

INTRODUCTION

HOW AND WHY I BECAME AN AUTHOR

I was responsible for arranging the very first charter flight from England to visit the Rebbe Shlita in New York. This took place in July 1961 – Tammuz 5721.

On the 8th of Elul of that year I received a letter from Rabbi M. A. Chodakov, the personal and private secretary of the Rebbe which stated:

“I would like to take this opportunity to suggest that it would certainly be worthwhile if one of the members of the group that came aboard the chartered flight from England would write a diary containing incidents and information of their visit here. A diary of this kind was kept by one of the visitors who came aboard the chartered flight from Eretz Yisroel last year and it was really of great interest.”

“I would also like to suggest that I think it would be advisable that you publicise your speech to the teenagers, about which you write in your letter, or at least excerpts of it, in newspapers and other means of publicity.”

I decided to accept this challenge personally, and I wrote a short account of this memorable visit. I sent a copy of this to the Rebbe, who in due course acknowledged this by writing to me as follows:

“I take this opportunity to thank you for sending me the diary, which has revealed to me a new trait in your character, namely - a sense of humour.”

As Rabbi Chodakov had suggested, I also read out this report to various youth organisations - it took 30 minutes to recite. It was a huge success. I do not know exactly how many of my listeners I had influenced, but many years later Rabbi Chaim Farro admitted to me that this was his first contact with Lubavitch beliefs, doctrines and work. It had created a profound impression upon him and was in no little way, instrumental in his decision to become a follower of the Rebbe.

From December 1959 onwards, I visited the Rebbe at ‘770’ every year, sometimes twice and on one occasion three times per annum.

Ten years later, in 1969, I decided to write a personal diary of my visits to ‘770.’ There were so many interesting and varied occurrences and happenings which had taken place, and in which my wife and I were personally connected and involved with the Rebbe that I felt obligated to record these facts - in order that my grandchildren should be able to read and learn how their ‘Bobby and Zaidie’ had spent their time at ‘770,’ and of the high honour and friendliness which the Rebbe and our Rebbetzen had extended to us over the years.

I printed only fifty copies of the first edition. I wanted to ascertain the reaction of the Rebbe before I wrote any further material for general distribution amongst my friends.

It was an instant success and I was requested by the Rebbe to “carry on writing.” Thank G-d I am blessed – at this moment – with seventeen grandchildren (KAH) and I have not sufficient copies left to supply even them.

I RECEIVE A LARGE ORDER

After Shovuos 5738-1978 I had a mini-Yechidus with the Rebbe. He instructed me to continue to write further instalments of “My Encounter” and “the next edition, being the tenth, should contain at least one hundred pages.”

This seemed to me a rather difficult assignment. “On the contrary,” the Rebbe said, “it would be easy.”

Since then I have received a letter from the Rebbe dated Shevat 5739/1979 which contained the following paragraph:

“I thought it would not be necessary to make it more explicit when I expressed my hope that your next diary would contain 100 pages. But let me make it clear that it refers to a minimum, as a

prelude to larger ones in the future. Indeed, In view of the Farbrengens and events of the current year, it should not be difficult to attain this goal."

I am not sure whether my readers would welcome a complete edition devoted and confined only to the Rebbe's Sichas (talks).

These Sichas are published regularly, weekly, in Yiddish and irregularly, but often, in English too. Surely the Rebbe does not desire that I should compete with these professionals.

It is well known that I do include a number of Sichas in "My Encounter." I would not print a word of Torah unless it could be easily understood by an ordinary layman or housewife. Therefore, it is essential that I should translate the Sichas into basic, simple, English.

I do realise that the effort is worthwhile, because I have been flattered by some Lubavitch woman telling me that it was the first time that they had understood a Sicha of the Rebbe! I shall therefore continue to include as hitherto - a small number of Sichas in this tenth instalment.

However, I have a much easier and simpler method of filling one hundred pages - **and** they shall be the usual standard size of page as on previous occasions.

I intend to achieve my target by rewriting the very **first** of my encounters, and to conclude with the events of this past year - my tenth instalment.

I do hope that my readers will be pleased with the results of my endeavours.

CHAPTER 1

MY FIRST ENCOUNTER WITH THE REBBE

My very first encounter with the Rebbe took place in 1952. It was not a direct face-to-face meeting. It was by means of a letter which I had received as President of the Kahal Chassidim Synagogue, Manchester.

We wanted to send the Rabbi of our Shul my uncle, Rabbi Shmuel Rein, to visit the Rebbe as our emissary. He had himself, written to the Rebbe for permission to travel. It was a long sea journey (there were no air services at that time) and he was not in good health.

The letter which we received from the Rebbe was in Yiddish. The following is my translation of this epistle:

7th Elul 5712/1952

To the Members and Honorary Officers of the Kahal Chassidim Synagogue.

I have just received your letter, and am pleased to learn how much you value the work of your Rabbi Shmuel Rein. I am also happy to note that you desire a closer liaison and contact with us here (at '770') - that being the main reason why you want to send Rabbi Rein as your Shaliach - emissary to Brooklyn.

I hope that, just the same as with every living- thing, so will your good feelings also continue to grow and to permeate through your members, into their homes and their activities.

This is the principle theme of our Torah and of our religion that they are not relevant to a part of the day only, and the rest of the time this Yiddishkeit is not even noticeable. But ours is a living Torah, from a living G-d which encompasses a Jew from the very first second until the last second of the 120 good years of his life - not only a Jew in Shul, at prayer and study, but also at home, in the street, and in the office - as we recite twice a day in the Shema "and you shall speak of them when you sit in your house, and when you walk on the road, when you lie down and when you rise up." should visit me here, and further to his letter to me regarding his health. I consider that the strain of the journey, especially with the problems of eating and drinking, and other essential matters - although even amidst Simcha and happiness - would be too much for him. I am sure he has shown you the letter which I sent to him and in which I have explained these above-mentioned matters.

I wish to thank you for the good thoughts in wishing to send your Rabbi, especially from a congregation which prides itself on the name of Kahal Chassidim.

We learn that the Alter (old) Rebbe wrote in the Tanya, Chapter 16 that "Good thoughts have to be united with deeds." That is, there has to be action too. Therefore, I hope that there will also be deeds that mean, that the good results which you could have anticipated from the visit will be turned to good actions even though your emissary did not make the journey.

I end with good wishes for a Happy New Year to all the members of your Shul and to their families - to everyone - materially and spiritually."

This was the first letter which I had ever received, albeit indirectly, from the Lubavitcher Rebbe.

Until that moment the Rebbe was, to me, some vague personality living thousands of miles away in the USA, literally - we were worlds apart.

My first recollections of a Rebbe were as a youngster – when he was an even vaguer figure, who resided thousands of miles away in the town of Lubavitch in Lithuania.

My maternal grandfather, Shneur Zalmon Edelman was a devout Lubavitcher Chossid. My mother used to tell us that he left his wife and three daughters at home in Rakishik, Lithuania and spent every Yom Tov with the Rebbe, Sholom Ber, who reigned from 1883 until 1920.

Around 1906, during the time of the Russian pogroms, my mother together with many thousands of Jews fled to this country. She settled in Manchester, where she subsequently met my father, Zev Jaffe, who had come from Riga in Latvia. They were married in 1910. My father was not a Lubavitcher Chossid, but my mother persuaded him to join the Kahal Chassidim Synagogue.

Until I was nearly thirty five years of age, the only contact, involvement or knowledge I had of Lubavitch was that we davened in a 'Lubavitch Shul.' We celebrated a Yom Tov called Yud Tes Kislev, which was the anniversary of the date on which the Alter Rebbe, the founder of Lubavitch was released and freed from a Russian jail after having been sentenced to death for alleged treason. We also celebrated Simchas Torah in rather a hectic and merry manner, which was most unusual in Manchester at that time.

The old Chassidim, who included my uncle Shmuel Rein, Alexander N Nemtzov, Rabbi Rivkin and Rabbi Dubov, had all studied at the Lubavitcher Yeshiva. They kept very much to themselves as they were old friends. I had no idea what Lubavitch stood for or what it meant. My uncle did give over a Maamer during *Shalosh Seudos* on Shabbos in winter. It was in Yiddish and none of us boys understood very much of it. We did know that Rabbi Rein corresponded with the Rebbe, but we were not personally involved.

I LEARN ABOUT LUBAVITCH

Then Rabbi Ben-Tzion ShemTov arrived on the scene. Matters changed very swiftly and dramatically. He was the ideal and perfect soldier of the Rebbe. He served the A'mighty and the Rebbe and the Jewish people with friendliness, gladness, joy and self-sacrifice. He explained to us the Lubavitch teachings and doctrines. Furthermore, to enable us to comprehend more easily, he told us the following story about the Alter Rebbe, which explained in simple language the dogma of Lubavitch, so that even a child could understand.

“The Alter Rebbe shared his house with his eldest married son - Rabbi Dov Ber (who later succeeded him). Rabbi Dov Ber was known for his unusual power of concentration, when he was engaged in study or prayer he was totally oblivious to everything around him.

“On one occasion, when Rabbi Dov Ber was thus engrossed, his baby, sleeping in a nearby cot, fell out of his cradle and began to cry. Rabbi Dov Ber did not hear the baby’s cries.

“The infants grandfather, the Alter Rebbe, who was in his study on the upper floor - also engrossed in his studies, did hear the baby’s cries. He interrupted his studies, went downstairs, lifted the infant soothed it and replaced it in its cradle. To all this, the infants father remained quite oblivious.

“Subsequently, the Alter Rebbe admonished his son - “No matter how engrossed one may be in the most lofty occupation, one must never remain insensitive to the cry of a child.” The lesson which we have to learn is that we have to hearken to the cry of a child.

“The ‘child’ may be an infant in age, a minor or teenager, a Jewish boy or girl attending public school, fallen from the ‘cradle’ of the Jewish religion, heritage and way of life.

“Or it may be an adult in years, yet an ‘infant’ with regard to knowledge and experience of the Jewish religion and heritage, as are so many Jewish students on the campuses of colleges and universities or in other walks of life.

“The souls of these Jewish ‘children’ cry out in anguish, for they live in a spiritual void. They cry out for a guiding hand that would restore to them the security, warmth and comfort of their faith, and give meaning to their empty lives, whether they are conscious of it, or feel it only subconsciously.

“We must hear their cries, no matter how preoccupied we may be with any lofty cause – for to help them back to their Jewish cradles takes priority over all else.”

MY FIRST CORRESPONDENCE WITH THE REBBE

Suddenly, from ‘right out of the blue’ and quite unexpectedly, during Shevat 5713 (January 1953) I received my first personal letter from the Rebbe from ‘770.’ It was written in Yiddish, which I translated as follows:

“I was pleased to receive regards from you through Rabbi Shem Tov. I was especially pleased, to hear that your business is going well. I hope that the A'mighty will help so that your business shall go from ‘good to better.’”

“According to my opinion, however, you should take it upon yourself to give immediately from your earnings a little more than Maaser (a tenth) to charity organisations and not to wait until you may see a success to your business ventures but to fulfil the sayings of our sages (Z.L.) “Give a tenth in order that you should become wealthy.” This means that first one gives Maaser - and one should not be so exacting - but to give a little more. One then can rely on the honesty of the A’mighty, that He, Blessed be He, will fulfil His promise of bestowing riches. The Holy Torah calls wealth that which will be used for healthy happy Yiddish matters. May HaShem, Blessed be He, give you good fortune.”

Rabbi Shem Tov just happened to be in Manchester at that moment. I proudly showed him the letter from the Rebbe. He insisted that I should reply, straight away, to the Rebbe and that I should write in English. I did so.

A completely new vista - a new era - had now been opened up before me. I now had a confidant and an advisor - a ‘Father’ upon whom I could rely implicitly, and it is certainly a great relief to be freed from the burden and responsibility of having to make vital decisions on one’s own.

It is a great comfort to be able to receive an unbiased opinion and objective advise, especially from a saintly person who will intercede on one’s behalf, by fervent prayer, direct to Our Heavenly Father.

In due course I received a reply to my letter. It was in English too. In fact, most of our correspondence from that time onwards was written in the English language.

The Rebbe wrote:

Sholom U’ Brocho,

I was pleased to receive your letter. You need not excuse yourself for writing in English and should not hesitate to continue to do so. The important thing is that your letter should contain good news.

I was gratified to note in your letter that you feel the need and urge to devote more time to learn Torah and that to increase the amount of Tzedoka cannot make good the deficiency in the time of study. That this is true, we can see from physical life. Each organ of the body must receive its nourishments and although strength in one indirectly benefits also the rest, each and every one must receive its own blood and nourishment. Spiritually, the soul has its own 248 ‘organs’ and 365 ‘blood vessels’ namely, the positive and negative precepts, respectively, which make up the spiritual stature of the Jew. And although a greater effort in one Mitzvah benefits the whole organism each Mitzvah has its own function which cannot be substituted by another.

I trust this feeling of the need for more time for study which springs from an inner desire for Torah, will be translated into practical deed, and without loss of time, and that you will go from strength to strength as our sages rule: “Maalin b’Kodesh.”

Your determination to give Tzedoka above Maaser is certainly praiseworthy, and in addition to all else, it is a Segulah for good business and avoidance of losses, so that not only would your anxiety about your surplus stocks prove unfounded, but even bring a profit, in accordance with the words of our sages “Aser bishvil shetisasher” (give a tenth in order to become wealthy.)

I am looking forward to receiving good news about your coming addition to the family, it would be advisable to have all the Mezuzahs checked in the meantime.

May G-d help you and your wife to raise your children to the life of Torah, Chuppah and Maasim Toivim and that you continue to increase your share of Torah and Mitzvos.

With blessing

M. SCHNEERSON

For the following six years, until I had the merit and pleasure of actually meeting the Rebbe at ‘770’ in January 1959, I corresponded regularly with the Rebbe (I still do, thank G-d). In all, up to the present moment – 1979/5739 – I have received over one hundred and seventy letters from the Rebbe. They cover a wide range of subjects communal and general, as well as personal. All have been signed by the Rebbe himself, who obviously very carefully reads the letters before signing, because on many of these there are alterations and additions made by the Rebbe in his own handwriting.

Once, I did receive a very important reply to an urgent query of mine which did not have the Rebbe's signature. It just stated "because of Chol Hamoed this letter is unsigned."

I hope to find the opportunity of quoting from some of these letters further on.

CHAPTER 2

OUR FIRST VISIT TO AMERICA

THE START OF OUR ADVENTURES

During 1958, Roselyn and I felt that it was about time that we went to New York in order to see and meet the Rebbe personally. Travelling to the USA was an adventure - a 'once in a lifetime' experience. The sea journey itself took five days each way.

We decided to combine the Gashmius (the material) with the Ruchnius (the spiritual). In other words to take advantage of our visit to the Rebbe and whilst in America to enjoy an extended winter holiday in the sunshine of Miami Beach in Florida.

Amid great excitement and expectations we booked our lovely stateroom on the 'Queen Mary' for our outward journey, and a similar one on the 'Queen Elizabeth' for our homeward voyage. We boarded the ship at Southampton on Sunday, 28th December 1958. Roselyn's mother, Avrohom and Hilary and a few friends came especially to Southampton to wish us "Bon Voyage" (and also to see around and examine this magnificent and luxurious ship). We also found awaiting us three bouquets of flowers, three baskets of fruit and innumerable telegrams and cards from the family and friends, from the Shul and from many organisations. It was real V.I.P. treatment.

The ship was almost empty (it was in mid-winter) and there were only 92 passengers in the first class, which normally has accommodation for seven hundred.

That night the ship pitched and tossed continuously. I managed to arise from bed at 11.30am in order to daven and then stayed in bed all afternoon. I was not sick - just uncomfortable. Roselyn too, felt a little dizziness. Boat drill was at noon - neither Roselyn nor I were present. Lunchtime was 1.00pm. Both Roselyn and I were conspicuous by our absence.

By the following morning the ship had stopped tossing - but it was still pitching. I had enjoyed a good night's sleep and was also getting used to the ship's roll, so I felt much better. I walked to the Shul, which was situated actually in the bows of the ship. The *Oron Hakodesh* was built and fixed permanently right in the front so when we journeyed to New York, we davened towards the west. As the earth is round, we faced Jerusalem from the other side.

In Shul I met the Bobover Rebbe with seven of his Talmidim or Chassidim. We had a good nucleus for a Minyan; we only needed one more person. We arranged to daven Mincha at 5.00pm. At 5.45 we were still one short, but we managed Mincha and Maariv at 5.50.

Shacharis was at 8.00am because the Bobo (as Roselyn nicknamed him) went with his Chassidim to the Mikveh - otherwise known as the first class swimming pool - at 7.00am.

That night we met a hurricane. I thought that the ship was going to 'turn turtle' and I nearly fell out of bed on a number of occasions. Oddments and books were sliding from one side of the stateroom to the other. But we did have a Minyan for Shacharis and no Tachnun is said when one is travelling, ruled the Bobo. That suited me quite (s)well.

The 'Queen Mary' was due to dock at New York at 10.00am on the Friday. So we davened earlier at 7.00am. At 7.30 the ship had stopped. We discovered that we were enveloped in thick fog. At 9.30 the 'Mary' was still anchored alongside the Ambrose Lightship at the entrance to the New York Channel. We were getting a little worried about Shabbos. We still had five hours to spare - sorry four now - so I was hoping for the best

Roselyn said, "Don't worry, what the Bobo does - so will we do." At 11.30 the fog had cleared and we were on our way. We expected to land at 2.30 and Shabbos came in at 4.15pm. Avrohom, Rabbi Shem Tov's son had just phoned us to the ship that we should get everything prepared so that there would be no delay when we docked.

We disembarked at 2.45. Eventually the Customs passed our baggage. We hurriedly packed all our belongings which the officers had left strewn all over the dirty dock floor and at 3.30 we emerged into the U.S.A. Avrohom ShemTov was waiting for us. He had brought all our Shabbos meals and had

reserved hotels all along the route to Brooklyn. We staggered into Sarah and Mendel Shem Tov's home just two minutes before Shabbos.

OUR FIRST VISIT TO '770'

We left at once for '770,' in order to daven Mincha at the Rebbe's Beth Hamedrash. Obviously, I was excited, because I was now going to meet the Rebbe. I had been travelling for over a week and thousands of miles - and now I was to receive my reward. Rabbi Shem Tov, my sponsor and guide had already warned me that I should not approach nor speak to the Rebbe, otherwise I might have been tempted to wish the Rebbe Sholom Aleichem and to shake him by the hand.

I entered the Beth Hamedrash and was struck by its smallness - it was not much bigger than a very large dining room. It was packed tightly with about 150 people all standing in a solid mass, and yet there was a completely empty space at one end, where a table and a nice chair were specially prepared for the Rebbe. There was also a small bench to seat just four or five persons near the Oran Hakodesh.

I did not speak to, neither was I introduced to the Rebbe. He sat by himself with downcast eyes and davened. The decorum was perfect. Everyone davened and no one spoke at all to his neighbour. When the Rebbe got up to leave after the service, a large passageway was miraculously cleared for him. In between Mincha and Maariv one of the boys recited one of the Rebbe's recent Maamorim.

After Shul we returned to Mendel Shem Tov's home and waited until 7.00pm to make Kiddush. Avrohom (Shem Tov) and Freidel (Shem Tov) were also present. Freidel's fiancé, Nachman Sudak made up the party.

On Shabbos, we benched Rosh Chodesh Shevat. The service commenced at 8.30am because the whole Book of Tehillim (Psalms) was recited before Shacharis - this took an hour and a half. Shacharis started at 10.00am - as usual. Rabbi Gurary, the Rebbe's brother-in law, was given the third Aliya - which he always has. The Rebbe is always called up for Maftir and Haftorah. I was honoured with an Aliya too.

The Shul (Beth Hamedrash) was even more crowded than previously. I reckoned that about 200 people were present. Again, there was no talking during the service, not even during the layenning and whilst the Rebbe recited the Haftorah, one could have heard a pin being dropped.

OUR FIRST FARBRENGEN

The service concluded at about 12.20pm. We were informed that there would be a 'Farbrenge' at 1.30pm. Mendel and I rushed home to make Kiddush - for the womenfolk. We hurriedly ate a piece of fish and returned to '770' in good time.

The Farbrenge took place in the 'Succah' - a temporary building which was between '770' and the apartment house next door. There were about 300 people present. The Rebbe sat in a lonely state at a table which was positioned upon a dais at the far end of this 'Succah.' A number of specially chosen Rabbonim sat in a semi-circle around him, not touching but surrounding the Rebbe. Everyone stood up or sat at the few tables which were located in the centre of the building. I was fortunate to find a seat at a table opposite and facing the Rebbe.

Wines, cake and strong drink - Benedictine and vodka - which were very popular, were distributed amongst the assembly. This enabled all those present to wish the Rebbe, *L'chaim* (to life). The Rebbe would reply *L'chaim V'livrocho* (to life and for blessing). The Rebbe would turn his head to face those all around the room in order to catch everyone's eye - so that no one would be missed and all would receive a blessing from the Rebbe.

Quite a lot of drink was donated for the assembly. The bottles were placed before the Rebbe on the table. The names of the donors and their special reasons, if any, for providing these drinks, were announced. The Rebbe would touch or unscrew the top of the bottle, the contents of which were distributed amongst some of the celebrants.

We sang nigunim and in between the songs the Rebbe spoke words of Torah (a Sicha). The Rebbe related two Sichas of fifteen minutes each, after which we all stood up for the Maamer (a deep Chassidic discourse). This took 45 minutes and everyone listened very intently, indeed.

There was further singing, and again everyone tried to wish L'chaim to the Rebbe and to receive his blessings in return. I was publicly reprimanded. "Zalmon," the Rebbe said, "Do not wait for *Kovod* (honour), get up and say *L'chaim* to me." I had already said it once, but the Rebbe wanted me to say it again – and again.

Some of the nigunim were terrific - with the Rebbe conducting with his fist faster, faster and faster – and everyone singing, swaying and jumping up and down.

The Rebbe recited a third Sicha. This took fifteen minutes and after more singing, the farbrengen ended at 3.30pm – two hours of concentrated talks and singing.

The Rebbe arose, a passageway was cleared as if by magic and he made his exit. The Rebbe met Roselyn who was standing outside and wished her a "Good Shabbos" at the same time, touching his hat. We rushed home to finish our Shabbos luncheon - it was almost 4.00pm. By 5.00pm we were back at '770' for Mincha and Maariv. The Rebbe did not speak to any individual personally, and most of the time he wore a grave and solemn expression.

After Maariv, I asked Rabbi Chadakov to let me know when we could see the Rebbe privately – at Yechidus. He replied that he had arranged it for Sunday, the following day – at Chatzos – midnight! 12 o'clock midnight! It sounded crazy. To an Englishman 8.00pm or even 9.00pm was very late for a conference, but midnight! I was told that we were very lucky, because 2.00am was considered quite early for an appointment.

Next morning, Sunday, I davened Shacharis at '770' at 9.20am. Sarah and Mendel then gave us a lift to the Waldorf Astoria Hotel in Manhattan. At 11.00pm we left to keep our appointment at '770.' The place was a hive of activity. Rabbi Chodakov – the private secretary of the Rebbe made us welcome. We also met Nissan Mindel, whom we knew very well from his 'old Manchester' days – he had married Netta Nemtsov, who had lived near us in Salford. He was the Rebbe's private secretary and attended to the English correspondence.

OUR FIRST YECHIDUS

This being my first visit to '770,' I had plenty of advisers on protocol. Our dear friend, Rabbi Shem Tov, was our chief sponsor. I took particular note of his instructions such as – "Don't shake hands with the Rebbe," "Don't sit down," and so forth. Although our appointment was for midnight, it was 12.45am before we were called in. (Whilst we were waiting, a man phoned from Chicago for an appointment, and Rabbi Chadakov told him that the earliest date available was after Pesach.)

On entering the Rebbe's sanctum, we were startled and amazed to see the Rebbe coming forward to greet us, his hands outstretched.

"Oh," said I, "I am sorry, but Rabbi Shem Tov said that I must not shake hands with the Rebbe." "Never mind" answered the Rebbe, smiling, and with a lovely twinkle in his eye, "We won't tell Rabbi Shem Tov! He shook hands with me. He then invited us to sit down.

"Oh, dear, no," said I, horrified, "Rabbi Shem Tov told me that on no account must I sit down."

"You may sit down for the first three times," said the Rebbe. So I did - thinking to myself - that it had taken me forty years to get to America. I did not expect ever to come a second time, never mind a third time! . . .

(Author's note: Thank G-d, up to the end of 1978 I have crossed the Atlantic twenty eight times. I have seen the Rebbe privately on over seventy occasions. In addition I have enjoyed many a mini-Yechidus. I have also been privileged to be one of those fortunate men whom the Rebbe has invited for Shovuos meals. This has given me further opportunities to "talk" to the Rebbe. So, needless to say, I now **stand** in the Rebbe's presence, and I do **not** shake hands.)

For the following two hours we remained closeted with the Rebbe. We discussed many and varied communal and general matters, as well as our own personal and family affairs. We had only seen the Rebbe at the services and at the Farbrengen, and it was amazing to us to behold such a transformation in a human being. Instead of the serious expression and far away look which the Rebbe habitually seemed to wear, we found ourselves now conversing with a very cheerful, happy and friendly, albeit, Holy person. (We very soon discovered that the Rebbe saw and knew everyone and everything and that the 'far away look' was really far sighted and far seeing.) He had a gorgeous smile, and the dazzling twinkle in his eyes lightened the seriousness of the occasional criticism or rebuke.

The Rebbe said that he was very keen and concerned about Jewish education. He would like to see the Jewish Day School movement, such as we possess in England, extended until the age of sixteen. What we were doing for the young children should, and must, be accomplished for the older ones - with particular emphasis on girls. Jewish High School for girls and Jewish Grammar School for boys should be supported and encouraged.

The Rebbe considered it most important and vital that boys should spend at least twelve months at a Yeshiva before studying for a career. Girls should attend a Seminary for Higher Jewish education.

The Rebbe had written to this effect a few months previously in Tishrei 1958. He had stated:

...In which you ask my opinion with regard to the future education of your son, Abraham Joseph. Considering his age and the preparation that is required for life in the present troubled times, it is my opinion that he should dedicate at least one year to the exclusive study of the Torah. If this is difficult to arrange in Manchester, no doubt Gateshead or London will offer the proper conditions.

I need hardly say that the first thing that is most essential in life, on which everything else depends, including Parnosso, is courage and peace of mind. And, to devote one year to the exclusive study of the Torah is the least preparation that a Jewish boy can do, before entering into mature independent life. This year, should not, G-d forbid, be considered as a sacrifice, rather as a very good investment, and a springboard for future success whatever his choice should be, either a career or business.

I trust you will find the enclosed message interesting and useful.

With prayerful wishes for Chasimo Ugmar Chasimo Toivo, and with Blessing."

M. SCHNEERSON

I was not too pleased with the Rebbe's suggestion that we should send Avrohom to Gateshead or to London. I wanted him to be with the Rebbe at '770.' I was anxious that he should imbibe the Lubavitcher atmosphere at the highest level.

I did not have too much confidence in Avrohom's stamina and resolution to remain at Yeshiva for twelve months. I was hoping that he would be prevailed upon to stay at least for three months, so that he would become a Chossid of the Rebbe, if not a Rabbi himself.

I had written these above-mentioned ideas to the Rebbe. The Rebbe then intimated that he would accept Avrohom at the Yeshiva at '770' with "both arms wide open." Afterwards, if Avrohom desired to take up dentistry, he would have no objection and would acquiesce. The Rebbe informed Roselyn that women's organisations should interest themselves in children's and girls Jewish education and not solely raise funds.

The Rebbe concluded our Yechidus by stating that he was deferring his main Brocha (blessing) to us until we returned from Miami Beach and after the Yud Shevat Farbrengen. He would then advise us regarding outstanding problems and instructions about spreading the work of Lubavitch in Manchester. This appointment was for Sunday evening, 25th January 1959, just before our departure for home on the Tuesday morning.

The Rebbe rose to see us to the door and remarked, "Go and have a good vacation, and when you return we will get down to business." (This - after two hours!!)

Avrohom Shem Tov provided us with refreshments - lemonade and cake - and a car to take us back to the Waldorf Hotel, where we retired to bed at 4.00am.

YUD SHEVAT FARBRENGEN

We arrived back at New York from Miami on Monday 19th January 1959 and prepared for the Yud Shevat celebration, which was due to commence at 8.30pm.

I was told that there would be no food served – only drink and cake - and spiritual food, Torah. The Farbrengen was expected to conclude by 1.00am which was considered early.

It was anticipated that a large crowd would be present, but Mendel assured me that he had reserved me a seat. I also donated two bottles of drink.

This Yud Shevat Farbrengen was held in a large hall, Albany Rooms, which was situated about twenty minutes walk from ‘770.’

‘770’ was much too small. I reckoned that over 1,000 Rabbonim, men and boys took part in this celebration. If one took into account the ‘fluctuating audience’ - those who stayed for only one hour then 1,500 would be a more realistic figure. There were also about thirty women present, of whom Roselyn was one. They could hear, but could not see anything at all behind the partitions.

The Farbrengen started at 8.30pm. It finished at 2.30am – after six hours! I was offered a seat on the platform near to, but behind, the Rebbe. This I reluctantly refused. I desired to sit facing and watching the Rebbe, who sat alone at a long table situated on the platform. He was surrounded by a semi-circle of about forty Rabbonim.

Drinks were served in paper cups - very hygienic. Cake and egg kichels were served by hand - no plates, NOT so hygienic. A recording was made of all the proceedings and photoflashes were exploding all night. I sat just opposite the Rebbe, but most of the boys had to stand.

The Rebbe himself was in complete charge and control. There was no chairman; the Rebbe was the only speaker. He suggested the Nigunim and conducted with his fist just like on the Shabbos Farbrengen at ‘770.’

The Maamer, which was preceded by the special Nigun, took 45 minutes. The Rebbe also recited eight Sichas of fifteen minutes each. The Maamer was a bit ‘tough’ but the fifteen-minute talks were really good and enjoyable.

So we spent half the time singing and the rest of the evening listening to the Rebbe - a total of six hours.

I was particularly impressed with the Rebbe’s talk on whether one is allowed to interrupt a man who is davening. Prayer is most important, and has to be recited with the greatest *kavana*, concentration and zeal. One should be careful not to interrupt anyone who is davening - praying to G-d. A saintly person prays with very much devotion and concentration. The higher a man is spiritually, then the greater would be his *kavonos*.

Moshe Rabeinu (Moses) was on the very highest spiritual level of all. In this Sedra, Beshalach, we learn that Moses was in trouble. He had led the Jews out of Egypt very successfully when suddenly, they were faced with an insurmountable and impenetrable barrier – the Red Sea – a huge expanse of water, stretching as far as the eye could see. At their backs were the Egyptians, ready to strike. So what did Moishe do? He commenced to daven – to pray and cry to G-d for help and deliverance. What did G-d do? He interrupted Moshe’s prayers and told him, “Why do you come to me crying for help. Now is the time for action. Lift up your rod (stick) and march forward – then I will be able to help you.”

A Jew has to be a vessel to accept G-d’s blessings. It is of no use to him staying at home all day and davening. That will not bring him sustenance for himself and family. He has to show himself capable, by his actions, of receiving the blessing of the A’mighty. There is a time for praying and a time for action.

I was given great *kovod* (honour). I had presented drinks to the Rebbe, and I was requested to come up to his table. I was seeking the best and easiest way of getting there, when I was suddenly yanked up by willing hands and had to walk ON and along the table to where the Rebbe was sitting. He opened the bottle and filled his own glass with vodka, then insisted upon handing to me the bottle personally (“with your right hand”). He wished me *L’chaim* and I answered *L’chaim Velivrocho*. I then walked along the table back to my seat.

Towards the end of the Farbrengen the Rebbe again requested me to come to the ‘top table.’ He placed a few slices of cake into a bag, handed it to me and said “Give the *Baal Haboste* (my wife) some and take the rest home for the children.”

The Rebbe distributed further quantities of cake to other recipients, a nigun was commenced, the Rebbe arose from his chair, left the hall and the Farbrengen had ended. There were about six pieces of cake left on the Rebbe’s plate. Well - talk about rugby or American football - this was twice as fast and as rough as both games combined.

Was it worth it? Well the victors who had dragged themselves slowly to their feet, from under a pile, a crowd of Yeshiva boys but still clutching a minute portion of the Rebbe’s cake, must have certainly thought so.

A FRIENDLY PEOPLE

Mendel had asked us to return to his home for a meal at 3:00 in the morning!! We refused. Avrohom Shem Tov and most of the ‘boys’ had returned to ‘770’ to learn the Maamer which the Rebbe had recited at the Farbrengen. They repeated this over and over again, until they were word perfect. By that time it was 6.30am Tuesday morning - just in time for bed!!

The following day was freezing cold. Roselyn took me ‘shopping.’ The shops were boiling hot, like a furnace.

In the summer it is just the opposite – outside is like a furnace and inside the shops it is freezing cold, like a fridge.

Mendel phoned to inform us that he had arranged a festive party especially for us and it would take place on Saturday night. He told us that Yechidus had been held on the previous evening, Tuesday night. There had been forty-two private appointments and the Rebbe had left ‘770’ at 6.00am!

We had now been away from home for over a month. We disliked Manhattan – one tall building, another high building, and some taller still. The streets were dirty and untidy; we were not impressed with Manhattan.

We did like the winter sunshine of Miami Beach, but the town was so – oh – artificial.

But, we loved to be near the Rebbe. Therefore we were spending our last weekend in the States at Crown Heights. Once again, we were offered the hospitality of Sarah and Mendel’s home.

