



Teshurah (Memento) from the Bar Mitzvah  
of Yisroel Aryeh Leib Tennenhaus ז"ש

Featuring translated selections from the Sefer Chiddush Sofrim

By Rabbi Yaakov Silberman ז"ל

Along with a brief overview of the Alter Rebbe's ksav,  
and some background and unique qualities  
of one of the leading Sofrim (scribes) of the last century



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## Introduction

It is my pleasure to present a *teshurah* (memento) in honor of the Bar Mitzvah of my grandson, Yisroel Aryeh Leib Tennenhaus, "ישי, son of Rabbi Mendy and Endi Tennenhaus, י"ח"י.

The *teshurah* is most connected to a Bar Mitzvah, as it contains a sampling of translations of the *sefer Chiddush Sofrim*, written by my 8<sup>th</sup>-grade Rebbi, Rabbi Yaakov Silberman, ל"ד, one of the foremost and leading *sofrim* (scribes) of the last century. The *sefer* discusses the proper shapes of the letters to be used when writing *tefillin*, etc.

Yisroel Aryeh Leib, the Bar Mitzvah boy, is named after the Rebbe's brother, ז"ל, and after my brother, Rabbi Yisroel (Sroli) Tennenhaus, ל"ד.

My brother was my mentor. When I was ten years old, he taught me how to put *tefillin* on college students, and the Rebbe told him to be a *boki*, to be fluent, in the laws of *tefillin*.

May this *teshurah* bring awareness to the incredible reliance of the overwhelming majority of Halachic authorities on the Alter Rebbe's opinion on this topic.

I would like to thank Rabbi Yehuda Altein and Rabbi Eli Schochat for translating the Hebrew sections and putting together this *teshurah*. Much thanks as well to Rabbi Yossi Altein, Rabbi Moshe Schwartz, my son and daughter-in-law Rabbi Mendy and Rebbetzin Endi Tennenhaus, and my wife Rebbetzin Goldie Tennenhaus for their invaluable assistance.

May we merit to have Yiddishe and Chassidishe *nachas* from Yisroel and from all our children and grandchildren י"ח"י.

May all of the Bar Mitzvah guests and readers of this *teshurah* merit many *simchas*, and may the next *simcha* be in Yerusholayim, with Moshiach, NOW!

Rabbi Raphael Tennenhaus

7 Iyar, 5782

Hallandale Beach, Florida

## Author's Introduction to Chiddush Sofrim

The *sefer* I present to you today, *Chiddush Sofrim-Tomar Yaakov*, is the result of my forty-five years of experience writing and correcting *sta"m* (as well as *gittin*).

When I began studying *hilchos sta"m* in depth, I did not have all the pertinent *sefarim* available. Therefore, whenever a question arose that was not discussed in the *sefarim* I had, I needed to study the topic myself and reach a conclusion. I wrote down those conclusions, as well as most of the *halachos* discussed in these *sefarim*. I then arranged them according to the order of the Alter Rebbe's Shulchan Aruch on *hilchos tefillin*.

I then realized that it would be beneficial for my fellow *sofrim* if I would share the fruits of my labor with them. In this *sefer* they will find a suitable explanation on the Alter Rebbe's Shulchan Aruch. They will also find clarity on various common questions relating to the writing of *sta"m*, *megillos*, and *gittin*.

Another benefit of this *sefer*:

The Chasam Sofer wrote a *haskamah* on the *sefer Keses Hasofer*. He wrote that no *sofer* should be allowed to write *sta"m* unless he is fluent in that *sefer*. Now, the *Keses Hasofer* writes that he copied the shapes of the letters from the Alter Rebbe's Shulchan Aruch. Due to the popularity of *Keses Hasofer*, the shapes of the letters as explained in the Alter Rebbe's Shulchan Aruch have become accepted by the majority of Bnei Yisroel.

