

Sefer Ephesians And [Lag B’Omer](omer.html)

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***Tehillim (***[***Psalms***](psalms1.html)***) 119:18*** *Uncover (גל*) *my* [*eyes*](body.html)*, that I may behold wondrous things out of thy* [*law*](law.html)*.*

# Introduction

In this [study](study.html) I would like to explore the connections between [Lag B’Omer](omer.html)[[1]](#footnote-1) and Sefer Ephesians. I will be using the translation of Hakham Dr. [Yosef](joseph.html) ben Haggai, for sefer Ephesians. This translation was made in an attempt to faithfully translate the Greek in consonance with the [teaching](teacher.html) of our Sages.

[Lag B’Omer](omer.html), on [Iyar](feasts.html) [eighteen](eighteen.html), is located at a most significant point in the [omer](omer.html) period; it marks the *transition* that takes place within a person who engages in this counting, from a state of contracting and correcting oneself to [one](one.html) of ascent and elevation towards the [spiritual](physical.html) climax, the [festival](festival.html) of Matan Torah (on Shabuot – the [feast of Weeks](shavuot.html)), the giving of the Torah! Further, [Lag B’Omer](omer.html) is a day of transcendence. *All of the* [*events*](feasts.html)*, stories, and customs deal with the interface between this* [*world*](worlds.html) *and the next.*

[Lag B’Omer](omer.html) (the 33rd day of the [Omer](omer.html) count) is characterized by the sefirah of *Hod sheb’Hod,* *Glory in Glory*. This sefira is intimately associated with Aaron the [High Priest](priests.html) and by inference it is associated with [Yeshua](yeshua.html) The [High Priest](priests.html).

[Lag B’Omer](omer.html) is a happy day on which the sad [prayer](prayer.html) of tachanun is not recited.[[2]](#footnote-2) In recent history, [Lag B’Omer](omer.html) may very well be the single largest [annual](annual.html) gathering of observant [Jews](gen-jew.html) anywhere.

[Lag B’Omer](omer.html), like sefer Ephesians, carries the theme of Ahavat Israel, the imperative to love and respect [one](one.html)’s fellow and is a [time](time.html) to celebrate [Jewish](gen-jew.html) unity by gathering with men, women, and children to show our love and passion for [one](one.html) another.

[Lag B’Omer](omer.html) and sefer Ephesians both deal with the secrets of the [future](future.html) Messianic Age. They both deal with the lessons that are necessary to achieve that glorious age.

When I was in my early 20s, I memorized sefer Ephesians. While I can no longer rattle it off as I once could, never the less much still remains of those memories. This memorization enabled me to notice the stunning connections between what is written in sefer Ephesians and what our Hakhamim [teach](teacher.html) about [Lag B’Omer](omer.html). In this [study](study.html) I would like to spell out some of these connections.

Before we jump into sefer Ephesians, I need to provide some background on the personalities, symbols, and customs that dominate this joyous day. Lets start by looking at [one](one.html) of the greatest Hakhamim that the [world](worlds.html) has ever [known](daat.html), Hakham Akiba.[[3]](#footnote-3)

# Hakham Akiba

Hakham Akiba ben [Yosef](joseph.html) was a true Torah giant; his halachic rulings were recorded by his students and became the normative mode of conduct for all [Jews](gen-jew.html).

The [Gemara](orallaw.html) comments that when a [**Mishna**](orallaw.html) is recorded without mentioning the [name](name.html) of the sage, that means that it was said by Hakham Meir.

When we find a similar nameless passage in the **Tosefta**, we [know](daat.html) that it was said by Hakham Nechemiah.

An anonymous **Sifra** is attributed to Hakham Yehudah.

And an unnamed **Sifrei** to Hakham Shimon.

The [Gemara](orallaw.html) concludes, “and they are all according to Hakham Akiba”.[[4]](#footnote-4) Rashi explains, “They all said these words from what they had learned from Hakham Akiba”.[[5]](#footnote-5) This [teaches](teacher.html) us that Rabbi Akiba and his talmidim were the living embodiment of Torah shebalpeh, [oral Torah](orallaw.html). They were the [masorah](mishna1.html), they were *The* [*Gospel*](mishna1.html)!

[Oral Torah](orallaw.html) (Torah shebaal peh) underwent a fundamental change in the [two](two.html) [generations](toldot.html) after Hakham Akiba, during a period of relative peace with the Romans. The leader of the [Jewish](gen-jew.html) people at that [time](time.html) was Hakham Yehuda the Prince, who had a uniquely positive relationship with the Emperor of Rome, Antoninus Marcus Aurelius.[[6]](#footnote-6) At that [time](time.html), Hakham Yehuda (Rebbe), wrote down all of the verified opinions of the [oral Torah](orallaw.html) into what we call the [Mishna](orallaw.html). But this process of preserving the oral tradition in written form began [two](two.html) [generations](toldot.html) earlier, when Hakham Akiba did not lose faith with the deaths of his students, but rather started over with his students in the South. [First](one.html) he systemized the streams of [oral Torah](orallaw.html) that been handed down since [Sinai](stages.html). It was his student,[[7]](#footnote-7) Meir, who wrote the clear and concise language of the [Mishna](orallaw.html), which was finally written down in the next [generation](toldot.html) by Rebbe and his court. These final preparations for the redaction of the [oral Torah](orallaw.html) are perhaps what the [Talmud](orallaw.html) means when it says, “and they stabilized Torah at that [time](time.html).”

This vital work, the preservation of the mesorah, would not have happened without the incredible optimism of Hakham Akiba, who in his old age was forced to start over, with [five](five.html) [new](new.html) talmidim, after losing his entire academy of [twelve](twelve.html) thousand pairs of talmidim. The loss of Hakham Akiba’s students was more than can be measured in sheer [numbers](nchart.html).

Hakham Akiba’s 12,000 pairs of students died during the sefirah period, with the exception of this day, the [eighteenth](eighteen.html) of [Iyar](feasts.html).[[8]](#footnote-8) They died because they did not respect [one](one.html) another.[[9]](#footnote-9) Thus a period of [mourning](mourning.html)[[10]](#footnote-10) ensued with no haircuts, no marriages, no rejoicing, that is widely observed today. This poses a small problem as we [know](daat.html) that many more people died at the destruction of the [Temple](temple.html), fifty years earlier. Why then do we [mourn](mourning.html) over these [twelve](twelve.html) thousand pairs? The short answer is that we [mourn](mourning.html) not for their lives, but for their Torah. They were the hope of Torah shebaal peh ([oral Torah](orallaw.html)) for the next [generation](toldot.html). Their deaths represented the death of the [oral Torah](orallaw.html). For this we [mourn](mourning.html). However, I am getting a bit ahead of myself. We shall examine this subject in greater detail a bit later.

Getting back to Hakham Akiba, it is important to [know](daat.html) that Hakham Akiba and sefer Ephesians both emphasized the importance of [Jewish](gen-jew.html) unity. The [Midrash](orallaw.html) records Hakham Akiba’s words:

[***Midrash***](orallaw.html) ***Rabbah Kohelet 11:*** *‘I had 24,000 disciples from Geves to Antiperes, all of whom died during my lifetime [between* [*Pesach*](passover.html) *and Shabuot]. In the end, I had* [*seven*](seven.html) *disciples,*

*Hakham Yehuda Ben Ilai,*

*Hakham Nechemiah,*

*Hakham Meir,*

*Hakham Yosi Ben Chalafta,*

*Hakham Shimon Ben Yochai,*

*Hakham Eliezer the son of Hakham Yosi HaGalili and*

*Hakham Yochanan HaSandlar.*

*The earlier disciples died because they envied the Torah accomplishments of their colleagues. You the later disciples must not repeat their error.’ Immediately, they succeeded in filling all of* [*Eretz Israel*](city.html) *with Torah.’*

Hakham Akiba said some things that are also significant topics in sefer Ephesians. The following quote from the [Mishna](orallaw.html) details [one](one.html) of the sayings:

***Avoth 3:17*** *Hakham Akiba said that Jesting and frivolity lead a man to immorality. Tradition (mesorah –* [*gospel*](mishna1.html)*) is a fence around the Torah, tithes are a fence to riches; vows are a fence to self-restraint, and a fence to wisdom is silence.*

The following pesukim from sefer Ephesians reflect this saying:

***Ephesians 5:4*** *Neither filthiness, nor foolish talking, nor jesting, which are not convenient: but rather giving of thanks.*

***Ephesians 1:13*** *In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the* [*gospel*](mishna1.html) *of your* [*salvation*](salvation.html)*: in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise,*

***Ephesians 3:6*** *That the* [*Gentiles*](gen-jew.html) *should be fellowheirs, and of the same* [*body*](body.html)*, and partakers of his promise in* [*Mashiach*](mashiach.html) *by the* [*gospel*](mishna1.html)*:*

***Ephesians 6:15*** *And your* [*feet*](heel.html) *shod with the preparation of the* [*gospel*](mishna1.html) *of peace;*

***Ephesians 6:19*** *And for me, that utterance may be given unto me, that I may open my* [*mouth*](body.html) *boldly, to make* [*known*](daat.html) *the mystery of the* [*gospel*](mishna1.html)*.*

***Ephesians 4:28*** *Let him that stole steal no more: but rather let him labour, working with his* [*hands*](fourteen.html) *the thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth.*

***Ephesians 4:29*** *Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your* [*mouth*](body.html)*, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister* [*grace*](grace.html) *unto the hearers.*

Hakham Akiba was the armor-bearer for Bar Kokhba. Hakham Akiba believed Bar Kokhba to be the [Mashiach](mashiach.html) ben [Yosef](joseph.html). He realised that he was wrong when Bar Kokhba was killed by the Romans. The Messianic expectations were related to [Lag B’Omer](omer.html) as the [Mashiach](mashiach.html) comes at the interface between this [world](worlds.html) and the next, which is the principal concern of [Lag B’Omer](omer.html). The messianic age begins [two](two.html) hundred and [ten](ten.html) years before the year 2000.[[11]](#footnote-11) The messianic age is the interface between the present age and the [Olam HaBa](futures.html), the [World](futures.html) To Come.

Hakham Akiba was the quintessence of Torah shebaal peh, the [oral Torah](orallaw.html), as can be see in what he transmitted to his talmidim.

***Menachoth 29b*** *Rab Judah said in the* [*name*](name.html) *of Rab, When Moses ascended on high he found the Holy* [*One*](one.html)*, blessed be He, engaged in affixing coronets to the* [*letters*](letters.html)*. Said Moses, ‘Lord of the Universe, Who stays Thy* [*hand*](fourteen.html)*?’ He answered, ‘There will arise a man, at the end of many* [*generations*](toldot.html)*, Akiba b.* [*Joseph*](joseph.html) *by* [*name*](name.html)*, who will expound upon each tittle heaps and heaps of* [*laws*](law.html)*’. ‘Lord of the Universe’, said Moses; ‘permit me to see him’. He replied, ‘Turn thee round’. Moses went and sat down behind* [*eight*](eight.html) *rows [and listened to the discourses upon the* [*law*](law.html)*]. Not being able to follow their arguments he was ill at ease, but when they came to a certain subject and the disciples said to the master ‘Whence do you* [*know*](daat.html) *it?’ and the latter replied ‘It is a* [*law*](law.html) *given unto Moses at* [*Sinai*](stages.html)*’ he was comforted. Thereupon he returned to the Holy* [*One*](one.html)*, blessed be He, and said, ‘Lord of the Universe, Thou hast such a man and Thou givest the Torah by me!’ He replied, ‘Be silent, for such is My decree’.*

Now that we have briefly examined Hakham Akiba, let us examine [one](one.html) of Hakham Akiba’s most outstanding students, Hakham Shimon ben Yochai.

# Hakham Shimon ben Yochai (Rashbi)

[Lag B’Omer](omer.html), the 33rd day of the [Omer](omer.html) Count is the day of the passing of Hakham Shimon ben Yochai, who lived in the 2nd [generation](toldot.html) after the [Temple](temple.html)’s destruction, about 1,900 years ago. Hakham Shimon is the author of the [*Zohar*](orallaw.html)*,[[12]](#footnote-12)* *Mechilta,[[13]](#footnote-13)* and of hundreds of [laws](law.html) and teachings cited in the [Talmud](orallaw.html). He played a fundamental rule in the history of the Torah’s transmission through the centuries, in both its revealed[[14]](#footnote-14) [face](body.html) as well as its esoteric[[15]](#footnote-15) soul. This esoteric soul is a taste of the next [world](worlds.html), it is the essence of [Lag B’Omer](omer.html).

If there is [one](one.html) thing that characterizes Hakham Shimon ben Yochai’s life it is that he inhabited a reality that, for most of us, still lies in the [future](future.html): The reality of [Mashiach](mashiach.html), the messianic [world](worlds.html) of [redemption](redemption.html), harmony, and perfection. It is said of Hakham Shimon that, for him, the Holy [Temple](temple.html) was never destroyed, the people of Israel never entered the state of [*galut*](galuyot.html) ([physical](physical.html) [exile](galuyot.html) and [spiritual](physical.html) alienation), and the [world](worlds.html) had attained the divine perfection of the Age of [Mashiach](mashiach.html).

Rabbi Shimon’s approach to [Jewish](gen-jew.html) [law](law.html) is distinct from that of his opponent Rabbi Yehudah and the other sages. Rabbi Shimon places importance on the thought (kavanah) behind the action while Rabbi Yehudah looks at the act itself. This attitude will pervade all of his contributions to Torah Shebaal peh and will enable us to glimpse his important contributions.

Hakham Shimon ben Yochai was the talmid par excellence and bore the quintessence of Hakham Akiba’s teachings, as we can see from the [Gemara](orallaw.html):

***Gittin 67a*** *So too said R. Simeon to his disciples: My sons, learn my rules, since my rules are the cream of the cream of R. Akiba’s.*

At this point we have learned that Hakham Akiba WAS THE [ORAL TORAH](orallaw.html). Why then do we focus [Lag B’Omer](omer.html) on Hakham Yochai, the talmid? Why not focus on the [teacher](teacher.html)?

The Pri Tzadik answers this question by pointing to a brutal fact. Hakham Akiba had defied the Romans; and for that, the Romans had killed him. In view of the the Romans’ continuing domination of [Eretz Israel](city.html), it was totally out of the question to commemorate Hakham Akiba’s passing; for the Romans would have treated such a celebration as rebellion. Hence, the shift, as a cover, to Hakham Shimon ben Yochai, Hakham Akiba’s prime student!

This leads us to an even larger understanding: Hakham Akiba is also a stand-in for an even greater personality: [Mashiach](mashiach.html)!

Now that we have touched on the personalities associated with [Lag B’Omer](omer.html), let us look at the [time](time.html) frames for these great Hakhamim and the hakhamim of sefer Ephesians.

# [Time](time.html) Frames

To begin to understand the connections between sefer Ephesians and [Lag B’Omer](omer.html) it will be necessary to note the [time](time.html) frame when each of the personalities died. This will help us gain some perspective of how they relate to the [events](feasts.html) associated with [Lag B’Omer](omer.html).

Paul of Tarsus lived until about 67 c.e. This great Hakham wrote sefer Ephesians.

Simon ben Kochba lived until 136 c.e. Ben Kochba was declared to be [Mashiach](mashiach.html) by Hakham Akiba. This appelation was subsequently withdrawn.

Hakham Akiba ben [Yosef](joseph.html) lived until 135 c.e.

Hakham Shimon ben Yochai lived until 160 c.e.

From these dates we can understand that sefer Ephesians was written years before the primary [events](feasts.html) that are ascribed to [Lag B’Omer](omer.html). This suggests that the [events](feasts.html) associated with Hakham Akiba’s talmidim are a picture of the real [events](feasts.html) that shape the energies of [Lag B’Omer](omer.html). The same can be said for the [Lag B’Omer](omer.html) [events](feasts.html) in Hakham Shimon ben Yochai life.

We need to explain something he touched upon that the Nazareans were pioneers on [Zohar](orallaw.html) understanding, and that the Apostles were the [first](one.html) to bring that understanding down to earth and NOT Ben Yochai! The principle ideas of the [Zohar](orallaw.html) were already well [known](daat.html) by the Disiciples of the Master.

It is important to understand that Chazal have not identified the Torah roots for the celebration of [Lag B’Omer](omer.html). In fact, we see almost no historical record of this minor [festival](festival.html) until fifty years of the destruction of the seconf [Beit HaMikdash](mikdash.html), the second [Temple](temple.html). This does NOT mean that there is no Torah root. It merely means that Chazal have concealed this root.

From the previous paragraph we can understand that sefer Ephesians may have the very real possibility of bringing more information to our understanding of [Lag B’Omer](omer.html). Never the less, the traditions that surround [Lag B’Omer](omer.html) should find roots in sefer Ephesians.

Consider the following:

Shimon Ben Kokhba was thought to be [Mashiach](mashiach.html) by Hakham Akiba ben [Yosef](joseph.html) in the same way that [Yeshua](yeshua.html) was understood to be [Mashiach](mashiach.html) by His disciples. Is it possible that the people and the stories concerning [Lag B’Omer](omer.html) are a series of symbols used to cover-up the understanding that [Lag B’Omer](omer.html) was all about [Yeshua](yeshua.html) and His Disciples, and was the primary subject of sefer Ephesians? Consider Hakham Akiba’s [twelve](twelve.html) thousand *pairs* of talmidim hint to the [twelve](twelve.html) Apostles and that [Yeshua](yeshua.html)’s talmidim went out [two](two.html)-by-[two](two.html)[[16]](#footnote-16)? Hakham Akiba began to [study](study.html) at [forty](forty.html), in the same way that [Yeshua](yeshua.html) started a [new](new.html) [mission](mission.html), as [Mashiach](mashiach.html) ben David around 40. As Hakham Akiba bore [arms](body.html) for his [Mashiach](mashiach.html), so Hakham Tzefet bore [arms](body.html) for [Yeshua](yeshua.html). As Hakham Akiba’s talmidim brought Torah Shebaal Peh to the [world](worlds.html), so [Yeshua](yeshua.html)’s talmidim brought Torah to both the [Jewish](gen-jew.html) and the [Gentile](gen-jew.html) [world](worlds.html).

Hakham Shimon ben Yochai wrote the mystical sefer called the [Zohar](orallaw.html) (*Shining Light*) in the same way that Yochanan wrote the mystical works of ‘John’ and Revelation in the Nazarean Codicil.

***Sukkah 45b*** *Hezekiah further stated in the* [*name*](name.html) *of R. Jeremiah who said it in the* [*name*](name.html) *of R. Simeon b. Yohai, I am able to exempt the whole* [*world*](worlds.html) *from judgment from the day that I was born until now, and were Eliezer, my son, to be with me [we could exempt it] from the day of the* [*creation*](bara.html) *of the* [*world*](worlds.html) *to the present* [*time*](time.html)*, and were Jotham the son of Uzziah with us, [we could exempt it] from the* [*creation*](bara.html) *of the* [*world*](worlds.html) *to its final end.*

Hakham Shimon said, “I have the power to correct the entire [world](worlds.html); I can exempt the whole [world](worlds.html) from judgment.”[[17]](#footnote-17) In the same way, [Yeshua](yeshua.html) can exempt the [world](worlds.html) from judgment.[[18]](#footnote-18) Note also that he could exempt the *whole* [*world*](worlds.html). This includes the [Gentiles](gen-jew.html) as well! This concords well with sefer Ephesians which focuses on the [Gentiles](gen-jew.html) and their place in the [body](body.html):

***Ephesians 2:11*** *Wherefore remember, that ye being in* [*time*](time.html) *past* [*Gentiles*](gen-jew.html) *in the flesh, who are called Uncircumcision by that which is called the* [*Circumcision*](circumcz.html) *in the flesh made by* [*hands*](fourteen.html)*;*

***Ephesians 3:1*** *For this cause I Paul, the prisoner of* [*Yeshua*](yeshua.html)[*Mashiach*](mashiach.html) *for you* [*Gentiles*](gen-jew.html)*,*

***Ephesians 3:6*** *That the* [*Gentiles*](gen-jew.html) *should be fellowheirs, and of the same* [*body*](body.html)*, and partakers of his promise in* [*Mashiach*](mashiach.html) *by the* [*gospel*](mishna1.html)*:*

***Ephesians 3:8*** *Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, is this* [*grace*](grace.html) *given, that I should preach among the* [*Gentiles*](gen-jew.html) *the unsearchable riches of* [*Mashiach*](mashiach.html)*;*

***Ephesians 4:17*** *This I say therefore, and testify in the Lord, that ye henceforth* [*walk*](walking.html) *not as other* [*Gentiles*](gen-jew.html)[*walk*](walking.html)*, in the vanity of their mind,*

The giving of the Torah took place with Israel and the [erev rav](erevrav.html).[[19]](#footnote-19) [Yeshua](yeshua.html) came to the [Jewish](gen-jew.html) people and sent His talmidim to the [Jews](gen-jew.html) and also to the [erev rav](erevrav.html) ([Gentiles](gen-jew.html) in the [Exodus](exodus.html)).

The [law](law.html) is like Hakham Shimon for most issues when it concerns the [Shabbat](sabbath.html) Halakot.[[20]](#footnote-20) [Yeshua](yeshua.html) also is Lord of the [Shabbat](sabbath.html).[[21]](#footnote-21)

Hakham Shimon ben Yochai alone was given permission to reveal the great mysteries contained in the hidden teachings.[[22]](#footnote-22) Ephesians talks quite a bit about mysteries as well:

***Ephesians 1:9*** *Having made* [*known*](daat.html) *to us [*[*Jews*](gen-jew.html)*] the* [*secret*](sod.html) *[interpretation] of His [G-d’s] will according to His [G-d’s] good pleasure which He [G-d] purposed in Himself,*

***Ephesians 3:3*** *How that by revelation he made* [*known*](daat.html) *unto me the mystery; (as I wrote afore in few words,*

***Ephesians 3:4*** *Whereby, when ye read, ye may understand my* [*knowledge*](knowledge.html) *in the mystery of* [*Mashiach*](mashiach.html)*)*

***Ephesians 3:9*** *And to make all men see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the* [*world*](worlds.html) *hath been hid in God, who created all things by* [*Yeshua*](yeshua.html)[*Mashiach*](mashiach.html)*:*

***Ephesians 5:32*** *This is a great mystery: but I* [*speak*](mashal.html) *concerning* [*Mashiach*](mashiach.html) *and the* [*church*](church.html)*.*

***Ephesians 6:19*** *And for me, that utterance may be given unto me, that I may open my* [*mouth*](body.html) *boldly, to make* [*known*](daat.html) *the mystery of the* [*gospel*](mishna1.html)*,*

On the 33rd Day of the [Omer](omer.html) many, many years ago, Hakham Shimon ben Yochai’s powers to bring help and [salvation](salvation.html) to all of Am Israel increased manifold.[[23]](#footnote-23) In the same way, [Yeshua](yeshua.html) brought [salvation](salvation.html) to the whole [world](worlds.html).[[24]](#footnote-24)

\* \* \*

There are [two](two.html) periods to the [omer](omer.html) count. The [first](one.html) 32 days and the last seventeen days. [Lag B’Omer](omer.html) is a transition point between the [first](one.html) [two](two.html) thirds of the sefirah period and the last [third](three.html). [Lag B’Omer](omer.html) marks a transition where we begin to ascend to Matan Torah.

