

## Chapter 13: Future Plans

I immediately wrote to the Rebbe thanking him for all he had done for us whilst we were in Brooklyn. I also wrote:

"I am now like the fellow in the Rebbe's Moshul who goes to the market to buy goods to sell throughout the year. He buys a little here and a bit there. Only when he returns home and goes through his list carefully can he see, understand and realise what exactly he has purchased." '

"It is the same with me - a Sicho here, a Yechidus there, a story of a bris~, here, and a women's convention there. All in all I might have sufficient to carry on throughout the year - for my Diary. And, if I have not enough goods, then I shall have to come over for Succos, with my wife - as the Rebbe has suggested - and buy "some more goods"."

On 20th of Ellul, I again wrote to the Rebbe:

"..and I wish to thank you for your most welcome letter, which I received when I returned home from Israel. I do not expect the Rebbe Shlita to write to me - but it is certainly nice to receive an unexpected acknowledgement of my various letters and to realize that the Rebbe Shlita is thinking of me occasionally. It makes me very happy) and proud'.

"A few days later I received the "official" letter from the 770 office about the Rebbe's message regarding daily Shiurim for our Senior Citizens. (It is hard to realise that I am also KAH a Senior but T.G. I have not let up one iota and "keep at it constantly".)

"Now Rabbi Y. whom I persuaded to give one weekly Shiur, every Wednesday at 3 p.m. the numbers attending have varied from eight to twenty has been missing one or two Shiurim since he started last Shvuos. He did not turn up last Wednesday. He said he Funked It. I went to see him and took him both of the letters received from the Rebbe. He complained that he was not could not talk and could not stand, nor sit

"I congratulated him on the fact that his Shiur has now become a TRAIL BLAZER. The Rebbe could see that the advice which he gave to Rabbi Y. through my Shelichus was a very good one. So good, that the Rebbe Shlita was now advising and instructing all communities throughout the world to follow this example - but even more so - not for once a week - but for every day - and not for just an hour or so, but for all day.

Previous Rebbe (ZTzL) who was paralyzed, and could not write or even talk properly achieved the greatest possible success for Yiddishkeit in America while sitting in a wheelchair. That is an example of Messirass Nefesh in its highest sense. So, now Rabbi Y. knows that one has to be messirass nefesh for Jews and especially for Talmud Torah which is equal to all the Mitzvahs!

"In about three weeks time, Roselyn and I hope to be in 770 - in obedience to the request of the Rebbe Shlita that this year, being the year of Haakel, we should come to see Our Rebbe for Succos and not wait until Simchas Torah, as we did last year.

"Meanwhile INVI shall have P.G. and KAH four grandchildren in temporary abode in Crown Heights during the month of TISHREI. Dovid (Jaffe) Avrohom's eldest son, will be settling in Brooklyn for a more permanent period. He is commencing to attend the Lubavitch Yeshiva in Borough Park. He is following in his father's footsteps, although Avrohom was about three years older and studied at 770, and not at Borough Park. Yossi, Mendel and Yenta Chaya -Hilary's eldest children are the other three of my grandchildren who will be at 770 during the next four weeks or so. Yossi will be ultimately going to the Lubavitch Yeshiva at Jerusalem. He is upset - He wanted to go to New York - He remarked that as he will be away from the Rebbe, it will seem like in gollus!!? Yossi and Mend '1 have been layenning in a Shool all year so they have their own money for their flight and expenses?!?"

"We will be staying at our "new" apartment, below Rabbi Dvorkin, but although we left instructions for making the partitions - nothing has been done yet.

"As we are now approaching Rosh Hashona, I wish to extend a Brocha to the Rebbe Shlita and to Our Rebbetzen Shlita that they should enjoy good health during the coming year of 5741. It should be a sweet year, and a year wherein we shall all hear good news) from each other and that our Rebbe Shlita should receive much Nachas from all his chassidim and from all the Jaffe family . . . ."

## Chapter 14: Preparations for Yom Tov

During Simchas Torah, last year, the Rebbe had told me, when he poured the wine of Koss Sbel Brocha into my cup, that I should "come again next year, as it would be even better".

Six months later, when I took my leave of the Rebbe after Shovuos, I intimated as looking forward to coming again for Simchas Torah. The Rebbe then invited me to come before Succos, as this year was Shnass Haakel. Chapter Five, it states that after the year of Shemita - every !t the time of Succos, the people should gather themselves Jerusalem - from all of the corners of Eretz Yisroel. There, the King would publicly read out certain relevant passages from the Torah – words of Torah, so that the people should always remember them, and keep the Mitzvahs.

In these days, alas, we do not possess a King in Israel. Therefore, we, the followers of the Lubavitcher Rebbe take upon ourselves the duty and privilege of assembling together to listen to the words of Torah which are related and discussed by our Leader, the Rebbe, Shlita.

I considered that on this occasion, I was a special guest of the Rebbe?! It was therefore, behoven of me to ensure that I should procure the best possible set of "Arba - the set of four species which we need on Succos for benching Esrog If there was the Lulov, the date palm; Hadassim, the myrtle; Arovas, the willow; and, of course, the Esrog. The first three types are bound together and the blessing is said on the Lulov (Is it because it is the largest and most outstanding of the four species?). The Esrog, which is held in the left hand ~ is brought close to the other three kinds for the NAANUIM - the Shakings, aid for the Hoshannos.

I always considered it odd that we say "to bench Esrog" (make the brocha on the Esrog) as the actual blessing is on the Lulov! Maybe it is because the esrog is the most expensive of the four types. It is hard to believe that in the era of the gemorro, the cost of an esrog was a Shova e of the lowest coin.

According to chassidic teachings, these four kinds represent the four categories of Jews, which make up the Jewish Nation:

(1) The Esro€ has both Taste and Smell: This Jew knows Torah and keeps Mitzvahs.

(2) The Lulodl' has Taste (dates) but no Smell: He has Torah, but keeps no Mitzvahs.

(3) The Myrtle has no Taste but has Smell: He has no Torah, but keeps the Mitzvahs.

and (4) The Willow has no Taste and No Smell: He has neither Torah, nor keeps the Mitzvahs.

When all types of Jews are bound together, each one responsible for the proclaim to the A'Mighty that we are all living in unity and G-d will listen to our prayers.

When I was the President of the Manchester Shechita Board, I learned, from the non-Jewish slaughtermen, that we had four types of workers:

(1) was a good worker' and also a gentleman: They loved him.

(2) was a food worker, but not a gentleman: They had to co-operate with him.

(3) was a bad worker, but a nice gentleman: They felt sorry for him and helped him.

And (4) was a bad worker and not a gentleman: He had no good points at all, and they refused to work with him altogether.

I now had to decide whether to buy my set in England or in Crown Heights.

The Esrog was always the most difficult one to choose and to buy. It had to be absolutely perfect - in every respect, a super, super fruit, and no expense had to be spared for this.

I made up my mind to obtain my Esrog in Manchester, but the unwieldy types - the Lulov, Haddassim and Arovas, I would purchase in Crown Heights. These would be awkward to carry from Manchester to New York,- and they were the less expensive kinds.

Unfortunately, there was not much choice in the Esrogim which the importers had allocated to us at Lubavitch Manchester. There was not much choice in price, either. I paid £36, about eighty-five dollars, and was presented with a dark green coloured esrog. I estimated that it would be nice and yellow by Channuka time. I did not have much option, so I took it.

I was also presented with a certificate from the Italian Ministry of Agriculture which confirmed that the Esrog (citrus mechea) was grown in Italy, that it was inspected five days after cutting, and was found apparently free from the Mediterranean fruit fly and other pests. This certificate was required by the U.S.A. Customs officials, who, otherwise, would have dumped my £36 esrog into the garbage bin.

On the Friday of erev Yom Kippur we telephoned the Rebbetzen to wish her and the Rebbe a Gemar Chassima Tova - that they should receive the seal for a good and healthy year. The Rebbetzen informed us that a "lot of new people had arrived, and Crown Heights was pretty well full up". She sincerely hoped that we had secured our accommodation. She was reassured when we told her that Mrs Itkin had rented to us her basement apartment for our exclusive use. I added that we would arrive P.G. on the following Sunday, and that we had four of our grandchildren at this moment in Crown Heights. She confided that she was aware of this fact, and that "they were all wonderful - 'umberuffen'!"

Our flight was from Manchester. We were making excellent time and it seemed quite probable that we would arrive at 770 in time for the Rebbs Mincha Service at 3.15 p.m.

Unfortunately, when we were only an hour's flying time from Kennedy Airport, the Captain's voice came over the loudspeakers enquiring whether there was a Doctor of Medicine on the 'plane. A young lady passenger had collapsed. A few minutes later the Captain informed us that the doctor had diagnosed a heart attack. The doctor had also emphasised that if we continued to Kennedy, the patient might be dead on arrival. The 'plane was being diverted to Boston, about half an hour's flight away. On arrival at Boston we were invaded by dozens of ambulance men, and oxygen containers, who were accompanied by a small battalion

We left Boston an hour later, but when we arrived over Kennedy Airport, we had lost our turn in the

'queue'. So we circled and circled around and around the Airport - a prelude to Simchas Torah?! - and touched down over two hours late. So we missed the Rebbe's Mincha that day.

Our apartment was in quite good condition, but the workman who 'ad promised to fix the partitions - over three months ago - had still not yet arrived. We had only this one large basement room at our disposal, which was just sufficient to accommodate Roselyn and me for 'sleeping'. Wednesday night was Succos, so there was not much time to put up the partitions. Furthermore, as everyone was building a succah, I did not envisage much success in obtaining a workman to do the job.

Our grandchildren, Yossi Mendie and Yenta Chaya were staying with the Baumgartens in Carrol Street - quite a long distance from 770, whilst Dovid, now on vocation from the Lubavitch Yeshiva in Boro' Park, would be the guest of Label Turk, who also resided a good way from 770. Shmuel, who was due to arrive next day, would also find a bed at Baumgartens'. So - I still could not understand why Roselyn was so insistent that I should get these partitions fixed, so that all the family, aforementioned, could eat and sleep with us - just in case! It was this phrase "just in case" that really bothered me!

I hurried alone to 770, just in time for Maariv. The Bais Hamedrash, upstairs, where all week ay services were normally held was not very full. I was a little surprised as I expected to see a very large crowd.

Of course, I should have known better. The service was to be held downstairs in the large Shool. The Shool was out exactly as it was last Tishrei, with the large raised platform, about three feet high by about twenty feet square on which the Rebbe – and only the Rebbe would stand. This platform was fixed up at the far right hand corner on the East side (Mizrach) of the shool. Only during the month of Tishrei, which included Rosh Hashanah, Yom Kippur and Succos, was the platform in use. It gave the Rebbe protection, whilst at the same time he could see and be seen by most of the people.

The place was already tightly packed. I pushed my way, with no little difficulty, to the front, in order to be standing at my usual spot, when the Rebbe arrived.

The Rebbe entered, lightly carressed the Curtain of the Oran HaKodesh (the Ark) looked at no one, ascended to the platform and stood at his lectern (shtender).

After the service, the Rebbe turned his head around, slowly, looking a little eyes alighted on me. He gave me a lovely smile of welcome and in his usual manner when he wanted me to start to sing a Nigun. That is all the encouragement I needed, and I commenced, in my loudest voice, to sign Vesomachto.. Everyone joined in and the Rebbe left the Shool to a rousing chorus. Soon we were all singing and dancing - very freilech, very young dancers asked me from whence I came? I told them -from England. They - "What is your name?" When I replied "Zalmon Jaffe", they said "oh, Zal-mon Jaf-fe.. Now we know!"

Zusie Williamofsy, from Kfar Chabad gave me a fulsome Lubavitch welcome. He smothered me with his beard and gave me kisses galore. We decided that we would sing the Rebbe - and - out, on every single occasion.

I am happy to relate that at every subsequent service, morning, noon and night, on Yom Tov and or all the days previous to Yom Tov, everyone joined in the singing and clapping. At first, I will admit that there was the usual shushing when the Rebbe entered, so that there should be complete and respectful

silence - but - this was ignored. Soon every single person was delighted to join in. As someone remarked to me "If these people want quietness then let them stop shushing. They make more noise by shouting "Shush, shush".

Zusie loved to stand on a bench and to conduct the singing. On one occasion he stood on the Floor .- ground level - conducting. The Rebbe, who was passing by, ordered him to get up onto a bench, as usual.

During the two weeks which we spent in Crown Heights, we T.G. never saw the face of the Rebbe, grim or downcast - ever since that first Maariv when we arrived from England

Next morning, Monday, I attended a seven o'clock minyan at 770. I had an Aliya and benched Gomel (to thank G-d for the safe journey across the Ocean). I was pleased I did this because when the Rebbe had his aliya later on, at 10.30 a.m. it was a sheer impossibility for everyone to go to the Bimah to make this blessing. There were far too many. So no one at all was allowed to go. They were advised to find other groups - minyanim, which would be davenning all over the Shool during the course of the day.

At 7.45 that morning, a Jewish workman had walked into 770. He had a wooden measuring ruler and a screwdriver stuck into his overall pocket. He looked like a carpenter. He was a carpenter. We had a good chat and he promised to call at our apartment at 9.30 a.m. to see whether he 'could do t'he job of fixing the partitions.

To my utter astonishment this gentleman, Yes, he was a gentleman, called at 9.20 a.m. - ten minutes earlier than he had promised. He was a Russian and his name was Yaakov. It seemed that Rabbi Dvorkin had also approached him about this work.

He took measurements and made some calculations. He gave me a quotation, which I accepted, on one condition, that the work was to be completed on that very day. He agreed. I paid out a few hundred dollars on account for the wood, and I hopefully awaited developments.

It was now 9.45 a.m. so I made my way to 770, so that I could welcome the Rebbe when he arrived, and afterwards listen to the Krias Hatorah and to the Rebbe having his Aliya.

Until quite recently, it was the custom, that as soon as the Rebbe appeared everyone, especially the boys, disappeared - they ran away and hid themselves. All one could see of the hundreds of boys who had been hovering and lounging about the area, were heads - just heads, protruding over the walls and hedges.

It was surprising how matters had changed over the past few years. Except for the boys who had as usual disappeared from sight, that morning there were over one hundred and fifty women standing outside with their children and babies in their arms too. There were quite a few men, also, with babies all waiting for the Rebbe. They waited from 9.15 until the Rebbe arrived one hour later. The Rebbe alighted from his car, and all those assembled outside, stood strictly to attention, like soldiers on parade, whilst the Rebbe passed long, glancing at the groups, with a smile here and there for some special lady, gentleman or child.

Roselyn was standing on the steps and was privileged to receive a glorious smile of welcome. This was her first meeting, of this session, with the Rebbe so she had immediately received her ample reward for coming from Manchester to spend Yom Tov at 770.

I dashed into the Bais Hamedrash, it was almost empty, I realised that all services would have to be held downstairs in the large Shool. There were so many people who had arrived and were still coming for Yom Tov that even the large Shool could ultimately hardly accommodate everybody.

The Women's Shoals.(plural, there was also an extension onto the South Side) were also crowded and packed tightly with ladies and girls, even for this weekday morning service.

There were over 1100 visitors from Eretz Yisroel, 8001'Ifrom Kfar Chabad, alone, including one group of 450 who had travelled by a specially chartered Jumbo Jet.

Nearly one thousand people had come from France. If we reckoned all the visitors who arrived from all over America, England and the rest of the world, it came as no surprise to see that 770 was very much overcrowded.

The Kohen who was called to the Torah was Bar-Mitzvah that morning. The Levi also a Bar-Mitzvah boy. The Rebbe had, as usual, the third Aliya.

Zalmon Gurary had Hagbah - lifting up of the Torah. He had bought the privilege of taking this mitzvah (or honouring some one else) for the whole year from Shabbos Beraishis up till the following Shabbos Beraishis. On most occasions, he came to Shool especially to take this Honour himself. I really do not blame him for keeping the goods for himself. In any case his contract was nearing its end, and he couldn't afford to miss.

After the Service the Rebbe adjourned to his office. He did not leave 770 until after the Farbraingen of that evening, which ended at nearly midnight. So the Rebbe spent the whole day without once leaving the premises.

We sang the Rebbe out with a Nigun and dance. A little Israeli boy, Boruch Kay from Kfar Chabad, wanted to know "Why does the Rebbe like you? Did you go to University together? Do you talk to the Rebbe? Is the Rebbe your friend?" I explained to him that the Rebbe is everybody's friend.

He furthermore declared "The singing was lovely. Will we sing again tomorrow?!" I replied, that if he would help me, we would sing every day, and especially all Yom Tov.

