

ספר

תולדות יעקב יוסף

ספר במדבר

אשר חיבר איש חי רב פעלים היה כבוד הרב הגאון הגדול המפורסם
חסיד ועניו איש אלקי קדוש יאמר לו
מהר"ר יעקב יוסף הכהן וצ"ל

אשר אור תורתו חי ורחמי בק"ק ראשקוב ובק"ק שאריגראד ובק"ק נעמירוב
ובסוף יסדו חי' איתן ששבו לאב"ד ור"ם ומ"ץ בק"ק פולנאי יצ"ו
ומצ"פ בק"ק נעמירוב

נרפס ברוב פאר וחדר, במנהג סדוויקת, בתוספת מ"ס לזכות הרבים
הכשתוקקים להביא ברכה אל תוך ביתם ולתתתם כאור אסרוח קדש של
רכינו חקי תסתבר וי"ץ

יצא לאור
ע"י אגודת בית ודיעליסאלי
ת. ד. 5044 ירושלים

שנת התשל"ג ליצירה
פעיק ירושלים תוביא



שכנ

יעקב יוסף

וישב

תולדות

פרשת וישב

ושלח, וכמו שאיתא. בזוכר ולך לך פה. אלה
תולדות יעקב יוסף, על ידי יוסף עבד יעקב
תולדות וכו', לכך קפץ עליו רוגזו של יוסף על
ידי נסיון במלרים, אז נעשה לדיק ועבד יעקב
תולדות על ידו והבן.

עוד יש לומר על דרך שיטתית ממורי כי
אדם השלם חס ידמן לו אחיז ביעול
חורב וחפלה, יש לו להבין שגם זה הוא ידו
יתברר, שזוכה אותו כדי שיחקרצ יוחר, (א)
בסוד (שה"ש ב) שמאלו תחת לראשי וימינו

... May my opening words fall upon attentive ears to hear truthful words of genuine truth in regard to the dispute with our opponents.

If it had been possible for me to bring the matter to a proper conclusion with them—surely there is no greater *mitzvah* than establishing peace among Jews. But what was there for us to do that we did not do? We have tried very hard in this matter, but we did not succeed. We are innocent before G-d and Israel.

With prior notice we went to the house of *HaGaon HaChasid*, long may he live, to debate with him and to remove his censures from us. I was there together with the *Rav* and Chasid Rabbi Mendel Horodoker of saintly memory, but he [the Gaon of Vilna] shut the door to us twice. When the notables of the community spoke to him, "Master, behold, their famous *Rav* came to debate with your Torah Eminence; and should he be defeated it will certainly bring peace upon Israel," he staved them off by various pretexts. But when they began to implore him persistently, he disappeared, leaving the city and staying away until the day we left the city, as the elders of your city know.

Subsequently, in our province, we went to the community of Shklov, again to seek a debate, and we did not succeed. They did unto us things that should not be done, reneging upon the promise they had promised us not to mistreat us. But seeing that they had nothing with which to refute us, they resorted to violence, purporting to rely on the authority of *HaGaon HaChasid*, long may he prosper.

In truth, we judged him in the scale of merit, inasmuch as the matter had been completely resolved in his mind, without a doubt or any shadow of a doubt, and he had arrived at a verdict on the testimony of many trustworthy witnesses insofar as a man can see superficially. Accordingly, when he heard a word of Torah quoted to him by the notorious provocateur¹³ who interpreted it, he did not look upon it favorably or try to justify it, perchance the agent had slightly misquoted it. For, as is well known, a minor change in language may alter the matter from one

extreme to the very other. It certainly could not have occurred to him that they [the Chasidic leaders] might be in possession of the word of G-d received from Elijah [the Prophet] of saintly memory, to interpret and sublimate the material [language] of the holy *Zohar* in a mystical manner that had eluded him, since it can be transmitted only directly from mouth to mouth, and not through the said agent. But because the attainment of such a high level [to merit the revelation of Elijah] required a very great and profound sanctity, diametrically opposed to that [level] which had been confirmed to him by witnesses whom his Eminence considered trustworthy—and usually people do not err to such an extent, from one extreme to another—he refused to accept from us any argument, answer or defense whatsoever, or any explanation of the word of Torah which he had heard [in our name], nor anything else whatever.

And why should this day be different? For even now nothing has been heard from him in the way of a retreat and regret from [his position in] bygone days, to indicate that any doubt has now arisen [in his mind] perchance they [the opponents] had been wrong. On the contrary, the money is the proof, namely, the fact that he demanded two thousand *adumim* for *tzedakah* or other worthy cause. This was because he did not wish to waste his time. For, as you know, I have answers to all the questions, which are well-known in our provinces; but they did not accept the answers, as we have personally witnessed in the community of Shklov. Now, therefore, why should I toil in vain? For the dictum of our Sages of blessed memory is well known: "Just as it is a *mitzvah* to say a thing that will be heeded, so it is a *mitzvah* not to say a thing that will not be heeded."¹⁴ ... Especially after the many evil deeds which have been perpetrated against our Chasidic fellowship in the province of Lithuania and Little Russia on the basis of the expressed opinion of *HaGaon HaChasid*, particularly to his disciples; and a friend has a friend. I have seen with my own eyes a letter written by one of his disciples in Vilna in the name