

Chabad Chayil

# Jewish Family

SPRING ISSUE / SHAVUOT 5785

A LITTLE NOSH FOR THE SOUL

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## CELEBRATE SHAVUOT

JUNE 1-3



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# Happy Shavuot



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Dear Readers,

As we gather once again to hear the Ten Commandments and relive the moment of Sinai, it's important to remember: this isn't just a reenactment of history: it's personal.

Shavuot isn't only about what was given; it's about who it was given to. And the answer is: you.

The Torah doesn't belong to scholars or sages alone. It's not a reward for good behavior or a gift for the spiritually elite. It's an inheritance, which means it's yours by birthright. As the verse says, "The Torah that Moses commanded us is the inheritance of the congregation of Jacob."

The Rebbe explains this beautifully. A paycheck is earned. A gift is given. But an inheritance is different "it's yours by virtue of who you are, not what you've done. No one earns their inheritance. You don't have to qualify for it. It is part of you.

This holiday, take it personally. When you stand in shul and hear the Ten Commandments, don't think of it as a grand event from the past. Think of it as your inheritance being handed to you again.

The Torah is yours. It belongs to every Jew. So go claim it.

With blessings for a happy Shavuot,

**Rabbi Moishe & Layah Kievman**  
*Directors, Chabad Chayil*

PS: Join us for the Shavuot Ice Cream Party June 2nd at 11:00am, and on June 3rd for Yizkor at 11:30am. You can also RSVP for exquisite catered Holiday meals at [ChabadChayil.org/Shavuot](http://ChabadChayil.org/Shavuot)



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## *Top that!*

A SHAVUOT GUIDE:  
Welcome to the Torah

# H<sub>2</sub>O FOR THE SOUL



If you think the Ten Commandments are laws—you're both right and wrong.

Much more than a list of do's and don'ts:

The Torah is the **oxygen** for a world gasping for truth. —Psalms 19:8

The Torah is the nourishing **water** for parched souls. —Isaiah 55:1

The Torah is the **light** that guides a world shrouded in darkness.  
—Proverbs 6:23

The Torah is the living **living tree** with branches that touch every aspect of life. —Proverbs 3:18

The Torah is the **bridge** that allows finite, earthbound humans to touch the infinite. —Hayom Yom 8 Adar I

The Torah is the **map**, guide, and tool to fulfill the very purpose of creation.

It's not just a book—it's divinity itself.

At Sinai, G-d gave the Torah to you.

In our brief guide to the ultimate guide, you'll find that your fingerprints are all over the blueprint of creation, so, this Shavuot, go ahead and take it personally.



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# THE TORAH: *A DEEPER LOOK*

*By Rabbi Shmuel Marcus*

## WHAT IS THE TORAH?

The word Torah means “instruction” or “guide,” and it is often described as G-d’s “user manual” for the world. But unlike an ordinary user manual—which is secondary to the product it explains—the **Torah is primary**, not secondary.

The Torah isn’t a guide for managing an existing creation—it’s the reason creation exists. The Talmud states that **the world was created in response to the Torah**. G-d created the world so that the instructions of the Torah could be lived and fulfilled.

The same is true for each of us. Rather than seeing yourself as a victim of random events, recognize that your divine mission is the primary focus, and your current life circumstances only play a supporting role, not the other way around.

For example, in 1967, when a snowstorm left a group of Jewish women stranded and stuck in a Detroit airport, they called the Rebbe for guidance, and he famously responded, “A Jew is never stuck; wherever you find yourself, it’s by Divine design.”

The story beautifully illustrates how even snowstorms and flight cancellations are secondary and divinely orchestrated to help facilitate the Torah’s primary mission. Inspired by this message, the group of Jewish women used the unexpected delay in Detroit to connect with other stranded Jewish travelers, resulting in new relationships and a lasting Jewish impact.

Similar to how you’ll see online ads in your feed based on your demographic, location and preferences, the Baal Shem Tov taught that everything we encounter in our lives is by divine design. For instance, if you notice a flaw in a friend, it’s only showing up in your “feed” to serve as a mirror, highlighting something within yourself that requires attention.

Can there be anything random in a world created and designed only to facilitate the Torah?

## WHAT IS THE TORAH’S PURPOSE?

In short, the Torah’s objective is divine unity.

This unity isn’t about being alone, the only, or having no opposition. Absolute divine unity is revealed when the Torah transforms and includes even the most distant or seemingly opposite elements within the realm of holiness. As the light that was once darkness shines much brighter, and the peace that can bond enemies is much stronger, this Torah-enabled unity is a more profound oneness.

But to unite and uplift the world, you need to be above it.

That’s why the Torah is in a constant state of being “given,” as G-d makes sure the Torah retains its primary transcendent nature. This is similar to aerodynamics, where you need an outside force to lift yourself, and for creation and all its messy parts, the Torah is that “outside” force.

So, look deeply into the Torah and watch how the distance between heaven and earth dissolves and see how “commandments” connect and elevate you, and the world’s countless details with endless scenarios, into a profound divine oneness. ●

(Based on a Chasidic Discourse by the Rebbe)

>> Rabbi Shmuel Marcus is the editor of Chabad Magazine and together with his wife Bluma and their family direct the Chabad in Los Alamitos in California.



## SINAI’S THORNY ROCKS

Mount Sinai got its name from its unique “sneh” imprinted stones. In Hebrew, “sneh” means thornbush, and according to Rabbi Ya’akov Emden (1697–1776), a prominent German rabbi and Talmudic scholar in the 18th century, each stone depicts a complete thornbush. Hence the name Mount (Sneh) Sinai.

Recently, researchers took the stones of Mount Sinai to Jerusalem University’s pathology institute, ground the rocks into a powder, and examined them under a microscope; incredibly, they found the image of a thornbush on the dust.

