



# the MILFORD JEWISH VOICE

SHAVUOT 5785 | SPRING/SUMMER 2025

ISSUE 15

## DEAR FRIENDS,

We make a big deal about the holiday of Passover, and rightly so! The holiday commemorating the day the Jewish nation was released from slavery is one that is celebrated with much pomp and circumstance, along with special family customs and traditions. We all know why celebrating our physical freedom is important, but what about our spiritual freedom? Shouldn't the holiday of Shavuot, which celebrates the giving of the Torah—infusing a Jew's life with spirituality and meaning—also share some of the limelight?

In today's world, Shavuot tends to take a back seat to more widely recognized holidays. Yet in ancient times, it was actually a central holiday—one of the three pilgrimage festivals when all Jews were commanded to make the journey to Jerusalem and celebrate there. The truth is, Shavuot is the day that truly defined our destiny. As Rabbi Akiva famously explained in the Talmud, "A Jew without Torah is like a fish without water." It is the Torah that binds us together, serves as the common denominator among Jews from Alaska to Australia, and has always been our moral compass, allowing

us to be "a light unto the nations."

Shavuot has strong ties to the Land of Israel (see "What is Shavuot?" below). The Holy Land is always on our minds as we fervently pray for the safety of our brothers and sisters there, and for the immediate release of those still held hostage.

We hope to see you at some of the events planned over the coming months. And, of course, please join us for our annual Shavuot celebration on June 2.

We wish you a wonderful summer!



*Rabbi Schneur &  
Charie Wilhelm*

## WHAT IS SHAVUOT?

The Torah was given by G-d to the Jewish people on Mount Sinai more than 3,300 years ago. Every year on the holiday of Shavuot, we renew our acceptance of G-d's gift, and G-d "re-gives" the Torah. The word Shavuot means "weeks." It marks the completion of the seven-week counting period between Passover and Shavuot. The giving of the Torah was a far-reaching spiritual event—one that touched the essence of the Jewish soul for all times. Our sages have compared it to a wedding between G-d and the Jewish people. Shavuot also means "oaths," for on this day G-d swore eternal devotion to



us, and we in turn pledged everlasting loyalty to Him. In ancient times, Shavuot was the time that people would begin to bring bikkurim, their first and choicest fruits, to thank G-d for Israel's bounty. The holiday of Shavuot is a two-day holiday, beginning at sundown of the 5th of Sivan and lasting until nightfall of the 7th of Sivan (June 1 - June 3).

# WHAT IS THE TORAH?

The Torah is composed of two parts: the Written Law and the Oral Law. The written Torah contains the Five Books of Moses, the Prophets, and the Writings. Together with the Written Torah, Moses was also given the Oral Law, which explains and clarifies the Written Law. It was transmitted orally from generation to generation, and eventually transcribed in the Mishnah, Talmud, Midrash, and the entire corpus of Torah literature that was developed over the millennia. The word Torah means “instruction” or “guide.” The Torah guides our every step through its 613 mitzvot. The word



mitzvah means both “commandment” and “connection.” Through the study of Torah and fulfillment of mitzvahs, we connect ourselves and our environment to G-d. G-d’s purpose in creating the world is that we sanctify all of creation, imbuing it with holiness and spirituality.

On the holiday of Shavuot, the entire Jewish nation heard the Ten Commandments from G-d. The next day, Moses went up to Mount Sinai, where he was taught by G-d the rest of the Torah—both the Written and Oral Laws—which he then transmitted to the entire nation.

