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## YESOD – THE ENDURING FOUNDATION AND POWER OF REAL BONDING

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Almighty God we come before your throne in heaven on this another weekly Shabbat (Sabbath day) and on this 39<sup>th</sup> day of the Omer count in anticipation of reaching Shavuot –Pentecost, the Feast of Weeks. We thank you for the wonderful and meaningful time we have had this year in counting the Omer day by day, week by week. Thank you for helping us to make the Omer really count through meditating on your word. Please help us improve and refine the quality of our character and to overcome our human weaknesses by the power of your Spirit and to reflect the fruits of your Spirit accordingly and walk closely with you step by step. Thank you for the insight you have given us into these days and of their vital importance. Thank you for revealing to us the command of counting the Omer from Passover (Pesach) to Pentecost (Shavuot) and the integrated plan and a practical guide on how to make daily progress in bringing our thoughts and actions in subjection to your divine will and commands. Thank you for your promise of salvation and your coming kingdom. Please continue to create in us a clean heart and renew a right spirit in the name of Yeshua haMashiach, Jesus Christ our Savior. Amen.

Greetings! There will be one more weekly Sabbath day before Pentecost (Shavuot) and Tuesday, June 4 will be Pentecost. There are eleven days to go until Pentecost. Upon conclusion of the 49 days, we arrive at the 50<sup>th</sup> day—Shavuot (Mattan Torah-the giving of God’s law to Israel at Mt. Sinai). We have been counting the Omer now for six weeks. After we have achieved all we can accomplish through our own initiative, traversing and refining every emotional corner of our mind and emotions, we receive the gift of true freedom. We receive from God that which we could not achieve with our own limited faculties.

We are now on day four of **WEEK 6—YESOD (foundation) – BONDING. Aish.com—**“During the sixth week of counting the Omer, we examine and refine the emotional attribute of Yesod or bonding. Bonding means connecting; not only feeling for another, but being attached to him. Not just a token commitment, but total devotion. It creates a channel between giver and receiver. Bonding is eternal. It develops an everlasting union that lives on forever through the perpetual fruit it bears.”

“Bonding is the foundation of life and the emotional spine of the human psyche. Every person needs bonding to flourish and grow — bonding between mother and child, between husband and wife, between brothers and sisters, and between close friends. Bonding is affirmation; it gives one the sense of belonging; an affirmation that I matter; I am significant created in the image and likeness of God.” We are the handiwork of God. He has fashioned and molded us. Therefore, by divine creation we are important. But not just “I matter” (not pride/arrogance), but that God and others are “significant and important” to me. “It establishes trust — trust in your own self and trust in others. It instills

confidence. Without bonding and nurturing we cannot realize our potential and be what we were destined to be.” Everything that God had made is of worth to him. If we were worthless, we would not have been created or exist.

Newborn babies are experiencing everything for the first time. The first touch from mom helps promote healthy psychological and physical development. Lack of physical contact can prevent normal development and can even lead to higher rates of illness or death in infants. The first contact a newborn has with his mother, sets off cascades of hormones in his body that benefit his health; both mother and baby learn to respond. Those babies who have a caring and nurturing mother learn to respond. I recall a story about infant babies who were placed in an orphanage during WWI. Their basic necessities of feeding, bathing and diaper changes were met, but there was no other interaction to hold, cuddle, or nurture them. Some of the babies began dying, but before they died there was a period where they would stop crying, verbalizing, or changing expression before they died. All of them were very healthy babies and none of them had been ill. Volunteers were solicited to provide a more normal environment with nurturing and touching for the remaining babies who began to respond positively to the new environment provided and further deaths were averted. The conclusion was that nurturing is actually a very vital need in humans.

It is **Day 39** —“**Netzach of Yesod: Endurance in Bonding.** An essential component of bonding is its endurance; its ability to withstand challenges and setbacks. Without endurance there is no chance to develop true bonding. Am I totally committed to the one with whom I bond? How much will I endure and how ready am I to fight to maintain this bond? Is the person I bond with aware of my devotion?”