In the present *sefer* I resolve the questions posed by the *Keses Hasofer* and other Acharonim on the shapes of the letters as explained in the Alter Rebbe's Shulchan Aruch. I also provide sources and explanations for *Ksav Chabad*, the script devised by the Alter Rebbe. He instructed R' Reuven Sofer to use this script, which fuses the opinions of the Poskim and the Arizal's tradition.

I also cite alternate versions with practical application based on old prints of Gemara and Poskim that serve as the basis for *hilchos sta"m*.

Additionally, whenever possible I try to find leniencies so as to prevent unnecessary *genizah* of sacred texts. I gleaned this perspective from four *sofrim* of the previous generation from whom I received guidance when I began writing *sta"m*.

\* \* \*

I named this *sefer Chiddush Sofrim*, because it is a work on *safrus* and there are surely some *chiddushim* inside. I added a *kuntres* with expositions I felt would be too lengthy to include in the *sefer* itself. I called this *kuntres Tomar Yaakov* as a sign of respect toward my parents: My name is *Yaakov*, and *Tomar* (תמר) is an acronym for *Toldos Avraham Moshe Rivkah*, "the descendants of Avraham Moshe (my father) and Rivkah (my mother)."

Please do not rely on what is written in this *sefer* for practical purposes without examining the topic yourself. May it be Hashem's will that I will not present any incorrect rulings. May the Alter Rebbe's merit stand in good stead for me, my children, and my grandchildren, that we should fear Hashem and study His sacred Torah.

Yaakov Silberman

### Introduction from the Sons of the Author

The day has arrived when our father's *sefer*, over which he labored extensively, is finally being published.

We must note that our father never fully completed the work of arranging the *sefer*. Many *chiddushim* remained written on loose pages, and it was not clear where in the *sefer* they belonged. Additionally, most of the pictures of the letters, essential to properly understand the various scenarios discussed in the *sefer*, were missing.

We were assisted in many areas by R' Moshe Weiner, author of *Osiyos Harav*, and R' Menachem Mendel Meshi-Zahav, author of *Minchas Soles*. The latter selected his grandson R' Chaim Dovid Meshi-Zahav to undertake the task of preparing the *sefer* for print, which he did with tremendous success.

\* \* \*

To assist the reader in learning this *sefer*, we added comments, pictures, captions, and a detailed index.

May it be Hashem's will that this *sefer* will be of benefit to those involved in the field of *safrus*, as the Gedolei Yisroel wrote in their *haskamos*. May this *sefer* assist in spreading knowledge of this area in Halachah, as our father desired.

Sons of the author

### Haskamos to Chiddush Sofrim

**Rav Moshe Feinstein**, dated Kislev 2, 5740: "It is a necessary *sefer* that is of great benefit to scribes, as well as to rabbis and decisors of Jewish law. The author is a great Talmudic scholar, and a specialist in the laws of writing Torah scrolls, *tefillin*, and *mezuzos*. He is also a sharp student and has an expert eye when it comes to the shapes of the letters."

**Rav Yitzchok Yaakov Weiss** (author of *Minchas Yitzchok*), dated Tuesday of Parshas Shelach, 5741: "This *sefer* is necessary and very beneficial for scribes and those who expound and decide practical Jewish law."

**Rav Shmuel Vosner** (author of *Shevet Halevi*), dated Erev Shabbos Parshas Chukas, 5748: "The author descends properly to the crux of the matter, with straightforward thinking. He cites sources and presents logical arguments, according to the knowledge of Torah."

**Rav Pinchas Hirschprung** (*rov* of Montreal), dated Erev Rosh Chodesh Nissan, 5751: "In this *sefer*, the author of blessed memory is revealed as unique in our generation in the art of writing Torah scrolls, *mezuzos*, and *tefillin*, with sharpness and amazing breadth in the opinions of the Rishonim and Acharonim.... It is befitting to rely on the author.... Therefore, I declare that it behooves every scribe to study this *sefer* thoroughly. It can be used to make proper halachic decisions relating to the laws of *safrus*."

