



A MOUNTAIN OF BLINTZES

Written by Barbara Diamond Goldin

Illustrated by Anik McGrory

The Catskill Mountains is the setting for this story in which the members of a family find ways to contribute the ingredients to make blintzes, a traditional food for the holiday of Shavuot.

Shavuot is celebrated on the 6th day of the Hebrew month of Sivan, which occurs in late May or early June. This holiday is the culmination of a time period that begins each spring on Passover and concludes on Shavuot: on Passover the Israelites were freed from Egyptian slavery; on Shavuot the people were given the gift of the Torah, the Laws, signifying their readiness to become a nation.

RELATING TO HISTORY

In *A Mountain of Blintzes*, Sarah, the mother, speaks to her children of the importance of Shavuot: “When Moses went ... to meet God and receive the Laws—what a meeting! Can you imagine?” Encourage this type of imagination in your home. How fascinating for children to be reminded that thousands of years ago there were youngsters much like themselves—children who laughed when they were tickled and cried when they skinned a knee.

What would it have been like in those days at Sinai? Was Moses friendly to children? Do you think children were permitted to run and be noisy? Did the Israelites know that extraordinary things were happening? Allow questions such as these to guide comparisons and discoveries.

FAMILIES AND THEIR VALUES

This story epitomizes how families, at their best, care for each other and join together when there is a challenge to be met. In your family, this might mean working together to provide a warm home for an animal, supplies for a local family shelter, or funds for an international helping organization.

Open a dialogue with your children about causes you value and for which you hope your children will learn to care. How can your family band together to make a greater impact on these causes than you could separately? Perhaps money is needed: if so, how can each of you contribute? If time is what’s called for, plan the hours during which your family can offer to help. In doing so, you share with your children a treasured Jewish value of caring for all of God’s creatures.