



The Counting of the *Omer* – From Agricultural Offering to Personal Spiritual Growth

The period between the second day of Passover and *Shavuot* is known as the Counting of the *Omer*. In Leviticus 23:15, the Torah tells us to bring an omer of barley as an elevation offering, and then to count the days and weeks until we reach 50 days, that is, 7 weeks, and then we bring another offering and make that 50th day a festival. The Torah doesn't give us a reason or explanation of the purpose, but it's reasonable to assume that it was originally an agricultural form of worship, offering an agricultural product to God as a way to pray for a good harvest. In fact, the word *Shavuot* means weeks, referring to the 7 weeks that we count to get to it. The Torah gives no other explanation of the holy day. It's just the end point of the Counting of the *Omer*. [Continued on page 8.](#)



SULAM and Gesher: Highlights of the Year

When we started this school year, I would never have imagined that Israel would suffer the heinous attack of October 7th and that, six months later, we would be embroiled in a war with significant loss of life in Gaza and fears that it could expand in the north, in the West Bank, and with Iran and its proxies. Having spent much of July in Israel, I was full of enthusiasm for the learning I had done and how I would share it with our students and community here at TCS. And, despite the war and the state of the world, we have done just that. [Continued on page 8.](#)

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