

## WHY WE EAT DAIRY ON SHAVUOT

### AGGREGATED LIST

- 1) A two loaf offering was brought to the temple on Shavuot. To commemorate this we have two meals on Shavuot, one dairy, and then the typical festival meat meal.[1]
- 2) When the Torah was given, the laws of kosher were taught to the Jews. Since it was given on a Shabbat, they could not slaughter animals nor kosher utensils, so they ate dairy.[1] Some say preparing the meat would have taken too long with these new laws, so they ate dairy in the meantime.[2]
- 3) Torah is nourishing like milk.[1]
- 4) Gematria of Chalav (חלב) is 40, corresponding to the 40 days Moshe was on Mount Sinai receiving the Torah.[1] There were 40 generations between Moshe who wrote the written Torah, and Ravina and Rav Ashi who wrote down the Talmud (oral Torah). The Talmud starts and ends with the letter Mem, which has a gematria of 40 also.[3]
- 5) When Moshe ascended Mount Sinai, angels tried to convince God to not give the Torah to the Jews “Bestow Your majesty upon the heavens... What is man that You should remember him, and the son of man that You should be mindful of him?” (Psalms 8:5-7). The angels’ request was disregarded because the Jews meticulously kept the Torah, especially kosher, as exemplified through their abstinence to meat during the first Shavuot.[1]
- 6) Milk is mentioned in the “milk and honey are on your tongue” (Song of Songs 4:11). The honey and milk are symbolic of Torah, and Shavuot celebrates the Torah.
- 7) [3] "מחלב" is formed from the acronym of the word from Numbers 28:26 ( מנחה חדשה ליהוה ( בשבעתיכם meaning “from milk”, suggesting dairy is an acceptable food for the festival.[2]
- 8) At Mount Sinai the Jews were considered to be innocent like infants, whose food is milk.[2]
- 9) Mount Sinai is called Mount “gavnuim” meaning many peaks. This is similar to the word for cheese in Hebrew, “gevina”. [2]
- 10) The gematria of “gevina” is 70, corresponding to the 70 faces of the Torah.[3]
- 11) Dairy dishes were historically made during the spring time because cheese was made in that season.[2]
- 12) Dairy symbolizes modesty, the same way in which we should receive the torah.[2]
- 13) The Zohar assigns each of the 365 negative commandments in the Torah to each of the 365 days of the year. The Mitzvah that corresponds to Shavuot is “Bring bikkurim; don’t mix a calf in its mothers milk.” Therefore we have two meals, one dairy and one meat.[3]
- 14) Moshe refused to nurse from any of the Egyptian wet-nurses, and only nursed from his mother. The Talmud explains that his must be kept pure since it would eventually communicate with god (to receive the Torah).[3]

15) The Jews previously thought that they were not allowed to eat milk, since it falls under the category “eating a limb from a live animal”, one of the 7 Noahide laws. Upon the giving of the Torah which contained the passuk “land flowing with milk and honey,” dairy became permitted to the Jews.[3]

16) The gematria of ("דסמידא קמחא חלב דבש", honey, milk, fine flour) is 613, the number of commandments in the Torah (actually off by one).[4]

17) Milk is kept in simple clay and glass jars. So too, the Torah can be found among the poor, lowly but modest, not just around the rich.[4]

[1] [https://www.chabad.org/library/article\\_cdo/aid/2160/jewish/Why-Eat-Dairy-on-Shavuot.htm](https://www.chabad.org/library/article_cdo/aid/2160/jewish/Why-Eat-Dairy-on-Shavuot.htm)

[2] <https://www.myjewishlearning.com/article/why-dairy-on-shavuot/>

[3] <https://www.aish.com/h/sh/r/48969771.html>

[4] <https://schechter.edu/why-do-jews-eat-milk-and-dairy-products-on-shavuot/>

Addendum:

18) Meat would remind God of the eigel hazahav, so we eat dairy. – Abraham Goldstein