These [two](two.html) [time](time.html) periods represent how we should [study](study.html) and understand the Torah. The [Gemara](orallaw.html) tells us that when studying, “a person should [first](one.html) amass information, and then afterwards he should apply himself to understanding it all”.

***Shabbath 63a*** *R. Kahana objected to Mar son of R. Huna: But this refers to the words of the Torah? — A verse cannot depart from its plain meaning, he replied. R. Kahana said: By the* [*time*](time.html) *I was* [*eighteen*](eighteen.html) *years old I had* [*studied*](study.html) *the whole Shas, yet I did not* [*know*](daat.html) *that a verse cannot depart from its plain meaning. until to-day. What does he inform us? — That a man should* [*study*](study.html) *and subsequently understand.*

In other places,[[25]](#footnote-25) these [two](two.html) [stages](stages.html) are defined as *Chochmah* (a broad [knowledge](knowledge.html) base) and *Binah* or [*Daat*](daat.html) (in-depth analysis). During the [first](one.html) 32 days of the [Omer](omer.html)-count, a person is expected to prepare himself to receive the Torah by amassing information, or Chochmah. The subsequent days are for analyzing what [one](one.html) has learned. (It is interesting to note that Chazal describe the [*thirty*](thirty.html)*-*[*two*](two.html) pathways of Chachmah[[26]](#footnote-26)).

Sefer Ephesians sits on the line while admonishing us to get understanding.

***Ephesians 1:18*** *The* [*eyes*](body.html) *of your understanding being enlightened; that ye may* [*know*](daat.html) *what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his* [*inheritance*](inherit.html) *in the saints,*

***Ephesians 4:18*** *Having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their* [*heart*](body.html)*:*

***Ephesians 5:17*** *Wherefore be ye not unwise, but understanding what the will of the Lord is.*

# [Lag B’Omer](omer.html) Customs

We need to collate the customs and correlate them to Ephesians.

We have several [Lag B’Omer](omer.html) customs. These customs will be used to help us gain some understanding of this mini-[holiday](festival.html) and they will also enable us to see connections between these customs and sefer Ephesians.

The customs of [Lag B’Omer](omer.html) are in green bold [type](types.html).

## Burning Clothes

Many have the custom to burn expensive clothing at the grave of Hakham Yochai. While there have been some authorities that have forbidden this practice because we are not allowed to purposely destroy things without a valid reason. Never the less some authorities do permit the burning of expensive clothing on [Lag B’Omer](omer.html).

The burning of clothes on [Lag B’Omer](omer.html) is related to the following [Gemara](orallaw.html). As we shall see, there is much more that we can learn from this [Gemara](orallaw.html) then just the burning of clothes.

[***Shabbat***](sabbath.html) ***33b*** *So they (R. Simeon and R. Eleazar) went and hid in a cave. A miracle occurred and a carob-tree and a water well were created for them. They would strip their garments and sit up to their necks in sand. The whole day they* [*studied*](study.html)*; when it was* [*time*](time.html) *for* [*prayers*](prayer.html) *they robed, covered themselves,* [*prayed*](prayer.html)*, and then put off their garments again, so that they should not wear out. Thus they dwelt* [*twelve*](twelve.html) *years in the cave. Then Elijah came and stood at the entrance to the cave and exclaimed, Who will inform the son of Yohai that the emperor is dead and his decree annulled? So they emerged. Seeing a man ploughing and sowing, they exclaimed, ‘They forsake life eternal and engage in life temporal!’ Whatever they cast their* [*eyes*](body.html) *upon was immediately burnt up. Thereupon a Heavenly Echo came forth and cried out, ‘Have ye emerged to destroy My* [*world*](worlds.html)*: Return to your cave!’ So they returned and dwelt there* [*twelve*](twelve.html) *months, saying, ‘The punishment of the* [*wicked*](wicked.html) *in Gehenna is [limited to]* [*twelve*](twelve.html) *months.’ A Heavenly Echo then came forth and said, ‘Go forth from your cave!’ Thus.’; they issued: wherever R. Eleazar wounded, R. Simeon healed. Said he to him, ‘My son! You and I are sufficient for the* [*world*](worlds.html)*.’On the eve of the* [*Sabbath*](sabbath.html) *before sunset they saw an old man holding* [*two*](two.html) *bundles of myrtle and running at twilight. What are these for?’ they asked him. ‘They are in honour of the* [*Sabbath*](sabbath.html)*,’ he replied. ‘But* [*one*](one.html) *should suffice you’?-*[*One*](one.html) *is for ‘Remember-’ and* [*one*](one.html) *for ‘Observe.’ Said he to his son, ‘See how precious are the* [*commandments*](cmds613.html) *to Israel.’ Thereat their minds were tranquilized.*

This interesting [Gemara](orallaw.html) [needs](needs.html) to be unpacked a bit so that we can understand what is going on. Remember that [Gemara](orallaw.html) is [remez](remez.html) literature. This means that the various items are hints to something far deeper. Before I begin to unpack this, let me note that there are some who say that Hakham Shimon ben Yochai and his son exited the cave on [Lag B’Omer](omer.html).[[27]](#footnote-27)

Okay, lets examine some of the items mentioned in this [Gemara](orallaw.html).

The [Gemara](orallaw.html) indicates that Hakham Yochai and his son were buried up to their necks. The [*neck*](body.html) is what the Torah uses when it is hinting to the [connection](connection.html) between [heaven](heaven.html) and earth, between the upper [world](worlds.html) of the [head](body.html) and the lower [world](worlds.html) of the [body](body.html). Thus the picture presented is that of [two](two.html) humans who are a part of the earth (buried in the sand as it will be buried in death) and at the same [time](time.html) they are connected to the upper [world](worlds.html) in their total focus. Additionally, the [burial](burial.html) means that there is no more movement. There is no more *doing* and no more *going*. This is what happened at Matan Torah when [HaShem](hashem.html) [spoke](mashal.html), there was no movement anywhere on earth.[[28]](#footnote-28) The meaning of this is clear. We move because we have [needs](needs.html). When all of our [needs](needs.html) are met, there is no more movement. Being buried up to the [neck](body.html) effectively buried the [body](body.html) and negated it. Hakham Yochai and his son no longer had [bodies](body.html). This is an allusion to the [Olam HaBa](futures.html), the [World](futures.html) To Come.

What is the meaning of the carob tree? We [know](daat.html) that a carob tree takes [seventy](seventy.html) years to bear fruit. [[29]](#footnote-29) So, not only was the sprouting of this tree miraculous, but the [time](time.html) to produce fruit was equally miraculous. Chazal [teach](teacher.html) that the years of a man are [seventy](seventy.html) years.[[30]](#footnote-30) This [teaches](teacher.html) us that the carob tree fruit is something which is beyond the lifetime of a man. Further, [seventy](seventy.html) years is the years of the [Babylonian](bavel.html) [exile](galuyot.html).[[31]](#footnote-31) This suggests that this tree is suggesting that we are looking at the age beyond the current [exile](galuyot.html). As the carob is sweet, so we would expect that the end of the [exile](galuyot.html) will be a [time](time.html) of sweetness. Finally, we can also view the fruiting of the carob tree as a return to the state we had in [Gan Eden](eden.html). In [Gan Eden](eden.html) when [one](one.html) planted a tree he [ate](eating.html) of it’s fruit the same day! This carob tree suggests that Hakham Yochai and his son had returned to [Gan Eden](eden.html) as it was before the [sin](sin.html) of [Adam](adam.html) HaRishon. This “return to the [future](future.html)” is what is spoken of in Kohelet:

***Kohelet (Ecclesiastes) 1:9*** *The thing that hath been, it is that which shall be; and that which is done is that which shall be done: and there is no* [*new*](new.html) *thing under the* [*sun*](hachama.html)*.*

Just as an aside, the Ben Ish Chai tells us that the carobs tasted like the manna. This makes another [connection](connection.html) that we need to note: As the manna was miraculous and helped the people to receive Torah on [Shavuot](shavuot.html), so also was the carob miraculous and helped Hakham Yochai and his son receive Torah secrets. Thus we learn that the Torah is only given to those who [eat](eating.html) manna, to those who become a part of [Mashiach](mashiach.html).

The cave, during second [Temple](temple.html) days, was a place where people were buried. A cave also has the connotation of a [connection](connection.html). So, for example, the cave at Machpela was said to be the [connection](connection.html) to [Gan Eden](eden.html). Thus a cave is a portal to the next [world](worlds.html). In some way we would say that Hakham Shimon ben Yochai was in [Olam HaBa](futures.html) even while he was still in this [world](worlds.html). Hakham Shimon ben Yochai and his son exited the cave on [Lag B’Omer](omer.html). To suggest that this portal is related to [Lag B’Omer](omer.html).

Why does the [Gemara](orallaw.html) tell us that Hakham Yochai was commanded to go back to *his* cave? As a hiding place, he surely didn’t own it. We can see by what happened that *his* cave was quite unique. While most go into their cave and never come back out in this [world](worlds.html), Hakham Shimon went to his cave and came back out. Because he could come and go, this cave was called *his* cave. It was as though death had no power over him.

The well of water is another interesting symbol. Throughout the Torah we see that whenever we see water we always are [speaking](mashal.html) of Torah. A well is dug by human effort. It is not a naturally occurring phenomenon. The water on the other [hand](fourteen.html), is entirely up to [HaShem](hashem.html). No amount of human effort will create or produce water. Taken together, these [two](two.html) indicate significant human effort combined with the blessing of [HaShem](hashem.html) is required to derive the secrets of the Torah.

The [Midrash](orallaw.html) relates[[32]](#footnote-32) that [three](three.html) of the greatest men of the Torah encountered their [future](future.html) wives at wells of water. Their names were [Yitzchak](isaac.html), [Yaaqob](jacob.html), and Moses. This suggests that the well of water in the cave is a place where Hakham Yochai and his son meet [Mashiach](mashiach.html), their [future](future.html) spouse.

This [teaches](teacher.html) us that Hakham Yochai and his son have Torah at their fingertips, but this did not come except through their great labor.

The [twelve](twelve.html) years, plus [one](one.html), are a clear allusion to the [tribes](tribes.html) of Israel which are always listed as [twelve](twelve.html), yet there are [thirteen](thirteen.html) if [one](one.html) were to list them all.

Hakham Shimon ben Yochai took off his clothes to [study](study.html) Torah in order to show that he had stepped out of his [body](body.html) (which is like a suit of clothes) to a higher level. When he would [pray](prayer.html) for the [physical](physical.html), he would put on his clothes (he would step back into his [body](body.html)). In the same way, when we burn clothes, on [Lag B’Omer](omer.html), we are connecting with the idea that this [body](body.html) is like a set of clothes which we can shed at will to achieve a higher [world](worlds.html). The burning is an allusion to the conversion of the [physical](physical.html) (clothes) into the [spiritual](physical.html) ([fire](fire.html)). Another way to understand their lack of clothes is to view them like [Adam](adam.html) HaRishon before the [sin](sin.html). The Torah [teaches](teacher.html) that [Adam](adam.html) and Chava were naked and unashamed.[[33]](#footnote-33) This suggests that Hakham Yochai and his son had returned to [Gan Eden](eden.html) as it was before [Adam](adam.html)’s [sin](sin.html).

The sand effectively negates the [needs](needs.html) of the [body](body.html). Our [Gemara](orallaw.html) has nothing to say about excretion. The lack of excretion was also seen in the wilderness when we came [out of Egypt](thebirth.html). Thus our closeness with [HaShem](hashem.html) and our supernatural [food](food.html) (manna in the wilderness and carob in the cave) combine to show that there is no more evil to be separated from the good. There is only the good. The manna fell at ones [feet](heel.html) if he were righteous and involved in the [study](study.html) of Torah. It was ready-to-[eat](eating.html) without any preparation. In the same way, the carobs were at their fingertips and they required no preparation.

The end of this [Gemara](orallaw.html) shows how those in the mundane [world](worlds.html) still have a taste of the [Olam HaBa](futures.html) through their honoring and guarding of [Shabbat](sabbath.html). They use their labor of the [six](six.html) days to connect to the [Shabbat](sabbath.html). They picture the [six](six.html) thousand years of labor followed by the Messianic age when all will be [Shabbat](sabbath.html). This [seventh](seven.html) millenium is itself a prelude to the [Olam HaBa](futures.html). In this [seventh](seven.html) millenium, we will still have *going* and *doing* as pictured by the old man. Never the less, in the messianic age we will be connecting with [Shabbat](sabbath.html) through all of our actions.

When Hakham Yochai and his son caused things to burn up, this is the reminder of the bonfires and of the renewal of the earth at the end of the age. [HaShem](hashem.html) stopped this [fire](fire.html) because it was not yet [time](time.html) for this renewal. Thus Hakham Yochai and his son go back to the cave for [twelve](twelve.html) months. The [Gemara](orallaw.html) indicates that this is analagous to the [wicked](wicked.html) spending [twelve](twelve.html) months in Gehenna. So the cave symbolizes death and then the cave symbolizes the dead in Gehenna.

When Hakham Yochai encounters the old man on erev [Shabbat](sabbath.html), we learn another significant thing about [time](time.html). This [time](time.html), just before [Shabbat](sabbath.html) starts, is the [time](time.html) when this [world](worlds.html) ‘kisses’ the next [world](worlds.html). This [time](time.html) speaks to the messianic age when we nned to hurry to make last minute preparations for the messianic age and the [Olam HaBa](futures.html). The sweetness of the myrtle (taken by Sephardim for [Shabbat](sabbath.html) evening) is given to remind of the [two](two.html) [Shabbat](sabbath.html) [commands](cmds613.html) to guard and to remember. We recall that the sweet smell of the myrtle is to give pleasure to the additional soul that we receive on [Shabbat](sabbath.html). The sense of smell is the sense of the soul. At this [time](time.html) we give precedence to the soul rather than to the [body](body.html). After all, it is how the righteous judge. This [time](time.html) just before [Shabbat](sabbath.html) is the [time](time.html) when [Adam](adam.html) HaRishon was created. This [teaches](teacher.html) us that man was not made for work, but rather he was made for the messianic age and the [Olam Haba](futures.html). This [time](time.html) when man was created is ripe for [redemption](redemption.html), it is ripe for the [mitzvot](cmds613.html) of [Shabbat](sabbath.html) and of the messianic age. As we have mentioned before, Hakham Shimon ben Yochai and his son exited the cave on [Lag B’Omer](omer.html). They exited at this [time](time.html) just before [Shabbat](sabbath.html). They exited when this [world](worlds.html) kisses the next [world](worlds.html). This [time](time.html) of ‘[kissing](mashal.html)’ is the [time](time.html) of [Lag B’Omer](omer.html).

The [Gemara](orallaw.html) tells us that Elija came to announce to Hakham Yochai that he and his son could leave the cave. Why Elijah? When we hear Elijah [coming](coming.html), we hear the echos of the prophet Malachi who is sent before [Mashiach](mashiach.html) to prepare the way for the messianic era.[[34]](#footnote-34) Thus we have a hint to the fact that this [Gemara](orallaw.html) is [speaking](mashal.html) of the [time](time.html) just before the messianic era, an era where we begin our return to [Gan Eden](eden.html). This is the beginning that starts on [Lag B’Omer](omer.html).

Now, why does our [Gemara](orallaw.html) include both Hakham Yochai and Hakham Eleazar, his son? If we go back to our observation that the focus of [Lag B’Omer](omer.html) is Hakham Yochai in order to deflect the Romans from focusing on Hakham Akiba who is the [teacher](teacher.html) and the greater of the [two](two.html). Remembering this observation suggests that the cave contains the [teacher](teacher.html) (Hakham Akiba) and his talmid (Hakham Yochai) with Hakham Yochai and his son as stand-ins for Hakham Akiba and Hakham Yochai. This also explains why Hakham Yochai does all the talking. This explanation is reinforced when we understand that the relationship of a [teacher](teacher.html) and his talmid is a [remez](remez.html) to the relationship of a father to his son.

Taken together, this [Gemara](orallaw.html) is showing us the nature of the the [Olam HaBa](futures.html). This is a [world](worlds.html) without movement. A [world](worlds.html) where Israel can [study](study.html) Torah without the cares of this [world](worlds.html) interrupting us. It is a [world](worlds.html) when [Mashiach](mashiach.html) is the [head](body.html) and Israel is in a [marriage](mashal.html) [covenant](covenant.html) with [HaShem](hashem.html). It is a [world](worlds.html) without [sin](sin.html), hunger, thirst, or any worry. A carefull reading of Sefer Ephesians shows many of these same symbols with a similar understanding.

## Ashkenaz Marriages are Permitted

## Sephardim permit Marriages on [Iyar](feasts.html) 19.[[35]](#footnote-35)

[Marriage](mashal.html) is an allusion to our relationship with [Mashiach](mashiach.html) and with [HaShem](hashem.html). [Lag B’Omer](omer.html) is the day when we see [marriage](mashal.html) as the purpose of the [Olam HaBa](futures.html). The intimacy and the [connection](connection.html) with [HaShem](hashem.html) can only be achieved when we are without [sin](sin.html) as pure bride without spot or blemish.[[36]](#footnote-36)

## Bows and Arrows

A bow and arrow are the tools of a hunter. [Jews](gen-jew.html) are admonished not to hunt. In fact the occupation of [wicked](wicked.html) men is hunting. That is is why Nimrod and [Esau](edom.html) were hunters. They were hunters because they were [wicked](wicked.html). So why are [Jewish](gen-jew.html) children playing with bows and arrows?

Our Hakhamim [teach](teacher.html) that there are a couple of reasons why children p[lay with](marriageact.html) bows and arrows on [Lag B’Omer](omer.html). Each of these reasons is connected to the Torah.

The bow [teaches](teacher.html) us about Torah. The closer a bow is pulled towards your [heart](body.html) the more effective it becomes. In the same way, Torah has to be pulled to our [heart](body.html) and the closer it gets, the more effective it becomes. Hakham Shimon ben Yochai [taught](teacher.html) that Torah is effective only with the proper intention (kavanah). Therefore, we illustrate this for our children by [teaching](teacher.html) them about how a bow is used.

The custom of children playing with bows and arrows on [Lag B’omer](omer.html) has been traced by some to the rainbow, that symbolizes destruction, as well as eventual peace. A rainbow (A rainbow is a bow turned towards [HaShem](hashem.html) and the harmless side is pointed towards His people in peace) did not appear[[37]](#footnote-37) during the lifetime of Hakham Shimon ben Yochai, because of his [merit](merit.html).[[38]](#footnote-38) In sefer Ephesians we see the emphasis on peace as can be found in a bow which is pointed in peace, as we will see shortly in more detail.

Another reason offered for the bows and arrows custom is to recall the Roman decree forbidding any Torah [study](study.html). As such, Hakham Shimon ben Yochai and his students would [head](body.html) to the forests equipped with their bows and arrows in order to [study](study.html) Torah there. When they would be found and questioned by the Roman policeman they would claim that they were hunting and not studying. Similarly, the military nature of bows and arrows are intended to recall the revolt against the Romans in 135 C.E. The revolt was led by Hakham Akiba who was the primary [teacher](teacher.html) of Hakham Shimon Ben Yochai.

The commentaries tell us that the *mabul* (the great flood) occurred on [Lag B’Omer](omer.html). The posuk records:

***Bereshit 7:11-12*** *on the seventeenth day of the second month all the fountains of the great depth were opened and the windows of the* [*heaven*](heaven.html) *were opened. There was rain on the earth for* [*forty*](forty.html) *days and* [*forty*](forty.html) *nights.*

Rashi here notes that the [forty](forty.html) days of rain do not include the [first](one.html) day. This is because the rainfall of the [first](one.html) day was incomplete due to the fact that it did not rain the prior evening. Thus, according to Rashi although the windows of the [heaven](heaven.html) along with the fountains of the great depths were opened on the seventeenth, the mabul did not begin until the [eighteenth](eighteen.html) day of the second month. The seventeenth day of the month was just the warm up period. There is a dispute in the [Gemara](orallaw.html) as to whether the months of the Torah are calculated from Tishre or from [Nisan](feasts.html). If we follow the opinion that they are calculated from [Nisan](feasts.html), it emerges that the mabul started on the [eighteenth](eighteen.html) day of [Iyar](feasts.html), which is the same day as [Lag B’Omer](omer.html).

The commentators explain that this is [one](one.html) reason for the custom that children p[lay with](marriageact.html) bows and arrows on [Lag B’Omer](omer.html). The [Hebrew](hebrew.html) word for bow is *keshet*. This is the same word used for rainbow. The rainbow[[39]](#footnote-39) was designated by [HaShem](hashem.html) to serve as a [sign](signs.html), of peace, that He would never again bring a mabul to the [world](worlds.html). We remind ourselves of this [sign](signs.html) on the anniversary of the mabul ([Lag B’Omer](omer.html)). This is the [sign](signs.html) of peace that is repeatedly mentioned in sefer Ephesians. Notice the centrality of *peace* in sefer Ephesians:

***Ephesians 1:2*** *Mercy, [Justice,] and* [*Compassion*](file:///D%3A%5CWord%5COmer%5Cjonah.html) *to you from* [*HaShem*](hashem.html) *our Father and [from] the Master* [*Yeshua*](yeshua.html) *the* [*Messiah*](mashiach.html) *[King of the* [*Jews*](gen-jew.html)*].”*

***Ephesians 2:14*** *For he is our peace, who hath made both* [*one*](one.html)*, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition;*

***Ephesians 2:15*** *Having abolished in his flesh the enmity, the (manmade)* [*law*](law.html)[*commandments*](cmds613.html) *in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain* [*one*](one.html)[*new*](new.html) *man, making peace;*

***Ephesians 2:17*** *And came and preached peace to you which were afar off, and to them that were nigh.*

***Ephesians 4:3*** *Endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.*

***Ephesians 6:15*** *And your* [*feet*](heel.html) *shod with the preparation of the* [*gospel*](mishna1.html) *of peace;*

***Ephesians 6:23*** *Peace to the brethren, and love with faith, from God the Father and the Lord* [*Yeshua*](yeshua.html)[*Mashiach*](mashiach.html)*.*

What were the root causes of the flood? Rashi cites sexual immorality and [idolatry](idolatry.html)[[40]](#footnote-40). Following the [Gemara](orallaw.html) in Sanhedrin, Rashi adds that “Hamas” or theft sealed the [generation](toldot.html)’s fate. Sefer Ephesians also explicitly condemns these very [sins](sin.html).

