

# *Shavuot*

## *BIKKURIM*

*(see also Ki Tavo, p.100)*

### *Deuteronomy 26:10-11*

“Now, behold! I have brought the first fruits of the earth which God has given to me.” And with that he shall lay his basket of first fruits down before the Lord your God and bow before the Lord your God. And you shall be happy with all the goodness which the Lord your God has given to you and your family, to the Levites and to the non-Jews who live among you.

### *Mishnah Bikkurim 3:9*

They decorated the basket of first fruits on the outside with the seven species that the Torah mentions growing in Israel (i.e., grapes, figs, olives, pomegranates, dates, barley and wheat).

### *Sifre Deuteronomy Piska 301*

When one goes into his field and sees a ripe fig, a ripe cluster of grapes, or a ripe pomegranate, he should tie them with strings and say, “These shall be my first fruits.”

## *Discussion Questions*

1. The text here commands us to be happy. Can anyone command someone else to feel a certain emotion? How can you help yourself to feel happy?
2. Below is an illustration of part of a 1500-year-old mosaic synagogue floor in Sefhoris in Israel. It shows the basket of the first fruits with the seven species on top and two pigeons on either side. The plates chained together are cymbals that would have been used in the march to Jerusalem. Shavuot was an elaborate county fair/parade. How could we make our observance of Shavuot more joyous and rich with traditions?



3. This passage from the midrash describes how one would identify the actual first fruit. As we are no longer an agrarian society; what would you consider your first fruits today? How can you show God your appreciation for them?