

## LAG BAOMER

### A Special Day

On Lag Ba'Omer, Rashbi was illuminated by the light of *Moshiach*, thereby attaining the highest level of his lifetime, and partially revealed that light to his *talmidim*. Hence, Lag Ba'Omer each year is a day of the revelation of *pnimiyus haTorah*, the inner, mystical dimension of the Torah.

(סדרו עם דא"ח שער ל"ג בעומר, סה"ש תש"ד ע' 124)

The AriZal taught that it is a *mitzva* to rejoice on Lag Ba'Omer, because Rashbi called his *yahrzeit* a *hillula*, a celebration. This joy is meaningful to every Yid, for Rashbi protects the entire world from judgment.

(לקו"ש חכ"ב ע' 138)

### A Holy Celebration

For the Mittlerer Rebbe, Lag Ba'Omer was an exceptional *Yom-Tov*. From the time he settled in Lubavitch, he renewed the *minhag* of celebrating Lag Ba'Omer in a field outside the city, with a light *seuda* and *LeChaim*. He too would say *LeChaim*, something he did not usually do for health reasons, and the chassidim would sing and dance. The Rebbe would perform miracles, *bentching* many childless women to have sons who would grow up to be true chassidim. Though he usually sent such requests to his brother, Reb Chaim Avrohom, on Lag Ba'Omer he would *bentch* them himself. People waited all year long for Lag Ba'Omer.

After delivering a *maamar*, the Mittlerer Rebbe would ask the *eltre* chassidim to relate their Lag Ba'Omer memories of earlier years, and share the words of Torah and stories that used to be related. Even after he left, the chassidim would continue to *farbreng* until evening.

(היום יום י"ח אייר, תו"מ ח"א ע' 60, סה"ש תש"ו-ה'ש"ת ע' 412)

At a *seudas Shabbos* in the home of Rebbitzin Rivka before Lag Ba'Omer תרנ"ו (1897), the elder chossid Reb Hendel related: "From the time that the two *chassidishe* land-managers settled near Lubavitch, the celebration was held on their grounds, together with a large, festive *seuda*. A week or two before Lag Ba'Omer, a raffle would be drawn to decide whose field would

be used. Whoever had the *zechus* of hosting the celebration would invite the local *yoshevim* (the men who learned full time in the Rebbe's *beis midrash*) and the other guests to come on *erev* Lag Ba'Omer, and after an early *Mincha*, a full *seuda* of fish and meat would be served. At the table *maamorim* were taught, *chassidishe* stories were exchanged, and we would sing and dance. Generally, the chassidim would remain awake the entire night. Early in the morning we would *daven Shacharis* together, with a *minyana* – at length, *ba'arichus*. At eleven o'clock, a *milchige seuda* and *LeChaim* would be served, and then from three o'clock, we would eagerly await the arrival of the *Tzemach Tzedek*.

"Throughout the entire winter of תר"ד (1844-45), the Rebbe forbade the chassidim to come to Lubavitch, due to a libel of the *maskilim*, and in the course of that winter delivered a *maamar* of *Chassidus* only six times. With the approach of *Shabbos HaGadol* he permitted the chassidim to visit Lubavitch and delivered a *maamar* of *Chassidus* publicly. For Lag Ba'Omer that year, about four hundred guests arrived, prominent among whom were the eminent chassidim, Reb Aizik Homiler and Reb Hillel Paritcher. On the *Shabbos* before Lag Ba'Omer, the Rebbe delivered three *maamorim*. The *simcha* in the air was incredible.

"That year, the last of the *BeHaB* fasts fell on *erev* Lag Ba'Omer. However, the senior *rabbonim* present *paskened* that because of the great *simcha*, the fast would be held only until *Mincha*, and then they would hold the customary *seuda*. Due to the great joy, the day passed quickly, and the following afternoon the Rebbe participated in the *farbrengen* for two hours and delivered another *maamar*."

(סה"ש תש"ו-ה'ש"ת ע' 412)

The gaon Reb Yonasan Eybeschutz cautions that one should make good use of this holy day and not waste it on foolishness.

