

Summary of Counting the Omer: Biblical Perspectives

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Counting the Omer: Biblical Perspectives

Main Topic: The Commandment to Count the Days between Passover and Pentecost (Shavuot)

- **Scriptural Foundation:** The teaching centers on Leviticus 23 and Deuteronomy 16, which command counting 50 days from Passover to Shavuot (Pentecost).
- **Spiritual Significance:** Emphasizes the unity between the Sinai covenant (giving of the Torah) and the new covenant (outpouring of the Holy Spirit in Acts 2), illustrating the continuity between the deliverance from Egypt and the coming of the Holy Spirit.
- **Obligation in Yeshua:** As believers in Yeshua (Jesus), the commandments are considered written on the heart, and followers are encouraged to fulfill the command to count the days as an act of joy and unity in the body of Messiah.

Historical and Interpretive Variations in Counting the Omer

- **Different Traditions:** Outlines four primary methods of counting the Omer in Jewish history:
 - *Essenes & Sadducees:* Wait until the full seven days of Unleavened Bread conclude, then begin counting after the next weekly Sabbath (Sunday).
 - *Karaites:* Begin counting on the Sunday within the seven days of Unleavened Bread, regardless of the actual Passover date.
 - *Ethiopian Jewish Community:* Begin counting the day after the full seven days of Unleavened Bread, regardless of the weekday.
 - *Pharisees (Perushim), Modern Israel:* Start counting on the second day of

Unleavened Bread (Nissan 16); this is the method favored by the presenter.

- **Scriptural and Historical Support:**

- *Septuagint, Targums, Philo, and Josephus* all support the Nissan 16 start.
- *Acts and Paul's Practice*: Presenter argues Paul, as a Pharisee, and the early Yeshua-followers would have followed the Nissan 16 tradition.

Key Questions Discussed

- What does "the day after the Sabbath" in Leviticus 23:15 refer to?
- Is it a salvation issue if one follows a different counting tradition?
- How should communities today decide which tradition to follow?

Presenter's Position and Reasoning

- The Nissan 16 method (second day of Unleavened Bread) is preferred, both for biblical and historical reasons.
- Emphasizes following the Torah as taught by Yeshua and the community elders led by the Holy Spirit.
- Recognizes that different communities may count differently and maintains this is not a salvation issue.

Practical Application and Community Life

- Encouragement for listeners to study and decide for themselves which tradition to follow.
- Stresses the importance of unity, community, and joy in observing the commandment.
- Notes that obeying this commandment is both a personal spiritual discipline and a public proclamation of the gospel.

Additional Topics

- **Essenes & Sectarian Views**: Presenter critiques Essene theology, particularly their exclusivity and doctrine concerning salvation.
- **Role of Tradition**: Advises balancing tradition with fidelity to Torah; traditions

are acceptable if they do not violate Torah.

- **Authority in the Community:** Cites Yeshua giving the "keys of the kingdom" to his disciples, empowering communities to interpret and apply Torah under the Holy Spirit's guidance.

Action Items

- Study the scriptures and historical sources to understand the counting of the Omer.
- Participate in the communal celebration of Passover, the Omer count, and Shavuot.
- Foster unity and dialogue within the community on this and similar issues.

Closing

- Encouragement to subscribe to the presenter's channel for further teachings and to engage with the community.
- Affirmation of the ongoing importance of these commandments in personal and corporate spiritual life.