

Because time is of the essence, and because of the importance of the matter, I am having this letter sent to you by Special Delivery - Express. And for better measure still, I will request the office to contact you by long distance phone, so that you can make the most of Lag B'Omer and Shabbos and subsequent days.

With blessing,

(Signed) M. SCHNEERSON

It is significant that the Rebbe repeats **three times** in this one letter, the proverb that “if good is good, is better not better?”

The Rebbe also refers to me as Mr. Manchester, but when I am in Israel, especially in Jerusalem, certain Israeli Cabinet Ministers call me, spitefully, Mr. Lubavitch. They take me to task because the Rebbe is fighting to amend the law of ‘Mihu Yehudi’ so that it should read “according to the Halacha.” They also allege that the Rebbe has split the religious party into two. I, however, retort and emphasize, that the Rebbe's fight is for the ‘sake of Heaven’ and for the ‘sake of Israel,’ whereas **their fight** was for the ‘sake of themselves.’

Shovuos this year was on Sunday night, 26th May, and we arrived at ‘770’ a few days before, on the Thursday.

Roselyn and I were accompanied by Hilary and by her three youngest children, Sholom Dov Ber (ten weeks old), Zelda Rochel (sixteen months) and Channah (three years). Linda Grant, our very dear young friend, had also joined us once again.

Actually, she had changed her mind quite a few times before making her final decision to travel with us. Firstly, she had telephoned to ascertain whether she could accompany us to New York. Of course we replied that it would be a real pleasure and we would be delighted to have her with us. A week later Hilary informed us that Linda had decided to stay at home. She had been very pleased indeed with her sessions with the Rebbe last year and particularly impressed with the Rebbe's obvious friendliness and interest in her problems. The Rebbe had even described to her fully the type of boy whom she would marry, and even how he looked. But - in the event - the Rebbe had told her that there would be **no** shiduch for her that year.

So, as she did not wish to be embarrassed, or to have people talk about her, nor arrange shidduchim, she had decided to remain in London. I asked Hilary whether it was important for Linda to visit the Rebbe this year. She replied, very emphatically, that in her opinion it was extremely urgent and essential that we should take Linda with us to Brooklyn. So, putting the onus on the Rebbe, I finally persuaded her to join us.

Immediately on arrival I delivered to the Rebbe thirty letters, together with my 'Encounter' and a covering letter.

Rabbis Chodakov and Label Groner greeted us very warmly and their first question was, “Where is your diary?” I handed a copy to each with a profound sense of satisfaction and relief because I had **only** completed this edition a few days previously, and it would have been most embarrassing not to have brought it with me.

Another great friend of ours Rabbi Binyamin Klein was a terrific help to us. He gave us the key to our (the Rebbe's) apartment above the Kolel to where we immediately made hasty steps.

The Rebbe had promised us the previous year that the flat would be better **this time** - but what a surprise! (If good is good, is not better – better!) Even compared to last year it was like a palace. Newly painted, new floor covering, new furniture and the actual Kolel was completely ‘rebuilt’ and refurbished. It was full of young men busily engaged in learning and study. The place was spotless - like a new pin. I give due credit for this of course, to the Rebbe and particularly to his foresight in appointing young Rabbi Slavin to be in charge and to be responsible for keeping the place clean and tidy. If a person is neat and methodical, then one can be certain that whatever tasks he is allotted will

be up to the same high standard. Rabbi Slavin is also a wonderful 'handy man.' He has personally planned and constructed the new library in the Kolel. He has succeeded in producing a real professional masterpiece.

The Rebbe really deserved our grateful thanks and I immediately dispatched a letter of congratulations to him. I also sent the Rebbe five bottles of vodka - for the "Rebbe's pleasure."

Next morning, Friday, I had a mini Yechidus with the Rebbe. The Rebbe arrived at '770' by car, and everyone as usual rushed away and disappeared. I was left all alone - with the Rebbe, of course. It is like the well-known parable of 'Meeting the King in the Field.' Normally, the story goes, if one wishes to see the King, one has to first see the Commissionaire, then the under-secretary, afterwards the minister, until - if he is lucky - he is allowed into the King's presence, where His Majesty is sitting on his throne surrounded by scores of officials and nobles. But, if perchance one should meet the King whilst he was walking in the field, then he was much more easily approached and a more intimate "tête-à-tête" could take place.

Similarly with the Rebbe. Firstly, one has to arrange matters with Label Groner or with Rabbi Chodakov. One has to be very fortunate indeed to be able to book an appointment with the Rebbe, even months ahead. When the time does arrive, it is generally at about 8.30pm till midnight and more often in the early hours of the morning - about 1.00am till 3.00am. The waiting room is full of men, women and children. At long last one enters the Rebbe's sanctum, sometimes after waiting for many hours for one's turn and then every five minutes or so Label Groner gives a gentle hint (sometimes not so gentle) that others are still waiting for **their** turn!

Is it not much better to 'meet the King in the field?' Here I am all alone with the Rebbe, the street deserted, not a soul to be seen anywhere and no Label Groner to tell one to "make it brief."

As the Rebbe walked up toward me, I wished him "*Shalom Aleichem*." He seemed very pleased to see me and returned "*Aleichem Shalom*." The Rebbe enquired whether Hilary had brought any of my *einiklech* (grand children) because he had received letters from a number of them. I told the Rebbe that Hilary had been informed that this year was the 'Year of Hakhel' and on that year in Israel, the women used to bring their babies in arms to see the King. She had, therefore, brought with her all her three 'babies in arms;' Sholom Dov Ber, who was only ten weeks old, could not even hold up his head properly. She had brought letters from all the children whom she had left at home in London. The Rebbe was very pleased and said he hoped to see more of my Grandchildren next year.

On Friday afternoon I went to see Rabbi Chodakov privately in his office. Already he had some replies from the Rebbe for some of my friends in Manchester and also for me personally. Hilary also accompanied me. Together with Shmuel, she was this year again producing the S.T.E.P. (Summer Torah Educational Program) for children on vacation (thirty days of study, puzzles and prizes). She left some sample pages for the Rebbe's perusal and also discussed other matters with Rabbi Chodakov.

As befits the Rebbe's principal secretary, Rabbi Chodakov always interposes many words of Torah. When I told him about the *moshul* of the 'King in the field,' he said I had better start blowing Shofar. (This parable refers to the A'mighty during the month of Elul, when the Shofar is blown every day - except Shabbos, of course!)

The Rebbe in his reply to me, noted how pleased I was with the apartment - but what did my wife have to say about it? I told Roselyn on my return and she at once wrote a letter to the Rebbe. She let me read it and it confirmed all I had stated, and added how much it benefited the boys in the Kolel. It **encouraged** them to keep the place clean.

