

Sefirat Ha'Omer 2024

In the midst of the Spring Festivals of Passover, Unleavened Bread, and Yom HaBikkurim (Early First Fruits), there is a unique and special command that links to Shavuot – the instructions to number the days or count the omer/sefirat ha'omer! When examining the pattern laid out in the Torah of what's taking place within this season, it is evident that these days are crucial regarding a transformation process that is to take place within His people by the time we reach Shavuot! Passover redeems and frees a people enslaved, with a slave mindset and habits. Shavuot is about entrusting a mature people with an inheritance and a Covenant. The season of the omer count is when you and I, mercifully, are given 50 days to prepare for being entrusted with what's about to be released lest we mishandle the promise!

This unique command is seen referenced in Leviticus 23:15-16, and Deuteronomy 16:9.

Leviticus 23:15-16

Count: Strong's #5608 saphar סָפַר to count, recount, relate, to rehearse, to declare; 2 letter root (#5592) saph שָׁפַח a threshold, doorway, the most ancient form of an altar, signifying a doorway/connection from the spiritual to the natural! It's no coincidence that saph is first seen in connection with Passover (Exodus 12:22 – “And ye shall take a bunch of hyssop and dip it in the blood that is in the bason/saph...”)

*The season of the sefirat ha'omer is about rehearsing and declaring the promises we were given at Passover that are not fully manifest in the natural until Shavuot! Yes, Israel was set free from physical Egypt, but the full manifestation and purpose of their redemption was to be realized at Shavuot when they would be transformed into His Segullah (peculiar treasure, kingdom of priests, and a holy nation – Ex. 19:5). Israel was recognized and redeemed as the firstborn at Passover (Ex. 4:22, 13:2), and they were to be consecrated and access the birthright associated with that role – the priesthood – at Shavuot! This season is about you and I preparing to house/be a Tabernacle of the Promise!

Segullah סְגֻלָּה (#5459) when broken down, ס = to surround, intricately connected to the concept of laying on of hands (semikhah) seen in both the rituals of the offerings or the consecration of the priests. This is connected to the גלה root which infers to uncover, reveal, to make bare, to look beyond the outward garments/appearance; it's revealing that the promise made at Passover was to transform Israel into His Segullah, a promise that goes way beyond the “outward appearance”, but would reveal and uncover the very depths of their being, laying bare the most inward and secretive aspects of who we are to then reach in and semikhah – lay His hands upon His people to restore, heal, resurrect, and then present a nation who was no longer slaves, weak or powerless, but to present a holy nation of priests, the representatives of His Name, Power, Authority, and Glory upon the earth!

Sheaf/Omer: Strong's #6016 'omer עֹמֶר omer, sheaf, a measure of grain; cognate of #559 'amar אָמַר to say, to speak, to utter, it refers to what is being communicated by a person's

actions along with his words! Will we walk as if we've been redeemed, will we choose to declare and stand on the promises made to us at Passover? The season of the sefirat ha'omer then is where the focus is placed upon what our footsteps/actions are speaking!

From #6014 'amar עָמַר to bind sheaves, to gather, to manipulate, deal tyrannically with, treat as a slave or act as master, to subdue; seen only 3x's in the Scripture, first in Deut. 21:14 regarding the rules of the beautiful captive (a woman seen in battle and chosen by a warrior of Israel, yet the Torah stipulates a set process that the woman must undergo before she is taken as his wife)

Deuteronomy 21:14 – “And it shall be, if thou have no delight in her, then thou shalt let her go whither she will; but thou shalt not sell her at all for money, thou shalt not make merchandise/'amar of her, because thou hast humbled her.” – interesting to note that this captive is described in the Hebrew as Yaphet To'ar יַפֶּת־תּוֹאֵר the same phrase first seen describing Rachel in **Gen. 29:17**, and then again in **39:6** describing Joseph! Could this same analogy apply also to Israel as a nation being chosen and brought out of Egypt (as well as you and I from our exile)? Yet before they are taken and given the status as wife, there is a transformation process just like this captive woman.

