

# **My Encounter With The Rebbe, Shlita**

**By Zalmon Jaffe**

**13th Installment**

**Shovuos 5741- 1981  
until Shovuos 5742- 1982**

## Introduction

I am happy to present to you the thirteenth installment of "My Encounter with the Rebbe, Shlita". This covers the period from Shovuos 5741 (1981) until Shovuos 5742 (1982).

I am gratified that my work continues to give pleasure to so many, and in particular to the Rebbe, who encourages me to "keep on writing".

I remarked to the Rebbe at a Yechidus that he has to take the blame and the responsibility for these publications. It is all the Rebbe's fault, that I am writing these diaries.

The Rebbe replied, "I have broad shoulders, and I do accept the responsibility and blame - but - not for the style".

All the Sichos of the Rebbe, Shlita, which I have related in this installment are my own version and interpretation, unless otherwise stated and acknowledged.

It is always nice to receive letters of appreciation from some of my readers - and especially from my regular "fans" - Walter and Rebecca Hubert, Peter and Mrs Kalms, Danny and Malka Kahn, and those of my friends who have written from Australia, the U.S.A. and Canada.

I hope you all enjoy reading this thirteenth instalment.

*Zalmon Jaffe*

## Acknowledgements

I wish to acknowledge the assistance and co-operation of my friend Rabbi Shmuel Arkush of Birmingham Lubavitch who has attended to all the technical work involved in the printing of this Thirteenth Installment. I am very well satisfied with the results of his endeavours.

I wish to place on record my grateful thanks to Shirley - Mrs Abudarham, who has typed all the pages of this edition. She possesses the remarkable and exceptional gift of being able to read my writing - the deciphering of many words which, on many occasions, eludes even me.

Shirley related to me two stories which gave me very great pleasure:

(1) Shirley's friend declared that she was envious of her - that Shirley had the commission of typing this Diary, which gave everyone such enjoyment;

and

(2) Shirley remarked to me that there was no repetition in this instalment of matters that were mentioned in last year's edition.

## Chapter 1

# "Two Main Themes for the Year"

The Rebbe, Shlita, has concentrated on two main themes during the course of this year.

The first was the importance of every Jew, Men and Women, Boys and Girls, and little children to be united and associated one with the other in the writing of a Sefer Torah.

This campaign started with the children, when the Rebbe emphasised and stressed, on every possible occasion, that every Jewish child under the age of Bar and Bass Mitzvah should purchase a letter in a special Sefer Torah which would be written in the Holy City of Jerusalem, in the Tzemech Tzedek Shool, which was situated opposite the Western Wall. (I believe that ten adult males took part, to make this venture "Kosher").

The Rebbe did point out that it stated quite categorically in the Shulchan Oruch, the Halacha, that contrary to popular belief, when a person wrote just one letter in a Torah, this did not constitute - or counted - as if he had written a whole Sefer Torah.

However, by joining together with 304,804 other Jews, in order to produce a Torah, each person buying one letter - this showed the greatest Ahavas Yisroel. Each letter was an individual one, completely unconnected with any other - yet all these individuals, together, made up a Kosher Sefer Torah.

The Rebbe mentioned that the whole **world** is shaking, trembling and quaking. The only way to ensure and conserve the Peace was for the whole Jewish Nation - all over the Globe - to become affiliated with each other and united through the means of these Sifrei Torah.

In the Book of Daniel (12:1) it states:

"And at that time shall (the Angel) Michael stand up. The great prince who stands for the children of your people. And there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was, since there was a nation, **EVEN** to that same time. And at that same time your people shall be saved — **every one that shall be found written in the book**".

Our Sages tell us that "No Biblical Verse is excluded from its literal interpretation". In addition to all the commentaries on this Verse, the literal meaning remains "The Book" mentioned - with the definite article, can only be The Book of Books, the Holy Torah. "Whoever will be found written in the Book" - in the Sefer Torah, by owning a letter - will escape whatever harm is in store for the world, for the enemies of our People.

Therefore, it behoves us all to listen and to act quickly upon the words and advice of the Rebbe. For the Rebbe with his continuous self-sacrifice and great Love for all Jewish People everywhere, and with his unique and prophetic Vision, is pleading with us all to save ourselves and work for the Peace of Mankind.

The second theme, was regarding the position in Eretz Yisroel, which was very worrying, indeed, to the Rebbe.

The Arabs have declared on many occasions, and it is still the official policy of the P.L.O. that their aim is to destroy Israel completely and massacre and annihilate all the Jews.

The Camp David agreement was a Catastrophe as far as Israel is concerned. The whole world realises full well that when we have returned to Egypt all the land which she is claiming, then Egypt will tear up this treaty.

I heard on the British Radio, at the time when Israel officially annexed the Golan Heights, that a "Spokesman in Cairo" admitted that treaties can be torn up unilaterally. He added that "It is only a piece of paper which means very little". This confirmed what the Rebbe has been saying for a very long time.

It is a well-known fact, that until quite recently, Egypt had no territorial claims on Sinai, whatsoever. No one was interested in these vast tracts of desert and wasteland. But now, that it has been established and proven that these deserted wastes contain vast quantities of Oil and that the potential for further large discoveries exists, that Egypt has unilaterally laid claim to Sinai. It never belonged to Egypt: it was always just *hefker* (ownerless).

Then, through the stupidity and greediness of the Arabs, the Al-Mighty had presented us with this invaluable gift, which is so essential for the safety of our 3,000,000 Jews who live in Israel.

But we have continuously acted as if we were the vanquished, rather than the VICTORS. We are always looking over our shoulder and worrying what the nations of the world, the goyim, are saying.

We have returned all the Oil Wells, the beautiful towns and settlements, the Airfields and our security in exchange for a piece of paper which maybe, might be torn up within a few weeks.

The Arabs will then claim that all Israel belongs to them. They have lived there for many years and Lord Balfour had no right to give "their" land to the Jews. Of course, he had no right to do so, it was not his to give.

Most of the nations today accept the Bible as the basis of their religions, even the Arabs.

And it states in the very first verse of The Holy Book, that G'd created and owns the whole world.

Eretz Yisroel belonged to the Creator and He gave it to the Jewish People forever. As it is written in G'd's Own Book, the Chumish, that the A'Mighty made this promise to Our Father Abraham, and then to Isaac and again to Jacob and to the whole Jewish Nation.

It is not a matter of logic - or who lived there first - or last. It is simply that the Boss and Creator of the World gave Eretz Yisroel to the Jewish People forever.

The Rebbe added, that in spite of our mistakes, there is still time to rectify the situation. We must be firm and strong. We must establish settlements on all the borders of Israel, and not to be dictated to, nor imposed upon, by any other nation, however great and however momentarily friendly to us, but are only considering their own interests.

We must have faith in Hashem and "**We want Moshiach now!**"

## Chapter 2

# "Provocative Statements"

I was feeling quite pleased with myself. Once again I had finished another instalment - the twelfth - of "My Encounter with the Rebbe, Shlita".

I now felt relaxed after the usual excitement and hectic scramble to get the publication completed in time for Shovuos - the Target date. I then waited expectantly and hopefully for the accolades and congratulations to which I assumed I was fully entitled.

However, when my eldest granddaughter, Leah (Jaffe), aged 14 years, turned to me and observed, very naively, that "there is nothing very clever, Zaidie, in your writing this "Encounter with the Rebbe" every year. Anyone could do it!" I was a little astonished and taken aback. My Ego was completely deflated.

She then expounded and explained her remarks by adding that as I was given this gift by the A'Mighty then all I had to do was to make use of this accomplishment.

So what had seemed to me at first to be a little effrontery on Leah's part, was, upon examination, found to be a very profound statement. We all have certain gifts bestowed upon us by the A'Mighty. Most of us do have some idea at what we are good. As the Rebbe has often said - "The main thing is to use these talents to the best advantage". The principle reason why we do not always use these gifts to their fullest extent, is normally, because of sheer laziness and lack of incentive.

It is like the Old Story. When someone asked the Vilna Gaon, what was the secret of his immense stature in learning, and how could one emulate his scholarship and knowledge, the Gaon merely replied "*will nor*" - 'only want'.

I personally realise full well that if the Rebbe did not urge me to write this diary - and if I did not set a target date for its completion - then I would never have written anything at all beyond the first instalment in 1970.

I could think of many excuses and submit plenty of reasons why I could not continue to write these books:- I am T.G. very busy at my business, and I have plenty of Lubavitch work, and other communal activities to which to attend.

But - I feel I have also a great obligation to the Rebbe and I keenly desire to keep faith with him.

### **The Three Yomim Tovim**

I was looking forward to visiting Crown Heights and to see the Rebbe, at least three times during this forthcoming year.

I already have a Chazoka (tradition) to be at 770 together with Roselyn on Shovuos and on Succos. I also hoped to be at 770 to celebrate the Rebbe's 80th birthday (till 120 years) on Yud Aleph Nissan – the eleventh day of the month of Nissen. This latter visit I would have to undertake without Roselyn. Three days before Pesach was not a good time for a woman to be away from home and then having to return only one day before the Yom Tov.

These three visits are in entirely different categories.

Shovuos is Roselyn's special Yom Tov. It occurs at a lovely time of the year - beautiful warm summer weather, and only two days of actual Yom Tov. It is an ideal time for Roselyn and we are together for most of the fourteen days or so which we spend in Crown Heights. She is not confined to our basement apartment, but is able to sit and rest on the bench opposite to 770 and watch all Lubavitcher activities. She will also have many opportunities of meeting the Rebbe.

Roselyn is very happy and so, obviously, am I. 770 is very much overcrowded, KAH, but it is always a constant surprise to me that so many thousands more manage to squeeze in at Succos. This is my special Yom Tov and is a very different matter. It is a Man's Yom Tov. I do not see very much of Roselyn. I eat, alone, or with other men, in the Succah and then proceed to 770. I return, I then eat again in the Succah and walk back again to 770, and so on and so forth - backwards and forwards. Roselyn is left alone in the basement. The weather is generally very mixed, with plenty of rain too. Occasionally it is warm, but it can get very cold, as well, so Roselyn is forced to spend most of her time in the basement.

When she wants to attend Shool services or to be present at a Farbraing - or watch the Hakofass - the Women's Shool is also T.G. so overcrowded, that Roselyn has no chance whatsoever of seeing or hearing anything at all. She is no longer a youngster and cannot and will not fight with mobs of women and girls for the privilege of obtaining a seat with a reasonably good view of the Men's Shool. Even when Roselyn has gone to Shool early and reserved and sat down on a seat, she is soon enveloped by scores of girls and she is in real physical danger. There is only one ideal vantage point for just a few women, and that is in the Communications room. A couple of apertures are opened and a lovely view can be obtained of all the proceedings. Unfortunately this room is reserved for the wives of the Communication Workers only. I was given this information very forcibly when I begged for permission so that Roselyn should be allowed to have a "peep" during the Hakofass.

However - she is always willing to come at Succos time for my sake.

T.G. the Rebbe always gives Roselyn a very wonderful welcome - and we do visit the Rebbetzen, so she does have ample consolation for her "trials and tribulations".

Yud Aleph Nissen is the Rebbe's birthday, and I travel without Roselyn, and stay for three or four days. One whole day is spent flying to America and one whole night on the return journey. I arrive home hoarse from singing and shouting and completely exhausted.

But on the unique occasion of the Rebbe's 80th birthday, I desired to extend a personal and hearty Mazel Tov and good wishes to the Rebbe.

This is the Rebbe's own Yom Tov, and it would give me tremendous satisfaction and pleasure to be with the Rebbe on this great day of his Simcha.

### Chapter 3

## On Our Way to Crown Heights for Shovuos

We now possessed our very own apartment on Eastern Parkway - by kind permission of Mrs Itkin \_ which was next door but one to 770. Under these circumstances, we would have felt rather inconsiderate or even mean, if we would not have taken some of our Grandchildren with us.

So when we booked our flight, we also arranged that we would be accompanied by five of our grandchildren. They were Leah, Channah and Golda (Jaffe), and Golda Rivka and Pincus (Lew).

In spite of threatened strikes and industrial action by Civil Servants, who were neither servants, nor civil, we departed from Manchester at the scheduled time. We had been told that the plane was fully booked up, so we were delighted that we had taken the precaution of reserving our seats in advance. (It was too risky to buy a "Stand-by" ticket especially as there were seven of us). In the event, the plane - which holds about 350 passengers, was completely empty, except for the first and last three rows!!

We had ordered and had paid for our seven Kosher Meals (Laker always charged Jewish people - or anyone else who wanted them - extra, for these Kosher Meals). From past experience - with all Air Lines - Roselyn always prepared a large pile of sandwiches, because we had been let down so often.

This occasion proved no exception. There were five meals for the seven of us. The stewardess paid us the cash difference on the spot.

A friend of mine was travelling on the same plane with his wife and family. They also received cash in lieu of food, which is not really very satisfactory if one is hungry.

I took the opportunity of presenting my friend with a copy of my Diary. A little later he returned it to me. He had read "just the interesting parts". I remonstrated with him, and told him to keep the book and read it all. I explained to him that many people had read my diary, and become converted. "Converted to what?" interrupted his wife, giving me a stony glare. "Eh - Err - Eh - converted to reading my book", said I innocently.

On the plane we were handed forms, to fill in for the Immigration Officer. When it came to the question "Day of Birth", one of my granddaughters could not recall whether she was born on a Monday or a Tuesday - she was too young to remember!

Pincus was terribly excited when the plane touched down at Kennedy Airport. Before he had

even left the plane, or set foot on American soil, he declared that "I cannot wait until I go to America again!"

We went through the Immigration department, and handed in our completed forms to the Officer. For our "address in the U.S." we had written "770 Eastern Parkway". The Officer remarked that it must be a pretty big house, because he noticed that they got very many visitors staying there, all the time! We then passed through the Customs, where the Officer seized the balance of our fresh salmon sandwiches and a few apples and threw them in the garbage bin with a grunt of disgust - "**no fruit and no fish may be brought into the U.S.A.**".

We arrived at 770 at 5.45 p.m. but the Rebbe was at the Ohel. When he returned for Mincha the months just seemed to roll away. It was as if we had never been away from 770. I was delighted to see that the Rebbe had not changed. T.G. He looked fit and well - and as youthful as ever, (KAH).

Roselyn and I, and our grandchildren, had the pleasure of greeting the Rebbe when he marched briskly up the steps and into 770. He welcomed us all with a lovely smile and touched his hat to Roselyn - The Rebbe is always the Perfect Gentleman!

### **Grand-Parental "Control"**

We had brought with us five grandchildren so that when Dovid joined us from Ocean Parkway Yeshiva, this made the number up to six. There was quite a buzz of excitement around Crown Heights - "Zalmon Jaffe had brought with him four granddaughters, and he must want to arrange Shiduchim" (marriages). "It's marvellous. How old are they?" When they were told that their ages were one at 14, two were 12, and one only 10 years old, their reaction was "Oy Vey - what a pity!"

I did not want the children to keep pestering me for money all the time, so I opened up an account at Beryl Kahn's shop. They took unlimited quantities of sweets, ices, crisps and cookies. They ate Bootlaces of endless lengths which made me feel sick to watch them. Actually they were long liquorice "ribbons".

It still did not stop them from asking me for money every minute. They had a new trick. They wanted to give me change of a dollar. I handed over the dollar, and they gave me ten cents change.

Except for the liquorice, I never saw what they actually did buy from Kahn's. They were always hiding things in their room. Pincus had bags of stuff under his pillow. During a meal they would, each one, disappear into her (or his) bedroom. It was no small wonder that on many occasions they had very poor appetites.

Dovid was a good boy. He cleaned out the fridge every night when at 12.30 a.m. after midnight he would burst in - starving. Roselyn was under the impression that she had plenty of food for Yom Tov. - not now!

One of the girls went shopping to buy a lettuce - and to make certain that it had a good solid heart. She brought back - a cabbage.

Pincus was not very much bother. He disappeared into 770 and we only saw him at meal times.

We did have a little trouble with our granddaughters. They all looked up to Leah, who was the eldest. She set the example. They lacked parental control, and we the Grandparents lost the battle before we started. They all took advantage of us - as grandchildren are wont to do.

They were **very** naughty, rude and disrespectful - but so lovely, so nice and so loving! I do not know why, but I always gave in and gave way to their "meshugassen" (silly ideas). They were sometimes so inconsiderate that I could have murdered them - but - Ah, well, they knew how to pull at their Zaidie's heart strings.

Constant phrases used after a meal were:- "It's not my turn to wash up", "I only used one plate", "It's not fair", "It's always me", "It's not fair, I didn't use a fork and knife only my fingers", "It's not fair, I washed up yesterday", and so on.

But the real problem presented itself at Bedtime. Then we had real trouble - they would leave the apartment after midnight and disappear into 770. At 2 a.m. they would start returning home. They wished to keep 770 hours - up and awake all night - and lie in bed and asleep all day. We could not get any sleep at all.

Matters were getting out of hand, so we called and held a general meeting. It was resolved, decided and agreed that all the children should be back at the apartment at the latest by 12 o'clock midnight and should be immediately ready for bed. It still took them over an hour to retire. Then they chatted and talked for another hour - which in turn was followed by a half an hour of giggling and chuckling.

So - at 3 a.m. I had to give them all a good hiding, in order to settle them and get some sleep. It was alright for them, they slept on until lunchtime and even later, on the following day!! Whereas I had to be ready to attend Shool which commenced at 9.30 a.m.

Actually, this lack of sleep did catch on us. We were so exhausted by the first day of Shovuos, that after lunch we had to retire to our bedroom and rest. Suddenly, we were awakened by a loud banging and shouting - Harvey Showman, our friend from Manchester had called to visit us. He realised that we were in bed, so he shouted out that he would call again at a more convenient time.

He did come around on the following afternoon. We were in bed. He must have thought that we were very peculiar people - to have travelled over 3,000 miles to New York, in order to spend our time sleeping all day long in a basement apartment.

Everyone liked the Cover on the new Diary. However, Dovid and his friends had already discovered that the **stiff plastic** binding could be easily removed. In this manner they could separate and take out all the Sichos. They would then have a complete volume of only stories and anecdotes.

I delivered a copy to Rabbi J.J. and Mrs Hecht. Rebbetzen Hecht maintained that she took it to camp and it soothed her to sleep!

I pointed out to J.J. that I had written some uncomplimentary things about him, and I hoped that he was not going to sue me. He laughed uproariously, slapped me on the back and declared in between guffaws "Oh No, Oh No, Oh No!!"

### **Shovuos Farbraingen**

Over the Shovuos period there were the usual Farbraingen. I managed to obtain my usual seat. Pincus had the best place. Right at the top table - sorry - under the top table, exactly facing the Rebbe. This was extremely cheeky, but there were dozens of similar young cheeky boys underneath the top tables. They were all crawling along, pushing and "shtupping" in order to get nearer to the Rebbe. I had a better view of what transpired when I sat on the platform at a Simchas Torah Farbraingen. I shall tell you about this later on.

Amongst the many Sichos which the Rebbe related were the following.

In Chapter 9 of the sedra of *bamidbar*, it states that "G'd told Moishe, on the second year after leaving Egypt, that he should instruct the Children of Israel to offer up the Korban Pesach (the Passover sacrifice) once again". This the Children of Israel did. But - for the next 38 years, they did NOT keep this Mitzvah until they "came to the Land of Israel".

In verse 7, however, it states that certain men approached Moishe, with the complaint that they could not offer this sacrifice because they were unclean. Some opinions in the Talmud explain that they had attended to a Burial - either they were the relatives of Nodov and Abihu, who had died in the sanctuary and these men had taken out the corpses from the Holy Place, or they had attended to another Burial - A Maiss Mitzvah internment. This day, happened to be the seventh - the last day of their uncleanliness, so that by the evening they would have become clean, once again. Therefore, these men asked. "why should not the regular Kohanim offer up the Sacrifice on our behalf and we could eat the Korban Pesach in the evening - the correct time for eating the Paschal Lamb".

Thereupon Moishe replied "wait a moment and I will enquire from My Rebbe -The A'Mighty - what we shall do in this instance". He said this with full confidence - like a pupil who is certain that he will obtain the information from His Rebbe at any time. (I have mentioned this Rashi before, in a previous edition, to show how lucky we are in that we may call upon Our Own Rebbe to answer our questions - and we also obtain the replies straight away.)

G'd told Moishe that in these circumstances those men could celebrate a Pesach Sheni - a second Passover - on the fourteenth day of the following month and on that day they could bring a Korban Pesach.

Thus we learn that these few men prevailed upon the A'Mighty, that they - and only they, should be allowed to celebrate another Pesach, one month after the original Festival in Nissen.

The Rebbe asked - why should these few men achieve something that all the Jews – including Moishe and Aaraon never succeeded in achieving during the whole period spend in the wilderness! For, as I have stated above, there were no further sacrifices of the Korban Pesach for the next thirty-eight years.

During this Farbraingen, the Rebbe did not answer this question. The Rebbe left very many questions on Rashi also unanswered for the present. As Rabbi Chadakov remarked to me - the Rebbe wants us to use our heads and to think about the answers. For example - these men wanted something so urgently, that they were prepared to give up their very lives for it.

The Rebbe then quoted the commentary by Rashi on Chapter 6, verse 22, regarding the Priestly Blessings. The Rebbe had many questions to ask on this one statement of Rashi. As in the past, the Rebbe asked me to count the number. I am told that this procedure of counting innumerable questions on Rashi, only seems to occur when I am present at the Farbraingen.

The Rebbe wanted to know - why should the Kohanim have to go through all the ritual of blessing the Jewish people. G'd, Himself, had told Abraham that "I will bless those who bless you" and "I will bless your descendants". G'd had promised Yaakov that He would look after him and guard him, and that would include his descendants, too. It also states in the sedra of Bechukosai that "If you will keep My statutes and Mitzvahs, then you will receive all the blessings which are recorded in that chapter of the Torah".

The Rebbe kept me on my toes. "How many questions?" - "Three". Again "how many?" "Seven". "Good!" "How many now?" "Fourteen", I replied. The Rebbe seemed a little annoyed. He declared that he had already discussed the fifteen words of the Birchas Kohanim and he had asked at least one question, if not more, on each word.

As I have said before, the Rebbe asks many questions. There are the **klotz kashies**, the main

ones, then there are many subsidiary ones. Last year, I had a similar job, and when the Rebbe asked me to state the number of questions, I replied "Twenty". I had counted **all the "little" ones**. But it was maintained that there were only fifteen. It is not easy!!

So, why did the Kohanim have to "Bless the Jewish Nation"? It could be that if the Kohanim showed Ahavas Yisroel and went to the trouble of blessing the people, in order that G'd should approve and give His Blessings to the Jews, then they, the Priests, would be repaid. As Rashi says on verse 27, "And I will, in turn, bless them" could mean that G'd will bless the Kohanim as well as the Children of Israel.

During the Farbraingen the air conditioning was not working. The Rebbe made a strong complaint. He mentioned that it had broken down twice, consecutively, already. He did not want this to happen again, because if it failed once more, it would become a Chazoka, a tradition which cannot be changed.

At the time of the Creation, Divine Providence had ordained that five thousand years, plus seven hundred, plus forty one years, henceforth, some machines would be invented which would ensure that Chassidim in Crown Heights would enjoy a Farbraingen in comfort, and not be perspiring and in distress. But in a nice cool place to listen to words of Torah from their Rebbe. Instead of which the machinery was broken and we all had to sweat and "shvitz" (perspire) in discomfort.

It says in Tehillim "Ivdu Hashem Besimcha" - Serve G'd with Joy. Yet, you all come with sad and miserable faces. It is against the Din to be downcast. I know what some of you are thinking - looking at me straight into my eyes, half asleep and wet through with perspiration (many even completely asleep), and glancing at the clock every few minutes. They are thinking "Why doesn't the Rebbe finish the Farbraingen now. It is so hot. Much too hot! It is quite enough to have a Farbraingen for an hour or so. It is quite sufficient." The Rebbe continued by saying that we must greet everyone with a happy smiling face. He added that the A'Mighty is responsible for all our troubles. It is not our fault. The Master of the Universe gave us the Yetzer Horah - the Evil Inclination. G'd should send us Moshiach as soon as possible.

Following the Rebbe's complaint, workmen fixed **six** additional fans in the Hall.

### **Our Visit to the Rebbetzen** as related by Pincus Lew (age 11 and a half years)

I was very excited when I heard that we were going to visit the Rebbetzen. I know that it is a great honour to be asked. She is a great and wonderful lady and we are lucky people to be invited to her home.

We were walking along the road to her house. It was half past three, and Zaidie asked us all whether we would like to say a Vort Torah or sing a song for our Rebbetzen. Leah, Golda Rivka, Channah and Golda seemed a bit shy, so Zaidie said that he wouldn't insist upon them doing

anything.

We arrived at the Rebbetzen's house and she looked just lovely and adorable. We sat around the table and were treated to Ice Cream, Cakes and Cookies. It was fantastic. I sang a Nigun. I think the Rebbetzen liked it, but Zaidie kept telling me not to jump up and down on the chair all the time. Golda Rivka, my sister, then volunteered and said a few words of Torah about Ruth and Shovuos. It was good. I sang again and then gradually Channah and even Leah joined in the competition. Not Golda (Jaffe) though. She was too shy.

I didn't mind a bit, because I could see that the Rebbetzen liked my singing. I had sung in Yiddish and I wanted now to sing in Russian. I spoke a few Russian words which the Rebbetzen said she understood very well. I told her that I knew a lovely Russian song, but I could only sing it backwards. I don't know why everybody laughed. It was a typical song - similar to the one in English like "Who Knows One, Who Knows Two" and so on. But I only knew it backwards - that is: I began from "Who Knows Ten, Who Knows Nine" and so on.

The Rebbetzen was really thrilled, Bobby was laughing and nearly rolling on the floor. Zaidie kept shouting at me to keep still and not jump up and down on the chair.

I was having a really fantastic time. Then I told some stories. I told her my favourite one:

About an ignorant fellow who wanted to become a Rov. But he wanted to learn everything in five minutes. He went to the Chief Rabbi of the town and asked for permission to be able to practice as a Rabbi. The Chief Rabbi said, "Of course, I shall be very happy to teach you and you will become proficient after only five minutes. So, please take a seat and listen to my instructions".

The Chief Rabbi said that there were only three things that a Rov really needed to know.

(1) "If someone says I cut open a Chicken and didn't find any Gall, you should tell her to lick the chick - and if it is bitter, then it is O.K. It's Kosher. If there is no bitterness then it is treife and must not be eaten". The Chief Rabbi asked the ignoramus to repeat this, so that he would remember - which he did.

The second problem would be (2) "If one says that he has used a meaty knife for cheese, then he should stick it in the ground for 24 hours and it will be Kosher". "Please repeat this" said the Chief Rabbi. The ignoramus did so.

The Number (3) problem would be "If Reuben and Shimon argue. Reuben says that Shimon owes him £100 and Shimon says that this is not true and swears to that effect - then he has not to pay". "Repeat this" said the Chief Rabbi and the ignoramus did so.

The Chief Rabbi said "O.K. You can now practice as a Rov". So he went home and put up a sign outside his house to show that he was a qualified and "certified" Rabbi.

Next day a lady called with a Chicken. She couldn't find the Gall. The Rabbi said that she would have to swear. The lady said she couldn't find the gall and why should she have to swear. "If you won't swear then you will have to pay £100". So, she paid. "But what about the chicken?" The Rabbi said "give it back to the butcher". The lady left.

A little later, a fellow called and said that he had cut his cheese with a meaty knife. The Rov said "lick it off, and it will be O.K." The fellow went out.

Later, there was an argument between Reuben and Shimon. Reuben said that Shimon owed him £100. Shimon denied this. The Rov told Reuben to stick Shimon into the ground for 24 hours and he will be Kosher. After 24 hours he was dead.

The moral of the story is that if one wants to become a Rabbi, one has to study very much - more like 5 years than 5 minutes. Zaidie told the Rebbetzen that this came from the sedra of Mishpottim, where it says "Teach the Dinim properly and you should not forget them". In my story, the Rov didn't learn properly, so he soon forgot them.

I wash really having a grand time. Alright sho my mouth wash shlobbering a bit, and I wash breaking the Rebbetzen's chair - but everyone wash having a good laugh ash well.

Zaidie was encouraging me all the time to quote gemorrah by heart and shing and tell more shtories.

Suddenly Bobby said "Oh, it is half past and we must go, now". We had been with the Rebbetzen for two hours. To me it sheemed like just a few minutes - It wash a pity we had to leave sho shoon .

### **Our (Shovuos) Yechidus with the Rebbe**

I did make a half-hearted offer to Label (Groner) that maybe I should forego our Yechidus this time, for the sake of the Rebbe. Label retorted "Don't be a fool - go!"

