

SHOVUOS 5735

CHAPTER 1

A BILINGUAL TANYA? THE VERY IDEA!

Five years ago, Rabbi Nachman Sudak, Head of the Lubavitch Foundation in London, contacted me.

The Rebbe had indicated to him, that the Tanya should be printed in five additional countries. This would “hasten the Redemption of the Jewish people and the coming of our righteous Moshiach.”

The Tanya had never been printed in England and Nachman assumed that the Rebbe wished us to rectify this omission as soon as possible.

I was not particularly enamoured with this idea. I did realise and appreciate that this was a spiritual matter, but why go to all the trouble of printing, here in England, the exact same book which was being already produced in Brooklyn and in Israel.

I suggested that a publication, even of a holy sefer, which was printed in Britain, should have some English content. The Chumash (The Five Books of Moses in Hebrew) is published here in one volume together with the English version. The Tanya, too, had already been translated into many languages, including English - in five sections - and I saw no great problems nor difficulties to be overcome.

To have the English translation actually on the page facing the Hebrew text would be a tremendous step forward, besides being of enormous help and a great boon to students. Yes, even to Chassidim studying the daily *shiur* of the Tanya.

We decided to present this idea to the Rebbe. In due course, we learned that the suggestion had received the Rebbe's approval, and if we ensured that the words “Made in England” were printed therein, it was “bound to be a first class production.” The Rebbe also advised us to contact the Soncino Press - the well known and, by repute, one of the best publishers in Great Britain.

At a special meeting of the Manchester Lubavitch, it was resolved to appoint a small sub-committee which would take immediate steps to implement this idea. My son (Rabbi Avrohom Jaffe), Bernard Perrin and myself were to be the three members of this sub-committee. Our first task was to visit our local bank and guarantee an overdraft of £10,000 for the Lubavitch Tanya Account. We were now ‘in business!’

In addition to this, Bernard offered to donate a very substantial sum, towards the cost of this project. This was extremely generous of him and in these circumstances we considered that it would be a nice gesture on our part, if we could print a special page in the new Tanya, in memory of Bernard's father, the late Shlomo Perrin.

In general, this would never have been allowed, but as Shlomo Perrin was a founder and a stalwart of Lubavitch in England, we decided to enquire of the Rebbe whether this would be permitted in this instance.

Nachman had recommended to us that we should co-opt Hershel Gorman onto our committee. He resided in London and he could deal, on the spot, with any queries or difficulties which might arise during our association with the Soncino Press. It was an inspired suggestion - one of the best - and we were delighted when Hershel accepted our invitation. He was the ideal person to look after our interests.

We had arranged to meet Mr. Bloch, managing director of the Soncino Press, for a ‘working luncheon’ at the Kedassia restaurant in London. We wished to ascertain whether (a) he could do the job, (b) how much approximately it would cost, (c) how long it would take, and (d) any other points we had to discuss which were relevant to the production of this edition.

The luncheon went down well! But not the ‘working’ part of it.

Mr Bloch was a ‘tough’ negotiator. He knew his business - and his own mind. He would not - or could not - give us a quotation regarding the cost. He told us that it could be printed much cheaper in

Holland. We insisted, however, on a 100% British production! “In that case,” says Mr. Bloch, “you will have to rely on me to get the best possible terms for you.”

“The work would take about three years to complete.” Three years! We were astounded. We were stunned. Three years for such a simple printing operation?!

As we did not have any alternative, we accepted Mr. Bloch's offer to do a first class job, at the lowest possible price, and in the shortest possible time.

Little did we realise that it would take five years of heartache, aggravation and trouble, before we would have this bilingual Tanya ready to hand over to our beloved Rebbe.

Mr. Bloch's first requirement was an **original** Vilna Tanya. The Brooklyn and Kfar Chabad publications were only photographic copies. Absolutely useless for our type of work. On my next visit Label Groner ‘loaned’ me an original Vilna edition from the Rebbe’s own private library and “please Zalmon,” he begged of me, “do be careful and let me have it back in this same, impeccable condition.” I did not realise that Mr. Bloch intended to take the whole volume to pieces (literally) page by page, in order to photograph each leaf individually.

Mr. Bloch was well satisfied with this Vilna Tanya and we now commenced the more serious discussions. Straight away we became involved in technical arguments: the colour of the paper, the format,- the place for the English notes and explanations, the numbering of the pages,- English and Hebrew, and so on and so forth.

Thank G-d we have our Rebbe (till 120 years). We sent all proposals and suggestions to the Rebbe for his decision.

The Rebbe preferred off-white paper instead of white; the Hebrew text should be on the left and the English on the right hand side. The first word on the English page should correspond (in meaning) to the first word on the Hebrew side. **No** changes whatsoever were to be allowed in the Hebrew section and the frontispiece had to be exactly as in the original. Two silk book liners were to be affixed to every volume and a jacket (cover) supplied. The Rebbe also instructed us regarding the bindings, the thickness of the paper and where the division for the ‘two-volume’ edition should take place.¹

The Rebbe would **not** agree to Mr. Bloch's urgent request that it should be called the “Soncino Tanya.” The Rebbe did, however, give permission for a special page in memory of the late Shlomo Perrin to be inserted, because Mr. Perrin was almost a Lubavitch institution on his own.

We kept closely and continuously in touch with the Rebbe, who decided personally on all matters relative to and connected with this work.

It was fortunate indeed that we had Hershel (Gorman) actually in London to represent us. It was his task and responsibility to keep in contact with Mr. Bloch, to ensure that our instructions were carried out and to make certain that reasonable progress was being made.

Four weeks went by, three months, six months, twelve months. There seemed to be no progress. Yet during the course of that year, Hershel had been speaking to or trying to contact Mr. Bloch almost every other day. Hershel nearly had a nervous breakdown over these years. He used to have nightmares and murmur in his sleep “Oy a Bloch! Oy a Broch!”

Then, lo and behold, one day, to our utter amazement and very pleasant surprise we did actually receive a few pages of our new Tanya. These were sent to us, so that they could be checked for mistakes and errors. We found plenty! So we returned these pages for correction. In the course of time these were again sent back to us. Yes! All the mistakes had been rectified, but many new ones had been made. This is how it went on and on and on!

After two years all we had to show for our efforts were two sample pages of our new English/Hebrew Tanya. Furthermore, until now Mr. Bloch had not even asked us for money, and because of this we were really getting worried.

¹ The Rebbe did not allow the *moreh shiur* to be inserted on each page.

On one occasion, during Chol Hamoed Pesach we received an urgent message. Mr. Bloch wanted to see us immediately. It could not wait, not even until after Pesach. Bernard and I rushed down to London. We met Bloch at Hershel's home, where we enjoyed a scrumptious meal - and that was all! Still no progress!

Then, one glorious morning, Bloch informed us that he needed £5,000 on account, at once. This was wonderful news. It was like sweet music to our ears! Bloch actually wanted £5,000 after two years! It meant that he was now concentrating on our work and we could expect the completed Tanya at "any time now."

It was suggested that this £5,000 should be paid through a lawyer, in a proper businesslike manner, with all conditions clearly stated and defined.

It was felt, however, that Mr. Bloch, being a little temperamental, might get annoyed and throw up the whole project. He had done a great deal of the groundwork during these two years and was entitled to some cash, and we had to show that we trusted him! So, the £5,000 was sent direct to Mr. Bloch. We did enclose a letter of confirmation regarding the printing of 7,500 copies of this Tanya, as a first edition.

Pages for proofreading and checking were now being received. Bernard had a group of assistants in Manchester. Hershel had helpers in London... Every page had dozens of mistakes. For every error which was rectified, there were dozens of new ones made. We were having continuous quarrels and arguments with Bloch. He said that we were holding up progress. He blamed us entirely (maybe for finding so many mistakes). He now seemed to be losing interest again and during some months we never heard a word from him. During the following twelve months I wrote two very strong letters to Mr. Bloch, demanding the return of the £5,000. These were never sent. We were advised that quiet and tactful diplomacy would be more effective.

Meanwhile, the Rebbe would soon be celebrating his 70th birthday (till 120). Nachman foresaw that our bilingual Tanya would certainly not be ready for that happy occasion, so he arranged to have a Hebrew **only** Tanya, printed in London, England. It took just two weeks to be published. This **was** ready for the Rebbe's 70th birthday.

The Rebbe, too, was becoming a little impatient. He stated that we were "not good businessmen. Because of this delay many people were unable to study the Tanya properly."

I informed the Rebbe that if he would permit me to instruct Bloch to print the Tanya, as it was now, with all or any errors therein, then we would get results.

The Rebbe refused this permission. I would have to discuss it with my committee. Bernard said - **no!** Hershel added, that it had to be 100% perfect, even if it took "ten years." So, another year went by!

Before I left to spend Shovuos with the Rebbe, Bloch delivered to me personally a bound copy of our new production. It contained the 'usual two sample pages.' The remainder were blanks. It was "to show to the Rebbe how our new Tanya would look!" Incidentally, it was nothing like the book which Bloch did subsequently produce!

Some months later, Bernard and Hershel declared, "Zalmon, you had better write **now**, a strong letter to Bloch, otherwise our Tanya will **never** be printed."

I, first of all, telephoned Bloch informing him that I was sending him this letter, which would instruct him to print the Tanya immediately and he must ensure that there were no mistakes. Bloch told me that he would refuse categorically to accept such a letter. All delays were definitely our fault and responsibility. We were forever changing our minds. So we had to "change our minds" again - and wrote to him to print at once and to "do his best" to see that there were no mistakes.

Once more we were 'on the job,' until our Prime Minister decided on a 3-day week. This was followed by a dock strike, a printers' stoppage, and a Railway strike followed this. Everything and everyone seemed to be working against us.

One morning, Bloch telephoned us again - he wanted more money. Our £5,000 had been with him for over two years. So my committee said, "Sorry - nothing doing!" But they did agree to my suggestion that we should promise him the cash on receipt of at least twelve completed copies, even unbound. We considered that if these dozen Tanya were ready, then it could be assumed that the rest of our order would be soon forthcoming.

On my last Shovuos visit to '770' (1974), the Rebbe had signified that I should "come again, this year - **before** next Shovuos." I remarked, "Of course - with the new Tanya!" The Rebbe had replied "you must be an optimist - do not wait for the Tanya." So, I did go to Brooklyn again - for Yud Shevat - **without** the Tanya.

But it was a near thing. I went so far as to discuss with the Rebbe the list of names to whom these first twelve leather bound copies should be presented. (The first, to the Rebbe of course and then to our Rebbetzen, and so forth.)

On my return home to Manchester, Bernard informed me that Bloch had promised us these twelve Tanyas "any day now." We did not wish to delay the presentation of these to the Rebbe, so it had been decided that these should be taken to New York at once. It was surmised that I, personally, might object to returning to '770' straight away and in that case Bernard and Nachman (Rabbi Sudak) should travel to Brooklyn alone. Alone, but with the Tanya, which, as yet, were not in our actual possession.

To be on the safe side they booked their flight for Purim - but it was not safe enough! We postponed this to Rosh Chodesh Nissan; and then to a much nicer and appropriate date - Yud Aleph Nisan - the Rebbe's birthday. All to no avail - the Tanyas were still "on their way."

At long last, two weeks before Lag B'Omer we did receive ten unbound copies. (Bloch took the other two for himself.)

We sent these to the bookbinders to be specially leather covered. Bernard suggested we should now all book our flight for Lag B'Omer - "the binding should not take more than a few days." This put me in a quandary. I was due to travel to Brooklyn in fourteen days time for Shovuos, together with Roselyn (my wife) and also with Shmuel, Hilary and their eight children (*kein ayin horah*). The date of their flights could certainly not be changed. I was sure the Rebbe would not be too pleased if I went to New York for a two days visit and then returned a few days later with my wife, children, and grandchildren for our usual annual Shovuos flight. Bernard emphasised that they would not take the Tanya without me. My family, Roselyn, Avrohom, Susan, Shmuel, and Hilary all pointed out how wrong it would be for me to make two flights to the Rebbe within two weeks - and more important still, but so hard to believe, the Tanyas were still at the binders!

Meanwhile, the British Chancellor of the Exchequer had announced a new and additional 20% tax on furs - to take effect in **fourteen days' time**. This is Bernard's business. He was so busy during these two weeks working continuously, day and night (and this was his normal quiet trading period) that he told me that he would have lost many thousands of pounds worth of business if he would have gone to Brooklyn for Lag B'Omer.

Our Shovuos flight was due to leave England on Monday the 12th of May. Five days beforehand, on the Wednesday, Hershel Gorman phoned me that the ten leather bound copies were now in his possession. On the Friday afternoon, **three** days before our departure, we also received 74 of the ordinary bound copies, just in time. One can realise what a relief this was to all of us who had worked and toiled, who had heartache and aggravation throughout almost five years!!!

RABBI MENACHEM M. SCHNEERSON

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מנחם מענדל שניאורסאהן
ליובאוויטש

770 איסטערן פארקוויי
ברוקלין, נ. י.

By the Grace of G-d
9th of Elul, 5733
Brooklyn, N.Y.

Mr. Dov Ber Perrin
67 Scholes Lane
Prestwich, Lancs.

Sholom uBrocho:

I duly received your correspondence.

Without desiring to dwell on a painful matter, I am impelled to express my ~~profound~~ disappointment at the delay in the publication of the Tanya, in the hope that this may spur you and your associates in this endeavor to expedite it.

Especially as we are now in the auspicious month of Elul, followed by Tishrei.

With regard to the matter concerning your son-in-law, it is also somewhat surprising. For if, as you write, it is a good thing, and it is only a question of a loan, is it right that this should be the obstacle? All the more so in view of the fact that in the month of Elul Jews feel much more responsive to do G-d's Will, and the Mitzvah os Gemilus Chasodim "balances all other Mitzvoth." Needless to say, this, too, is not intended as a "complaint", but in order to see this matter resolved satisfactorily and expeditiously. For this reason, also, the letter is sent by Special Delivery.

With prayerful wishes for a Kesivo vachasimo toivo to you and all yours,

With blessing,

M. Schneerson

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B. H. 11th of Sivan. 5731.
Brooklyn, N. Y.

Mr. Dov Ber Perrin

Sholom uBrocho:

I duly received a detailed report from Mr. S. Z. Jaffe about the Lubavitcher affairs in general, and especially about the Tanya project.

With regard to the color of the paper, and the like, it is best to follow the accepted practice in the printing of scientific books, particularly in the field of religion and philosophy, in the U. K. It is important, however, to that a book-mark be bound with the book. It is also advisable to have a certain quantity printed on Bible paper, but of good quality, of course (not transparent).

