

SHABBAT BULLETIN

May 27, 2023 | 7 Sivan, 5783



Dvar Torah Shavuot 5783

By: Rabbi Yehoshua Ellis

Shavuot is a strange sort of holiday. On Shavuot we celebrate G!d giving the Torah to the Children of Israel, but the written Torah was given to us only just before Moshe died; the Oral Torah is still being revealed. Further the Torah never actually connects Shavuot to the giving of the Torah. Shavuot has three names in the Torah: holiday of the weeks, holiday of harvesting and holiday of first fruits. None of those names refers to the Torah at all. Why then do we make this connection?

The first and most obvious answer is that we did the math, it states in the Torah that the Children of Israel arrived at the wilderness of Sinai on the third month after leaving Egypt. Our tradition tells us that whenever it says "the month" in the Torah it means on the first day of the month, meaning that the Nation of Israel arrived at Sinai on the first day of the month of Sivan

and met with G!d on the five days later on the sixth of Sivan. The sixth of Sivan is the day that we arrive at when we count fifty days from the second day of Pessah, as the Torah instructs us regarding celebrating Shavuot.

How do the names of Shavuot connect it to the Torah? Hag Shavuot means the holiday of weeks, because we are instructed to count seven weeks and on next, the fiftieth day, is Shavuot. Fifty is the five books of the Torah multiplied by the ten commandments. The name Hag Habikkurim, the holiday of the first fruits.

Shavuot begins the process of the Children of Israel bringing their first fruit offering to the Temple in Jerusalem. The Midrash explains that Bikkurim is a reference to the Torah which is also referred to as the first. The final name the Torah gives to Shavuot is Hag Hakatzir, the holiday of the harvest. Harvesting grain is a major step in the process of producing bread. It fills us with great joy and represents a major milestone in the annual production process. However, it produces nothing of actual physical

use to people. A great deal of effort and resources must still be invested before the final product can be enjoyed. So too Torah learning is a major part of our lives that produces great joy, but without applying it to the physical world we are lacking the final product that it was intended for, a world filled with loving kindness, justice and purity.

The connections between the date and names of the Shavuot and the giving of the Torah are now clear, but why is it a celebration of the giving of the Torah if the whole Torah was not given to us on Shavuot? The Torah is never given, it always has to be acquired through effort and love. The Torah is never fully transmitted, there is always more to be learned. Finally at Mount Sinai on Shavuot the whole Nation of Israel heard the voice of G!d and this is the very essence of Torah, the wisdom that allows the whole Nation of Israel to hear the voice of G!d.

May we all merit to hear the small still voice that is always calling to us from Sinai!

Shabbat Shalom & Hag Shavuot Sameah

SHABBAT SHALOM

Start/Debut End/Fin **8:12 p.m. 9:27 p.m.** SHAVUOT II

SHABBAT SERVICES

SHAHRIT: 8:30A MINHA: 8:30P

WEEKLY SERVICES SCHEDULE

Sunday

Shahrit: 8:30A Minha: 6:00P

MONDAY - FRIDAY Shahrit: 7:00A Minha: 6:00P

CHEVRA SHAAS Service Schedule

SHABBOS, May 27TH Schachris 9:30 a.m. SUNDAY, May 28TH Schachris 8:00 a.m.

TORAH CLASS

Join ANDRE ROTCHEL every Shabbat after services Beit Hamidrash Refreshments

To contact **Reverend Hazan Daniel Benlolo:**cantorbenlolo@thespanish.org
(514) 892-2859

Synagogue Office

will close on Thursday, May 25 at 2:00P and Friday, May 26 for Shavuot



OPINION

Shavuot Matan Torah

Reverend Hazan Daniel Benlolo

Dear Congregants and friends,

When in Ottawa, I gave a series of classes at the St Paul's University Theological department. The course gravitated towards the impact of Judaism in everyday life. This is part of a section on Shavuot.

The festival of Shavuot commemorates Matan Torah, G-d's giving of the Torah to the world. Since, as the Gemara (an essential component of the Talmud, comprising a collection of rabbinical analyses and commentaries on the Mishnah and presented in 63 books) informs us, "Our forefathers in Egypt never ceased studying Torah," the Jewish people evidently possessed Torah before it was formally given on Sinai. What, then, makes Matan Torah so unique?