**Rav Yaakov Yitzchok Neiman** (*av beis din* of the Belz community of Montreal), dated Chodesh Nissan, 5751: "There is no doubt that the release of this *sefer* will greatly benefit those involved in the holy work [of writing holy articles]. They will learn how to be precise in the writing of Torah scrolls, *tefillin*, and *mezuzos*."

**Rav Shlomo Zalman Auerbach**, dated Iyar 23, 5751: "The author was knowledgeable in the entirety of the Talmud.... He proved his expertise in the areas of writing *gittin* and the writing of Torah scrolls, *tefillin*, and *mezuzos*, and he was a trusted source for those who had questions in these matters."

**Rav Yitzchok Tuvia Weiss** (*gaava*"d of the *Eidah Hachareidis*), dated Elul 3, 5766: "I knew the author well in his younger years. Already then he was a genius in Torah and was great in his pure fear of G-d."

**Rav Moshe Sternbuch** (*raava*"d of the *Eidah Hachareidis*), dated Chodesh Av, 5778: "When this *sefer* is published, it will certainly be joyously accepted by those who study these *halachos*."

The *safar* **R' Menachem Davidovitch**, dated Sivan 13, 5741: "You can rely on the words of the author."

## The Alter Rebbe's Ksav: A Brief Overview

Although all *sta"m* are written in *ksav ashuri*, there are various opinions as to exactly how this *ksav* is formed. Although the basics are the same, there are variant nuances in how the letters are shaped.

The most common scripts are *ksav Beis Yosef*, followed by Ashkenazim; *ksav Arizal*, followed by most groups of chassidim; and *ksav velish*, followed by Sephardim.

Unique among these scripts is *ksav Admor Hazaken*, the Alter Rebbe's *ksav* (which the Frierdiker Rebbe describes as "a most beautiful script"<sup>1</sup>). The story is told that once, when the Alter Rebbe was in Mezeritch, the Maggid summoned him and gave him an important task relating to the *mitzvah* of *tefillin*. He instructed him to determine the correct way of writing the letters (and also of forming the *battim* and tying the *retzuos*), in a way that would conform with both the Poskim and the Mekubalim. The Alter Rebbe spent four weeks laboring on this topic, until he succeeded in creating a *ksav* that would meet this requirement.<sup>2</sup>

It should be noted that the Alter Rebbe's *ksav* differs from the way the Alter Rebbe describes the shapes of the letters in his Shulchan Aruch (*siman* 36). In his Shulchan Aruch, the Alter Rebbe describes both *ksav Beis Yosef* and *ksav Arizal*. The Alter Rebbe's *ksav*, by contrast, is very close to *ksav Arizal*, with adjustments. (This should come as no surprise. There are many examples where the Alter Rebbe changed his mind from what he wrote in his Shulchan Aruch.)

The Rebbe corresponded with various *sofrim*—including R' Yaakov Silberman—attempting to determine the exact tradition of this *ksav*. At the same time, the Rebbe strongly encouraged that Lubavitchers use *sta"m* written in this *ksav*.<sup>3</sup>

As R' Yaakov writes in his introduction, one of the goals of *Chiddush Sofrim* is to find sources and provide explanations for the nuances unique to the Alter Rebbe's *ksav* (see the selections featured below). This *sefer* is thus a significant resource for Lubavitcher *sofrim*, and indeed for all *sofrim* and *rabbonim*, in gaining clarity on this *ksav*.

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<sup>1</sup> *Igros Kodesh* of the Frierdiker Rebbe, vol. 6, p. 95.

<sup>2</sup> See *Yagdil Torah* (New York), issue 26, pp. 37ff. See also *Igros Kodesh* of the Frierdiker Rebbe, vol. 9, p. 53.

<sup>3</sup> See the forceful letter of the Rebbe printed in *Igros Kodesh*, vol. 15, p. 316. For a collection of the Rebbe's correspondence on this topic, see *Otzar Minhagim V'Horaos* (Bistritsky), *Yoreh Dei'ah*, pp. 201–204.