Before Mincha on Erev Shabbos I had a chat with Label Groner, who confided to me that during the past few months the Rebbe was driving himself along unsparingly and to the utmost limit. He kept everyone else on their toes too. Time seemed to be so precious and at a premium. For instance, the Rebbe would give instructions to "get his message around the world." All central offices would be contacted and these in turn would relay the messages to their own area branches. For example, London would receive the notice directly from '770.' They would then telephone Manchester,

Glasgow and Dublin. Manchester would be responsible for Liverpool, Blackpool, Leeds and other smaller cities. Leeds might contact Sheffield, Bradford, Gateshead and Sunderland and so forth.

This procedure would be adopted all over the United States, South America, Europe, Israel, Australia, South Africa and every continent and in every city where there was a Lubavitcher Nucleus. It normally took two hours to cover the whole world, yet within thirty minutes the Rebbe was enquiring whether the message had been received everywhere. **Even we** in England can perceive the Rebbe's insistent urging and pushing, especially in regard to the Five Mitzvah's Campaign and the kindling of the Shabbos Lights.

The Rebbe is (*kein ayin horah*) full of energy and is untiring. He once told me that a true Lubavitcher should work twenty-five hours in the day. Our Rebbe tries to do forty-eight hours in one day - and seems to succeed too.

My friend Tzvi Fisher presented me with a new Parker pen, remarking that I now had no excuse for not continuing to write my Diaries. He then handed to me a beautiful coloured photograph of the Rebbe placing the new 'Silver Crown of Moshiach' onto the Sefer Torah. A lovely picture - and a lovely gesture by Tzvi Fisher. More lovely still was the story he told me. He was fortunate to have had a Yechidus with the Rebbe. Tzvi had asked, "How is the Rebbe?" and the reply was "Always *freilech*."

Tzvi is really a 'good lad.' He not only laughs at my jokes and stories but on Shabbos he is invaluable. On Shabbos morning in shul - or anywhere else in '770' for that matter - it is impossible to obtain a Siddur, a Chumash or a Tehilim. Tzvi always brings along a set of almost new ones for me, and what is more, he holds them until I need them. Where he gets them remains a mystery. But, should one leave a sefer (book) unattended on the ledge, then it would disappear within seconds, literally from right under one's nose.

Anyway, let us revert back to Mincha Erev Shabbos. The Rebbe walked into the Beth Hamedrash and a fellow made the brocha '*Shehechyonu*' in a deliberate slow and very loud, clear voice. Everyone answered "*Omein*." We all make some brocha when we see the Rebbe for the first time after a long period, but generally one makes it quietly. It is unusual to be so ostentatious and to make a loud brocha of '*Shehechyonu*.' Maybe the gentleman wanted to make known to the Rebbe that he was present - as if the Rebbe did **not** know! Anyway, it was something unusual and different. Of course there was nothing wrong about it.

After the Friday night Shabbos service we 'sang' the Rebbe out of Shul, Tzvi Fisher and Moishe Stuart helped considerably.

I then had the opportunity to meet all my old friends - and many new ones too. Also, I seemed to have lost my *Smicha*. Instead of being referred to as 'Rabbi' Jaffe as in the past, I was now called 'Reb Zalman' and even just 'Zalman.'

A new friend whom I met was Rabbi Saltzman from Russia. There were scores of Russians here, for the first time ever. They all desired Yechidus with the Rebbe so it was obvious that there was not to be much time available for general Yechidus.

This Rabbi Saltzman was in charge of a small factory in Russia with about twenty workers. They arranged that **all** the profits were to be put aside to pay for the Jewish education of children, of whom there were over a thousand. They had to be taught the very basis and rudiments of Judaism. One of the main problems was that they had **no** siddurim. Fortunately, there were hundreds of sensible tourists who visited the Moscow synagogue and surreptitiously left behind their prayer books. Rabbi Saltzman then purchased these from the Gabbai (warden).

All the money they had, went on the children's education. They could not be taught openly in large classrooms, but were divided out three children to a house. This required more teachers who, in turn, had to sacrifice some of their time. And "lost time meant less money to be earned." It was all very worrying and he said to Reb Mendel Futterfas (this was many years ago) that he did not know "where the next kopek would come from!" Reb Mendel asked him if he had a watch. When the reply was affirmative, then Reb Mendel retorted, "then you do not have to worry - yet!" On the other hand, it

was even worse for the wives and children because if they were ever discovered, they could be jailed and even banished to Siberia.

I also met Benzion Kravitz, a young man from Dallas, Texas. He introduced himself to me, his whole face beaming and said "I am a Baal Tshuva. It is lovely to be a *Baal Teshuva* and I am proud of it! And he really **was**. He is studying at the Morristown (Lubavitch) Yeshiva in New Jersey, together with another nine boys from Texas. Altogether there were over fifty boys, all *Baalei Teshuva*, now studying at Morristown in a special class.

Anyone who knows the 'wilds of Texas,' especially regarding to Yidishkeit or even basic Judaism, will appreciate the wonderful achievement of Rabbi Lazaroff whom the Rebbe sent to this state. These ten boys knew nothing about our heritage and practiced even less and were no different from the four thousand Jewish students who attended Austin University together with forty thousand gentiles. It is no wonder that intermarriage and assimilation have reached catastrophic proportions.

However, Rabbi Lazaroff persuaded these ten boys to become *Baalei Teshuva* and prevailed upon them to leave their homes and environment and to travel all the way to New York to study. Even more - to take an example from the Rebbe and from his stupendous work for Klal Yisroel.

The Shul has been extended again and it was crowded with thousands of people from all over the world who came to spend Yom Tov with the Rebbe. Everyone knew me and shook my hand, saying "Shalom Aleichem Zalman" - I wish I knew all **their** names. It reminds me of the time I was asked by a friend if I knew his son who is studying at '770. I asked what he looked like. He replied that he was attired in a dark suit, an open neck shirt, a black trilby hat and he wore glasses and a black beard. Of course I knew him. I know them all. But please do not ask me their names **only** the Rebbe knows the names of every boy and man who stays or lives in '770.'

I was very proud to be called up for an *aliya* on this Shabbos morning. After all, there were hundreds of distinguished and important Lubavitcher workers present. For example - Rabbi Shmuel Chayfer who was in charge of the new hostel and school for one thousand girls in Kfar Chabad and others of similar caliber. But here at '770' all were equal. There was just one 'Boss' - the Rebbe who stood head and shoulders above everyone.

As usual, I had the best *aliya* - *Shevi'i*, so that I could stand almost touching the Rebbe when he recited the *Haftarah*.

Then, afterwards, it was all so easy just to follow the Rebbe through the solid mass of men and boys, which gave way on the approach of the Rebbe, and which enabled me to return to my place quickly and in safety. It was a little unnerving however, to stand on the Bimah which stood about five feet from the ground! and to look upon a solid mass of people which was continually swaying from side to side. Occasionally there would be a reverberating crash and the whole Bimah would shake and tremble. I considered this highly dangerous!

