

Shavuot (Sivan 6)



The holiday of Shavuot is the second of three major festivals, the other two being Passover and Sukkot. The word Shavuot means 'weeks' and refers to the timing of this festival which is held exactly 7 weeks after Passover. This holiday is known as the Festival of the Giving of the Torah as it celebrates the giving of the Ten Commandments at Mount Sinai. Agriculturally, this holiday is also known as the Festival of the First Fruits as it also celebrates the time when the first fruits were harvested and brought to the Temple in Jerusalem.

Counting the days between Passover and Shavuot, the counting of the Omer, reminds us of the important connection between Passover and Shavuot. Passover freed us physically from bondage but the giving of the Torah redeemed us spiritually.

It is customary to stay up the entire first night of Shavuot and study Torah. It is also customary to read the Book of Ruth and to eat a dairy meal at least once during Shavuot.

At Shalom Village, residents light candles at dinner on the first and second nights of the holiday. During the day residents have discussions of the Book of Ruth and then enjoy cheesecake together. On the second day of Shavuot there is a Yizkor Service (Service of Remembrance) at 3:45 p.m. in the chapel.