Dovid wanted to lend me a small tape recorder. Although the Rebbe did tell me once, that it would be quite in order for me to bring in this type of machine, I felt a little guilty. I did regret not taking Dovid's advice, because although we normally spend an hour or so comparing notes after our Yechidus, there were still a few pieces of conversation which we could not quite recall.

Our Yechidus was on Thursday evening. There were 155 appointments for that night, with a total of over 600 people involved. For example, our own appointed included seven of us - Roselyn

and I, plus our five grandchildren.

There were hundreds of French people who wished to see the Rebbe on that night. All these French-speaking persons had their Yechidus in groups - one group after the other. I was told that the reason for this was because the Rebbe could continue to talk in French, without having to change his vocabulary from French to English and to Yiddish - and vice versa. This did not sound quite right to me, for I was sure that this would not present any difficulties for the Rebbe. Label probably wished to eliminate the "Frenchies" as soon as possible - they seemed to be a rather excitable group of people!!

Someone asked me in what language does the Rebbe converse with me. I replied "In English". "Hum", this fellow grunted - "a grosser Koved" (a big honour).

This reminded me of the morning when I went to the Bakery. A woman had ordered a birthday cake and she wanted the Baker to put the words "Happy Birthday" onto this cake. "If I could write English" he retorted, "I wouldn't have to be a Baker".

Another story:- Rabbi Dvorkin complained that he could not understand David's Yiddish. Dovid replied that he couldn't understand Rabbi Dvorkin's English. It was stalemate, and no small wonder that they could not communicate with each other too well. Incidentally, I cannot always understand Dovid's English either, because he speaks so quickly.

It was well after Maariv when Roselyn and I, and our grandchildren entered the Rebbe's study for our Yechidus. It was 2 a.m. after midnight. (Maariv had taken place at 1 a.m. and hundreds had been present to daven with the Rebbe).

The Rebbe raised himself from his chair and said Sholom Aleichem. He greeted us with his usual wonderful and friendly smile. It is over twenty-two years since we first met the Rebbe, and T.G. we have always received a most remarkable heart-warming welcome, coupled with a most extraordinary happy and cheerful countenance. We shall forever be grateful to the Rebbe and always treasure his unique friendship.

I confided to the Rebbe that one of my grandchildren had told me that it was not very clever of me to write my "Diary" - "My Encounter with the Rebbe", because it was a gift from Hashem. I suggested that there should be a moral somewhere. The Rebbe agreed that if one had received a special gift from Hashem, then one needed to make full use of this - otherwise it was just wasted.

The Rebbe was pleased that we now had a permanent apartment in Crown Heights. I commented that we would always feel guilty if we came alone - another wasted gift! So we had brought five grandchildren with us. The Rebbe observed that this was very good and "next time **bring seven!**" This was a bit of a shock. I looked at Roselyn, I thought she would have "gone through the floor", but she was still standing there. She had paled a little, but in general she was bearing up

well.

I complained that they had all made certain promises - to help with the household chores, to go early to bed and so on - and - they had not kept all these promises. The Rebbe declared that they still had two days in which to repent (before we left for home). The Rebbe maintained that it was a very good thing to bring the grandchildren.

The Rebbe asked me "Where is Dovid?" I replied that Dovid had not prepared himself for Yechidus. Actually he was a little nervous - and was not prepared, mentally.

The Rebbe then enquired about my foot. I gave a demonstration with a skip, a hop and a dance, - although I was only wearing sandals and not shoes. The Rebbe laughed. (I had sustained an accident to my Achilles Tendon last year.)

I intimated to the Rebbe that I did not have a very good seat at the last Farbraingen. I had Rabbi J.J. on one side - but a solid steel pillar on the other side. Although J.J. did give way a little, occasionally, I certainly could not budge the steel girder. It was tough. The Rebbe commented that a "Chossid has to 'shvitz'" (to perspire).

The Rebbe then continued with a nice smile "I am a practical man, and I am looking for business for the Sefer Torah for those who are under Bar and Bass Mitzvah". He then wished to know which of my grandchildren now present, came under that category. I replied that "Channah would be Bass Mitzvah on Yud Bais Tamuz". The Rebbe considered that this was a very nice time to celebrate a Bass Mitzvah. I told the Rebbe that Hilary's birthday was on Yud Shevat - also a memorable date!

(When we returned home, I got into a terrible row with my granddaughters who insisted that the Rebbe's question was directed to them, and I had no right to have answered on their behalf. After all it was also their Yechidus - - - and so on - - - and so forth - "ad infinitum and ad nauseam". I cannot win!!)

The Rebbe confirmed that he was very happy with my Diary. He liked the binding, the format and the printing, and mainly the Rebbe liked all the good things about which I wrote. He enquired whether I had given my usual talk at the Kinus Hatorah, and was delighted when I replied in the affirmative.

The Rebbe advised me to describe fully the Farbraingen, in my Diary. It would help our grandchildren to understand what happened much more easily. "Next year would be number thirteen - a big year".

I demurred. "I have nothing much to write". The Rebbe stated that "You are repeating yourself, just like last year". I said that last year I went to the brissen of the Russian boys and to the

Ladies' Convention.

The Rebbe again reiterated that I had grumbled last year and yet I had written more than ever, and "Do not worry, you will have plenty to write".

I then declared that it was getting late and that I did not want to keep the Rebbe. The Rebbe said that I was not keeping him.

The clock was still going. He turned to Roselyn and asked whether I danced on Pesach. Roselyn explained that this Shovuos was the first occasion on which I had even put on sandals (very lightweight shoes).

The Rebbe was surprised that he had not heard from me about a certain unhappy affair. I replied that I did not wish to write unpleasant news, especially when it T.G. did not affect us - and there are always plenty of good things about which to write. The Rebbe laughed and said "All I get is Tzorrus, bad news - I don't get too much good news".

The Rebbe turned again to Roselyn and said "and bring a special suit for Simchas Torah. No - better come for Succoss so that you (Roselyn) can have a week's rest before Simchas Torah". I referred to a certain gentleman who came to 770 for Simchas Torah. He put on a brand new Kapota in honour of the occasion. He jumped over benches, boys jumped and trod over him. In a very short time, he was wearing a very old and shabby Kapota.

The Rebbe enquired of Roselyn about our apartment. Roselyn replied that it was adequate, but it was in a wonderful position - right next door to the Rebbe.

"But", the Rebbe insisted, "is it a good apartment?" Roselyn maintained that it was very good for a couple of weeks a year.

I reminded the Rebbe that at Succoss time, I was upstairs in the succah, whilst Roselyn was downstairs in the basement. The Rebbe repeated what he had said last year - that this should be Roselyn's "Seventh Heaven".

We discussed some other matters, and then I thanked the Rebbe for everything, especially his lovely welcome. The Rebbe interrupted and said "No, No, I thank you, I thank you for coming to see me. It is my pleasure". (Is this not a wonderful thing for the Rebbe to say to us. We should thank the Rebbe from the bottom of our hearts - and we do - for giving us the honour and privilege of a private Yechidus - especially in these times.)

The Rebbe asked us to give his regards to Avrohom and Susan, to Shmuel and Hilary and to all our Ainiklech (granchildren) who had been left behind in England.

Before we took our leave, the Rebbe handed everyone a dollar note for sheliach mitzvah (for Charity). We had been with the Rebbe for twenty minutes, and it was 2.30 a.m. when we left.

Leah grumbled, as usual, about having to go to bed so early. The crowds of people milling around and inside 770 made it seem like daytime, so I could not blame her too much. She however wanted to be the last into bed - cheek! and it was nearly 4.30 a.m. in the morning before she retired.

### **A Couple of Queries for Our Rebbetzen**

It is surprising how many legends and stories have grown up about our saintly leaders.

Rabbi Izerach Immerman of Johannesburg, South Africa told me that Rabbi Gafni is the Mashpiah of (looks after) a Baalei Tshuva group in Kfar Chabad. It seems to be the custom that a Bridegroom would borrow a shirt from the Rebbe, which he could wear at his Wedding. I was informed that the Rebbetzen was the source - and supplier - of these shirts.

An owner of one of these prized and invaluable garments had lent it to a Bochur to wear on his wedding day - and this Chosson had "misaid" it. As a result of this, there was complete chaos, and Rabbi Gafni and thirty of his "students" were in disarray. The shirtless owner is taking them to the Bess Din - but even money cannot replace this garment. Could the Rebbetzen replace this shirt and thereby save much Agmus Nefesh and severe distress.

When I posed this question to the Rebbetzen, she was very amused.

She intimated that there was not very much she could do about it now. I didn't wish to embarrass the Rebbetzen by pressing the point. (And Roselyn was pressing me to keep quiet.)

So I just left the Rebbetzen the addresses of the interested parties and asked her to do her best for them.

The second query:- Rabbi Daniel Kahan telephoned me to Manchester from Milan, Italy. It was around the time of Channuka, and the usual discussions were taking place regarding the type of Oil one should use for lighting the Menorah. Some even lit candles!! However, Daniel wanted to know whether our Rebbetzen used Oil for the Shabbos lights. I was pretty certain that the Rebbetzen used Candles every Friday night and for Yomim Tovim - but I could not be 100% sure. I had heard of women lighting with Oil, or at least having one Oil lamp amongst the Shabbos candles. I promised that I would ask the Rebbetzen on the next occasion when I spoke to her.

I did put this question to her one morning on the telephone from Manchester. The Rebbetzen confided in me that she definitely used only Candles. These were placed in solid silver

candlesticks which used to belong to her grandmother (Peace be unto Her). It was her tradition to "bench licht" in these beautiful heirlooms, which had been handed down from generation to generation.

### **A Good Yom Tov**

We all spent a very pleasant and happy Yom Tov. 770 was very much overcrowded, but not comparable to Simchas Torah when at that time a regular modern miracle occurs which enables so many extra people to squeeze into 770.

My friend Yisroel Goldshmid - and here I wish to apologise to him for referring to him as Yisroel Goldstein - kept the young boys in order to the best of his ability. He gave me two dollars for Mitzvah money, plus a nice photograph of the Rebbe - he is a lovely boy.

Rivka and Moishe Kartlasky invited Roselyn and me to lunch on Yom Tov - they always do so - every Yom Tov. We refused this time because we could not leave the children to fend for themselves on Yom Tov. Moishe insisted that we bring them along, too. We explained that there were SIX of them KAH. "Only six", ejaculated Moishe, "that's not many. Bring them all." So we did. And the number of guests at that meal was over fifty.

A really sumptuous banquet was provided, with a super abundance of unlimited delicious food and drink. Not were the Spiritual "ingredients" neglected. A word of Torah here and there. A happy atmosphere pervaded the large dining room. Moishe was in good form as a marvellous raconteur. He amused and entertained us all with his brilliant witticisms and with his astute references to Sir ZALMON and LADY Roselyn - and to Her Majesty.

Dr. Nissen Mindel took us to meet our Old Young Friend, Sarah Nemptzov, who had now celebrated her 101st birthday, till 160 KAH - a real wonderful lady, active and with all her faculties unimpaired. She insisted upon seeing us to the front door and waving "Au Revoir" to us.

Nissen confessed that he and many people, even those residing in Crown Heights, have to read my Diary to discover what is happening at 770.

The usual long March to Boro' Park took place. Pincus and my Manchester friend, Harvey Showman took part. They returned just before midnight, completely exhausted. But - they did enjoy themselves.

Rabbi Chadakov always spares us a few minutes of his invaluable time so that we may bid him Farewell, before we leave for home. He never misses the opportunity of relating to us a few words of Torah.

He also commented that "Some Chassidim are so busily engaged in their own study of Mysticism and higher Chassidus, that they could never spare the time - nor did they have the inclination - to teach a child. They really should, because it would be good for them. They would get quicker reactions afterwards, when they studied. It would sharpen their Wits".

"As for the Mivtzaim - the Mitzvah campaigns, they certainly had no opportunities to take part in these - there would be less time for their own learning".

Rabbi Chadakov declared that learning can be compared to eating. Just as one has to eat and digest one's food, so one has to digest one's learning.

It is not of any use to eat a hurried mouthful of food in the morning and then have a quick snack, late at night. Or to have good meals on one day and then nothing to eat for days afterwards. One has to have regular and fixed hours for eating and for learning in the correct manner.

Rabbi Chadakov stressed the importance and significance of Teffila BeTzibur - davenning with a Minyan, and that even Children should be encouraged to join in.

I pointed out to Rabbi Chadakov that the Rebbe was pleased with my Diary. Rabbi Chadakov asserted "It is tackie gut, and everyone likes a good thing. If it's good - it's good".

Here is an example of one small episode that made our visit so worthwhile and exciting.

It was 6.15 p.m. on Thursday afternoon. Roselyn and I were sitting and resting on a bench outside, opposite to 770. There was no one about, the whole place was deserted.

Suddenly, without warning the Rebbe emerged and walked towards his car. I immediately stood up, and strode towards the Rebbe, who raised his hand and waved, very nicely, to us. It was a very beautiful incident to watch and especially one in which we took an active part.

### **The Day of Our Departure**

We were due to leave 770 at 5.30 p.m. on that day for the Airport. It was the thirteenth day of Sivan. I have Yartzeit and I usually daven at the Omed (officiate) at the Rebbe's minyan.

At 8 a.m. that morning, I was preparing for Shool. At 11 a.m. I had an appointment with Rabbi Altein to discuss the main points of the Sichos, which the Rebbe had related to us over Shabbos and Shovuos. We also had another projected visit to the Rebbetzen. The time of Shacheris was 9.30 a.m.

Roselyn had already made a start with the packing of the suitcases on the previous evening. She was now busy completing the job. I noticed, however, that she seemed to be emptying the

suitcases not filling them. She was opening and closing drawers. There was a flurry of activity and she was throwing clothes and scattering papers all over the place. She was searching frantically for something and so I asked her for what she was looking!!

Well, she had put all the seven passports together and now she only had SIX. To make matters worse - the missing Passport belonged to me. We then made a thorough and systematic search, inch by inch - and the result was negative. It was now after 9 a.m., and I had to go to Shool.

Label Groner obtained the telephone number of the British Consul in New York. I spoke to him and explained my predicament - that I needed a passport this very morning as I was due to leave later in the afternoon. In one respect I was lucky in that we discovered the loss so early in the morning, we did have a chance.

I cancelled the appointment with Rabbi Altein, I called the Rebbetzen on the telephone and told her of our plight - and off I went - with Roselyn - to catch the Subway to Manhattan. The children stated that they would remain around 770 and we would see them later. Roselyn and I waved goodbye to them and we rushed to the station.

I was getting two Subway tokens when Pincus and Leah joined us, very much out of breath. Roselyn remonstrated with Leah - she had no right to leave Channah and the two Goldas all alone - when lo and behold - here they were - so I paid for seven tokens and we went off to Manhattan.

At long last - after walking, seemingly, many miles, we arrived at the Office of Her Majesty's Consul General, in New York. Our very own representative. Large queues (lines) were standing, waiting at a few counters. I joined one - and all my gang joined with me. There were now quite a lot of people standing and waiting at this counter. In due course, I arrived at the window. It was my turn and all my "supporters" were around me waiting for action. I explained to the woman what had occurred. She asked me for identification. I considered myself lucky. I had my Credit Card, driving licence, and even a photograph on a special document. I was very pleased with myself and asked her how long I would have to wait for my Passport. "Oh No," she asserted - "where are your two photographs? I must have these to affix to your new passport". I enquired if there was a photographer or photo shop nearby. "Oh Yes", she said, "just around the corner. When you return, I will attend to you straight away." Roselyn was too tired, so she stayed behind. But the gang trailed behind. I begged them to remain and await my return. But oh no, they had to be where the action was. Unfortunately, the girl at the Consulate had not told me which corner we had to go "around". We walked hither and thither, asked and enquired from passersby and small tradesmen (selling hot dogs and other edibles from barrows) and only received blank stares.

Fortunately we met a Policeman - a Cop - who directed us to the place we wanted. In we all trooped. The manager was expecting a large order. He seemed taken a little aback to hear that he

had only one client. He soon recovered - took a number of pictures of me in different disguises and gave me the Bill. When I was revived, I paid the \$10 and we all trooped out again, on our way back to the British Consulate.

After walking for half an hour in the wrong direction, we at last arrived back to the place from where we started.

I pushed to the head of the queue, and my gang helped to push. I handed the photographs to the girl. She looked suspiciously at the photographs and at me. Then with a shrug, she decided to accept them. There was a certain resemblance - and she told me to wait. There was a half an hour interval. Roselyn and I found it impossible to control our gang during that time. We begged the guards who were standing nearby to arrest them. We pleaded with them to shoot them or threaten to shoot them. It was hopeless. The children were running in an out, all over the place. I was thankful to get my passport and run, before I was arrested for physically assaulting my grandchildren.

In the event, I was given a document which was to be (valid) for just one journey - to get me home to England. When I did arrive at Manchester Airport, the Immigration Officer took it from me.

I was to leave for the Continent and Israel in a week or so, therefore I had to apply for a new passport at once.

The Civil Servants were still on strike, but they would attend to personal callers, only. There were so many thousands who required passports, that the only way to ensure my obtaining one was to be at the Liverpool Office at 4.30 a.m. in the morning. I got my passport - valid for one year only.

About three months later, I received a letter from Liverpool. They had found my old passport in New York and did I want it returned to me!!

Meanwhile, to continue with my story - we had spent so much time on the passport job, that we just managed to get back to 770 in time to have a little lunch before Mincha.

It was now too late to see the Rebbetzen, who apologised (why?) and said she looked forward to seeing us twice on our next visit. I had, however, asked the Rebbe whether we could see him after Mincha to say Farewell and receive another Brocha, and a special one for the journey home. We already have an old-established Chazoka for this and the Rebbe has never let me down.

We made the usual arrangements. Roselyn would take all the children in the lift to the first floor and walk down the stairs to the Rebbe's waiting room.

I was davenning Mincha at the Omud (officiating) and immediately after Rabbonun the last Kaddish, I rushed after the Rebbe. I followed closely behind him to his waiting room. Even so, in the end, I still had to push my way through a few hundred boys, but that was to be expected and was my usual exercise.

### **Second Yechidus**

I was propelled into the Rebbe's waiting room by Label Groner, who shut the door behind us. I was gratified to see Roselyn and five of our grandchildren waiting there.

I thanked the Rebbe for giving us this further privilege of seeing the Rebbe at this mini-Yechidus.

The Rebbe said "Faur gezunderhait and I should hear Besuros Tovos (good tidings). Next time," he added, with a twinkle in his eye, "don't print Loshon Horo about the pushing and shtupping. Continue to write good things". I protested and said that my granddaughters push me around. The Rebbe commented that "they are alright and that doesn't really matter". At Yechidus the Rebbe had asked me to give regards to Avrom and Susan, and Hilary and Shmuel. The Rebbe now repeated this by saying, "Gerist (give regards) to your son and daughter and all the grandchildren."

The Rebbe seemed to have realised that my granddaughters were still sore and annoyed with me about the main Yechidus, because the Rebbe turned to each of them separately and gave everyone an individual brocha, mainly that they should have Yirass Shomayim, learn well, and be a Lamdan (have fear of Heaven and become a student of great ability).

The Rebbe again thanked us for coming to see him and hoped to see us again.

We then reluctantly took our leave of the Rebbe.

### **Girls' Graduation Day**

This day, the thirteenth of Sivan, was the day of our departure and was also Girls' Graduation Day, for all those girls who were leaving school - including those over 12 years of age who were going to High School.

The Rebbe was due to address them at 5 p.m. in the large Hall - the Shool. Men and boys were accommodated in the Women's Shool - the gallery. It was necessary for us to leave 770 at 5.30 p.m. otherwise we would miss our flight home to Manchester. The Rebbe arrived at 5 p.m. Rabbis Chadakov, Label Groner, Butman, J.J. Hecht and Myer Harleck together with Dr. Nissen Mendel were standing around the top table.

The Rebbe stated that “you are all assembled here together, prior to your breaking up from School. Then, you will become free from all routine. But the principle thing a Jew must always remember is that his connection with Torah cannot be broken, even for only a small period of time. We have just had the Zechus (Merit) of celebrating the Giving of the Torah - on Shovuos. The Torah, which explains how to live in a "clever", well-planned, and splendid way is G'd's most precious treasure. He has given this to us, and when we live according to the laws of the Torah, you will be successful and lead a lovely life."

"You will be on vacation, having a holiday - but only from secular matters. This should give you more time for studying and learning Torah and Yiddishkeit - much more time than when you had to go to school every day. You will have more scope to learn Torah. There are so many days and each day has its own opportunities and chances".

"The Baal Shemtov stated that everything is by Divine Providence - everything, however small even. Today is the thirteenth of Sivan, which ends the Yemay Tashlumim", the days which complete the Shovuos holiday period. Every Yom Tov has seven days, for its special sacrifices, but Shovuos has only one day. Therefore another six are added for the Shovuos offerings."

"Sacrifices cannot be offered up today because we have no Beth Hamikdosh, so until the Third Temple will be built, we make these in a spiritual manner."

"Men, women and children put all their joy and vitality into these Shovuos offerings which are completed on the twelfth of Sivan. The Yetzer Horoh (Evil Inclination) persuades us that after this date, there are no further offerings to be made on account of the Giving of Our Torah, so we shall be free from all such matters. But the thirteenth of Sivan commences a new section - we have to learn the Halacha of how we should carry on our daily lives in Thought, Words and Action".

"You should learn with Happiness, Joy and Concentration. You should set an example to everyone of how even in an ordinary, plain weekday one can live - eating, drinking, walking and just dwelling in a country and become a precious treasure to the A'Mighty".

With these profound Torah sayings from the Rebbe ringing in our ears, we took our leave from 770, and returned home to Manchester.

## Chapter 4

# Our Annual Visit To Israel

Annually, for the past number of years, we have been fortunate in that we have been able to visit Eretz Yisroel, for a short holiday.

T.G., we have many relatives in Israel. My brother Maurice, of the Hechal Shlomo, Jerusalem, with his wife Ella and family. Also my sister Rose, with her husband Charles, also residing in Jerusalem. I have many nephews and nieces with their children, including my niece Malka Edrei and husband Moishe, and family, who live in Kfar Chabad.

Although we do meet most of the family on our visits, I should confess that one of the main reasons for our holiday is to bathe in the waters of the Dead Sea.

About eight years ago, I had a terrible bad hip. It was so excruciatingly painful that I could hardly walk across the road. I consulted many eminent doctors, even in Harley Street, London. All professed that there was nothing that they could do for me at the present. They recommended that I should attempt to lose some weight. Then in ten years time I would become almost bedridden. But - help would be at hand. The Harley Street doctor would operate and insert a brand new hip - made of steel, plastic or silver. He declared that within two weeks after the operation, I would be able to drive a car. Furthermore, he promised that two weeks later, I would be able to play golf. I thought to myself - "What a wonderful doctor he is! He will fix me a new hip and almost immediately I will be able to play golf. This would really be an achievement, because I have never played golf in my life".

Roselyn also suffered from many aches and pains. One year the Rebbe advised me to take Roselyn for a holiday to Israel. We spent a few days at the Dead Sea - and it seemed to give us much relief. We now stay at the Dead Sea for two weeks, every year, and T.G. it has done both Roselyn and me, the world of good. My hip now hardly bothers me at all KAH. I seldom suffer pain and instead of getting worse, it is T.G. improving all the time. So obviously we keep up this annual treatment. I don't know whether it is the waters, the rest, or just psychological - but I do know that T.G. I obtain great and permanent relief.

This year we had another incentive to visit Eretz Yisroel. My grandson Yossi (Lew) was studying at the Yeshiva Torass Emess, in Jerusalem. I also take advantage of this visit to purchase a pair of Tefillin for our next grandson's Bar-Mitzvah P.G., from Gershon Henech Cohen's shop in the Meah Shearim. He provides me with the Best Tefillin and specially written by the Rebbe's Shlita personal scribe.

It was the turn of Sholom Dov Ber (Lew) but it would be P.G. five years before he would be

eligible to wear them.

On arrival in Jerusalem, we immediately travelled to Gershon Henech's shop to confirm that my order was being attended to. From past experience one cannot just walk into this shop, make one's purchases, and leave, all within thirty minutes. One has to be prepared to spend at least half a day to order the goods and another half a day to collect these items. This shop is an institution where one meets friends and acquaintances from all over the world. It is a social event - and being a Lubavitch centre, which is patronised by all Chabad members - I very soon find myself surrounded by many friends - from 770 - from Kfar Chabad - from - everywhere.

As soon as I entered the shop, Gershon Henech flung out his arms in a warm and tremendous welcome. "**ah zalmon jaffe -- zalmon jaffe -- my friend** -- and the Rebbe's friend", and so on and so forth.

A tall portly fellow wanted to know my family tree and geneology. Was I a relation of Yitzchok Jaffe of Tel Aviv, or of a Yankel Jaffe of Bnei Brak? I denied relationship, or even knowledge of these distinguished Jaffes.

A young man standing nearby asked "Are you Zalmon Jaffe, the author, who writes all those interesting books about the Rebbe?". This was indeed fame. My bosom swelled with pride. I really felt good.

This boy was nineteen years of age, and he carried a gun slung over his shoulder. His name was Kalman Steinmetz and he had once studied at Morristown (Lubavitch) Yeshiva, near New York, where he had read one of my "Encounters with the Rebbe, Shlita". He complained to me that he had tried to buy some of these books, but they were not for sale - anywhere. I presented him with Instalment number twelve, for which he was duly grateful.

He was at present learning at the Bais Hadassah Yeshiva actually in the centre of Hebron. Six pupils had been murdered by a gang of Arabs last year. Therefore the twenty or so talmidim went about always armed. They had gun practice every Thursday.

I managed to get a word in, edgeways, with Gershon Henech. Yes, the Tefilin were ready. He had only to fix in the Retzuos (Straps). That was all?! The price this year was just a little higher than previously, at 470 dollars they were a bargain! The English pound had dropped considerably in relation to the dollar, so I paid £250 almost £50 more than last year.

Gershon Henech congratulated me in having the foresight to order these Tefilin which had been written by Rabbi Shlomo Aaron Henig, the Rebbe's Sofer. He was busy writing the Children's Sefer Torah, so there would be no more Tefilin from this scribe for many months, if not longer. Gershon Henech had saved this pair for me and kept it - the last such pair he possessed - for the few months until I arrived to collect them.

He then gave me the glad tidings that his son was to be married on the following day, to a girl in Bnei Brak. He had the greatest possible pleasure in handing me a printed wedding invitation, and also his own personal appeal and entreaty that I should join the wedding party next day at about 6 p.m. in the evening.

We had received a great welcome from Yossi. He could not wait to get his hands on Instalment number twelve. He read this book at every conceivable moment. It was lovely - very gratifying to listen to his spontaneous outbursts of laughter. He really enjoyed himself - and so did I. He relived again and again, all those happy or humorous episodes which I had described in my diary and which concerned him personally.

But - he never read the Sichos! I was annoyed - after all my research and hard work! He countered by saying that he had read and learnt these Sichos in their original Yiddish.

He had a very strict timetable and curriculum. Commencing at 7 a.m. with Chassidus, it was 10 a.m. before he ate breakfast - till 10.30 a.m. Then followed two hours of Gemorrah, one and a half hours for another Shiur - until 2 p.m. when there was a break for lunch and Mincha, and so forth until 4 p.m. More learning followed until 7.30 p.m. when he had three quarters of an hour for Maariv and supper till 8.15 p.m. Then more studying until 10.30 p.m. A good full day's work. (David, in New York, told me that his day's work in Ocean Parkway, Brooklyn, was very similar to that of Yossi's.)

As a matter of fact, once a week, Yossi does manage to visit the home of Esmond Goldfield, a "cousin". There they are joined by Michael Goldblum, another "cousin", and Yossi gives them a Shiur on Tanya every Wednesday afternoon - he probably arranges an extended luncheon hour. The unbiased report I have received is that Yossi has been giving a wonderful Tanya Shiur for about twelve months now. Esmond and Michael enjoy this Shiur immensely, but after all this time they are still no wiser and still do not understand the Tanya very much but they are both very confident that these shiurim are good for their souls.

I now realised why Yossi was so pleased to see us. The Rosh Yeshiva allows his talmidim to have a short break when parents or grandparents arrive.

For three days, Yossi accompanied us everywhere - meals, even at the Hotel - wherever we went, Yossi came too. It was a little holiday for him.

Well - we were in Gershon Henech's shop. It was about 6 p.m. and Gershon Henech was ready to serve us when - "Mincha, Mincha" - shouted a fellow, popping his head through the doorway. So off we went to the Shool of the Matersdorf Rebbe - across the road, around the corner, and up two flights of steps. Gershon Henech lent me a Gartel, which he had used at his last Yechidus with the Rebbe at 770. So - "please look after it". We arranged to call on the following day for

our goods, just before the time of the Wedding. We had never been to a Lubavitch Wedding in Jerusalem and we looked forward to some new experiences.

