

**Seven Shepherds of Israel**

(summarized from “The Book of Our Heritage,” Eliyahu KiTov)

**Avraham Avinu** - Attribute: Lovingkindness - (Chessed - lovingkindness)

He fed and sustained everyone with love. There was no jealousy, cruelty or hatred in his character.

*Week One of the Omer - Lovingkindness*

**Yitz'khak** - Attribute: Strength - (Gevurah - strength)

His strength was devoted to serving God and fearing him, never faltering, even in the testing of his father's (not his) faith.

*Week Two of the Omer – Strength, Justice and discipline*

**Ya'akov** - Attribute: Beauty - (Tiferet - prayer)

Accomplishment with simplicity and perfection. Pure in his relationships. He did everything with perfection, with Lavan, Esav, and in his struggle with God. He was devoid of deceitfulness and treachery; he was an ish tam ([Gen 25:27](#) -blameless, perfect, integritous). He was the opposite of those who seem righteous in their actions but are really corrupt. If his actions seemed corrupt, they were rooted in uprightness.

*Week Three of the Omer – Beauty, Harmony and compassion*

**Moshe** - Attribute: Permanence/Eternity (Netzach)

Victory-through-eternity, eternity, music/orchestration, name of God - the Eternal One, Jerusalem-the Eternal city. Contrast with the temporary, mundane, fading, disappearing and unimportant.

Moshe was the personification of the eternity of Torah. All that man acquires is temporary, transient. But if one acquires Torah from others, or others acquire it from him, an eternal asset has been exchanged. Moshe was willing to give his life for the Torah, and was merited with becoming its teacher, and to transmit it to every generation

*Week Four of the Omer – Eternal, Endurance and persistence*

**Aharon** - Attribute: Splendor /Peace - (Hod - majesty, splendor, glory)

Aharon loved peace and pursued it, in all mankind, bringing them closer to Torah. He led by example causing others to emulate him. He rejoiced in Torah, learning it in and from the greatness from his younger brother, never jealous.

Hine ma tov umanaim shevet achim gam yachad – Behold how good and pleasant it is when brothers dwell together as one.

*Week Five of the Omer - Humility*

**Yosef** - Attribute: Moral Virtue (Yesod - Foundation)

## TREE OF LIFE – COUNTING THE OMER

The righteous morality of Yosef was so great that he achieved the highest level of sanctity. His character is the foundation upon which the world rests, the opposite of the character of man that resulted in the flood.

### *Week Six of the Omer – Bonding and connection*

**David haMelech** - Attribute Sovereignty. (Malchut - Exaltedness)

David did not rise to rulership by his own power, might, wisdom or inheritance. His kingdom was granted to him by the King of kings. He grew from shepherding his fathers sheep, to become the faithful shepherd of the flocks of Israel. God chose him because he knew that even if David rose to the greatest of heights, he would forever remain a servant in his own eyes. He maintained the humility of a shepherd in the presence of the kings of the world that came to pay homage to him. He made God sovereign among all of mankind, and provided us with the means to sing God's praises. He rejoiced in the greatness of others and combined that greatness with his own to pay tribute to the One to Whom greatness belongs.

"And David blessed God in front of the entire congregation, and David said: "Blessed are You, God... Yours is greatness, strength, glory, eternity and splendor... Yours is sovereignty and You are uplifted above all... who am I and who is My nation that we might have the strength to volunteer for this... for all is from You and that which we give You is from Your hand (Divrei ha-Yamim I 29:10-14) 1chr 29:10-15

### *Week Seven of the Omer – Sovereignty and Leadership*

Each one of these attributes is interconnected with the others; lovingkindness is soft-heartedness if it is not joined to strength. Similarly, lovingkindness apart from glory degenerates into sin. Likewise, none of the other attributes can be considered complete if they lack an element of lovingkindness.

Each of these attributes has a light of its own that shines forth only from its combination with the others.

There are 49 days in the counting of the omer - seven weeks.

The first week is devoted entirely to *lovingkindness*. On each subsequent day, the focus is placed on a different attribute combined with lovingkindness.

The second week is devoted to strength, with each subsequent day focused on strength interwoven with each of the other attributes.

	Lovingkindness	Strength	Beauty	Permanence	Humility	Connection	Sovereignty
Lovingkindness	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Strength	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
Beauty	15	16	17	18	19	20	21
Permanence	22	23	24	25	26	27	28
Humility	29	30	31	32	33	34	35
Connection	36	37	38	39	40	41	42
Sovereignty	43	44	45	46	47	48	49