

AT THE ARTSCROLL SHABBOS TABLE

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PROJECT DEDICATED BY MENACHEM AND BINAH BRAUNSTEIN AND FAMILY
L'ILLUI NISHMAS RAV MOSHE BEN RAV YISSOCHOR BERISH AND MARAS YENTA BAS YISROEL CHAIM

PARASHAH

A PARENT'S DUTY

The Torah Treasury by Rabbi Moshe M. Lieber

אָמַר אֶל הַכֹּהֲנִים בְּנֵי אַהֲרֹן וְאָמַרְתָּ אֲלֵהֶם.

Say to the Kohanim, the sons of Aharon, and tell them (21:1).

Rashi (based on Yevamos 114a) tells us that the redundancy — *say to* and *tell them* — teaches that the adult Kohanim were cautioned regarding the minors.

Many homiletic explanations of this Rashi have been offered by various commentators. Rav Moshe Feinstein viewed it as a lesson in educational philosophy and approach. One cannot inculcate children or students with fidelity to Torah and its values by merely telling them what their obligations are. Parents and educators must demonstrate that the Torah life is precious, desirable and beautiful. When a child recognizes that Torah is the key to serenity and a happy, fulfilled life, he will want to follow the Torah. One must speak to his children "twice": once to teach them the *mitzvos*, and a second time to ignite within them a burning desire to a live Torah life. It is only in this way that the elders will succeed in passing their values onto their young.

According to the Dubno Maggid, this teaches us to realize that adults serve as role models for our children. How they behave in their own lives often reflects the behavior they saw in their parents.

Thus, even when we may not have the strength of

character or resolve to do the right thing, we must find the strength to do what is right for the sake of our children.



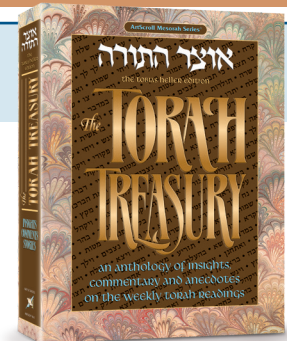
Rav Baruch Sorotzkin

Rav Baruch Sorotzkin, citing his father, Rav Zalman Sorotzkin, offered the following educational insight:

The charge to be particularly careful about children was given to the Kohanim. While parents can usually control their home environment in which a child is raised, peer pressure and society can have a detrimental effect on a child. It is the parents' duty to address those influences in an appropriate manner.

Kohanim are subject to privileges - but they have unique proscriptions as well. Thus, the child of a Kohan was, at times, forced to act differently from his friends. It was his parents' duty to see to it that he maintained his unique status.

Any parent whose child is subject to an environment that is not consonant with the spiritual level of the home has a similar responsibility. He must guide and encourage his child to hold his own in the face of the lower standards his friends or the others around him maintain.



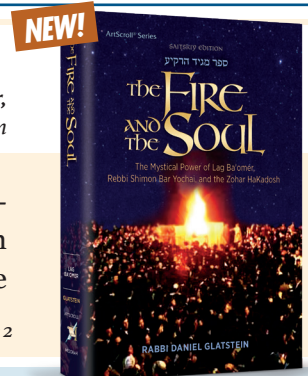
LAG
BA'OMER

WHY CELEBRATE ON LAG BA'OMER?

The Fire and the Soul – The Mystical Power of Lag Ba'Omer, Rebbi Shimon Bar Yochai, and the Zohar HaKadosh by Rabbi Daniel Glatstein

Lag Ba'Omer is a joyous day celebrated throughout the spectrum of the Jewish people. There is a widespread custom to travel to the *kever* of Rav Shimon bar Yochai in Meron, where an incredibly festive event transpires annually. Thousands participate in the *simchah* with music, singing, and dancing.

continued on page 2



THIS WEEK'S ISSUE IS SPONSORED
לזכות בהצלחה יצחק בן דבורה, מזל בת שושנה, גבריאל בן מזל, אברהם בן מזל

MESORAH HERITAGE FOUNDATION

WHY CELEBRATE ON LAG BA'OMER? *continued from page 1*

But why?

Interestingly, although the *Chasam Sofer* declared that he did not understand the reason for celebrating on *Lag Ba'Omer*, many of the explanations we will present are posited by the *Chasam Sofer* himself throughout his writings.