Roselyn, Yossi and I duly called at Gershon Henech's shop at 5.40 p.m. on the following afternoon and collected our goods. A special bus had been chartered to transport the wedding guests from the home of Gershon Henech at 87 Meah Shearim direct to Bnei Brak at 6 p.m.

Gershon Henech was very insistent and stated emphatically that "You, Zalmon, are my special guest. You are considered as one of the family, so you will travel with us in a special car. I have two cars".

Gershon Henech invited us into his home, which was a very nice apartment indeed, and invited me to sit down on a comfortable chair and - "Shreib" - "write all about the wedding in your book, whilst I prepare myself for the wedding". This did not take him very long. He just removed his jacket and hat and replaced these with a Kapota and a Shtreimle. And the Mechuton was now ready to lead his son to the Chupah.

I enquired of Gershon Henech whether there would be room for Roselyn and Yossi, too, in the car. He said - "that is no problem" and he immediately telephoned for another taxi. He was having some little argument with the taxi firm. From what I could gather from the conversation, the cost of the vehicle was proving highly prohibitive. Gershon Henech was getting quite excited and his face had paled visibly and very significantly. I had great pity on the mechuton and I interrupted the conversation by telling him that Roselyn, Yossi and I insisted upon travelling by bus. It should be an added experience

Gershon Henech looked very relieved. He remarked that "Yes, maybe it would be a good idea."

At 6.10 p.m. the two car marriage motorcade drove off. We awaited the bus, due at 6 p.m.

At 6.40 p.m. our special chartered bus arrived, and all the guests entered. We expected a Mechitza, a division to separate the men and the women, but this was not provided. However; the rear half of the bus was taken up with typically-dressed Meah Shearim women all clothed in black, with a tight black cotton headdress. No wigs - they looked like Full Moons.

Roselyn and I sat together, with Yossi next to us on the other side of the gangway. The bus made a few additional stops to pick up more passengers. At 7 p.m. we were on our way. The Chupah was due to take place at 7.30 p.m. but I assumed that the proceedings would be help up pending our arrival.

We were half way to Bnei Brak when a gentleman came along the gangway, calling out "Fares, please" (and the Hebrew equivalent). The charge was only twenty shekolim, return, so it was not exhorbitant. I was glad, however, that we had not joined Gershon Henech in his special taxi!!

We arrived at the hall at 8.15 p.m. The Chupah had not yet taken place. Gershon Henech greeted me very warmly and invited me to sit next to the Chosson at the Top Table. This seemed a little odd, so I refused this honour. Gershon Henech was not worried - he modestly joined me at the bottom table, whilst we waited for some progress in the marriage ceremony.

A very important announcement was then made - Maariv services would commence straight away. About six separate Minyanim were formed all over the Hall.

After Maariv, the usual conference or debate took place whereat a small number of Rabbonim discussed various Shaalos, questions - regarding the validity of the Kesuba. A Rov gave his own personal considered opinion. Another Rov gave his reasoned verdict. A third Rov made certain suggestions and amendments - and we were ready for the Chupah.

This took place on the flat roof of the building at 9 p.m. The Kallah's little brother had been holding a glass tumbler in his hand, all the evening. He thought that the time was now ripe to break it. He was prevailed upon to wait a little longer.

There was a further delay under the Chupah. The Rabbi could not read the Kesuba. It was too dark. I did notice, with pleasant surprise, that the usual "200 Zuzim" normally written into the Kesuba, had been omitted, and the words "Ten thousand Dollars" had been inserted instead, into this marriage settlement. This made the whole document much more meaningful and realistic. We now knew what this Kesuba was worth in actual fact - at today's prices.

I just managed to stop the little boy from breaking the glass. There was another delay when the ring was produced. The Rov in charge wished to ascertain whether the Bridegroom really owned this ring. Had he paid for it? - With his own money? - and how much did it cost? There ensued a thorough and minute examination of this ring - and the boy nearly broke the glass again.

Then Hooray!! - the Chosson had said the vital nine words, in Hebrew, in front of two witnesses, which signified that the young couple were duly joined in Holy Matrimony. (The English translation reads - "with this ring thou art consecrated to me according to the laws of Moses and of Israel.)

The Chosson broke the glass, which was the signal for the spontaneous outburst of cheering, singing and the shouting of Mazel Tov, Mazel Tov. Actually, of course, the breaking of the glass is a reminder to us of the destruction of Our Holy Temple (Bess Hamikdosh) so that even when we experience the heights of happiness and ecstasy, we should always remember that until our third Bess Hamikdosh is rebuilt, our Joy cannot be absolutely complete.

As far as I could ascertain, there was no letter received from the Rebbe. Perhaps the Rebbe was not invited.

At 9.30 p.m. we finally sat down at our table to partake of the Seuda. We were still playing the waiting game - neither the Chosson nor the Kallah were present and Roselyn sat at the other side of the Mechitza. Fortunately we had enjoyed a good meal before we left Jerusalem. We should have brought sandwiches too, all the tables had been set with plates of salads of many varieties, which were to be eaten with the main course. The men at the next table had completely finished off these salads - they had made the main meal of the salads!

In general the wedding celebrations followed the usual pattern of most religious marriages. A good three piece orchestra - clarinet, drums and electric organ - was in attendance. So were the inevitable gentlemen doing somersaults. I missed the juggler balancing a bottle on his forehead.

The only noticeable difference to "our" weddings, was that at our affairs there were one or two Jerusalemites intermingling with the dancers. Whereas here - the Yerushalmies, with round black hats and long ringletted Payus reaching down to the level of their chests, monopolised the dancing. Only a few of the Lubavitch type Chassidim were to be seen.

At 11 p.m. the Bridegroom arose to make a speech. He stood there, waiting nervously to be interrupted. His friends did not fail him, and commenced singing a Nigun. With a sigh of relief, the Chosson sat down again.

We met Avrohom Parshan from the U.S.A. and Rabbi Gurary from Tel Aviv. Rabbi Yaras from Lud was also present. It was only a few weeks previously that we had met at 770. He considered himself an expert in the reading of palms (hands). He explained the meanings of all the various lines to Yossi, and then "read" his hand. He told Yossi that he would become a Yirras Shomayim (Fear of Heaven), would be extremely wealthy (who is a rich man? - see Perak Ovus), and be a Talmid Chochum. In my opinion this was sheer psychology - what else should one tell a Yeshiva Bochur?

I once asked Chazzan Reubin Bercovitch (Oluv Hasholom) how he had davened on Rosh Hashannah. He replied that he would let me know at this time next year!! The bus left for Jerusalem at 11.45 p.m. The driver promised to leave all the passengers near to their homes.

Our route passed by the Yeshiva Torass Emess. But Yossi, who seemed a little fuddled, insisted upon leaving the bus, at 12.30 a.m., about two miles from his destination. He wanted a good walk to clear his head.

It was no small wonder that Yossi arrived at our hotel for breakfast next morning - an hour late - just as the doors of the breakfast room were being shut. He had bought for himself a new digital alarm watch which went off all day long - at the most unusual hours. I do not think that it worked during the night at all. He had overslept!

If Yossi would not have possessed a good reason or excuse for rising late, then he would have been punished. This normally took the form of having to learn two chapters of Tanya, by heart. He would have chosen chapters one and two, as he knew these very well. "In any case", Yossi said, "this was not a punishment, and it was a good idea to learn Tanya by heart!"

We remonstrated with Yossi for coming so late for breakfast. There was not too much time to eat! However, Yossi confessed that he was not very hungry. He just managed to get through a plate of porridge, a couple of fried eggs, and a large plate of herring, assisted by half a dozen buns or rolls. These were washed down by two cups of coffee, glasses of orange juice and a large jug of milk chocolate. All this did not take very long, as Roselyn was kept busy providing a shuttle service from the self-service tables to the consumer - to Yossi. A conveyor belt would have been very useful. (In these hotels, one is allowed to eat as much as one can manage - no limit - and no extra charge.)

Yossi now had a little time to relax, so Roselyn brought him his favourite dish - cottage cheese and cream (Shmetana). This was followed by a bowl of fruit and cream. It was fortunate that Yossi was not very hungry that morning! When we left the Hotel to proceed to the Dead Sea, Yossi saw the amount of our Hotel bill. He blurted out, with a shiver, that he hoped that we would not be staying at any more Five Star hotels!

As Yossi was residing at the Yeshiva, Roselyn wanted to show him how to wash his shirts and handkerchiefs in case of emergency, and how a handkerchief can be "self-ironed". The handkerchief is placed, dripping wet, upon a smooth surface - for example - a tiled wall, or looking glass in the bathroom. The result, when dried, is a perfectly ironed handkerchief. Yossi said that it sounded like a good idea, but it was not necessary in this Yeshiva. All he had to do was to roll his handkerchief and his shirt, into twisted balls, and leave them lying about. The next he saw of them was when they had been returned from the laundry. They were like new. Each shirt was individually packed and stiffened with cardboard, so that it would keep its shape until required. This was much better and easier than hanging them against a wall.

## Chapter 5

# The Production Of The Children's Sefer Torah

The Israeli Radio had announced on the 2 p.m news bulletin that all children should be encouraged and persuaded to write one letter each in the new Sefer Torah which was being written by one of the Rebbe's personal scribes, Rabbi Shlomo Aaron Heneg. The child could do this by purchasing a letter for a nominal amount, (one dollar in the U.S.A. or 50p in Britain) with their own money. They would have to apply for this letter in their own handwriting so that they would be personally involved. In due course, they would each receive a lovely certificate to confirm that a letter had been purchased and written in this Sefer Torah on their behalf. I have seen these certificates and they are well planned and designed and are beautiful individual mementos.

Every Jew is obliged to fulfill the Mitzvah of writing a Sefer Torah. In most cases this is an impossibility. However, it was understood that if one wrote a letter - together with 304,804 other Jews in one Sefer Torah, then it might be reckoned as if he had written a whole Torah. The hebrew letters in the word Y(i)SRO(e)L stand for:-Y = Yesh; S = Shissim; R = Rivoss; O = Oisus; L = LeTorah, which translated means that "there are 600,000 letters in the Torah. (The exact number of adult Jewish males who left Egypt under Moishe Rabainu at the time of the Exodus).

However, the actual number of letters is only 304,805. The balance of 295,195 letters is according to the Massora, which is the scientific study of the writing in the Sefer Torah, made up of Messoratic points (vowels) and other mystical "crowns and curves", etc. which are well understood by those experts in this field.

The Rebbe was anxious to do everything in his power to hasten the coming of our Righteous Moshiach and had initiated the concept that Jewish children - boys and girls under the age of Bar and Bass Mitzvah - should collectively write a Sefer Torah. These young children who were innocent and pure, and free of sin, should pay a nominal sum out of their own pocket money to pay for the Sefer Torah.

It made me terribly annoyed and exasperated when Golda Rivka confided to me, in London, that (1) a certain "**grosser**" fellow, An S. Chossid had explained to her that "I would not buy a letter in a Sefer Torah with all the posselle (unfit) Yidim", and (2) another one of the same sect told her "I would not buy a letter which may be next to one bought by a non-frum (not religious, yet) child". Golda Rivka was terribly upset!

Whilst we were in Jerusalem, we decided to take the opportunity of visiting the Tzemach Tzedek Shool in Chabad Road in the Old City of Jerusalem. It was situated almost opposite to the Kossul

- the "Western Wall".

From the roof of the Shool one can obtain a lovely view of the Kossul. This Shool is 128 years old. It is the only Shool in the Old City which was not destroyed by the Arabs but was left standing with the walls and the roof complete.

As the Rebbe has said - it has always been a complete shool and will never be destroyed - a very apt place in which to write a Sefer Torah - opposite to the Western Wall of the Bess Hamikdosh, which has never and will never be destroyed. Also we thought we might be lucky and see the Scribe at work on the Sefer Torah.

When we arrived at the Shool, we found ourselves in the Kolel Chabad where sixty young married men sit and learn all day. Rabbi Shmuel Schneerson, a cousin of the Rebbe, is the director of this Kolel Chabad.

Rabbi Tuvia Zilbershtrum showed us around the premises and especially the library which required more books. He begged me to give him a copy of my latest book - which I did.

Of course, that was a useful addition, but they needed more books - and would I please make a donation to enable them to purchase more stock for their library. I did not want my own poor book to be sitting alone with no company - so I had to help out with a donation. He made out the receipt to Rabbi Zalmon Jaffe. I told him my old story, that at 770, thousands of boys have given me Semicha, but not one Rabbi!

He, Tuvia, related me his story - "that the cheapest Semicha in the world was given by the Bell Telephone company of New York. All one had to pay was for the cost of the insertion in the Directory."

We were having a very interesting time, but it was not the reason why we came to this shool. We wanted to see how our Sefer Torah was being written. We were told that this was not possible. The Sofar would not be disturbed. He was working against time - and every single minute counted. The door to his room was always locked. But - "if you did not mind a rebuff, then just knock on the door and take a chance. What can you lose except a blow to your pride!"

So, I gave a good blow onto the door. There should have been a notice on the door to the effect "that Rabbi Shlomo Aaron Heneg, Sofar to the Rebbe, is working inside. So do not disturb".

Rabbi Heneg himself opened the door and gave me a wonderful welcome. His face lit up and he beamed with pleasure. He exclaimed "Oh, Zalmon, what a lovely surprise!" I was delighted that not only did he recognise me, but had given me such a lovely welcome. He had, of course, seen me often at 770.

I explained to Rabbi Shlomo Aaron that I write a book about the Rebbe every year, and I am always seeking something new and fresh to add. This was to be number 13, and I needed material and what better than a report on the actual writing of the Children's Sefer Torah, which was inaugurated by the Rebbe. At this moment, 240,000 children from all over the world had each bought a letter, but there was still a wealth of untapped riches.

In case I had need to substantiate my story about being an author, I took with me instalment number 12. Rabbi Shlomo Aaron asked me to give him a copy - which I did. He could not read English, but his daughters were quite adept at this and he was looking forward to them reading excerpts from my diary to him.

Shlomo Aaron explained that the best parchment for a Sefer Torah was obtained from the Vead of cow. Obviously the skins of these very young (unborn) calves are very soft indeed. Our Rabbonim have kept a special watch for these veadim. Even so, they vary - and some are better than others. Some are very white whereas others have some discolouration or stains. The outstanding ones were put aside for the Children's Sefer Torah.

Each Vead makes a piece of parchment which measures 24 inches by 17 inches (two feet by one and a half feet). 63 skins are needed for this one Sefer Torah. There are four columns (Amudim) on each piece of parchment, making a total in the Sefer Torah of 252 columns altogether. Forty two lines are ruled across the parchment with a special tool or a knife. No ink is used to mark these lines.

Each skin costs today sixty dollars, therefore the price of the parchment alone is almost \$3,800, well over £2,000 sterling, which is a lot of money, just for the raw materials.

For a pen, he uses a Quill made from either a goose feather or one from a turkey. The Ink he mixes himself (he does not buy "Indian Ink"). If you are interested, the ingredients are: Kuppenasser, Gum Arabic and Gulush. I was none the wiser.

Shlomo Aaron is a very young man of forty years (till 120). Roselyn said that he is just the right fellow to write a Sefer Torah. He has such a happy face. This could very well be true, but in addition to this, he must also be an expert craftsman.

He was just about to commence to write on a new section of parchment. In every Sefer Torah the very first letter is the Bais, of Beraishis. In the whole of the Torah there are another five columns in which the first letters have to be a Yud, a Hay, a Shin, a Mem and a Vov. These six Amudim always start with these above-mentioned letters. There is a Masseratic explanation for this.

Our Scribe was writing a Vov Sefer Torah. That meant - that in addition to the Six Columns aforementioned - every column commenced with the letter Vov. Similarly there are Megillas (of Esther) which are referred to as "Hamelech" Megillas, because every column started with the

word Hamelech (the King).

Shlomo Aaron works from 8 a.m. until 8 p.m. He lays the parchment, flat, onto his desk, under bright fluorescent lights. He wore a lightweight Kapota and instead of the usual Lubavitch custom of wearing a Yarmulka covered by a Hat, he wore one Yarmulka covered by another Yarmulka - this was much more comfortable.

He explained that normally it takes a Sofar a day to write one column. Shlomo Aaron does more. He has two pairs of spectacles (NOT worn together), a watch and a stop-watch. In front of him he has a Tikun, especially produced for Scribes of Sifrei Torah, to which he refers.

Yossi asked Shlomo Aaron whether we could watch him, whilst he wrote a letter. Yes, he would be delighted to accede to this request.

He dipped the Quill into the ink and wrote. Unlike English letters, which are written upon the bottom of the line - standing on this line, the letters of the Torah are written from the top of the line, hanging downwards, would be a good description. As Shlomo Aaron remarked "We go with the Kop aroof (head on top). They go with the Kop arop (head downwards)". He commenced four or five inches from the top of the parchment.

Then we watched as the words flowed from his pen. He wrote two lines. It was uncanny how swiftly the words formed onto the parchment - like a machine - and what beautifully immaculate and symmetrical writing was produced. Each letter was a work of art. This was indeed perfection. After watching him write these two lines, I would suggest that Shlomo Aaron's normal speed would be over three columns a day!! It was no small wonder that the Rebbe desired Shlomo Aaron to write this Sefer Torah.

I have seen lovely specimens of Kesav (writing), but this was in a category of its own. (Uzziyahu Brown, our own Manchester Sofar, also does reach a very high standard.) I enquired about the spaces which are left blank in the Torah and are shown by the letters 'PAY' and 'SOF' or by three PAYS and three SOFS in a Chumish. I suggested for instance that all spaces covered by three PAYS would be identical. He disagreed and showed us the space which he had left blank - and this was the size of the letter YUD larger than a previous one.

That is where the Tikun comes in useful. It explains and demonstrates all these finer points.

Each Scribe has his own idiosyncrasies. Some leave a blank space whenever the name of G'd appears in the text. Then they write them in all together, every day, after special immersion in the Mikvah. This is not a good system. Most Sofarim immerse every day, before they recommence this Holy Work.

Shlomo Aaron told us that when the *Ari Zal* (who was born nearby) obtained someone to write a

Sefer Torah for him, he, the *Ari Zal*, insisted upon writing all Hashem's names himself.

In case of any unforeseen difficulties or problems, there was another Scribe writing a Sefer Torah in the same room, who had started from the half-way mark. At this moment, Shlomo Aaron was writing the sedra of Shemini which was just past this halfway stage. He had no doubt that he would overtake his colleague. It was remarkable that although he was writing at such a fast and forcing pace, his work did not suffer one iota.

Shlomo Aaron added that when the Children passed by on their way home from school, they would look and stare at him, through the window - watching whilst he was working - they were very respectful indeed.

They wanted to know "is it my letter, which you are writing?" and "where are you up to now?"

Shlomo Aaron told them that it is "not your business!" "But it is our business", they retorted, "It is our Sefer Torah". This was a wonderful way to teach children.

We had spent a very interesting half an hour with Rabbi Shlomo Aaron. We did feel a little guilty, that we had wasted his time, which he could not really afford. "Don't worry about that! I will work an extra half an hour later on. It has been well worth it. You have brought extra light into my room - and also a lovely book".

This was all very complimentary, and we, personally, had learnt quite a lot on this visit - some of which I do hope that we have passed on to you.

When we arrived at our Hotel at the Dead Sea we discovered that a new Shomer had been appointed. He was a Moroccan - a Lubavitcher - a David Ochanna. His Rosh Yeshiva in Morocco was Rabbi Michol Lipsker. David brought out a bottle of Cognac which Rabbi Lipsker had sent to him - a present from the "Reebie".

We also celebrated Yud Bais Tamuz with a Farbraingen - about twenty men participated, in between the Mincha and Maariv services. David also gave a Shiur every day, at that time. He enjoyed it - he really loved it.

An election had just been held in Israel. Every day, I read in the Press about the progress in the formation of a Coalition Government. It did not make very pleasant reading. The bargaining - the blackmail - and the jobs for the Boys attitudes. The only good news was that there seemed a reasonable chance to get the "Me Yehudi" law amended. Then - Rabbi Shach objected. He also was not polite to the Rebbe Shlita.

The National Religious Party (not so religious - not so national - and not much of a party) had lost half of their seats. Mr. Abu Hatzeira, with but three members elected, demanded two Cabinet posts. The Aguda did not want any Cabinet positions, but demanded more money for Yeshiva

students, etc. (Why not?) 22,000 votes at the election secured one member. I wonder how many votes Lubavitch could muster? Although I feel that the Rebbe would not like Lubavitch to become a political party.

We bathed regularly, every day, in the Dead Sea. At 5 a.m. in the morning when the Sea was lukewarm and the atmosphere was warm. At midday when the Sea was hot and the atmosphere was very hot, and at 5 p.m. in the evening when the Sea was boiling hot, but the atmosphere was nice and warm in the shade of the Hotel whilst the sun was setting.

After two weeks, Roselyn and I both felt fit and well - and ready for our (now) annual visit to the Rebbe and Crown Heights for the Festival of Success.

## Chapter 6

# Hilary Hires A Holiday Home

Although some of Hilary's boys and girls do go to the Lubavitch Summer School and Camp, Hilary and Shmuel always like to take all the children away to the seaside. So they hire a house for a few weeks.

Hilary had the annual problem of seeking suitable accommodation to house her large family, KAH. As she does not commence to search until the very last moment, it is not surprising that she sometimes falls into the cart - cart-track would be more truthful, as you shall soon learn.

She obtained a beautiful large house with all amenities. It stood in its own grounds and was overlooking the sea. The main consideration was that there was another farmhouse situated about 300 yards away which possessed a telephone. Arrangements were made with the farmer so that Shmuel and the boys could take part in the "U.S.A. Conference and World Link-Up" which might take place on a few occasions during the time they were in their holiday home. The farmer was warned that this Conference Link-Up would probably take place after midnight and during the early hours of the morning.

I don't think that the farmer would have understood the rudiments of a Farbraingen!

Hilary has a large estate car, and she fixed a roof rack on top. This was not large enough to carry all her stuff - so she also hired a large covered trailer, which she could tow behind her car.

They intended to leave London, which was nearly 200 miles from their destination, on Tisha B'Av. Roselyn warned Hilary, who was the driver, to ensure that they left London very early, because she had neither visited nor seen this house, but only had written directions of how to get there. If G.F. she met difficulties or problems, and it became dark, then she would be in real trouble, especially as she would have young passengers, including two babies.

She filled the trailer, as a start, with fifty loaves of bread. She even loaded her freezer into the trailer. She then filled the car and the roof rack, and most of the children travelled by train with Shmuel. They had arranged to obtain milk supplies direct from the farm. Hilary put the cat into the car and she was ready for the journey to the seaside.

At 7.30 p.m. Roselyn phoned the farmer-neighbour to discover whether Hilary and family had arrived. "Not yet." She phoned again at 8 p.m. - at 9 p.m. - at 10 p.m. - and at 10.30 p.m. and she still received the same answer: "Not yet, and no sign of them". Roselyn was in a "real state" - worried sick and in a panic.

At 11 15 p.m. at night, we at long last received the news that "all had arrived - except Mum". You can imagine how we felt.

However, by midnight all was revealed. Hilary had started out from London at 4 p.m. As it was Tisha B'Av they could not wash until after midday and so on, so they could not leave any earlier.

The house was in its own grounds alright - it was in the Welsh National Park. And it was certainly overlooking the sea, but the house was on top of a mountain and one could see the ocean many miles below.

So - when Hilary reached the mountain, it was already getting dark. The road had changed to a cart-track, then to a smaller cart-track and then to a nameless dirt track, just fit for the deer, fawns and wild horses which roamed about the National Park.

So - in the dark, the trailer got stuck in the ditch. There she was, with a few children, including two babies, about a quarter of a mile below her destination. She detached the trailer and left it in the ditch. She then managed to turn the car around, and went in search of Shmuel and the rest of the family who, presumably, had been waiting at the station - at sea level - for the past few hours.

On the way, she was stopped by a fellow on a motorcycle who enquired whether she was Mrs Lew. He was the neighbour-farmer, who had already rescued Shmuel and the other children, and was now searching for "Mum".

One day, a week later, we were passing close by to South Wales, so Roselyn and I went up to see them and stayed overnight.

Next morning we insisted upon everyone going to the beach, the sea, early for a change. We left the Mountain Top retreat by car at 12 noon. It took twenty minutes to arrive at the beach. At 4 p.m. the Rebbe was to relay a Sicho, so we had to rush back again.

During the course of three weeks, Hilary's car received a real "bashing" on those cart-tracks. Broken gears - and her tyres?!? One morning Ben-Zion was in the driving seat of the car. He pulled out the whole gear lever. Of course, he had no right to be driving - he had not passed his driving test yet - well - he was only two years old.

## Chapter 7

# Our Visit to the Rebbe for Success

### "On Our Way"

As our plane to New York left early on Sunday morning from London, we decided to stay over Shabbos with Hilary, Shmuel and the children. In any case we had to collect two of our grandchildren, Channah and Sholom Dov Ber (Lew). Levi (Jaffe) who also intended to travel with us to the U.S.A. accompanied us to London.

Shmuel had just returned from spending a week, including Rosh Hashanna, in Russia. He gave us a very interesting, but confidential report. He confirmed that none of the stories and reports which had emanated from Russia about the plight of the Jewish people who lived there, had been exaggerated. They were unfortunately only too true. For Jews to live as Jews in that country was not easy!! Extremely difficult indeed.

A most unusual incident occurred when Shmuel arrived at Moscow Airport. He was taken aside and his suitcases and his person were thoroughly and minutely examined. They were searching for religious appurtenances, such as Tefilin, Tzitzis, Sidurim, in fact, all types of books and even cassettes, which had religious connections.

The Customs Official placed a cassette taken at random and placed it in Shmuel's tape recorder. The Official told Shmuel to switch on the machine, let it spin around and to stop the machine when signalled to do so. "Then I want hear the play-back", he added. "Now play", he ordered. And - suddenly the whole Moscow Airport was filled with the Rebbe singing, loudly and clearly, the verse from Psalm 63, Tzemo Lecho Nafshi, which translated means "My soul is thirsty for YOU, My flesh longs for YOU in a dry land, and it is faint without water (Torah)".

The whole Airport was resounding to the Rebbe's song. It echoed and re-echoed from the rafters. "Stop, stop the maching", shouted the Russian Official. Shmuel did his best to keep it going for as long as he dared - and then turned it off. I believe that during his visit he had further clashes with officialdom.

During the short time that he was in Russia, Shmuel officiated at a Wedding. He did a wonderful job in encouraging the Jewish people whom he met, to keep their faith, Emunah, and to have confidence that P.G'd very soon, our Righteous Moshiach will become revealed.

Then Our Jewish brethren will be relieved from their severe and hard oppression.

Roselyn and I, together with three of our grandchildren Levi (Jaffe) aged 13, and Channah (Lew) aged 10, and Sholom Dov Ber (Lew) aged 7, left London by TWA. We did not expect Kosher food, so we were not disappointed. Levi, Channah and Sholom Ber soon polished off the large pile of our sandwiches, followed by loads of biscuits, cake and chocolates. The Stewardess reappeared with the information that she had discovered three parcels of Kosher meals and would we accept them. We took them - just in case of an emergency, but it seemed the emergency had already arrived. It was uncanny the way these three children tucked away all the chicken, meat, extra liver cake and fruit, after eating so many large and filling sandwiches.

Channah and Sholom Ber immediately got down to business. They did not want to waste time. They desired to write a letter to the Rebbe. They obtained writing paper and envelopes from the Stewardess. On this stationery, going along the whole length, was a motif, a picture of a large Mickey Mouse in full colour. I was sure that the Rebbe would enjoy that!

Channah wrote a lovely, sensible and friendly letter to the Rebbe - even the date (in Hebrew) was correct - the thirteenth day of Tishrei 5742. She wrote:

Dear Rebbe, Shlita, till 120 years.

How are you? I am fine, B.H. I have come here for two weeks to see you. I wish you a lovely Yom Tov and all your family.

I am here in America with my grandparents and one cousin Levi Jaffe, and my brother Sholom Ber Lew. I have been to America 7 times KAH, and P.G. this will be my 8th time. Each time I have been there, I have been enjoying myself very much. The last time I came here was Yud Bais Tamuz, with my mother and a few girls from the 5th form. That time I really enjoyed myself and I still remember at Yechidus when you gave us a Brocha in English and gave us a dollar each to put in Tzedoka when we get to England.

Have a happy and healthy year and P.G. Moshiach will come speedily.

Gemar Chassima Tova.

