

Tu B'Shevat Haggaddah

Introduction

Tu B'Shevat is the Jewish New Year for trees. Leviticus 19:23-25 outlines the importance of Tu B'Shevat, stating:

When you enter the land and plant any kind of fruit tree, regard its fruit as forbidden. For three years you are to consider it forbidden; it must not be eaten. In the fourth year all its fruit will be holy, an offering of praise to the LORD. But in the fifth year you may eat its fruit. In this way your harvest will be increased.

Tu B'Shevat became an important marker of time so Jews could respect the laws of tithing. It was a way to honor the trees, and by extension, the Earth that God gave us. Tu B'Shevat was a way to revere the partnership between humans and nature. By medieval times, the mystical Kabbalists viewed this holiday as a way of spiritual improvement. In line with their general concern for *Tikkun Olam* – spiritually repairing the world –Kabbalists regarded eating a variety of fruits on Tu B'Shevat as a way of improving themselves.

Now, the environment is changing, and the idea of Tikkun Olam is changing with it. As it says in Deuteronomy 20:19, "A human is like a tree of the field." One human, like one tree, cannot make up a community. It takes all of us working together to repair the spiritual and physical damage humans have impressed upon the Earth. As we celebrate this holiday and eat the traditional foods, we must also think about our responsibility to the Earth and how to begin these repairs.

How to use this book

Seder means order. The Kabbalists of Tsfat, Israel, of the 16th century created a Tu B'Shevat Seder loosely modeled after the Passover Seder. Like a Passover Seder, they drank four cups of wine, ate foods that are symbolic of the holiday, and used a haggadah to guide them. This Tu B'Shevat haggadah emulates that seder model.

The Kabbalists taught that we live on four spiritual levels simultaneously: *Assiyah* (doing), *Yetzirah* (formation), *Briyah* (creation), and *Atzilut* (nobility). Every section of the haggadah represents some aspect of these four levels. At our seder, we will reflect on each spiritual level, while tasting the special foods and enjoying the different activities.

Each section contains

- Introduction
- Cup of Wine & Traditional Fruit
- Judaic text
- Scientific fact
- Action items
- Discussion questions

Seders can include all of these sections, or you can select the ones of interest to you. Take turns reading aloud. Each of the four sections begins with a question and answer, similar to the four questions of the Passover Seder. These are meant for reflection during the ceremony. Further spiritual content, discussion questions, poetry, and recipes for the festive meal can be found in the appendix.

You will need

1. Red and white wine or grape juice
2. For each level: (choose any or all of these)
 - Assiyah* – walnuts, almonds, hazelnuts, pomegranate, grapefruit, pineapple, coconut, pistachios, banana, kiwi
 - Yetzirah* – dates, olives, avocados, peaches, plums, cherries, apricots
 - Briyah* – figs, seedless grapes, blueberries, raisins, raspberries, strawberries
 - Atzilut* - candle

3. For the meal:

Plan your meal around the "seven species" from Deuteronomy 8:7-10:

For the Lord your G-d is bringing you into a good land, a land with streams and springs and fountains issuing from plain and hill; a land of wheat and barley, of vines, figs, and pomegranates, a land of olive trees and date syrup; a land where you may eat food without stint, where you will lack nothing; a land whose rocks are iron and from whose hills you can mine copper.

When you have eaten your fill, give thanks to THE LORD your G-d for the good land which has been given you.



Level 1: Assiyah – Doing

Why does this holiday specifically honor trees, rather than people or events?

The Jewish people have had a traditional appreciation for trees since the time of the Beit Hamikdash, the Temple. There are laws regarding the fruits of the trees, which entail giving the fruit as a tithe to the Leviim and Kohanim (priests) in the fourth year and not eating of the fruits until the fifth year of their growth. There is also a prohibition against cutting down the fruit trees of a city upon besieging it (Deuteronomy, 20:19). There used to be a custom to plant a cedar tree for a baby boy and cypress tree for a girl. The children would care for the trees as they grew up and on their wedding days would use the wood as poles for their chuppahs. This carried the tradition of loving trees from one generation to the next. Tu B'Shevat focuses on trees rather than people in order to celebrate and uphold these traditions.

Introduction:

Assiyah means action. Think about nature and the physical world—about actions we can take to repair the world and keep it whole. The earth (eretz) is a symbol of Assiyah because it is permanent and solid.

