

27. **For therapeutic purposes.** One who is ill may listen to music to lift his spirits (הגרשו"א, הליכות שלמה פסח פי"א הערה 54, הגר"נ קרליץ), as well as one experiencing melancholy or depression (הגר"ח (קנייבסקי). In these scenarios, it is best to listen with earphones if possible so others do not hear.

Halachos of Lag Ba'Omer

Erev Lag Ba'Omer

28. **Tachanun.** Tachanun is not said at Minchah on Erev Lag Ba'Omer (מ"ב סק"ט, ומ"ב ס"י קל"א סק"ג).

Haircuts

29. The Mechaber holds that one should not get a haircut until the morning of the 34th of the omer (שו"ע סי' תצ"ג ס"ב), beginning at neitz (מ"ב סק"ו). The Rama holds one may get a haircut Lag Ba'Omer morning but not the night before (רמ"א שם). However, there are Acharonim who hold one may get a haircut the night before (א"ר (סק"ז הובא במ"ב סק"א, שעי"ת סק"ה). The Arizal's minhag was not to get a haircut at all (above, 18).

30. **Upsherin.** The Arizal's minhag was to cut the hair of three-year-old boys in Meron on Lag Ba'Omer, leaving their peyos (שעי"ת סי' תקל"א) (סק"ב). This is considered "making peyos," not giving a haircut. Therefore, both the Mechaber and Rama would allow doing an upsherin on Lag Ba'Omer night (הגר"ש"א, הלכות חג בחג ספה"ע פי"ז הערה ג' (58), שו"ת אור לציון ח"ג פי"ז תשובה ג' upsherins before Lag Ba'Omer.

Listening to Music

31. According to the Mechaber, music, like haircuts, is only mutar on the morning of Day 34. The Rama holds it is mutar on Lag Ba'Omer morning (שו"ת שבט הלוי ח"ה סי' קס"ה אות ה').

32. Nevertheless, in Eretz Yisroel, many are meikel on music for Rashbi's yahrzeit even at night (חו"ט שני שבת ח"ד עמ"ל ש"פ), e.g., at bonfires in honor of Rashbi. One should not listen to music on the way to Meron before neitz of Lag Ba'Omer.

Weddings on Lag Ba'Omer

33. According to the Mechaber, weddings should not take place until the morning of Day 34 of sefirah since weddings have the same status as haircuts (מ"ב סק"ה). According to the Rama, weddings should only take place on Lag Ba'Omer day, not night. Even the Mishnah Berurah, who allows haircuts on Lag Ba'Omer night (above, 29), writes that he did not see people being meikel on weddings on Lag Ba'Omer night (מ"ב סק"א).

34. Nevertheless, some do permit making weddings on Lag Ba'Omer night after tzeis. If necessary, [e.g., that is the only night a hall has open,] one may rely on this (פר"ח ס"ב, שעי"ת סק"ה, שו"ע הרב ס"ה) and even have music and dancing. However, everyone agrees one may not make a wedding before tzeis of Lag Ba'Omer night.

35. **Seudah that continues into 34th at night.** If people who also practice aveilus after Lag Ba'Omer make a wedding on Lag Ba'Omer day, they should take care to finish the seudah and dancing before the 34th night. If necessary, they may be meikel and continue into the night (שו"ת מנח"י ח"ד סי' פ"ד אות א') (אהר"י ח"א סי' צ"ז, חוט שני שבת ח"ד עמ"ל ש"פ), and that is the common minhag of those who make weddings on Lag Ba'Omer.

Going to Meron This Year

ונשמרתם מאד לנפשותיכם

36. This is the first year after the horrific tragedy in Meron in which 45 men, bochurim, and boys were killed, lo aleinu. Lag Ba'Omer is the first yahrzeit of their holy neshamos rising to Shamayim to bask in the glory of the Shechinah.

37. Because of this, the authorities implemented many new rules and laws to minimize the number of people on Har Meron at one time. They are selling tickets, limiting time spent there, organizing transportation, regulating the number of bonfires and how they are made, and the like. They say it is all for increased on-site safety to prevent a repeat tragedy, chas v'shalom.

38. However, they also ruined many measures that were taken at the holy site of Meron to preserve the location's kedushah and unique character and to ensure it is suitable for G-d-fearing people, e.g., they abolished the men's mehadrin path. They also abolished many things that were done for hundreds of years, e.g., the tremendous celebration and legendary "Hilula" at the courtyard of R' Shimon bar Yochai's kever, with various excuses.

