The seven-week period between the Biblical festivals of Passover and *Shavuot*, or Pentecost, is the season of Counting the Omer (Leviticus 23:10-16; Deuteronomy 16:9-11). Originally in the Tabernacle and Temple of Ancient Israel, the priests were to present special offerings before the Lord each day for the fifty-day count. Psalm 67 was among the hymns recited and employed to offer praise and adoration to Him. Since the destruction of the Second Temple, various Jewish traditions have been developed in order to make the seven-week or fifty-day Omer Count a very special time to focus on God, His blessings, and the important themes of *Shavuot*.

Today's Messianic Believers can surely benefit from any discipline where God's people can review various Scripture passages for a set time, and allow themselves to be prepared for great things when the Feast of Weeks is finally observed. The awesome wisdom and goodness of our Heavenly Father are things definitely worthy of exploration and contemplation—via a reflection upon the themes of various Psalms, and how they relate to our understanding of *Shavuot* and our faith in Yeshua the Messiah (Jesus Christ).

***Counting the Omer: A Daily Devotional Toward Shavuot* is a compilation of insightful, encouraging messages, which examines a passage from Psalms every day for the fifty-day Omer Count season. Each exhortation is intended to prepare you for the commemoration of *Shavuot* (Pentecost) at the end of seven weeks. Gleaned from the studies and notes of William Mark Huey, it is the author's intent that God's people can not only be energized to Count the Omer themselves—but be *specially prepared* to experience His presence when the Feast of Weeks finally arrives!**

COUNTING THE OMER

Counting the Omer

A Daily Devotional Toward Shavuot

William Mark Huey

MESSIANIC APOLOGETICS
messianicapologetics.blog

COUNTING THE OMER

A Daily Devotional Toward Shavuot

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Speak to the children of Israel, and tell them, "When you have come into the land which I give to you, and shall reap its harvest, then you shall bring the sheaf of the first fruits of your harvest to the priest. He shall wave the sheaf before the LORD, to be accepted for you. On the next day after the Sabbath the priest shall wave it. On the day when you wave the sheaf, you shall offer a male lamb without defect a year old for a burnt offering to the LORD. The meal offering with it shall be two tenths of an efah of fine flour mixed with oil, an offering made by fire to the LORD for a pleasant aroma; and the drink offering with it shall be of wine, the fourth part of a hin. You must not eat bread, or roasted grain, or fresh grain, until this same day, until you have brought the offering of your God. This is a statute forever throughout your generations in all your dwellings. You shall count from the next day after the Sabbath, from the day that you brought the sheaf of the wave offering: seven Sabbaths shall be completed" (WMB).

Leviticus 23:10-15

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Abbreviations and Special Terms

The following is a list of abbreviations for reference works and special terms which are used in publications by Outreach Israel Ministries and Messianic Apologetics. Please familiarize yourself with them as the text may reference a Bible version, i.e., RSV for the Revised Standard Version, or a source such as *TWOT* for the *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament*, solely by its abbreviation. Detailed listings of these sources are provided in the Bibliography.

ABD: *Anchor Bible Dictionary*
AMG: *Complete Word Study Dictionary: Old Testament, New Testament*
ANE: Ancient Near East(ern)
Apostolic Scriptures/Writings: the New Testament
Ara: Aramaic
ASV: American Standard Version (1901)
ATS: ArtScroll Tanach (1996)
b. Babylonian Talmud (*Talmud Bavli*)
B.C.E.: Before Common Era or B.C.
BDAG: *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature* (Bauer, Danker, Arndt, Gingrich)
BDB: *Brown-Driver-Briggs Hebrew and English Lexicon*
C.E.: Common Era or A.D.
CGEDNT: *Concise Greek-English Dictionary of New Testament Words* (Barclay M. Newman)
CGL: *Cambridge Greek Lexicon* (2021)
CHALOT: *Concise Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament* (Holladay)
CJB: Complete Jewish Bible (1998)
CJSB: Complete Jewish Study Bible (2016)
DRA: Douay-Rheims American Edition
DSS: Dead Sea Scrolls
EDB: *Eerdmans Dictionary of the Bible*
EJ: *Encylopaedia Judaica*
ESV: English Standard Version (2001)
Ger: German
GNT: Greek New Testament
Grk: Greek
HALOT: *Hebrew & Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament* (Koehler and Baumgartner)
HCSB: Holman Christian Standard Bible (2004)
Heb: Hebrew
HNV: Hebrew Names Version of the World English Bible
IDB: *Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible*
IDBSup: *Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible Supplement*
ISBE: *International Standard Bible Encyclopedia*
IVPBBC: *IVP Bible Background Commentary (Old & New Testament)*
Jastrow: *Dictionary of the Targumim, Talmud Bavli, Talmud Yerushalmi, and Midrashic Literature* (Marcus Jastrow)
JBK: New Jerusalem Bible-Koren (2000)
JETS: *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society*
KJV: King James Version
Lattimore: The New Testament by Richmond Lattimore (1996)
LITV: *Literal Translation of the Holy Bible* by Jay P. Green (1986)
LES: *Lexham English Septuagint* (2019)
LS: *An Intermediate Greek-English Lexicon* (Liddell-Scott)
LSJM: *Greek-English Lexicon* (Liddell-Scott-Jones-McKenzie)
LXE: *Septuagint with Apocrypha* by Sir L.C.L. Brenton (1851)