***Ephesians 4:28*** *Let him that stole steal no more: but rather let him labour, working with his* [*hands*](fourteen.html) *the thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth.*

***Ephesians 5:3-6*** *But fornication, and all uncleanness, or covetousness, let it not be once named among you, as becometh saints; 4 Neither filthiness, nor foolish talking, nor jesting, which are not convenient: but rather giving of thanks. 5 For this ye* [*know*](daat.html)*, that no whoremonger, nor unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, hath any* [*inheritance*](inherit.html) *in the kingdom of* [*Mashiach*](mashiach.html) *and of God. 6 Let no man deceive you with vain words: for because of these things cometh the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience.*

It is also worth noting that the primary [sins](sin.html) that brought on the mabul were the primary requirements of the [Noachide](noachide.html) [laws](law.html) which are incumbent upon all mankind.

Finally, [Lag B’Omer](omer.html) commemorates the passing of Rabbi Shimon Bar Yochai. On that day, before he left this [world](worlds.html), Rabbi Shimon revealed much of the Torah’s hidden light. The “bow and arrow” symbolizes this revelation. How? White light seems indivisible, inscrutable. No detail can be discerned in its pure whiteness. The bow of the rainbow, however, reveals the [secret](sod.html) anatomy of white light. It shows us how white light, when refracted, is really composed of all the colors. Just as the rainbow reveals the hidden colors within the white light, so Rabbi Shimon revealed the hidden light within the Torah.[[41]](#footnote-41)

## Bonfires

A [number](nchart.html) of reasons are cited for the custom of lighting the bonfires of [LagB’Omer](omer.html). [One](one.html) is a rememberance of the [fire](fire.html) at Mt*.* [Sinai](stages.html) at the giving of the Torah. Another is to remind us of the [fire](fire.html) that was always present when **Hakham Shimon ben Yochai** learned Torah.

[One](one.html) of the reasons we light fires on [Lag B’Omer](omer.html). Forgetting Torah is associated with darkness. The [Hebrew](hebrew.html) word for darkness is “*choshech,” chet,* *shin* and *chaf.* This word has the same [letters](letters.html) as the word *sh’ko’ach, shin, chaf and chet,* which is translated as “to forget.” We light fires to removes darkness as a symbolic expression that the due to Rabban Shimon bar Yochai, Torah has not been forgotten by the [Jewish](gen-jew.html) people.

There is another reason. The [fire](fire.html) represents the [Jewish](gen-jew.html) Neshama. (soul) It say in Proverbs, “The Soul of Man is [HaShem](hashem.html)’scandle (light). The bonfire is a symbol of the igniting of the [Jewish](gen-jew.html) soul on this day, and its [desire](needs.html) to come closer to [HaShem](hashem.html).

On [Lag B’Omer](omer.html) we have a custom to light bonfires,[[42]](#footnote-42) not just in Meron, but all over the [world](worlds.html). It is said that the bonfires represent the [fire](fire.html) of Torah, as well as other explanations. Sefer Ephesians talks specifically about the Torah, but does not [speak](mashal.html) directly about [fire](fire.html) or bonfires.

***Ephesians 2:13-17*** *But now in* [*Mashiach*](mashiach.html)[*Yeshua*](yeshua.html) *ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the* [*blood*](body.html) *of* [*Mashiach*](mashiach.html)*. 14 For he is our peace, who hath made both* [*one*](one.html)*, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition; 15 Having abolished in his flesh the enmity, the (manmade)* [*law*](law.html) *of* [*commandments*](cmds613.html) *in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain* [*one*](one.html)[*new*](new.html) *man, making peace; 16 And that he might reconcile both unto God in* [*one*](one.html)[*body*](body.html) *by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby: 17 And came and preached peace to you which were afar off, and to them that were nigh.*

There is also the concept that [fire](fire.html) extracts the [physical](physical.html) and converts it into the [spiritual](physical.html). [Fire](fire.html) exists is the [spiritual](physical.html) plane but it exists at the interface between the [spiritual](physical.html) and the [physical](physical.html). [Fire](fire.html) is that material which converts
[physical](physical.html) matter into energy. So too, Torah shows us how to transform the material [world](worlds.html) into a
transcendent energy.

Now, let us examine the possibility that the bonfires represent the renewal of the earth by [fire](fire.html) in the days of [Mashiach](mashiach.html).

The Scriptures [speak](mashal.html) of [two](two.html) floods. The mabul in the day of [Noach](noach.html) and the mabul in the days of [Mashiach](mashiach.html). [Noach](noach.html)’s flood was a flood of water. [Mashiach](mashiach.html)’s flood will be a flood of [fire](fire.html).

***Malachi 3:1-3*** *Behold, I will send my messenger, and he shall prepare the way before me: and the Lord, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to his* [*temple*](temple.html)*, even the messenger of the* [*covenant*](covenant.html)*, whom ye delight in: behold, he shall come, saith* [*HaShem*](hashem.html) *of hosts. 2 But who may abide the day of his* [*coming*](coming.html)*? and who shall stand when he appeareth? for he is like a refiner’s* [*fire*](fire.html)*, and like fullers’ soap: 3 And he shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver: and he shall* [*purify*](purity.html) *the sons of Levi, and purge them as gold and silver, that they may offer unto* [*HaShem*](hashem.html) *an* [*offering*](korbanot) *in righteousness.*

***Matityahu (Matthew) 3:11-12*** *I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance: but he that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear: he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with* [*fire*](fire.html)*: 12 Whose fan is in his* [*hand*](fourteen.html)*, and he will thoroughly purge his floor, and* [*gather*](gather.html) *his wheat into the garner; but he will burn up the chaff with unquenchable* [*fire*](fire.html)*.*

***II Tzefet (Peter) 3:10-12*** *But the* [*day of HaShem*](hashem.html) *will come as a thief in the night; in the which the* [*heavens*](heaven.html) *shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up. 11 Then all these things shall be dissolved, what manner ought ye to be in holy conversation and godliness, 12 Looking for and hasting unto the* [*coming*](coming.html) *of the* [*day of HaShem*](hashem.html)*, wherein the* [*heavens*](heaven.html) *being on* [*fire*](fire.html) *shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat?*

Now these [two](two.html) floods, [one](one.html) of water and [one](one.html) of [fire](fire.html), are both portrayed on [Lag B’Omer](omer.html). [Noach](noach.html)’s flood is portrayed with bows and arrows, and [Mashiach](mashiach.html)’s flood is portrayed with bonfires.

## [First](one.html) haircuts

This custom of Chalaka / Upsherin – [first](one.html) haircut, is of recent origin (1500’s) and is not performed exclusively at Rashbi’s kever (grave). Sefer Ephesians does not [speak](mashal.html) directly about [hair](hair.html) or haircuts. However, our Hakhamim [teach](teacher.html) that the haircut at age [three](three.html) has the purpose of signaling a transition from ‘babyhood’, with it’s utter dependence on the parents, to ‘childhood’, with it’s greater independence. No longer are they called ‘babies’, now they are called ‘children’.

There are several ‘cuttings’ that signify transition points. There is the cutting of the umbilical cord, [brit mila](circumcz.html) ([circumcision](circumcz.html)), and at age [three](three.html) we have the ‘cutting’ of the [hair](hair.html).

Cutting the umbilical cord separates us from the life of our mother. It is the [first](one.html) act of independence and separation.

Cutting the foreskin separates us from the [goyim](gen-jew.html) and attaches us to the [covenant](covenant.html). We transition from a child of this [world](worlds.html) to a child of the next [world](worlds.html).

Cutting the [hair](hair.html) is the signal that we are transitioning to the [world](worlds.html) of Torah learning. We are leaving the selfish [world](worlds.html) where are the center. We are transitioning to a [world](worlds.html) where [HaShem](hashem.html) is the center, which we will learn. [One](one.html) of the [first](one.html) things that we will learn about is our Torah [inheritance](inherit.html).[[43]](#footnote-43)

Sefer Ephesians is addressed, in many way, to these *children*. That is why this sefer deals with many elementary things.

***Ephesians 1:5*** *Having foreordained us [*[*Jews*](gen-jew.html)*] to the adopting [of sons] through* [*Yeshua*](yeshua.html) *the* [*Messiah*](mashiach.html) *to Himself (G-d), according to the good pleasure of His (G-d’s) will.*

***Ephesians 2:2*** *Wherein in* [*time*](time.html) *past ye walked according to the course of this* [*world*](worlds.html)*, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience:*

***Ephesians 2:3*** *Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the* [*desires*](needs.html) *of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others.*

***Ephesians 4:14*** *That we be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive;*

***Ephesians 5:1*** *Be ye therefore followers of God, as dear children;*

***Ephesians 5:6*** *Let no man deceive you with vain words: for because of these things cometh the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience.*

***Ephesians 5:8*** *For ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord:* [*walk*](walking.html) *as children of light:*

***Ephesians 6:1*** *Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right.*

***Ephesians 6:4*** *And, ye* [*fathers*](fathers.html)*, provoke not your children to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.*

Thus we see that sefer Ephesians is very much addressed to these [new](new.html) converts who are making the transition from *baby* to *child*.

## Rejoicing at Rashbi’s tomb

Why do we rejoice on the yartzeit of Hakham Shimor ben Yochai? After all, we normally fast and [mourn](mourning.html) at the death of a loved [one](one.html). The answer brings us to the essence of the [Gemara](orallaw.html)’s statement that when Hakham Yochai and his son would [study](study.html) Torah, they would take off their clothes and bury themselves in the sand. This is the [Gemara](orallaw.html)’s way of telling us that Hakham Yochai and his son had already learned how to step out of the [body](body.html) like [one](one.html) steps out of a [garment](garment.html). They did not have to go through the painful separation of the soul from the [body](body.html) when they died. They no longer viewed the [body](body.html) as something intrinsic to be grasped. They saw the [body](body.html) like a suit of clothes. As long as the clothes were needed (when they [prayed](prayer.html)), they were used. But the [body](body.html) had no more meaning than a suit of clothes. Clothes that reveal and conceal the essence of a man. Thus we rejoice on the yartzeit of Hakham Yochai because we do not feel his pain in separating his soul from his [body](body.html). For Hakham Yochai it was a [time](time.html) of rejoicing, without pain, as he transitioned to a higher level. He left the [physical](physical.html) behind, without the normal pain of separation because he was no more attached to his [body](body.html) than he was to a suit of clothes.

Sefer Ephesians speaks at length about the unity and the [knowledge](knowledge.html) of Torah that were brought about by [Yeshua](yeshua.html). It is this unity and Torah [knowledge](knowledge.html) which are the source of the joy at Hakham Shimon ben Yochai’s tomb in Meron.

## Granting smikha

After the death of his [twelve](twelve.html) thousand pairs of talmidim, Hakham Akiba realized that the institution of smikha was in danger of dying out. So he took [five](five.html) [new](new.html) talmidim and gave them smikha[[44]](#footnote-44) on [Lag B’Omer](omer.html).[[45]](#footnote-45) It is for this reason that many rabbonim have a custom to give their students smikha on [Lag B’Omer](omer.html).

Smikha is a [physical](physical.html) act which acknowledges the [spiritual](physical.html) transformation of a man into a living sefer Torah. Thus smikha lives at the interface between this [world](worlds.html) and the next, between the [physical](physical.html) and the [spiritual](physical.html).

Sefer Ephesians also speaks of smikha.

***Ephesians 1:18*** *The* [*eyes*](body.html) *of your understanding being enlightened; that ye may* [*know*](daat.html) *what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his* [*inheritance*](inherit.html) *in the saints,*

***Ephesians 4:1*** *I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye* [*walk*](walking.html) *worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called,*

***Ephesians 4:4*** *There is* [*one*](one.html)[*body*](body.html)*, and* [*one*](one.html) *Spirit, even as ye are called in* [*one*](one.html) *hope of your calling;*

You see, I am happy he has connected [Lag B’Omer](omer.html) with Smikha. But this [needs](needs.html) to be much unpacked, such as the gifts i.e. Apostles, Pastors, teachers, etc.

By the [time](time.html) we reach the middle of the [fourth](four.html) chapter, we begin to see the actual offices that have received smikha. These are the officers that have been freed from this [world](worlds.html) to do the deeds of the next [world](worlds.html). Theirs is a [mission](mission.html) to bring others into the kingdom by [teaching](teacher.html) and demonstrating Torah to the [world](worlds.html).

***Ephesians 4:10-12*** *He that descended is the same also that ascended up far above all* [*heavens*](heaven.html)*, that he might fill all things.) 11 And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; 12 For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the* [*body*](body.html) *of* [*Mashiach*](mashiach.html)*:*

Nazareans were called by [Yeshua](yeshua.html) to be Hakhamim. It is not an option! If we are to serve The King, then we need to be trained as top notch judges in order to sit on His Bet Din.

Additionally, both the sefira and the [Yovel](yovel.html) counts [teach](teacher.html) us that everything belongs to [HaShem](hashem.html) and that the only way to trully possess something is to give it away. This is the message of Ephesians 4:28, but, it is a message driven home by our Hakhamim who give freely of themselves to the [community](community.html) in order that all may attach themselves to [HaShem](hashem.html) and complete the [body](body.html) of [Mashiach](mashiach.html), which is a major theme throughout sefer Ephesians.

# Other [Events](feasts.html) of [Iyar](feasts.html) [Eighteen](eighteen.html)

## The [plague](plagues.html) (Askera) stopped.

On [Lag B’Omer](omer.html) all of Hakham Akiba’s 24,000 talmidim had died. They died during the sefirah period, the [time](time.html) of the counting of the [Omer](omer.html). The [Talmud](orallaw.html) records this great tragedy.

***Yevamoth 62b*** *It was said that R. Akiba had* [*twelve*](twelve.html) *thousand pairs of disciples, from Gabbatha to Antipatris; and all of them died at the same* [*time*](time.html) *because they did not treat each other with respect. The* [*world*](worlds.html) *remained desolate until R. Akiba came to our Masters in the South and* [*taught*](teacher.html) *the Torah to them. These were R. Meir, R. Judah, R. Jose, R. Simeon and R. Eleazar b. Shammua; and it was they who revived the Torah at that* [*time*](time.html)*. A Tanna* [*taught*](teacher.html)*: All of them died between* [*Passover*](passover.html) *and* [*Pentecost*](shavuot.html)*. R. Hama b. Abba or, it might be said, R. Hiyya b. Abin said: All of them died a cruel death. What was it?-R. Nahman replied: Croup.*

This catastrophe happened because Hakham Akiba’s talmidim did not treat each other with respect. How can this be? Where in the Torah does it mandate the death penalty for lack of respect? Because of these questions we must presume that there is much more to this story than meets the eye.

Hakham Akiba’s [twelve](twelve.html) thousand pairs of students stopped dying on [Lag B’Omer](omer.html). At this point ALL of his disciples were dead. Chazal [teach](teacher.html) that death is the transition of the [spiritual](physical.html) essence of a man from this [world](worlds.html) to the next. It is the separation, the transition, of the [spiritual](physical.html) from the [physical](physical.html). We have a custom to tear our clothes when we hear of the death of a loved [one](one.html). We tear our clothes to acknowledge the understanding that the [body](body.html), and its life, are just a [garment](garment.html) for the [spiritual](physical.html) essence of a man. When we die, we just step out of the [body](body.html) as [one](one.html) steps out of his garments.

Sephirat HaOmer is a [time](time.html) of [mourning](mourning.html). We [mourn](mourning.html) to acknowledge our empathy with the [one](one.html) who died. The [one](one.html) who died is going through a very difficult transition from the [physical](physical.html) to the [spiritual](physical.html). This pain is mirrored in the lives of their loved ones who feel the pain of this transition.

Every year on a person’s yartzeit, the soul transitions to a higher level. So on this day we light a candle and [mourn](mourning.html) as we ‘feel’ this transition. This is why we continue to [mourn](mourning.html) the death of HakHam Akiba’s talmidim every year during sefirat HaOmer. We fast during this period so that we can begin to feel the transition of our own soul from the [spiritual](physical.html) to the [physical](physical.html). We have seen elsewhere that [food](food.html) is that energy which [connects](connection.html) the [spiritual](physical.html) to the [physical](physical.html). Fasting cause a small separation of our [spiritual](physical.html) essence from the [physical](physical.html).

These 12,000 pairs of talmidim were the [masorah](mishna1.html), the [gospel](mishna1.html), the [oral Torah](orallaw.html), for the next [generation](toldot.html). Their deaths represented the death of the [masorah](mishna1.html). There would be no more oral [law](law.html) because the oral [law](law.html) had died with them. This was truly a reason to [mourn](mourning.html). Without [masorah](mishna1.html) there would be no more [mitzvot](cmds613.html) because without [masorah](mishna1.html) no [one](one.html) knows how to perform the [mitzvot](cmds613.html). This was a GREAT tragedy!

Demonstrating respect for all of our fellow [Jews](gen-jew.html) is no trivial matter. It is an essential prerequisite to receiving the Torah! We will examine this aspect of [Lag B’Omer](omer.html) in greater detail when we look at Ephesians 4:9.

Another Approach

[Two](two.html) hundred years before Rabbi Akiba the Hillel (middot HaRachamim) vs. Shammai (middot HaDin) argument was settled in favor of Hillel. [HaShem](hashem.html) had determined that [sin](sin.html) had so corrupted humanity that they could no longer stand up to the attribute of strict justice. Without the attribute of mercy the [world](worlds.html) would cease to exist.

Rabbi Akiba, therefore, was of the house of Hillel. Unfortunately, his talmidim took the approach of Shammai. Because the [world](worlds.html) was no longer able to stand up to such an approach, these talmidim died. They were subjected to strict justice so that the [world](worlds.html) would recognize that even though their Torah was exceedingly great, the great students could not stand up to their own approach.

Out of this disaster, Hakham Akiba takes [five](five.html) [new](new.html) talmidim and begins to train them. Hakham Shimon ben Yochai is [one](one.html) of these [five](five.html). From the accounts in the [Gemara](orallaw.html) we can see that for awhile Hakham Yochai followed the approach of Hakham Shammai. This explains his severe approach towards the works of the Romans and his destruction of the [world](worlds.html) following his release from the cave. Unfortunately for Hakham Yochai and his son, the [world](worlds.html) could not stand up to this midda. Therefore, the extra [twelve](twelve.html) months in the cave was necessary so that Hakham Yochai and his son could master the midda of mercy.

In the end, Hakham Yochai and his son learned the lesson and their Torah changed the [world](worlds.html). This is the lesson that [His Majesty](yeshua.html) King [Yeshua](yeshua.html) followed and it is the path of His talmidim. Further, it is reflected in sefer Ephesians. This is the inclusiveness of the [Gentiles](gen-jew.html) who have joined themselves to Israel. While the [Gentiles](gen-jew.html) are generally pushed away by the House of Shammai, they brought close by the House of Hillel. The [Gemara](orallaw.html) is replete with examples of Hakham Hillel’s patience and he included and [taught](teacher.html) [Gentiles](gen-jew.html).

**The** [**Number**](nchart.html)[**Twelve**](twelve.html)

In this [Gemara](orallaw.html) and in [Shabbat](sabbath.html) 33bwe see a repitition of the [number](nchart.html) [twelve](twelve.html). What are we to make of this? To answer this we must [first](one.html) define the meaning or significance of the [number](nchart.html) [twelve](twelve.html).

[Twelve](twelve.html) is the [number](nchart.html) of maximal differentiation. It is the [number](nchart.html) of lines that border a cube, and according to Chazal, all of reality. [HaShem](hashem.html) and His [Oneness](oneness.html) is manifested via [twelve](twelve.html) channels to the [world](worlds.html) we live in. [Twelve](twelve.html) is the level where the [oneness](oneness.html) is manifested in the [world](worlds.html). It is why we associate government with [twelve](twelve.html). There are [twelve](twelve.html) who govern the many. All of [physical](physical.html) reality is constrained and restrained (as in government) by the 12 lines that mark the edges of the [physical](physical.html) [world](worlds.html).



The fact that the 12 are all connected in the center is the [thirteenth](thirteen.html). [Thirteen](thirteen.html) is the [number](nchart.html) that bonds multiplicity into [oneness](oneness.html). For example:  There are [twelve](twelve.html) [tribes](tribes.html) that are bonded into their father Israel ([Yaaqov](jacob.html)). Israel is the [thirteenth](thirteen.html). The [number](nchart.html) [twelve](twelve.html) is associated with the concept of rule or government in that a government is the [oneness](oneness.html) which bonds the multiplicity of parts.

Now that we have defined the meaning of the [number](nchart.html) [twelve](twelve.html), lets go back to our [two](two.html) Gemaras and try to understand the twelves that are used.

[First](one.html) we have 12,000 pairs of talmidim. From our definition of [twelve](twelve.html), we can see that the [Gemara](orallaw.html) is emphasizing the maximal nature of these talmidim. In essence we are being told that these are the only talmidim in the [world](worlds.html). On the [shoulders](body.html) of these 12,000 pairs, rests the transmission of the [oral Torah](orallaw.html). The various ways for the [oral Torah](orallaw.html) to be manifested in the [world](worlds.html) were described in these talmidim. The [mourning](mourning.html) for these talmidim is, therefore, the [mourning](mourning.html) of the loss of [oral Torah](orallaw.html). Without these talmidim there would be no more [oral Torah](orallaw.html) in all of its various manifestations!

