



by Rabbi Shlomo Weinrib

“אשרינו מה טוב חלקינו ומה נעים...”
This lebedige niggun reverberated throughout the hall, echoing the feelings resonating within 700+ neshamos.



They had just witnessed the siyum of 165 thirteen-year-old Bonai Chavivai boys who had learned and mastered a masechta in honor of their bar mitzvah, chazering each gemara tens of times! The air in the huge ballroom took on that of a chasuna as the

dancing in celebration of the tremendous simchah.

On Motzei Shabbos Shemos, hundreds of boys and their fathers travelled from many locales to attend the annual Bonai Chavivai melava malka and siyum in the Atrium hall in Monsey. Bonai Chavivai, the brainchild of Rabbi Dovid Newman, is modeled after his widely acclaimed Vhaarev Na program for mesivta bochorim, encouraging 12-year-olds to be “koneh” a masechta for their Bar Mitzvah through crystal clear understanding and countless chazaras. The boys choose a masechta suitable for them, and learn it during their free time, guided and motivated by experienced rebbeim. On that Motzei Shabbos they came together to celebrate the culmination of months of hard work making the masechta theirs.

But this wasn't just another

the Bonai Chavivai program in Monsey, explained that this event marks the beginning of a new trend. “When we were just starting the Bonai Chavivai program four years ago, our dream was that there would come a time when every 12-year-old boy



will not only ask his friend, ‘What is your Bar Mitzvah parshah?’, but also, ‘What is ‘your’ Bar Mitzva masechta?’” The last few years have seen this dream develop into a reality, as the Bonai

as Chicago, and LA. The lively dancing and smiles lighting up the face of every boy was the greatest testament to their pride at being a part of this dream-come-true.

To start the evening, the chuppah room was transformed into a beis medrash, jam-packed with the young stars of the evening enjoying more chazara of “their” masechta. At the conclusion of the seder, Horav Moshe Boruch Newman, father of Rabbi Dovid Newman, addressed the crowd. He remarked that the boys of Bonai Chavivai who don't just finish but know a masechta for their bar mitzvah, are another level of manifestation of the Chofetz Chaim's foretelling that Torah will survive and flourish after World War II.

While the crowd enjoyed a festive melava malka, six boys from Bonai Chavivai shared

many times that he was able to teach it to his older brother. Another boy mentioned that his rebbi commented that since joining the program, there has been a tremendous positive change in his learning in yeshiva as well. The time he was spending



to acquire his masechta was not detracting from the regular yeshiva limud; on the contrary, the confidence and ahavas haTorah that he gained from his masechta spurred him to put in more effort in yeshiva. Another boy spoke about the incredible feeling of being able to open a gemara and learn wherever he is – undistracted, such as a few weeks ago while waiting in a barber shop. Hearing from these pure neshamos firsthand how they have realized the importance of mesiras nefesh for constant review and the simchas haTorah that it brings, made an indelible impression on all those present.

Rabbi Dovid Newman addressed the assemblage, reading aloud a letter he received from a parent, expressing his thanks for the incredible Bonai Chavivai program. “As soon as the invitation for the Bonai



Grand Siyum

hundreds of participants joined hands,



siyum. The emcee Rabbi Dovid Delouya, who runs

Chavivai program exploded from its headquarters in Monsey to cities all over, from Lakewood, Passaic, Brooklyn and Far Rockaway, to as far

how much the program has helped them grow. One boy attested to the confidence he felt after learning and chazering “his masechta” so

Chavivai event arrived, my son ran to the calendar to calculate how much he would have to chazer each day in order to make a siyum in time for the grand siyum. He then took out his gemara and started learning with such a geshmak. My wife looked on with tears in her eyes. This is a boy who has so many competing interests vying for his time. In yeshiva he is a good student, but at home we never see him with a gemara. The Bonai Chavivai program is amazing, not only for the chazara factor, but also because it teaches the boys to set goals and take responsibility for their time." This sentiment could have been expressed by every one of the hundreds of boys in the program.

Rabbi Newman explains the uniqueness of the Bonai Chavivai program which brings about such a level of genuine ahavas haTorah. "With Bonai Chavivai, every boy is learning with pure cheshek without any external pressure of tests or performance-based prizes. This opportunity to learn with self-motivation and the gratifying feeling it brings, are the greatest gifts we are giving the boys."

Horav Elya Ber Wachtfogel, guest speaker at the event, reflected on the unique feat of the boys of Bonai Chavivai. "You bochorim are making history!! There have been many gedolim who have learned through a masechta over a hundred times, but to have such young

boys learning a masechta so many times, is history!!" The Rosh Yeshiva related that

body knows that Moshiach is coming very soon. You boys will be amongst the first

it backwards and forwards!!"

The highlight of the evening was the grand siyum, where 165 bar mitzvah boys were mesayem "their masechta" once again in honor of the event, as hundreds of soon-to-be bar mitzvah boys looked on, eagerly awaiting their opportunity to be amongst them. They recited the hadran together, standing in front of rows of shtenders which were presented as a gift for every mesayem. Following the kaddish, the entire room erupted in resounding simchas haTorah, an air of heilige energy filling the room and sweeping everyone into uplifting dancing.

Following the dancing, everyone sang together in a hartzige kumzitz with R' Boruch Levine. The kumzitz featured a beautiful

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the Chofetz Chaim told his father, Horav Nosson Wachtfogel, that the first people Moshiach is going to greet

people he will start talking with in learning, because you



and speak to are the bnei Torah who know at least one masechta thoroughly. Rav Elya Ber continued, "Every-

one who has chazered your masechta so many times, and know

the choir made up of members of Bonai Chavivai, led by Rabbi Yaakov Meir Halpern, one of the Bonai Chavivai rebbeim



in Monsey. The choir performed the famous V'haarev Na song, with the lyrics adjusted in honor of the occasion, emphasizing the love of Torah borne out of tireless dedication to chazara. During the kumzitz, Rabbi Shmuel Newman, who heads the Bonai Chavivai program in Lakewood, related a beautiful mashal to bring out how learning Torah with the simcha and cheshek that comes from truly knowing the masechta is the surest way to keep out the Yetzer Hara who seeks to pull us away from our true goal. "We have to play our 'shira' louder than his, to drown out the 'music' of the outside world!"

As the evening drew to a close, every person there left the hall with a renewed appreciation for Torah, and a sense of awe at the accomplishments of such young boys, who have paved for themselves the path to true ahavas and simchas haTorah.

To bring this program to your community please contact Rabbi Dovid Newman at vhaarevna@gmail.com.

