-1880, later Rebbe of Liadi) and Rabbi Yisrael Noach (1815-1883, later Rebbe of Niezhin)—with two postscripts by the youngest son, Rabbi Shmuel (1834-1882), who succeeded his father as Lubavitcher Rebbe—they write here the reasons why they had decided to keep all the manuscripts together in their father’s home.

Forty volumes of manuscripts were left, they write, of which twenty were on



Talmudic-Halachic subjects and were soon to be edited for publication, and the other twenty were on Chasidus. In another letter, already published elsewhere, they write similarly and note that they had appointed guards for these valued manuscripts.

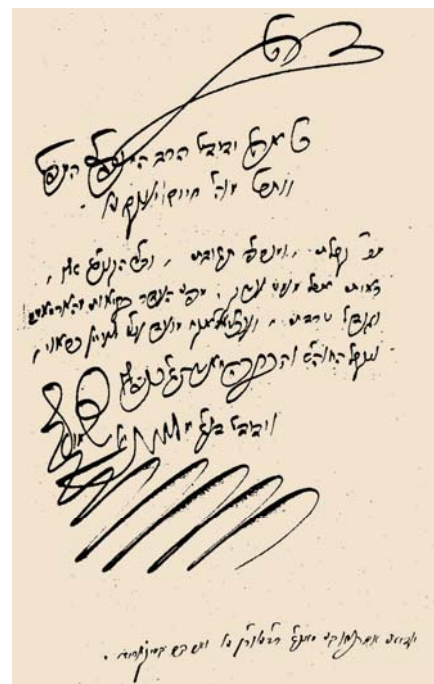
In both his postscripts, Rabbi Shmuel writes that he strongly desired that all the manuscripts be published immediately, and “may all his wellsprings be spread outward, as stated in *Keser Shem Tov*.” He was referring to the renowned letter of the Baal Shem Tov (published in *Keser Shem Tov*, an anthology of the Baal Shem Tov’s teachings) describing his heavenly vision in which asked Moshiach when he will come, and received the reply: “When your teachings will be publicized and revealed in the world, and your wellsprings will be spread outward.”

Rabbi Menachem Mendel’s responsa and other Talmudic-Halachic writings were immediately given to editors to prepare for publication, and most were published between 1871 and 1884. His manuscripts on Chasidus, however, were published only many decades later, a few between 1911 and 1918, and most in the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, in the multi-volume series *Or HaTorah*.

### 83. LETTER BY RABBI SHMUEL OF LUBAVITCH

This letter, by Rabbi Shmuel, is addressed to Rabbi Chaim Yaakov Vidrevitch, a renowned Talmudic scholar and Chabad Chasid who was the chief editor of Rabbi Menachem Mendel’s Talmudic-Halachic writings, *Tzemach Tzedek*, for publication. Later he served as the Rabbi of communities in White Russia and Lithuania, and then of Moscow from 1877 to 1892. When Moscow’s Jews were expelled in 1892, he moved to New York, where he served as Rabbi of the Chabad community on the Lower East Side until his passing in 1911.

Apparently, Rabbi Vidrevitch had sent a letter and a learned manuscript he had written, requesting the Rebbe to examine it. The Rebbe wrote to him that he received his letter and was enclosing a reply. (The reply, however, is not presently extant.) In addition, the Rebbe wrote that, because of health problems and many pressing concerns, he had perused the manuscript only a little so far, but intended to find time to examine it properly. He also asked about the whereabouts of the sons of some of his Chasidim.



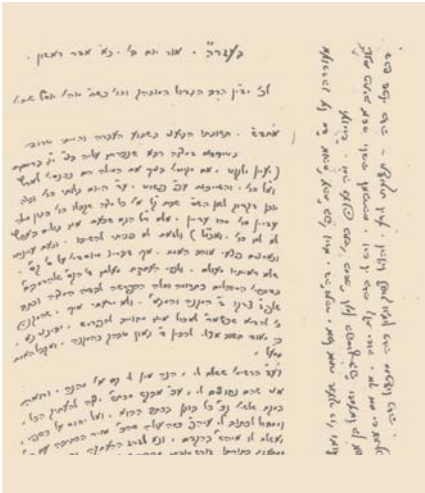
### 84. ENVELOPES WITH RABBI SHMUEL’S HANDWRITING

These are envelopes that have Rabbi Shmuel’s handwriting on them in Russian and German. His grandson, Rabbi Yosef Yitzchak, used to keep them in a special envelope, on which he noted their content, in Hebrew.



### 85. TORAH CORRESPONDENCE OF RABBI MORDECHAI SCHNEUR ZALMAN SCHNEERSOHN WITH RABBI YOSEF TUMARKIN

Rabbi Mordechai Schneur Zalman Schneersohn (d.1866) was the eldest son of Rabbi Yosef Yitzchak, the fifth son of Rabbi Menachem Mendel, author of *Tzemach Tzedek*. A brilliant scholar, he was appointed Rabbi of Zhitomir, an important city in Ukraine, at the young age of 17, during the lifetime of his



grandfather. Unfortunately, he passed away while still in his twenties, just 11 days after his grandfather. In recent years, his commentary and source references have been published on the summarized laws of hand-washing for meals and of blessings included in Rabbi Schneur Zalman of Liadi's Siddur. His other known Torah writings are not presently extant.

His letter presented here is addressed to Rabbi Yosef Tumarkin, Rabbi of Kremenchug, Ukraine, for many years. Rabbi Tumarkin was a Chasid of Rabbi Menachem Mendel, who was very fond of him and wrote to request him to accept the position of Rabbi in Kremenchug. He was renowned as an outstanding scholar, to whom many contemporary Rabbis addressed Halachic queries. His responsa were very profound, but although, after his passing, his family wanted to publish them, they were eventually lost. A few have been published, including one in the Chabad journal *HaTomim*, which is in response to a previous query, also published there, by Rabbi Mordechai Schneur Zalman Schneersohn, author of this letter, which, in turn, is his reply to Rabbi Tumarkin's responsum there.

