

The Weekly Farbrenge



למען ישמעו • בהר תשפ"ד • 776
EDITOR - RABBI SHIMON HELLINGER

LAG BA'OMER

AN AUSPICIOUS DAY

On the day that Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai was preparing to leave this world, he told his son Reb Elozar and the *talmidim* who were gathered around him, "This is an auspicious time. I am now going to reveal holy secrets that I have never yet disclosed, so that I will arrive in *Olam HaBa* without reason for embarrassment. I see that today is a distinctive day, for *HaShem* and all the *tzaddikim* are rejoicing in my celebration (*hillula*)."

He instructed his *talmid* Rabbi Abba to write down what he was about to say, Rabbi Elozar to repeat it, and the other *talmidim* to listen carefully. He then revealed to them the section of *Zohar* known as *Idra Zuta*. At that time, the *kedusha* of Rabbi Shimon was so intense that none of the *talmidim* were able to gaze upon him, and throughout the day, a fire surrounded the house, keeping everyone else at an awed distance.

Rebbi Abba recalled: "While I was in midst of writing, and Rabbi Shimon was in the middle of quoting a *possuk*, he stopped at the word 'Chaim'. I waited, wanting to continue, but did not raise my head to see why he had stopped, for I was unable to look at the bright light that he radiated. Suddenly, I heard a voice call out a *possuk* that included the word 'Chaim', and then another voice called out another *possuk*. I fell to the ground and wept. When the fire subsided and the light faded away, I saw that the great luminary, Rabbi Shimon, had passed away. He was lying on his right side, with a smile on his face."

Soon afterwards, residents of nearby Tzipori came to take Rashbi to bury him in their village, but the inhabitants of Meron sent them away. Meanwhile the bed, now outside the house, raised itself in the air, while a fire burned in front of it. A voice rang out, "Come and gather for the *hillula* of Rabbi Shimon!" When they entered the cave in which he would be buried, another voice was heard, coming from within: "This man shakes up the world and all its kingdoms; many adversaries in *Shamayim* are silenced because of his merit; *HaShem* glories in him daily. Fortunate is his portion, both Above and below!"

(זהר ח"ג דף רצ"א ע"ב, רצ"ו ע"ב)

On that 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.

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

CONSIDER

What is the reason for the great joy on Lag Ba'Omer?
Didn't Rashbi pass away on this day?

How did chassidim rejoice on Lag Ba'Omer?

HOLY CELEBRATIONS

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)

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 *eltere 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)

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' קי"ז)

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 מג"א או"ד, תו"מ ח"ג ע' 77)

In a letter addressed to all 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)



Yoseph Shomer
Certified Public Accountant

(718) 301-7014 | SHOMERCPA.COM



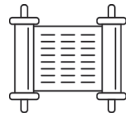
www.SELLMILESNOW.com
732-987-7765

COTLAR PLLC
Certified Public Accountant

audits, reviews, compilations, & GAAP financials
RabbiCPA.com | (713) 419-0780

Kvation™
Kosher Rentals

Instantly Book on
kvation.com
Got a rental? Free for hosts on kvation.com



MEDICAL MALPRACTICE

Is a doctor halachically liable for malpractice or a mistaken prognosis?

The Torah grants permission for a doctor to heal, and it's a mitzvah for an expert doctor to do so, as the posuk says, "v'rapo yerapei."

Although the halacha is that "Adam muad leolam" and a person is always responsible for his actions even without intent to harm, for the sake of improving civilization (tikun haolam), an expert doctor is exempted, so he shouldn't refrain from treating people.

Thus, if a licensed doctor inadvertently causes harm that he could have avoided with additional precaution, he is exempt from liability in beis din law, but obligated in order to exonerate himself from heavenly judgment. However, if he did his utmost to give the best care, and the harm was beyond his control, he is exempt even in the heavenly court.

If a doctor prescribes the wrong medicine, he would be responsible for negligence. If he estimated that a certain medicine would work and it ended up not working, he is exempt b'dinei adam.

Harm resulting from alternative medicine, such as chiropractics or homeopathy, depends on whether that type of medicine is recognized and licensed by the local government or rabbonim in that location.

