

Chabad of Venice and North Port

Shalom Times

SPECIAL EDITION: SHAVUOT 5781

A LITTLE NOSH FOR THE SOUL

FULL
SHAVUOT
GUIDE
INSIDE!

SOLVING THE
WORLD'S PROBLEMS

THE TORAH'S
POWER & PURPOSE

WHAT THE TORAH
SAYS ABOUT YOU



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**Rav Levi Yiztchak ben
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soulwise

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{SHALOM!}

Dear Friend,

Please enjoy this complimentary copy
 of our Chabad Magazine. I hope you find
 it both inspiring and insightful.

As we observe "social distancing" it's
 understood that we may be physically
 apart, yet we feel a stronger sense of
 spiritual connectedness with each other.
 This Jewish connection is firmly rooted in
 our Torah and our nation's historic unity
 traces all the way back to the original
 Shavuot.

Over 3300 years ago, following the
 first Passover — the festival of our liberation — came Shavuot — the festival of the
 receiving of our Torah. In this issue you'll read the deeper meanings hidden inside
 the 10 Commandments and a unique Chassidic approach to Shavuot.

A running theme throughout this issue is humility, since the backdrop for
 Shavuot and the giving of the Torah is humility as it's signaled by a small mountain
 in the desert. The idea, of course, is that humility is the major requirement to be a
 student of the Torah, but we also can't forget that we are an unmovable mountain.
 Small, humble, yet strong and firm in our commitment to observe its laws no matter
 the world's condition or climate.

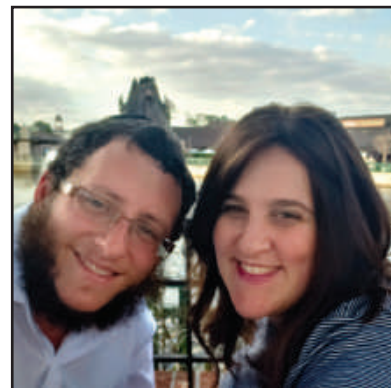
The Chassidic masters remind us that humility is not worthlessness. True
 humility is a thankfulness and acknowledgment of the truth, that G-d is the power
 behind our success. Humility means that we do tremendous things, yet we are honest
 enough to say that it's really G-d who has gifted us the ability to do incredible things.

As we prepare ourselves for Shavuot let's remember that we are each a small
 mountain: humble yes, but also strong and proud like a mountain should be.

Wishing you a happy and healthy Shavuot!

Rabbi Sholom & Chaya Rivka Schmerling

Directors, Chabad of Venice and North Port



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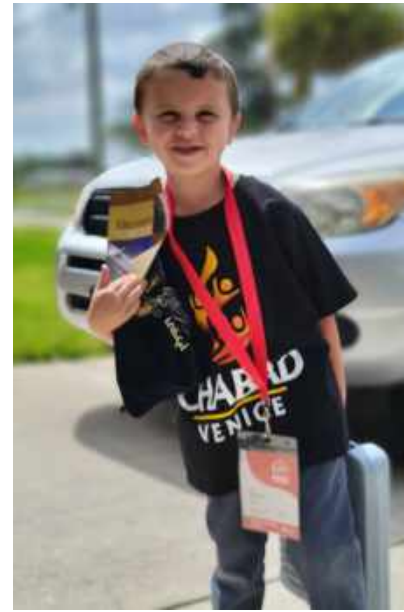


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Chabad in Pictures



Bagels, Lox & Shmooze

A PERFECT PAIRING

What better to combine with bagels, lox and cream cheese than an opportunity to connect with old friends, meet new ones and support Chabad. In other words...."Shmooze".

On Tuesday, April 20 saw the successful launch of a new Chabad event. "BAGELS, LOX & SHMOOZE" that will take place every Tuesday at noon at Chabad.

Skillfully executed by Rabbi Sholom, Chaya Rivka and the tireless efforts of Sasha and Maria, 33 people from 31 states gathered to eat, shmooze and connect. The common thread was the exceptional gift of living in paradise, finding their way to Chabad and wanting to share in the "Yiddishkite" that events like these offer.

After reopening last May, Chabad has not slowed in finding ways to ensure our community stayed connected and engaged. So many of us turned to Chabad for support, friendship and kosher meals during the isolating times of the last year. Chabad was there in so many ways.