LXX: Septuagint
m. Mishnah
MT: Masoretic Text
NASB: New American Standard Bible (1977)
NASU: New American Standard Update (1995)
NBCR: *New Bible Commentary: Revised*
NEB: New English Bible (1970)
Nelson: *Nelson's Expository Dictionary of Old Testament Words*
NETS: New English Translation of the Septuagint (2007)
NIB: *New Interpreter's Bible*
NIDB: *New International Dictionary of the Bible*
NIV: New International Version (1984)
NJB: New Jerusalem Bible-Catholic (1985)
NJPS: Tanakh, A New Translation of the Holy Scriptures (1999)
NKJV: New King James Version (1982)
NRSV: New Revised Standard Version (1989)
NLT: New Living Translation (1996)
NT: New Testament
OT: Old Testament
REB: Revised English Bible (1989)
RSV: Revised Standard Version (1952)
t. Tosefta
Tanach (Tanakh): the Old Testament
Thayer: *Thayer's Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament*
TDNT: *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*
TLV: Messianic Jewish Family Bible—Tree of Life Version (2014)
TNIV: Today's New International Version (2005)
TWOT: *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament*
UBSHNT: United Bible Societies' 1991 Hebrew New Testament revised edition
v(s). verse(s)
Vine: *Vine's Complete Expository Dictionary of Old and New Testament Words*
Vul: Latin Vulgate
YLT: Young's Literal Translation (1862/1898)
WMB: World Messianic Bible (2020)

INTRODUCTION

An interesting experience happened to me on my spiritual journey, between Passover and the Feast of Weeks in 2004, which actually inspired this volume. At that time, in my capacity as director of Outreach Israel Ministries, we were responsible for certain elements of a unified effort, by several independent Messianic ministries, to co-host a celebration of the festival of *Shavuot* (Pentecost) in Orlando, Florida. With the stated theme of "Unity in Spirit and Truth," our collective efforts, among many goals, were devoted to displaying to much of the beleaguered Messianic community—at least for *a brief moment*—that Spirit-led followers of Yeshua the Messiah could actually work, worship, and minister together while commemorating the Feast of Weeks. In Biblical times, *Shavuot* was originally given to be one of the three times of ingathering at Jerusalem:

> "You shall observe a feast to me three times a year. You shall observe the feast of unleavened bread. Seven days you shall eat unleavened bread, as I commanded you, at the time appointed in the month Abib (for in it you came out of Egypt), and no one shall appear before me empty. **And the feast of harvest, the first fruits of your labors, which you sow in the field;** and the feast of ingathering, at the end of the year, when you gather in your labors out of the field. Three times in the year all your males shall appear before the Lord GOD" (Exodus 23:14-17, WMB; cf. Leviticus 23:11-16).

The important feature of *Shavuot* is to convoke and declare allegiance and dedication to God. Our primary objective in 2004 was to focus on the Holy One of Israel, and since most do not have the financial ability to convene in Jerusalem—we simply wanted to assemble as one and declare our love and obedience to the Lord, allowing His Spirit to minister. As a result, almost all who attended our convocation were treated to an awesome display of how events and gatherings focused on the Messiah Yeshua and His work for us, can be a spiritual blessing beyond description.