

Halachically Speaking

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Lag B'omer

Sponsored

לרפואה שלמה חנה חיה בת מזל
לז"נ יענטא בת ישראל חיים לז"נ משה בן יששכר בעריש לז"נ יעקב אריה בן שבת
לז"נ הרב נתן אליהו בן הרב מרדכי זצ"ל

Lag B'omer is a day which people celebrate with great *simcha* and joy. What is the reason for this great celebration? When does it start? At night or by day? Why do so many people go to *Meron* on *Lag B'omer*? Should one go to *Meron* for an *Upsherin*? All these questions and many others will be discussed in this issue.

The reason why the day is called *Lag B'omer* not *Lag L'omer* is because *B'omer* is the numerical value of *Moshe Rabbeinu* and *Rav Shimon Bar Yochai* (see below) who was from the *neshoma* of *Moshe Rabbeinu* and rose to the same level as *Moshe Rabbeinu*.¹

Lag B'omer will always fall out on the same day of the week as *Purim*.²

What Happened on *Lag B'omer*

Many different happenings took place on *Lag B'omer*.³ Some say it is the day *Rav Shimon Bar Yochai* came out of the cave that he and his son were in for thirteen years.⁴ *Rav Shimon Bar Yochai* died on *Lag B'omer* and revealed to us the *Zohar*.⁵ The *Rama* also died on *Lag B'omer* and many have the custom to go to his *kever* on *Lag B'omer*.⁶

The *Simcha* of *Lag B'omer*

On *Lag B'omer* we are happy.⁷ Some say the reason is because the *talmidim* of *Rav Akiva* who died throughout the days following *Pesach* stopped dying on *Lag B'omer*.⁸ Some *poskim* ask if so many *talmidim* died why is

¹ Elei Heim Moadei page 382, Ben Pesach L'Shavuos page 301, Natei Gavriel Pesach 3:page 268 in the footnote, Ohr Mufla pages 66-67.

² Tur O.C. 428, Shulchan Aruch 428:1. Refer to Me'or V'Shemesh page 142, Ohr Mufla pages 69-70. *Lag B'omer* also happens to fall out the same day as *Moshe Rabbeinu's Ushpezin* (Shar Yisoschor Chodesh Iyar 20:page 98, Gal Einay page 31).

³ Refer to Nesivos Sholom 2:pages 327-331.

⁴ Refer to Mesechtas Shabbos 33b, Bereishis Rabbah 79:6, Koheles Rabbah 10:8, Ben Pesach L'Shavuos page 302:6.

⁵ Birchei Yosef 493:4, Chai Adom 131:11, Kaf Ha'chaim 493:26, Ben Pesach L'Shavuos page 302:7, Gal Einay page 32. *Rav Shimon Bar Yochai* lived till about eighty years-old.

⁶ Ben Pesach L'Shavuos page 302:8, Natei Gavriel Pesach 3:page 278.

⁷ Darchei Moshe 493:1, Rama 2, Shulchan Aruch Harav 5, Yaavetz page 163a, Matei Moshe 68:page 148, Me'am Loez Vayeitzeh page 575, Gal Einay page 11.

this a reason to be happy?⁹ The answer may be we are happy that the *talmidim* which *Rav Akiva* acquired afterwards did not die.¹⁰ The *talmidim* of *Rav Akiva* died because they did not show respect to each other.¹¹ Some say they spoke *loshon hara* about each other.¹² Others say although each *talmid* grew to higher levels of *Torah*, they were treated by each other as if they had not grown at all, because they were still friendly from the olden days.¹³

Others say the reason is to show honor for *Rav Shimon Bar Yochai*.¹⁴ Some say the *mon* started to fall on *Lag B'omer*.¹⁵ Others say the reason for the joy is based on reasons of *kabbalah*.¹⁶

The Greatness of the Day

Lag B'omer is a *segula* for *parnasa*.¹⁷ Some say it brings one to *yiras shomayim*.¹⁸ It is a day for one to ask for his needs through *tefilla*.¹⁹ It is a day where one can ask for salvation in any area of life.²⁰

Meron* and *Lag B'omer

The custom to go to *Meron* on *Lag B'omer* dates back to the *Rishonim*.²¹ One should not go to *Meron* by himself.²² Some say going three days before and after has some meaning as well.²³ Although some question the *inyun* of going to *Meron* on *Lag B'omer*,²⁴ the custom is to go. It would seem that one who does not live in *Eretz Yisroel* does not have to be *matriach* himself to go to *Meron* on *Lag B'omer*.²⁵ One who can not go to *Meron* should learn the teachings of *Rav Shimon Bar Yochai*.²⁶