## Selections from Chiddush Sofrim

### The Left Head of the *Tes*, *Ayin*, and *Shin*

(*Chiddush Sofrim*, p. 274)

When describing the letter *tes*, the Alter Rebbe writes:<sup>4</sup> “The left head of the *tes* should be shaped like a *zayin*  (according to the Poskim who require a *zayin* to be made within each of the letters שׁעטנ״ג ף״א. However, according to the tradition of the Arizal, when writing *tefillin*, the left head should be shaped like a *vov*.)” 

The Alter Rebbe brings the same difference of opinion regarding the left heads of the *ayin* and *shin*.<sup>5</sup> According to the Poskim they should be shaped like a *zayin*,   while according to the Arizal they should be shaped like a *vov*.<sup>6</sup>  

The Alter Rebbe devised a unique *ksav*, with the goal of satisfying the opinions of both the Poskim and the Mekubalim. The left heads of the *tes*, *ayin*, and *shin* are fashioned in such a way that they can be seen as both a *vov* and a *zayin*.

How is this accomplished? The right side of the head is made curved until the bottom, and the foot extends from the end of the curve, sloping toward the right. 

A question can be asked on the Alter Rebbe’s solution. The Gemara writes that each of the letters ף״א ר״שׁעטנ״ג requires three *ziyunin*.<sup>7</sup> Most Poskim understand this to mean that each of these letters should be adorned with *tagin* (crowns), referring to the three slender lines extending from their tops. However, the Yereim (R’ Eliezer of Metz) understands this to mean that the heads of these letters should have three corners and not be curved.<sup>8</sup> Now, according to the Alter Rebbe’s *ksav*, the heads of *tes*, *ayin*, and *shin* only have two corners on the left side, while the right side is entirely curved!

Perhaps we can resolve this difficulty as follows:

First, neither the Mechaber nor the Rama cite the *shitah* of the Yereim in Shulchan Aruch. Perhaps it is not accepted in *halachah*.

Second, there are various *shitas* regarding how the *tagin* should be formed. What’s more, according to the Rambam, failure to add *tagin* does not disqualify the *tefillin*. Therefore, you are *yotzei* no matter which *shitah* you follow. This, then, is the rationale behind the Alter Rebbe’s *ksav*: Although the right side is curved (disregarding the opinion of the Yereim), since crowns are made on the top (following the other opinions), you are *yotzei*.

Furthermore, according to the Arizal, the heads of these letters should be shaped like a *vov*. The right side of a *vov*’s head is curved, and its foot extends from the right side, so it lacks three corners. So if you follow the Arizal, you will be unable to also follow the *shitah* of the Yereim. With regard to whether the

<sup>4</sup> 36:2, *tes*.

<sup>5</sup> 36:2, *ayin* and *shin*.

<sup>6</sup> With the other three letters of ף״א ר״שׁעטנ״ג—*nun*, *gimmel*, and *tzaddik*—the Poskim and Mekubalim both hold that they should incorporate a *zayin* (*Chiddush Sofrim*, p. 227).

<sup>7</sup> *Menachos* 29b.

<sup>8</sup> Cited in *Beis Yosef*, *Orach Chaim*, toward the end of *siman* 36.

left head should be shaped like a *zayin* or a *vov*, the Alter Rebbe's *ksav* succeeds in satisfying both opinions. However, it is impossible to follow the Arizal while also satisfying the Yereim, so the Alter Rebbe disregards the latter *shitah*.

(The only way to satisfy the *shitah* of the Yereim is by deviating slightly from the Arizal and adding a third corner to the right side of the head. Indeed, some *sofrim* make the heads of the *tes*, *ayin*, and *shin* in this way.)

