

סדר ט"ו בשבט

Tu BiSh'vat Seder



Compiled By

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ותוצא הארץ דשא עשב מזריע זרע למינהו
ועץ עשה-פרי אשר זרעו-בו למינהו וירא אלהים כי-טוב

"The earth sent forth vegetation, plants bearing their own kinds of seeds, and trees producing fruits containing their own kinds of seeds. God saw that it was good." (Genesis 1:12)

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INTRODUCTION TO SEDER

On the 15th day of the month of *Sh'vat* the Jewish community celebrates the holiday of *Tu BiSh'vat*, or what is commonly known as the “New Year for the Trees”. It is a time of year when we celebrate and honor the sacred and unique connection which exists between Judaism and nature; a time when we remember the biblical teaching that “the tree of the fields is man’s life” (Deuteronomy 20:19).

Additionally, it is at this time of year that we remember that spring is not too far away. *Tu BiSh'vat* marks the time that spring traditionally begins in Israel. It is a time when the winter rain subsides and budding begins. It is for this reason that we commonly eat fruits native to *Eretz Yisrael* – barley, dates, figs, grapes, pomegranates, olives, and wheat.

The *Tu BiSh'vat* seder was created in the 16th by Isaac Luria and other Kabbalists. The seder is full of imagery and symbolism meant to mark the four season. Additionally, the seder is split into four “spheres”, each of which represents a different Kabbalistic relationship that we have with the earth: *Assiya* (Actualization), *Yetzira* (Formation), *Beriah* (Creation), *Atzilut* (Nobility).

Additionally, in the nature of this holiday, this seder is a call to action. While the *Tu BiSh'vat* seder is meant to be a celebration of our relationship with nature, it is also a time of education and reflection, a time to look at our impact on the world around us and change the way to interact with our environment during the coming year.



A Note About The Seder:

This seder, although ready to use is easily adaptable. Feel free to insert your own readings or songs into the framework. Additionally we have included an appendix in the back of the seder with additional readings and ideas that may be substituted in at any time.

Introduction

Leader: Every 15th of Shevat Jews gather together to remember the miracle of nature and celebrate our relationship to it. We are about to begin our Seder, to taste the fruits of God's creation and to reflect on our role in the world. Let all who hunger for knowledge and change come together to reflect on our partnership with the earth and our connection with nature.

Reader: In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth, the wind and the water, the sky and the sea and although God planted flowers and trees in the earth's soil, God refrained from sending rain down. The Torah teaches that only once God had created man did God allow the vegetation to bloom. Only after God formed Adam out of the very earth that these plants lay dormant in, only after there was someone else to watch over their wellbeing, did God allow plant life to sprout and their seeds to spread. Humans were to be the earth's caretaker and guardian, a *Shomrei Adamah*. And during Adam's first night in the garden, God took him by the hand and led him to every seed bearing tree telling Adam "See my works, how lovely and praiseworthy they are. All that I created, I have created for you. Be careful though, that you don't ruin or destroy my world, for if you ruin it there is no one who will repair it after you" (*Kohelet Rabbah* on Eccl. 7:13).



Reader: Tu BiSh'vat is a time for us to remember our bond with the earth, and renew our covenant with God. *Midrash* teaches us that "There is no plant without an angel in Heaven tending it and telling it, 'Grow!'" (*Genesis Rabbah* 10:7). Tu BiSh'vat is a time for us to live as angels, to recreate heaven here on earth. The Jewish name for heaven is *Gan Eden*, the Garden of Eden. Today, as we eat, sing, and pray together, let us envision a paradise that we are partners in, shaping, cultivating, and guarding.

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה, יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ, מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, שֶׁהַחַיָּנוּ וְקִימָנוּ וְהִגִּיעָנוּ לְזֶמֶן הַזֶּה

Baruch Atah Adonai Eloheinu, Melech ha'olam shehechyanu v'kiymanu v'higiyanu lazman hazeh.

