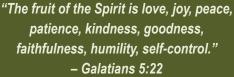


TRAINING OURSELVES TO WALK BY THE RUACH







- WEEK 1 LOVE
- WEEK 2 JOY
- WEEK 3 PEACE & PATIENCE
- WEEK 4 KINDNESS & GOODNESS
- WEEK 5 FAITHFULNESS
- WEEK 6 HUMILTY
- WEEK 7 SELF-CONTROL

COUNTING THE OMER

Counting the Omer (based on Leviticus 23:9–16) takes us through seven weeks, from the Day of First Fruits and the anniversary of the resurrection of Yeshua to Shavuot, the culmination of the grain harvest and anniversary of the giving of the Torah on Mt. Sinai and the outpouring of the Ruach HaKodesh after the resurrection.

The Omer is the first sheaf of barley waved before the Lord to dedicate the whole harvest to him. In Galatians 5, Paul talks about another kind of harvest, the fruit of the Spirit, the evidence of a new way of living instilled by the Ruach into the followers of Yeshua. This year, as we count the Omer together, we'll focus on one (or sometimes two) of those fruits and how to nurture them in our words and deeds, especially toward those around us. We'll draw on the wisdom of Mussar, a traditional Jewish practice of developing character by focusing on specific positive traits called middot (singular, middah) day by day and week by week. The Hebrew word "mussar" means "correction" or "instruction," and appears many times in the Tanakh, especially Proverbs, beginning with 1:2.

Following the mussar tradition, we will count each Omer day as an opportunity to perfect a specific character trait or middah reflecting the fruits of the Spirit that Paul lists in Galatians 5. He says, "If we live by the Ruach, let us also walk by the Ruach," and walking implies the same real-life, step-by-step approach that characterizes Mussar. Counting the omer this year will mean not only keeping track of the 49 days or seven weeks leading up to Shavuot, but taking steps through those days and weeks to cultivate the fruit of the Spirit that was poured out on Shavuot.



HOW TO USE THIS JOURNAL

- 1. Find a study buddy! Mussar is normally practiced in small groups or with a partner or chevruta. Learning with another person enhances insight and accountability and helps you put your middah for the week into practice. As Rav Yehoshua said, "Get yourself a teacher, acquire a friend (chaver), and judge everyone with generosity" (Pirke Avot 1:6). Ask a close friend or family member to study with you day by day, or week by week.
- 2. **Count the omer daily.** Count the omer daily: in the evening, after sundown, and on each date listed inside this journal. Recite the blessing:

ָּבָרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶּךְ הָעוֹלָם, אֲשֶׁר קִדְּשָׁנוּ בְּמִצְוֹתָיו, וְצִוָנוּ עַל ספירת העמר

Baruch atah Adonai Elohenu melech ha-olam, asher kid'shanu b'mitzvotav vitzivanu al sefirat ha-Omer.

Blessed are you, Lord our God, King of the universe, who has sanctified us by his commandments and commanded us concerning the count of the Omer.

Today is day	y , which is	_ week(s) and	day(s) of the omer
	,	_	

- Write in the journal. Review the fruit of the week and write down brief answers to the reflection questions. Discuss your answers with your study buddy.
- 4. **Prepare to give.** Set aside one dollar per night to present as your offering for Shavuot, May 25–27.
- **5.** Register for Tikkun Leil Shavuot: May 25/26, 2023, 9 PM-6 AM Eastern Time.

Late night torah study at your fingertips! Study the Torah with premier scholars of the Bible, Judaism, and Theology all from the comfort of your own home.

For details and FREE registration: umjc.org/events

WEEK 1 LOVE

If I speak with the tongues of men and of angels but have not love, I have become a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal. If I have the gift of prophecy and know all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have all faith so as to remove mountains but have not love, I am nothing. If I give away all that I own and if I hand over my body so I might boast, but have not love, I gain nothing.

— I Corinthians 13:1–3 TLV

Love is expressed in compassion, but this must be practiced in balance. Am I compassionate to a fault? Or slow to show compassion?
To whom do I have difficulty showing compassion?
Who can I reach out to this week to extend compassion?

OMER CALENDAR	
☐ April 6, Thursday - Day 1	☐ April 10, Monday - Day 5
☐ April 7, Friday - Day 2	☐ April 11, Tuesday - Day 6
☐ April 8, Saturday - Day 3	☐ April 12, Wednesday - Day 7
☐ April 9, Sunday- Day 4	

JEWISH WISDOM: Love is what redeems us from the prison cell of the self and all the sickness to which the narcissistic self is prone—from empty pride to deep depression to a sense of nihilism and the abyss.

— Rabbi Jonathan Sacks

WEEK 2 JOY

You make me know the path of life; in your presence is unbounded joy, in your right hand eternal delight.

— Psalm 16:11 CJB



When does joy seem hardest to attain?
Joy is fueled by gratitude.
What have I begun to take for granted or feel entitled to?
Who can I show sincere gratitude to this week?

MER CALENDAR	
☐ April 13, Thursday - Day 8	☐ April 17, Monday - Day 12
☐ April 14, Friday - Day 9	☐ April 18, Tuesday - Day 13
☐ April 15, Saturday - Day 10	☐ April 19, Wednesday - Day 14
☐ April 16, Sunday - Day 11	

JEWISH WISDOM: A good guest says, 'How much my host toiled for me! He put so much meat in front of me, so much wine, so much bread—all his exertion was just for me!' A bad guest says, 'What did my host toil for me? I ate just one loaf, just one piece of meat, I drank just one cup—all his exertion was for his own household!