### The Bottom-Left Corner of the *Yud*

(*Chiddush Sofrim*, pp. 277 and 281)

When describing the letter *yud*, the Alter Rebbe writes:<sup>9</sup> “The head of the *yud* should be bent slightly downward to the left. This is accomplished by adding what resembles a small *oketz* (projection) extending downwards.”

If no projection was added, and the left side of the *yud* extends downward in a curve, it would seem that the letter is not kosher. Such an extension is not included in the term “*oketz*.”

Similarly, if the bottom of the left side of the *yud* ends in a corner (without a projection extending from it), perhaps it is not kosher. though the term *oketz* can include a corner with a point, the Alter Rebbe writes that the *oketz* should extend downward, which is only possible if a projection is added.

Following this reasoning, even if the point of the corner extends sideways but lacks a vertical projection, it would seem to be problematic.

Now, in the Rebbe Maharash's *megillah*, the left sides of the *yudin* end in a corner with a point, without a vertical projection. In most cases, the point extends slightly downward, but in some cases it only extends sideways.



Section of the Rebbe Maharash's *megillah*

This requires explanation.

Perhaps this can be explained based on the following:

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<sup>9</sup> 36:2, *yud*.

The Chasam Sofer was once asked about the kosher status of an old Sefer Torah with many letters written differently from what is accepted. One of the letters in question were the *yudin*, which were written without projections on the left side extending downward. Instead, they merely ended in a corner with a point (see third picture of the *yud* above). The Chasam Sofer replied that these *yudin* were kosher, so long they ended in corners and were not curved.<sup>10</sup>

Based on this, *yudin* that have a point extending sideways are surely acceptable, even without the Chasam Sofer's *chiddush*. They do more than just end in a corner; they also have a point extending sideways. The only factor missing is the projection downwards, and it stands to reason that this requirement is not *me'akev*. (Not only that, but there may be a *hiddur* not to include vertical projections—see note.<sup>11</sup>)

## Flexibility of the Letters

(*Chiddush Sofrim*, pp. 191–194)

One of the fundamental sources dealing with the shapes of the letters is the *sefer Boruch she'omar*, written by one of the later Rishonim.

With most of the letters, the *Boruch She'omar* specifies the height of the letter, using the thickness of the quill as a unit of measurement. (For example, he writes that the height of the *beis* should be like the thickness of three quills: one for the top line, one for the bottom line, and one for the space in between.<sup>12</sup>) However, the Alter Rebbe omits these specifications. Why?

Perhaps we can explain this based on what the *Boruch She'omar* writes regarding the letter *tov*. He brings two opinions as to what the left leg of the *tov* should look like: an upside down *daled* or an upside down *vov*. He continues that in reality there is no argument: If you are writing short letters (i.e., each letter is three quills thick), the left leg should be shaped like a miniature upside down *daled*. But if you are writing tall letters (i.e., each letter is four quills thick), the left leg should be shaped like an upside down *vov*.<sup>13</sup>

We see from here that even according to the *Boruch She'omar*, the height of the letters is not set in stone. In fact, he even mentions an advantage to taller letters: When writing in this way, the letters that extend below the line (i.e., the end letters) do not contrast as much with the other letters, providing a neater look.<sup>14</sup> (For example, the *Boruch She'omar* writes that the end *chof* should extend the thickness of two quills below the line.<sup>15</sup> If the other letters are only three quills thick, the end *chof* is extending the length of two thirds of a letter. However, if the other letters are four quills thick, it is only extending the length of half a letter.)

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<sup>10</sup> *Shu"t Chasam Sofer, Yoreh Dei'ah* 265.

<sup>11</sup> A possible reason is that if the projection is too long, the *yud* might look like a (miniature) *ches* (see *Shu"t Tzemach Tzedek, Even Ha'ezer* 2:387).

<sup>12</sup> *Kovetz Sifrei Stam*, vol. 1, p. 200.

<sup>13</sup> *Kovetz Sifrei Stam*, vol. 1, pp. 243–244.

