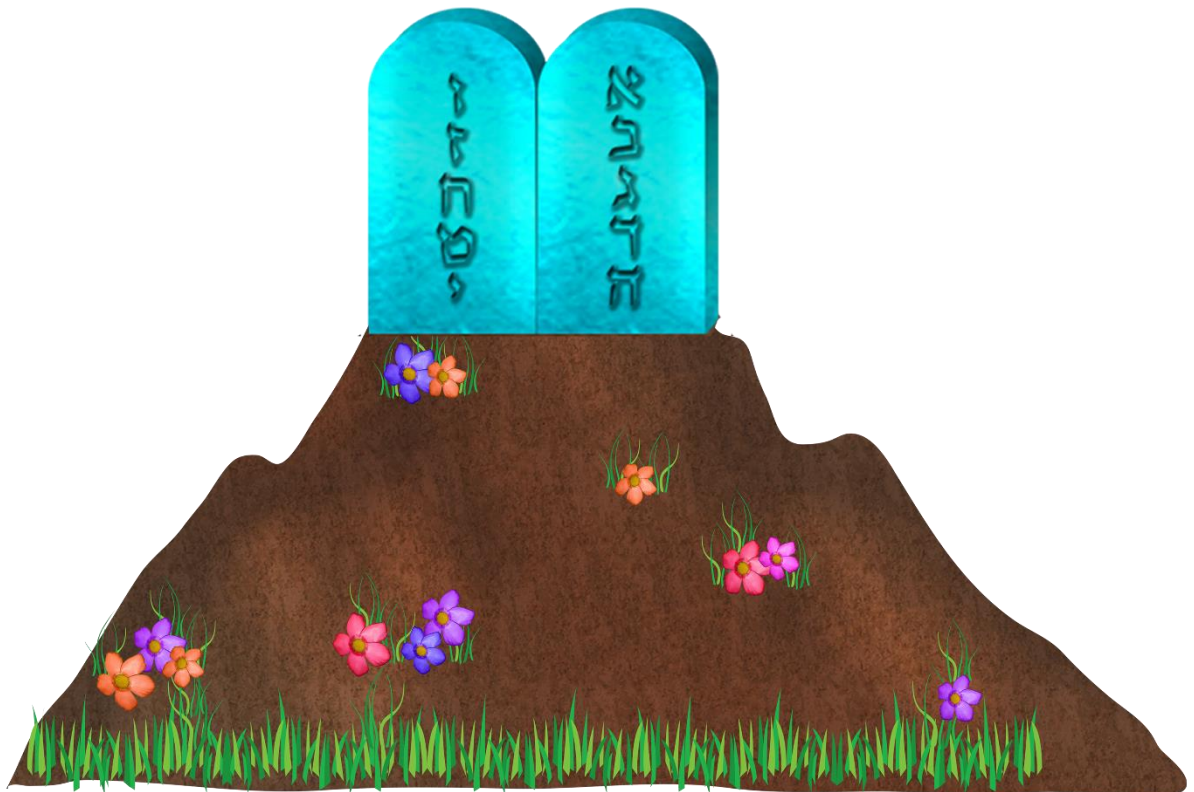


בס"ד



המשבועות מתג





The names of the **יום טוב**.

The **יום טוב** of **שבועות** has five names. It is important to study these names because we can learn many important ideas about the **יום טוב**.

The three names which are used by the **תורה** are:

שבועות

יום הבכורים

חג הקציר

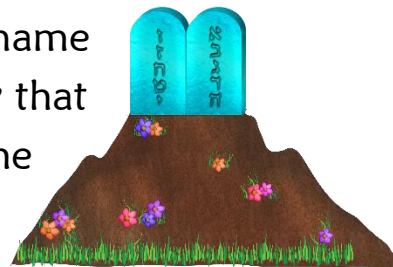
The fourth name is called **זמן מתן תורתנו**. This is the name we use in our **תפילות** which we daven on **שבועות**.

The last name is called **עצרת**. This is the name that **הז"ל** use when they speak about **שבועות** in the **משניות** and **גמרא**.

◆ שבועות ◆

The festival of Weeks

When the תורה calls this יום טוב by the name שבועות – Weeks, it is referring to the שבע שבועות that בני ישראל counted towards קבלת התורה. The counting towards קבלת התורה showed how eagerly the בני ישראל looked forward to receiving the תורה.¹



The בני ישראל not only counted towards קבלת התורה but did תשובה to prepare themselves to receive the תורה. Just as בני ישראל did תשובה at that time, we should also try to **better ourselves**. We should learn more תורה, daven better, do kindness, and try to become closer to ה'.

◆ יום הבכורים ◆

The day of the first offering.

שבועות is called יום הבכורים because it is from the **new wheat harvest** that the שתי הלחם is brought on שבועות. The שתי הלחם, which is a קרבן מנחה, permits the new grain to be used for the מנחות in the בית המקדש.

שבועות is also called יום הבכורים because at this time the מצוה of בכורים begins. (בכורים is the bringing of the first fruits from the שבעת המינים to the בית המקדש.)

