

NEWS

LIVING WITH MOSHIACH AROUND THE WORLD

MIVTZA HISKASHRUS FOR THE 100TH YEAR IN OHOLEI TORAH

The children in Oholei Torah's elementary school were excited to have the opportunity to purchase albums capable of holding 100 pictures of the Rebbe MH"M. Each picture features an explanation as to when it was taken and under what circumstances.

The principal, Rabbi Tzvi Hirsch Lustig, along with Assistant Principals Rabbi Levin and Rabbi Glick and with input from other teachers, initiated this campaign to galvanize the children's learning and *hiskashrus*.

Every day, teachers receive pictures for their class to be distributed as a reward for whatever behavior the teacher wishes to reinforce. The students get another picture in the lunchroom as a reinforcement for proper *Chassidische* behavior there, as well.

Well behaved students receive additional pictures at recess. Every positive move the children make is rewarded with a picture of the Rebbe MH"M. The children enrich their knowledge of Chabad customs and at



the same time become acquainted with rare pictures of the Rebbe.

The children were given boxes with symbols of the *mivtza* and the

school on it, to hold any "doubles" they might receive. The children are motivated to be on their best behavior in order to complete their albums as quickly as possible. About 75 of the pictures have been distributed thus far. Doubles are traded among the children. A note from parents about *Chassidische* behavior over Shabbos is also rewarded with a picture, as are fulfilling special *horaos* like *Kiddush Levana*.

Thanks go to R' Zev Cadaner and Rabbi Mendel Eidelman for their support for this exciting *mivtza*.

What feedback was received about this project? As one student in second grade put it: "When I get a picture of something, I don't feel anything. But when I get a picture of the Rebbe, I feel something!"

SHONEH HALACHOS

One of the nice projects of Igud Menahalei HaYeshivos of Crown Heights is the project "Shoneh Halachos," which is designed to emphasize the daily study of *halacha*. Boys of the eighth grade in Oholei Torah, Tomchei Tmimim of Crown Street and Lubavitcher Yeshiva of Ocean Parkway participated. The *mivtza* was *l'ilui nishmas* Rabbi Yehuda Kalman Marlow, a'h, who the Rebbe called "ish ha'halacha."

In a letter the Rebbe writes: "...to emphasize the importance of action, which is primary...it is extremely vital that practical *halachos* applicable to daily life be learned. It is worthwhile looking for appropriate ways through special tests, giving prizes and the like, so that the *mushpaim* should be adept in



them." (*Igros Kodesh*, Vol. 3, p. 158)

Learning *halachos* is especially connected with the 100th year since the birth of the Rebbe MH"M. As the Rebbe explained in the *maamer* "Mizmor LSoda" 5717, the *Megaleh Amukos* notes that the first letters of "Mizmor LSoda

hariau l'Hashem kol ha'aretz," spell "halacha."

Prizes were awarded to 49 students, who did well on the tests. A student of Rabbi Marlow, who wished to remain anonymous, donated \$100 to each of the outstanding students. There were tests at various stages of the *mivtza*, with twenty students being tested at the final stage. They exhibited prodigious knowledge in numerous *simanim* of *Kitzur Shulchan Aruch*. The final winner was Yisroel Kirsch, with Hillel Pikarski and Boruch Moshe Korf as runners-up.

Rabbi Marlow's son, Rabbi Yosef Yitzchok Marlow, flew in from Florida especially for the final program. He was one of the judges, along with Rabbi Yitzchok Zirkind and Rabbi Yaakov Schwei.

SHAVUOS AT RIKERS ISLAND

BY REB MORDECHAI STAIMAN

Shavuos came a bit early to Rikers Island Prison, in New York City, but on the 47th day of *S'fira*, the Jewish men and women inmates gathered under the basketball hoop of the gleaming gymnasium of the Correction Officers, and welcomed Hashem's giving of the Torah. The setting was festive, with everyone seated at tables covered with white linens, with lots of food and soft drinks on hand.