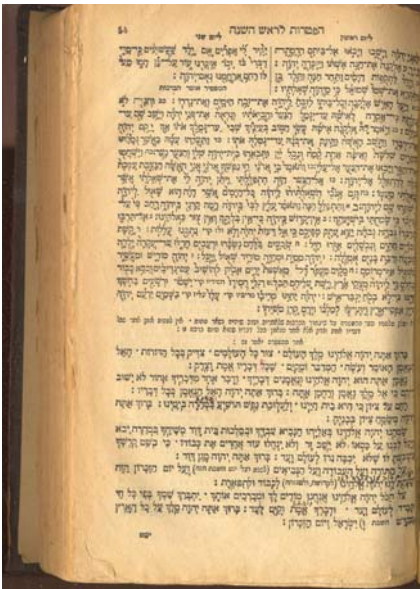
The letter's expressions show how personally close the author felt to Rabbi Tumarkin and how he admired and enjoyed his Torah profundity. Besides the scholarly subjects of his queries here, he also requests Rabbi Tumarkin to send him all copies of responsa of his grandfather, Rabbi Menachem Mendel, which he had in his possession, and asks to let him know the total cost of copying so that he could reimburse him.



### 86. NOTES ON THE JERUSALEM TALMUD BY RABBI SHALOM DOVBER OF LUBAVITCH

When Rabbi Shalom DovBer, fifth Lubavitcher Rebbe, and his family left Lubavitch in fall, 1915, in the face of approaching German armies in World War I (see above, Introduction, and chapter 10), he sent most of his library to Moscow for safekeeping (see above, Introduction, and chapter 63). He took with him, however, his collection of manuscripts and about 100 Torah volumes for his own use and those that had belonged to his ancestors (such as Rabbi Menachem Mendel's *Tanach*, described above, chapter 80). Among them was his set of Jerusalem Talmud and notes, published in Zhitomir, on the margins of which he wrote several comments and notes, which are presented here.

These include three learned comments, while the rest are notes comparing the text of the Jerusalem Talmud and its accompanying commentaries in the Zhitomir edition to that of other editions, or else obvious corrections.



### 87. RABBI SHALOM DOVBER'S CORRECTIONS ON THE HAFTORAH BLESSINGS

From 1915 to 1920, Rabbi Shalom DovBer lived in Rostov, southern Russia. During that time, on Rosh Hashanah in the four years 1916-1919, he used a Machzor published in Vilna, 1910.

In this Machzor, the blessings recited following the reading of the Haftarah do not include the addition of certain words included in the text of the Siddur as instituted by Rabbi Schneur Zalman of Liadi and followed by Chabad Cha-

sidim. Rabbi Shalom DovBer therefore wrote in these extra words, as shown here.

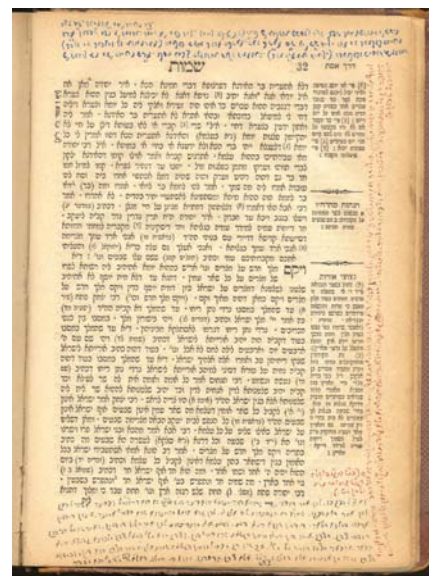
At the beginning of the Machzor is attached a sticker on which Rabbi Yosef Yitzchak, sixth Lubavitcher Rebbe, has noted the above in brief.

### 88. HANDWRITTEN COMMENTS ON THE MARGINS OF ZOHAR BY RABBI LEVI YITZCHAK SCHNEERSON

In 1940, Rabbi Levi Yitzchak—father of the Lubavitcher Rebbe, Rabbi Menachem M. Schneerson—was sent into exile in a remote village in Kazakhstan (see above, chapter 65). Having no Torah books to study, he wrote to his wife, Rebbetzin Chana, asking her to send him certain books, including the three volumes of the *Zohar*, central work of the Kabbalah.

Later, she traveled to join him in order to be of assistance to him. Seeing his pain at being unable to write down his flow of Torah insights for lack of ink and paper, she learned how to manufacture ink from various herbs, and he used it to write his profound comments around the margins of his few Torah books. On several occasions, the Rebbe spoke about this publicly, explaining that since his mother lacked expertise in ink production, the ink varied in color from time to time.

This chapter shows three pages of Rabbi Levi Yitzchak’s comments on the *Zohar* (which were later published), in the inks’ varying colors—red, green, blue, purple and black.



### 89. CALENDAR OF LAWS & CUSTOMS ACCORDING TO NUSACH HA'ARIZAL & CHABAD CUSTOMS—AS EDITED BY THE LUBAVITCHER REBBE, RABBI MENACHEM M. SCHNEERSON

Rabbi Avraham Chaim Noeh (d. 1954) was a renowned scholar and Chabad Chasid born in Hebron, who lived his later decades in Jerusalem. Most of his life was devoted to compiling useful works to clarify practical Halacha in general, and particularly according to the rulings of the Chabad Rebbes and following Chabad custom.

Among his works was his annual Calendar of Synagogue Laws and Customs, according to Chabad custom. Originally he published it himself as a wall chart, and also as a booklet sent to supporters outside the Holy Land. Later, and continuing until today, it has been published annually by Colel Chabad—the aid organization for Jews in the Holy Land established by Rabbi Schneur Zalman of Liadi and headed by all his successors, the Chabad Rebbes, in following generations.

The oldest sample of his calendar in the Chabad Library is a booklet for the Jewish year 5692 (1931-1932). The Israeli National Library in Jerusalem has an older sample, a wall chart for the year 5686 (1925-1926).