Now lets try to understand the [twelve](twelve.html) years that Hakham Yochai and his son were in the cave in the [Shabbat](sabbath.html) 33b [Gemara](orallaw.html). [Twelve](twelve.html) years is the length of [time](time.html) that it takes for a girl to mature and become a woman. This suggests that it took Hakham Yochai and his son [twelve](twelve.html) years to reach maturity in their Torah studies. It was now [time](time.html) for them to bear fruit. To do this they would have to return to the [world](worlds.html). Unfortunately, they failed to find the [connection](connection.html) between the mundane [world](worlds.html) and their lofty Torah level. They wre in danger of destroying the [world](worlds.html) rather than bearing the fruit of good deeds. Because of this lack, they were sent back to their cave for [twelve](twelve.html) months. This [twelve](twelve.html) was used by the Hakham and his son to see the many facets of Torah as manifested in the mundane tasks of this [world](worlds.html). They saw the myrtle branches as the [connection](connection.html) between the [spiritual](physical.html) and the [physical](physical.html). It was [physicality](physical.html) imbued with spirituality. It was the lesson that we need to understand this [world](worlds.html). In [twelve](twelve.html) months, [one](one.html) has experienced the shabbatot and [festivals](festivals.html) in their complete [cycle](cycles.html). These [appointments](appointm.html) are the [connection](connection.html) between the [physical](physical.html) and the [spiritual](physical.html), and between this [world](worlds.html) and the next.

The [first](one.html) use of “[twelve](twelve.html) years” in the Torah, is in Bereshit 14:4 where we find several kings serving for [twelve](twelve.html) years nad rebelling in the [thirteenth](thirteen.html) year. This could suggest that [twelve](twelve.html) years is the length of [time](time.html) that Hakham Yochai and his son could profitably [study](study.html) Torah without rebelling. Their actions when they emerged from the cave suggests that they did “rebel” in a certain sense. They were anable to achieve the understanding of the proper place of Torah in the mundane [world](worlds.html). Therefore they were in danger of destroying the very [world](worlds.html) that their Torah was meant to [save](salvation.html). Once it became clear that this additional lesson needed to be learned, [HaShem](hashem.html) sent them back for [one](one.html) more set of [twelve](twelve.html). This [time](time.html) period would be [twelve](twelve.html) months, rather than years.

Finally, there are [two](two.html) sets of [twelve](twelve.html); [One](one.html) of years and [one](one.html) of months. Years are calculated by the [sun](hachama.html) and months are calculated by the [moon](chodesh.html). The [sun](hachama.html) is used to determine the [calendar](calendar.html) of the [Gentiles](gen-jew.html) and the [moon](chodesh.html) is used to determine the [calendar](calendar.html) of the [Jews](gen-jew.html). This suggests that there were [two](two.html) messages. The [first](one.html) to the [Gentiles](gen-jew.html) and the second to the [Jews](gen-jew.html).

## The mabul began.

The [Talmud](orallaw.html) records a dispute between Hakham Eliezer and Hakham Yehoshua on the date of the [creation](bara.html). Hakham Yehoshua said that [creation](bara.html) began in [Nisan](feasts.html), while Hakham Eliezer said that [creation](bara.html) began in [Tishri](feasts.html).

[***Rosh HaShana***](teruah.html) ***11a*** *It has been* [*taught*](teacher.html)*:* ***R. Eliezer*** *says: In* [*Tishri*](feasts.html) *the* [*world*](worlds.html) *was created; in* [*Tishri*](feasts.html) *the Patriarchs were born; in* [*Tishri*](feasts.html) *the Patriarchs died; on* [*Passover*](passover.html)[*Isaac*](isaac.html) *was born; on* [*New*](teruah.html) *Year Sarah,* [*Rachel*](rachel.html) *and Hannah were visited; on* [*New*](teruah.html) *Year* [*Joseph*](joseph.html) *went forth from prison; on* [*New*](teruah.html) *Year the bondage of our ancestors in Egypt ceased; in* [*Nisan*](feasts.html) *they were* [*redeemed*](redemption.html) *and in* [*Nisan*](feasts.html) *they will be* [*redeemed*](redemption.html) *in the* [*time*](time.html) *to come.* ***R. Joshua*** *says: In* [*Nisan*](feasts.html) *the* [*world*](worlds.html) *was created; in* [*Nisan*](feasts.html) *the Patriarchs were born; in* [*Nisan*](feasts.html) *the Patriarchs died; on* [*Passover*](passover.html)[*Isaac*](isaac.html) *was born; on* [*New*](teruah.html) *Year Sarah,* [*Rachel*](rachel.html) *and Hannah were visited; on* [*New*](teruah.html) *Year* [*Joseph*](joseph.html) *went forth from prison; on* [*New*](teruah.html) *Year the bondage of our ancestors ceased in Egypt; and in* [*Nisan*](feasts.html) *they will be* [*redeemed*](redemption.html) *in* [*time*](time.html) *to come.*

Both Rashi and the Chatam Sofer, using the chronology according to Hakham Yehoshua, [teach](teacher.html) us that the mabul, the great flood in the days of [Noach](noach.html), began during the day of [Iyar](feasts.html) 17. This means that the [first](one.html) full day of the flood was on the next day, on [Lag B’Omer](omer.html).

***Bereshit (Genesis) 7:11*** *In the* [*six*](six.html) *hundredth year of* [*Noah*](noach.html)*’s life, in the second month, the seventeenth day of the month, the same day were all the fountains of the great deep broken up, and the windows of* [*heaven*](heaven.html) *were opened.*

After the mabul, a year later, [HaShem](hashem.html) made a promise to [Noach](noach.html) that He would never again flood the earth. Every [time](time.html) that he would look down and see the [wickedness](wicked.html) of men, He would put a rainbow in the sky to remember His promise and to warn us that we again deserved to be destroyed by a flood.

The Torah records that the mabul covered even the highest mountain.

***Bereshit (Genesis) 7:19*** *And the waters prevailed exceedingly upon the earth; and all the high hills, that were under the whole* [*heaven*](heaven.html)*, were covered. 20* [*Fifteen*](fifteen.html) *cubits upward did the waters prevail; and the mountains were covered.*

Why did the flood waters cover way above the highest mountain? They covered the highest mountain because [HaShem](hashem.html) was immersing the land in a [mikveh](forty.html). He was baptizing the earth. And we [know](daat.html) that [one](one.html) who immerses in the [mikveh](forty.html) is required to have every part of their [body](body.html) underwater, including their [hair](hair.html). If the [hair](hair.html) floats on top of the water, than the immersion is invalid. Thus the highest mountain had to be covered in order for this [mikveh](forty.html) to accomplish [HaShem](hashem.html)’s purpose.

The rain of the mabul fell for [forty](forty.html) days. And the waters persisted on the [face](body.html) of the earth for a year. As the flood lasted a year, so also did Hakham Yochai and his son returned to the cave for [twelve](twelve.html) months. As a result of the mabul, [HaShem](hashem.html) made a [covenant](covenant.html) with [Noach](noach.html) that was also later given to the [Jews](gen-jew.html) at Mt. [Sinai](stages.html). Additionally, [HaShem](hashem.html) gave the [Gentiles](gen-jew.html) the [Noachide](noachide.html) [commandments](cmds613.html) after the the mabul. Thus like [Lag B’Omer](omer.html) the mabul had a portion of the [covenant](covenant.html) for the [Jews](gen-jew.html) and a portion of the [covenant](covenant.html) for the righteous [Gentiles](gen-jew.html). It is the joining of the [Jews](gen-jew.html) and the [Gentiles](gen-jew.html) which is the major emphasis of sefer Ephesians.

After the flood, [HaShem](hashem.html) put His rainbow in the clouds as a [sign](signs.html) of the [covenant](covenant.html) that He made with [Noach](noach.html) to never again flood the earth. Now, a rainbow is created when light is refracted through water suspended in the sky. Thus a rainbow is “composed” of water and light. Both of these symbols are used to represent Torah. Thus we have another hint to the Torah revealed on [Lag B’Omer](omer.html) to Hakham Yochai.

## The Manna began.

The Chatam Sofer quoted a [midrash](orallaw.html) that the manna fell on the [eighteenth](eighteen.html) of [Iyar](feasts.html) for the [first](one.html) [time](time.html).[[46]](#footnote-46) This date corresponds to [Lag B’Omer](omer.html). This is based on the idea that the [food](food.html) supply ([matza](chametz.html)) that we brought [out of Egypt](thebirth.html) lasted until the 14th of [Iyar](feasts.html) (which marks the 14th of [Iyar](feasts.html) as the end of the [Pesach](passover.html) [time](time.html) frame, hence its choice by [HaShem](hashem.html) for [Pesach](passover.html) [Sheni](sheni.html)). Then the people went hungry for [three](three.html) days, the 15th,16th, and 17th of [Iyar](feasts.html), complained, and received the manna on the 18th.

The manna would fall for [forty](forty.html) years.

[One](one.html) should keep in mind that the manna was not just a source of [food](food.html) for the [Jews](gen-jew.html), and the [Gentiles](gen-jew.html) who attached themselves to Israel, in the desert. It provided [spiritual](physical.html) sustenance that elevated the [Jewish](gen-jew.html) people, and the large mixed multitude of [Gentiles](gen-jew.html), enabling them to later learn Torah.[[47]](#footnote-47) In this respect it has a direct [connection](connection.html) to the receiving of Torah and it is appropriate to commemorate this [event](feasts.html) on [Lag B’Omer](omer.html), before Shavout.

This amazing [food](food.html) was so [spiritual](physical.html) that those who [ate](eating.html) it had no waste[[48]](#footnote-48), they did not need to go to the bathroom. This was the [food](food.html) of the next [world](worlds.html). This was a [food](food.html) that did not need to have us separate the good from the evil.[[49]](#footnote-49)

Manna is the essence of bitichon, trust in [HaShem](hashem.html). [One](one.html) went to bead with no [food](food.html) for breakfast. When [one](one.html) awoke he would find manna for breakfast according to his emunah. If his emunah was great, the manna would be ready to [eat](eating.html), right at his doorstep. If his emunah was very small, then he would [travel](mashal.html) a distance to collect his [omer](omer.html) and then he would need to spend [time](time.html) preparing the manna before it could be [eaten](eating.html).[[50]](#footnote-50)

On [Lag B’Omer](omer.html) we enter the final [third](three.html) of the period of counting, the [third](three.html) watch of the night. Our focus is now on the reception of Torah on [Shavuot](shavuot.html). The manna is the [food](food.html) which will enable us to receive (become a vessel for) Torah. We need to prepare the [physical](physical.html) [body](body.html) to become a vessel which can contain Torah. With the manna we have no more smelly waste. With the manna we can learn to trully depend on [HaShem](hashem.html). With the manna we can have an impartial evaluation of our emunah, our faithfull obedience. This [spiritual](physical.html) [food](food.html) could trully help to transform us into something that could trully hold and become Torah!

This is what Hakham Shaul meant when he said that we were chosen in [Mashiach](mashiach.html) to be holy and blameless before [HaShem](hashem.html) in love.[[51]](#footnote-51) [Mashiach](mashiach.html) the Living Torah told us that He was the bread (manna) come down from [heaven](heaven.html).[[52]](#footnote-52) This bread from [heaven](heaven.html) was about to transform us into vessels of Torah. This is the widom that Hakham Shaul [spoke](mashal.html) about in Ephesians 1:8, 17. [HaShem](hashem.html) was using the manna to transform us into the [body](body.html) of [Mashiach](mashiach.html), and [Lag B’Omer](omer.html) was the [time](time.html) for this process to begin as it speaks to that period of [time](time.html) when the messianic age is to begin. [Lag B’Omer](omer.html) speaks to the [time](time.html) of transformation, the [time](time.html) when we prepare for the [Olam HaBa](futures.html), the [World](futures.html) To Come.

Before the manna was given, [HaShem](hashem.html) gave the Bne Israel [laws](law.html). Because they kept these [laws](law.html) they [merited](merit.html) to receive help from above regarding the rest of Torah.

[***Midrash***](orallaw.html) ***Rabbah -*** [***Exodus***](exodus.html) ***XXV:7*** *Another explanation of BEHOLD, I WILL CAUSE TO RAIN BREAD FROM* [*HEAVEN*](heaven.html) *FOR YOU. It is written, Come,* [*eat*](eating.html) *of My bread, and drink of the* [*wine*](wine.html) *which I have mingled (Prov. IX, 5).[[53]](#footnote-53) The Holy* [*One*](one.html)*, blessed be He, said: ‘What enabled you to* [*eat*](eating.html) *of the manna, and drink from the well?-The fact that you accepted the statutes and ordinances,’ for it says, There He made for them a statute and an ordinance (Ex. XV, 25). So, ‘because you have accepted My* [*food*](food.html) *have you received the* [*food*](food.html) *of the manna, and because “of the* [*wine*](wine.html) *which I have mingled”, have you drunk of the water of the well,’ as it says, ‘And drink of the* [*wine*](wine.html) *which I have mingled.’*

Thus we understand that the manna was given on [Lag B’Omer](omer.html) in order to enable us to begin learning and understanding the secrets of the oral and the writtenTorah.

We will elaborate more on this when we examine Ephesians chapter III.

## [Yeshua](yeshua.html) ascended on [Lag B’Omer](omer.html).

On [Lag B’Omer](omer.html) [Yeshua](yeshua.html) ascended into [heaven](heaven.html) [forty](forty.html) days after his passion. We see this, in the [number](nchart.html) [forty](forty.html), a hint ([remez](remez.html)) to [Lag B’Omer](omer.html). Since II Luqas (Acts) is literature which was meant to be understood at the [remez](remez.html) level, and we [know](daat.html) that the [pshat](remez.html) (literal) is not the intended meaning, then we would understand that [numbers](nchart.html) are a symbol to [teach](teacher.html) us a deeper understanding.

***II Luqas (Acts) 1:3*** *To whom also he shewed himself alive after his passion by many infallible proofs, being seen of them* [*forty*](forty.html) *days, and* [*speaking*](mashal.html) *of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God: 4 And, being assembled together with them, commanded them that they should not depart from* [*Jerusalem*](city.html)*, but wait for the promise of the Father, which, saith he, ye have heard of me. 5 For John truly baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence. 6 When they therefore were come together, they asked of him, saying, Lord, wilt thou at this* [*time*](time.html) *restore again the kingdom to Israel? 7 And he said unto them, It is not for you to* [*know*](daat.html) *the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power. 8 But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in* [*Jerusalem*](city.html)*, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth. 9 And when he had spoken these things, while they beheld, he was taken up; and a* [*cloud*](important.html) *received him out of their sight.*

Since II Luqas is written at the [remez](remez.html) level of interpretation, we [know](daat.html) that at the [remez](remez.html) level all [numbers](nchart.html) are symbols and are not meant to be understood literally. The [number](nchart.html) [forty](forty.html) (40) carries with it the understanding that a change in [mission](mission.html) has occurred, as we have written extensively elsewhere. This change in [mission](mission.html) is the essence of the ascension where [Yeshua](yeshua.html) completed the [mission](mission.html) of [Mashiach](mashiach.html) ben [Yosef](joseph.html) and began the role of [Mashiach](mashiach.html) ben David. [Lag B’Omer](omer.html) is a transition point between the [first](one.html) [two](two.html) thirds of the sefirah period and the last [third](three.html). [Lag B’Omer](omer.html) marks a transition where we begin to ascend to Matan Torah.

Sefer Ephesians also speaks about this ascension. In fact, only in sefer Ephesians is this ascension spoken of as a completed [event](feasts.html) rather than a [future](future.html) occurrence.

***Ephesians 4:8-10*** *Wherefore he saith, When he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men. (Now that he ascended, what is it but that he also descended* [*first*](one.html) *into the lower parts of the earth? He that descended is the same also that ascended up far above all* [*heavens*](heaven.html)*, that he might fill all things.)*

## Hakham Shimon ben Yochai died.[[54]](#footnote-54)

On [Lag B’Omer](omer.html) Hakham Akiba’s most illustrious talmid, Hakham Shimon Ben Yochai, died. On the day of his death he revealed the secrets of the Torah. These secrets where later written down in a sefer called the [Zohar](orallaw.html).

Normally when a person dies we [mourn](mourning.html) their death. Thus the Torah tells us that Israel mourned the death of Aaron for [thirty](thirty.html) days.

***Bamidbar (***[***Numbers***](nchart.html)***) 20:29*** *And when all the congregation saw that Aaron was dead, they mourned for Aaron* [*thirty*](thirty.html) *days, all the house of Israel.*

When Hakham Shimon ben Yochai was dying he commanded his talmidim to rejoice after he died, and on the anniversary of this death. The reason we rejoice is because on this day, [Lag B’Omer](omer.html), Hakham Shimon ben Yochai revealed the secrets of the [oral Torah](orallaw.html). On this day he revealed the secrets of the [Zohar](orallaw.html).

## Secrets of the Torah were revealed.

On the day of his death Rabbi Shimon revealed the mystical [insights](insights.html) of the [Zohar](orallaw.html) and he did not die until he had completed this revelation.[[55]](#footnote-55) To commemorate this momentous transmission, Rabbi Shimon stipulated that [Lag B’Omer](omer.html) should be a day of simcha (joy) and promised tremendous reward to those who would rejoice on this day at his graveside . As a result many have the custom to ascend to the tomb of Hakham Shimon and his son Rabbi Eliezer in Meron to celebrate [Lag B’Omer](omer.html).

Additionally, [Lag B’Omer](omer.html) is when Hakham Akiba started to reveal the light of the [oral Torah](orallaw.html) to [new](new.html) students, including Hakham Shimon ben Yochai.

[***Zohar***](orallaw.html) ***3:291b*** *Until now, I have held the secrets close to my* [*heart*](body.html)*. But now, before I die, I wish to reveal all. Hakham Abba reports: “I couldn’t even lift my* [*head*](body.html) *due to the intense light emanating from Hakham Shimon. The entire day the house was filled with* [*fire*](fire.html)*, and nobody could get close due to the wall of* [*fire*](fire.html) *and light. At the end of the day, the* [*fire*](fire.html) *finally subsided, and I was able to look at the* [*face*](body.html) *of Hakham Shimon: He was dead, wrapped in his Talit, lying on his right side, and smiling.”*

# [Bimodal](bimodal.html) Aspects

In a previous paper we examined the bimodality of the year as viewed by the [festivals](festivals.html) and Torah readings. In this [study](study.html) we will examine the [Lag B’Omer](omer.html) aspect of this bimodality.

[Coming](coming.html) between [Pesach](passover.html) (a [seven](seven.html) day feast) and [Shavuot](shavuot.html)[[56]](#footnote-56) (also called Atzeret), [Lag B’Omer](omer.html) has a [bimodal](bimodal.html) aspect when compared with [Succoth](succoth.html) and [Shemini Atzeret](shemini.html). To understand this aspect we need to understand how the symbols of [Lag B’Omer](omer.html) are incorporated into the symbols of [Succoth](succoth.html) and [Shemini Atzeret](shemini.html). Why did we choose these [two](two.html) [festivals](festivals.html)? Since [Lag B’Omer](omer.html) occurs after [Pesach](passover.html), but before [Shavuot](shavuot.html), which is also called Atzeret, then we need to compare this to a comparable [time](time.html) period. This comparable [time](time.html) period is between [Succoth](succoth.html) (the only other [seven](seven.html) day feast) and it’s Atzeret, [Shemini Atzeret](shemini.html).

Now that we have the correct [time](time.html) period we need to review the [Lag B’Omer](omer.html) symbols so that we will recognize their counterparts in [Succoth](succoth.html) and [Shemini Atzeret](shemini.html). There are several customs that are a part of [Lag B’Omer](omer.html): Bows and arrows for the children, bonfires, burning clothes, and joy.

The bow (keshet) is a symbol of the rainbow after the mabul (flood).

The bonfires are a symbol of the Torah and of the refining of the earth at the [end of days](lastdays.html).

The burning of clothes is a symbol of the conversion of our [bodies](body.html) to a higher level.

These [Lag B’Omer](omer.html) customs are also the symbols of the feast of [Succoth](succoth.html). During the festivities of [Succoth](succoth.html), water is poured out on the altar in great joy as part of the Simchat Bait Hashoevah. Another part of Simchat Bait Hashoevah[[57]](#footnote-57) is the lighting of “the light of the [world](worlds.html)”. At the close of the [first](one.html) [festival](festival.html) day they went down to the Court of the Women, and made great preparations there. There were golden candlesticks there with [four](four.html) golden bowls on the top of them. The candlesticks were fifty cubits high. [Four](four.html) ladders led up to each candlestick, and [four](four.html) youths, from the priestly families, went up holding in their [hands](fourteen.html) jars of oil, [twenty](twenty.html)-[four](four.html) logs in capacity, which they poured into the bowls. They made wicks out of the worn-out garments of the [priests](priests.html), and with them they set the candlesticks alight, and there was not a courtyard in [Jerusalem](city.html) that did not reflect the light of the *beit hashoevah*.[[58]](#footnote-58) This is the only place other than [Lag B’Omer](omer.html), that I am aware of, where clothes are burned by [Jews](gen-jew.html). These are the symbols of [Lag B’Omer](omer.html) and [Succoth](succoth.html).

Now we need to compare the symbols of [Shemini Atzeret](shemini.html) and [Lag B’Omer](omer.html). On [Shemini Atzeret](shemini.html) we rejoice with the written Torah. We make circuits around the bima[[59]](#footnote-59) and we sing and dance with the [Torah scroll](letters.html)s.

[Lag B’Omer](omer.html) is a [time](time.html) when we rejoice because of the [oral Torah](orallaw.html) (Torah shebaal peh). It is interesting to note that the [Talmud](orallaw.html) describes the impact of the [plague](plagues.html) that killed Hakham Akiba’s talmidim as “the [world](worlds.html) was desolate”.[[60]](#footnote-60) Only when Hakham Akiba managed to locate and [teach](teacher.html) [five](five.html) outstanding Sages, in the south of [Eretz Israel](city.html), was the [oral Torah](orallaw.html) restored to the [Jewish](gen-jew.html) People. There is an important lesson in this account. Without [oral Torah](orallaw.html) [study](study.html) the [world](worlds.html) is desolate. Once the [oral Torah](orallaw.html) was [taught](teacher.html) to these [five](five.html) Sages, on [Lag B’Omer](omer.html), joy returned to the [world](worlds.html) on this day. Thus on [Simchat Torah](simchat.html) we rejoice with the written Torah and on [Lag B’Omer](omer.html) we rejoice with the [oral Torah](orallaw.html).

It is also worth noting that [Lag B’Omer](omer.html) always falls on the same day of the week as the [first](one.html) day of [Succoth](succoth.html) of the following year. Another interesting [connection](connection.html).