I returned to the apartment. I was pleasantly surprised when a little later Yanked arrived with a load of wood - and an assistant. In a very short time our one room apartment was converted and transformed into a comfortable flat, containing three bedrooms, a kitchen and a living room. Roselyn was now well prepared for any emergency and "Just in Case" !

The Farbraingen was to commence at 9.30 p.m. that evening, so Maariv was brought forward to 9.15 p.m.

Just before that time, whilst we were all standing outside 770, there was a panic. Someone inside 770 had been taken ill and the ambulance had been called.

Fortunately our own Lubavitch, HATZOLA, Ambulance was permanently stationed outside 770, so the

emergency could be tackled straight away, without any undue delay.

There was a flurry of movement, and many excited gentlemen were seen dashing and careering down the steps 'of 770. One jumped into the driver's seat of the vehicle, the engine roared into life and the ambulance leaped forward the four or five intervening yards to '770. It came to a screeching, squealing and abrupt halt. A fellow rushed, into 770 with a stretcher. He was followed by another fellow with another stretcher. Everyone was shouting instructions. The ambulance men were caught up in their own excitement. One gave the following advice "Keep the pathway clear, and move, please move along - away from this area. Tide stretcher will be carried down here, and the patient needs air - plenty of air". As we were standing outside in the open, there seemed to be plenty of air about - especially "hot air".

However, suddenly, the stretcher carrying the patient was brought outside. There was silence. then eases of horror and incredulity as it was realised that the person who was being transferred to the hospital, only a couple of days before Yom Tov, was none other than the RASHAG himself - the brother-in-law of the Rebbe. Everyone wished him a speedy recovery and the ambulance drove off. We were all left standing - and hoping that the Rashag's illness would not be too serious and that the Rebbe would not have a spoilt and worrying Yom Tov. It was unfortunate to receive such bad news at this particular time - that his Simchas Torah "Dancing Partner" might not be able to be present at this year's Hakoffas. Every year the Rebbe dances the Hakoffas with, and only with the Rashag.

And - if the Rashag would actually not be well enough to attend - then - with whom would the Rebbe dance on Simchas Torah? This question seemed to occupy the minds of most of the boys, during the next few days.

The Shool had been set out for the Farbraingen and the whole place was already absolutely overcrowded.

This Maariv service therefore had to be held upstairs and - the e were not too many present, either. The reason was obvious. Everyone had been sat on their seats or standing at their places - in the Shool downstairs - f r quite a considerable time. No one would budge, in case they lost their positions. Shmuel, my son-in-law, had come direct from the airport to 770 where he arrived at just after 8.30 p.m. He managed with great difficulty to claim his usual seat.

When I visit Crown Heights I give top priority to the following our concepts:

(1) to daven with the Rebbe, in order that my own supplicat'ons and prayers would be joined together and ascend to Heaven with those of the Rebbe, the devout saintly Person - the Tzadik of our generation.

(2) to attend the Farbraingen and learn Torah from our Rebbp

(3) to have Yechidus or at least to exchange one Or two words in private with the Rebbe.

and (4) to give pleasure to the Rebbe, whenever possible.

In view of the above, I had made it my business to be present in the Bais Hamedrash, in order to daven the Maariv service with the Rebbe. By so doing, I nevertheless took the risk that my usual seat at the Farbraing-n would not now be available for me.

I rushed downstairs straight after Maariv. I was lucky that quite a few regulars were missing on this occasion, so I managed to push my way into my usual niche.

At a subsequent Farbraingen, I asked one Rabbi who was a prominent member of the 770 Hierarchy why he had not been present at that Monday night Farbraing. He replied - that he could not afford such luxuries. It seemed that he had so much work to complete before Yom Tov, that he couldn't spare the time!!

Just before the Rebbe was due to arrive, an announcement was made to the effect that volunteers were urgently wanted to man two succahs which had been erected in Manhattan. One was situated outside the United Nations Building and the other one outside Macy's Department Stores. So there should be "good passing trade".

Up till now, there had been no official bulletin issued about the condition at the hospital. No one was quite certain whether he was progressing at all. Everyone was anxious and worried about him, and the Rebbe would react at the Farbraingen.

The Rebbe entered, with firm and sprightly steps, and immediately allayed our

The Rebbe told us that all Yomim Tovim are - should be - Moedim LeSimcha (Times of Joy) but Succos and Shemini Atzeres are Zeman Simchosainu - the time of Our rejoicing.

On the following day, Tuesday, the Rebbe visited the Ohel of the Previous Rebbe (Z.Tz.L), and returned in time for an evening Mincha.

Meanwhile, I took Yossi with me to help me to choose a Lulav, We bought a very nice one from a shop in Kingston Avenue for twenty dollars. We deferred the purchase of the Arovus until the next day as new and fresher stocks were expected to arrive. These would keep in good condition for a much longer period.

Label, Mrs Itkinson, was very actively building the Succah that day. He is a very nice boy. I offered to help him as I was hoping to be allowed to use this succah. He refused point blank. He said that it was his pleasure to put up the succah for our use too. I have stated that he is a very nice boy. He really was very helpful, too, in assisting us to settle into the apartment. Nothing was too much trouble for him. Whenever we gave a shout for Label, he would be down in our flat within minutes and settle our problems. Mrs Itkin was also extremely co-operative. She has a charming manner and an infectious laugh. Rabbi Dvorkin made an eruv - the Shabbos boundary, so that we could carry our food from the house to the succah outside. "Good Old Rabbi Dvorkin!"

### **'The Rebbe's Esrog'**

At 10.30 a.m. next morning, erev Succos, Label Groner approached me with a request that I should remain near 770, because the Rebbe might "have a job for me" and may want to see me.

This message was very intriguing. I was conjuring up all sorts of reasons why the Rebbe should want to see me at that time of the day. Surely, it could not be a Yechidus! - or maybe the Rebbe required some

information about someone or something in Manchester ! - or somewhere else!

I had quite a clear conscience but I felt like a schoolboy waiting outside the Headmaster's stud, for a severe rebuke or an admonishment.

It was all very puzzling, but the answer would be doubtless forthcoming if I would be patient and waited long enough. Within a short time, the hallway had become rather overcrowded. It was obvious that I was not the only one whom the Rebbe wished to see on that morning. I then learnt from the others, that every year the Rebbe presented a complete set of Arba Minim (Lulov, Esrog, Myrtle and Willow) to each Mossad, or branch of Lubavitch that was represented at 770. As I was, the Chairman of Manchester Lubavitch, I would be handed the Arba Minim on behalf of Manchester.

The waiting room had been set out with a number of tables, arranged around the sides of the room. On the first table lay the Esrogim. The Lulovim, Haddassim and Arovus were lying on other tables. Each assignee entered this room, picked up an Esrog - walked along to the next table and took a Lulov, then the Haddassim and finally the Arovus. He would then thank the Rebbe, who stood at the door of his study, for this great honour - and for the Arba Minim. The Rebbe would give each person a brocha.

There were better and older men than me awaiting their turn to enter, so I bided my time. I heard Label Groner shouting for Shmuel Lew - but he had gone to visit his father on that very morning. The Rebbe had invited Shmuel to join Rabbis Nachman Sudak and Phaivish Vogel to form the official delegation who altogether would receive the Esrog on behalf of London.

Nachman and Phaivish emerged with the one esrog, but in addition they each held a Lulov, as well. I then heard my name being urgently called by Label Groner. I think I was almost the last person in the line. I entered the room. There was only one esrog lying on the table. This should confirm the quotation that one "must hurry to do a Mitzvah and not to put it off". I very nearly lost my Esrog - only one left. But - it was a Beauty. It was a "whopper". It weighed fourteen ounces - almost one pound in weight. It was so large that I could not get a box for it, and I could barely hold it in one hand. There were still a couple of Lulovim and a few Haddassim and Arovah left, with which to make up my set of Arba Minim. However, as there were no more esrogim, then no further complete sets could be assembled.

I heard Label earnestly assuring the Rebbe that he had definitely ordered sufficient esrogim to go with the lulovim and so forth. One or two of these esrogim might have been detached or lost in the crush. I am certain that these missing esrogim did not carry the brochas or approval of the Rebbe. It is queer "what idiotic things some people may do!!"

I drew near to the Rebbe and thanked him for this wonderful gift. He replied in Hebrew "You should draw down upon yourself all of the relevant Divine Influences". The Rebbe then continued by saying that the set was for Manchester. I enquired if that inferred that I had to take these Arba Minim all the way home to England - and if so then that would be after Yom Tov. The Rebbe replied that this was not necessary, but I had to ensure that the Manchester people who were at 770 would have the opportunity of using them here.

Shortly afterwards, Shmuel arrived. The Rebbe called him and presented him with just twelve Haddassim. Shmuel was delighted. It meant that he had one Haddass for each of his eleven children (KAH) plus one

jointly for himself and Hilary.

Over a week later, on Hoshanna Rabbi, Rabbi Dovid Hickson of Manassah came to let him have one Haddass. He would dry it and use it for Havdola. I followed his example and did the same, and so did Shmuel.

I now had in my possession two sets of Esrogim. I certainly did not need two sets, and I would not part with the Rebbe's gift. The Esrog which I brought from England, plus the Lulov I purchased yesterday, cost me \$105. So when I received an offer from Shmuel I was very pleased. When I heard the details, however, I was not so pleased. It was for one dollar!! He pointed out that I should really supply Haddassim and Arovus, and furthermore in just a few days the market for Esrogim would be non-existent and they would be worth only a nominal amount for Jam-making. He refused to increase his bid so I had no alternative but to accept.

I still had another problem:- On which Esrog should I make the brocha every morning. The one which the Rebbe had personally given to me - or the Esrog and Lulov which the Rebbe himself uses every morning and for which all of the Lubavitcher Chassidim and boys queued up every day.

One school of thought maintained that as the Rebbe himself had presented me with this Esrog - for my own use, then surely that was the one on which I should make the brocha. In any case, why should I wait for over an hour and a half in the queue for the Rebbe's esrog, which was normally brought to 770 at about 8.45 a.m.

On the other hand, as Dovid, my grandson, argued - it would be much superior and of more spiritual value to bench with the Esrog which the Rebbe had used that very morning. That argument prevailed. In any case, I had plenty of time to stand in the line and await the Rebbe. It was much more exciting and interesting too.

## Chapter 15: Succoss

On the first night of Succoss, at the conclusion of the Maariv service, the Rebbe, as usual, raised his right arm and I was instantly ready to start a Nigun. But, instead, the Rebbe shouted Good -- Yom Tov - emphasising each word with a downwards and upwards swing of his arm. This was repeated three times. Everyone joined in with the Rebbe and shouted at the "Top of their Voices" - Good Yom Tov - Good Yom Tov - Good Yom Tov.

After this I again prepared to commence a Nigun prior to the Rebbe leaving the Shool – but – The Rebbe remained quite still – never moved.

A great hush descended upon this huge assembly. What exceptional innovation was the Rebbe going to inaugurate on this first night of Succos. The Rebbe commenced to speak. He was standing of course, on the platform. After a couple of minutes, I felt irresistible pressure on my back. I was being inexorably pushed towards the platform and then crushed against it. Having reached a “dead end” the boys started to climb upwards. One boy stood on my left shoe, another on my right foot. I could not move. Then the whole throng – the packed crowd – started to sway. That was terrible – the swaying – from side to side, forwards and backwards. I was tossed like a cork in the rough sea. It was unbearable – I felt like screaming – but no one would have taken the slightest bit of notice. All everyone wanted to do was to get nearer and yet nearer to the Rebbe.

I have always heard the term “Mesiras Nefesh”, which means self sacrifice, or literally – a danger to one’s soul. This is the first time I had encountered “Mesiras Haregel, danger to one’s feet. Of course, Haregel also mean the Yomim tovim, too, when all the Jews went up to Jerusalem, on foot, on their own feet, and not on the feet of others, of course.

Actually I felt very worried and perturbed about the young boys. It was a miracle that none of them suffered injury.

There was a solid mass of people of many thousands in the Shool. It was impossible for anyone to make his way from the rear of the hall to the front, where the Rebbe stood.

On one occasion, after a Farbraingen, the Rebbe left his seat at the top table on the dais and made his way to his lectern on the platform near the Oran Hakodesh in order to daven Mincha. I was in my usual "farbraingen" seat, but I found it impossible to move in any direction against a solid human wall - except upwards. I was determined to be near the Rebbe at the Mincha service, so upwards I went - climbing on top of the tables and onto the dais, but I was in the same predicament, surrounded by a solid human wall, and blocked in at every angle. The only way out of this impasse was downwards. Making my way towards the front of the Shool, I leaped down about six feet and then jumped another few feet. I had now reached the ground level. Looking upwards I could see only crowds of men and boys towering above me standing on what looked like builders' scaffolding. All around me were table legs and tops. These formed a series of passageways similar to a catacomb, which stretched from one end of the Hall to the other. Lots of little boys were continuously burrowing along these "underground" channels to get to other parts of the Shool. I stood there in this "well". I could neither see nor hear anything. So I did a bit of creeping and crawling myself, until I discovered that I was at the far end of the Hall.

The next thing I discovered - a very important fact, not realised by me before, was that at the back of this vast concourse, this multitude of people, it was impossible to hear even one word, either spoken by the Rebbe or by the Chazan. Yes, one could see perfectly, but everyone at the other end looked like actors on a stage, as seen from a very long distance.

Although some of the men chatted and chattered with each other, others considered that even if they could push forward, at least twelve inches, they might be able to hear much better.

So, actually, the crushing and pushing commenced right from the back of the Shool and kept moving forward like an unstoppable tide.

During the whole of this period, whilst I was at 770 for Success, the area around the Oran Hkodesh and the Rebbe's platform was ringed with tables, chained together, and guarded zealously by appointed officials. These boys did a good job and gave me preferential treatment in allowing me to climb over these tables in order to reach my usual place. (When the Rebbe arrived the tables were heaved, dragged and levered a couple of feet to allow the Rebbe to pass through).

But, no one could stop the little boys from coming through underneath the tables. These children came and went just as they pleased. Therefore, in addition to the pressure from the back, we had the extra problem of little boys popping up, just in front of one.

On this first night of Success, I could not relax sufficiently and to concentrate on what the Rebbe was saying. It was a terrible strain and needed great exertion and effort to remain standing - and my brand new suit would not have disgraced a garbage collector.

The Rebbe spoke for about twenty-five minutes. He pointed out that on every night of Success we celebrated the additional Yom Tov of Simchas Bais Hashoevu and this simcha should be increased every day. Although this Yom Tov is not actually mentioned in the Torah, the Gemorra states that "whoever has not seen the Joy of Simcha Bais Hashoevu, which is connected with water, has not seen true rejoicing and joy. Therefore the Rebbe asked everyone to celebrate this Yom Tov in the Succah every night. "Shpeezen" - special guests also joined us on these occasions. They were our ancestors. 1 - Avrohom. 2 - Yitzchok. 3 - Yaakov. 4 - Moishe. 5 - Aaron. 6 - Yoseph and 7 - Dovid. These corresponded to our own chasidic guests:- 1 - Baal Shem Tov. 2 - Maggid. 3 - Alter Rebbe. 4 - Mittel Rebbe. 5 - Tzemech Tzedek. 6 - Maharash and 7 - Rashab. There was also, 8 - the Previous Rebbe. In addition, there was our own Rebbe, Shlita. As I told the Rebbe twenty years ago, whenever and wherever there is a Lubavitch Farbraing or Seuda, our Rebbe is always present.

Furthermore, every night each one of these distinguished visitors take it in turn to be the Guest of Honour, or Chairman. On the first night the Master of Ceremonies is our Father Avrohom; on the second night, it is Yitzchok; and so on.

### **In the Succah**

After Maariv we returned to our apartment and prepared to make Kiddush in the Succah.

What a wonderful Mitzvah is the Succah. It envelopes all who sit inside it, and invites them into one compact family. Even if they were complete strangers, totally unrelated to each other, everyone independent and bringing in their own food and drink, they become one unit.

I was a little apprehensive about who would be our companions and fellow diners. I need not have worried.

Rabbi Zalmon Shimon Dvorkin, the Rov of Lubavitch (not to be confused with the Rebbe Shlita) sat in solitary state at the top of the table. His brother-in-law Rabbi Dubrawsky was seated at his left. At his right side was Re Yankel Katz from Chicago, who was a guest of the Itkins.

Rabbis Pinson (from Tunisia) and Nottie Barkan were two gentlemen who had only recently been allowed to leave Russia. Rabbi Trevnick from Kfar ~habad was also present. I sat next to Rabbi Itkin, our official host. His son Label, and my son-in-law, Shmuel, together with my grandchildren Yossi, Mendel and Dovid (Avrohom's son) made up the twelve males who were joined together for the Succah meal.

