

Psalm 34, verse 8: *"Taste and see that God is good."*

- *A person is like the tree of a field... (Deut. 20:19)*
- *For as the days of a tree shall be the days of my people. (Isaiah 65:22)*
- *He will be like a tree planted near water... (Jeremiah 17:8)*

ט"ו בשבט
Tu B'Shevat
15th of Shevat

By Ramon Yakob Ben Abraham



- A prayer from the original Tu Bish'vat haggadah, Pri Etz Hadar:

O God, who makes, forms, creates, and emanates the highest worlds! You made the trees and grasses grow from the ground in the shape and pattern of these highest worlds. And this full moon is the beginning of Your work to renew and ripen the fruit trees, to bring forth the fruit of 'the Tree of Life in the midst of the garden.' May it be Your will that our eating and blessing and meditating on these fruits will strengthen the flow of love and blessing over the trees, to make them grow and bloom, for good life, for blessing and for peace. May all Creation return to its original strength and may we see the rainbow rejoicing in its colors. And may all the sparks of divine energy, whether scattered by our hands, or by the hands of our ancestors, or by the sin of the first human against the fruit of the tree, be returned and included in the majestic might of the Tree of Life.



Tu B'Shevat (15 of Shevat)

(חמשה-עשר בשבט)

Hamisha Asar B'Shvat

Mishnah Rosh Hashanah 1:1

אַרְבַּעָה רֵאשִׁי שָׁנִים הֵם. בְּאֶחָד בְּנִסָּן רֵאשׁ הַשָּׁנָה לְמַלְכִים וְלְרִגְלִים.
בְּאֶחָד בְּאֵלוּל רֵאשׁ הַשָּׁנָה לְמַעֲשֵׂר בְּהֵמָה. רַבִּי אֶלְעָזָר וְרַבִּי שְׁמַעוֹן
אוֹמְרִים, בְּאֶחָד בְּתִשְׁרֵי. בְּאֶחָד בְּתִשְׁרֵי רֵאשׁ הַשָּׁנָה לְשָׁנִים וְלִשְׁמַטִּין
וְלִיּוֹבְלוֹת, לְנֻטִיעָה וְלִירְקוֹת. בְּאֶחָד בְּשֶׁבֶט, רֵאשׁ הַשָּׁנָה לְאֵילָן, כְּדַבְּרֵי
בֵּית שְׁמַאי. בֵּית הַלֵּל אוֹמְרִים, בְּחֵמֶשֶׁה עֶשֶׂר בּוֹ:

The four new years are: On **the first of Nisan (Pesach)**, the new year for the kings and for the festivals; On the **first of Elul (Rosh Hashanah)**, the new year for the tithing of animals; Rabbi Eliezer and Rabbi Shimon say, on the first of Tishrei. On the **first of Tishrei (Yom Kippur)**, the new year for years, for the Sabbatical years and for the Jubilee years and for the planting and for the vegetables. On the **first of Shevat**, the new year for the trees according to the words of the House of Shammai; **The House of Hillel says, on the fifteenth thereof.**



Tu B'Shevat was celebrated in the middle ages following the teaching of the four new years found in the Mishnah.

Rabbi Yitzchak Luria instituted the Tu B'Shevat seder with fruits from trees found in the Land Of Yisrael.

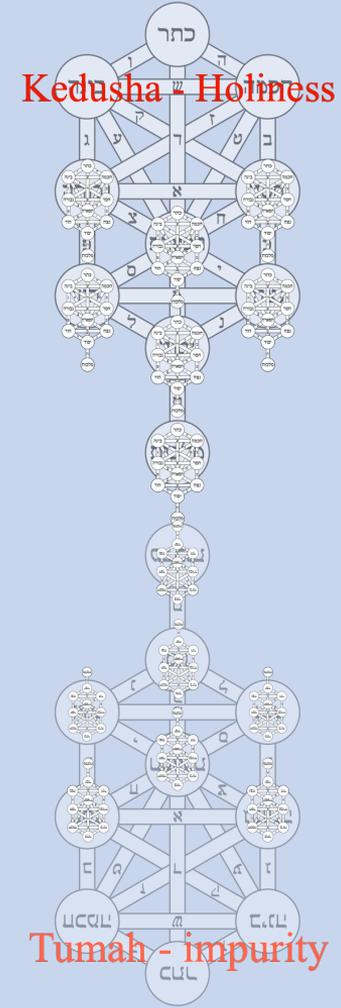
Each food was given a symbolic meaning.

In the seder we find 10 food and four cups of wine.



