

## Messiah and the Omer

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**Introduction:** Since we have over the last week desired to make it a point to remember the passion of our Master who endured much for us and have tried to fulfil the Mitzvah (the Instruction) of YHWH to celebrate the Feast of Unleavened Bread in honour of Yahshua the sinless one we will hopefully come to see that everything that YHWH does is in accordance with His prescribed time. Nothing happens by accident and this is revealed right from the beginning of Bereshiyth (Genesis) with the Creation in chapter one where all creation comes to be through a defined period of time explained as the 1<sup>st</sup> day, 2<sup>nd</sup> day etc.

Following this timed creation account, we are initiated into the means by which Elohim provides an instruction by which his Moadim or appointed times which are primarily the Feasts can be determined through the heavenly signs as indicated in:

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What this shows us is that nothing happens on the Calendar of YHWH outside of his clearly defined appointments and that these appointments have very important purposes. In order for us to begin to experience the purpose of the First-fruits and the subsequent Counting of the Omer it will be good to see how we can determine when to begin the count of the Omer which refers to the Sheaves of the New Harvest which commenced from the day of first-fruits and will lead up to Shavuot, (Pentecost) for even within this timeframe there is considerable division between various groups, so I will first address this.

**First fruits consideration**

When we view the Feast of First Fruits from a Rabbinical perspective we will find that it has been determined that it should be observed on the 2<sup>nd</sup> day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread or the 16<sup>th</sup> of Nissan and the basis for this is found in the story of Yisrael entering the land of Canaan before the city of Yericho (Jericho) where we read that they celebrated the Feast of Pesach (Passover) but we also read with this event the following:

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**Yahushua (Joshua) 5:11 Yisrael ate from the aged grain (the stored grain) of the land on the day after the Pesach (Passover) sacrifice, unleavened Bread and roasted grain on this very day.**

**12 When the Manna was depleted the following day they ate from the aged grain of the land.**

This is the core text generally used by Rabbinic teachers to determine the Feast of First-fruits but there are problems since this reading clearly teaches us that they ate aged grain or stored grain and there is no mention at all of a first-fruit offering. We cannot see why or when this concept of First-fruits on the 16<sup>th</sup> began since according to Halacha or Jewish Law the Omer offering could only be brought from Barley which grew in a field owned by a Yahudim (a Jew).

I wonder if the different date may have stemmed from the opposition the Pharisees had with the Zadokite Priests known as the Sadducees & the Karaites who considered that the First-fruits directly followed the weekly Shabbat. We must further take note that at the time of Yahshua it was in fact the Sadducees who were the appointed Priests and therefore they controlled all Temple service and not the Pharisees who had no lineage to Aaron and seemed to be the ancestors of the Rabbis or was it to do with the rise in the first century of the teaching that Yahshua rose to be the First-fruits of the dead at the close of Shabbat as revealed in this Scripture:



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**Corintyah Aleph (1 Corinthians) 15:20 But now Messiah has been raised from the dead and has become the first-fruit of those having fallen asleep.**



Be as it may we must investigate further!

It is in our best interest to now turn to the writing concerned with this period of time to Vayikra (Leviticus) to see how it is described because this will help to determine the Omer count that we employ. When we think of the three major Feasts of Yahweh in which all Yisrael needed to gather before YHWH, strangely, we find a focus on the gathering together and the term Shabbat is not used to describe these Festivals but rather the following as we read concerning the Feast of Unleavened Bread:

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Vayikra (Leviticus) 23:6-7 And on the fifteenth day of this month is the Festival of Matzot (unleavened bread) to YHWH- seven days you eat unleavened bread. 7 In the first day you shall have a Qodesh Miqra (a Holy Convocation), you shall do no servile work therein.