Praised be You, Eternal our God, Ruler of the universe, who has kept us alive, sustained us and permitted us to reach this season.

Washing of the Hands

Leader: Benjamin Franklin once wrote, "When the well's dry, only then will we know the worth of water." Water provides sustenance for our stomachs and souls. It is the home for millions of plant and animal species and a regulator of world temperature.

Reader: However, water can also be devastating, causing mudslides and flooding, and carrying toxins that pollute our environment and endanger our health.

Leader: Trees anchor our soil, soak up our rain, and filter our drinking water. In essence, they make our life-force, livable. Our ecosystem as a whole and all that depends on it is completely interconnected. This idea is reflected in the teaching of Rabbi Shimon Bar Yochai who once taught, “three things are of equal importance: earth, humans, and rain. Rabbi Levi ben Hiyata said: ... to teach that without earth, there is no rain, and without rain, the earth cannot endure, and without either, humans cannot exist” (Genesis Rabbah, 13:3).

[Recite the blessing for the washing of the hands]

אַתָּה, יי אֱלֹהֵינוּ, מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם אֲשֶׁר קִדְּשָׁנוּ בְּמִצְוֹתָיו וְצִוָּנוּ עַל נְטִילַת יָדַיִם
בְּרוּךְ

Baruch Atah Adonai Eloheinu, Melech haolam asher kid'shanu b'mitzvotav v'tzivanu al
n'tilat yadayim.

Meditation:

And on the banks, on both sides of the river, there will grow all kinds of trees for food. Their leaves will not wither nor their fruit fail, but they will bear fresh fruit every month, because the water for them flows from the sanctuary. Their fruit will be for food, and their leaves for healing.

- Ezekiel 47:12

Four Questions

Leader: Of all of God's creations, why does this holiday honor trees specifically?

Trees are a symbol of our investment in the future, and because they take so long to grow, planting them is the most selfless act one can make for their children. Trees give us shade and food; they purify our waters and house our wildlife. Honoring trees honors the investment of our ancestors and reminds us of our obligation to our children.

There is a story told of a righteous man named Honi. One day he saw an old man planting a carob tree. Honi said to him: "Foolish man, do you think you will live to eat and enjoy the fruit of the tree you plant today? It will not bear fruit for many, many years." The old man replied: "I found trees in the world when I was born. My

grandparents planted them for me. Now I am planting for my grandchildren." And so Honi learned the importance of planting seeds for future generations.

Leader: Why, today, do we specifically eat fruit that is grown in Israel?

In the *Tanach*, Isaiah is recorded as prophesizing that "In the days to come Jacob will take root, Israel will blossom and sprout, and they will fill the whole world with fruit" (Isaiah 27:6). For over 2000 years Jews were exiled from living in the Land of Israel; for over 2000 years the Jewish people were without a home. Now we can fulfill Isaiah's prophesy of not only filling the world with fruit, but partaking in its offerings as well.

Leader: Why are we thinking about planting when spring is several months away?

Although it is still winter here, in the Land of Israel one season is ending and another beginning. It is a period of transformation where "most of the rainy season has passed and the sap has risen; but the time of ripening has not yet begun" (Rashi on *Rosh HaShanah* 14a). Now is the time for us to thank God for the rain for which our Earth depends and celebrate the start of another season of greenery.

Leader: Why, today, do we remember the importance of conservation and environmental stewardship?

When we take our precious resources for granted we overlook their value in our lives, and we overlook their necessity for the future. This holiday is a time to reflect on our place in the world around us and to work to improve our relationship with the environment. Tu BiSh'vat is a time to remind us of the importance of completing God's work in the world, the holiest of deeds. The truth of this lesson is attested to in the teachings of Rabbi Yochanan Ben Zakkai who once said: "If you have sapling in your hand, ready to plant, and the Messiah comes, plant the tree first and then go to greet him."