The last and greatest day of [Succoth](succoth.html) is called [Hoshana Rabba](hoshana.html)h. This is the final day of judgment. All verdicts are final on this day. This [bimodal](bimodal.html) aspect accords nicely with what the [Talmud](orallaw.html) tells us about Rashbi.

[***Succah***](succoth.html) ***45b*** *Rashbi said, ‘I can discharge the whole* [*world*](worlds.html) *from judgment.’*

Now we [know](daat.html) that the judgment of the mabul (flood) began on [Lag B’Omer](omer.html). (The entire sefira period is a period of judgment.[[61]](#footnote-61)) Thus we see that [Lag B’Omer](omer.html) also carries with it an aspect of judgment. Further, the [spiritual](physical.html) influences of Yom [HaKippurim](file:///D%3A%5CWord%5COmer%5Ckippur.html), and its judgment, are revealed on [Shemini Atzeret](shemini.html) and [Simchat Torah](simchat.html).

The opening verses of Ephesians also shows an aspect of judgment.

***Ephesians 2:1-3*** *And you, who were dead in trespasses and* [*sins*](sin.html)*; 2 Wherein in* [*time*](time.html) *past ye walked according to the course of this* [*world*](worlds.html)*, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience: 3 Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the* [*desires*](needs.html) *of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others.*

This suggests that [Lag B’Omer](omer.html) incorporates the symbols and the joy in the [Temple](temple.html) during [Succoth](succoth.html) and the joy of Torah as found on Sinchat Torah. Thus we see that [Lag B’Omer](omer.html) also has a bi-modal aspect which helps us to understand its symbols and how these symbols are found in sefer Ephesians.

The water and the light we also see repeatedly in sefer Ephesians.

# Tov – Good (Beneficial)

Our Hakhamim also note that the 33rd word in the Torah is the [Hebrew](hebrew.html) word *tov* meaning *beneficial*, but normally translated as *good*. It refers to the light that was [HaShem](hashem.html)’s [first](one.html) [creation](bara.html): *God saw that the light was good* (Genesis 1:4).

The 32 previous words of [creation](bara.html), equaling the numerical value of *lev* ‘[heart](body.html)’, serve to generate this *beneficial* light. Sefer Ephesians also speaks of this ‘good’:

***Ephesians 1:5*** *Having foreordained us [*[*Jews*](gen-jew.html)*] to the adopting [of sons] through* [*Yeshua*](yeshua.html) *the* [*Messiah*](mashiach.html) *to Himself (G-d), according to the good pleasure of His (G-d’s) will.*

***Ephesians 1:9*** *Having made* [*known*](daat.html) *to us [*[*Jews*](gen-jew.html)*] the* [*secret*](sod.html) *[interpretation] of His [G-d’s] will according to His [G-d’s] good pleasure which He [G-d] purposed in Himself,*

***Ephesians 2:10*** *For we are his workmanship, created in* [*Mashiach*](mashiach.html)[*Yeshua*](yeshua.html) *unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should* [*walk*](walking.html) *in them.*

***Ephesians 4:28*** *Let him that stole steal no more: but rather let him labour, working with his* [*hands*](fourteen.html) *the thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth.*

***Ephesians 4:29*** *Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your* [*mouth*](body.html)*, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister* [*grace*](grace.html) *unto the hearers.*

***Ephesians 6:7*** *With good will doing service, as to the Lord, and not to men:*

***Ephesians 6:8*** *Knowing that whatsoever good thing any man doeth, the same shall he receive of the Lord, whether he be bond or free.*

# Torah Readings

The Torah lectionary is prophetic and speaks of things in the week that it is read.

In the [annual](annual.html) [cycle](cycles.html), parasha Behar (Leviticus 25:1-26:2) is read around [Lag B’Omer](omer.html).

The [septennial](shmita.html) [cycle](cycles.html) has the following readings for [Lag B’Omer](omer.html) in each of the [seven](seven.html) years of the [cycle](cycles.html):

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Year** | **Parasha** |
| 1 | Bereshit (Genesis) 30:22 - 31:2 |
| 2 | Shemot ([Exodus](exodus.html)) 34:1-26 |
| 3 | Bamidbar ([Numbers](nchart.html)) 16:1 - 17:15 |
| 4 | Bereshit (Genesis) 6:9 - 7:24 |
| 5 | Shemot ([Exodus](exodus.html)) 13:1 - 14:14 |
| 6 | Vayikra (Leviticus) 24:1 - 25:13 |
| 7 | Devarim (Deuteronomy) 7:12 - 8:20 |

To try to understand [Lag B’Omer](omer.html) a bit better, I have summarised each [septennial](shmita.html) Torah portion to get a quick overview of the parashiot.

1. **Bereshit (Genesis) 30:22 – 31:2** – [Yoseph](joseph.html) is born. [Yaaqob](jacob.html) and Lavan w/speckled sheep. Laban’s contenance changes.
2. **Shemot (**[**Exodus**](exodus.html)**) 34:1-26** – The second luchot. The 13 midot of Rachamim. Moshe pleads for [HaShem](hashem.html) to take Israel as His [inheritance](inherit.html). [HaShem](hashem.html) makes a [covenant](covenant.html) and [commands](cmds613.html) against [idolatry](idolatry.html). On covenent to be made with inhabitants of Canaan. [Pesach](passover.html) [command](cmds613.html). Firstborn [command](cmds613.html). Shalosh regalim. Bikkurim. Moshe spends [forty](forty.html) days on mount comes down shining.
3. **Bamidbar (**[**Numbers**](nchart.html)**) 16:1 – 17:15** – [Qorach](qorach.html) with [fire](fire.html) and [incense](ketoret.html). Earth swallows [Qorach](qorach.html) and [fire](fire.html) from [heaven](heaven.html) consumes the 250 that offered [incense](ketoret.html). [Plagues](plagues.html) breaks out and kill 14,700. [Incense](ketoret.html) stops the [plague](plagues.html). Aaron’s [rod](staff.html) buds and bears fruit.
4. **Bereshit (Genesis) 6:9 – 7:24** – The flood. [Noach](noach.html) builds an [ark](ark.html). Unclean animals come 2 by 2. [Clean](purity.html) animals come 7 by 7. [Noach](noach.html) righteous in his [generation](toldot.html). [Rains](rains.html) for 40 days. [World](worlds.html) is immersed in the [mikveh](forty.html). Water prevails for 150 days.
5. **Shemot (**[**Exodus**](exodus.html)**) 13:1 – 14:14** – Firstborn sanctified. [Nisan](feasts.html) is the beginning of months. [Pesach](passover.html) commanded. Moshe brings [Yoseph](joseph.html)’s bones. Pillar of [cloud](important.html) and pillar of [fire](fire.html). Paro pursues Israel. People are afraid at Yam Suf.
6. **Vayikra (Leviticus) 24:1 – 25:13** - Oil and menorah commanded. Showbread with frankincense is an [offering](korbanot) made by [fire](fire.html). Man blasphemes and is stoned. [Shmita](shmita.html) and [Yovel](yovel.html) [command](cmds613.html).

The Torah [commands](cmds613.html) that we count the days (aka counting the [omer](omer.html)) between [Pesach](passover.html) and [Shavuot](shavuot.html).

***Vayikra (Leviticus) 23:15-16*** *And ye shall count unto you from the morrow after the* [*sabbath*](sabbath.html)*, from the day that ye brought the sheaf of the wave* [*offering*](korbanot)*;* [*seven*](seven.html) *sabbaths shall be complete: 16 Even unto the morrow after the* [*seventh*](seven.html)[*sabbath*](sabbath.html) *shall ye* [*number*](nchart.html) *fifty days; and ye shall offer a* [*new*](new.html) *meat* [*offering*](korbanot) *unto* [*HaShem*](hashem.html)*.*

The Torah uses similar words when it [commands](cmds613.html) us to count [shmita](shmita.html) ([sabbatical](shmita.html)) and [yovel](yovel.html) ([jubilee](yovel.html)) years.

***Vayikra (Leviticus) 25:8-10*** *And thou shalt* [*number*](nchart.html)[*seven*](seven.html) *sabbaths of years unto thee,* [*seven*](seven.html) *times* [*seven*](seven.html) *years; and the space of the* [*seven*](seven.html) *sabbaths of years shall be unto thee* [*forty*](forty.html) *and* [*nine*](nine.html) *years. 9 Then shalt thou cause the trumpet of the* [*jubilee*](yovel.html) *to sound on the tenth day of the* [*seventh*](seven.html) *month, in the day of* [*atonement*](kippur.html) *shall ye make the trumpet sound throughout all your land. 10 And ye shall hallow the fiftieth year, and proclaim liberty throughout all the land unto all the inhabitants thereof: it shall be a jubile unto you; and ye shall return every man unto his possession, and ye shall return every man unto his family.*

The parallels between the 50 year [cycle](cycles.html) and the 50 days of Sefirat HaOmer and [Shavuot](shavuot.html) are obvious due to the numeric similarity (7 X 7 + 1). Both the [annual](annual.html) and the [septennial](shmita.html) Torah reading [cycles](cycles.html) use the [jubilee](yovel.html) year to remind us of the [omer](omer.html) count and the implications for [Lag B’Omer](omer.html). [Lag B’Omer](omer.html) is the [fifth](five.html) day of the [fifth](five.html) week. The [fifth](five.html) year of the [fifth](five.html) [Sabbatical](shmita.html) [cycle](cycles.html) ([shmita](shmita.html))[[62]](#footnote-62) would be the corresponding point in the [jubilee](yovel.html) count.

Our [redemption](redemption.html) [from Egypt](thebirth.html) begins on [Pesach](passover.html) and then we spend the next [seven](seven.html) weeks and fifty days working on ourselves to perfect the [seven](seven.html) attributes as mentioned in the sefira. In the same way, the [seven](seven.html) [sabbatical](shmita.html) years and the total of fifty years are used for the [redemption](redemption.html) and the rest of the [land of Israel](city.html).

1. **Devarim (Deuteronomy) 7:12 – 8:20** - Contains a cure for all [physical](physical.html) ailments, the destruction of Israel’s enemy, a recounting of the [forty](forty.html) years of [Exodus](exodus.html), test to see [command](cmds613.html) obedience, feeding with manna, clothes that did not wear out and [feet](heel.html) that did not swell for 40 years, details of a good land w/7 species, and a [command](cmds613.html) to remember [HaShem](hashem.html).

Now that we have summarised the parashiyot we can see that we have a surprising amount of correlations with the traditional customs and understandings of [Lag B’Omer](omer.html). Let me make a few of these connections:

Pillar of [fire](fire.html) = big bonfire

Flood portion = flood date

[Forty](forty.html) years / days = 40 days in II Luqas

Vayikra 24 = [Chanukah](chanukah.html) The [eighth](eight.html) day

Yochai’s cave = [Qorach](qorach.html)’s earth swallowing

Manna portion = manna started

Clothes did not wear out = Clothes burned

The sefira period = the [shmita](shmita.html) period

[Shavuot](shavuot.html) = [Yovel](yovel.html)

It is very instructive to note that each of these portions hints to the Messianic age and the [olam HaBa](futures.html).

[Lag B’Omer](omer.html) is day [thirty](thirty.html)-[three](three.html) of the sefira period. It is day [thirty](thirty.html)-[three](three.html) of our [redemption](redemption.html) [from Egypt](thebirth.html). The parashiyot about [Pesach](passover.html) and the [redemption](redemption.html) of the firstborn come to remind us of this on [Lag B’Omer](omer.html) as we finish the final [third](three.html) of the count, as we sprint for the completion of our [redemption](redemption.html) on [Shavuot](shavuot.html).

# Barley

Barley plays an important role in Sefirat HaOmer, the counting of the [omer](omer.html). It is an [omer](omer.html) of barley that is brought on [Nisan](feasts.html) 16.

Barley is normally associated with animal [food](food.html).[[63]](#footnote-63) ‘Barley’ represents the endeavor to nourish and develop our animal soul. [Gentiles](gen-jew.html) are normally depicted with animal images.[[64]](#footnote-64) In the period between the [exodus](exodus.html) [from Egypt](thebirth.html) and the giving of the Torah (The period of counting the [omer](omer.html)), the Children of Israel elevated themselves from the level of animals to the level of human beings. Therefore, for the [commandment](cmds613.html) of the [Omer](omer.html), barley is harvested, for they were on the level of animals at this stage. Then, after fifty days of refining their character traits, they reached the level of man and the [Kohanim](priests.html) offered wheat loaves, [food](food.html) for human beings. On [Lag B’Omer](omer.html) we metaphorically transition to wheat from barley.

Barley is also associated with [atonement](atonemen.html):

***Berachoth 57a*** *If* [*one*](one.html) *sees barley in a* [*dream*](dreams.html)*, his iniquities will depart, as it says: Thine iniquity is taken away, and thy* [*sin*](sin.html) *expiated.*

This suggests that Sefirat HaOmer is a picture of the process of [atonement](atonemen.html). This is also consistent with the [mission](mission.html) of [Mashiach](mashiach.html) ben [Yosef](joseph.html) as delineated in sefer Ephesians.

***Ephesians 1:7*** *In whom we [*[*Jews*](gen-jew.html)*] have the* [*redemption*](redemption.html) *through his (*[*Messiah*](mashiach.html)*’s) life, the remission of the trespasses, according to the riches of His (G-d’s) mercy.*

***Ephesians******2:1*** *And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and* [*sins*](sin.html)*;*

***Ephesians 2:5*** *Even when we were dead in* [*sins*](sin.html)*, hath quickened us together with* [*Mashiach*](mashiach.html)*, (by* [*grace*](grace.html) *ye are saved;)*

# Ephesians Chapter I

Now I would like to look at the various chapters of sefer Ephesians in order to connect the comments of our Hakhamim with the text of sefer Ephesians. Lets start by examining the [first](one.html) section:

***Ephesians 1:1-6*** *Shaul, a [religious and political] Emissary of* [*Yeshua*](yeshua.html) *[ben David] the* [*Messiah*](mashiach.html) *King of the* [*Jews*](gen-jew.html)*, to the [*[*Jewish*](gen-jew.html)*] pious/saints faithfully obedient/observant of Torah by/because of* [*Yeshua*](yeshua.html) *the* [*Messiah*](mashiach.html) *[King of the* [*Jews*](gen-jew.html)*].* ***2.*** *Mercy, [Justice,] and* [*Compassion*](file:///D%3A%5CWord%5COmer%5Cjonah.html) *to you from* [*HaShem*](hashem.html) *our Father and [from] the Master* [*Yeshua*](yeshua.html) *the* [*Messiah*](mashiach.html) *[King of the* [*Jews*](gen-jew.html)*].”**3 Blessed be the G-d and Father of our Master* [*Yeshua*](yeshua.html) *the* [*Messiah*](mashiach.html) *who has blessed us [*[*Jews*](gen-jew.html)*] with every* [*spiritual*](physical.html) *blessing in heavenly places with* [*Messiah*](mashiach.html)*. 4 According us He (G-d) chose us [*[*Jews*](gen-jew.html)*] in him (*[*Messiah*](mashiach.html)*) before the foundation of the* [*world*](worlds.html) *for our being holy/separate and blameless before Him (G-d) in love. 5 Having foreordained us [*[*Jews*](gen-jew.html)*] to the adopting [of sons] through* [*Yeshua*](yeshua.html) *the* [*Messiah*](mashiach.html) *to Himself (G-d), according to the good pleasure of His (G-d’s) will. 6 To the praise of the glory of His (G-d’s) mercy, wherein He (G-d) made us instruments of mercy in the beloved.*

Sefer Ephesians is an esoteric work which uses conventional language to [speak](mashal.html) of the next [world](worlds.html). In the [first](one.html) [six](six.html) pesukim of Ephesians the righteous [Gentiles](gen-jew.html) are chosen and separated for an existence in the next [world](worlds.html). This concords with the essential theme of [Lag B’Omer](omer.html) as an interface to the next [world](worlds.html).

Hakham Dr. [Yosef](joseph.html) ben Haggai made the following observation on this passage: *The upper* [*three*](three.html) */* [*four*](four.html) *spheres are* [*known*](daat.html) *as “heavenlies” or “heavenly places” and the lower* [*seven*](seven.html) *are* [*known*](daat.html) *as “earthly places.” Notice that there is NO division in the Sephirotic* [*Tree of Life*](eternal.html)*, the lower* [*seven*](seven.html) *spheres are merely an extension of the* [*four*](four.html) *upper spheres! (The diagram in the next page perhaps will illustrate this better.) This follows the important Midrashic and Kabbalistic principle “as above so below” and as explained in the Master’s summary of the* [*Amidah*](amida.html)[*prayer*](prayer.html)*: “Your will be done in earth, as it is* [*heaven*](heaven.html)*.” This is also illustrated in the Book of Revelation where* [*Yeshua*](yeshua.html) *our Master, who is seated in the heavenlies,* [*walking*](walking.html) *“in the midst of the* [*seven*](seven.html) *Menorahs” (each Menorah (candlestick) has* [*seven*](seven.html) *branches representing the* [*seven*](seven.html) *lower Sephirot of the* [*Tree of Life*](eternal.html)*, and each Menorah representing a congregation) – see Revelation 1:12-13.*

Thus we can see form this passage that the sefirot are going to play an important part in Sefer Ephesians. This mystical concept concords well with Hakham Shimon bar Yochai’s [teaching](teacher.html) of the [Zohar](orallaw.html).

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Keter**(Crown) – ColourlessMinistry: Invisible Divine Will in the [Messiah](mashiach.html) |  | **|****|****|****|****|****|****HEAVENLIES****Or** **HEAVENLY****PLACES** |
| **Binah**(Understanding) - GrayVirtue: Simchah (Joy)Ministry: 2nd of the bench of [three](three.html)APOSTLE |  | **Chochmah**(Wisdom) - BlackVirtue: Emunah (Faithful Obedience)Ministry: Chief Hakham 1st of the bench of [three](three.html)APOSTLE |
|  | **Da’at**([Knowledge](knowledge.html)) - WhiteVirtue: Yichud (Unity)Ministry: 3rd of the bench of [three](three.html)APOSTLE |  | **|****|****|****|****|****|****|** |
| **==============================================================** |
| **Gevurah** (Strength/Might) – Scarlet RedVirtue: Yir’ah ([Fear](fear.html) of G-d)Ministry: Sheliach [Chazan/Bishop] |  | **G’dolah / Chessed** (Greatness/Mercy) – Royal BlueVirtue: Ahavah (love)Ministry: Masoret [Catechist/Evangelist] | **|****|****|****|****|****|****|** |
|  | **Tiferet**(Beauty) - YellowVirtue: Rachamim ([Compassion](file:///D%3A%5CWord%5COmer%5Cjonah.html))Ministry: Darshan or Magid [Prophet] |  | **|****|****|****|****|****|** |
| **Hod**(Glory) - OrangeVirtue: Temimut (Sincerity)Ministry: Parnas [Pastor] |  | **Netzach**(Victory) – Emerald GreenVirtue: Bitahon (Confidence)Ministry: Parnas [Pastor] | **EARTHLY****Or** **EARTHLY****PLACES****|** |
|  | **Yesod**(Foundation) - VioletVirtue: Emet (Truth/Honesty)Ministry: Parnas [Pastor] ([Female](male%2Bfemale.html) – hidden) |  | **|****|****|****|****|****|****|** |
|  | **Shekhinah / Malkhut**(Presence) – PurpleVirtue: HumilityMinistry: Meturgeman/Moreh/Zaqen [[Teacher](teacher.html)/Elder] |  | **|****|****|****|****|****|** |

The [Talmud](orallaw.html)[[65]](#footnote-65) relates that the Rashbi once sent his son, Hakham Elazar, to [two](two.html) other sages to receive their blessings. They promptly showered Hakham Elazar with various curses, leaving him deeply shaken. Upon returning home, the Rashbi explained to his son how the apparent curses were actually lofty blessings.

The [two](two.html) sages clearly had blessings in mind when addressing Hakham Elazar. Why, then, did they not state these blessings openly, as did the Rashbi? The answer lay in the sages’ inability to reveal [spiritual](physical.html) concepts on an earthly level.

Only the Rashbi had the ability to reveal the underlying [spiritual](physical.html) blessings inherent in their words and bring them down to the [physical](physical.html) realm.

On [Lag B’Omer](omer.html), this quality of the Rashbi becomes accessible to every [Jew](gen-jew.html). On this day we are all able to understand and internalize the secrets of the Torah. It is truly a [time](time.html) for us to rejoice *together* with the Rashbi.

