

## SEVENTH DAY OF PASSOVER – TRIUMPH AND VICTORY, MYSTERY OF OMER COUNTING

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Praise your glorious name, O Lord. Yours is the greatness and the power, the glory and the victory and the majesty: for all that is in the heaven and in the earth is yours. You reign over all and in your hand is power and might. Yours is the kingdom and you are exalted as head above all. We know that you try the heart and have pleasure in uprightness. Thank you for grace and favor and your plan of salvation. Our lives are in your hands. Please be merciful and help your people to learn the lessons needed in overcoming our human nature day by day and week by week as we prepare for your coming. We ask to understand the the real meaning of these days and incorporate them into our heart, mind and spirit and to be totally dedicated to serving you. It is our desire to be filled with your purity, truth and spirit. In the name of our Savior, Jesus Christ, we pray these things and thank you. Amen.

Greetings brethren! Today is the 21<sup>st</sup> day of Abib/Nisan and the seventh day of the Days of Unleavened Bread and the Passover feast. It is a day of great spiritual significance and there are lessons for us to learn. Let's turn to the historical account of the **Exodus**, chapter **14**. The Jews tell us that this was the very day that Israel crossed over the Red Sea. They left Egypt on the 15 day of Nisan which was Passover night after taking the Passover. Early the next morning at daybreak they were marching out of Egypt in ranks—600,000 men with women and children. That first week they hiked across the Sinai Peninsula all the way down to the shores of the Red Sea which is an arm of the Indian Ocean which separates Saudi Arabia from the Sinai Peninsula. The Lord went before them by day in a pillar of a cloud, to lead them the way; and by night in a pillar of fire, to give them light; to go by day and night. This was a march of about 250 miles. This means that if you divide 240 by six it would be forty miles per day. The Israelites were used to hard labor and were a strong people. On the seventh day they crossed the midst of the Red Sea on dry ground when God parted the waters back and the waters were a wall to them on the right hand and on the left.

**Exodus 14: 5-31**—the king of Egypt was told that the people had fled: and the heart of Pharaoh and his servants was turned against Israel after the death of Egypt's first born. They said, "Why have we done this, that we have let Israel go from serving us?" He made ready his chariot and took his people with him: and he took 600 chosen chariots and all the chariots of Egypt with captains, over every one of them, his horsemen, and his army and pursued Israel and overtook them encamped by the Red Sea. When Pharaoh drew near the children of Israel and they saw Egypt had marched after them, they were extremely afraid." They said to Moses: "*Better for us to serve the Egyptians, than we should die in the wilderness.*"

Notice **verse 13**. Moses replied: "Fear not, stand still and see the salvation of the Lord which he will show to you today: for the Egyptians whom you have seen today, you shall see no more

forever. The Lord shall fight for you, and you shall hold your peace.” The Lord told Moses, “I will harden the hearts of the Egyptians, they will follow Israel and I will get me honor upon Pharaoh—all his host, his chariots and his horsemen—and the Egyptians shall know that I am the Lord when I have gotten me honor. Why are you crying to me? Speak to the children of Israel that they go forward. Lift up your rod, stretch out your hand over the sea and divide it: and the children of Israel shall go on dry ground through the midst of the sea.”

The angel of God which went before the camp of Israel, moved and stood behind them, between the camp of the Egyptians and the camp of Israel becoming a cloud of light to Israel at night, but a cloud of darkness to the Egyptians so that the one came not near the other all the night. Moses stretched out his hand over the sea, and the Lord caused the sea to go back by a strong east wind all that night and made the sea dry land and the waters were divided. The children of Israel went into the midst of the sea upon the dry ground. The Egyptians pursued them and all Pharaoh’s horses, his chariots and his horsemen went in after them to the midst of the sea.

It came to pass in the morning watch (2 am to sunrise), the Lord troubled the host of Egyptians and took off their chariot wheels so that they drove them with difficulty. The Egyptians said, “Let us flee from the face of Israel; for the Lord fights for them against the Egyptians.” The Lord said to Moses, “Stretch out your hand over the sea that the waters may come again upon the Egyptians, upon their chariots and upon their horsemen.” Moses stretched forth his hand over the sea and the sea returned to its strength when the morning appeared and the Egyptians fled against it. The waters covered the chariots, horsemen and all the host of Pharaoh that came into the sea after Israel; there remained not one of them who survived. The Lord overthrew the Egyptians in the midst of the sea. Thus the Lord saved Israel from the hands of the Egyptians, and Israel saw the Egyptians lying dead on the shore. “And when the people of Israel saw that great work that the Lord had done in Egypt, the people feared the Lord and believed the Lord and his servant Moses.” These things really did happen.