First Cup – *Assiya* (Actualization)



[Pour a full glass of white wine]

Reader:

I frequently tramped eight or ten miles through the deepest snow
to keep an appointment with a beech-tree,
or a yellow birch, or an old acquaintance among the pines.

~Henry David Thoreau, 1817 – 1862

Leader: We now come to our first cup of white wine, symbolizing the barrenness of winter. As we recite the blessing we are reminded of the emptiness of the winter season, the same emptiness that existed before creation. Yet we are also reminded that just as God formed creation out of nothing, our winter landscape has the potential to one day change and our dormant plants will again grow, thrive, and blossom into spring.

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה, יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ, מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, בּוֹרֵא פְּרִי הַגָּפֶן

Baruch Atah Adonai Eloheinu, Melech haolam borei p'ri hagafen

Blessed are you, Adonai our God, Creator of the fruit of the vine.

Leader: The Tu BiSh'vat Seder is split into four sections, each reflecting the seasons and symbolizing a different way that we relate to trees in our everyday lives. The first section is *assiyya* or “actualization” and is symbolized by the eating of fruits and nuts with a hard outside and a fleshy inside.

Reader: We eat these fruit and nuts to remind us that appearance remains deceiving. Although seemingly inedible from the outside, each of the foods eaten during *assiyya*, when peeled or shelled, will transcend their outward appearance. We call this section of the Seder “actualization” because like winter which has laid dormant for so long, these fruits and nuts contain in them the unique potential to reveal the hidden secrets of creation.

Reader: Additionally, because of their hard outsides, these foods represent the human tendency to judge others on their outer appearance. Judaism teaches us that people are so much more than they appear, and eating these fruit reminds us that despite our size, shape, or color, we all carry a divine spark within because each of us is created *B'tzelem Elohim*, in the image of God.

Leader: We now partake in the first five fruits and nuts of the fifteen that we will be eating today. On Tu BiSh'vat we are commanded to eat 15 different fruits symbolizing the 15 days of Sh'vat leading up to this holiday.

[Serve any five of the following hard shell fruits and nuts:
Almonds, Walnuts, Pomegranates, Peanuts, Coconuts, Pecans,
Chestnuts, Pistachios, Bananas etc.]



[Recite the following]

*For Fruit From a Tree בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה, יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, בּוֹרֵא פְּרִי הָעֵץ Baruch Atah Adonai Eloheinu, Melech haolam borei p'ri ha-eitz <i>Blessed are you, Adonai our God, Creator of the fruit of the tree</i>	*For Fruit from anywhere other than a tree בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה, יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, בּוֹרֵא פְּרִי הָאָדָמָה Baruch Atah Adonai Eloheinu, Melech haolam borei p'ri ha-adamah <i>Blessed are you, Adonai our God, Creator of the fruit of the earth</i>
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Meditation

If you remove one nut from a pile of walnuts, every nut in the pile will be shaken. Similarly, if one person sins, the whole community will suffer. (Midrash Song of Songs Rabba 1)

"[The Torah compares humans to trees] because, like humans, trees have the power to grow. And as humans have children, so trees bear fruit. And when a human is hurt, cries of pain are heard throughout the world, so when a tree is chopped down, its cries are heard throughout the world." (Rashi)



B'tzelem Elohim

Verse 1:

We all got a life to live
We all got a gift to give
Just open your heart and let it out
We all got a peace to bring
We all got a song to sing
Just open your heart and let it out

Chorus:

When I reach out to you and you to me
We become B'tzelem Elohim
When we share our hopes and our
dreams
Each one of us B'tzelem Elohim

Verse 2:

We all got a tale to tell
We all want to speak it well
Just open your heart and let it out
We all got a mountain to climb
We all got a truth to find
Just open your heart and let it
out...**Chorus**

Bridge:

B'reishit Bara, Elohim
B'reishit Bara, Elohim
All our hopes all our dreams
B'reishit Bara, Elohim
Each one of us B'tzelem Elohim



