

Roselyn and I arrived in Brooklyn on Wednesday, May 30th, almost a week before Shovuos and just ten minutes before the Rebbe was due to attend Mincha at 3.15pm. The following day the Rebbe went to the Ohel, so on that day Mincha took place at 9.00pm - another Belzer Mincha!

Roselyn, as was her usual custom stood in the hallway and waited for the Rebbe to walk past, on his way from the office to the Beth Hamedrash. She was not disappointed; within minutes the Rebbe left his office, saw Roselyn and gave her a lovely glorious smile. Nu, one 'satisfied customer.'

I received my 'rations' in the Beth Hamedrash. The Rabbis say that "words that issue forth from the heart, reach directly to another one's heart." The Rebbe's eyes are most eloquent and expressive. He does not have to **say** anything; when his eyes are lit up with that wonderful superb smile, then the message that the Rebbe is pleased to see me comes over 'loud and clear.' There could be no misunderstanding. So thank G-d within minutes of our arrival from England, both Roselyn and I had already received our reward for coming to Brooklyn, and this was only the beginning.

We then learnt that the Rebbe had visited our apartment on the previous day. The Rebbe always loans us these rooms above the Kolel for our stay over Shovuos.

Unfortunately, we were out. Furthermore we were still in England. What a pity we were not present to welcome the Rebbe, to be his hosts on such a unique occasion. Still, the fact that the Rebbe was actually in our abode - even in our absence - was a great Zechus.

I do not know **exactly** what transpired, but the net result was that our apartment was spick and span, neat and tidy. For the first time ever!

All '770' was in turmoil. Angry accusations were leveled at me that I had asked the Rebbe to ensure that our flat was clean and tidy.

One fellow remonstrated with me in the following terms: "If it was **my** apartment then what business did I have to ask the Rebbe to check the condition, **and** if it was the Rebbe's flat, then what has it got to do with me." A real '*Gemora keppl*.'

Of course, I would never have had the chutzpah to suggest such a thing to the Rebbe, and even if I did, it would not have had any effect whatsoever. I am not so foolish or 'big headed' as to think otherwise. Still, it was interesting to find out what did occur.

It seems that Binyomin Klein called at the Rebbe's home in President Street, in the car to bring him to '770,' as usual. The Rebbe asked him to drive to Union Street, then told him to stop at the Kolel. This was the first time ever that the Rebbe had visited the Kolel, and no warning or intimation was given.

One can just imagine the scene. Young men learning, studying, lounging or lolling about. Everyone's attire extremely casual, to say the least, and the whole place untidy; bottles, cigarette ends and paper strewn all over the floor and tables - when in walks the Rebbe.

I would not have liked to have been in their shoes for anything. On the other hand I would have hated to have been one of those young men who had pleaded with the Rebbe to be allowed to study in the Kolel for a further two years, and who on this important occasion was conspicuous by their absence.

Actually, the Rebbe was very pleased to see 50 young men, all learning, except that they were all studying different gemorrahs, instead of the same Mesechta. Rabbi Chodakov remarked that it was a great chizuk - a source of strength for them, and they would all receive great benefit from this visit, ultimately. What they did receive the next morning was a very strong letter from the Rebbe enumerating all the points, which had to be attended to immediately or else - the Kolel would be closed down by Friday.

The Rebbe then ascended 2 flights of stairs to our apartment to inspect the place, with the result as aforementioned - a nice, clean flat, ready for us.

When we entered the Kolel there was a great deal going on. It was a hive of industry and much activity. Boys were painting, cleaning and scrubbing, hammering and banging. An electric saw was being used and furniture fitted.

They did a magnificent job and the whole Kolel seemed to be rejuvenated. It was certainly a striking improvement.

My son-in-law, Shmuel, was also in Brooklyn for Shovuos together with my grandsons, Yoseph Yitzchok and Menachem Mendel. He and Yossi Shem Tov (my 'haulage contractor') brought our six cartons of household equipment - cutlery, crockery, cloths and everything needed to make our flat habitable, from our storage depot (Sarah Shem Tov's) where they had been lying for 12 months. Shmuel remarked that Jewish housewives have a complete change of utensils etc. for Pesach - well, we have it for Shovuos too!

I was very fortunate in being able to arrange for an immediate private talk with Rabbi Chodakov. I handed him a copy of my diary. "I have been waiting for that," he said. I told him that it was becoming increasingly more difficult to write this 'diary.' I only came once last year. Because of extreme pressure on the Rebbe's time, I had Yechidus with the Rebbe for only about 30 minutes instead of about 200 minutes (over 3 hours) on my previous visits. The four Yomim Tovim meals with the Rebbe had been discontinued and my stay over Shovuos lasted only 12 days, and not for 21 days as in the past. Furthermore, all the daily 'normal routine' occurrences and happenings at '770' have been discussed and explained in my 4 previous editions of the 'diary.' I maintained that I should now postpone my 'next edition' until I had sufficient material.

Rabbi Chodakov disagreed. "You must carry on every year, even if it consists of very few pages. It is the contents that matter. You have the knack of presenting a different angle of the Rebbe's activities, than we know of here. It is very important."

We talked about the Lag B'Omer parade in Brooklyn, at which about 20,000 children attended. There were many rumors flying around about the reason why the Rebbe did not address the children. It seems that about 40 Senators, Congressmen, and Councilors of all the different and various parties wished to make political profit out of this parade. The Rebbe had to put his foot down, very firmly. Be this as it may - it is still only **our** opinion and conjecture. The Rebbe alone knows the reasons why he does certain matters. He knows best and he has always been proved right.

However, the parade was still a very great success, a real Kiddush Hashem and the Rebbe was absolutely thrilled and delighted.

Rabbi Chadakov accompanied me outside where we encountered Yossi, my grandson. Although he was on vacation in Brooklyn (from England) he went every day to school with his brother, Mendel. A very fine holiday! They were taught Lumudei Kodosh all day - translating the Gemora into Yiddish. He asked Yossi what Gemora and Mesechta he was studying in London and plied him with many questions on this. I was relieved and pleased when Rabbi Chodakov expressed his appreciation and satisfaction with Yossi's replies.