**Exodus 15:1-3**—“Moses and the children of Israel sang a song of deliverance to the Lord, called the “Song of Moses”. “I will sing to the LORD, for He has triumphed gloriously!” These are the first 3 verses of the 19 verses. “The horse and its rider He has thrown into the sea! The Lord is my strength and song. And He has become my salvation; He is my God, and I will praise Him; my father’s God, and I will exalt Him. The Lord is a man of war; the Lord is His name.” The rest of the song can be read in **verses 4-19**. This is the seventh day of the Feast of the Passover and Unleavened Bread. This week’s Torah portion to be read for the 7<sup>th</sup> day of U.L.B. is **Exodus 13:17** through **Exodus 15:26**, some of these verses I have just quoted.

Article: *Making the Impossible Possible*. This is the lesson which we are to learn—**what is impossible for man is possible with God**. Christ said to his disciples in **Matthew 19:26**—“All things are possible with God.” There is nothing that he cannot do. In **Matthew 21:18-21**—On the way to the temple in Jerusalem Jesus was hungry, and “seeing a fig tree a far off, he came, if haply he might find anything thereon: and when he came to it, he found only leaves, for the time of figs was not yet. And his disciples heard him say unto it, ‘No man eat fruit of you hereafter forever.’ ” **Mark 11:12-14; 20-24**—on their return from Jerusalem, as they passed by the disciples saw the fig tree dried up from the roots and they marveled. Peter said, “The fig tree you cursed is withered away.” Christ said to his disciples, “Have faith in God. Whosoever shall

say unto this mountain, 'Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea'; and does not doubt in his hear, but believes that those things which he says will be done; he will have whatsoever he says. Therefore I say to you, whatever things you ask when you pray, believe that you will receive them, and you will have them." Christ taught his disciples that "whatever things you ask in prayer, **believe** that you will receive them and you will have them."

**Philippians 4:13**—"I can do all things through Christ which strengthens me." **Zachariah 4:6**—"not by might, nor by power, but **by my Spirit**, says the Lord of hosts." God's Spirit in us and growing energizes us and enables us to overcome. Israel thought their position was hopeless, but God showed them man's extremity is God's opportunity. When we cry out to God then he is able to act. Our extremity is God's opportunity. Some years ago a woman in faith felt she faced an impossible situation and prayed to God with all of her heart and being. God heard her prayer and intervened. She called it a "prayer of desperation."

Turn to **Joel 2**. The Prophet Joel looks far into the future at coming judgment yet to come during the time of the *Day of the Lord*. **Joel 2:10-12** (Moffat translation) –"At the advance the land is quaking, the heavens are shaking, sun and moon are dark, the stars have ceased to shine, and the Eternal thunders in front of his army [[a mighty host is his, and strong are they who execute his orders. For the Eternal's day is great and awful: who can endure it?]]. Turn to me with all your heart, fasting, weeping, mourning; come heart-broken, not with garments torn." Put your whole heart and being into prayer. **Verse 13** (NKJV) —"Rend (tear open your heart), and not your garments; Return to the Lord YHVH your God for he is gracious and merciful, slow to anger and of great kindness; and he relents from doing harm (evil)."

This seventh day of the feast of Passover and Unleavened Bread—is a day of completion and freedom and the day when Pharaoh's army was destroyed in the Red Sea and Israel was suddenly set from perishing by the power of God. In the article, "*Making the Impossible Possible*" the rabbi says, "When there is something that we want to accomplish looks impossible we have two choices: either give up altogether, or least try to do what we can. The Israelites had reached a dead end at the edge of the Red Sea which was in flood stage. Crossing the Red Sea to the other side seemed impossible. It appeared as though they were going to be captured by the fast approaching Egyptian army. Jewish sages relate that when Moses did as God said and spoke to the children of Israel and raised his rod over the Red Sea and told Israel to go forward, Nason immediately acted in faith and stepped into the water, at which point God acted and miraculously the waters began to split and the sea opened up before Israel letting the entire nation cross over to freedom walking on dry ground. Then they believed Moses and God."

The lesson for us today is : when we try to do what we can do no matter how difficult and impossible the situation we are facing seems, with God's help and according to his will, we can accomplish more than we thought possible. With men, it may be impossible, but **with God all things are possible**.

