

## 28 Days Completed

### Learning Focus

Here I am ready to consider **dread** 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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The new ruler “did not know Joseph” and placed new burdens on *Yisrael-ites*. They keep increasing and spreading out, however; so Pharaoh and his people *va-yakutzū*, which the Old JPS translates as “were adread” (Ex 1:12).

This is a serious reaction. In addition to the old-fashioned, but poetically apt, "adread," the Hebrew root *katz* [כָּטַז] can mean “to be grieved, loathe, abhor.” Some other (mostly Christian) translations of this verse use the following: loathed, greatly abhorred, came to dread, were grieved, were vexed by, were distressed by, couldn’t stand them, feared them worse than before.

This *katz*ing is a strong reaction and an important part of how the story develops. It's also an important concept in the way power dynamics work in DC and other places, as well as nationally. It is central to understanding the intersecting functions of racism and anti-Jewishness. (More to come).

In the Exodus tale, growing “dread” on the part of Pharaoh and the *Mitzrayim-ites* contributes to harsher treatment of the *Yisrael-ites*, and finally to attempted genocide. In the U.S., policies and personal behavior fueled by White Supremacy have long contributed to a range of harsh treatment of people seen as non-white: from neighborhood disinvestment, economic and cultural displacement, to outright genocidal actions toward indigenous, Black and brown people.

Moreover, while losing a favorite take-out restaurant or local hangout may seem a far cry from the harsh conditions of the Exodus story, these are not far removed from racist "dread" at all: Creating a place which serves majority white communities too often means displacing Black people and others perceived as a threat.

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**Who, today, is trying to govern** from a place of "dread"?

**Which public conversations** are driven by this concept?

**How are attempts to avoid "dread"** in one form or another fueling our housing, education, and other budget decisions?

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## 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*

*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 תִּשְׁעָה וְעֶשְׂרִים יוֹם שֶׁהֵם אַרְבָּעָה שָׁבוּעוֹת וְיוֹם אֶחָד לָעֹמֶר.

*Hayom tishah v'esrim yom*

*shehem arbaah shavuot v'yom echad la-omer.*

Today is twenty-nine days, which is four weeks and one day of the  
Omer.

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