I had my usual large package of letters to send into the Rebbe from friends in Manchester, I also enclosed my own covering letter and my diary. (By mistake I also included a letter from Rabbi Chaim Farro to his brother-in-law, Rabbi Yarmush. It was returned to me the next morning. It had been through 'very good hands.')

Rabbi Label Groner was taking an **additional** extra 35 letters to the Rebbe for signature. Contrary to 'popular opinion,' many hundreds of letters are definitely sent out every week from the Rebbe. So somebody does receive one occasionally. The answer, is that one should write many letters and in due course, it could be your lucky turn to get one back.

Mr. Bloch, (the 'boss' of the Soncino Press) had promised me faithfully that the first copy of the new Hebrew/English Tanya would be ready for me to take to the Rebbe for Shovuos.

The evening before we left England for New York, Mr. Bloch extended to me the extraordinary and unusual honour of calling to see me at my daughter (Hindy's) home in Stamford Hill, where I was

staying overnight. He personally brought to me a beautifully bound, thick volume of the new Tanya. The very first copy, as promised.

When I opened it I found therein only **one** printed page. All the rest of the pages were just **blank** -this was real 'progress.' The very first **one page** Tanya! It is no wonder that Hershel Gorman refers to him as "Oi a Bloch!"

Anyway, it was something to show the Rebbe. The following morning after our arrival, Thursday, Shmuel had Yohrtzeit. It did not seem nine years since we had all arrived on one of our charter flights from Manchester - just in time to attend the funeral of Shmuel's mother (*oleha hasholam*).

Before layenning, the gabai went searching for a Kohen. He did find one, at last - and requested him to leave. He was confronted with a similar problem as he had on the previous year. There was a Yohrtzeit, a Bar Mitzvah and of course, the Rebbe.

The following day, Friday, was Rosh Chodesh. Here again, there was another Bar Mitzvah - and what a coincidence! We had attended his brother's Bar Mitzvah on almost the identical day last year.

Young Raskin's wife had just been blessed with another baby daughter, and, of course, the Rebbe had the fourth Aliya.

Every time we layen there are always many visitors who come forward to the bima to '*bentch Gomel*.' They feel sublimely happy when the Rebbe answers "*omein*" to their brocha. I had '*Hagboh*.' It was, as usual, the very small Sefer Torah - almost a miniature - just handy for me! On Shovuos, in particular, as many as thirty men join the procession to '*bentch Gomel*' on the Bima in the shul - just before the Rebbe's Haftorah.

Almost everyone of the thousands of people one talks to in '770' has a story to tell of the unique and exceptional (almost miraculous) advice which the Rebbe has given to them regarding their queries about their own or their relatives illnesses - and in particular when it concerns operations. Of how the Rebbe's advice has always proved right - in spite of the prevalent medical opinions - was really uncanny.

The Rebbe went to the Ohel, as usual, on Erev Rosh Chodesh. The Tanya does mention that today men have not the strength nor the ability to fast so many times as had the Gedolim of the past. Our Rebbe proves the exception to this rule.

The Rebbe fasts every time he goes to the Ohel, which he visits at least twice a month, and sometimes six times a month. During Nissan (before Pesach) every other day - and of course, the Rebbe also fasts on the usual 'communal' fast days. I am quite certain I am correct when I state that the Rebbe fasts on an average of 70 days every year. That is really tough - so is, thank G-d, the Rebbe!

On this day, the Rebbe returned from the Ohel at 9.00pm. Obviously the day is not long enough for the Rebbe. He increasingly has more and more requests from people of every walk of life, for special help and assistance in so many various matters.

My own personal opinion is that only at the tomb of the previous Rebbe in perfect solitude and quietness, undisturbed and uninterrupted, without a break for food or drink, can our Rebbe Shlita concentrate and plead for Klal Yisroel - for all Israel - with a broken heart - near to, beside the last resting place of his father-in-law, the previous Lubavitcher Rebbe, whose soul still lingers over this holy place.

It is alleged that the Rebbe once gave the following reply to somebody, "You all need a Rebbe - I also have a Rebbe." It is a good answer for some.

The whole area around '770' was packed tightly with men and boys awaiting the arrival of the Rebbe. Within seconds of the Rebbe's car drawing up to the curb, the place was absolutely deserted - like a windswept beach after a storm. Only Roselyn and I were left standing, about ten yards from '770.'

The door of the car was pushed open from the inside by the Rebbe. Unfortunately, because his arms were full of seforim and a large paper parcel, he had the utmost difficulty in keeping the door open, to

enable him to alight from the car. Thank G-d I had the presence and the mind to jump forward and hold open the door. For this action, I received a very nice “thank you” from the Rebbe.

In England, when Mincha and Maariv are davened almost together, this takes place normally at the time of Mincha. In Brooklyn, it takes place at Maariv time.

My friend Sholom Weiss from Manchester, was not present at this service. He was attending a wedding which his Brooklyn host was organizing and preparing. The Chosson and Kalah were to be married in four weeks time at the Reform Synagogue at the express wish of their respective parents. They were, however, Baalai Tshuva and wanted a Chuppah according to Orthodox custom and tradition. They did not inform their parents and after the wedding celebrations they returned to their own respective homes for the duration of the following four weeks.

I met my old friend Tzvi Fisher. I gave him a copy of my diary, as usual. He was vastly amused, as usual. He is a good friend!

He then presented me with a lovely and unexpected gift. Something that could not be bought at any shop, or anywhere for that matter, for any money. It was a gift that required only one thing - *mesiras nefesh*.

