MY SECOND VISIT

Tishrei 5737 by the Rebbe

as told by

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Tishrei 5787 – 50 Years

B"H.

My second visit - Tishrei 5737

On the first day of Selichos 5736 - 1976, a few of us Bochrim traveled together from London to New York. The next morning, Monday the second day of Selichos, I woke up early and ran to the mikveh, knowing that they start Selichos at 7:00 AM. As I passed 770 to cross Eastern Parkway to get to the Kerestir mikveh, I saw the Rebbe's car arriving at 770. The entire street came to a standstill, and I watched the Rebbe get out of the car and walk into 770. It had been a year since I last saw the Rebbe, and I was overjoyed to see his familiar holy face, but I felt bad that I was seeing the Rebbe before I had been to Mikveh. I crossed Eastern Parkway and ran to the Mikveh. Inside, I saw one of my friends (L.S. שי') and shouted to him that the Rebbe had already arrived at 770. Immediately, everyone in the mikveh began hurrying to make it to Selichot on time.

They started saying Selichos at 7:00 AM and finished at 7:30 AM. Right after Selichos we went upstairs to the small Zal, where they started Shacharis immediately. At 8:00 AM, the Rebbe came out for Krias Hatorah. There was a line of guests who wanted to Bench Gomel, and I joined as well. (This time, I was very careful not to look at the Rebbe while saying Gomel, having already learned my lesson from the previous year).



(Picture of me saying Gomel, making sure not to look up in the middle of the Brocho).

A few days later, I saw that the photographer Levi Yitzchok Freidin was selling fresh photos of the Rebbe, and among them, I saw a picture of myself waiting in line to recite Gomel.

After Krias Hatorah, the Rebbe remained in the Zal, because on that day, the 25th of Elul, the Rebbe says Kaddish.

It was interesting to hear the Chazan [I think it was R' Levi Pariz OH] finish the day's Tehillim (Psalms) with the verse "Vechol Karnei," which was the Rebbe's Kapital for that year, and immediately afterwards the Rebbe said Kaddish.

That evening, the Rebbe delivered a Sicha to N'shei U'bnos Chabad, as every year before Rosh Hashanah. I went into the women's section of Eastern Parkway so that I could also see the Rebbe talk, not just hear it from outside. (There was a debate among the bochurim whether it was appropriate to stand in the women's section and watch while the Rebbe was speaking to women. After I returned to London, I saw a book of sermons by the Chafetz Chaim, and the title of one of the sermons read: "What the Chafetz Chaim

spoke in the Shulto the women, while the women sat in the Shuland the men were upstairs in the women's section").

Rosh Hashanah 5737

The Rebbe entered for Maariv and there was a kind of silence and an atmosphere of awe. The Rebbe sat down and said some Tehillim, and afterward motioned with his holy hand on the Shtender to sing, and they sang Avinu Malkeinu. I noticed that Shemoneh Esrei took the Rebbe a little longer than usual. (I once heard it said that on the first night of Rosh Hashanah the Rebbe Davens Shemoneh Esrei for 12 minutes).

On the first day of Rosh Hashanah, there was no Shofar because it fell on Shabbos, and Davening went by almost like a regular Shabbos and YomTov and it was also easier because one could eat mezonos before Davening. During Haftorah, when the Rebbe reached the words "Channah, why are you crying," the Rebbe burst into tears. (I thought to myself, exactly at these words "why are you crying" the Rebbe starts crying…).

On the second day, I heard that those who have permanent places had to arrive at 8:30 to secure their place. Since I did not have a permanent place, I did not think I needed to come early and arrived at ten. When I came I noticed that there was a major change, and there was increasing pushing toward the bimah. I joined the crowd – BH I had bought a small pocket size Machzor before Rosh Hashanah, which was easier to manage with – and pushed my way into the crowd, waves going back and forth. For some reason I was behind the Minyan, and at the beginning of Chazoras Hashatz I was in the middle of Shemoneh Esrei. One Bochur who was pushing to his place saw that I was in the middle of Shemoneh Esrei, took pity

on me and said, "Daven, I'll wait until you finish and then I'll move on," and I thanked him when I finished.

One of my friends once told me, when the Rebbe goes up onto the bimah for the Tekios you no longer feel the pushing…. I cannot say whether I felt them or not, but I have no further memory of any pushing.

On the second day of Rosh Hashanah, the Rebbe would walk very quickly to the Bimah to say Kaddish after Krias HaTorah, because on the 2nd day of RH the Rebbe would say Kaddish (for his sister-in-law the Rebitzin Sheina HY"D). (The secretaries ran behind the Rebbe with packages of Pidyonos, wrapped in brown paper and tied with white string. I noticed that Rabbi Klein tucked his tallis into his gartel...).

After the Haftorah, the Gabbai RMP Katz announced (as every year,) that everyone should stand in his place, and no one should stand on benches and boxes and the like, און מ'זאל וויסן וואו מ'שטייט און פאר וועמען מ'שטייט (you should know where you are standing and in front of whom you are standing).

After Haftorah, the Rebbe would prepare himself for Tekios, and he would throw his Talis over his head, covering also the packages of Pidyonos, and would remain like that for a few long minutes. They say the Rebbe would cry, and sometimes also hum a Nigun. When the Rebbe was ready, he raised his Talis to above his mouth and began Lamnatzeach.

