

## 22 Days Completed

### Learning Focus

Here I am ready to consider **idols** 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.

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In addition to feeding the narrative that Dollinger described (Day 23), a few famous words from R' Abraham Joshua Heschel (1907-1972) about Selma are regularly used to promote many misunderstandings in his name.

AJH's praying-legs\* are often cited in context of activities that are safe for participants, including marches protected by police. In Selma, however, earlier marchers were beaten by police, leaving 25-year-old John Lewis near death. Although federal troops stepped in for the third crossing attempt, when AJH arrived on Mar 21, he had no expectation of protection. Using his words sans nuanced recollection erases two factors:

- the real risk AJH and others faced;
  - difference in everyday risk: AJH faced many horrors in his life, but after the protest, in daily U.S. life, he and others with white skin were afforded a level of protection that MLK and many would never know.
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**Have key teachings lost context,** making idols of moments of change?

**Might we more profitably recall** AJH, weeks prior to the iconic moment, leading a group to FBI HQ in NYC to protest Bloody Sunday and call for arrest of rioting police (thus landing himself on the FBI watch list)?

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#### Sabbath/Festival and Action

For many Jews the question of whether to take part in action on the sabbath or a festival does not arise at all: either because their observance prohibits related activities (driving or using transit, carrying anything, including money, etc.) or because their observance doesn't include those restrictions. Individual Jews and organizations make participation decisions in many ways. But honoring AJH's memory means **not** using his words (about a Sunday activity, BTW) as precedence.

On the other hand, we have the teaching of Esther Ticktin, *ש"ת*, of Fabrangen Havurah (DC). She is credited with ending an argument about whether attending an anti-Vietnam War march on a Saturday could be considered "*pikuach nefesh*," a case in which saving a life takes precedence over other duties (like sabbath observance). Esther's conclusion: Attending is a violation of Shabbat, in community understanding, but going anyway underlines its urgency and import.

\*"For many of us the march from Selma to Montgomery was about protest and prayer. Legs are not lips and walking is not kneeling. And yet our legs uttered songs. Even without words, our march was worship. I felt my legs were praying". -- AJH, re: Selma

## 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*

*Elohéinu hei ha'olamim*

*asher kidshétnu*

*bamitzvotéihe vatzivétnu*

*al sefirat ha'omer*

בְּרוּכָה אַתָּה יְהוָה

אֱלֹהֵינוּ חַי הַעוֹלָמִים

אֲשֶׁר קִדְּשָׁתָנוּ

בְּמִצְוֹתֶיךָ וְצִוִּיתָנוּ

עַל סְפִירַת הָעוֹמֵר

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 שְׁלֹשָׁה וְעֶשְׂרִים יוֹם שֶׁהֵם שְׁלֹשָׁה שָׁבוּעוֹת וּשְׁנַיִם יָמִים לָעוֹמֵר

*Hayom sh'loshah v'esrim yom  
shehem sh'loshah shavuot ushnei yamim la-omer*

Today is twenty-three days  
which is three weeks and two days of the Omer

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