It was a Book of (Sefer) Tehillim, which the Rebbe himself had used a few weeks previously. What happens is this: When the Rebbe comes to *Kerias haTorah*, he is provided with a Chumash for the layenning, and with a Tehillim which the Rebbe uses whilst the minyan is saying ‘Ashrei’ and so forth, prior to returning the Sefer Torah to the Oran Hakodesh.

The custom is that he, who has the foresight, the quickness, the speed and the luck, places his own brand-new Chumash or Tehillim on the Rebbe's ‘*shtender*.’ After the Rebbe has used the seforim and left the beth hamedrash or shul, each particular boy or gentleman comes along and claims his own sefer. There is always a huge waiting list. It is not all that simple or easy, to be privileged to see your own sefer being used by the Rebbe. In all these fourteen years, I have only had one success, when my son Avrohom was too quick for the rest of the ‘competitors.’

Soon after Shacharis, Binyamin Klein beckoned me. He had a reply from the Rebbe for me, to my letter of the previous evening. Considering that I had left my bundle of letters with the Rebbe at 6.00 pm the night before and it was now only 10.00am the next morning, one cannot deny that the Rebbe attends to and replies to his mail **at once** - without any loss of time, and mine were not the only letters.

I had written in my letter, amongst other things that “...I hope the Rebbe will enjoy reading my diary.” The Rebbe responded, writing on the margin of this paragraph in Hebrew, “*keposhut*” (=obviously). I concluded by writing that “I am looking forward to the next twelve days with keen anticipation and pleasure.” The Rebbe had underlined the word **days** and written in Hebrew “**Have great Hatzlocho.**”

I also received replies, which friends of mine in Manchester were eagerly and impatiently awaiting, for their letters which were sent through me.

Friday evening, after *Kabollas Shabbos* and Maariv, I sang, as usual, a Nigun when the Rebbe was leaving the Shul. A girl asked her father why were they singing, she was told “because Jaffe was here.” A boy also approached me a few days afterwards and said it was **so** obvious that the Rebbe was very happy and delighted to see me. Well, I am also proud and delighted to think that **I do** make the Rebbe happy. But why, oh why then, does nobody follow my example! Every year I emphasize this point and still no one takes any notice. I can assure them that the rewards are immediate and well worth while. To bask in the Rebbe's glorious smile - it is a wonderful feeling.

Upon leaving the Shul, I was approached by Label Groner. He had brought along his daughter, Gittel, aged 16, who had expressed the wish to be introduced to the “author of the diary.” What a charming young lady and what a beautiful compliment. (Or - what a beautiful young lady and what a charming compliment.)

Anyway, I can now boast of a Fan Club of **one** - but a very nice ‘one!’

On Shabbos morning I was offered an *aliya*. This is a great *zechus* and tribute to any visitor coming to '770' and davenning with the Rebbe. Some men had to wait, literally many years before they had the privilege of having an *aliya* on Shabbos with the Rebbe's minyan. As I was a bit of a *chiyuv* on the following Shabbos, I asked whether I could leave it until then. I was told that it was a sheer impossibility because there were nine chasanim to be called up and some of them would have to wait until Mincha. They drew lots, the only fair way to decide which ones should have that privilege of having their 'Ufruf' in the presence of the Rebbe. No 'Mi Shebayrach' is made on the bimah, but normally, a Baal Haboss donates twenty-five dollars and a Choson fifty dollars. And if one cannot afford these amounts, then a smaller figure has to be accepted. The Shul obviously needs money for routine expenses. It is only fair and proper that those who are given this special preferential treatment should pay their share.

Anyway, we can expect heavy bombardments next Shabbos - sweets and nuts galore. Even a good heavy woolen tallis is barely a sufficient protection when the missiles come along 'thick and fast.'

On this Shabbos morning I was lucky to be called up for *shevii*. This is the best *aliya*, because after this one the Rebbe is then called up for *maftir* and *haftorah*. Being next to the Rebbe, I can obviously hear the *haftorah* very well. I can also see the Rebbe's finger following the text word by word in his chumash. And finally, when the Rebbe has concluded the brochus and is leaving the bimah, one can say with deep sincerity, "Always follow the Rebbe and you will come to no harm." I therefore, dash off the Bimah in the wake of the Rebbe and within seconds I am back in my place, safe and sound.

It is always a constant surprise and amazement to me, to see, on the Rebbe's approach to this solid mass of men and boys, how a pathway is miraculously opened and immediately closed again in the fraction of a second it takes the Rebbe to pass. Almost as big a miracle as the parting of the waters at the Red Sea.

We all sang '*Hu Elokenu*' as usual. Everyone knows by now that the Rebbe likes this singing and yet it is only when I am present that this takes place. It is really amazing. I cannot understand their mentality at all.

As expected there was a Farbrengen at 1.30pm sharp. And another miracle - the tables were nicely spread out, leaving plenty of room to stand up. Furthermore a gangway had been left open between the centre tables, so that when the Rebbe beckoned someone to come up to the platform for Mashke and so forth, then all this person had to do was to walk straight up this aisle to the Rebbe. Not as hitherto, when they had to walk on top of the tables standing on people's hands, faces and heads, on their way to the front.

It was a lovely, fraileche Farbrengen. The only discordant note was when the Rebbe discussed the subject of 'Mi Yehudi.' After all these years the position regarding the conversions of non-Jews, especially in America has not much improved. I am personally of the opinion that the Rebbe's continuous daily tirades and heartrending cries over these many years that the Israeli Government should only accept non-Jews as **Jews** if, and when they had been converted '*Al Pe Halacha*' was slowly but surely having some effect.

In a New York newspaper, I read only yesterday of a fellow whose father was a Jew but his mother was a Catholic. He, in turn, had also married a Catholic. Now, he wanted his wife to become Jewish. She, at first, refused, but was persuaded to go along to the Reform Temple. She had eight lessons of one hour each, after which she was automatically given a certificate (a piece of paper) to prove that she was now a Jewess. She was not tested on her knowledge (or lack of it) and no ritual took place. This woman is quite adamant that she is still a practicing and a loyal Catholic. She only did this to please her husband!