It was very moving to hear the Rebbe begin loudly: Lamnatzeach Livnei Korach Mizmor! (He emphasized the word Lamnatzeach as though saying "Lamnatze-ei-ach" and prolonged the tzadik), and afterward all the Psukim, with everyone repeating with the same tune. After the Psukim the Rebbe covered himself again with the

Talis for a short while, and then began saying the Brochos in the special tune of the Rebbeim. To see the Rebbe doing something different than speaking Maamorim and Sichos, is so amazing…

The Psukim after Tekios, the Rebbe said in a relatively low voice. Unlike most years, when he would raise his voice from Posuk to Posuk, this year the 3 Psukim after the Tekios were said in the same tone. After Tekios, when the Rebbe passed by me on his way back to his place, I saw that he had several cloths in his holy hand, one of them was red (they say this is the handkerchief of the Rebbe Rashab).

I was not especially impressed by the Chazonim, only Rabbi Weinberg could be heard best, and he Davened with such warmth that it was simply delightful to listen to. I noticed that the Rebbe sat down in several places during the Davening and also during the Chazoras Hashatz, unlike the other Shabbosim and Yomim Tovim when he stood the whole time (as I remembered from last year). I also saw that the Rebbe does not stand every time the Oron Hakodesh is opened (but I am not sure whether it was also so on Rosh Hashanah, on Yom Kippur I am certain he sat when the Oron Hakodesh was open), it was also interesting to see Rabbi Groner helping the Rebbe stand and sit – bringing the chair closer, etc.

That evening before Shkiah, the regular Rosh Hashanah farbrengen took place. I had already heard about the Seder of this Farbrengen, and nevertheless it was a little surprising to see a Farbrengen where, apart from the Maamar, there are not many Sichos, and most of the Farbrengen consists of Niggunim.

(I thought I would be smart, and I could stand wherever I wanted, and I took a place on a bench opposite the Rebbe's place. But when those whose regular place it was arrived, little by little I was pushed out of the place, but I insisted on standing there, and

consequently I remained standing with only my feet on the bench, and my whole body outside. One baal teshuvah young man, big and strong, told me, "Lean on me and you can stay here," and so I did, I was very small then, and I leaned on him throughout the entire farbrengen, which lasted about an hour and a half. One of the young men who was standing there remarked to me, "What are you doing to this person that you are leaning on him all the time, in any case at the next farbrengen don't do it again."

Who knows? Maybe because of this situation – in the middle of the Farbrengen I saw the Rebbe motion towards my direction that someone should say l'chaim, I did not know whether it was directed at me or not, and I did not respond at all. The Rebbe made a gesture with his head like what a pity, and that was the end of that, (but for me it was not the end, and on Simchas Torah I thought about this some more – as I will write about - Bezr"H).

After washing and saying Hamotzi, the Rebbe instructed the Nigunim of the Rebbeim be sung. After Sholosh Tenuos of the Baal Shem Tov and the Maggid, the Rebbe instructed to sing "A Alter Rebbe's Niggun." R' Yoel thought the Rebbe had said "Der Alter Rebbe's Niggun" and began singing Niggun of Daled Bavos, to which the Rebbe shook his head no. R' Yoel began singing Keli Atah, and after Keili Ato the Rebbe told him to sing "Avinu Malkeinu". (After Chazoro that night, Rabbi Yossi Hecht said it seemed the Rebbe actually wanted them to sing Avinu Malkeinu, but since Reb Yoel had started Keli Atah, the Rebbe allowed that to be sung as well).

Afterward the Rebbe motioned to sing the Maamar Nigun, and said a Maamar "Yechayenu Miyomayim." At the end of the Farbrengen the Rebbe Benched, everyone Davened Maariv, the Rebbe made Havdalah and began distributing Kos Shel Brocho. BH

I managed to find a good place from which to see the Rebbe during Kos Shel Brocho, and the Rebbe encouraged the Niggunim most of the time. I was so happy to see the Rebbe encouraging the Niggunim that I did not notice how time was passing. Suddenly I saw that the Rebbe sat down to say Brocho Achrona, a sign that Kos Shel Brocho was over and I realized I had missed the opportunity, but I consoled myself that there was still Simchas Torah, and I could receive Kos Shel Brocho then.

I don't remember anything special about Tzom Gedaliah, but in the evening after Maariv, I stood in the hallway by the main door, and Rabbi Berel 'שי Dubravsky asked me to watch his young son for a moment until he returned. I stood there with the boy and didn't think of anything, when suddenly the door of the Gan Eden Hatachton opened and the Rebbe came out... I was so scared, and the Rebbe walked past us, looked at both of us, and left. When Reb Berel 'שי came to pick us up and we went home, I told him that the Rebbe suddenly came out and I was very scared... The child turned to his father and asked: Why is he afraid of the Rebbe? And his father answered him: Because he is a Rebbe! (I thought to myself, maybe the local kids are so used to seeing the Rebbe that they aren't afraid).

VOV TISHREI 5737.

Fore the Tefilos of Vov Tishrei, everyone tries to grab a place to hear the Rebbe as the Chazan. By Maariv I could only hear, but in the morning, I managed to stand in a slightly higher spot on the right side of the Shul, and I could also see some Minhogim during Davening. I remembered that I was Zoche to hear a tape of the Rebbe Davening on Yud Shevat last year, and it helped me concentrate and listen during Davening, because I recognized the

Rebbe's tune of Davening.

Minhogim I noticed: Every time he kissed his Tefillin, he checked (or adjusted) the knot at the back of the head. In Vehu Rachum for Mondays and Thursdays, he finished each section aloud.