In attendance, the Lubavitcher *shluchim*, by their own admission, had one of their finest hours, satisfying the hundred men and women inmates who were so appreciative of not being forgotten on this very important Festival. The *shluchim* included Shneur Zalman Osdoba; two brothers, Zalman and Mendel Tewel, *bachurim* worthy of being painted as dancing *Chassidim* by any of our great Chassidic painters; and this writer. Every Festival and *Yom Tov*, under the leadership of Michoel Chazan, chairman of the board of directors of Vaad HaKohol and the Crown Heights Jewish Community Council, Lubavitcher *shluchim* reach out to Rikers inmates, bringing them *simcha* and *Chassidus*, putting *t'fillin* on male inmates, and praying with them.

Joining them was Satmar Rabbi and Jewish Chaplain Leib Glantz, who seemed everywhere at the same time in the gym, distributing *kosher* goodies. Several other Jewish rabbis were also in attendance, and they pitched in to make the evening sweet and memorable. Oh, yes, the 600,000 Jewish souls and millions of Jewish bodies at Mount Sinai mingled among the inmates, not yet freed from their own *Mitzrayim*, and you know they were cheering the Jewish inmates on.

This writer had a very special moment while *davening Mincha* and *Maariv* with black Jewish inmate O. B. We shared a *siddur* together, reciting passages in English. Suddenly I saw tears fall from O.'s eyes and land on the prayer book. He then turned to

It was then that I realized that I hadn't come only to write a story for Beis Moshiach, but to help a fellow Jew.



me, hugged me and said how moved he was to read about the greatness of Hashem. He also thanked me for helping him with his *davening*. It was then that I realized that I hadn't come only to write a story for *Beis Moshiach*, but to help a fellow Jew.

After the dinner, Rabbi Richtman, Administrative Chaplain of Jewish Affairs, NYC Department of Correction, addressed the inmates and spoke at length about *Shavuos*. "It is the Season of the Gift of our Torah. On the sixth day of *Sivan* (it was on the day of *Shabbat*), in the year 2448 after Creation, G-d gave the Torah to the Jewish people on Mount Sinai. The Feast of Weeks,¹ on the sixth and seventh of *Sivan*, commemorate this great event."² At my table, Jewish inmate J. W. leaned over to me to get special attention and info about *Shavuos*. As he whispered to me, his voice seemed small and thin, like a little boy inquisitively asking his mother, "What is the Torah you are talking about?" And his mother said, "Well, my child, the Torah is...is... I'm not exactly sure myself what it is until we receive it. But this I can assure you, my child, G-d is about to give us the most wonderful and precious gift in the world."³

That night, when *Shavuos* came a bit early to Rikers Island, every inmate, "standing tall at the foot of Sinai," gratefully received the Torah. Jewish inmate K. C. also wept with joy.

1. The name, Feast of Weeks, is given to this Festival because it is celebrated after the end of the seven weeks of the Omer; the counting of which begins on the second night of Pesach.

2. These words were not from the lips of Rabbi Richtman. They actually came from Rabbi Nissan Mindel's (o.b.m.) book, *The Complete Story of Shavuot*. I used them here as I was too busy answering questions from the inmates at my table to hear the actual speech of Rabbi Richtman.

3. Also borrowed from Rabbi Mindel's book on *Shavuos*.

TANYA PRINTED IN HUNGARIAN

"Mysticism and Jewish Kabbala" is the inscription on the introductory page to the Hungarian edition of *Likkutei Amarim-Tanya* which was printed in Budapest for Yud-Tes Kislev this year. Since that time, nearly two thousand copies have been sold. A limited number of copies were sent to Eretz Yisroel to enable Hungarian Jews there to learn the Written Torah of Chabad Chassidus.

This translation only includes the first seventeen chapters, but it's an important first step; now Hungarian can also be included in the roster of languages the *Tanya* is translated into.

The work was done over a three-year period, for in addition to a careful translation of the text, footnotes and sources, there is a section called "Concepts" (of Kabbala and Chassidus), without which the text is impossible to understand in a language as difficult as Hungarian.