Shabbos service commenced as usual at 10.00am. I was delighted to receive another Aliya, Mendel was flabbergasted – an *Aliya* on two occasions within a few weeks!!

Sarah and Mendel had been living at their present apartment for almost six months. They decided to combine a *Chanukas Habayis* (house consecration) with a *Melave Malka* in our honour.

At 9.00pm after Shabbos over sixty men had congregated in their home. Roselyn and the ladies were in a separate adjoining room.

Rabbi Caplan, an old friend of mine, from Manchester, was in ‘the chair,’ in charge of the proceedings. Many of the Rabbonim of the Lubavitch hierarchy were present and spoke – all about me. My eulogy was well interspersed with words of Torah. I was really made to feel like a V.I.P. and Guest of Honour. It was hard to believe, that all these wonderful praises and flow of oratory were on my behalf. Avrohom Shem Tov recited a little of the Rebbe’s Maamer. I was given the honour of *bentching* (saying grace) after such a lovely feast of rhetoric and of good food and drink. I really could not grumble or complain about my treatment at Crown Heights. From the Rebbe downwards everyone had welcomed us with open arms and given us every honour and friendship.

By 1.30am we were returning to our hotel in Manhattan. On the car radio we heard a report from the chaplain of the Israeli forces discussing rockets and sputniks. He was concerned about the Halachic ruling regarding the sanctification of the New Moon, when flights to the moon would take place. Also the position regarding Shabbos when the earth would be encircled over half-a-dozen times a day - one would have the week of seven days in one twenty four hour period! A Shabbos every day.

OUR SECOND YECHIDUS

On Sunday night at 10.00pm Roselyn and I again entered '770' for *Yechidus* with the Rebbe. Everyone was thrilled for our sakes - it was such a great privilege to have two private appointments in one visit to New York.

This interview lasted one hour. The Rebbe carried on the conversation just as if we had never left his presence at all since our first *Yechidus*. He reiterated his points about higher Jewish education.

He hoped that I would give his regards to "London and Manchester." The Rebbe suggested that I should arrange special meetings for this purpose. He added that Roselyn should address the ladies. I had no confidence in myself as a speaker, able to relate some of the Rebbe's *Sichos* to an assembly. "But," I remarked to the Rebbe, "what about the six hours recording of the Yud Shevat Farbreng. If I could obtain a copy of this tape, with the Rebbe talking for three hours and the nigunim too, then I could make good use of it and bring the Rebbe's voice and intonations to the people of England." After a lot of discussion the Rebbe decided to let me have a copy, as this was an exceptional case. This was the first time ever that the Rebbe had not only permitted this to be done, but had actually given the orders. No one would believe this at first. Mendel and Avrohom Shem Tov were quite excited and I could not wait to hear Rabbi Shemtov's reaction. It would take a little time to make this copy - I did not realise then how much time!!

The Rebbe then induced one of his 'boys' to translate some of the *Sichos* into English for Roselyn's benefit. This was done and Roselyn was thrilled and gratified with the results and with the Rebbe's consideration of her.

The Rebbe handed me a special *sefer* for Dayan Golditch, one for Dayan Weiss and another one for Rabbi Unsdorfer (my brother-in-law). In addition to these he presented me with a Tanya for Avrohom and a Siddur for Hilary. But best of all he extended to Roselyn and I a most wonderful Brocha (besides all the advise he had proffered to us).

The Rebbe accepted responsibility for all his Chassidim, particularly in Crown Heights. We, in England, do not realise to what a great extent the Rebbe rules their lives. For instance, Mendel Shem Tov was uncertain regarding what action he should take about a certain problem. He asked the Rebbe and he obeyed implicitly all the Rebbe's instructions. Phil (Phaivish) Vogel had been studying at '770' for twelve months. Aaron Cousins had been there two years. I asked them what were their plans for the future. They did not know and were not worried, and they were delighted to leave all the responsibility to the Rebbe. They knew full well that they were in good hands.

And so, with the Rebbe's good wishes and *Brochos* ringing in our ears, we said farewell and took our leave of this saintly, friendly and powerful personality.

HOMEWARD BOUND

Our ship was due to leave on Tuesday morning at 10.30am. On Monday we visited the Rebbe's Lubavitch Schools. The first was for girls only - 500 attended. The second contained 450 boys.

I made periodic enquiries about the tapes. I was told that they would be available "in a couple of hours time" then, "another few hours" then, "it won't take long." In the event we had to give Rabbi Chadakov permission to hand these tapes to Avrohom Shem Tov, who in turn, would deliver them to the Queen Elizabeth the next morning.

All the 'boys' insisted that I joined them in singing and dancing before we left '770.' It was a very hectic departure.

Next morning we arrived on board the 'Elizabeth' with our cabin trunk and ten suitcases at 9.30am. We were anxiously awaiting our friends and the tapes. At 10.00am there was no sign of them, neither at 10.30am nor at 10.45am. Actually, they had arrived at 10.30am but they were not allowed on to the ship - they had left it too late. We rushed down to see them – Mendel, Avrohom and Frieda Shem Tov, Phil Vogel, Aaron Cousins, Nachman Sudak and Yitzchok Sufrin, **and** the tapes which had not been completed until 1.15am the previous night. We said goodbye to our friends and the Queen Elizabeth left the quayside shortly afterwards.

Avrohom Shem Tov had given me four books of Tehillim, which I placed in the Shul of the ship. I stamped them with the official Queen Elizabeth seal and signed with my own name.

Most of the journey home was rough and hurricanes were prevalent. We arrived at Cherbourg at 8.30am on Sunday morning, the 1st February. The sun was shining - the first time we had seen it for a week. The French passengers disembarked by tender and we crawled across the Channel to Southampton for we could not dock before 5.00pm because of the tides.

We were met at Waterloo station in London by Rabbi Shem Tov (and others), who took us to his home for a meal. A women's meeting was in progress, so we had a good opportunity to give personal regards from the Rebbe and from relations and friends in Brooklyn. We left Euston for Manchester at 12am midnight, and arrived home at 7.30am on Monday 2nd February. We had been away from Manchester for 40 days and 40 nights!!

CHAPTER 3

MANY TAPE RECORDERS

As soon as we had settled down to our usual routine in Manchester, I arranged to make full use of the tapes which the Rebbe had provided for me.

I booked a large hall and advertised in the local press 'the great attraction' that one could come along to a Farbrengen in Manchester and actually listen to the Rebbe speaking. There was an exceedingly large attendance, and one or two people really thought that the Rebbe himself would be present in person.

I had invited several prominent local celebrities - including Dayan and Mrs. Weisz, Dayan and Mrs. Golditch and many lay leaders, to our house for a preview. All were tremendously impressed.

I then travelled to London to hold a Farbrengen in Rabbi Shem Tov's home. When I arrived with the tape and my machine, I found over forty people present, and to my utter horror, I noticed that every single person had brought his own recorder and intended to make a copy. I was nonplussed. I protested that this was a private tape and that the Rebbe said copies were not allowed, and so on and so forth. It was to no avail. I was fighting a losing battle, because obviously, as long as even one copy would be made then my opposition would be circumvented. I accepted defeat gracefully.

AVROHOM STUDIES AT '770'

Now, one of our first objectives was to ensure that Avrohom would travel to and settle in Brooklyn in order to study for twelve months at the Yeshiva in '770.'

Avrohom had been a pupil at the Manchester Yeshiva for many years, attending evening classes after school hours. As he was still at college it was not possible for him to be at the Yeshiva all day (*Kol Hayom*). There were no evening classes for his age group (18 years) therefore I had to provide him with private tutors. I was fortunate to obtain the services of Rabbonim Dubov, Margulies and Rapaport. In a couple of month's time, when he would have completed his school curriculum, he would have concentrated tuition most of the day and every day.

I contacted the Rebbe to discover the most appropriate time for Avrohom's departure from Manchester.

Then, on 10th Iyar 1959 I received a letter from the Rebbe, which contained this paragraph:

With regard to your son, Abraham Joseph, I suggest that you should get in touch with Rabbi Dubov, or other members of the faculty of the Manchester Yeshiva, that they should give him an informal examination, so as to ascertain his status in learning, and then they should write about it to the Yeshiva Administration here, in order to make sure that there would be a suitable class for him etc.

The next correspondence on this matter came from the Yeshiva Administration at '770.' This stated that they had received the reports from Manchester. They suggested that Avrohom should postpone his departure for two years and during that period he should study at the Manchester Yeshiva *Kol Hayom*.

Well, this did really upset me. I was furious. I was blazing and raging with indignation. I wrote at once to the Rebbe. I explained that we at Lubavitch went out of our way to encourage and prevail upon boys to attend Yeshivas, in particular to go to a Lubavitcher one, and a preference to '770.' I personally had put great effort, endeavour and much money into this sphere in order to propagate this idea. Yet when I wished my own son to take advantage of this scheme, I was told, quite bluntly, that he could not be accepted. Did one have to be a *Baal Teshuva* (one who had 'returned' to Judaism) or belong to a non-orthodox family, before one could be eligible to be accepted by a Lubavitch Yeshiva?!

On the 25th Tammuz 1959 the Rebbe replied as follows:

I received your letter of July 24th, and I am sorry that you seem to be upset about the fact that the Yeshiva Administration decided to postpone your son's admission to the Yeshiva here.

Needless to say, they had the interest of your son at heart, as they explained to you the difficulties and problems involved.

On the other hand, if you think that these apprehensions are exaggerated and that despite all that they have written to you, you still feel that you would like your son to be admitted to the Yeshiva here, do not hesitate to write to me and I will be glad to persuade the Yeshiva Administration to accept your son as a student. In this event, I think that the best time for your son to come would not be now, when most of the students are dispersed on various missions of the Merkos L'Inyonei Chinuch, and the whole Yeshiva programme is greatly curtailed etc. The best time for him would be to come closer to Rosh Hashonah, when the Yeshiva programme begins again on a normal keel, and all the students will be present then, including these from England, who might be of help to your son in getting adjusted here.

With blessing,

M. Schneerson

I thanked the Rebbe very much indeed, for his intervention and help in this matter. I was awaiting the requisite documents from the Yeshiva to enable Avrohom to acquire a temporary immigration certificate from the USA authorities.

Weeks went by and we had heard nothing from '770' except on the 15th Menachem Av, a paragraph in the Rebbe's letter, stated:

...with regard to the necessary documents for your son, the whole matter was turned over to the Yeshiva Administration, and no doubt they will take care of the formalities.

But, of the documents there was no sign!

Rabbi Shem Tov wanted Avrohom to accompany him to Brooklyn for Rosh Hashonah and then remain in New York for a few months. He promised to look after him (I knew he would) but we did require legal permission for Avrohom to stay a year or more in the U.S.A. to study at a college. Then, typically the documents arrived just in time, at the very last moment.

Rabbi Shem Tov obtained the air tickets. I was a little perturbed when I discovered that he had purchased a return ticket for Avrohom. I expressed my apprehension and concern. If Avrohom suddenly felt homesick or the urge to return home, he could get on the next plane to England. It was that easy and so simple. I would rather that he met some difficulties and obstacles when that happened just to give him time to reconsider the situation and make further efforts to remain at the Yeshiva.

However, events turned out very much better than I had ever expected. I received a lovely letter from him within a week or two, wherein he expressed his great satisfaction and delight in being at '770', the "hub of the world." He stated that I could never appreciate or understand what a wonderful thing I had done for him in sending him to Yeshiva. He had acquired and gained a new outlook, a new perspective of life, of Judaism and of Lubavitch. He had settled down very nicely.

Phil Vogel was assisting him in his learning. Three months soon passed and before we realised it, Avrohom had been at Yeshiva for twelve months. He was prepared, even anxious to continue his studies for another year. When this period had come to a close, the Rebbe recommended that he should study for his Semicha. We engaged Rabbi Dvorkin to supervise and help Avrohom and eventually after five years - since he had left Manchester in 1959, Avrohom became **RABBI** Avrohom Joseph Jaffe.

I have in my possession many beautiful letters from the Rebbe expressing his pleasure and satisfaction with the way Avrohom was studying, the good impression he was creating and with the work he was accomplishing for Lubavitch in general.

CHAPTER 4

OUR SECOND VISIT TO AMERICA

Meanwhile, to retrace our steps back to 1959, we now had another good reason for wishing to visit the Rebbe at '770.' As the Rebbe had remarked, "we had a hostage in Crown Heights." We considered that it would be an excellent idea to visit New York in case Avrohom needed moral support and encouragement. It was decided to repeat the previous year's itinerary and to take along Hilary, too.

Our first and main task was to book an appointment for Yechidus with the Rebbe.

In answer to my query and application. Rabbi Chadakov replied that he "was pleased to hear that you and your family will be visiting here soon. I see your son here every day. He was already privileged with an appointment with the Rebbe."

Rabbi Chadakov went on to offer us Tuesday evening 15th December 1959, the day of our proposed arrival in New York, or the following Tuesday night. We naturally accepted the first available date. After a pleasant voyage, the Queen Elizabeth duly docked at New York on December 15th 1959. This time we resided at the Hotel New Yorker. It contained 2,500 bedrooms and the window cleaner has a full-time job. It takes him three months to do the round.

We chose this hotel because it was close to the dairy restaurants -last year we had to hire a taxi from the Waldorf Astoria every time we wanted a meal.

THIRD YECHIDUS

Our appointment with the Rebbe was due to commence at 10.00pm but the Rebbe was officiating at a marriage ceremony (*Messader Kedushin*). This was almost the last occasion on which the Rebbe had performed this function.

Roselyn, Hilary and I entered the Rebbe's room at 10.40pm. He again rose, shook hands and made us all take a seat.

I had brought some gifts from friends in Manchester, together with a special gift from Roselyn and me.

I also delivered letters and messages from quite a number of Mancunians. The Rebbe does not accept gifts and was most reluctant to do so in this instance – fortunately, it was not possible for us to take them back to England.

The Rebbe suggested that when Avrohom returned home for good then it would be a good idea to send Hilary to attend the girls' seminary in Brooklyn. Meanwhile, he would consider whether Avrohom should spend next Pesach at home in Manchester, and would let us know after Purim. The Rebbe advised us (our Shul) not to join with any other Synagogue but we should remove our premises to where most of our members were now living. After discussing other matters, we left the Rebbe's presence at 12.20am - one and a half hours of privacy with the Rebbe.

TO CROWN HEIGHTS FOR SHABBOS

It was Friday, 18th December and time to move from our Hotel in Manhattan to Brooklyn in order to spend Shabbos near the Rebbe. We left quite early because we had always experienced difficulty in obtaining a cab to take us to Brooklyn. They "did not know the way;" "they had never heard of Brooklyn;" "they were just going off duty;" and so on. On one occasion I stopped a taxi, and Roselyn and I entered and sat down before I told him my destination. I knew that by law the driver dare not refuse a fare, a customer.

Well, what a performance. The driver's face fell, and he blurted out that his taxi had broken down. We just laughed and told him that we refused to budge. He jerked forward - and stopped - jerked - jerked and jerked forward and stopped. It was like a Rodeo Horse Show. Well, ultimately he won.

This time we were lucky. We caught a taxi **at once** - with a very obliging driver. Unfortunately it was the week before the annual general public holiday and we had not taken into account the extra heavy and shopping traffic.

After thirty minutes we had only moved along ten blocks. We had now an urgent problem to solve. Would we get to Mendel's in time for Shabbos, or should we return to our hotel in Manhattan.

We held a quick conference with the driver and a swift decision was made. We descended from the taxi at the next subway station and caught the first train to Brooklyn.

Our foremost objective was to get across the River. It was too much to expect that we were travelling on the direct line to Kingston and Eastern Parkway, well, we were not. We were not conversant with the subway route, so we alighted from the train and hoped that the holiday traffic and the Brooklyn bottleneck had been left behind. "Quickly, quickly, Hilary" I shouted, "get to the street and grab a cab." Off she rushed, whilst Roselyn and I puffed along in the rear struggling with a large suitcase.

We reached street level - just in time for Hilary to overtake us. She had, of course, gone the wrong way.

Fortunately, we did obtain a cab almost at once. I emptied the contents of my pockets into Roselyn's lap and dashed out at '770' Eastern Parkway just in time for Mincha, and Roselyn and Hilary arrived at Mendel's - just in time for Shabbos. What a nightmare of a journey!

We spent the usual very pleasant and happy Shabbos davening with the Rebbe. I again had an *Aliya*. Rabbi Shem Tov had returned from a visit to Canada, so we all had a nice reunion at Sarah's. We returned to Manhattan on Saturday night.

YUD TES KISLEV 1959

The next day, Sunday 20th December, was Yud Tess Kislev, and this special Farbrengen was held at the Albany Rooms, again. We left our hotel early and picked up a taxi straight away. The driver was a coloured man. "Kingston Avenue" says I, "OK boss," says he and off we went. It was 6.45pm and we had arranged to pick up the Shem Tov's first. When the fare meter on the taxi showed exactly double the normal fare, we suspected that there was something wrong. Then the driver informed us that we were now at the Kings Highway - I knew definitely that something was wrong. I shouted at the driver "What the !!?X???!". "Sorry sah," says he, "I thought youse know the way." He turned the car around and commenced to retrace our route. We asked him to stop a moment - which he did, we paid the 'crackpot' his fare, dashed out and caught another cab with a sensible driver. Of course, when we arrived at Mendel's, they had all left for the Farbrengen.

Fortunately, a good seat had been reserved for me, very similar to the one I had occupied last year on Yud Shevat - facing the Rebbe. At 8.30pm the Rebbe arrived and the Farbrengen had started. Once again, everyone filled their glasses and wished the Rebbe *L'chaim*. I was rewarded with a lovely smile and the reply of *L'chaim Velivrocho* - then about half an hour later again, and again. At midnight, Avrohom Shem Tov placed the six bottles of *Mashke* (drink) which I wished to present to the Rebbe upon the top table. The Rebbe handed me a bottle to share out amongst the assembly.

The Rebbe related fourteen Sichas at this Farbrengen and nigunim were sung in between these talks. Towards the end of the Farbreng, the Rebbe called me up to the top table. 'As usual' I had to walk along the tables to get to my destination. The Rebbe presented me with a huge bag of cake and also a bottle of Mashke and said twice "A *sach gevirus, a sach tzedokah*" (lots of wealth and lots of charity).

This Farbrengen lasted for seven hours and concluded at 3.30am. Roselyn was tired and sleepy. Hilary was wide awake and excited and delighted with her 'new friends.' It would not take much effort to persuade Hilary to remain in Crown Heights.

INTERUPTED HOLIDAY

On Thursday, 24th December Roselyn and I left for Miami Beach and took with us Avrohom and Hilary for a short holiday. It was nice and restful. The temperature was between 76 and 80 degrees, very pleasant. Every afternoon Avrohom and I had a Shiur in Gemorrah. I was quite pleased with his progress. Tuesday 29th December was the fourth day of Chanukah. Whilst I was learning with Avrohom, at 4.45pm I was interrupted by a telephone call from New York. It was Rabbi Shem Tov. He was most annoyed. "Tonight was the fifth light and the Rebbe was giving out Chanukah *gelt* to the

Yeshiva boys that evening.” I had no right to take Avrohom away from Brooklyn at this time. I must at once send Avrohom back to New York in order not to miss this unique opportunity of receiving the silver dollar - Chanukah *gelt*, direct from the Rebbe.

“It is impossible,” I countered. “Nothing is impossible,” declared Rabbi Shem Tov. And he was right; we tried over a dozen airlines and finally managed to obtain a seat on a new prop-jet flight which was leaving Miami at 10.00pm that evening. This would arrive in New York at 12.30am. His flight back from New York would leave at 9.30am. I phoned Rabbi Shem Tov at Brooklyn and informed him that I had booked the flight for Avrohom but it cost \$150. “It is well worth it,” he retorted.

Avrohom partook of an early dinner, changed into his ‘winter’ clothes, packed a suitcase and, he was almost ready to travel. Yes - almost, because as he was about to leave the hotel, there was another telephone call from New York for me - it was Rabbi Chadakov. He explained that the Rebbe had learnt that Avrohom intended to come to Brooklyn to collect his Chanukah *gelt*. The Rebbe had indicated that first of all, it was a pity to spend money on wheels - travel - which could be used for *Yiddishe Tzedoka*; and two, in any case Avrohom would arrive too late, as the Chanukah *gelt* was being distributed between 9pm and 10.30pm. Therefore, Rabbi Chadakov suggested that if Avrohom would give him ‘power of attorney’ then he (Rabbi Chadakov) would collect the silver dollar en Avrohom’s behalf. We agreed to this on the understanding that I should also receive a silver dollar from the Rebbe. Rabbi Chadakov agreed. However, a few moments later, there was another telephone call for me. Once again it was Rabbi Chadakov. He had spoken to the Rebbe, who had pointed out that Chanukah *gelt* was only given to his *Talmidim* (pupils) and to those who learnt Tanya. So, if I would promise to study at least two lines of Tanya every day, then I could be considered as a *Talmid*. I agreed to this with alacrity. Rabbi Chadakov then signified that as Roselyn and I were man and wife, we could only be treated as one unit, and were entitled to only one dollar between us. So, Avrohom would obtain his, we would get ours and poor Hilary would ‘be left out in the cold.’ Therefore, continued Rabbi Chadakov, if he would be given the ‘power of attorney’ for Hilary then he would get her silver dollar too.

Clever Rebbe!! We cancelled Avrohom’s flight.

OUR FOURTH YECHIDUS

We returned to New York on Tuesday, 5th January, 1960. Our second Yechidus with the Rebbe had been arranged for 11.00pm that evening. We were due to leave for home on the Queen Elizabeth the following morning.

Rabbi Shem Tov, Mendel and Avrohom Shem Tov accompanied us to ‘770.’ Rabbi Chadakov gave us the silver dollar Chanukah *gelt* which he had obtained from the Rebbe on our behalf.

Shemmy was really excited and delighted when he saw T.G. our family entering the Rebbe’s study - all together.

The Rebbe stood up and extended to us a wonderful welcome. Avrohom and Hilary remained standing during the Yechidus. I thanked the Rebbe for the Chanukah *gelt* and handed him an envelope containing \$150. Avrohom had saved this amount by not flying to New York to collect his dollar. The Rebbe remarked that this was not my money. It belonged to Avrohom who had to give it to charity. The Rebbe handed the cash to Avrohom and instructed, him to give it to Rabbi Chadakov and to ensure that he got a receipt in his own name, too.

The Rebbe asked Hilary whether she would be prepared to spend a year or two in Brooklyn. Hilary replied with an emphatic, unhesitating “yes.” Hilary’s new friend, Debbie, had created a most wonderful impression upon her. “She is a fire,” said the Rebbe. The Rebbe wished Hilary much success and good health. Whereupon the children left the room after ten minutes. The Rebbe remarked that I was worried last year about Avrohom’s future, and asserted that I had no cause to worry any more.

Rabbi Shem Tov was outside in the hallway. It was his turn to enter for Yechidus after we had left. So after discussing various matters we took our leave with most beautiful Brochas and good wishes ringing in our ears. I hoped that I would be seeing the Rebbe again – and soon!

We sang the new *nigun*, Uforatzto, and danced with the boys at '770,' and very reluctantly left for home.

Shemmy came to the ship to wish us farewell. He had spoken to the Rebbe after we had left Yechidus and the Rebbe had indicated that I would make a lot of money – but I must not fail to give the due amount to Tzedoka. Shemmy implied that the Rebbe seemed to be very pleased with our visit!

We had a pleasant, restful and leisurely voyage home. How leisurely it was can be deduced from the fact that we arrived at Cherbourg on Monday 11th January at 8.00am and then drifted the few miles across the Channel to Southampton where we arrived at 10.00pm. All passengers stayed aboard overnight, and we arrived home next day at 4.00pm.

CHAPTER 5

UNIVERSITY STUDENTS QUESTION THE REBBE - MARCH 1960

We now had our 'own correspondent' at '770,' who was also a good 'public relations officer' as well as an excellent liaison between '770' and Manchester.

He (Avrohom) sent me the report of a meeting which 80 students had held with the Rebbe at '770.' Here follows the official version.

*The following is a transcript made from notes taken by a few of the listeners who were members of a Hillel Foundation group that had an audience with his eminence, the Lubavitcher Rebbe Shlita, Rabbi Menachem Mendel Schneerson, on the 6th March 1960. About 80 students, boys and girls were with the Rebbe Shlita, for over an hour and a quarter, asking the questions and being given the following answers. The whole audience was conducted in English. However, it must be pointed out that this transcript has **not** been checked over by the Rebbe Shlita and it is **not** his exact words, so consequently, it is not advisable to take the **exact** words as what the Rebbe Shlita meant, but mainly the ideas.*

REBBE SHLITA: This year has special significance, being the 200th anniversary of the *histalkus* of the Baal Shem Tov, the founder of general Chassidism. The word '*Histalkus*' does not mean death in the sense of coming to an end, but rather an elevation from one level to another on a higher plane. When one has accomplished his mission in life he is elevated to a higher plane. The significance of this for us is that everyone here can lift himself to a higher level by studying the teachings of the Baal Shem Tov and taking an example from his life.

From the very beginning, one of the first things the Baal Shem Tov did was to teach small children little things, such as blessings, and to explain to them how they could be near to G-d A'mighty – that G-d was very real for them and close to them and not far-removed in some seventh-heaven. He worked not only with the teenagers, but even with six and seven year old children, making them understand that they should do G-d's will all the time – not only Sunday, Monday or Tuesday, but all the days of their life, and that through this they would be assured of a happy and harmonious life materially and spiritually.

The epoch of the Baal Shem Tov came after the Chmilnetzky pogroms, which left the Jews in a state of dejection and despair. It was the aim of the Baal Shem Tov to encourage the Jews, and to show them how they could meet the problems of their day, whilst living a life of torah and mitzvos.

Our present age is similar in many ways to the time of the Baal Shem Tov. One third of the Jewish population have perished under Hitler and have been cut off from us. How great, then, is the obligation that lies upon each and every one of us to do as much as is within his power to spread the light of torah and mitzvos in his surroundings and throughout the world in general.

At this point the Rebbe Shlita paused for questions and asked if the students preferred to ask all their questions and then he would answer them or whether they wanted each question answered as it was asked. The latter was decided upon and the students then began the question period.

QUESTION: The Rebbe Shlita said that one should spread Torah. How and in what manner is this to be done?

ANSWER: Everyone must do as much as possible in his immediate surroundings, by speaking with other people in a way that shows his certainty and confidence in the matter – for confidence is a characteristic of the youth specifically. An older person is always beset with doubts and hesitations – whilst the young are sure of themselves. It is this characteristic that we must utilise in spreading torah and mitzvos, and everyone must work at 100%

capacity. Every means must be employed, the newspapers, the radio but above all, the most vital is the personal example we set in our everyday living.

QUESTION: There appears to be a contradiction in the view of death as we find in Job and in Ecclesiastes. In Job it is considered redemption, but in Ecclesiastes it is thought of as an evil that transforms everything into vanity. What is the view of Chassidus concerning an after-life?

ANSWER: As was explained before, death is not a cessation of life, and in this the term “after-life” is not a proper expression, but rather one's spiritual life takes on new dimensions or is, as we said, elevated to a higher plane. This is logical and follows from the principles of science, which you consider to be the absolute truth. In science, the principle of the conservation of matter states that nothing physical can be completely annihilated. This table or a piece of iron can be cut up or even burned, but in no case could the matter of the table, or the iron, be destroyed. It simply takes on a different form. So, likewise, on the spiritual level, what composes our spiritual life, our thoughts, feelings, etc. can never be destroyed, but it can change its form, or elevate itself to a higher plane.

QUESTION: (*The same questioner then asked*) Is after-life of a soul personal or impersonal?

ANSWER: In conjunction with what we said before, the table is not destroyed when it is burned; it merely takes on a new form. So likewise, the soul takes on a new and higher form. In this the term ‘after-life’ is inappropriate. Rather it is a continuation of life. Until 120 it is carried on at one level, and at 121, 122 and 123 it is carried on at another level, and thus we go higher and higher in the realm of spirit. There is nothing metaphysical or mystical if you accept the truth (of science).

QUESTION: What was the role that the Baal Shem Tov played in the Chassidic movement?

ANSWER: The role of the Baal Shem Tov can be understood by noticing the relationship between an electric powerhouse with a switch that is connected to it by a wire. In order to connect oneself with the powerhouse, one must first find the right switch or push the correct button. So the soul of every Jew is connected with the powerhouse, but in order that one can enjoy the great benefits of the powerhouse the correct switch must be found or the proper button pushed. It was the Baal Shem Tov's merit to have discovered the right switch in every Jew, so that through their connection with the powerhouse, their lives were changed from dark despair to one of harmony and happiness.

So, also, you in your own work in strengthening Judaism must try to find the switch in the soul of every Jew. One can never know what will make the connection, perhaps one word, but, by this, you open up the well or inner fountain of his soul.

Rabbi Levy, director of the Hillel Foundation at Princeton University brought greetings to the Rebbe Shlita from Kfar Chabad. He had visited there during the summer and related his admiration for the love that is shown the Moroccan children. Never had he believed that such love between Jews existed.

QUESTION: Can Israel exist as a political state? (The Rebbe Shlita asked if the questioner was speaking from an economical, religious or political point of view. The questioner then replied that he meant whether a political and religious state could exist harmoniously together.)

ANSWER: The world runs according to a general plan. In the case of a machine, it can be used for a small job, or if used at stronger capacity, it could do an even bigger job. So also in the State of Israel it can be a state of Jews, or it can be something bigger, namely a Jewish State. But to be a Jewish State, it must run according to the Messianic tradition. This is not a contradiction to its being a normal state with men, women and children as any other, and then it will be doing something exceptional.

QUESTION: What is the difference between Lubavitch and other Chassidic groups?

ANSWER: Lubavitcher Chassidim are often called ‘Chabad’ Chassidim, from the Hebrew words *Chochma*, *Bina* and *Daas*, which indicate different aspects of the understanding. To serve G-d, with the emotions alone or with the faith alone, or even with intellect alone is not enough, for it would be an incomplete kind of service. Rather, there must be a fusion of all these elements, in a way that permeates the entire being of a Jew every single day. However, the intellect is the most important of these elements, and it is this that the Alter Rebbe stressed when he said that a Chassid must use his intellect and not be content with a life centred on the emotions or in faith alone.

QUESTION: Can Chassidim bring non-religious Jews back to their Judaism?

ANSWER: Certainly. Today it is required that one understands his religion and, therefore, Jews can be reached through the understanding. But in order to reach the intellect of someone else, you must first utilise your own intellect, for only through your mind can you reach the mind of another.

QUESTION: Why is Chabad Chassidim so successful in its activities?

ANSWER: Today everyone must understand something before he does it. I am not saying whether this is good or bad, but this is the situation. We require proofs and understanding. This is what Chabad Chassidim does; it explains aspects of Judaism so that they can be understood by the intellect. Also being a Chabad Chassid, I naturally believe this is the truth and that this is why it is successful.

QUESTION: What is the function of the Rebbe?

ANSWER: As we said earlier, to find the right switch in every Jew to connect him to the powerhouse.

QUESTION: What is the Jewish attitude towards conversion?

ANSWER: Never have we openly converted. A Jew should be a good Jew and a gentile, a good gentile. There is enough to do in just seeing that Jews are good Jews. One might utilise the example of a body to bring out the meaning clearer. Every limb of a body has its particular function and the body is healthy as long as each part does its proper work. It would be no advantage for the stomach to stop acting like a stomach and begin acting like an eye. Each limb has its activity to which it is fitted. So, likewise, every created thing has its particular function. The Jew has his and the gentile has his and it is of no purpose for one to do the work of the other.

QUESTION: This afternoon we heard a lecture by Dr. I. Bloch in which he explained that a Jew has a divine spark. He didn't say explicitly, but he intimated that only a Jew has this Divine spark and a non-Jew has not. Is this so?

ANSWER: A non-Jew does have a Divine spark, but it is not the same Divine spark that a Jew has. To illustrate from the body again. Each part has its own function, the brain to think, the heart to feel, and the legs to carry one about. So the mission of a Jew in life is to transform the physicality of the world into something spiritual. The non-Jew has a different purpose and therefore, the two do not have the same Divine spark. This may sound chauvinistic, but it is not my creation.

QUESTION: I understand that Chassidism elevates the woman to a state higher than she had before in Judaism. Could you explain this?

ANSWER: Traditionally women were not taught Torah, except those laws which were directly relevant to her. Chassidim taught, however, that the Mitzvos must be done with happiness, even the smaller Mitzvos, like eating; if one eats to serve G-d. **But** all of these Mitzvos must be done with love and happiness, not automatically. However, first the woman must be made to understand the Mitzvah. We cannot expect her to be a good Jewish woman unless she understands the providence and omnipresence of the A'mighty G-d and that He created not only the heavens but also the kitchen – and the kitchen therefore, must be a Jewish

kitchen. We must explain to her in great detail the teachings of Chassidus and the reason and why of Judaism. For indeed, the woman has a great effect on her children and her husband. It is necessary then that she be taught the basic ideas of Chassidus.

QUESTION: Can a Jew be a Chassid even though he finds it necessary to work on Shabbos especially in the case of a physician?

ANSWER: You mean he **thinks** it necessary to work on Shabbos. Really it cannot be that it is impossible for a Jew to keep Shabbos. For, since G-d is good, he would not have commanded us to do something and then have put us in the position where it would be impossible.

The question was continued and it was asked what should a physician do if a life was in danger.

ANSWER: Under ordinary conditions a physician must not desecrate Shabbos and his entire life must be as holy and as Jewish as possible. However, when an emergency arises and a life is at stake, it is not only, not a desecration but one is even commanded to save the person. If one is a physician and a Talmid Chochom, the mitzvah should not be given to another but he himself must save the person.

