

SHAVUOT: the Giving of the Torah

Seven weeks after Passover, we celebrate the festival of *Shavuot* (pronounced *Shah-voo-oat* & sometimes pronounced as *Shah-voo-us*). On Shavuot we celebrate the giving of the Torah to the Jewish people at Mount Sinai.

Historically, Shavuot also marked the spring harvest, so it is a time of both abundance and joy in the Jewish calendar. ***Shavuot* will begin at sundown on Tuesday, June 11 and end at sundown Thursday, June 13.**

Counting the Omer

Beginning on the second night of Passover, the 49 days that elapse are counted each night until *Shavuot* arrives. This is called the *Omer*. Historically, counting the *Omer* marked the period between the barley and wheat harvests. Today, it serves as a spiritual preparation for "receiving" the Torah on *Shavuot*.

Why Dairy?

Dairy is a feature of *Shavuot* because it symbolizes the "land flowing with milk and honey" (Exodus 3:8). Kugel (a sweet noodle casserole made with eggs, sour cream and cottage cheese), blintzes, and cheesecake are all delicious



How We Celebrate

While *Shavuot* is a very meaningful holiday, it is not as widely celebrated as some other Jewish holidays. Given the themes of spring and harvest, decorating with florals and bright colors is a great way to get in the holiday spirit. Typical celebration involves staying up late and studying biblical texts, especially the [Book of Ruth, summarized here](#). We also read about the Ten Commandments and celebrate Moses receiving the tablets from G-d at Mount Sinai.



meals that remind us of the joy and comfort provided by the Torah.

Making a Shavuot Space

To prepare for *Shavuot* celebrations, try some easy, fun crafts that will bring spring into any space! DIY projects like [these popsicle stick flowers](#) or [these cupcake liner bouquets](#) can be made with common household objects and are sure to brighten rooms and moods alike.



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Bubbe's Corner

You can always count on Bubbe (Yiddish for "grandmother") for her wisdom, stories and traditions. Be sure to ask your residents about how they celebrated Shavuot. Did they make blintzes, eat cheesecake, make paper flowers? Be sure to ask your residents about any Shavuot memories they have!

Shavuot has **five** recognized names! *Shavuot*, Day of First Fruits, the Harvest Festival, *Atzeret*, and the Time of the Giving of the Torah.



During the *Omer*, Jewish weddings are prohibited. Therefore, *Shavuot* is often a very popular time to get married.

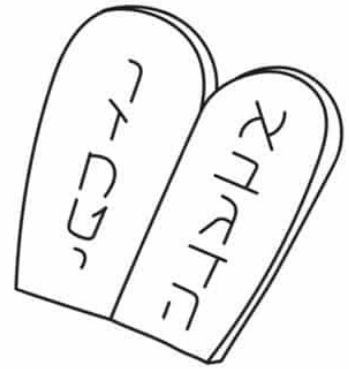
In some sects of Judaism, teenagers in religious schools have confirmation ceremonies around *Shavuot* because it's near the end of the school year.

In Israel, many *kibbutz* (commune) communities throw colorful harvest festival celebrations called *Bikkurim*.

Shavuot literally translates to "weeks" since it marks the seven weeks that have elapsed during the *Omer*.

Important Terms for Shavuot

Hebrew...	It is pronounced...	It means...
Shavuot	Shah-voo-oat / shah-voo-us	Weeks/the Harvest Festival
Chag Sameach	Hahg sah-may-ach	Happy holiday!
Har Sinai	Har Sea-nye	Mount Sinai
Sefirat HaOmer	Se-Fear-aht Ha Oh-mare	Counting of the Omer



Happy Shavuot



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Jewish Holidays Calendar 2024-2025*

HOLIDAY	DATE
Passover (8 days)	Monday, April 22* – Tuesday, April 30, 2024
Shavuot (2 days)	Tuesday, June 11* – Thursday, June 13, 2024
Rosh Hashanah (2 days)	Wednesday, Oct. 2* – Friday Oct. 4, 2024
Yom Kippur (1 day)	Friday, Oct. 11* – Saturday, Oct. 12, 2024
Sukkot (7 days)	Wednesday, Oct. 16* – Wednesday, Oct. 23, 2024
Shemini Atzeret (1 day) & Simchat Torah (1 day)	Wednesday, Oct. 23* – Friday, Oct. 25, 2024
Hanukkah (8 days)	Wednesday, Dec. 25* – Thursday, Jan. 2, 2025
Purim	Thursday, March 13* – Friday, March 14, 2025
Passover	Saturday, April 12* – Sunday, April 20, 2025

* All holidays begin at sundown

About JFS

JFS has continuously provided a range of support, services and resources for individuals and families of all ages and backgrounds since 1854.

Our mission is to enrich the lives of individuals and families of all backgrounds, and strengthen the community by providing compassionate, collaborative human services, guided by Jewish values.

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- Spiritual support and guidance
- Counseling and case management

Jewish Family Services
NORTHEASTERN NEW YORK



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— SINCE 1854 —

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This publication and JFS Chaplaincy support are only made possible through philanthropic support of the facilities that Rabbi Ami visits and the residents that he serves.

If you have enjoyed a visit with Rabbi Ami this year, please consider a gift to JFS.


Thank you.

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