And as our world is now reopening we expect to see the return of familiar faces and hopefully new ones for Bagels, Lox & Shmooze, Lag Baomer, Shavuot and of course the high holidays.

Since we love our bagels, we thought it was time to explore the history of bagels in America, and why they are so Jewish. No one knows for sure who created the winning trifecta of a bagel, cream cheese, and lox, but we know the bagel arrived in the United States with Jewish immigrants from Poland in the late 19th century.

Long before it was schmearred with cream cheese and topped with lox, capers, tomatoes, and thinly sliced red onions, it was sold on the streets of New York City's Lower East Side stacked up on poles or hung from strings — that's why they have a hole — for people to buy and enjoy on the street. It was simple, comforting peasant food.

The Yiddish word for bagel is actually beigel, and it is also theorized that the bagel is a descendent of the German pretzel, which is another yeasted dough bread that is boiled then baked. The boiling and baking process actually means that bagels stay fresher longer, which for poor Jews, was really important.

We can thank the invention of cream cheese in the 1930s, Lender's Bagels, and 1950s housewives for marrying the bagel with cream cheese and lox, which was first suggested to serve as an appetizer at cocktail parties in Family Circle Magazine.

So, now that you know the history of our favorite "nosh", please join us next Tuesday and every Tuesday at noon for delicious Jewish offerings and great conversation. Please RSVP to ensure there is enough nosh for all. www.chabadofvenice.com/shmooze

written by Linda Wolfe

B"H

THE SHMOOZE

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We are pleased to announce that Chabad of Venice has acquired its very own Cemetery "Jerusalem Gardens" located at Venice Memorial Gardens, 1950 Center Rd.

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THE TEN COMMANDMENTS OF PARENTING

BY RABBI YOSEF B. MARCUS

1. Say to your child: I am your parent who took you out of the womb.

You are more than your child's pal. Teach your children the old fashioned concept of honoring parents. You may not feel like you deserve or need the respect. But it's not about you. It's about the mitzvah, and the sensitivity that is instilled in a child through this mitzvah.

2. You shall have no other parents before Me.

Be your child's parent. Resist the urge to create other parents for them (i.e., TV, your iPhone).

3. Say to your child: Do not say my name in vain.

Children should refer to their parents as Mommy and Daddy, not by their first names.

4. Remember the Sabbath day to consecrate it to spending time with your kids.

One of the greatest gifts of Shabbat observance today is down-time from the screens. If you haven't yet tried the "Shabbat detox," go for it. Phones stay off from candle-lighting on Friday until Saturday night.

5. Honor your father and mother and your children will honor you.

Children learn by example. The way you treat parents is the way your children will treat you.

6. Do not crush your child.

The Talmud compares shaming a person to emotional and psy-

chological murder. Discipline your child in a way that preserves their self esteem and dignity. Build 'em up.

7. Do not cheat on your children.

Stay focused so that you can give children the attention they deserve and need. As busy as things are, make it a priority to spend quality time with each child individually.

8. Do not steal from your children.

Sometimes as parents, we have our vision for what we want our children to be. Yet each child has his or her particular nature and talents. Identify them and make it your goal to promote your child's gifts and unique potential.

9. Do not bear false witness in front of your children (or any other time.)

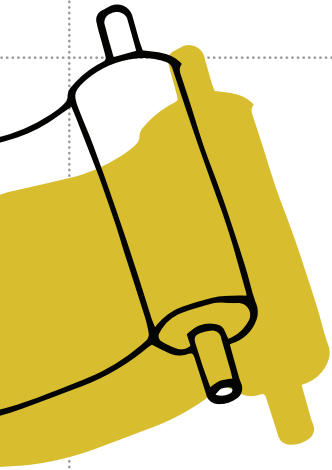
Teach by example. If your children hear you uttering small untruths here and there, or slandering others, they will learn the same habits and also respect you less.

10. Do not be jealous of other people's children.

Love your children for who they are. G-d entrusted you the children you have, since you are best suited to be G-d's partner in raising them.

**G-D BLESS YOU AND YOUR CHILDREN WITH GOOD HEALTH
AND ENDLESS NACHAS!**

Rabbi Yossi Marcus is the author of commentaries on Pirkei Avot, Psalms, the Haggadah, and the Book of Esther. He lives his wife and children in S. Mateo, CA, where he directs Chabad NP.