Today, when there are legal laws governing medical malpractice, some poskim say that they override the halachic exemption of tikun haolam since the laws obligate everyone for the sake of keeping law and order ("If not for fear of the government...") which is over and above dina demalchusa dina. Yet, others hold that halachic exemption remains.

- 1. וראה ערוה"ש ב"י של"ו ס"ב, שו"ת שבה"ל ח"ד סי' קנ"א.
2. שו"ע יו"ד סי' של"ו ס"א.
3. ראה שו"ע שם. וראה שיעורי תורה לרופאים ח"א סי' ל"א.
4. שו"ת צ"ח ח"ה רמת רחל סי' כ"ג. וחיוב בדיני שמים מדין גרמא - פסקי משפט סי' שע"ח סק"ט.

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



REB MENDEL HORODOKER

Reb Menachem Mendel Horodoker (also known as Reb Mendel Vitebsker) was a great talmid of the Baal Shem Tov and Maggid of Mezritch. Initially charged by the Maggid with the task of spreading Chassidus in Russia, Reb Mendel later accepted leadership of the chassidim in White Russia after the Maggid's passing. A short while later, Reb Mendel relocated to Eretz Yisroel, accompanied by a large group of chassidim. Author of the sefer "Pri Haaretz" amongst others, Reb Mendel passed away in Tverya on the second of Iyar, תקמ"ח (1788), and is buried there.

Two years after the Maggid appointed Reb Mendel to spread Chassidus in Russia, Reb Mendel visited the Maggid. In Yechidus, the Maggid asked, "What did you achieve with the Yidden of Russia?" Rabbi Mendel replied, "I found their clothes torn and hearts complete; I worked on making their clothes complete and their hearts torn."

(The poverty stricken Yidden in Russian struggled to properly plan their activities and make a living, hence the torn clothes. Yet their hearts were complete, unaware of their true purpose. Reb Mendel helped them significantly increase their wealth, and

cause their hearts to tear from the work of repairing their spiritual lives).

After the Maggid passed away, a letter arrived for Reb Mendel relaying the news. His talmidim decided it would be best to give Reb Mendel the letter after he lit Shabbos licht (as he lit the licht himself). Reb Mendel read the letter and said nothing. Shabbos continued as usual, with no noticeable changes in Reb Mendel's mood or behavior. On Motzoei Shabbos, immediately after havdala, Reb Mendel fell in a faint...

One Simchas Torah, Reb Mendel lamented to the Alter Rebbe, his prodigy, that he knew one hundred pirushim on "Atah hareisa", each describing a unique level of avoda. Being yet to achieve these levels, he did not want to recite the psukim. The Alter Rebbe responded, "A person can never stand in the place where his eyes reach. When he arrives at that point, his view will extend even further. Similarly, even if the Rebbe reached all the levels described in these pirushim, the Rebbe would see new levels to reach."

Reb Mendel accepted the answer, and began reciting the psukim.

A Moment with The Rebbe



זכות שניאור זלמן בן חוה לאה וכל משפחתו שיחיו לכל המצטרך בגשמיות ורוחניות

CHASSIDISHE CHINUCH

With the help of Reb Mendel Futerfas, Reb Uri Cohen established a cheder in Holland, al taharas hakodesh, free of secular studies.

The Rebbe encouraged him to receive government recognition despite having only twenty-four pupils, and chose the name for the small moisdad, calling it "Cheder."

In a different episode, a parent from Manchester UK wrote to the Rebbe on 6 Cheshvan 5727 (1966), asking for direction about which school to send their daughter to.

two kindergartens here, one is run by the Prestwich Jewish Day School, with experienced teachers. The other one, administered by a group of Chassidische Yidden, with inexperienced teachers, was established only recently and is therefore not so organized...

"Obviously your daughter should be educated in the chassidische kindergarten," the Rebbe responded, "and the question is surprising."

"I have a problem," he wrote. "There are

(Hiskashrus Issue 870)

זכות שאול זאב בן פרימיד, לרגל יום הולדתו