***Ephesians 1:7-14*** *In whom we [*[*Jews*](gen-jew.html)*] have the* [*redemption*](redemption.html) *through his (*[*Messiah*](mashiach.html)*’s) life, the remission of the trespasses, according to the riches of His (G-d’s) mercy. 8 Which He (G-d) caused to abound towards us [*[*Jews*](gen-jew.html)*] in all wisdom and intelligence (understanding). 9 Having made* [*known*](daat.html) *to us [*[*Jews*](gen-jew.html)*] the* [*secret*](sod.html) *[interpretation] of His [G-d’s] will according to His [G-d’s] good pleasure which He [G-d] purposed in Himself, 10 for the administration of the fullness of times; to* [*head*](body.html) *up all things in the* [*Messiah*](mashiach.html)*, both the things in the* [*heavens*](heaven.html) *and the things upon the earth, 11 in whom also we [*[*Jews*](gen-jew.html)*] did obtain an* [*inheritance*](inherit.html)*, being foreordained [predestined] according to the purpose of Him who is working all the things according to the counsel of His will, 12 for us [*[*Jews*](gen-jew.html)*] being to the praise of His glory, even those who did* [*first*](one.html) *hope in the* [*Messiah*](mashiach.html)*, 13 in whom you also, having heard the Word of the truth, the tradition of your* [*salvation*](salvation.html)*, in whom also [you] having faithfully obeyed, you were sealed with the spirit of holiness of the promise. 14 This being a down-payment of our* [*inheritance*](inherit.html)*, to the* [*redemption*](redemption.html) *of the acquired possession, to the praise of His glory.*

Hakham Dr. [Yosef](joseph.html) ben Haggai made the following observation on this passage: *In v.8* [*two*](two.html) *spheres of the* [*first*](one.html) *triad of the Sefirotic* [*Tree of Life*](eternal.html) *are mentioned: (1) Chokhmah (Wisdom) and (2) Binah (Understanding) also* [*known*](daat.html) *as the seat of the intellect. Here in verse 9, we start with the Greek word* ***γνωρισας (Gnorisas)*** [the English word ‘[known](daat.html)’]*which is a derivation of the word for* [*Knowledge*](knowledge.html) *in Greek, and therefore the* [*third*](three.html) *sphere of the* [*first*](one.html) *Triad of the Sefirotic* [*Tree of Life*](eternal.html) *– i.e. ChaBaD [Chokhmah (Wisdom), Binah (Understanding), and Da’at (*[*Knowledge*](knowledge.html)*).*

*Delitzsch has justly and aptly pointed out that the* [*Hebrew*](hebrew.html) *translation for the Greek term* ***μυστηριον (Musterion),*** *is none other than* ***סוֹד*** *–* [***Sod***](sod.html)*– and therefore an allusion, as is characteristic of the* [*Remez*](remez.html) *literature, of the* [*fourth*](four.html) *level of Rabbinic Hermeneutics by the same* [*name*](name.html) *and dealing with the major topics of the* [*Messiah*](mashiach.html)*, the Sefirotic* [*Tree of Life*](eternal.html)*, the* [*Festivals*](festivals.html)*,* [*time*](time.html)*, prophecy, and hidden meanings of words in Scripture! Any student of* [*Jewish*](gen-jew.html) *Hermeneutics knows that there are* [*four*](four.html) *levels of Rabbinic Hermeneutics which Israelites received from Moses, and Moses in turn from G-d at Mt.* [*Sinai*](stages.html)*. These* [*four*](four.html) *levels are explained in the following diagram:*

**Rules of** [**Jewish**](gen-jew.html) **Hermeneutics**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| פרדס | פשאת | רמס | דרש | סוד |
| [**PaRDeS**](remez.html) | **P’shat** | **Remes** | [**Drash**](remez.html) | [**Sod**](sod.html) |
| **Definition** | Simple | Hint | Explore - Ask | [Secret](sod.html) |
| **Literary level** | Grammatical | Allegoric | ParabolicMetaphorical | MysticalSymbolical |
| **Audience level** | Common People | Noble(Lawyers, Judges, Scientists) | Kingly/Royal(civil servants, political scientists) | Mystic(psychologists) |
| [**Hermeneutic**](rules.html) **level** | 7 Hillel [Laws](law.html) | 13 Ishmael [Laws](law.html) | 32 Ben Gallil [Laws](law.html) | 42 [Zohar](orallaw.html) [Laws](law.html) |
| **Rabbinic level** | [Mishna](orallaw.html) | [Gemara](orallaw.html) | [Midrash](orallaw.html) | [Zohar](orallaw.html) |
| [**Gospel**](mishna1.html) | Marqos (Mark), Jude1 & 2 Peter | I and II Luqas ([Luke](luke.html)) | Matityahu (Matthew) | Yochanan (John) 1, 2, 3, and Revelation |
| **Presentation** | [HaShem](hashem.html)’s Servant | Son of Man | The King[Messiah](mashiach.html) | Son of G-D |
| **Principle Concern** | What do we have to do? | What is the meaning behind what we have to do? | How do we go about establishing [HaShem](hashem.html)’s Kingdom on earth? | What metaphysical or symbolic/prophetic meaning is there to what is happening? |
| [**World**](worlds.html) | Asiyah | Yetzirah | Beriyah | Atzilut |
| **Symbol** | Man | Ox/Bull | Lion | Eagle |
| **Mazzaroth** | Deli | Shaur | Aryeh | Aqurav |
| [**Tribe**](tribes.html) | Reuben | Ephraim | Judah | Dan |
| [**Temple**](temple.html) | Outside Chatzer | Chatzer | Kodesh | Kodesh Kodashim |

The [sod](sod.html) was the realm of the [Zohar](orallaw.html) given to us by Hakham Shimon Bar Yochai. Thus this section of Sefer Ephesians is setting the tone for the rest of this sefer. As all scrolls contain an ‘executive summary’ at the beginning, so also is this section an ‘executive summary’. The important point that we need to see is that unity is a major focus of the [first](one.html) [fourteen](fourteen.html) verses of this book. Further, Israel can not be [redeemed](redemption.html) until he fulfills the purpose for which he was created. He is to be a light to the [Gentiles](gen-jew.html). This is why Hakham Shaul changes from ‘we’ and ‘us’ to ‘you’, ‘us’ and ‘your’. We have switched from [Jews](gen-jew.html) to righteous [Gentiles](gen-jew.html) (Noachides).

In this next section, we see the righteous [Gentiles](gen-jew.html) are being [gathered](gather.html) together and given a [connection](connection.html) to the [Olam HaBa](futures.html) through [Mashiach](mashiach.html).

***Ephesians 1:15-23*** *Wherefore I also, after I heard of your faith in the Lord* [*Yeshua*](yeshua.html)*, and love unto all the saints, 16 Cease not to give thanks for you, making mention of you in my* [*prayers*](prayer.html)*; 17 That the God of our Lord* [*Yeshua*](yeshua.html)[*Mashiach*](mashiach.html)*, the Father of glory, may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the* [*knowledge*](knowledge.html) *of him: 18 The* [*eyes*](body.html) *of your understanding being enlightened; that ye may* [*know*](daat.html) *what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his* [*inheritance*](inherit.html) *in the saints, 19 And what is the exceeding greatness of his power to us–ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power, 20 Which he wrought in* [*Mashiach*](mashiach.html)*, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right* [*hand*](mashal.html) *in the heavenly places, 21 Far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every* [*name*](name.html) *that is named, not only in this* [*world*](worlds.html)*, but also in that which is to come: 22 And hath put all things under his* [*feet*](heel.html)*, and gave him to be the* [*head*](body.html) *over all things to the* [*church*](church.html)*, 23 Which is his* [*body*](body.html)*, the fullness of him that filleth all in all.*

Hod Sheb’Hod (the Sefirah connected with Lag BaOmer) is associated with the Messianic [redemption](redemption.html), as mentioned in the ma’amar from the Chabad Siddur concerning Lag BaOmer.

Hakham Shimon ben Yochai is also associated with the Messianic [redemption](redemption.html) as the [Zohar](orallaw.html)[[66]](#footnote-66) states: “With this composition of yours (the [Zohar](orallaw.html)), Israel will be [redeemed](redemption.html) from [exile](galuyot.html) with mercy.” Though Hakham Shimon himself was on a [spiritual](physical.html) level above the destruction of the [Temple](temple.html), being able to [experience](experience.html) this level despite the fact that he and his son were forced to hide from the Romans for [thirteen](thirteen.html) years, nevertheless, he provided the key to the [redemption](redemption.html) of the entire people.

In the [*Zohar*](orallaw.html) (3:144b) we also find that Hakham Shimon ben Yochai is also considered to be the reincarnation of **Moshe Rabbenu**, (Moses our [teacher](teacher.html)). Now since Moses was the [first](one.html) redeemer and [Mashiach](mashiach.html) was the second redeemer, so we find that that which is attributed to Hakham Yochai is also attributed to [Mashiach](mashiach.html). Thus we see that sefer Ephesians is concerned about [redemption](redemption.html).

***Ephesians 1:7*** *In whom we [*[*Jews*](gen-jew.html)*] have the* [*redemption*](redemption.html) *through his (*[*Messiah*](mashiach.html)*’s) life, the remission of the trespasses, according to the riches of His (G-d’s) mercy.*

***Ephesians 1:14*** *This being a down-payment of our* [*inheritance*](inherit.html)*, to the* [*redemption*](redemption.html) *of the acquired possession, to the praise of His glory.*

***Ephesians 4:30*** *And grieve not the holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of* [*redemption*](redemption.html)*.*

\* \* \*

In this next section, the [connection](connection.html) of the righteous [Gentiles](gen-jew.html) to the [Olam HaBa](futures.html) through [Mashiach](mashiach.html) and His portion in the [Olam HaBa](futures.html).

# Ephesians Chapter II

***Ephesians 2:1-10*** *And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and* [*sins*](sin.html)*; 2 Wherein in* [*time*](time.html) *past ye walked according to the course of this* [*world*](worlds.html)*, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience: 3 Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the* [*desires*](needs.html) *of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others. 4 But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, 5 Even when we were dead in* [*sins*](sin.html)*, hath quickened us together with* [*Mashiach*](mashiach.html)*, (by* [*grace*](grace.html) *ye are saved;) 6 And hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in* [*Mashiach*](mashiach.html)[*Yeshua*](yeshua.html)*: 7 That in the ages to come he might shew the exceeding riches of his* [*grace*](grace.html) *in his kindness toward us through* [*Mashiach*](mashiach.html)[*Yeshua*](yeshua.html)*. 8 For by* [*grace*](grace.html) *are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: 9 Not of works, lest any man should boast. 10 For we are his workmanship, created in* [*Mashiach*](mashiach.html)[*Yeshua*](yeshua.html) *unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should* [*walk*](walking.html) *in them.*

The *Sifsei Tzaddik*, zt”l, cites the following [*Gemara*](orallaw.html): “Rashbi said, ‘I can discharge the whole [world](worlds.html) from judgment.’”[[67]](#footnote-67) This is actually true for all [generations](toldot.html). Each year on [LagB’Omer](omer.html), when we make a resolution to change our ways, Hakham Shimon effects an [atonement](atonemen.html) of all our [sins](sin.html) and all our [prayers](prayer.html) are answered. [Yeshua](yeshua.html) also was able to provide [atonement](atonemen.html) for [sin](sin.html) as we read: *Even when we were dead in* [*sins*](sin.html)*, hath quickened us together with* [*Mashiach*](mashiach.html)*.*

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In this portion we see that the righteous will sit in the heavenly in [Mashiach](mashiach.html). What does it mean to ‘sit’? We have learned from the Tanakh that siting always indicates the act of judging. This ‘[sitting](mashal.html)’, this judging is ‘in [Mashiach](mashiach.html)’. This [teaches](teacher.html) us that the righteous are engaged in Torah [study](study.html); for we have learned elsewhere that Torah = [Mashiach](mashiach.html). On [Lag B’Omer](omer.html), as we have seen, the light of the Torah begins to shine. The manna given on [Lag B’Omer](omer.html) will begin to open our [eyes](body.html) to allow us to [study](study.html) (judge) Torah. This is what it means to be seated in the heavenly in [Mashiach](mashiach.html).

The [mitzvot](cmds613.html), the ‘good works’, which are the result of our [salvation](salvation.html) are the deeds of faithful obedience to the Torah’s [commands](cmds613.html). Without Torah there are no [mitzvot](cmds613.html) (good works). The mention of our [salvation](salvation.html) and its [connection](connection.html) to the [mitzvot](cmds613.html) is only trully appreciated when we [eat](eating.html) manna and begin to [experience](experience.html) the Torah. This is the [experience](experience.html) of [Lag B’Omer](omer.html).

***Ephesians 2:11-22*** *Wherefore remember, that ye being in* [*time*](time.html) *past* [*Gentiles*](gen-jew.html) *in the flesh, who are called Uncircumcision by that which is called the* [*Circumcision*](circumcz.html) *in the flesh made by* [*hands*](fourteen.html)*; 12 That at that* [*time*](time.html) *ye were without* [*Mashiach*](mashiach.html)*, being* [*aliens*](aliens.html) *from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the* [*world*](worlds.html)*: 13 But now in* [*Mashiach*](mashiach.html)[*Yeshua*](yeshua.html) *ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the* [*blood*](body.html) *of* [*Mashiach*](mashiach.html)*. 14 For he is our peace, who hath made both* [*one*](one.html)*, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us; 15 Having nullified in his flesh the enmity the (manmade)* [*law*](law.html) *of* [*commandments*](cmds613.html) *in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain* [*one*](one.html)[*new*](new.html) *man, so making peace; 16 And that he might reconcile both unto God in* [*one*](one.html)[*body*](body.html) *by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby: 17 And came and preached peace to you which were afar off, and to them that were nigh. 18 For through him we both have access by* [*one*](one.html) *Spirit unto the Father. 19 Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints, and of the* [***household***](househld.html) ***of God****; 20 And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets,* [*Yeshua*](yeshua.html)[*Mashiach*](mashiach.html) *himself being the chief corner stone; 21 In whom all the building fitly framed together* ***groweth unto an holy*** [***temple***](temple.html) *in the Lord: 22 In whom ye also are builded together for* ***an habitation of God*** *through the Spirit.*

Ben Kochba’s army achieved many victories and the rebellion raged for [six](six.html) years. Many non-[Jews](gen-jew.html) joined Ben Kochba’s army. It is reported that it grew to 400,000 men, larger than the Roman Army. Ben Kochba was so successful that Hadrian called in all of his best troops from England and Gaul. Rome felt threatened as never before. On [Lag B’Omer](omer.html), it is believed by some, Ben Kochba’s army re-conquered [Jerusalem](city.html), and we celebrate that great [event](feasts.html) today. [Jewish](gen-jew.html) independence was restored for [four](four.html) years. Many believe that Ben Kochba actually began to rebuild the [Beit HaMikdash](mikdash.html), the Holy [Temple](temple.html). [One](one.html) writer[[68]](#footnote-68) believes that he completed the building of the [Third](three.html) [Temple](temple.html).

# Ephesians Chapter III

***Ephesians 3:1-13*** *For this cause I Paul, the prisoner of* [*Yeshua*](yeshua.html)[*Mashiach*](mashiach.html) *for you* [*Gentiles*](gen-jew.html)*, 2 If ye have heard of the dispensation of the* [*grace*](grace.html) *of God which is given me to you–ward: 3 How that by revelation he made* [*known*](daat.html) *unto me the mystery; (as I wrote afore in few words, 4 Whereby, when ye read, ye may understand my* [*knowledge*](knowledge.html) *in the mystery of* [*Mashiach*](mashiach.html)*) 5 Which in other ages was not made* [*known*](daat.html) *unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit; 6 That the* [*Gentiles*](gen-jew.html) *should be fellow heirs, and of the same* [*body*](body.html)*, and partakers of his promise in* [*Mashiach*](mashiach.html) *by the* [*gospel*](mishna1.html)*: 7 Whereof I was made a minister, according to the gift of the* [*grace*](grace.html) *of God given unto me by the effectual working of his power. 8 Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, is this* [*grace*](grace.html) *given, that I should preach among the* [*Gentiles*](gen-jew.html) *the unsearchable riches of* [*Mashiach*](mashiach.html)*; 9 And to make all men see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the* [*world*](worlds.html) *hath been hid in God, who created all things by* [*Yeshua*](yeshua.html)[*Mashiach*](mashiach.html)*: 10 To the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places might be* [*known*](daat.html) *by the* [*church*](church.html) *(congregation) the manifold wisdom of God, 11 According to the eternal purpose which he purposed in* [*Mashiach*](mashiach.html)[*Yeshua*](yeshua.html) *our Lord: 12 In whom we have boldness and access with confidence by the faith of him. 13 Wherefore I* [*desire*](needs.html) *that ye faint not at my tribulations for you, which is your glory.*

We have previously mentioned that the mabul, the flood, took place on [Lag B’Omer](omer.html). This was a revelation from [heaven](heaven.html) that took [forty](forty.html) days. At the end of the [forty](forty.html) days, all the [wicked](wicked.html) were destroyed.

The Chatam Sofer notes that [Lag B’Omer](omer.html) was also the day that the manna began to fall from [heaven](heaven.html). The Torah records that the [Jewish](gen-jew.html) people came to rest in the Desert of [Sin](sin.html) on the [fifteenth](fifteen.html) day of the second month. On the sixteenth day of the month the [Jewish](gen-jew.html) people complained to Moshe that they had nothing to [eat](eating.html). The next day on the seventeenth of the month, [HaShem](hashem.html) told Moshe that on the following day, the [eighteenth](eighteen.html), the manna would begin to fall.[[69]](#footnote-69) As mentioned above, the [eighteenth](eighteen.html) day of the second month is [Lag B’Omer](omer.html).

Both of the above [events](feasts.html) share the characteristic that the [*heavens*](heaven.html) *miraculously opened*. However there is a major difference between the [two](two.html). The [first](one.html) [event](feasts.html) was the beginning of [forty](forty.html) days of complete destruction (which was for the benefit of the whole earth and for [Noach](noach.html) and his family) whereas the second [event](feasts.html) was the beginning of [forty](forty.html) years of great blessing. The [Midrash](orallaw.html) also mentions that the manna and the mabul were related.

[***Midrash***](orallaw.html) ***Rabbah -*** [***Exodus***](exodus.html) ***XXV:7*** *BEHOLD, I WILL CAUSE TO RAIN BREAD FROM* [*HEAVEN*](heaven.html) *FOR YOU. It is written, Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies (Ps. XXIII, 5). When did Israel say this?-When they left Egypt and the* [*nations*](nations.html) *declared ‘These will surely perish in the wilderness’, saying, Can God prepare a table in the wilderness (ib. LXXVIII, 9), What did God do?-He made them recline beneath the clouds of glory, as it says, But God made the people recline (Ex. XIII, 18); He gave them manna to* [*eat*](eating.html)*, as it says, Who fed thee in the wilderness with manna (Deut. VIII, 16). The manna was higher than the waters of the flood, for it says, And He commanded the skies above, and opened the doors of* [*heaven*](heaven.html) *(Ps. LXXVIII, 23), whereas in the case of the flood it says, And the windows of* [*heaven*](heaven.html) *were opened (Gen. VII, 11). The* [*nations*](nations.html) *beheld Israel* [*sitting*](mashal.html) *and* [*eating*](eating.html) *and praising God, as it says, ‘ Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies. Thou hast anointed my* [*head*](body.html) *with oil’ (Ps. XXIII, 5)-this refers to the quails. My cup runneth over-this is the well. Similarly in the Messianic age, He will establish peace for them, and they will sit at ease and* [*eat*](eating.html) *in Paradise, and the idolaters will behold their customs and* [*laws*](law.html)*, as it says, Behold, My servants shall* [*eat*](eating.html)*, but ye shall be hungry (Isa. LXV, 13).*

We may derive that the [eighteenth](eighteen.html) day of [Iyar](feasts.html) ([Lag B’Omer](omer.html)) is an auspicious [time](time.html) for [HaShem](hashem.html)’s revelation. Sefer Ephesians mentions this special revelation once in the above pasuk, and again in Ephesians 1:1. This revelation is [one](one.html) of the key points of this sefer.

Who [ate](eating.html) the manna? We [know](daat.html) that all of the [Jews](gen-jew.html) in the entire [world](worlds.html) [ate](eating.html) the manna, but what about [Gentiles](gen-jew.html)? Did they have manna? The Torah records that they, too, were in the wilderness and [ate](eating.html) the heavenly bread.[[70]](#footnote-70)

This manna would, therefore, transform both the [Jew](gen-jew.html) and the [Gentiles](gen-jew.html), who had attached themselves to Israel, into Torah vessels. Both groups would be brought together to receive the Torah. Remember that Shabuot was the [time](time.html) of the giving of the Torah. On [Lag B’Omer](omer.html), [Shavuot](shavuot.html) was anly seventeen days away. We are on the final approach of our [redemption](redemption.html). We, [Jews](gen-jew.html) and attached [Gentiles](gen-jew.html), must renew our strength to change who we are through the counting of the [Omer](omer.html). On [Lag B’Omer](omer.html) we receive assistance from [Heaven](heaven.html) when [HaShem](hashem.html) sent us The Bread from [Heaven](heaven.html). This manna enabled them to receive the Torah ([Mashiach](mashiach.html)) on Shabuot. This manna was a catalyst to bring both [Jew](gen-jew.html) and [Gentile](gen-jew.html) to [Mashiach](mashiach.html) and His Torah. This is the message of sefer Ephesians. This is the message that Hakham Shaul is [teaching](teacher.html) the [Gentiles](gen-jew.html) of Ephesus. Torah is what brings the righteous together, and it is only in the [body](body.html) of [Mashiach](mashiach.html) that this [connection](connection.html) is made clear.

***Ephesians 3:14-21*** *For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord* [*Yeshua*](yeshua.html)[*Mashiach*](mashiach.html)*, 15 Of whom the whole family in* [*heaven*](heaven.html) *and earth is named, 16 That he would grant you, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man; 17 That* [*Mashiach*](mashiach.html) *may* [*dwell*](dwelling.html) *in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love, 18 May be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; 19 And to* [*know*](daat.html) *the love of* [*Mashiach*](mashiach.html)*, which passeth* [*knowledge*](knowledge.html)*, that ye might be filled with all the fullness of God. 20 Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us, 21 Unto him be glory in the* [*church*](church.html) *by* [*Mashiach*](mashiach.html)[*Yeshua*](yeshua.html) *throughout all ages,* [*world*](worlds.html) *without end. Amen.*

# Ephesians Chapter IV

***Ephesians 4:1-6*** *I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye* [*walk*](walking.html) *worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called, 2 With all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing* [*one*](one.html) *another in love; 3 Endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. 4 There is* [*one*](one.html)[*body*](body.html)*, and* [*one*](one.html) *Spirit, even as ye are called in* [*one*](one.html) *hope of your calling; 5* [*One*](one.html) *Lord,* [*one*](one.html) *faith,* [*one*](one.html) *baptism, 6* [*One*](one.html) *God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all.*

The love of [one](one.html)’s neighbor comes from the same root as your respect for your neighbor. Thus when the talmidim of Hakham Akiba died due to lack of respect, it also indicates a lack of love. To avoid the disaster of Hakham Akiba’s talmidim it is necessary that we learn to have the utmost love and respect for our neighbor. Sefer Ephesians implores the Nazarean to go to great length to love and to respect our neighbor. This love is a natural outgrowth of our closeness to The King. Those who serve in the King’s court should be above reproach in this arena.

The greatest distancing is when talmidei chakhamim are not connected with [one](one.html) another. The Netziv comments at length[[71]](#footnote-71) on Chazal’s statement that on account of baseless hate the [Temple](temple.html) was destroyed. He explains that this was not plain baseless hatred, but in that [generation](toldot.html) there was lack of [connection](connection.html) between talmidei chakhamim because of the difference in their opinions, and there did not [dwell](dwelling.html) between them love about their very greatness of Torah. When those talmidei chakhamim negate each other on account of their opinions and do not give importance to the very greatness of Torah, because of this the [Temple](temple.html) was destroyed. The [generation](toldot.html) of Hakham Shaul and the subsequent [generation](toldot.html) of Hakham Akiba and his talmidim were not immune to this same problem. The death of the 24,000 spring from this same cause. We would be wise to heed the words of sefer Ephesians and learn how to love each other despite our differences.