Similarly, in a letter to his chassidim before Lag Ba'Omer, the Alter Rebbe writes: "Rejoice on the day of Rashbi's celebration, because we drink from his wellsprings of *Chassidus*. Celebrate by singing praises to *HaShem* from *Tehillim*, and not *chas veshalom* by lightheaded frivolity."

(יערות דבש ח"ב דרוש י"א, אג"ק אדה"ז ח"א ע' ק"יז)

### Bows and Arrows

Why do children traditionally play with bows and arrows on Lag Ba'Omer? The *tzaddik*, Reb Mendel of Rimanov, explains that the rainbow is a sign of *HaShem's* anger, and no rainbow was seen throughout the lifetime of Rashbi, for in his merit that entire generation was protected.

A further explanation is given by Reb Mendel's holy *talmid*, Reb Zvi Elimelech of Dinov, who is known by the title of his *sefer* as the *Bnei Yisaschar*. It is written in the *Zohar* that an especially bright rainbow indicates the imminent revelation of the light of *Moshiach* – and since a foretaste of this light is revealed in the *Zohar*, we play with bows and arrows.

The Rebbe explains the connection of this custom to young *talmidim* of *cheder* age. An arrow is able to overcome an enemy even from a distance, *before* it comes dangerously close. This ability alludes to those activities of *kedusha*, such as *davening* and giving *tzedaka*, that overcome the *Yetzer HoRa* in advance, so that the individual is then able to study Torah undisturbed.

(בני יששכר חודש אייר מ"ג או"ד, תו"מ ח"ג ע' 77)

In a letter addressed to all Yiddishe children, the Rebbe writes: On Lag Ba'Omer, you should assemble to speak of Rashbi and his greatness, to discuss his teachings and to firmly commit to fulfill them with joy. In addition, you should organize a parade in your area, to publicize your connection to Torah – like Rashbi, whose main occupation was studying Torah. The *zechus* of Rashbi will help you fulfill the Torah and its *mitzvos* happily, and will bring the *Geula* soon.

(תו"מ תשמ"ז ח"ג ע' 209)

### CONSIDER THIS!

- Why was Lag Ba'Omer such a holy day amongst chassidim?
- How would chassidim rejoice on Lag Ba'Omer?



# A WAY OF LIFE

Rabbi Chaim Hillel Raskin  
Moreh Hora'ah - Beis Horaa Rechovot

## Pre-Order Discount

May a publisher offer a discounted price to those who pay in advance before the sefer is printed?

- The Alter Rebbe rules<sup>1</sup> that one who sells an object at a discounted price for advance payment transgresses *ribis midrabanan* (*avak ribis*).
- The reason for this: The advance payment is seen as a loan. The receiver of the loan (the publisher) then repays the loan with goods (*seforim*) worth more than the amount paid because of the money laid out by the buyer. This is similar to *ribis*.
- Under certain conditions Chazal permitted such a transaction: (1) If the seller has the item in stock. Then it is considered as if the buyer received the item at the time of payment (though he collected it at a later date) or (2) If the article on sale doesn't (and won't) have a fixed price. Then it's not noticeable that a discount was given due to the advance payment.<sup>2</sup> However in our scenario neither of these conditions exist.
- Yet, some *acharonim*<sup>3</sup> allow this type of sale specifically for the purpose of printing a *sefer*. Since spreading Torah is a *mitzvah* and we find Chazal allowed *ribis midrabanan* for Shabbos needs<sup>4</sup>. However, some recent *acharonim*<sup>5</sup> contend that one should not rely on this *heter* for printing *seforim*. Since it is often done for financial interests it may not have the same *mitzvah* status as *seudas Shabbos*.
- It is therefore good that a *heter iska* be made<sup>6</sup>, which arranges for the publisher and the buyer to enter a joint venture, with the return for the buyer being the value of the *seforim*. Another option is that for a while after print the *seforim* should be sold for the discounted rate, so that the advance payers received nothing extra for their early payment.<sup>7</sup>

1. שוע"ר הל' ריבית סכ"ג.
2. רמ"א יו"ד קע"ג ס"ז (דלא כש"ך וט"ז).
3. דרכ"ת יו"ד ס"י קס ס"ק קמח בשם שו"ת מעשה אברהם.
4. אדה"ז באו"ח סי' רמ"ב ס"ט (ודלא).
5. שו"ת מנח"י ח"ד סי' צ"ט. וראה בספר תו"ר פרק י' הערה ק"ב, ובס' מלוה ה' ח"א עמוד תכ"ט.
6. מסורת משה עמודים רמ"א-ב'.
7. ראה מלוה ה' שם.

