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YOUR SHAVUOT

SIVAN 6-7, 5771 **GUIDE** JUNE 7-9, 2011



SHAVUOT CALENDAR 5771 / 2011

June 7: Light the Yom Tov candles at the time shown. Say both blessings. If lighting after sunset, light only from a pre-existing flame. Tikun Lail Shavuot during the night.

June 8: Be there. If you're Jewish and between the age of 0-120, join us for services on the first morning of Shavuot, Wednesday, June 8, 2011, and hear the reading of the Ten Commandments live from the Torah scroll. Children and infants especially welcome.

Light the Yom Tov candles from a pre-existing flame after the time shown. Say both blessings.

June 9: Yizkor is said during the morning services.

SHAVUOT CANDLE LIGHTING BLESSINGS

Bo-ruch A-toh Ado-noi E-lo-hei-nu Me-lech Ho-olom
A-sheh Ki-de-sha-nu Be-mitz-vo-sov Vi-tzi-vo-nu
Le-had-lik Ner Shel Yom Tov.

Bo-ruch A-toh Ado-noi E-lo-hei-nu Me-lech Ho-olom
She-heh-che-yoh-nu Vi-ki-ye-mo-nu Ve-he-ge-o-nu
Liz-man Ha-zeh.

A pre-existing flame is a flame burning continuously since the onset of the festival, such as a pilot light, gas or candle flame.

Note: This brochure contains sacred writings; please do not desecrate it. However, it is not considered shaimos.



2011 Candle Lighting Times for Metro New York-New Jersey
June 7 at 8:06 p.m. June 8 after 9:15 p.m.

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SHAVUOT BASICS

It was the most radical event in history. Time's most crucial moment, the watershed event of the entire human drama. Erupting in a single place in a single day, it crashed through borders of nation and culture, implanted itself in the minds of thinkers and the hearts of ordinary men and women, surfed over the bumps and barriers of time. Until nothing was left the same, no ruler could set the same rules, no mind could think the same thoughts, no

mouth could speak the same words. The landscape was transformed and the innerscape of the human psyche could never return to its original self. Even now, its echo reverberates through every moment of our day—louder and louder as time goes on. The vision, the sounds, the smell and the trembling are branded onto the very circuitry of our souls. Every year, once a year, as sure as the spring that blossoms at that time, we gather to relive that event. The experience that wrought us into a people and forged our consciousness as individuals. This year, be there. Again. Shavuot!

WHAT IS SHAVUOT



Shavuot is one of the three festivals of the Jewish calendar; the other two are Passover and Sukkot. Like the other festivals, Shavuot has two faces: It is a celebration of the wheat harvest and the ripening of the first fruits. It is also the birthday of the Jewish nation. On the day of Shavuot, we received the Torah at Mount Sinai. Before that, we were a family and a community. The experience of Sinai bonded us into a new entity: The Jewish People. That is why Shavuot is a day to reconnect—to our people and to the wisdom of our Torah.

WHAT WE DO ON SHAVUOT



The All-Night Learnathon:

Sit up with friends and strangers, too, sifting through the diamonds and pearls of this treasure you have inherited. Once the dawn breaks, the world will never look the same again.

Relive the Story Together:

Shavuot morning, get your entire family—toddlers and suckling babes included—into the shul for a re-enactment of the greatest event of history: The Ten Commandments, read from a genuine Torah Scroll. Get your nephews and nieces and aunts and uncles there, as well. Get

any Jew you know off the street and into your synagogue. After all, we accepted this Torah as a single whole, all of us as one. And so, all of us are responsible for one another.

Bring Out the Greenery: Fill your home and your synagogue with fruits, flowers and greenery, in keeping with the celebration of this season. There's another reason, too: According to tradition, Mount Sinai bloomed with flowers after the Torah was given upon it.

Eat a Dairy Meal: Torah is mother's milk to the Jewish soul. That's one reason we feast on milk and soft cheese the first day of Shavuot. We follow this with a full meat meal—after washing the mouth of any dairy residue, of course, and according to some customs of waiting ½ hour or 1 hour.

WHAT HAPPENED AT SINAI

Once G-d created this world, He left open channels for communication with His creations. Every new day inspires new insights, original art, joy and laughter, deep truths and an urge to change and rise higher. Then there are those lofty men and women who experience another realm of clarity, for whom the inner workings of the cosmos open wide in a vision beyond comprehension. We call such people prophets. Once in history, an entire nation experienced an ultimate moment of clarity. In that moment, they all perceived the unity of the Creator along with the

oneness of the creation and its meaning. They found themselves charged with a world-shaking mission and a set of guidelines to follow in all aspects of life. They called it, "Torah"—meaning "a teaching". Over the next 40 years, the people remained secluded in a no-man's land, while Moses received the entire Torah, transcribed it and taught it to them. Over the next three millennia and more, they struggled to implement that teaching, under every imaginable condition, in every part of the world. Eventually the ideals of Torah—purpose, progress, peace, the value of life and of the individual—became the dominant themes of world culture, the very fabric of human thought.