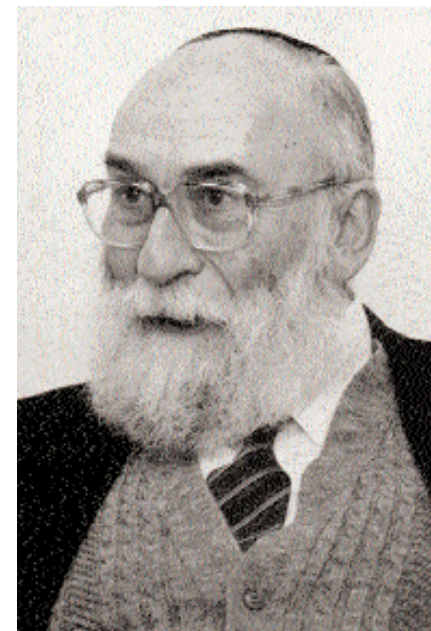
The translation as well as the footnotes and concepts, in addition to an introduction to the book, are the work of journalist Naftali Krauss of Tel Aviv, who was greatly encouraged by the Rebbe MH"M to write and publish books in Hungarian on Jewish topics for Jews in that country - over 100,000 Jews!

So far, Krauss has published eleven books. With the *Tanya* he became a publisher as well, having published it at his own expense with the help of a group of Hungarian Lubavitcher Chassidim.

In a separate section containing selections from the Rebbe's *sicha* of 5751 about the importance of translating Chassidus and disseminating it around the world, as well as the holy proclamation "*Yechi Adoneinu Moreinu V'Rabbeinu Melech HaMoshiach Lolam Va'ed!*," there are



quotes from the Rebbe that were said to the translator on 22 Elul 5751. "Moshe Rabbeinu showed the way - that Torah must be translated into seventy languages. [Smiling:] Hungarian was surely included. *Hatzlacha raba u'muflaga* (great and outstanding success)."



Translator and elucidator R' Naftali Krauss

Indeed, the Rebbe's *bracha* was fulfilled and the *Tanya* was printed in a most attractive manner, with the book's design created by Avrohom Yeshaya Reinetz. The layout was done in Eretz Yisroel by the tireless printer Yom Tov Lippe Friedman of Bnei Brak, who was able to set the unique layout like a Gemara with the text in the center and the notes and concepts on either side, like Rashi and Tosafos.

The end of the work contains a biography of the author, the Alter Rebbe, and a translation from the book, *The Rebbe Who was Accused of Sedition*.

The *Tanya* is displayed in select bookstores in Budapest with the Hungarian side on the front cover. It has a picture of the Rebbe taken at the distribution of English *Tanyas* in 5735, translated by R' Nissan Mindel, a'h. The original plan was to have a picture of the Alter Rebbe on the front (now it's on the back cover), but the graphic artists insisted on having the Rebbe MH"Ms picture, the *rosh alfei Yisroel* of our generation.

1ST MACHON CHANA INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S CONFERENCE SCHEDULED FOR WEEK OF 3 TAMMUZ

As spring days are becoming warmer, and New Yorkers start to think about leaving town for the mountains and camp, Machon Chana is busy planning a major event in Crown Heights. The first Machon Chana International Women's Conference is scheduled to take place the week of Gimmel Tammuz, June 21-26.

We spoke to the dean of Machon Chana, Mrs. Sara Labkowski, to get a "behind the scenes" view of this formidable endeavor.

Mrs. Labkowski, could you tell us how you first came up with the idea of a conference?

After visiting many cities and speaking to many *shluchim* and *shluchos*, I have noticed that Chabad Houses are very successful at making a *fremder* into a *mekurav*, but taking them a step further is still a challenge. Making a *mekurav* into an *eigener*, into a strong Chassid, is difficult without the help of *yeshiva* learning or a strong *baal tshuva* community. Today, in cities around the world, there are thousands of *baalei tshuva* with families who never attended a *yeshiva* (families who became *mekarev* by *shluchim*), but who have the same concerns in regards to *chinuch*, *avoda* or running a *frum* home as do our alumnae. The strength and wealth of knowledge they could gain from spending time with women who received their *chinuch* in Machon Chana is tremendous — both in terms of seeing how far one can reach in *yiras Shamayim*, *hiskashrus* and *Chassidishkeit*, and in the overall level of integration into the Anash world. We felt that a conference of this sort would give these women an opportunity to meet others who are further along in their journey, to receive new insights, and thus help them reach higher goals both for themselves and for their families.

