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DAY 33 – Lag Ba'Omer

\*\*\*\*\* The Count (using the I-Count Card) \*\*\*\*\*

Please follow the "5 steps of counting the Omer" on the I-Count Card (which can be downloaded at http://omerproject.com/assets/docs/I-Count.pdf). When you arrive at Step #3, please use the following for the count:

Rabbinic: Ha-yom sh'losha u'sheloshim yom, shehaym arba-a shavuot vachamisha yamim la-omer

Today is thirty-three days, which are four weeks and five days of the Omer

Karaite: Today is the third day of the fifth week of seven weeks. Today is the thirty-first day of the counting of fifty days from the day of the waving of the Omer on the morrow after Shabbat.

\*\*\*\*\* Sing \*\*\*\*\*

Ana B'Koach represents the seven sefirot and is recited in Rabbinic prayers wherever there is a symbolic ascent of Divine energy from a lower plane to a higher one, or whenever there is any movement from one reality into the next:

A·na, b'cho·ach g'du·lat y'min·cha ta·tir tz'ru·rah

(Please, with the power of Your great right hand free the bound.)



\*\*\*\*\* This Week According to Rabbinic Mystical Teachings \*\*\*\*\*

Week Five: Hod is Glory, Splendor, Containment, Humility, Presence, Gratitude, Receptivity, Yielding, Grace, Surrender, Openness.

As Netzach is the artist, Hod is the scientist, the logician, the math whiz, and the certified public accountant in the brown tweed suit. This week is all about humility and remembering that everything we have was given to us by the Creator for a greater purpose. Focus on making yourself small this week so you can truly discover your greatness.

Aaron represents hod - in his splendor and thankfulness - during this week.

\*\*\*\*\* This Day According to Rabbinic Mystical Teachings \*\*\*\*\*

This Day: Hod shebe'Hod. Glory within Glory, Humility within Humility, Receptivity within Receptivity, Prophecy within Prophecy.

One thought for the day: Love acts of charity and kindness.

\*\*\*\*\* This Day's Biblical Figures \*\*\*\*\*

\*\*\*\*\* with the Rabbinic Mystical Quality of the Day \*\*\*\*\*

A righteous king of Judah, named Josiah, discovers that the high priest has discovered a sacred scroll in the Temple which teaches that G-d is angry because of the people's violations of G-d's laws. But Josiah does not know if the scroll is authentically the word of G-d. Josiah asks a delegation of his royal officers to go to Chuldah, a prophetess who lives in Jerusalem, and find out from her whether he should govern according to the words of the mysterious scroll.

Chuldah, surrounded by the high ranks of the king's court, delivers her verdict: the scroll is authentic, and G-d plans to punish the people with exile because they have disobeyed G-d's word. But Josiah's lifetime will be peaceful, because he has humbled himself before G-d.

It is extraordinary that Chuldah, a woman, is not only a prophetess who is valued and respected by the king, but the first person in the Bible ever to canonize a text. The work Chuldah recognizes as G-d's word is probably

Deuteronomy, the book of the Torah that promises exile in retaliation for the people's disloyalty. The rabbis of the Talmud ask why the king consults a woman when there are other great (male) prophets around, and concludes that it is because Chuldah is compassionate that the king asks her. Yet whatever the reason, it is clear that Chuldah begins a new kind of prophecy in Israel-- the process of reading and interpreting sacred text. Chuldah represents *hod shebe'hod*, receptivity within receptivity, prophecy within prophecy, for her prophecy allows Israel to experience the prophetic voice in a new way.

The thirty-third day of the Omer is also Lag B'Omer. Lag B'Omer is a minor holiday frequently celebrated with bonfires and with the cutting of the hair of young boys. Lag B'Omer marks a day when Rabbi Akiva's students stopped dying of a plague, and celebrates the triumph of rabbinic Torah study. It also marks the *yahrtzeit* (death date) of Shimon bar Yochai, traditionally named as the author of the Zohar, a work of mysticism. It is appropriate that Chuldah be remembered on a day that is a celebration of prophecy.

\*\*\*\*\* This Day's Rabbinic Refinement of Moral Character \*\*\*\*\*

Everyone has humility and modesty in their hearts, the question is the measure and manner in which one consciously feels it. Humility must also be examined for its genuineness.

Ask yourself:

Am I afraid to be too humble?

Do I mask and protect my modesty with aggressive behavior?

Is my humility humble? Or is it yet another expression of arrogance?

Do I take too much pride in my humility? Do I flaunt it? Is it self-serving?

Is my humility part of a crusade or is it genuine?

Exercise for the day:

Be humble just for its own sake