But notice, at the end of this process in Deuteronomy the goal is that the man will find delight in her! If not, she is still free (she is not made a slave), but yet the true goal of the entire journey is not met – to become the bride!

Delight: Strong's #2654 chapets עָפַץ to delight in, to take pleasure in, to desire or be pleased with; to move or bend down, to incline or be favorable towards; gematria = 178, the same value as Ya'akov יַעֲקֹב Jacob, the root of his name meaning to follow at the heel; He delights in the Ya'akov, the one who follows at the heel/in His footsteps!

*Further connecting this, same term is seen in **Numbers 14:8** regarding Israel accessing the promised inheritance– “If Yahweh delight/chapets in us, then he will bring us into this land, and give it us; a land which floweth with milk and honey.”

Looking further, chaphets is also seen in **Psalms 37:23** – “The steps of a good man are ordered by Yahweh: and he delighteth/chaphets in his way.”

Steps: Strong's #4703 mitsad מִצָּד step; from #6085 tsa'ad טָעַד to step, march, stride, to cause to march; it's used to describe soldiers marching into battle or conflict, marching in perfect step with their general, in perfect time with their leader creating a sense of unity and oneness. Marching in perfect step creates fear in the enemy because it sends the message that their opposition is of one mind and one purpose – they're not an unruly mob set to do whatever they want, but a disciplined force all with the same goal and purpose in mind!

*Notice the 2 letter root of mitsad מִצָּד is מִן (#4671) chaff, what is useless or worthless, removed from the grain (remember the Feast of Yom HaBikkurim and Shavuot is focused on the first fruits of the grain/wheat), also interesting to note that this is also the 2 letter root of Mitsrayim מִצְרַיִם! This is connected to the root טָד

witness, testimony, also the same root stem of mo'ed מועד appointed time, place, or meeting – the FEASTS!

Why do you think Yahweh takes the time in the midst of judging Egypt, preparing Israel for their coming Exodus, to also address and reorient His calendar and mo'edim (Ex. 12)? Because without knowing His timing how then would they be able to walk in step/in time with Him? Unity would be impossible without knowing the cadence. It's no accident then that upon being given the knowledge regarding His timing to walk in unity with Him, Israel then is instructed to put that knowledge into practice by counting/saphar the 50 days to see if they can remain in step/in tune!

Could it be that as we are redeemed at Passover, the season of the sefirat ha'omer then is to teach us to walk in step with our King? That then come Shavuot we will have a witness and proof that we are in fact in one mind and one accord, having spent the past 50 days rehearsing, declaring, and undergoing the process of transformation – our actions declaring we are in fact a people set free. He now can find delight in us and in our way! It requires the chaff of Egypt to be removed from our lives, the stripping of what is worthless, to present the living offering come Shavuot!

Way: Strong's #1870 derek דֶּרֶךְ way, road, distance, journey, or manner; metaphorically this term refers to the pathways of one's life, or the pattern of life – it's a way compromised of the series of choices one has made and are continuing to make that will lead to a specific destination;

*Gematria of Derek = 224, the same as miphkad (#4662) מִפְקָד muster, appoint, an appointed place, a counting; it was at the miphkad appointed place where Israel was to declare their lineage – to saphar when counted in order to gain access to the Tabernacle! It is at this same location that the Red Heifer was sacrificed as well as the Messiah was offered up outside the Miphkad Gate – it deals with cleansing one from contact with death. His Mo'edim are about restoring life, cleansing us from death, and when we choose to walk in step it brings resurrection in our lives!

This term miphkad comes from the root paqad – to visit, the code phrase given to Israel regarding their deliverance. When our steps are ordered by Yahweh, it is the witness that we have been visited – paqad yiphqad – redeemed and set free from our exile! This is how we can be united – in one mind and one accord.