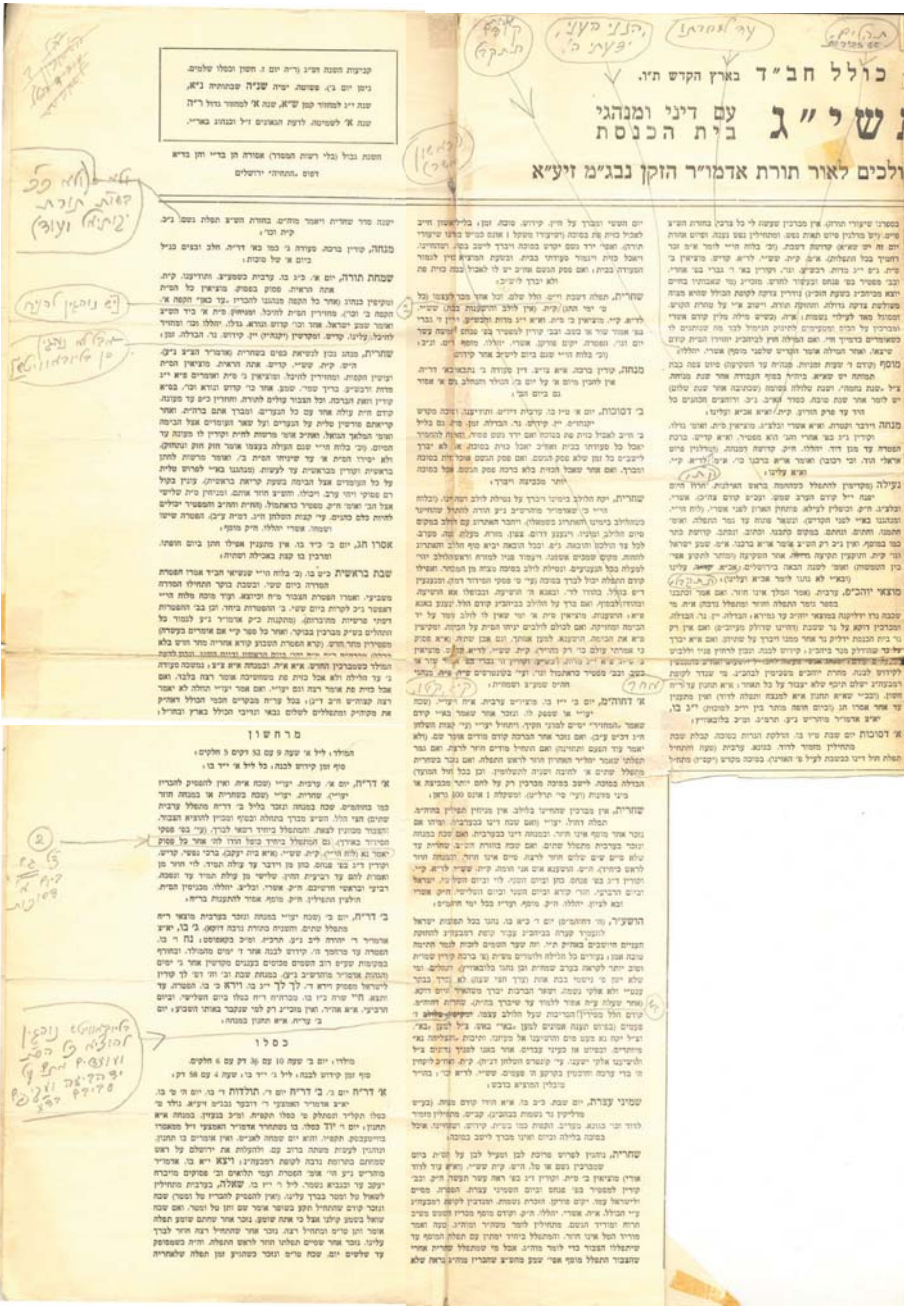
After the Lubavitcher Rebbe, Rabbi Menachem M. Schneerson, arrived in the United States in 1941, he frequently publicized Chabad customs as observed from and authorized by his father-in-law, Rabbi Yosef Yitzchak, sixth Lubavitcher Rebbe. He published these in his Chasidic calendar *Hayom Yom*



(1943), his *Haggadah* (1946), and in lists of customs for festivals etc., that appeared in various booklets of Chasidic discourses published by Chabad.

The Rebbe accepted the Chabad leadership in 1951. In summer, 1952, Rabbi Noeh sent the calendar of the following year, 5713 (1952-1953), in wall chart format, to New York to the Rebbe to edit. The Rebbe made many additions and corrections, which have been incorporated into every year's Colel Chabad calendar ever since.

The wall chart was in two separate sheets, but only the first of these is presently in the Library's possession, covering the months of Tishrei, MarCheshvan and part of Kislev. On this chart appear dozens of the Rebbe's handwritten additions and corrections—which have been published elsewhere.





# Portraits and Photographs



## 90. PORTRAIT OF RABBI YOSEF HATZADDIK, RABBI OF POZNA

Rabbi Yechezkel Landau (1714-1793), Rabbi of Prague, one of the greatest Torah giants of his era, is renowned under the name of his Halachic responsa, *Noda B'Yebuda*. Less well-known is his son-in-law Rabbi Yosef “Hatzaddik” (1726-1801), author of *Zichron Sh'eiris Yosef* (Kolomaya, 1882) on the Talmud. In his generation, however, Rabbi Yosef was well known, serving as Rabbi of several cities before he became Rabbi of the important community of Pozna (Posen, Germany, now Poland) in 1780. His father-in-law was particularly fond of him and lauded his Torah prowess, calling him “unique in the generation.”

## 91. PORTRAIT OF RABBI AKIVA EIGER

Rabbi Akiva Eiger (c.1762-1837) was a celebrated prodigy from an early age. Later he became Rabbi of Friedland, where he headed a yeshiva of hundreds of students, and became renowned among the Rabbis of his generation, who sent him a flow of Halachic queries. In 1815, he became Rabbi of Pozna, reestablishing there his yeshiva, which grew even larger and more famous. He was a prolific author of Talmudic-Halachic works, used and admired in *yeshivos* and by Torah scholars to this day.