## CUSTOMS OF THE HOLIDAY

- Women and girls light holiday candles to usher in the holiday, on both the first and second evenings of the holiday (Sunday, June 1 & Monday, June 2).
- It is customary to stay up all night learning Torah on the first night of Shavuot.
- Adults and children should go to the synagogue on the first day of Shavuot to hear the reading of the Ten Commandments. (See back page for more info.) Children are an important focus of the holiday. Tradition teaches that G-d asked Moses who would guarantee that the Jewish people would keep the Torah. Moses offered Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, the 12 tribes, and even the future leaders, but it was only when Moses offered the Jewish children as guarantors that G-d agreed to give the Torah to the Jewish nation.
- As on other holidays, special meals are eaten, and no “work” may be performed.
- It is customary to eat dairy foods on Shavuot. Among other reasons, this commemorates the fact that upon receiving the Torah, including the kosher laws, the Jewish people could not cook meat in their pots, which had yet to be rendered kosher. At Chabad, we will celebrate with a dairy dinner (see back page).
- On the second day of Shavuot, the Yizkor memorial service is recited.
- Some communities read the Book of Ruth publicly, as King David—whose passing occurred on this day—was a descendant of Ruth the Moabite.

**BLT**  
BAGELS. LOX. TEFILLIN.

**MEN'S MONTHLY TEFILLIN CLUB**

**SUNDAY MORNINGS:**  
**JUNE 22, JULY 20, AUGUST 10**  
**9:00 - 10:00 AM**

*Heroines of the Bible*  
Her Story. My Story.

**BRURIA: Feminine Wisdom**  
**Tuesday, June 10, at 7:00 pm**

**For more info and to RSVP:**  
[www.JewishMilford.com/RCS](http://www.JewishMilford.com/RCS)

**ROSHCHODESH**  
society

# YOUR VOICE



## Community Members Speak

In 100 words or less,  
**WHAT DOES THE TORAH MEAN TO YOU?**

**Dalia Coleman**



I am reminded of the song we sing when the Torah is brought out of the Ark. It is called "The Tree of Life." It is a living guide to a good life. It is as applicable to life today as it was when it was given to the Jewish people at Mount Sinai thousands of years ago. I am reminded of the Aramaic saying about the Torah, "Read it again and again, all the answers are in it." Some examples of amazing laws in the Torah: we are commanded to take care of the environment and feed our animals before we feed ourselves. My young students sometimes ask me, How do you know the Torah is true? Easy! There were 2 million witnesses to the giving of the Torah. All our souls were at Sinai.

**Jeff Levinson**



To me, the Torah is the ultimate connection to our collective heritage. I know when I am reading and learning something in Torah that there is definitely another Jew, somewhere in the world, doing the same thing. Also as the world continues to change, friends come and go, family members pass and new ones are born, we all have a common text and guide that sustains and connects us from generation to generation.

**Irit Perkins**



The Torah is the foundation of Judaism, serving as a guide, teacher, and spiritual roadmap for living a meaningful life. It provides rules and laws that shape moral conduct and religious practice. As a sacred reference and constant reminder of the covenant with God, the Torah is both timeless and essential. It is also a birthright—an inheritance passed through generations—deeply tied to Jewish identity and tradition.

### RECIPE CORNER

## EASIEST SHAVUOT CHEESECAKE



**Honest Confession:** I don't love to bake...I'll use any shortcut I can when it comes to baking. (Cooking is a different story!) So when it comes to the traditional Shavuot cheesecakes, I was really excited to find this recipe years ago that has never failed! It's probably the easiest you can get when it comes to cheesecakes. Try it and let me know what you think! - *Chanie*

#### INGREDIENTS:

16 oz. whipped cream cheese  
1 cup sugar  
3 eggs  
2 tsp. lemon juice  
1 tsp. vanilla extract  
1 9" graham cracker crust  
1 can cherry or blueberry pie filling

Preheat oven to 350°F. Beat softened cream cheese, sugar, eggs, lemon, and vanilla until smooth. Pour mixture into crust and spread evenly. Bake for 45-50 minutes until firm and golden on top. Let cheesecake cool and then refrigerate for several hours or overnight. Once cake is chilled and set, top with your favorite pie filling. Enjoy!



## CHANUKAH AT THE MALL



## GRAND PURIM CELEBRATION



## JEWISH WOMEN'S CIRCLE EVENTS





## EWISH KIDS CLUB

A group of children are sitting around a long table in a library, holding wooden sticks and playing a game. There are bags of snacks on the table.



