

## **Torah on our hearts**

The festival of Shavuot fast approaches. The Jewish people, as commanded by G-d, have been counting the days from the Feast of Unleavened Bread to the Feast of Weeks (Shavuot). Termed “The Counting of the Omer”, they are counting fifty days.

***“From the day after the Sabbath, the day you brought the sheaf of the wave offering, count off seven full weeks. Count off fifty days up to the day after the seventh Sabbath and then present an offering of new grain to the LORD” Lev. 23:15-16***

This Festival marks the first fruits of the wheat harvest. The people are commanded by G-d to bring to the temple two loaves of bread (made with flour of the harvest) and present them to the LORD.

But this Holiday symbolizes something else...something much more essential. Shavuot celebrates the receiving of Torah on Mt. Sinai. It was fifty days from the Exodus out of Egypt (celebrated at Passover the night before the Feast of Unleavened Bread begins) to the giving of G-d’s instructions for HIS NEW NATION. The Israelites didn’t even see their deliverance from Egypt as complete until they received the laws that would govern them...the laws that would separate and consecrate them as a nation dedicated to the One, True and Living God.

There are three appointed feasts which G-d commands the Israelites to travel.

***“Three times a year your men must appear before the LORD, your God, at the place He will choose: at the Feast of Unleavened Bread, the Feast of Weeks and the Feast of Tabernacles. No man should appear before the LORD empty-handed: Each of you must bring a gift in proportion to the way the LORD has blessed you.” Deut. 16:16-17***

Now... let’s fast forward. The year is 30AD. Yeshua, our Messiah, has been crucified, has died, and has been buried. He has risen and has appeared to many on several occasions over 40 days. The last day, before He ascends into Heaven, He instructs His apostles in Jerusalem:

***“Do not leave Jerusalem, but wait for the gift the Father promised, which you have heard me speak about. For John baptized in water, but in a few days you will be baptized in the Holy Spirit.” Acts 1: 4-5***

The Apostles stayed in Jerusalem as instructed...and Shavuot approached. Waves of pilgrims flowed into the city (as commanded) to worship the LORD. Jews from all over the Roman Empire, and abroad, came to offer their sacrifices and gifts at the Temple to celebrate the Festival. And on the day of Shavuot...the gift Yeshua spoke of did indeed come. The Holy Spirit...the Ruach haKodesh.

***When the day of Shavuot came, they were all together in one place. Suddenly a sound like the blowing of a violent wind came from heaven and filled the whole house where they were sitting. They saw what seemed to be tongues of fire that separated and came to rest on each of them. All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other languages as the Spirit enabled them.***

And if you read on, you will see how not only was the first fruits of the second spring harvest being celebrated...the harvest of the first fruits of souls belonging to Yeshua had begun. ***“And the LORD added to their number daily those who were being saved.”***

Just as the gift of Torah came to the Israelites at Mt. Sinai *fifty days* after G-d delivered them from the slavery of Egypt... the gift of the Holy Spirit descended upon the Apostles *fifty days* after Yeshua's resurrection delivered us from sin. And just as the nation of Israel was not complete until they had the laws and instructions written in stone to guide them down the right path...followers of Messiah are not complete until His laws and instructions are written on our hearts.

***“This is the covenant I will make with the house of Israel after that time” declares the LORD. “I will put my law in their minds and write it on their hearts. I will be their God, and they will be my people.” Jeremiah 31:33(or Hebrews 8:10)***

The Holy Spirit, our Counselor and Mediator... is **Torah on our hearts.**

Now here's the thing: The law hasn't changed. Whether Torah is written in stone, on scrolls or in our hearts... the instructions to live a life Holy and pleasing to our LORD haven't changed. The Way to Truth hasn't changed. The Way to Righteousness hasn't changed. The Way to Salvation through the blood hasn't changed. HaShem's Mercy and Grace and Long Suffering and Faithfulness haven't changed. HaShem does **not** change!

Who did the LORD make the new covenant with? The house of Israel; a house made up of Jews and those joined with them to serve the Almighty.

**Isaiah 44: 1-5**

***But now listen, O Jacob, my servant, Israel, whom I have chosen.  
This is what the LORD says-  
He who formed you in the womb, and who will be your help:  
Do not be afraid, O Jacob, My servant, Yeshurun, whom I have chosen.  
For I will pour water on the thirsty land, and streams on the dry ground;  
I will pour out my Spirit on your offspring, and my blessing on your  
descendants.  
They will spring up like grass in a meadow, like poplar trees by flowing streams.  
One will say, "I belong to the LORD";  
Another will call himself by the name of Jacob (Jew)  
Still another will write on his hand, 'The LORD's'  
And will take the name of Israel. (Gentile)***

On Shavuot it is traditional to stay up all night studying Torah. It is also traditional to read the Book of Ruth. Why Ruth? Because she was a gentile who chose to abandon the pagan religions of her people and follow her Jewish mother-in-law, Naomi, back to Israel, saying: "Your people will be my people; your God will be my God."

Ruth shed all that she knew and devoted herself to the Jewish people and the God of Israel. She obeyed His commands and rejoiced in His blessings and during the barley harvest (read the Book of Ruth) was redeemed by her kinsman-redeemer, Boaz. The barley harvest occurs during the fifty days that lead to Shavuot. Ruth and Boaz were wed. She gave birth to Jesse, the father of King David. (*King David was born on Shavuot, and he died on Shavuot, according to the Jewish Sages.*)

For Gentile believers...Ruth is *your story*...or it should be. If you have accepted the truth of Messiah...if you have received the gift of the Holy Spirit... you have chosen to be grafted into the tree of Israel. (Read Paul's letter to the Romans)

Being grafted into the house of Israel means you are shedding your filthy rags and replacing them with clean ones. How do we know the difference between clean and unclean? Torah. How do we know how G-d wants us to behave? Torah. What tells us how to be a light to the nations? Torah. Where does the LORD promise to write His Torah on our hearts? Torah...

### Read Deuteronomy 30

- The LORD, your God, will circumcise your heart
- The Word is not too difficult for you
- The Word is not out of reach, it is near
- Love the LORD your God with all your heart and soul

- Walk in His Ways
- **Keep His Commands, Decrees and Laws**

What did Yeshua say in Matthew 22 when asked what the Greatest Commandment was? *Hear oh Israel, the LORD our God, the LORD is One. Love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.*

What did Yeshua say in Matthew 11? *My yoke is easy and my burden is light.*

His yoke is Torah. His burden is to simply walk according to His ways, which are the Father's ways.

What did Yeshua say in Matthew 5? *I tell you the truth, until Heaven and Earth pass away, not the smallest letter nor the least stroke of a pen will by any means disappear from the Law until everything has been accomplished.*

Folks, everything has not yet been accomplished....

Again, in Matthew 5, what did Yeshua say? *Anyone who breaks one of the least of these commandments and teaches others to do the same will be called least in the kingdom of Heaven.*

He doesn't necessarily say you won't get into the Kingdom...that's for Him to decide when He inspects your innermost parts; but He does make it clear that if you choose to decide for yourself what you will and will not obey...well, you get the picture. I, for one, am not seeking to be called "the least" when it comes to my role in Yeshua's Kingdom. The Father didn't just bring us into the Kingdom to figure it out for ourselves. He gave us His Word to live by...Torah. **And He put Torah on our hearts.** So the only excuse anyone has to **not** live by Torah is found in their own stiff neck and hardened heart.

In the words of Paul: *Live by the Spirit and you will not gratify the desires of the sinful nature.*

Wishing you a wonderful Shavuot! Praise Adonai!