

BJC Wensa

“WENSA” MEANS “FUN” IN JUDEO-ARABIC!

WWW.BJCN.YORG

June 4, 2011

2 Sivan, 5771

VOLUME 6

NASSO

SHABBAT ENDS 9:11 PM

Publisher: Anna Hakakian

SHAVUOT

Shavuot always falls on the same day of the week as the second day of Pesach. The rule of thumb is that the first day of Shavuot, outside of Israel, never falls on Tuesday, Thursday, or Shabbat.

Shavuot, perhaps more than any other festival, embodies the extraordinary integration of the spiritual-religious side and the earthly-material side of the Jewish people.

The festival of Matan Torah, the Giving of the Torah, wherein the children of Israel willingly and consciously accepted a system of laws that make up the Torah, the infrastructure for their spiritual and moral existence, is also the festival that expresses the close connection with the daily life of the people who, on entering Eretz Israel became farmers, cultivating the soil, and completely associated with all aspects of nature, its seasons and its manifestations.

When we dwelt in our land, before the destruction of the First and the Second Temples, Shavuot was above all the festival of the first fruits of the wheat harvest. Following the Exile, the emphasis for Shavuot was naturally placed on the fact that it is the festival of the giving of the Torah.

When the Jewish people returned to their land in recent generations, they returned to a natural life, working the land in their independent state. Shavuot once more became the Festival of Reaping, the festival of the fruits of our soil, the festival of flowers and greenery - and this combines well with "Hag Matan Torah".

Only in Israel can Shavuot be celebrated fully, with its entire range of meanings.

Thus, we must remember that the spiritual and moral basis of our Torah is always based on the principles of possessing the land of Israel and dwelling there and the two are inseparable:

"When you come in to the land ... and dwell therein".

The Torah of Israel, given to the Jewish people on Mount Sinai on Shavuot, can be observed fully and truly only if we fulfill the precept of Aliya to Israel and living there.

GREENERY

There is a long standing custom to decorate the shul and one's home with greenery - grasses and branches (flowers are used, but original custom seems to be branches) on Shavuot. Several reasons are given for this custom:

1- Immediately prior to and during Matan Torah, people and their animals were strictly forbidden to go up Har Sinai, or even to touch it. Our sources tell us that in honor of the giving of the Torah on Har Sinai, the mountain became miraculously adorned with vegetation. This is why animals had to be specifically banned.

2- Decorating with tree branches is a reminder that the world is judged by G-d on Shavuot concerning the fruit of the tree. It is appropriate to pray on Shavuot for bountiful yields of fruit.

3- Moshe Rabeinu was born on the 7th of Adar and hidden for three months. He was placed in a waterproof basket, floated on the Nile, hidden among the reeds, on the day that was to become Shavuot, 80 years later.

However, the green plants symbolize above all the custom of bringing first fruits from the seven species characterizing Eretz Israel.

DAIRY FOODS

Shavuot is a Yom Tov. On Yom Tov we have the mitzvah of Simcha (being joyous). One of the traditional forms of expressing joy in life is by eating a festive meal with meat and wine. However, we all know that we have a custom of eating dairy foods on Shavuot.

Why Dairy?

There are many "reasons" for this custom. Here are a few:

1- To commemorate the first Shavuot celebrated in the desert, when our ancestors ate only dairy dishes. This was because eating kosher meat after Matan Torah required much preparation.

2- The numeric value of the word CHALAV (milk) is 40, alluding to the forty days and nights Moshe spent on Har Sinai receiving the Torah.

3- According to tradition, Moshe Rabeinu was born on the seventh of Adar and was successfully hidden by his parents for three months. It was on the future Shavuot that baby Moshe was placed in the basket on the river and found by the daughter of Pharaoh. We are taught that Moshe refused to nurse from an Egyptian nurse. Therefore, Miriam suggested that Yocheved, Moshe's mother, be hired to nurse him. He, from whose mouth all of Israel learned Torah, could not drink "mother's milk" from a non-Jew. We remember this with dairy dishes on the day of Matan Torah.





An ode to English Plurals...

