



Lag Ba'omer, Pesach Sheini & Unity

1) Why is the shape of Shemura Matza round, circular [The simple reason is because it says Ugos Matzos- Shemos 12:39- and Ugah is a circle, as in Choni Hamagal (Taanis 19)]?

2) When the Gemoro (Yevamos 62b) tells us of the death of the students of R' Akiva, it says 12,000 pairs not 24,000. Why?

3) What happened on Lag Ba'omer that the students of R' Akiva stopped dying then?

We descended to Mitzrayim because Yosef was sold to Mitzrayim. For this reason, at Karpas- which is done on Pesach (Mitzrayim)- we dip in salt water just as the Kesones of Yosef was dipped into blood. Is it any wonder that when Rashi (Breishis 37:3) explains the Kesones Pasim he uses the term Karpas? Yosef was originally sold from Shechem. The Torah emphasizes the carrying of the bones of Yosef until he was buried. Where was he buried? In Shechem. This was part of the rectification as it began and concluded in Shechem.

When Moshe was appointed to greatness, Aharon was V'Racha V'Samach B'libo (Shemos 4:14), he was happy for his brother although he was older. This was the Tikun (rectification)- unity; love, since the brothers hated Yosef and that was the reason for the descent to Mitzrayim. This explains why Rashi (Shemos 19:2) says K'ish Echad B'lev Echad, as there was unity at Matan Torah, the opposite of what caused Galus Mitzrayim. With this, we can comprehend why the Gemoro says that 12,000 pairs of R' Akiva's students died since in every Chavrusah there is one

who is smarter, the Mashpia and the Mekabel. Hence, humility and unity are necessary.

Pesach Sheini comes out during the week of Sefira known as Hod. Hod is sourced in Hodaa which is the concept of nullification of oneself. Therefore, at Modim- the Bracha of Hodaa- we bow, a sign of nullification.

The seven shepherds (Avrohom, Yitzchok, Yaakov, Moshe, Aharon, Yosef and Dovid) correspond to the Seven Sefiros (Chessed, Gevura, Tiferes, Netzach, Hod, Yesod, Malchus). As a result, Aharon lines up with Hod. This fits with Aharon, the Kohen Gadol, who performs the Avodah as Hod is about submission. Aharon is described as an Ohaiv Shalom V'Rodaif Shalom; loving and pursuing peace (Avos 1:12). There were 80,000 children named Aharon that escorted him when he died because of the marriages he saved and these were those that emerged from it (Kallah Rabasi, 3, s.v. Braisa Yera' Chet). With this, we can appreciate the Gemoro (Brachos 58a) that states Hod refers to the Beis Hamikdash.

The week of Hod is a distinct time to work on ourselves. Consequently, Lag Ba'omer is the day of Hod Shebhod-ultimate Hod. The week of Hod heralds in Pesach Sheini. Pesach Sheini was a result of Lama Nigara (Bamidbar 9:7)- those who were impure and couldn't bring the Korban Pesach were complaining, why should we be left out from among the Jewish people (B'soch Bnei Yisroel). B'soch Bnei Yisroel- idea of submitting as we are part of a Klal (Bamidbar 9:6-7).

A circle represents the idea of unity. (This is why we dance in a circle.) Every radius in a circle has the same measurement. Since problems start with separation and hatred, the rectification is unity. Matzos are circular since it all began with Yosef because of hatred and Shmurah Matzah is round- representing unity. Accordingly, the students of R' Akiva died at this time of year because the lesson of unity should be taken from Pesach and they didn't.

Lag Ba'omer is about R' Shimon Bar Yochai, who gave us the hidden Torah. In Eretz Yisroel, many thousands of Jews gather in Meron at his Kever. Each Jew is a letter in the Sefer Torah as there are 600,000 root Neshamos and 600,000 letters in the Torah (In fact, Yisroel is an acronym Yesh Shishim Ribui Osiyos La'Torah; there are 600,000 letters in the Torah.) Torah has Pardes- Pshat, Remez, Drush and Sod. The Pshat of a Jew is his external part, the way he looks. A psychologist who is in accordance with Torah can see the Remez of a Jew. However, we don't see the Sod of a Jew since that is his Pnimitiyus; internal essence as it is his unique character.

One person may be the Mem of Moshe in the Torah and another might be the Beis of Bilaam. It all requires unity. Lag Ba'omer tells us the Sodos Ha'Torah; secrets of the Torah. The students of R' Akiva got the message from Lag Ba'omer to see the uniqueness of every Jew since R' Shimon Bar Yochai is about the secrets of the Torah (R' Shimon Bar Yochai sees the good in every Jew as we say in Va'martem Ko Lechai- Hu Yamlitiz Tov Baadainu.). Therefore, once Lag Ba'omer came, they got the message and stopped dying.

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