

24 Days Completed

Learning Focus

Here I am ready to consider **not remembering** 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.

Returning to the text of early Exodus:

A new king arose over *Mitzrayim*, who did not know Joseph. He said to his people, "Look, the *Yisrael-ite* people are more numerous and stronger than we. Come let us deal shrewdly... -- Ex 1:8-10

Although trouble begins when Joseph dies, many commentators focus on the "not knowing." In "Rereading the Plagues," David Silber writes:

Pharaoh's "not knowing" carries with it a sense of ingratitude, as Joseph was the savior of his nation; it also suggests callousness and a lack of sensitivity, and the Torah implies that it is not just an intellectual lapse but a moral deficiency.

--p.56, *Go Forth and Learn: A Passover Haggadah*

In a similar spirit, not knowing the contributions of enslaved and otherwise oppressed people to U.S. history "carries with it a sense of ingratitude." And not understanding the cost of such contributions "suggests callousness and a lack of sensitivity." As in the Exodus story, this is "not just an intellectual lapse but a moral deficiency."

Without trying to address the enormous topic of how history is and isn't taught in the U.S., awareness of "not knowing" as a "moral deficiency" demands we know more history. Pharaoh's not-knowing caused generations of pain followed by cataclysm.

Review some national background, e.g., "whiteness" as a legal property.

Consider some structures constructed through labor of enslaved and oppressed people -- the White House, the transcontinental railway, the university down the road or maybe where you studied, e.g.

Discover/recall some hyperlocal background: Who owned the house on the corner in previous generations, and what restaurants have come and gone before your favorite arrived?

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

אלָהֵינוּ חִי הָעוֹלָמִים

asher kidshétnu

אֲשֶׁר קָדְשָׁתָנוּ

bəmitzvotéhe 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 חָמִשָּׁה וְעִשְׁرִים יוֹם שְׁהֵם שְׁלֹשָׁה שְׁבִיעּוֹת וְאַרְבָּעָה יָמִים לְעֵמֶר.

Hayom chamishah v'esrim yom

shehem sh'loshah shavuot v'arbaah yamim la-omer.

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

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