

North Suburban Synagogue

Beth El
בית מוסת בית אל

TU BISH'VAT

HAGGADAH | 5781



Compiled and edited by Hazzan Ben Tisser

ABOUT THE SEDER

In the Mishnah (Rosh Hashanah 1:1) we are taught:

There are four new years. The first of Nisan is for the kings and festival (e.g. from when we count the reign of a Jewish king, and the month from which we start the cycle of biblical festivals). The first of Elul is for the tithing of the cattle...The First of Tishrei for years, for the Sabbaticals (*sh'mita*) and Jubilees (*yovel*), for planting and tithing of vegetables. The first of Shevat is the new year for the trees, according to Beit Shammai. Beit Hillel says the fifteenth [of Shevat].

Three of these new years remain an important part of annual cycle. We know that Pesach is the first in the order of the three Pilgrimage festivals, and so we start our agricultural cycle in Nisan. Rosh Hashanah is the beginning of our calendar year, in Tishrei. Tu Bish'vat is the day on which we celebrate nature and its fruits.

The Tu Bish'vat seder dates back to the late middle ages, when Rabbi Yitzchak Luria and his disciples in Tz'fat led a seder that celebrated the Kabbalistic Tree of Life and the *sefirot*. In modern times we have adapted this ritual to guide our appreciation for the beauty and bounty of nature. For Jews living in the Diaspora, we also use this ritual to deepen our connection to *Eretz Yisrael*—not the State of Israel as a political entity, but the land itself—the very land given by God to our ancestors thousands of years ago.

This *Haggadah* includes songs, readings, and *b'rachot* (blessings) to help us feel the joyful spirit of this holiday, and to help us understand the many levels of connection it offers us. You are encouraged to add your own rituals to your Tu Bish'vat seder, and you may feel free to switch out some of the foods listed herein for those which bring you meaning.

One should always use kosher wine—ideally Israeli wine—for the four cups. As well, one should traditionally taste from the *shiv'a minim*—the seven species of the harvest listed in the Torah as native to Israel, which are wheat, barley, grapes, figs, pomegranates, dates, and olives. Some include almonds as the *sh'kediyah*, or almond tree, is most traditionally associated with Tu Bish'vat as one of the earliest trees to bloom in Israel around this time of year. Cheese and honey are also often incorporated into the seder—both because they complement the seven species well, and to remind us of the “land flowing with milk and honey.”

We hope this Haggadah will provide a basis for you to create your own ritual around this most beautiful holiday. Please reach out to any of your clergy if we may help you along the way!

Portions of this Haggadah were excerpted from the Haggadah Tu Bish'vat of the YM-YWHA of Suffolk, and JNF's Seder Tu Bish'vat.

INTRODUCTION

LEADER Welcome to our Tu Bish'vat seder! Let us begin our celebration in song, for it is so good to be together

ALL SING *Hinei mah tov u-mah na'im, shevet achim gam yachad!*

LEADER For a thousand years the Jewish people lived in Zion, but for two thousand years Zion has lived in the people. Throughout our exile and wanderings, Zion was at the center of our lives.

ALL When we pray, we face toward Jerusalem. At Seder time we sing, "Next year in Jerusalem!" We pray for rain in Israel, and celebrate her harvest festivals. We mourn the historic destruction and devastation of our homeland, even as we celebrate her vibrant existence.

LEADER We have seen the fulfillment of the biblical promise:

ALL "I will restore My people Israel. They shall build ruined cities and inhabit them; they shall plant vineyards and drink their wine; they shall till gardens and eat their fruit. And I will plant them upon their soil, nevermore to be uprooted from the land I have given them, said Adonai your God." (Amos 8:14-15)

LEADER Today we come together to reaffirm our bond with the land of Israel and rejoice in her rebirth. Tu Bish'vat, *Rosh Hashanah La'ilanot*, marks the awakening of nature after its winter slumber. As we celebrate this seder, we renew our pledge to share in the rebuilding of *Medinat Yisrael* and make the desert bloom.

As we stand before God on Rosh Hashanah to be judged, so too, according to legend, are trees judged on Tu Bish'vat. Let us read together a poem by S. Shalom, which expresses these sentiments:

The Fifteenth of Sh'vat

On the fifteenth of Sh'vat
When spring comes,
An Angel descends, ledger in hand,
And enters each bud, each twig, each tree,
And all our garden flowers.
From town to town from village to village
He makes his winged way.
Searching the valleys, inspecting the hills,
Flying over the desert
And returns to heaven.
And when the ledger will be full
Of trees and blossoms and shrubs,
When the desert is turned into a meadow.

