

## **Simchat Shmuel - Joyful Jewish Wisdom for Lag BaOmer**

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As we commemorate Lag B'Omer, we reflect on the both the tragedy that befell the 12,000 pairs of students of Rabi Akiva, as well as the new generation of disciples of Rabi Akiva, including Rabi Shimon Bar Yochai, who restored the glory of Torah throughout Israel.

Of course, Lag BaOmer is observed as the hillula, the celebration of the life and legacy of Rabi Shimon Bar Yochai. Rav Moshe Wolfson shlita points out that Rabi Shimon Bar Yochai learned from his teacher Rabi Akiva, that every single letter in the Torah contains many thousands of secrets, each letter is valuable and important well beyond its face value. Rabi Shimon Bar Yochai explained further that every single Jewish soul, corresponds to an Ot - a letter in the Torah. If every single letter contains immeasurable secrets and meaning, then so too we must infer that every single neshama has immeasurable value and significance!

Therefore Rabbi Wolfson concludes that Lag BaOmer is indeed the tikun for the tragic episode of the 12,000 pairs of Rabi Akiva's students, who failed to see the value in one another's scholarship, and failed to treat each

other with dignity and respect. We celebrate the life of Rashbi, as his legacy serves to remind us of the inner importance and sanctity of each and every member of Klal Yisrael.

Lag Samei'ach!