Acts 2:1 – “And when the day of Pentecost/Shavuot was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place.”

This is the same promise Abraham was given at the first reference of saphar! **Genesis 15:5** – “And he brought him forth abroad, and said, Look now toward heaven, and tell/saphar the stars, if thou be able to number/saphar them: and he said unto him, So shall thy seed be.”

The promise was that his seed would become the physical manifestation of the redemption promise written in the stars – they would experience life and resurrection, be cleansed from the dead fallen condition, and just as the stars (the mazzeroth) function as a

tabernacle for the sun/Bridegroom (Psalms 19), so Israel would become a living tabernacle for His Presence – the purpose of the divine appointment of Shavuot! But notice this is given as a challenge to Abraham – if you saphar! Seems to infer that this season of the sefirat ha'omer then is the same challenge to you and I! If we will saphar, then the promises that He has written in the heavenlies will be made manifest in our lives, we will become the living Tabernacle of His presence, likened unto the stars.

*Note that this also reveals that there is a transformation journey necessary to become the “stars”/the Tabernacle of His presence...perhaps there is another picture that also reveals/teaches us of our condition outside of this journey (remember this!)

It is quite interesting to note that according to the Sages there are 2 other recognized events that happen on Shavuot (prior to Mt. Sinai) – the destruction of the Tower of Babel (Gen. 11) and the encounter between Melchizedek and Abram (Gen. 14). The similarities and connections cannot be ignored – at Abram’s encounter with Melchizedek, it is here that Abram is entrusted with carrying on the priestly birthright. He is initiated into the royal priesthood – the same thing Israel was expected to take on at Sinai. The Tower of Babel and its architect Nimrod is the antithesis of the Melchizedek righteous priesthood. It is from this same location that Abram is called out of and then entrusted with the true message and understanding of what’s written in the heavenlies – including the understanding of the timing to in turn march in step. The purpose of the Tower of Babel on the other hand was to usurp that very message, and to confuse the timing so that the unity produced would be of their own making. To present a counterfeit bride – the harlot, for a counterfeit groom!

Genesis 11:3 – “And they said one to another, Go to, let us make brick, and burn them thoroughly. And they had brick for stone, and slime had they for mortar.”

Go: Strong’s #3051 yahab בָּהַב to give, provide, ascribe, come; it indicates the handing over or turning over of something to someone

Let us make brick in Hebrew is word play – nilbenah levenim לְבַנְּה לְבַנִּים both from the לָבַן root stem.

Brick: Strong’s #3843 levenah לְבַנְּה tile, brick; the same letters rearranged form #5038 nebelah נְבֵלָה carcass, corpse, a body devoid of life, something that defiles or makes you unclean;

Stone: Strong’s #68 ‘eben אֶבֶן stone; it’s from the root banah (#1129) בָּנָה to build, rebuild, establish, to build a house or establish a family (to produce sons); first use is in **Gen. 2:22** – “And the rib, which the Yahweh Elohim had taken from man, made/banah he a woman, and brought her unto the man.”

*Hmm...could the Hebrew language be revealing much more is taking place than just building a physical “brick and mortar” tower? The goal here is that of building a helpmeet/bride in order to produce sons/establish a house and name that stands contrary to the Name of Yahweh that is declared in the Heavens! To do so, Nimrod requests the dead things – the corpse/carcass that is devoid of life and the Spirit to be handed over to him.

Slime/Mortar: Strong's #2564/2563 from the same root stem chomer חֶמֶר cement, mortar, clay; also can infer a heap or a mound as in a unit of measurement for grain! Close cognate of 'omer עֹמֶר further connecting what's taking place here to a counterfeit process of Israel being prepared as the Bride during this season to build the house/Name!

It's inferring that those who will build Babylon/Babel are also walking in step, to the same cadence causing them to be unified and in one mind and one accord...come out of her my people!