For Pesicha, (either Dr. Zeligson or Rabbi Chodakov) the one who took out Moshiach's Sefer Torah (as is known this Sefer Torah scroll is very heavy…) couldn't hold it, and it almost fell from his hands, and the Rebbe caught it, and it fell into the Rebbe's hands and the crown shifted from its place and stood crooked, and after a moment the Rebbe shook the Sefer Torah from the bottom where he was holding it and the crown straightened. (Later that year, Rabbi Levi Yitzchak Freidin showed his film at the Yeshiva in Lod, and I saw it again. [I don't understand why these days are missing from the film on the Jem website).

Tishrei 5737 was the first year that WLCC recorded, and they probably didn't think to record the Tefilos.

For the Farbrengen of Vov Tishrei, I stood (אבדלח"ט) next to Yossi Tiefenbrun OH. This was a good place, and I saw BH very well. At some point he suddenly asked me, does the Rebbe say a Maamar on Vov Tishrei? I answered him no, but at that moment I saw the Rebbe signaling to Rabbi Y. Kahan to sing the Maamar Nigun. (Maybe Yossi noticed that the Rebbe placed the handkerchief on his hand?). The Rebbe said a Maamar on "Shuva Yisrael." (It was very noticeable that the Rebbe had a severe cold...) A few times during the Maamar, you could hear how the cold was disturbing the Rebbe while saying... In any case, it was a Chidush that the Rebbe would deliver a Maamar on Vov of Tishrei, as in most years there was no Maamar.

At the Shabbat Shuva Farbrengen, the Rebbe spoke on a topic he

had dealt with extensively during the previous summer - Operation Entebbe. I remember how the Rebbe shouted (with his holy eyes flashing): "During this time when the Aibershter begs us! Search for me! How can they say about Jews that "they have no part in the G-d of Israel!"

(A certain group wrote against the miracles that occurred during Operation Entebbe, claiming that, G-d forbid, the Holy One, Blessed be He, does not perform miracles through those soldiers, as they wrote that they have no part in the G-d of Israel. The Rebbe protested and admonished against this during the months before Tishrei, and again on Simchas Torah and Shabbos Breishis, and there was a continuation of this even on Yud Tes Kislev.)

Erev Yom Kippur 5737

A few of us boys woke up at 4 in the morning, ran to the mikveh, and got a taxi to take us to Pitkin Ave where there was a warehouse that sold all kinds of small animals and various birds. On Erev Yom Kippur, they provided a great service to the Jewish community and sold chickens for Kapparos. We approached the counter and the seller said to us in Yiddish: A dollar a Foont (pound)! For us guys from England, it sounded a bit funny, because in England, the country's currency is called 'Foont' in Yiddish. We bought a rooster and did Kapparos, there were also a few Shochtim there and one of them Shechted the rooster for us, and BH we heard Rabbi Shia Hecht announce, anyone who wants to donate the Kapparos can leave them with him. We left and caught a taxi back to 770. Just as we arrived at 770 around 7 o'clock, we saw that the Sukkah was full of people, and we learned that at any moment the Rebbe was about to go out for his Kapparot. I squeezed into the sukkah but couldn't see much because it was full, and I'm also short (a situation which

bothered me many times in 770).

After that, I went to take a number for the Lekach, this was the first time they gave number tickets for the queue. I later heard that the Rebbe thanked the Vaad Hamesader for the good Seder at the Lekach this time (which was helped by the numbers). I went down to the big Shul and caught a Minyan for Shacharis, because I was worried about my place in line. I was still in the Shul when the Rebbe entered at 9:30 for the Shachris – Erev Yom Kippur is one of the only days the Rebbe comes out for Shachris.

When the Rebbe entered, one of the regular beggars of 770 was standing there collecting charity. When the Rebbe noticed him, he stopped, took a coin out of his pocket, and gave it to him. He blessed the Rebbe as he was accustomed to bless anyone who gave him Tzedoko: "Have a good year, may you be healthy!" The Rebbe nodded to him and continued walking to his place.

I went up to the women's section of Eastern Parkway where the line for Lekach was, and from there I could see the Rebbe's minyan, and when the minyan ended, we knew that the line for the Lekach would soon begin. In the women's section, there was a notice asking everyone not to request another piece of Lekach, and if someone needed to take for someone else, to please give them from their own Lekach. Apparently, most of the crowd complied with this request.

After Lekach I went home to eat the first Yom Tov meal, then the second mikveh, and Mincha at 3:15.

From the moment they said shh... as usual to signal the entrance of the Rebbe, until the Rebbe reached his place took a long time, because on Erev Yom Kippur the Rebbe would distribute Tzedoko to each of the plates placed there, and it usually took about a quarter of an hour.

At the end of Mincha, as everyone pushed towards the Rebbe's place, the Rebbe stood at the side of the Shtender, closed his holy eyes, and began to bless all Yidden with the traditional Brocho after Mincha on Erev Yom Kippur. The microphone was hidden to the side until the moment the Rebbe closed his eyes, because it happened in the past that the Rebbe signaled to move the microphone away.

The Rebbe began to speak in a tone that is different from regular Sichos: "May the Almighty grant a Chasima and a Gmar Chasima Toiva… He mentions that Teshuva Ilo'oh (the higher repentance) is an aspect of Simcha (a matter of joy), also because this year began with 'the Yom Tov of Rosh Hashanah that falls on Shabbos' and especially since this happened one year after another - that the whole year will be a year of rest… (The Brocho was Mugah by the Rebbe and is printed in Likkutei Sichos vol 14)."