Forty people receive these certificates every month from this one Temple. Every one of these may go to Israel and be registered as Jews without any arguments or questions being asked. That is the danger to Klal Yisroel, and the reason why the Rebbe is fighting so hard to get this odious practice stopped.

The Rebbe then fiercely denounced those Israeli Cabinet Ministers who went out of their way to attract and tempt back the Arabs to return to Jerusalem. They offered the Arabs so many conceivable

types of benefits, that they were coming back in their thousands, at the expense of Jewish taxpayers and Jewish charities, whilst the Jews were actually prohibited from making their own homes in the ancient Jewish city of Jerusalem.

“They are always frightened of what the goyim will say!”

The Rebbe then started on a mishna from Pirkei Avos. “One should honour him from whom one has learnt even one or two letters.” He had a number of questions to ask on this one Mishna. He asked me to count the questions. Right. One, two, three... “How many now?” asked the Rebbe. “Eight,” I replied. My neighbours said I was wrong, it was number eleven. Shmuel said it was ten.

Anyway, the Rebbe did not shame me (and in any case **I may** have been correct), and said “The ninth question is...”

We were having a most wonderful Farbrengen, with about 1,500 people present. All were singing with the Rebbe urging them on, faster, faster and still **faster**. Boys jumping up and down, waving their hands all in time to the music, and with a terrific rhythm, reaching to the very heights of ecstasy.

But at that very moment there was another Chassidic gathering **outside** ‘770,’ with the Police participating, waving **their** hands with batons, and boys and Police jumping up and down onto each other.

The facts seem to be as follows. Normally parents bring along their children, who during the Farbrengen usually spend their time playing and screeching outside. Eastern Parkway is a very wide thoroughfare, a main road for traffic with three lanes in each direction, six altogether. In addition there are two access roads on each **side** of the street for the convenience of the residents, one being adjacent to ‘770.’ Hundreds of children play about and run onto this road, so that it has become terribly dangerous. A child was **actually** killed recently. Lubavitch **did** arrange that during a Farbrengen, this access road should be closed to traffic, that is from 1.30pm until 5.45pm.

On this particular Shabbos, a car belonging to a nearby dentist - not a lover of Lubavitch - drove through the police barrier, leading a second car. A number of men and boys, who should have been inside ‘770’ at the Rebbe's Farbrengen, stopped the car and appealed to a ‘cop’ standing by to refuse to allow the cars to proceed. The policeman maintained that he had no authority to stop residents using this road, even during a Farbrengen.

One of our Lubavitcher ‘vigilantes’ - a little fellow and one who should have known better, jumped upon the car, banging and kicking and screaming at the police to keep to the regulations. A **very** large crowd had by now assembled, and were surrounding a few ‘cops’ who had arrested three men and boys and insisted that they accompany them to the police Station - **by car** (on Shabbos). This they obviously refused to do, and a fight developed. The police (not our usual patrolmen who just happened to be on leave!) panicked. They radioed an emergency call and within minutes, forty police cars with sirens blaring had arrived on the scene together with busloads of ‘cops.’ The first casualty was our little ‘vigilante’ who was beaten up and sent to hospital.

There were so many rumours and exaggerations that it was difficult to get to the truth. First it was said that 100 police arrived - then the figure had risen to 250. It was said that Label (Groner) who had gone outside to see what was happening, had taken a beating, no truth in that! That two police went to the women’s Shul and pointed loaded guns at the ladies - cannot say - but at least it might have kept them quiet! That fourteen police caps and a couple of batons were captured as prizes by ‘our boys’ - maybe!

However, the remarkable fact was that during all this rumpus outside, the Rebbe, inside just carried on as usual without any breaks or hesitation, although many anxious faces were peering all about to try and ascertain what was happening.

Anyway, if everyone had been inside ‘770’ listening to the Rebbe, then none of this would have occurred.

After Shabbos, hundreds of boys and girls went to the Police precinct to demonstrate for the release of those three Lubavitcher who had been arrested. Newspaper reporters from all over the world were

present. My son-in-law, Shmuel, said he represented the Jewish Chronicle of London, to gain access to the jail.

After a tremendous two-hour task, Label Goner arranged for a special judge to come down to this precinct and to try the case at 3.00am - otherwise our three friends would have languished in jail until Monday. The cases against two were dismissed, and the third was released on bail.

Meanwhile, there was plenty of talk about bringing charges against the police. As many as 30 counter charges were mentioned: brutality, indiscriminate baton charges against peaceful and unarmed people, and so forth. In the event, no action was taken against the police. The New York Daily News had large banner headlines "Chassidim beat up 15 cops" followed by "one cop was beaten unconscious," etc, etc.

Poor Yudel Krinsky was busy for days, acting as Lubavitch spokesman and being interviewed for radio, T.V. and press.

It was really a great shame to get involved with the police, who have always been extremely cooperative, helpful and friendly to Lubavitch, Two Officers are continuously on duty at the street corner to protect us in case of trouble with the coloured people. It would be a pity to ruin these good relations.

Sunday, we once again were privileged and honoured to be able to pay a visit to our dear and gracious Rebbetzen. It is always a wonderful experience, to which we look forward with very keen anticipation.

When we arrived at 6.30pm the Rebbetzen was surprised that Shmuel, Yossi and Mendel were not with us. She had expected them too. I remember once before taking Hilary, Shmuel and the children on a visit. All the children were served with nice cold raspberry juice in beautiful tumblers. The table was covered with a white spotless cloth. Before the refreshments were finished, the white cloth was a beautiful deep red colour - the same colour as our faces. Hilary's red face had become white.

We spent an extremely pleasant two hours - they seemed like only a few minutes. The Rebbetzen is a wonderful listener, and laughs at the right moment. She looked very well, "*um berufun*" (as she would say herself). She told me to keep on writing "biz 120" - the 'diary' is so interesting and people know nothing of the things about which I write. I should distribute these to students - to Hadar Hatorah.