QUESTION: How far does the power of the Rebbe Shlita extend in natural law? Does the Rebbe Shlita have preferred status as regards prayer? *(At this point someone added that what is meant is whether the Rebbe Shlita can perform miracles.)*

ANSWER: This world is not separate from the higher worlds but is simply another step, the last one, of a long chain of worlds. Everything that influences this world comes from the higher ones. A miracle is something that happens which you could not have calculated. When a Jew connects his Divine spark with G-d through prayer, Torah and Mitzvos, he can affect things in the physical world that are beyond calculation. This power is not the prerogative of one Jew but of every Jew.

At this point rabbi gurewitz, of the brooklyn hillel Foundation, thanked the rebbe shlita for his interview and started to leave. But the rebbe shlita then said the following.

Now I went to ask you a question and at the same time perform a miracle. Everything has a purpose. What was the purpose of our coming together tonight? Certainly it was not merely to ask questions and receive answers, good or bad. Rather it was to achieve something positive. All of us here are young, myself included, and have tens of years before us. We all must work to the fullest capacity, every one of us. Since six million of our people have been lost to us through Hitler, we have a special task to accomplish the work that they have done. Everyone counts. No Jew is expendable. In your normal day-to-day life you must use your strength to add to the side of good and by this you will gain a life of happiness and harmony and as I believe, this can be done only through a life of Torah and Mitzvos. This obligation lies upon every Jew and G-d has given us the power to carry this through successfully.

And now the miracle is that each of us, myself included, tomorrow should add to his own personal life more Torah and Mitzvos. If we can all do this, myself included, this indeed will be a miracle.

CHAPTER 6

OUR FIRST CHARTER FLIGHT TO '770' – 4TH JULY 1961

“(UN) EASY PREPARATIONS”

One morning in January 1961, I received a telephone call from Rabbi Shem Tov – from London. He was very excited. He informed me that there was a special charter flight arranged from London to New York leaving in a months' time. The cost was ONLY £35 (\$100) for each passenger – including meals and transport to and from the airports. He had taken the liberty of reserving three seats on this flight – for Roselyn, Hilary and me. It was undoubtedly an exceptionally cheap price, ridiculously low – an absolute bargain – but I really could not afford the time to leave my business for nearly three weeks – besides which – I had already been to America twice and had seen the Rebbe only twelve months previously.

Shemmy was quite cross with me. He pleaded with me, cajoled, threatened and finally persuaded me to accept these three super bargain seats. He added that there were still a few available seats and I should inform my friends.

I was very friendly with Frank Harris, the editor of the 'Jewish Telegraph' one of our local Jewish newspapers. I revealed to him the extraordinary and astonishing news that members of Lubavitch were travelling to New York – and back – with meals and transport to the airports – and all this for £35.

This newspaper is published every Friday, and there was a small paragraph printed about this flight.

I was enjoying my breakfast at 8.30am when the telephone rang. It was Mrs. Cohen. She had just read the report in the newspaper and wanted to join our flight – after all £17.10 to cross the Atlantic was really a silly, crazy price. She insisted upon taking advantage of this in order to see her daughter-in-law and son-in-law whom she had last seen 30 years ago – and to meet her grandchildren who she had never seen. By 11.30am I was still answering the phone. I rushed to the office and found a similar state of affairs. All day long people were enquiring about the flight. “When are you leaving?” “For how long are you going?” “Put me on the list.” “Take my deposit,” and so on. The same thing was happening at home and Roselyn was having a hectic time because she had to prepare for Shabbos too. Many enquirers had complained to the supervisor that our telephone must be out of order – because they had been trying all morning, and our line was always engaged – busy. We were very grateful to G-d and thankful that we had a Shabbos. From the time when Shabbos came in until the end of the Day of Rest, we had complete quietness and repose.

After which, it all started again. I arrived home from Shul on Saturday night, after Maariv, and found a dozen people waiting for me and the telephone ringing away. This activity of hustle and bustle continued all day on Sunday and Monday.

By Tuesday morning I had a list of one hundred and twenty friends and Lubavitchers desiring to take advantage of our offer and to join our group for New York. I had also received £1,000 as deposits.

I telephoned the good news to Shemmy and requested him to convey to me as soon as possible the exact dates of our departure and return – so that I could notify my 'customers.'

Well – a week went by – two weeks – a month – six weeks – and still I heard nothing definite about the flight details. I was being nagged and pestered continuously. The telephone never stopped ringing – but they were not friends any more and I only received abuse and insults. I was getting bad publicity and the image of Lubavitch was becoming a little tarnished. The whole idea of a £35 American trip was being ridiculed. “It was just a publicity stunt and a bluff.” I was becoming desperate and was terribly annoyed with Shemmy for putting me into this horrible situation.

But, first of all, I returned all the money to the applicants and informed them that I would communicate with them as soon as I had some definite news.

One day, Shemmy came to Manchester on one of his regular periodical visits. He arrived at his Lubavitch Manchester headquarters – which happened to be my office – and – I really let him know

exactly how I felt and what I thought about a man who would put a friend in such an invidious position. My reputation was such that people could always rely on my word. Therefore – I – wanted – my – flight!

Well, Shemmy blurted out the whole story. Some Satmar Chassidim were keen and anxious to visit their Rabbi in New York and they chartered a ‘plane for 118 Chassidim. They did not receive the spontaneous support, which they expected, so they invited the Lubavitch to join with them. That was all he knew about the whole affair.

This did not satisfy me, not at all. A decision had to be made. Either we had the flight to New York, or I had to apologise to the Jewish Public, and admit that we had been a little too ambitious.

Shemmy suggested that I should telephone the London travel agent who had organised this charter and I would receive an up-to-the-minute report – all the latest information.

I ‘phoned at once and I did get the ‘latest information.’ It was a cursory denunciation and condemnation – in most impolite terms – of Chassidim in general and Satmar Chassidim in particular. The flight was OFF, OFF, OFF!!

Mr. M, the travel agent, did confirm that he had a long list of intending passengers – six Sats and six Lubs. He was fed up with it and had wiped his hands clean from the whole sorry and sordid affair.

At last, when I managed to intervene and halt him in the middle of his monologue – I explained with a glow of pride, that he should not be so impetuous and hasty – because I had a list of over a hundred potential travellers and for which I personally would guarantee. Mr. M would not listen to any of my arguments and entreaties. He would have one of it! He would not waste his invaluable time with such unreliable people and fickle individuals.

I was very upset, hurt, surprised and disappointed and I again reproved Shemmy. I had made myself look very foolish. People were making snide remarks about the £35 American flight, which would never leave the ground!

Shemmy had another great idea – a sudden inspiration – “Why bother with travel agents – contact the Airline direct – we have the passengers (?) the money (!) and the organisation (!!?) Phone them now – at once.” “Kling op the ‘Flying Tiger.’” So I klanged op the Flying Tiger Airlines. Yes, they did charter planes to New York but they were fully booked up for this years programme. “Ah, no - just a moment, we do have a cancellation for our flight on the 4th July.” A quick glance at the calendar confirmed that it was neither a Shabbos nor a Yom Tov, but it was during the Nine Days – a week before the Fast of Av, a time of mourning for the Jewish People.

Shemmy hissed into my ear – “Nem doss, nem doss.” So I took doss. I was a little perturbed about visiting the Rebbe on those depressing days, but Shemmy explained and made it quite clear that, when one sees the Rebbe, the sadness becomes gladness and a weekday becomes a Yom Tov.

I immediately circulated all our Lubavitch friends and supporters setting out the exact times and dates and other particulars. Of the original 120 applicants, 60 had to drop out because, one – the time of departure was unsuitable, two – the length of time in New York was too long, and three, it was too short. Anyway, by the middle of June we had our full compliment of 118 passengers – and also a waiting list of over 20. One of these latter offered to pay us 10% for her child, which was the rule amongst airlines. That meant she wanted us to take her boy of four years old to New York and back to Manchester, feed him well and look after him all for £4 (\$10.) Even then she considered that she was generous, because 10% was only £3.50! Another woman wished to go one way only to New York. She had received an offer of £40 for the return journey. We told her ‘which way she could go.’

I wanted Rabbi Shem Tov to accompany us on this unique occasion. He desired this too. Shemmy was afraid to ask permission from the Rebbe in case he received a rebuff. So I wrote myself. In his reply, as a PS to a letter the Rebbe had added:

“..... In which you write about desire and suggestion that Rabbi Shem Tov join and lead the group visit. Now, although it is my custom in such a case to hear also directly from the party concerned, but in view of the importance and urgency of the request, I will make an exception. My reply is that the

suggestion is a very good one, unless there are some compelling reasons to the contrary. May I add that I am gratified to note that Rabbi Shem Tov's work and leadership in the Lubavitch affairs in England is so well appreciated."

Our flight was due to leave on Tuesday, 4th July. Four days before departure – I received a bombshell! The airline manager phoned me on Thursday night from London to inform me that our flight to New York would have to be cancelled. A Manchester travel agent had informed – reported us to the air authority in London that we were not a bona fida group – that we had accepted passengers, persons who were not members of Lubavitch or had not been members for at least six months. This was all nonsense. These travel agents were annoyed that we had started a new era – chartered flights from Manchester to New York and were frightened that these would interfere with and even ruin their regular business. They decided to put a stop to this new type of traffic in its infancy. They therefore made this false accusation at the very last moment so that it would be too late for us to appeal.

This was a shocking blow, especially after all our hard work and after the minutest details had been arranged and settled. I immediately telephoned to the Rebbe in Brooklyn and received his reassuring message that I need not worry and that everything would be all right. He was awaiting our arrival with keen and pleasurable anticipation. I confess – ashamedly – that I lacked faith. How could I not worry when so much was at stake – and – I did not relish the idea of informing my eager passengers that they had better start to unpack their suitcases. There were two courses of action open to me. One, to discover who were the travel agents and persuade them to withdraw their accusations, and two, to prove to the Air Authority that we were a bona fida group. Course number one was doomed to failure. I appealed to the boss of the travel agency for my sake – for the sake of my 118 passengers, for the sake of the many hundreds of friends and relatives who were awaiting our arrival – and lastly for the sake of the £4,200 which we would all be losing collectively. The boss just laughed and sneered and said it served me right for interfering in their business. He was a hard nut and I could not crack it. We concentrated on course number two. All day Friday we spent contacting every single one of our passengers by phone and telegram. We asked them to be at my house on Sunday and bring with them all their old membership forms. We had prepared a new certificate, which they would also sign on Sunday. When I had those in my possession I was to telephone the Flying Tiger manager, Mr. Clark, who would contact the Air Authority and receive hopeful permission to fly to New York.

We spent a hectic, worrying and uneasy weekend. By Sunday afternoon, every single passenger had been to my home and completed all the necessary forms. I had telephoned Mr. Clark and the flight was still in the balance. We had to await developments. But – as far as my passengers were concerned, the flight was still on unless they heard direct from me to the contrary – and NO notice should be taken of rumours or stories.

“THE FLIGHT”

The day before we were due to leave, on Monday, the Manchester Evening Chronicle printed a half-page article about our proposed trip and difficulties. This was headed by screaming headlines “£35 New York trip is in danger.” Lubavitch certainly had plenty of publicity that week. Tension was high and my poor passengers were on the phone to me every minute of the day – was the trip on, was it off? They had heard a rumour, somebody had told them this – and that – all I could say was – the arrangements still stood and until they actually heard from MY office they must carry out the instructions already issued to them. Even Halberstadt, the caterers, drove me crazy. If the trip was off what should he do with the meat, all right he knew the answer to that one – PICKLE IT, but what about the plastic cutlery. He would have enough to last him for 20 years.

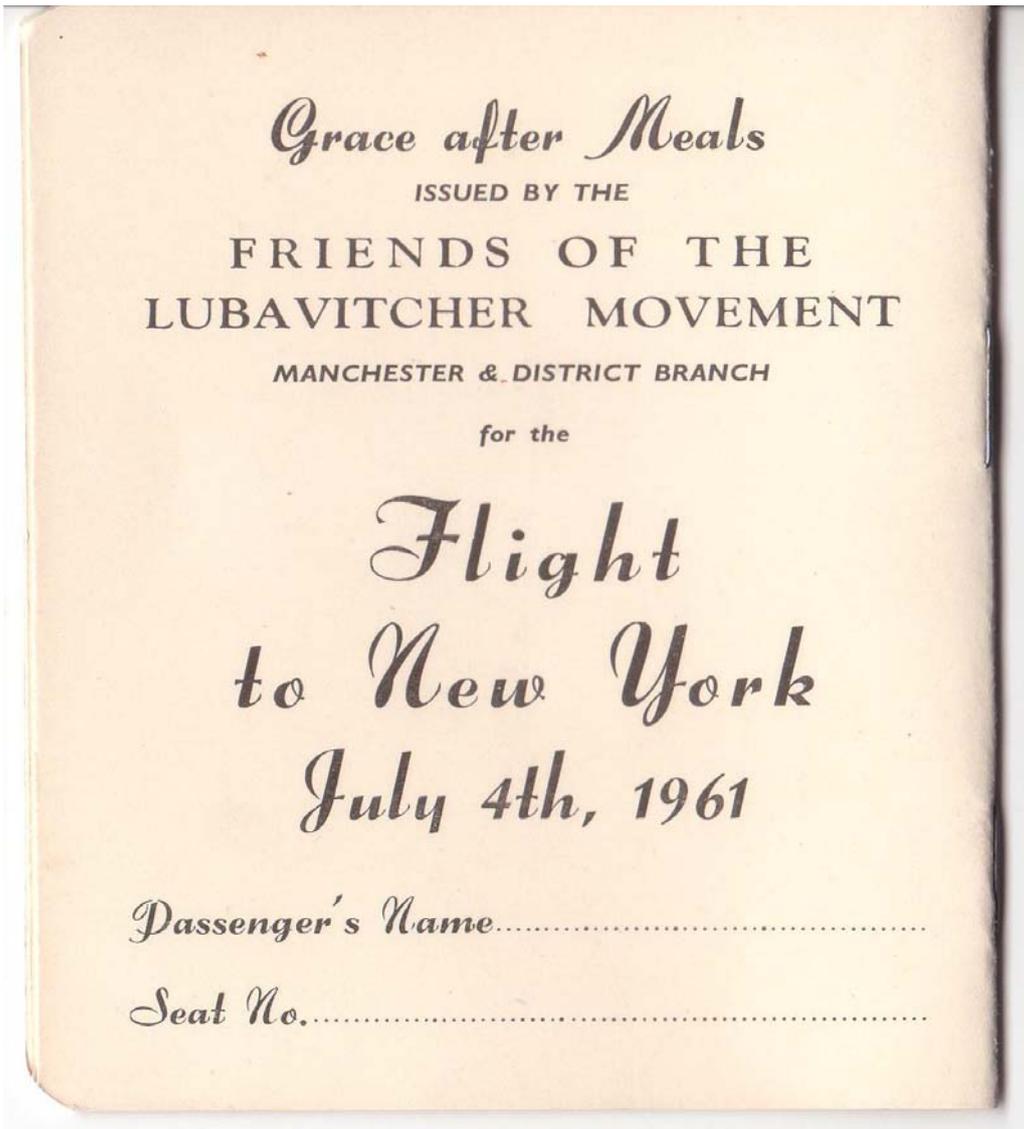
I awoke very early on Tuesday morning after a restless night. No news – well, no news is good news. We had a quick breakfast when – suddenly – SHOCK – a cable from New York - “TO JAFFE. CHEETHAM HILL 3110 – FLIGHT IS CANCELLED WILL BE IN LONDON.” My mind was in a whirl. In my imagination I was already shepherding the 118 tearful and weeping passengers back from the Airport, the \$4,500 paid to the airlines was already lost and I was being sued by everyone for

false pretences and for the return of their money – when – I realised that the sender of the cable was a Rabbi Halpern who was expected from New York with a greeting and good wishes from the Rebbe.

By the time I had revived it was nearly 9.00am the time arranged for bus no. 1 to call at our home for our family and friends of Cavendish Road who had congregated outside, when shock number two – the bus ordered from the Premier Cabs NOT ONLY arrived but came dead on time.

“Up with the luggage and call for Rabbi and Mrs. Unsdorfer on our way to Parksway.” We hustled them in and were a quarter of a mile away when we had to return. In the excitement, the Unsdorfers had left their front door of their unoccupied house – wide open!!

From then onwards things went almost according to plan. The three buses picked up the passengers, after the usual delays and waiting for latecomers, the Birchas Hamazon – the Benchers, were distributed to the passengers, to be used as tickets.



At the airport all was chaos and excitement. Crowds came to see us off – perhaps they could not believe we were actually on our way. I introduced myself to the representatives of the Flying Tiger and the BEA and with their help and co-operation, it did not take too long to weigh the baggage and check in the travellers. By 11.45am it was confirmed that everyone had gone through and we congratulated each other on a job well and quickly done.

By the way, says he – just as a matter of routine, I better see your passport, just routine, you know. He looks at my passport and then at me – and says, I'm sorry Mr. Jaffe, YOU cannot be allowed to go!! Of course, I realise he must be joking. Ha, ha, I the group leader cannot go, ha, ha! Must be a joke! It's got to be a joke. Good gracious, the fellow is serious!! He says my passport is two weeks out of date, and this invalidates my American Visa. If they do take me and I am considered to have entered the States illegally, they must bring me straight back. As they are a charter company and have no scheduled flights, they cannot do this and would be liable to a fine of \$5,000 for every day I remain in America. So – it's been very nice meeting me, but there is nothing he can do about it. It is now nearly 12 and the plane must be off. I appeal to the emigration officers – they are not helpful – as far as they are concerned, I can go even on my out of date passport. I have an idea – I will phone the American Consul – Hello, hello, hello.... It's the 4th of July and Independence Day, so there is no reply. The BEA fellow is helpful, very helpful indeed - he has found that I can get to Liverpool, extend my passport and get the 10.00pm BOAC jet that evening which would arrive only five hours after the group and for £85 it was a bargain. My mind was in a daze by then but I must explain everything to Roselyn.

“OK Ros, everything is in order, you and Hilary carry on and I will be along later. ALL RIGHT, don't get excited. Now relax and keep calm. KEEP CALM for goodness sake.” It's time to leave – everyone's gone mad, everyone is shouting, everyone – except Rabbi Shem Tov, who remarks quietly, “Don't worry, everything will be alright!!” I feel he must be going crackers too! Moishe Pfeffer tugs my arm and says “come with me Zalmon, I had this experience before and I think I know the way out.” (I thought yes – that's the way I am going.) He took me back to the emigration officers and got permission to speak to the Chief of the Passport Office at Liverpool. He in turn gave permission and instructions to the officers to extend my passport for 3 months. So, at last, everything in order, we eventually left Manchester at 12.30 – half an hour late on our four-engine propeller plane.

After all the trials and tribulations we were actually airborne. Everyone is seated in their allotted place. There is plenty of room and leg space all seem pleased with their neighbours. The first impressive moment was when Rabbi Unsdorfer read out the Tefillas Haderech in Hebrew, and then the English translation. Many of the lady passengers in particular, felt greatly reassured and all settled down for a pleasant flight to New York.

At 2.00pm after travelling for an hour and a half, we landed at Shannon Airport, Ireland in order to refuel for our long haul to Gander, Newfoundland, eight hours flying time away. Everyone dashed for the customs-free shops to buy cigarettes, liqueurs and perfume. The plane was announced to leave at 4.00pm which gave us two hours in Shannon.

I wondered why we remained in Shannon for two hours – we had left Manchester only one and a half hours before. I discovered that whilst in Ringway, a forklift truck which was loading our baggage had crashed into the plane and made a small hole in the fuselage. They were now trying to patch this up.

Meanwhile, all the men davened Mincha in the lounge. We left on time but it was 4.15pm before we could unfasten our seat belts and relax. It was over eight hours since most of us had eaten and we were famished, and I could see that it would take the stewardesses over an hour to serve the 118 passengers. I conscripted Hilary, David Kessler, Harold Glickman, Martin Weinberg, David Epstein, Irvin Landau and Mr. Kravitz to assist in 'operation hunger relief' and in ten minutes all had received their Halberstadt's delicious and luscious food parcels.

Rabbi Unsdorfer made the official Hamotzie and everyone praised the sumptuous and plentiful food. Fortunately I had warned the stewardesses to serve black coffee only and it was peculiar to receive a complaint from Rebbetzen Sudak that she was refused milk for her 11 month old baby who made up the 119th passenger.

After lunch we had communal benching, everyone with their benchers and singing with gusto and Kavono. I then announced that Dayan Golditch would give a Shiur on Tanya in English. Here the stewardesses interrupted and asked the members to please fasten their seat belts. A storm was expected – it saw a planeload of Lubavitcher Chassidim and ran away. We were then treated to a talk on the sedra by Rabbi Spector followed by Chumash and Rashi by Rabbi Unsdorfer, Tehillim,

Nigunim and songs followed. It was remarkable that with such a diversity of characters – twelve Rabbonim, men and women, boys and girls, orthodox and not so orthodox, they should all unite and combine together to form one happy family and group of people, all interested in each other and forming and cementing friendships. Only one person complained – he said it was worse than Yom Kippur – then at least one could open the door and leave the Shul! The crew and stewardesses were wonderful. They said they had never had such a happy group of people and it was a lovely experience for them. They were not allowed to accept gratuities, but if we insisted on giving them money, they would be honoured if we would accept it back for our Church. We stopped at Gander – to daven Maariv – that wasn't the real reason and we settled down for the last five hours journey to Idlewild, New York.

The small hole made by the forklift truck in Manchester had affected the air conditioning. It was now becoming uncommonly hot. At this stage of our journey we had 'drunk the plane dry. Not even a drop of water was to be had.

I walked to the front and looking along the length of the plane, all I could discern was a sea of red, flushed and perspiring faces – some gasping for air.

The coolest place was in the rear. Crowds had congregated at that spot and were chatting and gossiping. The Captain kept sending urgent messages – "there are too many people in the rear, the plane is dragging come forward at once, otherwise it will become dangerous.

My watch showed 6.30am but it was actually only 1.30am New York time when we arrived there – 18 and a half hours journey and 21 and a half hours since we had left our homes in Manchester.

The plane door was opened and we all filed out – to be greeted by a heavenly choir singing Uforatzto and other Nigunim. The parapet on the roof of the terminal building was lined with over 100 men and boys chanting a welcome.

The stewardess was so moved by this reception that she burst into tears.

We literally danced our way through Immigration and Customs and everyone crowded into the buses, which were lined up outside the airport.

"THE REBBE'S BRIGHT AND EARLY WELCOME"

It was nearly 3.00am New York time when we finally arrived at 770 Eastern Parkway, the headquarters of the Lubavitcher Movement. Lemonade, cakes and drink had been thoughtfully provided and whilst friends and relatives were being re-united, the rest of the 400 people present sang Nigunim, all waiting for the highlight of the visit – our first meeting with our beloved and revered Lubavitcher Rebbe Shlita. What a thrill and reward for me to see sisters and brothers, parents and children who had not seen each other for 30 years or more, weeping and crying for joy and blessing those who had made this £35 flight possible.

Since our last visit a new Shul had been opened at '770.' It was below street level and there was standing room for 1,500 people. (It was about a third of the present 1978 area - ZJ.)

It was now possible to hold all Lubavitch Farbrengen at '770.' There was no need to book an outside hall as hitherto.

All our passengers and friends had congregated in this shall. I should imagine that this was the first – and the last time that men and women were on the same level. However, the women had to take a 'back seat.'

At 3.30am on the dot – there was a sudden and expectant HUSH – an almost unnatural silence – and a passageway was miraculously cleared in the midst of the tightly packed crowd of men and boys who lined the side of the hall, what a thrilling moment as – with head erect, with light but resolute steps, the Lubavitcher Rebbe Shlita strode to the dais and seated himself in solitary state at the table surrounded by a semi-circle of about 50 Rabbonim. He gave me a wonderful smile of welcome. Everyone drank to his health and said L'chaim and he replied to each one with L'chaim Velivrocho.

That the Rebbe Shlita should welcome us personally at 3.30am was a remarkable and unprecedented honour and a stimulating experience. We were all very conscious of this extraordinary gesture.

We had come a long way to see this saintly and brilliant person and we were not disappointed. Wearing a black, soft felt hat with the brim turned down at the front, a neat black beard tinged with grey and an occasional humourous twinkle showing in his eyes, he had a vivid personality and looked younger than his 59 years.

He greeted us with “Sholom Aleichem.” when we replied with “Aleichem Sholom,” he explained that in those two phrases were contained all blessings, including that of “bruchim haboim” (blessed are the newcomers) for it says in the Mishna that peace is the ‘vessel’ that contains G-d’s blessings. Unity and peace are the channels through which the Jew draws upon himself G-d’s blessings in the fullest measure – the kind of blessings which only G-d can bestow, and which therefore satisfy all our needs both materially and spiritually.

This is so, even when one single Jew meets and greets another single Jew. When TG so many Jews are greeting each other tonight and hearing a discourse on Torah, then the blessings showered upon us are increased immeasurably.

It was, he continued, now during the three weeks, and our Rabbis tell us that the Temple was destroyed because of ‘Sinos Chinom’ (hating without cause.) How often do we hear the expression – “Oh, I can’t bear the sight of that fellow, “even though we hardly know and maybe have never spoken to “that fellow.” There is good in every Jew but they must be shown the right way. Many Jews practice Ahavas Hashem (love of G-d) and many practice Ahavas Yisroel (love of Israel – that is loving Jews) but they must be practiced together, one is no good without the other. The Jew who goes to Shul three times a day and dislikes his fellow man is no better than the Jew who lives his fellow being but keeps no other mitzvahs at all. A truly genuine, honest, and religious Jew, who loves his Maker, will most certainly love his fellow Jew, because G-d says “Ve’chavto le’reacho Komoicho” you must love your fellow Jew like yourself, and that is why we have to change Sinos Chinom (causeless hatred) to Ahavas Chinom (loving without cause) only because he is a Jew – and therefore has the possibilities of keeping the mitzvahs, especially the mitzvahs of Shabbos, Teffillin and above all – of giving Tzedoka. (This last, by the way, is of the highest importance and must be given daily. No one can measure the rewards of giving Tzedoka, and at least 1p per day must be donated to charity.)

“When that time comes,” the Rebbe Shlita concluded, “when we will love our fellow Jews – for no particular reason, not out of gratitude for kindness received, not in expectation of a favour in return, but for no reason at all, then we can expect the rebuilding of the Temple and the coming of the Messiah, very soon and in our time, Amen.”

That is the basis of the Lubavitcher doctrine. Every Jew is important – whether religious or not, whether male or female, or whether he lives in a city or at the outposts of civilisation, he can always become more orthodox.

In the past 10 years, Lubavitch Yeshivos, Talmudei Torah and schools have been founded, have flourished and are being increased rapidly in every country in Europe – in North Africa, Canada, Australia and in the South American states. In Israel another village in addition to Kfar Chabad is being established and numerous schools and Yeshivos are making splendid progress in every part of that country.

In the United States alone, there are 15 Academies that attend to the education of 16,000 youngsters. On the 28th June 1961, the New York Herald Tribune stated “the Lubavitcher Educational movement is recognised as the largest International Jewish educational institution of its type in the world, reaching 30,000 youngsters.”

Lubavitch has its own printing and publishing business, which is really colossal. Millions of books on every aspect of religion are sent all over the world.

Lubavitch has its own Free Loan Society and summer holiday camps for boys and girls, and also vocational schools where the boys learn and study half the day and are taught a trade the rest of the time.

The complicated business of running this huge organisation is carried out by the Rebbe Shlita in person. He has two private secretaries – Rabbi Chodakov, who is also the Rebbe’s Gabbai – or shadow. He has his own office, keeps long hours and works tremendously hard. He is a brilliant speaker and statesman, and is about 55 years of age. Dr. Nissen Mindel is the other private secretary, but only attends to the English correspondence. He is about 45 years of age and edits the famous Lubavitcher “Talks and Tales.”

There are also six general secretaries, all Rabbonim, in the main office and the four telephones are ringing continuously day and night.

Besides all this the Rebbe Shlita receives a fantastic amount of private mail from individuals all over the globe asking for advice and help, guidance and Brochas for some member of their family.

All this personal mail is handled by the Rebbe Shlita himself and one is amazed and astounded to see the huge bundles of unopened letters mostly in airmail envelopes which are taken into the Rebbe’s office for attention every day. Yes – even after Shabbos ends, the Rebbe Shlita starts on the bundles otherwise he would soon get far behind. When someone in a distant country is anxiously awaiting the Rebbe’s letter, this would never do.

Three times a week the Rebbe Shlita has private appointments, or Yechidus, as we call them. They start at 8.00pm and carry on without a pause until sometimes 8.00am the next day.

Not a drop of water, nor a particle of food passes the Rebbe’s lips during this period – in any case, as soon as one person comes out the next one goes in. At 8.00am the Rebbe Shlita is as fit and as fresh as at 8.00pm the previous evening. He arrives at his office, as usual, at 9.00am and he carries on his daily routine.

Quite a lot has been said and written about the wonderful achievements of the Rebbe Shlita and the remarkable insight he has. This holy person has such a tremendous gift of being able to discern the correct way to solve a problem, to give just the right Brocha or the correct advice when it is needed, that it has been attributed to him that he can perform miracles. I consider myself a common-sense sort of a fellow, who only believes what he can see and these stories of the supernatural should leave me cold. But – I can talk to you for hours of the wonderful Brochas that have come true. At the beginning it was always a coincidence. But it happens too often, and amongst my own friends and acquaintances. Practically every week one or two people come into my office asking me to write to the Rebbe Shlita for them – for his help, guidance and Brochas.

The Rebbe Shlita does not encourage talk about miracles.

I will now continue my story!! The Rebbe Shlita gave another talk, there was some further singing led by Rabbi Dubov, and at 4.30am, to the tune of “Kee Besimcha Tay’tzaiyu” the Rebbe Shlita stood up and left the hall and the Kabolos Ponin was over.

Now the mad rush started for home. Taxis were at a premium and independent, but at 5.30am I saw the last passenger on his way. The only casualty was Martin Weinberg – Mrs. Simon had gone off with his suitcase and left hers instead. This was not much use to him as it contained only ladies underwear and chocolates. He went off with his briefcase which contained only his Tallis and Teffillin, documents and money. I suppose it could have been worse and Mrs. Simon could have gone off with the briefcase too. She had his trousers, but to take his Tallis and Teffillin – well that would have been too much!!

WE didn’t have very far to go – our friends had gone on vacation and we had taken over their apartment.

It was now nearly 6.00am so we davened Shacharis and went to bed.

“EVENTS AND DAILY ROUTINE”

At 10.00am the phone started ringing – and never seemed to stop until we left for home two weeks later. The BBC wanted to interview us, but would like to see us singing and dancing – I just felt in that mood! Reuters wanted to see me – Martin Weinberg wanted his suitcase, and where was Mrs. Simon? By Thursday I had got into a routine, Shacharis at ‘770’ was at 9.30. The boys were usually up at 7.30 and they learned first and had a cup of tea and cake. Mondays and Thursdays the Rebbe Shlita came in to hear Keriyas Hatorah and get an Aliya.

There was always so much activity at ‘770.’ And I don’t mean all the different Minyonim that started after the official 9.30 one. (There was always an unofficial one at 7.30am.) At whatever time you arrived until twelve noon you could get a Minyan, or a Borrchu or Kedusha.

I generally got back home at twelve noon just in time for brunch. Too late for breakfast and too early for lunch. Martin Weinberg was still searching for Mrs. Simon. Yes, and he seemed to blame me too.

At 3.15pm every day, the Rebbe Shlita davened Mincha and at 9.33pm, Maariv. Yes, 9.33 on the dot. The Rebbe Shlita was a terrific timekeeper. He had to be – and – to have a Seder or routine, otherwise he would not get his work done. He says that a good Seder halves his work, and as it sometimes still takes him 23 hours on occasional days, you can imagine it, if he had no Seder. For this very reason, probably, the Rebbe never keeps the Minyan waiting at Keriyas Shema and is always one of the first to finish the Amidah.

Thursday night was Yechidus night. His first appointment was at 8.00pm and he had many Manchester people waiting to see him. I had arranged interviews for nearly 40 of our group, commencing on that night and throughout the following week. These had to be fitted in with his other appointments. Dayan Golditch went in at 2.45am and did not leave until two and a half hours later – at 5.15am. The Unsdorfers followed and they left at 6.30am. The Rebbe speaks fluently in many languages.

Friday night, Shabbos, we had invited 14 guests for dinner, with us that made 18. The cooking arrangements were simple – we just ordered the complete dinner, whatever we wanted – gefilte fish, chopped liver, chicken, pickled beef, potato pudding – so on and so forth. It was all delivered to us at 5.00pm. We had a lovely Shabbos meal and everybody was so very happy. At 12.30am I had to wake everybody up and send them home.

Shabbos service normally starts at 10.00am but on Shabbos Mevorchim – when we bench Rosh Chodesh, the whole book of Tehillim is said from 8.00am until 10.00am. Shul finishes at 12.15pm and on those Shabbosim, and generally only on Shabbos Mevorchim, the Rebbe has a Farbrengen at 1.30pm. We dashed off to have lunch and it was eat when and what we could - we didn’t do too badly mind you. (In fact, I said about our stay in Brooklyn that we had to eat and sleep whenever we could.) I returned to the hall just in time before the Rebbe came in at 1.30pm. He made Kiddush quietly, and the procedure was very much like our first meeting but of course on a larger scale. This day, with most people on vacation, there were probably 500 present. On special occasions such as the 12th day of Tammuz, there would be as many as 2,000 people. This is the anniversary of the previous Rebbe’s release from a Soviet jail, in 1927, where he was under sentence of death for deliberately and continually ignoring the Communist laws prohibiting religious instruction to children and teenagers.