When bringing the בכורים both the כהן and the owner do תנופה – lifting up and waving the בכורים.

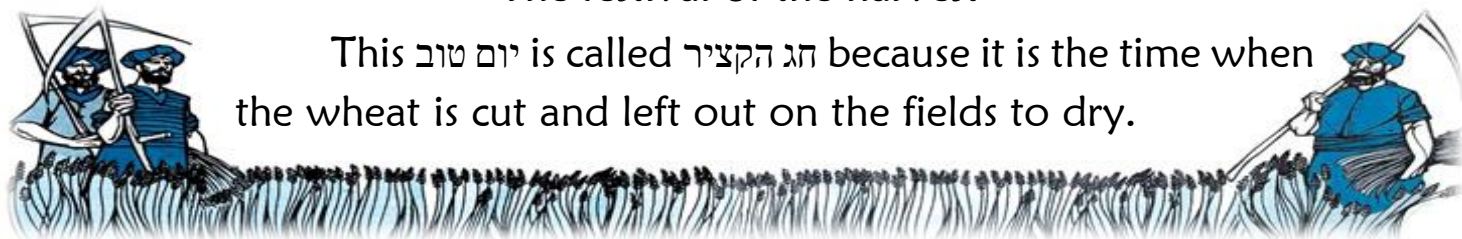


¹ ספר החינוך מצוה ש"ו

◆ חג הקציר ◆

The festival of the harvest

This יום טוב is called חג הקציר because it is the time when the wheat is cut and left out on the fields to dry.



◆ זמן מתן תורתינו ◆

The time of the giving of our תורה.



In our תפילות we say that שבועות is זמן מתן תורתינו, which means that it is the time of the giving of our תורה.

The תורה did not call שבועות by the name of זמן מתן תורתינו because Hashem did not want to set aside a special day as מתן תורה. A person should feel as if every day he is being given the תורה. In this way he will eagerly study the תורה and do the מצות of the תורה.²



² כלי יקר

◆ עצרת ◆

A holding back

The **יום טוב** of **שבועות** is also called **עצרת**. This is the name that **גמרא** and **משניות** use when they speak about **שבועות** in the **חז"ל**.

The word **עצרת** means a “**holding back**”. Therefore, **עצרת** is used as a name for the **Yom Tov** of **שבועות** for on **שבועות** we are “**held back**” from doing **מלאכה**.



שבועות Laws and customs about

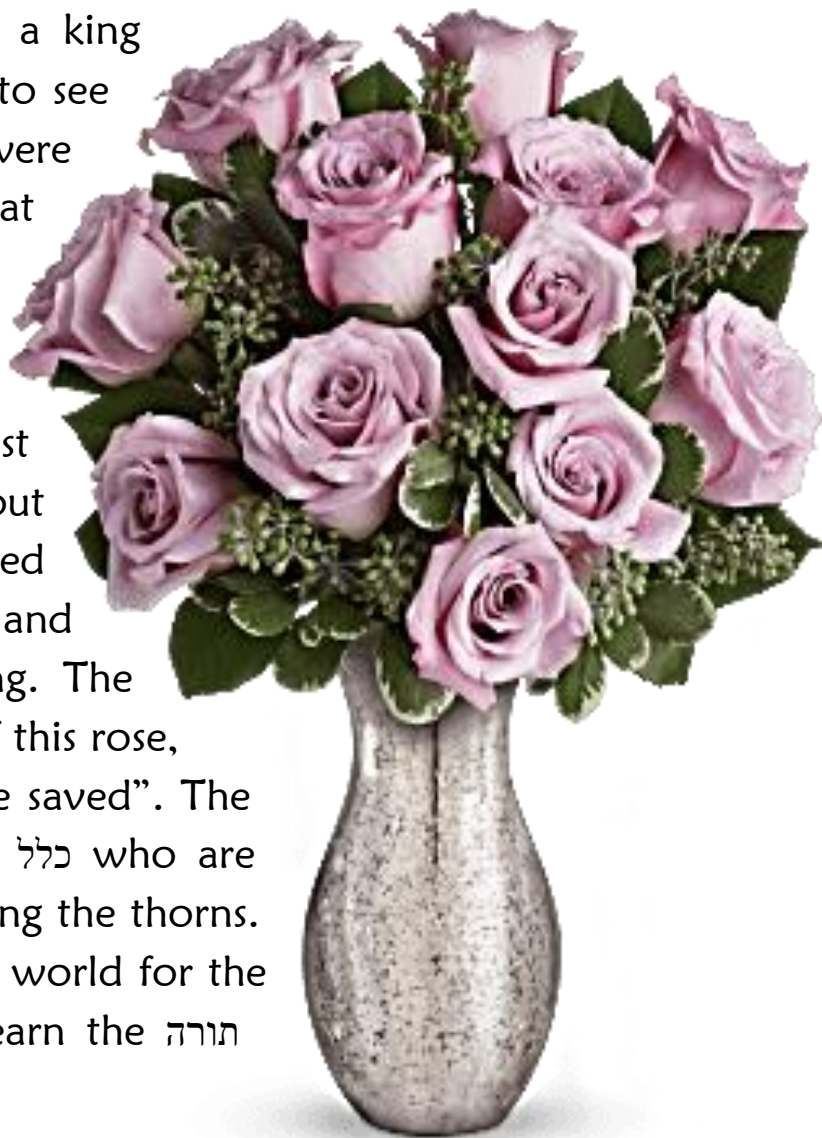
It is customary to decorate our shuls and homes with flowers, roses, and other plants. Some shuls have the **מנהג** to place trees next to the **ארון הקודש** and the **בימה**. The reasons for these **מנהגים** are:

עשבים – grass. We place grass in our Shuls as a remembrance of the great joy **בני ישראל** felt at receiving the **תורה**.³ We know that grass grew around **הר סיני**, since **ה'** told **משה רבינו** to warn **ישראל** that the sheep and cattle should not graze next to the mountain.⁴

אילנות – trees. It is customary to place trees in our shuls as it is a time when the world is being judged for the **פירות האילן**. The **אילנות** serves to remind us that we should be pray for an abundance of **פירות**.

³ שו"ע סימן תצ"ד סיעף ב', רמ"א שם
⁴ שם ס"ק י'

roses and flowers - שושנים ופרחים. In honor of the great day of מתן תורה, we decorate our Shuls and homes with flowers and roses. The מדרש tells a משל of a king who entered his garden to see how his flowers were growing and he saw that the garden was filled with thorns. He commanded that the garden be cut down. Just as the workers were about to cut it down, they noticed a rose among the thorns and mentioned it to the king. The king said "for the sake of this rose, the whole garden will be saved". The משל is referring to כלל ישראל who are compared to a rose among the thorns. Hashem saves the whole world for the sake of בני ישראל who learn the תורה and do מצות.⁵



⁵ בני יששכר סיון ד:ז

סעודת חג שבועות

The meals of the Yom Tov of שבועות

There is a custom to eat both dairy and meat meals on שבועות, so that we should use a different חלה for each meal. In this way, we will be using two חלות as a remembrance of the שתי הלחם which was brought on שבועות.⁶

We begin our סעודה by eating dairy and change our tablecloth and have a meat meal. We are not required to bentch between one meal and the next. However, we should eat a dry food like bread to remove the dairy from our mouth. We should also rinse our mouth and wash our hands. (One who eats hard cheese cannot use this method)⁷

The following is another reason for eating dairy on שבועות. When הר סיני came back to their tents from בני ישראל, they were only able to eat dairy. They did not have time to make the many preparations that were needed to prepare a meat meal. For instance, since the בני ישראל were given the laws of Kashering כלים by הר סיני, they had no time to Kasher their כלים right away. Therefore, they could only eat dairy.⁸

There is also a custom to have חלב ודבש (milk and honey) for the תורה is compared to both חלב and דבש.



⁶ שו"ע סימן תצ"ד ס"ק י"ד

⁷ שו"ע שם ס"ק ט"ז

⁸ שו"ע שם ס"ק י"ב

מגילת רות

There are many reasons why we read מגילת רות on the second day of שבועות. The following list is a few of them.

The story of רות is a story about kindness. The מגילת רות describes how רות showed kindness towards נעמי, her mother in law, and how בועז showed kindness towards רות and נעמי. It is very appropriate to read about רות on שבועות which is the time of מתן תורה. In many places the תורה teaches us to do חסד. For instance, the תורה tells us that when a farmer harvests his field, he should leave over the corner of his field for the poor to collect from. We see how concerned the תורה is for others.

The story of רות happened from the harvesting of the barley until the end of the harvesting of the wheat, which is the same time שבועות falls out.

On the day of מתן תורה we read from תורה, כתובים and נביאים. מגילת רות is the first ספר in כתובים.

דוד המלך, who was the great grandson of רות, was born and died on שבועות. We read מגילת רות to give honor to דוד המלך.

We also see from the story of רות the great reward for kindness. It was through רות that the dynasty of דוד המלך was born through whom משיח will come. Let us pray that משיח will come soon and the דוד מלכות בית דוד will once again reign.⁹

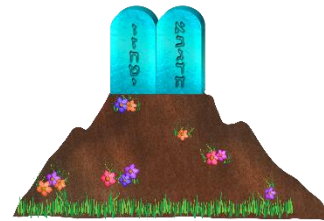
לעילוי נשמת מרת פרומא איטא בת ר' גרשון ע"ה
לעילוי נשמת מרת חיה בת משה ע"ה

⁹ רות רבה ב"ד

Name: _____.



Review Questions



1. In our תפילות we call שבועות by the name _____ זמן
- the time of the giving of our תורה.
2. שבועות is also called _____ חג because it is the time of the
harvesting of the wheat.
3. We decorate our shuls and homes with _____ to honor the
great day of מתן תורה.
4. There is a custom to eat a _____ as that is
what בני ישראל ate when they returned to their tents from הר סיני.
5. The story of רות teaches us the importance of _____.

הצלחה!