

# Counting the Omer

## What Is Its Spiritual Prophetic Significance?

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### From the Depths of Slavery to a Kingdom of Priests

EVERY DETAIL IN SCRIPTURE IS FOR OUR LEARNING AND EDIFICATION. All the examples of the past are for our learning upon whom the ends of the world are come (1 Cor 10:11; Rom 15:4). Everyday, YHVH is uncovering the prophetic mysteries hidden in the Scriptures that are being revealed to those who diligently seek him by diligently studying to show themselves approved as a workman rightly dividing YHVH's Word (2Tim 2:15).

YHVH's command for us to count the *omer* as a countdown to the Feast of Weeks (Heb. *Shavuot*; Gr. *Pentecoste*, Lev 23:15–16) memorializes the Israelites' journey from spiritual babyhood to adulthood. During this 49-day count, Israel ascended from out of the depths of slavery and suffering in Egypt, was baptized in the Red Sea, and then arrived at Mount Sinai—a place of a spiritual standing before YHVH as a kingdom of priests (Exod 19:6). It was there that YHVH gave them his instructions in righteousness—the Torah on *Shavuot*. This period represents Israel's passage from slavery to freedom. They came out of slavery permeated with the leaven—the sins, values, and pagan concepts—of Egypt leaving it all behind as pictured by the Feast of Unleavened Bread. YHVH gave Israel 49 days to overcome and to get rid of the impurities of Egypt, and to become the nation Israel—a holy priesthood and the bride of YHVH. There, at the foot of Mount Sinai, YHVH wanted them to become his ambassadors to this world of his heavenly kingdom and truths.

The counting of the *omer* is the story of our lives also. It pictures our going from bondage to the world, the flesh and the devil and coming to a place of spiritual standing before YHVH, so that we can be used of him to advance his kingdom.

It's a process ordained of YHVH and it's his pattern that we must follow. There is no escape if we are to be groomed and prepared for use in YHVH's service.

### Why Fifty Days Between the Wave Sheaf Offering and *Shavuot*?

Fifty is the number of complete redemption or liberty. In ancient Israel, all debts were forgiven every seven years. This was called the seven-year cycle. Each seven years one had to let their land rest—no crops were planted. This was called the land Sabbath. Seven seven-year cycles equaled 49 years. In the Scriptures, we see that seven is the number YHVH uses to signify completion or perfection. Therefore, seven sevens, or 49 years, signified total completion. Seven Sabbaths represents redemption, liberty or rest in its fullest or ultimate sense. The fiftieth year was therefore the year of jubilee when all slaves were set free, all land was returned to its original owners and when all debts were forgiven. If Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread signified deliverance from sin (Egypt), then *Shavuot*, occurring 50 days after the wave sheaf offering during the week of the Feast of Unleavened Bread, symbolizes total redemption, deliverance and victory over sin. How? For us, this occurs through the divine gift and glorious power of the indwelling presence of the *Ruach HaKodesh* (the Set-Apart Spirit), which Yeshua poured out upon his disciples on the day of Pentecost.

We must recognize this YHVH-ordained process, submit to it and realize what he wants to accomplish in our lives as a result. As we are going through the process, we must keep our eyes on the end goal and keep heading in that direction. Yeshua is that end goal. He is the “end” or “final aim, goal of the Torah” (Rom 10:4). He is “the fulfillment of the law” or full manifestation or fruition of the Torah (Matt 5:17). As such, he is our example to follow. Paul says we are to imitate him—to do what he did (1 Cor 11:1).

### The 49 Days Represent a Time of Overcoming and Spiritual Development

When the people of Israel left Egypt, they were immersed or baptized in the Red Sea. This represents the re-deemed believer being baptized for the remission of sins at the time of their conversion, and their receiving the

Spirit of Elohim. The gift of YHVH's Spirit is for the purpose of producing within us YHVH's divine nature. There are seven levels of spiritual growth and development that involve overcoming and equipping so that we come to a place where YHVH can use us in a special way as his representatives on earth for kingdom outreach.