Do you mean to say that this conference would be beneficial only to *baalei-teshuva*

women only?

No, everyone could gain from it. When the invitations to last year's Gimmel Tammuz Reunion were sent out, we received many phone calls from women from all backgrounds asking if they could attend even though they were not alumnae. The answer, of course was yes! The conference was a big hit with all who attended.

Is there an overall theme to this year's conference?

This year our theme is the Shabbos table — the cornerstone of a Jewish family, a foundation for our Jewish future. This topic was inspired by an answer I received from the Rebbe's *Igros*. The letter said that we should plan a *farbrengen* on Yud Shvat where we should discuss how to keep children at a Shabbos table. At first we were surprised at this seemingly limited and simple topic that seemed like enough for perhaps a single session at the conference. The more we discussed and planned the conference, this topic began to loom larger than the others. We realized that this theme of the Shabbos table encompasses almost every other topic we wanted to address — A "healthy" Shabbos table means a healthy Jewish family.

Making Shabbos meaningful and holy was second nature to our grandparents. For many today, it seems overwhelming, frustrating and out of reach. We are excited to devote the convention exclusively to this most vital topic and be able to offer hands on practical step-by-step guidance for making Shabbos — "Shabbos"!

Please tell us how you decided on the topics that will be covered.

As I mentioned before, the "Shabbos table" is the central theme of the conference. All of the topics will relate to this central theme. We will therefore discuss issues in *chinuch*, parenting and

communication as they relate to the Shabbos experience.

In addition, I keep in touch with our alumnae around the world, which keeps me informed about current concerns. We also conducted an extensive survey to find out which topics are the "burning issues." We are using all of these sources to build on the success of last year's conference.

Mrs. L., in its 28 proud years of existence, Machon Chana has held other gatherings and reunions, how is this conference different and why did you choose Gimmel Tammuz?

Our reunions in the past were at various times of the year and were always highly successful in terms of *chizuk* and insights. We needed to choose a set time for an annual gathering, but we could not figure out what would be the ideal time, especially since there are various conventions already happening throughout the year. Vav Tishrei seemed appropriate for Machon Chana but highly impractical. Tishrei is an *aliya l'regel* for all Chassidim, Rosh Chodesh Kislev — Kinus HaShluchim, Yud Shvat a Kinus of Yeshiva bachurim, Chof Bais Shvat — Kinus HaShluchos, The N'shei convention is during S'fira and Shavuos is the time when the Rabbanim arrive. On Gimmel Tammuz there is no real international event happening, which bothered me. But it's "erev camp," when people are running away and thus it is an extremely difficult time, so I dismissed that date as well. We opened an *Igros* last winter asking whether to plan the reunion for Adar or Iyar. The Rebbe's answer was amazing! It was a letter addressed to a Bais Rivkah Banquet held during the week of Parshas Shlach and Korach. Looking at a calendar we were quite surprised realizing it was the week of Gimmel Tammuz. The letter spoke about the

greatness of women and how they remained strong during difficult periods in Jewish history and focused on bringing up children that were truly *zera beirach Hashem*. The Rebbe spoke of the Rebbe Rayatz's connection with women in establishing Bais Rivkah and how appropriate it is to have an event around his day of Yud-Bais Tammuz. A reunion for Machon Chana, the Rebbe's contribution to Jewish Women, was the obvious choice to celebrate Gimmel Tammuz and *baruch Hashem* though the time of year was difficult — the convention was a tremendous success. This year I asked the Rebbe whether to plan the conference again at this time and I received a beautiful *bracha* for the same date.

