

FUN FACTS ABOUT SHAVUOT

Known by Different Names

Shavuot is a festival with a variety of names - *Hag HaKatzir* (harvest festival), *Hag HaShavuot* (festival of weeks) and *Hag Habikkurim* (festival of first fruits) - all mentioned in Torah.

Shavuot actually means weeks.

What Event Shavuot Relates to

Shavuot celebrates the giving of the Torah on Mount Sinai—the event when Yisra'el accepted all of Yahweh's teachings and instructions.



Acts 2 takes place on the day of Shavuot.

A Celebration

Shavuot celebrates the first of the wheat harvest. In ancient times, the grain harvest lasted seven weeks and was a season of gladness. It began with harvesting the barley during Passover and ended with harvesting the wheat at Shavuot. Shavuot was the concluding festival of the grain harvest, just as the 8th day (Shemini Atzeret) was the concluding festival of the fruit harvest of Sukkot.



Shavuot is the 2nd appointed time (mo'ad) of the year, and one of the 3 pilgrimage feasts commanded in Deut. 16:16 to be observed.

Shavuot is observed 50 days after one would bring a wave sheaf offering (barley) to the priest at the temple.

Offerings on Shavuot

Lev. 23 and Num. 28 list different offerings all to be brought on Shavuot. (You can dig into their differences and purposes on your own.)

This is the only festival that allowed 2 loaves of leavened wheat bread (chametz) to be brought to the temple as a wave offering.

The children of Yisra'el would bring the first-fruits (bikkurim) of their crops known as the 7 species (wheat, barley, grapes, figs, pomegranates, olives and dates) found in Deut. 8:8 to the priest in a basket on this day.



Traditions

It is customary to eat dairy on this day and stay up the night before to read Torah.

There is a tradition to decorate homes and synagogues with plants, flowers and leafy branches on Shavuot.

The book of Ruth (known as the Megillah) is commonly read on this day as it relates to the spring harvests of barley and wheat as well as Ruth accepting all of Yahweh's Torah.