Immediately after the Brocho to Anash, all the Bochrim ran upstairs to the small Zal to secure a spot for the Brocho to the Bochrim, which will take place around Licht Benchen. I joined the others going up, and I decided where I wanted to stand, even though I was by no means certain that I would actually stand there... They announced that the doors to the Zal would only open about a quarter of an hour before Licht Benchen, in order to ensure that all the students would have their Seuda Hamafsekes properly, instead of standing and pushing for an hour or two before the Brocho (as had happened in the past, and the Rebbe was very displeased with that).

I decided to cheat the system a bit, and on the way home, I went to the mikveh for the third time. This time, the mikveh was almost empty, and I went in and out quickly... After the final meal, I hurried back to 770, and the Zal started to fill up...

I've never seen anything like this, people keep coming in and the place is starting to get crowded, not that they're pushing, but it's so full that you can't move, and yet more and more keep coming in. There is also a lot of noise from six huge fans that move the hot air, but of course, they don't cool it down... Our friend (L.S.) was pushing next to us, it seems he wants to get to the window, and I told him to stop pushing because he is squeezing us all, I don't remember what he answered but of course, he continued on his way.

Within a few minutes, the Zal was so full that it was impossible to move. Because I am short and my hat kept on falling off, I held my hand up to catch the hat. After a time, I felt the pressure so strongly that the bone of my palm was pressing very hard against the bone of my chest, and I was afraid it might go in Ch"v ... With great effort, I managed to move my hand from the middle of my chest to the side, so it wouldn't press on the weakest part of the chest bone... Even if I wanted to lower my hand, there was no possibility.

Now the Bochur standing to my right turns to me and asks if I could please put his glasses on for him, because they slipped off his face due to the heat and sweat... and both of his hands were down, there was no way he could pick them up. I was able to pick up his glasses from where they lay - right next to him, because there was no space or possibility for them to fall down... I managed to put the glasses on his left ear, but in no way could I reach his right ear, because my hand was stuck in the middle and I couldn't lift it. I put his glasses onto his left ear several times, but each time they fell off again because of the sweat, and in the end, he told me thank you but leave them, there's nothing to be done.

Suddenly, we hear the call, "Shh..." And it became completely

quiet, apparently (from what I heard later) the moment the Rebbe entered, the electricity to all the fans was cut off and it became quiet, and we heard the Rebbe reciting Birchas Kohanim and the Brocho. It was very hard for me to concentrate because of the pressure and the heat, but I was to be in the same room where the Rebbe was and was blessing us. Later, I heard Bochrim discussing the Chidush of the Brocho today, the Rebbe said: "(Ufleben) Enthuse the Mashpiim and Masgichim around you..."

One of my friends told me that he was standing by the door of the hall where the Rebbe entered, and the moment the Rebbe reached the door of the hall, he stepped back for a moment because of the heat and sweat, and after a moment, he entered and ascended the steps to the table.

Right after the Rebbe finished the Brocho and left the Zal, one of the Bochrim announced: "Chevre, there are seven minutes (to Shkiah)!" and everyone ran to drink water.

When I left the Zal, I saw C.B.H. standing with a kittel but without a tallit, collecting and winding speaker wires, and next to him were two large speakers. (They said that this year was the first time the Rebbe allowed loudspeaker - but with a hidden microphone - during the Brocho).

I went to the sink at the end of the corridor, drank some water, and went downstairs. In one of the rooms near the big Shul, they placed all the Yom Kippur candles, and I see a young man pondering whether there is still time to light the candle...

Yom Kippur 5737

Yom Kippur prayers pass smoothly and pleasantly, there is no pushing, and in the usual places, the everyone sings together while the Rebbe encourages them, with tunes like "Ki Anu Amecha," "Darkecha," and more.

The Nigun I loved the most was "Ki Anu Amecha," where in the part sung without words, there is one spot where the Rebbe bangs his fist on the Shender quickly to the rhythm of the Nigun...

After Maariv the Minhag is to say the entire Tehilim, and here something happened that had not occurred in any of the previous years. The Chazzan for Tehilim (Rabbi Chaim Tashkenter) had already finished, and the Rebbe still remained for about half an hour or more and continued to recite Tehilim. When he finished, he went out with a serious face without saying a word.

When I went upstairs, I was surprised to see the text of the Beracha for the Bochrim hanging on the wall in the corridor... (I was told that every year they quickly type up the Brocho so it can be read during Yom Kipur...)

During Yom Kippur, there was nothing outstanding, the Nigunim and Tefilos were as usual (the Rebbe sometimes sits even when the Ark is open), and the only thing that people pushed for was during Mincha, to hear the Rebbe say the Maftir Yonah. (In the morning, Rabbi Chodokov received Maftir, a tradition that began during the time of the Rebbe Rayatz). Someone told me about the Rebbe bowing for Korim, if you see people jumping, know that you've already missed seeing how the Rebbe bows...

Toward the time of Neilah, there begins to be movement and excitement to see the Rebbe encouraging the March.

