

THE OMER - COUNTDOWN TO REVELATION

Week One

Baruch Atah Adonai Eloheinu, melech ha'olam, asher kid'shanu be'mitzvotav ve'tzivanu al Sefirat ha'Omer. Ha'yom, yom echad [sheni, shlishi...] ba'Omer.

Blessed are you, O Lord our God, King of the Universe, who has sanctified us through Your commandments, and has commanded us to count the Omer.
Today is Day [one, two, three.etc.] of the Omer.

Today is **Day 1**



Aleph - Psalm 119:1-8 “*Ashrei* - Happy are those whose walk is blameless, who walk within the instruction of the LORD.”

The *mitzvot* [good deeds done in obedience to His commandments] bring God into our lives through the intricate choreography of a life lived in accordance with God's will. They are the poetry of the everyday, turning life into a sacred work of art. ~ Rabbi Sacks

“You are to love Adonai your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength. This is the greatest and most important mitzvah. And a second is similar to it, ‘You are to love your neighbor as yourself.’ All of the Torah and the Prophets are dependent on these two mitzvot.” ~ Rav Yeshua

Today is **Day 2**



Bet - Psalm 119:9 -16 “*Bemah yezakeh* - How can a young man purify his path, to keep it according to Your Word?”

"The heart is deceitful above all things, it is exceedingly weak--who can know it?" (Jeremiah 17:9).

God asks for one's heart. Yet our greatest failures stem from the heart and our emotions. Only growing in intimate knowledge of Him and thereby coming to love Him more and more will purify the heart.

“The regard for the ego permeates all our thinking. Is it ever possible to disentangle oneself from the intricate plexus of self-interests? Indeed, the demand to serve God in purity, selflessly, ‘for His sake,’ on the one hand, and the realization of our inability to detach ourselves from vested interests, represent the tragic tension in the life of piety.”

~ Rabbi Abraham Heschel

Today is **Day 3**



Gimel - Psalm 119:17-24 “*G'mol* – Deal bountifully with Thy servant, that I may live and keep Thy Word. Open my eyes that I may behold wonderful things in Thy Torah.”

Every *mitzvah* is a miniature act of redemption. Every act, no matter how small, that is performed in loving obedience to God's will brings a healing to the brokenness of the world.

“*Mitzvot* teach us that faith is active, not passive. It is a matter of what we do, not just what happens to us. Performing a mitzvah, we come close to God, becoming His partner in the work of creation.”

~ Rabbi Jonathan Sacks

Today is **Day 4**



Dalet - Psalm 119: 25-32 “*Davka* - My soul cleaves to the dust; revive me according to Thy Word. ...Make me understand the way of Thy precepts, so I will meditate on Thy wonders.”

“Every mitzvah is a window in the wall separating us from God. Each mitzvah lets God’s light flow into the world.” ~ Rabbi Sacks

Each verse in this stanza of Psalm 119 starts with the Hebrew letter *dalet*. The pictograph for *dalet* is the door. Yeshua, as the loving-kindness and Word of God incarnate, opened a door whereby all can enter our Father’s Kingdom. He taught and lived a life that demonstrated the Way and Truth of God. These eight verses tell us that we must choose between the way of lies and the way of truth.

“Go in through the narrow gate; for the gate that leads to destruction is wide and the road broad, and many travel it; but it is a narrow gate and a hard road that leads to life, and only a few find it.”

~ Rav Yeshua

Today is **Day 5**



Hey - Psalm 119:33-40 “*Horeini* - “Teach me, O Lord, the way of Thy statutes, And I shall observe it to the end...Revive me through Thy righteousness.”

May we persevere, in faith, hope and strength ‘to the end’!

“With everlasting love have You loved Your people, the House of Israel. You have taught us Torah and commands, decrees and laws of justice. Therefore, Lord our God, when we lie down and when we rise up we will speak of Your decrees, rejoicing in the words

of Your Torah and Your commands for ever. For they are our life and the length of our days; on them will we meditate day and night.”

~ *Siddur*, Daily Prayer Book, 204-205

Today is **Day 6**



Vav - Psalm 119:41-48 “*Ve’yavoni* - May Thy lovingkindness also come to me, O Lord, Thy salvation according to Thy Word.”

The pictograph for *vav* is a nail, something that secures. These verses speak of our security in God’s word and His lovingkindness. All of our life can hang securely on Him. All of our pain and grief can be hung upon the one who was pierced for us.

“If a child knows that no-one will hear or respond to their crying, without His merciful and loving intervention, they will never cry out to their Father in Heaven. A child cries to be heard and simply wants to be held close and to know they are loved. When the Israelite slaves raised a cry from the depths of their being to God, He responded with miracles of salvation. Our blessed assurance is that our Father hears our cry. When we pray, He hears us.”

~Keren Hannah Pryor

Today is **Day 7**



Zayin - Psalm 119:49-56 “*Zechor* - “Remember the word to Thy servant, in which Thou hast made me hope.”

Pesach - Passover - is the season we are instructed to remember, just like the Sabbath. It is the appointed time of deliverance and new life, physically and spiritually.

“We need to remember the miracles of God, His great salvations that He undertakes when we, like the slaves in Egypt, are too weak to do anything ourselves. Redemption, however, is not about what *God* can do but is about what *we* can do in participation with Him as we respond to His call.

In the context of the Exodus, the miracles brought freedom but they alone didn't see the Israelites through the wilderness. Similarly, if a married couple depend on miracles to keep their love and relationship going, it won't last. It takes the building of trust and intimacy in a relationship - a fostering of the ability to hear the heart's cry of the other - that gives strength and the impetus to keep the relationship growing with new revelation.”

~Keren Hannah Pryor