A Mysterious Event on Rosh Hashanah 1746 .. The beginning of Hasidic History

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The Manuscript of the Baal Shem Tov’s letter found by Yehushua Mondshine, in a collection dated 1776
Rabbi Yakov Yosef of Polonnoye’s Ben Porat Yosef (Koretz 1781)
The letter as printed in Ben Porat Yosef (1781), at the end of the book
The end of the letter, on the last page of the book *Ben Porat Yosef* 1781.
Keter Shem Tov, Zolkiev 1794
(first known edition. There may have been a previous edition in Slavita)
The Letter as printed in Keter Shem Tov, 1794, page 2.

It appears at the beginning of all the subsequent editions.
The Baal Shem Tov and the Messiah

• “I asked the Messiah when will you come..? He answered.. When your wellsprings spread to the outside.. And they too will be able to do Ascents and Unifications like you..”
Historical Ramifications of the Wording of the Epistle

The Sacred Epistle

Spreading the Wellsprings

Ascents and Unifications

‘General’ Hasidic Leaders and Courts – the hasidic Rebbe carries out mystical Ascents and Unifications and inspires his followers

Habad – the ideal that each individual should study hasidic teachings and communicate them to others
The Baal Shem Tov’s Instructions regarding Prayer and Torah Study

• “Know.. That in every letter, there are [Spiritual] Worlds, and Souls, and G-dliness.. And the letters join together and become words.. And the words rise..

• “Have in mind that your own soul should rise with them.. And there is great joy, like the joy of a groom and a bride, but infinitely more..”