<sup>14</sup> *Kovetz Sifrei Stam*, vol. 1, p. 204.

<sup>15</sup> *Kovetz Sifrei Stam*, vol. 1, p. 201.

We see from this that the height of the letters is not determined by the thickness of a certain number of quills. Rather, what is important is that each letter be consistent with the other letters of that handwriting.

This understanding has practical implications, in cases where the kashrus of a letter is in doubt. Let's say the leg of a *vov* is too short, causing it to look like a *yud*. The *din* is that a child who is neither too wise nor too foolish should be asked to say what the letter looks like. When showing him the *vov*, the letters adjacent to the questionable *vov* should not be covered. Perhaps on its own it looks like a *yud*, but when viewed in contrast to the nearby letters, it will be clear that it is a *vov*. Conversely, if the letters are taller, what is really a *yud* might appear like a *vov* if viewed on its own.<sup>16</sup>

You might question this conclusion from the Alter Rebbe's wording. The Alter Rebbe writes that there is no *need* to cover the adjacent letters.<sup>17</sup> This implies that while not necessary, you may cover them if you so wish!

Perhaps we can answer that the Alter Rebbe is referring to other doubts in the shape of a letter that do not pertain to its length. But when a letter's length is in question, the child *must* be shown the surrounding letters, to ensure he will have an accurate impression of the questionable letter. This will prevent us from disqualifying *tefillin* and *mezuzos* unnecessarily.

A similar idea applies to the width of the letters. The head of the *vov* must be short, because if it extends too much, the *vov* may look like a *reish*. However, if the rest of the letters are wide, the top of the *vov* can be extended a bit and it will still look like a *vov*. That same *vov*, if placed among thinner letters, \*would look like a *reish*.

Similarly, certain letters differ from each other due to a curve in one versus a corner in the other (such as a *daled* vs. a *reish*). Others differ due to an extension in one that is lacking in the other (such as a *beis* vs. a *chof*). How sharp must the corner be, and how long must the extension be? The answer will be influenced by a comparison of these letters to the other letters of that handwriting.

Interestingly, we find differences in the shapes of the letters in different eras and locations in history. For example, the shape of a *samech* in all old Sephardi handwriting is very similar to the Ashkenazi end *mem*. Similarly, in centuries past, the left leg of the *hei* would touch its roof. To differentiate it from a *ches*, the left leg would touch the center of the roof, as opposed to its left side.  It is impossible to say that all such *sta"m* were written improperly!

We must say that the shapes of the letters varied based on time and place. They are all kosher, provided the handwriting in each Sefer Torah, *tefillin*, and *mezuzah* is consistent.

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<sup>16</sup> *Shu"t Darchei Noam, Even Ha'ezer* 3.

<sup>17</sup> 32:20.

### Biography of R' Yaakov Silberman

R' Yaakov Silberman was born to his parents R' Avraham Moshe and Rivka Silberman on 13 Iyar, 5681 (1921). Unfortunately, he was orphaned from both parents at an early age.

R' Yaakov grew up in London, where he studied in the Etz Chaim Yeshiva and then in the Toras Emes Yeshiva, known as "Schneider's yeshiva." His colleagues in the latter yeshiva were great Torah scholars such as Rav Yitzchok Tuvia Weiss and Rav Moshe Sternbuch, who recall his tremendous *hasmadah* and pleasant character.

R' Yaakov married his wife Frieda on 21 Adar, 5705 (1945), in Manchester. After his wedding, he served as a *maggid shiur* in the Toras Chaim Yeshiva in London. In 5709 (1949) he moved to Montreal, where he taught in Yeshivas Tomchei Tmimim Lubavitch.



R' Yaakov with his students

R' Yaakov would also give *shiurim* to *balebatim*, and he had many personal *shiurim* as well. One topic in which he excelled was the field of *zmanim* in Halachah. He would prepare a calendar of *zmanim* for the Montreal community each year.