On the question of pagination, I had mentioned - as I recall - that the same pagination should be followed as in the standard editions of the Tanya (in Hebrew), since references are usually made that way. But since also the English pages have to be numerated, the page numbers should there be given in brackets.

*in the
Hebrew
pages*

I trust you and yours had an inspiring and joyous Yom Tov of Kabbolas Hatorah b'simcho ubipnimus.

With blessing,

M. Schneerson

CHAPTER 2

OUR TANYA IS AIRBORN(E)

Rabbi Chaim Farro had decided to join Roselyn, Bernard and me, as part of the Manchester contingent on this historic occasion. He was accompanied by his younger son, Mendel, who was a big lad for his age (*kein ayin horah*), but who, alas, could not walk. He was only a few months old and had to be carried in his carrycot together with his diapers and his own food for the journey. Chaim certainly had his hands full!

At London Airport we met Hershel and we had our first glimpse of the Tanya. It was a beauty! A wonderful piece of workmanship surpassing anything that we could ever have conceived or imagined. It was a classic - a masterpiece!

Everything that has ever been written in English on the Tanya has been included in these 900 pages - Explanations, the five different introductions to each of the five English sections, essays and so forth. A welcome addition, especially to new scholars, is the long list of abbreviations used in the Hebrew text. These are spelled out in full and take up six pages.

This publication had completely vindicated Mr. Bloch and exonerated him from all our criticisms, worries and anxieties over these long five years. It has been well worth waiting for. This Tanya will enhance any and every library and at the same time be of the greatest value to the student of Chassidus.

Well, here we were, at last, on the wings of a Jumbo jet on our way to the Rebbe - with the Tanya and for Yom Tov.

As was to be expected - because it was the Rebbe's desire - Shmuel, Hilary and their eight children (*kein ayin horah*) were also with us. For many months beforehand they had been trying to rent an apartment in Brooklyn. It had to be large enough for ten people and close enough to '770.' A few weeks before our departure they had still not acquired a flat, although they were prepared to pay very well for the privilege.

The matter was becoming desperate. I felt that the only person who could help them now, was our Rebbe.

So I sent a letter to the Rebbe. I explained the position - how the children were all looking forward to spending Yom Tov with the Rebbe, and that the Rebbe had already informed me, that he was looking forward to seeing them, but they did need somewhere to sleep. With the best will in the world, no friend could be expected to accept an additional ten persons for Yom Tov. Surely Lubavitch Headquarters could find a suitable place to house them for a couple of weeks!

Shmuel was most upset and annoyed when he heard that I had been pestering the Rebbe. But I had the consolation and the satisfaction of receiving a letter, by return of post, from Rabbi Chodakov. He stated that the Rebbe had advised him of our predicament and of our requirements, and added that he had "placed the matter in the capable hands of Rabbi Binyamin Klein and Rabbi Yudel Krinsky, and you have therefore no need to worry about accommodation. This would be provided - without fail." This was a relief. The Rebbe had already promised Roselyn and me the use of the 'Kolel' flat, so everything in that department was now under control.

Miss Raizie Adler, a very pretty girl and a friend of Hilary's was also on the flight. It seemed that she had come along especially to look after the children on the journey to New York. A true, devoted and loyal friend! She did a good job, too! Incidentally, it was heart warming to see Mendel (aged nine) making sure that Chana (aged 3) recited the *Tefilas Haderech* correctly, word by word.

Bernard, Hershel, Nachman and I comprised the Tanya Committee. As we were all together on the plane, we naturally discussed various methods involving the presentation of the Tanya to the Rebbe. Each of us had a different idea on the matter. I wanted to make sure that the four committee members would each receive a leather bound copy direct from the Rebbe, as per my discussion with the Rebbe on Yud Shevat. I also desired that we, the four members, should autograph the Rebbe's copy and also

the one for the Rebbetzen. The Rebbe's Tanya was already embossed with gold letters, stating that this was a gift from Anash of England. (A special wooden case, to hold this Tanya was made in Brooklyn on the day we arrived).

Anyway, we ultimately accepted Nachman's suggestion that **all** the Tanya's, which we had brought with us, ten leather-bound and seventy four ordinary bound ones, should be handed to the Rebbe "without strings attached" (Nachman's own words).

We were now in the big business league. We had high quality goods, which would be in great demand. There would also be profits. Manchester and London would have normally agreed to a 50/50 settlement, but felt that it would be wiser, when dealing with a matter of Halacha to place all the facts before an independent and unbiased rabbi, when we arrived in Brooklyn. His decision would be accepted as final and binding to both parties.

CHAPTER 3

WE ARRIVE AT CROWN HEIGHTS – IT IS HOME FROM HOME

We arrived at ‘770’ at 2.30pm on Monday, (Shovuos was on Thursday evening). The Rebbe was at the Ohel that day.

In view of Rabbi Chodakov letter regarding the apartment for Hilary, Shmuel and family, we were not surprised to find that everything was in order. The flat was situated on Eastern Parkway, almost exactly opposite ‘770.’ A truly ideal spot. It was on the sixth floor, but fortunately there was an elevator. Unfortunately, there were **no beds!** Also **no furniture** - not even a chair! There was **no gas** and the electricity was cut off! We had only the bare walls. Hilary seemed a little disappointed, Roselyn very much so! Shlomo Rizel - a very good boy in charge of ‘*Hachnosas Orchim*’ (looking after visitors) was on hand, and he promised to attend to all those small details for us. We spent fifteen days in Brooklyn and Shlomo Rizel was actually still attending to these “small details” until the very day before we left for home.

Our first priority was to get the children settled in, after their very long journey from England - at least, temporarily for this first evening.

Shlomo had another apartment available, on Empire Boulevard. It was decided to take that one. It was smaller than the original flat, but almost identical: sixth floor, **no beds**, **no furniture**, **no gas**, **no electricity**. Fortunately, Shmuel has a sister who lives in Brooklyn, and by 9.00pm she had brought over sufficient mattresses and bedding, at least to get the children fixed up for bed.

Empire Boulevard was about a mile from ‘770.’ So, next day they all moved back to the Eastern Parkway apartment **and** they took with them, their sister's bedding. The three boys, Yossi, Mendel and Pincus would reside with us in the Rebbe’s (Kolel) flat.

Meanwhile, as soon as we had arrived at ‘770’ we had sent a memorandum to the Rebbe, with the information that we had brought with us a consignment of the first ever-printed bilingual Tanya. This was comprised of ten leather bound and seventy-four ordinary bound volumes - these being all that were ready by the time we left for New York. We also explained that the 74 volumes had **no marker ribbons** (no strings attached, as Nachman had once observed) nor did they have the ‘jackets.’ We pointed out that we thought it was better to bring them, as they were, than not at all. We considered that the Rebbe would have preferred them in this condition, rather than leaving them behind in England. Under these circumstances the Rebbe would have an extra 74 bilingual Tanya in hand - in stock.

Subsequently, we received a reply from the Rebbe, instructing us to send to him the ten leather bound copies and to ensure that the other 74 were properly completed and finished. Obviously this meant that markers and jackets had to be affixed.

Poor Hershel and Nachman! They really had to get down to work. They managed to obtain plastic jackets and rolls of silk ribbon. No one could do the job for us in the short time at our disposal. So they cut the ribbons into lengths and put in the markers and then the jackets, all by themselves within a day. These 74 Tanya’s have a distinctive and unique feature that all the other bilingual Tanya’s have **not** got. The two markers are in different colours - a red and a yellow one. The thousands since produced have only two brown markers.

The Rebbe returned from the Ohel in time for Mincha, at 8.45 p.m. I was waiting in the hallway. I received straight away my reward for the journey to Brooklyn. I was the recipient of one of the Rebbe's most glorious smiles and that is something worth receiving and seeing. The Rebbe left ‘770’ at 10.00pm after Maariv. I stood outside the door. The Rebbe asked me, “where is Mrs. Jaffe?” I replied that she was upstairs in the flat. The Rebbe remarked that he had already seen one “einikel” (grandchild) and wished to know whether the others were here too. I confirmed that (*kein ayin horah*) all the eight had arrived. The Rebbe said, “*in a gutte sho’oh.*”

Binyamin telephoned to the Rebbetzen and informed her of our arrival. He added that he had a copy of my diary for her. The Rebbetzen was delighted and asked whether everything was in order. She looked forward to our telephoning her tomorrow to fix an appointment to visit her.

Rabbi Chodakov was also pleased with my diary. He indicated that I should divide my next issue into chapters, with an index for reference. You now know who is responsible for this innovation. I am not quite sure whether this is a good idea. I have a 'fan' in Kfar Chabad who loves the "chatty pieces," but is not too interested in the "words of Torah." Another reader in Brooklyn - a lady - divulged to me that she "really enjoyed the Torah." She said it was the first time that she had ever understood the Rebbe's Sichah! Now they will know which parts to avoid!

CHAPTER 4

PRESENTATION OF THE TANYA TO THE REBBE

There was much discussion, debating and surmising on how and when the Tanya would be presented to the Rebbe. Normally a delegation would be received by the Rebbe, by an appointment, and there would be a short ceremony in the privacy of the Rebbe's room.

No one could ever have conceived the manner or form, in which our presentation would eventually take place.

We received a message through Rabbi Label Groner that there would be a special Farbrengen on Wednesday evening (Shovuos was on Thursday night). The Rebbe would be pleased if the committee would come up to the platform and present six of these leather bound Tanya's to him. This would take place immediately after the "*Brocha Achronoh*" (on the wine) at the end of the Farbrengen.

That very exciting moment had now arrived. My seat is in the well of the hall, just facing the Rebbe. The Rebbe gave me a signal and I jumped up immediately. I was followed at once by Bernard Nachman, already on the platform, was a move ahead. Hershel was 'dragging his feet.'

We were now all together on the dais. Nachman took a Tanya from the box under the table, and went forward to present it to the Rebbe. The Rebbe was literally beaming with pleasure. He accepted the Tanya and then handed to Nachman a specially autographed letter (about Shovuos) and also a glass of vodka.

I was the next in line. Label (Groner) was very excited, whispering hoarsely, "Come on, come on, quickly, quickly." To accelerate the proceedings, I took **two** Tanya's from the box and handed them to the Rebbe.

The Rebbe took one and said to me "Is the other one for you?" What a question to ask! What a temptation! All I had to say was "**Yes**" and I would be the proud possessor of a wonderful leather-bound Tanya, one of the first twelve to be printed, direct from the Rebbe's hands and given to me in front of thousands of witnesses and broadcast throughout the world!

I then contemplated on what would be the reaction of my colleagues. I know how I would have felt if the positions would have been reversed.

So, very reluctantly and crestfallen, I replied "No, Rebbe they are both for you." The Rebbe smiled, handed to me a letter, a glass of vodka and wished me "Le'chaim." Bernard and Hershel followed. After this the Rebbe called upon Chaim Farro to come up - Louis Tiffenbrun, Mendel Katch, Shmuel (Lew) and then all the British citizens who were present, including youngsters and boys - until the top platform was filled to capacity with Her Majesty's (and the Rebbe's) subjects.

The Rebbe handed to each of the men, a letter and a glass of vodka, and the boys were given a piece of cake. The Rebbe also handed to Nachman and Chaim some wine and cake to distribute to the "ladies of Great Britain" who were in the women's gallery.

It was a very impressive scene! When the Rebbe arranges something it is really good. No doubt at all about that!

CHAPTER 5

THE REBBE ACCEPTS THE BILINGUAL TANYA WITH VERY GREAT PLEASURE

Whilst we were all still standing on the platform the Rebbe said the following:

“The Torah consists of two elements - the revealed and the hidden.”

The Rebbe explained that we had just concluded the Tractate Sotah of the Gemora. The Talmud is referred to as the revealed Torah. Wherever there is a revealed element, then there is also a hidden facet. This concealed component is explained by Chassidus, especially in the book of Tanya, which is the Written Torah of Chassidus.

Before we received the Oral Torah we were given the Written law. In chapter 1, verse 5 of Devorim (Deuteronomy) it states “...and Moses began to explain the Torah.” Rashi, on this verse, remarks that Moses translated the Torah into the 70 languages in order that the Torah should become revealed and understood by all the people. By these means, one not only elevates the language, but also fully explains and expounds the meaning of the Torah. It is a two-way process.

All matters, which are discussed in the Torah, are lessons for future generations. This particular lesson is that Torah should be translated into every language. **Not** only the revealed Torah, but also the Torah of Chassidus - the Tanya - so that everyone should be fully conversant with this aspect.

Moreover, it is important that the translation should be especially and specifically in **English** - the language which is spoken and understood by the majority of Jewish people today - particularly in America where there is not only the quantity of Jews, but also the quality.

This language was brought to the U.S.A. by the Founding Fathers, who left England hundreds of years ago, in order to settle in America. Therefore it is appropriate that this English Tanya should be brought from England to the U.S.A. today.

Everything connected with Torah and mitzvahs should be beautiful. This edition of the bilingual Tanya **is** beautiful.

When a work is translated into a different language there are generally some mistakes. The second edition will be better. The third - better still.

It has to be remembered that the English language is only like an outer garment - a vessel. This is a new vessel, but the contents consist of the same old, precious good wine. This - the Hebrew constituent, must never be changed or tampered with. **Not** under any circumstances whatsoever, G-d forbid.

The Rebbe extended his blessings to all those who had taken part in the production of this volume. They should go from strength to strength in their learning, in Torah and in Mitzvahs, and also in Chassidus in a happy, contented, joyful manner - ever and always increasing until we shall be privileged to greet our righteous Moshiach speedily and in our days.

The Rebbe concluded by extending to us all a “*Yasher Koach*” (heartly thanks) for giving him such “*Nachas Ruach*” (spiritual satisfaction) and joy by bringing over this Tanya in time for the Yom Tov of Shovuos.

CHAPTER 6

THE END OF THIS SPECIAL FARBRENGEN

The whole Farbrengen had taken just two hours. And now, to complete everyone's happiness, the Rebbe himself commenced to sing the nigun (the 'signature tune') of the Alter Rebbe the first Lubavitcher Rebbe and the actual author of the Tanya. This was the first time ever that (a) the tune of the Alter Rebbe was sung during an ordinary week-day Farbrengen and (b) that the Rebbe himself had actually commenced this Nigun by singing the first bars of this tune.

This was the climax of the Farbrengen. With everyone standing, singing and clapping - the Rebbe left the hall.

I, together with scores of others waited outside the Rebbe's room. Many hundreds more were lining the drive and the street. We wanted to show our thanks and appreciation to the Rebbe.