This year something very unusual happened: but first, we need to give an introduction:

– A day or two before Yom Kippur, a horrifying event occurred. Arab rioters from Hebron entered the Ohel Yaakov in the Cave of the Patriarchs, desecrated and destroyed the place while disgracing the Sifrei Torah there. On Erev Yom Kippur, when Rabbi Gershon Ber Jacobson, editor of the "Algemeiner Journal," approached the Rebbe to receive Lekach, the Rebbe asked him, since the Yom Kippur had not yet begun in the Eretz Yisroel, if he could please call Eretz Yisroel and find out more details of the events. –

During the Chazoras Hashatz of Ne'ila, I noticed a few children who had climbed onto the Rebbe's Bima. It turned out that the Rebbe signaled something toward a few children. Rabbi Dovid Raskin, who noticed the signal, asked everyone standing near the Chazan to leave the area, saying, "The Rebbe said to leave." The Rebbe saw this and said: "Ich hab nit gehaisen" [= I didn't command]. Then the Rebbe hinted in some way that the children should come up to his platform.

Usually, the Rebbe would signal to start a Nigun by tapping with his left hand. When the Rebbe reached "Ato Bechatonu" he signaled as usual with his left hand, but in addition, he encouraged strongly with his right hand - toward the children (I think the Rebbe also encouraged the children by "Hu Elokeinu" but I'm not 100% sure). After "Sim Shalom," the Rebbe asked the chazzan to wait and instructed to bring up to the Bima all the children under the age of Bar Mitzvah who can Daven.

From the place where I stood, on a bench before the Krias Hatorah Bima, the instruction was not understood properly; we only heard shouts: children, children, meaning that the Rebbe wanted all the children present in the Shulto stand near him... Some

very small children were sent to the front of the synagogue, and a great commotion was created throughout the Shul in an attempt to bring all the children to the Bima. I saw Bochrim standing on the table between the front columns (which prevents the crowd from getting too close to the Rebbe), holding children with long hair, meaning before their Opsher, trying to send them back to their fathers.

Later, I heard from one of the children who stood on the platform, that throughout the entire time, the Rebbe was facing Mizrach and crying. The boy, who saw the Rebbe crying, began to cry himself... When the Rebbe noticed, he turned to him and smiled. I heard (from Rabbi Tz. T. ‘שי) in the name of Rabbi Groner, that he had never seen the Rebbe cry like that before, the Rebbe cried and cried without stopping for about five minutes.

When the children had completely filled the entire Bima, Rabbi Groner pulled the Rebbe's Shtender to the left toward the chazzan, to give the Rebbe space to stand without being surrounded by the children from all sides. Then Rabbi Groner moved the chair to the edge of the Bima and placed it with the back facing everyone. The Rebbe signaled him to turn the chair the other way (so he could stand on it).

When the situation calmed down and order was restored at 770, the Rebbe signaled with his left hand to sing "Avinu Malkeinu," and this time he also encouraged strongly with his right hand (twice) toward the children. I think they sang "Avinu Malkeinu" several times. The atmosphere at that time in 770 was electrifying. I remember a group of Baalei Teshuva standing next to me crying, and it felt as if there wasn't a dry eye in the entire Shul – everyone felt that something heavenly was happening here...

When the 'March' began, the Rebbe signaled with his left hand

on the shtender to sing, and then the Rebbe started adjusting the sides of the Tallis on his shoulders for a while. To me, it seemed as if the Rebbe wanted to delay his ascent to the chair... After maybe a minute or two, the Rebbe approached the chair, placed his right hand on the shtender, and slowly ascended to the chair. The Rebbe did not clap, but encouraged with his right hand only. All this lasted for a short time, and after that, the Rebbe descended. Even though it was my first Yom Kippur with the Rebbe, I still felt that the march was very short, compared to the stories told in previous years.

This was probably the only time the Rebbe delayed the congregation at the end of the fast (it is said that the Rebbe usually had a watch next to him during Neila), and Neila ended almost half an hour late. After Maariv, the Rebbe encouraged the recitation of "Gut Yom Tov" and the Nigun of "V'samachta," and after a few minutes, he went out for the Kiddush Levana, still wearing the tallit and kittel. (Here something happened with the photographer Rabbi Levi Yitzchak Freidin, apparently he fell while trying to photograph the Rebbe returning to 770 after Kiddush Levana, and while lying on the floor, he photographed the Rebbe.) The picture is in the library, and behind it, the Rebbe wrote in his own handwriting: Motzei Yom Kippur 5737.

Thursday, the 13th of Tishrei 5777

Today there was something new: besides Mincha and Maariv taking place downstairs, Krias Hatorah with the Rebbe also took place downstairs, due to the month of Tishrei. There was a very long line of guests who recited the Gomel in the presence of the Rebbe. Later in the day, the Rebbe traveled to the Ohel due to the 13th of Tishrei – the yahrzeit of the Rebbe Maharash. When the

Rebbe returned from the Ohel, he prayed Mincha downstairs, and after Mincha, he announced that there would be a gathering. (Maariv, if I remember correctly, was upstairs so that they could prepare the main Shul for the gathering). At the beginning of Mincha, I saw Rabbi Tz. T. 'שי, and I asked him if he had already prayed Mincha (because he arrived today from London), and he answered me that he is Frum, and he was afraid he might miss Mincha with the Rebbe, so he Davened earlier.

The Rebbe entered the Farbrengen after Maariv. He started with a Maamar on "בסוכות תשבו שבעת ימים (On Succos You Shall Dwell in Booths) " and then gave several Sichos. He spoke strongly about the situation in Eretz Yisrael. Among other things, the Rebbe said that we need to show that Jews are Ba'alei Teshuva through the Torah wherever they are, and consequently, representatives from all countries should say "L'Chaim." The Rebbe was looking for representatives from Romania, Hungary, Poland, Lithuania, and more.

