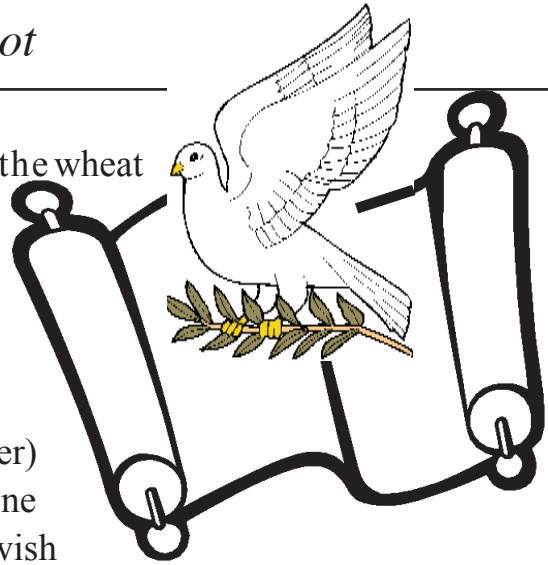


שבועות

Shavuot

Shavuot marks the beginning of the wheat harvest and the close of the barley harvest in the Land of Israel. The word Shavuot itself is the plural of Shavu'a, which means "week." The Festival is called "Shavuot" because since the end of Pesach we have counted seven weeks (or 49 days of the omer) leading up to Shavuot. Likewise, this was one of the three festivals that required every Jewish adult male to make a pilgrimage to Jerusalem.



Shavuot reminds us that we are dependent upon HaShem for all the food that He has provided. Since wheat and barley were the main ingredients of bread, and bread was a staple of life, Shavuot calls us to thank our Creator for His generous provision of life and the way that He sustains us with food.

In Leviticus 23:22, the commandment to leave the corners of the field for the poor is repeated, because Shavuot is the festival of the harvest. As we celebrate God's goodness in providing us with food, we are likewise to be gracious and to give food to those who have none.

HaShem also chose Shavuot as the Festival on which He poured out His Spirit in a special way, to empower His disciples to be a witness of Yeshua throughout the world. Why on Shavuot? The answer comes when we realize that Pesach and Shavuot are linked together through the bringing of the first fruits of the barley harvest, looking forward to the final harvest of the Land. Thus, the festival of redemption (Pesach) is linked to the festival of harvest, teaching us that we were redeemed to serve our Master as His witnesses. This is why He sent His Spirit on the Festival of Harvest. The power of the Spirit would be necessary for the work of bringing in the harvest of the nations. The evidence of the Spirit's work on Shavuot was that everyone who was at the Temple heard the message in their own language. By the power of the Spirit, enabling Yeshua's disciples to spread the Gospel throughout the world, the division of the nations at Babel would be overcome, and God would bless all the families of the earth as He had promised to Abraham.