Channah Lew

Sholom Ber's letter was much shorter and was written half in English and half in Hebrew (or Yiddish). For instance, he wrote "Dear Rebbe how are you" in English. Then "voss MACHSTU" in Yiddish, followed by "Shlita" in Hebrew. I assumed that this word belonged to the "Dear Rebbe" phrase. He wished the Rebbe a Nice Year a Shono Tova and a Chag Sameach. He also looked forward to the advent of Moshiach very soon.

### **"We Meet the Rebbe and Enjoy a Farbraingen"**

On that day, when we arrived, the Rebbe was as usual at the Ohel. He returned to 770 in the very late afternoon and ascended the steps with his eyes downcast. It had been a very warm day, and it had been probably extremely hot and uncomfortable at the Cemetery, especially so, as the Rebbe had nothing to eat all day.

I stood near to the top of the steps and the Rebbe was walking right past me. I took a chance - and wished the Rebbe "Sholom Aleichem" - and it paid dividends straight away - because the Rebbe replied "Aleichem Sholom". The Rebbe had once related in a Sicho, and explained, that when a Jew wishes another Jew 'Sholom Aleichem', he extends to him all the blessings of Peace, which is one of the highest forms of Blessings. He, in turn, receives the reply "Aleichem Sholom" and this makes the blessings even more numerous and effective. The Rebbe added, at that time - "and how more so when hundreds of Jews exchange these greetings together!!"

Therefore, today, I would personally add - and how much greater, effectual and beneficial is this brocha when it comes direct from the Rebbe himself.

The Mincha service was in the Shool. Zusie Williamofsky was already standing on a bench, ready to commence the singing when the Rebbe entered. And, what a raptuous welcome we did give to the Rebbe. We all sang as loudly and as vigorously as we could when the Rebbe arrived. We repeated the performance even more vigorously and lustily when the Rebbe left, after Mincha.

The Rebbe was beaming - it was lovely to see and we were all uplifted. I was told that this was the first occasion, after the seriousness and earnestness of the High Festivals - Rosh Hashonna and Yom Kippur - that the Rebbe was assuming the joyful face of Yom Tov. It was terrific. The Rebbe looked KAH really wonderful. It was nice to meet all my Old - and Young - friends, and to receive their very warm welcome. "Now we can see that it is Yom Tov" - - was an oft-repeated remark, expressed to me.

We returned to our apartment and the three grandchildren whom we brought with us from England had been joined by Dovid (Jaffe) who studied at the Lubavitcher Yeshiva in Ocean Parkway, and by Yossi, Mendie and Yenta Chaya (Lew) who had been in Crown Heights since before Rosh Hashonna and had been staying with friends. They were willing, ready and able to settle into our apartment. So, the Rebbe had prophesied correctly and Roselyn now had a total of seven grandchildren KAH to look after. And again to quote the Rebbe, Roselyn was in her seventh heaven - one grandchild for each heaven!

As a matter of interest it was to be five days - on the first day of Chol HaMoed - that Roselyn had her first opportunity of seeing the Rebbe outside 770. Roselyn told me that the welcome she received from the Rebbe made it well worth waiting for.

There was to be a Farbraingen on that first evening of our arrival, Sunday. Dovid had been pressing me to miss the Rebbe's Maariv, in order to ensure that I had my usual seat at the Farbraingen. There was a huge crowd present, and it would be difficult to claim one's seat.

I asserted that, if everyone maintained that attitude, then the Rebbe might not have a Minyan for Maariv at all. In any case, I have always considered that it is much more important for me to daven with the Rebbe, than to have a seat at a Farbraingen (see last year's instalment and my detailed views on this subject).

However, Dovid was a good lad. He offered to sit in my seat until I arrived for the Farbraingen after Maariv. Maariv was held in the Bess Hamedrish.

I davened at my usual spot, just behind the Rebbe. After the service, before the Rebbe departed from the Bess Hamedrish, he looked hard and intently at the floor near to where I stood.

I felt embarrassed and uncomfortable, and I looked around for any scraps of paper or other bits of refuse, which might be lying on the floor, and which the Rebbe wished me to clear up. I could see nothing, but the Rebbe was still staring and concentrating on my shoes. I glanced down - yes, they seemed nicely polished and clean, but I then realised that the Rebbe had noticed that this was the first occasion, for twelve months, that I was wearing shoes. During the time of Shovuos, I had worn lightweight sandals, because I had cut my Achilles Tendon (my heel) and so could not wear shoes.

This was another example of the Rebbe's acute perception - of how he notices and remembers everything.

Meanwhile, Dovid, sitting in my place downstairs, was on tenterhooks. He did not realise that Maariv had been a little late and he expected the Rebbe to arrive at 9.30 precisely - and it was now 9.30 p.m. exactly. Dovid was panic stricken and was fearful that he might be left sitting in my seat at the top end, "amongst the quality", when the Rebbe arrived and that he would not be able to get away.

Rabbi J.J. told Dovid to "Have faith, like I have, in your Zaidie". I just managed to exchange places with Dovid, only seconds before the Rebbe marched into the Shool Hall.

The Rebbe related a number of Sichos, and told us that on Yom Kippur we received, hopefully, a Gemar Chassima Tovah - "Signed and sealed for a good New Year". We were therefore very happy and in every one of these four days since Yom Kippur, our Simcha increased, higher and higher till Succos - when we would enjoy Simchas Yom Tov, Simchas Bais Hashoaviv, and culminate with The Joy of Simchas Torah. (In an aside, the Rebbe declared that we possessed Freedom of Religion in the U.S.A., and prayed vehemently that P.G. our brethren in "that other land" (Russia) would soon be able to enjoy this basic Freedom.)

The Rebbe explained that in these days it was vital, not only to study and to read Torah, but actually to write a Sefer Torah, which would join and unite all Jews together. The important matter was not whether to write more and more Sifrei Torah, but to unite all Jews together in one Sefer Torah. "You should love your neighbour as yourself".

Moishe Rabainu presented Twelve Sifrei Torah to the Jews in the desert, one to each tribe - plus an additional one - in case one of those became "possul" - not Kosher. Thirteen Sifrei Torah in all.

The whole idea was - not that each person or each congregation should write its own Torah, but everyone should join together in one - two - or even three Sifrei Torah. All should purchase single letters in each Torah, so that it should be as if written by individual people.

All who had attended Yeshivas Tomchei Temimim - their wives, sons and daughters - all should join in this Sefer Torah. Also girls who had attended Beth Rivka Schools. It was not the intention to make money, but of course - why not!? The cash could go to the Beth Rivka Schools and so on.

The Rebbe remarked that he had been informed that 200, 300 names had been collected. This was ridiculous when 305,805 were required. The Rebbe added that to those who have started - "It was very good and a brocha on them". They should ensure that all the letters in those Sifrei Torah already being written, should be sold first. "250,000 men were still waiting to buy a letter. First complete the one in Israel, then others - in Europe and elsewhere".

"Do not keep asking me the Halacha, it is a straightforward matter. If you are still in doubt, then ask a Rov, who will give you the ruling according to the "Din". We must immediately start the second Children's Sefer Torah, so that all Jewish Children shall own a letter in the Torah".

"The whole world is shaking and trembling. As long as Jews stand firmly together then **nothing** will prevail against them. The whole world is quaking and the only saviour would be for the Jewish people to join together in a Sefer Torah. The reward will be given straight away - may even bring Moshiach. But - you must all do your share in collecting these letters. You cannot rely on Elija the Prophet to sell these letters".

Rabbi Chadakov told me afterwards that the Children's Sefer Torah has had a tremendous effect on World and Jewish affairs recently. That is the reason why the Rebbe is so keen on writing a Sefer Torah for Adults, too.

The Farbraingen concluded with the singing of the Alter Rebbe's Nigun and "We Want Moshiach Now". After which the Rebbe distributed single dollar bills to all the assembly, not personally, but through the Rebbe's agents, who went amongst the gathering with thick wads of

these notes. It still took half an hour to supply everyone with these dollars. They were to be given to Tzedoka, but they could be redeemed for cash. During the distribution, for the whole thirty minutes, we sang a very lively and exciting nigun. - faster, faster and faster still. It was terrific - more terrific and most terrific!

As Rabbi Hadakov declared, I am sure that the Rebbe had a very good reason for this Sefer Torah campaign.

About four weeks later there was held an Arab Summit Conference. All the Arabs - all the Europeans, almost the whole world was against us - and then occurred in my opinion, a miracle. Saudi Arabia proposed a "Peace" plan, which was sponsored by the P.L.O. (Yemach Shemom) which would have meant the destruction of Israel. Our "own" Lord Carrington and government supported this - and - within five hours the Arab Summit was disbanded and in total disorder - and "poor" Saudi Arabia and Lord Carrington were all in disarray. It was, certainly, "higher than natural occurrences".

### **Success**

Label Itkin built the Succah, adjoining our wall and as he did last year, invited me and the boys to use - to dwell in - the Succah whenever we wished. This was very kind and generous of Label, and I very much appreciated this invitation.

So in addition to Dovid, Yossi, Mendie and myself, we expected to be joined by our usual neighbours - Rabbi Dvorkin and his brother-in-law, Rabbi Dubrawsky. Also Rabbi Cohen, the Rosh Yeshiva of Kfar Chabad, and a Rosh Yeshiva of Torass Emess, Jerusalem, and others, besides, of course, our Host Rabbi Itkin and his son Label.

### **The Rebbe's Esrog - "It's A Gift"**

Just as had occurred last year, Label Groner again invited me to wait in the Hallway, on Erev Succos, because the Rebbe would present me with a set of Arba Minim (Esrog, Lulov, Hadassim and Arovus).

The Hallway was crowded, with those who were to be honoured by the Rebbe plus scores of boys who were milling around, getting in everybody's way - but refusing to budge in case they missed something. Label appealed to/pleaded with, and shouted at them all, to leave the hallway. They had no business nor had they any reason to stand there in everyone's way.

So they all moved - around and around and around. Rabbi Chadakov's name was called - Nissen Mindel - representatives from Kfar Chabad, and so on. Finally, I then heard Label Groner call out "Shneur Zalmon on behalf of Manchester." The Arba Minim were laid out around the room. Again, there remained just one Esrog. (The man who came after me was not surprised.)

I took this Esrog, a Lulov, Arovus and three Hadassim (one extra - in case). I thanked the Rebbe for the gifts and the Rebbe said - "only three Hadassim? You are not a business man - take five - take seven". When I returned home I discovered I had eleven altogether.

I was telling Roselyn and my grandchildren how lucky I was to receive a perfect set of Arba Minim from the Rebbe - and - it cost me absolutely nothing for this perfection. Dovid was horrified - he pointed out that everyone had to pay something for his Esrog and Lulov and at least I should give something to Tzedoka for this privilege. It seemed a reasonable argument.

I took Dovid's advice and sent a letter to the Rebbe. I explained Dovid's arguments and reasoning. I realised that the Rebbe had presented me with the set of Arba Minim for the sake of our friendship. But - to legalise the transaction, I had pleasure in enclosing a \$50 bill for the Rebbe to give to Tzedoka. A little while later, Label Groner wanted to see me after davenning. He had a letter for me from the Rebbe.

The Rebbe thanked me for the lovely thought, but he explained that if he accepted money for me, he would have to accept money from all those to whom he had given the other sets of Arba Minim!! So the \$50 bill was enclosed - returned with many thanks.

I had brought along as my contribution to the Succah festivities two bottles of Glayva, Scotch liqueur and a small bottle of Polish white spirits, commonly called 96 degrees. I was informed, on the highest authority that this liquid is the Rolls Royce of all spirits.

I noticed that there were two accepted methods of drinking this liquid fire: (1) I call the Old Russian Kiddush:- two very large identical glasses or tumblers are filled to overflowing. One contains White Spirits 96° and the other just plain cold water. Kiddush is made upon the 96°, and the fiery liquid is downed in a few gulps without any pause. The man's face will become crimson red, then white like a sheet. He will become speechless and his eyes glossy.

Then, whilst his whole inside must be burning and completely on fire, the water is quickly and immediately poured down his throat, presumably to put out the fire;

and (2) a jiggerful (small glass) of this is downed in one gulp. He holds his breath and at once takes some small pieces or particles of food. These are munched very quickly and this acts as a counter-effect to the drink. The beatific smile which envelopes the drinker's face is wonderful to perceive.

770 was overcrowded. Even more so than at last Succos. From my last years' experience, I decided that "Discretion was the better part of valour" and that it would be better for me to sit or stand in or on the front bench, behind the Rebbe's platform. This bench was made to sit twenty people but thirty were squeezed into this area.

From the time of 6.20 p.m. after Mincha until 7.10 p.m. when the Rebbe arrived for Maariv, there was non-stop singing and dancing all around the Hall. And little boys were non-stop fighting all around the Rebbe's platform.

After Maariv, the Rebbe related to us a Sicho about the Yom Tov of Simchas Bais Hashoaivu. I was glad of the protection of the bench. Even so it was difficult to stand or to keep one's balance.

However, when I looked at Dovid, who was standing in the identical spot which I had occupied last year, I breathed a sigh of thankfulness. There Dovid stood. His face was flushed and wet with perspiration. He was pushed and pressed in on all sides. He complained afterwards about his back and his feet, as did both Yossi and Mendie. Levi stood next to an Old Man who suddenly collapsed and fainted. One excited man shouted Hatzola, Hatzola (ambulance, ambulance). I think that this was for Levi who was white around the gills and who did not recover his colour or composure until hours afterwards.

Next morning was the first day of Success. At 7.20 a.m, there was a long queue waiting for the numbered tickets, which ensured one a definite place or turn in the line waiting to bench with the Rebbe's Arba Minim. By 7.30 a.m., Shezak Zirkind and Avtzon had issued over 500 tickets. They did an excellent job and issued thousands of tickets quickly and without any fuss.

They did even better on the next day and issued tickets from 6.30 a.m. The Rebbe arrived just after 7.30 a.m. on both mornings, with his Esrog and Lulov. He did not wish to keep the people waiting for him. Actually, the Rebbe moved into the Library, next door to 770, with his Rebbetzen for Success. Just like they did last year.

Myer Harlick brought in the Rebbe's Arba Minim just before Hallel. The Rebbe always has the job of straightening the Hadassim and the Arovus. Last year it took as long as ten minutes for the Rebbe to be satisfied that all was well. One morning, the Rebbe counted then recounted and counted again. Everyone wanted to know what and why the Rebbe counted so much.

Incidentally, Dovid Mandlebaum told me in the name of Myer Harlick that the Rebbe uses Thirty-six Hadassim and not Twenty-six, as I mentioned in my last instalment.

Well, the Rebbe had plenty to count, and in view of the fact that the Rebbe's Esrog became broken during Yom Tov, one can understand the Rebbe's extreme care to confirm that all was well. It would have been quite easy to detach a Hadass or one of the Arovus. All day long, there was singing and dancing, just like on Simchas Torah.

During Chol HaMoed there was dancing in the streets every night and all night long. Bands were playing until the early hours of the morning and then afterwards most boys continued singing

and dancing until it was time for the morning service.

One day, when it was time for the Mincha service at 3.15, the Hallway was packed tightly with women and children standing and waiting for the Rebbe to pass by on his way from his study to the lift and to the Shool. The Rebbe gave each child a coin for the Tzedoka Box. It took over six minutes to complete this chore.

Meanwhile, the Bess Hamedrish was crowded, too, with men davenning and going around and around with the Esrog and Lulov for the morning service. Dovid and Levi were still fast asleep in the apartment. They were up all night, davenned and went to bed. They would probably sleep the clock round!

### **The Cost of Taking a Photograph of the Rebbe - by a true Chassid**

My friend Yisroel Goldschmid had an unusual experience on Thursday night - Chol HaMoed. Actually he was very reluctant to discuss this matter but for the sake of truth and veracity he decided to let me know the facts of what had occurred.

The Rebbe was descending the steps from the Platform and Yisroel, who does some photography in his "spare" time took this opportunity whilst standing nearby to take a picture of the Rebbe.

The Rebbe stopped before him and enquired how much Tanya he "had learned today". Yisroel replied that he had learned that day's Shiur of Chitas - Chumish, Tehillim and Tanya. The Rebbe then enquired how many pictures Yisroel had taken. Yisroel replied - three or four. The Rebbe again wanted to know how many chapters of Tanya he had studied that day, and Yisroel again confirmed that he had learned the day's Shiur of Chitas.

The Rebbe then asked how many pictures Yisroel had taken during the whole day. Yisroel reckoned about ten or fifteen. But the Rebbe intimated that he considered that he had taken more and added that from "tomorrow and onwards" Yisroel should learn a Perek (chapter) for every picture he takes (presumably of the Rebbe).

Yisroel was naturally a little nervous during this interview but he thinks that this was really the gist of the conversation that took place.

Incidentally, to prove how quickly false rumours do spread - Yisroel's sister in Montreal had already told him over the phone that she had heard that Yisroel had to learn two chapters of Tanya for every photograph he took!

### **We Go on Shelichos to Great Neck**

Rabbi Kassriel Kasstel was the organiser of the groups, which had volunteered to visit outlying

Succahs and to make Jews happy with the Simcha of Yom Tov.

Last year we visited Engledene, New Jersey. I was now requested to be outside 770 at 6.30 p.m. and a conveyance would be provided to take us to the Great Neck Community and Shool. I would be joined by others.

I could not stand outside 770, nor could anyone else to make up a group. The rain was lashing and thrashing down in torrents. The wind was howling - it was not fit even for a dog to be out on this terrible night.

I stood in the doorway waiting. At 6.50 p.m. Kassriel paid me a flying visit. "Please wait two minutes", he shouted and pleaded, "We have no car yet, and we are a few people short". At 7 p.m. he popped up again and told me to wait only one minute. I informed Kassriel that I would take my grandsons Dovid and Levi to make up the party. All we needed was the car.

We were still waiting at 7.15 p.m. and were considering cancelling our venture. But "Alright - we shall wait another half a minute", I promised Kassriel.

To our great surprise a van drew up. It belonged to Morristown Yeshiva and had just been overhauled. There were five of us and we all scrambled into the van. There were no seats at the back. Dovid sat upon the spare wheel and Levi sat upon Dovid.

We left at 7.30 - just one hour late. Dovid Kalan was the driver. He muttered and grumbled. It had cost \$350 to repair the van, and something was still wrong. The engine started and stalled. It jerked forward in fits and starts. The driver complained bitterly – "This van will break down". "It won't get us there". "If it does get us there, then it won't get us back". "Have you got \$12 in cash in case we need a garage - that is if we are lucky enough to find a garage open on such a night". During all this grumbling the van was still jerking, stopping and stalling, but we did manage to arrive onto Eastern Parkway.

We all shouted and screamed at the driver that we had suffered enough and we were leaving his car. Somehow or other we spluttered and jerked along to Kingston Avenue, where we all fell out through the door in great relief. We made our way back to 770, but we could hear the driver shouting to us that "it's O.K. now. Come back".

Kassriel was amazed to see us return so soon. He said that he was always pleased to see us, but whatever had happened? We told him a few home truths.

But we were lucky for Yehuda Blessofsky had arrived, driving his new car. He volunteered to take us to Great Neck - and there was even a seat for Dovid. Kassriel intimated that he had organised and sent out thirty cars containing about two hundred people on this terribly wet night to visit communal Succahs around New York State and New Jersey. He had experienced more

trouble and worry over our one group than with all the others put together. He was delighted when he saw the back of us.

Our group consisted of (1) Rabbi Yehuda Blessofsky, the owner-driver of a handsome motor car; (2) Rabbi Shmuel Zalmonoff; (3) Rabbi Mizrachi, from Israel; and (4), (5) and (6) were the Jaffe boys - Dovid, Levi and me.

The Rebbe's sheliach and our contact at Great Neck was Rabbi Anshel Pearl.

It was a good car. Kept out the rain. Kept up a good speed and travelled well. We travelled well for many many miles but we were not getting anywhere. We retraced our steps and went around in circles. I was quite comfortable and cosy, nicely squashed and squeezed into the back seat. Whenever we saw someone, which was very rarely, who had the courage to brave the elements, Yehuda stopped him to try and discover where we were - and more important, where we were going. We were afraid that the Great Neck might have shrunk and become a little Helzel (stuffed neck).

Yehuda had never been given explicit directions of how to reach this place and he now realised that we were completely lost. Finally, he pulled up at a telephone kiosk and called Rabbi Pearl at Great Neck, who transmitted the exact details of the route to our destination.

Rabbi Anshel Pearl promised to inform the assembly that we were on our way. He sincerely hoped that most of the gathering would have patience and await our arrival, however belated.

We arrived at 9 p.m., almost two hours late. Many members had already departed, but about sixty people, men and women, were still present, and gave us a warm welcome in the converted gymnasium. Steve Simenowitz, a very nice, huge burly fellow who wore a cowboy's hat, was entertaining the assembly, with songs and a guitar. He had done so for the past two hours. He told us that he had sung and played Uforatzo (the Lubavitch "signature tune") a dozen times already - and - well - was he glad to see us!

The Succah was a shambles, flooded and with huge pools of water everywhere. The decorations that were still tied to the roof, were hanging limply, dejectedly and wet. The rain was still pouring in through the roof, so we decided to hold the celebrations in the gymnasium.

I had understood from Rabbi Kassriel Kasstel that Rabbi Pearl would take charge of our group and that he would be our principle speaker. Instead of which, he asked one of us to say a few words. Now who? Rabbi Yehuda Blessofsky and Rabbi Shmuel Zalmonoff protested that they were not public speakers. Rabbi Mizrachi only conversed in Ivrit. Dovid and Levi maintained that they only came for the dancing.

Well, for the sake of the Rebbe, I volunteered. I went to the microphone and apologised for our

late arrival. I then read out excerpts from my Diary, for about three minutes, which were received with acclamation.

My colleagues were sitting at a table - but, of course, refused to drink even a drop of Vodka, orange juice, or soda, outside the Succah. I could envisage that this Farbraingen would deteriorate into an irresolute discussion and debate on Jewish and Lubavitch affairs.

I considered that now - this very minute - was the time for action.

I called my friends, started a nigun and off we went around the room, singing, whirling and twirling in a frenzy of excitement and exhilaration. Rabbi Mizrachi was doing cart-wheels and somersaults around us and in the centre. Anshel Pearl, Mr. Hersh Honickman (the Chairman of the Board of Directors), and Rabbi Ephraim Wolfe, the Minister of the Congregation, could not resist the rhythm and we were soon joined by them and by most of the men present in the hall.

For over an hour, we danced and sang non-stop. Dovid and Levi were puffing and blowing, almost out of breath, but they never gave up, although they were so wet with perspiration that it seemed as if they had spent that hour sitting in the wet Succah. Dovid confided that he never knew that I could dance so lively, energetically and with such verve. I did not know myself, either. But as the Rebbe had declared the other night - quoting the Perek Ovus - "If I don't do it, who will?" What did I care or bother about my bad leg, my poorly hip, or my sore throat! There was a job of work to be done - and we had to do it.

There was a short respite – after all we are human beings – not angels – so I read more excerpts from my book. Then – on with the dancing for another 30 minutes. A very exciting and enjoyable time was had by all.

We all received exceptionally high praise, and we certainly felt that we had brought Jewish people closer to Judaism and to Lubavitch. We definitely enhanced the name of Lubavitch. Rabbi Pearl impressed the members with the importance of purchasing a letter in the Sefer Torah.

Rabbi Ephraim Wolfe requested a copy of "My Encounter with the Rebbe" and I complied with his plea.

In another room there was a large party of Iranians who were preparing to recite Tikun for Hoshanna Rabba. They expressed a desire that one of us should address them. But - they could not speak nor understand English, nor French, neither Ivrit nor Yiddish. Only Pharsee. "Nu - find a Pharsee?!" Rabbi Kasstel sent out thirty cars with 200 people that evening - but not one who could speak Pharsee!

I congratulated all my colleagues including Dovid and Levi on their wonderful and exceptional

co-operation which ensured the success of the evening. I sent in a report to the Rebbe, which was their just reward. As a matter of fact, Rabbi Pearl subsequently told me, six months later, that the Great Neck members were continually asking him when we would be coming again - they enjoyed our visit so much.

After our hard bout of singing and dancing, we needed a little refreshment, so before we departed from Great Neck, we adjourned to the Succah to partake of orange juice and soda. It was not possible to sit upon the soaking wet chairs, so there we stood, inches deep in water and the rain continued to pour through the roof. We made the brocha - Laishev Basuccah, for the Mitzvah of dwelling in the Succah.

I suggested that surely it is well known that we are not compelled to eat in the Succah when the rain is not only dripping through the roof but actually pouring down, very heavily indeed. I was informed that once, many years ago, the Rebbe held a Farbraingen in the Succah at 770. The rain poured into the Succah so heavily and penetratingly that it was as if one was sitting (or standing) in the open, outside. But the Rebbe continued with this Farbraingen for more than three hours.

The Rebbe had mentioned in a Sicho on Simcha Bais Hashoavim that wine brought simcha. It was a natural thing - drinking wine made one happy - sometimes one drank too much with rather odd and peculiar results.

However the Simcha of the drinking of the waters was above nature - and it was one of the greatest joys. Well, we had plenty of rain water this Success.

### **The Rebbe Distributes Cake**

During the day of Hashanna Rabba, the Rebbe stood outside the Succah at 770 and distributed Lekach (cake) to all who were desirous of receiving this prized gift from the Rebbe's hand.

There were no more arguments nor debates on whether one should have mercy on the Rebbe and keep away, or whether to have no pity on the Rebbe and join the queue for this unique privilege. The Rebbe had made it quite clear during the past year or so, that he wanted everyone to come to him for Lekach. It was the Rebbe's pleasure.

The distribution commenced at 12.30 p.m. in the afternoon and continued until 3.30 p.m. without a stop, and with no respite for the Rebbe. There was a continuous line of hundreds of yards. I took along my five grandsons who were presently in Crown Heights - Dovid and Levi (Jaffe) and Yossi, Mendie and Sholom Ber (Lew).

Sholom Ber stretched out his left hand in order to take a piece of cake from the Rebbe. "No, No. You must use your right hand", he was instructed. Sholom Ber nearly pulled off the Rebbe's hand in his eagerness to obtain the cake and be gone.

I informed the Rebbe, that T.G. I had brought herewith five grandsons for Lekach. The Rebbe reproached me and explained that I should use the expression Nisht (not) nisht 6, nisht 7, nisht 8, nisht 9, nisht 10, nisht 11, nisht 12. We all received our rations or cake, which the Rebbe handed to each of us, together with a lovely brocha for a sweet New Year. After the men had been served, it was the turn of the ladies, so it was hours afterwards that Roselyn went with two of our granddaughters, Yenta Chaya and Channah (Lew) to the Rebbe. They each received their cake and blessings. In addition the Rebbe handed some extra pieces of Lekach to Roselyn with the remark that "Your husband did not ask for Avrohom, so please take this for him and for all his family, with best wishes for a sweet New Year". It is really remarkable how the Rebbe remembers everything and everybody!

### **Miscellany**

Every minute the children were asking me for money, for dollars, for any cash. Suddenly their demands became even bigger and even more frequent. I asked them why they needed so much money. They replied that they wanted to buy presents for "Daddy, Mammy and the family and also for you Bobby and Zaidie!!" Now wasn't that sweet of them!

Our Rebbetzen graciously extended to us an invitation to visit her at home - together with our grandchildren.

The Rebbetzen showed us the lovely little compact and comfortable Succah which the Rebbe used during Chal HaMoed. They removed to and lived in the Library, next door to 770, only during Yom Tov, when it was not easy for the Rebbe to manage to get home. A nice Succah had also been attached to the Library. At least the Rebbe would be able to spend Yom Tov together with his Rebbetzen, and not have to remain alone in 770 during the whole of that period.

The children were just getting into their stride, with their words of Torah and songs, when some unexpected guests were announced. The children could not hide their disappointment and chagrine.

The Rebbetzen was also a little surprised and upset - and taken a little aback, but being the perfect Lady that she is, she greeted the new arrivals very warmly indeed.

The children were too embarrassed and inhibited to carry on with their "show". In due course, after an hour and a quarter we took our leave of the Rebbetzen.

A woman approached Binyamin Klyne. She wanted a Brocha from the Rebbe. "But, I do not write on Chal HaMoed, so will you do it for me?" Binyamin agreed and wrote down what the woman had dictated to him.

Then she needed another one - and then another!! Some people do have a Chutzpah!! A big Chutzpah!

Gill Hersh, of the flower shop in Kingston Avenue, was raving about my book. He always does - he is one of my fans. He could not get over the idea of an Englishman writing about Chassidism. "It's unbelievable!!" (I don't know why) "It's wonderful", he added, "If the Rebbe tells you to write, then you will have plenty to write about".

A Rabbi asked Rabbi Dvorkin a shaala. He had been teaching a Bridegroom the laws appertaining to marriage, before his Wedding. This Chossen enquired whether there was a way to limit one's family because of "economic reasons".

