

# THANK YOU FOR COMING

## *Traveling to the Rebbe for Yud-Aleph Nissan*

A very large part of Yud-Aleph Nissan is definitely the many Chassidim who travel to New York to celebrate in the Rebbe's presence every year. The Rebbe expressed special appreciation for the many guests who came from far and near, at times even thanking them publicly for coming.

The first time many guests came to 770 for Yud-Aleph Nissan was in 5732\*, for the Rebbe's seventieth birthday. The mammoth preparations taking place around the world inspired many Chassidim to physically join the festivities in 770, also attracting many important and influential people to come as well.

Several weeks after Yud-Aleph Nissan, Rabbi Hodakov asked Reb Efraim Wolf for a list of people who had traveled from Eretz Yisroel to 770 for Yud-Aleph Nissan, as the Rebbe wished to personally participate in their travel expenses. The immigrants from Georgia and Bukhara were *zoche* that the Rebbe fully covered the expense of their tickets, aside from a symbolic amount of 18 lira. The Rebbe also participated in the travel expenses of many other individuals.

Although guests would continue to come every year, the next "big" year was 5737\*, the Rebbe's seventy-fifth birthday. The guests were

*zoche* to receive a special thank you from the Rebbe, and the Rebbe's satisfaction was quite apparent.

In 5733\*, a wandering Jew, in the spiritual sense, was staying around 770. He was having thoughts of conversion to another religion *r"l*, and was attempting one final look at authentic Jewish life. When he wrote to the Rebbe that he thinks his time in Crown Heights is up and he will be leaving the area, the Rebbe responded: "...Stay until after the upcoming Tishrei, enabling us to celebrate together all three *regalim* (and my birthday)."

Another expression of the *nachas ruach* the Rebbe derived from the guests who came for Yud-Aleph Nissan, was in 5740\* concerning the Glitzenshtein family. That year, Reb Yisroel Tzvi Glitzenstein arrived with his family to celebrate Yud-Aleph Nissan in the Rebbe's presence. On the day of their arrival, 9 Nissan, they waited outside 770 for the Rebbe's arrival from home. That day, Rabbi Chaim Pupko, an activist for *shleimus ha'aretz*, was waiting outside 770 too, with the intention to speak with the Rebbe about some important topics.

When the Rebbe arrived, Rabbi



JEM 108459 BY VELVEL SCHILDKRAUT 5734

\*📅 5732-1972, 5737-1977, 5733-1973, 5740-1980



THE REBBE SEES OFF A GROUP OF GUESTS WHO CAME TO JOIN THE REBBE FOR HIS SEVENTIETH BIRTHDAY — NISSAN 5732\*.

Pupko immediately approached and began an animated discussion lasting a few minutes. After the conversation was over, the Rebbe began walking up the stairs to the main entrance of 770, seemingly without noticing the guests. Suddenly, the Rebbe turned with a broad smile while pointing at the Glitzensten family and told Rabbi Pupko: “*Dos iz gest fun Eretz Yisroel*—these are guests from Eretz Yisroel.” The Rebbe continued again: “*Dos iz gest fun Eretz Yisroel*,” still smiling.

On the day the family was supposed to return to Eretz Yisroel, they gathered to receive the Rebbe’s *bracha*, this time after Mincha in the 770 lobby. Several minutes later, Rabbi Hodakov informed them that the Rebbe had just called him on the intercom, notifying that he would take part in the family’s travel expenses, both to New York and back to Eretz Yisroel. If they wanted the payment in cash, the Rebbe said, it could be provided as well.

Interestingly, in a *yechidus* earlier that year, the Rebbe clearly requested for guests to come in

honor of Yud-Aleph Nissan:

Rabbi Dovid Wetiman, shliach in S. Paulo, Brazil, had been working with a supporter of his, an attorney, to translate a book about Torah belief and science to Portuguese.

On Yud Shevat 5740\*, Rabbi Weitman came to New York and brought the attorney working with him to meet the Rebbe in *yechidus*. The attorney presented the Rebbe with a sample of the nearly-finished book,

and told the Rebbe that he hopes the book will be ready on time for Yud-Aleph Nissan, just a few months later.

The Rebbe responded: “Instead of the book, bring me the hundreds of students who will read the book. They should come to the *farbrenge*n and see that Torah is not dependent on science, but is far higher.”