Rabbi Dvorkin made Kidush, then so did his brother-in-law. They went out to wash and returned. Each brought in their own first course, soup we and the Itkins pleaded with these gentlemen to join us and to they were quite adamant and independent - they preferred to be their "own boos".

Roselyn and Yenta Chaya (my granddaughter) came into the Succah to Shmuel's Kidush and to make Hamotza. After which they disappeared for the rest of the evening.

Rabbi Dvorkin was asked a number of questions of Halacha which he answered quickly without hesitation.

A few words of Torah were expounded.

Then Yankel Katz "took the floor". (Incidentally, he asked me to make the following corrections to my last year's "Encounter". (1) His name is Yankel - and not Abraham. (2) He did not donate \$5,000 for the Rebbe's first posuk of the Atta Horaisa last year - it was for an undisclosed amount - (probably much more than \$5,000) a seven year prison sentence. The worst crime was being religious. one year and was then released. One of the most dreadful experience was called for questioning by the Police authorities. Food was they worries. Nottie continued: Georgia, in Southern Russia near the T1 was always a stronghold of religion. Stalin was born there. These have lived there for hundreds of years. They were strong in their Jews would not allow the Shool to be closed. They lay down in the seems that they were treated unusually leniently - Z.J.) I The Rebbe emissaries to strengthen these people in their faith. In fact the tens - scores - of people working in Georgia, and there are many converts to Chabad.

I asked Nottie how old he was. He replied 59. I said he! looked so, young, not more than 55. Nottie said, the Rebbe told him that the reason was because one doesn't count the years spent in jail or in custody.

He had worked in a factory which employed thousands of workers. On day the Director of this concern sent Nottie to buy some spare parts for some machines. He was told to make a "small diversior to Kiev - about 500 miles, in order to buy four or five pounds of tomatoes! On this trip Nottie became unwell. There were no hotels in Kiev, nor anywhere else. Fortunately he had friends there, a Chabad family, who

resided] in a huge' block of apartments. They lived four people to one room and slept and ate in the same room.

There was an adjacent building which contained the toilets - ten W.C.'s. for the thousand people from these apartments. Nottie said that as he felt ill he didn't stay there. He slept at the Airport.

He went to Moscow but could find nothing to do to make a living. One Success sixteen Esrogim arrived from Rabbi Gorodinsky, of Lubavitch, Paris. Nottie managed to get two for all Moscow - one thousand people benched Esrog. The Lulovim were brought from Georgia. These were some of Nottie's naughty stories. We heard anecdotes and highlights from' the others, who were all from Russia or of Russian origin.

The conversation then left this materialistic, prosaic and mundane level. We advanced to the spiritual heights. We discussed the merits of "190" White Spirits from Texas against the Russian "9" or alternatively pure Vodka.

Rabbi Itkin was a good host and piled everyone with 96 proof white spirits (almost pure alcohol) "not like in England **a capatee, capatee, just water**" he said. I tested a little, and my tongue remained numb for some time. I had brought – as my contribution to the festivities – a large bottle of Glayva – a scotch liqueur. Rabbi Itkin was a little wary mixing his drinks. He distrusted these Red liqueurs. They were 70 proof strong, but because they were sweet, one didn't realize the potency of these drinks. Rabbi Itkin was a good barman, too, and everyone was becoming very happy. To add atmosphere to the stories, - and to make them more realistic – Rabbi Itkin commenced to sing an old Cossack Camp Fire Song. I sat next to him, so I joined in. We sang a duet together. One arm around each other's shoulder and flinging the other arm around and around for emphasis. We sang loud and unclear. I didn't know the Russian words, but that didn't matter. It was the spirit (96 proof) which counted. I know my children were having a very good laugh and we all spent a jolly and merry Simchas Beis Hashoevu.

This year, Luzie Raichik was the organiser of this wonderful service. It necessitated that Lpizie and his friends should be at 770 from 7 a.m. in the morning. They deserved our grateful thanks. Over two thousand tickets were distributed that morning. Actually, I should apologise to Luzie, because he heartily objects to be called by that nickname, even if it is a term of "endearment". The 'Rebbe once gave a Sicho on the importance of being called by one's hebrew name, such as Avrohom, Yitzchok and Yaakov - and not by any English or American corruption of these appellations.

Luzie maintained that his proper name was Eliezer, (surely Luzie is also original hebrew) and he refused to answer to any other name. Luzie will learn in time that one has to earn respect or honour, one cannot demand it.

At 8.40 a.m., the Rebbe arrived at 770 with his Esrog. I was standing in the line when the Rebbe approached. I wished him a good Yom Tov. The Rebbe wished me the same and asked me whether I had celebrated Simchas Bais Hashoevu last night in the Succah. I answered in the affirmative. The Rebbe consented "but not for long".

I agreed and said "Yes, just for a short time only". I did not tell the Rebbe that after our Farbraingen in the Succah, Shmuel left with Yossi, Mendel and Dovid to visit the 770 and other Success. They returned at 6 a.m. in the morning!

The Shachariss service commenced at 10 a.m. and followed the usual pattern. One very noticeable difference to last year's Yom Tov was the extraordinary large number of people present at 770. I thought that the limit had been reached the previous year and that no more people could be accommodated.

Yet on this Succos, it was estimated that there were at least fifty per cent more people present. A modern miracle! Mind you, I did feel very crushed all the time.

Yisroel Goldstein was doing a fine job marshalling the young boys who had congregated into the reserved area, near the Rebbe's platform. I admired his coolness and unruffled patience. As I have mentioned before, these very young boys came from underneath the tables. When a new contingent of twenty boys emerged, quite suddenly, it did make matters a little awkward and extremely compressed.

A new young friend of mine, Shneuer Zalmon Wolfe from Kfar Chabad, about twelve years old, was an expert at throwing his weight about - of which he had plenty — he was certainly a robust and very tough lad. A born leader, and not afraid to use physical force in order to attain his territorial objectives. He looked after me like a long lost father and ensured that I always had my reserved spot. In fact amongst the hundred or so little boys milling around this area there was, always - invariably - one fistcuffs battle in progress. In addition there was always a poor little tormented soul crying and weeping. Yisroel Goldstein remained aloof, indifferent and unconcerned, as long as they did not climb onto the platform.

Just before we were due to recite Hallel, Myer Harlick brought in the Rebbe's Lulov and Esrog. (There were still many hundreds waiting to use the Rebbe's Esrog. They would have their opportunity after the morning service). He handed the set of Arba Minim to the Rebbe. It seemed that when two thousand people had used the Esrog, it needed First Aid. The Rebbe spent ten minutes straightening out the Hadassim and the Arovus - There were the usual two Arovus bound to the Rebbe's Lulov, but there were as many as twenty-six Hadassim!!! Not just the three which one normally possessed. There must be some mystic reason for having twenty-six.

On a subsequent morning, the Rebbe brought in a reserve Lulov. It was most interesting to see the Rebbe take the Arovus and Hadassim from the original Lulov and put them onto this second Lulov. Everyone watched spellbound whilst the Rebbe completed the operation, which took quite a while.

During the Hallel ceremony of Na-Anuim - that is the "Shaking" of the Lulov together with the other three Minim - the Esrog, Hadassim and Arovus, takes place.

At first the Lulov, Hadassim and Arovus are held in one's right hand. Then at the latter part of Hallel one takes also the Esrog and in this way the Arba Minim are held close together for the Shaking. At the appropriate times during Hallel - four times in all - the hands holding the Arba Minim point the Lulov towards six directions in rotation.

First the hands extend the Lulov southwards to their maximum length and the Lulov is shaken. It is then returned to one's chest and heart and shaken again. This exercise is performed - to and fro - three times.

This operation is repeated in the following additional directions - in this order - North. East. Upwards. Downwards and Westwards. This is to symbolize the bringing forth of all the spiritual goodness from every direction and part of the universe, to one's own domain.

I had requested Dovid Hickson to stand nearby and to be prepared to take the Arba Minim from me when I had finished my turn so that he too could participate in the Mitzvah of the Na-Anuim. I could then also fulfil the Rebbe's instructions of allowing at least another person from Manchester to use this Esrog and Lulov.

I had barely completed the operation when the Esrog and Lulov were snatched from my hands by a gentleman who did not possess his own set of Arba Minim. Fortunately he was a very quick operator, so fast indeed, that even after Dovid Hickson had finished his turn, there was time for another customer to "take a hand" before the Rebbe had ended this section of the Shaking.

At the end of Hallel, I started to sing Kailie Atoh. Everyone joined in. At the second paragraph - Howdu La'Shem we generally repeat the nigun, but during Succos we shake the Lulov at this point. So - I was stumped and non-plussed. I didn't know what to do. In that split second the Rebbe conveyed to Label Groner who relayed it to me - all in sign language - that I should continue the Nigun without singing the hebrew words, which we all did - with the new words of "Yom, Yom, Yom, Yam". (Another innovation for this Yom Tov).

After Hallel, those of the congregation who possessed the Arba Minim made one circuit of the Bimah - for the Hashaanos (ceremony) - carrying the Esrog and Lulov.

Last year I behaved like a gentleman!! I allowed others to take precedence over me, in the line. So - I was literally pushed right out! Therefore, having learned my lesson, I immediately followed behind and close to the Rebbe. But even that did not help. As soon as the Rebbe had passed, scores of men flung themselves right in front of me. By the time I had reached the first corner of the Bimah, I could see that the Rebbe had nearly completed the circuit. I had a long way to go yet. Meanwhile from every side hundreds of people stampeded into the line. Instead of going around the Bimah another branch line made a detour. They went up the steps and over the top of the Bimah to the other side. The two lines converged together and collided in complete and utter confusion. It was every man for himself! Even when I arrived at the fourth and last corner of the Bimah, hundreds were still pushing their way into the line in order to commence their march around the Bimah. As for ME, I was only anxious to return to my place in the "reservation". My route to safety was completely blocked. No one took the slightest notice of me. I had to push, plead, appeal for help and push even more until Yisroel Goldstein saw my predicament and opened up a way for me through the tables.

Dovid Hickson related to me that he saw one distinguished Rabbi return from the circuit. He was very much dishevelled. His tallis had been lost in the crush. His Lulov was in his right hand, and the Hadassim in his left. The Esrog was stuffed into one pocket, and his small siddur into another pocket.

When the morning service had ended, Yankel Katz, who was a Kohen, jumped upon a bench and made a long speech including some announcements. He concluded his speech by turning to the Rebbe and pronouncing the Priestly Blessing - Yevorechacho etc. (The L-rd bless you and keep you and so forth). This occurred every single day after the morning service. Mr. Katz certainly liked to "duchen" literally, to mount the Priestly platform and bless the people, and was determined to do so. Anyway, the Rebbe was always highly amused.

That evening was the second night of Yom Tov. I had undergone a slight traumatic experience the previous evening. The Rebbe had, without warning, given over to us a Sicho, and I enjoyed a good crushing.

I considered that just in case the Rebbe would decide to relate to us another Sicho, it might be more sensible and safer if I could find a better and a more protected spot.

I stood, therefore, behind a solid steel pillar. I considered that this would be as good a safeguard as any other.

In the event the Rebbe did speak after the service for thirty-five minutes. I had once again made a poor choice of where to stand. The steel girder, instead of being a protection became a dangerous hazard. I was in a more confined space, with not much room in which to move, and every time the crowd swayed, which was very frequently, I was banged and bumped and crushed against the steel pillar, which being solid metal would not budge even a fraction. The Rebbe spoke again on Friday and on Saturday nights for about half an hour on each occasions. On Friday night my back was forced over backwards against a bench. It was almost broken. By Saturday night, I considered that discretion was the better part of valour and I returned to the comparative safety of standing in the seating section of the Shool.

## Chapter 16: Choi. Hamoed and Simchas Bais Hashoevu

The Rebbe impressed upon us the importance of increasing day by day the simcha and joy of this Simchas Bais Hashoevu. Yom Tov. Shmuel (and the boys) were always eager and alert to do the Rebbe's bidding but in this instance were more than resolute and firm in obeying the Rebbe's instructions. On that night they visited friends - and sang and danced in the streets until 4.30 a.m. in the morning. (On Friday night, they were up until 6.30 a.m., and on Saturday night Shmuel never went to bed at all — anyway more about this later.)

However - on Friday morning, the second day of Succos, I arrived at 770 at 7.15 a.m.. in order to collect my numbered ticket for my turn to Bench with the Rebbe's Esrog. I found about twenty men already waiting there.

I stayed for about five minutes. I was then told that the boy who was distributing the tickets that morning had just slipped off to the Mikvah for a few minutes. I decided that I could also slip off to the same place - I might even see the boy on the way. I did see him - he had slipped into the hot water and was enjoying a dip. I also slipped off my clothes, rushed in - and out, got dressed - and yet the fellow was still in the nice warm Mikvah. He had already been soaking for about fifteen minutes. He seemed to have plenty of time.

I remonstrated with him. I explained that people were waiting for him outside in the cold. He was quite unimpressed, unconcerned and unrepentant. He stated that he had now transferred this job of distributing the tickets to another one of his friends. He was fed up and did not intend to arrange this service any more.

I returned to 770 and told the hundred or so people who were patiently waiting for their tickets, that there would be no distribution - neither on that day nor on any of the following days. This announcement did not have the dramatic effect which I thought it would have. There was no obvious dismay or cries of thwarted rage.

Instead of standing in a line waiting for Luzie's friends, they just stood in the same line waiting for the Rebbe and the Rebbe's Esrog.

As usual, I was pretty early, and stood on the pavement near the steps of 770. Within a short time there was a queue of people stretching almost to the next block - to Brooklyn Avenue. At 8.15 a.m. my friend, Avrohom Gluck stopped by me to have a chat. I noticed that gradually and surreptitiously other men and boys were lining up behind Avrohom Gluck. By 8.30 a.m. there was now firmly established a second long line, formed adjacent to the original - the main one.

Just then a friend of Mr. Gluck stopped to have a talk with him, and the whole process was repeated. In less than no time there were now three long lines stretching away into the far distance.

I was personally very annoyed. It wasn't fair either to all these people who had been waiting since 7.30

a.m. However, I could not really object because everyone insisted that I should take precedence. But I was surprised to notice that the rest of the people remained so placid, docile and acquiescent. They took it all with good humour. They had plenty of time and had nowhere else to go - and most important, it was not raining. Some caught up with their Tehillim (Psalms), others with their learning, but most of them just chatted with their neighbours and friends.

Our apartment was next door but one to 770. The Rebbe's library was the only building in between. Roselyn almost invariably met the Rebbe either outside our apartment or saw him when he entered 770. That morning the Rebbe gave Roselyn his usual wonderful smile and asked her where was her Ainekale (her granddaughter Yenta Chaya).

All our family who were present at that time in Crown Heights gradually removed into our apartment. We were now comparatively full up - seven of us - Roselyn and I - Dovid (Avrohom's son) and Shmuel, with Yossi, Mendel and Yenta Chaya. There was no doubt at all that the apartment was very conveniently situated.

We could be in 770 within seconds, which was much better than having to walk all the way to the end of Carol Street - about twenty minutes.

The children were also partial to Roselyn's cooking and were continuously popping in and out of the flat at all times of the day and night. Eventually they would all troop into the apartment at about 4.30 a.m. in the morning - everyone of them "dead beat" and starving.

Roselyn had filled the fridge and the oven with all kinds of hot and cold dishes, already to be served at a moment's notice. But I do not think that Roselyn trusted them not to make a mess, because as soon as she heard them enter the apartment, she would arise from bed and attend to their needs.

When we returned home to England, Roselyn confesses to me that she had never slept (except for an occasional "cat-nap") for the whole two weeks which we spent in Crown Heights.

On Saturday night before the conclusion of Shabbos, a discussion arose, amongst the Rebbe's lieutenants, as to where the Maariv service would be held. This normally took place in the Bais Hamedrash and because of the fact that the Havdola had to be made in the Succah, it seemed an obvious choice to daven upstairs.

I pointed out that only a small fraction of those present could be accommodated upstairs. Furthermore, there was no place for the women to daven or even to see and hear in the Bais Hamedrash. In addition to which, the Ladies' Shool was absolutely overcrowded, at this very moment - with women and girls. They wished to daven with the Rebbe and to be ready and prepared, in case the Rebbe would give over another Sicho. Obviously the Rebbe himself would decide - have the last word.

However, these arguments seemed to prevail, although many doubted whether the Rebbe would speak again that evening.