## MILFORD MENORAH PARADE & LIGHTING



STRATFORD CHANUKAH PARTY





# UPCOMING EVENTS

## TAMBOURINE EXPERIENCE



Create a stunning 3D work of art on a tambourine with a scene of Jerusalem.

Learn about the historic connection between tambourines and Jewish women!

**TUESDAY, MAY 27**  
**7:00 PM**

\$30 / person

Refreshments will be served  
[www.JewishMilford.com/JWC](http://www.JewishMilford.com/JWC)



## FIRST FRIDAYS

*Celebrating Shabbat Together*



Join us on the first Friday of each month as we welcome Shabbat with prayer and song, followed by Shabbat dinner. Make Shabbat a meaningful and cherished part of your week.

**Upcoming Dates:**  
**June 6, June 27\*, August 1**

RSVP: [www.JewishMilford.com/fridays](http://www.JewishMilford.com/fridays)

\* July's First Friday will take place a week prior, on June 27

## MEN'S SOCIAL SCOTCH & STEAK

*Monday, July 14*  
*6:00 pm*

ENJOY A SCOTCH-TASTING  
PRESENTATION & GRILLED STEAKS

WOODMONT BEACH ROOFTOP  
LOCATION SHARED UPON RESERVATION  
COUVERT: \$100, \$250/SPONSOR  
RSVP: [JEWISHMILFORD.COM/STEAK](http://JEWISHMILFORD.COM/STEAK)



PRE-ROSH HASHANAH

## Bus Trip to Queens, NY



**SUNDAY,**  
**SEPTEMBER 14**



More info & RSVP:  
[JewishMilford.com/bustrip](http://JewishMilford.com/bustrip)



## Dearest Rabbi and Chanie!

Thank you for the wonderful Seder. It was so beautiful and your whole family helping out.

I'm particularly grateful for the Shmurah matzah. It lasted me most of the week and it was amazing!!

Thank you for all you give to the Milford community.  
Shabbat Shalom, **D.M.**



## Dear Rabbi

Thursday evening's Chanukah Celebration was a resounding success here at Oronoque. The compliments have been many. The evening was filled with pride and ruach. It was a memorable experience and the freilach music provided by Richard Gans and family enabled the attendees to experience the light and hope of Chanukah.

Wishing you, Chanie and family a beautiful Chanukah celebration.  
With appreciation, **E.G.**



I would like to thank you and your wonderful family for inviting me to attend the amazing Seder as we began the Passover celebration! I had the opportunity to meet some very kind and welcoming people. I do plan on attending some upcoming events.  
With Shalom, **SHARON T.**



From a neighbor who wants to see you thrive - Happy Hannukah!

**NANCY SHIRLEY**



The Menorah lighting on the Green was such a great event! We look forward to it each year.

**SARA BURNS**



Lunch & Learn is always wonderful. Lunch was delicious and you end up learning something new about being a Jew. Thanks, Rabbi and Chanie.

**LORNA PINCUS**



Hi Chanie,

Good morning! I just wanted to let you know what a wonderful evening and fun I had at the Paint & Sip event. My daughter loved my painting. Thank you!

**LESLIE G.**



## LUNCH & LEARN



## PURIM IN STRATFORD





NEW



**YOUR VOICE!**  
Community  
Members Speak



**PHOTOS:**  
Captured  
Moments



**WHAT IS  
SHAVUOT?**



**SUMMER  
EVENTS**

**Sleepless  
in Milford**  
*Late Night Shavuot Study Session*  
**SUNDAY, JUNE 1 • 11:00 PM**

NO CHARGE ~ SPONSORSHIPS AVAILABLE  
RSVP: [WWW.JEWISHMILFORD.COM/SHAVUOT2025](http://WWW.JEWISHMILFORD.COM/SHAVUOT2025)



DEAR THE TEN COMMANDMENTS  
& ENJOY A DELICIOUS DAIRY BUFFET DINNER



MONDAY  
JUNE 2



6:00 PM

**SHAVUOT**  
with Chabad of Milford-HCW