As a symbol of Assiyah, we eat fruits and nuts with a tough outer shell and a soft inside. These foods symbolize the winter season because of their protective outside. Removing the hard shell exposes a fleshy vulnerable inside.

Before you eat, recite this blessing:

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה ה' אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם בּוֹרֵא פְּרֵי הָעֵץ

Baruch atah adonai, eloheinu melech ha-olam, Borei pri ha-etz.

Blessed are You, our G-d, Sovereign of the universe, who creates the fruit of the tree.

Our first cup of wine is white, reminding us of winter when nature is asleep. The white wine symbolizes purity and represents the beginning of creation. In winter the earth is sometimes barren, covered with snow. We layer ourselves in clothing, blanketing ourselves from the cold just as the earth covered in snow is insulated. We turn up our heaters and start our cars earlier so that we can be warm when we leave our houses. Pour white wine, lift the cup and say:

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה ה' אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם בּוֹרֵא פְּרֵי הַגָּפֶן

Baruch atah adonai, eloheinu melech ha-olam, Borei pri ha-gafen.

Blessed are You, our G-d, Sovereign of the universe,
who creates the fruit of the vine.

Drink the first cup.



Jewish Text:

“Every blade of grass sings poetry to G-d
without ulterior motives or alien thoughts –
without consideration of reward.
how good and lovely it is, then,
when one is able to hear this song of the grasses.
it is therefore a precious thing
to conduct oneself with piety
when strolling among them.”
– *Rebbe Nahman of Bratslav*
Podolia, Ukraine
1772-1811

We see the actions that we can take, both physically and spiritually,
to move toward a greater understanding and harmony between humanity and the earth.

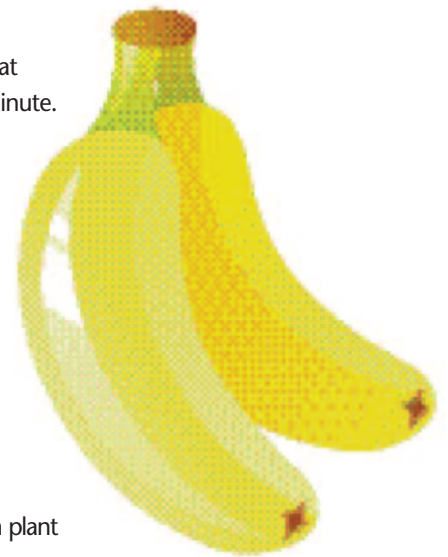
Scientific Fact:

“According to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), driving a car is the single most polluting thing that most of us do. Motor vehicles emit millions of tons of pollutants into the air each year. In many urban areas, motor vehicles are the single largest contributor to ground-level ozone, a major component of smog. Ground-level ozone is the most serious air pollution problem in the northeast and mid-Atlantic states. Cars also emit several pollutants classified as toxics, which cause as many as 1,500 cases of cancer in the country each year. Auto emissions also contribute to the environmental problems of acid rain and global warming. Pollution control measures have drastically reduced emissions per vehicle in the past 20 years. However, during that time the total miles traveled has doubled, resulting in higher levels of air pollutants in many parts of the country.”ⁱⁱ

Action Items:

The following actions help combat vehicle emissions:

- **Don't idle your car.** Idling wastes money and gas and creates pollution by releasing emissions that induce global warming. Unless in traffic, turn off your engine if you are waiting more than one minute.
- **Inflate your car tires to the proper gauge.** Check your car manual for exact details. This can improve your gas mileage and save you seven cents a gallon.
- **Buy locally grown meats and produce.** The average American meal travels 1,500 miles before reaching your plate. Supporting local farmers cuts back on use of fossil fuels and air pollutants while helping your community.
- **Carpool or use public transportation when possible.** Carpooling can save 790 lbs. of carbon dioxide and hundreds of dollars per year. Public transportation not only reduces your emissions but helps support the area you live in.
- **Plant trees.** It is a tradition to plant trees in Israel on Tu B'Shevat. Now and all year long, students can plant trees in Israel.



Discussion:

An article that appeared in USA Today opens with the question, “If you plant some trees, is it OK to drive an Escalade?” While the question might be somewhat facetious, the question remains, what does off-setting our carbon actually do? Is planting trees “like the medieval practice of selling indulgences to wash away sins”? Does it actually do anything other than alleviate guilt for those who are doing the off-setting? What is our responsibility to Earth now that we can begin to see the affects of Global Warming?ⁱⁱⁱ (To read the entire article, go to: http://www.usatoday.com/travel/news/2007-05-29-offset-schemes-travel_N.htm)

Level 2: Yetzirah – Formation

Why do we especially eat fruit that grows in Israel, rather than whatever is in season?