The accomplishment of Matan Torah lies in the fact that "G-d gave us His Torah." Prior to Matan Torah, Torah was merely "taken" by man according to his inherently limited intellectual

capacity. When G-d gave the Torah, however, He gave it to us utterly and completely, in accordance with His infinite capacity.

Moreover, this was not simply a one-time event. Rather, at the time of Matan Torah G-d wholly "incorporated" Himself within the Torah. Thus, we find that regarding Torah G-d says: "I have written and placed [within Torah] My very 'Soul' and Essence"; whenever a person studies Torah, G-d says: "You are actually clutching Me."

This, then, was the novel aspect of G-d's revealing Himself in Torah: Matan Torah achieved something so new and distinct, that Torah as it existed prior to Matan Torah bore absolutely no comparison to Torah as given at Matan Torah:

As stated above, prior to Matan Torah, Torah study was limited to man's restricted intellect and capacities. Understandably, man's achievement in Torah was limited to what a finite being is capable of grasping of an infinite Being and infinite wisdom.

However, with the Giving of the Torah, Torah study brings a student not only to the comprehension of Torah - which given the limitations of the human mind, must necessarily be limited - but to an infinite unity with the Giver of Torah Himself.

While differences existed between Jews in their degree of comprehension of Torah as it existed prior to Matan Torah, these differences - regarding Torah's essence - did not apply to Jews as they studied Torah as it existed after Matan Torah; the aspect of being able to fully grasp G-d is the same among all Jews who study Torah, whether it be the greatest scholar or the simplest Jew.

Matan Torah thus brought about not only an extraordinary degree of unity between the Jewish people and G-d, but also among the Jewish people themselves - they were all equal in their ability to "clutch" G-d.

This quality of Matan Torah was so potent that when the nation encamped opposite Mt. Sinai, even before the Torah was given, they did so "as one man with one heart."

For the fact that G-d was about to give the Torah to the Jewish people revealed within them the quintessential aspect of their Jewishness, something that resides in all Jewish hearts equally: a faith in G-d that transcends logic; a power that enables all Jews - through Torah - to equally grasp G-d's essence.

Torah is ultimately to be studied and learned with one's intellect. The purpose of Matan Torah is not only that G-d's Essence be revealed in Torah, but that the student so thoroughly unites himself with Torah that Torah becomes his very reason for existence.

When one understands something with one's own intellect, that concept becomes so thoroughly grasped that it becomes part and parcel of one's spiritual being, to the same degree that food becomes transformed into part of one's physical being.

This is the ultimate intent of Matan Torah: To allow man to grasp G-d Himself - a relationship that wholly transcends intellect - yet to concurrently possess the ability to assimilate the Torah's lessons and have them permeate the human intellect so that the individual becomes one with the Torah.

Shabbat shalom and Hag Shavuot Sameah.

SPANISH & PORTUGUESE ANNUAL SHABBAT KIDDUSH DONOR:

Yvonne, Fred & Ronnie, in memory of their mother, Jamila Borshanpour z'l.

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Galia Dafni & Henri Darmon, in memory of Rivka Ekshtein, bat Taibl ve Moshe Krutzel z'l.

COMMMUNITY

Congregation Maghen Abraham

SHAVUOT

Thoughts: **Mayer Sasson**

"Any Torah scholar whose inner self is not like his outside shall not enter the Study Hall."

Concerning that said in the Masechet Avot, "One should raise many disciples" Rabeinu Ovadia of Bartenura explained, "Raise many disciples" – This is compared to Raban Gamliel who said, "Every Torah scholar whose inner self is not like his outside shall not enter the Study Hall." Raban Gamliel's intention was that a person should not be hypocritical and say things that his heart does not feel. Raban Gamliel intended that a person's mouth and heart should be the same - his inside should be like his outside.

In the sefer Igra Dipircha the Bnei Yissachar explains Raban Gamliel's words according to hidden meanings and he writes, "In the word "תוכו" the Name of G-d is in the inside and in the word "כברו" is on the outside. In other words in the word "תוכו" the inner letters are "כו" which add up in numerology to 26, like the numerology of G-d's Name. In the word "ברו" the outside letters are "כר" which add up in numerology to 26, like the numerology of G-d's Name.