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The Word Qodesh Miqra comes from the root Qara to call or cry out and according to the Blue Letter Bible means this:

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Lexicon :: Strong's H4744 - <i>miqra'</i>		Aa
מִקְרָא		
<b>Transliteration</b>	<b>Pronunciation</b>	
<i>miqra'</i>	mik-rá' (Key) 	
<b>Part of Speech</b>	<b>Root Word (Etymology)</b>	
masculine noun	From מִקְרָא (H7121)	
<b>Outline of Biblical Usage [?]</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I. convocation, convoking, reading, a calling together           <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A. convocation, sacred assembly</li> <li>B. convoking</li> <li>C. reading</li> </ul> </li> </ul>		
<b>Strong's Definitions [?]</b>		<b>(Strong's Definitions Legend)</b>
<p>מִקְרָא <i>miqrá'</i>, mik-raw'; from H7121; something called out, i.e. a public meeting (the act, the persons, or the place); also a rehearsal:—assembly, calling, convocation, reading.</p>		

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What we find is the word for a holy gathering, a Sacred Assembly or what could be deemed as a rehearsal or a convocation for the purpose of reciting Torah or public speaking.

We find that in Judaism all the Feasts became to be known as Sabbaths as it appears in the writing of Yahuchanan (John) using this same terminology with an explanation in brackets which at some time became the prevailing terminology as we read concerning the Feast of Unleavened Bread which has confused some with regards much of the timeline of Pesach (Passover) especially within Christianity which tries to squeeze Passover into the weekly Shabbat scenario as we see in:

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**NETZARIM - ANTOECIE**  
**NAZARENES OF AUSTRALIA**



**Yahuchanan (John) 19:31**  
**Therefore, since it was the Preparation Day, that the bodies should not remain on the tree on the Sabbath (for that Sabbath was a high day) the Yahudim asked Pilate to have their legs broken and that they be taken away.**

There is even groups that begin their fifty day count from the seventh Shabbat after Pesach (Passover) based on this verse:

**Vayikra (Leviticus) 23:16 Until the morrow after the seventh Shabbat you count fifty days, then you shall bring a new grain offering to YHWH.**

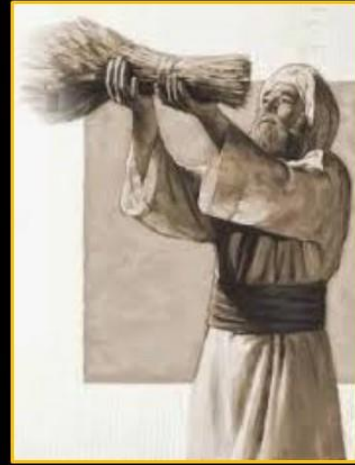
To avoid confusion, we need now read how the Torah reveals the instruction concerning Yom Bikkurim (Day of First-fruits) and the counting of the Omer:



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**Vayikra (Leviticus) 23: 10** When you come into the land which I give you and shall reap of its harvest, then you shall bring a sheaf of the first-fruits of your harvest to the Priest. **11** And he shall wave the sheaf before YHWH for your acceptance. **On the morrow after the Shabbat the Priest waves it.**



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What we see in this reading is the clear use of the term the Shabbat which was shown to only be used for the weekly Shabbat prior to the introduction of the of the Set-apart Feasts. With the introduction of the Feasts there has been some confusion. What is even more telling is the instruction concerned within the following:

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**Vayikra (Leviticus) 23: 15** And from the morrow after the Shabbat from the day that you brought the sheaf of the wave offering, you shall count for yourselves seven completed Sabbaths. **16** until the morrow after the seventh Shabbat you count fifty days, then you shall bring a new grain offering to YHWH.



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If we look to the Hebrew Calendar from Chabad.org for say 2017 we discover that it does not show the day before Shavuot as a Shabbat but an ordinary day. This is strange considering the verse we just read.