At first, they said "L'Chaim" one by one, then the Rebbe showed with both his holy hands and said: "Leibedik!" To Rabbi Yaakov Friedman he said: Chadrei Torah Or - Hungary! He said "L'Chaim" and the Rebbe replied to him in Russian something along the lines of "Our side will prevail," and he responded in Russian. Then the Rebbe asked: Where are those from Poland? Surely half the congregation here is from Poland! Rabbi Zalman Sudakowitz told the Rebbe that he has a passport from Poland, to which the Rebbe replied: Well, good. In the UN (United Nations), it is the passport that matters! Later, the Rebbe asked, "Where is the Rosh Yeshiva? He was also once in Poland". Rabbi Mentlik turned red and said "L'Chaim. Afterward, the Rebbe asked if there was anyone from Latvia? And immediately he pointed with his holy hand to his left and said: I reminded myself that Rabbi Chodokov was once in

Latvia. Rabbi Chodokov smiled and said, "Lechaim." Then the Rebbe asked them to sing "Nashah Sluzhbah," and Rabbi Yoel Cohen started to sing. The Rebbe made a gesture with his hand and said: "He is from Eretz Yisroel, let someone from Russia sing," and the Russians started to sing "Ech Ti Zimlakh." Overall, it was a very Freileche Farbrengen.

The next day, on the morning of Erev Sukkos, representatives from all over the world entered the Rebbe's holy room to take Daled Minim. Representatives from Kfar Chabad also brought Esrogim from Kfar Chabad, and the Rebbe blessed them while sitting in his place. He also blessed the Chabad communities of Kfar Chabad, Nachlat Har Chabad, Tzfat, and Jerusalem. The text of the blessing was then Mugah by the Rebbe.

Before the Tefilos on YomTov, when the Rebbe enters, they sing, and the Rebbe encourages them on his way to his place. And at the end of the Tefilos, most of the time, Reb Zusha Wilimowski the partisan would start a Nigun with the encouragement of the Rebbe, and the Rebbe would encourage him and, on his way, encourage everyone else. On the second day of Succos, there was a long line to bless on the Rebbe's lulav, as usual every year. When the Chazzan was close to Halel, Rabbi Meir Harling arrived with the Four Species and handed them to the Rebbe. At the end of Musaf, before the Rebbe descended for Birchas Kohanim

– During Birchas Kohanim, the small shtender for Krias HaTorah is placed at the end of the Rebbe's platform, and the Rebbe stands there during the Birchas Kohanim. After the Kohanim descend from the Rebbe's platform, the Rebbe nods his holy head in appreciation to each of the priests –

the Rebbe himself moved his chair from its place next to the shtender to the northeastern corner, and stood his Lulav on it.

(Rabbi Tz. T. ‘שי turned to me in astonishment: The Rebbe moved the chair himself?!)

[In the years before 5741, before the Sichos of Simchat Beit Hashoeva began, Sukkot was a very quiet YomTov. People went out to Bench Lulav & Esrog with people, and they also traveled during Chol Hamoed to bring joy to Jews, but in general it was a quiet YomTov. Only on the second night of Succos did Farbrengens take place throughout the neighborhood. Before the YomTov, I learned that my hosts were planning to travel out of town for a few days during Chol Hamoed, and I thought, what will I do? A friend suggested that I travel with him to the city of Woodridge in the mountains, to help the Shliach there, and so it turned out that I spent all the days of Chol Hamoed with this Shliach. BH, we were very successful, and we returned to N.Y. on Hoshana Rabbah (the Sliach’s wife gave birth in the early morning of Hoshana Rabbah, yet he still drove us back to the city). One night of Chol Hamoed, some of Anash came to bring joy to the people in the area during the Simchat Beit Hashoeva, and I was able to ask what was happening by the Rebbe. That day, a special Farbrengen / Rally was held for the children of the public schools, and the Rebbe washed his hands for Hamotzie (with a minyan of people), said several Sichos, sang some Nigunim, and then Benched over a cup of wine, and gave Kos Shel Brocho to the councilors so they could distribute wine to the children. The entire order of this special Farbrengen was Mugah by the Rebbe, down to the last detail. For example, the Rebbe wrote that they should sing "Hoshia Es Amecha" three times. After the boys recited the final blessing, they left the sukkah, and the girls who had been in the small Zal and watched from the windows entered the sukkah, recited the blessing of sitting in the sukkah, and also received Kos Shel Brocho (if I remember correctly).

Of course, my friends and I were very disappointed that we didn't get to be there, but one of the guests from the community (Rabbi Yosef Segal) explained to me that no one was allowed to enter the sukkah because it was very small and barely accommodated the children who came. I later heard that Rabbi C.B.H. hired a camera and screen so people could see what was happening in the sukkah from the Shul, but the audience was very disappointed because they could barely see anything, and they paid the requested fee only out of pity.

On Hoshana Raboh afternoon, we returned to N.Y. And after preparing for the Yom Tov, we secured places for the hakafot. This year, I found a spot in the pyramid on the left side of the Oron Hakodesh, and BH I could see quite well. However, since we were looking at the Rebbe from the side, I had to stay on my tiptoes the whole time. I don't remember all the Nigunim and movements that were (now), but as is known, Hakafos with the Rebbe are something that is never forgotten.

"**Melech Olomim Hoshia Na"!**

The year 5737 was noteworthy for being the first time the Rebbe spoke during Hakafos.

