

23 Days Completed

Learning Focus

Here I am ready to consider **memory misuse** 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.

Misuses of Martin Luther King Jr's memory have reached an all-time, outrageous level with attempts to undermine U.S. history by quoting out of context the aspirational "content of their character." But misuses of MLK are not new or limited to this egregious recent campaign.

For decades, we spoke of love driving out hate but not "the 'congenital deformity' of racism that has crippled the nation from its inception." We omit: "White Americans left the Negro on the ground and in devastating numbers walked off with the aggressor."-- MLK 1967 (*Where Do We...?*)

We've managed to divorce "the Beloved Community" from its context: "The triple evils of poverty, racism, and militarism are forms of violence that exist in a vicious cycle. They are interrelated, all-inclusive, and stand as barriers to our living in the Beloved Community." We teach "the riots" of 1968 but not MLK's introduction of the Poor People's Campaign, the "gulf between the haves and the have-nots" in the U.S., the need for "an alternative to war and bloodshed," and the link between militarism and poverty. ("Remaining Awake Through a Great Revolution," National Cathedral, 3/31/68 -- King was assassinated four days after this speech.)

If we are guarding the memory of MLK, as a leader from a minority community relating to the larger society, we must have his whole legacy in mind.

How often do we allow our communities, Jewish and not, to claim we "have always" supported MLK, when history says otherwise?

How often does our view of MLK leave out criticism -- from in- and outside his own community -- as well as complex interactions with other Black leaders, various Christian groups, and a host of other sources?

Do we consider the biblical Joseph's likely detractors, within the larger family of Jacob as well as in other parts of *Mitzrayim-ite* society? The text is not explicit, but guarding and remembering Joseph's whole legacy, like MLK's, as an example of intergroup relations is not a simple matter.

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 kidshétu

bəmitzvotéihe vətzivétu

al sefirat ha'omer

ברוכה אתה יהוה

אלהינו הי העולמים

אשר קדשתנו

במצוותיה וצויותנו

על ספירת העמר

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

היום ארבעה ועשרים יום
שהם שלשה שבועות ושלשה ימים לעמר

Hayom arbaah v'esrim yom
shehem sh'loshah shavuot ushloshah yamim la-omer.

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

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