When choosing a mountain and backdrop for the Torah, G-d chose the unassuming Mount Sinai from among the more impressive and larger mountains because of its humility. The sages teach us that humility is the path to receiving the Torah.

We all have strengths and weaknesses, roses and thorns, but when G-d appears to Moses, He chooses a thornbush, and when it comes to climbing the mountain of G-d, you’ll find the stones have humble thorns.



Rabbi Avraham Berns, a former librarian at the Rebbe’s Library at Chabad World Headquarters in Brooklyn, displays a stone from Mount Sinai with a visible thornbush depiction to Hebrew High students at Chabad in Los Alamitos, CA.



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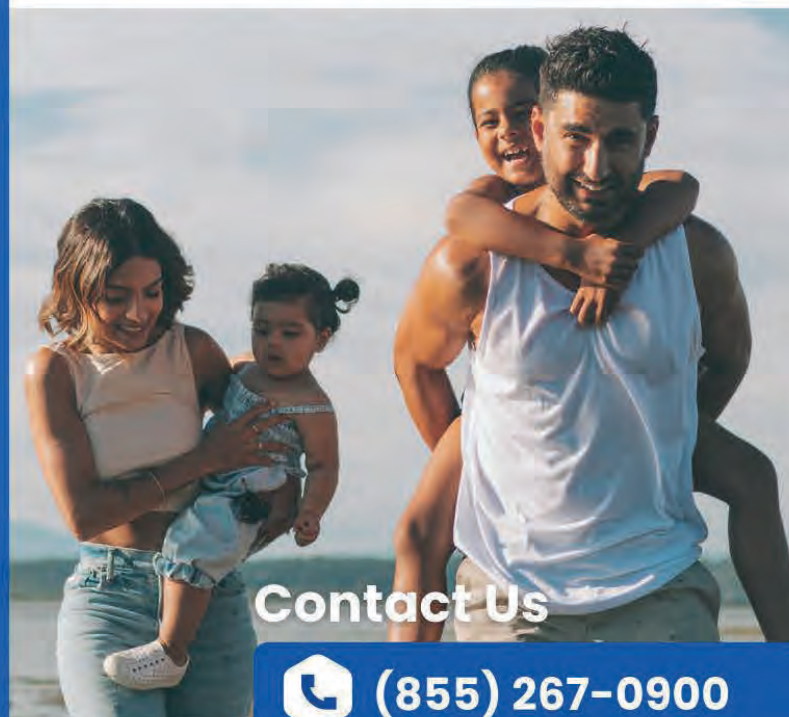
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# HERE'S WHY YOU COUNT

*Based on the teachings of the Rebbe*

Some holidays, like Passover, arrive whether you're ready or not. It comes as a gift—unearned and unconditional. But the next Jewish holiday, Shavuot, is different. It doesn't just happen on its own. It depends on you. And that's by design.

The Torah intentionally does not write a date for Shavuot. Instead, after the first day of Passover, we are commanded to count seven complete weeks—a process known as Sefirat HaOmer or Counting the Omer. Only after these forty-nine days do we reach Shavuot, the day we received the Torah at Sinai. This counting makes the holiday of Shavuot unique: it doesn't just arrive—you cause it.

How does counting days cause Shavuot?

Counting sounds easy, like a child counting their fingers and toes or a baker counting a dozen plain bagels. But in Hebrew, counting is also associated with

the brilliant sapphire stone because this “sefira” includes an act of polishing.

There are seven weeks to the Omer and seven human emotions; this is not a coincidence. We count each day by searching for personality traits that could use a little

**Shavuot celebrates  
a more profound  
connection built  
through daily personal  
improvements.**

shine, and this daily self-improvement has a luminous effect.

The name says it all.

The Torah tells us that your counting “Shavuot” or “Weeks” causes the time and date of the great revelation. Sure, there was thunder, lightning, and great revelation of the Torah, but this holiday is more about

you, the reader, and what happens when you count weeks.

Shavuot celebrates that empowerment.

Today, we take this power to change for granted. But, historically, our forefathers pre-Sinai were trapped in an unchangeable world. The heavens were holy, the earth was mundane, and only G-d could make changes or holidays. It took years of slavery, a wondrous Passover Exodus, and our counting of forty-nine days until Shavuot for G-d to gift us the power to change calendar days and, more importantly, the world around us.

This is the core of Shavuot, and it's worth celebrating.

While watching the sea split is nice, knowing that our actions elevate and impact the world around us is truly wonderful. At Sinai, G-d came down, and Moses went up—bridging heaven and earth forever, empowering us to turn ordinary homes into sacred spaces, everyday items into divine mitzvot, and regular days into holidays.

Yes, your Judaism is a gift at birth, and Passover is about G-d's unconditional love, yet, Shavuot celebrates a more profound connection built through daily personal improvements. It sounds fun to get a free ride and enjoy unearned miracles, but G-d's greatest gift to us is the power to be His active partner.

And that's how you change the world: one day at a time. ●

## IT'S MAGIC!

Lior Suchard is a world-renowned mentalist who has captured audiences on shows like Jay Leno and James Corden. He stars in *Gone Mental* and co-hosts *Brain Games* on National Geographic. With fans ranging from A-list celebrities to world leaders, Lior is best known for his incredible illusions, but when connecting with G-d, Lior doesn't use slight-of-the-hand tricks. He uses Tefillin. That's why we're fans of his.



קַדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא הַמְצִיחַ וְהַמְשִׁיב וְהַמְשַׁלְּטָן

“Israel, the Torah, and G-d are indeed one.”

- THE ZOHAR

START HERE

# The road to wholesome living starts here.



“What is an Alef? A point above, a point below, connected by a line, that’s an Alef. Education starts with knowing that God above and we below are indeed one through the Torah. Look at the Alef, and see the Torah as the bridge that unites body and soul.”

