

# Significant Lessons From The Seemingly Insignificant

## #27 Feast of Weeks: Counting The Omer

Feast of Weeks = Shavuot = Feast of Pentecost

The Feast of Weeks, #4, is the second of the three "solemn feasts" [Passover, Feast of Weeks and Feast of Tabernacles] that all Jewish males were required to travel to Jerusalem to attend and offer sacrifices. [Shalosh Regalim = go up on foot] [Exodus 23:14-17; 34:22-23; Deut. 16:16] All three of these feasts were connected to agricultural harvests and required that "first fruit" offerings be made at the temple as a way of expressing thanksgiving for God's provision.

- |                               |                |                       |
|-------------------------------|----------------|-----------------------|
| • Passover                    | Barley Harvest | A First Fruit Harvest |
| • Pentecost = Weeks = Shavuot | Wheat Harvest  | A First Fruit Harvest |
| • Tabernacles = Sukkot        | Fruit Harvest  |                       |

Shavuot = Feast Weeks/Pentecost, has a double significance.

1. It marks the important wheat harvest in Israel.

Ex. 34:22 And thou shalt observe the Feast of Weeks, of the first fruits of wheat harvest.

2. It commemorates the anniversary of the day when God gave the Law to the nation of Israel assembled at Mt. Sinai.
  - Manifestation Of God's Glory & Holiness
  - Shavuot is called: The Giving Of The Law
  - Shavuot is considered: The Birthday of Israel since the Torah brought 12 tribes together into one corporate people who were "married" to Jehovah God.

Feast of Weeks/Shavuot/Feast of Pentecost

1. Starts seven full weeks, or exactly 50 days, after the Feast of First Fruits.
2. It occurs in late spring, either the last part of May or the beginning of June.
3. Unlike other feasts that began on a specific day of the Hebrew calendar, this one is calculated as being "fifty days to the day after the seventh Sabbath."
  - This is called: Counting of the Omer, Biblical measure of grain

[Omer = Hebrew measure of dry things; contains a 1/10 part of an ephah [Ex. 16:36]

Ephah = 10 measures of grain = sheaf or bundle of stalks of grain = ~22 liters]

Lev. 23:15-16 And ye shall count unto you from the morrow after the sabbath, from the day that ye brought the sheaf [OMER] of the wave offering; seven sabbaths shall be complete: <sup>16</sup> Even unto the morrow after the seventh sabbath shall ye number 50 days; and ye shall offer a new meat offering unto the LORD.

Deuteronomy 16:9-10 Seven weeks shalt thou number unto thee: begin to number the seven weeks from such time as you begin to put the sickle to the grain. <sup>10</sup> And thou shalt keep the feast of weeks unto the LORD thy God with a tribute of a freewill offering of thine hand, which thou shalt give unto the LORD thy God, according as the LORD thy God hath blessed thee:

### Counting The Omer To Shavuot:

1. It is not a who or what. It is a time in between.
2. Refers to the 50 day period between the First Fruits of the Barley Harvest until the First Fruits of the Wheat Harvest.
3. During the 50 days of "counting the omer," the wheat crop is in the ripening process.
4. The Omer links Passover Season To Feast of Pentecost/Shavuot/Weeks.
  - Passover celebrates the initial liberation of the Israelites from slavery in Egypt.
  - Pentecost/Shavuot marks the culmination of their liberation when they became a nation, an autonomous people with God's laws and standards.
5. It marks the time when God revealed His purpose to make them a holy people, a kingdom of priests and His treasured possession.
6. Counting the Omer is regarded as a remembrance of the intervening days between the Exodus from Egypt and the revelation at Mt. Sinai and giving of God's Law.
7. Counting the Omer to Shavuot/Pentecost reminds us of the process of moving from a slave mentality to a liberated mentality with a new master.
8. Counting the omer is a time of preparation to meet with God at Mt. Sinai

### When Do I Start Counting The Omer To Pentecost?

1. Start the count on the day after the Sabbath when you brought the First Fruits wave offering during Passover week.
2. There will be 7 Sabbaths + 1 = 50 Days
  - Shavuot/Weeks marks the conclusion of the counting of the omer or 50 days.
3. By the end of the omer count, the wheat is ready for harvest, and the first fruits of the wheat crop can be brought to the temple for Pentecost on the 50<sup>th</sup> day.
4. This concludes the "festival season" which began at Passover.