Unlike the previous year, when the Rebbe would take a few steps toward the crowd at the beginning of each Hakafah, this year the Rebbe remained standing, leaning his back on the Shtender and facing the crowd. In my humble opinion, the reason was that the Rebbe had a cold, and a heavy cough could be heard in his holy voice.

However when they reached the fifth Hakofoh, the Rebbe stepped forward and looked to his left at the gabbai R'MP Katz, and began to speak. At first, it seemed as if the Rebbe wanted to instruct

him about something regarding the hakafah, but to our surprise, he started to say a Sicha. The first words he said were: "Since it is the time to perform hakafos in Hebron, the city of the patriarchs." The Rebbe spoke about how Hebron belongs to the Levites, and therefore, for this hakafah, the Levites will join, and sing the well-known march (Napoleons March). It seemed clear to us that all of this was a continuation of the events of Erev Yom Kippur.

After the Sicha, the Rebbe took his Siddur, and began to recite the text in a very loud voice: "Melech Olomim Hoshia Na (King of the Universe, save us)!" As the Rebbe continued his voice became even louder, and the last words "Somech Noflim, Aneinu Beyom Koreinu" were said in such a high tone, it was difficult to match! Then the Rebbe quietly recited the Psukim that follow, and in the meantime, some had already started singing the march, while others sad "Shah!" When the Rebbe finished reciting the Psukim, he said, "Nu! Der March Hayodua (the famous march)!" and began to encourage the singing very strongly.

Near the stage stood a beardless Jew who was making joyful hand gestures similar to the Rebbe's encouragement movements. The Rebbe encouraged him quite a few times. We later discussed that perhaps these special encouragements during the march were to 'make up' for the March on Yom Kippur, which was quite short...

The next night of Simchat Torah, before the fifth Hakafah, the Rebbe again said a Sicha, during which he asked that all those who are currently or have been in the army, should join the Hakafah. I remember, for example, Rabbi Zusha Wilmovsky and Rabbi Avraham Yitzchak Glick going for this Hakafah. The Rebbe again recited the Psukim "Melech Olomim," etc., and when he finished, they didn't know what to sing. Others started singing the march, but the Rebbe then began singing "Hoshia Es Amecha."

By the way, in the middle of one of the Nigunim after Ato Horeiso (maybe during "Uforatzto"), the lights suddenly went out in three-quarters of the Shul. All those who stood next to me on the bleachers leaned back because there was no light and they thought they wouldn't be able to see, but now it became easier for me to see because nobody was blocking me, and I saw that the Rebbe didn't stop encouraging the Nigun for a moment. From the light shining from the west side of the synagogue, I could see the Rebbe's white beard, and I saw how the Rebbe continued to clap his hands.

In one of the Sichos during the farbrengen of Simchat Torah, the Rebbe elaborated on the Mivtzoim, providing several explanations on the matter very Geshmak. The explanations were so beautiful and enlightening that I smiled with delight... Toward the end of the Sicha, the Rebbe smiled, and I had a feeling that it was related to me…

During the farbrengens of Simchat Torah and Shabbat Bereshit, the Rebbe continued to speak at length about the miracles in Entebbe. The Rebbe said that Rabonim should answer two questions (on Shabbat Bereishit, the Rebbe added a third question, but with the same content as the second question). The first question: What is the Halocho if one of the hostages returns to Entebbe (since it has lately opened up for business), is he required to recite the Brocho for miracles or not? In other words:

those who argue that this is not a miracle from Hashem, are they required to bless Hashem for this miracle? Second question: If someone needs a doctor, and there is no choice but to take a specialist doctor who says about himself "this is my strength and the might of my hand," or a not-so-specialized doctor, but who observes Torah and Mitzvos, which doctor should one turn to? The intention behind this question is whether it is permissible to use

soldiers who might say "My own power and the strength of my hand" but are experts in military tactics and can save the captives. And the rabbis should not “bury their faces in the ground” saying, "When such a question comes to me, then I will answer," but rather they should answer now.

During the farbrengen of Simchat Torah, I said Lechaim to the Rebbe several times, and each time the Rebbe answered me. Since I had a doubt whether the Rebbe wanted me to say "L'Chaim" at the Rosh Hashanah Farbrengen, I said "L'Chaim" several times at the Simchat Torah Farbrengen to make up for it. After a few times, the Rebbe stopped responding to me, and I didn't understand why. (Nevertheless, when the Rebbe said that all those who participated in the Tahalucha should say "L'Chaim," I also said "L'Chaim" along with everyone). After the Farbrengen, I spoke about it with my host's son, Rabbi M. T. D. who was already an older Bochur, so he asked me how many times did you say Lechaim? I told him 4 or 5 times. So he replied to me that's way too much! Imagine if everyone at the Farbrengen said "L'Chaim" to the Rebbe 4 or 5 times... But after some time, I thought to myself, apparently I said "L'Chaim" to the Rebbe four times, and the fifth time he didn't respond to me because of the Gzeirah of Mashke. (To be honest, I'm not sure I knew about the Gzeirah back then... and it certainly didn't occur to me at the time.)

On the morning of Shabbat Bereshis after Tehillim the Rebbe went up to his room, and returned for Shachris at a quarter to eleven! As usual on Shabbat Bereshis, the Chazan Rabbi Moshe Teleshevsky Davened long with Nigunim, and the Parsha is also long, so they finished the Shacris at ten minutes after **one**! **Twenty** minutes before the Farbrengen!