What is the Torah?

THE TORAH: ITS POWER AND PURPOSE

You can pick up any book, but only one book has the power to pick you up.

READ THIS FIRST

THE TORAH IS CALLED THE ORCHARD BECAUSE IT OPERATES IN MANY DIFFERENT LEVELS AND DIMENSIONS.

THE FOUR PRIMARY LEVELS ARE:

1 CODE OF JEWISH LAW	2 MIDRASH	3 TALMUD	4 KABBALAH
Peshat basic textual meaning	Drush the lesson or inferred meaning	Remez the hinted meaning	Sod the secret meaning

The first letters of these four stages spell the Hebrew word *Pardes* (Orchard). Obviously, behind the four-step process is the Creator Himself. The fifth level of pure Divinity that infuses them all.

The Torah's power and purpose is in its ability to uplift humanity and the world. The process of making this world a better place has been the mandate of the Jewish people ever since they first gathered in the Sinai desert. The tool for personal and global transformation is called the Torah. How does this work?

On a practical level the Torah is a moral code that if everyone adheres to it, we will have a very peaceful planet. But it is more than that. The Torah itself is the tool to a perfect world because of its inherent Divinity. The wisdom of G-d and G-d Himself are one and the same, and just as the Creator is not limited to human perceptions or bound by creation, the Divine Torah provides us with the power to actually change the world.

In this view, the Torah isn't just a book of laws on how to behave in the created world, it's the other way around, the laws of nature were created to behave a specific way to facilitate the Torah's true power and purpose.





ABOUT YOU

THE TORAH HAS FIVE NAMES FOR YOUR SOUL, INDICATING THE SAME IDEA.

1 NEFESH (Soul) animates action (final product)	2 RUACH (Spirit) animates emotion (development)	3 NESHAMA (Soul) animates intellect (incubation)
4 CHAYA (Life-force) animates the spiritual (vision)	5 YECHIDA (United, Oneness) essence of the soul is the Creator Himself that infuses them all.	

THE CREATIVE PROCESS

The 1926 book titled *The Art of Thought*, argues that all products come by way of a four-step creative process. 1) The vision, 2) incubation, 3) development, and 4) verification or final product. This four-step process has been part of the Jewish tradition for centuries. The Kabbalists spoke of creation as a four-world process.

 1 ATZILUT (Emanation/ vision)	 2 BRIAH (Creation/ Incubation)	 3 YETZIRA (Formation Development)	 4 ASIYA (Created World/ Final Product)
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Obviously, behind the four-step creative process is the Creator Himself who infuses them all.

Our editors will walk you through this "Orchard" using the Modeh Ani prayer as an example. Wait for it. Watch what happens once you've reached the essence of the Torah. As you walk back, tracing your initial steps, you will start seeing the orchard, and your life, with a whole new lens.



START HERE ...

By Rabbi Shmuel Marcus

**WHETHER YOU'RE A
STRUGGLING ENTREPRENEUR,
RETIRED DOCTOR, OR STILL
A LITTLE GIRL IN PIGTAILS,
WE ALL SHARE A COMMON
STARTING POINT, OUR SOUL.**

**AHH, YES, THE JOYOUS FACT
THAT WE ARE ALIVE, BEYOND
OUR TITLES AND IMPRESSIVE
RESUMES, OUR DIVINE SOUL IS
REALLY THE CORE AND ESSENCE
OF WHO WE ARE. THE MODEH ANI
PRAYER OFFERS THANKS FOR
THIS SOUL, AND IT GIVES US A
FRESH PERSPECTIVE ON WHAT WE
REALLY ARE THANKFUL ABOUT.**

The Jewish morning routine begins with the Modeh Ani prayer of thanks: *"I give thanks unto You, O living and eternal King, for having restored within me my soul, with mercy; great is Your trust."*

The reason why the sages insisted that the Modeh Ani be our daily starting point helps us discover essential ideas about ourselves, and our purpose on this earth. So, let's take a walk through the orchard of Torah and examine the Modeh Ani like never before.

