

A Dvar Torah to encourage matters of Yiras Shomayim prepared to be shared and discussed with your family at the Shabbos table



פרשת אמור

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ל"ג בעומר THE עבודה OF

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לימוד הדבר תורה לזכות ר' שלום מרדכי הלוי שי' בן רבקה לגאולה קרובה מן המיצר אל המרחב

THE קדושה OF THE DAY

On the day Rebbi Shimon Bar Yochai was preparing to leave this world, he told his son Reb Elozar and his other talmidim who were gathered around him, "Now is an עת רצון and I am going to reveal holy concepts that I have never yet disclosed, so that I will arrive in הבא without reason for embarrassment. I see that today is special, for Hashem and all the tzaddikim are rejoicing in my celebration (הילולא)." He instructed his talmid Rebbi Abba to write, Rebbi Elozar to repeat it and the rest of the talmidim to listen carefully, and then revealed to them the section of זוהר known as אדרא זוטא. At that time, the kedusha of Rebbi Shimon was so great that none of the talmidim were able to gaze at him, and throughout the day, a fire surrounded the house, preventing anyone from approaching it.

Rebbi Abba recalls, "I was in middle of writing, when in middle of quoting a possuk, Rebbi Shimon stopped at the word 'חיים'. I waited, wanting to continue, but did not raise my head to see why Rebbi Shimon had stopped, for I was unable to look at the great light that was shining around him. Suddenly, I heard a voice call out a possuk on the word 'חיים', and then another voice called out another possuk. I fell to the ground and wept. When the fire and the light departed, I saw that the great light, Rebbi Shimon, had passed away. He was lying on his right side and his face was smiling."

Soon afterwards, residents of the village Tzipori came to take the רשב"י to bury him in their village, but the inhabitants of Miron chased 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 הילולא of Rebbi Shimon." Upon entering the cave where he would be buried, another voice was heard, coming from within the cave, "This man shakes up the world, and many מקטרגים (adversaries) in שמים are silenced because of him, and Hashem is praised with him daily. Fortunate is his portion, both above and below!"

(זהר ח"ג דף רצ"א ע"ב, רצ"ו ע"ב)

The Arizal said that it is a mitzvah to rejoice on ל"ג בעומר because of the directive of רשב"י calling his yahrtzeit a celebration. This joy is relevant to every Yid, for רשב"י protects the entire world from judgment.

This day is also joyous because the talmidim of Rebbi Akiva stopped dying. As a result of this special day, they began to relate to each other with proper respect.

(התוועדות תשמ"ב ח"ג ע' 1429)

The Alter Rebbe explains that on this day, רשב"י reached the highest level of his life, being illuminated with the light of משיח, and revealed some of this to his talmidim.

The Friediker Rebbe said that ל"ג בעומר is a day of revelation of פנימיות התורה.

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

A talmid of the Arizal, Reb Avraham Halevi Galanti, was a גלוגל of Yirmiyahu Hanovi who had prophesied the חורבן, and therefore constantly mourned over the destruction of the Beis Hamikdosh. Every single day he would add the tefila of 'נחם' in davening, which is usually said only on Tisha b'Av. On ל"ג בעומר, the Arizal and his talmidim went to the "נחם" kever, and Reb Avrohom said 'נחם' as he usually did. When he finished davening, the Arizal told him, "I have just seen the רשב"י standing by his kever and he said to me, 'Tell this man: Why are you saying 'נחם' on a joyous day? Soon you will need to be comforted.'" Less than a month later, Reb Avrohom's son passed away.

(שער הכוונות פ"ז ע"א בשילוב מקורות אחרים)

CELEBRATING ל"ג בעומר

ל"ג בעומר was an exceptional יום טוב by the Mitteler Rebbe. He would go with the Chassidim to the field, where he would say 'Lchaim', something he could not usually do due to health reasons, and would perform miracles. Many childless women would be benched by the Rebbe to have sons, who will grow up to be Chassidim. Usually, when people came to request a brocho for children, the Mitteler Rebbe would send them to his brother Reb Chaim Avrohom. However, on ל"ג בעומר, he would bench them himself. People waited for ל"ג בעומר all year long.