The Rebbe Shlita is in complete control. There are no other speakers and no chairman of course. Obviously we only want to hear the Rebbe when he is there.

The Farbreng lasted until about 5.00pm and the Rebbe Shlita gave six Sichas, that is talks on the Sedra of about 20 minutes duration each and a Maamer, a very deep and penetrating talk on the mysteries and mysticism of Chassidism. I confess that I found some of the Sichas very tough. The Maamer I could only understand about 10% of and yet to see the Rebbe Shlita giving his Maamer, with his eyes closed, and in his special Maamer tune, and all the people standing perfectly still for the whole 40 minutes is a most impressive sight, and is an inspiration to everyone present.

On Saturday night, after Shabbos ended, there was a Melave Malka in our honour. This was combined with a farewell party for 70 boys who were going on the Rebbe’s Shelichos. They were going in pairs and travelling to Central America, Mexico and all over the United States. Avrohom should have gone

to Texas but decided to stay with us until we left for home. He subsequently went to Alabama, Indianapolis and Chicago. He sold Seforim, spoke in Shuls and halls and even persuaded one boy to join the Yeshiva in Boston. At this Melave Malka there were about 250 present and the press was well represented. The Rebbe does not attend these functions. It was really exciting to hear people giving reports from all over the world, from Paris, Milan, Manchester and London. From Sidney and Melbourne, Rio-de-Janeiro and Jerusalem.

Finally a gentleman with a big bushy beard spoke about the progress being made in Toronto. The speaker was a Professor of Philosophy at the University and was a recent convert to Lubavitch, or Chabad Chassidim. Chabad stands for Chochma - wisdom, Bina - understanding, and Daas - knowledge in other words one must completely understand one's religion and from every aspect. Hence the importance of teaching the young and the old, boys and girls.

Every American newspaper carried full reports about our activities and meetings. The New York World Telegraph said that Mr. Jaffe spoke in clipped English, whilst the Yiddishe Morning Journal said I spoke in "Oxford English!!" No comment.

We had a significant experience on the following day, Sunday. Rabbi and Mrs Halpern, a young couple, were being sent by the Rebbe to Brazil. The young Rabbi was taking over the Directorship of the Rio-de-Janeiro Talmud Torah, where over 300 children were studying.

Avrohom suggested that we go to '770' and see them off, because the Rebbe was sure to say "farewell" to them. We waited from 2.15 till 3 o'clock and although the Rebbe was in his office, he never came out, not even showed himself at the window, which faces Eastern Parkway. The poor couple had to leave without the Rebbe's Brocha. I admitted to Roselyn that I was a little disappointed. After all, the couple were leaving their hometown, for a strange land, and going maybe for good. Still, I suppose the Rebbe knew his business. At 8 p.m. ten we returned to '770,' the first people we bumped into were Rabbi and Mrs. Halpern. We were dumbfounded. They explained to us that they were already on the plane, and the plane had actually started on the runway, when they found a technical fault, and they had to disembark. The flight was now delayed for 48 hours. Needless to say, when they did leave 48 hours later, the Rebbe Shlita did say "farewell" to them.

On the following Shabbos, the 2nd of Menachem Av, I had Yartzeit for my Mother (ALHS). I had mentioned this to the Rebbe at the previous Yechidus and the Rebbe had pointed out "Oh, so now we have a Chazan for Shabbos."

I accepted this invitation and officiated at all the services.

Immediately after the davening on Shabbos it was unexpectedly announced that there was to be a Farbreng. We were delighted, of course, and the usual procedure was carried out. The Rebbe Shlita was T.G. very happy that day, full of enthusiasm and fire. At about 3.30 he announced that the Din stated that nothing must be prepared on Shabbos for after Shabbos. Therefore, all the drink must be immediately consumed and nothing left. We must hurry, too. I had just presented three extra bottles of vodka on the occasion of my Mother's Yartzeit, besides which, there was still gallons of wine and Benedictine lying untouched. Nu as the Rebbe Haist! ... Rabbi Shem Tov, who normally never drinks very much at all immediately drank a tumbler of wine, a tumbler of vodka and a tumbler of wine again in that order.

In all the years that I have been visiting '770,' this was the most exciting and lively Farbrengen I have ever attended. This WAS in spite of there being only 350 people present. Almost everyone was away on holiday and in camps. After Shabbos the leaders were told about it on the phone. There was much gnashing of teeth and self-denunciation for having missed a Farbrengen, so unexpected, yet so very thrilling and joyful.

The Rebbe was standing up - his hands - and arms moving like pistons faster and faster. At one point every single person was standing on the benches, jumping up and down and swaying to the Rebbe's conducting and singing (and screaming) in tune.

Half an hour later, we lifted Rabbi Shem Tov onto a bench and he slept on happily for hours and hours. He came into our flat next morning and wanted to make Havdola. Meanwhile at the Farbreng,

there was great excitement. The Rebbe Shlita had made Kiddush but never touched another drop yet seemed to be gloriously inspired. The climax came with the Rebbe standing up with his arms working like pistons, and singing Uforatzto in an extremely quick tempo. I felt myself yanked onto the bench and looking around, I saw that practically every person was standing on the benches, dancing, jumping up and down and singing together with the Rebbe Shlita. No words can do justice or describe that scene. It was terrific and went on for about 15 minutes. The Rebbe then seated himself, and breathing heavily after his exertions, closed his eyes tightly and gave us all very wonderful Brochas in subdued tones. In the uncanny silences it was vividly impressive and memorable.

The two weeks passed very quickly. A busload of us visited 250 boys in the Lubavitch Camp in the Catskills. There Dayan Golditch and Rabbi Shem Tov had a long session on the see saw. Their intention was to prove the old Chassidic theory that if a person wished to elevate another he must be prepared to lower himself. We then visited 100 girls in a Lubavitch camp nearby. We were treated like royalty wherever we went.

Hilary was having a terrific time - SO I was told. I saw her twice. Once - when I met her on the stairs, and the second time she wanted \$10.

Martin Weinberg had traced Mrs. Simons to Chicago and with his case. She promised to send it to him but he never got it.

We had official receptions everywhere. Even the N'shei Chabad, the women, made a special women's only party.

The day of our departure arrived. A message came through that the Rebbe was prepared to see privately any individual who wished to say farewell to him. He allowed us 30 minutes from 4,15pm to 4.45pm. We had arranged for the buses to leave '770' at 5.00pm for the airport, so it was just right.

At 3.30 the group was congregated in the hall at '770' and then I received the biggest surprise of my life – all the passengers were so delighted with the arrangement that they felt they must repay me in some small measure for the work I had done – and so on their behalf – Rabbi Unsdorfer made a nice complimentary speech about me, and presented me with a beautifully bound Shass, printed in 20 volumes with nearly every commentary. EVERY person had signed it and the Rebbe signed it too. This is something I shall always treasure. The Rebbe had at first hesitated, as he was not a passenger on the 'plane'. I explained that wherever we of Lubavitch traveled then the Rebbe was always with us. An odd fact regarding the signatures on this Gemorrah was that all the men had signed on the right hand side of the page, and the women on the left – and no Mechitzah – peculiar!!

It was now 4.15pm and one at a time the members went into the Rebbe's room. As you can imagine, it took much longer than anticipated.

Instead of 5.00pm we at last got away at a quarter to seven. The Rebbe stood outside whilst we left and bade us all, collectively, Tsaischem Lesholom and he did not move until the buses were out of sight.

All the luggage was loaded onto a special bus, and the driver would not let us take out one suitcase until we handed him \$10 (£3.55) as a tip, and we had already paid for the buses beforehand.

We eventually left Newark Airport, New Jersey at 9.30pm after further speeches, additional press interviews and more presentations of flowers to Mrs. Jaffe. The homeward journey took far less time than the outward flight and we did not stop at Gander. We had appetizing and delicious hot meals – dinner and breakfast, and all sang the benching together. Sermons were given and Tehillim were said. Dayan Golditch gave a Gemorrah Shiur, Rabbi Unsdorfer read out the Rebbe's Sichah which had been translated into English and printed in booklet form. I presented every passenger with this booklet and a Lubavitcher Yarmulke on behalf of the movement. The time soon passed. We lost 5 hours straight away by putting our watches forward to English time. It was soon daylight and every man and boy put on Tefillin and davened. It was a wonderful sight. The aisle full of men with Tefillin and davening. The Stewardesses said – "it's very interesting, but what about the women – don't THEY do ANYTHING?"

We landed at Shannon to buy duty free cigarettes and liqueurs again and at 4.00pm we duly arrived back in Manchester.

About 200 people came to meet us. First out of Customs was Martin Weinberg with only his brief case. One bystander expressed surprise that a man should travel all the way to America, for two and a half weeks and take only a briefcase!

It was the end of a most perfect holiday, but certainly not a restful vacation. All the members were so pleased that they wanted to book straight away, on bloc, for the next trip.

To me, the most rewarding feature was to hear people, who had been away for over two weeks, holidaymaking, visiting relatives and friends, seeing many interesting places and wonderful sights exclaim in no uncertain terms - that the one thing they would always remember, the most stimulating, inspiring and lasting impression was the few minutes they had spent with the Rebbe Shlita.

One and all *were* unanimous on this point and many informed me of their decision to keep more Mitzvahs in the future.

CHAPTER 7

OUR SECOND CHARTER FLIGHT TO NEW YORK 1962

“THE FLIGHT”

Our first charter flight had been a tremendous success. Many people had been given the opportunity of seeing the Rebbe as well as meeting, their relatives and friends - some of them for the first time. It had also presented Lubavitch with excellent publicity.

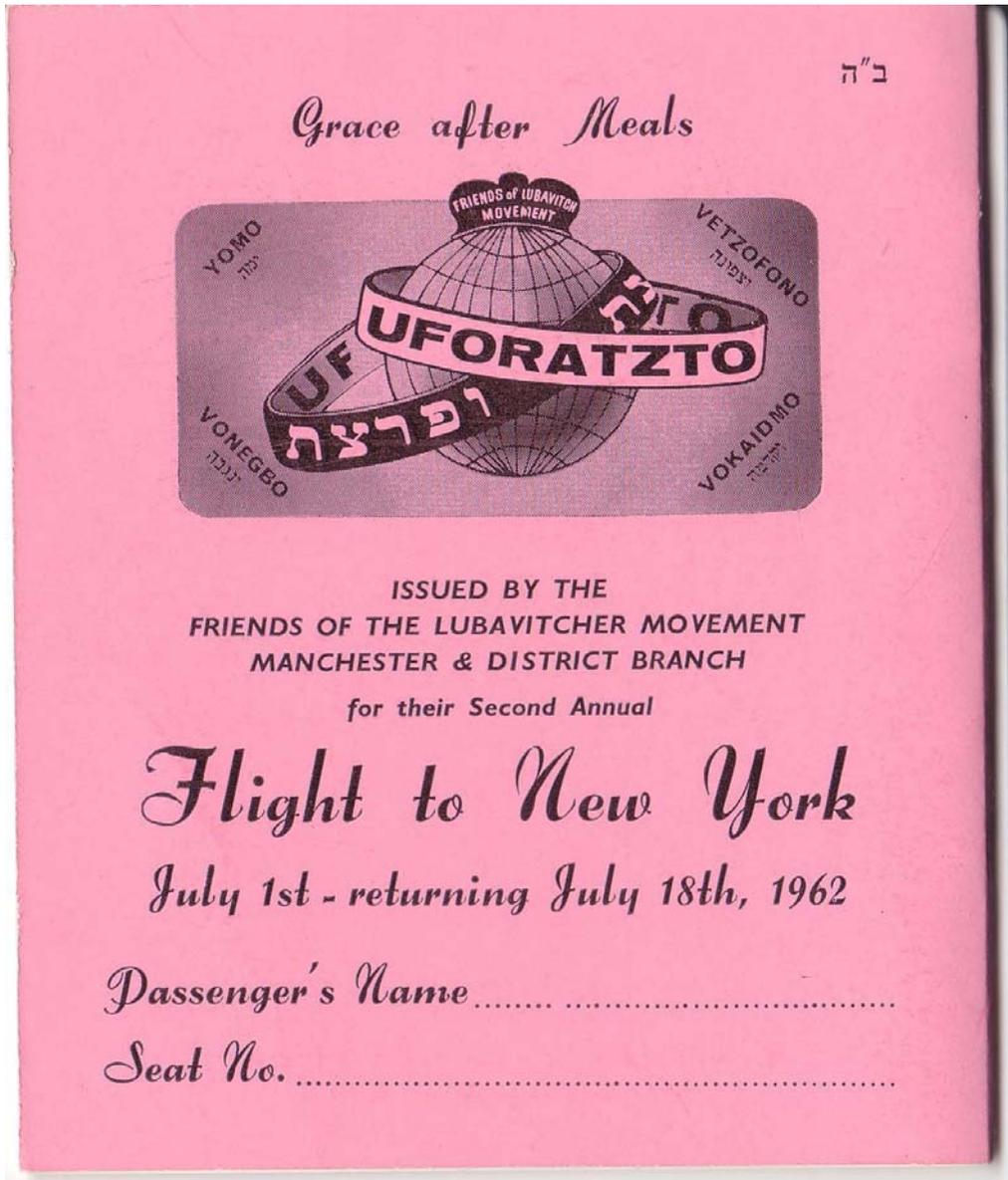
We were receiving continuous enquiries about our next flight. We decided, therefore, to charter another plane from the Flying Tiger Airline.

Once again, we had to accept the one and only date which was available. The return flight would leave New York on the evening of the 16th of Tammuz, so we would be flying home on a fast day - the 17th of Tammuz.

Fortunately we would have six hours less to fast, as we would be travelling from West to East.

Well for £35 return - we were glad to accept. We arrived at Ringway airport, Manchester at

10.00am on Sunday morning to commence our journey to New York. We discovered that although our ‘plane was on the tarmac, it was not quite ready to accept our passengers. It had brought over a group of one hundred USA Servicemen from Now York to Spain, from whence it had come direct to Manchester. On arrival it was found that this plane was fitted with only one hundred seats, whereas we had contracted for, and needed 118. It seemed that American troops required more comfort than the Rebbe’s soldiers. But - we were assured there was no cause for alarm - another plane was on its way from Barcelona with the extra 18 seats. There would be a short delay of about..... one hour!!



At 12 noon we were informed that there would be a further delay, and that we could not expect to leave before three o'clock. We were confronted with the problem of providing a hot meal for our passengers. There was definitely no kosher food at Manchester Airport. In fact there was no place at all in Manchester which could supply kosher food for 118 people at a moments notice - except - maybe one - the 'Holmes Caterers.' I phoned the owner, Mrs Fruhman. She could provide only tea, cake and biscuits. That was the best she could do. Her problem was that she simply had no bread with which she could make sandwiches. As our passengers were becoming 'peckish' we were glad to accept anything, because even a cup of tea at the airport was not kosher.

The Flying Tiger Airline was responsible for looking after all our needs - because we had already checked in therefore their representative obtained a fleet of buses to take us back to Manchester and promised to pay for our meals - even if it happened to consist only of tea and cake.

When we arrived at the 'Holmes' we were confronted with mountains of vorst and meat sandwiches - together with pots and pots of tea. Mrs. Fruhman had waylaid the baker's delivery van and commandeered the whole load of bread. So many sandwiches had been made that every passenger was given a large bag full of food to take with in case of emergency.

We returned to the airport at 3.00pm and learned that the extra 18 seats had been delivered. I accompanied the representative of the Flying Tiger to the plane to ascertain the length of time still required to complete the job.

I entered the 'plane and my heart sank. The whole cabin was in a completely chaotic state. Seats were strewn all over the place - not one chair was in an upright position. All lay on their backs on the floor.

However, by some miracle or other, we did leave at 6.30pm - 8 hours late and arrived at '770' at 8.30am New York time. The place was almost deserted. The Rebbe had waited for us until very late - but 8.30 in the morning was a rather inconvenient time.

A few hardy and close relatives and friends were awaiting our group. They whisked away our weary travelers to more comfortable and luxurious quarters.

What a difference this was to the welcome which we received the year before! But - then nothing will ever compare to our first charter or recapture the excitement and thrills of that first unforgettable flight.

However, a very memorable event did take place during that visit. I shall refer to it as

"A SHORT TIME FOR ROMANCE"

Hilary, as usual, accompanied us to Brooklyn. Avrohom met us at the airport and imparted to us all the latest flows and events about '770.' He kept interspersing his remarks with the name of one special friend. Shmuel Lew who seemed to be the paragon of all virtues, a Talmid Chochom of the highest degree, athletic and very good looking. He reminded us that we had met him at last years Lubavitch camp in the Catskills. I did not recall any such distinguished and outstanding young man.

They all looked very much the same - medium to tall in height, wispy beard, and soiled white shirt with short sleeves. "Anyway," I interrupted, "What about it?" Well Avrohom wanted to arrange a meeting between this Shmuel and Hilary. Roselyn said that on no account and under no circumstances would she consent to or allow this meeting. "She is only eighteen years of age and there is plenty of time for a Shidduch."

During the whole of the three weeks that we were in Brooklyn, Roselyn was subjected to the most extreme pressure, by Shemmy and Avrohom, that she should allow this meeting to take place. "What harm would it do?" "They might not even like each other," and so on. Roselyn became a little worried and decided to remove the risk of even a chance meeting. She had a brilliant idea - an inspiration (at least Roselyn imagined that it was her idea). We dispatched Hilary to Detroit, thousands of miles away from this Shmuel Lew - where the Lubavitch Girls' Camp was being held.

There she spent six days, always in the company of one Mindy Feller, who constantly and consistently took every opportunity to tell Hilary about the wonderful and attractive brother she possessed - and "what a Talmid Chochom!"

We learnt, afterwards, that Mindy was Shmuel Lew's married sister!

Almost at the end of our stay in New York - we were due to leave for home on the following Wednesday - Roselyn was at long last prevailed upon to invite Shmuel for Friday night's Shabbos dinner but - at the last moment she cancelled the invitation.

Meanwhile, there was an undercurrent of great activity going on with Rabbi Shem Tov and Avrohom, whispering and plotting in corners. I heard later that they also involved the Rebbe. Shmuel was a counselor at the Lubavitch camp in the Catskills. The Rebbe had advised him to leave the camp and to spend Shabbos at Crown Heights in order to meet Hilary. (We did not know about this.)

At that Friday night's dinner, Shemmy, who had made Kiddush and followed this with a few Schnapps, 'took the chair.' The lights had fused and we were sat around the candle-lit table. It put Shemmy in a very emotional mood and he was reminiscing about his early days in Soviet Russia.

In his opening speech he flayed Roselyn for her obstinacy and obduracy. He condemned her unreasonable attitude which prevented two young people who, in Shemmy's estimation, were an ideally suited couple - from even being allowed to meet each other. Avrohom was the second speaker - his theme was very similar to that of the 'Chairman'.

Under this concentrated attack, Roselyn relented. She consented to Hilary seeing Shmuel on Saturday night. Roselyn thought to herself "we are leaving on Wednesday, in three or four days' time, so it seems fairly safe now to let them meet each other."

Shmuel took Hilary on the Staten Island Ferry, which had become notorious and renowned as the 'Lubavitcher Shadchonus Express.' (Or- express Shadchonus!!)

On the following evening, Sunday, there was a Farbrengen at '770,' during the course of which the Rebbe called me up to the top table. He handed me some Lekach (cake) and indicated that I should give this to my daughter. I was told by Rabbi Dvorkin that this signified a blessing for a Shidduch.

This pleased me very much, but I obviously did not expect the Rebbe's Brocha to be fulfilled with so much haste and speed.

Next day, Monday, Hilary and Shmuel met again for the second time.

That night, I received a message that the Rebbe desired to see Roselyn and me straight away. Roselyn refused. She had a bad headache, was already prepared for bed and was generally upset with this 'Shmuel' business. She did not wish any further involvement - so I went alone.

I admit I do not remember much about this Yechidus. Events were moving too fast for me. I was being carried along by the current of circumstances over which I had no control. The Rebbe suggested that it should take place in the month of Tishrei or in Tammuz. I surmised that the Rebbe was discussing the Tenoyim (engagement) but the Rebbe was talking about the WEDDING - and neither Roselyn nor I had yet made Shmuel's acquaintance.

It was time that we rectified this omission. It was arranged that I should pick up Shmuel at '770,' on the next day - Tuesday and take him to our apartment to meet Roselyn.

As we walked down Kingston Avenue together, he turned to me and said, "I want to congratulate you, Mr. Jaffe on the wonderful way you have brought up your daughter - real Chassidish." Although I was obviously very pleased with this remark, I was a little taken aback.

His next statement completely took the wind out of my sails. He said, "You may think that this is very sudden, but you must remember that what it takes, Lehavdil 'other people' a year or two to discover - namely, their backgrounds, family history and so forth - we already know. What we do have to find out is our compatibility and whether we are attracted to each other." He then quoted (from Genesis, Chapter 24, verse 67) that "Isaac met Rebecca, she became his wife, and he loved her." That is the Jewish way - leading up to a lasting and permanent love.

I was non-plussed. He had only spoken to Hilary on two occasions and he was already talking about compatibility and –marriage!

I was flabbergasted, stunned and I could not think of anything to say and so I rushed him to the apartment.

I introduced him to Roselyn. Shemmy and Avrohom were also present. Roselyn remarked that she was very pleased to meet a friend of Avrohom's and - if he liked Hilary and if she liked Shmuel then they could write, correspond with each other. After all, she was only 18 and when they would meet again "next year" then we could all discuss and talk about more serious matters.

I am afraid that Roselyn was fighting a losing battle. She had imagined that three days would be insufficient time - it seemed that three minutes were just about all the time they needed. Roselyn was interrupting and suggesting that they should write and THEY were arranging a meeting between us and Shmuel's parents at the Milky Restaurant in Kingston Avenue to enable us to discuss matters over lunch.

Mr. Dovid Lew, Shmuel's father, could not manage to join us at 1.00pm (we met him at the airport) but we had the pleasure of the company of Shmuel's mother and also grandmother, as well as his Uncle Lou.

I was the leader of the flight and I was kept pretty busy. Passengers were continuously interrupting our meal and conversation - there were so many problems to settle. Our buses were scheduled to leave '770' for the airport at 3.00pm. The Rebbe had kindly consented to see every single member of our group - each one of the 118 passengers - individually privately in his study, before our departure.

Everyone would be permitted to stay for only a few seconds in order to receive the Rebbe's blessings. There was quite a lot to organise. Therefore, Roselyn - who was my 'right hand man' and I had to leave our guests in the restaurant in the company of Rabbi Shem Tov, Hilary and Shmuel.

The scene at '770' was chaotic, utter confusion and appalling.

Hundreds of travelers, their friends and relatives together with hundreds of Yeshiva boys (who were always interested in everything connected with the Rebbe) were all milling around the vicinity of the hallway. I was in the waiting room doing my best to keep the queue moving. Passengers would enter into the Rebbe's study and they would just not leave. We had almost - literally - to drag some of them from out of the Rebbe's presence. It was very fortunate indeed that it was our own chartered flight - and it could not leave without us. (We left New York three hours late because of this lack of co-operation from our members.)

Suddenly a large commotion was heard outside. Rabbi Shem Tov had arrived. He was holding a bottle of vodka and a glass and wishing everyone mazel tov, mazel tov. He pushed a glass of vodka into my hand and said. "Say L'chaim, Hilary has made up her mind and she is now a Kallah!" What excitement! What a turmoil! But - poor Roselyn - she hardly knew the Chosson and we had not met the Mechuton. The only consolation, the anchor that kept us sane, was that the Rebbe had agreed to the Shidduch and given his blessing. That alone assured our rationality.

I confess that I did find it inconceivable that our Hilary, whom I had always considered a sensible and calm young maiden, should be so quickly and completely 'bowled over.'

There was a very wonderful sequel - a few days afterwards we received a letter from Rabbi Shem-Tov, written by himself - in ENGLISH - the only letter in English ever written by Shemmy.

This is what he wrote:

Yud Tes Tammuz

"Mazel Tov! Mazel Tov! Mazel Tov!

"My dear, dear, dear Zalmon. Rosali and Hinda Malka!

"To see chassidische happiness in your home and BH I feel in my soul like a happiness in my own family. I hope that everyone of the family of Zalmon Jaffe will understand my feelings.

“I was very happy to see the nearness from the Rebbe Shlita to everyone of your family. For the 47 years in Lubavitch, I have never hear or see from the Rebbes to push a Shiduch like the Rebbe in the Shiduch of Hinda Malka (Le’arichas Yomim Veshonim Tovos.....)

“I am sorry for my broken English but I cannot ask somebody to write my feelings and I want Roselyn and Hinda Malka themselves to read my beste wishes for long life in happiness (Begashmius Veruchnius)

“I hope to hear from everyone and to see Besimcho

B. Szemtow”

CHAPTER 8

OUR THIRD CHARTER FLIGHT

“PREPARATIONS FOR HILARY’S WEDDING”

We returned home to Manchester to receive a great ovation and a tumultuous welcome. We were showered with congratulations and Mazel Tovs. The local Jewish newspaper carried screaming banner headlines - right across the page - announcing that “HILARY JAFFE ENGAGED TO AMERICAN YESHIVA STUDENT.”

Meanwhile I received a letter from the Rebbe, dated 28th Tammuz 1962 which contained also this paragraph:

“.... It is gratifying to know that you had a pleasant return trip and a heartwarming welcome, including the many good wishes of Mazel Tov for your daughter’s Shidduch. It must have helped Mrs. Jaffe to get used to the idea that her daughter has grown up and there is much to be grateful for in the thought that the A’mighty has helped bring up such a suitable Shidduch without undue strain and worry. May G-d continue to shower His blessings on you and yours from His open and generous hand.”

The first problem which we had to settle was the location of the wedding ceremony. I was anxious to have the marriage solemnized in Crown Heights with the Chupah outside ‘770.’ I did realise that The Rebbe had not been Messader Kedushin for nearly four years, but as the Rebbe had himself sponsored this Shidduch, I hoped that the Rebbe would consent to officiate at Hilary and Shmuel’s wedding.

I could foresee that these two young people would be a tremendous asset to Lubavitch in general and to the Rebbe in particular. If the Rebbe would only give them his grand ‘send off’ to their married life together then their potential as extraordinary and exceptionally good Lubavitch workers would be fulfilled and realised.

On the 28th Menachem Av 1962 I received another letter from the Rebbe in which he wrote: “With reference to the time and place of your daughter’s marriage in a happy and auspicious hour, surely this is a matter for both sides to determine. In general, it is the Jewish custom to arrange the wedding in the place of the Kallah. As for the question of the date, and your mentioning that if the place is Manchester, then it could be arranged during the winter months. I do not quite understand why this haste. Originally you and Mrs. Jaffe seemed to be against an early wedding or even Tenoyim (engagement) and now you seem to want to rush it in a few months time? But you do not even mention any reasons for this haste.

“If you desire to know my opinion, I would suggest considering the summer which would enable the Chosson to end the year of learning without much distraction, and would enable your daughter too, to complete her studies. What is no less important is the fact that it is necessary to have ample time to discuss and arrange for the couple’s plans after the wedding. In view of all this, you should have an open mind about the date of the wedding and begin discussion on the above-mentioned points. In view of the note of urgency in your letter, I have replied to your letter ahead of turn.”

The Rebbe wished to know the reason for haste. As far as we were concerned there was nothing to prevent the marriage taking place as soon as possible. Shmuel was in New York and Hilary in Manchester - well the ‘phone bills were such that it would be cheaper for me to get them married at once. The Rebbe had suggested that it should take place during the summer - which confirmed what we had been told at our last Yechidus.

On the 27th Ellul 1962, in a letter to me, the Rebbe had added a Post Script which read:

“With regard to my position relating to Siddur Chupah and Kedushin, you can gather it from the fact that in about two weeks a cousin of mine will be married in New York to a Talmid of the Lubavitcher Yeshiva, but the Messader Kiddushin will be one of the Anash Rabbonim.”

This was a big blow to our ambitions that the Rebbe should officiate at the ceremony. I discussed the matter with Shemmy. He concurred with my viewpoint that although the Rebbe had HINTED that he would not be Messader Kidushin nevertheless he had not expressed an unequivocal “No.” If the

marriage took place in Manchester then there was no chance at all of achieving our objective, whereas if the location was Crown Heights, then there was every possibility that the Rebbe might relent and bestow upon us this great honour.

The Rebbe had also explained that I was a man holding a prominent position in the Manchester Community, and I should not transfer this Simcha to another country. Ultimately, after much correspondence, the Rebbe permitted the wedding to be held in Crown Heights as long as I provided some function for my Manchester friends, relatives and colleagues. I therefore suggested that I could arrange to hold an elaborate dinner and Sheva Brochas in Manchester immediately after the marriage in Brooklyn - we intended to invite 450 guests.

On the third night of Chanukah 5723 (1962) the Rebbe confirmed that this was in order by writing:

"You are right in assuming that there is no objection on my part as to the time and place of the wedding, in a happy and auspicious hour, as long as both sides agree on the time and place.... From time to time I see the clippings which your son, Avrohom, submits to me, and, of course, I follow your communal activities with keen interest.

In these days of Chanukah, may G-d grant that all matters of Torah and Mitzvos and the material blessings coming through them advance in a growing measure, as taught by the Chanukah candles, and that all your affairs, personal and communal likewise flourish in a steadily increasing manner."

The next task was to book the flight for Tammuz (July 1963.) The Flying Tiger Airline had been ordered by the Air Authority to increase their prices. Although they admitted to me that they were making a handsome profit at £35 they were now forced to charge us £50 return. At this price we could afford to charter a Prop-Jet Airliner. We booked this with the Irish Airlines.

The months soon passed. Avrohom, who was in New York, booked the hall, the orchestra and also engaged the caterers for the wedding dinner. We would have to settle all the details and the prices when we arrived in Brooklyn. He had also ordered the invitations - here again the time of the Chupah and other particulars would have to await our coming to Crown Heights.

Meanwhile, we had sent out invitations to all our friends to attend the Manchester Sheva Brochas and had received all their replies. This enabled us to make the seating plan and complete all the details in connection with this affair before we left Manchester for New York.

So many friends wished to travel to New York for the wedding that we had to charter two planes. We invited all the 240 passengers to join us at our Simcha - and many did avail themselves of this opportunity to attend a Chassidishe wedding.

Before we left Manchester airport the Airline Representative wanted to know whether our Rabbi wished to bless the 'plane.

Immediately we arrived in Brooklyn I begged for an audience with the Rebbe for, as yet, until this moment, we were still uncertain whether the Rebbe himself would be officiating at the ceremony.

It was with some agitation, excitement and no little trepidation that I asked the Rebbe at what time would be the Chupah. He answered, to my great relief that it should take place outside '770' at 5.00pm precisely.

Our next appointment was with the caterers. We were accompanied by our Mechutonim - Mr. & Mrs. David Lew.

Before discussing the menu, we were handed a large swatch of coloured cloths. These were six-inch squares - samples of tablecloths and matching serviettes (napkins). We were offered white, purple, red, blue, green, navy blue, maroon, scarlet, pink, yellow, mauve - in fact every colour in the spectrum of the rainbow. We chose turquoise - as if it mattered. It was much easier to choose the menu.

David Lew was more concerned with the Smorgasbord - a Danish (or Swedish) word for what we refer to as a buffet dinner. It would consist of all types of food and delicacies - every kind of fish and meat dishes, liver and sausages, savories and deserts and fruits. This Smorgasbord was for the

Kabbolas Ponim (the reception) which would take place an hour or so BEFORE the Chupah, in the hall downstairs at '770.'

Shmuel's calling-up (Aufruf) was, of course, at '770.' The warden co-operated with us regarding the Aliyas. He also intimated that one of our friends could officiate at the Service. There were a number of Chazonim amongst our wedding guests, so we asked Rev. Weiss to daven - but on no account must he repeat any words - as is the custom amongst cantors. He was greatly honoured to officiate at '770' in the Rebbe's presence. He davened very nicely indeed - and always recalls this as one of the great occasions of his life.

"HILARY'S WEDDING"

It was now Sunday, the 15th of Tammuz 1963. The day of the wedding had arrived.

Rabbi Chadakov had impressed upon me that the Rebbe must not be kept waiting. The Rebbe had said five o'clock and 5.00pm on the dot it had to be.

At 3.45pm the Smorgasbord was in full swing. The tables around the hall at '770' were heavily laden and groaning under the weight of so much food. The 'lady collectors' who normally congregated and sat outside '770' in order to solicit for alms were present inside the hall in full strength. It did my heart good to see them all have a good 'tuck-in' - holding plates filled to overflowing with liver and meat and so on, and enjoying themselves just like all our other guests.

Shmuel had davened Mincha. He had used the Rebbe's Siddur, which was always lent to a Chosson in which to daven Mincha on the day of his wedding.

Meanwhile, Hilary - the Kallah, was being dressed and prepared for the Chuppah. Roselyn then took her and her 'ladies-in-waiting' to visit the Rebbe's mother - Rebbetzen Channah. We had become very friendly and attached to Rebbetzen Channah through the good offices of Rabbi Shem Tov. We always made it our business to visit the Rebbetzen whenever we were in Brooklyn. Shemmy used to take us to her home on the ground floor of the building situated at the corner of President Street and Kingston Avenue. There the Rebbetzen held court like a Queen. Nevertheless although she exuded grace, charm, majesty and regality, she was very much down to earth. She sat at the head of a large table surrounded by her admirers and courtiers and insisted upon hearing all the latest news and events, especially relating to births and marriages. She had a lively and energetic mind. She was fond of discussing the 'old days' in Russia with Shemmy, and other close friends. Best of all, she loved to talk about her son, the Rebbe (so did we all.) The Rebbe visited his mother every single day - without fail - on his way to '770' from home,

However, to continue with the Chupah. At five minutes to five o'clock the Rebbe returned from the Ohel, where he had spent most of the day without food or drink.