Interesting to note that the term used for brick/build - levenah is a close cognate (just different vowels) as #3842 levanah לְבָנָה full moon; there are several different terms for moon in Hebrew – 2 main ones being yerach & levanah (full moon); this brings up a question that has been asked quite a bit lately – what is the role/purpose of the moon? Tradition has told us it is for the purpose of the calendar/mo'edim, yet historically this can be traced back to Babel/Babylon. In fact calendar issues arise in all ancient cultures when attempting to make the moon a time keeping piece along with the sun, as 12 lunar months will only give you 354 days compared to the 365 day solar year.

*It was Babylonian astronomers that attempted to sort out this mess and introduced intercalated months on a set schedule in order to ensure their Babylonian new year (Nissanu...hmm sounds like the month Nisan) was never far from the Vernal equinox matching the seasons to their months – why was this so important? Could it be another example of a counterfeit attempting to match closely the genuine – as the equinox is the true Biblical start of the year and nature testifies of this with the season of spring where we see new life and growth! The current system was established by a Greek mathematician/astronomer and is called the Meton cycle.

What does the Scripture reveal then about the moon?

As we begin to dive into this, it is interesting to note that the moon cycle in the natural is closely linked with woman's menstrual/niddah cycle (in fact without the interference of artificial light, the moon would synchronize the cycles). And in the Scriptures the moon is seen multiple times in connection with the role of the Bride/woman. In fact the first reference of the term moon/yerach is in **Gen. 37:9** regarding Joseph's dream (the sun - father, moon - mother, and 11 stars – the brothers that bow).

Niddah נִדָּה menstruous, impurity, set apart; the נ stem means to wander, to shake, or waver (to be a vagabond). We see a connection to this same concept in the term yerach/moon (#3394) יָרַח moon; connected to the root 'arach (#732) אָרַח the wanderer!

*Remember the connections – Nimrod asks for the levenah (the bricks) the wanderers, those who remain in an unclean condition therefore incapable of accessing the intimate chamber to meet with the true Husband! Is this part of the picture of the moon?

As a side note, the mothers of Israel all came from the house of Laban לָבָן white; the same root stem inferring to make bricks as in Babel, or the moon! Joseph's own mother Rachel steals the images/teraphim of Laban (his false gods), she is defiled by contact with the

dead ones and incurs death herself! In order to conceal her theft, she uses her niddah condition (Gen. 31) as a way to conceal her actions.

Genesis 37:9 is the first occurrence of the word moon, the next 2 deal with commands to not worship the moon, and finally the 4th verse once again helps to unveil its message!

Deuteronomy 33:14 – “And for the precious fruits brought forth by the sun, and for the precious things put forth by the moon/yerach”

Precious things: Strong’s #4022 meged מַגִּיד excellence, something very precious or noble; it’s a cognate of the term maggid מַגִּיד (a term familiar to most due to Passover) meaning one who relates or teaches, or one who tells; stems from the root nagad נָגַד (#5046) to tell, make known, to publish or declare; this is the same root as what the woman was created to be the ‘ezer k’negdo (helpmeet)!

Put Forth: Strong’s #1645 שָׁרַף a thing put forth, yield, produce, thing thrust out (used only in this verse); from the root #1644 garash שָׁרַף to drive out, expel, cast out, drive away, divorce or put away – 1st seen in Gen. 3:24 when Adam and Eve are driven out of Eden!

*The Hebrew language reveals that the role of the moon is that of teaching/telling or relating to us the exiled condition of the helpmeet who was divorced/driven out from the Garden of Eden/Garden of Appointed Times due to having been defiled by dead things (levanah/nebelah)!

Psalms 136:7-9 – “To him that made great lights: for his mercy endureth for ever: The sun to rule by day: for his mercy endureth for ever: The moon/yerach and stars to rule by night: for his mercy endureth for ever.”

