



**Blessing for Counting the Omer:**

The Omer is counted every evening after nightfall.

Before counting though, we stand and say the following blessing:

**BA-RUCH A-TAH ADO-NAI E-LO-HE-NU**

**ME-LECH HA-OLAM ASHER KID-E-SHA-NU**

**BE-MITZ-VO-TAV-VETZI-VA-NU AL**

**SEFI-RAT HA-OMER.**

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם,

קִדְּשָׁנוּ בְּמִצְוֹתָיו וְצִוָּנוּ עַל סְפִירַת הָעוֹמֵר.

"Blessed are You oh LORD our God, King of the universe who has sanctified us with His commandments and commanded us concerning the counting of the Omer. Today is the \_\_\_ day of the Omer."

"Blessed are You, oh LORD our God, King of the universe, who has sanctified us by Your commandments and commanded us to be a light unto the nations and has given us Yeshua our Messiah, the light of the world."

Psalm 67 is also recited daily because it is composed of exactly 49 Hebrew words, which correspond to the 49 days of the Omer count. The Psalm is seasonally appropriate because of its harvest motif. It is spiritually appropriate because it speaks clearly of God's salvation (Yeshua) being made known over all the earth.

**Psalm 67:** "May God be merciful to us, and  bless us, and cause His face to shine on us. (Selah) So that Your way may be known on earth, Your salvation among all nations. Let the nations praise You, O God; let all the nations thank You. O let the nations be glad and sing for joy; for You shall judge the peoples righteously and govern the nations on earth. Selah. Let the nations give thanks to You, O God; let all the nations praise You. The earth

shall yield its increase; and God, our own God, shall bless us. God shall bless us; and all the ends of the earth shall fear Him.”

## Counting the Omer

### What is the Omer?

The "Omer" (literally, "sheaf") was grain from the first harvested barley that was brought to the Temple as a first fruits offering. The counting begins on the day after the Sabbath during Passover week when the first Omer of barley was harvested and brought to the Temple.



### When to count the Omer

**Leviticus 23:5-11:** “During the first month, on the 14<sup>th</sup> day of the month, in the evening is Adonai’s Passover. On the 15<sup>th</sup> day of the same month is the Feast of Matzot (Unleavened Bread) to Adonai. For 7 days, you are to eat matzah (unleavened bread). On the 1<sup>st</sup> day you are to have a holy convocation and you shall do no regular work. Instead you are to present an offering made by fire to Adonai for 7 days. On the 7<sup>th</sup> day is a holy convocation when you are to do no regular work. Adonai spoke to Moses says, ‘Speak to Yisrael and tell them: When you have come into the land which I give to you, and reap its harvest, then you are to bring the omer of the firstfruits of your harvest to the kohen (priest). He is to wave the omer before Adonai to be accepted for you. On the morrow after the Shabbat, the kohen is to wave it.”

**Leviticus 23:15,16:** “Then you are to count from the morrow after the Shabbat, from the day that you brought the omer of the wave offering, 7 complete Shabbatot (Shabbats). Until the morrow after the 7<sup>th</sup> Shabbat you are to count fifty days, and then present a new grain offering to Adonai.”

The question is, does the count always begin on the 16<sup>th</sup> of Nisan, the day after the 15<sup>th</sup>, which is a Sabbath being the first day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread, or does it always begin on the first day of the week after the 7<sup>th</sup> day Sabbath of Passover week? If it always begins on Nisan 16, then Shavuot will always be on Sivan 6. If the Feast of First Fruits always begins on the first day of the week, the day after the 7<sup>th</sup> day Sabbath, then there will never be a set date for First Fruits or Shavuot. Amazingly, nowhere in the Scriptures does it ever give a date for First Fruits or Shavuot suggesting that there never was a set date like there is for every other feast given in Scripture. From a Messianic point of view you can never get three days and three nights from 3pm on 14<sup>th</sup> of Nisan to the morning of the 16<sup>th</sup> of Nisan. Since the 14<sup>th</sup> of Nisan moves during the days of the week over the years, Messiah had to die in a year where the 14<sup>th</sup> of Nisan had to fall on a Wednesday. This also is a direct connection to the original Exodus when Nisan 14 fell on a Wednesday. Therefore, the counting of the Omer always begins on the first day of the week after Passover.

### Why Count the Omer for 49 days?

God commanded it:

**Leviticus 23:15,16:** “Then you are to count from the morrow after the Shabbat, from the day that you brought the omer of the wave offering, 7 complete Shabbatot (Shabbats). Until the morrow after the 7<sup>th</sup> Shabbat, you are to count fifty days.”

The Torah commands that during this time each year we count 49 days or 7 weeks from the day after the Sabbath of Passover week. The 50<sup>th</sup> day is the Feast of Shavuot, which means “weeks” from the counting of the 7 weeks. In Christianity this is known as the “Feast of Pentecost!” The first Pentecost was actually celebrated every year for 1,500 years before the book of Acts. Pentecost celebrates the giving of the Torah on Mt Sinai. To this day the Jewish people still keep the Feast of Pentecost every year.

The foremost reason to obey the LORD is that the count demonstrates our thrill for the impending occasion of receiving the Torah, God’s loving instruction. Just as a child often counts the days until the end of school or an upcoming family vacation, we count the days to show our excitement at again receiving the Torah. Counting in anticipation of an exciting event is quite understandable. Also it is not a countdown but a **count up** as we ascend the mountain of the LORD.

To better understand, we first need to answer a more basic question: Why did God wait 50 days after the Jews left Egypt before giving the Torah? Why didn't He simply give it to them in Egypt, or immediately after their departure?

The answer is that the Jews were not yet spiritually equipped to receive the Torah. For over 200 years, they had been living in an Egyptian society known to be the world center for immorality and vice.

The high-impact adventure of the Exodus — 10 miraculous plagues and the splitting of the Red Sea — launched the Jews into physical freedom. Yet a one-time experience, as powerful as it is, does not permanently change anyone's emotional attitude.

Spiritual growth, like climbing a ladder, must be one step at a time. The growth that occurs during this time is akin to a marathon. We pace ourselves and seek to improve day-by-day until we reach the day that we again receive the Torah.

But life is not a race to beat the other guy; life is a race to conquer your inner self. As we climb the ladder, which direction we're headed is more important than which rung we're on. Don't just count the Omer, make the Omer count!

The Messiah's resurrection makes the counting of the Omer a season of special significance and joy. For his disciples, it is a time to remember the resurrected Yeshua. All of His post-resurrection appearances and ascension fell within the days of the Omer count. He ascended on the 40<sup>th</sup> day of the Counting of the Omer.