It seems that the Bnei Yissachar intended that we should deal in Torah and mitzvahs for G-d's sake both internally and externally, both on the obvious level and the hidden level. Therefore G-d's name is alluded to internally in the word "תוכרו" and externally in the word "כברו".

SHABBAT SHALOM!!



A Milestone of Historic Proportions

ANU - Museum of the Jewish People

Shared by our member: Sami Sourani

Dear friends, this is a historical moment for all of us. This Codex was owned by the Sassoon family (a Baghdadi Jewish family who thrived in India and the Far East) for many generations, then it was sold to the Saffra Family (a Jewish family of Lebanese/Syrian origin) and finally, it finds its way to the Israeli Museum in Tel-Aviv/Israel.

The book of the books will rest in the country of its birth. It should be noted that the documentation of the Bible was initiated by the Prophet Ezra, The Scribe, in Babylon, a few years after the exile of the Jews from Jerusalem to Babylon. The fruit of his work was, is, and will always be a document that introduced civilization to this world. Ezra is buried near Basrah, not far from the ancient city of Babylon. In the coming Festival of Torah giving on Mount Sinai, let us celebrate the achievement of our ancestors.

The American Friends of ANU – Museum of the Jewish People is thrilled to announce the



acquisition of Codex Sassoon, the oldest and most complete Hebrew Bible. We are most grateful to Ambassador Alfred H. Moses of Washington D.C. whose generous donation made this possible. "Ambassador Moses' vision and core conviction that this singular Hebrew Bible belongs to the Jewish People in Israel and his love for ANU brought about this milestone of historic proportions for the museum," underscored Shulamith Bahat, CEO, ANU - America.



"The Hebrew Bible is the most influential book in history and constitutes the bedrock of Western civilization. I rejoice in knowing that it belongs to the Jewish People. It was my mission,

realizing the historic significance of Codex Sassoon, to see that it resides in a place with global access to all people," said Ambassador Moses. "In my heart and mind that place was the land of Israel, the cradle of Judaism, where the Hebrew Bible was originated. In Israel at ANU, it will be preserved for generations to come as the centerpiece and gem of the entire and extensive display and presence of the Jewish story."

read more: https://www.anumuseum.org.il/news-and-events/codex-sassoon-2/

Got a Question for Reverend/Hazan Daniel Benlolo?

Dear Danny, Why do some sections of the Jewish community mostly eat dairy during Shavuot?

Dear reader, Thank you for this timely question. I would like to share with you this interesting article I read on My Jewish Learning.

"Although everyone agrees that the food of choice for Shavuot is cheese, most typically blintzes, or a Sephardic equivalent such as bourekas, there are differences of opinion (some quite charming) as to why it is a custom.

Some derive the practice directly from scripture, saying we eat dairy to symbolize the "land flowing with milk and honey" (Exodus 3:8) promised to the Israelites, or that "milk and honey are under your tongue" (Song of Songs 4:11). These passages, along with "The precepts of the Lord are... sweeter than honey" (Psalm 19:9-11) also indicate we should eat honey, which is customary in some communities.

A sage discovered that the initials of the four Hebrew words in Numbers 28:26, which describe the sacrificial meal offering on Shavuot, spell mei halav (from milk), suggesting that dairy food is the acceptable dinner for the festival. At Sinai, the Israelites were considered to be as innocent as newborns, whose food is milk.

Those of kabbalistic [mystical] bent equate the numerical value of the word halav, 40 ('het'=8, 'lamed'=30, 'vet'=2), with the number of days Moses spent on Mount Sinai receiving the Ten Commandments and other teachings (Exodus 24:18). Others look to the mountain itself, which is termed in Psalms mount of gavnunim (68:15), meaning many peaks. They connect that description with the Hebrew word gevinah, meaning cheese.

Scholars who trace all Jewish customs and rituals to practices common among various ethnic groups claim that spring harvest festivals characteristically featured dairy dishes, perhaps because cheese was produced during that season. There is also support for the custom based on the spiritual development among the Israelites in the wake of Sinai. After the Torah was given, they were obligated to follow its laws, including those governing dietary practice. As they returned to the camp from Revelation, they could not eat the previously prepared meat, which had not been done according to the laws of kashrut [dietary restrictions]. Since butchering and cooking fresh meat would take too long for the tired, hungry Israelites, they took the dairy food that was readily available. Symbolizing modesty, the dairy was also seen as appropriate for the occasion of receiving the Torah, which should always be approached with humility.