— Rabbi Schneur Zalman of Liadi, founder of Chabad (1745–1812)

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## you got this

G-d gave the Torah to the Jewish people on Mount Sinai on Shavuot. G-d re-gives the Torah every year, and we renew our acceptance of G-d's gift. It's your inheritance, so claim it.

The giving of the Torah and our ability to connect Heaven and earth is a continuous event that still impacts and elevates our daily interactions.



## READING OF THE TORAH

# The Giving of the Ten Commandments

Two Torah scrolls are removed from the ark. The first is used for reading Exodus 19:1-20:23. We then read Numbers 28:26-31 in the second scroll.

The English version is an adaption and translation of the reading.

כהן — First Aliyah

## united as one

All Jews were gathered at Mount Sinai and today we do the same by gathering men, women, and children of all ages to hear the reading of the Ten Commandments.

בְּחֹדֶשׁ הַשְּׁלִישִׁי לְצֵאת בְּנֵי־יִשְׂרָאֵל מֵאֶרֶץ  
מִצְרַיִם בַּיּוֹם הַזֶּה בָּאוּ מִדְּבַר סִינַי:  
וַיִּסְעוּ מִרְפִּידִים וַיָּבֹאוּ מִדְּבַר סִינַי וַיַּחֲנוּ בְּמִדְבַר  
וַיַּחֲזֶנְשֵׁם יִשְׂרָאֵל נֶגֶד הָהָר: וּמוֹשֶׁה עָלָה אֶל־  
הָאֱלֹהִים וַיִּקְרָא אֵלָיו ה' מִן־הָהָר לֵאמֹר כֹּה  
תֹּאמַר לְבִית יַעֲקֹב וְתִגִּיד לְבָנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל: אַתֶּם  
רֵאיתֶם אֲשֶׁר עָשִׂיתִי לְמִצְרַיִם וְאֵשָׂא אֶתְכֶם  
עַל־כַּנְּפֵי נְשָׁרִים וָאֵבָא אֶתְכֶם אֵלָי: וְעַתָּה אִם־  
שָׁמוּעַ תִּשְׁמָעוּ בְּקוֹלִי וּשְׁמַרְתֶּם אֶת־בְּרִיתִי  
וְהָיִיתֶם לִי סֻגְלָה מִכָּל־הָעַמִּים כִּי־לִי כָל־הָאָרֶץ:  
וְאַתֶּם תְּהִיוּ־לִי מְמֹלַכֶת כְּהַנִּים וְגוֹי קָדוֹשׁ אֵלֶּה  
הַדְּבָרִים אֲשֶׁר תְּדַבֵּר אֶל־בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל:

**In the third month** after leaving Egypt, the Jews arrived at Sinai on this day. Traveling from Rephidim, they came and set up camp at the foot of mount Sinai. Moses ascended to God, and the Lord told him, "So shall you say to the daughters and the sons of Israel, 'You saw what I did to the Egyptians, and [how] I carried you on eagles' wings, and I brought you to Me. And now, if you obey Me and keep My covenant, you shall be to Me a treasure out of all peoples, for Mine is the entire earth. And you shall be to Me a kingdom of princes and a holy nation.' These are the words that you shall speak to the children of Israel."

**ויבא** מֹשֶׁה וַיִּקְרָא לְזִקְנֵי הָעָם וַיִּשֶׁם לִפְנֵיהֶם אֵת כָּל־הַדְּבָרִים הָאֵלֶּה אֲשֶׁר צִוָּהוּ ה': וַיַּעֲנוּ כָל־הָעָם יַחְדָּו וַיֹּאמְרוּ כָּל אֲשֶׁר־דִּבֶּר ה' נַעֲשֶׂה וְנִשְׁמָע וַיֵּשֶׁב מֹשֶׁה אֶת־דְּבָרֵי הָעָם אֶל־ה': וַיֹּאמֶר ה' אֶל־מֹשֶׁה הִנֵּה אֲנֹכִי בָּא אֵלֶיךָ בְּעָב הָעֲנָן בְּעֵבֹר וְשָׁמַע הָעָם בְּדַבְרֵי עַמְדָּךְ וְנִסְכַּךְ יֵאמְרוּ לְעוֹלָם וַיִּגַּד מֹשֶׁה אֶת־דְּבָרֵי הָעָם אֶל־ה': וַיֹּאמֶר ה' אֶל־מֹשֶׁה לֵךְ אֶל־הָעָם וְקִדְּשָׂתֶם הַיּוֹם וּמָחָר וּכְבֹּסוּ שִׁמְלֹתֵיכֶם: וְהָיוּ נְכֻנִים לְיוֹם הַשְּׁלִישִׁי כִּי בַיּוֹם הַשְּׁלִישִׁי יֵרֵד ה' לְעֵינֵינוּ כָּל־הָעָם עַל־הַר סִינַי: וְהִגַּבְלֹתָ אֶת־הָעָם סָבִיב לֵאמֹר הִשְׁמְרוּ לָכֶם עֲלֹת בְּהָר וּנְגַע בְּקַצְהוּ כָל־הַנֹּגֵעַ בְּהָר מוֹת יוֹמָת: לֹא־תִגַּע בּוֹ יַד כִּי־סָקוֹל יִסְקַל אוֹיֵרוֹהָ יִירוֹהָ אִם־בְּהֵמָה אִם־אִישׁ לֹא יַחֲיֶה בַּמּוֹשָׁךְ הַיֵּבֶל הַמָּה יַעֲלוּ בְּהָר:

**Moses came** and called the elders and put the Lord's words before them. And all the people replied in unison, "All that the Lord has spoken we shall do!" and Moses took the people's words back to the Lord. And the Lord said to Moses, "Behold, I am coming to you in the thickness of the cloud, so that the people hear when I speak to you, and they will also believe in you forever." And Moses relayed the words of the people to the Lord. And the Lord told Moses, "Go to the people and prepare them today and tomorrow, and they shall wash their garments. And they shall be ready for the third day, for, on the third day, the Lord will visibly descend upon Mount Sinai. And you shall set boundaries for the people, saying, Beware of ascending the mountain or touching its edge; whoever touches the mountain will die.' No hand shall touch it, for he shall be stoned or cast down; whether man or beast, he shall not live. Only when the ram's horn sounds a long blast may they ascend the mountain."