That was seven years ago, and he still has no children. What advice can Rabbi Dvorkin give him? As the Rebbe said last year, in a Sicho, the parents can only decide when NOT to have children. If they do want a family, then they have to appeal and pray to the A'Mighty - the "Third Partner" in addition to the parents.

Rabbi Dvorkin is always being asked Shaalas. He must expect them in his Office - and - he is not disappointed. But it is a bit cheeky to have to give a Pesak Din when eating one's Yom Tov meal in the Succah.

We were just concluding our dinner when a young man entered the Succah. He wanted to give to Rabbi Dvorkin a nice piece of chicken. I thought to myself - "It was very nice and very kind of him". But this young gentleman only wanted to discover whether this chicken was Kosher, so that he and not Rabbi Dvorkin would be allowed to consume it.

Rabbi Dvorkin examined the chicken and in a few second pronounced it fit for Jewish consumption. He is extremely quick in making these Halachic decisions. The young gentleman heaved a sigh of relief and reached into his jacket pocket and brought out another nice piece of chicken for Rabbi Dvorkin. I thought to myself, "This must be a thanksgiving offering for Rabbi Dvorkin". But no - it was another Shaala. This also proved to be Kosher. The young gentleman left us in order to return to his own Succah and to enjoy his chicken dinner.

It was about 2.30 a.m. after midnight. I was awakened by a furtive noise. The whole apartment was in darkness, yet I could discern a small light glowing and moving around. I peeped through my bedroom doorway and I beheld a shadowy figure holding a lighted candle and collected crumbs from the table.

Someone was searching for the Chometz - but surely it was Erev Succos and not Erev Pesach!! I realised that it was Dovid. I noticed that he had removed all the chometz from the table and had now approached the fridge.

He opened the fridge door - and still holding the lighted candle, he commenced to clear out all the chometz from the fridge.

With a start, I then realised that Dovid intended to enjoy a "Midnight Binge" - all on his own. However, this did solve the mystery of the disappearing food from the fridge, which had been puzzling Roselyn for some little while.

Eliyohu Elyani is a friend of mine in Manchester. He informed me that he travels to New York almost every month. He invariably visits 770, just to see, to look at, the Rebbe during a Mincha or other service.

He has never had a Yechidus, although he did receive a brocha when he opened a branch shop in New York, "but you must not be open for even five minutes on Shabbos or on Yom Tov", the Rebbe warned.

He has always written to the Rebbe. The very first time was when he was nine years of age and he lived in Morocco. He could not write Hebrew, so he obtained the services of someone else to write for him.

In the course of time, he received a reply from the Rebbe - in FRENCH. Eliyohu could understand this language perfectly - it was his own "native tongue".

I walked into 770 on Monday morning. I enquired whether the Rebbe would be present at the minyan to listen to the layenning. I was told that the Rebbe was definitely expected and the service would take place as usual upstairs.

I walked into the Bess Hamedrish. The Chazan was standing at the Omud. Rabbi Chadakov was standing at his usual place near the doorway, and there were about twenty-five people standing around, all waiting for the Rebbe to arrive.

After a few moments, I noticed that a number of people had left.

I double-checked with Rabbi Chadakov, who confirmed that "Yes, the Rebbe would be listening to the layenning in the Bess Hamedrish" well, Rabbi Chadakov was the one man who should know. So I waited. The next time I turned around, I discovered that all the people had departed - even the Chazan had disappeared. Only Rabbi Chadakov and I were left in the Bess Hamedrish.

Where was everybody? I went to the hallway, stopped a boy and asked if he knew where the Rebbe was. He replied that he did see the Rebbe a short while ago walking along the passageway and down to the Shool.

I rushed downstairs. True enough the Shool was crowded and layenning was in progress. I had

no option but to wait for the Rebbe near the exit. It was impossible at that moment to push a way through the solid mass of men and boys.

I was fortunate to receive the Rebbe's friendly and charming smile when he passed me on his way to the office.

One morning of Yom Tov, before the service had commenced, the Gabai Rabbi Pinson approached me and declared that "you have not yet had an Aliya, so during the layenning come onto the Bimah, and I will call you up to the Torah". This is always a wise precaution because it would take about fifteen minutes for a man to reach the Bimah from his seat, or from where he was standing.

I stood on the Bimah, prepared for my "Call Up" when, with seconds to go, I was told by the Gabai that he was very sorry but, he could not give me an Aliya, after all. A wife had just presented her husband with a brand new baby boy and was entitled to an Aliya. For a consolation prize, I was allowed to remain standing on the Bimah. In any case, it was impossible to descend because of the dense mass of humanity surrounding the Bimah. Dovid Mandlebaum wanted to know what was I doing standing on the Bimah?!

The Rebbe gave a Sicho regarding the way that the Luchos - the Tablets which Moishe Rabainu, brought down from Mount Sinai - are always envisaged as having rounded edges at the top. One can see these pictures, engravings and symbols everywhere. Even in synagogues and on holy appurtenances.

The Gemorra in Baba Bassra states quite clearly and specifically that the Luchos were square. It also gives the dimensions to prove that they just fitted into the Oran.

Unfortunately we have followed the example of the Goyim, Lehavdil. I, personally blame Michelangelo, the famous Italian painter (1475 - 1564) for this error. He had painted the well-known picture of "Moses with the Tablets", which portrays the Luchos with rounded tops. Furthermore, Moishe Rabainu, himself, is depicted as having two horns protruding from his head. The Chumish does mention that Moishe had "Horns of Light" shining from his forehead. But not solid horns that look like the common and popular portrayal of the "Devil".

It is no small wonder that ignorant people assume that all Jews have horns. I had the personal experience many years ago of meeting a fellow in a small village in Ireland who would not believe that I was a Jew because I had no horns. Sholom Weiss told me that he also had a similar experience. We owe a lot to this Michelangelo!!

Talking about Goyim - when the Royal Wedding took place last year in London, I heard an American commentator express surprise that there was no Rabbi taking part in the service, or even standing on the Altar at St. Paul's Cathedral!!

A son of a friend of mine from Manchester was not well. The doctor advised an immediate operation. Would I obtain the Rebbe's opinion on this matter. From past experience I would have predicted that the Rebbe would have advised getting another medical opinion, first.

But the Rebbe is seldom predictable - the Rebbe replied that the full medical report from the doctor should be handed to a "practicing Rabbi" and let him give the answer.

David and I continued our friendly discussion, started last year, whether I should bench Esrog with the Rebbe's Arba Minim, or use the one which the Rebbe had presented to me. Dovid maintained his attitude of last Succos. He asserted "What could be better than to bench with the Rebbe's own Holy Esrog, on which the Rebbe had himself made the blessings - in addition to the thousands of Brochas which all the Lubavitch Chassidim of Crown Heights had made on this one Esrog".

However, I was pleased to hear Yankel Katz tell me that the Rebbe had declared to Yankel "I gave you an Esrog - bench with it!" Dovid, never to be outdone or give up, commented that Yankel Katz was an Old Man and had certain other reasons for needing to bench as soon as possible and not to have to wait for the Rebbe's Esrog. All this was very complimentary to me, so I accepted Dovid's reasonable arguments.

On Saturday night the children never went to bed at all. They were up all night dancing and singing in the streets, and visiting various Succahs for refreshments.

The boys davened and retired to bed. Levi slept solidly until 5 p.m. late afternoon. He awoke with a start and rushed to 770 with the Esrog and Lulov and circled around the Bimah with the Arba Minim. He was not the only one. Hundreds had the same idea.

Rabbi Yaakov Tuvia Rappoport always tells me a good story which I can use in this Diary. On this occasion, it was no joke - it was too serious a matter. Yaakov Tuvia is a busy Shaliach of the Rebbe. He intimated that in a radius of 40 miles from Syracuse, there are 12,000 Jews, but 15,000 Jewish students. He also mentioned Buffalo, Rochester, Albany - all Upstate New York. However, he inferred that he had plenty to keep him fully occupied.

The centrepiece in this City, was the New Cathedral. He arranged to blow the Shofar on Rosh Hashanna outside the precincts of this outstanding building. The Reform minister heard of these plans and notified Yaakov that if he insisted on carrying out this idea then it would mean just one thing - WAR! Yaakov was not unduly worried and arranged also a Succomobile to circle the Cathedral square for the whole seven days - in addition to the blowing of the Shofar. He had a great success, and had good patronage from the students. The moral is - not to take notice of idle threats - carry on - and you will have Hatzlocha.

On Shovuos we had with us four granddaughters and two grandsons. We grumbled about their lack of co-operation in doing the household chores. How I misjudged them!

On this occasion we had five boys and two girls. It was very much worse. We had more trouble than ever with the male members of our household.

Yossi had never heard of Women's Lib and he expected poor Yenta Chaya and Channah to help Roselyn with the daily chores and to bring up his meals to the Succah. I do not like to see injustice and Yossi's attitude caused much friction.

A young man - Mr. Namder, from England. He had left Hendon, London seven years ago on the Rebbe's instructions, and was doing very well in New York. He assured me that if the Rebbe advised him to travel to Australia - tomorrow - he would pack up and go.

### **Simchas Torah**

Monday night was Shemini Atzeress. Maariv was at 7 p.m. There was then an interval for Kiddush and a snack until 9 p.m. followed by Hakoffas until 11.15 p.m. On Tuesday night - Simchas Torah, Maariv was again at 7 p.m. followed by a break until 9 p.m. when we enjoyed a Farbraingen until 11.30 p.m.

The Shool Hall then had to be cleared and completely emptied of all the furniture so that there would be room for the Hakoffas later on.

Whilst the removal experts (including Dovid, Yossi, Mendie and Levi) were doing their job, an innovation was inaugurated for the first time this year - a Kiddush was provided, free, for everyone. It took place outside 770, in the open air, on Eastern Parkway.

I encountered Avrohom Shemtov who was munching a rosy apple. He explained that this was the dessert after consuming Kuggle, Cake, Soda, and so on. He considered that this Kiddush was a brilliant idea.

The Hakoffas commenced at 12.30 a.m. after midnight and concluded at 2.30 a.m.

The Rebbe had asked me, although he had a twinkle in his eye when he said it, not to write Loshon Hora about pushing and shtupping. Therefore I have deliberately refrained from mentioning this subject, except to state, briefly, that as there were about 50% more people present on this Yom Tov than had attended last year, the overcrowding was much more than ever before!

I was fortunate again this year to go Hakofass with the Rebbe on every occasion, that is - the first and the seventh Hakoffas on both nights and the complete 3½ times on Simchas Torah day.

I had once more made arrangements with Rabbi Zalmon Gurary that I should purchase a verse in the Atoh Horaiso, so that the Rebbe would recite it for us. Last year I paid 1,000 dollars. The price this year had been increased to 1,800 dollars (and for that I had to share a verse with a partner, otherwise I would have had to pay double).

Unfortunately, the pound sterling which was worth two dollars 40 cents last year had dropped to only one dollar 85 cents. In other words, the 1,000 dollars last year cost me £420 whereas the 1,800 dollars would cost nearly £1,000 this year.

On the Rebbe's assurance that this money, which was spent on Simchas Torah would be repaid by the A'Mighty very quickly - and it seemed to have worked very well every year. I bought a share in another posuk for 300 dollars and a share for Roselyn for \$180.

(And, dear Readers, only a couple of weeks after our return to Manchester, the A'Mighty repaid this money - plus! - in a most unusual and miraculous manner).

I was standing on the Rebbe's crowded platform, almost touching the Rebbe. The Gabai was calling out, from a list he held, the names of all those gentlemen whom he was honouring with the first Hakoffa. Although I stood adjacent to him, I could not hear even one name. The noise was tumultuous. I guessed, of course, that the name of the Rebbe was first on this list.

I stood hesitatingly, not wishing to join the participants if I was not invited, when I heard my friend Rabbi Moishe Kartlasky calling my name. He was holding a Sefer Torah for me. As Moishe told me, in reference to another matter, about which you will read later on - "It is not what you know, but who you know!"

Last year, you will recall, that the Rashag, the Rebbe's brother-in-law, was not well. He was confined to Hospital, and the Rebbe danced by himself, with the Sefer Torah, in a circle surrounded by hundreds of little boys.

This year, I presume that the Rebbe danced with the Rashag again. I could not see. I carried my Sefer Torah about ten yards towards the raised platform which had been erected in the centre of the Hall, especially for the Hakoffas and the dancing. But I could not go any further. There were about fifteen Sifrei Torah altogether. Ten of these (held by men, of course) were left standing outside the perimeter - completely blocked by the boys - who were only interested in seeing the Rebbe and watching the Rebbe dancing with the Rashag.

So - after a few minutes, I led the procession back to base. This was also no easy matter because besides being hindered by the boys and men standing solidly alongside, there was a continuous swarm of little boys hurrying and scurrying from under the tables, crossing our path and scrambling back along the floor to the protection of the next tables. We were actually walking on

top of boys.

There was another boy over whom I was continually falling. He was Sholom Ber, my grandson. I think Roselyn had told him to “keep close to Zaidie” – but not so close! – and over the whole of Yom Tov I pleaded with him to “please remain standing here, or sitting there - it is dangerous for such a small boy to be on his own amongst this solid mass of people”. But whenever and wherever I went - there was Sholom Ber under my feet.

When I returned to the platform, the Rebbe asked me why I did not go with Hakoffas. I intimated that I had joined in the procession but could only manage a distance of ten yards before I had to return. I made up my mind to do better next time.

At the seventh Hakoffa I was determined to get into the centre arena. I therefore did not stand on any ceremony, but took one of the first of the Sifrei Torah and rushed after the Rebbe.

I just managed to get onto the raised centre platform when I was flung together with the Sefer Torah onto a crowd of boys who were sitting, jostling and shoving on a bench. I tried to arise. I was flung back. How dared I to block the view of the Rebbe from all the boys! Whenever I tried to stand, anywhere - I blocked the view. So, I retired gracefully and peacefully, onto the bench, wedged in by crowds of boys, and the Sefer Torah lying across my chest.

There was some little consolation - when I struggled back “to base” with the Sefer Torah, almost every boy and man, without exception, wished me “Alavai iber a Yahr” (P.G. again next year). It was nice to hear.

On the next night, Simchas Torah, I made quite sure that I heard my name called - and dashed off again for the first Hakoffa. I tripped and nearly fell over a little boy. I realised it was Sholom Ber. I was terribly annoyed - I had told him to stay put - to remain on the Rebbe's platform together with all the other young little boys. Yet here he was right under my feet again. He refused to withdraw and we struggled together to reach the centre arena, where he disappeared from view.

The next time I saw him, he was weeping copiously and was being held and comforted by Label Itkin. It seemed that G.F. he had broken a couple of bones or ribs. “No” - I was reassured, “He had only lost his Yarmulka”.

I had barely another few yards to go, to reach my objective, when Label Groner shouted “Tzurik Tzurik” (go back, go back). I said, “No fear, I have come with the Sefer Torah for Hakoffas”. I insisted upon going forward, and pushed my way into the arena so that I could follow the Rebbe back to his place. The Rebbe smiled approvingly.

The Rebbe is so mindful and considerate. Rabbi Kasonofsky had YarTzeit on Simchas Torah, and insisted upon officiating - davenning at the Omud, as he has done for so many years. He was

not too well - and he was not getting any younger.

The Rebbe helped him to sing the special Rosh Hashanna tune which is sung as the Nusach of Simchas Torah. As a matter of fact, all that the Rebbe had to do was to raise his hand - and everyone joined in and raised the roof.

During Hakoffas, the Rebbe waited for some considerable time whilst both the Rashag and Rabbi Kasonofsky were led back to the Rebbe's platform.

Similarly, during Hoshanna Rabbi - when the Rebbe had made the seven circuits of the Bimah with the Arba Minim, accompanied by about a score of illustrious Rabbonim and one-other, he then waited for about twenty minutes, until the rest of the congregants had concluded all their circuits of the Bimah.

It became rather warm, too warm. The next thing I saw was two burly policemen carrying in a large electric fan. It looked like the propeller from the "Queen Elizabeth". They used it as a battering ram to get through to the platform area so that they could fix this fan as near as possible to the Rebbe. They were instructed to place it over here - no, over there - no, here - perhaps there - and the two burly policemen carried the "Queen Elizabeth's" propeller out again.

The Chief of Police with two aides complete with brass hats - the lot - joined us on the platform and shook hands with the Rebbe. They exchanged pleasantries and said Lechaim to the Rebbe on a glass of vodka. The Chief hoped I would have a good trip home, and remarked "Such a lot of people here. How many do you reckon?" "You tell me", I countered.

On Simchas Torah day, the Rebbe was, as usual, Chosson Beraishis. Avrohom Parshan who had been chosen Chosson Torah for the past ten years (let him have it for another 50) was honoured with this Mitzvah again. It was really a very great honour indeed, but he paid a reasonably good price for it - thirty-six thousand dollars. Actually and legally - he only bought Chosson Beraishis for this price, but he was given the honour of Chosson Torah - free of charge! The three and a half circuits of the Hakoffas are made all together - without returning to base.

Yankel Katz was the Chazan and led the procession. Label Groner once more pulling him around.

I carried the last Sefer Torah, and Label caught up to me. I could see him pushing, heaving and levering poor Yankel Katz with his backside, but progress was certainly made.

Then the Rebbe danced, again with only the Rashag, as he had done on the other previous Hakoffas. The Rebbe invited Dr. Ira Weiss to join them and to keep his eye on the Rashag. Actually, Dr. Weiss kept his hand on the Rashag's wrist and was checking his pulse. The Rashag was determined to carry on dancing to his utmost limit. On this day of Simchas Torah, he refused

to give up. He didn't wish to spoil everyone's enjoyment - and it was really a very long session, with the Rashag again, again and again insisting on carrying on. Personally, I considered that he was completely exhausted and spent. His face was extremely flushed and he seemed a bit "groggy" on his feet - but no - on and on he went. He was the last to give up. The service commenced at 10 a.m. and concluded at 2:30 p.m.

We were invited for luncheon by Rivka and Moishe Kartlasky. All of us again. There were fifty guests sat around the tables. There should have been fifty-two, but Roselyn and Yenta Chaya were unfortunately running temperatures, so they stayed at home as a safety precaution.

I was treated, personally, with the greatest possible honour by Moishe, (I was most embarrassed.) whilst everyone else was treated with the utmost generosity and tempted with every type of delicious food, morsels and drink.

Moishe prevailed upon me to "bench". Although I had a sore throat I persevered with my singing the Grace After Meals, **but** - Yossi, Dovid, Levi, Mendie and Shalom Ber never lifted a voice to assist me - most annoying!

Mincha was at 5.15, so we had to take our leave of our big hearted and bounteous host and hostess. Before we left, however, Rivka insisted upon handing me several containers, full with lavish portions of soup and meat and so forth for our poor invalids Roselyn and Yenta Chaya whom we had left at the apartment. So thoughtful and considerate of Rivka.

We arrived at 770 at 5.10 p.m. and the Bess Hamedrish was packed tight with people going with Hakoffas with the Sifrei Torah. By 5.15 they had all completed their rounds and we waited for the Rebbe to arrive.

Meanwhile, downstairs - the Shool was also packed tightly. Many had been seated for a few hours to ensure the reservation of their places.

At the last Farbraingen, Yossi and Dovid had taken turns at sitting in my place, so that my seat would be kept for me. This proved successful and there was even room for Sholom Ber to fidget about and keep kicking my legs.

But he was lucky, because when the Rebbe departed - at the conclusion of the Farbraingen - the usual large tray, filled to capacity with the Rebbe's cake was left standing on the table. There was the usual concerted mad rush to obtain at least a few crumbs of this valuable commodity, and for a few moments only flaying arms and legs were visible.

Then suddenly, without warning a huge piece of cake came flying towards us and landed right in Sholom Ber's lap. This really made his day.

However at this Simchas Torah Farbraingen it was now too late to reserve any seats. Furthermore I desired to attend the Rebbe's Mincha, so that when I ultimately arrived downstairs for the Farbraingen it was 5.40 p.m. Just twenty minutes before the Rebbe was due to enter.

In this instance there was definitely no room - not even an inch, in which to squeeze Sholom Ber. Yankel Katz was looking very disconsolate and pathetic at the back - there was no room even for him.

Well there was nothing I could do about it. For the very first time ever, it seemed I would have to stand during the Farbraingen. So - I stood - "centre back". Someone came up and declared "that's not fair, Zalmon, because when the Rebbe sees you he will say 'make a seat available for Shneuer Zalmon' and lo and behold there will be a seat for you - but - at the expense of others".

I moved from that spot, and considered the possibility of joining my grandsons on the "Pyramid". I rejected this as being a little silly - and again for the very first time, I ascended the Dais, and took a seat on the bench on the extreme left (facing the people and Eastern Parkway). I was not too happy. I would not be able to see the Rebbe - face to face - as I have done for over 22 years. But - I had no option, and was glad of even this seat.

Then my friend Moishe (Kartlasky) came running up. He remarked that it is not nice for Zalmon Jaffe, the Rebbe's best friend, to sit so far away from the Rebbe. I could not be so sure about being the Rebbe's **best** friend, but I was quite certain, without a doubt, that the Rebbe was **my** best friend.

Moishe then brought me a special chair from the Office and placed it just two yards from Rabbi Chadakov's chair, which, in turn, was only two yards from where the Rebbe sat. ("It's not what you know, but who you know").

I had never reclined on such a large comfortable seat during a Farbraingen - ever - there was only one problem. Sholom Ber insisted on sharing this chair with me. But it was not too bad.

I was just reflecting how nice and comfortable I was, when a small boy pushed his way out from underneath the table, and - he stood up in front of me, at my right side, and blocked my view of the Rebbe. I reprimanded him and told him to sit on the floor - when he was joined by another little lad.

There was a company of ten little boys, who were continuously coming and going - under the table - pushing and groping past me and my legs, and also upsetting Sholom Ber.

I noticed that the Rebbe always had a gold wrist watch placed in front of him. Even during the Hakoffas and now at the Farbraingen. And there are two electric clocks facing the Rebbe on the wall opposite. The Rebbe is very methodical.

After the Farbraingen, we davened Maariv. The Rebbe made Havdola and distributed Koss Shel Brocha until 4.30 a.m. in the morning. An orchestra or band arrived consisting of two guitars, trumpets, clarinet and drums.

Although there is normally no lack of lusty and enthusiastic singing and great excitement during the Koss Shel Brocha activity, this music, amplified by the loud speakers and consisting of Lubavitch tunes, did add much more rhythmical and swinging sound to the proceedings.

Next morning, Thursday, the Rebbe was back at work at his usual time. A boy had been brought along from abroad by his parents to celebrate his Bar-Mitzvah at 770. This really meant that it was expected and hoped for - that the boy would be called up for his Aliya and make his brocha in the presence of the Rebbe. The Rebbe does not disappoint these people, even if the result was that the Rebbe would miss a night's sleep.

The Rebbe departed for the Ohel at 1.30 p.m. He told me that one should dance AFTER Simchas Torah, too, and the Rebbe punctuated his remarks by lifting both hands in an upwards and sideways motion with arms bent.

There was another Farbraingen on the following Shabbos - Shabbos Bereishis at 1.30 p.m. I wanted to sit in my usual place facing the Rebbe, so this time we organised it better.

Dovid and Yossi remained seated in this place, whilst I rushed home to make Kiddush for Roselyn and to have a snack. I returned at 1 p.m. and Dovid and Yossi went to the apartment for the very same reasons. Sholom Ber squeezed in next to me.

During this Farbraingen, it is the custom to sell certain Mitzvahs, appertaining to Simchas Torah or to the whole year. For example, Avrohom Parshan paid 36,000 dollars for Chosson Bereishis, to be given to the Rebbe. Avrohom Parshan is then given the honour, free of charge, to be the Chosson Torah. Hagboah and Gellila are sold for the whole year. Zalmon Gurary bought Hagboah and does his best not to miss any of these Mitzvahs. He says these cost him plenty of money, and he cannot afford to give any away to other people - in any event, he likes it, he pays for it, so why should he not have the benefit himself.

Then, tenders were invited for the supply of oil, in multiples of 100 dollars. Wines for Farbraingen and so forth were also sold.

The Rebbe gave a Sicho on Rashi - on Chapter 1, verses 29 and 30. Once again the Rebbe requested that I should could the number of questions which the Rebbe was to ask on this one Rashi:

"How many?" asked the Rebbe - "Two", I replied - that was an easy one. "How many now?" -

"Eleven". "And now?" - "Sixteen", I answered.

"Right", went on the Rebbe, "and question number 17 is as follows..." Then - "The gematria of 17 is *tov* - meaning good. That's a good ending".

The Rebbe also mentioned that the first letter of the Sefer Torah is "bais" and the last one is "lamed", this adds to *laiv* which means heart - a good heart.

I wanted to include some of these Rashi questions, so I asked Shmuel to help me - so - thank you Shmuel for your co-operation.

This is the English translation of verses 29 and 30: **29** "And G'd said, Behold, I have given you every herb bearing seed, which is upon the face of the earth, and every tree in which is the fruit of a tree yielding seed; to you it shall be for food" and **30** "And to every animal of the earth, and to every fowl of the heaven and to everything that creeps on the earth, wherein there is a living soul, I have given every green herb for food".

And Rashi states - on these two verses together - "Scripture places cattle and beasts on a level with them (human beings -- that is --it places all alike in the same category) with regard to food and did not permit Adam to kill any creature and eat its flesh, but all are alike to eat herbs. But when the Era of the "Sons of Noach" began, He permitted them to eat meat, for it is said (Genesis 9:3) "every moving thing that lives should be for food for yourselves ... "even as the herb" that I permitted to the first man, so do "I give to you everything".

The Rebbe asked the following questions:

- (1) What is not clear in these verses that Rashi has to explain the obvious? It is not necessary to comment.
- (2) Rashi discusses the two verses - 29 and 30 together. Each verse can be understood without the other. Both are self-contained.
- (3) Rashi says that cattle and beasts are on the same level as Adam - why is there no mention of birds or of fish?
- (4) Why does Rashi say that G'd did not permit Adam to kill any creature? If the Torah mentions what one can do, it is obvious what one cannot do.
- (5) Why does Rashi say that they were not allowed to kill any creature to eat its meat, but were allowed to eat the meat as long as they did not kill the animal? Rashi does not normally give a Halachic ruling.

- (6) Where does Rashi derive this prohibition that it was permitted to eat meat as long as they did not kill the animal?
- (7) Why does Rashi state that all creatures humans and beasts can eat together? - that's repetition.
- (8) Why does Rashi quote that all were alike, equal to eat Herbs? Why not fruit, which is also mentioned in this verse?
- (9) Not only does Rashi omit Fruit, but this contradicts the principle of "equal eating": Fruit for humans and Herbs for animals.
- (10) Why does Rashi say that when the Children of Noach came, he permitted them to eat meat? What relevance is this to our verses here?
- (11) As it is said in Genesis 9:3, why does Rashi have to bring proof of what will happen in the time of Noach? It is not like Rashi to bring scriptural references to support his statements.
- (12) If Rashi requires proof, why use extra words and when he mentions creatures, why creatures that live?
- (13) And if Rashi does wish to quote that verse, why does he not add the rest of the sentence "to eat"? He should quote the whole verse.
- (14) When you learn verses 29 and 30, you will learn that Humans eat herbs and fruit, whereas animals eat only herbs. So why does Rashi say they are alike?
- (15) In verse 22, it is written that G'd created the fish and said be fruitful and multiply. Rashi says - on that verse, because they become diminished by people hunting them and eating them. They needed that special blessing. How can Rashi maintain that it was not permitted to eat flesh, when here it is stated that fish were allowed to be eaten? - and that is the reason why they needed a special blessing.
- (16) The Rebbe wanted to know why is it that no commentaries on Rashi ask all the above questions? and
- (17) The Mizrachi Commentary on Rashi does ask the question on Halacha - about eating flesh which they did not kill.

The Rebbe said, Rashi's style is to explain any verses or words in the Chumish that might trouble or bother a five year old child. This is not a phrase that would worry a five year old. These intricate and complicated Halachic problems could not be understood by a child.

The Rebbe added that there are many more questions on these verses, but 17 equals TOV, and also equals the number of verses in the ATTO HORAISO which we recite before Hakoffas on Simchas Torah. So we will conclude with those.

### **We have Some Answers**

The Rebbe's style is to explain the correct approach to Rashi, as a result of which the questions will fall away.

The key question which puzzles the child is that up till this moment in the Chumish, the Torah has been talking about details of all created beings and creatures, but has not yet mentioned their needs. Whereas, now, in these two verses, the emphasis is changed and their food is discussed. The food which is the needs of the animals and the food, but not the clothing, shelter and other needs, of a human being. Why is only the food mentioned?