In some Jewish communities, it is customary to follow the traditional dairy meal with a meat dish (after waiting the requisite 30 minutes per the laws of kashrut, except in places where the rabbis waived the normal separation).

PARNASS HAYOM BEIT HAMIDRASH HELWANI

SHABBAT 7 SIVAN - MAY 27
Myriam & Ronald Reuben, in memory of her father, Messod Dahan דייל

Famille Zaguri, à la mémoire de leur mère, Zippora Vakrat bat Rahel ד״ל

Emile El Sayegh, à la mémoire de sa mère, Latifé Yael El Sayegh ז״ל

SUNDAY/DIMANCHE 8 SIVAN - MAY 28 Isaac & Jacqueline Dana, in memory of their mother, Violette Dana "t

Penina & Claude Helwani, in honour of their grandson, Jared's Birthday.

Monday/Lundi 9 Sivan - May 29 Philip Khazzam, in honour of his Family.

TUESDAY/MARDI 10 SIVAN - MAY 30 Famille Fhima, à la mémoire de Zohra Fhima "'

Ruth & David Khazzam, in honour of the birth of our grandchild, Sophie Mila (Sarah) Khazzam.

WEDNESDAY/MERCREDI 11 SIVAN - MAY 31 Her Devoted Friends, in honour and in memory of Irene Buenavida ייל

THURSDAY/JEUDI 12 SIVAN - JUNE 1 Tami Aboubakary

FRIDAY/VENDREDI 13 SIVAN - JUNE 2 David Mashaal & Linda Mashaal, in memory of their mother, Gertrude Mashaal 577

Sampson Family, in memory of Esther Nachson Sampson ז״ל

Isaac & Jacqueline Dana, in memory of their father, Raphael Dana ז״ל

Sehayek Family, in memory of their father, Heskel Sehayek ה״ל

Famille Khadoury, à la mémoire de Raphael Khadoury ben Adele '" t

The two foods represent the two loaves brought on the festival. We are also supposed to eat meat as a contribution to our joy on a festival day. This can cause practical problems, however, not only in terms of the time lapse, but because you cannot mix milk and meat dishes and utensils. Therefore, it is more common to have a dairy meal on the first evening of Shavuot and then serve meat the next day.

Along with blintzes and bourekas, cheesecake is a widely popular Shavuot item. Some eat kreplach, three-cornered dumplings that are often filled with meat but can be cheese filled or even vegetable filled. They are supposed to remind us of the Bible, which is comprised of three sections (Torah, Nevi'im and Ketuvim / Torah, Prophets and Writings), which was given to Israel through Moses, who was the third child of Amran (after Aaron and Miriam), following three days of preparation (Exodus 19:11) in the third month of the year".

Until next time...

Upcoming Events



WEDNESDAY, MAY 31 | 10:00A - 12:00P

Women's Learning Group: The Importance of Having a Will with Maître Alain Murad.

Zoom ID: 849 4697 5701 - Passcode: SPRING2023 RSVP/Donate: office 514-737-3695 x101 gladys@mooallem.ca



SUNDAY, JUNE 6 | 12:00P

SISTERHOOD CLOSING EVENT 2023: Bringing our community together - Game Day & Lunch in the Sukkah (weather permitting). Bring your set & try to arrange your table.

RSVP by June 1st noon - space limited. \$5 Sisterhood member - \$12 Non-Members www.thespanish.org/form/Sisterhood-Closing-Meeting-2023.html



WEDNESDAY, JUNE 7 | 10:00A - 12:00P

Women's Learning Group: La Danse Israélienne d'hier, au temps des Pionniers à aujourd'hui, au 21^{ème} Siècle - avec Maurice Peretz

Zoom ID: 849 4697 5701 - Passcode: SPRING2023 RSVP/Donate: office 514-737-3695 x101 gladys@mooallem.ca



WEDNESDAY, MAY 10 | 10:00A - 12:00P

Women's Learning Group: A Musical Celebration to Complete Series 28 with Reverend Hazan Daniel Benjolo

Zoom ID: 849 4697 5701 - Passcode: SPRING2023 RSVP/Donate: office 514-737-3695 x101 gladys@mooallem.ca