The Rebbe had spoken on three consecutive evenings - in Jewish Law this constituted a Chazoka - a tradition which could not be easily broken, so I was pretty sure that the Rebbe would daven downstairs in

the Large Shool and relate to us a Sicho which would also include the message of how we should increase the Joy of Simchas Bais Hashoevu every day. Havdola could still be made in the Succah after the service. In the event, the Rebbe did daven downstairs and the Rebbe did speak to us again after Maariv.

At about midnight, Yenta Chaya came dashing into our apartment, breathless and excited. She gasped out that thousands of people were singing and dancing in the streets and we should come quickly. In addition, it seemed that Ellie Lipsker, our internationally famous Lubavitch "Showman" had become so carried away with all the excitement, he became so inspired with joy and Simcha, that he spontaneously brought out his accordian. He was joined by two brothers, who normally gave concerts professionally. They brought their drums, saxophones and trumpets(?). They set up their stand at the corner of Kingston Avenue and Montgomery Street. A microphone was installed - and night was turned into day. The police even diverted the traffic.

Yenta Chaya continued by informing us that an announcement was made to the effect that there would be a repeat performance on the following night - Sunday. Under those circumstances, and as we were so very tired, we decided to attend the next night's festivities, instead.

Dovid, Yossi and Mendel walked into the apartment at about 5 a.m. They had come to eat and to sleep. They mumbled something about a carnival and fireworks.

Shmuel had a speaking engagement in Newhaven, at 9 a.m. in the morning. He came along to the flat at about 6.30 a.m. in order to have a wash, change his torn "770" Kapota (Long jacket) and his shirt. Unfortunately he couldn't get in. We were all in a very heavy deep sleep. It was impossible to wake any of us. Luckily he met Yisroel Shem Tov who owned a suit and kapota shop in Kingston Avenue. He lent Shmuel a brand new kapota. He didn't sell shirts - so off Shmuel went to Newhaven.

He returned to the flat at 2 p.m. He had not yet davened - nor benched Esrog. He had not eaten, nor had he slept - He had a good time, though!

This Sunday was to be a busy day for me. First of all, I forwarded to the Rebbe a "short progress report".

I wrote:-

"Unlike last year, when I was isolated protected and safeguarded on the Rebbe's platform, this year I am put "amongst the boys". I put on a nice new suit for Yom Tov. By last night not only was it torn in a couple of places but it looked as if I had joined the garbage collectors' Union. I have no legs left. It is not only Miseras Hanefesh, but Miseras Haregel. I have also lost my voice.

"Every night, the Rebbe gives us over a Sicho. He tells us – Increase every day - in Simcha. We have been singing and dancing in the streets. Shmuel went to bed on the first night at 6 a.m., the second night at 4.30 a.m., third at 6.30 a.m. Last night he didn't go to bed at all - and went off to Newhaven.

"Yossi, Mendie and Dovid have also been up almost all night - every night. It is 10 a.m. in the morning and they are all sleeping, completely exhausted. Yenta Chaya went to bed early last night

at 3 a.m.

"I thank the Rebbe for everything, especially for "

Incidentally, the trousers of this suit had become extremely crushed and creased. They looked terrible. They needed a good pressing, but at that time we did not have an iron handy.

Shmuel introduced me to a new "First Aid Ironing" invention. It was wonderful in its simplicity. All we had to do was to boil a kettle full of water. We then placed the trousers neatly folded on a flat surface - a table, covered with a cotton cloth and used the base of the HOT kettle, still full of boiling water as a Pressing Iron. "And it worked too".

The next item on the agenda that morning was the Twenty-fifth Lubavitch Youth Convention. I had not received any official invitation to, nor notification of this event. However, I did decide to drop in for a few moments to see what was happening.

As soon as I entered the Hall, Rabbi Hollander coerced me into sitting on the platform at the top table, where many distinguished Rabbonim and notable gentlemen graced the assembly.

Amongst them were Rabbis Chadakov, Mentelik, Dovid Raskin, Hollander, Shmuel Dovid

Raichik, Zusi Williamofsky, our own Nachman Sudak and Yankel Katz.

Rabbi Butman was the Chairman. He greeted and extended a warm welcome to the delegates. Greetings and letters had also been received from the President of the U.S.A., Jimmy Carter, the Vice-President, Senators and so forth.

President Carter's letter was read out aloud to the Assembly. He had written that this Twenty-fifth Annual Convention was an important milestone. It also gave him a chance to applaud the achievements of Lubavitch, which was established two hundred years ago in the town of that name - which literally means the "City of Love", and "You are continuing in the right way to safeguard your heritage".

The next speaker was Harrison J. Golding, the Comptroller (Controller) of the City of New York, and the Second-in-Command. He told us that the Rebbe is the father of tens of thousands of children all over the world. He "wished us well" and welcomed us on behalf of "this great City". He congratulated us on our work in the furtherance of Jewish Education and may it go "Mai Chayil El Chayil" (from strength to strength).

Most, if not all, of those who sat at the top table were being asked to say a few words, or give a report of Lubavitch activities in their respective cities (for example, Rabbi Sudak was to talk about the progress in London).

I stayed for about an hour and decided to leave. I had a number of matters to which I had to attend. The Chairman tried to prevail upon me to remain for another hour or so, because he also wished me to say a few words about Manchester - this was the very first intimation I received about a speaking engagement. I refused that honour, because (1) I would never, if at all possible, speak in public unless I had time to

prepare my speech. (The Rebbe has often warned that one should never undertake a public duty without thorough preparation), and (2) I just could not wait so long.

I returned in time for the Rebbe's Mincha service. When he did arrive there was the "usual" outburst of spontaneous and furious singing. The Rebbe ascended to his platform. He turned to us - and to the seventy little boys who were standing facing him, and he urged us all to sing louder and faster. At one time everyone in the Hall, except ONE - was singing, yelling and screeching - whilst at the same time jumping up - and down with great gusto. The one exception was the "Comptroller of this great City of New York". He could not let himself go - completely - but he did stand amongst the crowd and clapped his hands together lightly but very rhythmically.

After Mincha I was standing outside 770 when a car drew up. The Rashag's wife (the Rebbe's sister-in-law) stepped out. I noticed that there was another lady sitting in the rear of the car - and she was waving to me. I was gratified and delighted to see that it was our own dear Rebbetzen.

Poor Roselyn was sitting on her usual bench opposite to 770, and she missed this auspicious and lucky occurrence.

I heard later that they had been to the hospital to see the Rashag. The latest bulletin stated that he was making satisfactory progress, but it was not yet certain whether he would be able to return to 770 for Simchas Torah.

There was much noise, laughter and music emanating from the Succah at 770, so I went to investigate, together with Roselyn.

We discovered that there was a party in progress for over two hundred Russian immigrants. The Succah was crowded with men, women and children, but mostly with women. Entertainment and food were provided.

Levi Baumgarten followed - also with a few songs. Afterwards, Rabbi Nisnevitch made quite a long speech in Russian - I didn't understand even one word - whilst a man, quite undeterred went amongst the audience offering his services with his Esrog and Lulov. He was annoyed when Roselyn refused to have a shake:

Meanwhile many in the Succah had lost interest in this long speech - which was still being delivered, although I was positive that they understood Russian - or maybe that was just the reason why they had lost interest. However, they were chatting, drinking soda, eating cake, and benching Esrog.

Chazan Levin, from Paris, was the next entertainer.

Before we left, we heard a lady address the assembly. She spoke very vehemently (in Russian, of course) on the significance and importance of lighting the candles on Shabbos and on the Festivals. She explained that many women had fulfilled this mitzvah in Russia - in secret. It had sustained their morale during all the privations which they had suffered. Now T.G. they were free and could practice this Mitzvah in the open and in public.

As I have stated previously, the Rebbe had urged all of us to increase every day the joy of the Yom Tov of Simchas Bais Hashoevu. Moreover we were told to visit - especially - other communities in their Succahs aid to celebrate this Yom Tov together with them in order that they could enjoy this Simcha in added measure.

I was prevailed upon to join a group. I didn't have much choice. My name had been put onto a published list, which was also submitted to the Rebbe.

Our group was to meet outside 770 at 6.30 p.m. in the evening and travel by car to Englewood, in New Jersey. Rabbi Binyam Cohen was our group leader. I knew him well when he resided in London. A nice young man. He had now been living in Melbourne, Australia for the past six years. Our colleagues on this mission were F.abbi Ellie Zilberstrum and his son Binyomin from Jerusalem; Rabbi Label Zalmanoff of Bnei Brak. The driver's name was Shmuel Light from Toronto, but now living in New York.

We duly arrived at the Englewood Synagogue and Community Centre in New Jersey, promptly, at the appointed time of 7.45 p.m.

A few members of the Englewood Community were already present. We chatted together for about thirty minutes. We then made our way to the Succah. On the table were set glasses, cake and soda. Subsequently there were twenty-three men and women present (sixteen from Englewood and seven of us - I cannot recall the name of the seventh person in our group). It was a nice large Succah, and just like the Home of Abraham our forefather, it had a large open doorway on each of the four sides. But unlike Abraham's house it was rather cold in this succah.

Rabbi Cohen opened up the proceedings. He modestly confessed that he was a teacher in Melbourne (Actually he was the Head of the Yeshiva). He spoke about his experiences in London and in Australia.

After his talk, he produced a bottle of vodka. We needed this because the atmosphere in this succas was becoming colder all the time - not spiritually, but materially. With the four large open doors, we were vulnerable and wide open to all the elements. (We could have done with an electric element). However, the vodka warmed us up a little. We then sang some nigunim, which also helped to "break the ice".

Rabbi Cohen then invited me to say a few words. I spoke about this Yom Tov of Simchas Bais Hashoevu: of the joy and ecstasy with which it was commemorated in the days of the Bess Hamikdosh (Holy Temple). I also read a few excerpts from my last "Encounter with the Rebbe", after which we sang more nigunim. The two Rabbonim from Israel whom we had brought with us were very cheerful and lively gentlemen, who sang with must verve and "frailichkeit". Unfortunately they could not understand nor could they speak one single word of English.

Binyomin felt a little sorry for them. After all they were distinguished Rabbonim and excellent speakers - in Yiddish. He asked the audience whether they understood Yiddish. The answer was in the negative - no. He now felt more sorry for them and persisted in asking one of them to address us.

He did so. He spoke very well indeed, but not having understood one word of which I had said, he repeated most of the remarks which I had related about Simchas Bais Hashoevu. After he had concluded, Binyamin considered it only right and proper that the audience should know what the speaker had said to

them in Yiddish.

So, for their benefit, he translated the Yiddish into English. So for the third time we were treated to the same story of Simchas Beis Hashoevu. Three times - already a Chazoka - a tradition.

I decided to try and enliven the proceedings by telling a good "Yiddish Joke". The one about the two Jewish gentlemen who met each other in New York. It happened before the War. They chatted, and typically, one asked the other from where he came. "I come from a small village in Poland," he replied. The next question was how many Jews lived there. "About five hundred" was the answer. "Tell me" went on the other "What do they do for a living?" "Oh, they are boot makers, tradesmen and farmers". "How many gentiles are there in your village?" went on the questioner. "About fifty" was the reply. "And what do they do?" he was asked. "Oh, they go around the village all day Shabbos making the fires and stoking up the heat. They are called "Fire Goyim".

It was now the Polish Jew's turn to ask the questions. "Where do you come from?" - "Manchester", was the answer. "How many Jews live there?" - "About forty thousand". "Forty thousand Jews. KAH. How very wonderful. What do they all do for a living?" "They are shopkeepers, factory owners, merchant bankers and so forth." "Now tell me, how many gentiles are there in Manchester?" "About seven hundred thousand". "Seven hundred thousand gentiles: Tell me why do you need so many goyim?" ::

No laughter, no acclamation greeted the punch line of this joke. And I always thought it was such a good one. I had related it in English, too. It then dawned on me that in these days, in modern America - and in England, too, there was no need any longer for non-Jews to go from house to house to make and stoke up the fires. Everyone had a central heating system installed in their homes even with Shabbos clocks and these fire goyim had become redundant many many years ago. It was no wonder that they could not appreciate the joke. I must be getting older. I can well recall on more than one occasion waiting, shivering with cold on a Shabbos morning for the fire boy to come along and light the fire.

Before we left, I was approached by Mrs R. Dilcher, of Box 454, West New York, N.J. 07093. She wished to purchase my book. She wanted to know the price and she desired to pay me immediately. It was very gratifying, but I had none to spare. I did have just one left in my apartment, but someone had borrowed it, and I have never seen it since. The person who borrowed it was a Rabbi. I gave him a copy of Number Eleven. He wanted also Number Ten. I only had this one copy left. He insisted - he must have it. It is priceless. And to prove it he wished to take the Number Ten and was going to photocopy every page. It would cost a mere \$14½. It was well worth it, he said. And he would return the book to me straight away. I was persuaded to part with this edition, and I have not seen him, nor the book, since.

I will admit that I remained in Crown Heights only about ten days after this event. And to photocopy one hundred and forty pages would take a long time. Maybe it will take twelve months, especially if my borrower is touring or working in remote parts of Europe. I hope that he will return to 770 next year - with my "Encounter".

We returned from Englewood at 11 p.m. The driver dropped us off at the corner of Eastern Parkway and Kingston Avenue, adjacent to 770. I had been wondering whether the Rebbe had been relating another Sicho after Maariv.

However the first thing I noticed was that there were hundreds of men and women, boys and girls, promenading and parading up and down Eastern Parkway and near to 770. It looked like a pre-War Bank Holiday crowd on the North Pier, Blackpool or on the Boardwalk in Atlantic City in the same period. All were busy walking, talking and shouting.

Above all this din, I heard the Rebbe's voice coming over the loudspeaker situated outside 770. I presumed that this was a recording of a previous Sicho.

I was amazed and flabbergasted to learn that this was actually the Rebbe himself, in person, still giving over the Sicho, which he had begun over one and a half hours ago. The Rebbe was probably waiting for me to return from Englewood! I managed to push my way into 770, and perforce had to stay at the far back of the Hall. I listened to the Rebbe for another hour or so. So instead of the Sicho taking thirty minutes as they did on the previous four evenings, we now had the pleasure of a two and a half hour long one. Fortunately the microphone made it possible to hear the Rebbe from every part of the Hall and even outside.

It was now well past midnight, so I collected Roselyn from the flat and we went to join the festivities at Kingston Avenue and Montgomery Street.

There was now a six piece (man) band with Ellie Lipsker and other friends in attendance. They were installed upon an open truck. It was really lively. Not only was the band itself making a terrific noise, but the sound was amplified by microphones and loudspeakers. Extra lighting had also been fixed.

About fifteen hundred men and boys were dancing and singing, and about seven hundred women and girls - and quite a few babies - were milling around too. All the windows and the doors of the premises round about were wide open. Crowds of people were at each window and doorway - and every outside fire escape was filled to overflowing - very dangerously, I might add - with people who should have known better. We left at 1.30 a.m. I was told that the band played on until 4.30 a.m. It still wasn't late enough for some of our dancers who continued at it until 5.30 a.m.

Later on an announcement was made to the effect that there would again be singing and dancing in the streets on the following night - all through the night - with bands playing the music. But - the venue - was changed to a different location - about half a mile away from the present site. It seemed that the neighbours had suffered quite enough and had complained to the authorities. I didn't blame them!!

One evening the news was flashed through the grape-vine that the Rebbe intended to visit the Succah at 770, in order to welcome all the visitors and guests.

Aitnough I did not take my meals in this Succah, I did consider myself as a visitor. I therefore made my way there very quickly, accompanied by Mendel.

The Succah was built at the side of 770 - along its full length. I surmised that the Rebbe would address us NOT from the top end of the Succah, but from the centre spot, so that he would be equidistant from everyone in this building.

We chose very good seats, so that we should be sitting directly facing the Rebbe.

The Rebbe arrived followed by his personal aides - Rabbis Chadakov, Label Groner, Bimyamin Klyne and Myer Harlick - and he walked right to the far end of the Succah.

Mendie, the perfect gentleman, gave up his seat to Naftali Cohen - but it didn't make any difference. Because as soon as the Rebbe commenced to speak, everyone jumped up onto the benches and onto the tables. Obviously those of us who still remained in our seats - and it had become dangerous to do so, could neither see nor hear anything. We did manage to struggle to our feet, but vision and sound were still obscured. We all stood crushed together, until the Rebbe concluded his talk and made his exit from the Succah.