THE FIRST CUP OF WINE

All fill their glass with white wine or grape juice.

LEADER In parallel to the Pesach seder, we will enjoy for cups of wine or grape juice throughout this ritual, each with its own significance. Our first cup of wine is white, symbolizing the winter. As we drink it, we recall that nature has been dormant these months, awaiting the warmth of spring and the annual cycle of rebirth.

ALL "You make the grass grow for the cattle, and herb for human labor that we may get food out of the earth; and wine that gladdens the hearts of people, and oil to make their faces shine, bread that sustains humanity" (Psalms 104:14-15)

LEADER Let us recite together:

ALL בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, בּוֹרֵא פְּרֵי הַגֶּפֶן
Praised are you, Adonai our God, Ruler of the Universe, who brings forth the fruit of the vine.

LEADER Throughout our seder we will experience four different types of food, each with unique characteristics. The first kind of fruit we eat is that which has an outer, inedible shell—traditionally the almond. In Israel, the *sh'kediya*, almond tree, blooms just about this time. Its white blossoms tinged with pink brighten the countryside after the bleak grayness of winter. Let us recite the blessing over this fruit of the tree, and thank God for being together to experience this holiday once again:

ALL בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, בּוֹרֵא פְּרֵי הָעֵץ
Praised are you, Adonai our God, Ruler of the Universe, who brings forth the fruit of the tree.

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, שֶׁהַחַיִּינוּ וְקִיְמָנוּ וְהִגִּיעָנוּ לְזֶמֶן הַזֶּה
Praised are you, Adonai our God, Ruler of the Universe, who has given us life, and sustained us, and enabled us to reach this occasion.

As we celebrate this holiday of Tu Bish'vat, so may we be blessed to celebrate together many more times in the future.



ALL SING *Hashkediya porachat v'shemesh paz zorachat
tziporim meirosh kol gag m'vasrot et bo hechag*

Tu B'Shevat higi-a Chag Ha'llanot, Tu B'Shevat higi-a Chag Ha'llanot

The almond tree is growing, a golden sun is glowing,
Birds sing out in joyful glee from every roof and every tree!

Tu B'Shevat higi-a Chag Ha'llanot, Tu B'Shevat higi-a Chag Ha'llanot

Trees

by Joyce Kilmer

I think that I shall never see
A poem lovely as a tree.

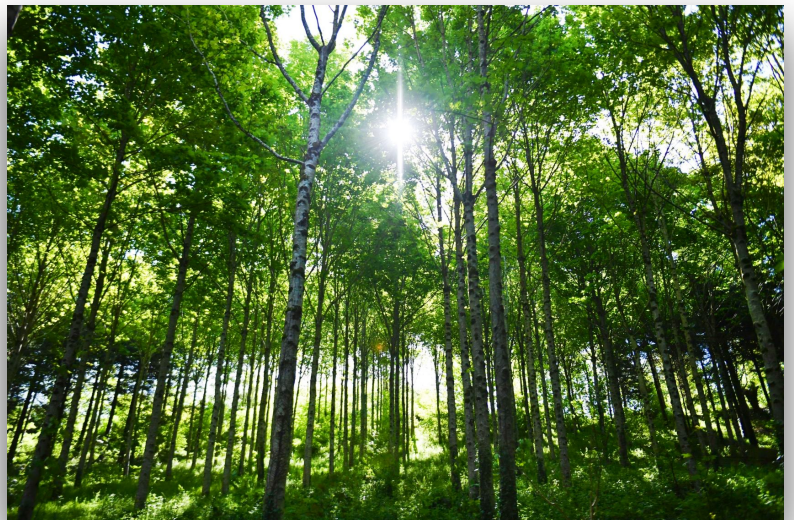
A tree whose hungry mouth is prest
Against the earth's sweet flowing breast;

A tree that looks at God all day,
And lifts her leafy arms to pray;

A tree that may in Summer wear
A nest of robins in her hair;

Upon whose bosom snow has lain;
Who intimately lives with rain.

Poems are made by fools like me,
But only God can make a tree.



