

OMER QUESTION OF THE WEEK

(Something to think about or to talk about with a friend or loved ones)

WEEK I (Thursday evening, April 9) We begin to count the Omer at the second night of Passover. Counting helps us mark off the days while we are waiting for something special to happen. What is something good you would like to have happen this week?

WEEK II (Thursday evening, April 16) There is a Jewish tradition which tells us to talk to God in prayer for someone who is ill. When you hear that someone is sick, what can you say to God?

WEEK III (Thursday evening, April 23) Each week, we read a different portion of the Torah (parashat ha-shavua). Think about a favorite Jewish story. What did you find intriguing or inspiring about it?

WEEK IV (Thursday evening, April 30) Think of a time when someone close to you felt hurt. What did you do to help him or her feel better?

WEEK V (Thursday evening, May 7) In Jewish tradition, Bikkur Cholim, visiting the sick is an important mitzvah, (responsibility). When you are sick, whom do you like to have visit you? What can you do for someone who is sick?

WEEK VI (Thursday evening, May 14) Shabbat is the holiday we celebrate each week. On Shabbat, we rest to remind ourselves that God, too, rested at the end of creating the world. What do you do to rest and relax?

WEEK VII (Thursday evening, May 21) We will finish counting the Omer when we reach the 49th day, the day before the holiday of Shavuot begins. At Shavuot we celebrate God's gift of the Ten Commandments. How many can you list? Check your memory by looking at Exodus 20:1-14.

JEWISH COUNTING

(or - How a blessing can improve your math skills!)

STEP ONE: We recite: בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם אֲשֶׁר קִדְּשָׁנוּ בְּמִצְוֹתָיו וְצִוָּנוּ
עַל סְפִירַת הָעֹמֶר:

Barukh Atah Adonai Eloheynu Melekh Ha'olam asher
kidshanu b'mitzvotav v'tzivanu al sefirat ha'omer.

Blessed are You Adonai Our God Ruler of the Universe who sanctifies us by
Your mitzvot and commands us to count the Omer.

STEP TWO:

We continue by reciting the day of the Omer. For the first week, we count each day
in this way:

Today is the _____ day of the Omer.

(Insert 1st through 7th)

From the second week until the end we count the weeks and the days. For example,
if it is the 10th day, we would recite:

Today is the 10th day, which is one week and three days of the Omer.