I sang *Hu Elokanu* as usual - and as usual not only did I get **no** help in the singing (except from my regulars: Tzvi, Stuart and now Benzion Kravitz) but stupid people actually made more noise shouting shush, shush. If they would have spent this energy in singing instead of in shushing, then the Rebbe would have been much more pleased. After the davening some of these 'well intentioned' people reprimanded me for singing without the Rebbe's permission. As if I would! Anyway, I am getting quite used to this after all these years.

We had a nice Farbrengen this Shabbos, but not very freilech. The Rebbe has everyone's worries on his head - especially those regarding Eretz Yisroel. The Rebbe handed me a bottle of vodka, poured a little into my cup wished me "le'chaim" and told me to serve the rest to the people assembled, but **not** to take it to Manchester. I did as requested and when the bottle was emptied, I turned it upside down to show the Rebbe that I had obeyed his instructions.

Next day, Sunday, I wrote a letter to the Rebbe. I mentioned the reprimand I received for my singing and I hoped that the Farbrengen on Yom Tov would be a little more freilech. I could well comprehend that the Rebbe was under great duress because of events in Israel - regarding the '*Mihu Yehudi Law*'

and so forth, but after all Yom Tov has to be freilech - happy. I also thanked the Rebbe again for the loan of the apartment, about the great improvement and mentioned a few other items.

I left this letter in the Rebbe's tray at 1.30pm on Sunday afternoon, Erev Shovuos. There were about twenty other letters in the tray.

At 2.30pm, one hour later, I received a message from Label Groner that there was already a reply to my letter. The Rebbe told Label to let "Reb Zalman" have these replies at once. I liked that "Reb Zalman" part.

What was amazing to me and really fantastic, was that with all the preparation the Rebbe had to do regarding the Shovuos Farbrengen - six hours of sichos, discourses and the Maamer - he still had time to read scores of letters and reply to mine at least.

I still have friendly discussions with our Rebbetzen and with Rabbi Chodakov about the times the Rebbe needs for preparing his talks - sometimes he speaks for fourteen hours over Yom Tov and Shabbos. Rabbi Chodakov remarked that whilst we are singing the nigunim, the Rebbe is preparing for the next Sicho. I told him that this was all right in the past when we used to sing two nigunim before each Sicho, but these days we only sing one in between the Sichos. Rabbi Chodakov smiled and said that the Rebbe is much more experienced nowadays and does not need so much time to prepare as in the past.

One learned gentleman informed me that just one of the talks which the Rebbe gave was so full of scholarship and profound knowledge that it would have taken him (the learned gentleman) six months just to look up the sources and prepare this sicha.

The Rebbe - in his reply mentioned above - said he liked my diary and it was self-understood that I must carry on. **And** I know that the Rebbe did read this, because he told me to make the correction which I did, at the beginning of this edition regarding the Tanya. I had suggested to the Rebbe that we print the Tanya at once and to take the chance that there would be no mistakes. The Rebbe said that he could not give me permission to print without the agreement of my friends in Manchester and in London.

Regarding the singing - the Rebbe had written "*vesovo olov berocha*" (Blessing shall be upon you). In other words, carry on, as my mother (a'h) would have said - "*a gezunt aff zain keppe.*" So - was it not worth singing? I should say it was!

Shovuos had now arrived. If one wished to participate in all the activities, then one had to be prepared for the following program.

Sunday - up all night saying Tikum.

Monday afternoon - a ten mile walk, 2,000 boys and men took part in the 'best ever' march to Boro Park. Wonderful Ruach and singing. Police cars and cyclists accompanied the walkers. After the boys had addressed the congregation at different Shuls, they gathered together outside the Rebbe's home, singing, dancing and covered with perspiration, at about 1.00am. Then dinner and to bed at 2.30am.

Tuesday - the Farbrengen ended at 2.30am. Then the Rebbe served the *Kos Shel Brocha*. This finished at 4.30am.

Wednesday Night - the Rebbe held Yechidus. The last person left at 5.00am.

From the above one can see that Shovuos at 770 is a very relaxing and restful Yom Tov.

The Rebbe told me to quote more Torah. So it is about time that I repeated some of the Rebbe's Sichos which we were privileged to hear over Shabbos and Yom Tov. Some of the mysteries of Chassidus and Kabala are a little too complicated for me and I have chosen those Sichos which have logical arguments and are easy to understand. These I like very much and enjoy immensely.

At the end of the first Perek of Avos, Hillel makes three statements. He says in Mishna 12 in **Hebrew**, "Be like a Talmid (pupil) of Aaron, loving peace and pursuing peace, loving thy fellow creatures and

drawing them close to the Torah.” In Mishna 13 he says in **Aramaic**, “A name made great is a name destroyed. He who does not increase his knowledge decreases it. He who does not study deserves to die and he who makes worldly use of the Crown of Torah shall pass away.” And finally, he says in the next Mishna, and again in **Hebrew**, “If I am not for myself, who will be for me? If I am only for myself, what am I? And if not now - when?”

Now, the Rebbe argues that Hillel came from Babylon, where the official language of the common man or the ‘man in the street’ was Aramaic. Therefore all these three statements should have been made in that, his ‘natural’ language. Or at least - if any Mishna had to be in Aramaic, it should have been the first.

So, let us examine what Hillel said in this first Mishna. “Be like a pupil of Aaron... Love **all human beings**, and bring them each close to the Torah.” Now, only the Rabbonim/Chachomim, the learned men could teach those who knew nothing and bring them nearer to the A’mighty. This saying was orders and instructions to the Rabbonim/Chachomim. They alone understood Hebrew. The majority of Jews who lived in Babylon only knew Aramaic. It was obviously undiplomatic and bad taste to tell people that they were ignorant and so forth. So this saying had to be in **Hebrew**.

The second Mishna, “A name made great is a name destroyed... and he who makes worldly use of the Crown of Torah shall pass away,” was a dire warning to the people to beware of the fellow who took advantage of his learning and knowledge to put himself above everyone else. He sought fame and was a dangerous person. This saying **had** to be made in **Aramaic**, so that the “common man” could understand the problem and the perils.

And finally the third Mishna was again directed towards the Rabbonim/Chachomim, “and if not now - when?” Hillel concentrated on the Rabbonim again. **Do not** waste time. Do it now - regardless of fame. There is no time like the present to bring close to G-d those poor ignorant people who know so very little about Torah and Judaism. That is the reason why this Mishna was said in **Hebrew**.

The Rebbe gave another similar sicha. Shvuos is the time of ‘*Matan Torah*,’ the anniversary of the day when we received the Torah on Mount Sinai. The sixth Perek of Avos is referred to as ‘Kinyan Torah’ - the ‘acquisition of the Torah.’ It was therefore, an appropriate time to quote from this Perek.

In Mishna 9 we read, “Rabbi Yossi Ben Kisma said, ‘I was once walking along the road, when a man met me and greeted me and I returned his greeting. He said to me, Rabbi, from what place are you? I said to him that I came from a great city of Rabbonim and Scribes. He said to me, if you are willing to live with us in our city, I will give you a thousand golden Dinars and precious stones and pearls. I said to him, even if you gave to me **all** the silver and gold and **all** the precious stones in the world, I would not live anywhere except where there was Torah.’”