Rabbi Chadakov assumed and surmised that the Chupah would now take place after Mincha. He rushed into the Rebbe's study to obtain confirmation of this - and he rushed straight out - shouting that the Chupah would take place at 5.00pm as arranged.

The Chupah was erected in the centre of the pathway leading from the door of '770' to the street - the pavement (side-walk) of Eastern Parkway.

As the clock struck the hour - precisely at 5.00pm the Rebbe came through the doorway of '770' and walked down the few steps towards the canopy. At exactly the same moment - Hilary and her 'ladies' entered the gateway and walked up the few lower steps towards the Chupah - under which she and the Rebbe met at the identical moment. Shmuel was already there waiting.

Hilary, followed by Roselyn, the Lews and me, was to walk around the Chosson seven times. There were some bridesmaids 'somewhere along the line.' I saw them later on - in the photographs. Roselyn and Hilary had spent months of thought and planning on their dresses - I saw those later on as well - in the photographs. We all held lighted candles and it was our intention, as well as our duty, to walk around Shmuel seven times. But where was he? We did see the Rebbe standing very erect under the Chupah. Everyone held the Rebbe in instinctive reverence and great awe, otherwise I am sure, the

Rebbe would have been pushed right out from under the Chupah. No such reverence nor respect were given to the Kallah nor to the Machetonim.

We had a terrible and fearful task, pushing our way through solid masses of Yeshiva boys and men, who all wanted to be near the Rebbe, in order to encircle the Chosson those seven times. It was like a nightmare with the candles blowing grease into our faces and onto our clothes.

My suit was covered with a thick layer of candle grease and *we* were standing - outside the Chupah. But we had done it.

Rabbi Kassonofsky read out the Kessuba. The Rebbe recited the seven Brochas and the ceremony was over. The time was nearly fifteen minutes past five o'clock, and Shmuel and Hilary were now man and wife. (I cannot blame the Rebbe for not wishing to officiate at weddings - it is definitely a danger to life and limb.)

By 5.15 everyone had left the vicinity of the Chupah and all were arranging conveyances to take them to the hall. Suddenly without warning, it began to pour - torrential rain. If the Chupah would have been delayed for even five minutes, then everyone would have been absolutely drenched. We gave thanks to the Rebbe for being brief and starting the ceremony punctually.

In due course we all arrived at the hall for the 'Dinner and Dance.' Everyone sat at their allotted tables, men on one side and the women at the other side of the Mechitza partition.

The Brocha Hamotzie was said over the bread and the waiters served the first course - the hors d'oeuvre. When - suddenly - the orchestra - the band, exploded into a lively and exhilarating tune, which compelled everyone to join in the dancing.

The tables became deserted - the hors d'oeuvres left on the plates - untouched - and with trumpets blaring, we entered into an era of non-stop, uninterrupted dancing for the next four hours.

After twenty minutes or so the waiters came along and took away the hors d'oeuvres and placed the next course - the fish onto the table. Twenty minutes after that, the fish was removed and soup substituted - and so it went on until the last course - the dessert and the coffee were served.

I did manage to swallow a few mouthfuls of food in between my dances. I noticed that one or two others did the same. But the music was so exciting and compelling that nobody cared to miss even one moment of the dancing but it was very annoying and aggravating to me to see all this food, for which I was paying good money, just simply not being eaten.

There was no doubt that all our guests were having a jolly good time. I did my share and I believe that Roselyn also danced well and continuously in the womens' department.

I started to dance with Mendel Shem Tov, who seemingly wears a small brown beard. Well - suddenly, I found that my partner had grown a long bright red beard, which reached past his waist - unbelievable!!

There was not one speech, not one word of Torah and it took a very great effort on my part to ensure that we had a Minyan to bench and say the Sheva Brochas.

The whole wedding party including the Chosson and Kallah, and the Machetonim returned to Manchester to continue the festivities. We recited 'the Sheva Brochas' on the homeward bound plane at every meal, and joined our 450 guests for the Dinner and Sheva Brochas, in Manchester. We had erected a beautiful Mechitza of flowers in the hall and everything looked wonderfully well.

In contrast to the wedding dinner in Brooklyn where the food was left untouched, where the dancing was non-stop and where there was not one speech and not one word of Torah - here in Manchester everyone ate the meal - there was not one dance, but there were fifteen speeches and Divrei Torah.

After the festivities, Hilary and Shmuel returned to Crown Heights where Shmuel was to spend the following twelve months studying at the Kolel.

CHAPTER 9

OUR FIRST SHOVIOS VISIT 1964

We had visited Brooklyn five times during the past five years. Twice in the month of Shevat and three times in Tammuz. Hilary had informed us that she was expecting her first baby around Shovuos time. So what better time than Shovuos could we choose to charter our next flight to see the Rebbe.

Since 1964 this Shovuos trip has become an annual event for Roselyn and me to visit the Rebbe in Brooklyn. (This year - 1979) will be the 16th consecutive Shovuos - Kane Yirbu.)

Hilary had rented for us an apartment opposite to hers in Montgomery Street. We spent a lovely Yom Tov in Crown Heights.

The baby was already due. Late on Sunday, Hilary was taken to the hospital and we were now becoming anxious about our return flight home, which was scheduled to leave on the following Sunday evening. There would be no problem if the baby was a girl, but a boy had to be born before 8.30pm to ensure that the Bris would take place on the Sunday before we left for home.

By 11.00pm the baby had not yet arrived, so we retired to bed. At 4.00am there was a great banging and clamoring on our front door. Roselyn rushed down to find out the news. But - it was Debbie Epstein, a dear friend of ours from Manchester. She had only just arrived in New York and had now taken advantage of our invitation that she should spend a few days with us in order to see the Rebbe.

Roselyn was terribly disappointed and her face fell. Not because it was Debbie, but because she had expected news about the baby. A few hours later, however, we did learn that Hilary had presented us with our very first grandson - Yoseph Yitzchok.

Needless to say, the chartered flight took off without us. (I had to pay £150 extra for staying over the one extra day. Roselyn remained with Hilary for the following two weeks.)

The Bris was on the Monday at '770.' We provided a sumptuous Seudah for everyone - Yeshiva boys and Baalei Battim. I was a little surprised when the Rebbe refused the honour of being Sandik. The Rebbe explained that there were already a good many people who were extremely envious of the friendliness which the Rebbe had been extending to me and to my family.

Especially so in regards to the Messader Kedushin at Hilary's wedding. The Rebbe maintained that the jealousy of these people would know no bounds if he accepted this great honour.

He felt that, for our own sakes, he should refuse. I realised that, as usual, the Rebbe was quite right. Rabbi Chadakov was the Sandik

CHAPTER 10

AVROHOM'S PROGRESS

After five years of intensive study, Avrohom had now obtained his Semicha - his degree which entitled him to be called Rabbi Avrohom Yoseph Jaffe.

Except for 1963 Avrohom had been coming home to spend Pesach with us every year - and then he would rush back to '770' to be with the Rebbe during the last days of this festival in order to take part in the march to Williamsburg where the Satmars congregated and to participate in the Rebbe's 'Moshiach Seudah' Farbrengen on the last day of Pesach. (Today the Lubavitch boys walk to Flatbush, because the Satmars have altered the old saying of "If you can't beat them, join them" to "If you can't join them, beat them.")

Almost on the identical date, every year, I received a letter from the Rebbe mentioning Avrohom.

11th Nissan 1960

"..... I have already received report from London about the most favourable and lasting impressions which your son has left there during his visit. I trust that this will be repeated even in a greater measure during his stay in Manchester, and that he will have the Zechus to be instrumental in having other young men of your community follow in his footsteps. May G-d grant you and Mrs. Jaffe true Yiddish Nachas from him and your daughter.....

27th Nissan 1961

"..... I was pleased to see your son Abraham Joseph back and present at the Farbrengen of the latter days of Pesach. Subsequently, he also visited me in connection with his birthday and he gave me regards from you. May G-d grant that you will always have true Yiddishe and Chassidic Nachas from him and from your daughter, in good health and happiness and gladness of heart.....

27th Nissan 1962

"..... I was pleased to receive your regards through your son, Avrohom on his return. I was particularly gratified, of course, to learn how well he has used his visit, and of the Nachas that he has given you. I asked Avrohom if his mother also attended his public speeches, and he replied in the affirmative, adding that she is a "severe critic" yet she was satisfied. I further understood from him, despite his modesty, that Rabbi Golditch was also satisfied with his talk with Avrohom in learning.

May G-d grant that you will always have Nachas from him as well as from your daughter and will have good news to report about all your affairs, both personal and public, including a substantial improvement in Parnosso.

26th Nissan 1964

"..... I was very pleased to receive your personal regards through your son Rabbi Avrohom Jaffe. I trust that his visit was not only greatly enjoyed by yourselves and your family, but also had a stimulating effect in the community at large.

"The first action a young man who has become a Rabbi has to take is to get married."

He and Susan Beenstock had known each other almost all their lives. They were attracted to each other and it was decided to arrange a Shidduch. The Rebbe gave his blessings to this match and the marriage was arranged for the month of Ellul.

Although we had a Mechitza at Hilary's Sheva Brochas the year before - in any case the children demanded it - many people in Manchester could not understand the importance of this partition. Avrohom wrote a short note which explained the matter succinctly.

"A wedding, according to Jewish tradition, has in it not only Simcha, but also holiness. We make the seven Brochas and entreat the A'mighty that the Simcha and joy should also take place 'up above' at

the same time. The only way that we can ensure this is to have a partition between the men and the women as in Shul.

“One should not worry that people will laugh at the Mechitza, because if we, as Jews, had ever reckoned with people laughing at us, then we would never have sent our children to Yeshivos and have different customs to the people amongst whom we live.

“The day of their marriage is the most important day in the life of the Chosson and Kallah. It is their wedding day and on that day they lay the foundation of their whole life together - and if the Chosson or the Kallah requires “the establishment of this foundation” to be with extra holiness and additional Mazel which is, according to all the Sages, through “joining the Simcha to G-d above, who will be celebrating joy at the same time,” and which automatically gives extra Simcha to the life of the bride and bridegroom, it is now easy to understand why a Chosson and Kallah do insist upon this, it has a bearing on their whole lives.”

After the wedding Avrohom desired to study at the Kolel for at least twelve months, but the Rebbe said “No.” Avrohom should now stay at home and join me in my business. He should also become Rov of our Shul - the Kahal Chassidim Synagogue in an honorary capacity.

On a post-script to a letter to me, the Rebbe wrote:

“I trust that after reading what I wrote to your son with regard to his sermons in the Shul, he will no longer insist on a five minute limitation. May G-d grand that his words, coming from the heart, should penetrate the heart and be effective.”

CHAPTER 11

“THE IMPORTANCE OF TZEDOKAH”

The Rebbe has consistently stressed the importance of giving Tzedoka (charity). Here are just a few of the examples taken from some of the Rebbe's letters to me.

12th Sivan 1957

“.....I received your letter of the 30th May and I was pleased to read in it that you so quickly saw the fulfilment of G-d's promise “Test me new herewith, sayeth our G-d if I will not open for you the windows of heaven and pour you out a blessing more than enough.” (Malachi 3:10)

“Thus, your pledge of £500 for Kfar Chabad has been returned to you many fold. It is a pity that you did not pledge more, so that the benefit would have been so much greater. I trust, however, that this will be a lesson for the future, to remember how trust in G-d is well rewarded

“Having recently celebrated the Festival of Shovuos, the time of our receiving the Torah, it is well to recall that, that great event is likened to marriage, in which G-d takes the part of the groom and Israel of the bride, and the wedding ring which the bridegroom gives to the bride, represents the Divine blessings which G-d gives to Israel in all their material needs. In other words, Jews should always remember that they are betrothed to G-d, and owe Him individual loyalty and devotion in return for which G-d takes care of all their needs, materially and spiritually.”

Chanukah 1962

“..... I was gratified to read in your letter that you have again had occasion to sow the benevolent providence in being able to sell quantities of your stock. May G-d continue to show you His benevolence in the future, and in a greater measure.

“However, I am somewhat concerned that while you mention about things done from On High, relating to the sales, you do not mention at all about the things that have to be done here below (and which are entirely in your hands because “All is in the hands of heaven except for the fear of Heaven.”) I refer to your Tzedoka contributions from your business profits. One should remember that according to our holy books one should not be tardy in remitting that which belongs to Tzedoka. On the contrary - it is even advisable to remit in advance of future profits - since the A'mighty's credit is always good.”

And on **3rd Nissan 1963**, included in a long three-page letter were the following paragraphs:

“..... I believe I mentioned to you that sometimes the order is ‘asseir’ first and then comes the ‘tissasseir’ and sometimes it is reversed – namely – G-d extends His ‘credit’ first, increasing the turnover of business and a proportionate increase in profits expecting confidently that the ‘assier’ will follow in a commensurate measure. In your case the latter order was followed. Hence, the increase of your Tzedoka contributions should be at least proportionate to the increase in the volume of business, especially as in your case, bli ayin hera, the volume increase has been Lemaalo miderech hatevoh.

“A further essential point is this, namely, in as much as the business and profits have, thank G-d, increased in an unusual way, I do not think it is justifiable to approach the question of Tzedoka with precise calculation etc. It is self-evident that a person residing in a community is obliged to participate in the community charities, especially one on whom Divine providence has bestowed a position of prominence and influence which must be reflected in every aspect including philanthropy. Needless to say, when I speak of an increase in Tzedoka which has been practised before but an increase in Tzedoka which is indicated by the growth of the business, as mentioned above.

“All that has been said above is relative to financial profits. Important as they are, they are by far exceeded by gains which cannot be measured in terms of money. And thank G-d, you have been blessed with such a fine Shidduch for your Bas Yechida, and quite unexpectedly and you have been blessed also with true Yiddish Nachas from your Ben Yochid (G-d bless them both) in a way which you also recognise was quite unexpected. One of the ways for you and Mrs. Jaffe as the blessed

parents to say to G-d “Thank you” is by greater devotion to all matters of Torah and Mitsvos: in general, and Tzedoka in particular since Tzedoka is weighed against all the Mitsvos.”

CHAPTER 12

THE FIRST INSTALMENT OF 'MY ENCOUNTER' WITH THE REBBE SHLITA – SHOYUOUS
1969

I had been visiting the Rebbe in Brooklyn for two years before I decided to write "My Encounter with the Rebbe, Shlita."

This is what I wrote in that first installment:

This year, 1969, we arrived at '770' from England at about 7.00pm. Rabbi Chadakov informed me that the Rebbe would be addressing the annual N'shei Chabad Conference in about half an hour's time in the large hall, after which, it was proposed that the women and girls from out of town only would form a line past the Rebbe, who was sitting alone at the table on the platform flanked by Rabbi Chadakov and Rabbi Groner. They would be allowed just a couple of moments to speak to the Rebbe.

Rabbi Chadakov suggested that after the file-past of women and girls had finished, we could then 'tag along' and say Sholom Aleichem to the Rebbe.

We rushed like mad to get to the hall before 8.00pm. There were about 500 women and girls present and all anxious to speak to the Rebbe. So - although only the out of town ladies were supposed to file past, all the 500 insisted upon joining the queue. Instead of waiting an hour for our turn, we waited seven hours - 3.00am. We enjoyed an unforgettable experience. We were the last in the line. There were now three girls ahead of us. Each would hand the Rebbe a letter, four or five pages, which took the Rebbe four or five minutes to read. Then, without hesitation, he replied to the girl, "You must continue to do this, or that" "Stay at College." "Rabbi Chadakov will loan you \$250 to finish the course." "Pay back when you are able." "Go to camp this year and take this group and that course." She was tremendously pleased and uplifted when she moved away. The girl immediately before us burst into tears - with joy, she said - on going to see the Rebbe for the first time.

Then our turn. "Why did you not come the day before Shabbos and have another Farbreng?" (I told Berel Futterfas that the Rebbe made a joke about coming for Shabbos Mevorchim. He said that the Rebbe does not make jokes and is now preparing for next year's flight to arrive in time for that Shabbos.)

The Rebbe asked me whether we farbreng in Manchester. "Yes, every Shabbos Mevorchim," said I. "Oh, you will have to change your name to Kfar Chabad."

We were staying at the flat above the Kotel and adjoining the back of '770' in Union street. This belongs to the Rebbe. "Where are you staying?" he asked us. "Union Street," "Ah, good, Unity Shalom."

Oh, I am a real Chossid now, and am well and truly at home at '770,' where people trample on my foot with relish, and push me with their hard elbows. Mind you, I am becoming quite an expert myself at this. On the other hand, it is an amazing and unbelievable sight to see the hall jammed tight with people and not an inch to spare. Then the lookout gives the signal that the Rebbe is on his way. A sudden hush falls on the assembly and as if by magic, there is formed a large clearway through which the Rebbe passes on his way either to the platform during a Farbreng or to his own special place during a Shul service.

Incidentally, the Rebbe never keeps the congregation waiting at K'rias Shema or at the Amidah. After the services on Shabbos and Yam Tov the Rebbe wishes everyone Good Shabbos or Good Yom Tov very quietly. A pathway is again miraculously cleared for him and I normally start a nigun so that the Rebbe is 'played out' with a happy tune.

To my eternal surprise and astonishment, but also gratification, the Rebbe has continued to bestow upon me much honour. Once I was tempted to ask him why he treated me so remarkably well, when in fact I had done nothing much to merit such favours. The Rebbe replied that it was not for the work which I had done, but for what I was going to do.

Many years later, I asked the Rebbe again why I was so favoured and recalled what he had said to me on a previous occasion - that it was for the work I was going to do and not for what I had done. The Rebbe smiled and said, "The same applies today."

"MEALS WITH THE REBBE"

Once more I was invited to join the Rebbe for Yomim Tovim meals, together with about a dozen or so other men. Obviously this was a very great honour. Enjoyable, dignified - but oh, so tense. After all we were dining with our own royalty.

The guests assembled in the large dining room upstairs, on the first floor of '770.' This was the residence of the previous Rebbe (ZL.) His Rebbetzen was our hostess, but we did not realise this until many years afterwards. When the previous Rebbetzen passed away, the Rebbe Shlita discontinued these meals at his mother-in-law's home although the Rebbetzen herself never actually attended the meals.

During all those years the Rebbe had given up the comfort and pleasure of his very own Yom Tov table for the sake of Kibud Ame - of honouring his own Rebbetzen's mother.

At the time we were puzzled and surprised that the Rebbe did not sit at the head of the table - after all he was our king. (Rabbi Shem Tov adamantly declined to attend these meals. He could not bear to see the Rebbe take a 'back seat.') Yet it made sense, although, as I have already stated, we did not realise it at that time.

We sat around a large rectangular table. There were normally six seats on either side, with two chairs at the bottom end. Each place was set with a silver goblet for Kiddush and two loaves of bread. The table itself was laid with an immaculate snow-white linen cloth and the finest cutlery, crockery and glassware were provided. Wine, soda, and other drinks were at hand for when required.

The top, the head of the table was set, exactly the same as all the other places, but the chair was to remain unoccupied. This was the previous Rebbe's Tische, and the chair was his too. It was a symbolic gesture. Therefore, the Rebbe who was the younger son-in-law, sat on the left hand side, whereas Rabbi Shmuel Gourary (the Rashag) sat on the right. Next to him was Rabbi Simpson. My seat was always the same, next to Rabbi Simpson, and almost opposite to the Rebbe.

On the first day of Shovuos, before luncheon, we partook of coffee and cake (not cheese) in the adjoining room. The Rebbe was not present on these occasions, but the (previous) Rebbetzen accompanied by her lady-in-waiting welcomed her guests and presided over the gathering. She had a warm and gracious smile for everyone - a typical charming 'Queen-Mother.'

To continue with the story. The Rebbe makes Kiddush, quietly, whilst his Rebbetzen listens at the door which is slightly ajar. We all follow suit, each one in a subdued voice.

Then we all wash. The Rebbe is served first, of course, but he will not commence eating until after everyone is seated and served - even the boys who are acting as waiters. I once asked a boy to exchange the tongue I was given, for chicken. It took seven minutes. It seemed like seven hours - all waiting for me to be served.

The Rebbe eats very slowly indeed and sees to it that he finishes that course last. No one would eat after the Rebbe has put down his cutlery. Therefore, he is always watching and ensuring that all have eaten before he lays down his knife and fork. There is no talking or even whispering during the actual courses which consist of the usual Yom Tov dishes, fish soup, chicken or meat, fruit then drinks.

At the Yechidus, subsequent to the first meal I had ever attended, I told the Rebbe that I was very disappointed at the atmosphere at the dinner. So quiet, so still, so tense. I said, "You should tell the Chassidim to make the Rebbe freilech."

He agreed, and said, "Yes, you must tell the Chassidim to make the Rebbe freilech."

So I now feel a special responsibility for trying, in between the courses, to enliven the proceedings, singing nigunim and telling a joke or two - all with the Rebbe's permission of course. It is a bit embarrassing to have to force oneself to break the uncanny silence. Although the Rebbe speaks to me

normally in perfect English, he insists that I speak in Yiddish so that all will understand. I am always given the honour of benching at one of the four meals. This means that I have to drink the whole goblet of wine and make a Brocha Acharonah, whilst everyone remains seated and quiet.

At the meals this year T.G. the atmosphere was happy - like a family party! The Rebbe asked me to sing a nigun after the first course on the first night of Yom Tov. I did so, but when the Rebbe asked me to sing another one I had to be diplomatic. The Fetter Hendel normally led the nigunim and I did not want to hurt his feelings. The previous year the Rebbe had asked him to sing a tune which he did (Al Achas) but without the words. The Rebbe said, "No words? - give him a Siddur." So Fetter Hendel started again, and once more again without the words, although he had a Siddur in his hands.

We discussed Manchester problems and I recounted what I had said to Rabbi Rashag, who asked me what was the problem about putting up a building. "All one needed, was money," he stated.

"Oh," said I, "anybody could put up a building with money. The cleverness was to do it without money." "So, how did you manage?" asked Rabbi Rashag. "With the Rebbe's Brocha," I replied.

All were delighted with this answer, because it pointed out to Rabbi Rashag that one had to do what the Rebbe instructed and it would be crowned with success. (Incidentally, if I personally, would have always done what the Rebbe told me I would have had many great successes - I was good at telling others to take heed of the Rebbe's advice.)

Rabbi Rashag then pointed out that from certain Seforim we could learn that we did not need a Farbrengen on Shovuos. "Good," said the Rebbe, "then we will have a rest."

"Oh no," says I. "We will not let you off!" This caused much laughter and Rabbi Rashag said, "You must come more often."

The Rebbe intervened and said, "everyone has his zeman for coming and as I daven Rash Hashonah at the Omud and for so many years, SO I cannot come at that time. The Rebbe then paid me some very nice compliments.

On the first day of Yom Tov I was surprised that "HoAderess Vehoamuna" was not sung. I therefore mentioned to the Rebbe that in Manchester we always sang this Nigun at Shacharis, "Every Shabbos?" asked the Rebbe, "No," I replied, "Only Yom Tov." "Why not every Shabbos?" "Oh dear," said I, wiping my forehead, and thinking of how many members we would lose if we took an extra ten minutes over the davening. The Rebbe came to my rescue by saying, "OK only on Yom Tov."

Next day, we did sing this during Shacharis - the first time for a few years. At the next meal, I thanked the Rebbe, who said that I should have mentioned it before, and we would have sung it the first day too. AND I will receive commission for this (this would come in useful as a bargaining counter for an extra farbreng.)

"GOOD YOM TOV"

After Tikun Shovuos, 3.00am, the first night of Shovuos, the Rebbe said the Maamer, a 45-minute deep and penetrating talk on Chassidus, extremely tough and difficult - for me at least. After the Rebbe had left at 3.45am, Rabbi Y. Kahan then repeated the same Maamer. It is uncanny - like a human tape recorder.

After every Shabbos and Yom Tov Farbrengen there is a 'Chazorah' a repetition. I have strayed into the Shul at one o'clock in the morning after the end of Shabbos and found about 50 boys listening to Yoel Kahan repeating all the Sichas and Maamer from the day's farbreng. Many pull him up and correct him and/or help him out. One of the boys is, at the same time, writing it all down in a special shorthand of his own, and by Monday the whole farbreng is already in print.

This does not refer to a mid-week farbrengen like Yud Tes Kislev, when the Rebbe uses a microphone and all the proceedings are recorded on tape. Second day, 8.00pm, we had the Shovuos farbreng. There is a long platform at the one end of the large hall. The Rebbe sits alone at the table surrounded by about 100 Rabbonim. In the well of the hall the Baalei Battim sit at tables surrounded by tier upon

tier of benches on which stand the boys, reaching almost to the roof. Something like a large auditorium. About 1,000 people are present normally and on special occasions even double that number. The Rebbe wishes everyone "L'chaim" and during the course of the Farbreng, one takes the opportunity of saying "L'chaim" to the Rebbe on numerous occasions. The Rebbe will say a Sichah, twenty to thirty minutes talk on the sedra, then a nigun and more Sichas, Normally a Maamer is also said by the Rebbe where everyone stands and listens enraptured and quietly for the forty minutes duration.

The Rebbe gave a strong Sichah about bringing up children, who were our guarantees for the Torah - Toras Emes - truth - which can not be changed or altered - it is the truth. The parents were not accepted as guarantees, only the children. A man - a parent uses his own so-called 'ideas' and does away with a Mitzvah. Years later the son takes away two more - he uses his 'so called' head.

Parents had to teach their children from a few weeks old. When the mother sings a yiddisher lullaby to the baby and even before the child is conceived - by keeping Taharas Hamishpocho. Then they know the child will be perfect, and in turn will be a perfect father and then grandfather. It is up to the women!

During the farbrengen the Rebbe asked me why I was unemployed? I had not said L'chaim for a while. Once the Rebbe handed me a large plateful of cake and a bottle of wine. "What should I do with these?" I asked. "You will soon see," said the Rebbe.

I was practically mobbed and just managed to salvage a few pieces of cake for my wife.

This farbrengen took seven and a half hours and ended at 3.30am when the Rebbe gave out Kos Shel Brocha - wine from Havdola, to everyone who filed past him with a glass into which the Rebbe poured wine. This took another hour or more for our 'poor Rebbe.' During this farbrengen we had visits from Mayor Lindsey who was seeking re-election as Mayor of New York and also some of the other candidates.

On the Sunday after Shovuos, was held the usual Kinus Hatorah from 4.00pm till 10.30pm when Roshei Hayeshivos and other prominent speakers addressed us and gave Pilpulim. The Rebbe is not present at these functions. I am generally asked to speak - which I did for ten minutes. I recalled the boys who used to learn at '770' when the Rebbe had only the small upstairs Beis Hamedrash. It was much too small and now - ten years later, the huge shed was also much too small. Now Avrohom and Shmuel, Nachman Sudak and Faivish Vogel amongst many hundreds like them were spreading Lubavitch doctrines and working for Judaism all over the world. I had asked the Rebbe for a Brocha - not to be a Tzorus Chossid and write only when in trouble, all I wanted was to write to the Rebbe good news every couple of weeks.

I then told the Moshul. People who lived at the source of a river did not realise the blessings and benefits which the river is giving during the thousands of miles of its flow to the sea. Same with the Rebbe, here in Brooklyn the boys did not realise that thousands of miles away, the 'river' was flowing stronger and larger than ever, bringing upon so many thousands of people and families untold blessings.

"YECHIDUS"

My Yechidus was the following night, Monday at 8.30pm. The Rebbe said I must not tell anyone about this special Yechidus as all would want the same. When we came out at 9.45 (Maariv should have been at 9.30) only about 150 boys were waiting for us!! And knew about this Yechidus.

When we had entered the Rebbe rose and told Roselyn that it was nice to give her Sholom Aleichem again, for the second time, and asked her to be seated. She sat, with paper and pencil in her hand ready to write down the vital points which would arise.

I was hoping that she would not do a repetition of the previous year when, after one and a half hours of Yechidus, all Roselyn had written on the pad was "the Rebbe said that the Farbreng was made specially for her." That was all she had written down.

I told the Rebbe that so far I had had a wonderful time socially, and now it was time for a business discussion. The Rebbe asked Roselyn whether she had given permission to me to leave her and eat Yom Tov with the Rebbe. When Roselyn answered in the affirmative the Rebbe said he hoped she did not mind. Roselyn replied that as the Rebbetzen had made this sacrifice, so could she and was pleased to do so.

The Rebbe said that his Rebbetzen had made this sacrifice for 40 years and Roselyn replied, "biz 120 years." The Rebbe smiled appreciatively. In fact during the whole one and a half hours the Rebbe was laughing and smiling.

I told the Rebbe about my speech at the Kinoss Hatorah the previous day, about not wanting to be a Tzorris Chossid. "Did you not give a Moshul as usual?" asked the Rebbe.

I was surprised because I do not remember ever having given a Moshul before. The Rebbe gets to know everything!! So I told him what I had said about people living at the source of the river who could not appreciate what was happening many hundreds of miles away. The Rebbe liked it. I reported about the many complaints I was receiving from people who had no replies from the Rebbe to their letters. I said - Lehavdil - the Queen of England has a private secretary who acknowledges her letters. The Rebbe said it was not for a Chossid. But yet, he was looking for some Nusach that would satisfy not only his correspondents but also himself. We discussed business and family, Lubavitch and communal problems. I realised it was now 9.30pm so I said, "the Rebbe will want to daven Maariv." So he replied "Well, ess shtait in Shulchan Oruch!" "Yes," I remarked, "but not to daven at 9.30pm - it could be 3.30am like the other night."

"Yes," said the Rebbe, "that is so, but it was getting a little tight for Sefirah." He advised me to come for my next Yechidus at my usual time in the early hours of the morning so that no one would be jealous. The Rebbe said he had received an anonymous letter from Detroit with B.H. on the top telling the Rebbe to go back to Lubavitch and not to interfere with people in America and pester them to do Mitzvos. I remarked that it was a good sign to get such a letter. The Rebbe agreed. I told the Rebbe about the Lubavitcher who phoned Bernard Perrin in Manchester at 2.00am and me at 7.00am to give regards from the Rebbe. "Ah," says the Rebbe, "he was keeping '770' hours." When he mentioned Avrohom, the Rebbe said he always addresses him as HaRav Avrohom in his letters. The Rebbe asked me if I liked the apartment in Union Street. I replied that it was ideal, especially as it was only seconds away from '770' and I wanted it for every Shovuos.

"MORE FARBRENGEN"

After this Yechidus I realised that I had not asked the Rebbe for a farbrengen for the following Shabbos. And there was another Shabbos after that one too.

B.H. since I have been coming to '770' there has always been a farbreng on every Shabbos I have been present. P.G. I hope this will continue. But, if one wants something, then one must ask for it. I asked the Rebbe once, last year, and he replied that he was "not prepared" I said that the Rebbe should just sit on the top table and we would all sing nigunim and make the Rebbe freilech.

"How can I sit on top without saying anything?!"

"OK," I said. "You might manage a couple of Sichas." In the event he spoke for five hours at the farbreng. Also last year, my wife and I met the Rebbe outside '770,' he touched his hat to Roselyn, and asked her if she was enjoying Yom Tov in spite of my leaving her for the Rebbe's table. I thanked him for a previous farbreng which I said was most enjoyable. The Rebbe replied, "It was my pleasure." Always the perfect gentleman is our Rebbe. I requested another farbreng and the Rebbe told me to have a good rest on Shabbos and he also had heard that some wives were actually complaining that we had too many farbrengen which spoilt their Shabbos dinners and so forth. In view of these remarks, there would be no farbreng on Shabbos.

A lengthy correspondence ensued (not through the Post Office) in which I pointed out that I was resting all day and the farbreng was the only time I could hear the Rebbe saying a word of Torah. Besides which, all those people had come on the plane from England especially to hear the Rebbe. One farbrengen on Shovuos was definitely not enough. I really should have had pity on the Rebbe and

given him a rest but a Chossid should have no Rachmonus when it means a word of Torah from the Rebbe. Anyway, I was lucky and I prevailed - to the utter dismay of 40 Yeshiva Bochorim from Newark, New Jersey and of Moishe Feller of Minneapolis who had been told by the office at '770' not to come as there would not be any Farbrengen on that Shabbos and they therefore stayed at home

Now, here once again this year, I had the same problem. In addition to which all the boys at '770' were driving me crazy to ask the Rebbe for a farbrengen. Under no consideration would they ask themselves although they wanted it so badly and some boys even walked the six miles from Boro Park especially to be present. They said they could not have the cheek but poor me I had to be the scapegoat. Well - as I wanted the farbrengen too, I had no option but to ask.

So I wrote to the Rebbe asking for two farbrengens. (By this method, of writing and leaving the letter in the Rebbe's office, I normally received a reply on the same day). The Rebbe replied that he himself had to open and read all the letters addressed to him and which were very confidential. All this took a long time. He therefore had no time to prepare a Farbrengen. I wrote back saying that in view of the enormous amount of correspondence which the Rebbe received, would I not be doing him a favour by not writing so often (every two weeks or so) and making more work for the Rebbe. Once I had complained to the Rebbe that he never replied to my letters (from Manchester) and I had to write again.

"Oh," said the Rebbe, "it was worth it as I had another nice letter from you because of that."

I pointed out that the Rebbe had said that my Zeman (time) for coming was Shovuos. In the social and business department, I was doing very well indeed, exceedingly well. I fully expect the same in the learning department' - Talmud Torah Keneged Kulom. I think the Rebbe will agree that one Farbrengen is not really a sufficient injection for twelve months. As Brochas normally go in threes (Kohanim) so do Farbrengens I wanted two more. I wrote the story about Winston Churchill who, when asked how much preparation he required for an hour's talk, replied "I can start right away." "For 20 minute's talk?" - "I need an hour." "For three minute's address?" "I need a week's preparation." So, Lehavdil our Rebbe does not need any preparation for a five-hour's Farbrengen. B.H, there WAS a Farbrengen that Shabbos.