Counting the Omer is significant in God’s plan for our spiritual growth and overcoming. Some are ignorant of this knowledge and others have rejected God’s command given in **Leviticus 23** and **Deuteronomy 16** and are not yielded to God and his word. **Leviticus 23: 4-8**—“These are the feasts of the LORD, holy convocations which you shall proclaim at their appointed times. <sup>5</sup>On the fourteenth day of the first month at twilight is the LORD’s *Passover*. <sup>6</sup>And on the fifteenth day of the same month is the *Feast of Unleavened Bread* to the LORD; seven days you must eat unleavened bread. <sup>7</sup>On the first day you shall have a holy convocation; you shall do no customary work on it. <sup>8</sup>But you shall offer an offering made by fire to the LORD for seven days. The seventh day shall be a holy convocation; you shall do no customary work on it.” **Leviticus 23:15**—“*[The Feasts of Weeks]* – “And you shall count for yourselves from the day after the Sabbath, from the day that you brought the **sheaf** of the **wave offering**: seven weeks shall be completed.” Passover is an annual Sabbath. The Passover is the first Day of Unleavened Bread and is the day after the annual Sabbath of Passover which was when the grain was cut and the wave sheaf offering waved.

**Deuteronomy 16:9-10, 12**—(Reviews the Feast of Weeks). <sup>9</sup> “You shall **count seven weeks for yourself**; begin to count the seven weeks from the time you begin to put the sickle to the grain. <sup>10</sup>Then you shall keep the Feast of Weeks to the LORD your God with the tribute of a freewill offering from your hand, which you shall give as the LORD your God blesses you. <sup>11</sup> You shall rejoice before the LORD your God, you and your son and your daughter, your male servant and

your female servant, the Levite who is within your gates, the stranger and the fatherless and the widow who are among you, at the place where the LORD your God chooses to make His name abide. <sup>12</sup> And you shall remember that you were a slave in Egypt, and you shall be careful to observe these statutes.”

The very name Pentecost in the Greek language means 50<sup>th</sup> day. This year Pentecost is on June 4, which is according to the counting of the Old Testament and the Law of Moses. It is the same counting as Christ and his disciples of the New Testament Church used. They counted 50 days after the Passover, the annual Sabbath holy day—the day they kept the Seder which was the first Day of Unleavened Bread. They began the Pentecost count on the second Day of Unleavened Bread which was Nisan 16. The Karaite Jews do not have it right. They follow the Sadducees who will be observing a Pentecost on a Sunday fifty days after Easter Sunday which is a *secondary* pagan spring festival. The primary one being Easter and fifty days later comes the celebration of the May goddess, or the Catholic celebration of Whit Sunday which they call Pentecost. It is patterned after the Sadducees whom Christ said were ignorant and don't know the scriptures. But the Pharisees did know the scriptures and sat in Moses Seat. The true day of Pentecost is June 4, not June 8.

The Sadducees are keeping Pentecost four days late. Another group is keeping Pentecost eight days early when the count is so simple, why do men get so mixed up? They get so mixed up because they all want to decide for themselves and go their own way. Few people want to humble themselves before the throne of God and follow what He says in His commandments. Today, I am not going to elaborate further on counting Pentecost. Many articles of how to count Pentecost are available from TPM. The Jewish people have articles on how to count Pentecost and the Bible is very plain. If it is a head-scratcher for you, just write for the articles dealing with this subject which we are sending out all the time.