It is unusual to find such a lengthy detailed story in Perek. It is interesting to examine this closely. Rabbi Yossi said, “Once I was walking along the road,” which infers that normally he did **not** walk along the road, but this time he was going for a certain Mitzvah. “When a man met me and greeted me.” A previous Mishna states that even when walking along the road, one must study the Torah. When Rabbi Yossi saw this man, he should have greeted him, as according to Jewish etiquette and good manners, one should always be the first to say Shalom to another, but Rabbi Yossi was studying Torah and could not interrupt his learning in order to greet someone. However, once this man **had** greeted him, then it was not only permissible, but imperative that these greetings were returned.

The man continued by saying, “Rabbi, from where are you coming?” He surmised correctly that Rabbi Yossi was a Rabbi from the fact that he was learning Torah. Furthermore, because he was walking along the road, he also surmised, incorrectly, that Rabbi Yossi was dissatisfied with his own town and was leaving, walking along the road. The man then wanted to know the name of the town from where Rabbi Yossi came, so that he could find out whether Rabbi Yossi was the only Rabbi in that town. Rabbi Yossi replied that he came from a city with many Rabbonim and Scribes. This new acquaintance then assumed that there were so **many** Rabbonim in that city, that Rabbi Yossi would not be missed so very much. He therefore offered him a job - he could demand his own terms, all his needs would be supplied. All he had to do was to accept this position and carry on with his learning

and study of the Torah in this man's town. Rabbi Yossi replied that even if he was offered all the money in the world, he would not leave his own city.

We are still waiting for the Rebbe to finish this interesting Sicho!

Label Groner explained that in **his** opinion this was **not** Lubavitch doctrine. Lubavitchers had to be prepared to leave the Rebbe's side. They were 'requested,' they were ordered to go out into the world to wherever there were Jewish people, and to sacrifice themselves for Jews and Judaism everywhere. It was easy to be an orthodox Jew near to the Rebbe, with all and every facility available for kashrus of the home and of oneself. But to be the Rebbe's representative in some outlying Jewish community, and be responsible for actually establishing Kashrus and Jewish education, was a very different and difficult proposition.

Now here follow some further excerpts from various sichos which the Rebbe related during the Shovuos period:

- a) The Torah was given to us in the desert. This is to teach us that even in the wilderness, where there is absolutely nothing, we need Torah. Therefore, how much more so do we need it in the town or city.

In a spiritual way this means that people who possess neither learning nor knowledge still need the Torah, as well as those endowed with understanding and wisdom.

- b) Moses, King David and the Baal Shem Tov all have connections with Shovuos.
1. **Moses** - because the Torah which is called **Toras Moshe** was given to us on that day. Moses wanted to see G-d's face but was shown only His back. Rashi remarks that in this way, Moshe was privileged to see the *Kesser shel Tefilin shel Rosh* - the knot on the Tefilin of the head. The Gomorrah states that one had nothing to fear whilst wearing the Tefilin shel Rosh.
 2. **King David** was born and also died on Shovuos. It states in the Midrash that because King David studied Torah, his generals won the wars.
 3. The Baal Shem Tov was born on Shovuos. He was the founder of Chassidism. He used to point out that the *Tefilin shel yad* (of the hand) was placed on the arm, almost touching the heart, the seat of **love**. This was to teach us that we must love every single Jew. The Baal Shem Tov was very fond of, and concentrated on the children. The Rebbe added that the children on summer vacation should learn *Limudei Kodesh* (Jewish Studies) every day - just as during the year.

The Rebbe again stressed the importance of the **five mitzvah campaigns**:

Mezuzahs - to be affixed on every door in the house. The Gemora in Shabbos states that Mezuzah's act as a guard for a home. It was essential to ensure that they were kosher, otherwise they were just useless. **Teffilin** - had to be worn by all males over thirteen years old, every weekday. A **Tzedoka Box** had to be kept in the home and some coins placed therein every day (except, obviously during the time of Shabbos or Yom Tov). A Book of Psalms - Tehillim and a **Chumash** (the five books of Moses) Sidur and other Hebrew books were also to be kept in the home.

- c) There is an interesting Rashi on the phrase in Posuk 47, "*Laavod avodas avoda*" - "To do the work in the Ministry" and Rashi says "with **songs** accompanied by cymbals and harps." In a different section of the Torah it says that the Levites were accompanied by cymbals, harps and flutes. Rashi explains to us that in the first instance, the principal work was **singing** by everyone and one could not sing with a flute in one's mouth.

Everything that Moshe Rabeinu did was permanent. The Torah is *Toras Emes*. The *Mishkan* (Tabernacle) which Moshe built, was never destroyed. The Medrash states that it is hidden somewhere. If Moses would have entered into Eretz Yisroel and built the *Bet Hamikdosh*, this would also have survived and the Jews would have never gone into exile.

Regarding the law of *'Mihu Yehudi'* in Israel, the Rebbe again showed his displeasure with the cabinet minister who said he would resign on this issue, but not yet. Perhaps in a few weeks time. Of course, he had a very good job and did not want to give it up. But this minister knew that what was going on was against the Halacha, he should resign now. If the same law would be against the Halacha in a few weeks time, then it was against the Din at this moment.

The Rebbe quoted the fact that Willie Brandt of Germany held a much higher position in a much richer (in a material way) country. Yet, he resigned immediately, as soon as he realised that he was doing wrong.

Some people have complained because they allege that the Rebbe had stated that if one does not have Mezuzahs on one's doors, then one would be punished. The Rebbe never made such a statement.

It says in the **Shulchan Aruch** quite plainly and straightforwardly that Mezuzahs "assure long life for you and your children." The Gemora Shabbos stresses this even more sharply. The Rebbe is only quoting from these - our own sacred, authentic and religious sources.

A Mezuzah is a guard. A soldier has to wear a steel helmet. It is for his protection, in case of the remote possibility that a bullet would speed directly to his head. A soldier would be very foolish indeed, if he neglected to wear this steel helmet.

The Rebbe said recently that he could not understand why, for the past few months, he had the continuous urge to talk about and to stress the importance of Mezuzah's. Then came the tragedy at Maalot, in Israel, where the Arab murderers slaughtered 21 defenseless and helpless children and families.

The Rebbe realised that this was the culminating point. The Rav of Safed telephoned the Rebbe to inform him that he had checked the Mezuzahs and found 21 that were *posul* - not kosher.

No one says nor dares to say, that this happened because there were no kosher Mezuzah's. Nevertheless, the Torah has ordained that these are a *Shmira*, a guard, and it is imperative that they are constantly checked to confirm that they are still kosher.

The Rebbe also stressed that women too had to take the responsibility for looking after the Mezuzahs. It should not be left wholly and entirely to the men.