When the Rebbe speaks through the microphone, everyone can hear (even as far as Manchester and Israel:;) but it is really a great pity that we, who are standing only a few yards from the Rebbe can see and hear nothing (when no microphone is being used) only just because people are selfish. If everyone would remain seated or stood in their own places, everyone would have a chance to see and to hear. But when everyone is, literally, trying to climb higher than his neighbour then it becomes just hopeless. Roselyn informed me that whilst the Rebbe was speaking scores of men and boys - plus a couple of Russian or French women were hanging down the outside wall of the Succah - along its whole length. Some were clutching the roof ends, others were clutching the legs of those already hanging there. Roselyn said "The whole wall was black with what looked like leeches".

Next morning, Monday, I arose as usual at 7.30 a.m. I discovered that Yossi had not been into bed at all that night. He had slept on a bench in 770 for an hour. Dovid and Mendie had been asleep since 6 a.m. and were "dead to the world". I realise that they were obeying the Rebbe's instructions in so far as increasing Simcha more and more each day. But I would have considered it more important and beneficial to daven with the Rebbe than to remain fast asleep when it was time for the morning service.

I was early, so I managed to obtain my usual place in the "Esrog" line at 770. The Rebbe had been very anxious about my health on the previous day, because I had stood outside without wearing a coat. I was determined to put on a coat on this morning even if it was heatwave weather. The Rebbe arrived at 8.40 a.m. He glanced at me. He glanced at my coat. Then he gave me a lovely smile of acknowledgement and appreciation. The Rebbe was obviously pleased that I had obeyed and carried out his command.

## Chapter 17: The Children's Rally and G-d's Army

You will have read in the early part of this book about a Children's Rally which took place last Shovuos, when I had the merit and pleasure to act as Chazan (Reader) at the Mincha service.

The Rebbe's theme at that time was that "the Hearts of the Fathers should turn to their Children, and the Hearts of the Children to their Fathers".

On this Monday afternoon a similar Rally was to be held after Mincha.

Again, the boys sat in the front of the Hall, and the girls at the rear. There was no mechitzoh (division) but one was ready to be affixed at a moment's notice during the Mincha service. Rabbi J. J. Hecht was in charge. A couple of clowns were jumping and scampering about amongst the children.

One of them, with a white face (painted), a long red nose (false) and a big bushy beard (not false) approached me - he wanted to borrow a Gartel (black belt) with which to daven Mincha. There was also a band in attendance.

The Rebbe had already issued a special letter for this Rally, which was relevant and pertinent to Jewish Children all over the world.

In this letter was mentioned, for the first time (as far as I am aware) the words "Tzivos Hashem" (G-d's Army). The Rebbe would elaborate on this new theme in his talk to the children that afternoon.

Rabbi Moishe Bogomilsky read out this letter to the assembly, whilst everyone remained standing.

"To All Jewish Children of  
pre-Bar/Bas Mitzvah Age

G-d bless you all!

Greeting and Blessing:

You surely know that we are now in a special year, called the year of Hakhel (Year of Assembly). During the time when the Bais Hamikdosh (Holy Temple) in' Jerusalem was in existence, it was in this year - and precisely in these (first) days of Chol-hamo'ed Succos - that the special Mitzvah (G-d's commandment) of Hakhel was carried out: All Jews, men, women, and children, even the very young ones, were assembled in the Bais Hamikdosh, where the King read before them portions from the Torah, and everybody listened very attentively, and learned to keep and do all that is written in the Torah throughout their entire life.

You surely also know that the Torah requires us, all Jews, to observe the anniversaries of important happenings in the history of our Jewish people; and to think deeply about these events, and to relive them as though we were there in person, in order to learn from them the proper lessons and to apply them in our personal lives, in our daily life here and now.

For example: When our very first festival, Pesach - on the 15th of Nissan - comes around, the uppermost thought in our mind is how G-d took us out from the Golus (exile) and slavery of Egypt, and made us free to serve Him and fulfil His Mitzvos..

Similarly, when the days of Hakhel come around (once in seven years), everyone of us, including the very small children, must become deeply mindful that our homes and every Jewish home, also the Jewish school that houses the children (and their classmates), should be pure and holy, like being in the Bais Hamikdosh; and that in every Jew, young and old, there is a "king" that rules and directs his daily activities, this being our Emunah (belief) in G-d, with which we begin our everyday life, as all of us, including the tiny tots say immediately upon rising in the morning: Modeh ani - "I give thanks to You, living and eternal King." We must listen attentively, with obedience and devotion, to this "king" in us, in order to make sure that everything we do is in keeping with what is written in His Torah.

Everyone should also be involved in Hakhel: Starting now and continuing through the year - on suitable occasions, and particularly on Shabbos - to get together for the purpose of learning a portion of Torah or a Torah subject, and encouraging each other in the doing of Mitzvos all the better.

In order that all this should be with still greater Hatzlocho, it would be a good idea for those who can participate more often in such gatherings, to form a kohol, a permanent group, or unit, under the same name everywhere "Tzivos Hashem" "G-d's Army", to which every Jew already belongs from childhood, all the better to carry out the Divine order: "Fill the earth and master it" - mastering all that is around him/her by filling the environment with true light, the light of Torah and Mitzvos, so that everyone will see and know that the whole world is G-d's.

Wishing you much Hatzlocho in all above, and - a joyful Yom Tov, and that the entire year should be a good and sweet year.

Note: Because of the holiness of the Festival the Rebbe Shlita did not sign this letter.

Rabbi Butman told an interesting story, the band played. The clowns clowned and everybody sang.

Then the Rebbe arrived amidst great excitement. Film photographers rushed forward dragging their heavy equipment and long trailing wires. Then they retreated - and ran around in circles. Leaders were chasing children away from the passageway which the Rebbe intended to use on his way to the lectern on the platform. The children rushed back, in between the leaders' legs. When ten were pushed back - another twenty came forward. The Rebbe halted for a few moments, whilst he handed over money for Tzedoka (Charity) to various children. He then marched forward towards the platform to the tune of "Vesomachto". The Rebbe set a terrific pace when he arrived on the platform. (I ceased clapping my hands, much sooner than the Rebbe did).

I think that the Chazan had started the service, because the whole assembly took over, saying Ashray together, word by word, slowly and tunefully. Rabbi J. J. and/or Rabbi Butman led the congregation. They sang and said it through the microphone.

No one could hear the Chazan, so during the Kaddish and the repetition of the Amida, Myer Horlick

stood close to the Chazan. Whenever the name of G-d was mentioned in the Brochas, Myer would signal to those gentlemen who were at the microphone so that the congregation could answer Boruch Hu UBoruch Shmo. The same occurred during the Kaddish and at the conclusion of the Broch a when Myer would give a different signal so that the children - with the Rebbe leading them - could reply Omain and so forth in a slow but loud rhythmic manner.

Every service is normally concluded with the paragraph of Olainu, and is followed by the Mourners' Kaddish. It is our custom to recite another four sentences, which are said silently - and quickly.

However, at Children's services, the second of these four sentences commencing Utzu Aitzo is sung, and repeated many many times, with very much fervour and energy. In fact, from this time onwards until after Shabbos Beraishis, which this year occurred on the day immediately following Simchas Torah. The Rebbe made a point of ensuring that the Utzu Aitzo sentence was sung loudly and vigorously after every service.

The Rebbe personally began this tune and conducted the children with a very fast and increasingly quicker tempo.

The English translation of the first sentence is "Do not fear sudden terror, nor the destruction of the wicked when it comes". We then sing the second sentence, Utzo - which means "Contrive a scheme but it will be foiled; conspire a plot, but it will not materialise, for G-d is with us".

The next item was the recital of the Twelve Torah sayings. J.J. had a little difficulty in obtaining order. The drummer gave a long roll on the drums and concluded with a loud bang and crash on the cymbals. The Rebbe was highly amused. This achieved the required effect and there was complete silence for a few moments. J.J. complained that it was the adults in the Women's Shool and the men and boys in the other Ladies department who were making all this fearful din. They should be given lollipops, like babies.

J.J. commented that we had visitors and guests from all over the world - just like a mixed up United Nations. He was therefore choosing representatives from different countries to recite these twelve verses. All, of course, were under Bass-Mitzvah or Bar-Mitzvah age. He called up the following five girls and seven boys:

Schneur Zalmon Goldstein from Spain

Sholom Ben Nachshon from Tzefas,

S. Zalmon Wolfe from Nachlass Chabad,

Miss Rivka Glitzin, Jerusalem - all from Israel.

Miss Channa Soro Loewenthal and Menachem Mendel Vogel, both from London, England.

Levi Yitzchok Azimoff and Miss Chaya Mousa Liberoff represented Paris, France.

Miss Rivka Aidelman came from Morrocco.

Miss Shainie Rivka Bellina was from Italy.

and Levi Yitzchok Caplan from Seattle and Menacham Mendel Gurevitz from New York both lived in the U.S.A.

All the above recited their verses in an excellent manner. They emphasised each word both vocally and physically - whilst all the assembly repeated every word after them.

The Rebbe then addressed the children in Yiddish. After speaking for about seven or eight minutes, the Rebbe paused for a slight intermission whilst Rabbi J.J. translated what the Rebbe had said, into English. This happened on a few occasions until the Rabbi had concluded the whole Sicho.

The main gist and points which the Rebbe emphasised were - in my opinion - as follows (my own version).

The Rebbe was confident that the message which he had relayed by letter to all Jewish children regarding this year of Haakel, was received and comprehended by all boys and girls, especially by the young and even by the tiny tots.

Although we now possess no Bais Hamikdosh and we are in exile, yet during this Succos, in this year of Haakel, we have to ensure that the children are gathered together to listen to words of Torah with much liveliness and joy - and with self-sacrifice. When these children will become Bar-Mitzvah or Bass-Mitzvah, they will remember throughout all their lives what is stated in the Torah, which Moishe (Rabainu) taught us and which was given to us as a permanent inheritance (heritage) - for ever.

The little children will surely have success in the battle with their "Evil Inclination". They are in the Army of the A'Mighty "Tzivas Hashem". Soldiers and officers who know what it says in the Torah, and will therefore win the battle for Yiddishkeit.

In these days of Succos - and the Simcha of this Yom Tov will last throughout the whole year, everyone will recognise that these children are in G-d's Army. Then G-d's promise will ensure success, with happiness, in their battles against the Evil Inclination and for the benefit of Yiddishkeit.

The first Mitzvah on the list of Mivtzaim (the Rebbe's Mitzvah Campaign) is "Love Your Neighbour as Yourself". Therefore, all should influence their friends for good - even little boys and girls.

We are now, all of us mobilised into G-d's Army. G-d created the World. He is the Boss, and the One and Only Commander-in-Chief. G-d relies upon you to fight His Wards against the Evil Inclination and you are going to win. You are in G-d's Army and each soldier realises that it is a serious, resolute, though a happy matter. When the soldier receives an order he does not ask for an explanation. His job is to carry out the order without question or hesitation.

When one eats, then the food must be Kosher. It may look nice, it may even be nice. Nevertheless, the order is issued that if it is not Kosher, then we must not eat it. In addition a Brocha must first be made. The same applies to drink.

A soldier must have discipline, otherwise he may endanger the whole Army.

No is No. A trooper does not know what is going on at the Front. But he does realise that each order must be carried out and obeyed immediately. Even if he thinks that he can do something different, which in his opinion may be beneficial, he is not allowed to do so. Even an officer does not know everything. Only the Commander-in-Chief knows the overall plan. Our Commander-in-Chief is Our G-d, Our Holy King. We must all accept the yoke of the Kingdom of Heaven, and carry out His orders with confidence and Simcha.

Another matter -, there has to be a constant check on the troops. They have to be paraded regularly and judged in order to see how they had comported and acquitted themselves.

Those who had distinguished themselves will receive citations, medals and gifts.

The Rebbe went on to say that a Parade should now be planned for Channuka time. Each soldier, boy and girl, should bring with them a report on how they had behaved and those who had shown outstanding merit would receive valuable prizes.

A booklet would be issued with space on the last page, wherein to write the names of friends who might be persuaded to join G-d's Army. The Rebbe quoted the two well-known apt verses: (1) "If you will see, then you will find" and (2) "Words which come from the heart will reach the (other's) heart". Therefore speak to all your friends. Go home and influence your Dad, and your Mom, your brother and your sister, and yes - your Bobby and Zaidie - because - all are in G-d's Army. And the Commander-in-Chief will get much pleasure. He will bestow His blessings on you all, for a year of goodness and sweetness every day - spiritually and materially.

The Rebbe continued by saying that he desired to impress upon all those who had listened to this broadcast, (The proceedings of this Rally were relayed throughout the U.S.A. and to the whole world) that they should try and fulfil what was said here this afternoon. Also those who were in touch with friends in different towns and in other countries, should recount to them what was spoken here. The Rebbe advised that the Twelve J'rah verses should be translated and printed into the aforementioned booklets and all should be prepared for the forthcoming Parade.

We have now davened Mincha, and recited the Twelve Torah verses. We now have to give Tzedoka before we leave.

The Rebbe concluded by saying that there should be gatherings of children everywhere, all over the world before Shemini Atzeress and they should all give stoney for Tzedoka. Then G-d's Army will march with hands (and heads) held high together with our youngsters and our oldsters to meet our Moshiach (Redeemer). We will, with G-d's help, take us out of Exile into Our Holy Land and into Jerusalem, our capital City.

Every single Jew has a claim on Jerusalem, even small children. King David bought it and it is ours. All of it belongs to us - the Temple Mount, the Western Wall and so forth. No one is allowed to give up any part of our everlasting inheritance.

Moshiach is coming, and will rebuilt the Holy Temple in Jerusalem, where once again all Jews will gather together in the Bais Hamikdosh, especially during the years of Haakel, to celebrate the Yom Tov of Success (and the other Festivals).

It was then announced that all the boys' leaders should come forward to the Rebbe who was standing on the platform. They would be handed copies of the Rebbe's letter and dimes which they should distribute to all the boys (the dimes in order to fulfil the Mitzvah of giving Tzedoka) after which the girls' leaders were invited to come along. Well - ALL the girls - Every one of them - in addition to the leaders, made a dash for the platform!! I cannot say that I really blamed them!

The Rally ended with everyone singing the latest and most popular refrain of-"We want Moshiach now, we want Moshiach now, we want Moshiach now, we do not want to wait". Practically every service ended with the children singing this song in English.

The Rebbe had instructed us to increase the Simcha of Yom Tov every day. Nowhere was this seen more clearly than at 770, and especially was this so just prior to the Rebbe's entrance into the Shool for Maariv on that Monday evening.

The excitement was terrific. The Rebbe had been concentrating his efforts on the youngsters, the new recruits to Tzivos Hashem - G-d's Army. Hundreds of these young boys had pushed and squeezed themselves right to the front. When the Rebbe entered and ascended to the platform they all sang lustily and heartily, but they were really screaming and screeching, clapping: hands and jumping.

One man outclassed and surpassed everyone with his forceful clapping, dynamic energy, vigorous vitality and vibrant intensity. This was Our Revered and Beloved Rebbe, Shlita and KAH. May the A'Mighty grant him full and healthy years together with our Rebbetzen, until his 120th birthday or until Moshiach will be revealed.

## Chapter 18: More Joys of Simchas Bais Hashoevu

After Maariv the Rebbe again gave over to us a Sicho. (This is my own version). Tonight, he said, was the beginning of the sixth day of Succos - and also the sixth day of Simchas Bais Hashoevu. What extra, and additional Simcha could we create after five days and nights of intensive joy. Simcha becomes a Mitzvah. We say on every Yom Tov "Moadim LeSimcha"- festivals for rejoicing. But on Succos we have a special additional simcha, for we say on this Yom Tov only - "Chag Simchasainu" - the season of our Rejoicings.

It becomes even more apt on this night, because our chief guest in the Succah this evening is Yoseph (Hatzadik). The name Yoseph means "more, something extra". Mother Rochel gave him this name because she hoped for more - that is - another son. So here was another reason for added rejoicing tonight.

The Rebbe then issued another warning to Eretz Yisroel regarding the disastrous Me Hu Yehudi statute. Every "so-called convert" to Judaism was handed a certificate a ridiculous piece of paper, which was a downright lie and would only enlarge the darkness of our Exile. Falsehoods and deception cannot survive.

The wicked Haman is quoted in the Megilla as saying that "Jews are different from all the other nations in the World". The gentiles do not wish to be converted. This statute is a catastrophe for Jews. Only religious Jews can give a ruling regarding Me Hu Yehudi. And even the goyim agree to this decision. If one sought the advice of a doctor regarding a cure, and this person did just the opposite he would be adjudged insane.

One "convert" still practices her Catholicism and brings up her children in the same way. She never did want to be Jewish. She desired to please her "husbandn - and well - "it is only a piece of paper!!"