In his book *Jokes and their Relation to the Unconscious*, Sigmund Freud has a joke about a matchmaker who is confronted by a newly married man. The angry husband shouts that "You told me her father was dead, and now I find out, he's actually a convicted felon living behind bars in state prison!" The matchmaker calmly replies, "You call that living?"


The first thing we become aware of each morning, is that we are awake and alive. We went to bed "dead-tired" the night before, and we somehow, we woke up refreshed, in both body and soul. So, we recite the Modeh Ani.

The Modeh Ani prayer isn't a prayer that thanks G-d for the fact that we are not

technically dead. When we thank G-d for being alive, for restoring "my soul" within me, it's a joyous prayer for a life full of freedom and purpose. Our appreciation and gratitude are specifically for the type of life force that we have been given. The sort of soul and vitality that can change the world arounds us. We offer thanks for restoring my pure Divine soul, that unruinable part of me that affords me the ability to transform myself and the world around me.

The Jewish daily morning routine of Modeh Ani helps us identify with the part of us that remains whole and connected always. This daily affirmation reminds us that no matter what challenges or impurities the day may bring, our Modeh Ani remains pure. You know it's going to be a great day when you can activate that inner core that's always connected to the Creator.

Discovering the power of our pure essence of our soul is really the best part of waking up. It's the starting point of everything we do throughout the day. This Yechida essence has many benefits, and it can infuse our spiritual life, work life, and our home life. And we are grateful for that.



**“I give thanks unto You, O living
and eternal King, for having
restored within me my soul, with
mercy; great is Your trust.”**

PESHAT

THE LAW

(Code of Jewish Law)

We say this prayer of thanks for being alive, and according to the Code of Jewish Law, we must recite it immediately upon awakening in the morning, even while we are still in bed. Jewish law does not allow one to say G-d's name before the ritual of washing one's hands. Therefore, the Modeh Ani prayer does not have G-d's name in it, thus allowing it to be said while still in bed.

REMEZ

THE HINT

(Midrash)

The prayer of thanks for restoring life hints to the ultimate restoration of life, when in the future G-d will revive the dead. We offer thanks for being alive today and for the future perfected world of tomorrow. The words “great is Your trust” alludes to the promise of our Prophets that the world will be perfected and restored to its true glory.

DRUSH

The Lesson

(Talmud)

The seemingly extra words of “great is your trust,” teach us that we should return objects even to people who still owe us money. Just as G-d gives us our lives back each morning no matter how we “spend it,” so too, we should be giving towards others no matter how others treat us.

SOD

The Hidden Meaning

(Kabbalah)

The prayer refers to G-d as a “King” that is “Living and Eternal,” this has a hidden secret message as to how G-d returns your soul. King refers to the attribute of Malchut (Royalty), and Living and Eternal refers to the quality of Yesod (Foundation), meaning that Malchut is operating together with Yesod.

YECHIDA

The Essence

(Chasidut)

The prayer of Modeh Ani comes from the essence of the soul, known as the yechida. The yechida part of us is constantly connected to G-d and remains pure Divinity even after entering this world. Unaffected by creation, no impurity in the world can contaminate our pure Divine essence. We may not be perfect people, and we may have faults, but our Modeh Ani prayer thanks G-d for that part of us that always remains perfect and whole.

*Adapted from On the
Essence of Chasidus, a
discourse by the Lubavitcher
Rebbe, available at
www.kehhot.com*

מוֹדֶה אֲנִי לְפָנֶיךָ מֶלֶךְ חַי וְקַיִם, שֶׁחֲזַרְתָּ בִּי נִשְׁמָתִי בְּחִמְלָה. רַבָּה אֲמוּנָתְךָ

SEE HOW THE “ESSENCE” OF TORAH INFUSES AND ENHANCES ALL FOUR DIMENSIONS OF TORAH

THE LAW

(Infused)



The yechida essence is that part of us that remains pure always, the part of us that's unruinable. This pure soul essence relates directly to the essence of G-d, totally bypassing the need for any Divine

names. The yechida part of us remains always connected, even before the ritual washing of the hands. Therefore, we say the Modeh Ani prayer without G-d's Name and while we are still in bed.

THE HINT

(Infused)



According to our tradition, the world is constantly being brought into existence by the Creator. This unique ability to create something from nothing comes directly from the essence of the Creator. Our soul essence senses that Divine ability each morning as it

witnesses the Creator's power to renew creation daily. The revival of the dead doesn't seem difficult for a G-d who renews creation every moment. This prayer can now hint towards a much more powerful “resurrection” that is constantly happening.