It was a freilech farbrengen and all the boys congratulated me -and straightaway started nagging for another one for the following Shabbos. During the Farbrengen, the Rebbe wished me Mazel Tov on Yossi and Yente Chaya's (my grandchildren) birthdays and told me to take a bottle of vodka and make a Farbrengen in London, not at Lubavitch House, but at Shmuel's house, The children were to be the real IKUR OORCHIN, after they had finished their share of the vodka, everybody else could then partake of the drink. (This subsequently took place - the children sat 'on top' about forty to fifty people were present, and I told stories about the Rebbe.) An interesting Sicha was the one about Bikurim. The Rebbe said that this referred to an unusual and unexpected business deal and Maaser had to be paid on this immediately.

After Havdola, I was at the door of '770' when the Rebbe was leaving - I was alone - everybody else had fled when the Rebbe approached, I held open the door for him and wished him "Good Voch". The Rebbe smiled and wished me the same and asked if I was Tzufrieden??!" Yes, said I (and then thinking about the following Shabbos) "So far so good." After having said this, I was terribly ashamed of my boorishness and chutzpah. The following day, I decided that I had to apologise for my lack of good manners and sent a contrite and sincere letter of apology to the Rebbe and hoped for another Farbrengen.

The day after, the Rebbe received a brand new Cadillac from a wealthy follower who has often received - and is still receiving -the beneficent and successful advice of the Rebbe in his business problems. He sends a new Cadillac to the Rebbe every year. We were shown the new Library and sumptuous offices next door which we do hope the Rebbe will make use of and soon. Although we always refer to Lubavitch House as '770,' this building is now only a small part of the five or six huge buildings in Eastern Parkway owned by Lubavitch. I am not referring to our numerous schools and Yeshivos in New York. One new Yeshiva is costing 3 million dollars to build.

The following day I saw Rabbi Chadakov in his own private office, and I could not get a word in edgeways. The telephone was ringing continuously - from Israel, England, Australia, besides local Canadian and U.S.A. calls. The general office is even worse, there are three telephones. A young man wanted to see the Rebbe - "earliest was four months, but he could write." A man had arrived from Uruguay with his son; he only wanted to look at the Rebbe. "His wish could be granted at Mincha." A Yeshiva boy brought in an old man at 7.45am and showed him a pair of Teffillin and said, "These are Teffillin." He helped the old man to put them on. The man made the Brocha and recited Shema - the boy thanked the man, the man with tears in his eyes, thanked the boy.

We were delighted to receive a phone call from the Rebbetzen inviting us to come and see her. This was a great honour which we accepted with alacrity. Roselyn and I arrived at 8.00pm and enjoyed an extremely happy two hours with Rebbetzen Schneerson. Tea and delicious cake were served. The Rebbetzen agreed 1) that it was most important to make the Rebbe freilech, especially at the Yom Tov 'tisch'. "If you want a thing badly, like a Farbrengen you must ask for it. It is so obvious - she intimated that there would be a farbrengen on the next Shabbos too! She also said that she was in the next room during the Yom Tov meal, and heard how we were enjoying ourselves. She told Roselyn to be careful when walking at night and "is she not frightened of the coloureds?" I made a joke about them not touching us because we are not Americans like the Maggid who was preaching in a Shul and all the congregation were in tears with emotion because of what he was saying. Only one man remained unperturbed. Afterwards, when asked why by the Maggid, he answered, "Well I am not a member of this Shul." Before we left we discussed the family and various other matters and also told a few more jokes. A very pleasant evening indeed. I hope the Rebbetzen enjoyed herself as much as we did.

"SECOND YECHIDUS"

The weeks were soon passing, and it was now time for our second Yechidus. It was to be at about 2.00am but we did not go into the Rebbe's room until 5.45am. The time taken for Yechidus varies from one minute to three hours, so it is hard to ascertain the exact time one is due in. Whilst we were waiting we met Yehuda Paldry, an Israeli journalist, who had broken his leg 20 years ago. After three operations, it was decided that nothing further could be done for him and he walked, leaning heavily on a very big, thick stick. He had been coming to see the Rebbe for three years now. On Motzei Shovuos whilst he was receiving his Kos Shel Brocha, bent double over his stick, the Rebbe asked him why he still walks with a stick. He should now leave it behind. Mr. Paldry smiled and the Rebbe said it was not a joke. "You don't need a stick." So, now he walks fine and without a stick. The men and boys who saw him previously walking laboriously with a stick, still cannot believe it. This is Mr. Paldry's own story and he is keeping the stick as 'exhibit A' for a constant reminder. A boy going in before us used to be a first class hippy and a drug addict. He has now been at the Yeshiva at Kfar Chabad for 12 months.

On entering the Rebbe's room I said that since the last farbrengen I had received a windfall - Bikurim. I went to pay the agent of our landlord; of the flat and he refused to take my money so I had brought all the rent to the Rebbe as Bikurim. The Rebbe confirmed that the Sicha the previous Shabbos on Yossi's birthday WAS for Yossi (who bears my father-in-law's name - said the Rebbe) as he was a "Ben Chomesh LeMikrah" "that means," continued the Rebbe, "that he would be six PG next year so we must bring him with us next Shovuos and stay again at the flat in Union Street. The Rebbe said that he now wanted to ask me a question. Why - after 800 years - all this time, no one has asked questions on Rashi until 1966/7/8. I told him that we have never had such a Godel Hador before, who could answer such questions on Rashi. Also, never one who could ASK such questions on Rashi. I reminded him of his promise to have these Rashi Sichas put into print for posterity. I put in an aside about a farbrengen on Shabbos,

"Ah," says the Rebbe, "You are smuggling in a farbrengen." "But if you will ask a question about Rashi, then I will answer it on Shabbos." We discussed problems still left over from the previous Yechidus. Lubavitch - Shechita Board - Shul and so forth. Plenty of humour too. I remember a few years ago, that Rabbi Shemtov went to Brooklyn on our plane from Manchester without asking permission from the Rebbe. Rabbi Shem Tov kept away from the Rebbe. He was afraid. I asked the

Rebbe not to be angry with him as it was my fault. "Ah," says the Rebbe, "then I have two people to shout at now."

I also recall when Avrohom, many years ago, wanted to grow a beard, so he asked the Rebbe if he could do so. I have since asked many people to guess what the Rebbe answered and NOT one has ever got the right answer. He replied, "You must ask your mother."

We left the Rebbe's room at 6.30am and we were not the last. I took Roselyn home, returned and davened. At 9.40am I saw the Rebbe leave for home - since 8.00pm the previous evening!! No food, no drink, no pause. And as fresh now as at 8.00pm the night before.

Another example of the Rebbe's attitude is when I complained to the Rebbe of the woman who interrupted her work on Friday evening to light the Shabbos candles. The Rebbe replied, "at least she had fulfilled a Mitzvah."

After davening I started on the Rashi questions. Now, instead of "Is there a Farbreng tomorrow - Shabbos?" (50 boys have already arrived from Newark) everyone was asking "What is your Rashi Kashe?" I was most annoyed with all of them. They fussed and congratulated, but when I pointed out that everyone should send in a Rashi question all became afraid, again. They were good at giving me advice, which I ignored.

I took a hint from Zalmon Shimon's Shiur, which I had attended during the week. In this week's Sedra, Behaaloscho, 3rd Possuk, it says that Aaron did what G-d commanded him. So what? Do you expect him not to do so. Why does Rashi say "Shelow Shono?" Zalmon Shimon explained that Aaron who was the High Priest for 39 years lighted the candles with the same warmth on the 39th year as on the first year. I did not like the explanation. (At the subsequent Farbrengen, the Rebbe said he had spoken about this on a previous occasion for about two hours and I should ask the boys.)

Yitzchok Sufirin, who had addressed us so well for 20 minutes on the plane, and helped with the Benching and Teffillas Haderech, suggested that I asked the Rebbe his opinion on 'Mesanercho.' Chapter 11, sentence 36.

At the farbrengen, the Rebbe spoke for one and a half hours on this, in relation to Israel too. G-d does not have to 'Kumu' get up and fight. He confounds their deliberations. They will ultimately destroy themselves. We must not return one inch of Eretz Yisroel to the Arabs. There was a special Sicha for me too. "Tsaischem Losholom." Go in peace and come again in peace. Next year P.G. Also, it is no use coming to see the Rebbe once a year and that is all. We had plenty to do when we were away from the Rebbe. He gave me a wonderful smile and said, "Now it depends on you." The farbrengen always started punctually, normally at 1.30pm. Shul finishes 12 noon (from 10.00am.) I once arrived at 1.33pm and the Rebbe was already sitting on the platform, he gave a sign as if to say why did I come so late. After Havdola, I again hold open the door of '770' for the Rebbe and said, "Good Voch, everything is now perfect, except for one thing."

The Rebbe was pleased and said it was a better reply than the previous week. And that was that "except for one thing." I replied, because we were going home on the following day and leaving the Rebbe.

"Tomorrow! That is another day, and I will see you again. In any case, Moshiach may come and everything will be changed.

Our buses left next day from '770' and the Rebbe came outside to see us off. Someone asked me why the Rebbe gave me so much Kovod? Did I give plenty of money? Work hard for Lubavitch? Or, what was the secret?

I replied, "Men darf machen dem Rebbe Shlita freilech" (we have to make the Rebbe happy.) That's all - in every possible way!

TRY IT! JUST FOR ONCE!

CHAPTER 13

THE SECOND INSTALMENT OF 'MY ENCOUNTER' WITH THE REBBE SHLITA -
SHOVUOS 1970

“AN IMMEDIATE YECHIDUS”

It was nearly 11.00pm when we arrived at ‘770’ on Monday evening, 25th May 1970. I immediately went to see Rabbi Chadakov to ascertain the earliest possible moment when I could see the Rebbe Shlita.

“Well,” he said, “Yechidus is on Thursday, and I will try and fit you in. but if you really wish to see the Rebbe sooner then you can go in straight away. Rabbi Gutnick of Australia is now with the Rebbe and as soon as he leaves the Rebbe’s room I could immediately enter the Rebbe’s presence. Of course, if I accepted this offer for tonight I should not be allowed again on Thursday, so - which day do you prefer? What a question to ask!

Leaving Roselyn at the apartment, (which the Rebbe had kindly loaned to us) together with our grandsons Yoseph Yitzchok and Menachem Mendel, I rushed to ‘770’ and took my stand outside the Rebbe’s door. It was now midnight and as Rabbi Gutnick had been with the Rebbe since 11.00pm I expected to enter at any moment.

Suddenly the door opened. I was caught unawares and Rabbi Gutnick emerged. I looked at my watch - it was 2.00am. I had been waiting for 2 hours.

The Rebbe looked very tired and depressed after three solid hours with Rabbi Gutnick (!!) but nevertheless gave me a lovely welcome. He said I must be tired, because my English time which was 5 hours later was now 7.00am and I had been up for 24 hours. I admitted that before I entered the Rebbe’s sanctum I was indeed tired, but the Rebbe had certainly now made me wide-awake.

“How are your children and grand-children? And daughter-in-law? It is the first time I have seen her.”

“Surely not,” said I, “she had been here before.”

“Yes,” replied the Rebbe, “but she was not your daughter-in-law then.”

I took this opportunity of telling the Rebbe that Susan wished to send special warm regards to our Rebbetzen and to say how impressed she was with our wonderful lady, by her grace and charm when she made Susan, Avrohom and the children so welcome at the time of their visit at Purim.

The Rebbe remarked that he had deliberately refrained from telling me to come on the Purim flight. He said that he took no chances, in case I then would not come for our regular Shovuos visit.

The Rebbe was not pleased, not one bit, when he heard that some Rabbonim were leaving 35,000 Manchester Jews hefker, whilst they removed themselves to Israel. It is against the Din, against the Shulchan Oruch to leave a community without first seeking and obtaining a replacement. He was surprised that such a great Posek should ignore the Din because it suited himself. And the cheek of another Rabbi, also leaving to settle in Israel to request the Rebbe to send a replacement from America to work for less money in a small community whilst he clears off to Israel.

Whatever answer can the Rebbe now give to people like the Lubavitcher Shochtim in Manchester who begged the Rebbe to allow them to leave Manchester but were restrained because the Rebbe would not allow Manchester to be left without kosher meat, when they see their so called superiors leaving the town without compunction. When I remarked that one of those Rabbonim was over retiring age, the Rebbe interjected by saying that Rabbonim do not retire, at all, at any age. Moishe Rabeinu did not retire. It was a disgrace to give Rabbonim five-year contracts. Incidentally the Rebbe took great exception to people asking for a Brocha for something which they had done or decided upon without even consulting the Rebbe.

The Rebbe then requested me to provide a Rashi Kashe for the following Shabbos. I then reminded the Rebbe that this year we came especially for Shabbos Mevorchim, as the Rebbe himself had

requested last year and why should I have to work for an extra Farbrengen? Well - the Rebbe still persisted that he would like a Rashi question.

I was happy to inform the Rebbe that the Mikveh was very nearly ready, but I said I was not too pleased. I only used the Mikveh on very special occasions, and if we had a beautiful Mikveh on our own premises, it would not be right for me to pass by without using it. I would have to arise earlier in the morning and change my routine.

I then delivered the message from Manchester Lubavitch that we wanted Rabbi Chaim Farro as soon as possible.

“Oh, but not before Yud Beis Tammuz,” said the Rebbe, “it would be cruel.”

The Rebbe then went on to say that because an extra man was coming, this did not mean that the rest could now take it easier. Avrohom is still the Rav of the Shul and is to carry on as hitherto. All must continue to work precisely as hard if not harder than at present.

“Chaim Farro’s job is to see that everybody works HARDER!”

The Rebbe was pleased that Hilda Perrin had been helping at the Lag B’Omer parade. He hoped she would continue her efforts for Lubavitch and that her daughters would support us too. The Rebbe was keen to hear about the good progress being made regarding printing the Tanya in Hebrew together with the English translation.

We discussed business matters for a few minutes and the Rebbe had a jolly good laugh when I explained to him that Avrohom took off a whole day from business to arrange the Lag B’Omer Parade.

I showed him the cable we received for Pesach from the Rebbe, the identical one which was sent all over the world - but ours had Niflee Niflous (instead of just Niflous.) The Rebbe laughed heartily and said it was a Brocha from the Post Office.

Last year I was told to bring Yossi with us to Brooklyn on this trip. I reported that, as requested, I had carried out instructions and brought Yossi. “Oh,” said the Rebbe, “you mean Yoseph Yitzchok.”

It was now 3.05am and I had been with the Rebbe an hour and five minutes. Before leaving I presented the Rebbe with four bottles of mashke to give out at a farbrengen. “Which one?” asked the Rebbe “Any one.” I said, “It is for the Rebbe to give to whomsoever he wishes.” “Is it from Manchester?” “No,” I reply, “from me.” Surely the Rebbe can find some deserving person or cause to whom to give the Mashke. The Rebbe admitted that he had stopped the giving of Mashke at the Farbrengen because it “got out of hand.” I told the Rebbe I did appreciate the cake but it was not as good as the Mashke because it became hard and stale after a week.

The Rebbe once again showed his humbleness and humility by saying “Mr. Jaffe, I thank you!!” What a wonderful and unique Rebbe we do possess. That such a great man and Tzadik should actually thank me for coming to see him was so unheard of that it left me speechless. He then offered to take me home in his car.

I do believe that the Rebbe looked very much happier and sprightlier than when I entered over an hour ago. Rabbi Chadakov told me to wait a moment whilst he went in to see the Rebbe. He came out beaming and said “You put the Rebbe in such-a good mood!!” (T.G. for that I says to myself.)

Incidentally, on the following Thursday evening was the last official Yechidus for two weeks (until after Shovuos.) The Rebbe gave over 70 interviews and Yechidus ended at 5.00a.m.

“PREPARATIONS FOR YOM TOV”

Shabbos was Shabbos Mevorchim. We commenced Tehillim at 8.30am and finished at 9.55am - one hour and twenty-five minutes, fantastic! The farbrengen started as usual, at 1.30pm prompt on the dot and went on until 5.30pm. Main theme - “what is a Jew?” Conversions must be according to the Halacha - bringing in all goyim (wives and children) and making a fifth column - there will be no peace unless and until we rescind this evil law then we will destroy all Israel’s enemies.

After a particularly strong and effective Sicha on this subject the Rebbe sat with his head sunk and bowed down, very dejected, and not looking up at anyone at all. Meanwhile, Yossi and Mendel were standing up straight and together, each holding a cup of wine and waiting to say L'chaim to the Rebbe. The Rebbe taking no notice. For very many minutes (which seemed like hours) they stood, in dead silence whilst everyone waited and wondered when would the Rebbe look up and if he would shake off his despondency. It was already getting most embarrassing, so I stood up and in a very loud, clear voice said "L'chaim" to the Rebbe. He looked up and replied "L'chaim Velivrocho." I then pointed to Yossi and Mendel still holding their glasses and standing so straight and upright. The Rebbe's face became transfigured by a lovely smile as he replied to their Brocha of L'chaim.

I was told by a great many people that this was the best part of the farbrengen. It made the Rebbe so happy after his deep depression. Someone told me that the Merkos should pay for my ticket to come once a month to make the Rebbe 'freilech!!' You do such a Mitzvah, Mr. Jaffe. You make the Rebbe happy. The Rebbe honoured me by giving me a bottle of mashke to divide amongst those present.

One Lubavitcher asked Roselyn "What mishpochah have you in Brooklyn, Mrs. Jaffe?" Roselyn answered "The Rebbe."

The following day, Sunday, was the annual convention of the Neshei Chabad. 500 women were present. Roselyn and Mindy sat on the top table as honoured guests from England. Rabbi Gutnick from Australia was the chief speaker, but there were many others speaking too. It took place at the Venetian Manor, Brooklyn, and commenced at 11.30am with brunch, greetings, reports, discussions, dinner, presentations, film show and other entertainments followed in quick succession. All the ladies (and girls) were supposed to be at '770' to meet the Rebbe at 7.00pm. Why cannot our Lubavitch organisations be punctual for a change and take an example from the Rebbe. The Rebbe's address to the women was due to be broadcast - live - to England, Australia, Israel and all over USA. The whole world and our dear Rebbe had to wait for the women (mainly for the organisers) until 8.20pm nearly one and a half hours. It was not really fair, in fact, I would say it was extremely rude, because there was the usual 'line of Yechidus' afterwards, and our poor Rebbe did not leave for home until 4.00am. I considered that these ladies were very selfish indeed to make the Rebbe wait 1 and a half hours. It could have meant that the Rebbe would have been able to leave for home at 2.30am instead of 4.00am besides people in England and Israel waiting near their telephones from midnight until 1.30am for the Rebbe's message plus the extra financial obligation this entailed.

Subsequently, I met delegates to this convention from Chicago and other cities, as well as from Brooklyn. One told me that she had not had Yechidus for 8 years. Another was going to settle in Israel and had tried for many months to see the Rebbe. A third woman had tried for three years. They were told to join the line and get a Brocha from the Rebbe. I am really a very fortunate and lucky person to be able to see our Rebbe so often,

Thursday was Erev Rosh Chodesh. The Rebbe went to the Ohel, the graveside of the previous Rebbe, to pray, say Tehillim and plead for all Jews. He fasts the whole day. During the three weeks we were in Brooklyn, the Rebbe went three times to the Ohel; it was 8.40pm when he returned, looking terribly tired, hot and really worn out. What the Rebbe does for us Jews!! Shmuel, my son-in-law, had Yartzeit and davened Mincha. (A. Chidush — he was told that as the Yartzeit was on Rosh Chodesh he did not have to bring Mashke and cake.) Maariv was at 9.20pm. I was asked to daven at the Omud. A Chazan is supposed to be asked three times before he accepts. I took no chances and accepted straight away. As the Rebbe was still fasting I davened extremely quickly, no one objected at all, but after Maariv instead of going straight home for a meal the Rebbe had Yechidus with Chief Rabbi Dreyfus of Belgium.

By trial and error I had now found a reasonably good Mikveh. The 'Rebbele' who owned the one I had used for the past few years had removed to Boro Park. I was told that the Mikveh opposite '770' was now - beautiful, clean, and spotless and had constant hot water. I visited another one in Kingston Avenue very dingy. It was so steamed up I could not see whether the water was clean or not. I put my spectacles on but they obviously became steamed up and I nearly fell right into the Mikveh. Finally, I found my way down the steps, and almost burnt off my toe, it was so hot. I took another step down and almost froze the other foot - it was so cold. The one I decided to patronise was quite good and I

paid my subscription for the whole three weeks in advance. When I went on Friday about 2.30pm. I was the first one to use it. It was really lovely and clean but NO WATER!!

“OUR VISIT TO THE REBBETZEN AND WE REPORT ON THE OPENING OF THE NEW LUBAVITCHER YESHIVA”

Friday 3.00pm was one of the highlights of our American trip. A visit to our really charming and gracious Rebbetzen. It is something to which we always look forward and we always make certain that we are not one second late. We were privileged and honoured this year to be allowed to take with us Hindy, Shmuel and their family (our grandchildren.) Yossi and Mendel were very shy, Golda Rivka and Pinchus were good but Yenta Chaya was terrific. She was singing nigunim for the Rebbetzen all the time. We had nice fruit juice, cream cake and so forth. We stayed for two hours altogether. The Rebbetzen talked about Susan and Avrohom, who had visited her last Purim. She had watched Susan waiting for Avrohom outside ‘770’ for hours. She adored their “lovely children.” We informed the Rebbetzen how impressed Susan had been with the Rebbetzen’s friendliness and courtesy, and how much ‘at home’ one was made to feel. We had a very good, enjoyable and happy afternoon, laughing and joking and occasionally being serious too.

We told her that we were thinking of attending the opening of the Lubavitcher new Yeshiva. The Rebbetzen insisted that we do go and also that we come back for the following Sunday and report to her what happened. So at 3.00pm on that Sunday, we again had the delightful pleasure of seeing our beloved Rebbetzen again. We went alone this time, so we had tea instead of fruit juice. We all agreed that it was a pity that the boys AND men did not take an example from the Rebbe - in cleanliness, tidiness, punctuality and doing everything with a ‘seder,’ also the perfect gentleman. He still greeted Roselyn, good morning or good afternoon and touched his hat whenever he met her in the street. We had a jolly good time for two and a quarter hours, and the Rebbetzen asked us to come again next year P.G.

This is an abridged version of the report I gave, and at which the Rebbetzen laughed uproariously! We received the official invitation to the Yeshiva Dedication Dinner. The following names were on the invitation: Rabbi S Gourary - Chairman, then the Dinner Chairman, followed by twelve Honorary (or honorable?) Chairmen, eight co-chairman, fifty-nine Vice-chairmen, one Toastmaster and forty-five committee men. In addition there was a Guest Of Honour and a Guest Speaker. A total of 129 men. If they all came with their wives we were certain of at least 258 people at the dinner. A good nucleus.

The building was supposed to have cost \$3,000,000 (without the land.) It had three floors and every available space was being used (but not duplicated as in Manchester and London.) The building had already been in use for nine months (and looked it) and an Opening Dinner had already been held a few weeks previously. Today was the Dedication Dinner and in a few weeks time was to be the Grand Opening at which Governor Rockefeller was due to attend. We walked around the premises, fifteen dormitories with four beds in each, that is for sixty boys on the top floor. Everything else nice and modern. After the inspection we partook of refreshments, reception before the dinner. Marvelous, wonderful - plenty to eat and drink, hot and cold meats, and fish, desserts, liver, jellies and so forth. I did not want to eat too much as it would spoil my appetite for the dinner. AND, if the reception was so elaborate, one could imagine what the dinner would be like!! We then sat down to dinner. 450 people were present. Mr & Mrs. David Lew, my Mechutonim were also there. My wife and Mrs. Lew did not sit with us. They were at a women’s only table very far from us. David Lew and I were given seats at a very nice table, near the top, but we sat with OTHER women AND their husbands. Rather peculiar to say the least.

Two nice jolly gentlemen approached me and asked me how I was and wished me well. I was taken aback! This was the first time I had met such friendliness in New York in all the years I have been going. I learnt afterwards that they were politicians and wanted me to vote for them. Then the Chief of Police arrived, a huge tough guy, almost a six footer and broad chested. (I thought to myself that I would not like to meet him in the dark.) I suddenly realised that it was my old friend Rabbi Gutnick dressed up as an Australian Army Chaplain in a blue uniform.

Dinner was called for 6.30pm and when the Chairman introduced himself at 6.45 I remarked that it was very good timekeeping for Lubavitch. But - unfortunately, we had a very long wait in prospect before we tasted food, It seemed from past experience that when dinner was served first NO ONE stayed for the speeches or for the appeal. So we were to have the speeches first. At this function half of the people, knowing of the new arrangements, arrived two hours later, still missed the speeches and came in time for the dinner. At only six tables, plus the top one, out of forty-two tables were the men and women sat separately. Bernard Deutch, the Dinner Chairman, dressed in a very light blue dinner suit, with vivid royal blue frilled shirt, and similar coloured tie spoke for twelve minutes. He introduced the Chairman of the Executive, Rabbi Gourary, who introduced the Guest of Honour, who introduced the Guest Speaker - anyway, we will come to that later,

The Rebbe's message was read out by the Rashag, who added his own commentary for fifteen minutes. Mr. Gruss, the Guest of Honour, who had presented the land as a gift, and also furnished the kitchens, dining hall, science lab etc., spoke for ten minutes. Rabbi Leckstein, Guest Speaker, addressed us for 45 minutes. A little fellow and wonderful orator, with slow delivery, like an actor, would do well on stage. He is president of Bar Ilan University in Israel. He said Lubavitch attracts the youthful intellectuals as well as all types of people. Holding the microphone which he barely 'topped' turning from left to right and then back again, he said - slowly - and through grated teeth:

"I - offered - a - professor - aged 32 - a job - in - Bar Ilan. What - did - he - reply - this - young - man-?" very long pause, "he - must ask the Rebbe! I met a hippie - in Israel - who had been round the world - looking - seeking - searching - frustrated - who was going back home to study Gemorrah. Why? The Rebbe had told him so!! Karl Marx said, "Religion is the opium of the masses." I say today opium is the religion of the masses. Michelangelo was a sculptor and a painter. He made a picture of Moses holding the Ten Commandments. We - hold - the Ten Commandments - (great pause and shriek) IN - OUR - HEARTS!! And we gave the Torah to the world!!

In the Sedra it says "Va'yehee," when Moses finished the Mishkon, and Va'yehee always prefaces something bad. What can be bad about "finished the Mishkon?" There are various Midrashic explanations. But, he says it is bad because we are then left with the large mortgage to pay off. Once, the Baalei Battim used to have their own bench or seat - their own 'bank' in the Shul. Today - we have - the Shul - in the Bank."

Rabbi Weinberg then made the Appeal. Four people gave a total of \$65,000. Grand total was forty people \$100,000. We were offered to be made a 'Torah Ambassador' for \$10,000 - no customers - a Life Time Governor for \$5,000 - no clients!

So, at last, at 8.30pm dinner was served. And what an anticlimax this was. Three courses - excluding fruit hors d'oeuvres, soup, meat and sweet. No choice of anything. Take it or leave it. In fact they left out the sweet course on our table entirely.

Then we started a new theme. Presentation of plaques to Guest of Honour, Guest Speaker, Guest ? and so forth. Eight altogether. At 10.00 pm it was decided to bench. The benching was offered to a dozen Rabbonim - all refused - they had not washed (had they eaten?) They even asked me. I wouldn't accept. At last someone volunteered. He said "Rabboysie Mir Vellen Benchen" etc.' and then had a relapse. Everything was so quiet, that Rabbi Weinberg announced that whilst those people were benching, he would carry on with more speeches. Ridiculous. Incidentally, he is prone to exaggeration - he introduced Rabbi Gutnick as Chief Rabbi of Australia (Rabbi Gutnick denied this in his speech.) He refers to Maurice, my brother in Israel as Colonel Jaffe, and of course, I am Rabbi Jaffe. I have Semicha from 500 boys at '770' but not from one Rav!

Next day, I went as usual, to Rabbi Dvorkin's Shiur, but found no one there. They had gone to a wedding. I met Rabbi Gutnick in the office. He said, "You look a cheerful soul!" I replied "wouldn't you be too, if your Rebbei had gone to a wedding and there was no Shiur?"

"ANOTHER FARBRENGEN"

Shabbos I had, T.G., an Aliya in the Shul. At 1.30pm a Farbrengen was held and lasted until 6.00pm.

During the second nigun the Rebbe got so excited, he jumped up and waved his arms, conducting the tempo. When the Rebbe stands, all stand too. Everybody standing, singing and jumping and the tempo getting quicker and faster. It was impossible to keep up. Yet the Rebbe is egging me on, faster and quicker. After I had said L'chaim to the Rebbe about three or four times, he leaned over and said, "say L'chaim (and in Yiddish) you are hiding yourself under the table."

Again on "Who is a Jew?" the Rebbe pointed out that the Druse Arabs living in Israel right on the borders where it was more dangerous and who were Christians and Moslems, fought and were fighting for Israel. They did not want to become Jews. Not at all. Not on any account... When it came to the test no Jew would give up his heritage. Achav the wicked Jewish King had murdered all the Jewish prophets, but when approached by a gentile to buy his Sefer Torah - he refused.

The Rebbe was in a much better mood at this farbreng - but - four and a half hours. It was tough too.

Shovuos was now approaching and once again I had the Zechus of being invited to partake of Yom Tov meals with the Rebbe Shlita. The seating arrangements and the food were similar to the past few years. The routine was the same too. This year I had a good helpmate in my endeavors to make the Rebbe freilech. Rabbi Gutnick - who took my advice and followed my lead. A good time was had by all. I remarked that Her Majesty, the Queen was well represented, from Canada, from Great Britain and Rabbi Gutnick who was a Chaplain in Her Majesty's forces in Australia, The Rebbe said that he even had a higher title - a Kohen. Rabbi Gutnick told me after Yom Tov that it was the most enjoyable and memorable Shovuos he had ever spent.

Another interesting guest was Rabbi Laizer Nannas. He has been residing at Shikun Chabad in Jerusalem for the past four years after spending twenty years in Russian jails, mostly in Siberia. He was sentenced to death for teaching Yiddishkeit. This sentence was then reduced to ten years imprisonment. After serving this sentence in full (only a thief receives remission for 'good conduct') he was jailed for another ten years. After these twenty years of hard labour, which killed most of the prisoners, he was released. He then waited ten years for permission to travel to Israel. All this time, for thirty years he had tasted neither meat nor poultry. (Incidentally on the Rebbe's instructions, he visited us in Manchester for one day en route from New York to Israel.)

From the outset - at the first meal and recalling that the previous year I had earned good commission from the Rebbe for suggesting that we should continue to sing "Hoaderess VeHoemuna" at 770, just as all Lubavitcher branches all over the world were still doing on Yom Tov - I declared to the Rebbe that I would like to discuss some business matter. The Rebbe agreed to hear my proposition as long as I spoke in Yiddish for many of the dozen or so guests could not understand English. So the deal was settled and I was to be allowed to commence the "Hoaderess VeHoemuna, Hu Elokainu, and Kailie Atoh." I did very well, I must admit. In the event, I started the first tune on Shovuos morning. I felt like Nachshon Ben Aminodov who was the first to jump into the Red Sea. The congregation was hesitating quite a while before they joined in. The Rebbe commented it would be much easier on the following day. It was. Subsequently, one fellow severely reprimanded me for singing in Shul without the Rebbe giving the signal. I explained that the Rebbe had already previously given me permission and I certainly would not do anything against 'protocol.' He apologised profusely. The trouble was that I was then inundated with requests to sing various other Nigunim. Obviously, I had to decline. One cannot or should not overdo a good thing. I was quite satisfied with what I had achieved. I still carry on the custom of singing a Nigun when the Rebbe is leaving the Shul, but instead of helping me by joining in and being freilech, I get blank stares and a few smiles of approval and even disapproval. Fortunately, my old friend Rabbi Shem Tov and my new friend, Zvi Fisher, had pity on me and we danced and sang together for the Rebbe.

Well, to revert back to meals with the Rebbe. Every meal was freilech. I sang many nigunim and told a few good jokes. I had just concluded a very good one, when the Rebbe observed that he did not like that joke at all as I had related something detrimental to the Jewish people. And I must immediately express something good about Jewish people - now and at once. This I did and the Rebbe raised his glass and wished me L'chaim. At a subsequent farbrengen I thought of something very good to say about Jews. This time the Rebbe made me say L'chaim in a very loud voice. The Rebbe takes a lot of

salt with his food. Once, someone asked him why he uses so much salt. The Rebbe replied, because “es is geshmack.”

I asked the Rebbe a question on Rashi. In the Birchah Kohanim the words “Emor lohem” Rashi repeats and then again the word “Emor.” He suggested I ask Rabbi Gutnick who is a Kohen. He gave one answer but the Rebbe promised to discuss this question at the next farbreng on Shabbos. At the last Yom Tov meal we sang the Rebbe’s Tehillim Possuk, which he quoted at every gathering this year “Kee Elokim Toshiya Tzion” to the tune of Dayainu. The Rebbe was exceptionally pleased and his face beaming asked whose inspired idea this was. We explained that some of the Yeshiva boys had hit on this brilliant idea. This Nigun became ‘top of the pops.’