The *Chasam Sofer* is astonished by the festivities. Flocking in celebration to Meron, he believed, will raise the ire of Yerushalayim, arousing her envy, which can have devastating repercussions. The *Chasam Sofer* wrote that the earthquake that destroyed Tzefas in 1837, killing 5,000 people, was caused by Yerushalayim's jealousy of the attention Tzefas was receiving while Yerushalayim remained empty and desolate. Furthermore, the *Chasam Sofer* argues, *Lag Ba'Omer* is not mentioned in *Shas* or *poskim* as a *Yom Tov*, and no miraculous salvations transpired at that time. It is not even hinted at anywhere in *Torah Shebe'al Peh* — so what is the origin of the *minhag*? The *poskim* merely instruct us to refrain from eulogizing and fasting, and even to that, the *Chasam Sofer* says, “וְטַעְמָא, גּוֹפֵא לֹא יָדַעְנוּ, I do not know why.”

This week, we will discuss three reasons for the celebration of *Lag Ba'Omer*.

The Talmidim Stopped Dying

The *Gemara* relates the tragedy that transpired during *Sefirah*. Rabbi Akiva had 12,000 pairs of students located between the cities of Gevat and Antipatris. They all died be-

tween *Pesach* and *Shavuot* because they did not accord one another the honor they deserved. The world was desolate, bereft of Torah, until Rabbi Akiva traveled to the south and taught Torah to five new students: Rav Meir, Rav Yehudah, Rav Yosi, Rav Shimon, and Rav Elazar.

The *Gemara* clearly states: מַפְסָח וְעַד עֶצְרַת שָׁבוּעוֹת, from *Pesach* until *Shavuot*. There is no indication in the *Gemara* that the students did not die



on or after *Lag Ba'Omer*.

The *Me'iri*, however, cites the *Geonim*, who have a tradition that the students of Rabbi Akiva stopped dying on *Lag Ba'Omer*. He adds that since none of the *talmidim* died on that day, one is not permitted to fast then. Furthermore, the custom not to marry during this period is limited to the period from *Pesach* until *Lag Ba'Omer*.

The *Maharil* takes the *Gemara's* words literally — the students died from *Pesach* until *Shavuot*. He makes the following calculation to explain why we celebrate on *Lag*

Ba'Omer: The *talmidim* of Rabbi Akiva died only on days that *Tachanun* is recited. Between *Pesach* and *Shavuot*, there are 17 days on which *Tachanun* is omitted from *davening*: the 7 days of *Pesach* (from the second day until the end), the 2 days of *Rosh Chodesh Iyar*, *Rosh Chodesh Sivan*, and the 7 *Shabbosos*. Of the 49 days of *Sefirah*, there are only 32 days on which *Tachanun* is said and on which the students died.

When we reach the 33rd day of the *Omer*, then, we have arrived at the numbered day that surpasses the number of days on which the students died. To symbolize that the students died on only 32 days, we celebrate on the 33rd day of the *Omer*, as initially it had been a day on which *Tachanun* was recited.

Accordingly, the reason for celebration seems to be the cessation of death. The *talmidim* of Rabbi Akiva were no longer dying, and this is cause for rejoicing.

The *Pri Chadash* is perplexed by this explanation. The reason the students of Rabbi Akiva stopped dying is because there was no one left to die! All the *talmidim* had already passed away. Why is the fact that the students were no longer dying a reason to celebrate?

Yahrtzeit of Rav Shimon bar Yochai

Some suggest that *Lag Ba'Omer* is a *mo'ed* because it is the *yahrtzeit* of Rav Shimon bar Yochai.

Rav Chaim Vital records that his *rebbe*, the *Arizal*, visited the *kever* of Rav Shimon bar Yochai on *Lag Ba'Omer* together with his son, *continued on page 3*

THIS WEEK'S DAF YOMI SCHEDULE:

MAY / אייר

SHABBOS	SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
18 א	19 ב	20 ג	21 ד	22 ה	23 ו	24 ז
Bava Metzia 80	Bava Metzia 81	Bava Metzia 82	Bava Metzia 83	Bava Metzia 84	Bava Metzia 85	Bava Metzia 86

THIS WEEK'S MISHNAH YOMI SCHEDULE:

MAY / אייר

SHABBOS	SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
18 א	19 ב	20 ג	21 ד	22 ה	23 ו	24 ז
Sotah 4:3-4	Sotah 4:5-5:1	Sotah 5:2-3	Sotah 5:4-5	Sotah 6:1-2	Sotah 6:3-4	Sotah 7:1-2

WHY CELEBRATE ON LAG BA'OMER? *continued from page 2*

Rav Eliezer. He testifies that he had once witnessed the *Arizal's* annual trip to Meron, together with his wife and children, whereupon he remained there for three days. On another occasion, he gave his son a haircut there.