*The International Jerusalem Post*, "Are You Happy with Who You Are?" by Rabbi Helman Pakkus. Or are you unhappy with whom you are and wondering how does one make *real* changes in your life? The formula is straight forward and simple enough.

1. Recognize the need that there is room for improvement—there is something that needs changing...
2. Make a decision to improve – to change.
3. Make a plan—plan it out and write it down.
4. Follow through on your plan—simply, DO it!

What holds us back? It's simple. We think that we can't change, think it's too difficult—and we make excuses for our self and give up before starting. We need to cry out in prayer to our heavenly father—the prayer of salvation. If we want results—get serious which equals results. **Proverbs 24:16**—“For a just man falls seven times, and rises up again; but the wicked shall fall into mischief.” The point is, never give up. “Winners never quit and quitters never win.”

**James 1:12**—“Blessed is the man who endures temptation; for when he has been approved, he will receive the **crown of life** which the Lord has promised to those who love Him.” **Matthew 24:13**—“He who endures to the end shall be saved.” “Rabbi Noah Weinberg who founded Aish.com, used to ask his students: ‘If God would help you do something, could you do it?’ The answer is obviously, yes.’ Do you think that the Almighty wants you to change? Does he want you to improve?’ Again, the answer is obviously, yes. ‘Well then, why is it so difficult? One does not want to take the pain of change. Only, through taking the pain and realizing that time is limited, will we be motivated to change.’ ” For example, there is only so much time to unleaven (get rid of the *kametz*) your household before the feast of Passover and days of Unleavened Bread arrive each year. There is a deadline and limited time available until it arrives. **Exodus 12:15-19**—“For seven days no leaven is to be found in your houses, since whoever eats what is leaven, that same person shall be cut off from the congregation of Israel, whether he is a stranger or a native of the land.” The leaven represents the sins in our life and putting all sin (*khametz*) entirely out of our life.

**2 Peter 3:9**—“God is long suffering toward us, and not willing that anyone should perish, but that all should come to repentance.” There is going to be a *Day of Judgment*. The day we die, our works are over. No one can overcome in the grave. All overcoming has to be done now in this life which is our testing ground and our opportunity to change and face up to the pain. Man has to realize that there is always pain and change in accomplishment. There may be a lot of failures along the way, but through persistent effort you may eventually succeed.

“It is not the critic who counts; not the man who points out how the strong man stumbles, or where the doer of deeds could have done them better. The credit belongs to the man who is actually in the arena, whose face is marred by dust and sweat and blood; who strives valiantly; who errs, who comes short again and again, because there is no effort without error and shortcoming; but who does actually strive to do the deeds; who knows the great enthusiasms, the great devotions; who spends himself in a worthy cause; who at the best knows in the end the triumph of high achievement, and who at the worst, if he fails, at least fails while daring greatly, so that his place shall never be with those cold and timid souls who neither know victory nor defeat.” --President Theodore Roosevelt

All those imbued with God's Holy Spirit are on our “wilderness journey marching out of Egypt” seeking the kingdom of God which lies ahead. There is pain, suffering, trials, testing, difficulties,

obstacles in the way, hunger and thirst that we will endure. It is vital to hold fast to unwavering faith in Christ and focus our eyes steadfastly on Him and deliverance by Almighty God. For forty years Israel was protected in the wilderness by God who performed miracle after miracle, gave them food (manna) and water (from the Rock/Christ), their clothes and shoes did not wear out. **Hebrews 13:8**—“Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever.” “For I am the Lord, I do not change.” We have to take that initial step like Nashon, and step forward into the “Red Sea” and God will act. We have to pray and call upon God to move the mountain wherever it is whether physical or psychological that is in the way of serving God. Memorize **Philippians 4:13**—“I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.” Ask for God’s strength to succeed in doing his will. Failure is the status reserved for those who don’t try, or who give up trying. Whether you think you can or think you can’t, you are right. It is your thinking processes that determine the outcome.

“It isn't what you have or who you are or where you are or what you are doing that makes you happy or unhappy. It is what you think about it.” By Dale Carnegie, *How to Win Friends and Influence People*. **Proverbs 23:7**—teaches us the lesson: what a man thinks in his heart that is what he is. God made us in his own image with a heart and mind in the likeness of himself. The nation of Israel had to adjust their attitude and change their thinking from negative to positive and went forward. Over the next 49 days as they began counting the Omer, beginning the very next day (Nisan 16) they were moving further away from Egypt and drawing closer to God and raising themselves to the spiritual level over those 49 days to where they were considered worthy to receive the Torah straight from God’s mouth and written on two tablets of stone by the finger of God at Mt. Sinai on Pentecost (day 50).

