

Shavuot Service

Welcome to our Shavuot service, we are today celebrating Shavuot. Shavuot is the second of the three Pilgrim Festivals. The name 'Shavuot' means 'weeks' because it falls 7 weeks after the 2nd day of Pesach. It falls on the 6th day of Sivan.

Sing:

*Hinei mah tov umah na-im
Shevet achim gam yachad.*

Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brothers and sisters to dwell together in unity. (Traditional song, based on Psalms 133:1)

1. Shavuot marks the day that the Torah was given to the Jewish people on Mount Sinai. That day was a very unusual one, with lightning, thunder and the earth shaking. Moses came down from the Mountain, his face all red and glowing, and read the Ten Commandments to the Children of Israel.



2. In Biblical times, Shavuot was at the time when the Jewish people harvested their wheat crop and their last grain of the season, and began harvesting their fruit crops. An important part of the celebration of Shavuot in those times was the ceremony of bringing the "first fruits", or *bikkurim*, of the harvest to the Temple as an offering of thanks to God.

3. The *bikkurim* were carried in beautifully decorated baskets. Families would gather together to walk to Jerusalem and they would sing, dance and have music playing whilst they walked. When they arrived at the Temple, they gave their offerings to the priests who would bless them.

All recite the Barechu, the call to prayer:

בְּרַכּוּ Bless the Living God
whom we are called to bless.

בְּרַכּוּ אֶת־יְהוָה הַמְּבָרָךְ:

בְּרַכּוּ *Bar'chu et Adonai ha-m'vorach.*

בְּרוּךְ Blessed is the Living
God whom we are called to
bless forever and ever.

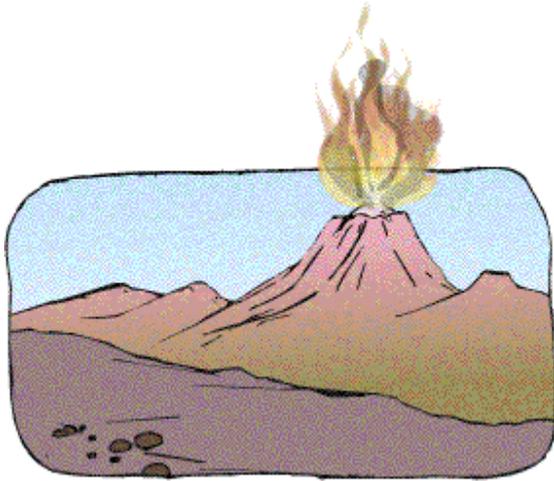
בְּרוּךְ יְהוָה הַמְּבָרָךְ
לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד:

בְּרוּךְ *Baruch Adonai ha-m'vorach l'olam va'ed.*

4. Different Names for Shavuot

There are many different names for the festival of Shavuot. Some of them are:

Zman Matan Torateinu - 'Festival of Giving of the Torah'



Chag HaBikkurim - 'Festival of the First Fruits'

Chag Hakatzir - 'Harvest Festival'



Chag Matan Torah -

'Festival of the giving of the Torah'



All together: Our fathers left the land of Egypt;
From Pharaoh they were free.

They left the land of Egypt,
A land of slavery.

They came unto the mountain
To receive God's special Law.

The heavens flashed and thundered,
As they stood in silent awe.

God gave the Law to Moses



To pass down through the ages,

From Joshua to the elders,
To the prophets and the sages.

We received the 10 commandments,
And we know what we must do.

We must keep the 10 Commandments;
And strive to teach them too.

All read the Shema together:

שְׁמַע יִשְׂרָאֵל יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ יְהוָה אֶחָד:

Sh'ma yisra'el, Adonai eloheinu Adonai echad

בְּרוּךְ שֵׁם כְבוֹד מְלֻכּוּתוֹ לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד:

Baruch sheim k'vod malchuto l'olam va'ed.

וְאַהֲבַתְּ אֶת יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ בְּכָל-לִבְבְּךָ וּבְכָל-נַפְשְׁךָ וּבְכָל-מְאֹדְךָ:
וְהָיוּ הַדְּבָרִים הָאֵלֶּה אֲשֶׁר אֲנֹכִי מְצַוְּךָ הַיּוֹם עַל-לִבְבְּךָ: וְשָׁנַנְתָּם
לְבָנֶיךָ וְדִבַּרְתָּ בָּם בְּשַׁבְּתֶךָ בְּבֵיתְךָ וּבְלֶכְתְּךָ בַדֶּרֶךְ וּבְשֹׁכְבְּךָ
וּבְקוּמְךָ: וְקִשְׂרָתָם לְאוֹת עַל-יְדֶיךָ וְהָיוּ לְטַטְפֹּת בֵּין עֵינֶיךָ:
וְכַתַּבְתָּם עַל-מְזוּזוֹת בֵּיתְךָ וּבְשַׁעְרֶיךָ:

V'ahavta eit Adonai elohecha, b'chol l'vav'cha, uv'chol nafsh'cha, uv'chol m'odecha. V'hayu ha-d'varim ha-eilleh, asher anochi m'tsav'cha ha-yom al l'vavecha. V'shinnantam l'vanecha, v'dibbartam bam, b'shivt'cha b'veitecha, uv'lecht'cha vaderech, uv'shochb'cha uv'kumecha. Uk'shartam l'ot al yadecha, v'hayu l'totafot bein einecha. Uch'tavtam al m'zuzot beitecha uvisharecha.

5. How do we celebrate Shavuot?

Greenery



On Shavuot we decorate our synagogues and homes with greenery, flowers and even fruits. This reminds us that on the day the Jewish people received the Torah, Mount Sinai bloomed with flowers. Using greenery also reminds us of the harvests, another main idea of Shavuot.

6. Learning Torah All Night

Many Jewish adults spend the eve of *Shavuot* staying up all night learning Torah. This custom is called *Tikkun Leil Shavuot*, which means 'making ourselves better people on the night of *Shavuot*'.

Tikkun Leil Shavuot is an extremely important *mitzvah* (good deed) because as the Talmud tells us, "the study of Torah is equal to all the other mitzvot added together." (Shabbat 127a)



7. Eating Dairy Foods



On *Shavuot* we eat dairy foods (foods made from milk). These can include cheesecake, cheese-filled pancakes and quiches. Some people also bake tall cakes to remind us how tall Mount Sinai was. Other people eat fruit, in particular the seven species of *Eretz Israel* (including figs, pomegranates and dates).

8. Going to visit the Western Wall (KOTEL) in Jerusalem

Shavuot is one of the three pilgrim festivals, when in biblical times all the Jewish people would gather in Jerusalem to celebrate and learn Torah. In 1967, the Six Day War in Israel ended just a few days before *Shavuot*.

In this war Israel won back the Old City of Jerusalem, which contains the Western Wall of the Holy Temple. So for the first time in 20 years Jews could visit this last remaining part of their Temple again.

On the day of *Shavuot* in 1967, the Israeli Army opened the Western Wall to visitors. On that day, over 200,000 Jews walked to visit and pray at it. Since then, every year on the morning of *Shavuot*, the streets of Jerusalem are filled with tens of thousands of Jews walking to the Western Wall (*Kotel*).



9. School Graduations



Because the festival of *Shavuot* is all about studying Torah, many Jewish schools hold their graduation ceremonies on or near *Shavuot*.

Read the Amidah together

אֲדֹנָי שְׁפָתַי תִּפְתָּח וּפִי יִגִּיד תְּהִלָּתְךָ:

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ

וְאֱלֹהֵי אֲבוֹתֵינוּ וְאֱלֹהֵי אֲמוֹתֵינוּ.

אֱלֹהֵי אַבְרָהָם אֱלֹהֵי שָׂרָה.

אֱלֹהֵי יִצְחָק אֱלֹהֵי רִבְקָה.

וְאֱלֹהֵי יַעֲקֹב אֱלֹהֵי רָחֵל

וְאֱלֹהֵי לֵאָה.

הָאֵל הַגָּדוֹל הַגִּבּוֹר וְהַנּוֹרָא. אֵל עֲלִיוֹן.

גּוֹמֵל חַסְדִּים טוֹבִים קוֹנֵה הַכֹּל. וְזוֹכֵר חַסְדֵי

אֲבוֹת וְאִמּוֹת

וּמְבִיא גּוֹאֵל לְבָנָי בְּנֵיהֶם לְמַעַן שְׂמוֹ בְּאַהֲבָה:

During the Ten Days of Penitence add:

זְכוּרֵנוּ לְחַיִּים. מְלַךְ חַפֵּץ בְּחַיִּים.

וְכֹתְבֵנוּ בְּסֵפֶר הַחַיִּים. לְמַעַן אֱלֹהִים חַיִּים:

מְלַךְ עוֹזֵר וּמוֹשִׁיעַ וּמַגֵּן:

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה

מַגֵּן אַבְרָהָם פּוֹקֵד שָׂרָה:

אֲדֹנָי Adonai s'fatai tiftach ufi yaggid t'hillatecha.