The Chabad Library has an oil portrait of Rabbi Akiva Eiger, too. On the back is written the name of its owner, “Yosef, son of the renowned Torah scholar, Rabbi Akiva Eiger.” The problem is that Rabbi Akiva Eiger did not, as far as we know, have any son of that name. He did, however, have a less well-known cousin with the same name as his, Rabbi Akiva Eiger, who served as Rabbi of Halberstadt, and was succeeded by his son, Rabbi Yosef, who passed away in 1851. Perhaps this portrait belonged to him.

This chapter traces how this portrait, and that described in the previous chapter, came into the possession of the Chabad Library, together with other items—a collection of Jewish calendars, historic documents and printed material.



## 92. ORIGINAL PORTRAIT OF RABBI MENACHEM MENDEL, AUTHOR OF TZEMACH TZEDEK

All pictures of Rabb Menachem Mendel, author of *Tzemach Tzedek*, publicized until recently are based on a portrait painted, without the Rebbe's knowledge, by a non-Jewish artist. During the Rebbe's later years, the artist was allowed into his room for a few moments on Shabbos, when the Rebbe wore his white Shabbos garments. With his eyes almost closed, the artist immediately returned to his lodging, keeping the Rebbe's image in his mind, and then painted from memory. He made just two errors: 1) The Rebbe's garment has its left side over the right, as is non-Jewish custom but contrary to Jewish (particularly Chasidic) custom; and 2) the book held by the Rebbe has the top cover at its left end, like books of European alphabets which are read from left to right, instead of at the right end, as are Hebrew books which are read from right to left.

Later pictures of the Rebbe were all attempts, of varying success, to imitate

this portrait. Shown here are seven pictures publicized until now, the first of which dates to 1886. One of them was given to Rabbi Yosef Yitzchak, sixth Lubavitcher Rebbe, by his grandmother, Rebbetzin Rivka, (wife of Rabbi Shmuel, fourth Lubavitcher Rebbe), who told him it is much closer to the appearance of her father-in-law than other publicized pictures.

Until recently, however, the original portrait's whereabouts were unknown. In 1991, the original oil painting was discovered in the Moscow home of a great-grandson of Rabbi Shlomo Zalman Schneersohn (1830-1900), Rebbe of Kopust. The latter was the eldest son of Rabbi Yehuda Leib, second son of Rabbi Menachem Mendel, and this portrait had adorned his home.

This full-color portrait is almost full-length and is very clear. Several of the books in the bookcase seen next to the Rebbe seem, according to the appearance of their bindings, identical to some preserved in the Chabad Library to this day. Of all pictures previously publicized, the one given to Rabbi Yosef Yitzchak by his grandmother is closest by far to this painting. Many points of similarity, besides other details, indicate this portrait to be the original.



### 93. PHOTO OF RABBINIC CONVENTION, KOROSTIN, UKRAINE, 1926

At the end of October, 1926, a convention was held of Rabbis of communities in central Ukraine was held in Korostin. This was the only spontaneous general Rabbinic convention ever held in the Soviet Union. It was greatly encouraged by Rabbi Yosef Yitzchak, sixth Lubavitcher Rebbe, for it comprised only traditional Rabbis interested in strengthening traditional Judaism even under the difficult conditions prevailing under the new regime.

A picture of participants in this convention has been published elsewhere, but it was from a contemporary newspaper and was not clear enough to identify anyone. Later, however, a copy of the original photo was discovered, on which each participant is marked with a number. Altogether, 101 individuals are shown, but the list identifying each by number is no longer extant.

A separate list of official participants exists, which includes 50 local Rabbis and 22 guest Rabbis—from communities outside the convention's official region. The other 29 individuals on the picture were apparently there in an unofficial capacity.

Efforts to identify the individuals on the photo have succeeded only partially—only 12 so far, some of them by conjecture.

The list of 72 official participants is given here in the hope that relatives or others may succeed in identifying more of them.



### 94. THREE PHOTOS OF RABBI YOSEF ROSEN, THE ROGATCHOVER GAON

As noted above (chapter 64), the Lubavitcher Rebbe, Rabbi Menachem M. Schneerson, held the Rogatchover Gaon (1858-1936) in the highest esteem. During the Gaon's lifetime he corresponded with him on profound Torah subjects, and later he strongly encouraged publication of the Gaon's works from manuscript. In the Rebbe's public Torah addresses, he often mentioned the



Gaon and his unique Torah approach and insights with the greatest respect.

In the Library there are three photos of the Rogatchover that were given to the Rebbe. On the back of one of them, the Rebbe wrote, in Hebrew, “The Gaon of Rogatchov.”



Q. Gold

## 95. PHOTOS OF RABBI LEVI YITZCHAK AND REBBETZIN CHANA SCHNEERSON

Two pictures presently exist of the Rebbe’s father, Rabbi Levi Yitzchak Schneerson.

1) One is from the files of the NKVD, the Soviet secret police, taken at the time of his arrest in spring, 1939.

2) The other was taken after his release from exile in a remote village in Kazakhstan, when he settled, in 1944, in that republic’s capital, Alma Ata. His years in exile had so weakened his health that, at the end of that summer, just months after his release, he passed away. When the Rebbe received this picture, he wrote on the back, in Hebrew: “My father, of blessed memory?” The question mark apparently alluded to the difference between how his father looked in this picture and how he had looked before, a difference so vast that it was difficult for anyone who had known him before, even his own son, to identify him as the same person!

A number of pictures exist of Rebbetzin Chana, the Rebbe’s mother. The last picture was taken when she came to watch the rally for Jewish children held on Lag B’Omer, spring 1963—about a year and a half before her passing in early fall, 1964.

When the Rebbe received this picture, he wrote on the back, in Hebrew: “Lag B’Omer, 5723.”



## 96. PICTURES OF RABBI YOSEF YITZCHAK OF LUBAVITCH WITH THE REBBE, RABBI MENACHEM M. SCHNEERSON

Shown here are three pictures of the Lubavitcher Rebbe, Rabbi Menachem M. Schneerson, together with his father-in-law, and predecessor, Rabbi Yosef Yitzchak. Next to them are additional pictures of Rabbi Yosef Yitzchak taken at the same locations and at or around the same times.