### Purpose Of Counting The Omer

Ps. 90:12 Teach us to number our days that we may gain a heart of wisdom.

1. The fact that we were slaves in bondage one day and then suddenly free men is hard to completely absorb the lovingkindness and faithfulness of our great God.
2. Counting the Omer is 50 Days laden with challenging spiritual potential. The opportunity for growth and transformation is ours for the taking.
3. Time for introspection, repentance, preparation and spiritual progress.
4. Counting the Omer is to prepare gradually for the great illumination of God's power at Mt. Sinai and willingness to draw near to His transforming fire.
5. The one who has been redeemed by the Passover Lamb is to be maturing and preparing herself to be the bride.

## *Counting the Omer: Journey from Egypt to Mt. Sinai*

Exodus 15-17 describe God's "boot camp" for Israel.

The time spent in this journey is to teach the Israelites the necessity of faith & obedience.

1. The Israelites were praising God and singing songs to Him until there was a problem.
2. It didn't take long after deliverance from Egypt for God to give Moses and the Israelites some tests that would stretch their faith and patience.

Ex. 15:22-26 So Moses brought Israel from the Red sea, and they went out into the wilderness of Shur; and they went 3 days in the wilderness and found no water. <sup>23</sup> And when they came to Marah, they could not drink of the waters of Marah, for they were bitter: therefore the name of it was called Marah. <sup>24</sup> And the people murmured against Moses, saying, What shall we drink?

1. There was no water to drink. Instead of continuing to praise Him, they began to grumble. <sup>25</sup> And he cried unto the LORD; and the LORD shewed him a tree, which when he had cast into the waters, the waters were made sweet: there he made for them a statute and an ordinance, and there He Proved Them, <sup>26</sup> And said, If thou wilt diligently hearken to the voice of the LORD thy God, and wilt do that which is right in his sight, and wilt give ear to his commandments, and keep all his statutes, I will put none of these diseases upon thee, which I have brought upon the Egyptians: for I am the LORD that healeth thee.

1. God revealed Himself: Jehovah Rapha - "I, the Lord, am your healer."

God knows what your needs are and will provide in His way and in His timing.

If you have seen God provide and care for you in the past, why would you doubt that He would do it again?

Ex. 15:27 And they came to Elim, where were twelve wells of water, and threescore and ten palm trees: and they encamped there by the waters.

A month has passed when they reach the Wilderness of Sin. [15<sup>th</sup> day of 2<sup>nd</sup> month]

### A. Grumbling Stomachs & Grumbling Saints

Ex. 16:2-3 And the whole congregation of the children of Israel murmured against Moses and Aaron in the wilderness: Would to God we had died by the hand of the LORD in the land of Egypt, when we sat by the flesh pots, and when we did eat bread to the full; for ye have brought us forth into this wilderness, to kill this whole assembly with hunger.

1. Grumbling is a problem when we do not like the pain of our circumstances.
2. Grumbling is a problem of perception.
  - It results from a difference between the way we perceive things to be and the way we think they should be.
  - Grumbling invariably distorts the facts.
  - They greatly exaggerated the benefits of Egypt.
  - Their perception of their own imminent danger of starvation was greatly exaggerated.
  - Accused Moses of leading them into the wilderness to kill them. Their view of Moses was entirely distorted.
  - They failed to perceive the loving hand of a sovereign God in their sufferings.

3. Grumbling is a problem of submission.
  - Ultimately, their grumbling was a protest against God's leadership. [Ex. 16:7-8]
4. Grumbling is a sin of the tongue, which is closely related to disobedience.
  - Grumbling occurs when we can't control our situation. Disobedience occurs when we have an option and we choose to do other than what God has commanded.
5. Grumbling is a communicable disease.
  - 16:2 The whole community grumbled.
6. Grumbling is the result of a failure in our faith.
  - It is a sin that reveals a lack of faith.
  - A grumbler does not see the good hand of God.
  - Grumbling allows our present circumstance to NULLIFY our confidence in God's purposes and promises.