We discussed and talked about the Rebbe ("my husband"), Lubavitch in general, Manchester in particular, the family and many other matters. She again laughed heartily at an old joke which I had recounted to her two years ago. I am certain - quite sure, that she knew it but she was too polite to say so! However, we were delighted when we were asked to call again "next Sunday at 7.30pm."

Taking a precedent from last year, I anticipated that there would be a Farbrengen before Yom Tov, and I expressed this view to Rabbi Chodakov and to others. No one knew anything at all. But at 9.00pm there was an announcement that there would be a Farbrengen at 9.30pm immediately after Maariv.

The Lubavitch 'grapevine' worked overtime and within a half an hour over 1,000 people were assembled in the Hall. In Brooklyn this can be done. In England it is more difficult.

Lou Tiffenbrun telephoned Hackner in London at 3.00am, English time, to **try** and get the chevra together within 30 minutes for this Farbraingen which was so unexpected that no one was prepared for it - everyone was fast asleep! Manchester had also to be contacted.

The Rebbe entered at about 9.45pm and almost before he had time to sit down **immediately** commenced the Maamer, without any preceding Nigun. This Maamer took exactly 30 minutes, as usual.

After every sicha we sing a nigun. Many years ago we used to sing two nigunim after every sicha. At present, Rabbi Gansburg normally starts the tune. After last Shabbos I complained to Rabbi Gansburg that the tunes we sang (and which he started) were neither well known, popular or '**swinging**.' In the past we used to sing irresistible nigunim.

Well, he took heed of my request and off we went with 'Al Achass.' Immediately the Rebbe got us all going by the usual little twitch of his head, and it did not take long before the Rebbe was 'conducting' with head **and** hands. You should know what that means. Over 1,000 people singing, yelling, shouting and screaming the Nigun at the top of their voices. Their arms and bodies swinging to the tune, all in unison. It looks as if the whole hall is rising and falling to the music.

But, about 40 or 50 staid old gentlemen who sit at the centre tables, remained anchored to their seats. I tried to lift up Rabbi D. He could not have weighed more than 150 lbs, but he must have strapped himself to the bench. I could not even budge him. I was not going to have my pleasure, nor the Rebbe's enjoyment spoiled by these aged Rabbonim, so old in mind and outlook, contrary to our Rebbe who is young, youthful and vigorous in **his** mind and outlook. I am sure that the Rebbe would have been overjoyed to see these Rabbonim spontaneously jumping up and down like the rest of us.

To give them their due, they do get up when the Rebbe stands. Sometimes - very occasionally - perhaps once in many Farbrengen the Rebbe himself will jump up and 'conduct' with both arms outflung - then this is really something to be seen and heard - like a riot *LeShem Shomayim!*

As was the custom I wished to say Le'chaim to the Rebbe so that in return I would receive his brochah, Le'chaim v'livrocho.

I held a paper tumbler, half filled with wine, caught the Rebbe's eye (every one of the thousand men and boys had the same idea) and wished him Le'chaim.

The Rebbe answered and signaled me to drink the whole lot without a pause ("Bottoms up" in English). I managed to do this and held up the tumbler upside down to show the Rebbe that I had obeyed his request.

The Rebbe was not satisfied. It was only half a glass! So I was handed another half a tumbler of wine to make up to the full glass, and repeated the exercise.

The Rebbe was still not satisfied and quite unimpressed with my protestations.

He wanted me to say Le'chaim with a full tumbler of wine, which I had to drink, in one go! Well, orders are orders! And it certainly put more spirit into me, in more ways than one.

The whole Farbrengen took only one hour and three quarters. Short, sweet, exciting and terrifically lively. Just like old times! I was told that it was the most exhilarating Farbrengen for almost 12 months. No wonder they kept asking Shmuel - "When is your shver, Zalmon Jaffe coming to make the Rebbe *freilach?*" The Rebbe had been very depressed lately.

The Rebbe then spoke about Matan-Torah, obviously. Suddenly there was a storm. The sky was rent by continuous flashes of lightning accompanied by the rolling and heavy crashes of thunder, and heavy rain was pelting down with terrific force - exactly as it must have been thousands of years ago at Har Sinai. The storm had ended when the Farbrengen finished.

The Rebbe reminded us that we were chosen by G-d to be His very own people. Chosen to be given the Torah and we had accepted this unconditionally. In fact we said "*Naase veNishma,*" we will do (first) and then we will listen and understand. We would have faith in the **one** G-d, He who had chosen us from so many nations.

But first, G-d wanted guarantors before He would part with His Torah. He wished to ensure that the Torah would become precious and a treasure to us, as **we** were to G-d. Finally, G-d accepted our children as our sureties. Throughout the ages we had to teach them the value and the ethics of this wonderful gift. In their turn, our children had to hand this down to their children and so on, right down to our present generation.

The Rebbe then stressed the fact that during the summer vacation (three months in the States) the children were left wandering about to their own devices. Schooling and secular studies were postponed for twelve weeks and this was a marvelous opportunity to get the children to learn *Limudei Kodesh* - Jewish Studies.

The Rebbe also emphasized that there were plenty of rabbonim and teachers who would be only too willing and happy to teach these boys and girls and at the same time to earn a few extra dollars for themselves. It was a unique and wonderful opportunity, and we should take every advantage of this three month holiday period.

The Rebbe spoke on this subject three times during the 'Shovuos' Farbrengen.

Before I left Brooklyn for home, I had a short Yechidus with the Rebbe. He told me again about this *inyan*. I said that in England we only had six weeks vacation. "OK," says the Rebbe, "It is forty-two days and every day counts."

The following afternoon, Friday, a special delivery arrived at our flat. A huge box with a **large** cream cake inside; a gift for Yom Tov from the Rebbetzen. How **very** sweet and thoughtful of her! A **big** sign on the box advised us that this should "be refrigerated." So we took out one of the trays, the soda and other drinks - not enough room yet! So out with the fruit and the cookies - still no use! The only alternative was to take out our Yom-Tov meals - the chicken, meat, also bottles of milk, packets of butter and so forth - or else - yes, you guessed it! We ate up half of the cake straight away, made room in the fridge and filled up our tummies instead.