Suddenly the door opened and the Rebbe emerged from his room. We all burst out singing a Nigun as loudly as possible - and here was the Rebbe himself with a wonderful, joyful and happy smile - *swinging and twirling the Tanya round and around his head in tune to the nigun - whilst with his free hand he was urging us all on to sing louder* - and faster. With sprightly steps the Rebbe reached his car and left for home.

I then noticed Roselyn standing by, with a proud beaming smile. **She** was offering **me** wine and cake, which she had received from the Rebbe. This was something unusual. It was the first time that she was in the position of being a donor. It was her turn and she rather liked it. It was good for her ego.

CHAPTER 7

GOOD YOM TOV

Shovuos was on Friday and Shabbos. We spent a very happy and joyful Yom Tov in the Rebbe's company. I always do my best to make the Rebbe *freilech* by singing a nigun and sometimes dancing a *rikud* every time that the Rebbe leaves the Shul. I also sang my 'hardy annuals' during the morning service - *Hoaderes Vehoamuna*, *Kaili Ata*, and *Hu Elokeinu*, with the help and assistance of Tzvi Fisher and Benzion Kravitz. As usual we had the active opposition of those foolish men hushing and shushing, who really imagined that I would sing these songs without the permission of the Rebbe!

We enjoyed luncheon on the first day at our good friends home - Sarah and Mendel Shemtov. We had a real jolly time reminiscing and talking about the highlights of the past fifteen years.

SOLDIERS ON THE MARCH

After Mincha, at 6.00pm on the first day of Shovuos, the annual march to Boro Park takes place.

Many thousands of boys and men participate in this 15-mile (return) walk. The procession is escorted by police cars and motorcyclists.

On arrival at their destination the 'boys' pair off and each group visits a different shul to address the congregants. They review a Sicha of the Rebbe, sing a nigun or two, and help to make Jews happy on Yom Tov. It is well known that Lubavitch do concentrate on those Jews who are not yet orthodox. The question is often asked, why do the Lubavitchers also visit these ultra Orthodox communities?

The analogy is given that a fish, which lives in, and is completely submerged in the water, will come to the surface when it is raining to taste a few drops of this precious fresh rainwater. Water is compared to Torah. So does Lubavitch supply this additional and welcome water to the Jews of Boro Park.

Unfortunately, I have a poorly leg and I have never taken part in this event. As usual, though, I came along to watch the Rebbe cheering and encouraging the marchers as they left '770.' Many thousands of women and children came along to watch too. They, however, were interested only in watching the Rebbe.

The procession officially starts from the corner of Kingston Avenue and Eastern Parkway - 100 yards from '770.' The marchers, singing lustily, then walk briskly and smartly down the slip road towards the Rebbe, who is standing on the steps outside Lubavitch. When they pass by the Rebbe they 'take the salute' and receive an overall Brocha from the Rebbe.

There were so many people taking part this year that it became necessary to get into some formation many hundreds of yards from '770,' and walk along the pavement towards the starting point. In effect, they would pass the Rebbe twice. Once on the pavement when walking towards Kingston Avenue and the second time in the official procession along the slip road.

Louis Tiffenbrun met me, as he was walking along the pavement to join the procession. He begged and appealed to me to accompany him. He maintained that it would give the Rebbe real pleasure if I became a 'marcher.' When he added that I could always drop off at the 'next block,' I allowed myself to be persuaded to join. Yossi, my grandson, also joined in.

Well, here I was, for the first time ever, taking part in a walk to Boro Park (anyway it was a start, literally) and - there was the Rebbe, on the steps outside '770' inspiring the walkers to sing and to march. Suddenly his eyes lighted on me amongst the crowd surging towards Kingston Avenue.

The Rebbe stared at me in amazement. It seemed (to me) that the Rebbe just could not believe what he saw. Then his face became transformed by a huge beaming smile. This added impetus to my singing. I was already looking forward to catching the Rebbe's eye on my way back from Kingston Avenue, in the actual procession.

Once more! I was lucky. The Rebbe did notice me again. It seemed to me that the Rebbe burst into a chortle!

I felt very gratified and very pleased with myself, until I heard a hissing whisper from a lady amongst the crowd of onlookers. It was Roselyn - knowing the condition of my leg she naturally suspected that I did not intend to walk very far. She hissed - "you are a fraud." This very much deflated my ego.

I mentioned to my sponsor, Louis, what Roselyn had said. I pointed out that I felt a little hypocritical and I was giving the wrong impression to the Rebbe. Louis indicated that there was a simple solution. I was in a procession of people who were going to give the Rebbe's Yom Tov message to various congregations. It was not necessary, in his opinion, to walk all the way to Boro Park. There was a shul less than a mile away, at which one of our Lubavitcher boys would be 'speaking.' By going there, I would be placed in the same category as all the other marchers.

This was a super suggestion; it relieved me of my guilt complex. So, at an appropriate spot, Yossi and I left the main procession.

We very soon arrived at this Synagogue. It was a large one too. We had just entered into the doorway when we were nearly bowled over by scores of men, who were rushing out to go home after Maariv. I managed to stop a gentleman I asked him where was the Lubavitcher speaker. He replied that there had been no speaker at that service, but he added that if I would like to come tomorrow he could assure me that I would enjoy a very good sermon. I was dumbfounded. I was determined to find a shul where one of our Lubavitcher boys would be 'speaking.'

Yossi and I had walked about one hundred yards when to our immense relief and delight we met Binyamin Klein, who was on his way home.

I implored him to direct me to a shul where some of our boys would be addressing the congregation. He indicated that if we walked down that road for about a quarter of a mile we would discover the place, which we were seeking. We did find it but it was shut, no sign of life whatsoever. We asked various people to direct us to another Synagogue. At last, we received notification of a shul half a mile further along the road.

In due course, we arrived there. About half a dozen men were lounging about and sitting outside. They gave us a warm welcome and told us to wait a little while. They were absolutely certain that there would soon be a minyan for Maariv. They could make no sense at all of my enquiries regarding Lubavitcher boys or speakers. They kept repeating that I would have to wait only a little while and a minyan would definitely be forthcoming.

By this time, I was fed up. This shul was situated on a corner. When I turned this corner I found I was back in Kingston Avenue. Only a few hundred yards from '770.'

Well, I had tried my best. At least I should have the consolation and satisfaction of having gained some little reward for 'marching' - even if it was in the wrong direction!

As usual the main marchers returned around midnight and congregated outside the Rebbe's private residence, singing and dancing with perspiration simply pouring out from them, until the Rebbe opened the door and gave them all a Brocha.

I heard of an odd incident during the march. The procession was crossing a large road junction under police protection and supervision. The driver of a car could not wait for the procession to pass, he was in a hurry. He kept his finger pressed on the horn which was blaring non-stop. A fellow approached him and told him to cease his useless horn blowing. The driver asked, "Who are you?" "I am a police officer," was the reply (he was not in uniform). "Oh, are you?" retorted the driver, "then take this!" 'This' was a punch in the eye. This driver must have been in a hurry to get to the police station. It did not take him long at all to get there.

ORAL TORAH ON SHOVIOS

The Shovuos Farbrengen commenced at 8.00pm. Everyone washed and made *Hamotzi* on the bread. Here follows a very minute part of what the Rebbe said at this Farbrengen.

It is a well-known fact that all our forefathers - even our ancestors when in Egypt, studied the Torah and kept the Mitzvahs. It is also recorded that Adam, the very first man, also learned Torah and

practiced the Commandments. So why all the excitement and fuss when G-d gave us the Torah on Mount Sinai on Shovuos.

Shovuos is referred to as *Zman Mattan Toraseinu* - the time when G-d gave to us **our** Torah. But - it is **not** our Torah - It is G-d's. By contrast, when G-d refers to the Torah in connection with Abraham, G-d says "**my** Torah." It remained the property of G-d.

Abraham studied and guarded the Mitzvahs. This was self-impelled. He was not instructed by G-d to do so. Abraham was also on the very highest spiritual level, but even his super mind was only human and so was limited.

Therefore, Abraham could only reach **his** own level, no matter how high this was.

However, when **we** study, it is because we are instructed by G-d to do so. It then becomes **our** Torah.

Rabbi Shmuel Lew (my son-in-law) explained this by way of a simple story to the children of Beth Rivka School. "If you girls wish to buy yourselves a present, you are limited in your purchasing power - \$1, \$10, \$100. But if a multimillionaire wants to buy you a gift, he could afford to spend a million dollars on your present."

Therefore when the gift comes from Abraham or from our Forefathers, it must have limitations. But when G-d gives us this unbounded and unlimited gift and it becomes **our** Torah direct from G-d, we can then reach even a higher level than Abraham.

We have the Torah, but we need to 'work on it.' Abraham was unable to connect the spiritual with the physical, while we have that power from G-d. For example, why are Teffillin so holy that if they fall down we must fast? Because this physical parchment becomes permeated with holiness by reason of G-d's Commandments. We have that power, by means of the Torah, to transform physical objects into holy and spiritual ones. This Abraham could not do; therefore it is **our** Torah - **our** gift from G-d himself.

Rabbi Label Groner gives the analogy of an electric current which is 'spiritual' - one cannot see it. A bulb is material. If we join the two together, we obtain a third force - light. By joining the spiritual to the material, we are able to accomplish a great deal; through our work we attain holiness.

This sedra, 'Nasso,' is always connected with Shovuos. It is read either just before or straight after Yom Tov. This year, as Shovuos is on Shabbos, it is read on that very day at Mincha. The sedra 'Nasso' commences with Torah and also ends with Torah. E.g., "When Moses came into the Tent of Meeting G-d spoke to him and taught him Torah." This is the connection with Shovuos.

The word Nasso not only means "to count;" it also means to elevate through the study of Torah. One should never be satisfied. As great as one is, there must be constant elevation and improvement.

In addition, when one sees a Jew who has never studied Torah it is one's duty to 'elevate' this person by teaching him Torah.

However, it also states that one should spend most of one's time in Torah study. If one leaves his own learning to teach another person, then one is neglecting this important mitzvah of learning Torah. But the Rabbis have told us that he who occupies himself **only** with Torah study and nothing else, will not even have any Torah left. The mitzvah of Ahavas Yisroel (love of one's fellow Jew) is of such tremendous importance that it is better to encourage others to study Torah.

A RASHI SICHA

The Rebbe then discussed the rather long Rashi in Parshas Naso, 7:18,19. He had a number of questions to ask on this Rashi and, as on other occasions, it was my good fortune (or misfortune) to be asked by the Rebbe to keep count of the number of questions. I did my best. When the Rebbe had concluded, I was asked to state how many? I categorically and emphatically informed the Rebbe that I had counted fourteen. I should have said four. It was a very interesting Rashi sicha and well worth repeating. But after the 'four questions,' I was stuck - completely flummoxed. I had completely forgotten the rest. So I begged Shmuel (Lew) to try and discover these fourteen questions which I had so conscientiously (or unconsciously) counted. To my great amazement and to his surprise, he did

find them. So - thanks to Shmuel, I shall endeavour to explain this sicha in simple language, which my 'youngest' reader (not necessarily in age) will be able to comprehend.

Rashi quotes these verses (18,19): "On the second day, Nesanel the son of Tzuar, Prince of Issachar did offer. He offered... one silver dish weighing 130 shekels... one spoon of gold of ten shekels full of incense... one young bull, one ram etc, etc.

Rashi comments, "Why is the word '*hikriv*' (he offered) used only in the offerings of the Tribe of Issachar and not by the other Tribes?"

Question 1: Why does Rashi begin with a question? Rashi's customary rule is to give, immediately, the answer to any difficult problem.

Question 2: Why does Rashi need to tell us that this word (*hikriv*) is not used in the case of the other tribes? We can see that for ourselves. The question should be, why is this word (*hikriv*) mentioned in this particular verse about **Issachar**? We do not need to know (at this stage) why it is not mentioned regarding the other tribes!

Rashi's commentary goes on, "...Reuben came and protested, saying, since Judah **my brother** has offered before me, let me at least offer immediately after him."

Question 3: Why was Reuben prepared to press his claim to go before Issachar, but was quite satisfied to go **after** Judah?

Question 4: The question is intensified when we recall that several verses back (7:2) we are told that these Princes were "those who presided over the census," and at the census (chapter 1) Reuben did, in fact, go first, being that he was the first born.

Question 5: Why does Rashi emphasise that Judah was Reuben's brother. If it explains why Reuben accepted Judah preceding him, then it equally applies to Issachar who was also a brother.

Rashi continues his commentary and gives the reason why Issachar follows Judah. "Moses told Reuben that G-d had ordained that the Princes should offer according to the order of their journeying and with their banners. Therefore, Issachar came after Judah.

Question 6: The fact that G-d had ordained this should have been sufficient, why add "according to their journeying and with their banners?"

Question 7: Even if we were to say that Moses was thus explaining why, in fact, G-d ordained this particular order, we have yet to understand the connection between journeys and offerings.

Question 8: Once Rashi does tell us "according to their journeying," why does he add "with their banners?"

Question 9: The question becomes all the more intriguing when we remember that several verses previously (verse 11) Rashi comments that G-d told Moses that the order should be "according to their journeys" and does **not** add "and with their banners." Why does Rashi add them in this verse?

Rashi's commentary continues that the "word *hikriv* is repeated a second time in Issachar's case (verse 19) in order to make known to us that Issachar's special honour was due to two things: (1) Their excellence in Torah, and (2) the fact that it was them who suggested the whole idea of these offerings."

Question 10: But does this not contradict the previously mentioned reason - that it was because G-d ordained that they should bring the offerings according to the "order of their journeying."

Question 11: We now have two reasons why Issachar preceded Reuben. But why did **Zevulun** on the third day also go before Reuben? The first reason could apply to Zevulun because

Rashi points out that this tribe also produced scribes (excellence in Torah), but the second reason does not apply to Zevulun for they did not suggest the idea of offerings?

Question 12: Whenever Rashi brings two reasons it is because each reason, on its own, is not sufficient. Why are two reasons necessary in this instance?

Question 13: If we say that the first reason is insufficient because it does not prove why Issachar should be singled out, for what is the connection between excellence in Torah and offerings; then the second reason, that because Issachar suggested the offerings, also do not explain why Zevulun preceded Reuben?

Rashi concludes his commentary on these verses by saying that R. Moshe Hadarshan (the preacher) has said that it was Nesanel (the Prince of Issachar) himself, who had suggested the offerings.

Question 14: What is the difference who exactly suggested it? And if the precedence of Reuben **was** in fact, due to this **one** individual, then we are more perplexed than ever as to why Zevulun went before Reuben?

These are the **fourteen** questions, which the Rebbe asked on this **one** Rashi.