I have explained in previous editions that the majority of the Lubavitcher families have guests staying with them most of the time. During Shovuos or Yomim Tovim, every Lubavitch abode has quite a few visitors. Although we occupy our 'own' apartment (the Rebbe's) we are continuously being inundated with pressing invitations for luncheons and dinners by all our friends and many acquaintances.

We always arrange to have at least one meal during Yom Tov at the home of our friends Sarah and Mendel Shemtov - our first ever hosts - with whom we stayed every year for very many years, since 1960 to be exact, whenever we came to Brooklyn to see the Rebbe.

This Shovuos we were once again invited to the Baumgarten's for the Yom Tov night dinner. From our previous experience we could expect good company, delicious food, plenty to drink, in a congenial atmosphere, plus the 'best entertainment in town.' We accepted with much pleasure and alacrity.

We davened Maariv at '770' and when we arrived at the Baumgarten's, we found that our host, Mendel, had been home for quite a while.

It seems that he had davened in a small Shul, close by his home. This rather surprised me. Surely he should have taken every opportunity to pray, together with the Rebbe at '770.'

I then learned that it was not Mendel's choice. The Rebbe had given specific instructions to scores of Lubavitcher *baalei batim* that they should daven at the various Shuls in the neighbourhood, so that these Synagogues could continue to exist to provide a local need and to keep up the amenities and services for the district.

It was a great sacrifice for these young men **not** to daven with their Rebbe, but their presence at these Shuls was more necessary and vital than to join the many thousands at '770.'

Nechama, our gracious hostess, made us all very welcome indeed. This year her house was comparatively empty. Only twenty guests were staying with her, including Hilary (my daughter) and her three youngest children. Fortunately, additional guests were invited for the meal so that nearly thirty of us sat down to dinner.

Our host, Mendel, sat at the top of the table, but he was not there alone, because every available space had to be used to the maximum advantage. He was surrounded by his sons and the men. His charming wife, Nechama, graced the bottom end of the table, with all the girls and the ladies.

In between sat their son Yossi and his Kalah, Linda, whose parents, Hilda and Bernard Rader, were also present - as was their son, Hershel. A girl of twenty and a boy of eleven, who were living at the Baumgarten's to "learn and study Yiddishkeit" were there too. Another set of *Machetonim*, a son-in-law, a couple of invited girls, plus Roselyn and I, made up the party. There were also a few babies here and there.

All the males made Kiddush. Everyone washed their hands and made *Hamotzei* over the bread and we then settled down to the serious business of eating and some drinking.

Mendel used his prerogative as host to give us a long but interesting *sicha* from the Rebbe, which was much appreciated. It was then my turn to provide entertainment - not a *sicha*. The audience, it seemed, enjoyed my efforts, for I was requested to do an encore. After the second encore I decided that "enough was enough" and I pressed into active service all the Baumgarten boys, who, after some little persuasion, sang individually and collectively. They really excelled themselves in harmonising most beautifully and it did not take too long before they were competing with each other to show off their prowess.

Mendel had just returned from San Francisco where he had taken part, together with Jan Pearce, in a most successful concert in aid of Lubavitch. He also decided to join in, and he sang to us many lovely pieces from his large Lubavitch repertoire.

We also managed to attract the attention of the Chosson, Yossi. He and his Kaleh seemed impervious to everything that was going on around them.

We even prevailed upon him to sing to us - which he did - to the great astonishment and satisfaction of Linda and the benign approval of both sets of *Machetonim*. As they say in Yiddish, "*zai hobben geklibben nachas.*" All in all, it was a most successful and beautiful Oneg Yom Tov, which we had immensely enjoyed.

We felt very pleased and gratified when a further invitation was extended to us for the following Friday evening.

Shovuos ended on Tuesday night. So after Mincha on that day, we all washed our hands, made *Hamotzei* on the bread and sat down to await the arrival of the Rebbe to commence the *Farbrengen* which would go on until the early hours of the morning. It was a *freilech Farbrengen* at which I received a bottle of vodka to take to Manchester Lubavitch. The Deputy Mayor of Jerusalem, Shmuel Shaulson, Aaron Dov Suffrin from London, Rabbi Shlami from France, and a representative from Kfar Chabad Israel were amongst those who also received bottles of vodka.

The *Farbrengen* ended at about 2.00am. We then davened Maariv and during the service there was a terrific commotion. 'Stewards' were busy taking away the benches and some tables in order to make more space. It was a dangerous hazard to stand still and say the *Amida*. It was only by a miracle that no heads were broken or skulls cracked by table legs or by bench ends.

The Rebbe then made Havdola and we had now arrived at the most interesting and rewarding part of the *Farbrengen* - the receiving of the *Kos shel Brocha* wine, direct from the Rebbe himself.

Every year for the past number of years, there has always been, at the best an undignified scramble, and at the worst even some private physical 'arguments,' at this part of the proceedings. It is

extremely difficult to control many thousands of people who are all desirous of reaching the Rebbe at one and the same time.

Before the Rebbe arrived at the Farbrengen, the usual announcement was made to inform us of the procedure regarding the *Kos shel Brocha* distribution.

There should be **no** pushing and no '*shtupping*.' We were to behave like civilized human beings. **one** line only should be formed and this should ascend the platform by the right hand side stairway, continue down the length of the dais and file past the Rebbe in an orderly fashion. The Rebbe would 'en passant' fill our containers with wine from his silver *becher* with which he had made *Havdola*.

A lively tune was started and I tried to make my way to the right hand stairway. It was a sheer impossibility. Crowds were pushing in the opposite direction and hordes of boys were climbing upon the tables. Looking around, I found that another line had been formed **on top** of the tables and that men and boys were resolutely walking forward towards the Rebbe, filing past and cutting out the 'official queue.' Exactly as on the previous occasion. It was just plain ridiculous.

In my right hand I was clutching a paper bag, which still contained some bread and cake. In my left hand, I held two paper tumblers for the *Kos shel Brocha* wine. In one pocket I placed the empty bottle into which I intended to pour the wine afterwards from the paper tumblers and in my other pocket I put my small Siddur, which I had used for benching and for Maariv.

I was being jostled on all sides and was in danger of being trampled upon. I decided that it was safer to be standing on the tables. By a supreme effort and with no little difficulty, I found myself on top of the tables.

There I now stood, completely hemmed in by a mass of people - all pushing and jogging. To my utter dismay, I felt myself being pushed towards the edge of the table. I was under a grave handicap because my hands were full, so that I could not grab or hold any of the men or boys. Suddenly there was a great concerted heave and I felt myself actually slipping off the table. The thought flashed through my mind that I should jettison the paper bag or grab someone's jacket with my teeth, but it was too late. I found myself lying flat on my back on the floor, in complete darkness and with a terribly heavy feeling on my chest and stomach. This heaviness soon disappeared as five boys disentangled themselves and jumped off my body. This coincided with a blinding flash and I found myself staring at the electric lights on the ceiling. I was helped up from the floor and made my way, in a daze, to the right hand stairway whilst plucking out handfuls of wooden splinters which were adhering to my trousers and jacket.