Hashkediya

Hashkediya porachat
 V'shemesh paz zorachat;
 Tziporim merosh kol gag,
 M'vasrot et bo hechag.
 Tu bishevat higiya Chag ha'ilanot (2x)

*The almond tree is growing,
 A golden sun is glowing;
 Birds sing out in joyous glee
 From every roof and every tree.*

*Tu Bishevat is here,
 The Jewish Arbor Day
 Hail the trees' New Year,
 Happy holiday*



Second Cup – Yetzira (Formation)



[Pour a nearly full glass of white wine with a few drops of red wine]

Reader: THE FIFTEENTH OF SHEVAT

On the fifteenth of Sh'vat,
 When the 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
 And all our land is a watered garden,
 The Messiah will appear.
 (Shin Shalom, Israeli Poet)



Reader: On Tu BiSh'vat most of the winter rain has already passed, and the roots of the trees begin to suckle from the new rains of the current winter, and no longer suckle from last year's rains. (*Talmud Yerushalmi*)

Leader: We now partake in our second cup of wine symbolizing the rebirth of spring and the transition from one year to the next. We drink a nearly full cup of white wine with a few drops of red wine to remind us of the gradual process of spring's rebirth. Just as each new stream begins with a trickle, each flower with a single bud, we watch as our simple drops of colored wine slowly transforms the hue of our glass.

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה, יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ, מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, בּוֹרֵא פְּרֵי הַגֶּפֶן

Baruch Atah Adonai Eloheinu, Melech haolam borei p'ri hagafen

Blessed are you, Adonai our God, Creator of the fruit of the vine.

Leader: This section of our Seder is called *Yetzira* or “Formation” and it is marked by eating fruits with pits at their center.

Reader: Although these pits are often discarded, we must remember that they are the seeds, the means to rebirth. We eat these fruits to remind us that every flowering tree was once barren, every budding field once bear, and that the means to growth can sometimes come from the most overlooked of places.

Reader: This lesson translates into how we treat the world. The Talmud teaches us “Everything that the Holy One, Blessed Be, created in God’s world, God did not create a single thing in vain” (*Shabbat* 77B). We eat pitted fruits during *Yetzira* to remind us that all of God’s creatures are valuable and significant and that before we discard anything or anyone, we should take the time to find that value, to explore the hidden spark within us all.

[Serve any five of the following pitted fruits: Dates, Cherries, Olives, Pears, Plums, Apricots, Hackberries, Avocados etc.]

*For Fruit From a Tree

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה, יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ
מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, בּוֹרֵא פְּרֵי הָעֵץ

Baruch Atah Adonai Eloheinu, Melech
haolam borei p'ri ha-eitz

Blessed are you, Adonai our God, Creator of the fruit of the tree

*For Fruit from anywhere other than a tree

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה, יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ
מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, בּוֹרֵא פְּרֵי הָאֲדָמָה

Baruch Atah Adonai Eloheinu, Melech
haolam borei p'ri ha-adamah

Blessed are you, Adonai our God, Creator of the fruit of the earth

Meditation

When in your war against a city you have to besiege it a long time in order to capture it, you must not destroy its trees, wielding the ax against them. You may eat of them, but you must not cut them down. Are trees of the field human to withdraw before you under siege? Only trees that you know to not yield food may be destroyed; you may cut them down for constructing siege works against the city that is waging war on you, until it has been destroyed. (Deut. 20:19-20)



Atzey Zeitim

Atzey zeitim omdim (4x)

La, la, la, la, . . .

Olive trees are standing (4x)



Dayeinu – A Modern Day Interpretation

Had we purchased 100% recycled paper but not reduced our paper usage... Dayeinu?
Would it be enough?

Had we reduced our paper usage, buying products with less packaging and printing on scrap paper but never saved electricity...Dayeinu? Would it be enough?

Had we saved electricity, buying energy efficient appliances and installing compact fluorescent light bulbs but not planted a tree...Dayeinu? Would it be enough?