Alongside his teaching responsibilities, R' Yaakov was an expert *sofer*. In addition to his proficiency in *hilchos sta"m*, he was blessed with a beautiful script and produced superb *parshiyos*.

R' Yaakov spent endless hours studying and clarifying the opinions of the Poskim relating to *hilchos sta"m*, and especially regarding the shapes of the letters. The result was the *sefer Chiddush Sofrim*, on which he received *haskamos* from many Gedolim.

R' Yaakov corresponded with the Rebbe regarding the differences between the Alter Rebbe's *ksav* and the other scripts used to write *sta"m*. Some of the Rebbe's letters to him are printed in *Igros Kodesh*.<sup>18</sup> R' Yaakov was also one of the *sofrim* that the Rebbe requested should be present at the *siyum* of Moshiach's Sefer Torah. He appears in the famous picture of the Rebbe placing a crown on the Sefer Torah.



R' Yaakov is directly behind the Sefer Torah, his face partially obstructed by the *atzei chaim*

R' Yaakov studied Chassidus on a daily basis, placing special emphasis on Tanya and Likkutei Torah. He would study them each day before davening, after which he would daven slowly and carefully. He didn't know what it meant to come to davening at the last minute or to rush through davening. After davening, he would study his *shiurim* and say Tehillim in Rabbeinu Tam's tefillin, and only then would he go home. On Shabbos and Yom Tov, he would spend many long hours studying Chassidus.

As a chossid, he would go out of his way to be *mekarev* other Jews and help them in any way possible.

R' Yaakov passed away in Montreal on 9 Shevat, 5751 (1991). May his memory be a blessing.

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<sup>18</sup> Vol. 8, p. 141. Vol. 16, p. 178. See also vol. 21, pp. 237–238. Vol. 9, pp. 199–200. Vol. 22, p. 374.

## My Recollections of R' Yaakov Silberman

Rabbi Raphael Tennenhaus

For many years, R' Yaakov was a teacher in Yeshivas Tomchei Tmimim Lubavitch in Montreal. I merited to be in his class in eighth grade, when I was 11–12 years old. Additionally, he was our neighbor and was a friend of my father.

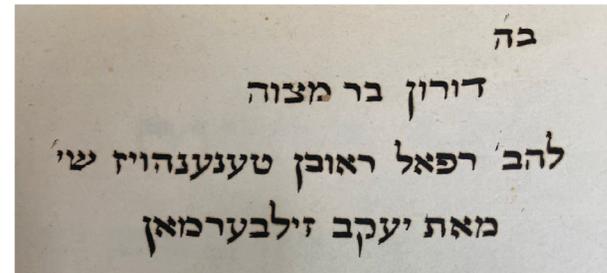
When I was a child, I heard that R' Yaakov become attracted to Chabad while still living in London. He once found a *sefer* lying in *sheimos* missing the front cover. Perusing it, he was greatly impressed. He said that he wanted to join paths with those Jews who follow the method of serving Hashem explained in this *sefer*. He later discovered that the *sefer* was none other than the Tanya.

When learning Gemara in his class, we often came across a word we did not recognize. In all sincerity, R' Yaakov would say, "I don't understand. I am sure you are all *maavir sedrah* on Friday afternoons. This word appears many times in Targum Onkelos. How can it be that you don't recognize it?!"

For my Bar Mitzvah, Rabbi Silberman gave me the Sefer Hamitzvos of the Rambam.

When Rambam Yomi started, and we began to teach Sefer HaMitzvos between Mincha-Maariv, I was using this Bar Mitzvah gift Sefer for the first few years.

Here is the inscription from Rabbi Silberman to me in the Rambam Sefer that he gave me for my Bar Mitzvah:



As his former student, it is my fervent desire that his crown jewel, *Chiddush Sofrim*, be given the recognition it deserves. May his efforts to clarify the Alter Rebbe's *ksav* bear fruit, putting to rest any questions anyone might previously have had about this superior *ksav*.