

29 Days Completed

Learning Focus

Here I am ready to consider **shrewd dealings** 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.

The current ruler "did not know Joseph." Next there are worries about how many and how strong the *Yisrael-ite* population is becoming:

[Pharaoh] said to his people, "Look, the [Yisrael-ite] people are more numerous and stronger than we. Come let us deal shrewdly with them, so that they do not increase; otherwise, in event of a war, they might join our enemies in fighting against us and rise up from the ground. -- Ex 1:9-10

הַבָּה נִתְחַכֵּםָה, לֵי

Come on, let us deal wisely (King James, 1611)

Come, let us deal shrewdly (JPS 1917 and 1985)

Come, let us outsmart it (Artscroll, 1993)

Come, let us be shrewd with them (Alter, 2004)

Come-now, let us use-our-wits against it (Fox, 1995)

The root of the verb is "wisdom," in this form: "to to show oneself wise, deceive, show one's wisdom." "It" (or "he") is a singular pronoun, referencing the collective "people," sometimes translated as "them."

From its very start, what is now the USA operated so as to "deal shrewdly with" indigenous populations, Africans dragged here and enslaved, and, later, immigrant communities treated with restrictions and suspicion even while welcomed -- or at least permitted -- in for their labor.

This subject is too large to tackle here. However, U.S. policy and practice in education, employment, courts, housing, health care, and other areas acted, throughout history, to keep some populations down. Regardless of intent, results for Black communities in particular look remarkably like a successful attempt to "deal shrewdly with them."

Look at local and/or national treatment of Black people from the lens of these Exodus verses. Do you see attempts to "deal shrewdly"?

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 שְׁלֹשִׁים יוֹם שָׁהֵם אַרְבָּעָה שְׁבֻעוֹת וְשִׁנִּים יָמִים לְעֵמֶר
Hayom sh'loshim yom shehem arbaah shavuot ushnei yamim la-omer
Today is thirty days, which is four weeks and two days of the Omer.