The Rebbe went on to explain: At the beginning of this sedra, Moses is commanded to count (elevate) the Levites from the age of thirty upwards till fifty years old, and instruct them in their holy work. But why are the children of Kehos (of the tribe of Levi) given a small paragraph at the **end** of the **previous** Sedra. The duties of Kehos were to look after all the holy utensils and appurtenances, including the *luchos*. They should receive first mention in this Sedra. And yet, the children of Gershon (also Levites) are given this preference. Their duties were to carry all of the equipment for putting up the *Mishkan* (the Tabernacle) and to facilitate the setting up of the *luchos* and the holy vessels. This is to emphasise to us that action takes precedence.

If Torah should come first, then Issachar who was noted for his learning and an expert in the calendar should have brought the first offering even before Judah. We have been told that when the Jews were offered the Torah they accepted it unequivocally and said “*Na’aseh VeNishmah*” - “first we will do and then we will listen and learn.”

A baby of two or three years old has no responsibility to learn Torah. If this was the main purpose then G-d could have easily arranged that as soon as a child is born, he would have the prowess of being able to study Torah. In other words, some things have to be done **before** study of Torah. For example, when a person awakes, the very first thing is to say “*Modeh ani*” - give thanks to G-d. A child has to be trained to this attitude of mind. He has to be taught to **do** things first.

That is why Judah, who symbolizes action before study, comes **before** Issachar. A Jew must always remember that action comes first, then the study of Torah.

Finally, the reason why Zevulun offered on the third day, before Reuben, was because the order of their offerings went according to their “journeying and with their banners.” The Jews were divided into four sections, when they encamped and when they journeyed. Each section had their own banner. Under Judah’s banner, which was adjacent to Moses and Aaron, came Issachar and Zevulun. That is why these three tribes offered first.

THE TANYA GIVES THE REBBE FURTHER PLEASURE

During the Farbrengen the Rebbe again spoke about the Hebrew/English Tanya. The Rebbe traced the history of the various translations. The first was about 75 years ago, when Rabbi Menachem Mendel the brother of the Lubavitcher Rebbe, the RaSHaB, Sholom Ber, had just one chapter translated into Russian. It was a great success, but no further progress was made until the previous Rebbe made a Yiddish version. During our Rebbe’s Shlita reign it has been translated into English, French, Italian and, Spanish.

However, this is the first time that the translation has appeared with the original Hebrew in one volume with one page of a different language directly opposite the Hebrew. It placed a heavy

responsibility on those who had carried out this work. It was a bold step and the Rebbe extended only the highest praise and thanks to all those who had taken part.

Since it had been done, it deserves, and will please G-d achieve great success. The Rebbe takes upon his own broad shoulders the full responsibility. All criticisms should be directed to the Rebbe.

The Rebbe added that he hoped that there would be now a second and then a third edition. This would create a *chazoka* and it would become a permanent production. It would enable students to learn and understand the Tanya much more easily. The Rebbe hinted that afterwards it might be possible to translate and print the Maamorim in the same manner.

The Rebbe then called upon the four members of this Tanya Committee who were present, to come to the dais. A bottle of vodka was presented to each one - to Rabbi Nachman Sudak, Bernard Perrin, Hershel Gorman and Z.J.

It was a very happy and joyful Farbrengen which concluded with the Rebbe reciting the bentching. We then davened Maariv, the Rebbe made Havdola and distributed the Koss Shel Brocha to every person present. The Rebbe obviously waited until all had been served, personally.

The Rebbe left for home at 4.30am.

CHAPTER 8

I AM ONCE AGAIN A GUEST SPEAKER AT THE 'KINUS HA TORAH

The Kinus HaTorah takes place on the day after Yom Tov. Many Roshei Yeshivas and other prominent Rabbonim come along. Each one has prepared a completed *pilpul* which they recount to the assembled men and boys.

They bring with them to the pulpit (*shtender*) a whole pile of Gemorahs and Talmudic books. They need to know their subject very well indeed, for they can expect - and do get - quite a lot of interruptions and questions on their 'thesis.'

I have a very long-standing *chazoka*, that I also address the audience. The Rebbe used to insist on my participation and Rabbi Mentlik always makes sure that I am present. I never try, obviously, to compete with the exceptionally high standard set by the other speakers. I do try and find a word of Torah to start with and then read excerpts from one of my 'Encounters With The Rebbe Shlita.' The boys in particular always look forward eagerly to my address.

The Kinus commences at 3.30pm. I generally speak at about 6.00pm so they are all ready for a light-hearted interlude amongst the very heavy orations to which they have been listening. I bring with me only a few notes and one of my diaries. The boys always listen very intently and with rapt attention and I am told by many how much they enjoy my talk.

This year the Rebbe's 'NeSHeK' campaign - the lighting of Shabbos candles - was in full swing, so I took this as my 'Torah theme'.

I started by quoting from next week's Sedra Bahaloscho, where we read about the instructions which were given to Aaron regarding lighting the candles of the Menorah. Rashi explains that the three candles (wicks) on each side of the central shaft were turned towards the middle.

Rashi asks, "Why is this?" and replies, "This is in order that people should not say that G-d needs the light of this candlestick." So, if the Almighty does not need this light, then for whose benefit is it?

It must mean, in effect, that any benefits which accrue from this Mitzvah will be to the direct advantage of those who actually perform this command.

The lighting of candles and particularly of the Shabbos candles, is not only of tremendous spiritual benefit to the woman, but also has a profound psychological effect on her and all those who participate in this meritorious deed.

To illustrate this point, Binyamin Klein's wife, Leah, told me this story. It came as a result of the Neshek campaign.

A woman worked at the Post Office. One of her work-shifts was on Friday night from 5.00pm until midnight. She listened to Rabbi Weinberg's talk on the radio and then telephoned Rebbetzen Klein. She explained that she did not want to be a hypocrite by lighting the Shabbos candles and then going out to work. She was asking a '*shaala*': should she light the candles before or after work! Rabbi Dvorkin was consulted and replied that the answer was on emphatic "**no**" in both instances.

The woman was disappointed and became very thoughtful for a short while. She then blurted out "Yes, the Rabbi is right." She has now changed her Shabbos shift to a Sunday one.

Mrs. Esther Sternberg is the chairman of this Neshek campaign in New York. They issue a brochure which quotes the Zohar that "when a woman lights the Shabbos candles, this ensures long life to members of her family. She will also be blessed with children who will illuminate the world with Torah."

The brochure also stresses the importance of lighting the candles **before** Shabbos has commenced. It is amazing that so many women have never realised that they were actually transgressing the Shabbos by lighting the candles so late.

Mrs. Sternberg has many stories to tell. It is unbelievable how quickly this campaign has snowballed. A local Rabbi asked for one hundred candlesticks. Within three weeks he had taken over four hundred.

One kit - a candlestick, brochure and a calendar, all in a plastic bag - was sent to a young girl in the Mid-West. Hundreds of families from that area are now *'bentching licht'* because of the spontaneous act of that one little girl. Up until this moment the committee have supplied 160,000 candlesticks throughout the U.S.A.

Now we can well understand Rashi, when he remarks that it is **not** the Almighty who needs this light. It is us and the women who *'bentch licht'* **and** their families, who reap the reward. This is especially so, at the time when all the members of the household are gathered together for their Shabbos meal, because of the Shabbos candles.

Now it is easy to realise why the Rebbe is constantly urging us to concentrate our efforts in order that every young girl will form the splendid habit of lighting Shabbos candles, and so ensure our Jewish heritage for ever.

After these words of Torah, I read excerpts from one of my diaries for the next thirty minutes or more, which were thoroughly enjoyed by all the boys present.

CHAPTER 9

ENCOUNTERS WITH THE REBBE SHLITA

I am constantly being asked why it is so difficult to obtain a private audience (Yechidus) with the Rebbe and why it is so rarely that one receives a reply to one's letter.

Let us consider the facts. The Rebbe is the head of a huge and successful international empire with scores of branches all over the world. In addition there are tens of thousands of correspondents in almost every city, in all countries (including Russia and its satellites) of every continent. Some of these correspondents are not even Lubavitchers, but they turn to the Rebbe for advice and help - which they get.

Letters, in batches of a hundred, are delivered by post, sometimes three times a day; many more are delivered by hand. Urgent messages are being continuously received on the 4 or 5 telephones, which are always busy, all for the personal attention of the Rebbe.

The Rebbe does not speak directly to the caller on the telephone, but he is constantly at hand to answer everyone's problems.

Every letter sent to the Rebbe is opened by himself alone. The replies are dictated in Hebrew, Yiddish, English, Russian, French or Spanish, and hundreds are sent out each week.

Obviously, it is humanly impossible to reply to every letter received - about 1,800 a week or 90,000 a year. One can be certain, however, that every single letter has been opened and read by the Rebbe. In these days of easy communications, most people phone through for an urgent reply to their letters. This method never fails.

In addition to the above, the Rebbe has to attend to the regular Lubavitch business. One can visualize the constant stream of queries coming from, in particular, the scores of branches throughout the U.S.A. and Israel, besides those from our five branches in Britain.

Sichos and Maamorim (the Rebbe's talks and Chassidus) are printed and published each week. These are edited by the Rebbe. During the course of a year, the Rebbe presides over approximately forty Farbrengens, at which he speaks for about five or six hours, often even longer. All these words of Torah require intensive and concentrated preparation.

Obviously, the Rebbe works extremely hard. He has no time to stop or to 'take it easy.' He spends about twelve hours a day in his office, and for the twenty-five years since he became our Rebbe he has never had one day's holiday. He is tied, absolutely to '770,' for seven days a week.

Thank G-d, the business is also increasing apace - so is the number of 'members.'

Everyone wants to see the Rebbe privately. There is a tremendous pressure by people clamouring for admittance. It is, of course impossible to see everyone!

Furthermore, as is seen from the foregoing, the Rebbe is so busy during the day, that Yechidus cannot commence before 8.00pm, and ends as late as 5.00a.m. (Years ago, I recall a night-long session of Yechidus finishing at 8.00am!!)

Many people travel to America for a holiday or on business. 'En passant' they would love to 'pop in' and see the Rebbe - privately. They will do him a favour! The Rebbe does not need these favours!

Dr Jacobovitch, the Chief Rabbi of England (and of the British Commonwealth!) told me recently that he had occasion to visit New York on a communal matter, and - whilst there would have liked to meet the Rebbe. He tried five times - to no avail. He said he could not even contact Rabbi Chodakov.

Until last year, everyone was 'entitled' to see the Rebbe for Yechidus on his (or her) birthday. Not anymore. New Yorkers are no longer allowed a private audience. Visitors from abroad are permitted only one Yechidus every twelve months, irrespective of the number of journeys and the long distances involved. The Rebbe maintains that everyone receives an overall and individual brocha at the Farbrengen.

To save the Rebbe's time, all who have been accepted for Yechidus must let the Rebbe have, in writing, well in advance, all the details and particulars for which answers are required.

One type of boy is given preference. One who has become engaged to be married. Zalmon Unsdorfer, my nephew, has been at '770' learning for over six months. (He was in the Yeshiva at Kfar Chabad, Israel, for over a year too.) He has not 'seen' the Rebbe yet. He reckons he will have to become engaged in order to see the Rebbe privately. He added that "it is much easier to get engaged than to get a Yechidus with the Rebbe."

Our appointment was on Monday night for an hour, 11.45pm till 12.45am. Gone forever are those days when we had two Yechidus - each for over two hours - during our seventeen days visit to Brooklyn.

The Rebbe, at a Yechidus, seems very different from the person we normally see at a Farbrengen or at a service (davening). He is so relaxed and yet so alert. It is impossible to believe that he has been non-stop at work for about fifteen hours. What is more important and significant is that one is given the impression that the Rebbe has all the time in the world, and that he is only interested in just you and your problems.

He absolutely loves children. A friend of mine went to see the Rebbe with his two children. The Rebbe asked "are the children always so quiet and serious, or is it because of Yechidus?" My friend replied, "Yes, they are generally like this." The Rebbe remarked that "My *inyan* is to bring joy to Jews." My friend said, "Their joy is inner joy." The Rebbe answered, "Joy may show itself, externally too!"

When Label Groner has the full quota for that night for Yechidus, his next problem is to decide on the order of precedence. There is only one fair and correct way. Label draws **lots** and each person or group is given a number. This simplifies the whole procedure. Obviously number 1 enters first at 8.00 pm. and number 65 will follow 64. If, however 26 has just emerged and 27 and 28 are not available, then number 29 takes their turn.

Label makes just one stipulation - large family groups with young children and babies are given preference -and are allotted early numbers. On the other hand, those who are likely to stay with the Rebbe for some length of time are automatically left to the last.

The hallway - the waiting room - is normally crowded with people who are due for Yechidus, together with their friends and relatives who are interested and concerned to know what the Rebbe has said. Scores of Yeshiva boys just hover about, very interested in anybody and anything connected with the Rebbe, but which is certainly not their business. The Rebbe once reprimanded them and told them to go and learn instead of wasting their time.

All present have their allotted numbers. They do know whom they will follow, but those before them may stay with the Rebbe for two minutes, twenty minutes or even an hour.

Our great moment has now arrived. The door of the Rebbe's sanctum was being gradually opened from the inside. A young man then withdrew and retreated slowly from the Rebbe's presence. He kissed the mezuzah and closed the door.

This was our signal. No pause, break or breather was to be given to the Rebbe. In fact, one of Label's special duties was to see that matters went along smoothly and to ensure that the Rebbe was not kept waiting, even for a second. As soon as one person left the next entered the Rebbe's study immediately.

I opened the door for Roselyn, kissed the mezuzah and closed the door after us. We walked towards the Rebbe who was seated at his large desk.

The Rebbe rose, smiled a warm welcome and wished us both "Shalom Aleichem." He turned to Roselyn and said, "Do sit down, Mrs. Jaffe," which she did. The Rebbe did not ask me to be seated. He knows that a Chassid will always remain upstanding in his Rebbe's presence.

Roselyn asked for a Brocha for good health, *parnassa* and nachas from children and so forth. The Rebbe specified that this year we would receive a double Brocha.

I explained to the Rebbe that Crown Heights, at one time, possessed two restaurants - a milk and a meat one. In the past year there were added also a snack bar and a pizza cafe. This year a new restaurant had opened which served every type of meal. The cooking **and** the cook are excellent, but at the moment the clientele was limited. The place was called the Jaffe Hotel and Restaurant. It was situated above the Kolel in Union Street by kind permission of the Rebbe. The principal patrons were the members of the Lew family.