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**May, 2017**  
Iyar - Sivan, 5777

To view Shabbat Times [click here](#) to set your location

Day	Week	Month	Year	List	TODAY						
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Shabbat					
30 4 Iyar Omer: Day 19 Tonight Count 20	1 5 Iyar Omer: Day 20 Tonight Count 21	2 6 Iyar Omer: Day 21 Tonight Count 22	3 7 Iyar Omer: Day 22 Tonight Count 23	4 8 Iyar Omer: Day 23 Tonight Count 24	5 9 Iyar Omer: Day 24 Tonight Count 25	6 10 Iyar Omer: Day 25 Tonight Count 26 Acharai-Kedoshim					
7 11 Iyar Omer: Day 26 Tonight Count 27	8 12 Iyar Omer: Day 27 Tonight Count 28	9 13 Iyar Omer: Day 28 Tonight Count 29	10 14 Iyar Pesach Sheini Omer: Day 29 Tonight Count 30	11 15 Iyar Omer: Day 30 Tonight Count 31	12 16 Iyar Omer: Day 31 Tonight Count 32	13 17 Iyar Omer: Day 32 Tonight Count 33 Emor					
14 18 Iyar Lag BaOmer Tonight Count 34	15 19 Iyar Omer: Day 34 Tonight Count 35	16 20 Iyar Omer: Day 35 Tonight Count 36	17 21 Iyar Omer: Day 36 Tonight Count 37	18 22 Iyar Omer: Day 37 Tonight Count 38	19 23 Iyar Omer: Day 38 Tonight Count 39	20 24 Iyar Omer: Day 39 Tonight Count 40 Behar-Bechukotai					
21 25 Iyar Omer: Day 40 Tonight Count 41	22 26 Iyar Omer: Day 41 Tonight Count 42	23 27 Iyar Omer: Day 42 Tonight Count 43	24 28 Iyar Omer: Day 43 Tonight Count 44	25 29 Iyar Omer: Day 44 Tonight Count 45	26 1 Sivan Rosh Chodesh Omer: Day 45 Tonight Count 46	27 2 Sivan Omer: Day 46 Tonight Count 47 Bamidbar					
28 3 Sivan Omer: Day 47 Tonight Count 48	29 4 Sivan Omer: Day 48 Tonight Count 49	30 5 Sivan Omer: Day 49	31 6 Sivan Shavuot	1 7 Sivan Shavuot	2 8 Sivan	3 9 Sivan Naso					

We know that among Messianics and Netzarim there is a tendency to follow the Rabbinic timing to be in accord with brother Judah which has a good intension & we may think that the timing of First-fruits is of little importance but is that true since all other feasts have specific timing. We however need to see how the truth of Scripture & unique timing fully reveals the truth of Messiah through all of the Feasts. We know that Yahshua fulfilled precisely his sacrifice on Pesach being sacrificed when the lambs were being slaughtered and he was the unleavened bread or the one without sin, our perfect example and we know that the Ruach Ha Qodesh (the Holy Spirit) fell exactly on the believers when the day of Shavuot (Pentecost) had fully come. Therefore, precisely when the exact day of Shavuot (Pentecost) had come. Our first and foremost criteria to determine fulfilment & timing of the Feast must be Yahshua the Messiah lest we do as Christians do and accept Messiah's death as on Friday before the Shabbat accepting a contradictory 3 days & 3 Night count which Yahshua stated was the only sign he would give of himself calling it the sign of Jonah.

**The Omer and the Messiah**



Just consider this? On the same day that the Master was bound and crucified, the servants of the Sanhedrin bound up the standing barley into bundles while it was still attached to the ground so that it would be easier to reap. **(according to Menachot 10:3)**

After the sun had set and the Shabbat was over, when the Master rose from his tomb, the barley was reaped and collected in three baskets. That night the baskets of grain were carried to Yerushalayim (Jerusalem). They were delivered to the priesthood in the Temple. The baskets contained more than enough grain to constitute a full sheaf's worth: enough to fulfil the mandate of Leviticus 23:10.

The Hebrew word for sheaf is **“omer”**.

The harvest ritual of gathering this barley **omer** was for a special first fruit offering to the YHWH. According to Torah, no grain or produce from the new year's crops could be used or eaten until the first **omer** of grain to ripen was harvested and brought to the Temple & Barley is the first crop to ripen in Israel.