We met Linda Grant, who had accompanied us from London a nice, little, pretty girl and friend of Hillary's. She was beaming; she had come to see the Rebbe, of course, like all of us. The Brooklyn Lubavitcher's cannot allow an exceptionally nice girl from England to remain unattached. Shiduchim were being arranged all the time. But the Rebbe had implied that the time was not yet opportune. So Linda was a very happy and contented girl and the Rebbe went up even higher (if that is at all possible) in her estimation.

I recall also a few years ago, that a friend of ours from England was visiting America. She was a single girl, although over 40 years of age. A nice type, a good 'Baal Habosty,' but not interested in marriage. Her family arranged a Shiduch for her with a much older man and everyone was tremendously pleased. They asked the Rebbe who said, "No!" The girl was absolutely relieved and blessed the Rebbe, this wonderful person.

The Rebbe does not automatically give his approval to all Shiduchim, not by a long way.

We spent a delightful Yom-Tov, davenning with the Rebbe. My friends Tzvi Fisher and Lou Tiffenbrun were excellent helpers when it came to the singing.

Lou Tiffenbrun also brought along with him from London his son. *Kein ayin hora*, he is a big lad although just over Bar Mitzvah. He insisted, always, in standing next to me. He had one bad failing. Whereas everyone '*shockled*' frontward, he *shockled* from side to side - with great *kavono* and impetus. He was a danger to life and limb, and in spite of dodging the main attacks, I have still got nasty bruises to show for my good neighborliness.

As usual, the boys went marching to Borough Park. I asked someone, "Why to Borough Park? It is an Orthodox - a very frum neighborhood!" I was told, we compare then to fish who live in and are surrounded by water, yet when it rains they come to the surface to drink the drops of heavenly water.

At Mincha on that day, there were exactly fifteen men and small children present. The Rebbe was delighted to see so few people. It meant that practically all the men and boys were 'marching!'

On the second day of Shovuos, Mincha took place upstairs in the Beth Hamedrash just before the Farbrengen. Most of the people were already downstairs in the hall making sure of their seats or 'standing room.'

There was still a good crowd upstairs with the Rebbe. After davening, the Rebbe started walking to the exit. At that very moment I was in a bit of a "dream." I was recalling my conversation with Yossi, my grandson. He had asked me, "Zaidie, why do you always sing when the Rebbe leaves the shul?" I said, "because the Rebbe likes it." "But everyone laughs at you," he retorted. I explained to him that as long as one does what is right and correct, then one should carry on in spite of what others will say or do. In any case, the Jewish people are used to others laughing at them.

I then suddenly realised that in a few seconds the Rebbe would have left the Beth Hamedrash, and no one was singing. I didn't know what to do. I was fed up with continually having to start the singing, and on many occasions, not one person joining in with me.

And just then, the Rebbe turned around, looked straight at me, gestured with his hand and said, "Nu?"

Well, that was all I needed. What an uplift to my ego! What a justification of my attitude hitherto! I can tell you I felt good - on top of the world. Furthermore, both Yossi and Mendel (my grandsons) were present and saw what had happened.

Needless to say, everyone joined in and sang with vigour and gusto, and then made their way downstairs.

I washed, made Hamotzi and rushed to my seat. I beckoned and shouted to Shmuel to tell him how the Rebbe had encouraged and vindicated me in my singing. But, already everybody and everyone knew - in less than five minutes!

I had brought from England a **ten yards** long new white linen damask tablecloth. I was glad to see it covering the top table(s). A few years ago I had brought a similar one to be used, instead of the usual three or four cloths which were normally needed. But they had immediately cut it into three parts - ridiculous! The whole idea was to leave it the full length.

Before the farbrengen I had asked Rabbi "K", to whom I had given the cloth, where it was? He replied that he didn't know - maybe in the Oron Hakodesh - or in a "vinkel!" I said the cloth had better be on the tables, or else!

That was why I was so pleased to see it.

The Farbrengen was very lively indeed. Can you just imagine - over 2000 people (including women and girls) who have all come along to listen to **one** man - the Rebbe. No chairman and no other speakers. No one to object that the Rebbe speaks too long. (Six hours at this Farbraingen and over 14 hours during the whole Shovuos 'week.') In fact everyone wants more and all are disappointed when the Farbrengen ends. All sit or stand 'glued' to their places and hardly anyone leaves the hall. It is unnatural - uncanny.

I was called up to receive a bottle of vodka "for Manchester." The Rebbe opened the bottle, poured a little into my glass and I wished him Le'chaim, to which he replied Le'chaim v'livrocho as usual. Bernard Perrin was also given a bottle of vodka for the Tanya, and to be divided between Manchester and London. The Rebbe laughingly told him that it was for "taking over the Soncino Press." (I am afraid it may even come to that!) The Rebbe asked me why I do not follow the example of my grandsons who were standing and saying Le'chaim to the Rebbe all the time. I was a little taken aback because I had already said Le'chaim to the Rebbe three times! I did not want to keep 'pestering' the Rebbe.

On Motzei Shabbos after Shovuos, the Rebbe usually comes out into the roadway to be '*makedesh the levono*' (bless the full moon). It was a very cloudy night with the moon disappearing every few seconds. We did not really expect the Rebbe to come out this evening in view of the uncertainty of the moon remaining visible for any length of time.

Still, I was ready and prepared in case the Rebbe did arrive. I had to maneuver very astutely to be near the Rebbe. Out came the Rebbe - and out come the moon - bright and brilliant until the Rebbe had returned to his office.

Fifteen minutes later, the Rebbe left for home, and although I was on the opposite side of the road, facing the Rebbe, he waved his hand to me.

