

# Maamarei Mordechai

הסבר לפי ממש פשוט

Parshas Emor 5786

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The Torah commands us to count the Omer.

וּסְפַרְתֶּם לָכֶם מִמָּחֳרַת הַשַּׁבָּת מִיּוֹם הִבִּיאְכֶם אֶת-עֹמֶר הַתְּנוּפָה שִׁבְעַת שָׁבָּתוֹת תְּמִימֹת  
תִּהְיֶינָה:

“And you shall count for yourselves, from the day after the Shabbos, from the day you bring the waved Omer, they shall be seven weeks, complete.” (Vayikra 23:15).

The mitzvah of Sefiras HaOmer, counting of the Omer, is tied to the Omer offering. The Torah could have taught to count from Pesach to Shavuos. Instead, it specifically tied the counting to the Omer. Why?

The waved Omer offering is the first of the harvested winter grain. (Ibid 23:10). It is brought to the Mishkan or Beis HaMikdash on the second day of Pesach. (Ibid 23:11). A korban is brought that day. (Ibid 23:12). On the day that the Omer is brought and waved, the counting begins. (Ibid 23:15). The Torah does not say the second day of Pesach outright. Instead, it uses the term “from the morrow of the Shabbos.” Because of this the literal (and incorrect approach) is that that counting begins from the first day of the week – Sunday. Even if the second day of Pesach falls out otherwise, the counting begins on Sunday. This would put Shavuos always on a Sunday. This is not incorrect because of a Rabbinic decree. It is incorrect because that is not what the Torah contextually says.

The Torah says “from the morrow of the Shabbos” both, by counting and by the Omer offering. The last day of the week – what is colloquially known as Shabbos – is not the only day that the Torah calls Shabbos. Shabbos simply means a day of rest. When Moshe first gave the command about Pesach, he did not call it “Shabbos.” Instead, he said “it shall be a remembrance” and a chag – festival. (Shmos 12:14). The first day is a holy convocation (a holy roll call) and the seventh day shall be a holy convocation, and no work may be done on those days. (Ibid 12:16). Moshe does get close to calling it Shabbos, but he uses the word *tishbosu* –clear away the chometz. The first day of Pesach is similar to Shabbos in that no work may be done. But the Torah does not rely on that comparison.

In our parsha, the Torah reminds the people that Pesach is seven days, and that no work may be done on the first day (Vayikra 23:7) or the seventh day (ibid 23:8). However, the Torah falls short of calling Pesach “Shabbos.” How can one learn, then, that this “morrow of the Shabbos” refers to the first day of Pesach? The Torah commences this segment with teaching about Shabbos. It calls Shabbos a holy convocation and no work may be done. (Ibid 23:3). Therefore, a day that is a holy convocation and no work may be done is a Shabbos. Further, the Torah calls Yom Zichron Terua (Rosh Hashanna) a Shabbos. (Ibid 23:24). It also calls Yom Kippur a Shabbos. (Ibid 23:32). Accordingly, if when the pasuk said “morrow of the Shabbos” meant a day called Shabbos – which one?

One may eliminate the two days in the seventh month, as they are stated later. However, how do we know that the Omer is offered on Pesach altogether?

Later, Moshe simply says, from the first sickle cut of standing grain, seven weeks should be counted. (Devarim 16:9). Because Pesach falls out at different times in the solar spring cycle, perhaps, then, the count can even start from before Pesach. Or perhaps even after Pesach, depending on the year. Clearly the Torah is commanding that the first harvest reap shall take place on the morrow of a “Shabbos.” The Torah says *the* Shabbos, not just “Shabbos.” It is connected to Peach—being adjacent and immediately following the laws of Pesach both times. Therefore, it is on Pesach, and “the Shabbos” refers to the holy convocation with no work; the first day of Pesach. The “morrow of the Shabbos” means the day after the first Shabbos day of Pesach, regardless of the day of the week it falls out. There really is no other way to read the Torah in context.

The Torah also teaches that the counting is tied to being in Eretz Yisroel and having a waved Omer offering. “When you come into the Land...and you harvest grain...and you bring it to the kohen.” (Ibid 23:10). The conditions of counting between Pesach and Shavuos is called “counting the Omer” because it is tied to the Omer offering. This has an important significance.

An important question regarding this mitzvah is if one misses a complete night and day of counting, can that person count the remaining nights with a brocho? Rambam, Rosh, Tur, Maharil, Rav Hai Goan, Smag (Sefer Mitzvos HaGadol), and Tosfos, all rule that one can continue counting with a brocho. Shulchan Aruch, however, rules that one counts without a brocho the remaining days. Of note, Rabbi Cairo does not write that one *cannot* count with a brocho. He uses the more passive, do it without a brocho. This is because of the ruling of the Baal Halachos Gedolos (Bahag). Bahag is quoted by Tosfos and Tur that if one misses a complete day then he can no longer count with a brocho. This is because the Torah says “complete.” It cannot be complete if one misses a day.

There is a reason for the discrepancy in the poskim. Bahag commented on the Gemara. The Gemara talks about the counting of the Omer – if by night or by day, if one missed at night can he count by day, and should one mention days and weeks in the count. (Menachos 66a). Interestingly, the Gemara does not talk about a case if one missed a full day. It also does not mention a brocho to be made when counting. Bahag rules that a brocho should be made and the word “complete” makes missing a day no longer complete, to the exclusion of making a brocho on subsequent nights.

The other poskim do not have a simple syntax discrepancy. They are ruling on a different set of circumstances. Sefiras HaOmer is tied to the Omer. Without an Omer, there is no obligation to count, anymore. The only counting done these days, is a Rabbinic requirement of Zecher LaMikdash. We are remembering the Mikdash, and practicing so that when the Beis HaMikdash is rebuilt, the practice of counting will be familiar. Therefore, Bahag was ruling during a time when the Torah law was applicable. According to all the other poskim, now that the counting is only Zecher LaMikdash, one can still count with a brocho even if that person missed a complete day or days. It is still the practice of counting for when the Beis HaMikdash is rebuilt. Soon in our days.