

Rabbi Jennifer Singer's 2025 Reverse Omer Calendar

Marking the 50 days from Tisha B'Av to Rosh Hashanah

The idea of a Reverse Omer Counter emerged fairly recently, giving Jews a chance to count down from Tisha B'Av to Rosh Hashannah. It mirrors the Biblical Omer count from Passover to Shavuot. The same number of days. The same opportunity to pay attention to the flow of time.

We are living in a time when the world seems to be spinning out of control. As I wrote this, Israelis were emerging from 12 days in bomb shelters while Iran and Israel exchanged missiles. There were some 50 hostages in captivity in Gaza, and no one knows how many of them are still alive. Ukraine and Russia are still at war. ICE raids across our nation are terrifying immigrant families.

The first Omer journey celebrates the willingness of a free people to bear the burden of carrying God's message forward into the world. This second journey takes us from Tisha B'Av, which marks the destruction of both temples in Jerusalem, to a day that marks a new beginning, Rosh HaShannah.

I have collected these 50 quotations in the hope that they will be a useful guide in difficult times. We all need resilience, strength, and an internal fortitude to help us through each day, and this is especially so today.

Any typographic errors or misquotes are my own. *Rabbi Jennifer Singer*

Date	Omer Count	Quote for the Day
		Week One <i>suffering and optimism</i>
8/3/25	Tisha B'Av	Hope rebuilds the ruins of Jerusalem. The Jewish people kept hope alive and hope kept the Jewish people alive. That is the message of Tisha B'Av. <i>Rabbi Jonathan Sacks</i>
8/4	50	In this time of ongoing political violence and unrest, as the pull of grief, exhaustion and uncertainty grows heavier with each passing day, may we remember: Not everything solid is impenetrable, and not every hard place must be broken open with force. <i>Rabbi Adina Allen</i>
8/5	49	One of the most important things to have learned in life is that choosing joy in a world rife with reasons for despair is a countercultural act of courage and resistance. <i>Maria Popova</i>
8/6	48	You think your pain and your heartbreak are unprecedented in the history of the world, but then you read. <i>James Baldwin</i>
8/7	47	Do not get lost in a sea of despair. Do not become bitter or hostile. Be hopeful, be optimistic. <i>Rep. John Lewis</i>
8/8	46	The unending paradox is that we do learn through pain. <i>Madeleine L'Engle</i>
8/9	45	The mind is its own place, and in itself can make a Heav'n of Hell, a Hell of Heav'n. <i>John Milton</i>

		Week Two <i>spiritual pain</i>
8/10	44	Hurt people hurt people. <i>Sarah McBride</i>
8/11	43	“Life is a comedy for those who think and a tragedy for those who feel. <i>Robert Walpole</i>
8/12	42	Faced with a hard and unyielding surface, Moses didn’t trust that something life-giving might still flow. The rock may have mirrored his own interior in that moment: sealed shut by grief, worn down by the weight of leadership, hardened by loss. To strike the rock was to reject the possibility that what is closed could be opened, that what is hard can still hold hope. <i>Rabbi Adina Allen</i>
8/13	41	Not to have felt pain is not to have been human. <i>Jewish Proverb</i>
8/14	40	In some ways, suffering ceases to be suffering the moment it finds a meaning. <i>Victor Frankl</i>
8/15	39	Darkness cannot drive out darkness Only light can do that. <i>Rev. Martin Luther King Jr</i>
8/16	38	Human suffering anywhere concerns men and women everywhere. <i>Elie Weisel</i>
		Week Three <i>resilience</i>
8/17	37	I am not looking for a lighter burden, but for broader shoulders. <i>Jewish Proverb</i>
8/18	36	Isaac is the quiet heroism of continuity. He is a link in the chain of the covenant, joining one generation to the next. He is steadfastness, loyalty, the determination to continue. Without these virtues Judaism would not have survived. He is the man who discovers God in the midst of fear. <i>Rabbi Jonathan Sacks</i>
8/19	35	Those who don’t know how to weep with their whole heart don’t know how to laugh either. <i>Golda Meir</i>
8/20	34	We have to learn ourselves that it did not really matter what we expected from life, but rather what life expected from us. <i>Victor Frankl</i>
8/21	33	This is how to deal with crisis. Wrestle with it, refusing to let it go until it blesses you, until you emerge stronger, better or wiser than you were before. To be a Jew is not to accept defeat. That is the meaning of faith. <i>Rabbi Jonathan Sacks</i>
8/22	32	‘How do you keep going?’ asked Tiny Dragon. ‘Sometimes,’ said Big Panda, ‘even the smallest step is better than no step.’ <i>James Norbury</i>
8/23	31	Life is all about the ability to get up from challenge. Greatness is defined as getting up one more time than what you've fallen down. <i>Charlie Harary</i>