1) In 1928, apparently close to the time of the Rebbe’s wedding: The Rebbe is standing next to Rabbi Yosef Yitzchak, who is sitting by the dining room table—probably in his family dwelling in Riga, Latvia, where he then lived—holding the Rebbe’s hand.

Next to it is another picture, at the same table, where Rabbi Yosef Yitzchak is sitting and reading a book, with his wife, Rebbetzin Nechama Dina, sitting next to him.

2) Spring, 1935, at the Austrian country resort of Purkersdorf, where Rabbi Yosef Yitzchak was staying: He is shown, standing among the trees, together with the Rebbe.

Next to it are two other pictures of Rabbi Yosef Yitzchak standing in the same location.

3) Summer, 1942, at the annual dinner of the United Lubavitcher Yeshi-



voth: Rabbi Yosef Yitzchak is giving a speech, while the Rebbe is supporting him with both hands.

Next to it are three more pictures showing those at the dinner's head table, including Rabbi Yosef Yitzchak, the Rebbe, his brother-in-law Rabbi Shmaryahu Gourary, guest Rabbis—including Rabbi J. B. Soloveitchik and Rabbi Dr. Leo Jung—and prominent Chasidim and Chabad supporters.

### 97. STUDENTS OF YESHIVAS TOMCHEI TEMIMIM, WARSAW-OTWOCK

The picture of all students of Yeshivas Tomchei Temimim-Lubavitch in Warsaw and its suburb of Otwock, Poland, has often been publicized. Here, however, is presented another picture that is not well known. The small pictures are actually the same as in the other picture but are printed here in a different shape.

The yeshiva's alumni who survived World War II have made great efforts to identify the individuals shown here, as already published elsewhere.



### 98. VIEWS OF LUBAVITCH WORLD HEADQUARTERS, 770 EASTERN PARKWAY, 1943-1945

These pictures were taken at a rally of Chadrei Torah Temimah—Lubavitch, a Chabad-organized network of Sunday and afternoon Torah schools for Jewish children who attended public schools. Possibly it was the rally held in spring, 1945, in the open courtyard then adjacent to Lubavitch World Headquarters at 770 Eastern Parkway. On most of that courtyard the first section of the central Lubavitch *shul* was later erected, presently the western end of the *shul*. This chapter discusses details of the pictures.



### 99. THE REBBE'S STUDY IN THE 1940S

During the 1940's, a delegation of alleged Ethiopian Jews once visited a number of Jewish organizations including Lubavitch. Rabbi Yosef Yitzchak, sixth Lubavitcher Rebbe, spoke to them words of encouragement and blessing, and told them to meet with his son-in-law, Rabbi Menachem M. Schneerson. They met with the Rebbe in his office, which served then also as the office of Merkos L'inyonei Chinuch, the educational department of Chabad-Lubavitch, and of Kehot, the Lubavitch publishing house. Also present were the important officials of the Rebbe's secretariat, Rabbi M. L. Rottstein and Rabbi C. M. I. Hodakov.

After the meeting, the visitors asked to have a picture taken. The two officials of the secretariat are seen here with the visitors.

The appearance of the Rebbe's room in the picture is different from its appearance in later years, and this chapter discusses the details.



The background of the slide is a dark, textured image of ancient Hebrew text on parchment. The text is arranged in vertical columns and is rendered in a light, semi-transparent color, making it difficult to read but clearly visible as a historical document. The parchment has a mottled, aged appearance with some darker spots and irregular edges.

# Sacred and Historic Objects

## 100. TEFILLIN BELONGING TO THE CHABAD REBBES

In 1966, a Lubavitcher Chasid from Montreal visited his birthland, the Soviet Union, where someone gave him Rabbi Schneur Zalman of Liadi's *tefillin* in order to bring them to the Rebbe. Soon after, the Rebbe allowed these *tefillin* to be displayed one day in the small upstairs *shul* at 770, and whoever had immersed that day in a *mikveh* was allowed to pass by and view them.



As is known, in accordance with the Kabbalah, the Chabad Rebbes wear on every weekday several sets of *tefillin*: 1) Rashi *tefillin*, worn by all Jews for weekday morning prayers, follow Rashi's Halachic opinion for the order of the *parshios*—parchments on which are written the four Scriptural texts that refer to the commandment of *tefillin*—and their placement in the leather boxes; 2) Rabbeinu Tam *tefillin*, which follow the opinion of Rashi's grandson, Rabbeinu (Yaakov) Tam, for a different order of the *parshios*, are worn by many, especially Chasidim, usually after morning prayers; 3) Shimusha Rabba *tefillin* have a different order for the head *tefillin* only, but the same order for the hand *tefillin* as Rashi, so they are worn after Rashi *tefillin*, just changing the *shel rosh*; 4) Raavad *tefillin* (also called Shimusha Rabba of Rabbeinu Tam) have a different order for the head *tefillin* only, but the same order for the *shel yad* as Rabbeinu Tam, so they are worn after Rabbeinu Tam *tefillin*, just changing the head *tefillin*.

Kabbalah sources emphasize that, of these four, the last two are not for most people, but may be worn only by those of exalted spiritual level.

Besides the four sets of *tefillin* worn by Rabbi Yosef Yitzchak himself, he left us two more groups of *tefillin*—eight sets altogether—which appear to be the *tefillin* of his grandfather, Rabbi Shmuel, and of his father, Rabbi Shalom DovBer. They are described in this chapter, together with reasons for identifying them as stated.

## 101. A SLEEVE, A SKULLCAP & AN ATARA

In Rabbi Yosef Yitzchak's private office, there is a wall that holds, among other items, several sacred objects inherited from his ancestors. They are not labeled for origin, but reasonable conjectures may be advanced:

1) One is a black silk sleeve, 55 cm. long, clearly well used, to the extent that it has a hole in the elbow. Its small size and simple style lead us to believe that it was from garment of Rabbi Menachem Mendel, author of *Tzemach Tzedek*, which, after his passing, is known to have been divided among his children, with one part given to Rabbi Shmuel, fourth Lubavitcher Rebbe.