Today, when one goes to *Meron* he can see animals being *shechted* on the side of the road. One should make sure that these animals are *shechted* properly and salted etc according to *halacha*. This is usually not the case, and one should be careful not to eat from animals that were *shechted* in this way. Furthermore, when going to *Meron* one should be careful to avoid the areas that people walk around dressed immodestly.²⁷

⁸ Refer to *Mesechtas Yevomos* 62b, *Meiri* page 229, *Shulchan Aruch* 493:2, *Levush* 493:2, *Gra* 493:2, *Mishnah Berurah* 8, *Divrei Torah* 3:83, *Aruch Ha'shulchan* 493:5, *Taamei Haminhagim* page 251:604, *Mishnas Rav Aaron* 3:pages 13-17. Refer to *Pri Megadim* M.Z. 493:1, *Mishnah Berurah* 7.

⁹ *Pri Chadash* 493:2, *Moadim B'halacha* page 301.

¹⁰ *Pri Chadash* *ibid*, *Sdei Chemed Eretz Yisroel* 6:page 8. Refer to *Maharsha* to *Mesechtas Moed Kotton* 28a "Meis B'chamishim).

¹¹ *Mesechtas Yevomos* *ibid*.

¹² *Me'am Loez Vayeitzeh* page 575.

¹³ *Horav Yisroel Belsky Shlita*.

¹⁴ *Chai Adom* 131:11, *Kaf Ha'chaim* 27, *Orchos Rabbeinu* page 92:16. Refer to *Birchei Yosef* 493:4.

¹⁵ *Chasam Sofer* Y.D. 233, *Sefer Hatodah* page 259, *Ohr Gedalyuhu Moadim* page 77:2.

¹⁶ *Ibid*, see *Bnei Yisoschor* (*Nissan*) 12:12.

¹⁷ *Natei Gavriel Pesach* 3:page 292.

¹⁸ *Sefas Emes Emor* 652, *Ohr Gedalyuhu Moadim* page 154:4, *Lag B'omer* page 260.

¹⁹ *Natei Gavriel Pesach* 3:pages 292-293. Some say it is a day to do *teshuva* (*Yaros Devash* 2:11, *Ohr Mufla* page 26). Some say it is a day for *hasmuda* in learning (*Gal Einay* page 15).

²⁰ *Bnei Yisoschor* (*Iyar*) 2:page 98. See *Ohr Gedalyuhu Moadim* page 154, *Gal Einay* page 16.

²¹ Refer to *Ateres Zekanim* 493, *Kaf Ha'chaim* 493:26, *Sharei Halacha U'minhag* page 165, *Taamei Haminhagim* pages 256-266 in depth for a list of who went to *Meron*. Some say if one does not go he does not see *simcha* in his days (*Taamei Haminhagim* page 275).

²² *Natei Gavriel Pesach* 3:page 276.

²³ *Nachlas Yisroel* 51, *Taamei Haminhagim* page 268:footnote 43. Refer to *Da'as Torah* 3:46 who seems to argue.

²⁴ *Shoel U'meishiv* 5:39, *Chasam Sofer* Y.D. 233, *Taamei Haminhagim* page 271.

²⁵ *Taamei Haminhagim* page 269:6.

²⁶ *Moreh B'etzvah* 8:223, *Moed Lechul Chai* 7:8, *Kaf Ha'chaim* 493:27, *Taamei Haminhagim* page 272, *Natei Gavriel Pesach* 3:page 277:6. The *Doleh U'mashka* page 196 says he did not learn the teachings of the *Zohar* etc on *Lag B'omer*.

²⁷ *Yechaveh Da'as* 5:35, *Yalkut Yosef Moadim* page 435, *Mekadesh Yisroel* 107.

Lag B'omer and Rav Shimon Bar Yochai

Any person who is asked will tell you that *Lag B'omer* is the day that hundreds of thousands of people go to *Meron* to the *kever* of *Rav Shimon Bar Yochai*.²⁸ Why is this so?