**ויירד** מֹשֶׁה מִן־הַהָר אֶל־הָעָם וַיְקַדֵּשׁ אֶת־הָעָם וַיְכַבְּסוּ שִׁמְלֹתֵיכֶם: וַיֹּאמֶר אֶל־הָעָם הָיוּ נְכֻנִים לְשְׁלֹשַׁת יָמִים אַל־תִּגְשׁוּ אִשָּׁה: וַיְהִי בַיּוֹם הַשְּׁלִישִׁי בְּהַיֵּת הַבֶּקֶר וַיְהִי קֶלֶת וּבְרָקִים וַעֲנַן כָּבֵד עַל־הַהָר וְקוֹל שֹׁפָר חֹזֵק מְאֹד וַיִּחַרֵד כָּל־הָעָם אֲשֶׁר בַּמַּחֲנֶה: וַיּוֹצֵא מֹשֶׁה אֶת־הָעָם לְקִרְיַת הָאֵל־לְהִיִּם מִן־הַמַּחֲנֶה וַיִּתְיַצְּבוּ בְּתַחְתִּית הַהָר: וְהָרַס סִינַי עֵשָׂן כָּלֹּ מִפְּנֵי אֲשֶׁר יֵרֵד עָלָיו ה' בְּאֵשׁ וַיַּעַל עֵשָׂנוּ בְּעֵשָׂן הַכֹּבֵשֶׁן וַיִּחַרֵד כָּל־הַהָר מְאֹד: וַיְהִי קוֹל הַשֹּׁפָר הוֹלֵךְ וְחֹזֵק מְאֹד מִשָּׁה יִדְבַר וְהָאֵל־לְהִיִּם יַעֲנֵנוּ בְּקוֹל:

**So Moses** descended from the mountain to the people, and he prepared the people, and they washed their garments. He said to the people, "Be ready for three days; do not approach a woman." So it came to pass on the morning of the third day that thunderclaps and lightning flashes, a thick cloud upon the mountain, a mighty blast of a shofar, and the entire nation in the camp shuddered. Moses brought the people toward God, and they stood at the bottom of the mountain. And the whole of Mount Sinai smoked because the Lord had descended upon it in fire, and its smoke ascended like the smoke of the kiln, and the entire mountain quaked violently. The shofar's sound grew increasingly stronger; Moses would speak, and God would answer him with a voice.

**ויירד** ה' עַל־הַר סִינַי אֶל־רֹאשׁ הַהָר וַיִּקְרָא ה' לְמֹשֶׁה אֶל־רֹאשׁ הַהָר וַיַּעַל מֹשֶׁה: וַיֹּאמֶר ה' אֶל־מֹשֶׁה רֵד הַעֵד בְּעַם פְּנִי־הָרֹסוּ אֶרֶץ לְרֹאוֹת וְנִפְלַ מִמֶּנּוּ רַב: וְגַם הַכֹּהֲנִים הַנֹּגְשִׁים אֶל־ה' יִתְקַדְּשׁוּ פְּנִי־יַפְרִיץ בָּרָם ה': וַיֹּאמֶר מֹשֶׁה אֶל־ה' לֹא־יֹכֵל הָעָם לַעֲלֹת אֶל־הַר סִינַי כִּי־אֲתָה הַעֲדַתָּה בְּנוֹ לֵאמֹר הַנִּבְּלָ אֶת־הָהָר וְקִדְּשָׁתוּ: וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלָיו ה' לְדַרְדֹּר וְעֲלִית אִתָּה וְאַהֲרֹן עַמְדָּךְ וְהַכֹּהֲנִים וְהָעָם אֶל־יְהָרְסוּ לַעֲלֹת אֶל־ה' פְּנִי־יַפְרִיץ־בָּם: וַיֵּרֵד מֹשֶׁה אֶל־הָעָם וַיֹּאמֶר אֲלֵהֶם:

**The Lord descended** upon Mount Sinai, to the peak of the mountain, and the Lord called Moses to the peak of the mountain, and Moses ascended. The Lord said to Moses, "Go down, warn the people not to go nearer to the Lord, to gaze, and many will fall. And also, the priests who go near to the Lord shall prepare themselves, lest the Lord send destruction upon them." And Moses said to the Lord, "The people cannot ascend to Mount Sinai, for You warned us saying, Set boundaries for the mountain and sanctify it." But the Lord said to him, "Go, descend, and return with Aaron, but the priests and the people shall not, lest He send destruction upon them." So Moses went down and told the people.