The man who started this Ger Keloh Halocha, (conversion NOT according to Jewish law) married a gentile woman and her children maintain that they are still goyim. This fellow has now ran away from his family.

These same people have made mistakes all the time. Israel needed all the oil it could get, and yet gave away all the oilwells to our enemy. This was a silly thing to do, because even before the "Peace Treaty" had been signed, they (the enemy) maintained that Jerusalem and even ALL Israel must be returned to the Arabs. Egypt has received extra arms and has given these to our enemies who are directly on our borders. The Egyptians asserted that they could not help themselves.

Nations who have never been interested in Jerusalem now all demand a say in this matter.

G-d has stated that **if** you will keep **my** statutes then you need not be afraid. You will live in Peace.

Simchas Bais Hashoevu is a big Simcha and should be celebrated in the Shool, in the Succah and by dancing in the streets. When you go into the streets to dance, and these thoroughfares become completely surrounded by men who are holding each other's hands, then these streets become a Reshus Hayochid (a

private domain) and a holy place.

This dancing in Exile will bring forth the redemption.

The Rebbe had spoken for one and a-half hours exactly. During the Sicho the Rebbe had mentioned the ten miracles which had taken place in the Bais Hamikdosh, and which were above, higher than, nature.

Before I had left the apartment at 8.30 p.m., Dovid had just arrived. He was so tired that he just flopped down onto a bed as he was - (it happened to be Yenta Chaya's). He was completely dressed and still wearing his jacket, his hat and boots - and fell immediately asleep.

I returned at 12.30 a.m., after midnight, and found Dovid still in a deep resonant sleep. The whole place was reverberating with his sonorous snoring.

Mendie walked by. I think he was sleep-walking. He has been like this for the past day or two. His eyes, behind his glasses, were bulging and opened wide. He was staring ahead with a horrible vacant expression in them. Roselyn said that he looked like a zombie (whatever that is:) I talked to him, I spoke to him. He looked at me blankly and bleakly. Then his mouth opened and remained wide open during which time a deep full-throated growl was emitted. It sounded like H A A A A A A H ? I think this was intended to mean, translated into English "I beg your pardon, Zaidie, and please will you repeat the question?!"

I have not been able to get anything else out of him latterly – just "H A A A A H?" He needed two things very urgently - sleep - and more sleep.

I was telling Roselyn that it was terrible at 770. All day long I am approached by people continuously demanding a dollar - a dollar - a dollar. Roselyn retorted that it was really too much, and we get enough of this at home. I observed that a dollar is not very much in these days, and not many will accept such a small donation today. However, when I informed her that the names of these people were Yossi, Mendie, Dovid and Yenta Chaya, she was even more annoyed.

## **Hoshanna Rabba**

Tuesday night was Hoshanna Rabba. The Rebbe did not disappoint us for after Maariv he related to us another Sicho for this seventh night of Succos and of Simchas Bais Hashoevu. The Rebbe told us (this is my version) that Hoshanna Rabba is mentioned in the Mishna and that we say Tikun of that night. The tikun which we recite tonight is different to the one we say on Shovuos. On Hoshanna Rabba we say the Mishna Torah. This is another definition for the fifth book of the Chumish, "Devorim" - words, which are the actual ones which Moishe Rabainu himself spoke to the children of Israel in the desert, before he died. We also recite the Sefer Tehillim (the whole Book of Psalms) which was written by King David. Therefore it is appropriate that he is to be the Chief Guest on this seventh night in the Succah, because we are still beholden to celebrate Simcha Bais Hashoevu on this night, too. To what extent depends on the person. If peace is here, everything is here, especially Simcha. Tonight too is the birthday of the Baal Shem Tov, the founder of Chassidus. It is also the birthday of the Alter Rebbe, the founder of Chabad, so we already have much about which to be joyful.

Our Chief Guest tonight is always referred to as KING David. Regularly, once every month when we sanctify the New Moon, we recite the words "Dovid Melech Yisroel Chai Vekayom" - "David King of Israel is living and enduring".

Every month, on the Shabbos before Rosh Chodesh, and every day, too, we recount the praises of G-d as composed by King David.

The Zohar tells us that our Chief Guest on the seventh night is Solomon (and that David's night is on the sixth). So we could have Dovid and Shlomo together. We have also been told that Moshiach will be a Ben Dovid - the Son of David. So we have even more cause for celebration tonight. In any case, we have commemorated the joy of Simchas Bais Hashoevu on every previous night of Succos, so we must carry on in the same way. We should dance in the streets for a minimum of either seven or eighteen minutes, then continue in the Shool and in the Succah - and also to learn.

The Rebbe concluded by telling us that we should not worry about the law of Me Hu Yehudi - nor about Parnosso. He wished us all a Happy and a Sweet New Year, and quoted the gemorah which states that when everyone will have attained complete Purity then Moshiach will come straight away.

We obeyed the Rebbe's instructions and about four thousand of us, men and boys danced and sang for fifteen minutes in the Shool. We then erupted into Eastern Parkway. This roadway consists of the two approach roads on either side of the main thoroughfare which consists of six lanes - three in each direction.

We danced on the actual roadway of Eastern Parkway and completely blocked the three northern lanes.

The police used their initiative and parked their vehicles in such a position that all traffic was diverted onto the other, the southbound carriageways. The three lanes on that side were then divided into two lanes of cars driving one way and one lane going in the other direction.

We danced for eighteen minutes, and then transferred to the Succah - just as the Rebbe had instructed us to do.

I returned to the Shool in order to say Tikun. At 1 a.m. in the morning, the Rebbe arrived to join us in reciting Tehillim. The photographer was busily engaged in taking pictures. The Rebbe indicated to him that it would be a bigger mitzvah if he would also join in with the congregation and also say Tehillim - and he did; We completed this service at 2.50 a.m.

We, all our family, retired to bed at 3 a.m. on that night. This was the earliest recorded time for the whole of the two weeks, which we had spent at 770.

We were now approaching some of the most exciting days in the Jewish Calendar, with Simchas Torah as the centrepiece or the "piece de resistance". As I have mentioned in the introduction to this edition, I do not wish to repeat the same fundamental happenings that occur every Yom Tov and about which I have fully written last year and in the previous years.

During this morning service of Hoshanna Rabba, the Rebbe descended from the platform to participate in

the seven circuits of the Bimah for the Hasaanos service. After each circuit the Rebbe returned to the lectern (on the ground level) to emphasise that each circuit was a separate entity.

The procession was not led by the Chazan, but by Label Groner who dragged along the Chazan so that he would not loiter on the way.

After the service, Yisroel Goldstein who was the new "Warden, in charge of the children at 770", and whom I have mentioned before as being a very good supervisor, swept up, immediately, all the beaten and left over Hasaanos, so that the Shool should be ready and cleaned for the next service.

Jews are a remarkable people. We pay the top prices for the best quality Hashaanos just so that we can beat them and bang them, onto the floor five times - Well, it's a Mitzvah;

One fellow wanted me to give him my Esrog. He maintained that as the Rebbe had presented me with this, then it must be 100% Kosher. I asked him, what he intended to do with it. He replied that he would make jam with it. (One could make quite a few jars from my Esrog - it was a super-large one). This then would be a Segulla for him, meaning a precious treasure for him and/or a lucky charm. I preferred to keep this for myself - if there are any treasures or charms available, I had a first claim!

At 12.30 p.m., the Rebbe commenced the distribution of the lekach (cake). The Rebbe had already issued a strong warning: He desired everyone to come for Lekach. He did not want a repetition of what had occurred before, when people were told to keep away - presumably for the sake of the Rebbe's health. The Rebbe had declared "Do not play games with me".

Some people will never learn! This, in spite of what the Rebbe had told me at Yechidus last year. He then made the following profound and fundamental statement -

"I want everyone to come and see me; I want everyone to come for Koss Shel Brocha; I want everyone to come for Lekach; and I want everyone to need their Rebbe - and then - the A'Mighty will give me strength to carry on".

There was a very good crown of men and boys waiting in the line. I had the opportunity to glance into the Rebbe's Succah. It was made from solid walnut panelling. Inside there were four electric lights, a heater, and an air-conditioner. There were also a washing bowl, a cupboard, and a shelf for books. To complete the homely atmosphere, a nice carpet covered all the floor. The Succah roof consisted of a selection of special branches and leaves. In case it rained there was a folding canvas awning or canopy which could be lowered over the roof of the Succah and so provide excellent protection from the elements.

Incidentally, for the past day or so there had been the sounds of constant hammering and banging emanating from the house next door to our apartment. This happened to be the Rebbe's Library. I learned that the Rebbe and Rebbetzen had moved into these premises for the period until after Yom Tov. Therefore a private Succah had been erected for them.

At 1.45 p.m., the Rebbe handed to me my rations of cake which was accompanied by a very nice brocha for a Good and Sweet New Year. I reciprocated this brocha to the Rebbe.

I then asked the Rebbe if I could have a little extra cake for our friends in Manchester. The Rebbe took a large serviette (napkin) opened it up and placed therein two large pieces of ginger cake. The Rebbe suggested that when I returned home, I should get someone to bake a "Ruggelle" - or a very large cake, and these two pieces of Rebbe's Lekach should be well blended into this cake mixture so that everyone would have the chance of receiving a "Kazayus" (an amount equal in size to an olive).

After lunch it was the ladies' turn to line up for the Rebbe's Lekach. Roselyn took Yenta Chaya with her. Mr. Friedrich, the photographer was busy, so very busy. He looked like the Man from Mars or from Outer Space. He wore a peculiar helmet on his head, from which two large and long prongs or antennas protruded. I presumed that these were part of his sound equipment.

Anyway, he was taking pictures of some of the ladies as they received their cake from the Rebbe. I managed to persuade Mr. Friedrich to take a photograph of Roselyn and Yenta Chaya when it was their turn to be greeted and received by the Rebbe. He confided to us, that as this was a special, a personal request and to avoid creating envy and jealousy, Roselyn and Yenta Chaya should wait at the end of the queue, or line. It was a long wait, because every time the last lady in the line presented herself to the Rebbe, another three or four joined the queue. Well, everything must ultimately come to an end, and lo and behold, there were no more women in the queue.

Roselyn and Yenta Chaya approached the Rebbe and received their cake and a nice brocha. The Rebbe also wished Roselyn a Fraileche (joyful) Yom Tov. As there were no more ladies, I followed Roselyn in order to again extend Yom Tov good wishes to the Rebbe. The Rebbe enquired of me whether I had or had not received Lekach. I answered that I had certainly been given a good ration of cake. The Rebbe smiled and wished me too, a Happy Yom Tov.

Meanwhile, I had noticed that Mr. Friedrich had been pointing his camera at us, had been squinting through the aperture, had been pressing buttons and in the process had been grimacing most frightfully. I expected some really excellent photographs which would be well worth whatever price Mr. Friedrich would charge me.

However, unfortunately, although Mr. Friedrich repeatedly promised to let us have the pictures "very soon" and - on the day of our departure, commented that he very well knew our address. We are still waiting to see something that was taken well over six months ago. I do hope that he had a film in his camera, otherwise developments will be blank.

I met Rabbi Mentelik a little later. He invited me to address the Kinoss Hatorah which was to take place on the following Sunday. We were leaving for home on that day at about 6.30 p.m. so I assured him that I would speak to the boys as long as I would be called upon at an early hour. Rabbi Mentelik protested that this would not be possible - and he seemed almost relieved as he observed that "Oh, well, your Chazoka is to speak on Shovuos, so it won't really matter if you do not address us at this time!!"

Bimyamin Klyne informed me that he had handed into the Rebbe my Mashkie (the usual delivery of five bottles of vodka). The Rebbe would be distributing these on Simchas Torah. "I took no chances this time," he added, "because you will 'murder me', as you have written in your book, and I am frightened of you."

## Chapter 19: Simchas Torah

The most exciting, fascinating and fantastic Yom Tov was now imminent. Over the next two days, my three grandsons, Yossi, Mendel and Dovid, who were spending the month of Tishrei in Crown Heights, would again be joining the Union of Furniture Removers. They would be carting out from the Shool all the tables and the benches to ensure more room for the Hakofass, and then would bring them back again for the services and for the Farbraingen. Out and In - Out and In - Out and In - it seemed "ad infinitum".

The Rashag was making good progress healthwise, but was not sufficiently well to warrant him leaving the hospital in order to spend Simchas Torah at 770. Therefore the question on many lips was - with whom would the Rebbe dance at the Hakofass. Well, we would soon know!

We davened Maariv on the first night of Shmeni Atzeress, Wednesday, at 7.30 p.m. After which there was an interval until 9 p.m. This was to give the furniture removers the time to do their work, and also to enable some of the men to rush home, make Kiddush for their wives and families - and even to snatch a little meal for themselves. The Lubavitch custom is to eat in the Succah even on Shmeni Atzeress, but not on Simchas Torah. The blessing of Layshave Basuccah, however, is NOT recited on this Yom Tov.

Before the Rebbe arrived for the HaKofas, Label Groner made an announcement to the effect that no one would be allowed to stand upon the Rebbe's platform, this year. Well, if Label made such a dogmatic statement, then I, at least, had to take notice and show an example to others.

Nevertheless, I wanted to be near to the Rebbe so I squeezed into the space between the Omud (the Reader's lectern) and the wall. For a few moments I had a good view of the Rebbe standing on the platform just above me.

Unfortunately for me, many others had the same idea. Some men assumed that other people's feet were only a means of gaining height in order to obtain a better view for themselves. As I have previously mentioned, it is the constant swaying and surging forward of the crowd which makes standing near to the Rebbe so dangerous. I had my back to the wall, literally, which obviously would not yield a fraction of an inch. I felt that I was being strangled and found difficulty in breathing. Then through a sudden break in the human wall, I saw through an aperture that there were about one hundred children and also thirty adults on this platform. All of the children were actually sitting, crosslegged, and the adults were standing and leaning very close to the wall. I felt stifled and annoyed. I gave a sudden heave and a lurch, with all my might, and in the ensuing melee, I managed to attain my objective and reached the steps leading up to the platform. Boys and men were even seated, tightly packed, on these steps, but I eventually did succeed in achieving my target and joined the other men who were leaning against the wall.

On the following night there were as many as one hundred and fifty young boys and fifty men assembled there. I joined them too. I have never seen the place packed so tightly with people. There were at least fifty per cent more, present than at last year. And there has never been such a hectic and jubilant Simchas Torah in 770 - ever.

As usual, the seventeen verses of Atah Horaiso were recited three times before the Hakoffass were begun. On the first night (Shemeni Atzeress) the Rebbe says the first and the last verses. Illustrious Rabbonim

and distinguished visitors are invited to say some of the other sentences. I was called up to recite the sixteenth verse 'Malchusscho'. This was the same possuk which I had said last year. I warned the Gabai that he would have to be very careful next year because if I was given this same verse again then it would constitute a Chazoka. Then it would become essential for me to recite this verse every time in the future!

On the occasions of the other Hakoffass on Simchas Torah - evening and morning, there was a great incentive therefore and much financial competition to purchase these verses of Atoh Horaiso, because the Rebbe would recite them in the name of the buyers. On the night of Simchas Torah, the money which was raised, went to the Lubavitch Yeshiva, and the cash promised on the following morning was earmarked for the Merkoz - the organisation of 770.

This year there was a minimum price of \$3000 for each sentence. I had already arranged with Zalmon Gurary that he would find for me two partners. Yankel Katz again bought the first sentence for an "undisclosed amount". My friend, Myer Silberstein, from Antwerp purchased the second. I then had the pleasure of hearing my name announced, together with the names of two other gentlemen, for the third verse.

After the Atoh Horaisas had been concluded, the Hakoffass would then take place. The Rebbe obviously was presented with the first Sefer Torah for the very first Hakoffah. This was a concentrated and lively affair. The Rebbe did not actually dance with anyone. We all danced around the Rebbe. For the following Hakoffas the Rebbe stood at his lectern on the platform. The hundred and fifty small, young boys sat on the floor, spread out and sitting crosslegged. The Rebbe conducted them and urged and encouraged them to sing more loudly and with a much quicker tempo. (There was always one poor little lad crying, pitifully, with tears running down his face.)

Then to our utter amazement, it was noticed that the Rebbe had again been handed the small Sefer Torah, and was leading the procession for the fifth Hakoffah (circuit of the Bimah). He was accompanied by sixty boys on the first night. On the second night the Rebbe again participated in the fifth Hakoffah and about one hundred boys followed him. This fifth Hakoffah took about an hour to complete. Subsequently whenever the Rebbe went with Hakoffas, all the little boys joined in.

