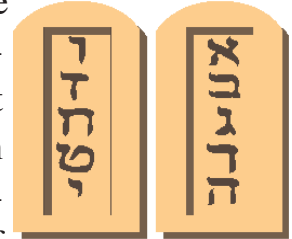


שבועות

Shavuot, Lesson 3



Shavuot is the Festival or Appointed Time that celebrates the ingathering of the harvest, the time when the farmers bring in the grain from the fields. Having brought the barley harvest in during the counting of the omer, Shavuot marks the beginning of the wheat harvest. Even as Yeshua said that the fields were ripe to be harvested, so Shavuot celebrates the ingathering of the nations to worship the One true G-d. Israel was given the Torah at Shavuot, teaching us that the Torah was the means of bringing in the nations. The Ruach also came on Shavuot to give the disciples of Yeshua special strength and wisdom to begin the gathering of the nations by preaching the good news of the Messiah Yeshua, that He had provided a way for sins to be forgiven, not just for Israel, but for the whole world.



What are some of the traditional things we do at Shavuot to celebrate this special day that G-d has given us? First, we meet together, because this is what G-d said we should do. Speaking of Shavuot, the Torah says “ On this same day you shall make a proclamation as well; you are to have a holy convocation. You shall do no laborious work. It is to be a perpetual statute in all your dwelling places throughout your generations.”

It is traditional to eat dairy-type foods, and grains at the Festival meal, because G-d promised to give us a Land flowing with milk and honey, and we celebrate the good harvest He has given. The synagogue is decorated with green plants and flowers, to remind us of the greenery around Mt. Sinai. Roses are a favorite because of a play on words in Esther 8:14, “And the decree (דַּת) was proclaimed in Shushan (בְּשׁוּשָׁן).” Thus, the Decree (=Torah) was given “with a Rose” (Shushan means “Rose”). It is traditional to spend erev Shavuot studying Torah to prepare oneself for its “giving” on the festival day. It is also traditional to read Ruth, which combines the two important parts of the Festival: harvest (Ruth was gleaning) and the ingathering of Gentiles (Ruth was a Moabitess). As we celebrate Shavuot, we are reminded that it looks forward to the coming of Yeshua when He will gather in the harvest He has sown, that is, the harvest of people who believe in Him.