

# SHAVUOT GUIDE

MAY 2013 – SIVAN 5773

## The Ten Commandments

On Shavuot we celebrate the great revelation of the giving of the Torah at Mount Sinai, 3,324 years ago. You stood at the foot of the mountain. Your grandparents and great-grandparents before them. The souls of all Jews, came to hear the Ten Commandments from G-d Himself.

This year, on Wednesday, May 15, 2013, go hear the Ten Commandments and reaffirm the covenant with G-d and His Torah. Since we all stood at Mount Sinai, we must all reaffirm our commitment. Babies, young children, the elderly, all that are able should attend.

## The Book of Ruth

The Book of Ruth is recited on Shavuot night. In many synagogues it is read publicly on the second day of Shavuot. Why the Book of Ruth?

1. Shavuot is the birthday and *yahrtzeit* of King David. Ruth and her husband Boaz were the King's great-grandparents.
2. The scenes of harvesting described in the book of Ruth are appropriate to the Festival of Harvest.
3. Ruth was a sincere convert who embraced Judaism with all her heart. On Shavuot all Jews were converts—having accepted the Torah and all of its precepts.

[Click here](#) for the story of Ruth.

## Adorning the Home with Flowers

Since Shavuot is also called the "Harvest Festival," it is customary to adorn the home and synagogue with fruits, flowers and greens. Furthermore, our Sages relate that although Mount Sinai was situated in a desert, when the Torah was given the mountain bloomed and sprouted.



# Eating Dairy Foods

We eat dairy foods on the 1st day of Shavuot. When Moses ascended Mount Sinai, the angels urged G-d to reconsider His decision to give His Torah away. “Bestow Your majesty upon the heavens. What is man that You should remember him, and the son of man that You should be mindful of him?” (Psalms 8:2–4). One of the reasons why the angels’ request went unheeded is because of the Jews’ meticulous adherence to the kosher laws. On Shavuot we therefore eat dairy products and then take a break before eating meat—in order to demonstrate our commitment to this mitzvah.

There are a few more reasons for this custom:

1. On the holiday of Shavuot, a two-loaf bread offering was brought in the Temple. To commemorate this, we eat two meals on Shavuot—first a dairy meal, and then, after a short break, we eat the meat meal.
2. With the giving of the Torah, the Jews became obligated to observe the kosher laws. As the Torah was given on Shabbat, no cattle could be slaughtered, and so they ate dairy.
3. The Torah is likened to nourishing milk. Also, the Hebrew word for milk is *chalav*. The numerical value of *chalav* is 40. Moses spent 40 days on Sinai when receiving the Torah.

## Shavuot Schedule

### Tuesday May 14 - Erev Shavuot

Candle lighting before 7:47 PM

Mincha followed by Arvit 7:30 PM

Tikun LeI Shavuot (midnight study) 12 - 4 AM

Classes given by Rabbi Raphael Benchimol Class and Marc Hazan (12-1 AM). Special class given by Mrs. Leah Iny on “Shavuot: Your Inner Strength” (1-2 AM)

### Wednesday May 15 - 1<sup>st</sup> Day of Shavuot

Shahrit 1st Minyan 5 AM

Shahrit 2nd Minyan 8:30 AM led by the Youth

Minyan followed by an ice cream party 10 AM

Everyone should hear the Ten Commandments during Torah reading

Azharot, Book of Ruth, Mincha 7:20 PM

followed by Shiur & Arvit

Candle lighting (from pre-existing flame) after 8:54 PM

### Thursday May 16 - 2<sup>nd</sup> Day of Shavuot

Shahrit 8:30 AM

Yizkor is recited

Azharot, Book of Ruth, Mincha 7:10 PM

followed by Shiur & Arvit

Yom Tov ends 8:56 PM