**Matthew 4:4**—Jesus said, “It is written, ‘Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God.’” **Deuteronomy 8:3**—“God “humbled you, allowed you to hunger, and fed you with manna which you did not know nor did your fathers know, that He might make you know that man shall not live by bread alone; but man lives by every word that proceeds from the mouth of the Lord.” **Malachi 2:9**—“Therefore I also have made you contemptible and base before all the people, because you have not kept my ways but have shown partiality in the law.” **Exodus 20:8**—“Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. <sup>9</sup> Six days you shall labor and do all your work, <sup>10</sup> but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the LORD your God. In it you shall do no work: you, nor your son, nor your daughter, nor your male servant, nor your female servant, nor your cattle, nor your stranger who is within your gates. <sup>11</sup> For in six days the LORD made the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and rested the seventh day. Therefore the LORD blessed the Sabbath day and hallowed it.” Many people pick and choose what parts of the law of God they want to keep, but refuse to keep all the commandments. God commands us to keep his seventh day Sabbath and in it we are to do no work.

**Numbers 15:37**—“Speak to the children of Israel: Tell them to make tassels on the corners of their garments throughout their generations, and to put a blue thread in the tassels of the corners. <sup>39</sup> And you shall have the tassel, that you may look upon it and remember all the commandments of the LORD and do them, and that you may not follow the harlotry to which your own heart and

your own eyes are inclined,<sup>40</sup> and that you may remember and do all My commandments, and be holy for your God.<sup>41</sup> I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, to be your God: I am the LORD your God.” My prayer shawl has fringes tied on it which adds up to the numerical number of 613 which is the number of the laws in the Torah and referred to collectively as the Law of Moses. The 613 commandments are "positive commandments", to perform an act (*mitzvot aseh*), and "negative commandments", to abstain from certain acts (*mitzvot lo taaseh*). Many of the *mitzvot* cannot be observed now, following the destruction of the Second Temple, although they still retain religious significance. *Mitzvoth*: 1) any of the collection of 613 commandments or precepts in the Bible and additional ones of rabbinic origin that relate chiefly to the religious and moral conduct of Jews. 2). any good or praiseworthy deed.

**Numbers 15:38 and Deuteronomy 22:12**—“the Lord said to Moses: speak to the Israelites and instruct them to make for themselves fringes on the corners of their garments throughout the ages; let them attach a cord of blue to the fringe at each corner. That shall be your fringe; look at it and recall all the commandments of the Lord and observe them, so that you do not follow your heart and eyes in your lustful urge.” My prayer shawl is called a *tallit* worn during prayer services and the response to the Bible’s commandment to tie fringes to the corners of one’s garments.

In **Numbers 16** we find that Israel decides that they are not going to obey God. Korah who was a Levite wanted to be a priest and have Aaron’s job. God made Aaron high priest. The Levites were servants in God’s tabernacle and wore a lot of blue. Korah, Dathan Abiram and On, sons of Reuben rose up against Moses with two hundred and fifty leaders of the Israelite congregation. — representatives of the congregation, ‘men of renown’. They confronted Moses and Aaron saying, ‘You take too much upon yourselves, for all the congregation is holy, every one of them, and the LORD is among them. Why then do you exalt yourselves above the assembly of the LORD?’ ”

When Moses heard this, he fell on his face and replied to Korah and his company, “Tomorrow morning the LORD will show who is His and who is holy, and will cause him to come near to Him. That one whom He chooses He will cause to come near to Him.”

**Numbers 17:1-11**—“And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying: <sup>2</sup> ‘Speak to the children of Israel, and get from them a rod from each father’s house, all their leaders according to their fathers’ houses—twelve rods. Write each man’s name on his rod. <sup>3</sup> And you shall write Aaron’s name on the rod of Levi. For there shall be one rod for the head of each father’s house. <sup>4</sup> Then you shall place them in the tabernacle of meeting before the Testimony, where I meet with you. <sup>5</sup> And it shall be that the rod of the man whom I choose will blossom; thus I will rid Myself of the complaints of the children of Israel, which they make against you.’ <sup>6</sup> So Moses spoke to the children of Israel, and each of their leaders gave him a rod apiece, for each leader according to their fathers’ houses, twelve rods; and the rod of Aaron was among their rods. <sup>7</sup> And Moses placed the rods before the LORD in the tabernacle of witness. <sup>8</sup> Now it came to pass on the next day that Moses went into the tabernacle of witness, and behold, the rod of Aaron, of the house of Levi, had sprouted and put forth buds, had produced blossoms and yielded ripe

almonds.<sup>9</sup> Then Moses brought out all the rods from before the LORD to all the children of Israel; and they looked, and each man took his rod.

