



THE HEROES & HEROINE OF SHAVU'OT

The festival of Shavu'ot has an obvious focus on Moshe, since it was he who brought the Israelites to Sinai and ascended the mountain to receive the Divine instructions.

There is also a case for calling it the festival of David, who is the symbol of Jewish kingship. He was the founder of the Jewish royal dynasty for which the Ten Commandments are the national constitution.

But that is not the end of the discussion. There is also a possibility that Shavu'ot can be regarded as the festival of Avraham Avinu, the pioneer patriarch whose dedication to the Torah principle of CHESED (lovingkindness) was the central moral principle of Judaism (Micha 7:20).

The psalmist says OLAM CHESED YIBANEH - "The world is based on lovingkindness" (89:3). Avraham trained his children to build a society founded on CHESED (B'reishit 18:19).

All these three heroes have an association with Shavu'ot, but in addition the festival focuses on Ruth,

the great-grandmother of David. CHESED is the keynote of the Megila of Ruth which we read on this yom-tov. Shavu'ot therefore celebrates three heroes and a heroine (Midrash Sh'mot Rabba 28:1).

The Ninth Commandment

The ninth of the Ten Commandments warns us against bearing false witness.

Looked at as a courtroom rule it means that a person who has been where something took place and has seen or heard what occurred must tell the court the truth and not distort the facts.

As a broader principle of ethics it means that data must not be twisted. You must be careful with how you report a situation.

In our generation, false reporting is constantly used to target and hurt Israel. We hear on all sides that the Jewish people have no history of attachment to the Promised Land, that there never was a Jewish Temple in Jerusalem, and Israel has deliberately judaised historical events.

False witness!! **OZ**