The Rebbe then spoke very strongly once more on the theme of “Who is a Jew?” He mentioned the Reform ‘Rabbi.’ who made conversions which consisted only of a certificate. This piece of paper which was given to the applicant straight away, without any formal instruction, stated that this man was now a Jew. Even Millah was not performed. This Reform ‘Rabbi’ did not believe in shedding blood and he had pity on this poor fellow. So this man’s children or grandchildren would, in time, G.F. be able to marry one of your children or grandchildren. You must think of them and of the future.

The Rebbe handed me a bottle of vodka “A little for now, a little for the ‘plane, and the rest for Manchester.” Shmuel also received a bottle - “To give to students.” We did very well indeed.

Yossi and Mendel were standing at the doorway of ‘770’ when the Rebbe arrived. He said “good Shabbos” to Mendel, who gave the Rebbe his hand to shake, whilst answering “good Shabbos” to the Rebbe. The Rebbe also shook hands with Yossi. A large argument and debate ensued on whether the Rebbe had given his hand first or if the boys were rude and had stuck out their hands. Whether it was correct or it was wrong and so on. Well, the following day we had just returned to ‘770’ when the Rebbe happened to be coming along. The Rebbe touched his hat smiled at Roselyn and me and FIRMLY and smartly shook hands with Mendy and Yossi who were again standing at the doorway of ‘770.’

One afternoon we took Yossi and Mendy with us to Utica Avenue. I went to a bank to change a travelers cheque - what a performance. I thought I was going to be arrested. The bank manager said that he had never seen an English Travelers Cheque and I should go to Wall Street. I told him a few home truths, that in the most primitive parts of India even, I could change English Bankers Cheques. But here in New York, the so-called centre of commercial civilization, when every hour or less, we could hear on the radio the temperature, humidity and degree of air pollution, we were taken for forgers and thieves. When he explained the troubles he faced in Brooklyn with gangsters, with the racial problems and slum conditions, (even in better parts, the dustbins lined the streets every day of the week.) I had to sympathise with him - as long as he gave me the money.

It was now getting late for Mincha. I didn’t want to miss the Rebbe’s Mincha at ‘770,’ but my foot was giving me trouble. So we all dashed down into the subway and caught a train - just in time. Unfortunately, it was an express. (In New York, the slow trains stop at every station, but the expresses stop in between the stations.) AND it went flying past the Kingston Avenue the whole station vibrating and the train screeching to the great delight and amusement of Yossi and Mendel.

Ultimately, it stopped at Franklin Avenue, the third station and we had to wait twenty minutes for a train back. I was late for Mincha.

“SECOND YECHIDUS”

The climax of our visit had now arrived. Sunday and our Yechidus with the Rebbe. There were so many people coming to see the Rebbe that the following night, Monday, was also declared a Yechidus night. I had never heard of such a thing. Shmuel, Hilary and the children went in on the first night. The Rebbe gave Siddurim to Yossi, Mendel and Chaya. They were with the Rebbe for four minutes. Moishe Stuart (four minutes) and then Neville Cohen - excited, worried and nail biting - his first Yechidus ever - four minutes. Result - fantastic, marvelous and unbelievable!

Monday evening, Roselyn and I entered at 9.40pm. Never before had we been so lucky to enter so early. 4.00am, 6.00am yes, - but before 10.00pm!! Actually, some people were delayed so we took

their turn. We received a splendid greeting from the Rebbe who remarked, with a twinkle in his eye, that we seemed to have come well prepared with pads and pens. I replied that as we had come thousands of miles for this interview, and every word of the Rebbe was so important that we could not afford to miss or forget anything. "You are not needing to write 1,000 lines or even 100 lines," added the Rebbe. "No," I replied, "but why should I take any chances?" I told the Rebbe what I had spoken at the Kinus Hatorah. The Rebbe was very pleased, but said I must be careful to tell that bit about Moishe Rabeinu only to those people who came from the town of Lubavitch. (Report of my address to Kinus Hatorah follows later on.)

The Rebbe requested that I keep writing to him every two weeks as hitherto. We were leaving for home next day, at 9.30pm from '770.' "Would we miss Maariv?" I asked. The Rebbe told us that he would be visiting the Ohel again. So Mincha would be at 8.30pm and Maariv ten minutes earlier than usual. And - "My wife will be delighted to see me ten minutes earlier," said the Rebbe.

The Rebbe reminded me that he had not answered every one of the twenty Rashi questions. He would give these later on. The Rebbe advised us to come next year again for Shabbos Mevorchim because "you are always wanting a farbrengen." I said "a Chossid must have no pity on his Rebbe if it concerns Torah." I pointed out that the Rebbe had spoken for fourteen hours over the Shovuos period - "it is a very lot of Torah." "Ah," says the Rebbe, "you say that after the event, not before." I admitted that I could not understand everything at a farbreng. "Yes," said the Rebbe, "they are not words one uses every day in business." Also I once told the Rebbe that in the English translation of his Pesach or other messages some words were so difficult to understand that one needed a dictionary handy. The Rebbe said, "The purpose of my letters is not to study English."

We then discussed our apartment which was on the top floor of the Kolel building. During Shovuos, it was like Grand Central Station. Boys from all over the U.S.A. arriving at all hours of the night, sleeping here, there, everywhere - even on the floor. In spite of 'PRIVATE' notices all over our place, one boy actually tried to come into our own bedroom. He wanted to sleep in that room 'as usual.' Even normally, some boys would be learning in a lovely but loud clear voice until 4.30am when the next shift would arrive and give us, at least, the feeling of safety and security. Otherwise we might have been afraid of strange passers-by. Now and then we seemed to have a number of Chazonim and choirs practicing their whole repertoire at 3.30am till 5.00am. The Rebbe said next year the apartment would be better.

As my landlord had again refused the rent, I offered the Rebbe this money as Bikurim - an 'unexpected windfall.' "Who is your landlord?" asked the Rebbe. "A very nice and exceptional gentleman who likes to remain anonymous." I answered.

The Rebbe said he had received a 'nasty' letter from Israel. Some of my best friends are Lubavitchers - complaining about the money wasted by telephoning the farbreng to Kfar Chabad. It would be better to buy Phantom Jets. Cheek, it would probably cost them just a few shillings each in Kfar Chabad. In any case, "Lo Bechayil eloh Bidvar Hashem!" I said that the farbrengs were received exceedingly well in London (in Manchester, too now) except that the Rebbe was not there in person and also that it was at an awkward time 2.00am till 9.00am - otherwise it was very nice indeed. Comfortable, chairs and tables, refreshments, no crush etc. "Shush" said the Rebbe, "don't tell anyone here, they will all want to go to London for the farbreng. Still," he added, "it is a pity I keep everybody up all over the world."

I remarked that a great impression had been made on Yossi and Mendel which will last them all their lives. "No, no," said the Rebbe, "they will come plenty of times."

The Rebbe said I should write this diary again this year (as herewith) but not about Moishe Rabeinu at the Kinus Hatorah.

I should also speak in Yiddish next year at the Kinus Hatorah. "Oh, no, I cannot, let us say half and half." "OK" said the Rebbe, "but the year after that all Yiddish."

The Rebbe informed me that there were a few letters hanging about his office for me. Never mind now, I said. "I do not need the answers." "But," interjected the Rebbe, "you won't object to receiving the letter?"

I told the Rebbe that Chaim Farro was complaining that he had a headache, but I had told him not to worry because we will give him a bigger one when he comes to Manchester.

The Rebbe stated that the Shovuos trip must go on. If the Purim flight interferes, then cancel the Purim flight. He was very pleased with my grandsons, who had attended every service at '770.' We left the Rebbe after a stay of one hour and ten minutes.

Hershel Pecker went into Yechidus after we had left. He came out flushed and excited. The Rebbe had given him \$100 to buy his wife (whom he had left at home in London) a gift.

"KINUS HATORAH"

Here is an abridged version of my address to the Kinus Hatorah. First - thank you to Rabbi Mentelik and a couple of topical jokes. Then the Rebbe's theme ever the past months has been "Who is a Jew?" The goyim, Lehavdil, here in New York realised the dangers of pollution, in the air, in the atmosphere and in the water, and were taking immediate steps to safeguard the health of the nation. In Israel, they are trying to pollute the whole spiritual existence of the Jewish nation - deliberate pollution, by injecting goyim into our midst. T.G. we had a leader who realises the danger to Klal Yisroel. The peculiar reaction of some Jews that the Rebbe has no right to interfere...

The greatest Jew who ever lived was Moses, our teacher. He, under the guidance and instruction of the A'mighty took the Jews out of golus of Egypt - slavery, cruelty and made them into a one and united nation. He taught them the laws, the Torah and made them into the first decent and civilized nation on this earth. He led them to Israel with instructions of how to conquer and then divide the land amongst themselves. But, unfortunately, he did not enter or live in Eretz Yisroel. (This bracketed part for those from the town of Lubavitch only - can anyone imagine Joshua telling the Israelites that they did not intend to be influenced by Moses because he never lived in Eretz Yisroel. That they were going to keep the Second day as the Day of rest instead of the seventh, as directed by the A'mighty through Moishe. Every generation had a Tzadik. Today we have our Rebbe, Shlita who receives divine inspiration and guidance on urgent problems affecting us all.) I told the boys at '770' that they were living too near the MOUNTAIN. You cannot visualise the impressive greatness and inspiring dominance of this great mountain unless you are many many miles away from it. Same with the Rebbe. Those in England, Australia, Israel and all over the world can see full well and realise the greatness of our Rebbe, much more so, than you boys living next to and near our great leader.

Could anyone visualise 50 or even 20 years ago that our Lubavitcher Rebbe would be celebrating a Purim Farbreng with 3,000 Chassidim in Brooklyn, whilst thousands of Chassidim in every Continent of the world are listening to the Rebbe's words at the same identical moment. Do the boys appreciate what the Rebbe is doing for them and for all the Jews with "Messiras Nefesh." The Rebbe never leaves his office, works almost 24 hours a day - no holidays (vacation.) Erev Yom Tov, the Rebbe is kept busy with Farbrengen. (14 hours Torah this Shovuos) which needs terrific preparation. Where could anyone find today, or at any time, such a brilliant brain and scholarship in one man who cannot only find 20 questions to ask on a couple of words of Rashi, but can also find and give the answers too. The Rebbe told me to speak only good of Jews. So I cannot tell you how badly most of you behave by going about with glum and miserable faces. When you have a chance of helping me by singing for the Rebbe enjoyment and pleasure you just turn the other way and grumble and mumble. All seem obsessed with his own secret sorrow. Where are all the happy faces and smiles we used to see here years ago? Most of these grumpy faces belonged to boys like you who are doing the Rebbe's work and doing it well in every country of the world and going from strength to strength. The Rebbe does not NEED thanks, but everybody likes a little appreciation..... I will conclude as last year. Pleases G-d, don't make me a Tzorris Chossid. Give me the merit and the opportunity to write good news to the Rebbe every week or so. You do the same and with a happy heart and manner and so put our beloved Rebbe into a happier and more joyful frame of mind.

I was gratified to receive a tremendous amount of applause and acclamation. Rabbi Mentelik said “Zayer goot, Mr. Jaffe, I have given a big Chizuk to the Bochorim”. Rabbi Chodakov said he heard “platzen” after my speech and Rabbi TV said he didn’t understand a word, but “Alle hoben gelacht heb ich aich gelacht.”

It was now time to leave for home. The bus arrived at ‘770,’ but the Rebbe’s car was parked outside. The Rebbe had been to the Ohel and the car would be required to take him home. The bus therefore parked further up the street. I was again given the honour of davening Maariv at the Omud. Again, very quickly as the Rebbe was fasting. The time was 9.35pm and we were running late. We had very little time to spare in order to catch our plane. I rushed out and as usual, had great difficulty in getting the passengers onto the bus. Everyone wanted to be the last one on. In addition to being late, I also hate to keep our Rebbe waiting to see us off. More so, in this case as he was fasting too. He had expressed his wish to say farewell to us from the steps of ‘770.’ The Rebbe normally gave us this honour, but it still could not be taken automatically for granted. At last, we were all in the bus, which then moved towards ‘770’ and the Rebbe about 100 yards away. Then - a terrible calamity - the driver refused to open the door so we could see and wave to the Rebbe. “Not whilst the bus is moving,” said he and he refused to stop, either, “Not allowed to stop on this road,” said he. Although we could and did see the Rebbe’s farewell, he couldn’t see us, because of the bluish tinted windows.

The plane left for home about midnight and took six hours and twelve minutes to Manchester. We drank the Rebbe’s vodka. Shacharis was 4.00am and at 700 miles an hour, I would say it was a speedy davening. Also Kedusha at 40,000 feet must have been a ‘haicha Kedusha.’ T.G. we all arrived home well but tired.

Subsequently, I received a letter from the Rebbe saying how disappointed he was that I never said farewell before leaving ‘770’ as I usually do. It was almost worth being held prisoner by the bus driver in order to get such a letter from the Rebbe Shlita.

Instalments 3 to 9 inclusive have been published and distributed every year from 1971 until 1978.

Instalment number 10 now follows.

CHAPTER 14
THE TENTH INSTALLMENT

“AN ODE TO THE REBBE SHLITA”

Happy are we, the Lubavitcher Chassidim,
That we have the Rebbe, who loves all Yidden,
For those whose own personal needs he has not a care,
But with all Klal Yisroel their worries he does share,
He implores us, “keep the Mitzvos” for our own special good,
Let us heed this lesson, ah – if only we would.
There are so many Jews, who lack Hebrew education,
We should teach them the Torah, and thus save the Jewish nation.
For those poor little children everywhere and in the USA,
The Rebbe for their welfare to the A’mighty does pray.
There are 10 Mitzvah campaigns with which to commence,
Now here follows the list, it sure makes sense.

A most wonderful Mitzvah is to love another Jew,
Because if all follow this example, you will be loved too.

We must emphasise the importance of Hebrew education,
It is the very basis and savior of the Jewish nation.

It is also vital that the Mitzvahs we should understand,
So we should study the Torah and obey G-d’s command.

When a Jew puts on a Tefillin upon his head and arm,
He will be assured that he won’t come to any harm.

A kosher Mezuzah should be placed on all doorposts,
For a house to receive the protection of the L-rd G-d of H-sts.

Coins should be placed in a box for the poor,
So that all will be ready when they knock on the door.

The home should be filled with holy Hebrew books,
Then the Torah atmosphere will pervade even the crannies and nooks.

If women and girls will light candles Friday night,
Peace and harmony will prevail with the home sparkling and bright.

Our spiritual existence depends on the food we eat
So make certain of the Kashrus of all your drinks and meat.

We rely on Jewish women to keep the family purity,
And thus ensure that the Jewish nation will last until eternity.

In conclusion, let your actions speak clear and loud,
So that the Rebbe and every Jew of you will be proud.

Let us tell the world, our hearts will sing,
The Rebbe is our leader, the Rebbe is our king.

Roselyn has already pointed out to me that this Tenth Installment will obviously contain repetition of some facts mentioned in previous editions.

Well, we spend all our lives doing almost the same things each day.

One consumes food daily, but would become sick and tired of the same meals every day. A good cook, working with the identical ingredients, will vary the menus very substantially.

I must take a lesson from the Rebbe, who does the same things regularly, but each action takes on a new emphasis, a new dimension and a different inspiration.

We find a similar example in Bamidbar, Chapter 8, verse 3, which states "Aaron did so." (As he was commanded.) Rashi comments that this is in great praise of Aaron, who lit the candles every day for thirty nine years, yet he did this action at the latter end of these thirty nine years with the same fervor, enthusiasm and freshness as he did on the very first day.

We also find this enthusiasm and freshness in everything that the Rebbe does.

CHAPTER 15
OUR FLIGHT TO NEW YORK

“FOOD FOR THOUGHT”

Avrohom’s eldest children would soon be celebrating important events in their lives. Our grandson, Chaim Dovid, was already putting on Teffillin - his Bar Mitzvah was in about six weeks’ time, and our granddaughter, Leah, would soon become Bas Mitzvah. It was decided that they should accompany Roselyn and me to Brooklyn in order to see the Rebbe and to receive a Brocha.

Zalmon Klyne, a young friend, also desired to see the Rebbe before his Bar Mitzvah. So we took a party of five to New York.

We traveled by Laker Airways direct from Manchester. Laker charge £5 extra for kosher meals. I paid £25 and received my letter of confirmation and receipt.

“Once upon a time,” Hilary and Shmuel went on a forty-minute plane journey from New York to Detroit. Because of frequent delays, they became stranded at the airport over Shabbos. All they had was - each others company - and a couple of Homantashen (Purim cakes.) They made Kiddush on Homantashen! In fact the whole menu was a Homantash.

A few months ago, Shmuel traveled home from New York to London by British Airways. He left Kennedy Airport on Wednesday night. It was during the worst weather of a bad winter and because of heavy snow in London, the plane was diverted and landed at Shannon Airport in Ireland on Thursday morning. By Thursday night they were still stranded at this airport, so Shmuel together with many others was taken to bed in a hotel in Limerick.

By Friday morning the runways at Heathrow had been cleared and planes were leaving Shannon for London at regular intervals. But not - British Airways - whose snow clearers were on strike. Shmuel was told throughout the day, not to worry about his Sabbath as the ‘plane would depart “any minute now.” He would be certain to arrive before the Sabbath. They were right - Shmuel just managed to get into the terminal lounge at Heathrow one minute before Shabbos - too late even to go to a nearby hotel.

By some miracle he still had in his possession a couple of Crown Heights ‘bulkies,’ left over from Wednesday night. They made very nice Shabbos meals. After a languid and languorous Shabbos, Shmuel arrived home on Saturday night.

He immediately wrote a very strong letter to British Airways and complained bitterly about their lack of information courtesy and general apathy towards their passengers’ welfare. He demanded compensation. The Airways replied - they were still apathetic. Shmuel wrote back – well, he now has a new occupation writing letters to British Airways. The score is 5 to 4 in Shmuel’s favour.

However - after all these experiences and our own too, Roselyn always makes and takes (albeit surreptitiously) sandwiches, “in case of emergency.”

The emergency had now arisen, because although we had our letter of confirmation, there was no Kosher food for us on Laker’s ‘plane.

Miss Jones, the Chief Stewardess, was particularly delighted to offer us a couple of forms (to register our complaint.) “We cannot eat forms,” I interrupted, “we need our food.” (This reminds me of a story which Hilary once related to me. A friend knocked on her door. She was making Sheva Brochas for a Chossen and Kallah, and “could Shmuel come along and bench.” Hilary wanted to know whether Shmuel had to eat at home first, it seemed rather an odd request. “Oh, no!” replied her friend, “they did not want Shmuel at all - they only wanted the bench - the form - to sit upon.”)

Miss Jones offered us vegetarian meals. Chaim Dovid was indignant - he said their vegetarian food was “even worse than eating chazir.” She did her best, plied us with orange juice, tomato juice, coca cola, and lemonade. For the next six hours we had this same menu - lemonade, coca cola, tomato and orange juice. We were certainly not thirsty when we landed at Kennedy Airport.

We arrived at our destination at 10.30pm on Sunday night (3.30am our British time.)

We had five reasons for wanting to stay overnight at the Holiday Inn Airport Hotel, rather than to go on to Crown Heights that evening. The first was - that we had nowhere to stay. "Thank you," the other reasons don't matter!!

Leah was delighted with her room. It had its own bathroom and toilet, television set (which Avrohom does NOT possess at home) radio and many other small luxuries. She imagined that she would be staying at a similar place during her visit to Crown Heights. She was due for a rude awakening.

"ARRIVAL AT '770.' THANKS TO G-D"

Next morning, Monday, Dovid and I were at '770' to listen to the laying in the Rebbe's presence.

I was very pleased to see that the Rebbe looked very well (KAH) after his recent illness. He had lost a little weight and was gradually getting back to his old routine.

The Rebbe, as usual, had the third Aliya after which I stepped forward to the Torah in order to bench Gomel (give thanks to G-d for a safe journey) and I was given the honour of Hagbah.

Dovid had never made this Brocha before. He was not yet Bar Mitzvah, although he was already putting on Tefillin. Everyone was expressing opinions. Some maintained that Dovid did not have to make the Brocha, others said that he did. Rabbi Chadakov was philosophical and declared that a "Zaidie had to look after his grandson and especially should bring him closer to the Torah. When a Zaidie goes to the Torah, then he should take his grandson with him - and therefore Dovid should bench Gomel softly and quietly at the same time that I was making the Brocha."

This has already set a precedent, for on the following day, which was Rosh Chodesh, another fellow went to the Bimah to bench Gomel and HIS son accompanied him too, and also made the Brocha quietly.

Actually, I was told later on by Rabbi Dvorkin that according to the strict Halacha, din, a boy under Bar Mitzvah does not have to bench Gomel. This ruling was given too late, because everyone had followed our example and made the Brocha - in the presence of the Rebbe.

We had learnt that our apartment would not be available for us until 9.00pm that evening.

Poor Dovid was terribly upset. His jacket and cap were still packed away in the suitcases and we could not get them. So there he stood, dressed in his shirt and wearing a Yarmulke facing the Rebbe,

The Rebbe had given me a most beautiful smile, full of significance and meaning - to me anyway.

The Rebbe had subjected Dovid to a searching and thorough examination - so said Dovid and he (Dovid) was a little perturbed and worried. Because - Yossi Turk had confided to him that "the Rebbe can see 'right through people' and that is the main reason why all the boys rush away and hide whenever the Rebbe appears. The Rebbe can tell at a glance whether they are learning or not." Obviously, they are afraid that the 'truth will out' and so they all run away.

I had sent in a copy of 'My Encounter' together with some enclosures to the Rebbe. Within an hour before he went to the Ohel, I had received the Rebbe's "Thank you, thank you very much."

Hilary arrived that evening from London. She brought with her four of our granddaughters - Golda Rivka, Channah, Zelda Rochel and baby Shaindel. They decided to have most of their meals with us at our apartment. It was more convenient - for them! Both Dovid and Leah were staying with us and Avrohom was due to arrive on Thursday.

Almost every day, just before Mincha, Hilary would stand in the hallway near the Beth Hamedrash, with her four girls and Leah and wait to see the Rebbe.

The Rebbe, looking KAH very fit and well, stopped when he saw them, and handed to each of the girls a coin to put into the Tzedoka box. On Thursday there were seven little girls waiting. The Rebbe, as usual, thanked each girl - even baby Shaindel. On another occasion there were fourteen children and babies outside the Beth Hamedrash, The Rebbe 'ran out of change' but Label (Groner) came to the rescue. The Rebbe again thanked all the children and a special "Thank you" to Hilary for assisting the baby to put the coin into the box.

One day over forty people were waiting in the hallway. Leah was the only girl present. The Rebbe gave her a lovely smile and also three coins to put into the box.

Yechiel Vogel told me that the Rebbe spoke to a woman as he walked through to the Beth Hamedrash. Everyone was anxious to learn what the Rebbe had said to her. She was embarrassed, but admitted that the Rebbe had rebuked her because her grandson 'played about' in Shul and never answered Amen and Yehai Shemai Rabboh. The Rebbe notices everything.

I came to the conclusion that Dovid should now wear a proper mans hat, because he was almost Bar Mitzvah. Dovid insisted that his flat school cap was the ideal headgear. I pretended that I needed to buy a new hat for myself, and then I would try and persuade Dovid to accept one as well.

The Rebbe had advised a certain Lubavitcher to open a hat shop in Kingston Avenue, so we entered therein. I take a size seven. The owner tried to sell me a six and seven eight (I cannot think why.) "So," he admitted, "it is too small, so what?" He imagined that because his shop was called Uforatzto that this small hat would also spread out and would ultimately fit me.

I bought Dovid a nice hat. He accepted this only on condition that he did not have to wear it. For the following two weeks he did keep it on, but he continuously threatened to replace it with his little flat school cap.

We met Zally Unsdorfer in this shop. I could see that he was wearing his 'Yeshiva boy hat,' because it needed a jolly good clean up. The proprietor was offering to steam clean all hats belonging to Yeshiva boys free of charge - but - very few were taking advantage of this offer. Zally informed me that the Rebbe had told him to go home and take a position in education or Rabbonus. Within six months he was appointed Rav of the largest Shul in England, in Ilford, and was married to a lovely girl.

Avrohom was expected on the following day. Dovid indicated that he wanted to write to the Rebbe, and ask for a Brocha. I refused to help in the composition of the letter nor give him any advice or hints.

He wrote as follows:

Dear Rebbe, (Shlita - in Hebrew)

"This is my first trip to America that I have been able to appreciate. I am enjoying it very much and I am delighted to see the Rebbe and have the Zechus of davening in his minyan.

I am staying with my Bobby and Zaidie at 1456 President Street.

Please could I have two Brochas? Firstly, that my father has a safe journey. (In Hebrew) Avrohom Yoseph Ben Yacha Raize, and secondly, could I have a Brocha for my Bar Mitzvah which is Parshas Bolok (in Hebrew) and my birthday is 16th of Tammuz, that I should be successful in my learning."

Every day Rabbi Chadakov reprimanded me - he maintained that I should send Dovid and Leah to Yeshiva Ohel Torah whilst they were here. I said that I would wait until Thursday, when Avrohom will arrive. Rabbi Chadakov retorted that they should learn every day, not have to wait until Thursday. "In any case," he added, "you are responsible for Dovid." "No," I countered "only for Avrohom." "For both," answered Rabbi Chadakov.

I took Dovid to the Mikveh. As in Manchester, he first of all had a good shower, then a dip into the Mikveh. He then wanted to go under the shower once again 'because' he remarked, "the Mikveh did not look too clean!" As we say in Lancashire, "you can't do that there 'ere!"

Hilary, together with Sandy Weinbaum, wrote a marvelous article about Mikvaos, which was printed in the 'Jewish Chronicle.' One relevant and excellent point which was emphasised was that "many women considered going to the Mikvah was for hygienic reasons, therefore, they might as well use the bath in their own homes." But, it was stressed and pointed out that before one went into the Mikveh one had to be absolutely clean - thoroughly washed - and then - only after this, could one immerse oneself in the Mikveh.

CHAPTER 16

MINI ENCOUNTERS

On Thursday the Rebbe went again to the Ohel. We were all waiting outside to see the Rebbe departing. I thought it would be nice to open the car door for the Rebbe, but Yudel (Rabbi Krinsky) would not let me - only he is allowed to open the door for the Rebbe. But - I could open it when the Rebbe returned. I could well understand the logic of this, because when they returned, Yudel would be driving the car, and before even Yudel would have the chance to leave his seat, the Rebbe would have opened the door himself and already alighted.

Therefore, I told the Rebbe that I was losing my job. He smiled and said, "I have already given you a lovely smile and you have not sung a nigun." So I commenced "Hoshea ess Amehcho."

Afterwards, at the Koss Shel Brocha the Rebbe said, "Every time I smile at you, you start to dance." I said, "Who would not dance for joy if and when the Rebbe smiled at one?" The Rebbe said that I had misunderstood his remarks. What he had stated was "that ONLY every time that I smile do you START to dance."

We had the pleasure of meeting the Rebbe when he entered '770,' on most of the days that we were at Crown Heights. Normally I stood at the doorway of '770' with Leah or Golda Rivka, whilst Dovid remained at the gateway near the pavement.

At one time I stood on the pavement and The Rebbe asked, "Where is the Bar Mitzvah?" Dovid had changed places and he was waiting near the door of '770.'

At 10.30am on Friday the Rebbe was ascending the steps and I said "Good morning and good Shabbos, Rebbe." The Rebbe answered, "This is the usual procedure, always meeting me."

I replied, "Thank G-d for that"

I was outside '770' with the children when, without warning, the Rebbe arrived. I said, "This is an unexpected pleasure." The Rebbe admitted that "it is a good beginning," entered the car and waved to all the children who were standing around. We met the Rebbe at 9.30am on both days of Yom Tov. He greeted Leah, Golda Rivka and me with Good Yom Tov and a brilliant smile. Dovid had already received his rations because, as usual, he waited on the pavement. At last I began to understand Dovid's objective and scheme - he received a greeting and smile from the Rebbe - all for himself and alone.

Leah very much wanted to take a photograph of the Rebbe with her new camera. The Rebbe actually posed for her whilst she took the picture, and afterwards waved to her.

Mr. Flaxman of the Levi Yitzchok Library in Kingston Avenue had always impressed upon me how much my 'Encounter' was treasured and how great was the demand on it by borrowers.

Therefore I took along three copies this year in order to meet this great-anticipated demand. I went to the bookshelves to have a look at my last year's edition. It was conspicuous by its absence. Mr. Flaxman regretted that it had not yet been bound - there were hundreds of volumes waiting to be done, and "I cannot allow such a valuable item to leave the library without being properly bound."

But, he had a very good idea and "the Rebbe would love it." I should give him money and he would get my books expertly bound immediately, and everybody would be happy, because "there is a good call for these 'Encounters' of yours." Well, what could I do? I paid.

Yoseph Carlebach suggested that I should charge for them. "If you sell them for a dollar, you will make a small fortune." I agree - I published 150 copies - I have at least 50 special friends from whom I would not accept any payment - 50-100 copies at one dollar each IS a small, a very small fortune.

It gives me much more pleasure to receive sincere and glowing letters of thanks and congratulations from my special fans who encourage me to carry on writing and look forward to the next installment.

Unfortunately, I only receive two. From Walter Hubert and from Peter Kalms. I really do appreciate their letters.

Little Aaron Groner, aged six and a half years, pleaded with me to translate it into Yiddish.

My loyal American fan - Tzvi Fisher - said that this installment was “better than ever.” He was chuckling and laughing out loud and felt silly and embarrassed - but “it was just lovely,” Yossi Turk, aged 13 years, enjoyed it immensely, but he had “hard work dodging the Sichas and Rashi questions.”

Tzvi Fisher was so delighted with my ‘Diary’ that he presented me with a copy of HIS new diary. He reads this diary almost all day long. It is the new publication of the Lubavitcher Siddur, leather bound, and with my name printed in gold letters on the cover. It was something that I had always wanted.

Incidentally, one of the finest books which the Merkos L’Inyonei Chinuch of Lubavitch, Brooklyn has ever produced was brought out recently. It was the new Siddur with English translation. It is a credit to the production team, to the translators and to Lubavitch.

It is magnificent and my wife and all housewives in particular will find it invaluable - not only to be able to understand their prayers - but - just as important - what prayers to say and when to say them. Congratulations to all concerned.

The telegraphic address of the Merkos L’inyonei Chinuch is obviously - HAMELECH New York, (the King, New York.)

“KINUS HATORAH”

Once again Rabbi Mentelik insisted that I should address the boys at the Kinus Hatorah on Isru Chag (the day after Yom Tov.)

I explained to him that I did not want a repetition of what happened the previous year, when the boys complained that I had spoken at an awkward time and they had to leave in order to partake of their meals. It was important that I commence my talk by 6.00pm at the latest. The boys simply had to leave at 6.45pm. They had no alternative.

When I entered, the Shul hall, Rabbi Elberg was still going strong. He had been speaking for a long time, but - I was lucky - for he concluded at 5.45pm.

But - to my utter dismay - Rabbi Mentelik called upon a Rabbi from Kfar Chabad, Israel to say a few words. He whispered to me that this Rabbi would not speak for very long.

Six o’clock, five past, ten past six - and the Rabbi from Kfar Chabad seemed set to speak for another hour at least. I signified to Rabbi Mentelik that it would be advisable to leave my talk over until after the ‘file past the Rebbe’ at about 8.30pm.

We were arguing about this, when another altercation arose. It was an argument between the speaker and his audience. They had taken exception to some of his remarks, observations and conclusions. First one boy interrupted with a question, then another joined in, until about 20 boys were arguing with and flinging questions at him. They showed in no uncertain manner that they disagreed with his definitions, quotations and conclusions.

At 6.15 the Rabbi from Kfar Chabad, Israel abruptly ended his speech. He left the Shtender, infuriated and in a ‘huff,’ and it - was my turn. The 200 boys listened intently and attentively until I ended at 6.45pm.

Besides reading excerpts from one of my previous ‘Encounters’ which all enjoyed immensely, I told them the following stories.

This year we had brought with us another grandson to see the Rebbe, just before his Bar Mitzvah. He was Chaim Dovid Jaffe.

As was customary he also desired to possess the Tehillim which had been used by the Rebbe. I was becoming tired of this problem every year, so I explained to Dovid what he had to do and he should himself carry out these instructions.

“Well,” he reported to me, “it was easy.” “I placed it on the Rebbe’s Shtender and after the service I collected it - was that simple.”

At that very moment a young boy asked Dovid if he would lend him this Tehillim for a few minutes. He wished to have the Zechus of saying the day's portion in the Rebbe's Sefer. Dovid felt sorry for him and out of Ahavas Yisroel (loving one's fellow Jew) he let him borrow it on the condition that he would put it back on to a certain bench which had already been pointed out to him.

The next result was that the boy disappeared, the Tehillim disappeared and even the bench disappeared. All Dovid could remember was that the boy wore a gray suit.

Dovid refused to accept defeat. He obtained another Tehillim and again placed it on the Rebbe's Shtender. I told Dovid to write his name inside the cover. Avrohom advised against it. He maintained that the name should be written in, after the Rebbe had used it. This did not make sense. The Rebbe proved me right, because when he picked up the Tehillim, he opened the cover to discover to whom it belonged.

After the service Dovid picked it up - when - lo and behold -another boy came along and asked to borrow it. "Enough is enough" Dovid held on to it whilst the boy was saying Tehillim and then realised that it was the same lad. He was disguised. He had changed his suit.

Dovid intended to take this Tehillim snatcher to the Beth Din - but I believe that Dovid settled the case 'out of court' to his entire satisfaction and pleasure.

I told the boys about my friend the "Gabai" D.M. He was extremely tired. He had attended a wedding the previous evening but he really could not spare the time. Consequently he had to work almost until daybreak. I asked him whose wedding it was. He replied that it was "Wolf's across the street." I intimated that I would have also have gone to the wedding if I would have received an invitation.