#### B. God's Response To Israel's Grumbling

1. They have only been following God 1 month and are immature in their faith.
2. God responds gently and graciously to demonstrate His presence with His people in their affliction and adversity.
  - He revealed His glory to the Israelites by a special manifestation of Himself in the cloud by which He had been leading them. [Ex. 16:10]
  - He provided them with quail and manna. [Ex. 16:11-14]

#### C. God's Regulations Regarding Manna

1. Manna gathering teaches us the priority of submission to the revealed will of God.  
Ex. 16:4 Then said the LORD unto Moses, Behold, I will rain bread from heaven for you; and the people shall go out and gather a certain rate every day, that I may prove [test] them, whether they will walk in my law, or no.
2. Instructions were intended to test them and teach them obedience and increase their faith.
  - Gather food provided by God each morning, but only enough for that day.
  - On the sixth day, gather enough food for two days.
3. Deut. 8:16 Who fed thee in the wilderness with manna, which thy fathers knew not, that he might humble thee, and that he might prove thee, to do thee good at thy latter end;
4. The great danger which Israel faced was not starvation in the wilderness, but the wrath of God.

Ex. 15:26 Israel's reaping of God's blessings and her healing from Egypt's judgments are dependent upon her careful obedience to the commands and decrees of God.

## Journey To Rephidim Ex. 17

Ex. 17:1, 3b And all the congregation of the children of Israel journeyed from the wilderness of Sin, after their journeys, according to the commandment of the LORD, and pitched in Rephidim: and there was no water for the people to drink. <sup>3</sup>Wherefore is this that thou hast brought us up out of Egypt, to kill us and our children and our cattle with thirst?

Ex. 17:6a, 7 Behold, I will stand before thee there upon the rock in Horeb; and thou shalt smite the rock, and there shall come water out of it, that the people may drink.

<sup>7</sup>And he called the name of the place Massah, and Meribah, because of the chiding of the children of Israel, and because they tempted the LORD, saying, Is the LORD among us, or not?

Ex. 17:8-9 Then came Amalek [type of flesh; spiritual warfare] and fought with Israel in Rephidim. And Moses said unto Joshua, Choose us out men, and go out, fight with Amalek: tomorrow I will stand on the top of the hill with the rod of God in mine hand.

Ex. 17: 15 And Moses built an altar, and called the name of it Jehovahnissi:

The Lord Is My Banner

- Trust is in God; Depend On Him to fight for you & win the battle.

## Obedience To The Will Of God

1. It is diametrically opposed to the self-indulgent desires of our flesh and culture.
2. Obedience to God's Word requires self-denial and self-discipline.

Luke 9:23 He said to them all, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me.

## The Self-Sacrifice Of Our Lord Is The Pattern For Every Believer.

Phil. 2:5-8 Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus:

<sup>6</sup> Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God:

<sup>7</sup> But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men:

<sup>8</sup> And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.

Lev. 23:15-16 And ye shall count unto you from the morrow after the sabbath, from the day that ye brought the sheaf [OMER] of the wave offering; seven sabbaths shall be complete:

<sup>16</sup> Even unto the morrow after the seventh sabbath shall ye number 50 days; and ye shall offer a NEW MEAT OFFERING unto the LORD.

Deuteronomy 16:9-10 Seven weeks shalt thou number unto thee: begin to number the seven weeks from such time as you begin to put the sickle to the grain. <sup>10</sup> And thou shalt keep the feast of weeks unto the LORD thy God with a tribute of a FREEWILL OFFERING of thine hand, which thou shalt give unto the LORD thy God, according as the LORD thy God hath blessed thee:

The MEAT OFFERING has a very special typology that is revealed plainly by the cross references to the word meat as used by Christ.

1. The meat offering is the offering of a "living sacrifice."

Romans 12:1 I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service.

2. It is the kind of sacrifice Christ gave during His earthly ministry.

John 4:34 Jesus said, "My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work."

John 6:27 He declares, "Labor not for the meat which perisheth, but for that meat which endureth unto everlasting life."

John 12:24 Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a grain of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit.

### Reflection & Commitment

I surrender all Lord

I surrender all Lord

For I Have Heard Your Call

To Lay My Life Down Before You

I surrender all Lord

I surrender all Lord

Be glorified

Lord Jesus, I surrender all.

Repeat the above