

Days 5–11

Counting our Way to Shavuot

AND MAKING IT COUNT FOR OUR LIVES

Introduction

A handout for counting the 49 days to Shavuot will be available each Shabbat and will contain a verse or two selected from each of the 66 books of the Bible for each day. A brief comment on the selected text is given, along with a few introspective questions in order to help initiate personal reflection on the biblical text as well as open discussion on an individual or group basis.

There is space on each daily page for writing down your thoughts as you consider the application of the selected text and how it could be applied personally, shared with another individual, or incorporated into family time or in a small group setting.

The icons on each page will remind you to consider an application of the verse, first for yourself, then for someone you may be discipling or with whom you have regular conversation, and finally with your family and/or a small group.



In this space, jot down thoughts about how the meaning of the chosen biblical text applies to your own life, and how you can incorporate its truth in your walk with the Lord.



Here you can list people you want to remember in prayer today and perhaps be able to share encouragement related to today's verse(s).



This is a place to write some thoughts on how the topic could be discussed with your family at dinner time, or with friends you may see, or in a small group study session.

הַיּוֹם חֲמִשָּׁה יָמִים לְעֹמֶר – Day Five

The LORD your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among you, from your countrymen, you shall listen to him. Deuteronomy 18:15

“Are you listening to me?”

I may be wrong but at times I feel like people are not really listening to what I say. A parent might feel this way when their children don't stop playing a game when asked to clean their room. A child might feel this way when they ask for just a few more minutes to play and receive a heated denial and restating of the command to, “Go clean your room now!” Each of us, at times, can be so caught up in what we want to do or are doing that we miss messages around us. God told His people in advance that He would send a prophet like Moses. The gospels show us evidence that some were seeking this promised prophet (John 1:21, 23, 25; 6:14; 7:40). Are we caught up in our own lives and missing things around us? Are we missing things God is saying? Many in Yeshua's day were caught up in their own agendas and failed to receive Him.

How can I ensure more consistency in listening to/for God in my life? What Bible verses might help me to stay focused in this area? How can I relate the importance of listening to someone else without making them feel like I am mad or criticizing them for not listening? How can I talk about communicating better with my family, friends, or others whom God has brought into my life?



Making it personal



Sharing it with someone



Sharing it with others

O taste and see that the LORD is good; How blessed is the man who takes refuge in Him! Psalms 34:8

Day Six – היום שֶׁשָׁה יָמִים לְעֹמֵר

This book of the Torah shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do according to all that is written in it; for then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have success. Joshua 1:8

“If you would just read the instructions...”

Why is it, for many of us, that looking at instructions seems like a last resort? I’ve built a few sets of furniture in my life. Sometimes I closely follow the instructions and other times I don’t. I have never gone to bed and woke up the next morning meditating on the manufacturer’s plans on how to build a desk or bookcase. God’s instructions are different but how often do we treat them like we do other instructions in our lives? God does have a plan for life that is truly successful and prosperous. He gives us means to that end and a path to follow to reach His goals.

How do we understand success and failure? What pressures in my life might be keeping me from bearing fruit according to God’s standards or success? What might be God’s solutions and instructions? How can I relate true prosperity to someone else? How can I promote healthy growth in my family, friends, or others whom God has brought into my life?



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And the one on whom seed was sown among the thorns, this is the man who hears the word, and the worry of the world and the deceitfulness of wealth choke the word, and it becomes unfruitful. And the one on whom seed was sown on the good soil, this is the man who hears the word and understands it; who indeed bears fruit and brings forth, some a hundredfold, some sixty, and some thirty. (Matthew 13:22-23)

Day Seven, 1 Week – הַיּוֹם שִׁבְעָה יָמִים לְעֹמֶר

Hear, O kings; give ear, O rulers! I, I will sing to the LORD, I will sing, I will sing praise to the LORD, the God of Israel. Judges 5:3

“Sing, Sing a Song...”

The above lyric was from a song originally written for Sesame Street and made popular by the Carpenters. The verse selected for today is from a song sung by Deborah and Barak during the times of the Judges in Israel. The Sesame Street song directed singers to make a song “simple” so that it would last a whole life long. As a children’s song, it fills one with thoughts of innocence, acceptance, good things not bad, and a whole life time of happiness. The song by Deborah and Barak was followed by 40 years of quietness in the land (Judges 5:31). But then the next generation went astray. The song and it’s meaning didn’t last. What about the songs we sing?

How does music unite generations? When I worship do I sing to the LORD? How do I know the difference? Am I singing songs that are simple enough for everyone to join? How can I reinforce the importance of worship to someone else? How can our families experience worship in song together?



