

4 Days Completed

Learning Focus

Here I am ready to explore the urge to say "**that's far enough**,"
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.

Decades ago, Michael Walzer concluded *Exodus and Revolution* with this adage about "what the Exodus first taught" --

- first, that wherever you are, it is probably [*Mitzrayim*]
- second, that there is a better place, a world more attractive, a promised land;
- and third, that the way to the land is through the wilderness.
There is no way to get from here to there except by joining together and marching.

In the years since 1985, this passage has found its way into countless essays, sermons, and Passover readings. Is this image still working for us, though, in approaching Passover and Exodus? Envisioning *en masse* departure of the oppressed -- a violent, permanent parting -- may not be the most helpful metaphor for many circumstances we face today.

Perhaps we are seeing something of a "crash" around Exodus as a "joining together and marching." Destruction of the Temple, close to 2000 years ago, resulted in the "crash" of Judaism's organizing story, according to R' Benay Lappe of SVARA: The Traditionally Radical Yeshiva. The Rabbis of the Talmud responded to that crash in a way that resulted in the Judaism we know today.

Has the Exodus/Passover story experienced something of a "crash" for you? for your community? At the very least, we must ask some tough questions, of ourselves and our communities, about this concept of "joining together and marching":

Are we prepared to head toward something **truly different**?

Will we **let go of what we have** in order to get there?

With whom have we **joined hands**? Whom have we **left behind**?

Have we been marching toward a liberation -- that never seems to materialize -- for so long that we now wonder if it's **worth the upheaval**?

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]

Brukheh ateh YHVH

ברוך אתה יהוה

Elohénu hei ha'olamim

אלְהֵינוּ חַי הָעוֹלָמִים

asher kidshétnu

אֲשֶׁר קָדְשָׁתָנוּ

bəmitzvotéihu vətzivétnu

בְּמִצְוֹתֶיהָ וְצִוְתָנוּ

al sefirat ha'omer

עַל סְפִירַת הָעֵמֶר

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 חֵמֵשׁ יָמִים לְעֵמֶר

Hayom chamishah yamim la-omer

Today is day five of the Omer.

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