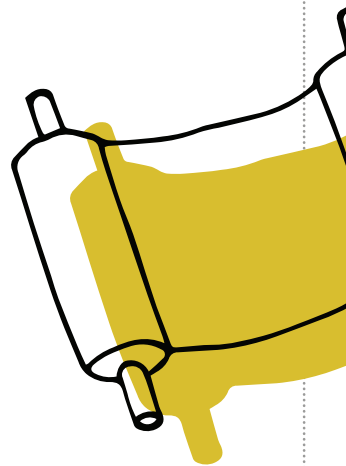
THE LESSON

(Infused)



The lesson of returning an object even to someone who owes you money shows us a side of the Torah beyond human rational. You could reasonably say that if someone owes you money and you are now in possession of his money, you will have a legal claim to it. Yet, the Torah says to return it. The truth is, the essence of all Torah laws, the absolute core of every law, is a pure Divine will. This Divine Will is mostly buried beneath

the reasons and intellect of the Torah. However, once in a while, the Torah let's us see a law for what it is. So, from the yechida perspective, the lesson here goes beyond being generous to those who still owe you money. It teaches us a lesson about the Torah itself. The idea is that just like your essence goes beyond the thoughts of your mind, so too the Torah's essence goes beyond its rational appearance.



THE HIDDEN MEANING

(Infused)



The process of returning souls comes from Malchut as it works together with Yesod. The soul's ability to transform the body and the world around it comes from its connection to the Creator. You can't pull yourself out of a pit, and you can't be your therapist. You'll need an outsider. Malchut, the lowest of the Divine creative powers, interacts with creation and is slightly affected by it. Yesod, however, remains a part of the Creator even within the body. Now, it all makes sense. The piece of us that is pure and untouchable by creation does come from the level of Royalty (“Malchut as it works with Yesod.”). Still, because Royalty is working with Yesod, it retains the latter's unfiltered spark of Divinity, allowing us the G-dlike ability to transform our world.

THE DAILY STARTING POINT

Thank You for restoring within me the essence of my soul, that part of me that always remains pure. Thank You for the ability to look beyond the physical world and see its true spiritual life and beauty. Thank you for the understanding that my Divine connection is beyond both heaven and earth and that it uniquely empowers me to transform the world around me.

Rabbi Shmuel Marcus is the editor of the Chabad Magazine, he lives in Los Alamitos California with his wife and children.

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SHAVUOT GUIDE

The holiday of Shavuot is a two-day holiday, beginning at sundown May 16th through nightfall on May 18th 2021. (Sundown on the 5th of Sivan through nightfall of the 7th of Sivan).

In Israel it is a one-day holiday, ending at nightfall of the 6th of Sivan.

What does Shavuot Celebrate?

The entire civilized world had been talking about the miraculous plagues that Egypt had suffered at the hands of Moses. The Hebrews were headed into the desert for an important festival with their G-d; this was the reason Moses had given Pharaoh as to why they couldn't stick around any longer. Destiny was calling.

While the smell of roasted Passover lamb and crisp unleavened matzah filled the camp, G-d requested that the Jews start counting the days (seven complete weeks) until the "The festival with their G-d" would happen at Mount Sinai.

Over 3300 years later, this "Counting of the Omer" is still practiced today. The daily counting was used as a form of preparation and spiritual countdown to the moment they would receive the Torah at Mount Sinai and discover the purpose of creation and why they were ultimately freed from Egypt. This festival with their G-d is called Shavuot.

Shavuot commemorate the revelation at Sinai and the giving of the Torah. The word *Shavuot* (or Shavuot) simply means "weeks." It celebrates the completion of the seven-week omer-counting period between Passover and Shavuot.

Although every major Jewish holiday has a start date mentioned in the Torah, Shavuot does not. Shavuot's date on the calendar is only referred to as seven weeks after Passover.

Historical Significance:


The Torah was given by G-d to the Jewish people on Mount Sinai on Shavuot. Every year on the holiday of Shavuot we renew our acceptance of G-d's gift, and G-d "re-gives" the Torah. It's your inheritance, so claim it.