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May God be gracious to us and bless us, and cause His face to shine upon us (Selah), that Your way may be known on the earth, Your salvation among all nations. Let the peoples praise You, O God; let all the peoples praise You. Let the nations be glad and sing for joy; for You will judge the peoples with uprightness and guide the nations on the earth. (Selah). Psalm 67.1–4

הַיּוֹם שְׂמוֹנֶה יָמִים לְעֹמֵר – Day Eight

May the LORD reward your work, and your wages be full from the LORD, the God of Israel, under whose wings you have come to seek refuge. Ruth 2:12

“Lost Cat – \$200 Reward”

People use rewards to create incentives for people to act. In regards to a general sense of indifference to a lost pet, a reward increases the felt urgency to all who would seek the payoff. What rewards does God have for those who seek Him? In Hebrews, faith is coupled with believing that God exists and that He rewards those who seek Him. We are saved by God’s grace and at the same time He provides increase based upon simple rules of sowing and reaping. (Gal 6:7). These principles don’t guarantee God will increase all planting but His plans will always flourish.

- What is God’s idea of reward in this life and the life to come?
- How does God give us desires? How are you doing in seeing Him fulfill those desires? (See Psalm 37:4-8)
- How do I communicate favor and acceptance to another person?
- How can I share common plans and goals with my family, friends, or others, that God has put into my life? How do we share the fruits of our labors together?



Making it personal



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So Yeshua said to them again, “Truly, truly, I say to you, I am the door of the sheep. All who came before Me are thieves and robbers, but the sheep did not hear them. I am the door; if anyone enters through Me, he will be saved, and will go in and out and find pasture. The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly. John 10:7–10

Day Nine – הַיּוֹם תִּשְׁעָה יָמִים לְעֹמֶר

Speak, LORD, for Your servant is listening. 1Samuel 3:9
Now, O Lord GOD, You are God, and Your words
are truth, and You have promised this
good thing to Your servant. 2Samuel 7:28

“What did you just say?”

We don't always pay attention when people are talking to us. Sometimes we listen but don't really hear. When Samuel was a boy with Eli, the LORD spoke to him and he didn't realize it. Nathan also heard from the LORD and carried His message to David. As the people of God, our greatest need is to truly know what God has said and what He continues to communicate to us. He has given us means to that end.

- How do we know God's truth?
- What do I know for sure that God has spoken to me? How do I understand “spoken” in this regard?
- How does my family, friends, or others connect with God? Yeshua speaks of this in terms of a vine and a branch (John 15). How might you communicate this concept?



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The heavens are telling of the glory of God; and their expanse is declaring the work of His hands. Day to day pours forth speech, and night to night reveals knowledge. There is no speech, nor are there words; their voice is not heard.

Psalm 19.1–3

היום עֶשְׂרֵה יָמִים לְעֹמֶר – Day Ten

Blessed be the LORD, who has given rest to His people Israel, according to all that He promised; not one word has failed of all His good promise, which He promised through Moses His servant. 1Ki 8:56

But the LORD, who brought you up from the land of Egypt with great power and with an outstretched arm, Him you shall fear, and to Him you shall bow yourselves down, and to Him you shall sacrifice. 2Ki 17:36

“But you promised!”

There is a special bond in relationships where promises are made and kept. When a promise fails, the feelings of disappointment can discourage us and even break the trust we feel towards one another. God’s promises will always be fulfilled. We may not always be able to reconcile the circumstances in our lives with this statement. Our God may seem far off in these times but He is living and aware of every detail in our lives. Take some time today and review some of the promises He has made.

How well do we rehearse the promises of God? As you cry out to God, express your thoughts and feelings to Him. What areas of your life might be strengthened by a fresh daily dose of God’s presence and promises? How can I listen to others and speak of or be a fulfillment of God’s promise to them? Consider how to relate the reality of God’s living promises. What discussion points might you present to a group of friends or to your family to open up sharing of needs and God’s ability to truly meet them?



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Grace and peace be multiplied to you in the knowledge of God and of Yeshua our Lord; seeing that His divine power has granted to us everything pertaining to life and godliness, through the true knowledge of Him who called us by His own glory and excellence. For by these He has granted to us His precious and magnificent promises, so that by them you may become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world by lust. (2 Peter 1:2-4)

Day Eleven – הַיּוֹם אֶחָד עָשָׂר לְעֹמֶר –

For David said, “The LORD God of Israel has given rest to His people, and He dwells in Jerusalem forever. 1Chronicles 23.25 He said, “O LORD, the God of Israel, there is no god like You in heaven or on earth, keeping covenant and showing lovingkindness to Your servants who walk before You with all their heart; 2Chronicles 6.14

“Want to bet on a sure thing?”

Many people find a thrill in gambling and risk taking. Placing a bet may be fun and innocent but might also be sinful and addictive. There are not risks in trusting in the LORD. Circumstances may make it feel hard or unthinkable to trust in the LORD but a truthful and wise heart will always lean on the LORD. How do you build this kind of faithfulness? How do we know that what God decreed will actually come to pass?

- Think about the surety that God gives for His promises. How do you know that His promises apply to you?
- Discuss with a friend or family member the fears you have in “going all in” with the Lord.
- How does fear of loss cause us to lose focus on God’s faithfulness?
- How do we see serving God as a risk? What do we fear losing?
- In the Bible, how many things are we to love with our whole heart?



Making it personal



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But from there you will seek the LORD your God, and you will find Him if you search for Him with all your heart and all your soul. You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might. (Deuteronomy 4:29; 6:5)