

The Seforim Shrank

Kuntrus Im Ta'iru – Volume 18

Rav Eliyahu Mordechai Yanofsky, Editor

Reviewed by Rabbi BZ Karman

“That Rav Eliyahu Mordechai hadahavas haTorah, we all knew. But with this, we can also see the tremendous ahavas Yisroel that he had.”

(Rav Aharon Shechter, Rosh Yeshiva of Mesivta Yeshiva Rabeinu Chaim Berlin)

“Im ta'iru ve'im te'oriru es ha'ahavah ad shetechpatz” (Shir Hashirim 2:7) The Ramban explains that there are times when a person has an awakening of *ahavas Hashem*, and he wishes to capture this feeling so that it remains with him. In order to accomplish this, the *pasuk* advises that one should transform his *hisorerus*, his awakening, *ad shetechpatz*—to solidify it into a *cheifetz shel mitzvah*, an object of a *mitzvah*. By converting it into a *mitzvah*, the feelings stirred within will have a lasting effect.

Rav Eliyahu Mordechai Yanofsky *z”l* was a most unique individual. Although he earned his *parnassah* in the field of *chinuch habanos*, his mind, heart and soul were embedded in the *koslei beis medrash*. When he felt a *hisorerus*, he sought out a means of encapsulating it in a manner which would benefit the *olalm of bnei Torah* to which he belonged.

Three years ago, he had a dream of producing a vehicle through which to enhance the already enormous *rischa d'oraisa* in Bais Medrash Govoha of Lakewood by publishing a periodical where *talmidei chachomim* would share *he'aros*—short concepts and ideas—which would be a source of creating a *masa umatan*, a give and take in the *sugyos* being learned, between *bnei Torah* and their peers. “When a person writes a long *shtikle Torah*,” he said, “The benefit of might be limited somewhat. Sure, the writer, who invested time and energy into producing the piece, has tremendous *sipuk* and *aliyah* from his work. But the advantage to others is not as noticeable, since often they won't devote much effort into learning it in depth. *He'aros*, a short *kushya*, a *ra'ayah*, a solution to a well-known problem, will generate a tremendous *ruach* and interaction amongst the *bnei hayeshivah*.”

He began transforming his dream into a *cheifetz*; he created a reality. It began in Adar 5775/2015 with a relatively small pamphlet, containing just seventy-two pages of *he'aros* on *Masechta Kiddushin*, which the yeshiva was learning at the time. This small treatise, diminutive in size but substantial in content, made its mark as it took the yeshiva world by storm.

The inaugural publication began with a *he'arah* from *gedolei roshei yeshiva* from the previous generation: the *rosh yeshiva* Rav Aharon Kotler, Rav Elazar Menachem Man Shach, Rav Shmuel Rozovsky, Rav Shmuel Berenbaum and Rav Shaul Brus *zichronom livrachah*. This was

followed by some *he'aros* from the *roshei yeshiva* of Bais Medrash Govoha, with the remainder containing *he'aros* from *roshei chaburos* and *yungeleit* of the *chaburos*.

Four months later, a second volume was published which contained *he'aros* from *gedolei Eretz Yisroel*, Rav Shlomo Arieli and Rav Dovid Cohen. In addition to the *he'aros* of the *talmidei hayeshivah*, it ends with a response to the *he'arah* of the Rosh Yeshiva, Rav Malkiel Kotler, offered by one of the readers of the *kuntrus*. The editors solicited material for the upcoming volume which was planned for a mere two months later, which would offer *he'aros* on Rosh Hashanah, Yoma and Succah.

Sure enough, come Tishrei 5776, the third volume was released, and once again it grew in size and scope. Besides for pieces of the *roshei yeshiva* of Bais Medrash Govoha, other local *roshei yeshiva* generously contributed their *he'aros*, and dozens of *yungeleit* submitted their own pieces on the various *yomim tovim* of Tishrei. A subsequent volume was dedicated to *he'aros* on Masechta Shabbos and Masechta Eiruvim, including the notes that Rav Elya Baruch Finkel recorded when he learned with Rav Nachum Partzovitz.

This pattern repeated itself every few months, with each new volume growing in size and covering different topics. Volume six, which was printed in Nissan, 5776/2016, contained a special section for the *he'aros* of three *gedolim* (Rav Meir Soloveichik, Rav Chaim Shlomo Leibovitz and Rav Chaim Yisroel Belsky z"l) who were *niftar* in that period. The *kuntrus* expanded to nearly two hundred pages due to the overwhelming response, as it became a popular venue for sharing *he'aros*.

The idea of presenting *he'aros* to the public so that it should create a *masa umatan* had obviously caught on. Ensuing editions included letters back and forth between those who commented and the original writers, who sometimes offering a defense of their original positions, and other times agreeing to the remarks of the writers.