<sup>10</sup> “And the LORD said to Moses, ‘Bring Aaron’s rod back before the Testimony, to be kept as a sign against the rebels, that you may put their complaints away from Me, lest they die.’<sup>11</sup> Thus did Moses; just as the LORD had commanded him, so he did.

“Is it a small thing to you that the God of Israel has separated you from the congregation of Israel, to bring you near to Himself, to do the work of the tabernacle of the LORD, and to stand before the congregation to serve them;<sup>10</sup> and that He has brought you near to Himself, you and all your brethren, the sons of Levi, with you? And are you seeking the priesthood also?

<sup>11</sup> Therefore you and all your company are gathered together against the LORD. And what is Aaron that you complain against him.”

“The ground split apart under the tents where stood Korah, Dathan, and Abiram with their wives, their sons, and their little children and the earth opened its mouth and swallowed them up, with their households and all the men with Korah, with all their goods.<sup>33</sup> So they and all those with them went down alive into the pit; the earth closed over them, and they perished from among the assembly.<sup>35</sup> And a fire came out from the LORD and consumed the two hundred and fifty men who were offering incense. The Lord did this so the congregation would know those men rejected the Lord. The next day the whole congregation complained against Moss and Aaron, and said, ‘You have killed the people of the Lord.’ Suddenly they saw the cloud covered the tabernacle and the glory of the Lord appeared. Moses and Aaron came before the tabernacle of meeting and the Lord said to Moses, ‘Get away from among this congregation that I may consume them in a moment.’ Aaron hurriedly put fire in his censer with incense on it and quickly ran into the midst of the assembly to make atonement for the people and he stood between the dead and the living as wrath had gone out from the Lord and a plague had begun; so the plague was stopped. Beside those who died in the Korah incident 14,700 died in the plague.”

Day 1 of Week 6 of Yesod –Bonding and **Day 36** of the Omer we were to examine and work on **Chesed of Yesod: Loving-kindness of Bonding**.

Love is the heart of bonding. You cannot bond without love. Love establishes a reliable base on which bonding can build. If you have a problem bonding, examine how much you love the one (or the experience) with which you wish to bond. Do I try to bond without first fostering a loving attitude? Is my bonding expressed in a loving manner?

### **Day 37 — Gevurah of Yesod: Discipline of Bonding**

Bonding must be done with discretion and careful consideration with whom and with what you bond. Even the healthiest and closest bonding needs "time out", a respect for each individual's space. Do I overbond? Am I too dependent on the one I bond with? Is he too dependent on me? Do I bond out of desperation? Do I bond with healthy, wholesome people? Review the discipline in your bonding experiences to see if it needs adjustment.

Be careful with whom you choose to bond. In selecting a mate for example, a man does not want to marry just anybody. He wants to be very careful in choosing a mate. Likewise, a young lady chooses to be very careful in selecting the man she wants to marry and allow to rule over her as her husband for the rest of her life, as they jointly serve God together. Learning to love without fear was addressed in an article I read to my wife today about *the Seven Blessings of a Jewish Marriage* by Sara Gutfreund. “Marriage asks of us to bring our pasts, our presents and our futures together and do it in a way that uses the tension of such precious intensity as a channel for blessing and growth.” The word of God gives us shared values, the blessing of feeling a part of each other’s achievements and appreciating our differences and clarity when we are faced with dilemmas. “Torah teaches that we are two halves of one soul. This connects us when we are struggling and when we are succeeding, because it helps us see that we are not just individuals living together but rather a team that rises and falls together. It teaches us that we are here in this world to constantly grow and work on ourselves. The challenging characteristics of our spouses are powerful catalysts for our own growth and part of what transform us and push us to stretch beyond ourselves.”