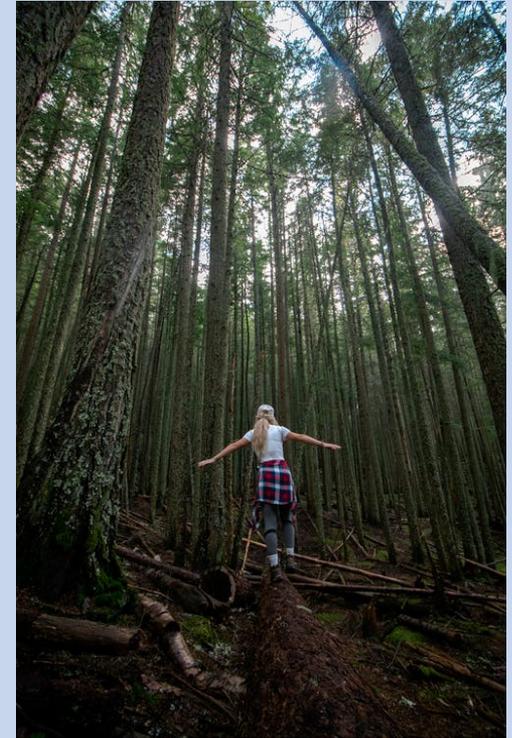
Tu B'Shevat Seder

- Follows the pattern of the Pesach Seder.
- It uses the frame work of the four kabbalistic worlds marked by each cup of wine.
- The eating of each fruit connects us with the Tree of Life G'd placed in Gan Eden.
- One must travel from the most external fruit with a shell (klipot) to the most internal fruits symbolized by totally edible fruits and the sense of smell (sefirot of Light).



Inner Meaning of Tu B'Shevat

- It connects us to nature (teba) which is the same as Elohim (teba = 86 = Elohim).
- It connects us to the interconnected parts of our soul.
- We by acting with mercy toward nature, sweeten the judgment and bring peace and connection to all parts of the system.
- We learn to bear fruits to fulfilled the desires of the other parts of our soul. Just as a tree depends on other animals and trees to bear fruit and seed the ground with new trees, so it is our work dependent on helping others.
- It help us ascend from *Lo Lishmah* to *Lishmah*. In this way we achieve the degree of Binah, which is all love and bestowal.



“The person is called a tree of the field, and Rosh HaShanah is the time of judgment, for better or for worse. ... It is written, ‘Forever is mercy built’ (Psalms 89:3). So on Tu BiShvat, which is called the New Year for Trees, we must be strengthened with the quality of kindness, because for this we merit fruit, which is called ‘a tree bearing fruit.’”

– Rabbi Baruch Shalom HaLevi Ashlag, *Dargot HaSulam*, “The New Year of the Trees.”

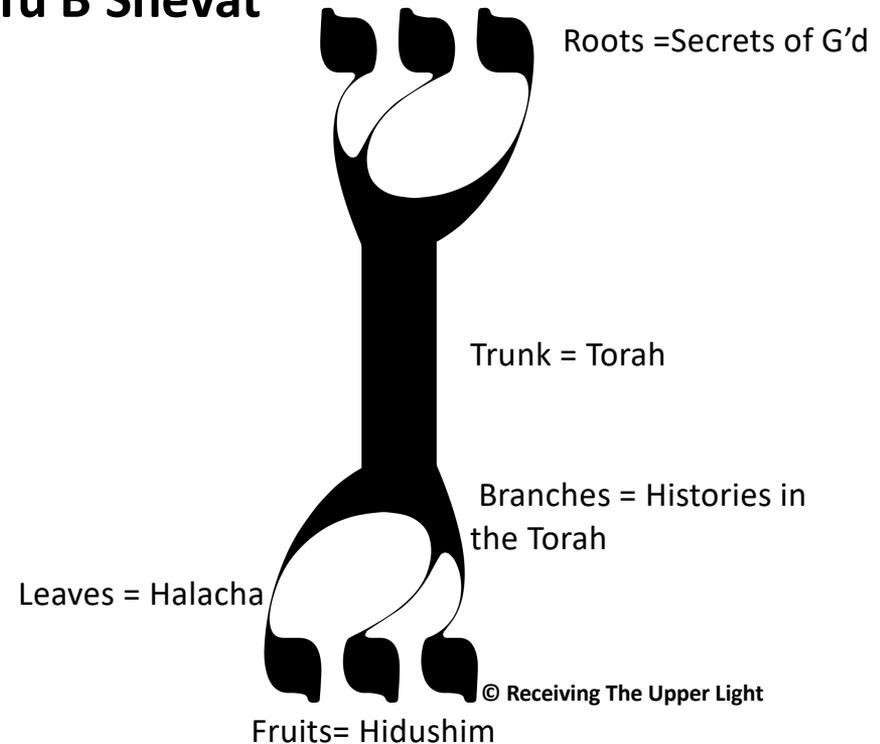


Inner Meaning of Tu B'Shevat

Rabbi Baruch Ashlag, *Dargot HaSulam (Steps of the Ladder)*, “The Matter of Tu Bishvat”:

The Creator wishes for a person who observes a commandment, which is a fruit, to have both the tree and the fruit taste the same, in other words, for his intention to also be “*Lishma*,” for the sake of bestowal.