As mentioned earlier, *Rav Shimon Bar Yochai* was *niftar* on *Lag B'omer*.²⁹ Normally when a *tzadik* dies the *yartzeit* is not a day of *simcha* and joy, rather one fasts.³⁰ However, *Rav Shimon Bar Yochai* is different. Before he was *niftar* he called his students and revealed to them the secrets of the *Torah*. These secrets were written down and are contained in the *Zohar*.³¹ Therefore, we are extra happy and rejoice on the day that these secrets were given to us. Others say since a miracle happened to *Rav Shimon Bar Yochai* that he did not die when he was in the cave,³² we celebrate his *yartzeit* by being happy.³³ The day *Rav Shimon Bar Yochai* died three-thousand *halachos* were introduced. This is another reason why we are happy on *Lag B'omer*.³⁴

Anytime it says in the *Gemorah Rav Shimon* without any other name, it means *Rav Shimon Bar Yochai*.³⁵ He was the *talmid* of *Rav Akiva* and *Rav Yehoshua*.³⁶

The day that he was *niftar* is referred to as the “*yom hilulei*” of *Rav Shimon Bar Yochai*.³⁷

Tachnun on Lag B'omer

Tachnun is not recited both on *Lag B'omer* and on the day before at *mincha* which is the thirty second day of the *omer*.³⁸ One recites *lam'natz'eiach yanacha* etc. on *Lag B'omer*.³⁹ However, others say that it should not be recited;⁴⁰ this is not the overwhelming custom. When *Lag B'omer* falls out on Sunday (as it does this year) one does not recite *tzidkascha tzedek* at *mincha* on *Shabbos*.⁴¹

Fasting

One may fast for *tannis chalom* on *Lag B'omer*. One should not fast for a *yartzeit* on *Lag B'omer*.⁴²

²⁸ Minhag Yisroel Torah 493:page 347. The *simcha* is made in America as well but on a lower level (Mekadesh Yisroel 104, see Minchas Elazar 4:60). *Kohanim* may not enter the *kever* of *Rav Shimon Bar Yochai* (Halichos Shlomo Moadim 2:page 366:23:footnote 34). Approximately 400,000-450,000 go to *Meron* for *Lag B'omer*.

²⁹ Taamei Haminhagim page 251:kuntres achron 604, page 271:11, Bnei Yisoschor (Iyar) 3:2:page 123b (new), Sefer Hatodah page 258, Moadim B'halacha pages 299-300, Yechaveh D'as 5:35.

³⁰ Shulchan Aruch Y.D. 376:4, see Shulchan Aruch O.C. 568:7-9.

³¹ Moreh B'etzah 223, Mishmeres Shalom 38:1, Taamei Haminhagim page 256, pages 267-268 in depth, Kaf Ha'chaim 493:26, Ben Pesach L'Shavuos pages 314-315, Orchos Rabbeinu 2:page 96:13, see *Lag B'omer* (Artscroll) pages 50-52.

³² Refer to Rabbeinu Chananel Mesechtas Succah 45b.

³³ Shem Aryeh O.C. 14. Before he was in the cave he was *Shimon Bar Yochai*, and after he left the cave he got the name *Rav* because of all the *Torah* he learnt there (Mekomos Hakedoshim page 18).

³⁴ Matamim Hachodesh page 16, Shar Yisoschor Chodesh Iyar Gal Einay 23. Refer to Taamei Haminhagim pages 251, 267-268. See *Lag B'omer* page 229.

³⁵ Rambam in Pirush Hamishnayos to Zerayim page 59b column 1, see Rashi in Mesechtas Shavuos 2b “mishmo.” Refer to Avos 4:17, Berochos 43b, Gittin 67a for other sayings of *Rav Shimon Bar Yochai*.

³⁶ Refer to Medrash Rabbah (Vayikra) 21:8, Mesechtas Gittin 67a.

³⁷ Zohar 3:page 291a, Moreh B'etzah 223, Chai Adom 131:11, Aruch Ha'shulchan 7, Kaf Ha'chaim 493:27, Taamei Haminhagim pages 265-266, 272. There are different translations for the words *hilulei*. Some say it is *simcha* others say it is *hallel* (refer to Moadim B'halacha page 301, *Lag B'omer* page 212).

³⁸ Darchei Moshe 493:3, Rama 131:6, 493:2, Levush 493:2, Pri Megadim Eishel Avraham 493:3, Sharei Teshuva 493:2, Matei Moshe 688, Shulchan Aruch Harav 6, Kitzur Shulchan Aruch 120:6, Mishnah Berurah 131:35, 493:9, Shar Ha'tzyion 11, Igros Moshe O.C. 1:159, Mekadesh Yisroel Sefira 108. Refer to Chok Yaakov 493:6 who seems to say that *tachnun* should be recited on *Lag B'omer*.