We are committed to loving God and he has committed to loving us, and we are committed to loving one another. We are to bond with God and Christ and with the brethren in the church.

### **Day 38 — Tiferet of Yesod: Compassion in Bonding**

Bonding needs to be not only loving but also compassionate, feeling your friend's pain and empathizing. Is my bonding conditional? Do I withdraw when I am uncomfortable with my friend's troubles?

Shavuot means weeks which is the name of the feast—*Shavuot*” the Feast of Weeks, not the feast of Sabbaths. We are not just counting seven Sabbaths, but seven weeks. The Hebrew word used there can be used as either one. In this case, it means weeks. **Deuteronomy 16:9**—“*number seven weeks*”. This is considered a mitzvah, so the count that takes place each night (day begins at sunset) is preceded by reciting a blessing. During the times of the holy temple on the holy day of Shavuot, at the end of the Omer count, special offerings were brought to the temple. These offerings were waived in six different directions: north, east, south, west, up and down similar how to the lu-lav is waived at the feast of Tabernacles. This demonstrates God Almighty’s all-encompassing presence. God Spirit is all around us in every direction—everywhere. The first sheaf of the barley harvest, the first fruits, was waved before the Lord in the six directions.

Why do we count these days—the Omer count? We learn it is for several reasons. First of all it is something that God told us to do. God told us to count the Omer, however, he doesn’t just spell it out. Some people want God to spell everything out before they will even look at it—thus cutting themselves off from the flow of God’s Holy Spirit—his energy and knowledge. God gives us minds to use—think, meditate and make connections. The count demonstrates our thrill of the impending occasion of receiving the Torah. Pentecost occurred on the day the Ten Commandments were given to Israel by God at Mt. Sinai. The revelation of God’s word and the conclusion of the wedding contract occurred between God (Husband) and Israel (his bride) on Shavuot/ Pentecost. Israel was to count the days (49) up to Pentecost (the wedding day between

themselves and God). It is like a child counts the days until the end of the school year, or a family counts the days until they leave for vacation, or an engaged couple count the days with anticipation to the actual wedding day when they repeat their vows of commitment to each other. Counting the Omer reveals our excitement at receiving the Torah once again on that holy day that symbolizes the giving the Torah and revelation of God and union with Him.

We also learn that this period of time is meant to spiritually repair and refine ourselves. This is what all the churches have completely overlooked. WWCG where I first learned we ought to keep Passover and Pentecost drew no connection. They thought that Passover just pictured the death of Christ. Then, they thought that Pentecost was totally different and just pictured the coming of the Holy Spirit in Acts 2 when the church was begun. So they missed the whole connection with Mt. Sinai and the giving of the Commandments and the marriage of the bride, Israel with God. But that is the real connection. Pentecost pictures the marriage of Israel with Jesus Christ—the pre-existent Christ, the second member of the Godhead who came down to Mt. Sinai and married Israel.

So we see that the Omer count was from the time Israel—who was totally enslaved with degradation and pollution by the basest and most corrupt society in the world— left Egypt through God’s great miracles and and who let Israel safely pass through the Red Sea (baptized) on dry land, after which God destroyed Pharaoh and his army in the Sea. “He did all these miracles and brought Israel out so he could prepare them to meet Him at Mt. Sinai and give them his law and make a covenant with them as his people and bless them. Israel accepted the covenant. “The Israelites were in Egypt for over 200 years and had learned the ways of the Egyptian people and sank to an unprecedented level of degradation and defilement. They were on the brink of destruction—the 49<sup>th</sup> level of contamination. At the last possible moment, the children of Israel were miraculously redeemed and brought out of their sinkhole of corruption. Then they underwent a spiritual rebirth as a nation and quickly ascended in forty-nine days to the holiest collective state they had ever reached. Their achieved holy state was compared to angels when they stood at Mt. Sinai. They had prepared and washed themselves, coming thought trials, tests and tribulations. Now they stood cleansed before God waiting for His word law, the Torah.”