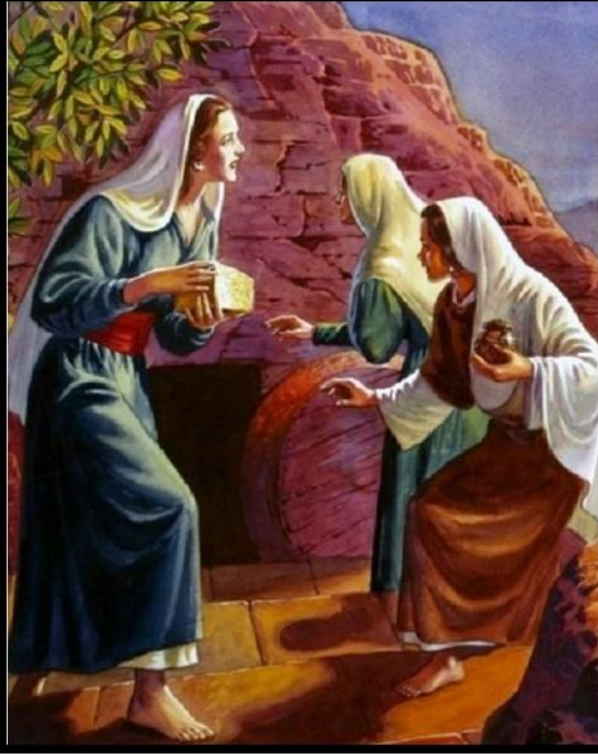
Until the barley **omer** was harvested and offered in the Temple, the rest of the crops were not deemed kosher.

So, it was that very night, the priests in the Temple threshed, roasted and ground the barley Sheaf into flour. All night they prepared it. The priests refined the freshly milled flour by sifting it through 13 sieves.

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1. The Women discover the Tomb empty.
2. At that moment the Priesthood are preparing the bread offering.
3. Miriam of Magdala encounters the risen Messiah.
4. The Kohen Ha Gadol (the High Priest) is now waving the dough before YHWH as a wave offering.
5. The Altar receives a memorial portion and the rest is made into unleavened bread to be shared among the Priesthood.
6. With this offering of the Barley Omer a single lamb is offered as a burnt offering.

Before the flour was ready for the altar, the women had already discovered the empty tomb and reported it to the Talmidim (disciples). While the disciples were trying to imagine what had become of the Master's body, the priesthood was busy mixing the barley flour with oil and frankincense to make it into a bread offering. As Miriam from Magdala encountered the risen Messiah in the garden, the High Priest was waving the dough before YHWH as a wave offering. He touched it to the altar and offered a portion of it on the altar as a memorial portion. The remainder of the dough was baked into loaves of unleavened barley bread to be shared among the priesthood. Along with this barley bread offering of the Omer, a single lamb was offered as a burnt offering.

By divine design, the rituals of offering the barley “**omer**” (sheaf) in the Temple coincided with the death and resurrection of the Yahshua. Just as the first fruits of the barley made all the rest of the harvest kosher for harvest and gave a promise of a full harvest, so too the resurrection of Messiah as the First-fruits presented to Yahweh in the Heavenly Tabernacle was a sign of the promise of a harvest of souls to come thus making the resurrection of the dead possible bringing hope to all those who would put their faith in him.

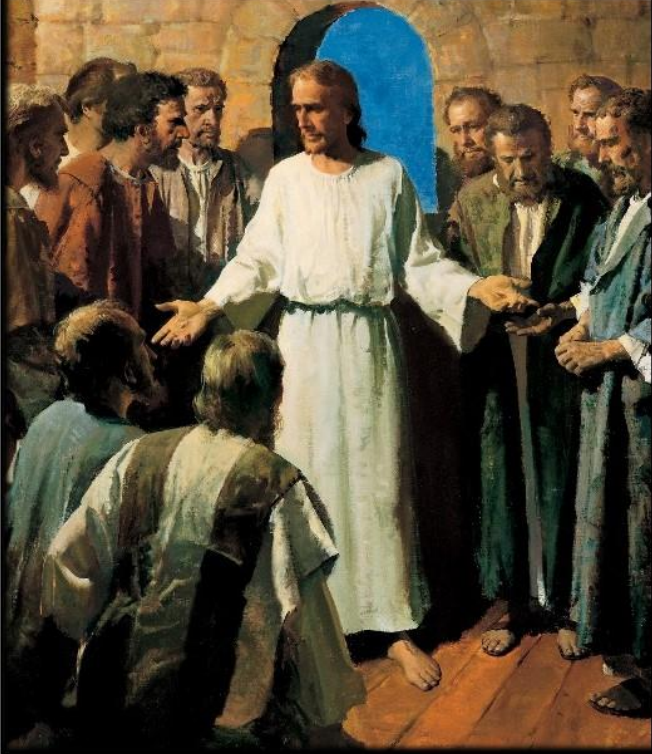
### **The Transformation of the Talmidim (Disciples)**