CONTRIBUTED BY MIRRA ZARA

We'll begin with a box, and the plural is boxes,
 But the plural of ox becomes oxen, not oxes.
 One fowl is a goose, but two are called geese,
 Yet the plural of moose should never be meese.
 You may find a lone mouse or a nest full of mice,
 Yet the plural of house is houses, not hice.
 If the plural of man is always called men,
 Why shouldn't the plural of pan be called pen?
 If I speak of my foot and show you my feet,
 And I give you a boot, would a pair be called beet?
 If one is a tooth and a whole set are teeth,
 Why shouldn't the plural of booth be called beeth?
 Then one may be that, and three would be those,
 Yet hat in the plural would never be hose,
 And the plural of cat is cats, not cose.
 We speak of a brother and also of brethren,
 But though we say mother, we never say methren.
 Then the masculine pronouns are he, his and him,
 But imagine the feminine: she, shis and shim!
 Let's face it - English is a crazy language.
 There is no egg in eggplant nor ham in hamburger;
 neither apple nor pine in pineapple.
 English muffins weren't invented in England .
 We take English for granted, but if we explore its paradoxes,
 we find that quicksand can work slowly, boxing rings are square,
 and a guinea pig is neither from Guinea nor is it a pig.
 And why is it that writers write but fingers don't fing,
 grocers don't groce and hammers don't ham?
 Doesn't it seem crazy that you can make amends but not one
 amend.
 If you have a bunch of odds and ends and get rid of all but one of
 them, what do you call it?
 If teachers taught, why didn't preachers praught?
 If a vegetarian eats vegetables, what does a humanitarian eat?

JEWISH JOKES

CONTRIBUTED BY MIRRA ZARA

A Jewish woman goes to see her Rabbi and asks, "Yankele and Yosele are both in love with me, who will be the lucky one?" The wise old Rabbi answers, "Yankele will marry you. Yosele will be the lucky one."

~~~~~

If a married Jewish man is walking alone in a park and expresses an opinion without anybody hearing him, is he still wrong?

~~~~~

My father says, "Marry a girl who has the same belief as the family." I said, "Dad, why would I marry a girl who thinks I'm a schmuck?"

~~~~~

Jewish Marriage advice: "Don't marry a beautiful person. They may leave you. Of course, an ugly person may leave you too. But who cares?"