DM expressed surprise - "the invitation was on the wall - for everyone!" I indicated that wall invitations were all right for Peking but not for New York.

Someone interrupted and joked "You should wait until you get a personal invitation," DM countered "If I had to wait for a personal invitation it would be an 'Och and Vay.'

Anyway, poor DM is kept busy. There is another wedding invitation for him on the wall. It would drive me UP THE WALL!

After I left the hall I met my friend Baruch Halberstrum. He asked me if I had seen his Tehillim. He had lent it to a boy in a brown suit. Jokes!! It seemed that there were twenty of them upstairs in a room listening to the recording. I will admit that after speaking for half an hour to the boys, my mouth was absolutely dry. I found it difficult to talk. I do not know how the Rebbe KAH manages to talk for six hours without a drink.

A boy approached me and said, "I am from Delaware, near Washington I would like to tell you, Mr. Jaffe, how much I enjoyed your talk, sir."

I walked out of the building. A Chuppah had been erected outside '770.' Rabbi J.J. pounced upon me - he was looking for a Chazan (a cantor) to chant "Mi Adir" to sing to the Chosson and Kallah. I had to refuse!

Yankel Tuvia Rappaport from Toronto told me the story of a man who went to '770' for an Aufruf. Suddenly in the middle of layenning everybody started to pelt the Baal Koreh with all sorts of things. He concluded that the Baal Koreh had made a mistake and they were all showing their disapproval. He had never seen the custom of throwing sweets at the Chosson.

Rabbi Sender Liberow informed me that he asked the Rebbe which dates are good, lucky for weddings.

He was told that the whole months, of Kislev, Adar and Ellul were appropriate. On the rest of the months, the wedding should take place during the first half. If one has a valid and good reason for wanting the marriage to take place during the second half of Shevat, one needed to obtain three Rabbonim to OK it, otherwise it must be left over until the following month - Adar.

"GOOD SERVICE"

At 9.30am on Yom Tov morning we greeted the Rebbe as he entered '770.' Shacharis commenced as usual at 10.00am but the Rebbe was not present. He has the best of medical advisors and most of the time - he obeyed their instructions. I also obeyed the Rebbe's instructions and sang "Aderess." There were scores of Frenchmen at the service. They had come from Paris, Marseilles, Lyon, Rouen, Lille, Nancy, Nice and Cannes, and they were accompanied by their wives and families. Therefore, on the second day I encouraged them to sing "Aderess" in the French tune.

We expected the Rebbe to join us for Hallel and he arrived as the Chazan was ending the Amidah, and to ensure that the congregation would not have to wait, he came just in time to stop the Chazan from saying Kaddish BEFORE Hallel.

Everybody was pleased because it could not have happened to a 'better' guy. Thousands of people were davening with the Rebbe on Yom Tov in this vast Shul and auditorium. At a special farbrengen there would be present between 5,000 and 6,000 - what a contrast to the first time when we visited the Rebbe twenty years ago, and about 200 to 300 people davened with the Rebbe. This was before the Shul was extended and extended to the huge area which it is today.

On the second day I was given Hagbah. It was with the tiny Sefer Torah, so I managed that quite well. When I have an Aliya, I always follow the Rebbe back to my seat, it is the best, safest and quickest way to return.

In this instance I had to lead the way, because I was carrying the Maftir Torah back to the Oran Hakodesh. All the congregants converged upon me. I could hardly move. Before me everyone was kissing, kissing, kissing (the Sefer Torah) whilst behind me everyone was hissing, hissing, hissing - "Hurry along, push along. Don't keep the Rebbe waiting." It became a dangerous and hazardous occupation.

(I am pleased that the Rebbe is taking notice of his doctors. In fact, I have since heard reports that the Rebbe is T.G. now carrying out all his duties, in the same efficient manner as he did before his illness.)

At Maariv, when the boys had gone marching to Boro Park and other venues, I was surprised to see so many people present. I noticed that the Rebbe's carpet was still rolled up. So I took charge. The Rebbe arrived and stopped at the Omud - they had forgotten to put the lights on. A policeman who was standing outside '770' obliged. Then at the wrong time I helped the Rebbe to move his chair - and received a quizzical look for my pains.

The Rebbe is extremely meticulous and always shows a good example. I once saw him bend down and pick up a piece of paper which was littering the floor. There were plenty of red faces but - no more paper on the floor!!

The farbrengen on Shovuos commenced at 8.15. Before the Rebbe arrived, Label (Rabbi Groner) made an announcement. There was obviously no microphone so everyone had to remain absolutely quiet in order that all the thousands of people would be able to hear the Rebbe. The Rebbe had to conserve his strength, and no one wanted to bear the responsibility of causing the Rebbe to speak louder and become ill G.F. Furthermore, one should say L'chaim to the Rebbe only once.

Well, in the event it was a very freilech farbreng. The Rebbe made me work hard. Singing (or shouting) clapping my hands, jumping up and down - and - saying L'chaim at the Rebbe's behest. The Rebbe asked me to sing "Aderess" and I let the Frenchies take over - they were delighted. The farbrengen ended at 10.45 - two and a half hours duration. We davened Maariv, the Rebbe made Havdola and then distributed Koss Shel Brocha to all the assembly.

I wrote in my notes that this was the end of an era - of long farbrengen, of giving drink to a Chosson and to a Bar Mitzvah boy. How wrong I was! T.G. Over the past year the Rebbe has progressed from strength to strength. He broadcasts to the world after every Shabbos Mevorchim. These are getting longer and longer and - more frequent too. Recently, the Rebbe broadcast four times in one week.

Last winter we used to receive the Shiddur in Manchester at 12.30am (7.30pm New York time) which was quite a good hour for us, for Europe and for Israel. But - in California - it was still Shabbos. I

believe that before the Shabbos they set the recording machine and telephone in order to receive the Shiddur. That is the reason why we now receive the broadcast in summer at 3.30am!!

On Thursday Isru Chag, the day after Shovuos, it was announced that although the Rebbe was not holding any private Yechidus, he would like to see all the visitors, individually at 8.00pm and to give them a Brocha.

It would take the form of a 'file past.' At 8.00pm precisely about 300 men, women and children were allowed to walk slowly, in procession past the Rebbe who was seated at a table in the doorway of his study.

The column started outside '770,' walked through the side door progressed past the Rebbe's study and out again through the front door. It took about an hour for everyone to file past the Rebbe.

Roselyn, Avrohom and Hilary and the children were all in the procession. When we reached the Rebbe, we noticed that he had two large bundles of new one-dollar bills neatly stacked on either side of the table - like a cashier in a bank. The Rebbe was paying out cash and blessing. Our Lubavitcher leader was setting an example - to show us that one should first bless a Jew with actual material wealth and secondly, to give a Brocha for spiritual welfare.

The Rebbe turned to Roselyn and said "Thank you for coming and P.G. I will see you next year." He requested Roselyn to help me with the diary, and as it will be the tenth installment - it should contain one hundred pages.

I said that it depended on the Rebbe, I could only write about what I saw and heard. The Rebbe admitted that I was correct when I stated that we used to enjoy very long farbrengen and that Yechidus took place from 8.00pm until 8.00am, and so there had been plenty about which to write. The Rebbe added that there would be a farbreng next Shabbos. I took the opportunity to extend a Brocha to the Rebbe for many long years with good health.

The Rebbe handed Roselyn and me five dollars each. He turned to Avrohom and asked him when he intended to return home. Avrohom replied that he was not sure but, *efshar* (maybe) he will stay until after Shabbos, the Rebbe was pleased and said "a *glaike zach*." (A good idea.)

Avrohom phoned Susan and got a good 'telling off,' (but it was well worth it!)

Once again, we had the honour and privilege of being received by our Rebbetzen. Hilary and the children came along too, with Dovid and Leah. Dovid confided, "She looks just as a Queen should look." I asked him to elaborate so he added, "she is dignified and charming and - well she looks like a Queen."

Leah remarked "She seems very, very clever."

We had the usual concert party. Golda Rivka and Leah sang a duet, Channah chanted the Rebbe's new nigun, Zelda Rochel sang the Rebbe's old nigun, and Shaindel just sang and shouted. Dovid gave a summary of his Bar Mitzvah *drosha* and Leah rendered a solo. All very good indeed.

We had a nice chat, ice cream, tea and cake, and left after a very delightfully pleasant two hours.

"THE STORY OF THE ESROG"

As I have mentioned on more than one occasion the Rebbe does not keep the congregation waiting.

Myer Harlig related this story about the Rebbe's Esrog. Everyone wants the *Zechus* to make a Brocha with this Esrog. In fact, I was told of the gentleman who benched with the Rebbe's Esrog, but later admitted that he had already made this Brocha. He was asked what was the reason for making it again. "Well," he replied, "if the Rebbe has sent his Esrog especially for me, I must not let him down, I have to help with the Mitzvah."

One day, in Shul, someone accidentally broke the *Pitum*, the top of the fruit. When the Chazan had ended the repetition of the *Amida*, the Rebbe asked him "if he would mind waiting for a few minutes, whilst he obtained another Esrog." The Rebbe went to his room and sent a messenger to borrow one

from his Rebbetzen. Afterwards, someone asked the Rebbe whether he could borrow it, the Rebbe answered that “one cannot lend an Esrog which has already been borrowed from someone else.”

I was in Israel one year, and I obtained an Esrog direct from the tree, from a friend. I forwarded this to the Rebbe and he acknowledged this as follows:

“I want to thank you also for your good will to send me an Esrog which, you yourself plucked from the tree on your recent visit to Eretz Yisroel. However, you surely know that an Esrog must be one that is NOT MURKOV, that is to say, that grows on a tree which had not been crossed with another species, and we use Esrogim concerning which we have a tradition that they meet this requirement. So, the first qualification of an Esrog is not so much where it comes from, but the certainty that it is not a murkov. Unfortunately, the place you mention is one of which I never heard that it should have that tradition, and even in Eretz Yisroel itself the Esrogim usually come from other places, but not the one you mention. Obviously, where this essential matter is in doubt, there is the question of making ‘a blessing in vain’ and above all, the doubt whether the Mitzvah of Esrog will be fulfilled. I trust that you, too have ordered for yourself an Esrog, which is definitely not murkov, and Anash surely know how and where to get such Esrogim.”

Myer Harlig informed me that the Medrash recounts that Moses wanted to know what was an Esrog. So G-d showed him the place where they were growing - in Calabria, southern Italy.

“SOME FARBRENGEN”

On the first Shabbos afternoon the Rebbe held a farbrengen. This was the first time since his illness that the Rebbe was farbrenging on the actual Shabbos. He gave over to us a very complicated Rashi Sicha. The Rebbe requested me to count the number of questions. It is my regular job now. I was very careful, but the Rebbe has a habit of asking questions on the questions. However, he turned to me and asked me “How many now?” I replied “Eleven.” “Good,” said the Rebbe, “we have more than a minyan, and the twelfth question is “ I heaved a sigh of relief. I was not 100% sure but the Rebbe never lets me down and covers up any mistakes that I might have made.

After Maariv, Label (Groner) informed me that the Rebbe would be coming outside to “mekadesh halevoneh” - new moon. He advised me to “stay here Zalmon and don’t get lost.” Because of this, Dovid and I had the Zechus to stand near the Rebbe during this service and receive - each of us individually - the Rebbe’s Brocha of “Sholom Aleichem” to which we replied “Aleichem Sholom.”

On the following Saturday night, we reverted to the now-normal type of farbreng which was broadcast around the world.

The short-wave radio sets were on hire, which enabled one to listen to the simultaneous translation. It seems that we can thank a certain Charlie Diamond of Canada for originating this good idea. He is a very wealthy man and he attended a farbreng at ‘770.’ He begged the Rebbe to recite at least one Sicha in the English language. When he was told that this was not possible, he proposed that simultaneous translation, as was operated at the United Nation Headquarters, should be arranged at ‘770.’ Zalmon Grossbaum, the Shaliach in Toronto organised this with Tzach (Lubavitch Youth Organisation) in New York.

Roselyn in the women’s gallery was using a set. She could not understand one word. She asked her neighbour who also possessed a set, what was the gist of the translation. She admitted that she did not understand a word, either. There were different translations each on their own ‘closed circuit’ wavelength. Roselyn probably had her set tuned into Ivrit, French or Italian.

The Rebbe called me upto the ‘top table’ and handed me a bottle of vodka “for Manchester.” He poured some of the wine from his goblet into the vodka bottle and then poured the mixture into a small glass for me to say ‘L’chaim.’

The Rebbe then handed a bottle to Avrohom - who was accompanied by Dovid - for Dovid’s Bar Mitzvah - they also said L’chaim. The Rebbe then presented me with a bottle of vodka to take home to Noach Vogel on the occasion of his Bar Mitzvah. (I had asked the Rebbe to allow me this Shalichus.)

Finally the Rebbe gave a bottle to Zalmon Klyne, the boy whom we had brought with us from Manchester, also on the occasion of his Bar Mitzvah.

I was informed that since his illness the Rebbe had ceased to present Mashkoh to Bar Mitzvah boys or to Chassonim. This, then was to first time that the Rebbe had recommenced this old established and lovely custom - may it continue till to Rebbe's 121st birthday - or until the revelation of our Righteous Moshiach.

CHAPTER 17

HISTORY OF THE TANYA PUBLICATION

The very first Tanya was printed in Slavita, Russia 183 years ago in 1796. It contained parts 1 and 2 only, and 40,000 copies were sold in just over three years.

The second publication was of part 3 and was printed in Zalkevi, three years later in 1799.

During the next fifteen years there were ten further editions printed in Zalkevi and in Shklov, until 1814.

Over the ensuing fifty years, until 1864, nineteen editions were produced mainly in Koenigsburg, Altona, Lemberg, Vienna and Lvov.

In the next seventy years, until 1940 thirteen publications were produced - all in Vilna.

During the war years Munkatsh, Shanghai (China) and Tel Aviv each produced a copy. In 1947, Munich in Germany were the printers.

For the eleven years until 1938 all the printing was done in Brooklyn and then Kfar Chabad took over with eighteen editions till 1978. In between we had copies produced in Melbourne, Australia; Garba, Tunisia; Montreal, Canada; London, England; Faid, West Bank of Suez Canal; Old City of Jerusalem, Hebron, Israel.

The Special Bilingual Tanya - Hebrew and English was produced in London, England in 1973. It still remains the only one of its kind ever to be published.

The Rebbe gave out an edict, that the Tanya should be printed in every country in the world and that this will hasten the revelation of our Righteous Moshiach. In that year - 1978 - forty five editions of the Tanya were printed in forty five countries, a remarkable achievement - eighty one editions printed in 182 years - and then forty five all in one year.

Here is the list

Casablanca, Morocco	Seoul, Korea
London, England	Kfar Kilaya, Lebanon
Nachlas Kfar Chabad, Israel	Singapore
Antwerp, Belgium	Oslo, Norway
Amsterdam, Holland	Kfar Chabad, Israel
Mexico City, Mexico	Safad, Israel
Zurich, Switzerland	Buenos Aires, Argentina
Hamburg, West Germany	Sau Paulo, Brazil
Stockholm, Sweden	Milan, Italy
Madrid, Spain	Johannesburg, South Africa
Lisbon, Portugal	Caracas, Venezuela
Budapest Hungary	Copenhagen, Denmark
Athens, Greece	Helsinki, Finland
Hong Kong	Paris, France
Tokyo, Japan	Gibraltar
Bangkok, Thailand	Belgrade, Yugoslavia
Dublin, Ireland	Wellington, New Zealand
Santiago, Chile	Bombay, India

Montevideo, Uruguay

Taipei, Taiwan

Vienna, Austria

Bogota, Colombia

Teheran, Iran

Zemach Zedek, Jerusalem

Nicosia, Cyprus

Brooklyn, New York (twice)

I can only repeat – it is an impressive and remarkable achievement for one year.

CHAPTER 18

GIRLS' GRADUATION CEREMONY

The Rebbe normally visits the Ohel on the 13th of Sivan but that date this year coincided with the Girls' Graduation Ceremony which took place at '770.' The Rebbe was to address them at 4.00pm. About 700 girls and their teachers congregated in the Shul hall where the men normally sit. Roselyn joined them and I was ordered to go up to the womens' gallery.

The Rebbe spoke for about half an hour and made the following observation. There is only ONE G-D and He is the Boss, the Master of the Universe. He created Adam - one man alone - who was equal in importance to the whole world. A Jewish child is also as important to the whole world. Man has a brain and can even make a god of himself. But there must be no other gods, heaven forbid. We are told that we dare not make gods of silver, gold, money or even of Kovod (honour.)

The Rebbe continued that we are now beginning to learn Perek (Ethics). The first statement we read is that Moses received the Torah from Sinai. This teaches us that Moses received it direct from G-d - and not from another man or person, with whom one can argue according to his intellect.

We learn further, that before giving a verdict on a Din or Halacha all aspects have to be examined very carefully and minutely, after which, we are enjoined to establish many Talmidim in order to hand down this Halacha. We cannot, must not, alter the Torah; there must be no compromises and no arguments - that is the law. The Reform and Conservatives say that we should alter the Torah to suit modern conditions. That would be fatal - therefore we are warned to make a fence around the Torah.

The Anshei Kenesses Hagdolah (the men of the Great Assembly) were responsible for clarifying the Dinim and teachings and our teachers today have a direct connection with them.

Even a very good child with an excellent character, has to be guided by a teacher. If the teacher is uncertain whether a child will receive any Hebrew education during the forthcoming summer months, it is his or her duty to help them and provide this service.

The Rebbe concluded by wishing that all the teachers should have much success and obtain many Talmidim and "The A'mighty should bless you all - children, teachers and leaders. If you work hard with enthusiasm, happiness and joy then you will succeed even more than you expect."

I now wish to log a strong complaint and protest - on behalf of all the women at the lack of proper facilities in the Ladies' Gallery. It is a real Mesiras Nefesh (self-sacrifice) for them to attend a farbrengen and try to listen to the Rebbe. The men downstairs may be comfortably seated or packed tightly, standing against each other, but at least they can see and hear the Rebbe.

Here, I was in the Ladies' Gallery. There were not many men present and I had a good choice of seats.

Well, if I leaned back I could see nothing and hear a little. If I leaned forward I could see the Rebbe through a dark haze. If I wanted to ensure that I could see and hear the Rebbe properly then I had to stand up, strain my head well forward and twist my neck under the small aperture which was left open under the black stained window partition. Or I could sit on the very edge of the bench, lean well forward and try and get my head under the aperture. If I was an international gymnast, or a contortionist, I might have managed, but unfortunately it was impossible for me to remain in such a distressing and painful position for any length of time. After a few minutes, it became unbearable and I had to lean back and rest.

When the place is crammed tight with women and girls, all anxious to be near the aperture or at least the partition, then it must be like a nightmare. The girls, in particular, show little respect or consideration for anyone at all. They push and stand on seats and on people without any qualms whatsoever. It is intolerable and I cannot understand why the ladies do nothing to ease the position.

CHAPTER 19

A BRIEF FAREWELL

We were leaving New York that evening to return home to Manchester. Therefore, it was necessary for us to depart from '770' immediately after this Graduation Ceremony in order to catch our 'plane from Kennedy Airport.

I had informed the Rebbe that we would bid him farewell after the ceremony and I had arranged to meet Roselyn and Leah outside '770,' so that we would see the Rebbe together.

Dovid and I searched for over fifteen minutes, but without success. It was difficult to find anybody in such a large turmoil of women, girls and few men. Eventually, we did locate them, we discovered that they had been waiting INSIDE '770' and had already seen the Rebbe and received a Brocha for a safe journey.

Dovid and I were distressed and disappointed at having missed the Rebbe. It was just too bad and we had to accept the inevitable,

During the morning I had confirmed that our flight would be leaving on time. As I went to obtain a taxi, a friend intimated that there were rumours that the Laker Airways flight was delayed. I 'phoned the Airlines and learned that our 'plane would be leaving a little late - six hours late to be exact.

This seemed very 'bashert' (fated) indeed. It enabled us to daven Maariv with the Rebbe and. - we might find an opportunity of saying farewell to the Rebbe after all!

After the Amida of Maariv, Dovid and I made our way to the hallway and stood by the door of the waiting room. The Rebbe emerged after Maariv and bade farewell to all those who had assembled in the hallway for that very purpose. He stopped near me and said, "How do I come to have the pleasure of seeing you again?" I indicated that I had not yet said "Goodbye" to the Rebbe." (Roselyn and Leah had done so) so, by Divine Providence, our 'plane was delayed for six hours, just in order so that Dovid and I should have this second chance.

By this time, as usual, a large crowd was hemming us in so the Rebbe opened the waiting room door and invited me inside for a ten minutes Yechidus. I looked around for Dovid, but the Rebbe reassured me and divulged that he had said farewell to Dovid in the hallway.

The Rebbe asserted that the airline was responsible for providing us with a hotel near the airport. I confirmed that they did offer us dinner and refreshments but they could not guarantee the Kashrus. We still had access to our apartment in President Street where we would rest until 2.00am until it was time to depart,

We discussed many communal and private matters. I mentioned a certain Rabbi in Manchester, who was a Misnaged (not Chossid) but was very good. The Rebbe remarked, "Even a Misnagid can be OK." The Rebbe revealed that he had sent Hilary back home to London for Shabbos, in order to look after the rest of the family, who had remained behind in London.

The Rebbe pointed out to me that now that I had a three hours wait, I could carry on writing my 'Encounter.' He confided that he liked the poem (first page of this tenth installment) very much indeed. "It is always good to start a diary or other work with a song. It is a very good beginning." I asked the Rebbe whether he had read my new 'Encounter' "Just the beginning," he answered "but, I have read the start of your next diary?!"

The Rebbe then said to me in English, "May G-d A'mighty bless you." He then added some exceptional blessings for good health and success in everything. He looked forward to us seeing each other next year P.G.

I responded with the hope and prayer that the Rebbe would be well and continue to improve and regain perfect health. I also concurred that I would look forward to seeing the Rebbe next Shovuos, if not sooner. On that note, I took my departure from the Rebbe.

CHAPTER 20

THREE BAR MITZVAH CELEBRATIONS

We had, KAH, three Bar Mitzvah celebrations this year. The first was for Chaim Dovid Jaffe, who had already accompanied us to see the Rebbe six weeks before his birthday.

The anniversary of his birth was on Friday, therefore, according to our custom, a Seudah, took place on Thursday evening for all the family and his Rabbis. Dovid recited his Maamer and Pilpul and words of Torah were said by other selected speakers.

The Rebbe does not encourage large Bar Mitzvah 'parties on the Shabbos, so no official invitations were issued. In any case, although Dovid layened the whole sedra, he did not have an Aliya, nor was he called up for Maftir, because according to Kaballa the first Aliya for a Bar Mitzvah must be at an 'Ais Rotzon' (a propitious time) - this 'good' time had to be on a Monday/Thursday morning or at Mincha on Shabbos.

Therefore, although there was a Kiddush on Shabbos morning in Dovid's honour, he had to wait until Mincha for his Aliya.

The festivities, at home, to which Avrohom and Susan had invited all their friends and relations took place three days later.

The second celebration was for Menachem Mendel Lew, Hilary's second son, and Shmuel took him to '770' to be called up. His birthday was also on a Friday. For over twelve months Shmuel had taken every opportunity to remind the Wardens at '770,' that Mendel required the Aliya at Mincha time on the Shabbos. There is only one Aliya to spare - but it was promised to Mendel.

Shmuel took with him Yossi, Pinchus and Yenta Chaya. I did not travel to Brooklyn because Erev Succos was on the following day. It was too risky to try and get home in time for Yom Tov. The festivities were continued in London when Shmuel and the children returned home.

On the Shabbos morning Shmuel was told that there was no spare Aliya for Mendel at Mincha time, because that warden, (who was not present now) had promised it to someone else. Shmuel was furious - but when he was offered an Aliya straight away - Shabbos morning - he accepted with alacrity. 'Chance is a fine thing.'

Much to his surprise, Mendel was again called up at Mincha time because this was the warden who had actually promised Shmuel the Aliya. So Mendel had two Aliyas at the Rebbe's Minyan at '770' on one day. Lucky boy!

The third Bar Mitzvah celebration took place in Israel. Besides all the wonderful work which Lubavitch is doing, Kfar Chabad has become renowned especially and in particular in Israel for the following three functions which are held there every year. One - Yud Tes Kislev, two - Motzei Simchas Torah and three - the Bar Mitzvah celebrations for those orphaned boys whose soldier fathers had been killed in the wars. The most successful function was always the Bar Mitzvah party.

It all started when Shifra Morozof lost her husband in the Six Day War. She was obviously tremendously upset; she went to visit the Rebbe to receive sympathy, comfort and consolation.

The Rebbe explained to her that there were hundreds of boys, all orphaned by the wars, and growing up. The Rebbe intimated to Shifra that every year she should gather together in Kfar Chabad all those boys who were, or had just become Bar Mitzvah and make a party for them. Why should they suffer, even more because they had lost their dads?

Actually, this party was the culmination of various activities including a seven-day stay at Kfar Chabad. The boys were billeted in pairs at private homes.

This year there were 99 Bar Mitzvah boys. I do know that is correct because I have an invitation which enumerates their names and addresses. They were treated like Princes. Arkia Airways and the Israeli Navy acted as their hosts for two outings. Eilat and Sharm el Sheikh were also visited. On Shabbos they remained in the village.

Roselyn and I arrived at Kfar Chabad at 5.00pm. The proceedings were due to commence at 6.30pm. We first visited our niece Malka Ederie and her children. At 6.00pm I was anxious to leave. Malka ridiculed my anxiety, indicated that these affairs never start on time and that none of the V.I.P.'s were expected to arrive before 7.00pm. In the past the President of Israel and many top generals were always conspicuous by their presence.

At 6.15 I was impatient to be gone. I took no chances and I arrived at the venue at 6.25.

I had always understood that these receptions took place indoors, in the presence of a few hundred people. Contrary to my expectation the party was being held outside in the open in the large square.

What a sight met my eyes! It was now almost dark but the whole area was lit up with hundreds, no - thousands - of electric lights, interspersed with coloured bulbs. Thirty-two table lengths were set out - each to seat over ninety people so there was seating capacity for over 3,000 people. At one table sat 90 cadets from the army. Around the table area stood, ultimately about 9,000 people. But the most impressive sight was the huge tiered platform facing the tables. It towered above the assembled gathering and seemed almost perpendicular. There were five rows of seats to sit 500 people, altogether, on this platform. Three of the rows had tables set in front of them. This huge platform was brilliantly lit by powerful floodlights which transformed the night into day. This gigantic platform was backed by a thirty foot (or more) boarding, on which was a large picture of the Rebbe, and painted in Hebrew was the fact that this was the Bar Mitzvah party. The 99 boys sat on one row and each had a name, printed in big letters on a card placed in front. The mothers of these boys were also on the platform and the guests of honour sat on the third row centre block. A twenty-foot scaffolding was built on one side to accommodate a five-piece orchestra.

Roselyn and I, with Malka and the children took the first available seats at the tables in the grounds, which were so vast that it was impossible to try and look for any friends. The tables were set with orange drinks, fruit and cakes. Cards, with the blessings to say on this food, were also provided.

First the Rebbe's letter sent for this occasion was broadcast. Then a message from Menachem Begin who apologised for his absence because he had to meet the US Secretary of State, was read out by the Deputy Director from the Ministry of Defense. Aluf (General) Moishe Levi of the Central Division and another General spoke for a few minutes each. Rabbi Ashkenasy of Kfar Chabad addressed us and said it was a Simcha for all of us and for the whole country. He also quoted the Sedra. The Chief Director from the Bank Leumi which provided the refreshments and paid for other things, also said a few words. There were a few further short speeches and finally one boy, representing all the Bar Mitzvahs replied and thanked everyone, especially for the Tefillin which they vowed to wear always so that "the nations will fear you."

In between every speech about a dozen men or boys danced in front of the platform in time to and singing the Lubavitcher tunes, played by the orchestra. A different dance formation for every nigun, the concluding dance consisted of each cadet (soldier) carrying on his shoulder one of the Bar Mitzvah boys, and dancing around the arena.

It was announced that the Rebbe had presented each boy with \$18 as a gift for themselves - not for Tzedoka. They received presents also from the army and from Lubavitch Youth Organisation. . A mother also gave her thanks to all concerned and how much they all appreciated what Chabad was doing for them.

All in all - a very, uplifting and impressive evening. Afterwards, Label Groner's son, Mendel found us. He had settled in Safad with forty other families. And so did Yossi Raitchik he seems to be everywhere, does this Yossi, KAH. Feigi Shem Tov and her husband also found us. They resided in Jerusalem.

CHAPTER 21
WOMEN OF WORTH

I was delighted to be Guest Speaker at the Girls' Camp Reunion in Manchester. I read this poem:

I am delighted to be present on this happy occasion,
To speak to girls – on whom depends the future of our nation.

A Jewish wife has always been a partner of equality,
Therefore she must prepare well and become – a lady of quality.

G-d told our ancestor Abraham in quite a categorical way,
To do what your wife, Sarah, tells you and listen to what she will say.

We learn that 'though Rebecca's mother and brother had to the Shidduch with Isaac agreed,
They wished to delay her departure; she said there was no need for such speed.

So they asked the maiden herself, as stated in verse fifty-seven,
Rebecca replied, I will go at once; it will be to me just like heaven.

Rashi points out that by what this is meant,
Is that a woman should not be given in marriage without her consent.

The Torah does not mince words, it states quite distinctly,
That Isaac loved Rebecca; it could not say it more succinctly.

Again, we learn in verse twenty, chapter twenty-nine,
That Jacob loved Rachel and said, "I must make her mine."

For seven long years he served her father, Lovon.
But those appeared in his eyes just as a few days gone.

Because his love for Rachel was so sincere and great,
And he desired her for his wife and constant mate.

Many years had now passed, Jacob was unhappy with Lovon,
He had endured nothing but trouble; it was time to be gone.

Return to the land of your fathers, the A'mighty did state,

Jacob arranged his departure; he could not afford to wait.

But first he had to discuss this matter with Rachel and Leah,
They were his mates and partners, he asked them to come near.

They decided to leave with their sons – the 12 tribes,
And off they went quickly, in spite of Lovon's jibes.

Our history proves categorically that girls carry our banner,
They follow the example of our mothers, as well as Miriam, Deborah and Channah.

Our beloved Rebbe has initiated a 'Ten Mitzvahs' campaign,
If we perform these most diligently, then much merit we shall gain.

The Rebbe stresses the importance – to girls of the last three,
You will soon realise why they are vital to you and to me.

You probably knew well these Ten Mitzvahs – and how!
But just to remind you, I shall read them to you now.

A most wonderful Mitzvah is to love another Jew,
Because if all follow this example, you will be loved too.

We must emphasise the importance of Hebrew education,
It is the very basis and savior of the Jewish nation.

It is also vital that the Mitzvahs we should understand,
So we should study the Torah and obey G-d's command.

When a Jew puts on Teffillin, upon his head and his arm,
He will be assured, that he won't come to any harm.

A kosher Mezuzah should be placed on all doorposts,
For a house to receive the protection of the L-rd G-d of H-sts.

Coins should be placed in a box for the poor,
So that all will be ready when they knock on the door.

The home should be filled with holy Hebrew books,
Then the Torah atmosphere will pervade even the crannies and nooks.

If women and girls will light candles Friday night,
Peace and harmony will prevail with the home sparkling and bright.

Our spiritual existence depends on the food we eat,
So make certain of the Kashrus of all your drinks and meat.

We rely on Jewish women to keep the family purity,
And this ensures that the Jewish nation will last until eternity.

In conclusion let your actions speak clear and loud,
So that the Rebbe and every Jew of you all will be proud.

CHAPTER 22

LAST WORDS

Avrohom and Susan spent Purim with the Rebbe at '770.' They reported that T.G. the Rebbe has fully recovered. The farbrengen were as exciting, instructive and joyful - and quite lengthy. They had the privilege of having a five-minute Yechidus with the Rebbe before they left New York to return home - "Just like the old times!"

I always let the Rebbe have the last word. He writes as a P.S. to the letter of Adar 5739.....

"I noted that your birthday is on the 7th of Adar, which I trust you surely observed in the customary way, and may it bring you a year of good health and Hatzlocho and happy tidings.

"May the above Hatzlocho include also your Diary. You are certainly right that there was no intention on my part that you should record the Sichas in English, which is not part of your 'function.' By mentioning the farbrengens, I merely had in mind that they can provide material for your Diary in other respects which need not be specified to you."

Thank G-d I have filled over 140 pages, much more than I anticipated and on Erev Shabbos Mevorchim Shevat 5739.....

"Greeting and Blessing,

"This is to acknowledge receipt of your correspondence.

"To begin with a Brocha, I extend prayerful wishes to Mrs. Jaffe on the occasion of her birthday for a year of Hatzlocho and good health for both of you together, with lots of Yiddishe Chasidish Nachas from your grandchildren as well as your children. I am making a point of mentioning both the grandchildren and children in response to the wrong 'definition' which you quoted.

"I thought it would not be necessary to make it more explicit when I expressed my hope that your next Diary would contain 100 pages. But let me make it clear that it refers to a minimum, as a prelude to larger ones in the futures. Indeed, in view of the farbrengens and events of the current year it should not be difficult to attain this goal.

"As we are approaching the auspicious month of Shevat, and of Yud Shevat, it is surely unnecessary to remind you about making suitable preparations for it, and I only mention it in light of the saying of our Sages "Encourage the Energetic."

"Looking forward to hearing from you further good news, both in your public as well as personal affairs, and, as mentioned above, both in regards to your children and grandchildren, and in due course also great grandchildren.

With blessing,

M. SCHNEERSON" (signed)