When the Rebbe had returned from dancing this fifth Hakoffah, it was announced on the Rebbe's instructions, that the Moshiach's Sefer Torah would be taken up to the Women's Shool, and all those young girls who were under the age of Bass-Mitzvah should take the opportunity of kissing the Torah. Incidentally, Yenta Chaya told me that when we in the Men's Shool are singing and dancing, then the ladies and girls also join in with their shouting, singing, clapping and banging. Of course, in the general din and commotion they are not heard downstairs.

Whilst we were awaiting the return of the Sefer Torah, the Rebbe sat down in his chair - facing all the young boys who were sitting on the floor at his feet. The Rebbe again conducted them and spurred them on to clap and to sing. He looked, to me, like a benign, gracious and warm-hearted father watching over his children.

We were still waiting for the Sefer Torah. Meanwhile the Rebbe distributed teeny drops of Mashke to some of the little boys. And - we were still waiting. The Rebbe requested Label Groner to ascend to the Women's Shool and to enquire of the whereabouts of Moshiach's Sefer Torah. He returned with the

information that the Sefer Torah had been transferred to the other Women's Shool, along the south side of the Shool Hall. Label shouted up to these ladies "Where is the Sefer Torah?" The women replied in unison that it had now left - and eventually it did arrive back to us.

On one night, Rabbi Zalmon Gurary was taking part in the first Hakoffa when he was overcome with the heat. He almost collapsed under the heavy weight of the large Sefer Torah which he was carrying. Dr. Ira Weiss, the Rebbe's doctor who was having a jolly good time singing and dancing, examined Zalmon Gurary and pronounced that the patient was not in any danger, but he should remain seated. Dr. Ira obtained a chair for him. Zalmon Gurary was not satisfied to take a passive role, and he repeatedly stood up to show the Rebbe that he was alive and well. The Rebbe indicated that he should sit down and remain down. Now here follows a very touching and humane anecdote. It is the custom that all those who had been honoured with participation in the first Hakoffah were invited - nay - were entitled to take part in the seventh, the last Hakoffah. And there was poor Zalmon Gurary ordered to remain in his chair!! Well - the Rebbe gave instructions that a small Sefer Torah should be handed to Zalmon Gurary, which he was to hold, still sitting in his chair, for the whole duration of the last Hakoffah. The radiance in Zalmon Gurary's eyes was wonderful to behold.

Here is another little story. I have mentioned above the name of Ira Weiss, the Rebbe's doctor. He is a real live wire. A tall handsome, clean-shaven and friendly young man. (He did say to me that I was very perceptive.) He really does enjoy dancing and singing and is not a bit inhibited. He normally wears a soft tweed trilby hat, not unlike a deerstalker. An English country gentleman's hat. I have another friend, Rabbi Gershen Henech Cohen, the world famous Lubavitch bookseller from Mea Shearim, Jerusalem. I regularly visit him in his shop, T.G. sometimes twice a year. In fact I called to see him last August. I have KAH nine grandsons T.G. so everytime I travel to Israel, I buy another pair of Tefillin. It is good stock, especially in these days of inflation! Gershen Henech told me that I was a lucky man, because he just happened to have the last pair of Tefillin which were written by the Rebbe's own scribe, in Israel, and there would be no more produced by Rabbi Shlomo Har Henick for at least another three or four months.

The reason was because he had received an order from the world-wide Neshei Chabad Organisation to write a new Sefer Torah in honour of the Rebbe and Rebbetzen on the occasion of their Golden Wedding. Delivery had to be made by Yud Tess Kisslev - in three months time. It normally takes eight or nine months to write a Sefer Torah, and so far he had only written the first book of Beraishis. So this scribe had given up everything else, so that he could concentrate on this special assignment and tribute to his and our beloved Rebbe. The Rebbe expressed the desire that he would like to greet the Moshiach, while he was holding the new Sefer Torah.

However, Gershen Henech was a small thin gentleman, very small indeed. He wore a nice long beard but his Peyut (his sideburns or side curls) with beautiful ringlets, were as long as his beard. He wore during Yom Tov, as a mark of respect, his Shabbos Shtreimel (fur hat) on his head. He danced with Dr. Ira Weiss. Gershen Henech came barely up to his shoulder. Then Ira did one of the funniest things I have ever seen. He exchanged hats with Gershen Henech. Well. Ira looked marvellous in it. It added inches to his stature. But, the checked tweed hat, fitting snugly on the head of Gershen Henech had just the opposite effect. Wearing his very long black Kapota (coat), he looked almost like a dwarf compared to Ira. It is impossible to adequately describe the hilarious scene. The two of them dancing together on the platform, with Gershen Henech taking two steps to Ira's one, and his sidecurls swinging and being flung from side to side. All were holding their sides which were in stitches from too much laughter. As we say

in England, Gershen Henech was a good sport, and took it well. The Rebbe had a good chuckle when he saw them.

Another friend of mine, Yisroel Duchman, held aloft a huge bottle, containing about a gallon of J.B. whisky. He was very generous and with a great flourish he offered everyone in his immediate vicinity a jiggerful (glass full) of this fiery liquid. He did not wish to be considered rude, nor unfriendly, so he also joined his friends in a "jiggerful" in order to wish each of them a hearty Lechayim, and a Happy Yom Tov.

It was good Simchas Torah fun, and he became more joyful and merrier with each passing moment. (Next day he protested and vehemently denied that he had taken any of this whisky himself - he only gave it to friends). One of these friends, who had probably received special privileges and favours, was my old pal Rabbi J.J. whose eyes held a vacant and glassy stare. Ultimately this vacant and glassy stare became completely glazed. He seemed dazed - then he nodded off, and fell fast asleep, amidst the singing, dancing and clapping.

I was again given the outstanding honour of being called up to participate in the first Hakoffah. As I have mentioned above, this entitled me to join in with the seventh, the last Hakoffah, too. Once more I felt that it was not really fair that I should take part in two Hakoffas on every occasion, when there were about ten thousand people present, who never had a chance of even one Hakoffah during the whole of Yom Tov.

The Rebbe declared that I should not be a Batlan. I realised that the Rebbe always chose his words very carefully. He did not say that I was a silly fellow to refuse such a great mitzvah. But a Batlan!? This remark puzzled me for quite a long time, until Shmuel gave me the answer. He looked up the word in the Yiddish/English dictionary and the following definitions were given for the word "Batlan".

(1) An idler. (2) Unworldly Man. (3) Unpractical man. (4) One maintained by the community in order to study and learn religion.

The Rebbe obviously referred to me as being in the category of No. 2 above. An unpractical man - not inclined to take action, even when offered an exceptionally good deal. The Rebbe was correct - I was offered the wonderful opportunity and Zechus of accompanying the Rebbe on another round of Hakoffas - and - I vacillated - I hesitated. But I went. I thoroughly deserved the appellation of "Batlan".

As I have written before - it was a very hectic Yom Tov. On the first night of Simchas Torah there was a Farbraingen from 9 p.m. till 11.30 p.m. There was an interval of one and a quarter hours, and the Hakoffas commenced at 12.45 after midnight, and continued until nearly 4 a.m. in the morning. On the day of Simchas Torah, the service and Hakoffas concluded at 1.15, and then again there was another Farbraingen at 6.15 p.m. which went on for two and a half hours, until 8.45 p.m.

The day immediately following Simchas Torah was Shabbos Beraishis. Not only was there a Farbraingen at 1.30 p.m. till 4.30 p.m. but a second Farbraingen commenced at 6.30 p.m. This ended at 9.30 p.m. and was followed by Maariv and Koss Shel Brocha.

This is an outline of what happened, in general - now for some more details.

Last year at the Simchas Torah Morning service, I went through a great deal of inconvenience to ensure that I had an Aliya, which is compulsory for everyone on this day. I had joined a Minyan at 8 a.m. in the Bess Hamedrish upstairs. This year I decided that what was good enough for thousands of other people, should be satisfactory and acceptable to me. Therefore during the layenning at the Rebbe's minyan, at the same time that those gentlemen were called up for the third Aliya (on Simchas Torah it is permissible for a few men to be joined together for each aliya), I, together with about another thousand men, stood up at our places, made the Brocha on the Torah, listened intently to the layenning and then made the second blessing. Other men did the same at the fourth, fifth and sixth Aliyas.

The Rebbe was called up for Chosson Beraishis. I have been asked by quite a few people why the Rebbe always has this particular Mitzvah, when it was considered (by some) that Chosson Torah was the more revered and prized of the two. However, I have heard that the Previous Rebbe (Z.Tz.L) was always the Chosson Beraishis. In fact, the Rebbe Shlita is called up "IM" (together with) the Previous Rebbe, who is proclaimed by name, as if accompanying the Rebbe. Just like the distinguished and illustrious guests who pay us honour by visiting us in our Succah.

Only one set of men are called up for the three and a half Hakoffas on Simchas Torah day. I had the great honour and merit to be included in that group. Actually someone who had wine rather too well had the audacity to argue with the Rebbe about the number of circuits already made!!

Next day was Shabbos Beraishis, and Tehillim was to commence at 8.30 a.m. As there were to be two Farbraingen on that day, Shmuel was taking no chances. He claimed his seat at just after 8 a.m. He sat in this place from that moment on and never budged all day long - until after the second Farbraingen at 9.30 p.m. except when he came to our apartment for a ten minute snack - of fish, Tzollent, Chicken and Melon - He is a quick and polished eater. Meanwhile Yossi guarded and kept his seat for him.

Chazan Toleshevsky had obtained leave of absence from his own Shool, especially to daven at the Omus for the Rebbe and for us. He was really excellent and fitted in and adapted different Lubavitcher tunes into the service and especially in the repetition of the Amida.

With the Rebbe's encouragement everyone joined in the singing. It was impossible to hear the Chazan, except when he repeated the Brochas, when obviously all remained silent in order to answer Omain and so forth.

After the service on Shemini Atzeress, we were invited to luncheon at the home of Rivka and Moishe Kartlasky. We already had our own four guests for Yom Tov - our grandchildren, and we could not very well forsake them.

Rivka and Moishe insisted that we should bring them, too. That meant an additional four very good eaters - six altogether, including Roselyn and me. We did not consider this to be very fair to our host and hostess.

However, we had no need to worry - because more than forty guests sat down to a lovely, sumptuous and delicious Shabbos meal. Our grandchildren did full justice to each and every course. It was certainly very complimentary to the cook. Besides the appetising and plentiful supply of food, a happy atmosphere pervaded - with much laughter and singing.

Yossi Tiffenbrun was amongst the guests. He has a beautiful melodious voice and is very adept at singing cantorial pieces. Unfortunately, it was one of his "off days" and he spent his time miming and imitating well known characters. What a great pity - and what a waste of good talent!!

It has always been a source of constant wonder and amazement that all those thousands of visitors who come to see the Rebbe for Yom Tov, all find accommodation in Crown Heights. There are still no hotels or boarding houses in this district. Everyone has to depend on friends or upon the good nature of the Chassidim, who live nearby - especially for their sleeping arrangements.

In the past, we, personally, have always been able to rely on the generosity of our friends, Sarah Shem Tov, and, more recently, on Raizie Minkowitz.

Rabbi Dovid Hickson of Manchester, was one of the six guests of Mordechai Nagel, who lives in Montgomery Street. The Nagels are a wealthy family in Milan, Italy. Mordechai studied at the Yeshiva at 770, and subsequently married an American girl. They desired to settle in Brooklyn, so Mordechai's father opened a Jewelry business for him on Fifth Avenue, where, it seems, that he spends most of his time putting Teffilin onto his customers.

He has bought a new house in President Street where, meanwhile, until he moves, he has allowed ten people to sleep there. Four students wished to join this "commune". Mordechai agreed to this as long as they brought their own beds or mattresses.

I know of many men and boys who do not require even this basic and main essential. For example - a few years ago, Shmuel accompanied me when we spent a few days in Crown Heights on the occasion of the Rebbe's birthday on Yud Aleph Nisan. Sarah Shem Tov had reserved two beds for us - although many of her guests did sleep on mattresses placed on the dining room floor and in the hallway. But, Shmuel never made use of this accommodation. For the whole of the three or four days, he never left 770, except to eat, and managed to survive with a few cat-naps on a bench, either in the Shool or in the Beth Hamedrish.

The above report will give my readers a little insight of how some visitors manage to be accommodated in Crown Heights.

It was noticed that Yossi had three large red weals around his neck. We asked him how he came to get these horrible scars. He explained to us that a boy had been standing behind him at a Farbraingen. They had become involved in an argument and this other lad nearly choked the life out of Yossi.

"But", said Yossi, "I gave him what for. I threatened him that if did that again, I would give him a good thrashing. I really told him off and "Blah, blah, blab" - and "You dare do that again, blah, blah, blab". "In other words I gave him a good lecture. I can tell you that this fellow will think twice before he starts with me again."

But, I asked him, "Did you take any physical action against him." "Oh, no", said Yossi, "but I told him "next time you do this, and so on and so forth".

I asked Dovid what he would do in similar circumstances. "Oh, I would first give him a good hiding and then - afterwards - give him a lecture."

I think Dovid had the right idea.

At the Farbraingen, over this Yom Tov period, there were four or five people sitting in my seat. So I took part in "Operation Heave Hoi!". It works as follows - I have no seat, so I am left standing. When the Rebbe arrives, everyone stands up - I shout "Heave" - and sidle into my seat, whilst everyone else shouts "Hoi".

However for the second Farbraingen on Shabbos Beraishis, which started at 4.30, after Mincha - at which I had the third Aliya - this trick did not work. NOT ONE of those, who had usurped my place, stood up when the Rebbe arrived - A CHUTZPA - a cheek! So I, together with Yankel Katz, were left standing.

It had been confided to me in the past, that everyone always wondered what would happen when Yankel Katz, from Chicago and Zalmon Jaffe, were at 770 at the same time and both would lay claim to the same identical seat. Well - now we knew. Both of us had to remain standing. Neither of us had anywhere to sit.

I was a little aggrieved but Yankel Katz remarked that this was a most unusual occasion, with at least fifty per cent more people present than at any previous gathering at 770 - so we should accept the position - even gratefully and proudly. I agreed and admitted that Label Groner does a grand job in spite of all the difficulties and pressures, but I commented that at least a seat should have been found for Yankel Katz - not for the sake of the huge amounts of money which he donates to the Rebbe's funds, etc. - because he obviously gets full value for his money - as we all do, but after all he is a man of well over eighty years young, and it is a danger to life and limb to remain standing in the well of the Hall.

Yankel Katz had sat in this seat or a similar one for about forty years. He refused to sit on the platform because he wanted to see the Rebbe's face and not the Rebbe's back. I have had this seat for over twenty years and I have also refused to sit behind the Rebbe on the platform.

Myer Harlick and Yoel Kahn stood in their usual places, leaning on the tables which ran along the length of the hall - on the floor, beneath the Rebbe's dais. They were almost facing the Rebbe. Yankel Katz and I stood behind them. Myer turned to Yankel and demanded that he should move away, because he was blocking the views of other people. Of course, naturally - Myer and Yoel did not block anyone's view. Nebech. After the maamer, a seat was found for one of us. I let Mr. Katz have this.

A short while later, Myer's boys who had been sitting on the table (on which Myer and Yoel were leaning) jumped down - crept under this table and burrowed their way out of the Hall. I gratefully accepted their abandoned places.

Mr. Meissels, of Toronto, also had no seat. He was standing, dejectedly, when the Rebbe called him. The Rebbe handed to him a few pieces of cake. On Mr. Meissel's return to the place where he had been standing, he was besieged by scores of men, begging for and even grabbing - crumbs of the Rebbe's cake. The Rebbe then declared "If you take Sherayim (leftovers) you should at least give him a chair". Needless to say that within seconds, there was a huge Heave Ho, and Mr. Meissels was installed in a place on the bench.

In the middle of the Farbraingen, an auction sale took place. The goods on offer were Mitzvahs. Most of

the prospective buyers had already put in their bids beforehand.

Therefore, for example, we heard the Auctioneer announce that Mr. Parshan had once again offered \$36,000 for the Mitzvah of Chosson Torah. (He would thus partner the Rebbe who would be the Chosson Beraishis). And, said the Auctioneer in Yiddish - for the first time, the second time and for the third time BANG! Sold! to Mr. Parshan for \$36,000. This caused quite a commotion because other men desired this signal and super honour.

In fact Mr. Beryl Weiss from Los Angeles, California, offered \$1%,000 for the honour of purchasing Chosson Beraishis, in order to have the merit of presenting it to the Rebbe. The Auctioneer refused to accept this bid. It seemed, that Mr. Parshan's bid also included Chosson Beraishis.