Yet animals were created on the fifth day, so why speak about their food today, on the sixth day?

Therefore we have two more questions - Why speak on these two verses when there is nothing to question? And - the main question becomes - why mention these at all?

Furthermore in the immediately preceding verse, 28, it states that man should have dominion over all animals and so forth. This could mean that if he is worthy then he would rule over them. The word in this verse meaning dominion is 'Urrdu' - which could also mean descending. So if Man is not worthy he could well be lower than the animals. How is it possible to be lower - below - the beasts? Why should G'd create two creatures - one in the image of G'd - the whole centrepiece of the Universe - and the other to serve, to be hunted and to be eaten by man? They are so different - but they have something in common.

Rashi explains that food is the common denominator and makes them both alike. Neither can live without vegetable (herbs) food. Neither clothes nor shelter are the main needs but food is essential and all important. Man obtains these herbs or vegetable direct, or by eating an animal that has consumed vegetables. Ultimately all proteins come from vegetables (herbs).

Rashi does not say that all food is the same. Man eats fruit too, whereas animals eat only vegetables. That is common to both - vegetable (or herbs) food.

The question is then, how can a man be lower than an animal? — only if he does not eat like a "Mensch" but like a sub-human. Whereas the animal will eat in a natural manner and become a point higher than the man.

The child still does not understand how man and an animal can be called equal, alike, when we

learn that man hunts and eats an animal (Question 15). Then Rashi explains that man is not allowed to kill - only if the animal is found dead already, may it be eaten.

The child has another question. He knows and says - "But we eat meat today, Rashi had meat on Shabbos, and we have a Shochet who slaughters the animals". So Rashi hastens to tell the child - not to worry, because soon in the Sedra of Noach it explains that man will be permitted to kill for food.

The Rebbe said that he couldn't answer Question 16 on why no commentators asked none of these questions, which he had itemised. There was no answer!

The Rebbe again showed his displeasure at the Camp David Agreement. Sadat and Menachem Begin kissed each other very profusely and wished each other Mazel Tov. Why should Sadat fight a war for it, when it was given to him on a silver plate?

It is a terrible shameful business. Little by little we are giving things back to Egypt. Straight away we gave all the oil back - and that was only the start. Within twenty-four hours we received a slap in the face - because it had been arranged that no arms nor supplies should be brought in to the P.L.O. through Sidon - but they brought them in "disguised".

G'd loves peace, so we must do what He says, but not to make a false peace. It is against the Din to give land back to the non-Jew. The Israeli government considered it to be a very good thing – but it had the opposite effect. It shows that we are afraid these nations. It is a disgrace to give away everything just for a piece of paper. They will want more and yet more. There will be no limit to their demands.

A good example of how firmness pays, is the fact that we have refused point blank to give up Jerusalem. Yet, some are trying to find a way to return Our Old City to the Arabs. It is false, very false diplomacy.

### **General Yechidus**

There was an air of great excitement and expectancy. It had been announced that tonight, Sunday, and on the following night, Monday; there would be a General Yechidus.

There were 1,500 people interested. Half of this number were flying home to Paris, London and Israel early on Monday morning, so these people urgently desired Yechidus on the first night - Sunday.

Just after Mincha, Label Groner made a public announcement over the loud speaker system that all those who wished to see the Rebbe on that night would have to form themselves into groups - of various categories.

- (1) All girls of Beth Rivka and Beth Channah Schools - plus those girls from London would be in the first group.
- (2) All families who were leaving tonight should all go together in the second group.
- (3) Pupils of all other schools should join together for the third group, and
- (4) All those students from Yeshivas Torass Emmess; Kfar Chabad; Lud; and other lands should go into the Rebbe as the fourth group.

Of those who were left - all ladies who were on their own and alone, should all join together as group five. The sixth group should consist of all the remaining families.

And the final - the last two groups - would be for all the young men. All those whose name began with A until M would form the seventh group and the last - the eighth group for all those whose names began with M until Z.

Label continued "You will be allowed to leave only a Tzetel - a request or a plea for a Brocha with your names and just a few words of something special, which you wish to add. You will then all receive a Brocha and Tzedoka from the Rebbe".

Tomorrow night would be Yechidus for those who would be leaving for home on Monday evening, Tuesday or later in the week. Even brides and bridegrooms would have to join with other Chossanim and Kaloss - Bar Mitzvah boys too. There would be no single individual Yechidus.

When Yechidus commenced, two lines were formed - males and females - for those who had to leave for home early on that very night, ladies and girls had priority. These lines started in Eastern Parkway, turned into 770 by way of the Women's Shool entrance and then continued past the Rebbe's study and out again through the main door of 770.

The Rebbe stood outside his room, gave to each a Brocha and handed a dollar bill to every person as they filed past - to give to Tzedoka.

### **Our Own Yechidus**

Just after midnight, Myer Harlick gave me a shout - "Mr. Jaffe - Zalmon - quick - quick - you may now go and see the Rebbe for Yechidus."

My own little group had been waiting nearby, in case of this sudden summons. Yossi had been fasting all day. He had maintained that one should not eat on the day of Yechidus. Levi had a

justifiable excuse in that Yechidus would probably take place after midnight so that this would be on the next day. Mendie was non-committal. He just murmured "Aah?! - Aah?!"

We entered the Rebbe's study - Roselyn led the way, followed by Yenta Chaya and Channah. Sholom Ber, Levi, Mendie, Yossi, Dovid and I made up the party.

The Rebbe welcomed Roselyn with a beaming smile, remarking "last but not least" and "Ladies first". The Rebbe signalled to Roselyn to be seated. The rest of us, of course, remained standing in the Rebbe's presence.

The Rebbe turned to Channah and asked if she had a letter in the Sefer Torah and whether she was in Tzivas Hashem. Channah was delighted to assure the Rebbe that she had bought a letter, that she was in Tzivas Hashem, and that she helped in all Lubavitch work and campaigns.

The Rebbe turned to all the children and gave them the following Brocha:- "May G'd A'Mighty bless each and every one of you in all things necessary Begashmeus Uberuchneus (materially and spiritually). You should go from strength to strength in all learning and Mitzvoss. You should be an example to your school-mates and friends, and you should be a source of Nachas to your parents and to your grandparents." The Rebbe handed to each of us two single dollar bills - one for Tzedoka, to be exchanged into English currency on our return to England.

The Rebbe turned to Roselyn and commented that he had heard that she had a cold. Roselyn admitted that she had a bit of a fever. The Rebbe declared that people come to 770 to get some warmth. Roselyn agreed and said it was very warm indeed. The Rebbe added that it was "too warm - overflowing".

After the Rebbe had given the children the Brocha, he gave a little cough. I remarked that it seemed that the Rebbe has a cold. The Rebbe answered that it was not in his throat, but "it is nerves – from not having peace of mind".

The Rebbe had heard that Shmuel was very successful in Russia.

The Rebbe brought up the question of Shadchans. The Rebbe maintained that this was a very good method of matchmaking and should be encouraged even amongst those who were of the opinion that it was "old-fashioned". There were many boys and girls of similar background and education, who could be introduced to each other and subsequently marry and establish a very happy future together.

I agreed with the Rebbe and pointed out that the Rebbe himself together with Rabbi Shem Tov (Oluv Hasholom) were the Shadchonim who brought Hilary and Shmuel together.

We discussed a certain Israeli gentleman. Roselyn explained that this fellow was immature. The

Rebbe wanted to know how long did one have to wait to become mature? I asserted that "but he is a good bluffer". The Rebbe remarked "Then he will make a good Israeli Cabinet Minister".

The Rebbe enquired about our health and especially about my foot. We discussed various matters and then the Rebbe inquired about Avrohom and his work and family. Before I replied, the Rebbe asked the children, who had been with us for the past twenty minutes, to please leave the room.

I expect that the Rebbe did not wish to inhibit me, and that maybe I would not reply frankly and candidly in front of the children. They all left and Roselyn and I continued our Yechidus with the Rebbe for a further twenty minutes.

T.G. I had only good to report about Avrohom, Susan and family.

We were leaving for home on the following day, and although we have a Chazoka, a tradition of long standing, that the Rebbe gives us the privilege of a Mini-Yechidus, in the Waiting Hall, after Mincha and prior to our journey home, I was prepared, in view of the Rebbe's commitments and our Yechidus this evening, to forego that great honour on this occasion.

The Rebbe would not agree to me breaking this Chazoka and promised to see me, as usual, after Mincha next day.

I apologised to the Rebbe for sitting upon the platform, the Dais, during the Simchas Torah Farbraingen. The Rebbe shrugged and said, "Why not? You could always sit there". I expressed the wish that I prefer my own regular seat facing the Rebbe.

I thanked the Rebbe for all his friendliness, to which the Rebbe replied - "It is my pleasure".

We discussed various other matters, and then we took our leave of the Rebbe.

I had Yartzeit that day and I had the honour of davenning at the Omud - officiating. Immediately after the service, we went through the usual exercise and drill and in due course all the family had congregated in the Rebbe's Waiting Hall. Dovid and Yossi were not present because they had to go to the airport to confirm and ratify our flight. Dovid, of course, was remaining in Brooklyn, He studied at the Yeshiva at Ocean Parkway.

The first words the Rebbe uttered were - "There is a grandson missing"(note, one grandson, because Dovid was not eligible to say farewell, as he was not travelling):" I explained to the Rebbe that Yossi had gone to the Airport. The Rebbe declared "give him my regards".

I advised the Rebbe that our next official visit would be P.G. on Shovuos. (I stressed the words "Our" and "official" because I had in mind to fly to Crown Heights for Yud Aleph Nissen, the

Rebbe's 80th birthday (till 120.)

The Rebbe gave us a Brocha for health for my foot, and for Hatzlocha. I wanted one for Parnosso, too. The Rebbe added - "Yes, and for good health".

The Rebbe turned to our grandchildren and told them that all who were with us and received expenses, money and hospitality, should recomense their grandparents by obtaining at least one person (for a letter for the Sefer Torah) for every day that they stayed in Brooklyn. If they could get more names, that would be better still.

(I know that on the plane going home, Levi was busy trying to collect names. He got many refusals, but he did obtain quite a few good results).

Dovid was in the throes of having an argument with one of his teachers. It happened quite often. So, he had sent a letter to the Rebbe asking for advice and he asked me to try and obtain the reply from the Rebbe.

I realised that this might be considered a little impertinent of me, but what could I do? - "Sholom Bayis!" So I stuck my neck out for the sake of my grandson.

I apologised for introducing a slightly discordant note into the proceedings, but I explained about the letter which Dovid had forwarded to the Rebbe, that Dovid had made me promise to ask the Rebbe for a reply - and here was I - in a "cleft stick" - and asking the Rebbe on Dovid's behalf for an answer to his letter.

The Rebbe was rather amused, but he could not assist me - for the simple reason that the Rebbe had not yet seen Dovid's letter. The Rebbe explained that he had received 3,000 letters. He did not know whether David's was at the beginning, in the middle, or at the end of the pile. In any case, the Rebbe continued, "normally all letters from Talmidim are referred to their Hanhola (the management of the Yeshiva).

I would suggest that almost every single one of those 3,000 letters contained requests and pleas for Brochas, help and advice - that is why I am grateful to A'Mighty that I am able to write regularly, about every fortnight a nice letter to the Rebbe which T.G. only contains good news. Maybe and perhaps that is why the Rebbe is so friendly to me. I do not - very definitely - want to be a Tzorrus Chossid. Why not send a nice "newsy" letter to the Rebbe, one day? It will pay good dividends.

Just imagine the Rebbe, with a pile of 3,000 letters - everyone which has to be opened and read personally, and a reply given. This must be done quickly, because there will soon be another batch of 3,000 letters requiring attention. And yet, I do receive replies - and so do many others - within a few hours! It is really amazing!

The Rebbe wished us all "Tzaischem Lesholom" (go in Peace), "Lehitraot" - as they say in Israel - till we see each other again and "Faur Gezunderhait" (Travel in good health). Give my regards to both sides of the family - to your son and all the family, and to your daughter and all the family, and Bon Voyage - Bon Voyage - Bon Voyage".

With all these wonderful Brochas ringing in our ears, we took our departure from the Rebbe, for the time being.

### **A Few Words of Explanation and Thanks**

You will have noticed that I have concentrated, in this instalment, on the unusual happenings and different aspects of "Life at 770". I have omitted all the routine matters that occur every day, each Yom Tov, and all the year round.

I have given no detailed descriptions of the services on Yom Tov, the lusty singing and the enthusiastic dancing. I have not even written about the splendid example set by the Rebbe - his vigour and determination, his scholarship and friendliness, and his consideration and love for all Jews and for Eretz Yisroel.

I have not mentioned the tremendous number of people who came to 770 for Yom Tov and the excitement and frenzy which prevailed and existed whenever the Rebbe was present. I did not tell you of the hundreds of people, mostly women and children, who daily besieged the office and thronged the Hallway, waiting to catch a glimpse of the Rebbe.

The reason being - that I have described all these matters fully and comprehensively in the past twelve instalments.

770 was tremendously overcrowded, with at least 50% more people than ever before. The office staff - in particular - Rabbis Chadakov, Label Groner and Binyamin Klyne - is greatly overworked.

I should like to congratulate these gentlemen on their untiring efforts which ensure the smooth running of the Lubavitch Office - in spite of the non-stop ringing of the telephone bells, and the scores of people, men, women and boys, who are constantly crowding and pushing their way into this small cramped space to beseech, beg and implore for appointments with, and advice and brochas from, the Rebbe.

I admire the staff's solicitude and forbearance. Not surprisingly Label does occasionally become rattled and excited, especially on Yechidus night. But more surprisingly Binyamin always remains cool and calm.

On the Sunday after Shabbos Beraishis, the night when about 800 people went to see the Rebbe for Yechidus, I picked up a large plastic carrier bag from the office, by mistake - I had a similar carrier bag. When I looked inside I noticed that it was packed very tightly with Yechidus papers - names and entreaties for the Rebbe. It must have contained the names of all the 1500 people who wanted to see the Rebbe privately.

I could well realise and envisage all the hard and complicated work in which Label Groner had been involved.

I think Label was entitled to be a little rattled and excited on that day.

## Chapter 9

# Yud Tess Kislev

Many people have been present at a Siyum of a Sefer Torah - the symbolic act of completing a new Sefer. At this stage, the Torah is virtually completed, excepting that the Scribe, anticipating this festive occasion, has deliberately left the letters contained in the last few lines, in their bare outline. This affords many the privilege and honour of actually writing themselves with a quill, a letter in this Sefer Torah, under the supervision and guidance of the Scribe.

But how many have taken part, or even been present at the commencement of the writing of a new Sefer Torah. At this stage, only one piece of blank parchment, lined (by means of a knife or sharp instrument) is required. The letters are not written upon these lines - they "hang" from the top of the line. The Scribe, when he writes the six letters of the first word "Beraishis" - "In the Beginning" - really knows and appreciates that this is the beginning of many months of hard and concentrated effort on his part. He has to write 304,805 perfect letters, each a separate entity, not joined on to another letter. Yet, if one, only, of these individual letters is incorrectly written, then the whole Sefer Torah becomes "Posul" - not Kosher.

Our Rabbis have told us that the hardest part of every project is the commencement.

We at Manchester Lubavitch started to write a new Sefer Torah on Yud Tess Kislev, where we had a very nice Farbraingen.

It seemed peculiar to see Uziyohu Brown - our own Sofar - and an excellent Scribe - take a piece of parchment and start writing - not at the beginning of the parchment, but in the top centre. Obviously a large space is needed in order to stitch this very first piece onto the Aitz Chayim.

Dayan Schneebalg said that even if every letter is Kosher, if the parchment and the Scribe are Kosher, the Sefer Torah cannot be completely Kosher until and unless all the individual pieces of parchment are stitched, tied together as one piece. One Torah. He added that we do not need, nor do we want a New Torah. We are pleased and satisfied with the Old Torah.

Uziyohu mentioned that the Scribe had to bear in mind just one word always - ESHKOL.

The Aleph stood for Amirah - one must say aloud the words which one is writing; the Shin stood for Shiross - lines; the Kof, for Kesiva - one should read from the "written" Tikun; and the Lamed - for Lishmo - this must be written for the Sake of Heaven.

The Rebbe related an interesting story about a Sefer Torah during a summer Farbraingen.

The Rebbe said "A number of amazing stories have emerged in these few weeks, including one which I will tell. This happened behind the Iron Curtain. A child was approached by one of our emissaries about the Sefer Torah for children, and was invited to participate. The child came home and asked his parents "tshto takoi Sefer Torah (what is a Sefer Torah)" - and the parents had to answer him that they had never seen a Sefer Torah, nor had they heard about one, for they had been raised in these terrible years behind the Iron Curtain, in a small town and had never had the opportunity to know about it. They searched until they found an old Jew who was able to tell them where a Sefer Torah could be seen, and they visited a shul in a time and manner so as not to be seen entering. After the child had seen the Sefer Torah, he still asked , "but what is it?" and he agitated until he found out all about it, inspiring his parents to return to the source from which they come. For all of their souls and all of our souls together heard the Ten Commandments at Har Sinai, and it is the inheritance of us all.

Unfortunately, that story is not only commonplace in Russia, but there are many children and parents here in the United States, who have never seen a Sefer Torah because of the education which they have never received, through no fault of their own.

In these few weeks of the summer, with our emissaries travelling around, many have found out what a Sefer Torah is for the first time in their lives. May this expression of unity and mutual love abolish the cause of the destruction of the Temple, namely the cause of hatred, and through each child's letter in the Sefer Torah (which is designated by lots just as the Land of Israel - the completeness of the Land - was divided by lots), one will become to behave one's daily life in thought, speech and action in accordance with the directives of the Torah. As the Prophet Yechezkiel tells us after explaining the appearance of the Temple, that in the time to come, the Land of Israel will once again be divided by lots, but this time Hashem himself will, as it were, cast the lots.

## Chapter 10

# "Our Work Is Never Done"

After many years of delay, we at long last had printed a smaller edition of our English/Hebrew Tanya. This, and also the presentation were described fully in last years' (twelfth) instalment. My son, Avrohom, Bernard Perrin and Hershell Gorman were the representatives of our Committee who were privileged to hand over the Tanya to the Rebbe. It was a memorable occasion.

Now - I do not know who was the "culprit". But one of the members of this Committee, which consisted of the above-mentioned three gentlemen, plus Rabbi Sudak and me, wrote a nice letter to the Rebbe explaining how pleased we were that, at long last, "the project is now completed". It had taken many years of trouble and delay, of routine arguments and basic problems - and T.G. we had completed the job and we had heaved a sigh of relief. But - I am pretty sure that I never wrote that letter to the Rebbe - and every one of the five of us, is also certain that the "other person" wrote it.

Be that as it may - the following nice letter addressed to "All Participants in the Publication of the small edition of the Bilingual Tanya" was received.

KAH the Rebbe never misses a point and we have to be so careful what we write.

This letter from the Rebbe was a masterpiece - and some of his remarks so unexpected, but so well deserved!!

Here is the letter:

By the Grace of G'd  
21 Iyar, 5741  
Brooklyn, N.Y.

To All Participants in the Publication of the Small Edition of the Bilingual Tanya

Greeting and Blessing:

I was delighted to receive the new small edition of the bilingual Tanya. Though, of course, small in size, it has all the good features and also external beauty of its larger predecessor - in keeping with the teaching of our Sages in connection with the verse, "This is my G'd and I will glorify Him. This is all the more important since the external Hiddur of the Sefer is conducive to the study and absorption of its contents.

I take exception, however, to the comment, "the project is now completed" - not to imply, G'd forbid, that the publication part of it is in any way incomplete. But this part is only a prelude to the essential part of the project, namely, to disseminate this sacred Sefer and its central message: to explain and show how the Torah and Mitzvos are "exceedingly near to you, in your mouth, and in your heart, to do it" - as the author of the Tanya defines its objective on the very title page. This task - to see to it that the Sefer and its message reach every Jew, man and woman, since both are included in the above definition - is only in its beginning.

I wish each and every one of you much Hatzlocho in working towards the achievement of the said task. The present days of Sefirah and preparation for Kabbolas haTorah with joy and inwardness is particularly propitious to go from strength to strength in the said direction.

With esteem and blessing,

M. Schneerson

## Chapter 11

# Purim Poems

My granddaughter, Leah (Jaffe) had organised various girls into groups in order to become "Purim Shpielers" (Purim Players) and collect money - from house to house - to help Lubavitch. I now have a Chazoka - that I have to compose a poem for them to recite on their rounds.

These groups, together with the boys, collected over £500! Well done, indeed! The money came in very useful - I wish Purim would occur every week.

This is the Poem:

### **Purim Shpiel 5742/1982**

Have you heard of the glorious, the wonderful news? Of the miraculous events which befell all the Jews.

When Haman and his gang decreed they would destroy  
The whole Jewish nation, including every little girl and boy.

But under the guidance of Mordechai and Esther,  
The Jews studied . . . fasted . . . prayed . . . then made a fiesta.

Because they had prevailed upon the A'Mighty to change this decree, So that the world could be made safer for you and for me.

We are still threatened daily by every disaster,  
But should have complete faith in our Heavenly Father and Master.

And we, His children should love and help our fellow-Jew,  
And be united by buying letters, together, in a Sefer Torah too.

If we keep all mitzvos, we will obtain our hearts' desire, And have the merit to welcome our true and Righteous Messiah.

We wish you all a Happy Purim, full of merriment.  
Please support Lubavitch Youth, which would be money wisely spent.

A few years ago, I composed the following poem for the "Purim Shpielers":

We **called** on you this evening - we saw the **Mezuzah** on your door, So we knew you keep the Mitzvahs - **and** support the poor

**We may** be poor in Gashmius - but in **Ruchneus** we are **very** rich, This is very **TYPICAL** - of **Manchester Lubavitch**

We read in the **Megilla** - of **Homon** who got his due

For **plotting** to kill our people - and murder every Jew

But **Mordechai** and Esther - they saved the Jewish nation By giving all the children - a good **Hebrew** education

**AND just** like Mordechai - the little children we teach

to keep the laws of Torah - and the **Mitzvahs** within their reach

**Even** those poor little ones - who are **not** yet orthodox

We encourage them to attend our groups - with nice fresh **baigels** and lox

The school boys and girls - they join us every day,

To do their homework - and have a little play

We offer them some drinks - and something to eat

And then they study Yiddishkeit - and they learn it a treat!

Our boys play table tennis - and football on the field

We play the games like gentlemen - but no one do we yield

It is now known by everyone - that we set a good example,

But it is a great pity - that our resources are not ample

The Camps in the summer - are a splendid holiday

Wherein we teach the youngsters - like Jews to live and play

We don't forget the students - their scholarship and culture

Because we fully realise - that they are our future

Purim and Pesach - Chanuka and Succos too

are the very special occasions - when we like to think of you

But Tefillin, Mezuzos and Tzedokah - we need them to guide our way

And the girls Light-candles for Shabbos - to make it a holy day

In Israel we have villages - Yeshivos and many schools

We comfort the soldiers - and give them all the tools

To have faith in Hashem - to destroy the P.L.O.

And it won't be necessary - for Rabbi Jaffe and Co. to go

We have given you some details - of some of the work we do

To make all our children - so proud to be a Jew  
We could have related - a joke to make you laugh  
But we suggest to you - that you read the Jewish Telegraph

We are commanded by our Rabbis - that on Purim we should give more  
So that our Neshomos - and spirits we can restore  
So please be very generous - and give us of your wealth  
And you will all be rewarded - with great happiness and health.

## Chapter 12

# The Rebbe's Sicho On Purim

Summarised and abridged by Rabbi Shmuel Lew

One could argue that the part of the Megillah which is relevant to Purim begins very much after the beginning. The essence of the story is that Haman wanted to annihilate the Jews, and the miracle of Purim followed. What lesson can we derive from the details of how Haman became a minister, and how Esther became the Queen, and Mordechai was ". . . sitting in the king's palace in the gate of the king . . ." There are many precedents that Jews were prominent in royal courts, as Daniel, etc. True, the story is much more interesting as a result of the details, but Torah is very sparing with its words, and every aspect of Torah has deep lessons to teach us. This lesson is relevant to every man, woman and child. (Indeed, the whole miracle came through a woman, to the extent that the Megillah is not called in the name of Mordechai, nor in the name of Mordechai and Esther, but just "Esther"), and we see that the children are much more excited about Purim and are more prepared to "stamp out" Haman with all their energies, whereas many of their elders feel that it is beneath their dignity!

An important lesson to be derived from the early part of the Megillah is that in the banquet of the king, the command was ". . . to do according to the desire of each and every individual...", as a result of which, as our Rabbis point out, Mordechai insisted on eating Kosher food and beverages. He did not calculate that the Jews are a tiny minority and why call attention to oneself in the capital city and in the Royal Palace. Shouldn't one show one's gratitude for having been invited to the king's feast by just participating quietly? Particularly so since one was in an environment where one of the noblemen was Haman and all the other courtiers were deafeningly silent even after the decree of Haman to annihilate the Jews was promulgated, and nobody stood up for the Jewish people.

Yet, the Megillah is making a powerful point. A Jew cannot change his essence, and just as no person wants to be considered a cripple (and takes cosmetic steps, i.e. artificial limbs, etc.) to appear as a normal person, so does a Jew who is ashamed of, or denies his Jewishness, appear as the greatest cripple in the world. One need not be afraid of provoking the Gentile by showing one's Jewishness, for the goy knows that ". . . their religion is different from that of all nations...". When we deny it, we are looked upon as hypocrites and certainly do not win any respect. On the contrary, one who is "True" to his being is respected, for whatever he says, he can be trusted to be sincere.

Similarly, every Jew "sits at the gate of the king's palace", whether it is in one's home - which is referred to as one's "castle", or in a school, a neighbourhood, a business centre, etc. Let us never

think that one's Yiddishkeit should be confined to the four walls of one's home, but need not be paraded in public. On the contrary, the more people might learn from one's example, the greater the responsibility to show the truth and to even be more meticulous about one's observance. Obviously, Yiddishkeit has to be kept totally everywhere but the effect of a flaw in one's observance is more far-reaching when it is in the public eye. For others will learn from one's weakness, and even if one repents, this has only corrected the harm done to himself, but will not change the effect on others. Thus, the Jew has freedom of choice, but this only extends to what he does, says and thinks, but not to what he is - his neshama. Even a young child can understand that he can change his clothes, but not his nose, and certainly not that which gives him his life. Thus, if there is an area of one's life which is not consistent with Yiddishkeit, it leads to a "split personality". Haman must know that a Jew ". . . will not kneel and will not bow down . . .", not because he is obstinate but because this is his essence, as Hashem created him. Then all the threats and decrees are only superficial and temporary, and at the end one experiences the joy which was felt on Purim.

The same applies with every mother or father, with the education of the child. The child must understand that it will not lose respect in the eyes of the world if it does not eat every sweet that its neighbour eats; and if he says a blessing, thus saying "Thank you" to Hashem before eating, he is true to himself and ultimately will receive greater respect. This is not fanaticism, but rather the only way to achieve respect in the long-term. Children who are educated in this way will grow up so that their home should be a dwelling-place for Hashem, a house with a Mezuzah, Holy Book, a Kosher kitchen and a Jewish spirit. Then, one is able to influence one's entire environment, city, and the whole country, because this person will be trusted by everyone to remain loyal, and will not undermine the interests of his country.

## Chapter 13

# Yud aleph nissen arrangements

The Rebbe's birthday this year took on an added significance for the Rebbe would be 80 years old, till 120. A really special occasion. "Ben Shmonim Ligvurah" - at 80 years one receives extra strength.

Everyone was anxious to fly to New York to be present at the Rebbe's special Farbraingen on Yud Aleph Nissen. I was told that special charter flights and group travel were being organised from all over the world. London Lubavitch were also arranging a cheap flight.

Meanwhile the Honorary Officers of Manchester Lubavitch were anxious to present the Rebbe with a nice gift to mark this unique occasion. We had received various suggestions. One was that the summaries of all the Farbraingen of the past year which had been recapitulated by Shmuel and printed and distributed by Avrohom and Manchester Lubavitch should be nicely bound into one volume. The main objection was that the summaries contained a certain number of mistakes (naturally, considering that they were printed and published and distributed within just a few days of the actual Farbraingen at 770) and it would not be in good taste to present such a volume to the Rebbe which contained errors.

It was suggested that we obtain the services of a Rabbi who could spare the time to ensure that these summaries were one hundred per cent correct. It seemed that no Rabbi could be found - with or without the spare time. I did suggest that we should bind these summaries as they are. The Rebbe does receive copies from us, so he knows that a few mistakes do occur occasionally. But I was overruled!!

One suggestion of mine, however, was accepted. It took the form of special Birthday Greetings hand written on vellum. The outside cover and the poem which I had composed are printed on the following pages.