I encountered Bernard Rader, who heaved a sigh of relief on seeing me. He did not know where to go for his wine. He said he would follow me as I knew the ground well. (Oy vey - did I know it!)

To my amazement, the 'stewards' had now blocked up the official passageway, which was supposed to be the 'one and only' way to the Rebbe. I got over that hurdle, literally, quite easily and even Mr. Rader, who is a rather hefty person, managed it very well too.

I then made the awful discovery that not only had I lost the paper bag, but what was more important, the empty bottle was missing. It must somehow have dropped out of my pocket during the recent skirmishes. Somehow, I still held two battered paper tumblers in my hand!

I needed this bottle; I searched high and low, here, there and everywhere. Some of the boys were helping me in my search, but it was of no use. The bottle had completely disappeared.

Meanwhile, I was being slowly but firmly pushed towards the Rebbe, who, as usual was quite unperturbed by all the commotion. He swung his arms now and then, to revitalise the singing which went on non-stop until the last boy had received his wine from the Rebbe himself at about 4.15am.

It was now my turn to be served. I told the Rebbe that I had twenty-one customers - Roselyn and I, our four 'children' and fourteen grandchildren and also for Linda Grant. The Rebbe obliged and poured out twenty-one times into my paper cups. I thanked him, descended from the platform and made another still unsuccessful search for my lost empty bottle.

Roselyn was waiting for me outside. We drank our own rations, returned home, put the paper cups in the fridge and retired to bed.

On the following day I asked Roselyn to purchase another empty bottle, as we needed it to take the wine back to England and to buy it from a shop which had their own Mikvah and so to save any bother about koshering.

“By the way,” I asked Roselyn as an afterthought, “where did you *toivel* (immerse) the other bottle? She looked at me in surprise and replied that she had not *toiveled* it at all. She had assumed that I had done so on my daily routine visit to the Mikvah.

It now seemed certain that the lost bottle had definitely not been immersed and koshered. We would have surely been very upset to find that we had put the Rebbe's wine in a bottle that had not been Toivelled, so, we were very pleased that we had lost that first bottle and considered ourselves very lucky indeed.

The day after Yom Tov was the annual ‘Kinus Torah’. It commenced at 3.30pm and went on until around 10.00pm. The audience of about 400 or 500, mostly boys, are addressed by a number of Roshei Hayeshivas, Rabbonim and some outstanding boys who deliver extremely complicated Pilpulim. Many of the speakers bring with them about a half dozen Gemorah's to the pulpit for reference. It is all very 'heavy stuff' but very interesting. Members of the audience are not slow to fire questions at the speaker and even relish having an argumentative debate with him. And in the middle of all this learned discourse, I too have to address the boys, generally at about 6.00pm. Rabbi Mentlik always insists upon it. He says the boys look forward to my talk and they love it. I have been doing this for many years and this makes it difficult now to refuse. Besides which, as my wife says, it provides some light relief to the proceedings and maybe “that is why the boys like it.” At the same time I always add some words of Torah as well.

I commenced by saying that in the *Sedra* we read last Shabbos, *Bamidbar*, we came upon the sentence “These are the generations (the children) of Aaron and Moses.” Yet, there is subsequently no mention whatsoever of the children of Moshe. Rashi explains that all the disciples of a Rebbe are referred to as his children.

Our Rebbe has scores of thousands of children all over the world. They all love and revere him. But - just like children everywhere they have their own friends and interests. Only when they need their father at times of trouble, do they go running to him for help.

Each of these countless thousands of children is so very precious to the Rebbe. He goes out of his way, as every father does, to help even the least deserving of his sons. **Do not be a *tzoris* Chossid** and wait until you are in trouble before writing or contacting the Rebbe. Give the Rebbe pleasure. Smile when you see him, write to him often with plenty of good news. Do not be annoyed or upset if no written reply is received. **I** write to the Rebbe nearly every two weeks. I do not expect any replies, so I am not disappointed. But - what a happy day it is if and when I do get a letter from the Rebbe. I had two last year, in reply to my twenty-four. So keep on writing. It will make the Rebbe happy and by the law of averages you must get a reply some time.

I continued by saying that last year I mentioned that Aaron the prophet and Chief Kohen, the **elder** brother of Moses, was also a *tzoris* Chosid. He was in trouble and wanted help for Miriam. He suddenly realised that with all his greatness and yichus he still needed a Rebbe. Why could he not appeal himself directly to the Almighty? No - he had to go to his Rebbe, Moses, to help him in his trouble.

A few years ago, in a sicha, the Rebbe compared a Chossid to a lamplighter. Fifty or sixty years ago our streets were lit up by gas lamps. Every day, at dusk, a man walked along the roads carrying a very long pole to which was attached a light, a flame. He went from lamp to lamp lighting up all these lights. Similarly, a Chossid lights up the divine spark of every Jew, making it burn brightly and strongly.

Today we have progressed. We have atomic power. In simple language this means that one atom splits another atom. This sets up a chain reaction and we get millions of atoms splitting up millions of other atoms.

Our Rebbe is our atomic power reactor. He charges up all our atoms in the first instance. Boys come to '770' and are 'radio activated' and sent all over the world to make contact with other 'atoms' - other boys and groups.

For instance, I was told that the Rebbe had sent Rabbi Lazarof to Texas. He contacted and influenced ten boys to come to '770' for Yom Tov. He then persuaded them to spend a few months at Morristown Lubavitcher Yeshiva. Soon they will be completely charged up and ready and prepared to return to Texas to commence their own chain reaction.

I then came to the part which the boys always enjoyed and to which they looked forward. I read stories about the Rebbe from my previous 'Encounters.' These always go down well. They can never have enough. However, I concluded my talk after forty minutes, although they pleaded for more. There were many more speakers with huge piles of Gemora's still waiting 'in the wings' and I had to be fair to them. I listened to the next speaker and then took my leave.

The time for our Yechidus with the Rebbe had now arrived. It is always difficult to gauge the exact moment when we would enter the Rebbe's sanctum. It all depended upon the length of time which the previous appointments took. Label advised us to be prepared for an 11.00pm appointment.

Actually, a new system has been introduced for Yechidus. All prospective visitors have to forward to the Rebbe, well in advance of their appointment, all the questions for which they required answers and all the problems on which they wanted the Rebbe's advice. By this method the Rebbe was able to conclude a whole evening's Yechidus by 2.00 or 3.00am - instead of between 5.00am and 7.00am as in the past.

Up until recently, anyone who was celebrating a birthday and ladies who were in their ninth month of pregnancy were 'automatically' allowed to see the Rebbe for a few minutes privately, in order to receive a brocha. These interviews have also been suspended.