**Exodus 24:1-16**—God told Moses, Aaron, Nadab and Abihu and seventy of the elders of Israel to worship from afar. “And Moses alone shall come near the Lord, but they shall not come near; nor shall the people go up with him.”

Moses wrote all the words which the Lord said. Then he came and told the people all the words of the Lord and all the judgments. He read the Book of the Covenant to the people, and they said, “All the Lord has said, we will do and promised to be obedient. Then Moses went up, also Aaron, Nadab, and Abihu, and seventy of the elders of Israel and they saw the God of Israel. And there was under His feet as it were a paved work of sapphire stone, and it was like the very heavens in its clarity. But on the nobles of the children of Israel He did not lay His hand. So they saw God, and they ate and drank. “

**Verses 12-13**—“Then the LORD said to Moses ‘come up to me on the mountain and be there; and I will give you tablets of stone, and the law and commandments which I have written, that you may teach them.’ So Moses arose with his assistant Joshua, and Moses went up to the mountain of God. And he said to the elders, ‘Wait here for us until we come back to you. Indeed, Aaron and Hur are with you. If any man has a difficulty, let him go to them.’ Then Moses went up into the mountain, and a cloud covered the mountain. Moses was on the mountain top forty days and forty nights.” Israel is a prototype of our Christian living and overcoming today. **Leviticus 23:4-14**—lists God’s

holy days, feasts of the Lord that we are to keep forever that we are to proclaim and keep at their appointed time. The seventh day of the feast of *Passover* and *Days Unleavened Bread* “shall be a holy convocation (assembly) –do no customary work on it, it is a day of rest (annual Sabbath). It shall be a statute forever throughout your generations forever.”

**Leviticus 23:15-16**--*Seferat ha Omer*, the counting of the Omer (49 days— to Pentecost) begins on Nisan 16, the day after Passover having seven weeks with seven Sabbaths of rest (cessation from labor). **Verse 21**—“And you shall count for yourselves from the day after the Sabbath, from the day that you brought the sheaf of the wave offering: seven Sabbaths shall be completed. Count fifty days to the day after the seventh Sabbath. Then you shall offer a new grain offering to the Lord” – which is on Pentecost (means 50). “And you shall proclaim on the same day that it is a holy convocation to you. You shall do no customary work on it. It shall be a statute forever in all your dwellings throughout your generations.” This counting is a procedure for each individual and each week ends with a rest day. The Hebrew word *Shabbat* means a cessation from labor.

**Deuteronomy 16:9-12** makes this quite plain. Here the word is *Shauvot*, meaning weeks—not Sabbath. The word Sabbath in this case is interchangeable with the word *weeks*. Thus you count seven weeks. “You shall count seven weeks for yourself; begin to count the seven weeks from the time you begin to put the sickle to the grain. Then you shall keep the Feast of Weeks to the LORD your God with the tribute of a freewill offering from your hand, which you shall give as the LORD your God blesses you. You shall rejoice before the LORD your God, you and your son and your daughter, your male servant and your female servant, the Levite who is within your gates, the stranger and the fatherless and the widow who are among you, at the place where the LORD your God chooses to make His name abide. And you shall remember that you were a slave in Egypt, and you shall be careful to observe these statutes.” We are commanded to keep the Feast of *Shauvot* which is called the *Feast of Weeks* because it occurs at the end of seven weeks.

*Essence of the Holy Days* by Avraham Jacov Finkel, chapter 9, page 161 on the Omer. Omer means the first-fruits of the barley harvest. Reference is from Leviticus chapters 15 and 16. Counting the Omer to Pentecost—“the 50<sup>th</sup> day, parallels the 50 degrees of degradation and imperfection and pollution of Israel that Israel had regressed to while in Egypt.” They had descended to the 49<sup>th</sup> degree of pollution/contamination, but God saved them from almost total pollution and helping them to build character in righteousness and holiness after leaving Egypt until they had ascended 49 levels of wisdom, up to the 50<sup>th</sup> level of wisdom/or obedience. Wisdom equals obeying God and keeping his commandments. That is wisdom.

