

YESHIVAS TORAH ORE
YERUSHALAYIM



ישיבת תורה אור
בש"ס ירושלים

Family & Friends

Parshas Behar - Bechukosai

May 22nd 2025 - Iyar 17 5785



Lag BaOmer in Yeshiva



Mazel Tov

Heartfelt Mazel Tov wishes to:

Ezra Behr on his recent engagement.

Eytan Wolf on his recent engagement.

Rabbi & Mrs. Yanky Mincus in his daughter's engagement.

steady effort and emunah.

Yovel, the Jubilee year, adds another layer by resetting economic imbalances—returning land to original owners and freeing servants (Vayikra 25:10). This cycle reflects a deeper truth about perspective. No matter our successes or struggles, Yovel reminds us that our circumstances are temporary in Hashem's eternal plan. In learning, this might mean recognizing that a difficult Tosfos or a moment of clarity is just one step in a lifelong journey. By viewing our efforts through Yovel's lens, we find balance, neither inflated by progress nor discouraged by setbacks.

Bechukosai shifts focus to the consequences of our choices, opening with "If you walk in My statutes" (Vayikra 26:3). Rashi explains "bechukosai" as toiling in Torah, a process of persistent engagement. This toil shapes not just knowledge but character. Every Rashi pondered

PARSHAS BEHAR BECHUKOSAI

RABBI MORDCHE GURWITZ

Parshas Behar-Bechukosai invites us to explore the interplay between Mitvos Hashem and personal choices, offering insights into faith and discipline.

Behar introduces the mitzvos of Shemittah and Yovel, laws governing the land's rest and economic restoration.

Bechukosai follows with blessings for following Torah and warnings of the Tochacha for straying. Together, these parshiyos reveal how our inner world aligns with Hashem's will through trust and commitment.

Shemittah, detailed in Behar, mandates that the land lie fallow every seventh year (Vayikra 25:1-7). The farmer must trust Hashem's promise to provide sustenance (25:20-21), surrendering control over crops and livelihood. This act of faith resonates beyond agriculture.

In our own lives, Shemittah suggests moments of pause—stepping back from the drive to achieve and trusting that growth unfolds in Hashem's timeline. The very same lesson holds true in limud HaTorah. For instance, we might feel pressured to master a sugya quickly. Yet, like the farmer, we can learn to release that urgency, allowing insights to emerge naturally through

or question wrestled with refines our patience and sharpens our focus. The Tochacha, by contrast, underscores the stakes of drifting from this path (26:14-43). It's a quiet reminder that Torah's impact depends on how we internalize it—whether we let it guide our thoughts and actions or allow it to remain theoretical.

The parsha's laws, from Shemittah's trust to Yovel's perspective to Bechukosai's toil, point to a life of intention. They ask us to consider how we approach challenges, whether in learning or beyond. Do we trust in Hashem's timing? Do we see our efforts as part of a larger journey? Do we invest in Torah with diligence? These questions linger as we turn the parsha's pages, inviting us to reflect on our path and its quiet alignment with Hashem's will.

LAG BAOMER TO SHAVUOS

The period from Lag B'Omer to Shavuos, spanning late Iyar to early Sivan, marks a unique spiritual arc in the Jewish calendar. These weeks bridge the exuberance of Lag B'Omer—commemorating the cessation of the plague among Rabbi Akiva's students and the legacy of Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai—with the profound moment of Shavuos, when we received the Torah at Har Sinai. For the



Shabbos in Netanya.

individual, this journey invites reflection on discipline, joy, and readiness to embrace Torah anew.

Lag B'Omer, the 33rd day of the Omer, arrives amid the Sefiras HaOmer's mourning period, a time recalling the tragedy of Rabbi Akiva's 24,000 students who perished for lacking respect toward one another (Yevamos 62b). The day's celebration, tied to Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai's yahrzeit and his teachings in the Zohar, signals a shift. Rabbi Shimon's life exemplified a fiery devotion to Torah, even under Roman persecution. For someone immersed in yeshiva life, Lag B'Omer might prompt a quiet question: What fuels my own learning? The day's bonfires and joy hint at an inner spark—enthusiasm for a difficult Gemara or a Rashi that suddenly clicks. It's a moment to rekindle that passion, letting it burn steadily through the Omer's remaining days.

As we count the Omer toward Shavuos, the focus sharpens. The Omer period mirrors the Klal Yisrael's journey from Mitzraim to Har Sinai, a time of preparation for Kabalas HaTorah. Each day of counting is a step toward refining oneself, much like polishing a vessel to hold something precious. In the Beis Medrash, this might mean tackling a challenging sugya with greater patience or pausing to internalize a new halacha. The Maharal teaches that the 49 days correspond to refining the seven middos (character traits) over seven weeks (Tiferes Yisrael). This structure invites introspection: Are we cultivating humility in our learning? Are we persistent when a Tosfos feels impenetrable? The Omer's discipline prepares us to approach Shavuos with clarity.



Aerial firefighting behind the Yeshiva.

Shavuos itself, on the 6th of Sivan, commemorates Matan Torah, when Hashem gave the Torah to a unified Israel (Shemos 19:2). The Midrash describes the nation preparing with awe, cleansing themselves to receive Dvar Hasehm – the divine word (Shemos Rabbah 29:9). For the individual, Shavuos is less about grand resolutions and more about renewal—a chance to recommit to Torah as if standing at Har Sinai. It's the quiet resolve to open the Gemara with fresh eyes or to daven with deeper focus.

The path from Lag B'Omer's spark to Shavuos' revelation traces an inner journey. It begins with joy, grows through discipline, and culminates in readiness. As we navigate these weeks, we might ask: How do our daily efforts—turning pages, wrestling with questions—shape us to receive Torah anew? The answer unfolds in the silence of our own learning.

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