³⁹ Shulchan Aruch 292:2, Pri Megadim Eishel Avraham 403:3, Mishnah Berurah 493:9, Mekadesh Yisroel 108.

⁴⁰ Pri Chadash 131:1, Siddur Yaavetz 2:page 163, Shulchan Hatohar 131:18.

⁴¹ Levush 493:4.

⁴² Refer to Meiri Yevomos 62b, Ben Pesach L'Shavuos 17:23-24.

When getting married on *Lag B'omer* those who have the custom to fast on their wedding day should do so.⁴³ Others are lenient.⁴⁴ Even one who did not fast should still say *viduy* at *mincha*.⁴⁵ When a fast day precedes the day of the *chuppah* one should still fast on the day of the *chuppah*.⁴⁶ The same would apply if a fast follows the day of the *chuppah*.⁴⁷

Marriage

The custom is that one is permitted to get married on *Lag B'omer*.⁴⁸ Some say that the only time that one may get married on *Lag B'omer* is by day.⁴⁹ The *Sefardim* have the custom to marry on the thirty-fourth day of the *omer*.⁵⁰ The overwhelming custom is that one may get married the night of *Lag B'omer*.⁵¹ However others have the custom not to get married on *Lag B'omer* as well.⁵² A wedding that started on *Lag B'omer* by day may continue into the night.⁵³ Dancing and music are permitted at a wedding on *Lag B'omer*.⁵⁴

It is interesting to point out that one who goes to a *chasana* during the time he is observing the restrictions of *sefira* may only dance after the *chosson* and *kallah* come out from taking pictures, since before they come out the dancing is not considered being *mes'ameach* the *chosson* and *kallah*.⁵⁵ Even those who hold like the *Arizal* and are *noheg* the *issur* of taking haircuts on all days of *sefira*,⁵⁶ may make a wedding on *Lag B'omer*.⁵⁷ No weddings are permitted on the night before the thirty second day.⁵⁸

Haircuts/Shaving

According to the opinion of the *Mechaber* one may not take haircuts until the thirty fourth day in the morning.⁵⁹ The *Rama* holds one may shave on *Lag B'omer*.⁶⁰ Many say this means even at night (because no *tachnun* is

⁴³ Magen Avraham 573:1, Chai Adom 132:43, Kitzur Shulchan Aruch 146:2, Mishnah Berurah 573:7, Da'as Torah 493:1, Aruch Ha'shulchan E.H. 61:21, Mekadesh Yisroel 111:page 156, Halichos Shlomo Moadim 2:page 365:22. Refer to Shulchan Haezer 6:3:6 and Misgeres Ha'shulchan 146:3 who bring lenient opinions. Refer to Otzer Haposkim 61:1:10:2 pages 261-266 in depth.

⁴⁴ Elya Rabbah 573:3, Mishnah Berurah 573:7, Piskei Shemuos page 68. If the wedding is on *Lag B'omer* at night then all would agree one fasts on the thirty second day of the *omer* (Natei Gavriel Pesach 3:page 272:8).

⁴⁵ Pischei Teshuva E.H. 61:9.

⁴⁶ Igros Moshe O.C. 1:167, Rivevos Ephraim 3:125:3, 3:587, Shraga Hameir 7:64, Yismach Lev 1:page 365, Chai Ha'Levi 3:87. Refer to E'ven Yisroel 7:28. The Shraga Hameir 3:103:3 is lenient with brushing one's teeth on the day of the *chuppah* even if one is fasting.

⁴⁷ Shevet Ha'kehusi 4:314. The Halichos Shlomo Moadim 2:page 404:13 is lenient.

⁴⁸ Rama 493:1, Magen Avraham 5, Levush 2, Minchas Elazar 4:60, Darchei Chaim V'sholom 636, Yechaveh Da'as 3:31. If the *chosson* has one minhag and the *kallah* has a different one, the custom of the *chosson* is followed (Refer to Yechaveh Da'as 3:31, Igros Moshe O.C. 1:158, Yismach Lev 1:page 100). Some say the dancing should be done by day and the *seuda* may be done at night (Halichos Shlomo Moadim 2:page 365:footnote 81).

⁴⁹ Elya Rabbah 7, Pri Megadim Eishel Avraham 1, Kitzur Shulchan Aruch 120:6, Mishnah Berurah 11, Kaf Ha'chaim 26, Sharei Halacha U'minhag 222:page 165, Yismach Lev 1:page 101 quoting the opinion of Horav Chaim Kanievesky Shlita. Refer to Shulchan Aruch Harav 5.