They started setting up the Farbrengen, and benches were flying

over people's heads... BH I managed to make Kiddush and grab one of the Aiyer Kichlech (air cookies), and at one-thirty the Rebbe entered the Farbrengen.

During one of the Nigunim on Shabbat Bereishis, the Rebbe called over Rabbi Gershon Henich Cohen from Mea Shearim and asked him about a bottle of wine, whether it is used in Jerusalem, and he answered yes. In the next Sicha, the Rebbe instructed that all those who were present during the Hakafot on Simchat Torah, especially the Leviyim, should choose a day and perform that Hakofoh saying the same Psukim etc., in Jerusalem near the Western Wall, and in Hebron at the Cave of the Patriarchs – but it should be done with permission and coordination of the army. After the Sicha the Rebbe called the local Rov of Kfar Chabad, Rabbi Nachum Trebnik OH, and gave him two bottles of wine – one of which was the bottle the Rebbe inquired about from Rabbi Gershon Henich Cohen.

I remember that during the sale of the Mitzvos for the entire year, the Rebbe leaned the left side of his back against the back of his chair, and was looking into the commentary on the Zohar from his late father. I saw on the Rebbe's face that he was concentrating very much, his holy eyebrows were furrowed in concentration, and his head moved from side to side. Suddenly, the Rebbe's face lit up, and at that moment, the Rebbe immediately coughed. It seemed to me as if the Rebbe wanted to cover up the fact that he 'caught on' and understood what was written there.

YECHIDUS

At the end of the month, I had the Zchus of entering Yechidus. Beforehand, I was instructed to knock on the door three times, to

say "Shehechiyanu" loud so the Rebbe can answer Omein, and kiss the Mezuzah, but out of sheer fear, I forgot everything...

When I was standing in line, there was like a semi-circle of Bochrim outside the Rebbe's room, and I was the first among the Bochrim. The one who was before me in the Yechidus, married with a Kapote, was taking a long time, and the Rabbi Groner began to open and close the door, hinting to him to hurry and leave, but he didn't leave. In the end Rabbi Groner opened the door completely and made a gesture with his hands as if to say, "What's going on here?" (to whom he gestured, I don't know), and the door remained open. Since I was standing right next to the door, I heard the Rebbe's voice clearly, but I was afraid to listen because it wasn't my Yechidus. Finall Rabbi Groner entered the room, took hold of the man's hand, and led him out of the Rebbe's room. Then he touched my arm, signaling me to enter.

Because of the general fear of entering the Rebbe's room, and especially after seeing the Rebbe's attendant remove a man from the Rebbe's room, and because he touched me as if to hurry me in, I forgot everything I was told to do. It's good the Gartel is put on earlier…

As I entered the room, I noticed that the Rebbe rose slightly, seemingly to extend his hand and take the note from me, but it was evident that he wanted to rise slightly. Later, I heard from other people that during their first Yechidus, the Rebbe rose slightly (interpreted as the Rebbe connecting one "Yechida" with another).

The Rebbe took the note from me, put on his glasses at the tip of his nose, and began to read. In the note, I wrote that I think I'm going to study in Paris (Brunoy) and I request his consent and blessing. Additionally, I wrote the names of my family members and requested a blessing for them as well. The Rebbe took a pencil

and drew a horizontal line under the question of my studies for the coming year, then the Rebbe drew a vertical line next to my name and another line next to the names of my family members.

The Rebbe then took off his glasses and began to speak while his holy eyes were still fixed on the note: "Regarding what you wrote..." Then he raised his holy eyes, looked at me, and asked: "Do you understand Yiddish?" I struggled to answer verbally and nodded my head in agreement. The Rebbe continued: "Regarding what you write about a place to learn, you need to discuss the reasons for it with the administration." Then the Rebbe asked me: "Did you receive dollars at the farbrengen?" And immediately I thought in my mind: Erev Rosh Hashanah? Yes. 13th of Tishrei? Yes. So I nodded my head affirmatively. The Rebbe opened the drawer and took out a dollar, saying: "I will give you another dollar, you should exchange it for francs if you go there, or wherever you go, you should exchange it for the currency of that country, add a dollar, and give it to charity."

Then the Rebbe continued to bless me:

"The Almighty should bless you" - the Rebbe phrased the blessing in the same terms I used in the note, such as "to be God-fearing and a scholar" and more. The Rebbe continued: "You should learn with diligence and perseverance, your father and mother should have Chassidic Nachas from you, and everyone should have Nachas from you." To my understanding, in the last words, the Rebbe answered my request to bring Nachas to the Rebbe…

Throughout the entire Brocho the Rebbe held the dollar in his hand, and at this point, he extended it to me. From the moment I took the dollar until after I left the room, I don't remember anything... The excitement and awe that enveloped me affected me, and I don't remember how I left the room...

One day we heard that the Rebbe was going out to see off the guests from Eretz Yisroel who were returning, and many Chassidim stood outside to watch. I had an old camera at the time and thought maybe I would try my luck and take a picture of the Rebbe, but the picture didn't come out... It was a sight to see the Rebbe standing by the main door at the top of the stairs, while the crowd stood and sang Ki Besimcho....

This is the sum-up of my second visit to the Rebbe that I merited 50 years ago לאוירש"ט, may these Brochos and experiences continue to inspire us, and may we be Zoche to be reunited with the Rebbe very soon, with coming of Moshiach right Now.