To help us understand how the counting of the Omer is an important Mitzvah or love connection for believers we need look no further than the Talmidim (the Disciples).

Though there is no clear revelation of the Talmidim making this count during the time from First-fruits to Shavuot (Pentecost) we can look at their great transformation that brought them there. At the onset of First-fruits we read this:

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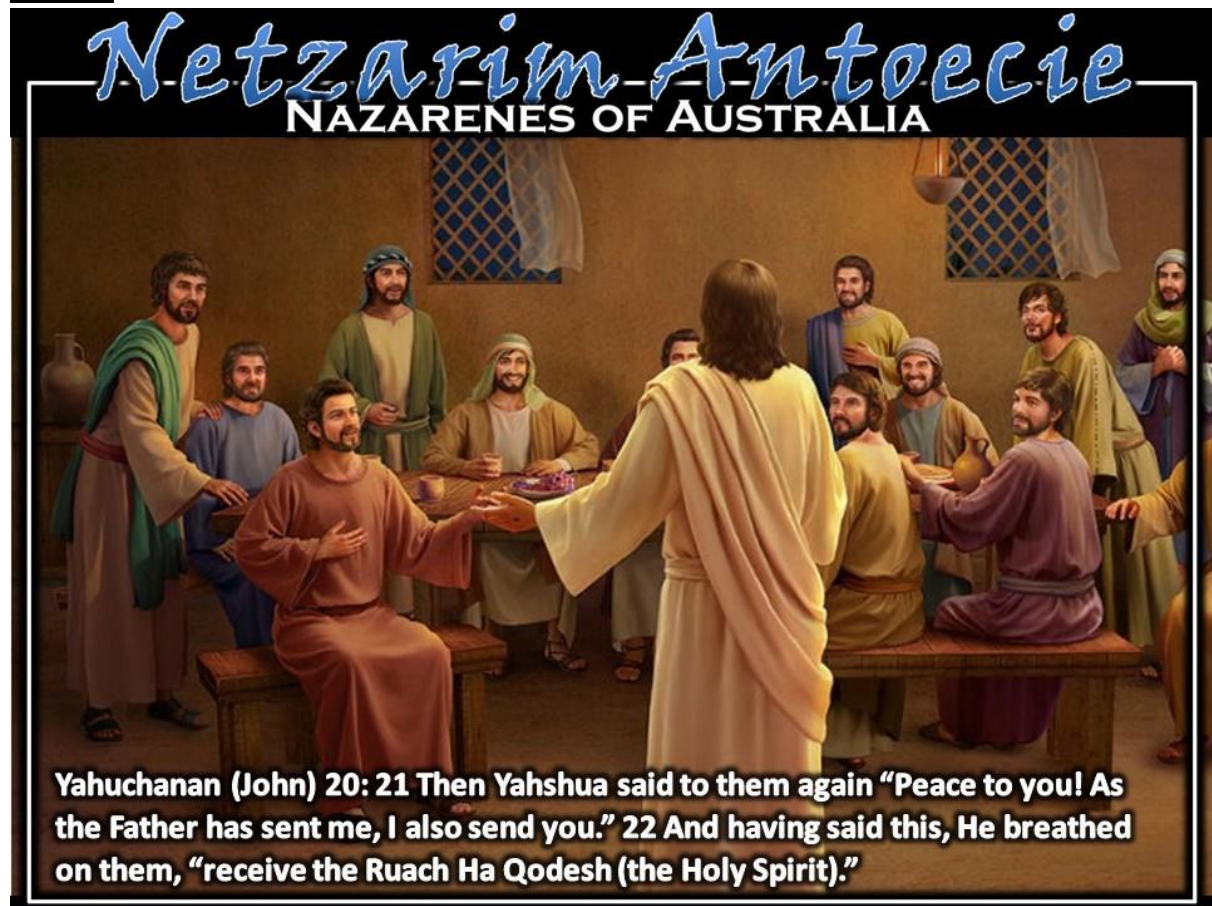