The seven levels of spiritual development of the divine nature are found in 1 Peter 1:4–8,

Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust. And beside this, giving all diligence, add to your **faith** virtue; and to **virtue** knowledge; and to **knowledge** temperance; and to **temperance** patience; and to **patience** godliness; and to **godliness** brotherly kindness; and to **brotherly kindness charity**. For if these things be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Master Yeshua the Messiah.

The fruit of the Spirit must proceed or underlay the gifts of the Spirit. Without love (or the fruit of the Spirit) all the gifts of the Spirit are zero, in YHVH's eyes (1 Cor 13). The power of the Spirit without the fruits makes for an out-of-control, fleshly or soulish, unloving, situation.

### Divine Empowerment for Kingdom Advancement

Upon conclusion of the 49 days, we arrive at the fiftieth day (in Hebrew, *mattan Torah*) or the *giving of the Torah*. It is at this point that we receive YHVH's gift from above—YHVH's Torah written on our hearts by his Set-Apart (Gr. *Paracletos* or Comforter, John 14:16–18, 25–26; 15:26; 16:7–8 12–14). The Spirit of Elohim is the One who comes along side of us to aid, help, strengthen and succor us in walking out the Torah. With this divine help, we are able to do that which we could not achieve by our own limited capacities. We receive the gift of true freedom from the world, the flesh and the devil through the gift of the Spirit of Elohim indwelling us, writing his Torah in our hearts thus empowering us to live at a spiritual level beyond what would be otherwise impossible solely through our own human initiative. It is by YHVH's divine empowerment that we are granted the ability to transcend our human limitations and touch the Divine.

The count of the *omer* is 49 days (7 times 7), which brings us into perfect completion in the fruits of the Spirit, so that we will be ready to be empowered by the gifts of the Spirit (Pentecost), thus empowering us to fulfill Yeshua's command in Acts 1:8 to evangelize the lost sheep of Israel with the gospel message. We can't reap this great wheat harvest of lost souls through human efforts alone. Only with the help of YHVH's divine empowerment are we up to this awesome and seemingly insurmountable task of regathering lost Israel.

The 49 days of the count of the *omer* gives us the time we need for removing the spiritual leaven from our lives, of overcoming and rising above the flesh—a period of spiritual cleansing and refinement before YHVH can properly use us without our being a spiritual liability as spiritual babes.

This time period also helps us to establish in our lives the disciplines of overcoming sin and progressively and continually ascending spiritually by defeating the world, flesh and devil. We will go through this process until the day we die.

### Why Seven Complete Sabbaths?

The Torah uses the phrase “seven complete Sabbaths” (Heb. *shabbatot*) not weeks (Heb. *shavuot*) in Leviticus 23:15. Why complete Sabbaths? What is a complete Sabbath? Some arguing in favor of a Sivan 6 Pentecost teach that though the Hebrew says *Sabbaths* it really means *weeks*. This is how *The ArtScroll Tanach* translates it. *Keil and Delitzsh* in their commentary on Leviticus 23:15 state that the term *complete Sabbaths* makes no sense, so it has to mean *weeks*. This is the standard rabbinical interpretation of this phrase. Yet according to *The Theological Word Book of the OT* and *Brown Drivers Briggs Lexicon*, *weeks* is not one of the definitions of the word *shabbatot*, though *weeks of sabbaths* is. What is a *complete weeks of Sabbaths*? It seems to indicate a complete or whole week from the first day (Sunday) to the seventh day (Saturday/Sabbath) with not a day lacking. Seven of these must be fully completed to arrive at Pentecost. It is interesting to note that Acts states, “When the day of Pentecost was **fully** come, they were all with one accord in one place” (Acts 2:1). Does the counting of the *omer*, which is seven seven-day weeks for a total of 49 days (7 times 7) representing “a completeness of a complete” represent the spiritual growth and development of the individual to come into perfect unity with YHVH and with his fellow man so that he will be spiritually prepared to receive the inner Torah of the heart, the gifts of the Spirit, and the oneness and accord within the body of Yeshua to be able to do the great commission and to reap the wheat harvest of lost Israel necessary to establish YHVH's kingdom as per Acts 1:6–8?