## THE TEN COMMANDMENTS

Rise and face the Torah during the reading of the Ten Commandments:

וידבר א-להים את כל-הדברים האלה לאמר:

**אֲנֹכִי ה' א-לֹהֶיךָ**  
אשר הוצאתיך מארץ מצרים מבית עבדים

לא יהיה לך אֱלֹהִים אחרים על-פני לא תעשה לך פסל | וכל-תמונה אשר בשמים | ממועל ואשר בארץ מתחת ואשר במים | מתחת לארץ לא-תשתחוה להם ולא תעבדם כי אנכי ה' א-לֹהֶיךָ א-ר קנא פקד עון אבת על-בנים על-שלישים ועל-רבעים לשנאי ועשה חסד לאֱלֹפִים לאהבי ולשמרי מצותי:

לא תשא את-שם ה' א-לֹהֶיךָ לשוא כי לא ינקה ה' את אשר-ישא את-שמו לשוא:

זכור את-יוֹם הַשַּׁבָּת לְקַדְּשׁוֹ שֵׁשֶׁת יָמִים תַּעֲבֹד וְעֵשִׂית כָּל-מְלַאכְתֶּךָ וְיוֹם הַשְּׁבִיעִי שַׁבָּת | לָהּ א-לֹהֶיךָ לא תעשה כל-מלאכה אתה ובנך ובתך עבדך ואמתך ובהמתך וגרך אשר בשעריך כי ששת-ימים עשה ה' את-השמים ואת-הארץ את-הים ואת-כל-אשר-בם וינח ביום השביעי על-כן בֵּרַךְ ה' אֶת-יוֹם הַשַּׁבָּת וַיְקַדְּשֶׁהּ:

כבד את-אביך ואת-אמך לְמַעַן יָאָרְכוּן יְמֵיךָ עַל הָאָדָמָה אֲשֶׁר-ה' א-לֹהֶיךָ נָתַן לָךְ:

לא תרצח:

לא תנאף:

לא תגנב:

לא-תענה ברעך עד שקר:

לא תחמד בית רעך לא-תחמד אשת רעך ועבדו ואמתו ושורו וחמורו וכל אשר לרעך:

God spoke all these words saying:

**I am the Lord,**

your God, Who took you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage.

**Do not have other gods.** Therefore, don't make graven images like anything in heaven, earth, or the water beneath the earth. Don't bow before them or worship them, for I, the Lord, your God, am a jealous God, Who visits the iniquity of the fathers upon the sons, upon the third and the fourth generation of those who hate Me. I do kindness to thousands of generations, to those who love Me and keep My commandments.

**You shall not take the name of the Lord, your God, in vain,** for the Lord will not hold blameless anyone who takes His name in vain.

**Remember Shabbat** and sanctify it. Six days shall you work, but the seventh day is a Sabbath to the Lord, your God; don't do any labor, neither you, your son, your daughter, your servants, your beast, nor your stranger in your cities. In six days, the Lord made heaven, earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and He rested on the seventh day. Therefore, the Lord blessed the Sabbath day and sanctified it.

**Honor your father and your mother,** so you will live long on the land that God is giving you.

**Don't murder.**

**Don't commit adultery.**

**Don't steal.**

**Don't bear false witness** against your fellow.

**Don't covet** your fellow's house; don't covet your fellow's wife, nor his servant, maidservant, ox, donkey, or whatever that is your fellows.

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וּבְרָא-הָעַם רֹאִים אֶת-הַקּוֹלֹת וְאֶת-  
הַלְפִידִם וְאֵת קוֹל הַשֹּׁפָר וְאֶת-הַהֶר  
עֹשֵׂן וַיֵּרָא הָעַם וַיִּנְעוּ וַיַּעֲמֵדוּ מֵרֶחֶק: וַיֹּאמְרוּ  
אֶל-מֹשֶׁה דַּבֵּר-אַתָּה עִמָּנוּ וְנִשְׁמָעָה וְאַל-  
יְדַבֵּר עִמָּנוּ אֱלֹהִים פֶּן-נָמוּת: וַיֹּאמֶר מֹשֶׁה  
אֶל-הָעַם אֶל-תִּירְאוּ כִּי לִבְעֹבֹר נִסּוּת  
אַתֶּם כִּי בָא-הָאֱלֹהִים וּבְעֹבֹר תִּהְיֶה יְרֵאתוֹ  
עַל-פְּנֵיכֶם לְבַלְתִּי תַחֲמָאוּ: וַיַּעֲמֵד הָעַם  
מֵרֶחֶק וּמֹשֶׁה נִגַּשׁ אֶל-הָעֶרְפֶּל אֲשֶׁר-שָׂם  
הָאֱלֹהִים: וַיֹּאמֶר ה' אֶל-מֹשֶׁה כֹּה תֹאמַר  
אֶל-בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל אַתֶּם רֹאִיתֶם כִּי מִן-הַשָּׁמַיִם  
דִּבַּרְתִּי עִמָּכֶם: לֹא תַעֲשׂוּן אֹתִי אֱלֹהִי כֶסֶף  
וְאֱלֹהִי זָהָב לֹא תַעֲשׂוּן לָכֶם: מִזְבֵּחַ אֲדָמָה  
תַעֲשֶׂה-לִּי וְזָבַחְתָּ עָלָיו אֶת-עֹלֹתֶיךָ וְאֶת-  
שְׁלָמֶיךָ אֶת-צֹאֲנֶךָ וְאֶת-בְּקָרְךָ בְּכֹל-  
הַמָּקוֹם אֲשֶׁר אוֹכִיר אֶת-שְׁמוֹ אָבוֹא אֵלֶיךָ  
וּבְרַכְתִּיךָ: וְאִם-מִזְבֵּחַ אֲבָנִים תַעֲשֶׂה-לִּי  
לֹא-תִבְנֶנּוּ אֹתוֹן גִּזִּית כִּי חֲרָבָה תִּנְפֹת עָלֶיהָ  
וְתַחֲלָלָהּ: וְלֹא-תַעֲלֶה בָּמַעֲלֹת עַל-מִזְבְּחִי  
אֲשֶׁר לֹא-תִגָּלֶה עֲרוֹתָה עָלָיו:

**And the** people saw thunder and lighting, the shofar's sound, and the smoking mountain. They trembled and stood from afar. They said to Moses, "You talk with us, and we will hear, but let God not speak with us lest we die." But Moses said to the people, "Fear not, God has come to exalt you, and that His awe be upon your faces so you won't sin." So the people remained far off, but Moses came near the opaque darkness, where God was. The Lord said to Moses, "Tell the children of Israel that you have seen that I have spoken with you from the heavens. Don't make any gods of silver or gold. Make an altar of earth for Me, and slaughter beside it your burnt offerings and your peace offerings, your sheep and your cattle. Wherever I allow My name to be mentioned, I will come and bless you. And when you make for Me an altar made of stones, don't use cut stones, lest you wield your sword upon it and desecrate it. And you shall not ascend with steps upon My altar so that your nakedness shall not be exposed upon it."

