



## BIRTHDAYS ARE FOR GROWTH

*11 Nissan, 5732-1972, The Rebbe's 70th Birthday*

I have been asked, "Since you have already reached seventy years, what are your plans after that? It's reasonable that this is a good time to consider some rest, etc."

The answer is: first of all, one must not look at the passport but, rather, how one feels. And more important: how many of the years were productive!

The number of years written in the passport or birth certificate is nothing special. We need, instead, the "full days" the Zohar describes, where each day counts and not even one is missing.

The answer to what we must do after seventy is in the continuation of the verse, "...and if with strength." Whatever "weakness" was in the preceding years — and through introspection one can be knowledgeable about this — one must begin to work with increased strength.

But there are some who cannot accomplish everything with their own hands and feet. They have limitations. So they must rely on those who hear their request, their pleading, to actually achieve the goals.

And carrying out goals is one of Torah's teachings: "He who has one hundred wants two hundred," and "he who has two hundred, wants four hundred." Particularly those who feel they have done everything necessary to be done ... then it's not the time to rest and take it easy because "he has succeeded nicely." Rather, now is the time to "want two hundred" — twice as much. And not to delude oneself, but truly double.

It is customary to connect every subject with a particular number. As we've seen so often that when we say, "We must achieve," people typically respond, "We've already accomplished so much" — and it's hard to know just where we stand. For this reason the Mishna says, "He wants..." a *specific* amount.

So, too, since we are moving from seventy into the eighties, this year we should establish at least seventy-one new institutions!

Probably some will be anxious that, since we're exhausted from the dancing and singing, we are not fully conscious of the obligation being assumed here. But this is not an obligation. It is a merit. Each institution is a merit that benefits the community and "the community's merit



depends upon you," and more importantly, "the community's merit sustains him": it will be much easier than we imagine.

The groundwork for this is already in place: in holiness there is nothing "free." Things in Egypt were "free," but we left Egypt long ago. Especially today, in the month of Nissan, this endeavor necessarily entails expenses and effort. So I will join forces with everyone who dedicates themselves to these projects. From the monies contributed to the "Seventy Fund" we will distribute at least ten percent of the expense of setting up these seventy-one new institutions.

And don't be frightened when, perhaps during this year we begin not seventy-one, but eighty, and maybe even 100 — that's even better; and there will surely be no problem regarding the ten percent, or even more than ten percent: as long as each person devotes at least his "little finger" to help in the work; both men and women.

And we are not calling for an institution in order to provide another place for a "Chairman" and "Treasurer," and "Honorary Chairman" and such; printing stationery and making headlines, where newspapers proclaim that so-and-so was honored and chosen for — this peculiar innovation of the United States — "Man of the Year!"

It's never been heard of! "Day of the Year" is a term for Yom Kippur; "Man of the Year" is solely an invention of the United States!

If he were truly a *mensch*, he should have been before this year and should be after this year. If he is a *mensch* only one year, it is a sign that he's not a *mensch* this year either! He would have been before and afterwards...

Yet, if it can be utilized for Torah and *mitzvos*, honor him as "Man of the Year;" make him "Man of the Month" — as long as the new institution is built on a foundation of Torah and *mitzvos*: *mitzvos* between man and his fellow, and between man and