⁵⁰ Shulchan Aruch 493:1, Pri Chadash 1, Biur Halacha "yeish," Kaf Ha'chaim 25, Minchas Yitzchok 4:84, Yechaveh Da'as 3:31.

⁵¹ Machzik Beracha 5, Aruch Ha'shulchan 4, Kaf Ha'chaim 28, Mahari Asad (Yehuda Yaleh) 2:39, Chelkes Yaakov 1:97, Igros Moshe O.C. 1:159, Shevet Ha'Levi 8:168:5, Shearim Metzuyanim B'halacha 120:13. Refer to Hilchos Yemey Ha'omer pages 40-43 in depth.

⁵² Divrei Yoel 26:1, Natei Gavriel Pesach 3:page 214:footnote 17 (Minhag in Skver), see Lag B'omer page 178:footnote 31.

⁵³ Igros Moshe E.H. 1:97:page 247, Natei Gavriel Pesach 3:page 217:19, Mekadesh Yisroel 103, Chut Shuni Shabbos 4:page 380.

⁵⁴ Igros Moshe E.H. 2:95, Avnei Yushfei 1:113.

⁵⁵ Horav Yisroel Belsky Shlita.

⁵⁶ Refer to footnote 69.

⁵⁷ Horav Yisroel Belsky Shlita, see Minchas Elazar 4:60.

⁵⁸ Natei Gavriel Pesach 3:page 216:18.

⁵⁹ Shulchan Aruch 493:2, Biur Halacha "yeish," Kaf Ha'chaim 25. Refer to Kaf Ha'chaim 493:18. If *Lag B'omer* falls out on Friday then even according to the *Sefardim* haircuts etc are permitted on Friday because of *kovod* for *Shabbos* (Shulchan Aruch *ibid*).

said already from *erev Lag B'omer*),⁶¹ while others say it means first thing in the morning because if one waits a little in the morning it is as if one waited a whole day. This is known as *miktzas hayom k'kula*.⁶² The custom of many seems to be that shaving or taking a haircut is permitted after *neitz hachama*.⁶³

When *Lag B'omer* falls out on Sunday (as it does this year) shaving etc is permitted on Friday because of *kovod* for *Shabbos*.⁶⁴ The reason why it is *kovod* for *Shabbos* is because by the *mincha* before *Lag B'omer* one does not say *tachnun*, so technically shaving would be permitted on *Shabbos*, but since one can not do so, the allowance is pushed back to Friday.⁶⁵ One may not shave etc. on *Motzei Shabbos* when *Lag B'omer* falls out on Sunday.⁶⁶ Furthermore, many say that shaving etc. in the above situation is not permitted on Thursday night if one has time to do it on Friday.⁶⁷ One who started shaving etc. on *Lag B'omer* may continue after *shekia* as well (even if he holds no shaving after *Lag B'omer*).⁶⁸

According to the opinion of the *Arizal* shaving is not allowed even on *Lag B'omer*.⁶⁹ Shaving is permitted on *Erev Shavuos* even for those who go with the *Arizal's* opinion.⁷⁰

Meron and Upsherin

Hundreds, if not thousands of people, cut their children's hair in *Meron* on *Lag B'omer*.⁷¹ This was the custom of the *Arizal*.⁷² Some say the reason is because the holiness of *Rav Shimon Bar Yochai* should be a *zechus* for the child.⁷³ Others say the reason is because hair is part of the *yetzer hara* and this was taught to us by *Rav Shimon bar Yochai* when he gave us the *Zohar*.⁷⁴ Many have the custom to go to *Meron* on *Lag B'omer* and cut

⁶⁰ Rama 493:2, Levush 2, Chai Adom 131:11, Kitzur Shulchan Aruch 120:15, Machzik Beracha 2, Aruch Ha'shulchan 7, Natei Gavriel Pesach 3:page 222, Ben Pesach L'shavuos page 249:footnote 17). This was the opinion of the Chazon Ish and the Steipler (Orchos Rabbeinu 2:page 95:10).

⁶¹ Be'er Heitiv 493:5, Chok Yaakov 6, Elya Rabbah 7, Shulchan Aruch Harav 5, Mishnah Berurah 11, Shar Ha'tzyion 12, Biur Halacha "yeish," Mekadesh Yisroel 103.

⁶² Gr'a, Mishnah Berurah 6. Refer to Machtzis Ha'shekel 3.

