

## QUESTION

- 1) I write this question with tears and pain over the unspeakable tragedy that happened to *Klal Yisrael* at the holy site of the Rashbi. There were a couple of eerie points in the tragedy. (a) There is a *Gemara* that "It is proper to rely on Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai's view *b'shaas hadechak*, when we are "pushed" into having no choice, and the 45 *korbonos* this year at Kever Rashbi were killed by being pushed. (b) And 45 is equal in *gematria* to one of the names of Hashem, which is known as the *Shem Ma"b*, the name of Hashem that equals the number 45. What can the Rav tell us to console us about the tragedy? Also, when we take accounting of our actions, what was the implication of the tragedy with regards to the *tikkun* that we need. What is it that we especially need to fix? Also, what is the connection between this tragedy and the *Galus* and the *Geulah*, both on a collective level as well as on a personal and inner level?
- 2) Although the government of Israel is not a real *malchus*, I felt as if the involvement of Chareidi politicians were to blame, for lack of organizing the event properly, for lack of responsibility, and just letting the oversized crowd to run it, etc.... it seems to me that had the government been running it, this tragedy wouldn't have occurred, because they know how to organize things well and they are better equipped for events like this [i.e. large crowds]. So how should we handle this matter?
- 3) What can you say and respond to a youngster (bachur) who was there and saw the disaster in front of him?

## ANSWER

1) Everything in Creation has a *chitzoniyyus* (outer level) and a *pnimiyyus* (inner level). Of Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai it is said נעשה אדם בעבורך "Man was made because of you." The *gematria* of the word for man, "adam," is 45. *Chazal* said that in the future, "The *tzaddikim* will be called by the name of their Creator," and a degree of this already took place on This World with Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai, whom the *Zohar* compares to Hashem: "The face of the master Hashem – *da Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai*." This revelation, this *ohr*, is mainly in the End of Days, where the level called "Keser" (crown) is revealed. The *Keser* is the bridge between human beings and Hashem, as it were. The *ohr*, the revelations, in the End of Days are shining strongly now and it "shines" especially stronger on the *yahrtzeit* of Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai. There has been an ascent in this world in which there are souls who rose to the ideal level of the human being, called "adam." These 45 *neshamos* rose to the level of "adam." They rose together with Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai, and they were *zocheh* to enter into the *mesivta d'Rashbi*, in the higher world. And it was a realization of בקרובי אקדש "With My close ones, I am sanctified," such as what took place at the inauguration of the Mishkan [with the deaths of Nadav and Avihu]. And here as well, this Lag B'Omer, there has been a day of special ascent for the soul of Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai, an ascent to the level of "adam," the ideal level of man along with 45 *neshamos* who were very, very worthy of ascending together with Rabbi Shimon Bar Yochai. They are praiseworthy in their portion. But in the *chitzoniyyus*, in the outer level of this event, the 50<sup>th</sup> level of *tumah*, which counters the 50<sup>th</sup> level of *kedushah* was active. Whereas, the highest levels of *kedushah* bring a person above the normal human level, the lowest levels of *tumah* are able to bring a person beneath the normal human level, below the level of *adam*. That is

where the world has fallen today. And, G-d forbid, even in a *makom kadosh*, a holy place such as Meron, these impure devices of the 50<sup>th</sup> level of *tumah* enter there daily. Even on the holy day of Lag B'Omer, in a place where *chassidus* is guarded so carefully, it is now filled with these impure devices, which were used to take pictures of the tragedy, etc.. So, on the one hand, the great exalted light of the 50<sup>th</sup> level of *kedushah* shines, but at the same time, its opposite, which is the 50<sup>th</sup> level of *tumah*, counters its radiance, G-d forbid. As is known, every year on Lag B'Omer Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai's soul becomes elevated again. On the one hand, Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai ascends to his high place above his burial place, but at the same time, on the world down below, the "heads of the *Erev Rav*" take control of this place because of the 50<sup>th</sup> level of *tumah* which runs rampant today.

2) At the *levayah* of Rebbi Shimon bar Yochai it was already like this. The *Idra Zuta* brings a story that the people of Tzipuri got into an argument with the people of Meron about where Rebbi Shimon bar Yochai should be buried. Until this day, the fighting concerning Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai's burial place continues in different forms. Part of the fighting is done with good intentions. Part of the fighting is coming from personal, ulterior motivations. And part of the fighting is coming from the "Erev Rav." We should never be involved with the "Erev Rav," whether it is an individual, or a leader, or the government of the "Erev Rav." And certainly we should not be involved with them when it comes to a holy place. Hashem, in His goodness, will do as He sees fit.

3) Every person who has experienced and seen this disaster needs to clarify this according to their own individual soul, and it is impossible to give guidelines on how each individual should act, and how to act with him.