בָּרוּךְ Baruch attah Adonai eloheinu

veilohei avoteinu veilohei immoteinu.

elohei avraham, elohei sarah,

elohei yitschak, elohei rivkah,

veilohei ya'akov, elohei rachel

veilohei le'ah.

Ha'eil ha-gadol, ha-gibbor v'ha-nora, eil elyon,

gomeil chasadim tovim, koneih ha-kol. V'zocheir chasdei

avot v'immahot

u'meiv go'eil livnei v'neihem l'ma'an sh'mo b'ahavah.

During the Ten Days of Penitence add: Zochreinu l'chayyim,

melech chafeits ba-chayyim, v'chotveinu b'seifer ha-chayyim,

l'ma'anacha elohim chayyim.

Melech ozeir u'moshi'a umagein.

Baruch attah Adonai,

magein avraham pokeid sarah.

אַתָּה גְבוּר לְעוֹלָם אֲדֹנָי. מְחַיֶּה מֵתִים אַתָּה. רַב לְהוֹשִׁיעַ:

In winter מְשִׁיב הַרוּחַ וּמוֹרִיד הַגֶּשֶׁם:

In summer מוֹרִיד הַטַּל:

מְכַלְכֵּל חַיִּים בְּחֶסֶד. מְחַיֶּה מֵתִים בְּרַחֲמִים רַבִּים. סוֹמֵךְ נוֹפְלִים. וְרוֹפֵא חוֹלִים. וּמְתִיר אֲסוּרִים. וּמְקַיֵּם אַמוּנָתוֹ לִישְׁנֵי עֶפְרָי: מִי כְמוֹךָ בְּעַל גְּבוּרוֹת וּמִי דוֹמֶה לָךְ. מְלֹךְ מִמִּית וּמְחַיֶּה וּמְצַמִּיחַ יְשׁוּעָה:

During the Ten Days of Penitence add:

מִי כְמוֹךָ אֵב הַרְחָמִים. זוֹכֵר יְצוּרֵינוּ לְחַיִּים בְּרַחֲמִים:

וְנֶאֱמַן אַתָּה לְהַחְיֹת מֵתִים. בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה. מְחַיֶּה הַמֵּתִים:

אַתָּה *Attah gibbor l'olam Adonai, mechayyeih meitim attah rav l'hoshi'a.*

In winter: Mashiv ha-ru'ach, u'morid ha-gashem. In summer: Morid ha-tal.

M'chalkeil chayyim b'chesed, m'chayyeih meitim b'rachamim rabbim, someich noflim, v'rofeih cholim, umattir asurim, um'kayyeim emunato lisheinei afar. Mi chamocha ba'al g'vurot, umi domeh lach, melech meimit um'chayyeh, u'matsmi'ach v'shu'ah.

During the Ten Days of Penitence add:

Mi chamocha av ha-rachamim, zocheir y'tsurav l'chayyim b'rachamim.

V'ne'eman attah l'hachayot meitim. Baruch attah Adonai, m'chayyeih ha-meitim.

An alternative congregational Kedushah or when praying individually.

אַתָּה קָדוֹשׁ וְשִׁמְךָ קָדוֹשׁ וּקְדוּשֵׁיךָ בְּכָל-יוֹם יִהְיֶה לְךָ סֶלָה:
בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה. הָאֵל הַקָּדוֹשׁ:



אֱלֹהֵי My God, keep my tongue
 from causing harm and my lips
 from telling lies. Let me be silent
 if people curse me, my soul still
 humble and at peace with all. Open
 my heart to Your teaching, and give
 me the will to practise it. May the
 plans and schemes of those who
 seek my harm come to nothing.
 May the words of my mouth and
 the meditation of my heart be
 acceptable to You, O God, my Rock
 and my Redeemer.¹

אֱלֹהֵי נִצּוֹר לְשׁוֹנֵי מִרְעָה.
 וְשִׁפְתוֹתַי מִדְּבַר מְרָמָה. וְלִמְקַלְלֵי
 נַפְשִׁי תִדָּם. וְנַפְשִׁי כְּעַפָּר לְכָל
 תְּהִיָּה: פָּתַח לִבִּי בְּתוֹרָתְךָ. וְאַחֲרַי
 מִצְוֹתֶיךָ תִּרְדּוּף נַפְשִׁי. וְכָל-
 הַקָּמִים עָלַי לְרָעָה מִהֲרָה הַפֵּר
 עֲצָתָם וְקַלְקַל מַחֲשַׁבוֹתָם: יִהְיוּ
 לְרִצּוֹן אֲמָרֵי-פִי. וְהִגִּיוֹן לִבִּי
 לְפָנֶיךָ. יְהוּה צוּרִי וְגוֹאֲלִי:

אֱלֹהֵי Elohaim n'tsor l'shoni meira, v'siftotai middabbeir mirmah, v'limkal'lai nafshi
 tiddom, v'nafshi ke'afar la-kol tihyeh. P'tach libbi b'toratecha, v'acharei
 mitsvotcha tirdof nafshi, v'chol ha-kamim alai l'ra'ah, m'heirah hafeir atsatam,
 v'kalkeil machsh'votam. Yihyu l'ratson imrei fi, v'hegyon libbi l'fanecha, Adonai
 tsuri v'go'ali.

*While reciting Oseh Shalom it is customary to take three steps backwards,
 to bow to the left at the words oseh shalom bimromav,
 to the right at hu ya'aseh shalom and to the centre at aleinu.*

עֲשֵׂה May the Maker of peace in
 the highest bring this peace upon us
 and upon all Israel and upon all the
 world. Amen.

עֲשֵׂה שְׁלוֹם בְּמִרְוּמָיו. הוּא יַעֲשֵׂה
 שְׁלוֹם עָלֵינוּ וְעַל כָּל-יִשְׂרָאֵל
 וְעַל-כָּל-הָעוֹלָם. וְאָמְרוּ. אָמֵן:

עֲשֵׂה Oseh shalom bimromav hu ya'aseh shalom aleinu
 v'al kol yisra'el v'al kol ha-olam, v'imru amen.

The Story of Shavuot

10. When the third month began, the Israelites had been walking by day and camping by night. The exhilaration of escaping from Egypt was wearing off. Already they were forgetting their song of joy at the Sea of Reeds. They were beginning to grumble and complain. They were hungry and thirsty. And even though God provided them with manna to eat and fresh spring water to drink, they were grouchy and unmanageable.

11. Then Moses' father-in-law, Yitro, gave him some good advice, and Moses chose wise people to lead the group so that they could

settle day-to-day disputes and Moses could tend to the weightier issues. At least for now, the Israelites began to get along better.

12. Having journeyed from Rephidim, they entered the wilderness of Sinai and encamped in the wilderness. Israel encamped there in front of the mountain, and Moses went up to God.
(Exodus 19:2-3)

Everyone Stands For The 10 Commandments

Together: God spoke all these words, saying:

I am your Eternal God
who brought you out of the land of Egypt, the house of bondage:
You shall have no other gods beside Me.
You shall not make for yourself a sculptured image,
or any likeness of what is in the heavens above,
or on the earth below,
or in the waters under the earth.
You shall not bow down to them or serve them.
You shall not swear falsely by the name of the Eternal your God;
for the Eternal will not clear one who swears falsely by God's name.
Remember the Sabbath day and keep it holy.
Six days you shall labour and do all your work,
but the seventh day is a Sabbath of the Eternal your God.
Honour your father and your mother.
You shall not murder.
You shall not commit adultery.
You shall not steal.
You shall not bear false witness against your neighbour.
You shall not covet your neighbour's house:
You shall not covet your neighbour's wife, or his male or female
slave,
or his ox or his ass, or anything that is your neighbour's.

Exodus 20:1-12

(All sit)

Concluding prayer

We have stood together and received God's teaching.
We have sat together and studied God's word.
We will eat together and share God's bounty.
Now may we, created in God's image,

embraced by God's love, guided by God's teaching,
continue to learn and live the words of the Torah.

Chag Sameach

Kiddush

Leader: In the same way as we celebrate all festivals, we stand together and sing the words of *Kiddush*, acknowledging both the joy of the day and God's loving gift of holiness.

Together: Praised are You, our Eternal God, Ruler of the universe, who has distinguished us and added holiness to our lives with Your mitzvot. Lovingly have You given us the gift of festivals for joy and holidays for happiness, among them this day of *Shavuot*, the festival of Your giving us the Torah, a day of sacred gathering recalling the Exodus from Egypt. Thus You have chosen us, endowing us with holiness, by granting us Your holy festivals in happiness and joy. Praised are You, our Eternal God, who makes holy the people Israel and the festivals.

(Say blessings and all drink the wine or juice.)

The Challah and Honey

13. In Europe it was the custom to demonstrate to children how sweet Torah study could be. When the children began school, they were offered cut-out Hebrew letters covered with honey, which they licked.

(Pass the challah and honey. Dip a piece of challah into the honey and eat it.)

Together: May the words of Torah always be sweet in our mouths.

Ice-cream Kiddush