Even with such a small number of customers, the proprietor was kept pretty busy the whole day long. For instance, three of the boys, Yossi, Mendel and Pincus actually lived on the premises. They were given breakfast and then packed off to school. Rabbi Lew and Zalmon Jaffe having spent the morning at '770', davening and gossiping (mostly gossiping), arrived for lunch at noon. At 1.00pm, Hilary and her three 'babies' came along to sample the luncheon menu. By 4.00pm, Yenta Chaya and Golda had arrived from school and required 'dinner.' Half an hour later the three boys returned from their lessons famished. The other regular patrons were served their dinner at 6.30pm. It was a busy little restaurant. In addition to the above-mentioned, morning coffee, afternoon tea, ices, soda, fruit, biscuits (cookies) and cake were also served during the day. Besides all this, there was the shopping for supplies to be done.

The Rebbe was highly amused at this story and asserted that I should take Roselyn for a two weeks holiday as soon as we returned from America. The Rebbe added that "It would be a good idea to go to Israel and to the holy city of Jerusalem." We normally do visit Israel during the month of August - in two and a half months time - but to go now in June seemed to me a little premature!²

I had already delivered a copy of my diary (6th instalment) to the Rebbe. I felt that by now I had covered everything that happens or occurs at '770' regarding the Rebbe. I considered it was time to edit all the previous editions and put them all together in one volume.

I asked the Rebbe whether I should continue to write this diary. The Rebbe looked straight at me and in all seriousness demanded, "Are you making fun of me, asking silly questions?" "Alright," I hastened to add, "then I would need a Brocha - and even more than that - I required material."

The Rebbe looked surprised. "Have you not sufficient material from a two hours Farbrengen plus six hours on Shovuos, enough to fill fifty pages?!" I indicated that it was Yom Tov and I could not take notes. It is impossible for my mind and memory to absorb so much. The Rebbe pointed out that there were plenty of boys who would help me. In any case, I seemed to remember quite a good deal of the 'action' at '770' for my diary so I should be able to recall some of the words of Torah as well.

The Rebbe indicated that he was extremely happy to see our grandchildren. He said, "It makes it a real festival to have them."

I told the Rebbe that Roselyn blames everything on Lubavitch. The Rebbe declared that he had "broad shoulders." I stated, "She does not blame the Rebbe - only Manchester Lubavitch."

We discussed various Lubavitch personnel. I mentioned that the organization was 'blessed' with many different types of 'workers' -some worked harder than others. The Rebbe revealed that Shmuel was a good Lubavitcher 'servant.' If he were asked to sweep the floor, then he would take off his jacket, obtain a broom and do the job at once. No work would be too difficult or too menial for him as long as the job had to be done. (We may categorically refer to Shmuel as a real **Lew**-bavitcher.)

Regarding the Tanya. The Rebbe intimated that he was very happy with it. "When it was presented at the Farbrengen it had the appearance of a real scientific work!³ Beautiful! It looked really wonderful - especially the cover." The wooden case provided for the Rebbe, made the Tanya rather heavy. It should be heavy 'spiritually' but not materially. The Rebbe advised that we should plan now for the third edition, which will make this a '*Chazoka*.' But, they have to be **solid**. The Rebbe asked us to submit our proposals to him at once. He suggested that we should contact Philosophical Societies, Jews College, Carmel College, all Hillel Houses, Universities, libraries and so on. The widest possible public had to be reached, but not the goyim, *lehavdil*.

² Thanks to this they attended Shemmies Levaya!

³ As per the Rebbe's instructions in his letter to Bernard Perrin, page 6

I complained that Mr. Bloch of the Soncino Press had taken two of the leather-bound copies. The Rebbe said that he hoped that Mr. Bloch would study them. He also told me that a delegation should present the “first one in England” to Chief Rabbi Jacobovitch, in London.

I informed the Rebbe that our new Lubavitch extension would soon be officially opened and we would like a letter - a message - from the Rebbe to put into our brochure. The Rebbe asked whether the date of the opening was definitely fixed or only tentative. I replied that everything was arranged for eight weeks time.

The Rebbe asserted that there was plenty of time to send a letter, but there was so much work to be done before then. The Rebbe was kept busy every second of the day with **immediate** problems. I should remind the Rebbe about this in good time, say, two weeks before we required it.

We carried out these instructions and received the Rebbe's message at the very last moment, just in time. We did worry a little rather unduly - as it turned out.

I now indicated to the Rebbe that I had a very important business matter to discuss. The Rebbe owed me an account which had been outstanding for a little while.

I had arranged a *shidduch*, a marriage, for a young girl at the Rebbe's behest and the Rebbe had promised me *shadchones gelt* (commission). I do admit that it was entirely my own fault that this matter was still outstanding, as I had intimated that I would **not** accept a cash settlement. I implied that when the time was opportune, I would request payment “in kind.”

I explained to the Rebbe that the time had now arrived. It was well known how much the Rebbe disliked being a *'baal chov'* (a debtor). I was now prepared to ‘make a deal.’

If the Rebbe would hand over personally to each of the four members of our Tanya Committee, a bilingual Tanya, autographed by the Rebbe, - that would completely discharge the Rebbe's indebtedness to me. Moreover, I would consider that I had made an exceptionally handsome bargain. These Tanyas would become invaluable to each of us. It would more than recompense me.

The Rebbe said, “I can see that you are not only a businessman in Manchester, but in America too.” The Rebbe agreed to my suggestion and said he would call us in for Yechidus before we left for home.

I then enquired of the Rebbe whether he would give me an opportunity of taking a nice photograph. The Rebbe looked surprised. “Surely you took one the other night?!”

I looked flabbergasted because when we had first arrived at ‘770,’ I had gathered all the family together in the hallway just before the time for Mincha. I knew that the Rebbe would leave his office in order to daven. In the past he has always stopped for a moment or two to exchange a few words with my wife, on his way to the Beth Hamedrash.

Anticipating this normal practice, I arranged that Roselyn and Hilary should stand with the children at a nice angle so that I would obtain a very good photograph. I checked the lighting, focus and camera, and waited. The door of the office opened. Like a flash, the Rebbe had passed by the whole group without even noticing them. He seemed very absorbed and preoccupied. Just my mazel! The very first time I had arranged to take a photograph, the Rebbe goes and changes his usual habit! I was certain that the Rebbe did not see me with the camera. But the Rebbe, it seems, sees everything!!

[A friend of mine took his son with him to ‘770’ for a holiday. The young boy carried his camera with him on every occasion. He wanted a good photograph of the Rebbe. The Rebbe stopped him once and told him that it would be better for him and for everyone if he spent his time learning instead of wasting his time every day with his camera.]

Anyway, the Rebbe shrugged off my request for a posed photograph.

At the Yechidus I complained that it was just impossible for Roselyn and I to remember half of what was said by the Rebbe. We had come a long way and it was important to recall everything. I asked whether there would be any objection to bringing in a tape recorder. The Rebbe replied that he had no objection whatsoever! He added, “please be more friendly to me.”

We discussed many other Lubavitch, communal and family matters, and then took our leave. We were amazed and found it hard to believe that we had been with the Rebbe for just over an hour. It had passed so quickly.

CHAPTER 10

THE DAILY NEWS

All our 'children' were enjoying a very fine holiday. The five eldest attended school every day **and** loved it. Twice a day, Poor Shlomo Rizel was busy calling up the electricity and gas companies. On the second day, a brand new fridge was delivered to Hilary's apartment. So they now had two fridges, but no electricity to make them work.

Slowly but surely, day-by-day, they gradually settled in. They never even had a key to the main front door of the apartment block. Fortunately, there were hundreds of people living there so all they had to do was wait outside for about five or ten minutes. When a resident came along and opened the door, they also slipped inside.

Yet, even with all these faults and aggravation they all seemed happy and contented. I asked Hilary, when we were back in England, whether she had a nice time in Brooklyn. "It was fantastic," she replied. I said, "Even with all the children?" She answered, "I have all the children (*kein ayin hora*) in London." I do really admire her placid nature.

The boys were so good at school that Shmuel rewarded them each with a gift. A Mishna on a cassette tape. They were **so** pleased! Yes, - I mean it! Shmuel promised Yossi a nice present if he would recite two pages of the Gemora by heart. Yossi accomplished this feat. I asked him what he received as a reward. Yossi replied with great pride, "Sefer Maamorim Tof Shin Lamed Daled!!" **How nice!**

Our apartment over the Kolel was very nice this year, except for one small matter. There was a tap which separated the hot water (for washing, showers, etc.) from the central heating system. No one knew where it was situated, none of the Kolel boys nor anyone at '770.' We never had this trouble before. When we now wanted hot water for washing up the crockery and cutlery and so forth, we had to turn up the central heating. So what happened? We had a temperature of 85 degrees out side and 105 degrees inside. On our first morning Roselyn asked me to switch it on, before I left for shul at 9.15am. When I returned at 11.00am I found that all the windows in the Kolel were steamed up. The boys had red-hot faces, were perspiring freely and were gasping for breath. We needed a compromise. So we arranged for a ten-minute period, every morning to allow the water to become warm.

The oil company sent a man to fix this tap. It took him three minutes, but he did not arrive until three days before we left for home!

Incidentally, this flat of ours was right in the centre of things, the very hub of activity. Especially during the night!

A TYPICAL NIGHT'S REST - TAKEN IN SMALL DOZES!

A few hundred yards from our abode is a public building that houses a large clock. This chimes very loudly on the quarter hour. Every fifteen minutes the strikes increase in volume and quantity until the hour is almost reached. When this happy moment arrives we are all treated to a jolly rendition of the nursery rhyme tune of 'Oranges and Lemons.' This carries on for five minutes providing a musical concert for our enjoyment and entertainment. This tune concludes with the sombre notes of the clock chiming the hour. The twelve strokes at noon seem to take five minutes!

At 11.00pm this musical section retires until 7.00am the next morning. This is a good opportunity for us, also to retire.

At 11.30pm, half an hour later, we were awakened by a loud clattering and banging downstairs. I went to investigate. I discovered a coloured boy cleaning up the Kolel. He refused to give me his name, but he must have been a Litvak. He wished me "*Salom Aleikem*" and said he was quite well "*Baruk Hasem!*"

At 12.30am the noises ceased and I dozed off to sleep - for 5 minutes! There was a competition going on outside between the Police department, the Fire brigade and the Ambulance service. Vehicles of these three departments were zooming and rushing along, seemingly right beneath our windows with their sirens blaring, wailing and warbling! Each vehicle in an uncontrollable frenzy, tried to outdo the

others in loudness and shrillness. Only a devilish lunatic could have invented such awful and crazy sounds. They may not have 'awakened the dead', but the living could certainly not sleep in this din. These strident warbling and wailing effects died down an hour later and I did manage to have an undisturbed sleep - for a half an hour.

At 2.00am a conference was taking place outside the Kolel. Two rival gangs of coloured youths had congregated together. They were discussing various schemes for the benefit of Crown Heights. There seemed to be some little disagreement. Arguments and altercations arose. Within minutes fights and fisticuffs were taking place all around. A number of cars arrived on the scene - their horns blaring away non-stop. This was rather an advantage because the screams and cries of anguish of the injured and maimed could not then be heard.

At 3.00am it was peaceful again. I was enjoying a lovely sleep and I was at a Farbrengen. Everyone was singing extremely *freilech nigunim*. All together in time to the Rebbe's quick and lively beat. I then awoke. I realised that it was not a dream. It was not the Rebbe.

About 20 boys had returned from a wedding. They had decided to continue the festivities at '770.' This went on for one and a half hours - **non-stop**. They went through the whole Lubavitch repertoire. It was very pleasant - but not at 4.30am, when I needed some sleep. (When I went to '770' at 9.20am to daven, most of the benches were occupied by sleeping and inert Yeshiva bodies. Lucky boys - they can sleep anywhere, anytime.)

At 5.15am there was a loud and reverberating banging on our door. I nearly jumped out of my pyjamas. "Who is it," I stuttered and shouted. "It is me, Yossi," said a small voice. "What do you want," I thundered. "What time is it," he asked. He was afraid he would be late for school. He wanted to know the exact time. I was terribly annoyed and packed him off to bed. The night had become one long nightmare. My body was aching and my brain was spinning. I fell into a deep sleep when again there was a non-stop rat-tat-tat on the door, and there was Yossi once more demanding the correct time. It was only half an hour since his last enquiry and I was really mad with him. Roselyn lent him her watch, which he subsequently broke through over winding because he was afraid the watch would stop.

It was now **6.00am**. The garbage vans were busy outside clattering away. A new day had now commenced. The Police, Fire Brigade and Ambulance services had begun their day shifts of duty and were continuing their competition for the most raucous and weird sounds.

At 6.30am the Nursery Rhyme tune started up again and went on until 7.00am. I then went to awaken Yossi. It took Roselyn and me nearly half an hour to get him up. He was nearly late for school - after all that!

A WORD FOR SHAUL COHEN

On the Sunday after Yom Tov, Shaul Cohen, a young friend of ours from London who was presently studying for his Semicha at '770,' informed me that he was becoming engaged to Miss Reva Rifkin of Brooklyn. He begged me to come along, for a few minutes, to the *vort* which would take place that evening at the home of the Kaleh, "and please bring Mrs. Jaffe too."

I persuaded my wife that it was our duty and privilege to be present to represent England and it would not take very long.

We arrived at the Rifkin abode and met the Kaleh - a very charming and pretty girl. The place was crowded, packed with ladies and girls all dressed up as for a wedding. The tables were set for a seven-course meal. Roselyn was a little upset. She had not been warned that this would be a 'posh' affair. She complained that she was not dressed up for the part.

It seemed that I was the only male present when I realised that the men and boys were, as usual, to be under the women's feet. The women were on a higher level. I walked down to the basement - a huge place, nicely decorated and brilliantly lit. About 100 men and boys were already seated. The only vacant spot was at the top table. So I sat down. There was a microphone facing me on the table and I

took charge of the proceedings. I made jokes, we sang nigunim. I called up various people to address us and give a Brocha to the Choson and Kaleh - and 'a good time was had by all!'

On our way home, Roselyn told me that the microphone was also connected to loud speakers upstairs. They had heard everything I had said, even the 'asides' which I had spoken in confidence to my neighbours! Oh Dear! I did feel foolish!

OUR RAIZIE LANDS A HECHT

The following week, Shmuel and Hilary invited us to another *vort*. Raizie Adler had proved herself such a good and loyal friend by looking after the children on the plane and so forth that Shmuel and Hilary had rewarded her by finding her a Choson - none other than Yossi Hecht, a fine upstanding member of the Hecht Family, a son of my great friend Rabbi J.J. What a catch! What a fish! Almost a 'Lesht!' I am always a little sad when I see one of our best girls being snatched up by an American boy. I do hope that Raizie will emulate Hilary's example and ultimately persuade Yossi to settle in England.