THE REBBE'S INSIGHTS

OUR GUARANTORS

Who secured the deal with G-d at Sinai? The kids did. You see, G-d wanted a guarantor to ensure we would keep our side of the deal. At first, we offered our elders, then our prophets, then our rabbis—but He wasn't impressed. Only when we offered our children as guarantors did He let us step up to the plate. After all, if the children will keep

the Torah, the adults will, too. Ever since then, the primary focus of Jewish life has been to educate our children, to ensure they will continue holding to our agreement. So when we read the Ten Commandments in the synagogue on Shavuot, we make every effort that our children—even the smallest ones—should be there, in the front row.

THE FIRST INFORMATION REVOLUTION

Pharaoh and his advisors, had they been there, would have thought Moses had gone nuts. "Like this you're going to control a nation?", they would have laughed. Control, as they knew it, was achieved by suppressing the flow of knowledge. Those who knew the secrets of the hieroglyphs, the movements of the heavenly bodies and the intricacies of the priestly rites—they became demigods in the eyes of the ignorant masses. Throw in a few myths and legends along with a mighty show of power and monolithic edifices, and the people were in the palm of your hand. Moses had another idea altogether. To him, every human being was a potential student and teacher—and prophet, as well. When it came to receiving the most treasured of all wisdoms, the Torah itself, he made sure that every man, woman and child would be there. All heard the same voice, all received the same revelation. Think of the reflection of the moon on a cloudless

night: Look in the ocean, you will see a large moon. Look in a pond; the same moon is there. In a puddle, in a teacup, everywhere, diminished somewhat in size, but all the features are there. So, too, one mind contains an ocean and another only a few droplets, but each contains the same essential truth of Torah. Moses enjoined his people to learn to write their own Torah scrolls. He pleaded with them to become not just students, but teachers, and to occupy themselves with teaching day and night. And Moses himself sat and taught every Jew who would come and ask. Today, we are in the midst of the greatest explosion of information access in history. Only 1-in-5 of the world's inhabitants remain illiterate. Every person's right to knowledge is universally recognized, but it wasn't always. It all began there, at Sinai.

POST SINAI

Before Mount Sinai, there was earth and there was heaven. Some people were getting all they could out of earth, others were in a race to get to heaven. But the rules were clear: The more you wanted one, the more you were obliged to abandon the other. At Sinai, those rules were broken. The mitzvahs of the Torah take earthly objects and everyday experiences and lift them to the heavens. A delicious meal to celebrate the Shabbat, a simple scroll placed on a doorpost, a few coins placed in a needy hand—

all these became G-dly acts, ways to find spirituality while keeping your feet on the ground. After all, the Infinite is everywhere and in everything. Each mitzvah uncovers another spark of the Infinite within another piece of the world. That's why we say that the goal of Torah is not to get to heaven, but to bring heaven down to earth. Until all our world is healed and all those sparks are redeemed in what we call the era of Moshiach.



CHEESE BLINTZES

Cheese blintzes are served hot, with sour cream or applesauce. They are a special favorite on Shavuot when it is customary to eat dairy products (not hard cheese) before the main lunch meal.

Batter:	Filling:
4 eggs	16 ounces cottage cheese
1 cup milk	2 egg yolks
1 cup flour	2 Tbsps. margarine
1 Tbsp. sour cream	or butter, melted
¼ cup sugar	2 Tbsps. sugar
1 package vanilla sugar	1 tsp. Vanilla sugar
pinch of salt	¼ cup raisins (optional)
	⅓ cup oil for frying

Batter: Combine eggs and milk. Add sour cream and blend well. Add flour gradually. Mix well until batter is smooth. Heat a small amount of oil on a low flame in an 8 inch frying pan until hot but not smoking. Ladle a small amount of batter (approx. 1 ounce) into pan, tipping pan in all directions until batter covers the entire bottom of the pan. Fry on one side until set and golden, approx. 1 minute. Slip pancake out of pan and repeat until all batter is used. Add oil to pan as necessary.

Filling: In another bowl mix all ingredients for filling.

Assemble: Fill each pancake on golden side with 3 Tbsps. of filling. Fold in sides to center and roll blintz until completely closed. Replace rolled blintzes in pan and fry for 2 minutes, turning once.