לע"נ מרת ציפא אסתר בת ר' שלום דובער ע"ה

347.471.1770 info@LmaanYishmeu.com  
www.LmaanYishmeu.com

לע"נ מרת שרה בת הרה"ה שניאור זלמן משה (היצחקי) ע"ה  
אשת הרה"ת אברהם דרייזין (מאיאר) ע"ה  
נדבת התנחום ובתם הר"ר יעקב ורעייתו לאה שיחיו רובין  
נלב" ע"י ט"א איר ה' תשנ"ז

# OUR HEROES

## The Taz

Reb Dovid HaLevi is known as the 'Taz' for his commentary on the Shulchan Aruch titled 'Turei Zahav.' He learned from his father Reb Shmuel, his brother Reb Yitzchak, and Reb Feivush, author of the 'Olelos Efraim.' He married the daughter of the "Bach," Reb Yoel Sirkish, who supported him after his marriage so that he could continue learning. The Taz served as *Rov* in Poznan-Ostraha and later in Lvov, and passed away on the 26<sup>th</sup> of Shvat, תכ"ז (1667).



The Taz lived through the horrific pogroms of 'Tach and Tat' (1648-1649). As the Cossacks advanced, the Taz fled to the fortified city of Olik. After many days of siege, the enemy breached in the wall. The Taz gathered everybody in the *shul* and pleaded with Hashem to have mercy on them. During the gathering, the Taz fell asleep. In his dream, he was read the *possuk* in Melachim, "And I will shield this city to save it for my sake and for the sake of Dovid my servant." The Taz woke up and announced "People of Hashem! Strengthen yourselves in prayer and supplication for Hashem will show us miracles today!"

Meanwhile, there were many people who took refuge in a tower in the city. There were some old cannons there that were long out of use. The people decided to try the cannons, and surprisingly, they functioned perfectly. The people shot the cannons at the enemy, taking them by total surprise and the Cossacks ran for their lives. Thus the city was spared.

Reb Shabsai Kohen, author of the Shach, was a contemporary of the Taz and he wrote a Sefer called Nekodos Hakesef in which he vehemently argues against many of the halachic rulings of the Taz. In his introduction he writes:

"Let the reader not think that I had any sort of argument with the author of the Turei Zahav or that I have any hard feelings towards him. It is well known that it was fulfilled with us the words of Chazal that two *talmidei chachomim* who argue in Torah learning will become friends. I hosted the Taz as a guest for three days and I honored him so greatly that it would be unbelievable to anyone who heard it. He too took great honor to the degree that he kissed me on my forehead and rejoiced as great as the 'Simchas Beis Hashoeiva.' Hashem knows and is a witness that I only made this *sefer* for the sake of heaven to seek out the truth."

לזכות הילדה גנעשא בת שיינא ביילא מרקוביץ שיגדלוה הורי' לתורה לחופה ולמע"ט

# A MOMENT WITH THE REBBE

## A Neshomo Saved

The night after Yud Shevat, 5733 (1973), was dedicated to *yehidus*. The line was long, since there were many guests, but there was one person who spent fifteen full minutes with the Rebbe. He was the head of the youth group "Jews for J" and he was on his way to Florida to be officially ordained as a priest of the Christian Church, r"l.

Curious *bochurim* saw through window how the Rebbe spoke with great force and with fierce hand motions. The Rebbe's voice was heard outside the room, although the content was not understood. One *bochur* described the scene in his diary, "It looked more powerful than a *sicha* on the topic of *mihu yehudi...*"

What this man heard from the Rebbe remained between them, however when the man came out, he told the *bochurim* that his plans have changed; his trip to Florida will not take place.

לזכות התינוק שיי' שיכניסוהו לבריתו של אברהם אבינו ויגדלוהו לתורה לחופה ולמע"ט