- *The Tree of Life is US.
- *This Tree of Life is upside down, with roots above and branches below.
- * The fruits are sweet because of our work.



Torah is a tree of life for all who grasp it. (Proverbs 3:18)



Inner Meaning of Tu B'Shevat

וַיִּצְעַק אֶל־יְהוָה וַיִּזְרְהוּ יְהוָה עֵץ וַיִּשְׁלֶךְ אֶל־הַמַּיִם וַיִּמְתְּקוּ הַמַּיִם שָׁם שָׁם לֹא חָק וּמִשְׁפָּט וְשָׁם נִסְהוּ:

So he cried out to the YHVH, and YHVH showed him a piece of wood; he threw it into the water and the water became sweet. There He made for them a fixed rule, and there He put them to the test.

וַיֹּאמֶר אֱמֻנָה שְׂמוֹעַ תִּשְׁמַע לְקוֹלִי יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ וְהִיָּשֵׁר בְּעֵינֶיךָ תַעֲשֶׂה וְהִצַּלְתָּ לְמִצְוֹתַי וְשִׁמְרַתָּ כָּל־חֻקֵּי כָל־הַמִּצְוֹת אֲשֶׁר־שָׁמַתִּי בְּמִצְרַיִם לֹא־אֲשִׁים עָלֶיךָ כִּי אֲנִי יְהוָה רַפְּאֵךְ:

He said, "If you will heed YHVH your G'd diligently, doing what is upright in His sight, giving ear to His commandments and keeping all His laws, then I will not bring upon you any of the diseases that I brought upon the Egyptians, for I YHVH am your healer."

*Bitter water is the world (judgement).

- The wood = Tree of Life
- Sweet = Hessed

A person whose wisdom exceeds his good deeds is likened to a tree whose branches are numerous, but whose roots are few. The wind comes and uproots it and turns it upside down.

But a person whose good deeds exceed his wisdom is likened to a tree whose branches are few but whose roots are numerous. Even if all the winds of the world were to come and blow against it, they could not budge it from its place. (Avot 3:22)



Inner Meaning of Tu B'Shevat

Seder Tu B'Shevat

What you need:

Wine

All white wine cup
All red wine cup



Mixed the white with a little red in one cup and the red with a little white in a different cup.

Fruits

Hard outside and soft inside: nuts, pomegranate, bananas

Soft outside and hard inside (with pit): dates, olives, plums, peaches, apples, avocado

All soft (all edible): berries, figs, grapes



Don't forget the bread for the *hamotzi*!

The wine is the Light of *Hochmah* contained inside the cup which is *Binah*. The fruits are our *Hidushim* or revelations that will make the angels of evil stop their work and come and listen. This in turn, makes them into angels of good.



Inner Meaning of Tu B'Shevat

Seder Tu B'Shevat

World	Ideal	Cosmic Element	Wine	Fruit	Meaning
Assiah	Action	Earth	All white	Hard outside soft inside	Removing the shells (klipot). Remove <i>Lo Lishmah</i> by recognition of evil.
Yetzirah	Formation	Water	White with a little red	Soft outside hard inside	Inside barren yet has potential to become a tree itself.
Briah	Creation	Air	Red with a little white	All soft	When we reach <i>Lishmah</i> we see Creation as Tov-good.
Atziluth	Spirit	Fire	All red	none	Because of the lack of physical manifestation, we must choose to preserve the planet as the representative of the place where we have experienced God.



What to do in Tu B'Shevat?

- Attend a Tu B'Shevat Seder (www.Kabbalah4All.com)
- Plant a tree.
- Give charity.
- Connect with nature. See yourself as part of it, not separated from it. Practice *Hitbodedut* (self-seclusion in the forest).
- Why not? Hug a tree.
- Plant your parsley seed. The plants will be ready and mature enough to be used on Pesach.
- Be a tree in the field of the world and give fruits of good deeds to humanity and nature.



- A Prayer of Reb Nachman of Bratzlav:

Master of the Universe, grant me the ability to be alone; may it be my custom to go outdoors each day among the trees and grass — among all growing things and there may I be alone, and enter into prayer, to talk with the One to whom I belong. May I express there everything in my heart, and may all the foliage of the field — all grasses, trees, and plants — awake at my coming, to send the powers of their life into the words of my prayer so that my prayer and speech are made whole through the life and spirit of all growing things, which are made as one by their transcendent Source. May I then pour out the words of my heart before your Presence like water, O Lord, and lift up my hands to You in worship, on my behalf, and that of my children! May it be Your will, O God of our ancestors, that through our eating of the fruits You have created, the trees be filled with the glory of their ability to renew themselves for new blossoming, from the start of the year to its end, so that our lives too will be renewed and filled with goodness, blessings, and peace.



Happy Tu B'Shevat!

ט"ו בשבט