As they began to obey God and march toward the Promised Holy Land they grew in knowledge, wisdom and understanding of God. By the end of 50 days they were prepared in righteousness and state of mind, ready to see God on the mountain without perishing. After seeing the miracles done by God they were open-minded and eager to hear the words of the Law and become his bride after being extricated from their hopelessness as slaves. God called them out to be a free people at liberty in God’s law and way of life. They went from one opposite to the other—totally

negative to totally positive—to purity. They had to depend on God day by day and gradually ascended to holiness (*Hebrew: kadusha*) – becoming a holy people. They added to their holiness by counting the Omer day by day.

Pentecost represents the illumination and the wisdom of the 50<sup>th</sup> gate of *bina* (*Hebrew: means understanding*).

Let's take a look at the significance of the Omer count. When a couple plans to be married and have set a date for the wedding ceremony, they count the days in anticipation until the day of the great event. Israel counted the days to the Feast of Pentecost in anticipation of the gift of the Torah and becoming married to God of Israel, the Messiah, on Shavuot. Rabbi Finkel says in his book, *The Essence of the Holy Days*, chapter 9, page 163, “To accentuate the importance of that day we count the days from Passover until Shavuot. You can compare it to a man who is waiting for his best friend to arrive. He will count the days, yes, even the hours, until their reunion. The same applies to the counting of the Omer from Passover until Shavuot. By linking the two festivals through the act of counting, we declare that receiving the Torah was the purpose and fulfillment of the Exodus.” The Jews tell us that the Feast of Shavuot is technically the eighth day of Passover. *Days of Unleavened Bread* is seven days. Then we are counting the Omer until the eighth day which is *Shavuot – Pentecost*. Each day we study to learn and become closer to God in character.

There are *seven shepherds* of Israel. Each shepherd illustrates one of the *seven Sefira* (*attributes of God*):

1. Abraham **CHESED (Ahavah—love)**, loving-kindness. Noted for hospitality
2. Isaac **GEVURAH (Yirah—awe or fear)** strength (in the sense of restraint)
3. Jacob **TIFERET (Rachamim—mercifulness/peace)** beauty
4. Moses **NETZACH** quality of power, desires and plans
5. Aaron **HOD**, splendor—quality of presence and being—experience of feeling
6. Joseph **YESOD**, foundation—balance between power and presence
7. David **MALCHUT**, kingship

During **Week 1** of the Omer County, we work on Chesed, **Week 2**-Gevurah, **Week 3**-Tiferet, **Week 4**-Netzach, **Week 5**-Hod, **Week 6**-Yesod, and **Week 7**-Malchut. We are human vessels to whom God gives his Holy Spirit that we might contain and manifest the energy of His Spirit.

*Mirrors in Time* by Joel Ziff, chapter 3, “Sefirat Ha’Omer”, pages 104-105. “Abraham, was known for his hospitality and care for others, and unconditional love and acceptance. *Ahavah* refers to the experience of unconditional love and acceptance. It is the ability to see the positive in everything, to appreciate and accept all aspects of life.

“Isaac is associated with *Gevurah* which refers to strength that comes from containment, the power to contain and hold the energy of love. It is the power of inhibition, and power of discrimination and judgment that allows one to make choices. It refers to our ability to know when not to express or act.

“Jacob is associated with the symbol of peace—*Tiferet* which represents the perfect balancing of the left and right sides, integrating love (*Chesed*) and containment (*Gevura*).

“Moses. is linked to Netzach. He was the shepherd who led the Israelites victoriously out of Egypt and endured all their problems for 40 years in the desert. Netzach begins the second triad of the *Sefirot*, associated with the translation of feeling into energy. It refers to the quality of power desires, and plans which translate feeling into form. The quality of loving-kindness becomes more specific in expression—guided and controlled.

“The fifth quality, is *Hod* —glory which refers to the quality of presence and being, the light in a person’s face. *Hod* is associated with Aaron, the high priest and brother to Moses. It is also splendor and connected with humility (meekness). More receptive than active and refers to the experience of feeling that shines forth. True glory does not glorify itself. Aaron spoke and reflected the words of God.

“Joseph the son of Jacob, is linked to *Yesod*—foundation. It represents the integration of Netzach and Hod, the balance between power and presence. Joseph’s character was one of righteousness. As a shepherd, he laid the foundation of righteousness and was known as the ‘righteous one (*sadek*).’ ” Contrary to human nature, he fled Potipher’s wife’s seduction. Righteous foundation means keeping God’s laws in faith—faith is the basis of our foundation.

“The seventh quality is *Malchut* –kingdom. It represents the translation of energy into action. King David is associated with this *Sefira*, who ruled over the people in the fear of God. Malchut serves as the intermediary between the spiritual domain and the material world.”