THE SECOND CUP OF WINE

All fill their glass with white wine or grape juice, adding a few drops of red.

LEADER Our second cup of wine is white, but tinged with red. It symbolizes the beginnings of springtime and the earth's reawakening. In Israel, pink and white flowers dot the hills and mountains at this season of the years. Let us recite together:

ALL בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, בּוֹרֵא פְּרֵי הַגֶּפֶן
Praised are you, Adonai our God, Ruler of the Universe, who brings forth the fruit of the vine.

LEADER The second type of fruit we eat in honor of Tu Bish'vat is one that has an inner pit which cannot be eaten - the date. When the Bible spoke of "a land flowing with milk and honey," it referred to the honey from the date palm, *tamar*. The *tamar* is one of the trees which abound with blessing, for every part of it can be used. For this reason, the rabbis compared the people of Israel to this noble tree.

ALL Israel is like the date palm, of which none is wasted; its dates are for eating; its *lulavim* are for blessing; its fronds are for thatching; its fibers are for ropes; its webbing for sieves its thick trunks for building – so it is with Israel, which contains no waste. (Bereshit Rabbah 41)

LEADER Let us recite together:

ALL בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, בּוֹרֵא פְּרֵי הָעֵץ
Praised are you, Adonai our God, Ruler of the Universe, who brings forth the fruit of the tree.

ALL SING Tzaddik katamar yifrach, yifrach)
Tzaddik katamar yifrach) x2
K'erez bal'vanon yisgeh (yisgeh)) x6



An ancient Greek proverb teaches:

"A society grows great when old men plant trees whose shade they know they shall never sit in."

Tu Bish'vat offers us a reminder of our unique challenge as Jews to live in three spaces simultaneously. We must be present, keenly aware of the world in which we live. If we don't see the world as it is, we will be challenged to understand our role in continuing the sacred work of *tikun olam*. We must, at the same time, be mindful of our past. We are a people of memory, and that obligates us to know and to learn from our history - maintaining our ancient traditions while keeping them relevant. Finally, we must always look toward the future with hope. Hope is what has sustained the Jewish people for so many generations, keeping us strong, and keeping us connected to one another, wherever we may be.

As we walk through the world, we understand that so much of what we experience - both in the natural world and in society - is due to the work and actions of those who came before us.

There is an ancient Midrash that tells of the Roman emperor Hadrian riding through the Galilee with his army. Along the way, he happened upon an old man who was planting a fig tree. Hadrian asked the man why he was planting the tree, noting the irony of an old man planting a sapling that would take so many years to bear fruit. The man replied, "All my life I have worked, and I continue to work. By God's will I might yet taste the fruit of this tree."

Hadrian said to the man, "Tell me your age." The old man replied, "I have lived for a hundred years."

"A hundred years old, and you expect to eat from this tree?" asked the emperor.

"If it be God's pleasure," replied the old man. "If not, I will leave it for my children, as my father left the fruit of his labor for me."

On this holiday, this New Year, let us resolve to continue to labor for the sake of future generations, just like the old man in the story. May we be blessed to enjoy the fruits of our labor for many years, and may we be doubly blessed that the next generation not only reap the benefits, but learn from us and continue our sacred work.

THE THIRD CUP OF WINE

All fill their glass with red wine or grape juice, adding a few drops of white. A rosé or white zinfandel is appropriate, as well.

LEADER Our third cup of wine, mostly red but with some white, represents the full arrival of spring. The red tulip and red buttercup spring up in Israel and brighter the countryside. As spring arrived, the soil is warmed and softened. Let us recite together:

ALL בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, בּוֹרֵא פְּרֵי הַגֶּפֶן
Praised are you, Adonai our God, Ruler of the Universe, who brings forth the fruit of the vine.

LEADER The third type of fruit we eat in honor of Tu Bish'vat has both an inner pit and a hard outer skin which cannot be eaten. Avocado, which grows all over the north of Israel, is a traditional selection; today we include more exotic fruits such as the lychee nut. Let us recite together:

ALL בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, בּוֹרֵא פְּרֵי הָעֵץ
Praised are you, Adonai our God, Ruler of the Universe, who brings forth the fruit of the tree.