The Rebbe has implied that in future these brochas will be conveyed 'collectively' at the Farbrengen. This is not done only for the sake of the Rebbe's health - may he enjoy the best of health till 120 - but it is just impossible for one man or even one Superman, to carry out such a heavy and concentrated program alone.

Label Groner told me that one evening a short while ago, the Rebbe had a little time to spare. So an announcement was made that all those bochurim who had not been privileged to have a Yechidus with the Rebbe for some length of time, would be allowed to see the Rebbe privately that night. One hundred and eighty boys took advantage of this 'offer'. The whole Yechidus lasted seven hours, from 8.00pm until 3.00am, which meant in effect that if one deducted the time when the Rebbe davenned Maariv, plus the few seconds it took to enter and leave the Rebbe's room, each boy was in the Rebbe's presence privately for just barely two minutes.

Whilst one is waiting in the hall, one meets and sees all types of men, women and children from every walk of life and from every country in the world. Two very tall handsome military looking men were receiving V.I.P. treatment. They looked like Israeli generals. Binyamin Klein said that they were higher than generals and were "very nice boys." Another Israeli had plans to open a diamond factory in Kfar Chabad, and another one in Nachlas Har Chabad. He required the Rebbe to approve the details. An elderly gentleman approached me and in a mournful voice said, "You are alright Mr. Jaffe, I am very sorry indeed." I was taken aback and I asked him why he was sorry. He replied that he was sorry for himself that **HE** could not make the Rebbe happy like I do.

The time passed very quickly and at 12.45am (only one hour and three quarters after the estimated time) we entered the Rebbe's room.

The Rebbe stood up and said a "*guten ovent*" (good evening). He requested Roselyn to be seated and asked me where was my usual long list of problems. I replied that T.G. I had no personal problems -

but plenty of Lubavitch ones. The Rebbe had once given me a brocha that I should have only Lubavitch problems - and he reiterated this.

I related to the Rebbe all that had transpired at the Kinus Torah - of the congratulations and acclamation which I had received afterwards. A whole delegation had told me "Your speech was wonderful, terrific and you should inform the Rebbe that we were all very much inspired by your remarks." Some boys said they got "really turned on."

Rabbi Mentlik said something which I could not quite make out, but as his face was angelic and beaming it must have been something nice.

I reported that I had inspected the new Lubavitch library in Kingston Avenue and it was in the height of luxury. I added that still there was plenty of room for more books. The Rebbe divulged that he had reserved a place for the new Hebrew/English Tanya!

Last year the Rebbe gave me a Brocha "*iber dem kop*" which really means that the blessings should be unlimited. I suggested to the Rebbe that I was very satisfied last year and that I would like the "same again please?" The Rebbe was keenly disappointed. "Have you no ambition?" he said and added "next year will be even better."

The Rebbe disclosed that he had read my Diary which he had enjoyed. He then made the correction about "taking a drink before going to the Beth Olam". (See page 1).

The Rebbe also 'suggested' that I should include more Torah in future editions. I hope that the Rebbe will be pleased with my efforts in this 'Encounter.' I do not have to quote the Maamorim nor the outstanding sicha's which are, of course, printed and distributed all over the world even in the English language. I then hinted to the Rebbe that I should now discontinue to write these diaries. It would be better to concentrate on editing the previous editions and printing them into one book. In any case, it was becoming difficult to find new material every year.

The Rebbe asserted that whether I intended to publish this book or not, did not make any difference. I had already published five installments so I had a *chazoko*. (If one did a certain action three times or more - this constituted a *chazoko*, which could only be 'broken' with the permission of the Beth Din). Therefore, the Rebbe was looking forward to seeing my 'Encounter 1974' otherwise I would have to attend the Beth Din to be '*matir neder*' (literally to get my vows annulled). So I must carry on writing. And with the Rebbe's Brocha I would certainly find something new (and how!).

The Rebbe then indicated that I did not need to exert myself to obtain 'customers' for Yechidus. He already had plenty of clients who were most anxious and eager to see him. The Rebbe did **not want anyone** to '*bashtel*' (order) any customers for him whatsoever!

We discussed various communal matters and the Rebbe enquired about Dayan Golditch, the Hubert's and other local Manchester celebrities. The Rebbe had received wonderful reports about Hilary's Lubavitch work in London.

He turned to Roselyn and asked her whether she was happy with Hilary. Roselyn replied that she would have preferred that Hilary should have spent more time on her home and on her children than on Lubavitch, but if Hilary wanted it that way and was happy - then Roselyn was satisfied.

The Rebbe then asked me why I had sent him five bottles of vodka. "Was it for five children?" "No," I answered, "the reason is quite a simple one. We were allowed to bring with us five bottles free of duty, so the price is very cheap, and as a businessman, I thought why should not Jewish people have this benefit. Therefore I sent them to the Rebbe." "But what shall I do with them?" questioned the Rebbe. I suggested to him that after the Farbrengen, the Rebbe should take them home and take a glassful every night. The Rebbe revealed that "Mrs. Schneerson would be surprised to see me drinking vodka. I don't like it and I don't drink vodka."

The Rebbe enquired about business matters and whether trade was satisfactory. I replied in the affirmative and the Rebbe turned to Roselyn for confirmation. The Rebbe remarked that we should make money and spend it "*af a gutten aiften*" (in health and on good things).

I congratulated the Rebbe that at long last he could see his campaign regarding *Mihu Yehudi* coming to a successful conclusion. (It seems that I spoke too soon.) The Rebbe exclaimed that “there will be still plenty of problems, even when *Mihu Yehudi* is settled.”

With a nice brocha to my wife for health, and to both of us for ‘*nachas*’ from our children and grandchildren ‘*iber dem kop,*’ we took our leave from the Rebbe, after spending just thirty minutes in his presence.

Incidentally, Hilary had also seen the Rebbe at Yechidus earlier that evening. As she had three ‘babies,’ Roselyn accompanied her to hold one or two and to keep them quiet. They stayed for eight minutes and Channah (aged 3) cried the whole time. The Rebbe gave them all a full measure of brocha’s.

Once again we were privileged and honoured to be received by our Rebbetzen *Kein Ayin Hora* she is really marvelous. She intimated that Hilary and her children would also be welcome. We arranged with Hilary that we should arrive first and that she and the children should come later on. We knew from past experience that small children soon became fidgety, mischievous and uncontrollable.

We had spent a glorious two hours with the Rebbetzen. She is a most attentive and rapt listener. If she had enjoyed herself that afternoon half as much as we did, then she had a wonderful time. Hilary and company then arrived. They all partook of fruit juices and cake. They all visited the ‘smallest room’ in the house. They all became fidgety, mischievous and uncontrollable and after ten minutes, we all quickly took our leave. Fortunately, the Rebbetzen asked us (Roselyn and I only) to call and see her again, which we did, and ‘a good time was had by all.’ (More about the Rebbetzen later on.)

