

14 Days Completed

Learning Focus

Here I am ready to consider some **costs of engagement** on this journey, undertaking to know more each day about the workings of oppression, so that we might get ourselves, all of us, out from under this millstone that is the Narrow Place.

"Pharaoh Didn't Know Joseph" (quoted on Days 12, 14) argues that "do not separate yourself from the community" is a communal obligation, not just an individual one. This is an important idea. The comment suggests, though, that it is the job of a minority community to engage with the larger community, and that it's a straightforward matter, easily accomplished.

Even the biblical evidence raises doubts on this matter: Joseph spent all of his adult years in *Mitzrayim* and is portrayed as fully integrated into, and a leader in, the larger society; it is not clear to what extent that was even an option for his brothers, who are portrayed, throughout Genesis, as Other within the larger society. And how does "just show up," promoting participation in many sectors, work for Others today?

DC is home to members of many minority religious groups, plus atheists and people who don't identify with any faith community. Nonetheless, many organizations, even some official bodies, are functionally Christian -- not just a prayer, here or there, in the name of Jesus, but regular reference to Christian faith as an operating principle. In addition, important civic meetings are regularly scheduled on major religious holidays.

Non-Christians can, religious observance permitting, "just show up," and quietly participate in Christian activities masquerading as civic ones. Or we can make a point of noting that the Christian framework is inappropriate, for us and/or for a civic body. We can explain that the crucial Town Hall scheduled for Rosh Hashanah or the event planned for Eid al-Fitr excludes us. Or we can decide to conserve our energy and just drift away.

Whatever choices we make, non-Christians face different costs in attempting to engage. It's exhausting, in some cases illegal, and a constant reminder that we don't entirely belong. But it's not potentially lethal or soul-crushing.

When do you go along to get along in civic, religious, and other groups?

When do you insist on being recognized, being allowed to fully show up?

Does your decision depend on speaking for yourself vs. for a group?

Ritual Focus

Here I am, ready and prepared

[use traditional *kavanah* and/or continue here]

Here I am, ready and prepared to fulfill this project of counting 49 days,
from Narrowness to Expansion,
seeking to examine oppression and envision liberation,
inspired by the Torah's counting of the Omer,
counting seven full weeks, from Liberation to Revelation,
until I reach fifty days,
and prepare to bring new thoughts before the Eternal and into the world.

Bless

[See "Blessing" page for masculine or feminine God-language]

Brokheh ateh YHVH

Elohéinu hei ha'olamim

asher kidshétnu

bəmitzvotéihe vətzivétnu

al sefirat ha'omer

בְּרוּכָה אַתָּה יְהוָה

אֱלֹהֵינוּ חַי הַעוֹלָמִים

אֲשֶׁר קִדְּשָׁתָנוּ

בְּמִצְוֹתֶיךָ וְצִוִּיתָנוּ

עַל סְפִירַת הָעֹמֶר

Blessed are you, YHVH,
our God, Life of endless worlds,
who made us holy
with Voix commandments and commanded us
to count the Omer.

Count

הַיּוֹם חֲמִישָׁה עָשָׂר יוֹם שֶׁהֵם שְׁנַי שָׁבוּעוֹת וַיּוֹם אֶחָד לָעֹמֶר

*Hayom chamishah asar yom
shehem sh'nei shavuot v'yom echad la-omer.*

Today is fifteen days, which is two weeks and one day of the Omer.

visit <http://Rereading4Liberation.com> for more on Recounting Exodus
and Rereading Exodus along the Anacostia