Aside from the comparisons between these fruits and the Jewish people, they have connections to the Land of Israel as well. By eating these specific fruits, we can strengthen our connection to Israel.

Introduction:

Yetzirah means formation. Think about how things are formed in acts of creation and what it means to create. Think about creation not just in the physical sense, but also our ability to be creative, our capacity to feel, speak and sing. Think of a transformation of raw materials, such as forming a pot from clay. We are acknowledging not only the physical world as seen in assiyah, but also of our ability to be creative. Water (*mayyim*) is a symbol of Yetzirah because water moves, cleans and dissolves. Think about what role water plays in our lives, how precious it is. All living things rely on water, yet it is not a renewable resource.

As a symbol of Yetzirah, we eat fruits with soft outer shells and hard pits, reminding us that if we have strong inner energy, we don't need to be hard on the outside.

Before you eat, recite this blessing:

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה ה' אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם בּוֹרֵא פְּרֵי הָעֵץ

Baruch atah adonai, eloheinu melech ha-olam, Borei pri ha-etz.

Blessed are You, our G-d, Sovereign of the universe, who creates the fruit of the tree.

As spring approaches, the sun begins to thaw the frozen earth. The landscape begins to change from white to red as the first flowers appear. In Israel, red and white flowers dot the hills and mountains during this time of the year.

The red also is symbolic of the beginning of springtime and the earth's reawakening. As a symbol of this change, we mix some red wine with the white for our second cup. We see a flame of red, of life, which now burns within this white cup of wine. The flame symbolizes the tree's growth as it has been nourished.

Mix some red juice with the white.

The Ten Plagues

Like the Passover Seder, we will now recognize and spill a drop of wine for each of ten plagues that are presently plaguing our environment. We cannot let apathy for the environment overtake us.

1. Acid Rain
2. Melting of the polar ice caps
3. Diseased trees, the destruction of rain forests, and forest fires
4. Pollution of oceans, lakes and rivers
5. Air pollution
6. Water shortages and droughts in Israel and throughout the world
7. Creating garbage landfills
8. Over-consumption of energy
9. Extinction of species
10. Destruction of the ozone layer



Lift the of wine cup and say:

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה ה' אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם בּוֹרֵא פְּרֵי הַגֶּפֶן

Baruch atta adonai, eloheinu melech ha-olam, Borei pri ha-gafen.

Blessed are You, our G-d, Sovereign of the universe, who creates the fruit of the vine.

Drink the second cup.

Jewish Text:

"How beautiful are your tents, O Jacob,
your dwelling places, O Israel!
Like valleys they spread out,
like gardens beside a river,
like aloes planted by the LORD,
like cedars beside the waters.
Water will flow from their buckets;
their seed will have abundant water.

– Numbers 24:5-7

Scientific Fact:

Of all the water on the earth, humans can use only about three tenths of a percent of it. Such usable water is found in groundwater aquifers, rivers, and freshwater lakes.

Action Items:

For most Americans it is difficult to imagine how devastating a water shortage can be, largely because of the ample availability of water here. But as parts of the U.S. face severe and unprecedented drought conditions, it is important to begin to develop habits that preserve our local water supplies.

The following actions help combat vehicle emissions:

- Instead of waiting for tap water to get cold enough for drinking, **keep a bottle of tap water in the refrigerator.**
- **Wait until you have a full load of laundry** before running the machine to save both water and energy. If you can't wait for a full load, use the right water level to match the size of the load.
- **Turn off the bathroom faucet** while brushing teeth or shaving.
- **Take short showers** rather than long showers or baths, and turn the water off while soaping.
- **Wash your car with a bucket of soapy water** and use a nozzle to stop the flow of water from the hose between rinsing.
- **Give Israel a drink.** Water, vital to Israel, is in very short supply there. JNF is working to help manage water by recycling, building reservoirs, using brackish water to grow fruits and vegetables, and more. You can help by collecting coins in the Jewish National Fund Blue Box. Your change will soon add up, helping to give Israel a drink of water through one of our many Israeli programs such as JNF Water Reservoirs.