The giving of the Torah was a far-reaching spiritual event—one that touched the essence of the Jewish soul for all times. 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 10 Commandments.

In ancient times, two wheat loaves would be offered in the Holy Temple on Shavuot.

It was also at this time that people would begin to bring *bikkurim*, their first and choicest fruits, to the Temple in Jerusalem.

EVE OF SHAVUOT - SUNDAY, MAY 16


 **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 Thursday evening (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, MAY 17


 **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:** 18 minutes before sunset women and girls 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.

 **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.


SECOND DAY OF SHAVUOT - TUESDAY, MAY 18


 **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:** We hold a cup of wine in our right palm and we recite the Kiddush for Shavuot found on page 357 in Chabad’s Kehot Siddur.

 **Eat:** Enjoy your festive meal.

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

 **Read:** Now that we experienced Shavuot, we rededicate ourselves to the study of Torah. Check out sites like Chabad.org and TorahCafe.com.

WHEN THE WINE TAKES THE CAKE

LINEAGE MOMENTUS
ESTATE GROWN SPARKLING WHITE
CLARKSBURG, CALIFORNIA



Flourless Chocolate Cake by Chef Gabe Garcia and Tierra Sur | Scan QR for the recipe





THE WEDDING DAY

By Tzvi Freedman
Photography by Zalmy Berkowitz

KING SOLOMON REFERS TO THE HOLIDAY OF SHAVUOT AS A WEDDING BETWEEN THE AL-MIGHTY GROOM AND HIS ETERNAL PEOPLE.

The Exodus was a romance, Mount Sinai was a marriage—a marriage of the Children of Israel and the G-d who rescued them from Egypt, of a created being and its Creator, of earth and heaven, body and soul, being and not-being.

Marriage is a story in three parts, each part an eternal moment. First, two must fall in love.

Not a rational love—no, that won't do. They must be nuts for

one another. Obsessed. They must feel they cannot live without one another, as though their very existence depends on their closeness to one another. They must feel that they are truly one, even as they are apart. But they are not yet one.

There must be a covenant. A covenant that excludes all others, that says “only you and I exist in this space.” He says to her, “You are sanctified to me”—you are separate from all others, distinct and unique.

That covenant is an intertwining of souls, bound by love, and not easily untied, because it is meant to last forever. But still they are not yet one.

The love is not enough, for each feels a different love. The covenant is not enough, because they remain two beings. They must rise and enter a space that can hold the two of them as one, a space in which there is no other, because there is no otherness, there is only One.

And that is the chuppah. Here they are one.

From now on, every moment of the rest of their lives together, they will continue to make two into one, in a constant union of love, covenant and embrace.

All of You

The chuppah of the Jewish people was Mount Sinai. The chuppah for each one of us is a mitzvah. Any mitzvah. Because every mitzvah of the Torah carries you into a space beyond all things, a space where there is no otherness, only the One.

Every mitzvah is an embrace, a kiss, and a union of spirits.

An embrace, because as an embrace grasps you from all sides, so the mitzvahs of Torah embrace every facet of your being. Not your heart alone, not your mind alone, but your every limb, your every sinew, and all the kishkes within you.

Give a few dollars to a homeless veteran so he can spend the night in warm and decent quarters. Your hand gave the dollars. Your entire being worked hard to earn it. You could have bought something else for yourself with that money. So now, all of you is tied up in this mitzvah. Divine light embraces your entire being.

The same occurs when you prepare a royal Shabbat meal. Carpool your kids to a Jewish school. Wrap yourself in a tallit—all of you. Bind the leather straps of tefillin on your arm and head. Munch your matzah on Passover. Feel the hunger of Yom Kippur. Immerse in the joy of learning Torah.

Each is a caress and a hug, each grasping another part of you, until every limb of your body and every facet of your life is held tightly in His embrace, pulling you close in oneness from head to toe, enveloping all your being.

Divine Kisses

“Let him kiss me with the kisses of his mouth, for his love is better than wine.” So begins King Solomon’s Song of Songs, a parable of the love between us and our G-d.

What is a kiss? It is when love can no longer be expressed in words of love—because there are no words for such love. It is when lips no longer speak as one speaks to another—because there is no other. And so two lips become one.

“When you read and speak words of Torah,” the Midrash tells,

“G-d reads and speaks every word along with you.” So that every word of Torah is a kiss. Our lips and His in union.