During this Omer count we use this template as a meditation and resource to work on these seven attributes of God to grow, overcome, develop and build the righteous character of Christ in us – the fruits of his Holy Spirit. We are to learn to put on the righteousness of Jesus Christ.

**Galatians 5:22-23**—“**the fruit of the Spirit** is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control. Against such there is no law.” This is the nature of God that we are to develop.

The Apostle Paul said to the Galatians in **Galatians 4:17-19**—“Those people are zealous to win you over, but for no good. What they want is to alienate you from us, so that you may have zeal for them. It is fine to be zealous, provided the purpose is good, and to be so always, not just when I am with you. My dear children (for whom) I am again in the pains of childbirth until Christ is formed in you.” **Romans 13:14**—“Put on the Lord Jesus Christ and make no provision for the flesh, to fulfill the lusts thereof.”

Counting the Omer is the process of building character; disciplining ourselves for 49 days. *The Book of our Heritage* by Eliyahu Kitav, Vol. 2, Adar – Nisan, pages 682-685. “These seven attributes were replanted in the world—after the sin of Adam had made them deficient—by our great ancestors, ‘the seven shepherds.’ Abraham was the personification of loving-kindness. Isaac personified the attribute of strength. Through him fear of God was introduced to the world. All of his strength was devoted to serving God and fearing Him. Jacob was the personification of glory. Everything that he accomplished was done with simplicity and perfection of character.

Moses was the personification of eternity—the eternity of Torah (the Law). Aaron personified the attribute of splendor, living peace and pursuing it, loving mankind and bringing them close to the Torah. Joseph personified the attribute referred to as the foundation: moral virtue and integrity. H refused to give into temptation and sin. David (ha-Melech) was the personification of the attribute of sovereignty. David did not attain rule on his own. He did not become king through his might or wisdom, nor did he wear the crown because he had inherited it. His kingdom was granted him by the King of Kings. God made him a shepherd first, who cared for and defended sheep from the lion and bear and then took him from tending the sheep to become the faithful shepherd of the flocks of Israel. David rejoiced in the greatness of others and combined that greatness with his own to pay tribute to the One to Whom greatness belongs.”

“Each of these seven attributes is related to the others; without strength there is no loving-kindness, for the latter attribute becomes soft-heartedness if it is not joined to strength. Similarly, if loving-kindness lacks an element of glory, it can degenerate into sin. None of the other attributes can be considered complete if they lack an element of loving-kindness. Each attribute has a light of its own that shines forth from its combination with the others. Counting the Omer as the period in which we are to correct the deficiencies of each attribute and all those joined to it. The forty-nine days are divided into seven weeks, during which one attribute reigns supreme. The first week is devoted entirely to kindness. The first day of that week, the emphasis is laid on the epitome of kindness. On each subsequent day of the week, the stress is placed on a different quality combined with kindness. During the second week the stress shifts to strength, with which each of the other characteristics is interwoven in turn on consecutive days. This pattern is repeated throughout the seven weeks.”

I will be happy to provide a reprinted a copy of the *Omer Meditation* by Rabbi Simon Jacobson for those who wish a copy as a guide. Today is the sixth day of the first week of the Omer count and the concept of bonding in love. “*Yesod of Chesed: Bonding in Loving-kindness*. For love to be eternal it requires bonding—a sense of togetherness which actualizes the love in a joint effort. An intimate connection, kinship and attachment, benefiting both parties. This bonding bears fruit; the fruit born out of a healthy union.”

This, brethren is the lesson on the Omer. Most people do not understand this lesson, nor do they see the need to count the Omer as God says to do. We are to grow in grace and knowledge of Christ and his kingdom and to make wise use of this time in counting the Omer. **2 Peter 1:2-11**—“Grace and peace be multiplied to you in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord, as His divine power has given to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him who called us by glory and virtue, by which have been given to us exceedingly great and precious promises, that through these you may be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust. But also for this very reason, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue, to virtue knowledge, to knowledge self-control, to self-control perseverance, to perseverance godliness, to godliness brotherly kindness, and to brotherly kindness love.”

“If these things are yours and abound, you will be neither barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. For he who lacks these things is shortsighted, even to blindness, and has forgotten that he was cleansed from his old sins. Therefore, brethren, be even more diligent to make your call and election sure, for if you do these things you will never stumble; for so an entrance will be supplied to you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.” Amen.