“During that forty-nine day period, they underwent a radical transformation from the lowest lows to the highest high in just seven weeks of marching, overcoming and enduring. The commandments of the Torah are not meant merely as history, but instead represent an ongoing lesson for each one of us. We view the Torah, as just having freshly received it every day of our lives and approach it with vigor, diligence and enthusiasm. So we also must digest the lesson of counting the Omer.” This is a lesson. Like being in a classroom, we are being taught. God is teaching us the meaning of the lesson of the Omer count every day. We can take it to heart and digest what we learn every day. There is a lot of homework involved with the Omer count. It is specifically that we strive to grow and mature in our spiritual faith. There is no other time of the year like it. It is 50 days of overcoming. In the fall holy day season we have ten days of Awe then the Feast of Tabernacles. But we have fifty days of overcoming in the spring festival between Passover and Pentecost with the Omer count.

It is specifically during this time that we strive to grow and mature in our spiritual faith. Like those little seeds planted in our garden, which are now sprouted above the dirt and drinking in

the water, sunshine and the nutrients in the soil prepared for them and they are growing strong and tall day by day as we keep hoeing the weeds out which would also grow green and tall if we did not regularly hoe around the plant so the weeds will not choke them out. Spring time is the time of growth. We are to grow in spiritual character like our plants grow physically strong with consistent good care. We are to use this time of the spring holy day season to let the light of God reflect in us, to receive the water of His Spirit and grow in grace and knowledge. “The Torah, the word of God, does not allow us to become satisfied with our current level of our spirituality.” We have to be careful, lest we let it slip.

**1 Corinthians 10:12**—“Therefore let him who thinks he stands take heed lest he fall. No temptation has overtaken you except such as is common to man; but God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will also make the way of escape, that you may be able to bear it. <sup>14</sup> Therefore, my beloved, flee from idolatry.” This chapter ten, of **1 Corinthians** pictures these days of the Omer count that we are going through right now. “Moreover, brethren, I do not want you to be unaware that all our fathers were under the cloud, all passed through the sea, <sup>2</sup> all were baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea, <sup>3</sup> all ate the same spiritual food, <sup>4</sup> and all drank the same spiritual drink. For they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them and that **Rock was Christ**. <sup>5</sup> But with most of them God was not well pleased, for their bodies were scattered in the wilderness.

<sup>6</sup> “Now these things became our examples, to the intent that we should not lust after evil things as they also lusted. <sup>7</sup> And do not become idolaters as were some of them. As it is written, ‘The people sat down to eat and drink, and rose up to play.’ <sup>8</sup> Nor let us commit sexual immorality, as some of them did, and in one day twenty-three thousand fell; <sup>9</sup> nor let us tempt Christ, as some of them also tempted, and were destroyed by serpents; <sup>10</sup> nor complain, as some of them also complained, and were destroyed by the destroyer. <sup>11</sup> Now all these things happened to them as **examples**, and they were **written for our admonition**, upon whom the ends of the ages have come.” After Israel passed through the Red Sea it was like they had been baptized.

**Hebrews 2:1**—“ Therefore, we must give the more earnest heed to the things we have heard, lest we drift away. <sup>2</sup> For if the word spoken through angels proved steadfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just reward, <sup>3</sup> how shall we escape if we neglect so great a salvation, which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed to us by those who heard Him, <sup>4</sup> God also bearing witness both with signs and wonders, with various miracles, and gifts of the Holy Spirit, according to His own will?” We have no excuse, brethren, for coming short of the grace and glory of God. He has given us the tools we need. He has given us the lessons of the Omer count and He is saying take this period of time every year and count from Passover to Pentecost every day working on your character in a systematic, orderly manner. The way you set out to do this is through the seven basic characteristics as revealed in him as he deals with mankind. The seven emotional attributes are:

1. Chesed — Loving-kindness
2. Gevurah — Justice and discipline

3. Tiferet — Harmony, compassion
4. Netzach — Endurance
5. Hod — Humility
6. Yesod — Bonding
7. Malchut — Sovereignty, leadership

**John 3:16**—“For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. <sup>17</sup> For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved.” God works with power and discipline. God withheld himself from destroying the world. God exercises self-control —1) in the days of the flood. 2) After the golden calf—and is a merciful God.