Rav Chaim Vital also records the custom of Rav Avraham HaLevi to add the *tefillah* of *Nacheim* to his daily prayers. He would recite it in the *berachah* of *ירושלים בתוך ירושלים* (in the *nusach hatefillah* of *Edot HaMizrach*, this *berachah* corresponds to *וְלִירוּשָׁלַיִם עִירָךְ בְּרַחֲמִים תָּשׁוּב*). This added *tefillah* is usually reserved for *Tishah B'Av*. The *Arizal* heard Rav Avraham HaLevi reciting *Nacheim* on *Lag Ba'Omer* and actually saw Rav Shimon himself expressing disappointment that someone could recite a *tefillah* about the sadness of the *churban* on a day of celebration. Due to this improper recitation of *Nacheim* on *Lag Ba'Omer*, the *Arizal* related that *Rashbi* prophesied that Rav Avraham would require personal *nechamah*. This came to pass when Rav Avraham's son passed away a few days later.

Rav Chaim adds that Rav Shimon bar Yochai was a student of Rabbi Akiva, and his day of joy is on *Lag Ba'Omer*.

The *Chida* writes in his *Moreh B'Etzba*, as well as in *Birkei Yosef*, that one should increase *simchah* on *Lag Ba'Omer* in honor of Rav Shimon bar Yochai, because, as we see from the writings of Rav Chaim Vital, it is his *yahrtzeit*.

Although the *Chida* does codify the practice to rejoice on *Lag Ba'Omer* based on Rav Chaim Vital, in his *sefer Mar'is HaAyin* he chal-

lenges the notion that Rav Shimon bar Yochai passed away on *Lag Ba'Omer*. He writes that our text from Rav Chaim Vital is known to contain errors and misprints, and the only reliable version is that



IT IS NOT EVEN HINTED AT ANYWHERE IN TORAH SHEBE'AL PEH — SO WHAT IS THE ORIGIN OF THE MINHAG?



which is written by Rav Chaim's son, the *שערים* ח'. Therein, Rav Shmuel Vital describes the *aveilus* of *Sefiras Ha'Omer* in great detail, delving into the reasons the *talmidim* died specifically during *Sefirah*. He refers to *Lag Ba'Omer* as a day of *simchas Rav Shimon bar Yochai*, the celebration of Rav Shimon. Glaringly absent is any mention that Rav Shimon bar Yochai passed away on *Lag Ba'Omer*.

Authentic recording of the traditions of the *Arizal* makes no mention of *Lag Ba'Omer* as the *yahrtzeit* of Rav Shimon. Likewise, the *Chida* argues that there is no reliable source that Rav Shimon bar Yochai in fact passed away on *Lag Ba'Omer*.

If *Lag Ba'Omer* is not the *yahrtzeit*

of Rav Shimon, and the fact that the students were no longer dying is not a cause for celebration, as no one was left to die, why, then, do we celebrate *Lag Ba'Omer* as a *mo'ed*?

Celebrating the Rebirth of Torah

The *Chida* cites a different text of the *Gemara* in *Maseches Yevamos*. His *girsas* states that the students of Rabbi Akiva died *מן הפסח עד פרוס* of *עצרת*, from *Pesach* until “פרוס” of *Shavuos*. He defines *פרוס* as 15 days before *Shavuos* — which is the 33rd day of the *Omer*. This *girsas* of the *Gemara* clearly indicates that they died only until *Lag Ba'Omer*.

The *Chida* writes that Rabbi Akiva then started to rebuild the very next day. He began teaching his five new students on *Lag Ba'Omer*. This, he adds, is the reason we celebrate on *Lag Ba'Omer*.

We are rejoicing in commemoration of the incredible strength of Rabbi Akiva, who, having just lost 24,000 students, immediately recruited new *talmidim* and started teaching Torah.