On the following pages were enclosed the original letters of Mazel Tov and congratulations from the Religious and Jewish Communal organisations - for example, the Manchester Bess Din, signed by Dayan Ehrentreu and Dayan Krausz; The Dayan, Rabbi Schneebalg of the Machzikei Hadass; The Synagogue Council; The Representative Council of all Manchester organisations; Sir Sydney Hamburger; and Arthur and Walter Hubert; then followed the Civic Dignitaries - the Lord Mayor of Manchester; the Mayor of Salford; the Deputy Mayor of Salford, who is my brother Joseph (he wrote that he was a Lubavitcher born and bred and knows full well of the wonderful work of the Rebbe, may he celebrate till 120 years); Local Members of Parliament; and finally messages from many hundreds of our friends and supporters from this area. It was a very nicely designed and beautiful presentation.

בס"ד

Lubavitch, Manchester

Special Greetings

to

Our revered and beloved

רביט א"ש

on his

80th BIRTHDAY עמו"ש

יא ניסן תשמ"ב

בן שמונים לנבורה

from

Civic Dignitaries

Illustrious Persons

Chassidim and

Friends

in

The Greater Manchester Area

England

From  
**The Honorary Officers & Members of  
Lubavitch Manchester**

*We extend Warmest Greetings to Our Rebbe, Shlita, today,  
And hope for the next forty years, you will enjoy good health every day.  
For the Rebbe, nothing has been too difficult, nothing too hard  
In order to teach the Jewish People that the A'Mighty is their guard.  
For the past eighty years the Rebbe consoled most Jews in their sorrow  
Solved their problems, never put them off for the morrow.  
We all share in this Simcha, this Eightieth Birthday cheer  
And wish Our Rebbe, with Our Rebbetzen, joy throughout every year.  
Moishe Rabbainu served eighty years on a self-sacrificing probation  
Until he was ready to lead the whole Jewish Nation.  
Our Rebbe, Shlita, is the Moishe Rabbainu of our own generation  
Whom we love and adore with the utmost veneration.  
Who will bring us forth to our hearts desire  
And lead us into the Era of our Righteous Messiah.*

*"We want Moshiach Now"*

*Zalmon Jaffe* Chairman

D. Abenson  
D. Hickson  
A. Jaffe  
B. Lewis

B. Perrin  
P. Pink  
D. Schurder  
S. Simon

A. Vaisfiche  
Y. Vogel  
S. Weiss

At another one of our meetings, Rabbi Dovid Hickson made an invaluable suggestion. He is in the jewellery business and he had bought a wonderfully designed silver decanter for wine. He was absolutely raving about it and recommended that it would be an ideal gift for the Rebbe. He thought that it would be much nicer for the Rebbe to use this silver decanter during a Farbraingen rather than an ordinary bottle covered by a brown paper bag, and would enhance the proceedings. We agreed with Dovid that it was really a marvellous idea. But there was just one proviso - we had to make sure that the Rebbe would use it when we did present it to him. It was left to me to find out. After careful thought, I considered that our Rebbetzen would be the best person to advise me.

I therefore telephoned the Rebbetzen and explained to her how anxious we were to present this silver decanter to the Rebbe. I begged her to enquire from the Rebbe whether he would make use of it, and I promised to phone again during the course of the following day. This I did, and the Rebbetzen informed me that she had given the message over to the Rebbe and - the Rebbe had remained silent - he had made no comment.

I informed my colleagues of our conversation, and we concluded that the Rebbe's silence meant confirmation that he would accept and use this gift.

I immediately wrote to the Rebbetzen thanking her for her co-operation and advice. I added that I hoped that it might be convenient, in spite of Erev Pesach preparations and turmoil, to see me for a few moments, when I was in Crown Heights on Yud Aleph Nissen.

I continued the letter by saying that "I don't even yet know when I am 'coming or going'. I had booked through London Lubavitch - and that should explain all!!" It seemed that London had arranged a special charter with Air India for £184 return - if we could provide 100 passengers. That was O.K., says London, but what if we have only 75! or maybe only 50? O.K. says the airline, we shall do it for 50.

The latest news was that they might accept only 25!! But - another complication had arisen, they have no return service from New York on the Monday - only on Tuesdays! This would mean that Shmuel would arrive home just in time for the Seder and I - I would have to keep Pesach Sheni (the Second Pesach on 14th Iyur) "---".

After I forwarded this letter, London informed me that we shall, after all, be flying to New York with Air India on the Thursday, April 1st, but we shall return with TWA on the Monday night. And - Ah Yes - there will be an additional £50 to pay, because we are leaving on April 1st, when the fares are increased to mid-season tariff. And No - we cannot travel, now, on the Wednesday before, because every single flight is fully booked on that final day of the cheap fares. It seems that I cannot win!!

Next morning I received a letter from the Rebbe. The envelope was stamped all over "Special

Delivery", "Express" and \$3 of postage stamps were affixed. The letter contained everything - Words of Torah - a nice brocha on the occasion of my birthday on 7th Adar, the Rebbe's signature and the correction of a word in the P.S. by the Rebbe himself. I have often written about the lovely letters which I receive from the Rebbe but - it is the P.S. added to these letters which cause quite a commotion. This P.S. was no exception. The letter was written in Hebrew, and I am indebted to my son Avrohom for the English translation.

Rabbi Menachem Mendel Schneerson 770 Eastern Parkway, Brooklyn,  
To Shneuer Zalmon Jaffe, "Greetings and Blessings,

I herewith thank you for your letters which were received all in their good time.

And whilst we are today, in Rosh Chodesh, entering the month of Adar, we are reminded that as we reach Adar then Joy and Simcha are increased.

Our Rabbis tell us in Gemorra Taanos, that if a Jew has a Court case with a non-Jew, he should try and postpone it until the month of Adar, because his Mazel is very strong at that time. This non-Jew could also refer to the "alien, peculiar and strange being" which is within us and which we call the Evil Inclination.

The time is now ripe to arouse every Jew, who has a judgment and a battle with this Evil Inclination, because his Mazel is strong at this moment. He will be victorious in the battle and change "the Evil to Good, Dark to Light and Bitterness to Sweetness" - to serve Hashem with "all your heart and with both inclinations" with joy and happiness in increased measure. To add in Torah and Mitzvochs through Joy, and to make this a Dwelling place for Hashem.

And especially to arouse the Mitzva of "Love your fellowman like yourself" - in all this, and make us "one people", especially as "their laws are different from all other nations" and "all together we will draw the Blessings of Our (Heavenly) Father towards us in the Light of His Countenance".

And then the main blessing will be fulfilled each and every day, that "Hashem will shine His Face towards us, and we should be saved in the true redemption through Our Righteous Moshiach.

And to arouse to the fulfillment of Torah and Mitzvahs with Alacrity and strength by learning the laws of Purim and its Torah and Mitzvahs and to fulfil them physically - each one at its proper time."

(The Rebbe did point out that there are Seven Mitzvoss which have to be performed on Purim - 'Al Hanissim' has to be recited in the Amida and in the Grace after Meals; the Megilla of Esther has to be read and listened to; there is a special portion of the Torah read on Purim; Mesheloach

Monoss - gifts of edible foods to be given to friends; Gifts of money to the Poor people; A Joyous Seuda, meal, to be partaken; and finally, there is the prohibition to fast on Purim.)

"With a proper self-examination, this will lead to action - and Kavana, to prepare all Jews for an assembly of thousands, in complete Unity, including the teaching of Torah to young children.

- And Peace and Love amongst all Jews in a physical manner, by sending presents to friends (Mesheloach Monoss) and gifts to the Poor.

As with all important matters, we need time to prepare - at least from Rosh Chodesh.

The importance of the days of Purim are very great - as we say only regarding them, "that they shall never be nullified from amongst the Jewish people".

With Blessings for a Joyous Purim (signed with the Rebbe's Signature) "

"N.B. The time is opportune to mention regarding the Sefer Torah so that all Jews should purchase a letter to bring the everlasting unity of everyone. Because in the days of Purim the Jews had fulfilled that which they had already accepted at Matan Torah".

There followed another N.B. wherein the Rebbe extended to me all good wishes, "Begashmius Uberuchneus (material and spiritual) on the occasion of my birthday on the Seventh day of Adar.

Then followed the P.S. - a postscript - in English:

"P.S. Mrs Schneerson has mentioned to me about the question of a silver wine decanter. I certainly appreciate your good intention and desire. But for practical considerations I must take the thought for the deed. For, as a matter of principle and practice over the past 30-odd years, I prefer to use a "bagged" (this word had been corrected by the Rebbe) glass container that conceals its contents, though I have, thank G-d, silver vessels. Similarly, I do not use a silver Esrog box.

I cannot go into the reasons for the above here. But one reason, if it will satisfy you, is that I do not wish to make a distinction between me and those surrounding me."

("Well," as Dovid Hickson remarked, "I will purchase this silver decanter for myself. I will always treasure it as the decanter "that the Rebbe nearly had" ")

Is not this Postscript a wonderful example of the thoughtfulness and consideration, together with Ahavas Yisroel, which the Rebbe is continually showing to his Chassidim and to his followers. So we now know one of the reasons why the Rebbe does not use a Silver Esrog Box. "Yes", the Rebbe seems to imply, "spend money on the Mitzvah, on the Esrog - get the best - but the Box

does not really matter".

Throughout our history we have possessed great men of immense intellectual stature and wisdom who have not been afraid to break with tradition and set a new example to the world in order to save financial embarrassment to many thousands of Jews.

It is well known that when the Alter Rebbe (the Founder of Lubavitch/Chabad) was arrested on a false charge, jailed and sentenced to death - then a great-deal of money was urgently required for his defence. One way of raising cash was that the married men sold the silver crowns, or collars, with which their Tallaisim were adorned.

Subsequently when the Alter Rebbe was acquitted and released, he issued a proclamation to his Chassidim that these Silver Crowns should not be repurchased. Obviously it might have caused some financial embarrassment to some of them.

The Rebbe showed pity and Ahavas Yisroel to his followers.

I do believe that this is also one of the reasons why Lubavitch Chassidim do not wear these silver adornments even to this day.

## Chapter 14

# The Rebbe's 'Prohibition' For Yud Aleph Nissen

Every Lubavitcher from all over the world - from young Yeshiva boys to elder statesmen - intended to be present at 770, on the happy and joyous occasion of the Rebbe's 80th Birthday - and to pay homage and to give honour to our beloved Leader and Revered Rebbe.

It was going to be the outstanding Lubavitch Social Occasion of recent years. Each person considered it vital and necessary that he should attend the Rebbe's Simcha. As all the most important people would be there, how would it appear if he, himself, was absent?

Therefore, special charter flights and cheap individual tickets were being arranged from all over the world. Eight hundred people were expected to travel from France alone.

Yossi, my grandson, who was studying at the Lubavitcher Yeshiva in Jerusalem, had already informed me last year that nothing would keep him away from 770 at Yud Aleph Nissen 5742.

When I demanded to know from where he was obtaining the £280 for the fare - this was the cost from London to New York - the part from Israel to London was Shmuel's responsibility - he replied that he still had money in his own bank account from his Bar Mitzvah presents, and "I can do what I want with that, it's mine".

Mendie, his brother, is also a very important person - and he could not possibly be left behind - so Shmuel was making contingency plans to airlift Mendie to New York, as well. The question of whether Shmuel himself should travel to Crown Heights for these four or five days, never came up. This was just taken for granted.

A relative of mine from Kfar Chabad, who had returned from 770 only a few weeks ago, insisted on flying back to Crown Heights for this unique occasion. As I have stated above - the whole Lubavitch world would be at 770.

A few days later the Rebbe addressed a Children's Rally at 770, which was broadcast, live, to all the world.

At the end of the Rally, it was announced that the Rebbe was going to make a very important statement which would concern everyone who was listening - and others, too. We all waited expectantly as the Rebbe addressed us in Manchester; those in London, Israel, all over the U.S.A.; and so forth.

What the Rebbe said, briefly and concisely, and which could be expressed in one sentence was -

"I do not want anyone to come to see me at 770 on the occasion of my Birthday". It was quite straight-forward with no ambiguity.

The Rebbe added that he could not prohibit anybody from coming to 770 for Yud Tess Kislev - that was the Alter Rebbe's (Z.TzL) Simcha – nor could he prevent people from visiting Crown Heights on Yud Beth Tamuz - that was the Previous Rebbe's (z.Tzl) Simcha, but the Rebbe emphasised - "Yud Aleph Nissen was MY Simcha and I do not want anyone to come specially, to 770, for my Simcha!"

Furthermore, the Rebbe continued - "All those who had intended to travel to New York should give half of the money, which would now be saved on the fare, to Tzedoka, and the balance, the other half should be spend on Hiddur Pesach - to make the Yom Tov much brighter and nicer - even by buying a new dress for one's wife".

One can imagine the turmoil, the excitement, the arguments and the stories that were flying around the world within minutes. I do know that Shmuel had received telephone calls from South Africa, the U.S.A. and other countries. Everyone wanted to know what the others intended to do.

Already there were many versions of what the Rebbe had said. Just as there are many commentaries on the Chumish, the Nach, the Gemorra and so forth, so here too, we had many commentators who explained exactly what the Rebbe had meant. One would have thought that the Rebbe's statement was a simple and straightforward directive to all his Chassidim to stay at home on Yud Aleph Nissen - but No - each Lubavitch chossid had his own interpretation.

I know that in Manchester, some of our members played over the tape of the address of the Rebbe - five times - to try and discover a loophole to this Isur - this prohibition. After much debate and discussion it was concluded that the Rebbe had only referred to those who had asked for permission to travel to 770.

Another most unusual conclusion reached was that all those who had intended to fly to New York had to pay half the fare money, thus saved, to Tzedoka, and the other half in order to prepare a nicer Pesach - BUT - those who never intended to travel had to pay nothing at all - either to Tzedoka or for the Hiddur Pesach.

We still could not persuade Yossi to cancel his flight. He was in a different category - and the whole prohibition did not concern or refer to him - he had no wife for whom to buy a new dress.

Personally, I was myself in a dilemma. I didn't know what to do.

I had already received a report that a certain Lubavitch worker from South America had arrived at 770. The Rebbe had shown his displeasure and enquired of him whether he had listened to the (now famous) Sicho.

I did not wish to embarrass the Rebbe nor myself by travelling to Crown Heights without permission. Well, T.G. I had a very royal and close friend in Brooklyn who might use her good graces and best efforts on my behalf and discover whether the Rebbe would object to my participation in his Simcha.

I therefore telephoned to the Rebbetzen and put the following points to her as my reasons for wishing to travel (1) I considered that I might be in a special category; (2) I was seeking more material for writing my book; (3) I would do my utmost to make the Rebbe happy and cheerful; (4) I had written a letter to the Rebbe last week, therefore the Rebbe knew that I was coming for Yud Aleph Nissen, and yet in the Rebbe's reply to me, he did not say "NO"; (5) I did not want people to say that Zalmon Jaffe is a Baal Chutzpah - a cheeky fellow, who went to 770, in spite of the Rebbe's prohibition; (6) Before the Isur, matters were different - everybody was going to 770 - how could I stay at home? (7) I would be away from home for only four days; (8) I would still pay my Tzedoka nwhich would be half the amount of the fare; and (9) I did not want people to say, that because Zalmon Jaffe was going to the Rebbe's Birthday Farbraingen then that would give them all an excuse to travel.

I also confided to the Rebbetzen that another interpretation had been submitted by some shrewd and "learned" people that this Isur only referred to those who had sought permission - whereas those who had not asked for the Rebbe's consent would be allowed to travel.

The Rebbetzen intimated to me that "surely you cannot compare yourself to all the groups of people who want to travel. The Rebbe does not want these groups of hundreds of people, but - I am sure that the Rebbe does not mean you".

I promised to telephone again on the following day to discover what reply the Rebbe had given.

When I spoke to the Rebbetzen again, she stated that the Rebbe had given no answer whatsoever.

I still had not solved my dilemma. I was receiving advice from friends - left, right and centre - most of them expressed good reasons why I ought to fly to Crown Heights. Shmuel had a brilliant idea. Why not phone Rabbi Dvorkin in Brooklyn? and he would give me an immediate and authoritative answer to my question.

I therefore rang up Rabbi Dvorkin and asked him whether I could come to Crown Heights for the Rebbe's Birthday. He replied — with no hesitation - "NO - definitely NO". "Did you not hear the Sicho?" "You must not come". "No one should come".

I commenced to put my nine reasons to him, and he, in turn, proceeded to demolish my nine points, one by one.

He told me that I was not in a special category, and that I need not write about Yud Aleph Nissen in my Book - or alternatively I could obtain the details and particulars from other sources. Although he did admit that I might make the Rebbe cheerful, it was much more probable that the Rebbe would be none too pleased and be unhappy because I had disobeyed his instructions. He agreed that people would call me a Baal Chutzpah and a cheeky fellow and I should not consider that I could appease the Rebbe by giving the value of half the fare money to Charity. So, please remain at home!

I was still not satisfied. There remained a strong doubt in my mind whether I was doing the correct thing. I deliberated, considered, pondered and brooded over all these points of view - and then I decided to talk to the Rebbetzen again.

I explained that I had asked Rabbi Dvorkin for his views and that he had pronounced his verdict that I should remain at home.

The Rebbetzen again reiterated that the Rebbe did not answer her query, because, in her opinion, if the Rebbe agreed that I should travel, then others would also want this privilege.

I intimated to the Rebbetzen that I wanted her to advise me - as a **friend**.

The Rebbetzen answered that in her opinion the Rebbe did not refer to me - or to any personal friends - only to groups of people.

She continued that "You cannot compare yourself to all the groups of hundreds of people who want to travel to 770 for Yud Aleph Nissen. The Rebbe does not want these hundreds of people. I am certain that the Rebbe did not refer to you".

The Rebbetzen advised me, as a friend - to come to 770 for the Rebbe's Birthday - BUT - she concluded - "Do not blame me if you should become embarrassed by the Rebbe . . . ."

That decided me! and I phoned Rabbi Dvorkin to tell him of my decision. In any case, I had to inform him of my intended arrival - he was my agent - and he had to tell Mrs Itkin of my contemplated visit to the apartment.

The first words which Rabbi Dvorkin uttered were "Are you not satisfied with my Pesak Din?" I remonstrated with him and explained that I had never asked another Rabbi for a verdict - in any case, it is forbidden to ask another Rav a Shaala if a Pesak Din or answer has already been given by a Rabbi. I mentioned that I had again spoken to the Rebbetzen and she had advised me - as a friend - to take a chance and to come for the Birthday.

### **Preparations for Yud Aleph Nissen**

At last, I was on my way to New York - alone. I travelled with British Airways from London. I always relate a story about the Kosher food on the planes — this time was no exception. Not only was there NO Kosher food on board, but there was NO non-Kosher food either. The catering staff at Heathrow were on strike. The steward announced however, that as no proper meals were provided, there would be some consolation - drinks (whisky, vodka, and so forth) would be served to everyone, free of charge, and as long as the drinks lasted.

All earphones (headsets) would also be provided free, but he regretted that there were no musical programmes! - everyone laughed uproariously - he rectified this announcement - there were no printed musical programmes.

I arrived at my apartment, next door but one to 770, at 6 p.m. I immediately dashed round to Beryl Kahn's shop to buy milk and some food, before he closed.

I had not heard from Dovid. Actually, I did hope that he would not bother me that night, because if he still kept normal "770 hours", then I could not expect him before 2 a.m. after midnight. I had spent a long day travelling and I needed a good night's rest.

I, therefore, only had one bed to make up - my own. This should have been a simple matter, because the blankets were folded away nicely and the sheets were in the cupboard. I soon found the fitted sheet for the base - but I could not find a decent one for the top of the bed. They seemed slightly stained, which did not exactly please me - but it was now too late to worry about such matters. Incidentally, when I returned home to Manchester, I told Roselyn about these sheets - she retorted that I had used a tablecloth and the discolorations were tea stains!

It was now about 7 p.m. and I had ascertained that the Rebbe would be davening Maariv at just this time. I gathered together all the letters which many friends had entrusted to me - for the Rebbe - and I flew into 770. I was just in time to greet the Rebbe in the Hallway on his way to take the lift down to the Shool, where Maariv and all subsequent services were to be held.

I wished the Rebbe a heartfelt and warm "Sholom Aleichem", and in return received a most glorious smile and welcome from the Rebbe.

He said something in reply to my greetings (probably "Aleichem Sholom"), but I could not quite make out exactly what the Rebbe had said.

I then whizzed downstairs, and was just in time to join the Rebbe's procession - first, the Rebbe, followed by Rabbis Chadakov, Label Groner and Binyamin Klyne. This strategy and expertise enabled me to march unhindered, behind Rabbi Klyne, to the top end of the Shool, where the Rebbe would be standing during the service. It had to be split-second timing, too, because as soon as the Rebbe and his Aides had passed, the whole assembly would close its ranks, and it would have been impossible for me to make any headway at all - I would have to remain at the

rear end of the Shool, to await the Rebbe's return.

After Maariv, the Rebbe commenced the nigun "We Want Moshiach NOW" and he turned to me with a heartwarming and beaming smile, and signalled that I should join in.

I realise, dear Readers, that every year you read a similar little story - about the Rebbe's welcome, his smiles, his friendliness and so forth. You probably say to yourself, "Why does Zalmon keep writing the same thing every year?" Well, for the simple reason that the welcomes and the smiles become bigger and nicer every year.

In view of the Rebbe's prohibition on travelling to Crown Heights and all the different viewpoints which I have enumerated above, I was actually uncertain and unsure of what kind of a welcome I would even receive this time from the Rebbe.

The Rebbe's first smile, therefore, absolutely overwhelmed me, and completely reassured me by confirming that I had done the right thing in coming to 770 for Yud Aleph Nissen.

My grandson, Dovid (Jaffe) did join me next morning. He had decided to eat all his meals at the flat, together with me, but would sleep elsewhere. This arrangement suited me very well. I did not relish being disturbed at all hours of the early morning by Dovid, and I might be fortunate to enjoy a good night's rest.

So - Dovid and I took our large shopping trolley and went off to buy our Shabbos meals. We first of all bought our Challas, Kuchen and Cake from the bakery and then made our way to Mermelsteins to purchase our "Ready Cooked Meals".

There were just the two of us, so we did not need very much - only sufficient for the two main meals, plus the Seudah Shelishit.

For the first course, we bought four large pieces of gefilte fish (one piece each for every meal) then we obtained one pound of chopped liver; four pieces - a whole chicken; a pound of sliced meat, one large hamburger; a large carton of vegetable soup with the bits and pieces (knaidlech, etc.); two potato puddings; a lockshen pudding; one pound of coleslaw and one pound of potato salad, and, in case we might run short, I bought two pieces of chopped and fried fish, and Dovid added a few slices of Salami.

We then called at Kahan's for a jar or two of pickles, a jar of chrain, and dozen bottles of soda and coca-cola. We filled the shopping trolley and carted the goods back to our apartment.

Dovid loves his food - but he enjoys cooking nearly as much. He was the expert, so I left everything to him. It was a pleasure to see his face, beaming, and alight with enthusiasm, as he prepared the meals for Friday night dinner and Shabbos midday luncheon.

He obtained the largest cooking pot or pan which was available and placed therein, as a base, evenly spread out, the contents of a tin of baked beans which I had bought for Sunday morning's breakfast. On top of this, he placed the four pieces of chicken, and the hamburger, and surrounded these with the sliced meat. He added some sort of liquid - or maybe water?

He placed the Shabbos Blech (steel or tin covering) on the gas stove, boiled the Shabbos kettle, put the vegetable soup in a pan, set the table, placed thereon the candlesticks and the candles, and challas - we were ready for Shabbos.

We enjoyed our Friday night meal, eaten very leisurely although the vegetable soup turned out like an extraordinarily thick Tzollent. But the Shabbos luncheon, just before the Farbraingen, had to consist of a ten minute snack, whilst Dovid could barely manage much more. Dovid was minding my seat at the Farbraingen, so we had to take our meals in shifts.

Therefore - we had sufficient food for Sunday and Monday, too. In addition we had a dozen eggs, cream cheese and shmetana, plus, plus . . . So we had plenty of food left over and which we handed to Mrs Itkin to dispose of before we departed for home on Monday evening.

On this Friday morning, I had been informed by Label and Binyamin that, at this year's Birthday Farbraingen, there would not take place the usual procession of men bearing gifts and tributes for the Rebbe - as had been the custom, hitherto.

I considered that this was an excellent opportunity to show to the Rebbetzen, the tribute that I had brought along for the Rebbe, on behalf of Manchester Lubavitch, before I handed it into the office.

I therefore telephoned the Rebbetzen and explained that I wanted her to have a preview of our tribute to the Rebbe. It was 2.30 p.m. on Friday afternoon, and the Rebbetzen intimated that she would like to see me - at any time, when it was convenient to me. I replied that "Now is a very convenient time". "Alright", she declared, "Come along now". So I went along at once. I went alone, because, in any case, Dovid had gone off on the Mivtzoyim.

I thanked the Rebbetzen for giving me the pleasure, honour and privilege of seeing her for just a few minutes before Shabbos. Like every other Jewish woman, the Rebbetzen had plenty to do at this time of the week - and - it was also Erev Pesach, so I was deeply indebted to her.

I had brought our special Birthday Greetings tribute to the Rebbe, to show the Rebbetzen. She greatly admired the whole production and in particular she loved the poem. She kept repeating, how beautiful it was. I also handed to her a letter which my daughter-in-law, Susan, had asked me to deliver.

The Rebbetzen was very anxious to read it straight away. In fact, she did open the envelope, but -

she resisted the temptation, and even apologised for opening the envelope!! (And I had told her that I was happy and delighted to wait whilst she read the contents of Susan's letter). I do not wish to give our Rebbetzen an "Ayin Horo" - the evil eye, but T.G. she looked really lovely and younger than ever, K.A.H. and Umberuffen.

As someone remarked to me, "Zalmon, you look younger than ever KAH. How do you do it?" I replied that "I followed the example of my Rebbe and Rebbetzen".

The Rebbetzen told me that she was delighted that she had the courage to tell me to come to New York for the Rebbe's birthday. I commented that Yossi might not be too pleased - I told him to remain at home and yet I saw fit to come along myself.

The Rebbetzen retorted that "Yossi should know and realise that there is a vast difference between him and his Zaidie!"

The Rebbetzen also remarked, "en passant", that she would not be seeing the Rebbe - not at all - on the morrow, Shabbos. This was a true prophesy. I saw the Rebbe enter 770 at 7.45 a.m. - the Service was at 10 a.m. and ended at 12.20. The Farbraiagen commenced at 1.30 p.m. and concluded at 5.30 p.m. Mincha followed and Maariv was at 7.15 p.m. As I have stated once before - it is hard to be the Rebbe - but it is still harder to be the Rebbetzen!!

770 was overcrowded. There were more people present than at any time before. I trembled to think how 770 could have coped with, or accommodated the many more thousands of Chassidim who had been ordered by the Rebbe to stay at home.

Many, very many did ask me why I came to 770, after the Isur. Well, I told them, I had a legitimate excuse. I explained that every year for the past fifteen years or so we held a Goyrell – a lottery, for one person to travel to 770 on our behalf, to wish the Rebbe Mazel Tov and hopefully to bring back some of the Rebbe's matzo for the Manchester Anash. This year was no exception. We had a Chazoka, a tradition, and we held this lottery as we usually do.

Most were well satisfied with this reply, but one or two cheeky fellows did ask me point blank whether I, personally, had won this lottery. To be truthful, I had to answer "No, I did not win this Goyrell!" a Chutzpah.

I had another problem, I was in a predicament. I always present to the Rebbe five bottles of Vodka for the Rebbe's pleasure, but being made of grain, chometz, and it being only a few days before Pesach, I was uncertain what to do. Some suggested that I should present just two or three bottles, others told me that I should not hand the Rebbe any bottles at all.

I asked Rabbi Dvorkin. He laughed uproariously, and said that this would present no difficulties. It would not be any problem to finish off five bottles of Vodka before Pesach.

During the course of the day, twenty brand new large cabins were unloaded and parked on the pavement outside 770. They looked like the old fashioned bathing huts which were popular and used at the seaside about sixty years ago, as a means of dressing and undressing for the beach, in privacy.

These cabins outside 770 were about six feet in height and about three feet square. They looked very intriguing. I watched as various people opened up some of the doors and peeped inside. There were different reactions - some giggled and laughed, others were embarrassed and blushed profusely. I decided to investigate and have a look for myself.

I discovered that each cabin was a self-contained, fully-furnished portable toilet - or as the Americans refer to them - "bathrooms".

