

An Overview on How to Count the Omer

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For many years there has been controversy on how to count the 50 days to Shavuot. Those who follow **יהושע** the Messiah would want to keep Shavuot the way **יהושע** the Messiah counted the omer, as **יהושע** is the Way the Truth and the Life according to **John 14:6**. If you have seen **יהושע** the Messiah you have seen the Father according to **John 14:9** as He is the image of the invisible Elohim according to **Colossians 1:15**. The question then obviously becomes: How did **יהושע** the Messiah observe Shavuot? The answer is: Exactly the way Moses instructed Israel to keep it. For according to **Hebrews 4:15** and **1 Peter 2:22**, **יהושע** the Messiah never sinned. As sin, by definition, is the transgression of the Torah according to **1 John 3:4**, one can be assured that **יהושע** the Messiah observed Shavuot exactly the way Moses instructed Israel to keep it.

One can reasonably presume that the calendar that was being kept by the priesthood in the Second Temple Period was the same calendar that Moses taught. Although there may have been arguments about how to count the omer in the Second Temple Period, the Levitical priesthood maintained the correct observation of the appointed times under the spiritual oversight of the Pharisees. Although there is evidence that the Qumran Sect was observing a different calendar at this time, the calendar that the Levitical priesthood kept was the Creation Calendar that Moses taught.

How can one reasonably presume this? When **יהושע** was a child, He would have observed the appointed times and the festivals on the calendar the Levitical priesthood kept at Jerusalem. The Messianic Scriptures record one such observation of Passover when **יהושע** was **12 years** of age in **Luke 2:40-52**. There is also evidence of other characters, such as Zechariah and Elisabeth, who were righteous before Elohim and walked in all of the commandments and ordinances of **יהוה** blamelessly according to **Luke 1:6**. How could Zechariah, who was a Levitical priest, along with his wife Elisabeth, walk blamelessly in the way of **יהוה** if they were not on the correct calendar? These are two examples of why one can reasonably presume that the calendar that was being kept by the priesthood in the Second Temple Period was the Creation Calendar that Moses taught.

יהושע the Messiah observed Shavuot exactly the way Moses instructed Israel to keep it according to the Creation Calendar. In order to observe Shavuot, one must be able to determine when a Hebrew Month begins and when a Hebrew Year begins. A Hebrew Month begins at the moment of sunset the evening the moon's crescent first becomes potentially visible to the naked eye in Jerusalem, assuming ideal sighting conditions without smog, haze or clouds. A Hebrew Spiritual Year begins at the moment of sunset in Jerusalem, on the evening of the first potentially visible crescent moon beginning **Day 1** of **Month 1**. A Spiritual Year can begin before or after the spring equinox. The rule of the equinox always places **Day 15** of **Month 1** on or after the Hebrew Day of the spring equinox.

Once these skills have been mastered, it becomes possible to determine when to observe Shavuot. One begins to count 50 days from the day after the Sabbath in Passover according to **Leviticus 23:15-16**. The Sabbath referred to here is the one that occurs on **Day 15** of **Month 1**. History makes it abundantly clear that this is the way the Levitical Priesthood counted the omer. Josephus, who was a Levitical priest in the Second Temple, mentioned in **Antiquities 3 / 250-254** that the Firstfruits of barley were offered on **Day 16** of **Month 1**. And the Talmud indicates in **Rosh Hashanah 6B** that Shavuot could be observed on **Day 5**, **Day 6** or **Day 7** of **Month 3**. **Rosh Hashanah 6B** clearly indicates that the Rabbinic Calendar was not in use in the first century. It also indicates that the first visible crescent was being observed at this time, and that the omer was counted from **Day 16** of **Month 1**. This constitutes historical proof from two independent sources that the Levitical Priesthood counted the **50 days** to Shavuot from **Day 16** of **Month 1**.

There is also direct evidence from Scripture which indicates that Moses kept Shavuot in this manner in the year of the Exodus. The Exodus occurred **480 years** before the fourth year of Solomon according to **1 Kings 6:1**. It can be determined from history, and specifically from the correlation between the history of the kingdoms of Judah, Assyria and Babylon as calibrated by solar and lunar eclipses, that the fourth year of Solomon occurred in **957 B.C.E.** This thereby places the year of the Exodus in **1437 B.C.E.** Upon observing **Month 3** in **1437 B.C.E.** on the Creation Calendar, it becomes apparent that Shavuot occurred on **Yom Shli-shi** or the **third day of the week** 50 days after **Day 15** of **Month 1**. There is a strong Hebrew tradition that **יהוה** appeared to Israel at Mount Sinai on Shavuot and that Moses descended with the Ten Commandments the second time **123 days** later on Yom Kippur. The Scriptures confirm that **יהוה** appeared to Moses at Shavuot on **Yom Shli-shi** on the **third day of the week** in **Exodus 19:11, 19:15** and **19:16**. This constitutes Scriptural proof that Moses counted the 50 days to Shavuot from **Day 16** of **Month 1** in the year of the Exodus.

For these reasons, the first day of the 50 day count will occur on **Day 16** of **Month 1**, and Shavuot will occur on either **Day 5**, **Day 6** or **Day 7** of **Month 3** according to the record contained in the Scriptures and the record of history.