The pictures of Rabbi Menachem Mendel, which all derive from a single source (see above, chapter 92), all have him wearing a white garment, which is what he wore on Shabbos and festivals. But he must also have had a black garment that he wore on weekdays, which apparently was the one divided between his children.

2) A white skullcap, in which are mixed silver threads, also has a small tassel. It was certainly worn by one of the Chabad Rebbes, but it was unknown which one until a note was discovered, in the handwriting of Rabbi Yosef Yitzchak, about a skullcap belonging to his grandfather, Rabbi Shmuel, which Rabbi Yosef Yitzchak received as a present, in 1928, from a cousin, a member of the Schneersohn family. It seems likely that the note refers to this skullcap.



3) An apparently very old silver *atara* (adornment, literally “crown”) that some are accustomed to attach to the top end of their *tallis*.

This custom is widespread among non-Chabad Chasidim, but has not been customary among Chabad Chasidim. It has been suggested that this Chabad practice dates back to 1798, when Rabbi Schneur Zalman of Liadi was arrested by the Czarist government and huge sums seemed likely to be required to obtain his release. Leading Chasidim gathered and decreed that, among other steps, every Chabad Chasid should remove his silver *atara* from his *tallis* and donate it to the fund for saving the Rebbe.

Since it is not Chabad custom, it is conjectured that perhaps Rabbi Yosef Yitzchak inherited this *atara* from his ancestors (through his mother, Rebbetzin Shterna Sarah), the Rebbes of Chernobyl and Cherkassy.



## 102. WALKING STICKS BELONGING TO THE REBBES

The Library’s collection includes several canes, some with a known history:

1) One cane belonged to the renowned Rabbi Levi Yitzchak of Berditchev (1740-1809), and was later inherited by a descendant. The latter’s daughter-in-law was a granddaughter of one of the two sons of Rabbi Moshe Shapiro (son of Rabbi Pinchas of Koretz, a renowned disciple of the Baal Shem Tov), the Rabbi of Slavita and owner of the famous printing press there (see above, chapters 50, 55 and 57). The two sons were arrested on false charges during the 1830’s, and were condemned to a cruel beating by soldiers. They were to be sent to Siberia but intercession got their sentence commuted to house arrest in Moscow (where few Jews were then permitted to live), from which they were released only after 17 years. The above-mentioned granddaughter traveled to visit them in Moscow, taking the cane with her (apparently for Rabbi Levi Yitzchak’s merit to protect her on her sacred mission). While she was there, the cane was damaged in a storm, and one of the Polish noblemen trying to help the family later fixed it with a new handle (the cane is still somewhat damaged). In 1957, a descendant of one of the Shapiro brothers sent the cane to the Rebbe.

2) A second cane, too, is reputed to have belonged to Rabbi Levi Yitzchak of Berditchev. Its metal handle is in the form of an eagle and on it are inscribed the letters ALPCCA (which could be either Latin or Cyrillic script). The Rebbe used to keep this cane in his private office, where it was hung on the table made by Rabbi Shmuel, fourth Lubavitcher Rebbe (see below, chapter 103). No other details about its origin or its ascription to Rabbi Levi Yitzchak are presently known.

3) Also unknown is the background of another cane found among Rabbi Yosef Yitzchak’s belongings, which is not identifiable from his pictures of that period showing a cane.

4-5) In 1941-1942, Rabbi Zalman Bezploff (son of Rabbi Yaakov Mordechai Bezploff, Rabbi of Poltava, see above, chapter 45) bought two canes with silver handles for Rabbi Yosef Yitzchak—because he felt the one the Rebbe used was not nice enough. The Rebbe accepted one from him, but apparently did not use it. This cane has the initials “S.B.” engraved on it.

Rabbi Bezploff took back the other cane—apparently at the Rebbe’s direction. Some time later, he moved to S. Francisco, California, and Lubavitcher





students who spent part of their summer traveling on “Merkos Shlichus” (tours to seek Jews for the purpose of strengthening Jewish identity and observance) sometimes visited him there. When Rabbi Yosef Chaim Rosenfeld (now administrator of Oholei Torah, Brooklyn) visited him as a student in 1959, Rabbi Bezploff gave him the second cane as a gift. It is engraved with the name “Z. Bezploff.” Rabbi Rosenfeld sent it to the Lubavitcher Rebbe, Rabbi Menachem M. Schneerson, who in return sent a check in payment, noting that he avoids accepting gifts without payment.

All of the above canes are shown here in the above order.

7) Another cane, reputed to have belonged to the Baal Shem Tov, was given to the Lubavitcher Rebbe, Rabbi Menachem M. Schneerson, by a Jew born in Leningrad to an assimilated Jewish family. His father, before his passing, told his son this cane had belonged to the Baal Shem Tov, from whom they descended, and he should never sell it, because this family heirloom had been passed down from generation to generation.

For this reason he brought the cane with him when he emigrated from Russia. In New York he met Chabad Chasidim, who encouraged him to become more Jewishly involved and invited him to a farbrengen of the Rebbe, held at the central Lubavitch *shul* at 770 Eastern Parkway, in Brooklyn. He was so inspired that he later brought the cane to the Rebbe as a gift. The Rebbe asked its price, but the man did not feel comfortable accepting payment and requested instead to arrange for *kaddish* to be said on his father’s yahrtzeit, to which the Rebbe agreed. The Rebbe asked whether he wore *tefillin* daily, and when he replied in the negative, the Rebbe requested him to start doing so. He agreed and the Rebbe accepted the cane, suggesting he go to a certain local Judaica store to choose a pair of *tefillin*. At the store, the man asked for the cheapest pair because he had little money. Just then, the storekeeper received a phonecall, and, after hanging up, gave the man the best pair of *tefillin*, telling him it was a present from the Rebbe! Some time later, the man passed away and the Rebbe said *kaddish* for him. The Rebbe kept the cane in his private office, where it remains to this day.