(היום יום י"ח אייר, תו"מ השי"ת ע' 60)

When the Mitteler Rebbe moved to Lubavitch, he reenacted the minhag of celebrating ל"ג בעומר in the field outside the city. A light seuda, including hard-boiled eggs, would be served, 'Lchaim' would be said, and the chassidim would sing and dance. Towards the end of the seuda, the Tzemach Tzedek would arrive to say a maamor and would then ask the 'eltere chassidim' to relate their memories of ל"ג בעומר of previous years, from the words of Torah and stories that were related then. After the Rebbe left, they would continue to farbreng until the evening.

At a Seudas Shabbos in the home of Rebbetzin Rivka on ל"ג בעומר תרנ"ו, the chossid Reb Hendel related: From the time that the two chassidische land-managers settled near Lubavitch, the celebration was held on their grounds, together with a large and festive seuda. A week or two before ל"ג בעומר, a גורל would be drawn to decide whose field would be used. Whoever had the zechus of hosting the celebration, would invite the יושבים (men who learned full time in the Rebbe's Beis Medrash) and אורחים to come on ל"ג בעומר, and after an early Mincha, a full seudah of fish and meat would be served. During the seuda, maamorim would be taught, chassidische stories told, and we would sing and dance. Generally, the Chassidim would remain awake the entire night and then early in the morning, we would daven shachris together, with a minyan, at length (באריכות). At eleven o'clock, a milchige seuda and 'Lchaim' would be served, and then from three o'clock, we would eagerly await the arrival of the Tzemach Tzedek.

The entire winter of תר"ד, the Rebbe forbade the Chassidim to come to Lubavitch, due to the libel of the משכילים, and he said chassidus only six times throughout the winter. On שבת הגדול, the Tzemach Tzedek said chassidus in public and it then became known that the Rebbe now permits chassidim to come to Lubavitch. For לע"ג בעומר that year, approximately forty minyanim of אורחים arrived, with the great chassidim Reb Eizik Homler and Reb Hillel Paritcher at their head. On the Shabbos before לע"ג בעומר, the Rebbe said three maamorim, and the joy was incredible.

That year, the last of the פ"ב fasts fell out on לע"ג בעומר. However, the great Rabbonim present 'paskened', that because of the great simcha, the fast would be held only until Mincha, and then they would have the customary seuda. Due to the great joy, the day passed quickly, and the following afternoon the Rebbe arrived for two hours, said a מאמר and returned home.

The Rashbatz, also present at the Seudas Shabbos in the home of Rebbetzin Rivka, then described the לע"ג בעומר celebration of תר"ט, which was the last time the Tzemach Tzedek went out to the fields: All the chassidim who had arrived for לע"ג בעומר went to the grounds of the chossid Reb Shlomo, who had been involved with the לע"ג בעומר celebrations since the Mitteler Rebbe became Rebbe.

It was a joyous time for us; the elderly chassidim, despite their age, danced with their tzitzis showing, and we, the talmidim of the Yeshiva, danced like rams. We then sat open mouthed as we listened attentively to every word said by the זקני החסידים.

At four o'clock in the afternoon, the Rebbe came, said chassidus and stayed for three hours. Before departing, he told us to sing the niggun דביקות of the Alter Rebbe, during which he sat in deep דביקות, with eyes closed and tears on his face. Upon concluding the niggun, the Rebbe stood up, announcing that the זכות of the ההילולא protect all Yidden. In unison, we all spontaneously cried out, "אמן!" The Rebbe smiled slightly and said, "אמן, כן יהי רצון."

After the Rebbe left, the זקני החסידים led by Reb Hillel gathered to review the maamor. They expressed their surprise that the Rebbe had asked for the Alter Rebbe's niggun to be sung and their worry regarding the Rebbe's parting words.

On the following Monday, an urgent messenger came to Lubavitch with a letter from the printers in Zhitomir, saying that the police had made an inspection regarding the recent printing of the תורה, checked where copies had been sent, and had sealed all remaining copies in the press. They ordered the owner, a chossid, to appear for an investigation on Wednesday.