**Genesis 9:12-17**—“I set my rainbow in the cloud, and it shall be for the sign of the covenant between me and the earth. The rainbow shall be in the cloud, and I will look on it to remember the everlasting covenant between God and every living creature of all flesh that is on the earth.”

**Revelation 4:2-3**—“Immediately I was in the Spirit; and behold, a throne set in heaven, and One sat on the throne. And He who sat there was like a jasper and a sardius stone in appearance; and there was a rainbow around the throne, in appearance like an emerald.”

God is patient and enduring. **James 1:2-3**—“My brethren, count it all joy when you fall into various trials, <sup>3</sup> knowing that the testing of your faith produces patience. <sup>4</sup> But let patience have its perfect work, **that you may be perfect and complete, lacking nothing**. <sup>5</sup> If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all liberally and without reproach, and it will be given to him. <sup>6</sup> But let him ask in faith, with no doubting, for he who doubts is like a wave of the sea driven and tossed by the wind. <sup>7</sup> For let not that man suppose that he will receive anything from the Lord; <sup>8</sup> he is a double-minded man, unstable in all his ways.” This is the reason that we are counting the Omer--that you may be perfect and complete, lacking nothing. This is why we count the Omer for seven weeks to Pentecost each year as God commanded and concentrate on these seven attributes each day of each week, with a different attribute in charge of each successive week. This week we are concentrating on YESOD — BONDING (foundation). Since a fully functional emotion is multidimensional, it includes within itself a blend of all seven attributes.

Suppose you were a senior attending school and assigned to certain classes necessary for you to graduate, but you decide after the first day of classes surfing is more interesting and head for the beach and spend the next seven weeks learning to surf instead of attending classes and following your study plan? Graduation day arrives and you are asked to show your credits qualifying you to graduate. What can you say when asked to show your credits needed for graduation? I developed a good suntan and have learned to be a good surfer? We are called to overcome, to be first fruits and to develop godly character and that takes study and practice in overcoming.

“It was during the 49<sup>th</sup> period that the Israelites underwent such a radical transformation, from the lowest low to the highest high in seven weeks. The commandments in Torah are not just meant for our history, but they represent an ongoing life lesson for all of us.” When you read the Bible and you are studying the word of God, is it a new revelation to you every day when open those pages and begin to read a chapter? What I often do, is try to read a chapter from the Old

Testament and a chapter from the New Testament, and sometimes I add a chapter from the Psalms and Proverbs to round it out.

**Genesis 28:12, 20**—Jacob “dreamed, and behold, a ladder was set up on the earth, and its top reached to heaven; and there the angels of God were ascending and descending on it. And behold, the LORD stood above it and said: ‘I am the LORD God of Abraham your father and the God of Isaac;’” <sup>20</sup> Jacob made a vow, saying, “If God will be with me, and keep me in this way that I am going, and give me bread to eat and clothing to put on, <sup>21</sup> so that I come back to my father’s house in peace, then the LORD shall be my God. <sup>22</sup> And this stone which I have set as a pillar shall be God’s house, and of all that You give me I will surely give a tenth to you.”