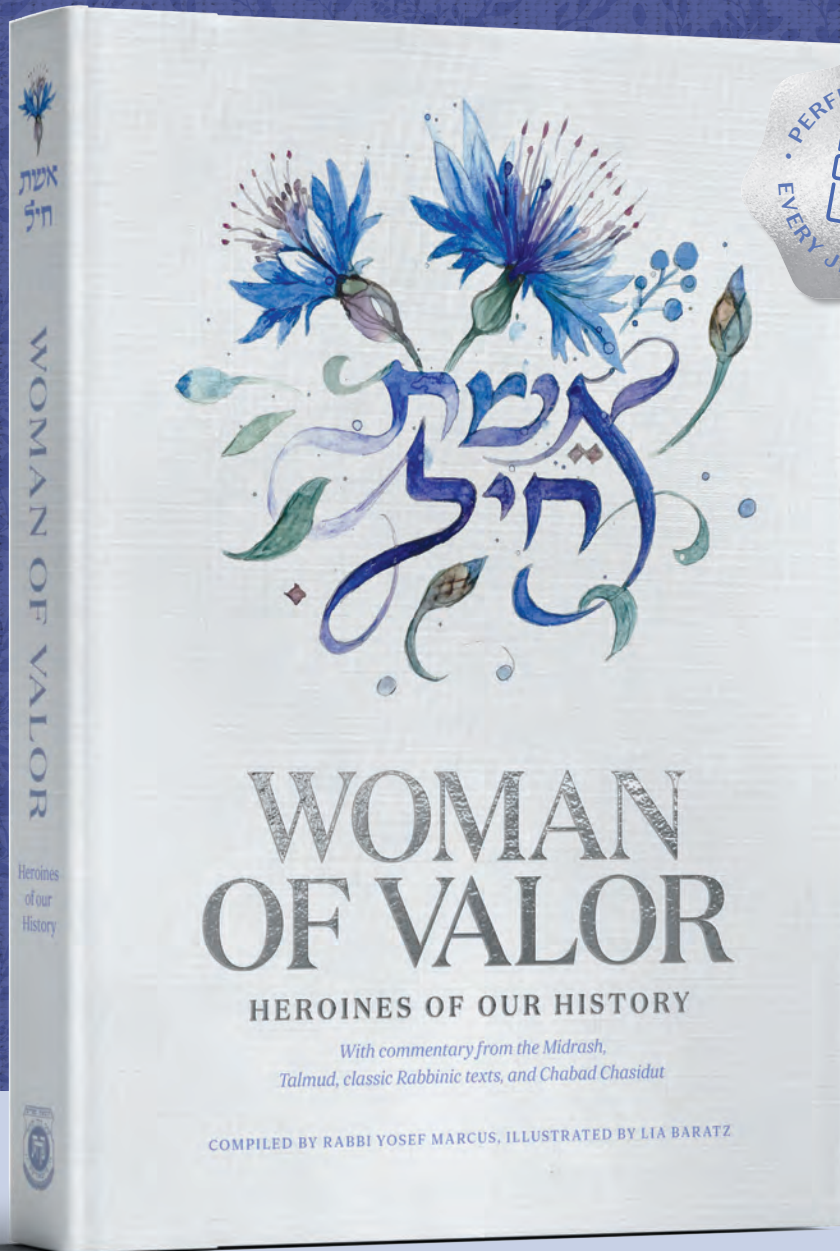
### say "I do"

Shavuot also means "oaths," for on this day, G-d swore eternal devotion to us, and we, in turn, pledged everlasting loyalty to Him. Our sages have compared it to a wedding between the Creator and the Jewish people. So be sure to say "I do" when you hear the Ten Commandments.

וּבַיּוֹם הַבְּכוּרִים בְּהַקְרִיבְכֶם מִנְחָה חֲדָשָׁה  
לָהּ בַּשְּׁבַעַתִּיכֶם מִקְרֵא-קֹדֶשׁ יְהִיָּה  
לָכֶם בְּלִמְצֹאֶת עֲבֹדָה לֹא תַעֲשׂוּ:  
וְהַקְרִבְתֶּם עוֹלָה קְרִיחַ נִיחֹחַ לָהּ פְּרִים בְּנֵי-  
בָקָר שְׁנַיִם אִיל אֶחָד שְׁבַעַה כִּבְשִׁים בְּנֵי-  
שָׁנָה: וּמִנְחָתָם סֹלֶת בְּלוּלָה בַשֶּׁמֶן שְׁלִישֵׁה  
עֶשְׂרִינִים לְפָר הָאֶחָד שְׁנֵי עֶשְׂרִינִים לְאִיל  
הָאֶחָד: עֶשְׂרוֹן עֶשְׂרוֹן לְכֶבֶשׂ הָאֶחָד  
לְשִׁבְעַת הַכִּבְשִׁים: שְׁעִיר עִזִּים אֶחָד לְכַפֵּר  
עֲלֵיכֶם: מִלֶּכֶד עֹלֹת הַתָּמִיד וּמִנְחָתוֹ תַעֲשׂוּ  
תְּמִימִם יְהִיוּ-לָכֶם וְנִסְפִּיהֶם:

**On the day** of the first fruits, when you offer up a new meal offering to the Lord, on your festival of Shavuot; it shall be a holy convocation for you, and you shall not perform any work. Instead, you shall offer a burnt offering with a spirit of satisfaction to the Lord: two young bulls, one ram, and seven lambs in the first year. Their meal offerings [shall be] fine flour mixed with oil; three tenths for each bull and two tenths for the ram. One-tenth for each lamb, for all seven lambs. One young male goat to atone for you. Besides the regular burnt offering and its meal offering, they shall be unblemished with their wine offerings. ■

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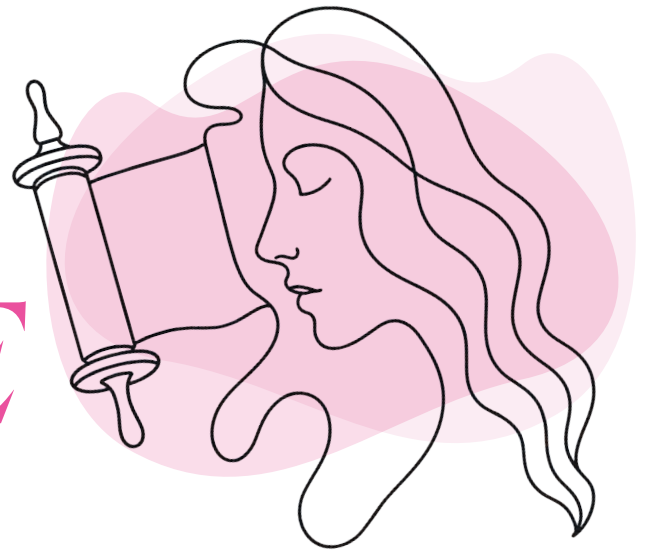
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# FEMININE MYSTIQUE

By Shira Gold



When G-d instructed Moses at Mount Sinai 3,300 years ago, He said: “Speak to the house of Jacob, and tell the sons of Israel” (Exodus 19:3). Our sages explain that “the house of Jacob” refers to the women, and “the sons of Israel” refers to the men. In other words, G-d instructed Moses to speak first to the women.

In Judaism, women have always been at the forefront of every significant moment in our history. In the Exodus from Egypt, for example, our sages declare that we were redeemed through the merit of the righteous women. Our Purim victory is thanks to Esther, and similarly, Yehudit played a key role in the Chanukah story.

Most importantly, as we look ahead, we see the feminine energy shining in Jeremiah’s prophecy, which foretold that in the days of Moshiach, “a woman shall rise above a man.”

In the 1990s, the Rebbe welcomed the rise of feminism and saw the advancement of women’s rights as fulfilling this prophecy.

But why is the feminine so central to Judaism and the Torah?

The Chasidic masters explain that masculine and feminine energies represent body and soul, the two essential divine forces in reality. Masculine energy represents vision, while feminine energy brings abstract potential into reality.

In Judaism, the body is the focus, not the soul. The Torah’s mission isn’t to escape to Heaven but to integrate and elevate the world. So, G-d tells Moses to speak to the women first, hinting that the Torah’s true divine purpose is

primarily realized in the material world. ●

>> Shira Gold is a staff writer at Chabad Magazine. She lives in Southern California with her husband and children.

**In Judaism, women have always been at the forefront of every significant moment in our history.**

## DATING TIPS FROM NETFLIX MATCHMAKER

**Shavuot is often described as the “marriage” between G-d and the Jewish people, so we reached out to Netflix’s Jewish Matchmaker, Aleeza Ben Shalom, for some expert dating tips. Here are her top three pieces of advice:**

1. Don’t rush to break up—give it another date to see if a deeper connection can develop.
2. Smile! Your face shows your true feelings, so let your date see that you’re happy to be there, even if it doesn’t lead to a perfect match.
3. Never stop looking. If you’re serious about finding love, keep searching until you find the one.



Shavuot 5785 / 2025

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# TORAH TIDBITS

*Enjoy these curated nuggets from the teachings of Chabad. For more on Torah study contact your local Chabad.*

Passover celebrates our birth as a nation, but Shavuot is when we discover why we were born.

At Sinai, we received the Torah, it wasn't just about escaping Pharaoh. It was about embracing a higher purpose and committing to it.

**“The two most important days in your life are the day you are born, and the day you find out why.”**

-MARK TWAIN

## ARE YOU ACTION ORIENTED?



The Jews famously declared, “We will do and we will listen,” showing a commitment to action before understanding. There's a big difference between hearing—like hearing thunder—and listening, as in listening to your doctor. By placing “doing” first, the Jews showed that their listening wasn't passive; it was an active listening. On Shavuot we celebrate not only the “Giving” of the Torah but also our active receiving of it. This radical dedication has become the Jewish trademark.

## SATISFACTION GUARANTEED



The Chasidic masters describe the Torah as a bridge that connects heaven and earth and the finite with the infinite. And this bridge is yours—it's your inheritance. You don't need to pay any tolls to cross it. Shavuot celebrates the grand opening of that bridge. It's the day we received direction and the tools to fulfill our mission. Shavuot also relates to the Hebrew word for satisfaction—because only living your purpose will keep you truly satisfied.

## SAY CHEESE!



The custom of eating dairy foods on Shavuot carries deep symbolic significance rooted in Kabbalistic teachings. One explanation is linked to the realization of the Jewish people upon receiving the Torah that their utensils were not

kosher, leading them to consume dairy products instead. Additionally, Kabbalistic symbolism associates Pesach with the blood of birth, while Shavuot is connected to the Torah, likened to milk. This reflects the transformation and progression from birth to maturation, culminating in the reception of the nourishing words of Torah on Shavuot.