Lag Ba'Omer is not a celebration of the cessation of the students dying. Rather, the *Chida* teaches, the source of the *simchah* lies in the fact that Rabbi Akiva established a new foundation in the *mesorah*. His teaching five new students ensured the perpetuity of *Torah Shebe'al Peh*. Were it not for Rabbi Akiva and his five new *talmidim*, we would not have Torah today.

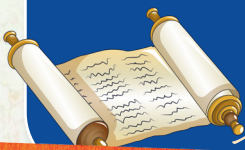
The *Pri Chadash* offers the same approach to explain why we celebrate on *Lag Ba'Omer*.

For more about why we celebrate *Lag Ba'Omer*, see “The Fire and the Soul – The Mystical Power of *Lag Ba'Omer*, Rabbi Shimon Bar Yochai, and the *Zohar HaKadosh*.”

This week's Yerushalmi Yomi schedule:

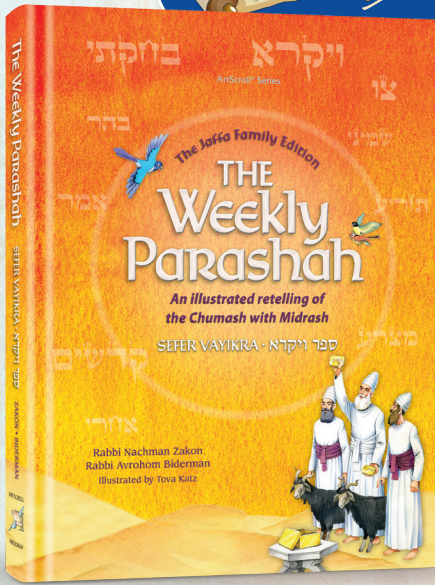
MAY / אייר

SHABBOS	SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
18 Maaseros 30	19 Maaseros 31	20 Maaseros 32	21 Maaseros 33	22 Maaseros 34	23 Maaseros 35	24 Maaseros 36



Parashah for Children

פרשת אמור



A Delicious Lamb Sandwich

Here's a story that could have happened in the time when the Beis HaMikdash stood.

Ezra is a boy who lives in Yerushalayim. He is a Kohen. On the way home from school for lunch, he accidentally steps on a dead mouse that was lying on the road. Because he was wearing sandals, his foot actually touched the mouse.



He comes home and tells his mom what happened. She says, "OY, VEY!"

"What's the matter, Ima?"

"I made you a special treat today, a delicious lamb sandwich for lunch. But the bread was made from terumah flour and the meat comes from the korban meat your father brought home today from the Beis HaMikdash.

"Because you touched a dead mouse, you are tamei and you aren't allowed to eat it until you become tahor again!"

"Well, at least the sandwich won't go to waste," Ezra assures his mother. "I'll run downstairs and go into our mikvah, so I can become tahor, and I can eat the sandwich tonight for supper!"

FASCINATING FACTS

A Kohen who is tamei may not eat korban meat or do the service in the Mishkan or Beis HaMikdash.

How does he become tahor again, so he can eat meat from the korbanos and do service in the Beis HaMikdash?

That depends on how he became tamei.

For some types of tumah, the Kohen becomes tahor by going to the mikvah by day and waiting till nightfall. (That's what our "make-

believe" Ezra had to do, so he could eat that great sandwich.) Then the Kohen can eat korban meat and do the service.

Other types of tumah require more days of being tamei and an additional step. For these types of tumah, the Kohen brings a korban on the day after he went to the mikvah. Only then is he allowed to eat korban meat or do the service. When becoming impure from the dead body of a Jew, the Parah Adumah ashes had to be sprinkled upon him as well on the third and seventh day.

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THE WEEKLY QUESTION

Question for Emor:

How many different mumim are there that prevent a Kohen from doing the avodah?

Kids, please ask your parents to email the answer to shabbosquestion@artscroll.com by this Wednesday to be entered into a weekly raffle to win a \$36 ARTSCROLL GIFT CARD! Be sure to include your full name, city, and contact info. Names of winners will appear in a future edition. HINT: The answer can be found in *The Jaffa Family Edition Weekly Parashah*.

The winner of the Pesach question is: ELIMELECH STEINFELD, Jackson, NJ



The question was: How many years ago did the Bnei Yisrael leave Mitzrayim?
The answer is: The Jews left Egypt in the year 2448. That's 3,336 years ago.

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