We are all climbing our own ladder of success spiritually and need to keep our eyes on our own progress and not be looking around to see where everybody else is and comparing our self with other people. **1 Corinthians 10:12**—“we dare not class ourselves or compare ourselves with those who commend themselves. But they, measuring themselves by themselves, and comparing themselves among themselves, are not wise.” Focus on yourself and where you are. Remember the hare and the tortoise. A speedy hare bragged about how fast he could run. Tired of hearing him boast, Slow and Steady, the tortoise, challenged him to a race. The Hare ran down the road for a while and then paused to rest. He looked back at Slow and Steady and cried out, “How do you expect to win this race when you are walking along at your slow, slow pace?” Hare stretched himself out alongside the road and fell asleep, thinking, “There is plenty of time to relax.” Slow and Steady the tortoise never, ever stopped until he came to the finish line. Hare woke up and began to run again, but it was too late. The tortoise had crossed the finish line and won the race.

Our prize is the gift of God—eternal life in the kingdom of God. We need to concentrate on improving in character—love, discipline, compassion, endurance, humility, and bonding—achieve all you can to get rid of all of negative attributes and emotions that have accumulated from parents, peers, and society. **Romans 12:2**—“And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God—by the Spirit of God in us.” Look deep within yourself. If we are challenged in the realm of kindness, then let’s go out of our way to do more charitable work. If we are lacking in the area of Justice, then let’s hold our self to the highest possible standards and be exacting and demanding in our own personal behavior and habit.

Benjamin Franklin was cognitive and systematic, he was also creative and adventuresome. Franklin developed and committed himself to a personal improvement program that consisted of living 13 virtues. In order to keep track of his adherence to these virtues, Franklin carried around a small book of 13 charts. The charts consisted of a column for each day of the week and 13 rows marked with the first letter of his 13 virtues. Franklin evaluated himself at the end of each day. Every evening he would review the day and put a mark (dot) next to each virtue for each fault committed with respect to that virtue for that day. The goal was to minimize the number of marks, thus indicating a “clean” life free of vice. “Virtue” comes from the Latin *virtus*, which in turn is derived from *vir*, Latin for “manliness.” The 13 virtues were:

1. **Temperance.** Eat not to dullness; drink not to elevation.
2. **Silence.** Speak not but what may benefit others or yourself; avoid trifling conversation.
3. **Order.** Let all your things have their places; let each part of your business have its time.
4. **Resolution.** Resolve to perform what you ought; perform without fail what you resolve.
5. **Frugality.** Make no expense but to do good to others or yourself; i.e., waste nothing.
6. **Industry.** Lose no time; be always employed in something useful; cut off all unnecessary actions.
7. **Sincerity.** Use no hurtful deceit; think innocently and justly, and, if you speak, speak accordingly.
8. **Justice.** Wrong none by doing injuries, or omitting the benefits that are your duty.
9. **Moderation.** Avoid extremes; forbear resenting injuries so much as you think they deserve.
10. **Cleanliness.** Tolerate no uncleanness in body, clothes, or habitation.
11. **Tranquility.** Be not disturbed at trifles, or at accidents common or unavoidable.
12. **Chastity.** Rarely use venery but for health or offspring, never to dullness, weakness, or the injury of your own or another's peace or reputation.
13. **Humility.** Imitate Jesus and Socrates.

**Galatians 5:22-23**—"Fruits of the Holy Spirit are

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|----------|------------------|-----------------|
| 1. Love  | 4. Longsuffering | 7. Faithfulness |
| 2. Joy   | 5. Kindness      | 8. Gentleness   |
| 3. Peace | 6. Goodness      | 9. Self-control |

We should have a lifetime of improving ourselves with the seven emotional attributes of God and the nine fruits of the Holy Spirit.

Article —"*The Morrow after the Sabbath*"aish.com. **Song of Songs 1:4**—God drew Israel out of Egypt by his power and might. Then Israel ran after him to the desert to Mt. Sinai and at Sinai He brought Israel into his chambers and married Israel. God is drawing us today and we are in the process of running after Him. We will meet him at his return to the Mount of Olives in Jerusalem. Our journey will be finished and the kingdom of God will be on earth. We need to be focused on running the race that has been set before us. **Hebrews 12:1**—"Therefore we also, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us,<sup>2</sup> looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God."

With patience and endurance let us run the race set before us and count the Omer with joy and thanksgiving all of our generations.