Had we planted a tree but not safeguarded our forests...Dayeinu? Would it be enough?

Had we safeguarded our forests, writing to Congress and asking for stricter logging restrictions but not cleaned up our streams...Dayeinu? Would it be enough?

Had we cleaned up our streams but not cleaned up our rivers...Dayeinu? Would it be enough?

Had we cleaned up our rivers but not taught our children about the importance of protecting our environment...Dayeinu? Would it be enough?



Third Cup – Beriah (Creation)



[Pour a glass that is half filled with red wine and half filled with white wine]

Reader:

I think that I shall never see
A poem lovely as a tree.
A tree whose hungry mouth is pressed
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.
~Joyce Kilmer, "Trees," 1914

Reader: In order to serve God, one needs access to the enjoyment of the beauties of nature - meadows full of flowers, majestic mountains, flowing rivers. For all these are essential to the spiritual development of even the holiest of people. (Rabbi Abraham Ben Maimonides)

Leader: We now partake in our third cup of wine symbolizing the warmth and ripening of summer. We pour half a cup of red wine, and half a cup of white wine to remind us that growth is a gradual process, that although the trees are full and green and the flowers have blossomed, their growth is not complete. So much more will be created; so much more will come to be.

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה, יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ, מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, בּוֹרֵא פְּרֵי הַגֶּפֶן

Baruch Atah Adonai Eloheinu, Melech haolam borei p'ri hagafen

Blessed are you, Adonai our God, Creator of the fruit of the vine.

Leader: This section of our Seder is called *Beriah* or Creation and is symbolized by the eating fruits that are entirely edible.

Reader: We eat these fruits to remind us of the wholeness of the world, that after each day of creation, God paused, looking at all of his work, and remarking that it was good. As we partake in these fruits we remember that although our lives may feel rushed, we too must pause to look at the wholeness of God's creations and learn to love and appreciate them as well.

Reader: We also take this time to look at the wholeness of our own creations, to examine our relationship with the world, making the necessary changes so that like God, we might call our actions good. Do we recycle? Do we conserve energy? Are we conscious of where our food comes from? What kind of cars do we drive?

We now take a minute to reflect on questions like these and make our own New Year's resolutions.

[Serve any five of the following fruits that have edible skins and don't have pits such as: Grapes, Apples, Dates, Pears, Carobs, Raisins, Strawberry, Blueberries etc.]



*For Fruit From a Tree

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה, יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ
מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, בּוֹרֵא פְּרִי הָעֵץ

Baruch Atah Adonai Eloheinu, Melech
haolam borei p'ri ha-eitz

Blessed are you, Adonai our God, Creator of the fruit of the tree

*For Fruit from anywhere other than a tree

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה, יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ
מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, בּוֹרֵא פְּרִי הָאֲדָמָה

Baruch Atah Adonai Eloheinu, Melech
haolam borei p'ri ha-adamah

Blessed are you, Adonai our God, Creator of the fruit of the earth

Meditation

No part of the date palm is wasted: The fruit is eaten, the embryonic branches (lulav) are used for the Four Species of Sukkot, the mature fronds can cover a sukkah, the fibers between the branches can make strong ropes, the leaves can be woven into mats and baskets, the trunks can be used for rafters. Similarly, no one is worthless in Israel: some are scholars, some do good deeds, and some work for social justice. (Midrash Numbers Rabba 3.1)



This is Very Good

When God made the world, God made it full of light
The sun to shine by day, the moon and stars by night
God made it full of life, lilies, oaks, and trout,
Tigers and bears, sparrows, hawks, and apes

And God took clay, from earth's four corners to give it the breath of life
And God said...

**This is very good, this is very very good
Man, woman, and child, all are good
Man, woman, and child, resemble God**

Like God we love, like God we think, like God we care (x2)
This is very...