LEADER In the book of Bereshit, we read:
And God said, "Let the earth bring forth grass, the herb-yielding seed, and the fruit trees yielding fruit after his kind, whose seed is in itself, upon the earth." And it was so...and God saw that it was good. (Genesis 1:9-13)

ALL God created the tree for our benefit. Therefore, it is our obligation to uphold and preserve this legacy for future generations. The tree establishes a living link between humankind and nature. This poem, by Rachel, speaks to us in its simplicity:

Artzi

Land of mine,
I have never sung to you
Nor glorified your name
with heroic deeds
or the spoils of battle.
All I have done
is plant a tree
On the silent shores
of the Jordan
And my feet
have trodden a path
Across the fields.



LEADER The Torah characterizes the Land of Israel as being blessed with seven varieties of produce:

ALL "A land of wheat and barley, of vines, figs and pomegranates, a land of olives and honey." (Deuteronomy 8:8)

LEADER We have enjoyed wine and fruit. Let us taste of wheat, and recite the *b'racha*:

ALL **בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, בּוֹרֵא מִיְּנֵי מִזֻּנוֹת**
Praised are you, Adonai our God, Ruler of the Universe, who creates a variety of foods.



THE FOURTH CUP OF WINE

All fill their glass with red wine or grape juice.

LEADER Our fourth cup of wine is completely red, symbolizing the full warmth and glow of summer. The crops are growing and flowers are in full bloom. In the months to come, nature will provide many varieties of fruit for our enjoyment and sustenance. Let us recite together:

ALL בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, בּוֹרֵא פְּרֵי הַגֶּפֶן
Praised are you, Adonai our God, Ruler of the Universe, who brings forth the fruit of the vine.

LEADER The fourth fruit we eat in honor of Tu Bish'vat is one which can be eaten entirely - raisins. The raisin is a dried grape and is the fruit of the vine. Let us recite together:

ALL בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, בּוֹרֵא פְּרֵי הַגֶּפֶן
Praised are you, Adonai our God, Ruler of the Universe, who brings forth the fruit of the vine.

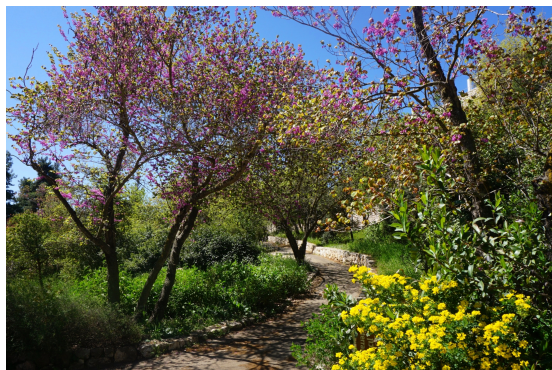
LEADER Let us join in a concluding prayer:

ALL May it be Your will, God and God of our ancestors, that through our eating of the fruits which we have blessed, the tress of Israel will renew themselves by blossoming and growing. May the trees we have planted in Israel add to the beauty and blessing of Zion.

And so we give thanks to *Adonai-borei ha'etz u-vorei peri ha'etz*—the creator of the tree, and the creator of the fruit of the tree.

We pray that this Tu Bish'vat Seder will inspire in us a deeper sensitivity to nature's gifts. May the day soon come when we can plant a tree ourselves in Israel in fulfillment of the commandments.

**לְשָׁנָה הַבָּאָה בִּירוּשָׁלַיִם!
Next year, in Jerusalem!**



GRATITUDE

LEADER

The Torah teaches us: "...and when you will eat and be satiated, you will bless Adonai your God for the good land which God gave to you." (Deuteronomy 8:10)

Let us now join in *b'racha acharonah*—the traditional blessing recited after enjoying food or snack over which *Hamotzi* is not recited.

ALL

Praised are you, Adonai our God, Ruler of the universe, for sustenance and for nourishment, and for the vine and the fruit of the vine, and for the tree and the fruit of the tree, for the produce of the field, and for the precious, good, and spacious land which You have graciously given as a heritage to our ancestors, to eat of its fruit and to be satiated with its goodness. Have mercy, Adonai our God, on Your people Israel, on Your city Jerusalem, on Zion the abode of Your glory, on Your altar, and on Your temple. Rebuild Jerusalem, the holy city, speedily in our days, and bring us up to it and make us rejoice in it, and we will bless You in holiness and purity.