This *Tenoim* was also a grand affair and took place in a very large hall. On this occasion there was sex equality - men and women on the same level.

J.J. was in charge in his usual boisterous and cheerful manner. After the excellent meal, he got carried away by the excitement of the occasion and called upon me to say a few words about the Choson, Kaleh and the Mechutonim. Me, of all people! In spite of this, I enjoyed myself immensely. It was a lovely affair.

A SURPRISE DECISION

On the plane coming from England, the Tanya committee had decided to seek an impartial rabbi, who would be willing to arbitrate in the matter of the Tanya between London and Manchester. He would have to adjudicate mainly on how the profits of the sales of this Tanya should be shared; whether Manchester or London should receive the proceeds, or if a compromise of 50% for each town should be accepted.

We had found the ideal man - a person in whom both parties had the utmost confidence. He was Rabbi Yitzchok Groner (Label's brother) from Melbourne, Australia, who was also in Brooklyn for Shovuos. He accepted our invitation to act as arbitrator.

After a two hour conference, at which Nachman (Rabbi Sudak) submitted London's claim to all the profits because London was the English H.Q. and so on. I put forward the claim of Manchester. It was our idea; all the correspondence with Bloch was dealt with by our office; we found the money (the overdraft from the bank); and so forth.

Rabbi Groner summed up and gave his verdict as follows:

London was entitled to... **nothing** (Hurrah - very good thought I).

Manchester should receive... **also nothing** (groans and gnashing of teeth by Z.J.).

Yitzchok explained his reasoning. The Tanya was officially a production of the **Kehos** Publishing Society who's H.Q. was at 770 Eastern Parkway, New York. It was not correct that money made on a publication should be given to a different institution. In his opinion the profits had to be used to publish other books of a similar nature.

We were all dumbfounded by the verdict. We accepted it - the logic of his summing-up, and his judgement.

We informed the Rebbe who replied, "I am greatly pleased with (1) the decision and (2) that it has been accepted unanimously and with acclaim by the committee.

We then sent a letter to the Rebbe outlining all our ideas and plans for advertising the Tanya, a launch date, pamphlets, booklets and so forth. The Rebbe replied, "It seemed that the advertising costs might be more than the whole printing of this Tanya!"

HOW TO TREAT A KING

At Yechidus the Rebbe had told me “to be more friendly to him.”⁴ I had been brooding over and reflecting on what the Rebbe had meant by this. A friend of mine had the answer.

The Rebbe is a king. He has to be treated like one, with the greatest honour and the highest respect and dignity. Therefore when one sees the Rebbe, one should **not** smile. It is ‘logical’ that the more friendliness one wishes to show to the Rebbe, the less one should smile and the more gloomier and solemn should be one's countenance!

I was a little worried, maybe I should not be so cheerful and smile at the Rebbe I mentioned this in one of my frequent notes. I received one word in reply to this theory - “**villd**” (‘crackers’ - mad).

The Rebbe did explain to me subsequently that he wanted me to do certain things out of complete friendship and love for him and with true joy and **not** because the Rebbe had given an order and therefore I had no choice but to obey.

However, there is no doubt that Lubavitchers know how to behave towards their king. (Rabbi) Avrohom Shem Tov had arranged a Lubavitch dinner in Philadelphia. Gerald Ford, the President of the United States of America was the guest of honour.

The President walked into the hall, surrounded by his bodyguard of half-a-dozen men. At first one could not tell who **was** the President. He was being pushed and jostled. Avrohom pulled his left arm to head him one way. Another pulled his right shoulder to go in the opposite direction. He was led, pushed and shown no respect whatsoever - this man, who was the head of one of the largest and richest countries in the world. Can anyone - even remotely - visualize people behaving like this to the Rebbe, *lehavdil?* Thank G-d, we know how to treat our Rebbe - like a king - which he is!

‘DRY’ HUMOUR

I always manage to include a story about the *mikvah*. Yankel, who is in charge, is a real businessman. Up till now he has always been in ‘**hot water**’ - now he has diversified his activities. He has transformed an antechamber into a warehouse. I do not wish to advertise this super-store, or embarrass Yankel, but he is in serious competition with **Macy's**, especially in the variety of goods, which he sells. But, he does not sell furniture - yet!

He does sell soap - or *zoiff*² - it is free of charge on Fridays only. During Yom Tov he had a terrible row with his clients and he did not provide one towel for the second day. He did warn me personally, however, the day before and show me where he had put a towel away for me.

It was rather mean and a little humiliating for two old men who were soaking wet. They got dressed and put on their clothes quite unconcernedly. They remarked, “It is very warm outside (90 degrees) and we will soon be completely dry.” They added that in winter “it was a little more uncomfortable...”

MINI ENCOUNTERS

The Rebbe had been at the Ohel standing all day long at that sacred spot, clothed in his long *Kapota* (coat/jacket) and his heavy hat in a temperature of 95 degrees and with **no** air-conditioning, no food, and no drink. Self-sacrifice for the sake of *Klal Yisroel* in general and for those, in particular, who had appealed to the Rebbe for a *brocha* or for advice. The Rebbe prays, meditates and receives inspiration at this holy place. This was the third visit, within ten days, which the Rebbe had made to the Ohel.

On his return to 770, the Rebbe met Yenta Chaya, one of my grandchildren. He waved to her and she waved back. The bystanders deduced from this, that she was **my** granddaughter! (Chaya has confided in me that she simply loves the **Funbrenge**).

After the Kinus haTorah, the Rebbe's Car drew up to 770. The Rebbe opened the door whilst I was still rushing forward to carry out my duties as Commissionaire. When I arrived, the Rebbe was

⁴ Described at the end of the previous chapter.

already standing on the pavement. "Too late," says he, with a jolly smile. I was crest-fallen. The Rebbe took a few steps forward, turned around, held up two fingers and declared "**next** time twice." I had been frustrated, but was now much appeased.

As a bonus, Roselyn, who was standing by, received a wonderful smile and a salute. The Rebbe touched his hat with his finger.

Pincus, a grandchild, had crashed into the side of a moving car in Eastern Parkway. We informed the Rebbe immediately and requested a *brocha*. The following day I was pleased to drop a note to the Rebbe to the effect that Pincus was now much better and "running about all over the place." The Rebbe thanked me for the good news and supposed "he was running about all over the place - in his *Tallis Kotton*."

At our Yechidus the Rebbe had intimated that he would call into his room the four committee members to receive from him our autographed Tanya. The Rebbe sent me a message which stated that "however, for many years there is no Yechidus during these days. So, as I have explained to you on previous occasions, rather than create envy and arguments as to why I differentiate between this person and that one, I will hand over the Tanya (and the Sicha on this Tanya) outside, so that everyone will be able to come near, right before your journey home (5.00pm on Monday)."

So we could expect a rather big crush of boys in the hallway/waiting room on Monday, please G-d!

In this letter the Rebbe also thanked me again, very warmly for the diary and in answer to my enquiry, had replied that he was satisfied with the words of Torah therein.

Regarding future visits - I was to come at least "as in the past." I elicited the further information that I had to take the average over the past three years, which implied I had to come again at least for Shovuos.

I had left my Teffillin on the table of the Beth Hamedrash. Next morning I could not find them. I was told 'hard lines' (tough luck). Someone had asked the Rebbe once, "when does something become 'hefker' (public property) at '770'?" The Rebbe replied, "after one minute." I was lucky - I did find my Teffillin afterwards.

At the Shabbos Farbrengen the Rebbe requested all those who had participated in the publication of the Tanya to say *Le'chaim* to him. I was, as usual facing the Rebbe in the well of the hall. He nodded to me. I held a large tumbler half filled with wine, I said *Le'chaim* and drank it all. The Rebbe objected and made me fill the tumbler again, right to the brim, say *Le'chaim* again, and drink it all at 'one go.' The Rebbe also said *Le'chaim* to Bernard, Nachman and Hershel.

After this, the Rebbe gave another Sicha - we had a great Zechus (merit). The Rebbe was pleased with us. We had asked the Rebbe at every stage of the production for his advice and guidance.

Next day, I had a mini-Yechidus with the Rebbe outside '770.' The Rebbe further explained the Sicha, that **if** there were complaints from people about any aspect of the Tanya, then the Rebbe accepts full and all responsibility. He had nothing but praise for all who took part.

The Rebbe added that we should present a Tanya to Machon Chanah (the student hostel for girls) and Beis Rivka Girls School. "Mrs. Jaffe and Rebbetzen Lew should join the delegation of Nachman, Hershel, Bernard, Mendel Katch, Shmuel and me. We should take the same delegation (not the ladies) to as many other organizations as time would permit - Hadar HaTorah, the library, but **not** to Yeshivas. The boys there had to learn in the original Tanya - not the bilingual."

The Rebbe also advised us to take a copy on the plane home, "in case you find someone who might need one."

We carried out the Rebbe's instructions in full measure. Shmuel explained the Rebbe's Sicha - very well indeed. Nachman presented to the girl (or boy) in charge a Tanya, autographed by the four committee members.

At all the places we visited, we were received with full pomp and ceremony. Shmuel and Nachman carried out their allotted tasks efficiently and everything was most impressive.

EXACTING TRIBUTES

I would not be human if I did not include some tributes to my 'diary.'

I was obviously highly delighted that both the Rebbe and the Rebbetzen enjoyed this year's 'effort' as did Rabbis Chodakov, Label Groner and Binyamin Klein. They maintained that it "improves every year."

Mrs. (Rebbetzen) Label Groner likes my humour. "You laugh with us - not at us." Dov Abenson read it three times - all at once. He enjoyed every page, but he added that when I read it out personally to the boys, it sounded even better. Lippa Brennan - "The Torah was clear and good. Adjectives just right." He could visualise the scene at '770.'

Benzion Kravitz - his friend at Morristown Yeshiva could not understand everything that was going on at '770' - was bewildered. He was given a 'diary' and everything was made perfectly clear to him. "You have a great *zechus* for this."

Rabbi Schildkraut complained that I had spoiled his afternoon sleep on Yom Tov. Rabbi Raichik stays at his home and he left a copy of my diary, which I had given to him, on the table. He started to read it and could not put it down until he had finished it. Rabbi Raichik's son, Yossi, wanted to know how to get a mention. I explained that he had to do something unusual! So he did a dance! That was not unusual!

One man asked me for my **dairy** (not diary) - I suppose that as it was Shovuos, he could have been correct.

A fellow from Kfar Chabad asked me in Hebrew for my '*choverret*.' "Can you read English," said I surprised. "No," he replied, "but my wife can."

* * *

I received this short, but interesting letter from the Rebbe:

**By the Grace of G-d
Erev Shabbos Breishis 5736
Brooklyn, N.Y.**

**Mr. Schneur Zalmon Jaffe
105 Cavendish Road
Salford, Lancs**

Sholom uBrocho:

I duly received your letters of 18th Tishrei, etc, with enclosure, and many thanks for the good news.

Now that we are coming from the solemn days and joyful festivals which ushered in the new the year, and which conclude on the keynote of Zman *simchoseinu* - the dual *Simcha*, Jews rejoicing with the Torah and the Torah rejoicing with Jews, as has often been mentioned before -

I am confident that you (and I) - and all our people Israel will fill the days and months of the new year with more Torah and Mitzvahs, and with increased efforts to spread *Yiddishkeit* and do all this with real joy. And it is known that '*Simcha* breaks through the barriers,' include those of inner limitations by habit and routine and worries.

May this year be truly a year filled with joy in every respect, materially and spiritually, for you and all yours.

With blessing

M Schneerson (signed)

One will take note from this letter that the Rebbe includes himself amongst those who "will fill the days of the New Year with **more** Torah and Mitzvahs.

The Rebbe works a 24-hour day, which is already filled to capacity with Torah and Mitzvahs. Surely if the Rebbe will be able to find some extra time for study and learning, then at least we should follow his fine example and do the same.

CHAPTER 11

OUR ENCOUNTER WITH THE REBBETZEN

One of the highlights of our Shovuos holiday is our visit to see the Rebbetzen at her home in President Street. She is a very charming and friendly person. She makes us feel so much at home, that even when we take our leave after two or three hours, she expresses deep regret that we “have to leave so soon.” We always try to arrange to visit the Rebbetzen on at least two occasions during our stay in Brooklyn.

On our first visit, the Rebbetzen told us that the Rebbe had brought home to her a Tanya, in order that she could see it and examine it minutely. She, too, was quite enthralled with it. It was well beyond her highest expectations.

The Rebbetzen repeated, time and time again during the course of our 2 ¾ hour visit, how much she and the Rebbe loved this Tanya. It was just beautiful - beautiful. Such a lovely production - a classic.

The Rebbetzen told us that the Rebbe had divulged to her, that we spent over an hour at Yechidus, and he thoroughly enjoyed it. She expressed the hope that I would continue to make the Rebbe happy, “as I am now doing.” “That is the *ikur* (the main thing), I should not take notice of what people are saying.”

We exchanged pleasantries and I read to her some excerpts from my diary. We also showed her scores of photographs, which we had brought specially for her to see. We were delighted that the Rebbetzen chose some of these to keep for herself. We had also brought - as we usually do - a letter and some photographs from Susan (my daughter-in-law.) Thank G-d, the Rebbetzen was her usual gracious and elegant self. We enjoyed nice refreshments - unlimited supplies of ice-cold pineapple juice and fresh strawberries. She expressed a desire to see our children and grandchildren who were presently in Crown Heights.

I asked the Rebbetzen whether she would be pleased to officially receive the members of the Tanya Committee. They wished to present her with a specially autographed leather bound Tanya.

She demurred a little - she dislikes ceremony. She would have been quite satisfied to accept this special Tanya signed by and presented by me, alone.

On reflection, however, she decided that it would be nice for her and for the committee, if all the members signed, and came along to present this Tanya to her. She added that she would be delighted, honoured and gratified to receive such an official delegation who represented the *Anash* of England.

We therefore, arranged the appointment for the following Sunday. Roselyn and I arrived at 2.45pm. We appraised her of the final arrangements. At 3.30pm the delegation representing the United Kingdom would arrive and at 3.45pm - Hilary, Shmuel and their eight children (*kein ayin hora*) would present themselves.

We were having a pleasant chat, when on the stroke of 3.30 pm there was a knock on the front door. It was the delegation which had arrived to pay homage to our Rebbetzen. I joined them and introduced the various members to her. (She had met most of them before.)

The Rebbetzen sat at the table - she is only a small lady, but her personality filled the entire large room. No queen, receiving her faithful and loyal subjects could have looked more regal and gracious than our dear Rebbetzen.