They are His words, the words He speaks to Himself, the words that speak of what he desires from heaven and earth, of His deepest desire.

They are the words of halacha—of what we are meant to do, of how His desire is to be expressed in this world.

Yet they are our words, the words given to us, in our mouths to expand, explain and apply. And they remain His words. Because in them we and Him are one in soul and spirit, as two minds

think as one, experience as one, desire as one, in that intimate union of a kiss. And there is a union of souls.

In the discovery of the wisdom of His Torah as your mind becomes absorbed in a divine way of thinking, and in the heartfelt focus of that prayer, in the tears that drip down your cheek as you return to Him, in the joy of a mitzvah that bursts out in spontaneous song, there your soul calls to the Soul of All Life, and the two are drawn together to merge as one in perfect union.

We are His

That is why a Jew doesn’t just do a mitzvah. A Jew says, “Blessed are You, G-d, our G-d, Majesty of the Universe, who has sanctified us with His mitzvot...”

Just as a man says to his beloved beneath the chuppah, “Behold, you are sanctified to me with this ring...”

Rabbi Schneur Zalman walked out from his study and heard his wife teaching other women. He heard two words. She said, “Mine says...”—referring to him, her husband, who became hers through marriage.

He leaned against the doorpost in a deep trance, uttering, “With one mitzvah, I became hers. With how many mitzvahs, have I become His!”

At Mount Sinai, we became His, and He became ours.

Tzvi Freedman is the award-winning author of Wisdom to Heal the Earth available at www.kehov.com. Freedman’s popular Daily Dose of Wisdom on Chabad.org is read daily by thousands around the globe.



HOW TO LEAD LIKE MOSES

By Levy Lieberman

The Moses Low-Down

According to traditional Judaism, Moses was the most outstanding leader. He walked comfortably among kings of the flesh and conversed with the King of Kings with equal ease. Moses managed to fuse spiritual with mundane and to make the mundane spiritual. At the peak of his greatness, he was also the humblest of all men.

You may ask yourself, was Moses in denial? Was he genuinely unaware of his wealth of accomplishments and of the multitudes he inspired who looked to him for guidance? The answer is, of course, Moses knew. He was, after all, wisest of all.

How, then, was he able to maintain his historic humility?

The Moses Approach

Therein lies the secret to authentic, practical, and inspirational leadership. Like many who achieve success, Moses did know what his success meant. On the other hand, he was completely aware that he had performed impossible feats due to circumstances and Divine Providence that endowed him the gift of doing so.

The man who took the Jews out of Egypt and split the sea sincerely believed that had somebody else been similarly gifted, they would have outdone him. He looked at those around him and saw more driven, more selfless, and even more worthy people. He was Moses, the most extraordinary and humble leader to have ever lived.

The Modern Moses

Look around at those you lead every day. You may be luckier than they. Were you blessed with circumstances that, one way or another, propelled you to become a leader among your peers? That doesn't make you more worthy – it makes you more responsible.

Lead like Moses and reap the rewards beyond your workplace and career.

Lead like Moses and create leaders who, in turn, will do even greater things than you ever can. Become a part of tomorrow's disruptive innovators.

Acknowledge your qualities and accomplishments but like Moses, use humility to see true greatness in others.

Levi Lieberman is Co-Founder and CTO at LimestoneDigital.com a results driven digital product development firm.

Moses was a shepherd. Once, a kid ran away from the flock. Moses chased it until it came to a spring and began to drink. When Moses reached the kid, he cried: "Oh, I did not know that you were thirsty!" Moses cradled the runaway kid in his arms and carried it to the flock. Said the Almighty: "You are merciful in tending sheep-you will tend My flock."

Moses realized that the kid did not run away from the flock out of malice or wickedness—it was merely thirsty. When we alienate ourselves from our people, it's because we thirst for meaning in life, but the Jewish waters have eluded us. So we wander about in foreign domains, seeking to quench our thirst.