Each new *kuntrus* had an introduction written by the editor, Rav Eliyahu Mordechai Yanofsky, where he explained in his own inimitable way the goals and aspirations of the publication: to encourage and develop an exchange of thoughts and ideas on the various *sugyos* that were being learned in the yeshiva and timely subjects based on the calendar. It is remarkable how he managed to express in so many ways the benefits to be gained, and how he inspired everyone to learn, speak and even argue about the ideas presented.

In his introduction to volume 11, printed in Shvat 5777/2017, he quotes Rav Moshe Shapiro as explaining that the opinion that a *talmid chocham* developed through his toil is considered Torah itself. If it is in any way contradicted by what is written in the Torah, it is considered a contradiction between the Torah of the *talmid chocham* and the written Torah, and one must seek a way to resolve the two. In a similar fashion, writes Rav Yanofsky, when the *talmidei chachomim* submit their *he'aros*, they are attempting to build rather than to *c"v* destroy the Torah. When they toil properly and come to an understanding, it is Torah itself, and if their conclusion contradicts what

is written elsewhere, it is a contradiction which requires resolution. This, in effect, is an expansion of Torah, not a contraction. And this, indeed, was the fruition of the dream of the dedicated editor of *Im Ta'iru*.

In the three years since *Im Ta'iru* began, sixteen volumes were printed and distributed to date. Rav Eliyahu was ably assisted by Rav Yaakov Shulman, and as Rav Eliyahu's strength waned due to the ravages of his illness, Rav Yaakov Nueman (the son of the *rosh yeshiva* Rav Yisroel Neuman) undertook to help produce the latest volumes and the expected future volumes.

The seventeenth volume, being released in time for Pesach, is dedicated to the memory of its founder and editor who carried it from its infancy to its celebrated state. Rav Yanofsky not only conceived the *kuntrus*, but was indeed involved in every aspect of its success; he solicited its funding, gathered the pieces from near and far, assisted the contributors in clarifying their ideas and writing style, and together with Machon Aleh Zayis, under the direction of Rav Hillel Shimon Szimanowitz, produced this amazing vehicle for *harbatzas Torah*.

The new *kuntrus* begins with a section of Rav Eliyahu's own *chiddushim*, some of which were taken from his previously published writings in *Eim Lemikra* and some from his unpublished writings. In a poignant *chiddush* on the *pasuk* “*Vlo sosiru mimenu ad boker vehanosar mimenu ad boker ba'eish tisrofu*”, Rav Eliyahu brings from Rashi who quotes the Mechilta as stating that the words *ad boker* are repeated to tell us that the *korban* is considered *nosar* immediately by *alos hashachar*, and not only after *haneitz hachamah*. The *Sifsei Chachomim* asks that we already know from many sources that the day begins with *alos hashachar*?

In his second *pshat*, Rav Yanofsky brings from the Gra who explains the question of “*Mah nishtanah halailah hazeh*” in a unique way. All *mitzvos* which are performed at night, such as *krias shma* and *succah*, are not limited to the nighttime; they are done both by night and by day. Why then is the *mitzvos* of *leil Pesach* performed only by night, and not by day? The answer, explains the Gra, is because by the *pasuk* states, “*Vehigadita levincha bayom ha'hu—on this day*”. Since the *mitzvah* is described as being done by day despite that it is actually done by night, it leads us to understand that the night of Pesach is considered “daytime” despite being nocturnal.

With this in mind, we may understand that other *mitzvos* can be performed immediately after *alos hashachar* since it is no longer nighttime. Once it is no longer night, it must be day despite that the sun is not yet shining. However, by the *mitzvos* of *leil Pesach*, it is not sufficient that it is no longer nighttime, since the night of Pesach is considered “daytime”. Therefore, there is reason to believe that *alos hashachar*, which ends the night, is not sufficient; it is only *nosar* when it is fully day with *haneitz hachamah*. For this reason, we need the repetition of *boker* to teach us that the *korban* becomes *nosar* by *alos hashachar*.

Readers of *Seforim Shrank* may remember the column where we presented the newly printed *sefer* of Rav Binyomin Paler, *Birchas Yitzchak*, which was universally accepted and learned by *bnei Torah*. In light of the excitement caused by its publication, , a section titled *Alei*

Sefer was included in the newest edition of *Im Ta'iru*, with the intention of encouraging further *masa umatan* in this and other *seforim*.

“*Vaya'al Eliyahu base'arah hashamayim*—And Eliyahu ascended in a storm to the heavens.” This special *talmid chocham* and beloved *mechanech* was taken away in his prime to the sorrow of all who knew him. The anguish felt by his family, his peers, his students and his wide circle of admirers is still too raw to articulate. His legacy, however, will live on in the many projects which he was involved in. Perhaps his *leibling*, his beloved *Im Ta'iru*, which was for the most part conceived and published with great *mesiras nefesh* during his final years, will be the lasting tribute to his love of Torah and love of *Klal Yisroel*. As further volumes come to print, the *rischa d'oraisa* he created and engendered will form the lasting testimony to this visionary *ish mushlam*.

Yehi zicho baruch!