

Feast of Firstfruits/Counting of the Omer

And the Lord spoke to Moses, saying, “Speak to the people of Israel and say to them, ‘When you come into the land that I give you and reap its harvest, you shall bring the sheaf of the firstfruits of your harvest to the priest, and he shall wave the sheaf before the Lord, so that you may be accepted. On the day after the Sabbath the priest shall wave it.’” (Leviticus 23:9-11)

You shall count seven full weeks from the day after the Sabbath, from the day that you brought the sheaf of the wave offering. You shall count fifty days to the day after the seventh Sabbath, then you shall present a grain offering of new grain to the Lord. (Leviticus 23:15-16)

On the first day of the week following Passover, the cereal harvest began. The first grain to ripen of those sown in winter was the barley. An “omer” is a half gallon of barley.

On the day after the Sabbath following Passover, as the first fruits of the barley harvest were being offered in the Temple, Christ was “raised from the dead, the first fruits of those who are asleep” (1 Corinthians 15:20).

As Christians, we can start counting the omer on Easter. For the year 2023, Easter Sunday (April 9, 2023) would be day 1 of the omer and Pentecost would be celebrated on May 28, 2023.

For Jews, Passover and the beginning of Feast of Unleavened Bread will be celebrated starting at sundown on April 5, 2023. The Feast of Weeks (Pentecost) begins on sundown, Thursday, May 25, 2023.

How to celebrate:

Gather the family at sundown (or any other time that is convenient).

Leader: “From the day after the Sabbath....count off 7 full weeks. Count off 50 days up to the day after the 7th Sabbath....” (Leviticus 23:15-16)

Everyone: This is the (first) day of the Omer.

Substitute the correct day as you count, once you reach 1 week, then you say, “This is the seventh day of the omer, which is 1 week of the omer.” Day 8 would be counted as follows, “This is the eighth day of the omer, which is 1 week and 1 day of the omer.” You may want to make a chart and fill in the chart for each day that you count.

Leader: Read a portion from the psalms as below. And close with prayer.

Portions from the Psalms to Count the Omer

Day

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| 1 | The Law of the Lord | Psalm 119:1-8 |
| 2 | Obedience to the Law of the Lord | Psalm 119:9-16 |
| 3 | Happiness in the Law of the Lord | Psalm 119:17-24 |
| 4 | Determination to obey the Law | Psalm 119:25-32 |
| 5 | A prayer for understanding | Psalm 119:33-40 |
| 6 | Trusting the Law of the Lord | Psalm 119:41-48 |
| 7 | Confidence in the Law of the Lord | Psalm 119:49-56 |
| 8 | Devotion to the Law of the Lord | Psalm 119:57-64 |
| 9 | The value of the Law of the Lord | Psalm 119:65-72 |
| 10 | The justice of the Law of the Lord | Psalm 119:73-80 |
| 11 | Prayer for deliverance | Psalm 119:81-88 |
| 12 | Faith in the Law of the Lord | Psalm 119:89-96 |
| 13 | Love for the Law of the Lord | Psalm 119:97-104 |
| 14 | Light from the Law of the Lord | Psalm 119:105-112 |
| 15 | Safety in the Law of the Lord | Psalm 119:113-120 |
| 16 | Obedience to the Law of the Lord | Psalm 119:121-128 |
| 17 | Desire to obey the Law | Psalm 119:129-136 |
| 18 | The justice of the Law | Psalm 119:137-144 |
| 19 | Prayer for deliverance | Psalm 119:145-152 |
| 20 | Plea for salvation | Psalm 119:153-160 |
| 21 | Dedication to the Law of the Lord | Psalm 119:161-168 |
| 22 | A prayer for help | Psalm 119:169-176 |
| 23 | True happiness | Psalm 1:1-6 |
| 24 | Confidence in the Lord | Psalm 11:1-7 |

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| 25 | What God requires | Psalm 15:1-5 |
| 26 | The Law of the Lord | Psalm 19:7-14 |
| 27 | A prayer for guidance | Psalm 25:4-10 |
| 28 | Longing for God | Psalm 63:1-8 |
| 29 | A song of thanksgiving | Psalm 67:1-7 |
| 30 | God and His people | Psalm 78:1-16 |
| 31 | God and His people | Psalm 78:17-31 |
| 32 | God and His people | Psalm 78:32-39 |
| 33 | God and His people | Psalm 78:40-55 |
| 34 | God and His people | Psalm 78:56-72 |
| 35 | God the King | Psalm 93:1-5 |
| 36 | God the Judge | Psalm 94:12-23 |
| 37 | A song of praise | Psalm 95:1-7 |
| 38 | God the Supreme King | Psalm 96:1-13 |
| 39 | God the Ruler of the World | Psalm 98:1-9 |
| 40 | God the Supreme King | Psalm 99:1-9 |
| 41 | The love of God | Psalm 103:1-22 |
| 42 | God and His people | Psalm 105:1-11 |
| 43 | The Lord's goodness | Psalm 106:1-5 |
| 44 | In praise of the Lord | Psalm 111:1-10 |
| 45 | The happiness of a good person | Psalm 112:1-10 |
| 46 | The reward of obedience | Psalm 128:1-6 |
| 47 | A prayer for help | Psalm 130:1-8 |
| 48 | A call for the universe to praise | Psalm 148:1-14 |
| 49 | A prayer of thanksgiving | Psalm 138:1-8 |
| 50 | Praise the Lord | Psalm 150:1-6 |