~~~~~

Morris went to his rabbi for some needed advice. "Rabbi, tell me is it proper for one man to profit from another man's mistakes?"; "No Morris, a man should not profit from another man's mistakes," answered the rabbi. "Are you sure Rabbi?"; "Of course, I'm sure, in fact I'm positive," exclaimed the Rabbi. "OK, Rabbi, if you are so sure, how about returning the two hundred dollars I gave you for marrying me to my wife?"

~~~~~

Jewish proverb: "A Jewish wife will forgive and forget, but she'll never forget what she forgave."



Sometimes I think all the folks who grew up speaking English should be committed to an asylum for the verbally insane.

In what other language do people recite at a play and play at a recital?

We ship by truck but send cargo by ship...

We have noses that run and feet that smell.

We park in a driveway and drive in a parkway..

And how can a slim chance and a fat chance be the same, while a wise man and a wise guy are opposites?

You have to marvel at the unique lunacy of a language in which your house can burn up as it burns down, in which you fill in a form by filling it out, and in which an alarm goes off by going on.

And in closing, if Father is Pop, how come Mother's not Mop?

AND THAT'S JUST FOR STARTERS

## BJC Lag B'Omer Picnic



### Joketime

#### NINE WORDS WOMEN USE

- 1- **Fine:** This is the word women use to end an argument when they are right and you need to be quiet.
- 2- **Five Minutes:** If she is getting dressed, this means a half an hour. Five minutes is only five minutes if you have just been given five more minutes to watch the game before helping around the house.
- 3- **Nothing:** This is the calm before the storm. This means something, and you should be on your toes. Arguments that begin with nothing usually end in fine.
- 4- **Go Ahead:** This is a dare, not permission. Don't Do It!
- 5- **Loud Sigh:** This is actually a word, but is a non-verbal statement often misunderstood by men. A loud sigh means she thinks you are a fool and wonders why she is wasting her time standing here and arguing with you about nothing. (Refer back to #3 for the meaning of nothing.)
- 6- **That's Okay:** This is one of the most dangerous statements a woman can make to a man. That's okay means she wants to think long and hard before deciding how and when you will pay for your mistake.
- 7- **Thanks:** A woman is thanking you, do not question, or faint. Just say you're welcome. (I want to add in a clause here - This is true, unless she says 'Thanks a lot' - that is **PURE** sarcasm and she is not thanking you at all. **DO NOT** say 'you're welcome'. That will bring on a 'whatever').
- 8- **Whatever:** This is the dreaded word in women's vocabulary. It's never followed by anything good. It's usually a woman's way of saying **YOU'RE HISTORY** or at least in the hot seat for a very long time!
- 9- **Don't worry about it, I got it:** Another dangerous statement, this is something that a woman has told a man to do several times, but is now doing it herself. This will later result in a man asking 'What's wrong?' For the woman's response refer to #3.

### G-d's Pharmacy!

G-d left us a great clue as to what foods help what part of our body:



A sliced Carrot looks like the human eye. The pupil, iris and radiating lines look just like the human eye... and YES, science now shows carrots greatly enhance blood flow to and function of the eyes.



A Tomato has four chambers and is red. The heart has four chambers and is red. All of the research shows tomatoes are loaded with lycopine and are indeed pure heart and blood food.



Grapes hang in a cluster that has the shape of the heart. Each grape looks like a blood cell and all of the research today shows grapes are also profound heart and blood vitalizing food.



A Walnut looks like a little brain, a left and right hemisphere, upper cerebrums and lower cerebellums. Even the wrinkles or folds on the nut are just like the neo-cortex. We now know walnuts help develop more than three dozen neuron-transmitters for brain function.



Celery, Bok Choy, Rhubarb and many more look just like bones. These foods specifically target bone strength. Bones are 23% sodium and these foods are 23% sodium. If you don't have enough sodium in your diet, the body pulls it from the bones, thus making them weak. These foods replenish the skeletal needs of the body.

## BJC Sisterhood with the laughing Yoga lady



### *PARSHA of the week...*

In our last episode the *Bnei Yisroel* was split into a 3 camp formation - flags and all! Then it was time to talk about packing out. The *Leviyim* took charge of breaking down the *Mishkan*. As the *Parsha* opens, *Hashem* tells Moshe to count the Gershon clan. Moshe gets Aharon to help him and they count all men ages 30 to 50, the strongest of the clan. The Gershon clan is in charge of transporting all the woven materials of the *Mishkan*. This includes the entrance curtains, the net curtains that make up the walls, the wall and roof curtains and the ropes used to tie the *Mishkan* tent. Only men 30 to 50 are physically and spiritually fit to transport these holy items.



Aharon's son, Itamar, is put in charge of this transport team. It's his job to make sure these *Leviyim* get to work on time, handle their assignments (no switching!), and get these items to the next site in good condition. He also supervises hanging the curtains when the *Mishkan* is reassembled.

Last but not least the Merari clan is counted - all men between 30 and 50. The Merari clan is split into three groups: the first group carries the boards, a second group carries sockets, and a third group carries bases, stakes and ropes, tools and maintenance equipment. Aharon's son, Itamar, is in charge of handing out these assignments.

A Great thanks to **Dalia Shamash** and **Alice Aboody** for their generous donation to the proceeds of the Newsletter and **Ferial Maslavi** for her donation towards the children's toys.

Thanks!

If you would like to contribute short jokes, stories, memories, recipes, etc. please email the publisher: [annahakakian@yahoo.com](mailto:annahakakian@yahoo.com).

Limited *signed* copies of the New Book:

***The Last Tango in Baghdad***

by Dr. Albert Khabbaza is available for sale.

For more info please contact:

[annahakakian@yahoo.com](mailto:annahakakian@yahoo.com)



**HAVE A GREAT SUMMER....**