

# The Eve of Shavuot

There is a widespread custom in all Jewish communities in the world for men to stay awake the night of Shavuot and learn Torah. The Torah-Box team offers you a practical card to memorize and to spend this time of Kedusha properly.

## Why Stay Up?

**The Midrash** recounts that the Bnei Yisrael slept as usual on the night preceding "Matan Torah" (giving of the Torah), and it was Hashem himself who had to wake them up... Thus, every year on the same date, we make sure to repair this sin.

### Rabbi Chaim Vital:

"All who will stay awake without sleeping even one moment can be assured that they will be saved from trouble for the whole year."

### Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai:

"All those who recite the Tikun of the night of Shavuot, and rejoice in it (...) will receive 70 blessings and will be granted the crowns of the world to come."

### Rabbi Chaim Falaggi:

"They will also deserve to have children and grandchildren who will be Talmidei Chachamim (Torah scholars)."

## Some Laws

**1** The custom is to recite a text called "**Tikun Shavuot**" on the night of Shavuot (it can be found among other places in the book "Krieh Moed"), composed according to the Zohar and the Ari Zal. It consists of extracts from many Torah texts. However, if one knows that it will be difficult for him to read the "Tikun" the whole night, he should organize a study group, that will prevent him from getting distracted, and will help him overcome his tiredness.

**3** Our Sages advised us not to stand up during the reading of the "**Asseret HaDibrot**" (Ten Commandments) in order not to give the impression that the Torah could be summed up with the Aseret HaDibrot alone. If, however, you wish to honour them by standing up, you have to get up at the beginning of the corresponding Aliyah.

**2** Regarding **eating**, during this period, it is advisable to:

-recite one Bracha Rishona at the beginning of the night  
-a single Bracha Acharona at the end of the night.  
-be careful to ensure that there is constantly a plate of food in front of you, **otherwise**, you will have to recite a Bracha Acharona by the end of 72 minutes after you finished eating (**if you did not eat anything** in the meantime).

**4** Whoever stayed up the entire night must recite the **Birchot Hashachar**, (morning blessings) and the **Birchot HaTorah** as usual, except for "Netilat Yadayim".

## Customs of the Festival

1. It is customary to eat milky dishes on Shavuot (in the morning, for example, after the Tefilla) in memory of the Bnei Yisrael who ate milky dishes after receiving the Torah. [Without omitting the essential mitzvah of preparing a Yom Tov meal containing bread, wine and meat].
2. Some people are used to eating foods containing honey, since the Torah is compared to honey.
3. We have the custom of reading the Megillat Ruth.
4. It is good to recite Tehillim, for King David (the author of the Psalms) was born and died on Shavuot. (Rabbi Chaim Falaggi explains that it is better to recite a little Tehilim fervently, rather than the whole Sefer without any heart).
5. It is good to learn the Rambam's "Sefer haMitzvot" or at least study the main rules pertinent to the 613 Mitzvot.