Moses understood this, and he became our leader. Only a shepherd who hastens not to judge the runaway kid, who is sensitive to the causes of its desertion, can mercifully lift it into his arms and bring it back home. (From the Rebbe)



The poster for Camp Gan Israel 2021 features a collage of photos showing children and staff smiling. The text "SUMMER 2021" is prominently displayed in large, colorful letters. Below it, "Camp Gan Israel" and "VENICE, FLORIDA" are written, followed by the dates "JUNE 28 - JULY 9". A list of activities includes "Warm & Caring Staff", "Exciting Trips", "Sports", "Ensementors", "Snacks & Lunches Included", "Swimming", "Art, Science & Baking", and "Specialty Clubs". The slogan "A Summer of Fun... A Lifetime of Memories!" is at the bottom, along with the schedule "MONDAY - FRIDAY 9:00 AM - 3:30 PM" and the website "www.chabadofvenice.com/camp". A red circular badge in the bottom right corner says "SCHOLARSHIPS AVAILABLE".



Cheesecake anyone?

By Shira Gold

I'm sure you don't need a biblical reference of your childhood Rabbi to convince you to try a piece of grandma's cheesecake. Yet, we asked our food editors to compile a few reasons why we eat dairy on Shavuot.

The Practical Reason: Dairy became the obvious go-to menu the moment the Jews heard the complicated laws of Kosher and how to slaughter beef ritually. To make things more complicated, since the Torah the original Shavuot was on Shabbat, it was prohibited to kill any animals on that day. Thus, immediately after receiving the Torah, our ancestors did not have kosher meat, and I am pretty sure someone said, "Hey, what about cheesecake?"

Sweet Cheese: "The sweetness [of Torah] drops from your lips; like honey and milk, it lies under your tongue." Song of Songs compares the sweetness of Torah to milk. We, therefore, eat a dairy meal on Shavuot, as we mark the day we received the Torah.

Let's do the numbers: The Hebrew word for milk is "chalav" (חלב). Hebrew letters are also numbers, and the Hebrew word for milk has the numerical value of forty. When we eat a dairy meal, it recalls that Moses spent forty days on the mountain to receive the Torah.

Storage Instructions: The Talmud sees a lesson in this dietary custom. Milk products keep best in earthenware and spoils quickly in silver or golden utensils, so too the Torah kept best in humble people. Human arrogance can spoil our thinking of Torah, and like milk needs to be stored correctly, your Torah study will stay fresh in a simple earthen container of humility.

Historical Milk: The Midrash tells a story about the day that Batya, the Pharaoh's daughter, pulled little Moses from the Nile. Batya and her staff were unable to feed the very picky Jewish baby. Fortunately, Miriam, the older sister of Moses, was nearby and suggested they use a Jewish wetnurse named Yocheved (the

mother of Moses). Sure enough, the Talmud says that day was Shavuot. The story of Moses's reunion with his parents is centered around milk, and our Shavuot dairy menu is our way of thanking G-d for this miracle.

Shira Gold is a staff writer at Chabad Magazine.

Festive Cheesecake Recipe

By Nitra Ladies Auxiliary / Photography and Styling by Sarah Husney

Cooking and Prep time: 1:10. Serves: 8. Contains: Dairy and gluten.

Crust Ingredients:

- 10 ounces lemon or marble cookies, crumbled
- 4 ounces butter, melted

Cheesecake Ingredients:

- 2 and 1/2 pounds farmer cheese
- 16 ounces whipped cream cheese
- 16 ounces sour cream
- 2 tablespoons vanilla sugar
- 1 and 1/4 cups sugar
- 4 tablespoons Cornstarch, dissolved in 1 and 1/2 cups milk
- 5 eggs

Prepare the crust

1. Combine cookie crumbs with melted butter.
2. Press into three nine-inch pie pans.

Prepare the Cheesecake

1. Preheat oven to 350 degrees Fahrenheit.
2. Mix cheeses and sour cream.
3. Add remaining ingredients.
4. Pour over crumbs. Bake for 55 mins. Leave cake in oven to cool

Courtesy of Kosher.com

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Shavuot Celebration



Monday May 17th, 5:30 PM

**HEAR THE TEN COMMANDMENTS
& ENJOY DINNER & ICE CREAM PARTY!**

Chabad Outdoor Tent

Sponsored by Abbie Davis in loving memory of her father



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MONDAY: 10 COMMANDMENTS & DAIRY BUFFET: 5:30 PM

TUESDAY: YIZKOR 12:00 PM

RSVP @ www.chabadofvenice.com