Fourth Cup – Atzilut (Nobility)



[Pour a nearly full glass of red wine with a drop of white wine]

Reader:

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!
—Reb Nachman of Bratslav (1772-1810)

Leader: We now come to our final cup of wine. Our nearly full cup of red wines symbolizes the blooming and color of autumn, while the drop of white reminds us of the cyclical nature of the season and the need to harvest and save for the coming winter.

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה, יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ, מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, בּוֹרֵא פְּרֵי הַגָּפֶן

Baruch Atah Adonai Eloheinu, Melech haolam borei p'ri hagafen

Blessed are you, Adonai our God, Creator of the fruit of the vine.

Leader: The final section of our Seder is called *atzilut* or nobility and it is the only section of the Seder when we do not eat fruit. Judaism teaches us that taste is intimately tied to this world. *Atzilut* is a reminder of our transcendence from this world, a chance to experience heaven if only for a short while.

Reader: The Talmud teaches us that “the apple tree has the fragrance of the Garden of Eden and the fragrance of Garden of Eden was that of a field of apples.” (*Ta'anit* 29b). Each day we must pause from our lives to notice the small wonders of earth, the smell of dew, the color of the changing leaves, the sounds of birds migrating south for winter. Only then will we know God’s paradise and experience that which lays hidden in the crevices of our world.

[Pass around a box of spices or a scented fruit]

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה, יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ, מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, בּוֹרֵא מִיְי בְּשָׂמִים

Baruch Atah Adonai Eloheinu, Melech haolam borei minei v'samim

Blessed are you, Adonai our God, who creates different types of spices

Meditation

Every part of the vegetable world is singing a song and bringing forth a secret of the divine mystery of creation (Rav Kook)

The tree of life has five hundred thousand kinds of fruit, each differing in taste. The appearance of one fruit is not like the appearance of the other, and the fragrance of one fruit is not like the fragrance of the other. Clouds of glory hover above the tree, and from the four directions winds blow on it, so that its fragrance is wafted from world's end to world's end." (Yalkut Bereishit 2)



All the World Sings/Ahavat Olam

Ahavat olam, ahavat olam,
Beit Yisrael, amcha ahavta (2x)

All the world sings to You,
The world sings to You (2x)

The song of the trees when the wind stirs their leaves,
The song of the earth when rain soothes its thirst
The song of the seas when waves are set free
The song of the sky when hummingbirds fly

Tout le monde chante de Toi,
Le monde chante de Toi (2x)

Conclusion

Leader: We have now concluded our seder. We have marked the four seasons, and explored how each one is tied to our relationship with God and to the physical world around us. As we finish we remember that we have an obligation to care for the earth, to utilize it while at the same time preserving it for future generations. May the New Year be a year of growth; may it be a year of renewal; and may all our eyes be opened to the wonders of creation. May we come to appreciate everything that is around us and may we be learn to build a brighter and better future for our children.



Dreamer

Chorus Our hands are strong and our hearts are young
And the dreamer keeps a dreamin' ages long

What'd we do when we needed corn?
We plowed and we sowed till the early morn'.
What'd we do when we needed corn?
We plowed and we sowed till the early morn'. For. . . (Chorus)

What'd we do when we needed a town?
We hammered and we nailed till the sun went down.
What'd we do when we needed a town?
We hammered and we nailed till the sun went down. For . . . (chorus)

What do we do when it's peace that we want?
When it's more than a man can build or plant.
We'll gather friends from the ends of the earth
To lend a hand in its hour of birth.

We'll plow . . . we'll sow . . . we'll hammer and we'll nail
We'll work . . . all day . . . till peace is real, for . . . (chorus)

L'SHANA TOVA!