Every year it is getting more and more difficult to arrange Yechidus with the Rebbe. I have heard Binyamin Klein tell Americans, personally and on the telephone, that it would be many months before they could have a private interview with the Rebbe.

However, Bernard Perrin and I got a message that the Rebbe was prepared to see us on Friday, Erev Shabbos of all days, at 3.00pm.

Roselyn and I were already waiting outside the Rebbe's office at 3.00pm. At six o'clock I sent Roselyn home to boil up the Shabbos kettle. At 7.25pm we entered the Rebbe's private office - Shabbos was at 8.10pm.

The Rebbe asked about the flat and **what else** (not **whether** anything) was needed to be done.

I paid my usual 'cheque' for the rent, obviously just an excuse, as the Rebbe would refuse payment for this apartment. It is not a matter of money. There are just **no** private apartments available for a short-term period nearby the Rebbe. Anyway, the Rebbe said that he does not really need **this money** before Shabbos because the *kugel* is already made.

The Rebbe said he had received a letter from Avrohom, my son, two days previously. It showed the "maximum of despair" (the Rebbe's own words) about Lubavitch in Manchester. He wished to resign. We should advise him to remember to "*kabeid*, honour, your father and your mother," and Roselyn (the emphasis on his mother) should tell him to keep his position as an honorary officer.

After 15 minutes we asked Bernard Perrin to join us, as we had mutual Lubavitch business to discuss.

The Rebbe asked me about a certain Lubavitch worker of ours. I replied that this fellow was making wonderful progress.

The Rebbe said, "You are not talking with enthusiasm." I said, "Then please ask Bernard Perrin." "Yes, yes," interposed Bernard, "he is wonderful." "Tut tut," said the Rebbe, "you are also not talking with enthusiasm."

We asked the Rebbe to decide on the profit allocation, when we published our Tanya, between London and Manchester. The Rebbe would not do this. He said he could not take the responsibility, when he P.G. reached the age of 120 years, having to answer a complaint that he had taken a pound from one and given it to another.

He had received wonderful reports about Jan Pearce's exceptional and notable efforts on behalf of Lubavitch in California. The Rebbe knew that we in Manchester were the first to enlighten Jan Pearce regarding Lubavitch work, and suggested that we should phone to congratulate and thank both Jan and Alice, his wife.

We reminded the Rebbe that last year he gave us a Brocha "*iber dem kop*," and would like the same again. The Rebbe replied, "It will be still better, with P.G. nachas from all the children."

Roselyn and I left the Rebbe's presence at 7.45pm. But Bernard still remained for his own private Yechidus - Shabbos was due in 25 minutes time!

On Shabbos, as stated before, we had an extremely fraileche Farbrengen.

Sunday, was the usual Kinus haTorah. Rabbi Mentilik had already reminded me that as I have been addressing the boys regularly for so many years at this function, he expected me to continue as the boys liked me speaking and looked forward to a little 'light relief.'

I commenced with a couple of jokes, which were much appreciated. I then told them that I found the end of this weeks Sedra, 'Bahalosscho,' very interesting. Miriam spoke '*Loshon hora*' about Moses to Aaron. She was punished with leprosy, whilst Aaron who had listened to her was not punished directly, but more subtly. He was also a prophet and also communicated with G-d. His punishment was that he could not appeal himself directly to G-d, to heal Miriam. He had to ask his Rebbe to intercede to the Almighty on behalf of Miriam.

The same thing occurs today. Many people retort "I don't need a Rebbe, if I want help I go direct to the Almighty himself." Unfortunately, when they are in trouble and need help, they react like Aaron the Kohen Gadol, the prophet. He went and appealed to his Rebbe, who showed the world forever, that even **he** needed a Rebbe. So do we all today.

Thank G-d, we are fortunate today to have our own dear Rebbe. A Tzadik whom we all love and honour. He looks after every single one of us, wherever he or she may be. In Brooklyn, England, Israel, Australia, Canada - in fact anywhere in the world where there are Jews.

The pleasure we can give the Rebbe is to write to him regularly with good news, not always to be a *tzorus* chassid, writing when in trouble. And when we are in the Rebbe's presence in '770,' we should show our appreciation and make the Rebbe happy by singing a little. You will have read that the Rebbe gave me direct orders to sing. So why not please the Rebbe and show a nice smiling face?! A glum countenance pleases **no one**.

I then read some excerpts from last year's diary and concluded with a couple of jokes. The boys seemed quite pleased and applauded my efforts.

The following morning, we were due to leave Brooklyn very early. I was determined therefore, to try and say farewell to the Rebbe just after Ma'ariv. I told Roselyn to be prepared too.

When the Rebbe left his office on his way to the Beth Hamedrash, he saw Roselyn and Linda Grant standing in the hallway. With a nice smile he said, "*Fort gezunterheit.*"

After Maariv I followed immediately after the Rebbe who was returning to his office. Before he entered he saw that I was following and turned around to wish me "*Tzeischem Leshalam.*" The Rebbe reminded me that he had given three Sichos on the importance of teaching children during the school holiday (vacation).

He asked me how did the boys like my talk to them at the Kinus Hatorah, and did I inspire them. I suggested that it might be better to ask the boys. "No," said the Rebbe, "I am asking **you**."

By then, there was a huge crowd of boys surrounding us, all craning their necks to see and stretching their ears to hear, what the Rebbe was saying.

Suddenly the Rebbe turned to them and said "What are all you boys doing here? Have you nothing better to do? Go and learn." This did have an effect for a minute or two, and a number of boys, including Shmuel ran away into the Beth Hamedrash.

I informed the Rebbe that I had phoned Jan Peerce, as I was told. The Rebbe remarked that he hoped I had called Jan Peerce – '*hakohen.*' Jan Peerce liked this, the Rebbe knew!

I reminded the Rebbe that I wrote a letter to him every two weeks. The Rebbe disagreed. "No, *Kimaet* every two weeks, not regularly," he said.