⁶³ Shulchan Aruch Harav 5, Mishnah Berurah 7,10, Lekutei Maharich 3:page 569 (new), Doleh U'mashka page 196. The Halichos Shlomo Moadim 2:page 364:footnote 80 is lenient, since bonfires etc. are made at night, haircuts etc should not be different.

⁶⁴ Rama ibid, Chok Yaakov 7, Shulchan Aruch Harav 5, Chai Adom 131:11, Mishnah Berurah 5, Aruch Ha'shulchan 6, L'Torah V'horah 2:page 19:2 quoting the opinion of Horav Moshe Feinstein zt'l, Rivevos Ephraim 6:page 294:2, Orchos Rabbeinu 2:page 95:11, see Chok Yaakov 7. This is even according to the *Sefardim* (Bais Dovid 208). *Lag B'omer* falls out on Sunday in the following years (5767, 70, 71, 73, 74, 77, 84, 88, 91, 94, 95, 97, 98). Some say to take the haircut on Friday after *chatzos* if possible, although taking it before *chatzos* is also permitted (Halichos Shlomo Moadim 2:page 364:footnote 79).

⁶⁵ Horav Yisroel Belsky Shlita. Refer to Nodeh B'Yehuda 1:28:page 64 (old).

⁶⁶ Ben Pesach L'Shavuos page 250:footnote 20 quoting the opinion of Horav Elyashiv Shlita, Doleh U'mashka page 196, Halichos Shlomo Moadim 2:page 364:footnote 31.

⁶⁷ Refer to Refer to Mishnah Berurah 260:5, Rivevos Ephraim 1:338, 4:131, see Kaf Ha'chaim 23, Ben Pesach L'Shavuos page 250. One who did not cut his hair in this situation until Sunday was not *mezalzel* in the honor of *Shabbos* (Rivevos Ephraim 1:338).

⁶⁸ Orchos Rabbeinu 2:page 96, Ben Pesach L'Shavuos page 247:7:footnote 10 quoting the opinion of Horav Chaim Kanievesky Shlita.

⁶⁹ Sharei Teshuva 493:8, Birchei Yosef 3, Moreh B'etzvah 8:221, Kaf Ha'chaim 13, Lekutei Maharich ibid, Shulchan Hatohar 260:8, Darchei Chaim V'sholom 628, Rivevos Ephraim 3:540:7, Minhag Yisroel Torah 493:15. Refer to Moed Lechul Chai 6:7, Minchas Elazar 3:65.

⁷⁰ Kaf Ha'chaim 13, Ohr L'tzyion 3:17:6.

⁷¹ Refer to Pardes Yosef Tazria 13:33, Minhagei Eretz Yisroel 23:13, Sharei Halacha U'minhag page 166, Chanoch L'nar 32:footnote 4, Yalkut Yosef 5:pages 435-436, Natei Gavriel Pesach 3:page 316:8, Eyunei Halachos 1:page 457, Halichos Shlomo Moadim 2:page 364:footnote 32. Some go on other days to *Meron* for this even not on *Lag B'omer* (Natei Gavriel Pesach 3:pages 312-315). Others go to the kever of *Shmuel* to cut the child's hair (Radvaz 2:608). The *minhag* is to permit the haircut to be done at night of *Lag B'omer* (Mekadesh Yisroel 82).

⁷² Ateres Zekanim 493, Sefer Hatodah page 258, see ibid:page 259, Minchas Elazar 4:10, Divrei Yoel 27, Peros Noshrim page 328.

⁷³ Sdei Chemed mareches Eretz Yisroel 6:page 7. Refer to *Lag B'omer* pages 313-314.

⁷⁴ Aprakasisa D'yana 1:161. Refer to Kotzsov Taltlaim page 60 for an additional reason.

the child's hair even before the child has actually reached the age of three.⁷⁵ Others say only if the child was born during *sefira* should one go to *Meron*. If the child was born after *Shavuos* or before *sefira* then one should not go to *Meron* to cut his hair.⁷⁶ Some question the reason to go cut hair at a *kever* of any *tzadik*.⁷⁷

Saying "Today is Lag B'omer"

Some *poskim* say one who has not yet counted the *sefira* of *Lag B'omer* should avoid telling someone else today is *Lag B'omer*, since doing so may be considered counting the day.⁷⁸ Other *poskim* permit this since his intention is not to count the day, rather he is referring to the name of the day since it is a day of *simcha*.⁷⁹ This seems to be the *minhag ha'olom*.