### 103. THE WOODWORK OF RABBI SHMUEL

In 1947, Rabbi Menachem M. Schneerson published a biography of Rabbi Shmuel, fourth Lubavitcher Rebbe, where he notes the following: Rabbi Shmuel’s doctors advised him, because of his poor health, to exercise regularly (see above, chapter 6) and to work with his hands. The family home of the Rebbes in Lubavitch had several items of superb craftsmanship made by Rabbi Shmuel, including a tall lamp of 12-13 branches, tables inset with wood and stone mosaic etc. Rabbi Shmuel was also an expert scribe, and gave each of his sons a *megillah* (scroll of Esther) he had written, and there were also *mezuzos* that he had written.

The implication of the Rebbe’s words was that the family no longer had the pieces of furniture—probably they were left in Lubavitch when the family moved to Rostov in 1915—but that the *megillos* and *mezuzos* were still known to exist. Indeed, the *megillah* he wrote for his son, Rabbi Shalom DovBer, is in the Library and several of its columns have been publicized. Nothing, however,



is presently known about the *mezuzos* he wrote.

Nevertheless, a table made by Rabbi Shmuel has stood in the Rebbe's office since 1947. How did it get there?

Rabbi Shmuel's youngest son, Rabbi Menachem Mendel (1867-1942), inherited one of the tables his father had made, and took it with him when he was compelled to leave Russia. He settled in Paris and had the table with him there. He later lived in Bastia on the isle of Corsica, where he passed away during World War II. His daughter, Mrs. Chana Ozerman, lived in Paris, and when the Rebbe traveled to Paris in 1947 to meet his mother, Rebbetzin Chana, and bring her to New York, Mrs. Ozerman paid him a visit, presenting him with the table as a gift.

The table can be taken apart. The Rebbe brought the pieces back with him on his voyage home and reassembled the table in his office at 770, where it stands to this day.

#### 104. THE SATCHEL OF RABBI SHMUEL

Shown here are pictures of a leather despatch bag that belonged to Rabbi Shmuel, fourth Lubavitcher Rebbe, together with a note written by his grandson, Rabbi Yosef Yitzchak, explaining that his grandmother, Rebbetzin Rivka, the wife of Rabbi Shmuel, had presented it to him as a gift in winter, 1887-1888 (when he was aged seven and a half).



#### 105. ANTIQUE SCROLLS

Besides the *megillah* written by Rabbi Shmuel (see above, chapter 103), the Library has several other *megillos*. Five were acquired by Rabbi Yosef Yitzchak in 1925, when he bought the collection of around 5000 rare books that had belonged to the renowned bibliographer, Shmuel Wiener. Then in his later years, Mr. Wiener was moving to France, where his son lived, but the Soviet authorities refused to let him take his collection with him. He agreed to sell it in its entirety to the Rebbe, who asked him the background of many items. On each of the five antique *megillos*, the Rebbe attached a sticker giving brief details about its history—all of which are reproduced in this chapter.

There is also a Kabbalistic scroll written on parchment, dating back to at least the 18<sup>th</sup> century. It is a ornate copy of the "Great Tree" composed by Rabbi Meir Poppers (c.1624-1662, editor of *Eitz Chaim* and *Pri Eitz Chaim*, the Kabbalistic writings of Rabbi Chaim Vital, leading disciple of the Arizal), which shows the "order of the chain" of Divine revelation to the spiritual worlds that precedes the creation of this physical world. Comparison with the published version shows that this manuscript is missing at its beginning and end, and its text also has differences from the published version. This scroll, too, has a sticker with a note written by Rabbi Yosef Yitzchak giving the known details of its background.

The Library also has four published editions of this Kabbalistic scroll, which are described in this chapter.



## 106. SACRED OBJECTS FROM THE ARCHIVE OF RABBI CHAIM KEVES

Rabbi Chaim Keves (1889-1943) was born in Vyetka, and studied at Yeshivas Tomchei Temimim in Lubavitch. In 1926 he became Rabbi of Yuchovitch, near Polotzk, White Russia. Later, when the Soviet regime's persecutions of Rabbis made it impossible to remain there, he fled to Nevel. In 1941, when the Germans invaded the Soviet Union, he escaped and settled in Samarkand, Central Asia, together with many other Chasidim.

His wife was a daughter of the Vileiker Rebbe, who was somehow related to Rabbi Yosef Yitzchak, sixth Lubavitcher Rebbe. She had inherited a spoon reputed to have belonged to the Baal Shem Tov, and a cup that Rabbi Mordechai of Lekhovitch (1742-1810) was reputed to have received from Rabbi Yechiel Michel of Zlotchov (1721-1786), a renowned disciple of the Baal Shem Tov.

Rabbi Chaim and his wife refused to sell these precious heirlooms, but after their passing, apparently without heirs, the Chasidim sold their belongings to provide assistance to poor refugees. R. Meir Itkin bought some of the items and, after he escaped from the Soviet Union and arrived in Paris, sent them in 1947 to Rabbi Yosef Yitzchak.

Another sacred object left behind by Rabbi Chaim Keves was a small kettle reputed to have belonged to the Baal Shem Tov. Another Chasid in Samrkand bought it and later sold it to Rabbi Yisrael Posner of Klimovitch, who, after he left the Soviet Union around 1970, presented it to the Rebbe.

Together with the other two items, R. Meir Itkin also sent Rabbi Yosef Yitzchak a *paroches* (ark curtain) reputed to have belonged to Rabbi Schneur Zalman of Liadi. His letter to the Rebbe explains how he obtained it, tracing its source to a descendant of Rabbi Schneur Zalman, Rabbi Shmuel Akiva Schneersohn of Moscow, who had inherited it as a family heirloom.