39. While the destruction of kedushah and forced control over a holy site can cause the feeling that we will not listen to any of their rules or management, both the Torah and logic dictate that some changes should be made. There must be increased caution for the sake of the public and to ensure that the huge crowds that come to R' Shimon bar Yochai's kever in Meron are not endangered, chas v'shalom.

Entering a Cramped Area

40. It is forbidden to enter an area where people are packed close together. One who does so first of all endangers himself, and he also endangers others. When people are overcrowded together, any small movement can trigger a chain of movements, causing people to fall. When a person falls in a very crowded area, it is hard to make room for him to stand up and people can easily fall on top of him, leading to disaster. It is certainly forbidden to intentionally push people from behind; all the more so when going from a wide space into a narrow space.

Consideration for Others

41. The reason R' Akiva's 24,000 talmidim died in this period is because they did not behave with respect toward each other (גמ' (בימות דף ס"ב ע"ב). To rectify this, we must try very hard to improve in this area by honoring and having consideration for others with renewed energy.

42. **Lingering at R' Shimon's kever.** Everyone wants to enter the inner area of R' Shimon bar Yochai's holy kever on Lag Ba'Omer to pour out his troubles at the kever of the saintly Tanna: a holy place at a holy time. But of course he is not the only one who wants to do this; hundreds of thousands of people also want to have this zechus. It is also clear that the site is too small and narrow to contain everyone who goes to Meron. Every year, it is a very dangerous place.

43. Therefore, it is both self-evident and required by the Torah under the mitzvah of לרעך לאהבתך כמוך that each person must have consideration for others by davening a short tefilah at the kever and then quickly leaving the area and completing his tefillos outside so others can also have the zechus. This is exactly what the Kohen Gadol did: even though he entered the Kodesh HaKodashim just once a year on Yom Kippur, he only said a brief tefilah, giving up the opportunity to pour his heart out in tefilah in the Kodesh HaKodashim on the holy day even without ushers hustling him out. This was out of consideration for others, lest the crowds waiting outside become worried that he died, (משנה יומא פ"ה מ"א) ח"ו. This was a segulah for Hashem to accept his tefillos. Incidentally, the piyut Bar Yochai mentions the Kodesh HaKodashim...

44. Also, since lingering at the site of the kever will prevent others from coming to Har Meron due to barricades and the like, one who does so withholds the opportunity from his fellow, steals time, and causes distress to other people who want to go on the mountain to daven at R' Shimon bar Yochai's kever.

45. Someone who stubbornly insists on remaining inside the kever or lingering on the mountain more than he should demonstrates that the world revolves around him and other people's needs are not important to him. This is not a segulah for his tefilos to be accepted or for him to be zocheh to the light of R' Shimon bar Yochai. This also does not rectify the situation of R' Akiva's talmidim.

הייתם קדושים

46. The mingling of men and women in Meron is a problem every year. Even when there was a mehadrin path, the area before the path, the buses, and the stations on the way were all issues. Now that they blatantly abolished the mehadrin path and will be checking everyone's tickets, there will be a mass of men and women in one spot, and it will probably be a very bad situation with pushing and pressure to go onto to the mountain. Therefore, everyone must be extremely careful to avoid nisayon. Bochurim and girls probably should not go at all for multiple reasons. [Chazal instituted three days of fasting – "בה"ב" – after Pesach and Sukkos because groups of men and women would come on Yom Tov to hear the drashah and they would look at each other (תוס' קידושין דף פ"א ע"א ד"ה סקבא) and they would look at each other (תוס' קידושין דף פ"א ע"א ד"ה סקבא) and they would look at each other. They instituted three days of fasting for something like this ...]

מזל טוב וגדיא יאה

הגליון נתרם לרגל שמחת לידת בנו הבכור
להרב ר' יצחק בלייער שליט"א מחשובי אנרבי בארא פארק
בן מוריני הרב רבי חיים אהרן בלייער שליט"א
וחתן הרה"ח ר' דוד הערץ שליט"א אב"י בארא פארק
ברכת מזל טוב שנורה לסבים
הרה"ח ר' יהושע שמואל בלייער שליט"א – פטרון המערכת
והרה"ח ר' יעקב פריער שליט"א לייקוואד – ירושלים
והרה"ח ר' יעקב מנתם פישער שליט"א – בארא פארק

תורתנו מגן לנו, היא מאידת עינינו. הוא ימליץ טוב בעדנו, אדוננו בר יוחאי