Citations

1. Trees, Creation, and Creativity: A Hillel Tu BiSh'vat Seder (Publication by the Hillel Foundation)
2. The Tu BiSh'vat Seder (Publication by The Pirchei Shoshanim Shulchan Aruch Project-2006)
3. THE TREES ARE DAVENING: A Tu BiSh'vat Haggadah Celebrating Our Kinship with the Trees and the Earth- Dr. Barak Gale and Dr. Ami Goodman (Publication by the Coalition on the Environment and Jewish Life)
4. Tu B'shvat Seder - Rivka Zuckerman and Ilana Sobel (Publication by Hagshama Department of the World Zionist Organization.)
5. Seder Tu Bishvat: The Festival of Trees - Adam Fisher (Publication by Central Conference of American Rabbis - 1989)

Musical Citations:

All the World Sings to You- Anselm Rothchild (notated in NFTY Shireinu)

Azi Zeitim - Traditional (Notated in Seder Tu Bishvat - Adam Fisher)

B'tzelem Elohim - Dan Nichols (notated in NFTY Shireinu)

Dreamer - Lorre Wyatt (notated in NFTY Shireinu)

Hashkediya - Israel Dushman and Menashe Rabina (Notated in Seder Tu Bishvat - Adam Fisher)

This Is Very Good - Jeff Klepper (notated in NFTY Shireinu)

10 Human Plagues

Climate Change – Burning fossil fuels releases greenhouse gasses into the atmosphere, raising our global temperature, increasing the risk of coastal flooding, and threatening nearly every part of our lives.

Deforestation – Trees are our most important natural resource yet a forest area the size of 20 football fields is lost every minute to paper production.

Water Pollution –The United States dumps billions of tons of chemicals into our water every single day, causing health problems for millions of Americans. In fact, scientists predict that each year 7 million Americans become sick from contaminated tap water.

Lead Poisoning - Lead enters our ecosystem through industrial air pollution, corroded piping, and faulty irrigation practices. Without intervention lead can cause kidney problems and developmental disorders in children and can lead to stillbirths and miscarriages in pregnant women.

Habitat Destruction – The leading threats to the diversity of species in the United States are habitat destruction and degradation. In fact 80% of the coastline in the lower 48 states has been developed, thus increasing the rate of extinction to 1000 times the background rate.

Mountaintop Removal –Mountaintop removal strip mining is the practice of blasting off the tops of mountains in order to mine coal deposits underneath. When it rains the residue from these mountains form sludge causing huge mudslides in West Virginia and polluting drinking water.

Radiation Poisoning – Each year countless numbers of Americans are exposed to higher than normal levels of radiation due to nuclear waste and improper x-ray technology. Even small levels of exposure can cause cancer and immune system malfunctions.

Factory Farms –According to the EPA, waste from hogs, chicken, and cattle has polluted 35,000 miles of rivers in 22 states and contaminated water in 17 states. Additionally, factory farms do not treat God's creatures with the respect that Judaism demands that they receive.

Over fishing – Our current fishing practices are decimating fish populations, throwing off natural food chains and allowing evasive species like algae to bloom. In fact recent studies have shown that if current fishing practices continue all fish stocks could collapse in 50 years.

Acid Rain – Acid rain is caused when human chemicals like sulfur dioxide (SO₂) and nitrogen oxides (NO_x) mix with water vapor in the earth's atmosphere and return as precipitation, thereby destroying forests, poisoning wildlife, and affecting human health.

For More Information

To learn more about forests, contact RAC Legislative Assistant Marc Katz at mkatz@rac.org or call 202-387-2800 or visit the following websites:

- <http://www.rac.org> The Religious Action Center for Reform Judaism
- <http://www.coejl.org> The Coalition on The Environment and Jewish Life (COEJL)
- <http://www.americanlands.org/> American Lands
- <http://www.earthjustice.org/index-1.html> Earthjustice Legal Defense Fund
- <http://www.sierraclub.org/forests/> The Sierra Club
- <http://www.fs.fed.us/> The U.S. Dept. of Agriculture Forest Service
- <http://www.wilderness.org/> - The Wilderness Society
- <http://www.npca.org/> - National Parks Conservation Association
- <http://www.nrdc.org/land/forests/> - The National Resource Defense Council forest page

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