Wine for all the Farbraingen of the year was the next item "sold". The buyer paid many thousands of dollars, and had to supply all the wine, in addition. The next lot - was Hagbah and Gelilla (lifting up and wrapping the Sefer Torah after the layenning) also for the whole year. Last year Zalmon Gurary bought this Mitzvah. But - there was plenty of trouble and arguments about this, because Zalmon Gurary insisted upon taking most of the Hagboas himself (I don't blame him) and monopolising the Gelillas, too. So this year, it was decided to divide this mitzvah into two parts. Hagbah to be separated from the Gelilla.

Zalmon Gurary bought only the Hagbah for all the year.

During the whole of the auction, the Rebbe was sitting patiently studying and reading a Sefer (book). Occasionally, he glanced up as if to assure everyone that in spite of appearances he still knew exactly what was happening.

There was one item in the sale in which many had a chance to participate - heating and lighting. It was for the annual supply of oil and I expect that electricity was included in this lot, too. Anyway, oil itself was needed to supply heat in winter and also maybe to provide cold air (air conditioning) during the hot summer months.

One could take a share in this mitzvah for as little as \$200, although most participants paid \$1000 and more each. As I also needed heat, light and air conditioning on my visits to 770, I paid my share towards this mitzvah

### **Koss Shel Brocha**

The Rebbe had previously announced that he wanted everyone to come for Koss Shel Brocha. No one should interfere in the Rebbe's business and no one should discourage people from joining in for this Mitzvah.

In view of these remarks of the Rebbe, there was a tremendous crowd present.

Label Groner had made the usual arrangements beforehand. Everyone must go up to the Rebbe with a Seder (a routine). He also declared "Will all those men and boys who are on my right side, descend from the Dais - completely - and only the few Chosheva (illustrious and praiseworthy) Rabbonim should be left standing on the Dais". This latter announcement was greeted with loud laughter and guffaws.

The Rebbe made Havdola - on the Dais - at the far end of the very lengthy tables. The queues, or lines, would then form on either side of these tables and the Rebbe would serve each line alternately, from his becher (large silver cup) of wine. This becher was never completely emptied. There was always some of the original Havdola wine, however small, present in this Kiddush Cup.

By some lucky chance, I was the very first person served by the Rebbe. At the time I didn't realise how it happened. One second I was standing on the floor, below the Dais - and the next second I was facing the Rebbe upon the platform. It seemed that I had quite a few good and helpful friends who had co-operated in pulling and dragging me up by my hands and arms, whilst others had pushed from behind.

The Rebbe poured me out the wine, gave me a brocha and also handed me a small bottle of vodka. This was at 9.40 p.m. I returned with Roselyn an hour later - what a scene met our eyes! The two lines at the top tables were moving along rapidly and in time to the vigorous singing and the clapping. These two lines, three and four men deep, extended right out of the Shool and reached to Eastern Parkway.

There were in addition fifteen branch lines which came from the well of the Shool and made their separate ways along the tops of the centre tables and ultimately joined the two main lines.

I could not see the Rebbe because of the large crush of people. Yossi and Dovid had erected a temporary grandstand, in order to obtain a better view of the proceedings. This scaffolding was built as follows - they had placed a table upon a couple of benches. Then a second table was put on the other one. On top of this rickety and unstable contraption were placed a number of empty plastic crates. (These empty bottle crates were in great demand during the services and the farbraingen - the boys stood upon them and immediately gained a foot and a half in height - it was a pity that I never thought of that idea. It would have helped me considerably). I allowed myself to be persuaded to climb to the top of the "Tower". Yossi, Dovid and Eliezer Levy gave me a good lift up - from a crate to the top of the bench - from the bench top to the first table - from first table to the second table and then, there I stood precariously and perilously on top of a couple of the crates. It did enable me to get a clear view of the Rebbe and of all the proceedings. I did not remain very long perched upon this grandstand. It seemed to sway quite a lot, and was definitely unsafe and dangerous.

Dovid then had a better idea. He told me that there was a Video Room next door, where one could sit down in comfort and watch on a closed circuit television screen a colour film of the Rebbe actually serving Koss Shel Brocha.

First of all, of course, I had to make the hazardous and risky descent from this awful swaying contraption.

Well - I made it!!

I collected Roselyn and we took our seats in this small Video Room. It was a wonderful feeling to sit very relaxed and see the Rebbe in close-up, distributing the wine from his Becher. One could see every feature of the Rebbe's smiling face so clearly and one could even hear the Rebbe speaking to the recipients. After all these years the Rebbe has become very proficient and a real expert at this job. He was very quick indeed. For three hours the Rebbe never stopped serving. He sang and smiled just the same at the end of the three hours as at the beginning. It took less than a second for each person to file past the Rebbe. By

my calculator, I reckoned that the Rebbe served about nine thousand people on that night - three hours at the rate of one second per person = 10,800. We have to allow for about two thousand fillings of the Becher which would take half an hour. Therefore we arrive at the figure of nine thousand. Even if one reckoned that it took a person one and a half seconds to be served it still leaves over seven thousand two hundred people. I am confident my first figure is correct.

On the video, one could see some of the men holding their little jigger glasses in one hand and a small baby cradled in the other arm. The baby also had a jigger glass tucked into its little jumper or jacket. The Rebbe filled all the glasses and took a particular delight in serving the babies and giving than brochas.

## Chapter 20: Yechidus

We had arranged to depart for home on the following day, Sunday, and we had to leave 770 at 6.30 p.m. in the evening.

There had been no private interviews with the Rebbe during the past few weeks and that night would be the first opportunity for general Yechidus. Unfortunately we would be on our way home when these Yechidus were due to commence.

Label had informed me that there were one thousand five hundred people who were anxious to have private interviews with the Rebbe on that one night. (At least one chartered Jumbo Jet was leaving for Paris and another one for Israel during the course of the next day or so.) So Label had arranged for seven hundred and fifty people to see the Rebbe on the Sunday and the same number on the Monday night. There would be no lots drawn for the "order of precedence" and each person would take his (her) turn in alphabetical order. No letters were to be sent in beforehand and no detailed questions would be answered. It would be similar to a "file past" to receive a brocha from the Rebbe.

"In any case", remarked Label, "It would not have been much use to you Zalmon". (Well - I would not belittle any opportunity to meet the Rebbe, as long as I would have still been present at 770.) I did have the privilege of exchanging a few words with the Rebbe outside 770 on a number of occasions, but these could not be compared to a Yechidus. I asked Label to enquire of the Rebbe whether it would be possible for him to see Roselyn and me for a few minutes before we took out departure for home.

Label subsequently disclosed to me that immediately after Mincha, I should be waiting with Roselyn near to the door of the Rebbe's study, and the Rebbe would honour us with a private audience for a few minutes.

The problem was how to get Roselyn through the hallway and into the waiting room without everyone wondering why she was there, and without causing undue jealousy. I hit upon a good idea. I advised Roselyn to enter the lift (elevator) which was situated in the hallway and ascend to the first floor. All Roselyn then had to do was to walk across the short landing, descend by the stairs and she would find herself in the Rebbe's waiting room, screened from all prying eyes.

Roselyn told, afterwards, that she had a little difficulty in completing this exercise. She entered the elevator alright and pressed a button. When she opened the lift door she realised that she was on the wrong floor. Roselyn pressed another button and discovered that she was again on the ground level. This happened a couple of times, till, in desperation she ascended right up to the top floor and then walked down all the steps until she reached her destination outside the Rebbe's study. Everything went according to plan, and after Mincha, Roselyn and I found ourselves closeted with the Rebbe in the waiting room.

I told the Rebbe that I had discharged my debts, and had paid for all the mitzvahs which I had bought. The Rebbe remarked that he never doubted that for one moment.

I pointed out that it was very nice being the guest of the Rebbe. The Rebbe retorted "but you acted like a Batlan (at the Hakoffas)." I indicated that I did not desire that others should become envious or jealous.

The Rebbe replied "Don't let that worry you and don't take any notice". The Rebbe implied that I should have a hundred pages to write, just on this Yom Tov. (At that time I could not envisage more than thirty pages.) I begged the Rebbe not to stipulate the number of pages which my next edition should contain. I would obviously do my utmost to put on record all that transpired during my visits to 770.

I informed the Rebbe that Roselyn spent all her time in the cellar, the basement, of our apartment, working, cooking and so forth for the children. The Rebbe asserted that "SHE SHOULD BE IN THE SEVENTH HEAVEN".

The Rebbe then told me, with a twinkle in his eye, that His (Our) Rebbetzen was particularly concerned about the report in my book that the Rebbe was working so hard - clapping, dancing, and so on.

The Rebbe then enquired whether the suit which I was wearing, was the identical one which I had mentioned in my letter. I replied in the affirmative, but explained that it HAD been my best suit. I had spent half an hour cleaning it, and then pressed it - but I had to send it away for mending and repairing.

The Rebbe then laughingly said that he had seen me struggling to obtain a seat at the Farbraingen. The Rebbe seemed very amused at this - although at that Farbraingen the Rebbe did not even glance in my direction,,at all - or so it seemed. We also discussed some other private matters.

You will realise from the above what a fantastic personality is our Rebbe. At a Farbraingen, he will be completely absorbed in Torah matters, relating Sichos and reciting a Maamer. Yet he notices and knows everything that is going on, not only around him, and at 770, but all over the world. From these lofty spiritual heights he will deign to exchange witticisms and pleasantries with Roselyn and me at a Mini-Yechidus, and he will recall every detail of a conversation which he had, even with a young person, many years ago.

He certainly has an extraordinary, outstanding and prodigious mind.

The Rebbe had handed Roselyn and me a dollar each \* for charity. He expressed the wish that I should come next year - "It will be better still". The Rebbe added that I should have Hatzlocho (success) and that I should "Give my regards to all your Ainiklech (grandchildren)".

I asked the Rebbe when I should come again - and he replied "Came as soon as you can, but it depends on Fits JAFFE.

We had spent a very pleasant and unforgettable ten minutes with the Rebbe. We took our leave and the Rebbe said - FAUR Gezunderheit (Travel (home) in good health).

We left 770 just before 4 p.m. We had an appointment with the Rebbetzen at 4 p.m. at her home, where, once again, we were given the privilege and great honour of being received by Our Rebbetzen. Roselyn and I were accompanied by Shmuel - and by Yossi, Mendel, Yenta Chaya and Dovid.

We spent a wonderful one and a half hours with the Rebbetzen who, KAH, looked lovely and gracious and simply superb. We drank tea, ate cake, chatted and listened and watched the children doing their acts. For instance, Mendel rendered some beautiful Chazonuss (cantoral) pieces. We had previously arranged

with Shmuel, that after about half an hour, he and the children should leave us, whilst Roselyn and I would continue to enjoy the Rebbetzen's presence. He rose from his seat, said farewell - but the children refused to budge. Every fifteen minutes or so, Shmuel stood up - said Good-bye - and sat down again.- Like a Jack-in-the-box. The children remained adamant - and seated. They were having a grand time.

Roselyn told the Rebbetzen that we could hear the Rebbe's Succah being built next door. It was so nice to have good neighbours! The Rebbetzen indicated that we should have come in for a cup of tea. We explained about the video room and the Koss Shel Brocha. We told her of the use teed but most welcome visitor to our apartment during Yom Tov - Dr. Ira Weiss. It certainly enhanced our Yom Tov.

The hour and a half simply flew; and it was time to take our leave, collect our suitcases and travel to the Airport.

We flew home in record time, less than five hours to cross the Atlantic. Next day we heard that yet another Children's Rally had been held. There seems no limit to the Rebbe's outstanding and extraordinary activities, and his fathomless capacity for non-stop hard work, day after day, month after month, and year after year. Alright - we realise that he is a Rebbe, but he is also human and can become tired. We beg of the Rebbe not to overdo it. We need him for at least another forty-one years - even when our righteous Redeemer shall become revealed.

## Chapter 21 Some Correspondence with the Rebbe

On our return home I wrote, as usual, to the Rebbe expressing to him our grateful thanks for looking after us so well, and assuring the Rebbe that we had all had a wonderful and fantastic time in Crown Heights. As the Rebbe had told me "Next time it will be better" - and - it was better! It is always better!

I also mentioned that nearly everyone who was in New York during Succos returned with a cold, including Roselyn, Shmuel and me. Within a few days I received the following beautiful letter from the Rebbe:

By the Grace of G-d,  
6th of Cheshvan, 5741  
Brooklyn, N.Y.

Mr. Shneur Zalman Jaffe  
England

Greetings and Blessing:

This is to confirm receipt of your correspondence, and many thanks for the good news that businesswise, and I trust that by now also healthwise, everything is in good order. Being a practical and successful businessman, you surely follow the practice of cashing in promptly all the checks you receive. I mention this apropos of the well known saying of my father-in-law of saintly memory that following the month of Tishrei and coming back "home" to start the daily routine of the new year, every Jew should "unpack" all the spiritual baggage he has brought with him, putting everything in its proper place.

And since the month of Tishrei, which is so rich and sated with spiritual content, concludes with Zman Simchoseinu which, in turn, concludes with Simchas Torah, and - this year - the Jew danced straight from Simchas Torah into Shabbos Bereishis, I am confident that you have started your activities on this note of joy, both at home, and in your synagogue, and in your community at large, as well as in the United Kingdom - in each place to the fullest extent of your ability.

And as we read in the Sedra Bereishis about G-d giving Adam "a help to match him" (Ezer k'negdo), I am certain that Mrs Jaffe is giving you her fullest help and support in all above.

I am looking forward to receiving good and ever better news from you and all yours,  
With blessing,

(Signed) M. Schneerson

Then a few weeks later, I received the following unusual and intriguing letter from the Rebbe. The first paragraph was in Hebrew and consisted of five short sentences - (1) was a brief greetings blessing; (2) many thanks for my letters; (3) a few words of Torah; (4) good wishes for the future; and (5) the Rebbe's signature with a few extra brochas added.

But, as in some of the letters which I receive from the Rebbe, there was a P.S. (a postscript). From past experience I have learnt to be very wary of these postscripts. .They sting sometimes.

This is the P.S. to this letter:

"P.S. The following comes in English, in response to your English letter, and particularly as it comes in reference to your remark that, "Nearly everyone who was in New York during Succos returned with a Cold."

I was, of course, taken aback by this development. While 770, especially in the crush of Zman Simchoseinu, could cause some discomfort, I had not expected that it could be the cause of a widespread Cold (with a capital C). I am used to receiving reports about returning from 770 filled with **warmth** and bursting with enthusiasm and energy which - if it had any physical effects - no doubt **raised** the body **temperature\*** several degrees. Buy to return from here with a "Cold"! Granted that England's climate is on the cold side all year round, and that Englishmen are basically conservative, reserved and cool-headed, not given to a display of exuberance and over-reacting, I had thought that things had changed a bit in England in recent years.

Of course, your statement implied no fault, certainly not intentionally. However, the association of a Cold with 770 seems quite incongruous, especially as Lubavitch here, as well as in Manchester, Great Britain and elsewhere, has, with G-d's help, succeeded in breaking the ice-age.

Be it as it may, there are certainly no קפידות כלל but rather in the spirit of some פדיונות that I have seen, expressing the prayerful wish that "It should have an impact on me and on others". I pray that what has been said above should have an impact on myself, that my conduct should leave no room for any possibility of a Cold in others."

\* and so it is to be called **even** in English=

On this subject, I wrote to the Rebbe as follows:-

"I note that the Rebbe was 'taken aback by this development', yet at the same time the Rebbe did write that he was "used to receiving reports about (people) returning from 770 filled with warmth . . if it had any physical effects - no doubt raised the body temperature several degrees". This is exactly what did happen. We returned home with hot burning heads and bodies and with very high temperatures. We had to remain in bed, and take pills to cool us down. Actually it is easy to catch a cold in New York at any season. In winter the buildings and shops are as hot as an oven, whilst the streets are freezing cold. Yet in summer\* it is just the opposite - the buildings and shops are like a refrigerator because of the air conditioning, whilst the streets are as hot as a sauna bath.

Roselyn is particularly vulnerable. It has been essential for her to visit Dr. Seligman, on a number of occasions in New York. In fact in my "Encounter" of 5736, I wrote that Roselyn, Hilary and Yenta Chaya were ill and went to see Dr. Seligman. He confirmed that they all had tonsillitis. They were given pills and ordered to stay in bed.

All this is certainly not the fault of the Rebbe. We are warned in Perek Ovus (Ethics of the Fathers) Chapter Two, Mishna 10 "to warm yourself by the fire of the Chachomim (Sages), but beware of their glowing embers lest you be burnt".

Well - see what happens when we get too near to a Tzadik, a Saintly Holy Person!? - but it was well worth it!!