

## RUBASHKIN SAGA

# Rubashkin to Respond to Government on Erev Pesach

*Mrs. Rubashkin Talks About Her and Her Husband's Seder*

BY YOCHONON DONN

OTISVILLE, N.Y. - Attorneys huddled Monday with Sholom Rubashkin in the Otisville Correctional Facility where the former manager of the nation's largest kosher slaughterhouse is incarcerated, to hammer out the final points of their appeals response to the government.

The prosecution replied to Mr. Rubashkin's January appeal in March, and the defense will hand in their rebuttal to the St. Louis, Missouri-based 8th Circuit Court of Appeals on Monday.

Immediately following the meeting, Mr. Rubashkin e-mailed his daughter: "Baruch Hashem, it will be a good *keli* for the goal, which is to vacate and throw out the conviction and I will be free to serve Hashem all the time!"

Meanwhile, last year's 45-minute Seder for Mr. Rubashkin will be a thing of the past, at least for this year.

Mrs. Leah Rubashkin, Sholom's wife, said she has *emunah* her husband will be out "before Pesach — like today." But she is glad that he informed her yesterday that his 9:30 p.m. curfew would be extended for that night.

"They're going to try to extend it for the Seder until about 11, or maybe even until 11:30," she told *Hamodia* yesterday.

There are 12 other Jews, encompassing all levels of religiosity, in the prison together

with Mr. Rubashkin. Most attended the *tefillos* on Yom Kippur and can be expected to attend the Seder as well.

"They will give them a room called a chapel but it will be under their terms," she said.

In an interview with *Hamodia*, Mrs. Leah Rubashkin refers to the medium-security prison where her husband is confined 70 miles northwest of New York City only as "there."

Mrs. Rubashkin, who has for years watched how her husband presided over a huge Seder in which his parents and brothers joined him in Postville, will spend her first Pesach since she moved out of Iowa at someone else's table.

She said she will spend the first two days of Yom Tov by her parents-in-law in Boro Park and the second days by her parents, Mr. Binyomin and Mrs. Yehudis Goldman, in Long Beach.

"My dear husband, I hope, will be joining me," she said. "But in the Mitzraim that we are in ... it looks like he'll still be there..."

She said her husband is very busy in prison, where he receives hundreds of letters every day.

"He is involved in his Tehillim..." she said. "He sends these *divrei Torah* e-mails every day."

Mrs. Rubashkin mentioned the paradox she is living with since her husband's arrest in November of 2009, and his subsequent 27-year prison sentence.

The conviction and sentence are currently under appeal, with oral arguments scheduled for the week of June 15.

"We have a very difficult task of living in *galus* and *geulah* at the same time," she said, her voice rising as she spoke. "On one hand he is there, you have to think about how the accommodations are going to be ... on the other hand a person who is a *baal emunah* and a *baal bitachon* knows that Hashem could let him out any minute. And the stronger we believe that the stronger the chance is that it can really happen. So the hardest [part] of this whole story is to be juggling those two worlds at one time," she said.

"But we are pulling through," Mrs. Rubashkin concluded optimistically.