## THE ULTIMATE YACHT




When chaos surrounds you, like Noah, you can find refuge in the “ark.” Interestingly, the Hebrew word for “ark” is the same as for “word,” referring to G-d's word, or the Torah. Just as Noah found safety in the ark, we can seek shelter from everyday turmoil by immersing ourselves in the divinity of the Torah.


## STAY THIRSTY



Years ago, during Roman rule, Rabbi Akiva defied the ban on Torah study, illustrating with a parable about a fox who tried to convince fish to escape the fishermen by leaving the water. The fish refused to leave the water, explaining that they may or may not escape the fishermen's nets but without water they would surely perish. Similarly, Rabbi Akiva argued that studying Torah was essential for life, like water for a fish. •

## EVE OF SHAVUOT - SUNDAY, JUNE 1


 **Decorate:** Some have the custom to decorate their homes (and synagogues) with flowers and sweet-smelling plants in advance of Shavuot. The Midrash tells us that the small mountain sprouted beautiful flowers to provide the perfect setting for the giving of the Torah. The branches also remind us that Shavuot is the time when judgment is rendered regarding the fruits of the field.


 **Light:** Women and girls light holiday candles to usher in the holiday on both the first and second evenings of the holidays.


On the eve of Shavuot (18 minutes before sunset) light candles and recite these blessings:


*Ba-rooch Ah-tah Ah-doh-nai Eh-lo-hei-nu Meh-lech ha-oh-lam ah-sheer kee-deh-sha-nu beh-mitz-voh-tav veh-tzee-vanu leh-had-lik neir shel yom tov.*


*Ba-rooch Ah-tah Ah-doh-nai Eh-lo-hei-nu Meh-lech ha-oh-lam sheh-heh-cheh-yah-nu veh-kee-yeh-mah-nu ve-hee-gee-ah-nu liz-man ha-zeh.*

 **Rest:** As on other holidays, special meals are eaten, and no “work” may be performed.


 **Pray:** The evening service includes the *Amidah* for festivals. Recite the sections for Shavuot. The *Amidah* for festivals is found in Chabad’s Kehot Siddur on page 331.

 **Kiddush:** We hold a cup of wine in our right palm and we recite the Kiddush for Shavuot found on page 329 in Chabad’s Kehot Siddur.


 **Eat:** Enjoy your festive meal.


 **The All Nighter:** It is customary to stay up all night learning Torah on the first night of Shavuot.


## FIRST DAY OF SHAVUOT - MONDAY, JUNE 2


 **Pray:** The Shavuot service includes the *Amidah* for festivals. Recite the sections for Shavuot. The *Amidah* for festivals is found in Chabad’s Kehot Siddur on page 331.

The *Musaf* prayer for Shavuot is found in Chabad’s Kehot siddur on page 340. Insert sections for Shavuot.

 **Read:** The 10 Commandments. During the morning service all men, women and children should hear the reading of the 10 Commandments. The Torah reading for the first day of Shavuot is found in Chabad’s Kehot Siddur on page 520-522.

 **Kiddush:** The Shavuot lunch begins with a cup of wine as we recite the Kiddush found in Chabad’s Kehot Siddur on page 357.

 **Eat:** It is customary to eat dairy foods on Shavuot. Menus range from traditional cheese blintzes to quiches, casseroles and more. If you are allergic or lactose-free, kindly leave this custom for others to enjoy on your behalf.


 **Light:** Many have the custom to light a *yahrzeit* candle in honor of a loved one. The memorial prayer of *Yizkor* will be said on the 2nd day of Shavuot. Be sure to light the *Yahrzeit* candle from a pre-existing flame before sunset.


 **Light:** After nightfall women and girls light candles from a pre-existing flame and recite these blessings:


*Ba-rooch Ah-tah Ah-doh-nai Eh-lo-hei-nu Meh-lech ha-oh-lam ah-sheer kee-deh-*

*sha-nu beh-mitz-voh-tav veh-tzee-vanu leh-had-lik neir shel shabbos v’shel yom tov.*


*Ba-rooch Ah-tah Ah-doh-nai Eh-lo-hei-nu Meh-lech ha-oh-lam sheh-heh-cheh-yah-nu veh-kee-yeh-mah-nu ve-hee-gee-ah-nu liz-man ha-zeh.*

 **Pray:** The evening service includes the *Amidah* for festivals. Recite the sections for Shavuot (and insert the sections for Shabbat). The *Amidah* for festivals is found in Chabad’s Kehot Siddur on page 331.


 **Kiddush:** We hold a cup of wine in our right palm and we recite the Kiddush for Shavuot found on page 329 in Chabad’s Kehot Siddur.


 **Eat:** Enjoy your festive meal.

## SECOND DAY OF SHAVUOT - TUESDAY, JUNE 3


 **Pray:** The Shavuot service includes the *Amidah* for festivals. Recite the sections for Shavuot. The *Amidah* for festivals is found in Chabad’s Kehot Siddur on page 331.


The *Musaf* prayer for Shavuot is found in Chabad’s Kehot Siddur on page 340. Insert sections for Shavuot.

 **Yizkor:** On the second day of Shavuot, the *Yizkor* memorial service is recited. *Yizkor* is found in Chabad’s Kehot Siddur on page 337.

 **Read:** Some communities read the Book of Ruth publicly, as King David—whose passing occurred on this day—was a descendant of Ruth the Moabite.

 **Kiddush:** Recite the Kiddush for Shavuot on page 357 in Chabad’s Kehot Siddur.

 **Eat:** Enjoy your festive meal.

 **Havdalah:** At nightfall recite the Havdalah over a cup of wine, spices and Havdalah candle. The blessings are found in page 297 in Chabad’s Kehot Siddur.

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