**Yahuchanan (John) 20: 19**  
**When therefore it was evening on that day, the first day of the week and when the doors were shut where the taught ones met, for fear of the Yahudim (the Jews) Yahshua came and stood in the midst and said to them “peace to you.” (Shalom aleikhem)**

Up until this moment the taught ones had lived in fear, unbelief and misunderstanding but with the appearance of Adonai (the Master) there lives were about to be in a state of progressive revelation and transformation. This is precisely what the counting of the Omer is meant to portray. For Yisrael it was a time to remember the freedom they gained from the slavery of Mitzrayim through a period that would refine them through various trials to prepare them for the giving of the Torah. For the taught ones (the disciples) however it was so much more life changing and the resurrection of the Master would be the catalyst for transformation and so each year it should be for us as well.

The key to the ability to receive “Binah” understanding and growth in truth, and character transformation however is not in our power but is in the words that Yahshua gives his fearful Talmidim (Disciples) in the following:





Just as with the taught ones we all need the power of the Ruach Ha Qodesh (the Holy Spirit) to transform us into useful ministers of the Good News just as the Talmidim needed, and we see that though they had received the most powerful revelation of the risen Master they still needed a period of growth all of which point towards the purpose of the Counting of the Omer. Can you imagine having such a powerful revelation and then not telling anyone about it. That is exactly what we find with the Talmidim (the Disciples). During the entire time of the counting of the Omer we see no signs of his taught one stepping out of the security of their fellowship to speak the truth of the resurrection. This may seem impossible, but we must believe that the instruction of the Master must have been to prepare themselves for a ministry that was destined to transform the world. Such a grand task required much self-examination & diligent searching of the Scriptures together with intense supplication in prayer for revelation from the RUACH (Spirit) of Elohim combined with close fellowship with the brethren.

Further evidence of the tremendous need to enter into this time we refer to as counting of the Omer is seen by the fact that all of Yahshua's post resurrection appearances fell within the days of the Omer count as shown on this slide:

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### *The appearances of Yahshua:*

1. To Miriam- (Yochanan 20:16)
2. To the other Women- (MatithYahu 28:9)
3. On the road to Emmaus- (Luke 24:13-30)
4. To Shimon Kepha (Peter)- ( Luke 24:34, 1 Cor 15:5)
5. To the 10 Talmidim (taught ones)- (Luke 24:36)
6. To the Disciples with Toma (Thomas)- (Yochanan 20:24-29)
7. by the Lake of Galil- (Yochanan 21)
8. On the Mountain in Galil appointed by the Master- (Mk 16:19)
9. To Ya'acov (James)- (1 Cor 15:7)
10. To the 500 that Shaul (Paul) speaks of- (1 Cor 15:6)

If there was such a need for progressive revelation among the Taught ones (the Disciples) who had walked with Yahshua for his entire ministry, surely, we can appreciate the need we have in reflecting on the 49 days leading up to Shavuot that we too can be prepared for the work Yahweh has for us to achieve within the next year. May we desire above all to have that passion to engross ourselves in obedience and intensify our walk that Shavuot (Pentecost) becomes a goal to climax our walk with Yahshua and that we truly become changed from the inside out through the power of his RUACH (Spirit) that resides in us remembering that we must be complicit, in full agreement with his purpose in us at all times if we are to be the people he desires us to be.

Shalom Aleikhem!