## 107. THE PRIVATE OFFICE OF RABBI YOSEF YITZCHAK OF LUBAVITCH

The first picture shown here reveals objects that remain on the desk of Rabbi Yosef Yitzchak, sixth Lubavitcher Rebbe, since before his passing in 1950: an electric lamp, an electric clock, and a bell he used to call his secretary when he needed him (another bell can be seen on the picture taken in spring, 1949, when the Rebbe was granted U.S. citizenship). In the corner is a small step-ladder used for reaching books on higher shelves of the bookcases. In the picture of the Rebbe lighting Chanukah lights, his menorah is standing on this ladder.

Near the window several small books can be seen. These useful books were always on Rabbi Yosef Yitzchak's desk, and following the directive of the Rebbe's son-in-law and successor, Rabbi Menachem M. Schneerson, were replaced there when they were returned in 1987 after the court case.

Another picture shows the Rebbe standing next to his father-in-law, Rabbi Yosef Yitzchak, during the procedure to grant him U.S. citizenship. In honor of this special occasion, Rabbi Yosef Yitzchak wore his fur *shtreimel*, or *spodik*, normally worn on Shabbos and festivals. The *shtreimel*, too, is shown here.

Also shown are the actual citizenship papers, signed by the Rebbe twice, once on the document itself and again on the photograph.



Shown, too, is a small revolving bookcase that stood next to Rabbi Yosef Yitzchak's desk. It was for books he often used, to save him the bother of having to go the main bookcases to get the books he needed.

Near the fireplace is a suitcase on which are engraved in gold letters Rabbi Yosef Yitzchak's initials "J.S." In this suitcase he kept the Baal Shem Tov's Siddur and letter, letters of the Chabad Rebbes, and manuscripts of the Chabad discourses of his father, Rabbi Shalom DovBer. He insisted on taking this suitcase with him wherever he went, even when running from shelter to shelter during the 1939 German bombardment of Warsaw.



### 108. RABBI YOSEF YITZCHAK'S PROPELLER PENCIL

Over several years, Rabbi Yosef Yitzchak used this propeller pencil to write replies to the thousands of letters he received. His replies were numbered according to the letters received, and later his secretaries copied them by typewriter. Accompanying the pencil is a note by the secretary, R. Nissan Mindel, giving its background.



### 109. PRAYER-STANDS USED BY THE LUBAVITCHER REBBE, RABBI MENACHEM M. SCHNEERSON

When the Lubavitcher Rebbe, Rabbi Menachem M. Schneerson, accepted the Chabad leadership, he refused to sit on a special chair or use a special *amud* (stand) during public prayers. Instead he sat on an ordinary bench, at an ordinary table, in the small upstairs *beis hamidrash* (study hall) used then for prayers (and for study by senior yeshiva students, then and to this day). For weekday prayers he stood, or sat on the bench, next to the door at the north-east corner. On Shabbos and festivals he stood, or sat on the bench, at the table along the south end (where he also sat during his *farbrengens*). On Shabbos and festivals, however, an *amud* was placed at the south-east corner for the Rebbe to use for each Amidah prayer, which is said standing.

The original *amud* was low and sloping—apparently so that it not be too high for the Rebbe to use even while sitting. Its top opened to form a “chest.” It is unclear when this *amud* was made, but it was already used during the festivals of Tishrei, 1951.

During the 1950's it was replaced by a higher *amud*. A while later, that *amud* was replaced by a third, which was wider and more nicely made, with a small, two-door closet and an open-out shelf on which the Rebbe could place his Siddur while sitting.

In 1962, the Vocational School at Kfar Chabad, in the Holy Land, built for the Rebbe a new *amud*, similar to the third (with the difference that its closet doors close against a small vertical bar, preventing insertion of the Rebbe's hat on Yom Kippur for use in the evening prayer following the fast). This *amud* was sent with a large group of Chasidim from the Holy Land who came to the Rebbe on a special charter flight for the festivals of Tishrei. It was presented to the Rebbe at a special *farbrengen* he held in their honor on the evening before Rosh Hashanah. The Rebbe explained the significance of an *amud* and told a famous story of Rabbi Schneur Zalman of Liadi in this connection.





After the *farbrengen*, the Rebbe directed that the new *amud* be brought into his room, where it remained for over half a year. At that time, the downstairs *shul* was already built, and the Rebbe used to pray there on Shabbos evening and morning. On Friday and Shabbos afternoons, however, he still prayed upstairs and the old *amud* was taken upstairs and downstairs as necessary. At Pesech time, 1963, the Rebbe directed that, instead of moving the *amud* back and forth, the new *amud* could be left permanently for use in the upstairs *shul*, and the old *amud* could remain downstairs.

All four of these original prayer-stands are now in the Library.

#### 110. PARCHMENT HAFTOROS SCROLL IN THE REBBE'S ROOM

In the Rebbe's room, on the table made by Rabbi Shmuel, fourth Lubavitcher Rebbe, lay for many years a scroll of the Haftoros—specific selections from the books of the Prophets read after the Torah readings on Shabbos and festival mornings and fastday afternoons. It is written on parchment, rolled up like a Sefer Torah, with *atzei chaim* (wooden staves) at the two ends, and covered with a mantle.

Books that the Rebbe used, too, were often left on Rabbi Shmuel's table, but he directed his secretary not to place them on top of this Haftoros scroll.

On the scroll's *atzei chaim* is an inscription indicating who donated it to a *shul* in 1927. There is also a sticker stating that R. Gershon Galin gave it—apparently to the Rebbe—in 1958. He was a wealthy resident of Crown Heights who contributed generously to Chabad institutions, while trying to keep his philanthropy unpublicized. Beyond this, nothing further is known about this scroll.

Those privileged to enter the Rebbe's room for *yechidus* (private audience) thought the scroll was a Sefer Torah. In fall, 1977, when the Rebbe was not well and stayed in his room at 770, R. Yaakov Lipskier—who was a *gabbai* (warden) of the synagogue at Lubavitch World Headquarters, and had built the beautiful large ark in the downstairs *shul* at 770—decided to build a small ark for this scroll, too. When he brought it, the Rebbe replied that it was not a Sefer Torah but a book of Haftoros, and directed that the new ark be sent to the Library. Some time later, the scroll of Haftoros, too, was sent for safekeeping to the Library.