"Chai Rotel"

Something which one finds when visiting *Meron* is the drink called "*Chai Rotel*." The *Bobov Rebbe zt"l* said that one who gives out this *mashka* on *Lag B'omer* is *zocheh* to great things including children.⁸⁰ Many people who can't attend *Meron* on *Lag B'omer* to hand out the *mashka* pay people to hand it out for them. *Chai Rotel* is an ancient Israeli measurement which today is equivalent to 54 liters. The *minhag* used to be to hand out only wine or grape juice. However, today water and soda are also handed out.⁸¹

Bonfire

Some say the reason for bonfires on *Lag B'omer*⁸² is because when *Rav Shimon Bar Yochai* revealed the secrets of the *Torah* to us, he brought light to the world, so we make light in his honor.⁸³ Others say the reason is as a remembrance of the fire that surrounded *Rav Shimon Bar Yochai* while he was in the cave.⁸⁴

Some have the *minhag* in *Meron* to throw garments in the fire on *Lag B'omer*.⁸⁵ Some say the reason is because *Rav Shimon Bar Yochai* did not wear clothes when he was in the cave, and when he wanted to learn he would cover his body in sand.⁸⁶ Those who permit this say there is no *bal tashchis* by throwing the garments in the fire,⁸⁷ while others say that throwing the garments in the fire is indeed *bal tashchis*.⁸⁸ The *minhag* today seems to be that no one throws any garments in the fire.

⁷⁵ Ben Pesach L'Shavuos 19:13:footnote 20, Lag B'omer page 27:footnote 29. Some say he can even be two and a half (Kotzosov Taltlaim page 39:footnote 16). This topic will *IY"Y* be discussed in full detail in Volume 3 Issue 19.

⁷⁶ Refer to Arugas Habosem O.C. 210, Aprakasisa D'yana 1:161, Chinuch Yisroel 8, Teshuvos V'hanugos 2:246, Minhag Yisroel Torah 493:pages 351-353, Hilchos Yemei Ha'omer page 33. The Chazzon Ish said if one makes an *upsherin* earlier than he is supposed to it is damaging to the child (Teshuvos V'hanugos 2:246).

⁷⁷ Mishpetei Tzedek 74.

⁷⁸ Refer to Shulchan Aruch 489:4, Biur Halacha 489 "sh'im," Lag B'omer page 176.

⁷⁹ Ohr L'tzyion 3:16:4:footnote 4, Avnei Yushfei 5:75:5.

⁸⁰ Taamei Haminhagim pages 263-264, Gal Einay page 13.

⁸¹ Anyone interested in giving money towards this *inyun* can call 1-718-435-1661.

⁸² Aruch Ha'shulchan 493:7, Minhag Yisroel Torah 493:pages 347-348, Ben Pesach L'Shavuos pages 32-321, Lag B'omer pages 237-242, Mekadesh Yisroel 106. The Sheilas Rav page 33 one should not go to a bonfire but he should learn *Torah*. Refer to Doleh U'mashka page 195:footnote 523. Some place oil in the bonfire (Ohr Mufla page 66).

⁸³ Horav Yisroel Belsky Shlita, see Taamei Haminhagim 606, see *ibid*:607 for an additional reason. Refer to Bnei Yisoschor (Iyar) 3:6:page 88a, Gal Einay page 12, Ohr Mufla pages 54-55. Some recite a special *tefilla* before lighting the bonfire (Lag B'omer page 243).

⁸⁴ Seforim.

⁸⁵ Sdei Chemed Eretz Yisroel 6, Taamei Haminhagim pages 272-274, Torah L'shma 400, Shem M'Shmuel 8.

⁸⁶ Yehoshuas Malka 12:page 152 (Lekutei Torah), Natei Gavriel Pesach 3:pages 280-285.

⁸⁷ Urion Tlisa 52.