He then rebuked me about the Tanya. "You are a business man," he said, "and I am surprised at you. Every day goes by and people are not learning because they have not got the proper translation."

I would like to translate and put into words, the wonderful and wondrous smile of our beloved Rebbe. This is a difficult task. Not only is our Rebbe's face transformed, but also his whole personality. The whole atmosphere radiates excitement, pleasure and laughter. The beneficiary of this smile feels invigorated and 'on top of the world,' and would go to any extreme lengths to please the Rebbe.

Roselyn was standing a little distance away. The Rebbe called to her to say farewell. He also told her that "next year the apartment will be better still."

He then asked for Shmuel, who was also leaving with us. "And where are the Grandchildren?" They were not at '770.' The Rebbe said, he will see them next year.

The Rebbe said that Linda Grant is a very good girl. She should be encouraged. He then enquired whether Linda was actually travelling back to England with us. When I answered in the affirmative, the Rebbe then expressed a desire to say farewell to her, too.

But she had disappeared. The cry went up, "Linda, Linda," the Rebbe wants to see Linda Grant.

In a few moments she was brought to the Rebbe. She was pale and trembling. She could not understand what was happening. What did the Rebbe want with her? And why just her?

Well, the Rebbe soon reassured her. He enquired after the health of her parents and hoped that Linda would convey the regards of the Rebbe to them. He then wished her a "Bon Voyage."

Linda then left, her head in a whirl, followed by scores of people who all wanted to know what the Rebbe said to her in those few minutes. Everyone was particularly interested by the fact that the Rebbe had singled out a young girl, to bid her farewell and to give her words of encouragement.

It was most unusual and a great Zechus for Linda. When she had left, the Rebbe again repeated to me that Linda is a good girl, and that I should do my best to hearten and to inspire her. I told the Rebbe that Linda visits and stays quite a lot with Hindy and Shmuel in London, so she would be in good hands. "Yes," said the Rebbe, "but she will be with you on the 'plane tomorrow for about seven hours."

Well, Linda did not need too much encouragement on the plane. She spoke to me for nearly three hours about the five-minute conversation she had with the Rebbe. She maintained that she was a very lucky girl - and I agreed with her - and how!

And so ended another Shovuos visit to our Rebbe.

During the course of the year, we in Manchester are constantly in touch with the Rebbe. Besides the usual 'live broadcasts' from Brooklyn on the occasion of various '**important** Lubavitch days,' we are continuously kept on our toes to concentrate on various Mitzvahs.

On the first day of Chanukah we received instructions to distribute Chanukah Menora's and candles to everyone who did not own one, even to girls. Also, to ensure that children should receive Chanukah *gelt* from us or their own parents.

I complained to Rabbi Nachman Sudak (of London), "why do we always have to wait until the very last minute for instructions." Nachman replied, "The Rebbe also has to wait for instructions!"

Anyway, we here in Manchester actually 'manufactured' and distributed nearly 1,000 Menorahs and countless thousands of candles. The 'boys' worked really hard and in due course, they received their reward, Chanukah Gelt from the Rebbe to all who had participated in this Mitzvah.

A few weeks after Chanukah, I wrote in one of my letters to the Rebbe that in a few months time it would be Purim. We intended to anticipate the Rebbe's instructions regarding the Mitzvas of Purim and we were already making plans for this event. The Rebbe replied to the effect that he was rather surprised that we had "nothing to do from Chanukah until Purim."

My son, Rabbi Avrohom, had taken a party of thirty people to Brooklyn for Yud Shevat. He had persuaded a number of friends to accompany him and Susan (his wife). Here is a story to illustrate the wonderful powers of the Rebbe over the dormant "goodness of every Jew."

One of the 'boys,' Mr. Y., belonged to a very fine Orthodox family. Unfortunately he had 'slipped' a lot. He had even joined the Reform Synagogue. He had Yechidus with the Rebbe and was most impressed. Mr. Y. told us that the Rebbe was a fine man but did not have any influence over him. However, he did commence to attend our Shul. Soon, he was attending shiurim. But, he kept repeating, that the Rebbe had no influence over him.

He always went to his mother's home for Friday night dinner, but now he had left his car at his own home. The last time I saw him he had a lovely long '*sefira*' beard!

Of course the Rebbe has good soldiers here, Avrohom in particular.

To conclude this years 'Encounter with the Rebbe,' I am appending, herewith the letter I received from the Rebbe, which I mentioned earlier. (When one writes 25 letters, one can then expect a reply - try it!)

In this way we can conclude with the Rebbe's Brochas and Signature.

By the Grace of G-d
8th of Shvat, 5734
Brooklyn, N.Y.

Mr. Shneur Zalman Jaffe,
105 Cavendish Road,
Kersal, Salford 7, Lancs.
England

Greeting and Blessing:

This is to acknowledge receipt of your correspondence, regards and Purim kit. Thank you very much for your thoughtfulness and attention.

No doubt you will receive a full report, as well as personal regards, through the visitors from Manchester, especially your children. Nevertheless, at this time on the eve of Yud Shevat, I want to extend my prayerful wishes to you and all yours for the fulfillment of your heart's desires for good in all your affairs, both personal and general. All the more so as this is also in reciprocation of your good wishes, which your letters always contain, thus making you eminently eligible, in the light of G-d's promise, "I will bless all who bless you," to receive G-d's direct blessings in a most generous measure.

With reference to your writing that you want to get ready for special actions in connection with Purim, it surprises me somewhat that it did not occur to you that there would be special actions from Chanukah to Purim, or that I might not let Yud Shevat pass without some special action, without waiting for Purim. I am sure, however, that you and all those who take their cue and guidance from you will fully participate in the special activities, which Yud Shevat will bring forth.

Wishing you and all yours an inspiring Yud Shevat, and may the Zechus of the Baal HaHilulo stand you and all of us, in the midst of our people Israel, in good stead.

With blessing,

(Signed) M. Schneerson