For You, Adonai, are good and do good to all, and we offer thanks to You for the land and for sustenance, for the fruit of the vine, and for the fruits. Praised are You, Adonai, for the land and for the sustenance, for the fruit of the vine, and for the fruits.

Praised are You, Adonai our God, Ruler of the universe, Creator of numerous living beings and their needs, for all the things You have created with which to sustain the soul of every living being. Blessed is the One who is the Life of the worlds.

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יי, אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם,
עַל הַמַּחֲיָה וְעַל הַפְּלִלְיָה, וְעַל הַגָּפֶן
וְעַל פְּרֵי הַגָּפֶן, וְעַל הָעֵץ וְעַל פְּרֵי
הָעֵץ, וְעַל תְּנוּבַת הַשָּׂדֶה וְעַל אֶרֶץ
חֲמֻדָּה טוֹבָה וְרוּחָבָה שְׂרָצִית
וְהַנְחִלָתָה לְאַבֹּתֵינוּ לֶאֱכֹל מִפְּרִיָּהּ
וּלְשָׂבוֹעַ מְטוֹבָה. רַחֵם (נָא) יי
אֱלֹהֵינוּ עַל יִשְׂרָאֵל עַמָּךְ וְעַל
יְרוּשָׁלַיִם עִירְךָ וְעַל צִיּוֹן מִשְׁכַּן
כְּבוֹדְךָ. וְעַל מִזְבִּיחֲךָ. וְעַל הַיְכָלְךָ.
וּבְנֵה יְרוּשָׁלַיִם עִיר הַקֹּדֶשׁ בְּמַהֲרָה
בְּיָמֵינוּ. וְהַעֲלֵנוּ לְתוֹכָהּ. וְשִׁמְחֵנוּ
בְּבִנְיָנָהּ וְנֹאכַל מִפְּרִיָּהּ וְנִשְׂבַּע
מִטוֹבָהּ וְנִבְרַכְךָ עָלֶיהָ בְּקִדְשָׁהּ
וּבִטְהָרָהּ.

כִּי אַתָּה יי טוֹב וְיָמִיטִיב לְכָל וְנוֹדָה לְךָ
עַל הָאֶרֶץ וְעַל הַמַּחֲיָה, וְעַל פְּרֵי
הַגָּפֶן, וְעַל הַפְּרוֹת. בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יי,
עַל הָאֶרֶץ וְעַל הַמַּחֲיָה, וְעַל פְּרֵי
הַגָּפֶן, וְעַל הַפְּרוֹת.

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יי אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם
בוֹרֵא נִפְשוֹת רַבּוֹת וְחִסְרוֹנָן עַל כָּל
מָה שֶׁבְּרָאתָ לְהַחְיֹת בָּהֶם נֶפֶשׁ כָּל
חַי. בְּרוּךְ חַי הָעוֹלָמִים.

הַתִּקְוָה - Hatikvah

Israel's National Anthem

Words by Naftali Hertz Imber

LEADER

As we conclude our seder, we rise and turn our hearts towards Jerusalem. We pray for peace in Israel and in the whole world. We pray that the year ahead be a year of rain, of bounty, and of God's grace. We rise and join in the singing of Hatikvah, our national anthem.

*Kol od balevav penima
Nefesh yehudi homiyah
Ul'fa'atey mizrach kadimah
Ayin letziyon tzofiyah,*

*Od lo avda tikvateinu
Hatikvah bat sh'not alpayim
Lihyot am chofshi be'artzeinu
Eretz tziyon viy'rushalayim*

כָּל עוֹד בְּלֵבב פְּנִימָה
נֶפֶשׁ יְהוּדֵי הוֹמִיָּה
וּלְפָאֵתֵי מִזְרַח קְדִימָה
עֵין לְצִיּוֹן צוֹפִיָּה.

עוֹד לֹא אֲבָדָה תִּקְוַתֵּנוּ
הַתִּקְוָה בַּת שְׁנוֹת אַלְפִּים
לִהְיוֹת עַם חֲפָשִׁי בְּאַרְצֵנוּ
אֶרֶץ צִיּוֹן וִירוּשָׁלַיִם

As long as deep within the heart,
the soul of a Jew is yearning,
And to the edges of the East, forward,
An eye gazes toward Zion.

Our hope is not yet lost,
The hope of two thousand years,
To be a free nation **in our land,**
The land of Zion and Jerusalem.