⁸⁸ Refer to Pischei Teshuva Y.D. 251:4, Shol U'Meishiv *ibid*, Orchos Rabbeinu 2:page 96:14, Doleh U'mashka page 195,

Night or Day

Many have the custom to make the bonfires (and dancing) on the night of *Lag B'omer*. Others say that the *simcha* should start by day.⁸⁹ However, it seems that because of *Rav Shimon Bar Yochai* the *minhag* is to do the bonfire and dancing etc at night all over the world not only in *Meron*.⁹⁰ However, music not accompanied by a bonfire should not be listened to until the next day after *neitz hachama*.⁹¹

Bows and Arrows

On *Lag B'omer* the custom of many is to shoot bows and arrows.⁹² One reason is because *Hashem* shows a rainbow (*keshes*) in the sky when He wants to destroy us, but the rainbow is the *simon* that he will not do so.⁹³ In the generation of a few people a rainbow was not shown because of their merit. One of those people was *Rav Shimon Bar Yochai*.⁹⁴ Many *tzadikim* have the custom to shoot a bow and arrow (representing a rainbow) as well.⁹⁵ Some say since *Lag B'omer* is a day that is fit for one's *tefillas* to be answered we shoot a bow and arrow. The beginning words of *shema kol tefilaseinu* spells *keshes* (rainbow).⁹⁶

The Bar Yochai Song

On *Lag B'omer* many people have the *minhag* to sing *Bar Yochai*,⁹⁷ which was composed by the *mekubel Rav Shimon Ben Labia* who died in 1584.⁹⁸ Many people have the custom to sing this song every week in the *zemiros* of *Shabbos*.⁹⁹ Some say the reason for this is because *Rav Shimon Bar Yochai* was called *Shabbos*.¹⁰⁰

Rabbi Akiva

Umar Rabbi Akiva etc. is popularly sung on *Lag B'omer* since the ideas expressed in the *Mishnah* coincide with the purpose of *sefira*, a period of spiritual cleaning in preparation for *Shavuos*. These words are taken from the last *Mishnah* in *Yoma*.¹⁰¹

Lag B'omer on Sunday

There is a discussion in the *poskim* when *Lag B'omer* falls out on Sunday (as it does this year) if the bonfires can be made on *Motzei Shabbos*. The reason for the discussion is because they are made on *Motzei Shabbos* the police etc may have to be *mechalel Shabbos* to prepare for the event (this is especially applicable in *Meron* where there are many Jewish police officers). The *minhag* seems to be lenient with this.¹⁰²

⁸⁹ Horav Yisroel Belsky Shlita, opinion of Horav Korelitz Shlita quoted in Doleh U' mashka page 194:footnote 520.

⁹⁰ Horav Yisroel Belsky Shlita, see Mekadesh Yisroel 103, Chut Shuni Shabbos 4:page 380, Doleh U' mashka pages 194-195 footnote 521. The Halichos Shlomo Moadim 2:page 362:footnote 23 says dancing is permitted on *Lag B'omer* even if it is not for a *devar mitzvah* (refer to Ben Pesach L'Shavuos 15:4:footnote 4). The Avnei Yushfei 1:98 is not convinced that dancing is permitted at all after *Lag B'omer*.

⁹¹ Poskim. Refer to Doleh U' mashka page 194:footnote 520, Mekadesh Yisroel 103.

⁹² Refer to Sefer Hatodah page 259, Taamei Haminhagim page 252:605, Lag B'omer page 249, Natei Gavriel Pesach 3:page 289:20. The equivalent of *Rashbi* and *Keshes* separately is 805 (ibid:page 251). See Me'or V'shemesh page 142.

⁹³ Refer to Eitz Yosef on Medrash Rabbah to Bereishis 35:2. See Bnei Yisoschor (Iyar) 33:3-4:page 88, Ohr Mufla page 64.

⁹⁴ Medrash Rabbah Bereishis ibid, Yerushalmi Berochos 9:2.

⁹⁵ Lag B'omer page 251, Ben Pesach L'Shavuos page 339.

⁹⁶ Minhag Yisroel Torah 493:14.

⁹⁷ Darchei Chaim V'sholom 634:page 205, Mishmeres Shalom 38:1, Lag B'omer page 278. Others did not sing this song (Yosef Ometz 589:page 125) because it had too much meaning.

⁹⁸ Lag B'omer ibid.

⁹⁹ Lag B'omer page 280, Otzer Hayidios (Shabbos) page 210, Natei Gavriel Pesach 3:page 288.

¹⁰⁰ Lag B'omer page 281, see Zohar Nosso page 144b. For this reason some people wear *Shabbos* clothes on *Lag B'omer* (Ohr Mufla pages 25-26).

¹⁰¹ Refer to Lag B'omer (Artscroll) page 41.

¹⁰² Sharei Tzyion (Rabinowitz) 14:pages 21-214 in depth. Refer to Modanei Yom Tov 1:54 who discusses the *halachos* that apply to one who wishes to sleep in his car on *Shabbos* in *Meron* before *Lag B'omer* that falls out on *Motzei Shabbos*.

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