## Walking Together in One Accord

Learning to walk together and in one accord didn't just happen on the day of Pentecost in the upper room. It started in the years, months, weeks, and days prior to that momentous event. One accordance was not something that miraculously dropped down on YHVH's people in the upper room on the day of Pentecost. It started in the lives of the people as they were walking out the fruits of the Spirit in their homes, with their families, in their communities, on their jobs. It started with their relationships with their wives and children and radiated like rays of the sun out from there into a cold and dark world.

Walking in the fruits of the Spirit is a process that involves little-by-little overcoming the flesh nature, and allowing YHVH's will to permeate our every thought, word and deed every step of the way, every moment of the day. Then when people who are doing this come together, they will be in one accord with the Spirit of Elohim. Pentecost-type experiences with YHVH pouring out the gift of his Holy Spirit will happen again and again as it did several more times as recorded in the Book of Acts (Acts 2:46; 4:22-24; 31-32; 5:12; 8:6).

One accordness occurs as we progressively die to our old sinful man, overcome the world and the devil, and put on the mantle of YHVH's love (and all the other fruit of the Spirit). This is the deeper significance of the count of the *omer*.

## What Happened When the Early Believers Were Together and in One Accord

Here are examples from the Book of Acts of the divine break-through that occurred when YHVH's people were together and in one accord:

- **Acts 2:1-3**, And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with **one accord** in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them.
- **Acts 2:46-47**, And they, continuing daily with **one accord** in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart, praising Elohim, and having favour with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved.
- **Acts 4:23-24, 31-32**, And being let go, they went to their own company, and reported all that the chief priests and elders had said unto them. And when they heard that, they lifted up their voice to Elohim with **one accord**, and said, Lord, thou art Elohim, which has made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and all that in them is....And when they had prayed, the place was shaken where they were assembled together; and they were all filled with the Set-Apart Spirit and they spoke the word of Elohim with boldness. And the multitude of them that believed were of one heart and of one soul: neither said any of them that ought of the things which he possessed was his own; but they had all things common.
- **Acts 5:12**, And by the hands of the apostles were many signs and wonders wrought among the people; and they were all with **one accord** in Solomon's porch.
- **Acts 8:6**, And the people with **one accord** gave heed unto those things which Philip spoke, hearing and seeing the miracles which he did.

## The Purpose of Pentecost: Divine Empowerment to Gather Lost Israel

Let's note the last question the disciples asked Yeshua before he ascended to heaven, as well as his answer to the question:

“When they therefore were come together, they asked of him, saying, ‘Master, will you at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel?’ And he said unto them, ‘It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father has put in his own power. But you shall receive power, after that the Set-apart Spirit is come upon you, and you shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.’ And when he had spoken these things, while they beheld, he was taken up; and a cloud received him out of their sight.” (Acts 1:6-9)

These were the last words that Yeshua spoke on this earth before ascending to heaven. Mark that! Before leaving this earth for two thousand years, he gave to his hand-picked and personally trained disciples their most important commissioning statement. He told them to wait in Jerusalem to be filled with the power of the Spirit of Elohim. Why? They needed that supernatural and divine empowerment of the gifts of the Spirit so that they

would be able to fulfil the great commission to restore the kingdom of Elohim to those who had been scattered to the far corners of the earth.

What does this mean for you and me? What are we to do to help fulfill Yeshua's last command to his disciples?

For the laity, this means seeking the fullness of the Spirit and learning what divine gifts and callings YHVH has for each of us. We use these gifts and callings within and out of the body of Yeshua.

For spiritual shepherds and overseers, this means building, discipling and equipping the members of the body of Yeshua that you oversee, and then giving them encouragement and opportunity to function in those ministry callings. You must let go of the reigns of control, the one-man-show mentality and follow the Yeshua (and Eph 4:11) model where he was proud to say of his proteges, "The works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do..." (John 14:12).