

Women & Flowers

Bloom

Where you are Planted.

Women love flowers. Perhaps because women, are mystical and beautiful, just like flowers.

Women have the power to heal.

Women may seem outwardly fragile while often admired for their outer beauty.

Yet, like flowers, women possess enormous hidden potential and deep strength.

Just like flowers, women also endure all sorts of storms that one might expect would 'undo' us, yet we still raise our heads proudly after the storm passes and say, "It's a new day".

And, just like women, flowers make a home. Flowers invariably give any space, large or small, a friendlier, warmer, brighter and more welcoming atmosphere. In short, flowers evoke good feelings in us, and its no coincidence that they are used all over the world, in all cultures, for a multitude of purposes.

When receiving flowers, our spirits are lifted. We feel appreciated. Whatever was bothering us just bothers us less after we receive flowers. Giving flowers strengthens connections between people.

Giving flowers is an effective way to strengthen or heal relationships.

One of many customs associated with Shavuos, the Holiday celebrating the receiving of the Torah on Mount Sinai, is to fill one's home and shul with flowers.

There is a Midrash that says that the ground around Mt Sinai, where the Jewish People waited to receive the Torah, wore a carpet of greenery and sweet smelling flowers. This in itself was miraculous because it was in the middle of the desert.

It's interesting to note that the Midrash shir Hashirim, says that as Hashem gave us the Ten Commandments, the smell of besamim, (aromatic spices) filled the entire world.

According to the Magen Avraham, the custom to bring flowers into our homes and shuls before Shavuot is based on the Mishna of Rosh Hashanah that Shavuot is a day of judgment for fruits.

Flowers and branches placed in shuls are a reminder for us to pray for the survival and health of the trees, flowers and all growing things for the coming year.

Another reason we adorn the home and shul with fruits, flowers and greenery is that in the time of the Temple in Jerusalem, the first fruits of the harvest were brought on Shavuot.

So now, enjoy your very own hand made bouquet of flowers in preparation for the holiday of Shavuos. And may each of us find the strength to truly 'bloom' where we are planted.

SHAVUOS ICE CREAM & CHEESECAKE PARTY

Wednesday May 31

5:00pm

Reading of the Ten Commandments

Delicious Falafel & Salad Bar

Ice Cream Bar

Chana's Famous Cheesecake & Desserts!

WHAT IS SHAVUOT?

Shavuot is the holiday that celebrated the receiving of the Ten Commandments, the Torah on Mount Sinai. The Torah was given by G-d to the Jewish people on Mount Sinai more than 3300 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.

WHAT DOES "TORAH" MEAN?

The word Torah means "instruction" or "guide." The Torah guides our every step and move through its 613 mitzvahs. 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 from G-d the Ten Commandments. 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 ON SHAVUOT:

1) Learning on Shavuot night

Tikkun (a correction) for Jews oversleeping on the morning they were to receive the Ten Commandments. Our lesson is to not 'sleep' through life and to listen to life's messages.

2) The book of Ruth is read (or studied) on the second day of Shavuot:

Shavuot is the birthday and yahrtzeit (day of passing) of King David, and the book of Ruth records his ancestry. Ruth and her husband Boaz were King David's great-grandparents.

The scenes of harvesting, described in the book of Ruth are appropriate to the Festival of Harvest (which is when the story took place)

Ruth was a sincere convert who embraced Judaism with all her heart.

3) Eating Dairy Foods

With the giving of the Torah the Jews now became obligated to observe the laws of Kosher. As the Torah was given on Shabbat, no cattle could be slaughtered nor could utensils be koshered, and thus on that day they ate dairy. The lesson: when you learn something new- integrate it immediately.

Just as milk is a baby's first food, we remind ourselves that as much as we've studied, we are really just beginning our journey of learning.

Moses was saved from the Nile by Pharaoh's daughter on the sixth of Sivan, and was only willing to nurse from a Jewish woman because he was going to receive the Torah.

We recall this merit of his, through eating milk on that day.

Chalav (milk)=40, represents the 40 days during which Moses was in Heaven studying the Torah

4) Adorning the Home with Greenery & Flowers

Torah is meant to make this world beautiful- Etz Chayim Hee (tree of life).