



Torah for Turbulent Times: "Say Cheese! Smile :) It's Shavuot!"

We're waiting and waiting, sometimes more patiently than others, as we count down the days until it's safe to return to gathering together again. Meanwhile, we count our blessings each and every day. We've also been counting down the days from Passover to Shavuot, seven weeks in total, which begins [this Thursday evening at 7:00 pm with a Zoom Community Event](#). I'd like to invite you to make up a tasty cheese plate, pour a glass of your favorite beverage, gather your household (or join solo), and participate in an hour of learning and connecting together. Tomorrow evening's Shavuot seminar is entitled:

*"From Tablet to Tablet - Revelation, Transmission & Reception"
with sources from Torah, Midrash & Annie Dillard too*

Shavuot is one of the central biblical holidays, yet it's one of the most unfamiliar to many. It was originally a harvest festival, and became the holiday to celebrate Torah's revelation to Moses and our people at Mt. Sinai. It's nickname is *z'man mattan Torateinu*, "the time of the giving of our Torah." From the original stone tablets to today's tablet technology, our stories, laws, ethics, values and practices continue to be the basis of Jewish life. Though the format and delivery system have evolved over a couple thousand years, Torah's content remains the same.

There are several customs for the holiday of Shavuot. We gather for two mornings of prayer. Some people decorate their homes with greenery or flowers, and eat a variety of forms of dairy, like cheesecake, blintzes, etc. And, there's a custom called, *Tikkun Leyl Shavuot*, staying up all night, or late into the night, to study and learn Torah with the community. While different reasons are given for this practice, here's my favorite one. It is said that our ancestors slept in late the morning the Torah was revealed. Can you imagine!? In a *tikkun*, or correction of this, we show our eagerness to receive the Torah by preparing, studying, and staying up late the evening before.

Whether you're a night owl or an early bird, whether you prefer to sleep in or to hop out of bed at sunrise, the Torah and wisdom of our tradition will be waiting for you - to receive!

-Rabbi Mark