

SAYINGS OF THE FATHERS

BOOKS BY WILLIAM MARK HUEY

TorahScope, Volume I

TorahScope, Volume II

TorahScope, Volume III

TorahScope Haftarah Exhortations

TorahScope Apostolic Scriptures Reflections

Counting the Omer: A Daily Devotional Toward Shavuot

Sayings of the Fathers: A Messianic Perspective on Pirkei Avot

SAYINGS OF THE FATHERS

A MESSIANIC PERSPECTIVE ON PIRKEI AVOT

**A DEVOTIONAL FOR COUNTING THE OMER
BETWEEN PASSOVER AND SHAVUOT**

WILLIAM MARK HUEY

MESSIANIC APOLOGETICS
messianicapologetics.net

SAYINGS OF THE FATHERS

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**PROVIDE THYSELF A TEACHER,
AND GET THEE AN ASSOCIATE,
AND JUDGE ALL MEN IN THE SCALE OF MERIT**

AVOT1:6

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ABBREVIATION CHART AND SPECIAL TERMS

The following is a chart of abbreviations for reference works and special terms that 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.

Special terms that may be used have been provided in this chart:

- 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*
 BECNT: *Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament*
 BKCNT: *Bible Knowledge Commentary: New Testament*
 C.E.: Common Era or A.D.
 CEV: Contemporary English Version (1995)
 CGEDNT: *Concise Greek-English Dictionary of New Testament Words* (Barclay M. Newman)
 CHALOT: *Concise Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament*
 CJB: Complete Jewish Bible (1998)
 DRA: Douay-Rheims American Edition
 DSS: Dead Sea Scrolls
 ECB: *Eerdmans Commentary on the Bible*
 EDB: *Eerdmans Dictionary of the Bible*
 eisegesis: “reading meaning into,” or interjecting a preconceived or foreign meaning into a Biblical text
 EJ: *Encyclopaedia Judaica*
 ESV: English Standard Version (2001)
 exegesis: “drawing meaning out of,” or the process of trying to understand what a Biblical text means on its own
 EXP: *Expositor’s Bible Commentary*
 Ger: German
 GNT: Greek New Testament
 Grk: Greek
halachah: lit. “the way to walk,” how the Torah is lived out in an individual's life or faith community
 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
 ICC: *International Critical Commentary*
 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)
 LS: *A Greek-English Lexicon* (Liddell & Scott)
 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*
NIGTC: *New International Greek Testament Commentary*
NICNT: *New International Commentary on the New Testament*
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
orthopraxy: lit. "the right action," how the Bible or one's theology is lived out in the world

OT: Old Testament
PreachC: *The Preacher's Commentary*
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*
TEV: Today's English Version (1976)
TLV: Tree of Life Messianic Family Bible—New Covenant (2011)
TNIV: Today's New International Version (2005)
TNTC: *Tyndale New Testament Commentaries*
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
WBC: *Word Biblical Commentary*
Yid: Yiddish
YLT: Young's Literal Translation (1862/1898)

PIRKEI AVOT

YEAR ONE

INTRODUCTION TO YEAR ONE

For the last few years, the joy of participating in the Counting of the Omer, between the Passover season and *Shavuot*, has been a major highlight, in which I have encouraged many to participate. However, the main verses which refer to this annual command are not full of any great detail about how to specifically “Count the Omer”:

“From the day after the day of rest—that is, from the day you bring the sheaf for waving—you are to count seven full weeks, until the day after the seventh week; you are to count fifty days; and then you are to present a new grain offering to *ADONAI*” (Leviticus 23:15-16).

This minimal description forced me to find a means for encouraging people to count the seven weeks between the Festival of Unleavened Bread to the Feast of Weeks or *Shavuot*. Several years ago (2004), while investigating the subject, a series of meditations from the Book of Psalms came to my attention that were used as a basis for daily reflection. The principal passage, that was considered each day, was recited by the priests at the altar in Jerusalem, when they were offering up the morning and evening sacrifices that burned continually before the Lord:

“For the leader. With stringed instruments. A psalm. A song: God, be gracious to us, and bless us. May he make his face shine toward us, (*Selah*) so that your way may be known on earth, your salvation among all nations. Let the peoples give thanks to you, God; let the peoples give thanks to you, all of them. Let the nations be glad and shout for joy, for you will judge the peoples fairly and guide the nations on earth. (*Selah*) Let the peoples give thanks to you, God; let the peoples give thanks to you, all of them. The earth has yielded its harvest; may God, our God, bless us. May God continue to bless us, so that all the ends of the earth will fear him” (Psalm 67:1-7).

Psalm 67 became a backdrop for going before the Lord on a daily basis. Coupled with it were a series of Psalm passages, which at times providentially seemed to line up with some of the Torah portions that were being studied and discussed on a weekly basis. Witnessing the Father’s handiwork, in answering many of my own personal questions throughout this fifty-day period, was extremely encouraging. Eventually, these reflections were compiled into a book entitled *Counting the Omer: A Daily Devotional Toward Shavuot*, which is available for those who like to have a tool for daily reflections centered on the Word of God.

During the course of the Omer Count in 2006, I was contacted by a friend who pointed out that one of the traditional Jewish topics for study during this time period for a