These were supplied in conjunction with the huge marquees (tents) which were to be erected on Sunday, to accommodate all the many thousands of extra visitors who were expected to arrive for that day. I should like to congratulate the organisers - they do have to think of everything.

There was a nice Farbraingen on the Shabbos. David kept my seat whilst I went to the apartment for a few minutes snack, so I was reasonably comfortable. In the middle of this Farbraingen, the Rebbe called up my neighbour, Rabbi J.J. Hecht, to him, and handed J.J. a glass of Vodka, and said - "You have been mixing me up, because your face is so miserable. Take this drink and smile".

At Mincha, I was called up for an Aliya, for which I was grateful to Myer Harlick. I was called up as Hechosson Shneuer Zalmon and for the first Aliya - I was neither a Kohen nor was I a Chossen.

It had already become a habit with the Baal Korah to call everyone up as a Chosson!

### **The Day of Yud Aleph Nissen**

On Sunday, Yud Aleph Nissen, the Rebbe arrived at 770 at 10 a.m., just as he does on every weekday of the year. As he marched up the steps of 770, the huge throng of boys and men vigorously and enthusiastically sang the Rebbe's new tune. The Rebbe encouraged us all, by beating time with his hand - and - immediately entered his study, for another day's hard work.

After Mincha, the leaders of Anash, the top men of Lubavitch at 770, went to the Rebbe's study in a delegation, and Rabbi Katz on everyone's behalf extended to the Rebbe a long brocha, which had been written down on paper. The Rebbe replied and returned blessings to everybody.

All day long, workmen were busily engaged in erecting the Marquees. It was a bitter cold day

and the wind was blowing with Force 9 gale gusts. The workmen had great difficulty in standing upon their own two feet when, at last, they managed to lift some parts of the tent. They swayed and flapped most dangerously and after a couple of hours the job was given up - beaten by the wind. So there were to be no marquees for that evening.

My friend, Rabbi Avrohom Shem Tov invited me to attend a special reception and dinner party at the Brooklyn Museum to commemorate this memorable day in the Lubavitch calendar. It was called

"Celebration Eighty"

American Friends of Lubavitch

**"National Day of Reflection"**

Nissen 11th 5742 4th April 1982

This day had been proclaimed by President Ronald Reagan also as a 'National Day of Reflection' and this is the text of his message:

#### **A Proclamation**

Amid the distractions and concerns of our daily existence, it is appropriate that Americans pause to reflect upon the ancient ethical principles and moral values which are the foundation of our character as a nation.

We seek, and steadfastly pursue, the benefits of education. But education must be more than factual enlightenment - it must enrich the character as well as the mind.

One shining example for people of all faiths of what education ought to be is that provided by the Lubavitch movement, headed by Rabbi Menachem Schneerson, a worldwide spiritual leader, who will celebrate his 80th birthday on April 4, 1982. The Lubavitcher Rebbe's work stands as a reminder that knowledge is an unworthy goal unless it is accompanied by moral and spiritual wisdom and understanding. He has provided a vivid example of the eternal validity of the Seven Noahide Laws, a moral code for all of us regardless of religious faith. May he go from strength to strength.

In recognition of the Lubavitcher Rebbe's 80th birthday, the Senate and the House of Representatives of the United States in Congress assembled have issued House Joint Resolution 447 to set aside April 4, 1982, as a 'National Day of Reflection'.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, RONALD REAGAN, President of the United States of America, do hereby proclaim April 4, 1982, as National Day of Reflection.

IN WITNESS THEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this 3rd day of April, in the year of our L-rd nineteen hundred and eighty-two, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and sixth.

(signed) Ronald Reagan

Representatives from all over the world had gathered at this hall for this event. Avrohom Shem Tov had asked me to be prepared to say a few words to the gathered assembly on behalf of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland.

Before I left 770, I went into the Shool to reserve my seat for the Farbraingen. I could not rely on Dovid in this instance. In any case, he was busy, and it would not have been fair to him, because his own place might have been put at risk.

It was 4 p.m. The hall was already packed to capacity, and the Farbraingen was not due to start until 9.30 p.m. The seating in the Hall had been extended to its utmost limits. The platform or dais also extended to the full length of the Shool/Hall. And, instead of the usual two rows or so in depth (on the dais), there were now five rows.

However, I had come to reserve my own seat. I just managed to squeeze in, and remained seated for about half an hour to lodge and ensure my claim. I then begged my neighbours to reserve my seat, as I had a duty to attend a celebration dinner. They promised faithfully to keep this seat for me - and off I went.

It was a very nice affair. First there was a walk-about reception. The waitresses walked about, and we received the delicious edibles and drinks while standing.

We then took our seats for dinner. Aaron Weingarten of London had accompanied me to this hall, and we remained together at a very well positioned table, directly opposite the top table, which was situated on a small platform and on which four or five people would be sitting.

I was delighted to see my friend Jan Pearce sitting at this top table, but I was very sorry that Alice (Pearce) could not make it.

Avrohom Shem Tov was in charge and also Master of Ceremonies. He did a grand job. The food was good and the atmosphere delightful. Jan Pearce made Hamotzee, and I was pleased to note that his voice had lost none of its strength or quality of tone.

Avrohom made some good speeches, and called up many representatives to address us from the microphone at the top table. He then described some wonderful Englishman who was present, and whom he now asked to address us. I realised, with a start, that he had called upon me to

speak. I was expected to deliver a message from Margaret Thatcher. I walked up to the platform and Rabbi Avrohom Shem Tov greeted me by shaking me by the hand. When he withdrew his palm, I discovered that I was holding a letter in my hand. It was from 10 Downing Street, London, and was signed by the British Prime Minister, Mrs Margaret Thatcher. I read the whole letter to the assembly, very slowly and deliberately - from the address and the date to Maggie's signature.

It was a very nice letter of congratulations on the Rebbe's birthday and all good wishes for the continued success of the Rebbe's work in good health and long years.

It was a pity that Avrohom had not given me this letter beforehand. I could have made a copy of it for this Diary. However - I did not know that Avrohom had the foresight to arrange for me to read Maggie's letter, and I had arranged to read out my poem from the Manchester Lubavitch Birthday Greetings Album. And this I did, with Avrohom's permission - and it "went down well".

Incidentally, the Rebbe has no time for parties or banquets. Each day is the same as other days.

When we returned to 770, I heard the splendid news that Sarah and Mendel's (Shem Tov) son Yossi, had become engaged to marry the sister of my friend Moishe (Katlarsky). This was wonderful news.

In addition the Shem Tavs were celebrating the Bar Mitzvah of Bassie (nee Shem Tov) and Rabbi Azeemof's son from Paris. They were hoping that their son would be called up to the Torah in the Rebbe's presence on the following day - Monday morning after the Yud Aleph Farbraingen.

### **At the Yud Aleph Nissen Farbraingen**

I returned to my place at 770 at 8 p.m. A further six people had arrived on our bench. It was a form with a high wooden back. My neighbors regretted that others had squeezed their way onto this bench, in spite of their protests, and they apologised profoundly for their inability to ensure that my seat was kept reserved for me.

So, I sat on top of this high wooden back, and gradually sidled downwards. First, I managed to get my toe onto the bench, then one complete foot. Twenty minutes later I managed to get the other foot into position. There I was, sat on the back of the bench, with both my feet pressed into a narrow space in between the gentlemen who were sitting down. I could not rely any more on these men to be upstanding when the Rebbe arrived, so that I could be seated in their places.

Having made a narrow gap with my feet, it was now much easier to force my legs and then my body down onto the bench. A wriggle here, a push there, and by 9 p.m. I was IN. I would have

loved to let out a sigh of relief but there was no room for that luxury.

The dais was also overcrowded. Every seat in the five rows of benches was taken, but these seated gentlemen could hardly be seen, because of the vast number men standing over and above them. And distinguished and illustrious men were arriving all the time. Mr. Koch, the Mayor of New York; the personal representative of the President; Governors and Senators - all came to pay tributes and give honour, to the Rebbe. Mr.Reagan's representative delivered the following personal letter from the "President of the United States of America" to the Rebbe, which read as follows:

The White House

Washington

April 2, 1982

Dear Rebbe:

Nancy and I are pleased to share in the joy and celebration which surrounds your 80th birthday on this 11 Nissan. On behalf of all Americans, we offer our most heartfelt congratulations.

You have so much of which to be proud. Since your first moments in the United States in 1941, you have shared your personal gift of universal understanding to the benefit of all. Time and again, your love and spiritual guidance have brought hope and inspiration to those confronted with despair. In bringing solace and comfort to the human spirit, you have helped to strengthen the foundation of faith which is mankind's most vital asset. Your life's work has been a response to that special calling few are privileged to hear.

I am especially pleased to join members of Congress in proclaiming a National Day of Reflection on your birthday. As I stated in the Proclamation, your work "stands as a reminder to us all that knowledge is an unworthy goal unless it is accompanied by moral and spiritual wisdom and understanding." As with all great leaders, you have given much more than you will ever receive.

G-d bless you today and always.

Sincerely,

(signed) Ronald Reagan

I really do not know where all the extra thousands of people, whom the Rebbe had prohibited from travelling to New York, would or could have sat or stood.

All the proceedings were being televised, live, to every part of the globe. I was told that 700 people, men women and children, watched the Farbraingen in London. The picture was produced on an eight foot screen. "It was like a personal Yechidus for each and every one of the 700 people gathered in Lubavitch House, London".

Thousands were watching the televised Farbraingen in the comfort of their own homes in New York and all over the U.S.A.

So, really - actually - there were more men present on Simchas Torah because there was no competition from the T.V. and the broadcasts - and no prohibitions issued by the Rebbe.

The Farbraingen commenced at 9.30 p.m. T.G. The Rebbe was extremely happy. He ensured that the Mayor and V.I.Ps all said LeChaim to him on a glass of Vodka. The Rebbe even signalled that the T.V. operator should be handed a glass of Vodka, in order to say LeChaim. By 12.30 a.m. after midnight, many V.I.Ps and those who had to be up early for work, had gradually left the hall, and I discovered that I could even stretch out my legs underneath the table.

On Yom Tov everyone stays for the whole Farbraingen, whereas tomorrow, Monday, was not only an ordinary working day, but it was almost Erev Pesach and many men had plenty to do.

### **Some Words of Torah**

The Rebbe related nine Sichos and a Maamer at this Yud Aleph Nissen Farbraingen.

Rabbi Shmuel Lew, my son-in-law, translates and summarises the Sichos and Maamers from most of the weekday Farbraingen, which are broadcast to the world from 770.

Shmuel dictates these to my daughter-in-law, Susan, in Manchester. She transmits these to Avrohom, my son, who organises and arranges for these Summaries to be printed, published and distributed by Manchester Lubavitch.

Here are some excerpts from Shmuel's version of the Yud Aleph Nissan Farbraingen:

### **Sicho One**

We begin with a blessing, as it is written "... blessed are those who come in the name of Hashem..." This means that we become united in the blessing through becoming united with Hashem, bringing about the deepest unity possible. Becoming a receptacle for "light" is a great power, for the nature of light is that it illuminates infinitely, provided nothing stands in its way. That is why we see that the light from stars which are countless millions of miles away reach the earth despite the distance, for light is infinite. Similarly, in becoming united with the light of

Hashem, and the light of Torah, we bring about an infinite power.

An important element in our efforts has been the promulgation of education. I would like to express publicly my deep gratitude to the President of the U.S., who has sent me a personal letter together with a proclamation by the Congress, affirming the essential value of education, and calling for a "day of reflection" about our purpose in the world, based upon the ten Commandments. Education is crucial, for "... the use of the future of the nations". Therefore, it is not merely a matter of accumulating facts but must be an education towards a more humane, just and fair society. The letter is sent to me personally, but merely because I am the representative of the Movement which has worked so tirelessly for over two hundred years, to bring about the unity of the Jewish people and of the entire world, in fulfilling the purpose of Hashem.

The power of reflection calls to mind the importance of the power of thought in man. When man acts, or speaks, this emphasises him as a separate entity, i.e. divides him from everyone else. However, thought is the power which elevates a person above his situation, and unites him with everyone else in the world in becoming dedicated to a higher unity. From the moment one wakes up in the morning he should reflect upon his purpose in life as prescribed by the Creator, and the Jew immediately acknowledges his commitment and debt to the Eternal King for having restored his soul. This purpose should be fulfilled with a joy, as the beginning of Tehillim Chapter 81 (the new Chapter of the Rebbe Shlita) starts with the words "... sing joyously to Hashem our strength ...", and through this, one is able to experience what the chapter goes on to say - "... open wide your mouth and I will fill it ...", i.e. becoming a vessel to the blessings of Hashem, culminating in the conclusion of this chapter "... and He fed him from the fat of the wheat and from the flintstones He satisfied you with honey ... This is the experience of Gevura (strength) in the material sense, and our Sages tell us that "... at the age of 80 one reaches the age of strength".

### **Sicho Three**

Man is comprised of a body and a soul. The soul is the main component, and the body is subordinate to it. When a person ages another year, he feels justified to diminish the energy he puts into his mission in life. This country in particular is built on the "work ethic" and elevating energetic enterprise to a high plane. Sometimes this can become exaggerated to the extent of a disproportionate value being given to silver and gold, with the danger of allowing the body to become predominant. The result is as above, that when one reaches the age of forty, and certainly fifty or sixty, one is seriously thinking about when he can "retire", i.e. become less active. In fact, the older one gets, there is much more he can achieve and G-d forbid that we should try to escape by reducing that which is most important about our life - our task to reveal G-dliness in the world. Retiring represents a desire to have pleasure from one's previous labours, whereas the Torah tells us "... Today - to do them ...", i.e. as long as one lives in this world, one is to achieve more. When one has reached the age of fifty, this is called "olam" (an eternity) in Torah, and certainly when one reaches the age of sixty, this is the age about which the Talmud tells us that one has escaped from negative forces, and these powers should be used towards

intensifying one's activities. Hashem says that He will feed us "... from the fat of the wheat", and we should be satisfied with these blessings in a material sense. But G-d forbid we should be satisfied with our lot and with our achievements in the spiritual sense. The soul gets no pleasure at all from gold, silver, food or drink. His only pleasure can be from new spiritual achievements.

One might say "... I feel that my strength is not as it was ...". The truth is that "... when one is bound up above, one does not fall below ...". The inner meaning of this phrase is that one should be bound up to that which is above time and space. Then, even though one feels a diminishing of his physical strength he realises that this is only for those who look with eyes of flesh. Therefore, the Torah tells us that at the age of eighty one reaches the age of "gevuros", namely a greater strength and intensity in serving Hashem, which comes from attaching oneself to Hashem, who gives the ability. The key is the realisation that one is not alone, and one attaches oneself to Hashem, and through Him, with his fellow-man. As the Alter Rebbe says, one's fellow might be greater than oneself, and this is why Moshe Rabeinu was the most humble person that ever lived, because he always saw the virtue of his fellow. The Alter Rebbe says an astonishing explanation based on a verse that Moshe Rabeinu was "more humble even than any gentile". How can this be? The answer is that Moshe Rabeinu felt that if anyone on earth was given the same capabilities and talents as he, he would have achieved even more.

Similarly, there is the younger generation which is a part of the same "world" in which we are. Therefore, one's physical energies as an individual are not a decisive factor, because every individual Jew (and person) becomes a unified "one" with his Creator and everyone else. Therefore, every year can witness an increase, for there are more people and more activities which have been undertaken. For all good is eternal, whereas the evil is only temporary and a means to bring us to a deeper service. Therefore G-d forbid that anyone should become frightened of aging, or to think of retiring and reducing his active life. We must remember that the benefit of the community (in which one becomes involved) is also the benefit of the individual.

All this must be done with a joy as in the beginning of Chapter 81 of Tehillim "... sing joyously to G-d who is our strength". This concurs with the teaching of the previous Rebbe who calls attention to the fact that an army marches on to the battlefield, a place of mortal danger, and yet he begins with a march of victory. How can one be so joyous before the battle has even been met? The answer is that it is through the joy that one can intimidate the enemy and all those who want to stand in the way of the purpose of our Creator.

#### **Sicho Four**

The important thing - action. Priority must be given to that which is most pressing today. The young generation is waiting! We cannot put off this important task of education until tomorrow, for there is enough to be done in the future without leaving today's task for them. Even though there are youths who are not demanding that we educate them, this in itself makes it even more

crucial and more obvious that they are lacking in something. First and foremost in education, on every level, is the showing of a living example. It is not sufficient for the educator to live up to the same standard that he expects of others. He must go above and beyond that standard. For the educated automatically thinks "I can never match my teacher" particularly in the early stages of education. Therefore one must show a living example on a higher standard. Secondly, one must see to it that the words which are spoken are sincerely felt. As our Sages say "words which emanate from the heart enter into the heart of the listener".

The education which is most timely at the moment is the preparation to Pesach. We start the Seder by a proclamation "... all who are hungry come in and eat". Namely, to work energetically that all those who are needy should receive the requisites for the Festival. Generosity of the heart will bring generosity of the hand, and the giver of Tzedoka will not be lacking G-d forbid, for Hashem will pay him (in addition to his spiritual reward). For ultimately, it is incumbent upon Hashem to provide the needs of a Festival upon His people, and will repay the one who "lays out" the money.

This brings us to talk about the Mitzva campaigns in general, beginning with Kashrus, which is more intense in the eight days of Pesach, and we find a reward which is not present in any other Mitzva, namely "... he who is careful from the slightest amount of Chometz on Pesach is promised that it will be a year without sin". This does not take away the precious gift of free choice, but means that the sin will not present itself before the person. Also the lighting of candles with "Shehecheyanu" which is the special privilege of the Jewish mother and daughter, although if there is no choice the husband lights the candles.

We also find on Pesach the campaign of Ahavas Yisroel, where the Haggadah tells "... the Torah spoke to four types of sons. In other words, we must not wait until "every son" becomes the "wise son", for the Torah tells us to speak on that night to every category. Then by the time the Seder is over, they will all be ready to cry out "Next Year in Jerusalem". This does not mean that we will have to wait a whole year, but that we will immediately be redeemed, and by next year we will be in Jerusalem. From this, we come to the campaign of Torah, Tefillin (to which the whole Torah is compared), Mezuzah (which the Mittlerer Rebbe tells is compared to the whole Torah) and guards the Jew whether he is at home or not. Tzedoka (which brings nearer the redemption) and the fulfilment of "... and I will sprinkle upon you pure waters and you will become pure" - namely the campaign of Taharas Hamishpacha.

After 1,900 years plus, it is time the Moshiach must come now! One can explain it by saying that it is obvious that a human cannot understand the infinite G-d, but it still hurts! It is only in time to come that we will be able to fulfill the prophecy "... I will praise You Hashem for having been angry at one ...". But today we pray in every Shemone Esrei "... cause the flower of David Your servant (Moshiach) to sprout forth speedily ... for to Your salvation we have hoped all day...". We need not ask "what happened with Eliyohu Hanovi?" for it is possible that he has come to the "great Beth Din" and we don't know about it. Therefore can Moshiach come immediately. We

are told that when Moshiach comes, Eliyohu will answer all questions. Let Moshiach come and Eliyohu will then answer why he did not come the day before Moshiach. Very soon we will go out of golus with the "great wealth" which has been amassed through the Torah and mitzvos throughout all generations.

### **Sicho Five**

Immediately after the first day of Pesach we begin the mitzva of counting the Omer. The Ran (Rabeinu Nissim) in Pesachim traces the source of this mitzva as commemorating the longing of our ancestors when they went out from Egypt, and were impatient to reach the day when they would receive the Torah from Hashem. It is interesting that on the second day of Sefira we do not say "... this is the second day of the Omer", but rather "today is two days of the Omer". Not only do we have the longing of a new day, but there is the cumulative effect of all previous efforts as well.

A basic lesson from the Sefira is that as much as one has studied Torah in its most perfect form, from the day he began to speak and his father taught him Torah Tziva Lonu .... until he has gone through a lifetime and reached the age of eighty, nevertheless it is all finite, and the highest possible number cannot be compared with infinity. Therefore, one always has a cumulative effect, but there is always much more to achieve, and one must "keep on counting". In addition, a fantastic thing about the counting of the Omer is that we are counting days (not deeds, words, or thoughts) despite the fact that one has no control over the passage of time. The reason is that these are days of the Omer; that is they are days with a certain purpose and goal, but if one does not count the days, he has lost a day, so that when one has wasted a minute he must not think that he is none-the-poorer, but that he actually lost that moment which was given to him for a certain reason by Hashem, and can never be retrieved. The Mezeritcher Maggid tells us that since "time" is a creation of Hashem and He has not created a single thing for nothing, therefore every Jew has the mission to count his days, and to connect each day with effort in Torah. There is an old Hebrew proverb: "... man worries about the loss of domov (his money) but does not worry about the loss of Yomov (his days)". This is not a statement of what should be but a deep-felt protest. If one worries about the material losses, how much more so should be worry about the loss of time which is irretrievable.

The right way for a Jew is to be as Avrohom Avinu who "was coming along with the days", i.e. it was recognised that it is a day of Avrohom. Otherwise it is that the day has passed without having been given a Jewish content, and this is painful. Every moment of one's life is a preparation for one's subsequent task. This even includes the time that one is asleep, which is the moment when the soul draws life-power for the rest of the day. That is why the Jewish people went to sleep the night before the Torah was given, so that they should draw life from a deeper source in order to use that extra power in fulfilling the Torah. As the previous Rebbe said, one who spends the day as he should will merit in his sleep to have secrets of Torah revealed to him.

The entire golus is compared to a slumber which has been continuing for over 1,900 years. Nevertheless, as it says in Shir Hashirim "I am asleep but the heart is awake", i.e. although we are in golus, our heart (neshama) is awake through the Torah and mitzvos which have been amassed, as a result of which we will soon go out with Moshiach.

### **The Rebbe Distributes the Special Tanyas**

It was almost 3 a.m. when the Rebbe made the following unusual and unique announcement: -

"I would like to express my gratitude to those who have sat and listened for long hours at this Farbraingen, which was not for the honour of an individual, but for the Chabad Movement. Our task is to win the battle of Hashem and the war is not won by the officers, but by the soldiers in the field. I would like to express gratitude for that! Every person becomes incorporated through a Sefer Torah. There is the revealed part of Torah, but also the inner part of Torah through which we will be redeemed from exile, and the "written Torah of Chassidus" is the Sefer Tanya. It is there to teach man how near it is for him to serve Hashem, as mentioned in the title-page. This unifies all people. The Sefer Tanya has been printed in many different places, and we suggested the idea to print a Tanya which would incorporate in it all Tanyas which were ever printed. The Sefer itself is identical, and it is why the title-page, which has the name of the different cities - which differentiate between them so we have published a Tanya with a facsimile of the title-page of a Tanya printed in every city. Thus, those who study in this Tanya will become unified with all the places and all the people who have studied in those Tanyas. When my father-in-law was a child, he was taught the Aleph-Beis from the title-page and inner pages of the Sefer Tanya. Each person will be given a Tanya and a dollar for Tzedoka. After all the men and boys have received their Tanyas, they will clear the Shool and the women will file by and each will be given a Tanya. For women are obliged to keep those positive commands which are not limited by a time factor, one of which is the love of Hashem and the fear of Hashem, which comes about through the study of Chassidus. Furthermore, we find in the Rambam (Hilchos Teshuvah, Chapter 1), that women should also study the inner part of Torah to reach the love of Hashem."

One can well imagine what great excitement this statement generated. Scores of cartons containing Tanyas were brought onto the dais and emptied. And they were continuously being replenished. The Tanyas were then placed in neat piles upon the table, and the Rebbe commenced the distribution. Everybody surged forward and rushed towards the platform. The Rebbe appeared annoyed and halted the distribution. He announced that there must be no shtupping and pushing. Everyone must come forward in an orderly manner and he indicated that a line, or queue, should be formed to the left of him, file past and accept the Tanya from his own hand.

I stood on a table facing the Rebbe, and it was a sheer impossibility to join the line without pushing or "shtupping", so I waited and bided my time.

Everyone was singing, and clapping and the Rebbe stood on the platform and handed each person - man, boy, child or baby, a Tanya with a dollar note enclosed.

An hour had elapsed since the commencement of "Operation Tanya" and the line and number of people did not appear to lessen, in fact, they seemed to be growing. I then realised what had occurred. The Rebbe had announced during the Farbraingen that he would give a Tanya to every single person, man - woman - boy - girl and child, who was present at this Farbraingen.

This announcement was clearly heard on the radio and on television, and within half an hour, men and women were arriving with their children and little babies, still wearing their night clothes and pyjamas, and some even in carry cots. Most of them were more asleep than awake, and they appeared as if they had been awakened at 4 a.m. in the morning - which they obviously were.

After an hour of hard work, the Rebbe sat down and continued the distribution. It was certainly a very hard task. Each Tanya actually weighed one pound and nine ounces. The Rebbe carried on for three and a half hours non-stop, handing out 32 to 35 Tanyas every minute (I checked this every fifteen minutes or so). Therefore I reckoned that in the three and a half hours, the Rebbe had given away 7,000 Tanyas - at one pound nine ounces each - means that the Rebbe handled nearly **five tons weight of tanyas**.

To make matters more difficult, for the Rebbe, most people waited for him to stretch out his arm and present them with a Tanya instead of leaning forward towards the Rebbe and saving him the effort of rising from his seat. Of course it was not easy to lean forward if one is holding two babies in one's arms and four more little ones are slinking along behind, but it was not easy either for the Rebbe.

One young handicapped man, sitting in a wheelchair, was hoisted up - still in the wheelchair - by a dozen boys, so that he could receive a Tanya from the Rebbe.

It was a lot of work, a lot of Tanyas, and a lot of weight. The Rebbe was entitled to feel tired.

At about 5 a.m I joined a line and made my way to the Rebbe. He gave me a cheerful smile (and I thought that the Rebbe was tired?!) and enquired where I had been and why was I so late in coming for my Tanya.

I indicated that as I was alone - I had left Roselyn in Manchester - so I had plenty of time to watch and enjoy the proceedings. In fact Dovid had been one of the first to be "served" - and was one of the last to leave 770. He had to help with the singing and clapping.

The Rebbe then wanted to know whether I had received his Shmura Matzo. I replied "Not yet". The Rebbe told me to make sure that I received the Matzo from Label Groner or from Rabbi

Chadakov as soon as possible. I did get this next morning - sorry - a few hours later on. There were two pounds in the Box, and I could take this home for distribution to the Manchester Anash. (Within minutes there was a rumour flying around to the effect that the Rebbe had asked me if Shmuel had come).

I received my Tanya, and included inside was a crisp new dollar bill. I examined the new Sefer Tanya and, as the Rebbe had told us - there were included facsimiles of the title pages of all the Tanyas which had ever been printed. I counted almost 180 title pages, and the number of countries represented was fifty. Many volumes were printed in Russia and in the U.S.A. and about a dozen or so were produced in various towns and villages in Eretz Yisroel.

These were the names of the countries enumerated therein (not in any particular order):

The U.S.A.; Russia; England; Poland; Japan; India; Israel; Hong Kong; Lithuania; West Germany; Australia; Tunisia; Canada; Morocco; Argentina; Belgium; Brazil; Holland; Italy; Switzerland; South Africa; Venezuela; Denmark; Sweden; Finland; France; Spain; Portugal; Gibraltar; Hungary; Yugoslavia; Greece; Chile; New Zealand; Uruguay; Thailand; Taiwan; Ireland; Austria; Korea; Colombia; Lebanon; Singapore; Norway; Nigeria; Turkey; Panama; Honolulu; Czechoslovakia; and North Africa (Suez).

Meanwhile, it was the turn of the ladies - it has been said that the "females of the species are much more aggressive than the males". They all stood - women and girls in a solid mass downstairs in the Shool - waiting for the male participants to be removed - out of harm's way. I must assume - they did seem to be a "dangerous crowd" - bunched together every one trying to improve her position - to get the benefit of territorial advantage as soon as the signal was given for them to proceed. They were chattering, laughing, and shouting. Anyway, I departed quickly, quietly and unobtrusively.

The proceedings concluded at 6.40 a.m and immediately a Minyan was formed for the Rebbe's Kriass Hatorah and as I have mentioned before, Bassie Azeemof's son who wished to be called up for his Bar Mitzvah at the Rebbe's Minyan joined in and had his Aliya. The Rebbe departed for home at 8.30 a.m. and was back at his office at 10.30 a.m.

I had spent a very hectic exciting and exhilarating few days with the Rebbe. I was indeed delighted that the Rebbetzen had the courage to advise me to come to Brooklyn and that the Rebbe was not at all angry with me.

Dovid and I packed our suitcases and left by air to rejoin our family in Manchester for a restful Yom Tov.

But the Rebbe departed to visit the Ohel of the Previous Rebbe (ZTzl)

The Rebbe's work is never ended.

**We Want Moshiach Now!!**