*In the context of this Psalm David is referencing creation (Gen. 1), yet he has specifically added the term yerach/moon as something that rules by night which is not seen in Gen. 1:14 – only the greater light (sun) that rules the day and the lesser light to rule the nights – the stars! A fact corroborated in the natural as the moon has no light of its own (solar eclipse also was just proof of that).

Rule: Strong’s #4475 memshalah מְשָׁלָה rule, dominion, realm; from the root mashal מָשַׁל which can mean to make like, or to assimilate; cognate of mashal מָשַׁל proverb, parable, saying, or riddle; every night there is a parable presented before us, a proverb or a riddle to understand! We see the stars – the lesser lights that are a Tabernacle for the Sun or Bridegroom and we see the moon – the wanderer, who has no light of her own, and it points us back to Creation – Adam first created and garmented with the Presence/Light of Yahweh, yet after the fall naked of that covering, exiled and sent out, a wanderer till we return... remember Abram’s challenge?! IF you saphar, your seed will once again be like the stars, no longer the one who wanders tainted by death!

*It’s no accident that here in Psalms 136 the very next verses deal with the redemption and deliverance of Israel from Egypt and their journey to the land of their heritage! Israel was walking out this same pattern!

Jeremiah 31:35, 36 – “Thus saith Yahweh, which giveth the sun for a light by day, *and* the ordinances of the moon/yerach and of the stars for a light by night, which divideth the

sea when the waves thereof roar; Yahweh of hosts *is* his name: If those ordinances depart from before me, saith Yahweh, then the seed of Israel also shall cease from being a nation before me forever.”

*The grammar of the above verse is dealing with 3 distinct categories 1) the sun for a light by day 2) the ordinances of the moon 3) the stars for a light by night – let’s look at the ordinances of the moon which are key to the seed of Israel!

Ordinances: Strong’s #2708 chuqqah חֻקָּה statute, ordinance, limit, enactment, something prescribed, established or defined; from #2706 choq חֹק statute, ordinance or limit; the word picture is a wall (ח) and the sun rising/circuit of the sun, also infers to gather (ח) forming the word picture of something separated and then brought back together (united) and illuminated by light!

*Isn’t it interesting to note that chuqqah is noted as usually referring to a particular law related to a Mo’edim or specific ritual (such as Passover, Sukkot, and the Red Heifer sacrifice)? It’s about the wandering wayward Bride who was separated being brought back together where she will be illuminated again! And if that moon/Bride has no hope of restoration then Israel ceases to be!

This same pattern is seen in the Holy Place of the Tabernacle/Temple! The Menorah (representing the Bridegroom/Messiah/Light of the Word) stands across from the Table of Shewbread – the 12 loaves, representing both the 12 Tribes of Israel as well as the 12 constellation signs in the Mazzeroth. **Leviticus 24** reveals that each row of the Table of Shewbread also had pure frankincense upon it. Lebonah לבנה, the same as Levanah – Moon! The Tabernacle proclaimed the same message of redemption seen every night in the sky – the wandering wayward Bride (the moon) juxtaposed to one who could be restored and become the Tabernacle of His Name! Every single night the Heavens proclaim the promise of resurrection and redemption!

With this connection of the moon to the wandering bride/defiled woman, isn’t it interesting that the first idol/counterfeit husband Israel accepts is the golden calf (Baal), the bull divinity in all ancient cultures was directly associated with moon worship – his horns forming the crescent moon as the heavenly bull pushes the moon across the sky! This same image is echoed in **Rev. 17:3** – “So he carried me away in the spirit into the wilderness: and I saw a woman sit upon a scarlet colored beast” – the beast pushing/carrying the moon - the harlot compromised bride!

Babylon asked for the bricks – the moon, the wayward wandering bride who had no life to build their kingdom! Yet the Abram was told to saphar – declare the Message of Redemption and His seed would become as the stars! This is the season of our resurrection and redemption!