*Hakham Shaul* [*Yosef*](joseph.html) *Leiter* wrote the following: [Lag B’Omer](omer.html) commemorates the cessation of the [plague](plagues.html) that wiped out Hakham Akiba’s students, who were punished for their lack of respect for their colleagues. *Rebbe Shmuel Shmelke of Nicholsberg* explained how to love a person who has done you harm. All of us are [one](one.html) integrated entity, because we are all small parts of the original soul of [Adam](adam.html), the [first](one.html) man. We can be compared to parts of a [body](body.html). Sometimes a person may unintentionally hurt himself, by dropping something on his [foot](heel.html) or by [walking](walking.html) into a pole. If we would then take a stick and vengefully hit the offending part of the [body](body.html), we would really be in pain. So it is with when someone else harms you. It is only because of a lack of understanding of how we are all connected. If we would pay him in kind, we are only doing ourselves more damage. Rather, we should remind ourselves that we deserved what we got, and the Almighty has many messengers. If this thought does not suffice, we should try meditating on the other person’s soul, which is literally a portion of [HaShem](hashem.html) from Above, which has fallen so low, and we should have [compassion](file:///D%3A%5CWord%5COmer%5Cjonah.html) for His holy spark.

***Ephesians 4:7-8*** *But unto every* [*one*](one.html) *of us is given* [*grace*](grace.html) *according to the measure of the gift of* [*Mashiach*](mashiach.html)*. 8 Wherefore he saith, When he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men.*

***Tehillim (***[***Psalms***](psalms1.html)***) 68:19*** *You ascended on high, you captured captives you took gifts for man.*

What gift did Moshe take for man?[[72]](#footnote-72)

When Moshe went up to [heaven](heaven.html) to take the Torah, the [angels](angels.html) opposed him.[[73]](#footnote-73) After he succeeded in proving that the Torah is meant for man and not for [angels](angels.html), they still insisted that the esoteric teachings of the Torah *(penimiut haTorah)* remain with them. The [one](one.html) who revealed the esoteric teachings of Torah was Hakham Shimon ben Yochai. He authored the [*Zohar*](orallaw.html), which is the basis of the *Kabbalah*.

The word *shevi, captive*, is an acronym for his [name](name.html) *(Shimon ben Yochai)*. In [speaking](mashal.html) of Moshe, King David says, “You ascended on high” and *“shavita* — you captured — *shevi* — the captive” — that is, he seized from the [angels](angels.html) the *neshamah* of Shimon ben Yochai, which they wanted to keep in captivity for themselves, and brought it as a gift for man on earth. In the next portion of Ephesians we will see that [Mashiach](mashiach.html) performed a similar function on behalf of the righteous.

***Ephesians 4:9-16*** *(Now that he ascended, what is it but that he also descended* [*first*](one.html) *into the lower parts of the earth? 10 He that descended is the same also that ascended up far above all* [*heavens*](heaven.html)*, that he might fill all things.) 11 And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; 12 For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the* [***body***](body.html) ***of*** [***Mashiach***](mashiach.html)*: 13 Till we all come in the* ***unity of the faith****, and of the* [*knowledge*](knowledge.html) *of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of* [*Mashiach*](mashiach.html)*: 14 That we be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive; 15 But* [*speaking*](mashal.html) *the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the* [***head***](body.html)***,*** [***Mashiach***](mashiach.html)*: 16 From whom* ***the whole*** [***body***](body.html) *fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of* ***the*** [***body***](body.html) *unto the edifying of itself in love.*

In this passage we see that the purpose of the ascension is the unity of the [body](body.html) with [Mashiach](mashiach.html) as the [head](body.html). These are the themes of Lag BaOmer. Further, Chazal [teach](teacher.html) that all “descent is for the sake of ascent”.

 On Shabuot the Torah was given at [Sinai](stages.html) at a moment when there was total [Jewish](gen-jew.html) unity. The Torah states, *va’yichan Yisrael neged hahar*, “the Israelites encamped opposite Mount [Sinai](stages.html)”. Va’yichan is stated in the singular, which the foremost commentator, Rashi, defines as meaning that Israel encamped opposite the mountain “as [one](one.html) man with [one](one.html) [heart](body.html),” i.e. in a state of total and perfect unity. From this, we derive the lesson that Torah can only prosper and accomplish its goals when the [Jewish](gen-jew.html) people are united.

The period of Sefirah serves as a preparation for Matan Torah, the giving of the Torah) in that the [seven](seven.html) sefirot are interwoven and refined. In this, the final [third](three.html) of the [omer](omer.html) count, the attribute of “Glory in Glory” is attained, the major portion of the Sefirah “[body](body.html)” has been built. And then [Lag B’Omer](omer.html) is directly connected to the state of “as [one](one.html) man with [one](one.html) mind,” of Matan Torah. As the [third](three.html) watch of the night is associated with the morning, so the final [third](three.html) of the [omer](omer.html) count is associated with the glow of Shabuot.

[Lag B’Omer](omer.html) foreshadows this unity, seventeen days before Shabuot, the final [third](three.html) of the [omer](omer.html) count.

Among [Jews](gen-jew.html) the story of the great revolt against Roman power was encoded as the story of those who died because of their lack of respect for [one](one.html) another, a not too subtle point on the lack of unity and the betrayals that doomed the uprising.

Hakham Akiba’s 12,000 pairs of talmidim were lacking the quality that was essential for acquiring Torah, they were found to be totally unprepared to receive the Torah, at their level.[[74]](#footnote-74) As the [time](time.html) period between [Pesach](passover.html) and Shabuot is the [time](time.html) during the year when we must be prepared to receive the Torah and the talmidim, through their own correctable flaw, were not prepared, this was the [time](time.html) that was deemed appropriate for them to suffer the [consequences](conseq.html). The [Gemara](orallaw.html) chose its words carefully. It is true the students stopped dying on [Lag B’Omer](omer.html). However, they died when they did because it was “between [Pesach](passover.html) and Shabuot”, the [time](time.html) dedicated to preparation for the receipt of the Torah.

The real lesson of [Lag B’Omer](omer.html) is not about bonfires and bows, it was about the lack of unity, the willingness, of some, to serve the Romans, to betray their own people, to agitate and undermine, to inform on and spy against their own. It is a lesson we desperately need to learn today. The way forward is in Meron but not because of what is buried there but because of what lives there, the unity of hundreds of thousands of Israelis and [Jews](gen-jew.html) from all walks of life

The Meron festivities bring together hundreds of thousands of [Jews](gen-jew.html) annually; both religious and secular, Ashkenazim, and Sephardim. The [Jewish](gen-jew.html) unity achieved at the Meron [festival](festival.html) should be hailed as a model of what we should be striving to achieve the entire year round.

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The [Gemara](orallaw.html) comments that when a [Mishna](orallaw.html) is recorded without mentioning the [name](name.html) of the sage, that means that it was said by Hakham Meir.

When we find a similar nameless passage in the Tosefta, we [know](daat.html) that it was said by Hakham Nechemiah.

An anonymous Sifra is attributed to Hakham Yehudah, and

An unnamed Sifrei is attributed to Hakham Shimon. The [Gemara](orallaw.html) concludes, “and they are all according to Hakham Akiba”.[[75]](#footnote-75)

Ephesians 4:11 speaks about [five](five.html) special officers.

***Ephesians 4:11*** *And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers;*

These [four](four.html) men are a pars-pro-toto for the [ten](ten.html) men of the [synagogue](synagog.html). Read the [study](study.html) on the [synagogue](synagog.html) to learn about these [four](four.html) special men.

And He gave some as Apostles… These [five](five.html) offices were filled by men who had received smikha from [Yeshua](yeshua.html). In the same way, the [five](five.html) talmidim of Hakham Yochai were great men of the [oral Torah](orallaw.html). Each of them played a major part in providing decisions for the various components of the [oral Torah](orallaw.html).

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Imagine that you have a bonfire burning brightly in front of you. What are you doing? If you are like most folks, you are mesmerized by the flames and you find your [eyes](body.html) following the flames up into the sky. You follow the burning embers as they fly ever further up. This is the effect of a bonfire. Curiously, this is the same thing that the disciples did at [Yeshua](yeshua.html)’s ascension:

***II Luqas (Acts) 1:9-11*** *And when he had spoken these things, while they beheld, he was taken up; and a* [*cloud*](important.html) *received him out of their sight. 10 And while they looked stedfastly toward* [*heaven*](heaven.html) *as he went up, behold,* [*two*](two.html) *men stood by them in white apparel; 11 Which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into* [*heaven*](heaven.html)*? this same* [*Yeshua*](yeshua.html)*, which is taken up from you into* [*heaven*](heaven.html)*, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into* [*heaven*](heaven.html)*.*

Judaism [teaches](teacher.html) that the souls of righteous men ascend to [heaven](heaven.html) upon [liberation](freedom.html) from their [bodies](body.html). Thus Hakham Shimon Ben Yochai and [Yeshua](yeshua.html) both ascended on Lag BaOmer. The difference is that [Yeshua](yeshua.html) ascended bodily. This is the message of sefer Ephesians 4:9.

***Ephesians 4:17-32*** *This I say therefore, and testify in the Lord, that ye henceforth* [*walk*](walking.html) *not as other* [*Gentiles*](gen-jew.html)[*walk*](walking.html)*, in the vanity of their mind, 18 Having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their* [*heart*](body.html)*: 19 Who being past feeling have given themselves over unto lasciviousness, to work all uncleanness with greediness. 20 But ye have not so learned* [*Mashiach*](mashiach.html)*; 21 If so be that ye have heard him, and have been* [*taught*](teacher.html) *by him, as the truth is in* [*Yeshua*](yeshua.html)*: 22 That ye put off concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts; 23 And be renewed in the spirit of your mind; 24 And that ye put on the* [*new*](new.html) *man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness. 25 Wherefore putting away lying,* [*speak*](mashal.html) *every man truth with his neighbour: for we are members* [*one*](one.html) *of another. 26 Be ye angry, and* [*sin*](sin.html) *not: let not the* [*sun*](hachama.html) *go down upon your wrath: 27 Neither give place to the* [*devil*](demons.html)*. 28 Let him that stole steal no more: but rather let him labour, working with his* [*hands*](fourteen.html) *the thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth. 29 Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your* [*mouth*](body.html)*, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister* [*grace*](grace.html) *unto the hearers. 30 And grieve not the holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of* [*redemption*](redemption.html)*. 31 Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil* [*speaking*](mashal.html)*, be put away from you, with all malice: 32 And be ye kind* [*one*](one.html) *to another, tenderhearted, forgiving* [*one*](one.html) *another, even as God for* [*Mashiach*](mashiach.html)*’s sake hath forgiven you.*

[Pesach](passover.html) flows into Sefirat Ha’[Omer](omer.html) (the counting of the [Omer](omer.html)), with the counting of 49 days from the second day of [Passover](passover.html) to the [holiday](festival.html) of Shabuot, the conclusion of [Pesach](passover.html). On [Pesach](passover.html) we begin our [physical](physical.html) [freedom](freedom.html) and on Shabuot we complete out [spiritual](physical.html) [freedom](freedom.html). [Lag B’Omer](omer.html) is the day when our [spiritual](physical.html) [freedom](freedom.html) begins. The counting of the [omer](omer.html) is based on the [commandment](cmds613.html) in:

***Vayikra (Leviticus) 23:15-16*** *And from the day on which you bring the* [*offering*](korbanot)*…you shall count off* [*seven*](seven.html) *weeks. They must be complete.*

The [seder](haggada.html) is the beginning point for an amazing transformation that will take 600,000 slaves and transform them into Am Israel, a [new](new.html) [nation](nations.html). A [nation](nations.html) of free men who serve [HaShem](hashem.html). To accomplish this transformation, these men will need to shed the mentality of slaves. A mentality that has existed for a couple of [generations](toldot.html). These are men who have never [known](daat.html) what is is like to be free men.

The [seder](haggada.html) is the beginning of a renewal process which will take Am Israel from the [forty](forty.html)-[ninth](nine.html) level of [impurity](purity.html) and make them like [angels](angels.html) at Mt. [Sinai](stages.html). This will be accomplished by the counting of the [Omer](omer.html). This count will allow Israel [one](one.html) week for each midot, each character trait. During this week they will focus on a different aspect of this midot. This process will renew their mind and transform them from a people of [impurity](purity.html) to a people who will stand before [HaShem](hashem.html) at [Sinai](stages.html) as a single man with a single [heart](body.html), the [heart](body.html) of [HaShem](hashem.html).

Finally, the [seder](haggada.html) is the beginning of a process which will take 600,000 men and transform them into a [nation](nations.html). They will learn [laws](law.html) and behaviors that will change them from slave-like followers and build them into a [nation](nations.html) of [Priests](priests.html) capable of [teaching](teacher.html) Torah to the [world](worlds.html).

Sefer Ephesians, in 4:23, speaks of this amazing process of renewal which transform the minds of a [nation](nations.html). Their minds will return to follow the Torah as [Avraham](avraham.html) did.

The mabul (flood), another [Lag B’Omer](omer.html) motif, also carries this idea of renewal. After the flood, not only was the earth renewed and cleansed, but [HaShem](hashem.html) also expected [Noach](noach.html) and his family to build a [new](new.html) [world](worlds.html) according to the Torah. [Noach](noach.html) and his sons were expected to change their mind set that “all things continue as they have from the beginning”.[[76]](#footnote-76) [HaShem](hashem.html) sent the mabul with the expectation of a [new](new.html) [world](worlds.html) populated by men of renewed minds; minds that were focused on [HaShem](hashem.html). The whole point of the rainbow was to warn men that they were not renewing their minds, instead they were deserving of the same punishment as the [generation](toldot.html) of the mabul. The rainbow was not only a symbol of [HaShem](hashem.html)’s promise not to flood the [world](worlds.html), but **it was also put in the sky whenever men deserved the punishment of the flood**. The rainbow, then, is a warning to mankind that they need to renew their minds and change their way of thinking and acting.

Another [Lag B’Omer](omer.html) custom, the burning of bonfires, is also a lesson in the renewal of our minds. As [fire](fire.html) converts the [physical](physical.html) wood into the non-[physical](physical.html) [fire](fire.html), so are we commanded to renew our mind and move it from a total concentration of the [needs](needs.html) and [desires](needs.html) of the [body](body.html) ([physical](physical.html)), to a a concentration on [HaShem](hashem.html) and the true reality of the [spiritual](physical.html) [world](worlds.html) which will render this [world](worlds.html) as a [dream](dreams.html).[[77]](#footnote-77)

The custom of giving a child his [first](one.html) haircut on [Lag B’Omer](omer.html) is another way to manifest the renewal of the mind. An amazing thing happens when a child receives his [first](one.html) haircut. He feels like a [new](new.html) person, like [one](one.html) who is about to change the [world](worlds.html). From this point on, we begin renewing the childs mind by [teaching](teacher.html) him Torah and [mitzvot](cmds613.html). This [first](one.html) haircut, in the place of the mind, serves to focus everyone involved in the tremendous renewal that is taking place in the childs life.

[Lag B’Omer](omer.html) represents a change of pace as we approach Shabuot. On Shabuot we will agin encounter the [shofar](shofar.html) calling us to awaken from our slumber. [Lag B’Omer](omer.html) serves, therefore, as a preliminary wake-up call. We must change the way we are thinking! We much change our actions!

[Pesach](passover.html) is mandated by the Torah to occur in the springtime. This is the very season when the earth is beginning to be renewed. By the [time](time.html) we reach [Lag B’omer](omer.html), the renewal is in full view for everyone to see. Thus we see that the earth itself is [teaching](teacher.html) us to begin a process of renewal, for this is the [time](time.html) of renewal.

Sephirat HaOmer is meant to remind us that the [redemption](redemption.html) from slavery was not complete until the Torah was *received* and *accepted* by Am Israel on Shabuot. This required a total renewal of the mind as sefer Ephesians [teaches](teacher.html).

# Ephesians Chapter V

***Ephesians 5:1-20*** *Be ye therefore followers of God, as dear children; 2 And* [*walk*](walking.html) *in love, as* [*Mashiach*](mashiach.html) *also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us an* [*offering*](korbanot) *and a* [*sacrifice*](korbanot.html) *to God for a sweet-smelling savour. 3 But fornication, and all uncleanness, or covetousness, let it not be once named among you, as becometh saints; 4 Neither filthiness, nor foolish talking, nor jesting, which are not convenient: but rather giving of thanks. 5 For this ye* [*know*](daat.html)*, that no whoremonger, nor unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, hath any* [*inheritance*](inherit.html) *in the kingdom of* [*Mashiach*](mashiach.html) *and of God. 6 Let no man deceive you with vain words: for because of these things cometh the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience. 7 Be not ye therefore partakers with them. 8 For ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord:* [*walk*](walking.html) *as children of light: 9 (For the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness and righteousness and truth;) 10 Proving what is acceptable unto the Lord. 11 And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them. 12 For it is a shame even to* [*speak*](mashal.html) *of those things which are done of them in* [*secret*](sod.html)*. 13 But all things that are reproved are made manifest by the light: for whatsoever doth make manifest is light. 14 Wherefore he saith, Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and* [*Mashiach*](mashiach.html) *shall give thee light. 15 See then that ye* [*walk*](walking.html) *circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise, 16 Redeeming the* [*time*](time.html)*, because the days are evil. 17 Wherefore be ye not unwise, but understanding what the will of the Lord is. 18 And be not drunk with* [*wine*](wine.html)*, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit; 19* [*Speaking*](mashal.html) *to yourselves in* [*psalms*](psalms1.html) *and hymns and* [*spiritual*](physical.html) *songs, singing and making melody in your* [*heart*](body.html) *to the Lord; 20 Giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father in the* [*name*](name.html) *of our Lord* [*Yeshua*](yeshua.html)[*Mashiach*](mashiach.html)*;*

Hakham Meir was [one](one.html) of Hakham Akiba’s [seven](seven.html) [new](new.html) students. Their names are also hints to the [Lag B’Omer](omer.html) story. In the [Talmud](orallaw.html),[[78]](#footnote-78) it says that all anonymous Mishnayot are attributed to Hakham Meir. This rule was required because, following an unsuccessful attempt to force the resignation of the [head](body.html) of the Sanhedrin, Hakham Meir’s opinions were noted, but only as “Others say...”

*Meir* is actually a sobriquet, his real [name](name.html) is thought to have been Nahori or Misha. The [name](name.html) *Meir*, meaning “Illuminator”, was given to him because he enlightened the [eyes](body.html) of scholars and students in Torah [study](study.html).[[79]](#footnote-79) Notice that in Ephesians 5:13, that the emphasis is on all becoming like Hakham Meir. We are all to become ‘illuminators’. Thus we have another hint to [Lag B’Omer](omer.html).

In Ephesians 5:8 we see that light is critical for our [walk](walking.html) with [HaShem](hashem.html).

Even in places other than Meron, Hasidic [Jews](gen-jew.html) make a practice of lighting bonfires on [Lag B’Omer](omer.html). Some also light candles in the [synagogue](synagog.html) in honor of Hakham Shimon ben Yochai’s Hillula. The bonfires and candles, with their light, symbolize Torah and [mitzvot](cmds613.html), as it says:

***Mishlei (Proverbs) 6:23*** *For the* [*commandment*](cmds613.html) *is a candle, and the Torah, light.*

This [connection](connection.html) between the bonfires and the light of Torah also provides an additional [connection](connection.html) to [Mashiach](mashiach.html) who is called the “Light of the [World](worlds.html)”:

***Yochanan (John) 8:12*** *Then spake* [*Yeshua*](yeshua.html) *again unto them, saying, I am the light of the* [*world*](worlds.html)*: he that followeth me shall not* [*walk*](walking.html) *in darkness, but shall have the light of life.*

Light is also a critical theme of the end of sefer Ephesians:

***Ephesians 5:8*** *For ye were sometimes darkness, but now light in the Lord:* [*walk*](walking.html) *as children of light:*

***Ephesians 5:13*** *But all things that are reproved are made manifest by the light: for whatsoever doth make manifest is light.*

***Ephesians 5:14*** *Wherefore he saith, Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and* [*Mashiach*](mashiach.html) *shall give thee light.*

The light of the bonfire provides us with a hint to the real light, the light of the Living Torah.

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On Shabuot, at the giving of the Torah, those who received it heard the [first](one.html) [two](two.html) words from [HaShem](hashem.html). When they heard, they were blown back [ten](ten.html) mil and died. They were then resurrected and brought back to the [foot](heel.html) of the mountain. When they heard the second word the process was repeated a second [time](time.html).[[80]](#footnote-80)

***Shabbath 88b*** *R. Joshua b. Levi also said: At every word which went forth from the* [*mouth*](body.html) *of the Holy* [*One*](one.html)*, blessed be He, the souls of Israel departed, for it is said, My soul went forth when he spake.[[81]](#footnote-81) But since their souls departed at the* [*first*](one.html) *word, how could they receive the second word? — He brought down the dew with which He will* [*resurrect*](techiyat.html) *the dead and revived them, as it is said, Thou, O God, didst send a plentiful rain, Thou didst confirm thine* [*inheritance*](inherit.html)*, when it was weary.[[82]](#footnote-82)*

From this Chazal understand that [resurrection](techiyat.html) was [one](one.html) aspect of this feast. To put it another way, the dead were awakened. On [Lag B’Omer](omer.html) we begin this process of waking up. Sefer Ephesians, in 5:14, calls us to awake from our [sleep](mashal.html), and arise from the dead. The call goes out on [Lag B’Omer](omer.html) and is completed on Shabuot. Bear in mind, as we have said before, that Shabuot is the Atzeret, the completion of [Pesach](passover.html).