Rabbi Sudak made the actual presentation. On the inside cover was a beautifully inscribed parchment, which read, “**To our gracious and esteemed Rebbetzen with best wishes from the Anash of England, presented by the Committee.**” Here followed the signatures of Nachman Sudak, Hershel Gorman, Bernard Perrin and Zalmon Jaffe - and the date.

The Rebbetzen was tremendously impressed and pleased and expressed her warm appreciation. We discussed various aspects involved in the production of the Tanya. She enquired after the welfare and health of our families, and at 3.45pm the delegation took their leave.

Ten minutes later - and late - our own 'gang' arrived. After the usual introductions, each child performed for the 'pleasure of the Rebbetzen' - and for the reward of a couple of sweets (candy) which were piled into a bowl on the table. I am sure the Rebbetzen had a good time. Yossi quoted a portion of the Gemora with full explanations. Mendy - a Mishna, also with explanations. Yenta Chaya and Golda Rivka each told a story. Pincus quoted the Chumash. Channah sang a Nigun and even Zelda Rochel - who was normally so very shy, also sang some unintelligible tune. Sholom Dov Ber - just a few months old gave the Rebbetzen a nice toothless smile!

They stayed for about 30 minutes. Just enough. Everyone enjoyed themselves.

I heard, afterwards, that Yossi was offered a 'Plattie' (a gramophone record) in exchange for one of the Rebbetzen sweets. Very sensibly - he refused!

We stayed a little longer with our Rebbetzen and reluctantly took our leave.

A TANK FOR 'LEFT ARM' WARFARE

A most luxuriously appointed **new** Dodge van - 20 feet in length, had just been delivered and was standing outside '770' for our inspection.

This was the most modern and up to date 'Mitzvah Tank' I could ever have envisaged.

The whole 20 feet were covered with wall-to-wall carpeting. There was armchair comfort for at least twelve people, including the driver. Other amenities including two long narrow tables, a gas cooker, water and sink, toilet and shower, a fridge, air conditioning, electric fan to expel air, dozens of lights, microphones and a public relay system, complete with musical recordings and so on.

When stationary, a large coloured canopy is unfolded from the roof and the tank has the appearance of - *lehavdil* - a coffee or ice cream and refreshment stall. A sign might read "**H**ot Mitzvahs Supplied Here!"

I am quite certain that the public would be tempted to come inside and look around - at the same time it would be a pleasure for them (the males) to raise their left arms and put on Tefillin.

PERSONNEL THANKS

The time for our departure was now drawing near. I now took the opportunity of saying farewell to all our very many friends at '770' and to give personal thanks to all who had helped make our stay so memorable and happy. The Rebbe and the Rebbetzen are, of course, in a separate and higher category.

It would be invidious to mention everybody by name. However, it is only right and correct that I should extend special thanks to Rabbis Chodakov, Label Groner and Binyomin Klein. These three friends of ours have always been very helpful to us. This year, they have been particularly outstanding and have assisted us to the greatest possible extent. No words or phrases of mine can do justice to the splendid and cheerful manner in which they had gone out of their way to make our Shovuos holiday so completely perfect.

I was discussing with Rabbi Chodakov what effects, if any, can a visit to the Rebbe have on little children - even on older ones who spent their holidays in New York attending school.

Rabbi Chodakov replied that one cannot ever imagine what memories the children's minds will retain which will last for all their lives.

Roselyn told him that she had noticed that we had new neighbours next door to the Kolel and "they looked like Lubavitchers." "Yes," replied Rabbi Chodakov, "they are my son (Sholom Yisroel) and his family." (I always said that my wife was very observant!)

I informed Rabbi Chodakov that I also had a new neighbour at the Farbrengen at '770.' He was a Rabbi, a visitor from out of town. I do not think he was used to long Farbrengen - he kept dropping off to sleep and I found his head cradled in my arm on a few occasions. It was embarrassing and when I jolted him and moved him, I found him asleep against my side within a few minutes. Rabbi Chodakov explained again that the *Neshomo* (the soul) never sleeps.

Last year I mentioned that the Jewish Daily newspaper, The Forward, had been writing a terrible diatribe and tirade against the Rebbe with **no** foundation whatsoever in fact. I was glad to learn that for three consecutive days, this newspaper had prominently displayed an unequivocal and unqualified apology by the editor to the Rebbe for these false rumours and stories.

I thanked Rabbi Chodakov again for everything he had done for us, and also for his suggestion about dividing this 'diary' into chapters - I hope the effort was worthwhile.

CHAPTER 12

A BRILLIANT AND PRAISEWORTHY OCCASION - A MOVING EXPERIENCE

We were due to leave '770' at 5.30pm. This would give us ample time to get to Kennedy Airport for our flight back to England.

Label Groner reminded me (I really did not need much reminding) that the Rebbe had promised to hand to me and to each of the other three members of the Tanya Committee, a specially autographed copy of the bilingual Tanya. He intimated that the Rebbe would present these to us at 5.00pm outside - outside the Rebbe's room we assumed. There was a good possibility that after the presentation, the Rebbe might even come outside to give us a Brocha before we left for home.

Last year, the Rebbe had stood on the steps of '770,' clapping his hands in time to the singing, whilst we and the boys danced round and around and at the height of these proceedings we had boarded our cars and left '770.' We were hoping for the same 'treatment' today, but realised that this was 'wishful thinking.'

Suddenly at 4.30pm great activity was being displayed. The Rebbe's '*shtender*' (stand) was brought out and placed in position in the doorway of '770.' The microphone was also fixed up. Label rushed up to us with new instructions. The Rebbe had decided to hold a Farbrengen outside - in the open air. What excitement! All our cars should be lined up outside '770' - just as they were last year. All the men and boys should form a line at the right hand side of the drive facing the Rebbe. Each traveller would receive a gift from the Rebbe, and afterwards make a complete turn around, walk back down the drive and enter his car.

The women were told to remain on the pavement (sidewalk). There was an immediate revolt by the ladies, led by my wife. They refused, for once, to take a 'back seat.' I suggested to Roselyn that she and one or two friends should take up their positions on the LEFT side of the drive. In a flash, all the women travellers had joined them - so we had the men lined up on the right and the ladies on the left.

Completely surrounding all the passengers were the boys of '770' - hundreds of them (*kein ayin hora*). They were standing on the lawns, the walls, the pavement and on the roadway.

It was a little embarrassing for the passengers to have these boys pushing them, leaning over them and breathing heavily down their necks - most uncomfortable too!

Meanwhile, Label had brought out some large cartons containing some of the 74 Tanya which we had already presented to the Rebbe. He extracted a couple of Seforim and took them into the Rebbe's room.

Then, suddenly, there was a shush and a hush and complete silence - and here was the Rebbe. He was followed by Label who was carrying six of these Tanya's. After him came Rabbis Chodakov, Binyomin Klein, Weinberg, Myer Harlig and Dr. Nissen Mindel. These gentlemen grouped themselves behind the Rebbe and we were ready for the first open-air Farbrengen which I had ever attended. The Rebbe has addressed gatherings at Lag B'Omer parades and so forth outside '770,' but as far as I can ascertain, this was the first actual Farbrengen held outside in the open air.

What a happy knack the Rebbe has of doing the right thing at the right time. It was a brilliant occasion, matching the brilliant sunshine of a beautiful, hot summer's day. A sparkling, scintillating **mini**-Farbrengen! The women in particular, were absolutely delighted. It was the first time they could see and hear the Rebbe as clearly and as well as the men. In fact, Roselyn and Hilary were just as close to the Rebbe as I was.

The Rebbe then gave the following Sicha:

A SICHA TO REMEMBER

Sivan is the third month of the year and is wholly connected with the giving of the Torah. The Torah is itself divided into three parts - Chumash, Prophets and Holy writings and was given to the people of

Israel which also consists of three sections - Yisroel, Levites and Chohanim. The first letters of these three types make up the word 'Y(a)L(e)CH,' which mean to 'travel.'

One of the themes connected with *Matan Torah* was the idea of travelling. G-d travelled down from above to Mount Sinai. Moses traveled upwards and later on to learn the Torah direct from G-d. Torah is now continuously travelling downwards to every Jewish person, in order that they should always be directly connected with the Almighty.

The Gemora states, "A Jew should not depart from his friend without saying a word of Torah. Through this they will always remember each other." Firstly, one should try and avoid parting altogether; but if one had to depart on a mission or to return to his own place, then this Torah which binds their two souls together will keep them constantly connected spiritually. Separation is only physical and external. These words of Torah will continuously remind each one of the other and strengthen them to translate Torah into action and to fulfil the mitzvahs.

May G-d bless you all and *Klal Yisroel*. External separation will soon come to an end with the coming of our righteous Moshiach, when G-d will bring together all the Jewish people, in peace and joy from wherever they are, to our Holy Land. The land which G-d guards from the beginning of the year to the end. This redemption will be speeded up by the Torah and Mitzvahs practiced by Jews in the *Golus* (exile) who will light up all their surroundings with the beacon of Torah.

In order to connect this theme with action, I shall give to each and every traveller a sefer (book), a definite connection with Torah, to take with them. These must be used regularly so that soon a second and then a third edition will be needed.

The Rebbe concluded by wishing us all, "*fort alle gezunter heit*" (a healthy and happy journey to you all).

A TREASURED MEMENTO

Roselyn told me that this was the first time that she could understand most of a Sicha. Lippa Brennan explained that when the Rebbe speaks to women he does not use too many complicated Hebrew words.

Before the Rebbe had arrived for this Farbrengen, I gave my camera to a friend with instructions that he should take as many photographs as possible of the Rebbe handing me my Tanya, a view of the crowds, and of the overall scene. The Rebbe was giving me and everyone else a most wonderful opportunity to take some good photographs of him, just what I had requested at Yechidus!

After the Rebbe had ended this Sicha, he signalled to me with his eyes (and how eloquent are the Rebbes eyes!) to come forward. I walked up to the Rebbe and gave him a message that "the British contingent had requested me to ask the Rebbe that the **Moshiach** should be revealed soon and speedily." The Rebbe answered that "it all depends on you and on everyone to help accelerate the coming of our Moshiach."

I believe that it was at this moment, when I put this question, and the Rebbe answered not only verbally, but with a gorgeous smile, that Louis Tiffenbrun took a superb and marvellous photograph of the Rebbe handing to me my Tanya surrounded by a group of his most trusted and able lieutenants.

Scores of boys also managed to take some wonderful photographs and Louis took quite a lot himself, but that one in particular, I do consider a masterpiece. Louis had this enlarged to a 12 inches by 8 inches laminated 'stand-up' photograph which I have seen in dozens of Lubavitcher households. One cannot see **my** face, but I am positive that by now, I have the most famous neck in Lubavitch!

I am told that Louis's two sons sold these in sets of six photographs in the U.S.A. They made enough money to pay their fare to America and to buy a pair of *Rabbeinu Tam's* Tefillin each!

My cameraman had taken fifteen photographs of the Rebbe. All identical!

The Rebbe handed me a Tanya and I was followed by Nachman, Bernard and Hershel and then by Chaim (Farro) and Mendel Katch.

I surreptitiously opened the flyleaf of the cover of my Tanya... Yes. There it was. In Hebrew, of course. What a wonderful and warm-hearted feeling I got when I found the Rebbe's own hand-written inscription. Translated into English it would have read "**B.H. Isru Chag of Shovuos 5735. A memento from M.M. Schneerson. (the rebbe's signature)**" There was also a photocopy of the Rebbe's Sich'a of Erev Shovuos inside with the Rebbe's own alterations as copied by Label.

I was thrilled, delighted and overwhelmed with gratitude to the Rebbe. It had been well worthwhile bothering the Rebbe. Hershel had argued with me on many occasions that it was not fair of me to pester the Rebbe to sign my Tanya. I had remonstrated with him. I pointed out that it was important to me, but to my children's children it would be more important still - a treasured heirloom. That was the main thing.

Nachman, Bernard and Hershel also received their autographed Tanya from the Rebbe.

The Rebbe then presented to every adult male traveller one of these 74 Tanyas. Shmuel has now received three Tanyas from the Rebbe, given to him at various occasions, with instructions from the Rebbe that he should learn in them every day. In the first Tanya, he learns the daily shiur. In the second, he studies part of a chapter every day, culminating on Shabbos with the whole of this chapter - to make sure he knows it! In this new one - the third, he learns every day half a page, including the English translation. The Rebbe called Shmuel over a second time and gave him the Rebbe's own copy of the Sich'a, with all the corrections which he had made.⁵

To each of the boy travellers the Rebbe gave a pocket Tanya.

He then called Rabbi Wineberg and handed him a wad of \$1 notes with instructions to distribute them to each and every woman and girl - even the little baby girls (Zelda Rochel and Channa, aged 2 and 3 years respectively). Two separate dollar bills, one for the Shabbos candles campaign and the other for charity.

I asked the Rebbe for a Tanya for Avrohom who is the fifth member of the Tanya committee. The Rebbe said "but he is not here!" and gave me a pocket Tanya as "commission for Avrohom."

The Rebbe called me up again (with his eloquent eyes) and handed me a Tanya for Chief Rabbi Jacobovitch of England, together with a personal letter for him. I was instructed to go with a delegation to see the Chief Rabbi in London.

We then sang *nigunim* and off we went to board our cars. The motorcade moved off. We all waved wildly and furiously singing lustily to the Rebbe who was standing on the steps of '770,' clapping his hands and giving us a farewell Brocha.

SOME MIX-UPS

On the plane going home, Shmuel was searching for a lost soul to whom to give the Rebbe's Tanya as instructed. He found one of our own passengers, Mr. Solomons who had gone direct to the airport - he did not know about the Farbrengen, he was not told. He is a 'good lad' and deserved a Tanya. He would have been quite disappointed.

⁵ In Rabbi Shmuel Lew's words: The Rebbe called me over **after** he had already given out the Tanyas. He HAD given a COPY of the Sichos of Erev Shovuos & Parshas Nasso, with his corrections, copied by Laibel Groner and written on to that photocopy of the typed sheets of the Sichos, to 6 people, together with their Tanya. (The 6 were: ZJ, B. Perrin, H. Gorman, C. Faro & ?????). When the Rebbe called me over at the end, he gave me **his own original**, with the Hagohos, and was probably the only copy he had. He told me to take it to England, "machen a photocopy, un upshicken tzurik." (Don't forget the taxis were Mamosh waiting to take us to the plane). I had a plate made of it, to make many copies, and sent it off. I called Binyomin Klein to confirm that it arrived, since I was metzuvo ve'oseh. He said it did. But the Rebbe anticipated this, because he sent me an Ishur kabbolas michtovo (which I don't remember EVER receiving except this time). And very beautifully, he enclosed the Sich'a he had "lent" me in its printed form, as a Likkut, with the 2 above Sichos PLUS the one of 16 Sivan, which he had said outside 770. I understood that he had **personally** placed that Likkut in my letter, because it did not have the Sha'ar Blatt or staples (it was just the Sichos) and no Mazkir would send such a thing in the Rebbe's name. (I checked and confirmed this with BK.)