The rumor spread quickly in Lubavitch, and the sons of the Rebbe hurried to hear the exact story from the Rebbe, for the story's details had twisted and grown during the one short hour it had spread. When they came, the Rebbe told them that the decree will be nullified.

That Wednesday, when the printer came before the police, he was threatened and then arrested. However, on Thursday evening he was set free, and on Friday, the ספרים were released.

(סד"ש תש"ז - ה'ש"ת, הוספות ע' 412)

On לע"ג בעומר תש"ג, the first children's parade was arranged and the Rebbe came out to speak. Suddenly, one of the windows of the Frierdiker Rebbe's apartment opened and people noticed the Frierdiker Rebbe listening to what the Rebbe was saying. One of the Rebbe's family members asked the Frierdiker Rebbe why he had stood near the window for so long, despite his weak health. The Frierdiker Rebbe replied, "It is known that Reb Levi Yitzchok from Bardichev asked the Alter Rebbe why he had not included 'שמרר' in the Shabbos davening if it causes a great יריד ("Market" - tumult) in שמים. The Alter Rebbe

answered that one does not need to be by every יריד." The Frierdiker Rebbe concluded, "In this יריד, the Alter Rebbe participated."

(ימי מלך ח"ב ע' 698)

The Rebbe said: It has been an age old minhag of לע"ג בעומר to take the children out to the field where the meaning of the day would be explained to them, they would be given sweets, and would also play with bows and arrows. These לע"ג בעומר activities should add in the chinuch of the children, causing them to shine in Torah and Yiddishkeit.

(התועודיות תשמ"ז ח"ג ע' 268)

MINHAGIM OF לע"ג בעומר

There is a minhag on this day to light bonfires representing the light of רשב"י. People would purchase the זכות of the bonfire lighting in Miron and other places. The Rebbe Rashab purchased the lighting in חברון a number of times.

Many sing special פיוטים which include praises of רשב"י. The Rebbe said that the Rebbeim would have them in thought, although for some reason, they did not sing them.

(התועודיות תשמ"ז ח"ג ע' 271)

The holy tzaddik Reb Mendel of Rimanov explains that this game of bow and arrow is played because no rainbow, a sign of Hashem's anger, was seen during the lifetime of רשב"י, for he protected the entire generation.

Reb Mendel's talmid, the tzaddik Reb Tzvi Elimelech of Dinov (the בני יששכר), further explains this game according to what is written in זהר, that an especially bright rainbow shows on the imminent revelation of the light of moshiach. Being that this light is partially revealed in the זהר, we play the bow and arrow.

The Rebbe adds that the arrow, a weapon that can shoot an enemy from a distance, alludes to those matters of קדושה which defeat the Yetzer Horah in advance, allowing the person to learn Torah successfully. This explains the special connection of the bow and arrow to the talmidim of חדר.

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

At a parade (תשמ"ג), the Rebbe said that primary trait of רשב"י from which we must learn, is the learning of Torah in a manner of תורתו, אומנתו, Torah was his only occupation. The Rebbe explained that everyone should, in a similar manner, dedicate themselves entirely to Torah, so that even when doing other things, it is noticeable that one's profession is תורה. This is particularly relevant to children who have no other concerns to worry about.

Another lesson we must take is to increase in אהבת ישראל and the learning התורה, which was revealed by רשב"י.

(לקו"ש חל"ז ע' 128)

לע"נ השליח הרב יצחק מאיר ב"ר יוסף אברהם ע"ה קאנאן
ליום היארצייט כ' אייר
ולזכות נכדתו חי' מושקא שתחי' לרגל הולדתה - י"א ניסן
נדבת מושפתם שי'

לזכות אלעזר בן בילא פלברבאום
לרפ"ש בקרוב ברמ"ה אבריו ושס"ה גידיו,
ברוח ובגשם, לאריכות ימים ושנים טובות
נדבת בנו צבי גרשון שי'