Another amazing expression of the Rebbe’s *nachas ruach* from those who traveled to be with him on

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לכל לראש ישנו חוב, ויתירה מזו: זכות נעימה, התחייבות טובה ומתוקה, לבטאות יישר כח לכל אלה שהתאספו כאן, וכל אלה שהתאספו ביחד במקומות אחרים וכל אלה ששומעים את הפארבריינגען, או שלאחר מכן יקראו או ישמעו את מה שדובר בהתוועדות (מכיון שגם הם רוצים להשתתף בזה), ומכיון שכמה קישרו זאת גם עם פלוני בן פלוני — ישנה זכות נעימה לבטא גם הכרת טובה פרטית.

Moreover, it is a sweet and most pleasurable obligation to express my thanks to all those gathered here and all those gathered in other places listening to the *farbrenge*n, and also those who will hear about this *farbrenge*n (because they also wished to participate). And being that they connected it with an individual — there is a pleasurable merit to express personal thanks.

*Yud-Aleph Nissan 5738*

Yud-Aleph Nissan took place during the early 5740s\*. In early Nissan of that year Rabbi Chaim Gutnick reserved flights for the *talmidim hashluchim* flying to Australia for shortly before Yud Aleph Nissan.

When Rabbi Binyomin Klein wrote this to the Rebbe, the Rebbe wrote back: "מהו הטעם והגעשמואק שיסעו מכאן?" (What is the reason and pleasure to travel from here a few days before Yud-Aleph Nissan?)

As the Rebbe's eightieth birthday, on Yud-Aleph Nissan 5742\*, approached, Chassidim from around the world prepared to travel to 770 to participate in the festivities. On Rosh Chodesh Nissan, during a Tzivos Hashem rally, the Rebbe spoke, naming several reasons why people should refrain from traveling to New York to participate in the celebrations, saying that it was inappropriate for people to leave their homes so close to Pesach. The Rebbe explained that "the Torah is concerned about the money of Yidden," and therefore the travel expenses should instead be given to tzedakah in connection with the upcoming Yom Tov of Pesach. The Rebbe also instructed that everyone should go on *mivtzoim* "on the special day, Yud-Aleph Nissan."<sup>8</sup>

Although many people from all

over had been planning on coming in, now, with the Rebbe's clear instruction, they immediately changed their plans.

Still, there were some who couldn't resist and made their way to 770 to spend these precious moments with the Rebbe:

Mr. Zalman Jaffe related in his diary, how unsure of how to proceed, he called the Rebbetzin (on two separate occasions) asking what to do in light of the Rebbe's instructions. (Both times) the Rebbetzin said that she did not hear this directly from the Rebbe, but she believed that the Rebbe was referring to large groups "of hundreds of people, but I am sure that the Rebbe does not mean you." The Rebbetzin did reiterate however, that she was not to be held accountable if the Rebbe would express displeasure to Mr. Jaffe for coming...<sup>9</sup>

Rabbi Mendel Raskin—son of Reb Leibel, the legendary shliach in Morocco—related: "Personally, we assumed from the outset that the Rebbe's request not to physically travel was only to those who were not sure or who had doubts as to how they can balance the Pesach preparations together with coming to the Rebbe." Not only did Reb Leibel himself come to New York that year, he even brought a group of 25

## PLEASURE SEEING YOU

It was a pleasure to see you at the farbrengen on the occasion of the 11th of Nissan, and exchange l'chaim blessings.

Letter to Mr. David Chase—12 Nissan 5741

Yidden from Morocco to celebrate Yud-Aleph Nissan with the Rebbe.

Sure enough, there were considerably less Chassidim who traveled to participate in the Yud-Aleph Nissan farbrengen that year. Surprisingly however, the Chassidim who were present were *zoche* to some extraordinary *kiruvim*:

During the Shabbos Hagadol farbrengen, the Rebbe said: "Since guests arrived in connection with the eightieth year," he will explain a part of his outgoing *kapitel*, as well as the incoming one. This lifted the spirits of the guests who had arrived, as they sensed that the Rebbe appreciated their attendance.

This notion was reinforced during the big farbrengen, Yud-Aleph Nissan night. The Rebbe farbrenged for six hours (until 3:00 a.m!) and then declared that because many people had traveled from far and near to attend this farbrengen, he will distribute a Tanya to all the participants as a memento and as a symbol of appreciation for coming. The *chaluka* went for another three hours, until 6:00 a.m!

In the coming years, 5743\*-5744\*, the Rebbe again instructed that Chassidim not travel to New York for Yud-Aleph Nissan. Interestingly, in 5745\* (the last Yud-Aleph Nissan on which the Rebbe farbrenged, *le'ei ata*) the Rebbe did not address the topic at all.



\* 5740S-1980S, 5742-1982, 5743-1983, 5744-1984, 5745-1985, 5741-1981