

46 Days Completed

Learning Focus

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

A series of worsening plagues are unleashed on *Mitzrayim* as Pharaoh refuses to let the People go. The first plague turns The River to blood; the tenth and final plague is the death of the firstborns, discussed above by Dick Gregory. Several times before the final plague, Pharaoh seems to relent, saying that the People can go but then changing his mind.

This pattern repeats:

- ➔ plague
- ➔ Pharaoh relents
- ➔ plague stops
- ➔ Pharaoh un-relents
- ➔ new plague

Exploring this pattern can illuminate some reasons it takes so long for Pharaoh "to change his oppressive ways" and how data is involved.

The seventh plague provides a helpful illustration. The plague of hail is smiting man and beast, herbs and trees all over *Mitzrayim* -- except in Goshen, where the *Yisraelites* live (Ex 9:23-26). In response, Pharaoh calls for Moses and Aaron and says to them:

'I have sinned this time; YHVH is righteous, and I and my people are wicked. Entreat YHVH, and let there be enough of these mighty thunderings and hail; and I will let you go, and you shall stay no longer.' -- Ex 9:27-28

The plague is understood by everyone in the story, including Pharaoh, to be evidence of a state of affairs in need of correction. The evidence is convincing, and Pharaoh is resolved to act. Then --

And when Pharaoh saw that the rain and the hail and the thunders [הַקִּלּוֹת, *ha-kolot*] were ceased, he sinned yet more, and hardened his heart [וַיִּכְבֶּד לִבּוֹ, *va-yachebed libo*], he and his servants. -- Ex 9:34

When the evidence is no longer in front of him, Pharaoh's resolve falters.

Can we share evidence of the need for change, in so many areas -- locally, nationally, globally -- without exhausting ourselves and others?

Should we specialize, limit our focus? **Whom do we trust** to direct decision-making if we cannot follow all the evidence ourselves?

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]

Brukkeh 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 שֶׁבָּעָה וְאַרְבָּעִים יוֹם שֶׁהֵם שְׁשָׁה שָׁבוּעוֹת וְחֲמִשָּׁה יָמִים לְעֹמֶר.

Hayom shivah v'arbaim yom

shehem shishah shavuot vachamishah yamim la-omer.

Today is forty-seven days,
which is six weeks and five days of the Omer.

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