



THE RABBI'S SHAVUOT MESSAGE:

We Are A Nation Only By Virtue of the Torah

By Rabbi Max Fox
 The Rabbis remark: "Everything depends on luck, even the Torah in the Ark." One Torah is read from constantly; the other one stands in a corner of the Holy Ark, forlorn and deserted. This applies equally well to the Jewish festivals. Some holidays have mazel and others do not. Shavuot is one of the "Sholosh Regalim" – one of the three pilgrimage festivals. Passover and Sukkot are observed for over a week. Shavuot, on the other hand, is celebrated for just two days, and even this is because we are in the Galut (Diaspora). In Israel it is only one day. There is an even more interesting difference between the Festivals. Every Jewish holiday has some unique symbol; some special "mitzvah" which must be performed. On Pesach we are required to eat matzo for seven days. On Sukkot we say the blessings over the Lulav and the Esrog, and we dwell in the Sukkah for seven days. On Rosh Hashanah we are commanded to blow the Shofar one hundred times. On Yom Kippur we fast for twenty-four hours. Shavuot, however, is not only the shortest festival in duration, but is devoid of any symbols or specific



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mitzvot which must be fulfilled. Yet, Shavuot is not a minor holiday. This festival celebrates "Z'man Matan Toratenu" – the giving of the Torah on Mt. Sinai. Shavuot celebrates the birthday of our Jewish Faith – a Faith that has given meaning and purpose to our existence. Unlike the other holidays, Shavuot celebrates the giving of the Torah, and there is no symbol for Torah. There is only one way to celebrate this festival that commemorates that awesome moment in history when G-d revealed Himself and gave our people a most precious gift – the Torah. And that is, by practicing and living in accordance with the precepts and moral teachings of the Torah. To reduce Torah to a symbol is to distort the very concept of Torah. The true celebration of Shavuot lasts more than a day or week. It should be observed 365 days a year, and in a lifetime of practicing and living a life of Torah. As the great Saadyah said: "Our people are a nation only by virtue of the Torah."

Rabbi Max Fox is the spiritual leader at Rodef Sholom in Atlantic City.

Jewish Community Calendar

- May 31 – Sun.**
Fun Run Benefiting Breast Cancer – Fabulous Feat 5K and 1 Mile Fun Run. Veterans Park. Hamilton, New Jersey. Registration begins at 7:30 a.m. with an 8:30 a.m. 1 Mile Fun Run start and 9:00 a.m. 5K start. Goodie bags will be provided to participants. Prizes will be awarded to all one-mile finishers, the top three male and female 5K finishers as well as the top three male and female finishers in eight age categories. Register online at www.ptacticehard.com or contact Marcy at premier5k@aol.com or 609-426-4442.
- June 3 – Wed.**
American Ballet Theatre Trip – sponsored by Congregation Beth Israel. "All-Prokofiev Celebration" at the Metropolitan Opera House in New York City. \$85. Includes bus transportation to and from New York, and orchestra seating at the matinee performance. The bus departs at 9 a.m. from Congregation Beth Israel. The matinee performance is at 2 p.m. Call (609) 641-3600 or email bethisrael@comcast.net.
- June 4 – Thurs.**
Stockton Spring Luncheon – Friends of Encore Learning of Stockton, Spring Luncheon. Linwood Country Club. 11:30 a.m. \$30. Reservations: Esther Steele, 129 Ridgeway Ave., Atlantic City, N.J. 08401. Call Laura at 823-1507.
- June 7 – Sun.**
Cancer Survivors Day – Shore Memorial Cancer Center, DiOrio Hall. 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. Free. Brunch, chair massages, line dancing and giveaways. Call 653-3585.
- June 8 – Mon.**
Sisterhood Meeting – First Sisterhood Meeting for Rodef Shalom. 11:00 a.m.
- June 9 – Tues.**
Why Good Cooks Go Bad – A special refresher course for anyone who cooks will be held at Beth El Synagogue in Margate. 7:30 p.m. Free. Call 823-2725.
- June 12 – Fri.**
Wine Tasting for Downbeach Film Festival – Second annual wine tasting at Lucy the Elephant to help raise funds for the Downbeach Film Festival. \$25. 6 to 8 p.m. Door prizes and silent auction. Tickets will be available at the door. Or you can send a check for \$25 made payable to the Margate Education Foundation
- June 15 – Mon.**
The Israeli String Orchestra of Arad – JCC. 7:30 p.m. Free and open to the public. The orchestra is comprised of 13 musicians playing piano, violin, viola, cello and vocals. Call 822-4404.
- June 30 – Tues.**
Surflight Theatre Trip – Bus leaves from Temple Emeth Shalom. Lunch at Pinzimonio Restaurant. \$65 pp includes lunch, transportation and ticket to show. 8501 Ventnor Avenue, Margate. Bus leaves at 9:30 a.m. Call Carol Myerowitz, 822-3940.
- July 11 – Sat.**
29th Annual Avalon Five Miler – CONTACT Cape-Atlantic will hold the 29th Annual Avalon 5 Miler. 8:00 a.m., Registration beginning at 7:00 a.m. Avalon Community Hall, 10th and Avalon Avenue, Avalon, NJ. Pre-registration is \$15 and same day registration is \$18. T-shirts to the first 125 registered. Call CONTACT Cape-Atlantic at (609) 823-1850 or (609) 463-4564.
- July 17 – Fri.**
Wellness Fair and Blood Drive – Seashore Gardens Living Center. 9 a.m.-3 p.m. Free health screenings including blood pressure, glucose and Wii Fit assessments. Call 609-748-4615.
- Aug. 13 – Thurs.**
Hester Street Klezmer Troupe – Annual Stanley Goldstein Memorial Concert.
- Sept. 2 – Wed.**
Seashore Gardens Annual Gala – Save the Date! Seashore Gardens Foundation Annual Gala will be held on September 2nd at 6:30 p.m. For more information or to learn about sponsorship opportunities, please call 609-748-4614.
- Sept 13 – Sun.**
Deborah Hospital Fall Festival – At the Deborah Heart and Lung Center in Browns Mills. Seeking vendors. 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Fees for vendors range from \$50 to \$120. Call Doreen Doherty, 893-0096 or ddoherty@deborah.foundation.org.
- Oct. 16 – Fri.**
Downbeach Film Festival – Second annual Downbeach Film Festival will be Fri., Oct. 16 thru Sun., Oct. 18. Opening night reception and film preview will kick off the festival, followed by two full days of features and shorts, and workshops in filmmaking and screenwriting. Awards presentation Sun. night. Visit www.downbeach.filmfestival.org for updated schedules, films, and events.

May 29, 2009
 Friday, 6 SIVAN 5769
 Volume 13, Number 22
 Shabbat Candle Lighting 7:58 p.m.
 FIRST DAY OF SHAVUOT
 Deuteronomy 14:22-16:17
 Numbers 28:26-31
 Haftarah: Habakkuk 3:1-3:19

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