Are you planning any special Gimmel Tammuz activities?

Our banquet on Sunday night, Gimmel Tammuz, we will pay tribute to the Rebbe's empowerment of Jewish women. We will celebrate what the Rebbe has done for women and through them for the Jewish family and nation. We will honor five women who were inspired, educated and encouraged by the Rebbe, and the institution he built for them and for women around the world-Machon Chana. These women represent thousands of others who, in between housework, work and homework have managed to deeply touch the lives of those around them and carry out the Rebbe's vision with joy, tenacity and self-sacrifice. The women whose lives we will celebrate this year are Chava Barada (Moscow, Russia), Sara Behrman (Crown Heights, NY), Bracha Meshchaninov (Monsey, NY), Devorah Leah Shalinsky (Crown Heights, NY), and Sara Weinstein (Pittsburg, PA).

Are you then planning for this to become an annual event?

Attendees last year told us that although they have been going to various other Chabad conventions, none spoke to them and their needs like this one. This underscored the need for this kind of an event to us, so we are definitely planning to make it annual. We hope that more and more *shluchim* will inform their *mekuravos* of its value

and send us addresses of women to invite.

Mrs. Labkowski, what moments of last year's reunion that were the most memorable to you personally?

There were many memorable moments, many of them leaving tears of joy in my eyes thinking of the Rebbe's *nachas*. Friday night was the first emotional moment, some women who are grandmothers today arrived at the dorm and reminisced about where they were at when they first arrived and how they feel the same sense of warmth and home after all these years. Many told of their experiences on Pesach when the Rebbe visited the Seder, while others related of their *z'chus* to visit with the

Through laughter and tears, we listened to harrowing experiences of sickness, poverty and need and how before and after Gimmel Tammuz the Rebbe helped them pull through.

Rebbetzin when they were chosen to deliver the *shalach manos* to the Rebbe. At *Shalosh Seudos*, we went around the room and each woman introduced herself and added a few words about her life and *peulos*. It was an extremely exhilarating moment. Our hearts swelled with joy. Many are campus *shluchos*, most are active in their communities, and almost all are proud mothers of *k'h* beautiful families. But the most memorable to me personally was a Bitachon and Simcha workshop. We were about 25 women in the room and each woman was given an opportunity to share with us personal experiences in *bitachon*. Through laughter and tears, we listened to harrowing experiences of sickness, poverty and need and how

before and after Gimmel Tammuz the Rebbe helped them pull through. Listening to these modern days stories of heroism and *emuna* I clearly saw how true the *pasuk* was "*B'makom sh'baalei t'shuva omdim ein tzaddikim g'murim yicholim laamod*" and understood why the Rebbe said "anyone who suspects me of being prejudiced to Machon Chana is right." These women the Rebbe chose to call "my daughters" were truly the *nashim tzidkanios* that would bring Moshiach.

Anything else you would like to add?

The program gives women an opportunity to not only discuss issues in personal growth, marriage and families in a warm and caring atmosphere but also to share insights with peers while receiving emotional support and together coming up with viable solutions. Machon Chana has always been known as the place to send students. During the past few years, with the trend of adult continuing education on the rise, we have expanded our program opportunities to accommodate women of all ages and stages. In addition to this conference, our summer program in our newly acquired beautiful 60 room hotel in Tannersville NY offers an excellent opportunity for learning, spiritual growth and networking for the whole family. We urge *shluchim* to take advantage and give their *mekuravim* a weekend, week, or month of learning they will forever thank them for.

Sounds very exciting! Can you tell us how to register for the conference?

Invitations are being printed shortly. *Shluchos* could e-mail us a list of women they feel should know of the event at channa@bhtech.net or send the list to 935 Eastern Pkwy Suite 5c, Brooklyn, NY, 11213. They may also call Channa Merkur at 718-467-9422 for more information. The Anash are welcome to register on our web site at www.machonchana.org, where they can also find a detailed conference program. Everyone is also welcome to call us at the above phone number — Machon Chana is waiting to hear from you!