***Ephesians 5:21-33*** *Submitting yourselves* [*one*](one.html) *to another in the* [*fear*](fear.html) *of God. 22 Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord. 23 For the husband is the* [*head*](body.html) *of the wife, even as* [*Mashiach*](mashiach.html) *is the* [*head*](body.html) *of the* [*church*](church.html)*: and he is the savior of the* [*body*](body.html)*. 24 Therefore as the* [*church*](church.html) *is subject unto* [*Mashiach*](mashiach.html)*, so let the wives be to their own husbands in every thing. 25 Husbands, love your wives, even as* [*Mashiach*](mashiach.html) *also loved the* [*church*](church.html)*, and gave himself for it; 26 That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, 27 That he might present it to himself a glorious congregation, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish. 28 So ought men to love their wives as their own* [*bodies*](body.html)*. He that loveth his wife loveth himself. 29 For no man ever yet hated his own flesh; but nourishes and cherishes it, even as the Lord the* [*church*](church.html)*: 30 For we are members of his* [*body*](body.html)*, of his flesh, and of his bones. 31 For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they* [*two*](two.html) *shall be* [*one*](one.html) *flesh. 32 This is a great mystery: but I* [*speak*](mashal.html) *concerning* [*Mashiach*](mashiach.html) *and the congregation (of Israel). 33 Nevertheless let every* [*one*](one.html) *of you in particular so love his wife even as himself; and the wife see that she reverence her husband.*

As we have already seen, the bow and arrows are a reminder of the rainbow which was given after the mabul (flood). What was the mabul? Why didn’t [HaShem](hashem.html) just send a [plague](plagues.html) and kill everyone except [Noach](noach.html) and his family? The answer is that the earth had become impure. How do we make vessels (pots and pans) pure? We immerse them in boiling water. The mabul was sent explicitly as boiling water in order to cleanse the [world](worlds.html) of [impurity](purity.html). As the [mikveh](forty.html) is [forty](forty.html) seahs, so this mabul lasted [forty](forty.html) days. It is also interesting to note that the other way to kasher a vessel is to use a blow-torch on it. The bonfire speaks to the blow-torch which will be used in the [end of days](lastdays.html) to [purify](purity.html) the [world](worlds.html). Ephesians 5:26 speaks to the [mikveh](forty.html) of water that is used to kasher (cleanse) the bride.

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In sefer Ephesians, Hakham Shaul emphasized the importance and the difficulty of [marriage](mashal.html), so too, did Hakham Yosi ben Chalafta, a talmid of Hakham Akiba, emphasize the importance and the difficulty of [marriage](mashal.html).

Since marriages have been on hold during the sefira period, now on [Lag B’Omer](omer.html) they are permitted, as we learned earlier. This concords well with a picture of the messianic age and the [Olam HaBa](futures.html). It also concords with Hakham Yochai’s well which pictures the wells where the patriarchs met their wives.

[***Midrash***](orallaw.html) ***Rabbah, Bereshit 68*** *A matron asked Hakham Yosi ben Chalafta: “In how many days did* [*HaShem*](hashem.html) *create the* [*world*](worlds.html)*?” Said he to her: “In* [*six*](six.html) *days.” Asked she: “And from then until now, what does He do?”*

*Said he: “He sits and matches up couples.”*

*Said she: “And this is His artistry? I, too, can do that! How many servants and maids do I have! In a fleeting moment I can pair them.”*

*Said he to her: “For you it may be easy. For* [*HaShem*](hashem.html) *it is as difficult as the splitting of the sea.” Hakham Yosi ben Chalafta left her and went.*

*What did she do? She took a thousand slaves and a thousand slave-girls, lined them up in* [*two*](two.html) *rows, and announced: “You marry him, and you marry her.” On the next morning they came before her -- this* [*one*](one.html) *with a wound in his* [*head*](body.html)*, that* [*one*](one.html) *with a drooping eye, this* [*one*](one.html)*’s arm dismantled and that* [*one*](one.html)*’s leg broken. Said she to them: “What happened to you?” The* [*one*](one.html) *said, “I don’t want him,” and the other said, “I don’t want her...”*

*Immediately she sent for Hakham Yosi ben Chalafta and said to him: “Hakham, your Torah is true, beautiful and praiseworthy. Everything that you said was well said.”*

# Ephesians Chapter VI

***Ephesians 6:1-9*** *Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right. 2 Honour thy father and mother; (which is the* [*first*](one.html)[*commandment*](cmds613.html) *with promise;) 3 That it may be well with thee, and thou mayest live long on the earth. 4 And, ye* [*fathers*](fathers.html)*, provoke not your children to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. 5 Servants, be obedient to them that are your masters according to the flesh, with* [*fear*](fear.html) *and trembling, in singleness of your* [*heart*](body.html)*, as unto* [*Mashiach*](mashiach.html)*; 6 Not with eye service, as men pleasers; but as the servants of* [*Mashiach*](mashiach.html)*, doing the will of God from the* [*heart*](body.html)*; 7 With good will doing service, as to the Lord, and not to men: 8 Knowing that whatsoever good thing any man doeth, the same shall he receive of the Lord, whether he be bond or free. 9 And, ye masters, do the same things unto them, forbearing threatening: knowing that your Master also is in* [*heaven*](heaven.html)*; neither is there respect of persons with him.*

In v.6 we see that Hakham Shaul is commanding the [Gentiles](gen-jew.html) to do the ‘will of [HaShem](hashem.html)’. What is the will of [HaShem](hashem.html)? How is the will of [HaShem](hashem.html)’ discerned? Surely you must say that the will of [HaShem](hashem.html) can only be discerned from the Torah! The reveal will of [HaShem](hashem.html) is found to the [oral Torah](orallaw.html) and written Torah. The revelation of Torah was begun on [Lag B’Omer](omer.html). It began with the giving of the manna and its secrets were given to Hakham Shimon ben Yochai on [Lag B’Omer](omer.html). Further, these Torah secrets were given to Hakham Yochai’s talmidim on [Lag B’Omer](omer.html). The [mitzvot](cmds613.html), the ‘good things’ are found in the oral and the written Torah, the gift that began on [Lag B’Omer](omer.html).

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The [Yovel](yovel.html) [cycle](cycles.html) is a [time](time.html) of [freedom](freedom.html) for all Israel. It is a [time](time.html) when free men return to their [inheritance](inherit.html) and begin anew. In the same way, the period when we count the [omer](omer.html) is a period where we obtain [freedom](freedom.html) [from Egypt](thebirth.html) and learn how to be free from our own lusts through the Torah. Both [Yovel](yovel.html) and the sefira are given to [teach](teacher.html) us that everything, including our very lives, belongs to [HaShem](hashem.html). His Torah alone [teaches](teacher.html) this to us and shows us how to curp our acquisitive nature in favor of obedience to [HaShem](hashem.html). On [Lag B’Omer](omer.html) we enter the final [third](three.html) of the days of counting. From this point on we have divine assistance as reach for the [freedom](freedom.html) that comes with receiving the Torah. This is the theme of Ephesians 6:5-9, which we will see shortly.

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In the sefer Ephesians, we see the word ‘tob’ (the Greek equivalent) [seven](seven.html) times. The preceding pasuk highlights the emphasis on ‘tob’, good.

“The students of Hakham Akiba did not behave with respect towards each other, since they did not grasp the [secret](sod.html) of unity, they only grasped the external level. The hint to this is that between [Pesach](passover.html) and Shabuot there are 49 days (32 + 17) numerically equal to the words *Lev* *Tob* (32 + 17) (a good [heart](body.html)). They were just Lev (32) ([heart](body.html)), but not Tob (17) (good), since the beginning of the Torah, from (the word) ‘Bereshit (In the beginning)’ until (the words) ‘that the light was good,’ there are 33 words, and Tov represents the inner light which is the understanding of the unity, which starts to shine from the 33rd day of the [Omer](omer.html) until Shabuot, which is this light, the light of Shabuot, which is the light of Yechida (singularity). When Israel camped at Mount [Sinai](stages.html) to receive the Torah), it says there, ‘And *he* camped,’using the singular ‘he’, showing there total unity even though it referred to all of Israel and should have said ‘they camped’. This is the Torah of Hakham Shimon Ben Yochai, which is the light of the inner level, which he revealed on the day of his withdrawal from this [world](worlds.html), that from henceforth, the ‘light which was good’ shines. Likewise, the Holy Ari revealed his Inner Torah, which is the repair for the destruction (of the [Temple](temple.html)), which is the light of chachmah (wisdom), which brings to unity.”[[83]](#footnote-83)

***Ephesians 6:10-17*** *Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might. 11 Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the* [*devil*](demons.html)*. 12 For we wrestle not against flesh and* [*blood*](body.html)*, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this* [*world*](worlds.html)*, against* [*spiritual*](physical.html)[*wickedness*](wicked.html) *in high places. 13 Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. 14 Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness; 15 And your* [*feet*](heel.html) *shod with the preparation of the* [*gospel*](mishna1.html) *of peace; 16 Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the* [*wicked*](wicked.html)*. 17 And take the helmet of* [*salvation*](salvation.html)*, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God:* *18* [*Praying*](prayer.html) *always with all* [*prayer*](prayer.html) *and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints;*

In [halacha](walking.html) ([Jewish](gen-jew.html) [law](law.html)) the solemn “Tachanun” [prayer](prayer.html) is not recited on [Lag B’Omer](omer.html); until this day, we are also accustomed to follow [mourning](mourning.html) practices in memory of Hakham Akiba’s students who died during this period of [time](time.html) some [two](two.html) thousand years ago. According to tradition, the deaths ceased occurring on [Lag B’Omer](omer.html). Hakham Shimon ben Yochai was the talmid of Hakham Akiba. Hakham Akiba was the armor bearer for Ben Kochba (a messianic figure), a hint to the full armor of [HaShem](hashem.html).

In this Epistle we can see the “armor bearer” (Akiba) in chapter 6. We can see that the focus is on [one](one.html) [body](body.html) with many members and [Mashiach](mashiach.html) as the [head](body.html). The recurring theme of unity is hammered home repeatedly with many examples.

***Ephesians 6:19-24*** *And for me, that utterance may be given unto me, that I may open my* [*mouth*](body.html) *boldly, to make* [*known*](daat.html) *the mystery of the* [*gospel*](mishna1.html)*, 20 For which I am an ambassador in bonds: that therein I may* [*speak*](mashal.html) *boldly, as I ought to* [*speak*](mashal.html)*. 21 But that ye also may* [*know*](daat.html) *my affairs, and how I do, Tychicus, a beloved brother and faithful minister in the Lord, shall make* [*known*](daat.html) *to you all things: 22 Whom I have sent unto you for the same purpose, that ye might* [*know*](daat.html) *our affairs, and that he might comfort your hearts. 23 Peace be to the brethren, and love with faith, from God the Father and the Lord* [*Yeshua*](yeshua.html)[*Mashiach*](mashiach.html)*. 24* [*Grace*](grace.html) *be with all them that love our Lord* [*Yeshua*](yeshua.html)[*Mashiach*](mashiach.html) *in sincerity. Amen. To the Ephesians written from Rome, by Tychicus.*

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The above theme of cleaving and bonding to [HaShem](hashem.html) is also connected to the section of Rambam [studied](study.html) on [Lag B’Omer](omer.html). Rambam writes[[84]](#footnote-84) that although the blessings in the [Amidah](amida.html) [prayer](prayer.html) originally numbered [eighteen](eighteen.html), another blessing was later added by the Sages. For “In Rabban Gamliel’s days, the [number](nchart.html) of heretics in Israel increased, and they were wont to harass the [Jews](gen-jew.html) and seduce them to turn away from [HaShem](hashem.html). When he [Rabban Gamliel] saw that this [the necessity to remove this evil] was the most urgent of [needs](needs.html), he and his Rabbinical court composed a blessing.

In other words, the Sages saw that the “smell of the tannery” — the environment in which [Jews](gen-jew.html) lived — was influencing [Jews](gen-jew.html) to “turn away from [HaShem](hashem.html). What did they do about it? They composed a [prayer](prayer.html) to [HaShem](hashem.html) to eliminate this evil, for [prayer](prayer.html), Rambam writes ([Laws](law.html) of [Prayer](prayer.html) 1:2), is the duty “to ask [for [HaShem](hashem.html)] all that he [needs](needs.html).” Since the greatest need a [Jew](gen-jew.html) has is to cleave to [HaShem](hashem.html), the elimination of this evil (“seducing them to turn away from [HaShem](hashem.html)”) was “the most urgent need.”

Cleaving to [HaShem](hashem.html), then, is of the utmost importance and need to a [Jew](gen-jew.html); and on [Lag B’Omer](omer.html), Rashbi achieved the ultimate union with [HaShem](hashem.html) — “I am [one](one.html) with Him, I have a passion for Him, I cleave to Him.” This is also the goal of [prayer](prayer.html): To be “as a servant before his master,” negating [one](one.html)’s ego and self and being [one](one.html) with [HaShem](hashem.html).

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Torah was give by threes.

The [world](worlds.html) stands on [three](three.html) things.

The 33 curses in Vayikra 26:14-33 (Bechuqotai).

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Leah is mentioned 33 times in the Tanach. Leah means ‘weary’.

Our obligation towards the stranger appears a total of 33 times in the Torah.

Be’er Sheva occurs 33 times in Tanach.

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***Vayikra (Leviticus) 25:10*** *And ye shall hallow the fiftieth year, and proclaim liberty throughout the land unto all the inhabitants thereof; it shall be a* [*jubilee*](yovel.html) *unto you; and ye shall return every man unto his possession, and ye shall return every man unto his family.*

***Ephesians 3:14-19*** *For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord* [*Yeshua*](yeshua.html)[*Mashiach*](mashiach.html)*, 15 Of whom the whole family in* [*heaven*](heaven.html) *and earth is named, 16 That he would grant you, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man; 17 That* [*Mashiach*](mashiach.html) *may* [*dwell*](dwelling.html) *in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love, 18 May be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; 19 And to* [*know*](daat.html) *the love of* [*Mashiach*](mashiach.html)*, which passeth* [*knowledge*](knowledge.html)*, that ye might be filled with all the fulness of God.*

[Lag B’Omer](omer.html) is a celebration of the [Oral Torah](orallaw.html) ([gospel](mishna1.html) – mesorah). The [oral Torah](orallaw.html) [teaches](teacher.html) us how to perform the [mitzvot](cmds613.html). It is applicable to the [Noachide](noachide.html) and to the [Jew](gen-jew.html). Its transmittal requires a [teacher](teacher.html) and a talmid. This [teaches](teacher.html) us that Noachides must have a [teacher](teacher.html) and they must accept the [oral Torah](orallaw.html) in addition to the [seven](seven.html) [laws](law.html) of [Noach](noach.html). This mesorah is the focus of sefer Ephesians.

As Aharon was the “[mouth](body.html)” for Moshe and the [oral Torah](orallaw.html), so also is [Yeshua](yeshua.html) our “[mouth](body.html)” ([head](body.html)) and the [oral Torah](orallaw.html).

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1. Moshe Isserlis recorded that this day is a mini-festival. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. See Rema on Shulchan Aruch, Orach Chayim, 493:2 [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Ashkenazim call him Rabbi Akiva. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. Sanhedrin 86a [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. Rashi ad loc. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. Avodah Zarah 10b [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. Avodah Zarah 10b [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. The Shulchan Aruch (Orach Chaim 493:1) records the tradition, based on Yevamot 62b, that the students of Hakham Akiba all died during the period between [Pesach](file:///D%3A%5Cweb%5Cbetemunah%5Cpassover.html) and Lag B’Omer. [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. These were extremely great talmidim and we must understand that they were judged at their level. [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. Hakham Ovadia Yosef tells us that the custom of mourning was instituted during the Talmudic period. See: Hakham OvadiaYosef, Yabia Omer volume 5 O.H. section 38. See also Otzar HaGeonim on Yevamot 62b (page 141) and sources cited. [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
11. According to the Holy [Zohar](file:///D%3A%5Cweb%5Cbetemunah%5Corallaw.html) (Midrash Ne’elam, Toldot 140a). [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
12. The most basic book of Kabbalah [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
13. A central midrashic work [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
14. Talmudical-halachic [↑](#footnote-ref-14)
15. Mystical-kabbalistic [↑](#footnote-ref-15)
16. Marqos (Mark) 6:7 [↑](#footnote-ref-16)
17. Succah 45b [↑](#footnote-ref-17)
18. Romans 5:18, Bereans (Hebrews) 5:9 [↑](#footnote-ref-18)
19. The erev rav were the large mixed multitude of Gentiles who left Egypt with Moshe and the Jewish people. [↑](#footnote-ref-19)
20. Shabbat 157a; Beitzah 2a-b. [↑](#footnote-ref-20)
21. Luqas (Luke) 6:5 [↑](#footnote-ref-21)
22. Zohar III:124b [↑](#footnote-ref-22)
23. Likutey Halahkot, Hekhsher Keilim 4 [↑](#footnote-ref-23)
24. II Luqas (Acts) 4:12, Romans 1:16, Ephesians 1:13. [↑](#footnote-ref-24)
25. for example, Rashi Shemot 30:3 [↑](#footnote-ref-25)
26. Sefer Yetzirah [↑](#footnote-ref-26)
27. Shir Rappaport, the well-known historian of the 19th Century. Orah Haim 493,7 [↑](#footnote-ref-27)
28. Midrash Rabbah - Shemot 29:9 [↑](#footnote-ref-28)
29. Ta’anith 23a [↑](#footnote-ref-29)
30. HaTikkun HaKlali [↑](#footnote-ref-30)
31. Yeremiyahu (Jeremiah) 25:11-12 [↑](#footnote-ref-31)
32. Midrash Rabbah Shemot 1:32 [↑](#footnote-ref-32)
33. Bereshit (Genesis) 2:25 [↑](#footnote-ref-33)
34. Malachi 2:25 [↑](#footnote-ref-34)
35. Mishnah Berurah 493:1 [↑](#footnote-ref-35)
36. Ephesians 5:27 [↑](#footnote-ref-36)
37. HaShem puts a rainbow in the sky whenever we deserve to be flooded from the earth. Thus we did not deserve to be flooded during H. Yochai’s life because of his merit. [↑](#footnote-ref-37)
38. Bereshit Rabbah 35:2 [↑](#footnote-ref-38)
39. There is a Kabbalistic tradition that on Lag B’Omer a rainbow will appear in a different color, which will symbolize the arrival of the Messianic age (Bnei Yissaschar). [↑](#footnote-ref-39)
40. Bereshit 6:11-12 [↑](#footnote-ref-40)
41. From B’nei Yissaschar [↑](#footnote-ref-41)
42. This custom of lighting bonfires on Lag B’Omer dates back to antiquity, particularly at the grave of the great tanna and his son. This practice is recorded in the ancient journal *Ahavat Ssiyon*. [↑](#footnote-ref-42)
43. Devarim (Deuteronomy) 33:4 [↑](#footnote-ref-43)
44. Ordination [↑](#footnote-ref-44)
45. Chida, Tov Ayin 18 [↑](#footnote-ref-45)
46. Responsa: Yoreh Deiah 233 [↑](#footnote-ref-46)
47. Meam Loez, Shemot 16:12 [↑](#footnote-ref-47)
48. Midrash Rabbah - Numbers XVI:24 [↑](#footnote-ref-48)
49. Yoma 75b [↑](#footnote-ref-49)
50. Yoma 75a [↑](#footnote-ref-50)
51. Ephesians 1:4 [↑](#footnote-ref-51)
52. Yochanan (John) 3:32-34 [↑](#footnote-ref-52)
53. Referring to the Torah, the heveanly food and drink which HaShem has prepared for Israel. [↑](#footnote-ref-53)
54. Kaf HaChaim 493,27; Aruch HaShulchan 493,7; Chaye Adam 131,11 and others. [↑](#footnote-ref-54)
55. Bnei Yissaschar, Iyar 3,3 [↑](#footnote-ref-55)
56. The Rambanin his commentary to Parshat Emorconsiders sefirato be a chol hamoedof sorts sandwiched between the holidays of Pesachand Shavuot. [↑](#footnote-ref-56)
57. Water Drawing and puring ceremony. [↑](#footnote-ref-57)
58. Succah 5:2-3 [↑](#footnote-ref-58)
59. The raised platform, in the [sysnagogue](file:///D%3A%5Cweb%5Cbetemunah%5Csynagog.html), where the Torah is read. [↑](#footnote-ref-59)
60. Yevamoth 62b [↑](#footnote-ref-60)
61. Rav Yichiel Michel Epstein, Aruch HaShulchan 493:1. He also sites the Chok Ya’akov (493:3) and mentions the opinion of Rav Yochanan ben Nuri, that the maximum hell to which a soul may be sentenced is the length of the period between [Pesach](file:///D%3A%5Cweb%5Cbetemunah%5Cpassover.html) and Shavuot, (Mishna Edyot 2:9) which further points to the *judgment* aspect of this period. [↑](#footnote-ref-61)
62. During the fifth month of the fifth year we are reading: Ex.23:20 – 28:43, which is about setting up the Mishkan and the priests. [↑](#footnote-ref-62)
63. cf., Psalms 104:15 and I Kings 5:8. See also Talmud, Sotah 14a [↑](#footnote-ref-63)
64. Marqos 7:24-30 [↑](#footnote-ref-64)
65. Moed Katan 9b [↑](#footnote-ref-65)
66. Raya Mehemna [↑](#footnote-ref-66)
67. Succah 45b [↑](#footnote-ref-67)
68. Hakham Leibel Resnick in “The Mystery of Ben Kokhba” (Jason Aaronson, 1996) [↑](#footnote-ref-68)
69. Shemot (Exodus) 16 [↑](#footnote-ref-69)
70. Shemot (Exodus) 12:37-38, Devarim (Deuteronomy 29:10-13. [↑](#footnote-ref-70)
71. In the introduction to Sefer Bereshit and Responsa Meishiv Davar 44 [↑](#footnote-ref-71)
72. Hakham Moshe Bogomilsky [↑](#footnote-ref-72)
73. Gemara Shabbat 88b [↑](#footnote-ref-73)
74. The spiritual level of these 12,000 pairs was so great that even the most insignificant of flaws would be unacceptable. Consider that we would have been ‘fried’ by their spirituality if we had stood in their presence. [↑](#footnote-ref-74)
75. Sanhedrin 86a [↑](#footnote-ref-75)
76. II Tzefet (Peter) 3:3-7 [↑](#footnote-ref-76)
77. Tehillim (Psalm) 126:1-6 [↑](#footnote-ref-77)
78. Gittin 4a [↑](#footnote-ref-78)
79. Eruvin 13 [↑](#footnote-ref-79)
80. See also Pirkei de-Rabbi Eliezer, ch. 41 (Eshkol ed., Jerusalem, p. 158) [↑](#footnote-ref-80)
81. Shoftim (Judges) 5:31. [↑](#footnote-ref-81)
82. Tehillim (Psalms) 68:10. [↑](#footnote-ref-82)
83. Hakham Avraham Brandwein of Yerushalayim. [↑](#footnote-ref-83)
84. Mishneh Torah, Laws of Prayer 2:1 [↑](#footnote-ref-84)