		Week Four <i>prayer</i>
8/24	30	Before I eat I will thank the Holy One of Blessing for my food, and pray for every human being who is in jeopardy across Israel and Palestine and Iran. Maybe it seems naïve to pray for peace at a time like this, but it is what I yearn for. A just and lasting peace, and safety, and hope, for everyone.” <i>Rabbi Rachel Barenblat</i>
8/25	29	There are as many ways to the Divine Presence as there are Jews. <i>Rav Nachman of Bratslav</i>
8/26	28	Where is God? God is where you let Him in. <i>Rabbi Menachem Mendel of Kotzk</i>
8/27	27	One recites a blessing for the bad that befalls him just as he does for the good. In other words, one recites the appropriate blessing for the trouble that he is experiencing at present despite the fact that it may conceal some positive element in the future. <i>Talmud Berakhot 54a</i>
8/28	26	Four individuals are required to render thanks: a person who had been sick and recuperated, a person who had been imprisoned and was released, people who alight [at their destination] after a journey at sea, and travelers who reach a settlement. <i>Maimonides Mishneh Torah</i>
8/29	25	One thing I ask of the LORD, only that do I seek: to live in the house of the LORD all the days of my life. <i>Psalms 27</i>
8/30	24	Better prayer without synagogue than synagogue without prayer. <i>Rabbi Abraham Joshua Heschel</i>
		Week Five <i>solitude in an infinite universe</i>
8/31	23	Even Superman had a fortress of solitude. <i>Unknown</i>
9/1	22	Take a day to heal from the lies you’ve told yourself and the ones that have been told to you. <i>Maya Angelou</i>
9/2	21	Solitude is for me a fount of healing which makes my life worth living. Talking is often a torment for me, and I need many days of silence to recover from the futility of words. <i>Carl Jung</i>
9/3	20	Look to my right and see—I have no friend; there is nowhere I can flee, no one cares about me. So I cry to You, O Lord; I say, “You are my refuge, all I have in the land of the living.” <i>Psalms 142</i>
9/4	19	Jacob was left alone. And an angel wrestled with him until the break of dawn. <i>Genesis 32:25</i>
9/5	18	‘Now Moses, tending the flock of Jethro, drove the flock into the wilderness.’ (Exodus). Moses, all by himself, wanted to pray and meditate in complete isolation and concentration. <i>Sforno</i>
9/6	17	Either companionship or death, as one who has no friends is better off dead. <i>Talmud Taanit 23a</i>

		Week Six <i>hope</i>
9/7	16	If you will it, it is no dream; and if you do not will it, a dream it is and a dream it will stay. <i>Theodor Herzl</i>
9/8	15	Those who hope in the Lord will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary, they will walk and not be faint. <i>Isaiah 40:31</i>
9/9	14	... we need to know that what can be lost can be regained. And what has been ruined can be rebuilt. We have a great deal that has been lost or ruined in our world – economically, politically, educationally, and above all socially. And we have to show what it is never to give up hope – that we can rebuild what has been ruined. <i>Rabbi Jonathan Sacks</i>
9/10	13	In the midst of winter I found within me an invincible summer. <i>Albert Camus</i>
9/11	12	What was once labeled a “day that will live in infamy” can also be viewed through a new lens; one that emphasizes hope, potential, and our nation’s enduring spirit. September 11, while an indelible mark of profound loss, also serves as a reminder of our shared resilience and unity. <i>Operation Hope</i>
9/12	11	I wish I could show you when you are lonely or in darkness the astonishing light of your being. <i>Hafiz</i>
9/13	10	Every single person amongst human beings hopes. <i>Sefer HaCheshek</i>
		Week Seven <i>looking forward</i>
9/14	9	This is one of the goals of the Jewish way of living: To experience commonplace deeds as spiritual adventures, to feel the hidden love and wisdom in all things. <i>Rabbi Abraham Joshua Heschel</i>
9/15	8	The Jews who will it shall achieve their State. We shall live at last as free men on our own soil, and in our own homes peacefully die. The world will be liberated by our freedom, enriched by our wealth, magnified by our greatness. And whatever we attempt there for our own benefit will redound mightily and beneficially to the good of all mankind. <i>Theodor Herzl</i>
9/16	7	“The Lord called your name a leafy olive tree.” (Jeremiah). Rabbi Yehoshua ben Levi says: Why were the Jewish people likened to an olive tree? It is to tell you that just as the leaves of an olive tree never fall off, neither in the summer nor in the rainy season, so too, the Jewish people will never be nullified, neither in this world nor in the World-to-Come. <i>Talmud; Menachot 53b</i>
9/17	6	If you are not a better person tomorrow than you are today, what need have you for a tomorrow? <i>Rebbe Nachman of Breslov</i>

9/18	5	If you don't know what you're living for, you haven't yet lived. <i>Rabbi Noah Weinberg</i>
9/19	4	To be a Jew is to believe in impossible dreams. To be a Jew is to believe that slaves can become free. It is to believe that the senselessness of this world can be disrupted by divine words that break through the barrier between heaven and earth. It is to trust, even on our darkest days, that we are part of God's dream. <i>Rabbi Tali Adler</i>
9/20	3	There are two ways to live. You can live as if nothing is a miracle. You can live as if everything is a miracle. <i>Albert Einstein</i>
9/21	2	Look for me in the most unlikely places. Perhaps nestled in your heart. <i>God</i>
		Erev Rosh Hashannah
9/22	1	The Days of Awe are a time to ask of ourselves something only we can control: the strength to do better. To be better. To make the world we live in a kinder, more peaceful place. To hear in the sacred shofar blast a call from within to change. <i>Barack Obama</i>

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