The extra Tanya was given to ZJ, not to me. He asked what it was for and the Rebbe said "you would meet someone on the plane who it is for." This was a "group" of about 30 people which I had organised, and one of the group in fact did not leave with us, and therefore did not receive a Tanya, but was given it on the plane by ZJ. I am quite sure (it was 26 years ago) that it was Brian Joseph, an osteopath, and not "Mr Solomon".

One of our committee members was also a little disappointed, sad and peeved because his Tanya was **not** signed by the Rebbe. I could hardly credit it. It seemed impossible - and it was. Someone else had taken his Tanya by mistake. What a mistake!

EPILOGUE

At Yechidus, the Rebbe had advised me to take Roselyn for a holiday as soon as we had returned from America. And, “take her to Israel and to Jerusalem, our Holy City.” We did intend going to Israel, later on in about twelve weeks' time. It did seem little too early and too sudden, to travel immediately after spending nearly three weeks in Brooklyn.

On our return home, I found that I had so many commitments during July and August that, if we did want an Israeli holiday this year, it would have to be almost immediately! Another incentive was that my nephew and his wife, whose wedding we had attended last year, were expecting a baby at any moment. Well, we might be lucky and be in time for a *Bris*.

I had also just heard that our friend “Shemmy” - Rabbi Benzion Shem Tov, had met with a serious accident in Israel. Roselyn and I were looking forward to cheering him up in hospital.

A SMALL ‘TASK FORCE’ COMPLETES A MISSION

Our flight to Israel left London on Thursday, June 12th. We travelled down to the Metropolis by car in order to fulfill a mission which I had accepted on behalf of the Rebbe. It was to deliver personally (assisted by a Lubavitch delegation) a bilingual Tanya to Rabbi Jacobovitch, the Chief Rabbi of Great Britain. Our⁶ appointment was for 11.15am. We had arranged to meet our London colleagues - Rabbis Nachman Sudak, Phaivish Vogel, Shmuel Lew, Hershel Gorman and Mr. Mendel Katch - outside Woburn House, the Chief Rabbi's headquarters. Shmuel would say some words of Torah.

We arrived at our destination, from Manchester at 10.45am. Hershel came along one minute later.

By 11.14am I had persuaded Hershel that it was far better that the two of us should be in time for the appointment than wait, maybe indefinitely, for the rest of our party. Hershel was even prepared, albeit reluctantly, to say a “word of Torah.”

We were ascending the steps - at 11.15 - when our colleagues arrived all hot and bothered, and with a photographer. Lubavitch are **always** late, but thank G-d, never too late.

We were ushered into the Chief Rabbi's private office. I handed over the Tanya together with the Rebbe's verbal message and letter, then ‘officially’ asked Shmuel to say some of the Rebbe's Sichos.

I now heard Shmuel expound for the sixth time (five times in Brooklyn) on the reasons why Judah had offered his sacrifice before Reuben. Once again he explained that it was Judah's **attitooode** towards Torah which took precedence over everything else.

After this abridged Sicha, the Chief Rabbi also offered some Torah comments and - **not** to be outdone - Nachman and Phaivish also added their contributions.

After about 20 minutes we took some photographs and our departure.

We arrived in Israel later that evening, just in time for the baby; but no *Bris* - it was a girl!

A SOLDIER/HERO FALLS IN ACTION

Unfortunately, Rabbi Benzion Shem Tov had not yet regained consciousness and on Saturday night we learned that our good and dear friend had passed to his eternal rest. At least Roselyn and I had the *zechus* to be present at his funeral. It was an occasion which we would have gladly postponed for another thirty years, but as we mortals have no jurisdiction over these matters - we had the consolation at least, of saying farewell, personally, to our beloved ‘Shemmy.’

⁶ Names of Manchester delegation: A Jaffe, B Perrin

Rabbi Shem Tov was an extraordinary person. He was an outstanding example of a true Lubavitcher chossid. A devoted and loyal soldier who carried out the Rebbe's orders unhesitatingly and without question, but with courage, gladness and self-sacrifice.

He was the Rebbe's roving ambassador abroad and represented Lubavitch with enormous and good effect. His exemplary conduct, determination and *Mesiras Nefesh* for Jews everywhere enhanced not only his own reputation, but that of the Lubavitcher movement too.

He could only see the good in people. He emphasized and praised their virtues and disregarded their weaknesses. He came to us, to England, over 27 years ago direct from the jails of Russia - the prison camps of Siberia to where he was banished for teaching children about Judaism. He was accompanied by his devoted wife and children. With only three pupils he opened up the first Lubavitch School in London. This small beginning was the foundation of the Lubavitch Empire in Great Britain, which he based not only on love, consideration and tolerance, but mainly on personal perseverance and sacrifice - guided always by his beloved Rebbe.

The Orthodox admired and respected him. The not-yet Orthodox loved him. He had only friends - all over the world.

His toes were frostbitten because of the severe Siberian cold, and he had to wear specially made boots. This did not stop him **walking**, literally, thousands of miles on the Rebbe's business. Nevertheless, he was always cheerful and looked constantly on the bright side of things. For example, his daughter Frieda was being rather outspoken because of his exile in Siberia. Rabbi Shem Tov rebuked her and pointed out that the cold climate was good for his asthma! And, in any case, Siberia was preferable to being called up to the Russian Army.

His late wife, Golda, was also a very wonderful person. She accompanied, voluntarily, her husband into this exile. She was a woman of great and simple faith.

On one occasion we visited her in London. She insisted upon baking us a cake. She took a baking tin and filled it with flour, eggs, sugar and so forth - then placed it in the oven. In due course, the cake was ready. It was absolutely delicious. Roselyn asked for the recipe. "Oh" said Mrs. Shem Tov, "I don't bother with recipes, or weighing ingredients, I just pour the stuff into a bowl, haphazardly, mix it well and put it in the oven. I then sit down and say Tehillim (Psalms)." Simple faith!"

Shemmy referred to my office as his Manchester branch. He always found plenty of work for me. He drove me crazy with his wild preposterous ideas and schemes, which somehow, in retrospect, always turned out to be such wonderful and inspired notions.

One day in '59, he arrived suddenly and told me to phone up the Flying Tiger Airlines and book a charter flight to visit the Rebbe in New York.

A charter flight was almost unknown in those days. I thought Shemmy was joking because he often did make jokes too! However, as he insisted, I thought I would satisfy him and my conscience, so I phoned up the airline.

Yes, we were lucky! They had just one date left. All we needed was 118 passengers to pay £35.00 each for the return journey - including all meals. Yes, the plane would have four propellers too! The date? During the nine days of **Av!** Shemmy said take it - quickly - so I did.

I now had to explain to everyone that the nine days of mourning were to be relieved by a little Simcha and joy - we were going to see our Rebbe.

On a subsequent flight I took Rabbi Shem Tov with us to Brooklyn. The Rebbe had not given him permission to leave England at that time and showed his displeasure by ignoring him. At Yechidus I begged the Rebbe to forgive Shemmy, as it was entirely my fault. "Ah," said the Rebbe, "I now have two people at whom to shout."

There was a certain committee in London which specialised in raising money for handicapped children. Within two years they collected the sum of £10,000 and presented it to Rabbi Shem Tov for the "handicapped boys of Kfar Chabad, Israel." A few years later, a delegation of this committee went

to Kfar Chabad. They met Shemmy and angrily demanded to be shown the handicapped children. They all looked pretty normal to them.

“And, no”, said Shemmy, “*zay kenen nisht tzu gut lernen,*” (They cannot learn - study - too well). A typical Shemmy reply which “at a stroke” turns away anger and wrath.

Rabbi Shem Tov introduced Roselyn and me personally and directly to the Rebbe and to the Rebbetzen. For us that was his greatest achievement. We shall always be indebted to him.

He has been a wonderful friend of ours over the years only interested in our welfare and looking after Avrohom and Hilary as if they were his own children. He wrote to me one of his very rare letters - in English too - how happy he was when Shmuel and Hilary decided to marry.

We have lost a very good friend, but the Rebbe lost a staunch soldier. Rabbi Shem Tov died on active service, doing the Rebbe's work for Klal Yisroel.

He suffered no pain and no long illness. He was no burden to anyone. That is what Rabbi Shem Tov preferred. He died in the Land of Israel and was to be buried in the Holy City of Jerusalem.

Our dear friend, Mendel, Rabbi Shem Tov's eldest son, had flown over from New York. He had been at Shemmy's bedside for over a week since the time of the accident, waiting for him to regain consciousness.

A meeting of the prominent officials of the Kfar was held. It was decided that the funeral should take place at 6.00pm because Rabbi Sudak, who is a son-in-law, would be arriving at Lydda from London at 5.30pm. The burial would be on the Mount of Olives (*Har Hazeisim*). All the information regarding the funeral, was announced on the radio.

At 3.30pm all work at Kfar Chabad came to a standstill. All the inhabitants, men, women and children, plus many hundreds from other areas, had gathered together to pay their last respects. Rabbi Shem Tov was placed upon a bier (a litter) draped in his *tallis*. He was carried by the boys of the Yeshiva and of the village. Every ten minutes the bearers were changed. For one solid hour he was carried around Kfar Chabad - accompanied and followed by every person of the village - men and women, boys and girls, and children.

Even babies in their prams were pushed along by their mothers. The procession made innumerable stops - at a *mosad*, a Yeshiva, a school and so on.

The summer's heat was terrific and everyone was perspiring freely. Yet, for the whole of the sixty minutes' walk, no one left the procession. Rabbi Shem Tov had been their friend and they were proud to have the *zechus* to bid him farewell.

Many buses had been specially chartered for the mourners, and **everyone** was a mourner, to take them direct to the Mount of Olives.

Meanwhile, Moishe ederei (my nephew by marriage) took me and a couple of others in his car to meet Rabbi Sudak at Lydda Airport.

The plane arrived on time from London. An official car drew alongside the airplane on the runway and Nachman was whisked away to the terminal buildings. Customs and immigration were merely formalities and within a few minutes of the plane landing on the tarmac, Nachman was being driven along the road to Jerusalem.

The burial plot was about half way up the mountain - a very stiff climb indeed. From this site could be seen the whole beautiful panoramic view of Jerusalem including the other six famous and notable hills, which together make up our Holy City.

In this unique and privileged spot, we buried our dear friend.

Jewish people do not consider death as the end of everything. Rather it is the **beginning** of eternal life.

* * *

My sister, Rose, resides in Jerusalem. She lost her son in a motorcar accident, too. She could not and would not be comforted. The Rebbe sent her a letter. It consoled her, calmed her and indeed, did comfort her. I herewith append this letter. It might be of help to some unfortunate people.

THE REBBE HAS THE LAST WORD

By the grace of G-d
5th of Nisan 5735

Mrs. Rose Goldfield
13 Yam Suf
Ramat Eshkol, Jerusalem

Blessing and Greeting:

I am in receipt of your correspondence, and trust that you received my regards through your brother R' Zalmon who was here for the Yud Shevat observance.

I must reiterate again what was said when you were here in regard to *Bitochon* in G-d, that all that He does is for the good. It is not easy to accept the passing of a near – and dear one, but since our Torah, which is called *Toras Chesed* and *Toras Chayim*, our guide in life, sets limits to mourning periods, it is clear that when the period ends it is no good to extend it – not good, not only because it disturbs the life that must go on here on earth, but also – because it does not please the soul that is in the world of truth.

A further point which, I believe, I mentioned during our conversation, but apparently from your letter not emphatically enough, is this: It would be contrary to plain common sense to assume that a sickness, or accident, and the like, could affect the soul, for such physical things can affect only the physical body and its union with the soul, but certainly not the soul Itself. It is also self-evident that the relationship between parents and children, is in essence and content a spiritual one, transcending time and space – of qualities that are not subject to the influence of bodily accident, disease, etc.

It follows that when a close person passes on, by will of G-d, those left here can no longer see him with their own eyes or hear him with their ears: but the soul, in the world of truth, can see and hear. And when he sees that the relatives are overly disturbed by his physical absence, it is saddened, and, conversely, when it sees that after the mourning period prescribed by the Torah a normal and fully productive life is resumed, it can happily rest in peace.

Needless to say, in order that the above be accepted not only intellectually but actually implemented in the everyday life, it is necessary to be occupied, preferably involved in matters of 'personal' interest and gratification. As I also mentioned in our conversation, every Jew has a most gratifying and edifying task of spreading light in the world through promoting *Yiddishkeit*. Particularly, as in your case, where one can be of so much help and inspiration to children and grandchildren who look up to you and your husband for encouragement, wisdom etc.

Here is also the answer to your question, what you can do for the soul of the dear one. Spreading *Yiddishkeit* around you effectively, displaying simple *Yiddish* faith in G-d and in His benevolent providence doing all the good work that has to be done, with confidence and peace of mind - this is what truly gratifies the soul in *Olam HaEmes*, in addition to fulfilling your personal and most lofty mission in life as a daughter of our mothers Sarah, Rivkah, Rachel and Leah, and thereby also serving as an inspiring example for others to emulate.

It is possible to enlarge upon the above, but knowing your family background and tradition; I trust the above will suffice. I might add, however, that one must beware of the *Yetzer-hara* who is very crafty and knows that certain people cannot be approached openly and without disguise. So he tries to trick them by disguising himself in a mantle of piety and emotionalism etc, saying: You know G-d has prescribed a period of mourning, which shows that it is the right thing to do; so why not do more than that and extend the period? In this way he may have a chance to succeed in distracting the person from the fact that at the end of the said period, The Torah requires the Jew to serve G-d with joy. The *Yetzer-hara* will even encourage a person to give *Tzedoka* in memory of the soul, learn Torah and doing *Mitzvoth* in memory of the soul, except that in each case it is associated with sadness and pain. But, as indicated, this is exactly contrary to the objective, which is to cause pleasure and gratification to the soul.

May G-d grant that, inasmuch as we are approaching the festival of our freedom, including also freedom from everything that distracts a Jew from serving G-d wholeheartedly and with joy, that this should be so also with you, in the midst of all our people, and that you should be a source of inspiration and strength to your husband, children and grandchildren, and all around you.

Wishing you and all the family *Chag Kosher veSome'ach*,

With blessing,

(signed) M. Schneerson