On Shabbos we had another Farbrengen which was extremely freilech. It was the first time I had ever seen or heard the boys singing vigorously non-stop without any prompting by the Rebbe. I like to think that it was because of my talk to them at the Kinus Torah.

We had arranged to leave New York very early on Tuesday morning. I therefore sent a note to the Rebbe informing him of this fact and added that we were hoping to have the opportunity of saying farewell to our Rebbe after Maariv and to receive a brocha for a pleasant and safe journey back to England.

Those good old days when we had Yechidus with the Rebbe for 2 or 3 hours on our arrival and again for 2 hours before we departed have gone forever. The Rebbe would have liked to continue this custom, but it is not humanly possible. We have therefore to maneuver our mini-Yechidus whenever we had the chance.

On Monday evening at 9.15pm Roselyn, Hilary and Linda Grant were already standing in the hallway hoping to catch a glimpse of the Rebbe and maybe be rewarded with a nice smile. I was inside the Beth Hamidrash, standing in my usual place just behind the spot where the Rebbe davens.

Punctually at 9.30pm, the Rebbe arrived for Maariv. It is rather paradoxical that the quickest part of the davening is just at those two sections of the service where in other Shuls the congregation is waiting for their Rav or minister.

The Rebbe keeps **no one** waiting. He normally finishes the Krias Shema and Amida together with everyone else.

After Maariv at 9.45pm the Rebbe opened the door of the Beth Hamedrash and walked out, and I followed quickly after him. The Rebbe walked right past Roselyn, Hilary and Linda not giving them even a glance, which was itself most unusual.

He arrived at his office door about ten yards away, put his key into the lock and still gave no sign to me, not even any indication that he knew I was behind him. The Rebbe was just about to enter his room. It would soon be too late. So, in desperation I blurted out "Rebbe, Rebbe". On hearing the sound of my voice the Rebbe seemed to be startled. He turned around, saw me and gave me his famous wonderful beaming smile.

He said that he had a new *shlichus* for me and told me to wait in the hallway outside his door whilst he went inside his office. I asked whether Roselyn could remain with me too. The Rebbe said, “Yes, and bring along Hilary and Miss Grant as well.”

Within a few minutes the Rebbe returned. He was holding a huge wad of English £10 and £20 notes. The Rebbe peeled off a £10 note and handed it to me and said that this was for Tzedoka. He peeled off another £10 saying that this was for the Mezuzah Campaign. The Rebbe then turned to Roselyn and handed her also two £10 notes using the same words. “With the right hand please,” says Label Groner who was standing nearby, “when one accepts something from the Rebbe.” And then once more, the Rebbe turned this time to Hilary and Linda Grant and gave to each one also two notes of £10 each and used the same wording again.

The Rebbe still had a handful of bank notes in his hand. He asked my advice on what to do with them. I was looking at the Rebbe with questioning eyes, when he startled me by suddenly slapping the whole lot into my hand. I asked the Rebbe how much money he had given to me. He answered that as he had not counted the notes, then why should I bother to count. The Rebbe stated that this additional money should be divided between London, Manchester and Glasgow. (I did check this cash afterwards and it came to £70.)

The Rebbe said that he could not refer to me now as Mr. Manchester. He would have to call me Mr. England. I interjected with “Mr. Britain” and the Rebbe corrected me and said “Mr. United Kingdom” - a very speedy promotion!

The Rebbe then said that he had a new assignment for me. He asked me to be a *shadchan* (matchmaker) and find a *choson* for our young friend, Linda Grant. The Rebbe also promised me *shadchoneh Gelt*. With such an incentive, how could I fail!

I repeated to the Rebbe the ‘story’ about meeting the ‘King in the Field’ and he laughed heartily. He promised that next year the apartment would be even better. I remonstrated and told him that it **was good** this year.

The Rebbe said that I should come again to ‘770’ **before** next Shovuos and that he was looking forward to seeing me. I pointed out that I would please G-d be coming again before Shovuos with the new Tanya. The Rebbe exclaimed, “You are an optimist, and you should certainly **not** wait for the Tanya.” I thanked the Rebbe for everything he had done to make our stay over Yom Tov so very enjoyable.

The Rebbe told Roselyn to convey regards to “your son and his family,” and told Hilary to convey the same to her husband and children. The Rebbe concluded by saying that “Tuesday” (the day we were travelling home) “was a good day.” “*Fort gezunterheit un mir zollen herren guttie besuros*” (travel in good health and we should hear good news).

The Rebbe then thanked **me** profusely for coming for Shovuos and for everything I had done for him. He then held out his hand to me! I cannot remember whether I was more astounded and astonished at the words, or by the offer of a handshake by the Rebbe. I had the presence of mind to grasp the Rebbe's hand and mumble some words to the effect that I was very embarrassed by the Rebbe thanking **me** when I was so much in the Rebbe's debt. I hoped the Rebbe would keep well and freilech - in spite of everything which he had to put up with.

On this happy note we took our departure. I would like to point out that obviously the Rebbe knew that I wished to see him, but he likes to demonstrate that nothing comes easily; one has to work hard to achieve success.

We had to arise early the next morning, but firstly I had a job to do. There was an English boy studying at ‘770’ whom I knew very well in Manchester. A very nice boy whose name was Shmuel Arkush. He seemed a boy with a forceful character, full of energy and great capabilities. He seemed to be the very man I was seeking. I asked Linda for permission to speak to him on this subject and she agreed. So, I approached him and told him about the Rebbe's protégée. He was very interested indeed. He had known Linda for a few years. They had both worked for Lubavitch day schools in England at

the same time. As we were leaving within an hour, the matter was left in abeyance until we returned to England.

To our great delight and surprise there was another treat in store for us before we left '770,' even at this late hour of 11.00pm. I had just heard that the Rebbe would be coming outside within a few minutes to be *Mekadesh* the *Levono* (the new moon). This decision was so unexpected that there were just about twelve of us to make up the Minyan, instead of the many hundreds who are normally present. The Rebbe walked sprightly towards us, a real mischievous smile on his face, as if to say - "What? Are you still here?" He came up to me and said that *Kiddush Levono* was good before a journey.

After the short service at which we exchanged the customary *Sholom Aleichem* and *Aleichem Sholom* greetings, the Rebbe repeated, "*Kiddush Levono* is good before a journey." He gave me his wonderful heartwarming smile and waved three times to Roselyn, Hilary and Linda who were sitting on a bench nearby.

What better leave-taking can one hope or pray for!

Within a few weeks I had the pleasure to cable the Rebbe the following:

THANKS HASHEM AND REBBE SHLITO, SHIDUCH ASSIGNMENT COMPLETED SATISFACTORILY
REGARDS ZALMAN MANCHESTER

As one can guess, Linda and Shmuel became betrothed within a few weeks and the marriage took place within a few months.

I wrote to the Rebbe confirming my cable and indicated that the Rebbe should not send me any cash for arranging the *shiduch*. Instead, I asked the Rebbe to credit my account with this. I felt very pleased with this unique and unusual situation!