— Ben Zoma, Brachot 58a

WEEK 3 PEACE & PATIENCE

Slowness to anger shows great understanding, but a shorttempered person exalts foolishness. A tranquil mind gives life to the flesh, but passion makes the bones rot.

— Proverbs 14:29–30 literal translation

In what situations do I find myself losing patience?
Is there a pattern or link between these situations?
What is one patience-testing situation I will likely encounter this week, and how can I approach it differently?

OMER CALENDAR	
☐ April 20, Thursday - Day 15	☐ April 24, Monday - Day 19
☐ April 21, Friday - Day 16	☐ April 25, Tuesday - Day 20
☐ April 22, Saturday - Day 17	☐ April 26, Wednesday - Day 21
☐ April 23, Sunday - Day 18	

trained to be patient. Either today or in the future, he is destined to sip from the cup of affliction.

JEWISH WISDOM: Woe to the pampered person who has never been

— Rabbi Menachem Mendel Leffin, Cheshbon Ha-Nefesh

WEEK 4 KINDNESS & GOODNESS

What credit is it to you if you love only those who love you?
Why even sinners love those, who love them? What credit
is it to you if you do good only to those who do good to you?
Even sinners do that. What credit is it to you if you lend only to those who you expect will pay you back? Even sinners lend to each other, expecting to be repaid in full. But love your enemies, do good, and lend expecting nothing back!

— Luke 6:32–35 CJB

Do I tend to lean towards excessive kindness, or towards stinginess, with my time, money, or words of encouragement?
What are the fears or longings that drive me in either direction?
Who have I been intending to show kindness to, but have neglected or avoided? What can I do this week?

MER CALENDAR ☐ April 27, Thursday - Day 22	☐ May 1, Monday - Day 26
☐ April 28, Friday - Day 23	☐ May 2, Tuesday - Day 27
☐ April 29, Saturday - Day 24	☐ May 3, Wednesday - Day 28
☐ April 30, Sunday - Day 25	

if he has done you a lot of harm, think of it as a little.

of it as a lot. And if you have done your neighbor a lot of good, think of it as a little. If your neighbor has done you just a little bit of good, think of it as a lot. And

— Avot D'Rabbi Natan 41:11 (according to Sefaria)

WEEK 5 FAITHFULNESS

Lying lips are detestable to Adonai, but those who act faithfully are His delight. A clever person conceals his knowledge, but the heart of a fool blurts out folly.

— Proverbs 12:22–23 TLV



Have I recently betrayed a confidence or not followed through on a commitment?
Do I need to make amends with someone about this?
What specific opportunities to practice faithfulness am I likely to encounter this week?

☐ May 8, Monday - Day 33
☐ May 9, Tuesday - Day 34
☐ May 10, Wednesday - Day 35

JEWISH WISDOM: The righteous say little and do much, whereas the wicked say much and do not do even a little.

WEEK 6 HUMILITY

I am telling every single one of you, through the grace that has been given to me, not to have exaggerated ideas about your own importance. Instead, develop a sober estimate of yourself based on the standard which God has given to each of you, namely, trust.

— Romans 12:3 CJB
In what ways do I tend to hold too high an opinion of myself? Too low an opinion?
When I receive praise or criticism, how do I tend to react?
What's a specific way that I can practice humility instead of an exaggerated idea of my own importance this week?

OMER CALENDAR	
☐ May 11, Thursday - Day 36	☐ May 15, Monday - Day 40
☐ May 12, Friday - Day 37	☐ May 16, Tuesday - Day 41
☐ May 13, Saturday - Day 38	☐ May 17, Wednesday - Day 42
☐ May 14, Sunday - Day 39	

JEWISH WISDOM: Every person should carry two pieces of paper, one in each pocket: in one pocket, 'For me, the world was created,' and in the other, 'I am but dust and ashes.'

— Rabbi Simcha Bunim

WEEK 7 SELF-CONTROL

It isn't good to eat too much honey or to seek honor after honor.

Like a city breached, without walls, is a person who lacks self-control.

— Proverbs 25:27–28 CJB



How do I respond when my plans are disrupted by others? What areas of my life need more order or more flexibility? What can I do this week to make an improvement?
What areas of my life need more order or more flexibility? What can I do this
What areas of my life need more order or more flexibility? What can I do this
·
·
·

OMER CALENDAR	
☐ May 18, Thursday - Day 43	☐ May 22, Monday - Day 47
☐ May 19, Friday - Day 44	☐ May 23, Tuesday - Day 48
☐ May 20, Saturday - Day 45	☐ May 24, Wednesday - Day 49
☐ May 21, Sunday - Day 46	, ,
inay 21, Sanday Bay 15	

JEWISH WISDOM: Take time, be exact, unclutter the mind.

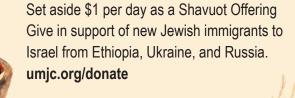
— Rabbi Simcha Zissel Ziv

REGISTER FOR TIKKUN LEIL SHAVUOT

DATE: May 25-26, 2023

TIME: 9:00 PM - 6:00 AM EST

umjc.org/events



With special thanks to Rabbi Jason and Malkah Forbes of Beit Hashofar Synagogue in Seattle, the founders of Riverton Mussar, for inspiring this Mussar-focused Omer calendar. umjc.org/omer2023