Discussion:

The average American individual uses 100 to 176 gallons of water at home each day. The average African family uses about 5 gallons of water each day. How do we reconcile these numbers? We know that water is a non-renewable resource and that other places in the world do not have the access to clean water that we do. Do we then have a responsibility to use less water? Do we need to be responsible for helping other people have greater access to clean water? Does it create more waste for us to try to help from here? (For more on water facts, visit <http://water.org>)

Level 3: Briyah – Creation

Why do we use this day specifically to discuss conservation?

The 15th day of the Hebrew month of Shevat was originally set as the legal date for the birthday of the trees, in order to know when to begin the harvest and when to tithe the fruits for the Temple. A later, tradition arose comparing Tu B'Shevat to Rosh Hashanah, a day on which the trees were judged by God. This is therefore the day on which we discuss how to keep the trees alive and well cared for. We cannot let apathy for the environment overtake us.

Introduction:

Briyah means creation. Think about ideas, hopes and dreams, the natural laws and patterns of nature that govern the universe. The wind (*ruach*) is the symbol of Briyah. In Hebrew, *ruach* means wind, breath or spirit. Creation helps us find wholeness (*shlemut*). Think about how we can create this wholeness in ourselves and with the world around us. Wholeness in our lives comes from the contrasts of G-d's creations – light and dark, sky and earth, sun and moon, land and sea, birds and fish. These contrasts create balance through the use of energy. It takes energy to struggle through imbalances in order to eventually create harmony. We have to find balance in the opposing forces of humans and the natural world. We are instructed to cultivate for our human needs, but we must do so in a manner that does not deplete or degrade creation and the environment. We need to use our energy affectively, in order to find a balance between the two. This will create shlemut, wholeness.

As a symbol of Briyah, we eat fruits that are soft throughout with no protective shells or pits inside so that the whole fruit can be eaten. Here, there is no difference between our inner feelings and our outer selves.

Before you eat, recite this blessing:

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה ה' אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם בּוֹרֵא פְּרֵי הָעֵץ

Baruch atah adonai, eloheinu melech ha-olam, Borei pri ha-etz.

Blessed are You, our G-d, Sovereign of the universe, who creates the fruit of the tree.

During the summer, fruits and vegetables are plentiful, the air is warm, and we are reminded of the richness of life. As a symbol of this change, we mix more red wine or grape juice into the white for a deeper color.

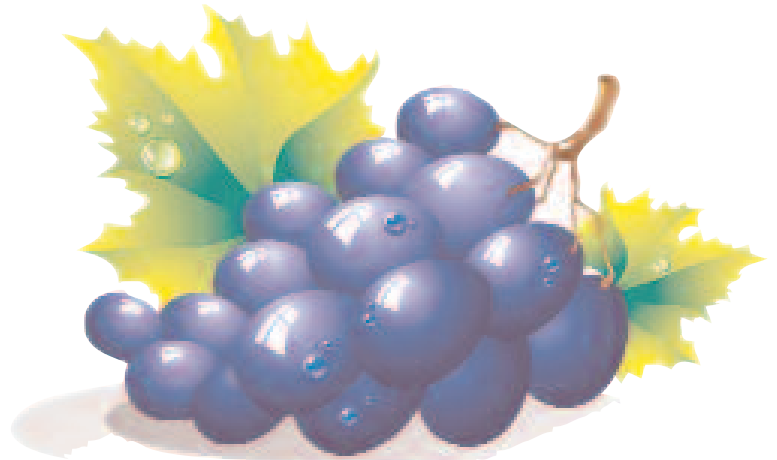
Mix some more red wine with the white, lift your cup and say:

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה ה' אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם בּוֹרֵא פְּרֵי הַגֶּפֶן

Baruch atta adonai, eloheinu melech ha-olam, Borei pri ha-gafen.

Blessed are You, our G-d, Sovereign of the universe, who creates the fruit of the vine.

Drink the third cup.



After the third cup is the **Festive Meal**. You may choose to complete this section prior to eating your meal, or you may continue the section as you eat. Eating bread reminds us that we depend upon the earth. Earth, G-d, and people work together to make a loaf of bread.

Lift the loaf of bread and recite the bracha together:

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה ה' אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם
הַמוֹצִיא לֶחֶם מִן הָאָרֶץ

Baruch atta adonai, eloheinu melech ha-olam, Hamotzi lechem min ha'aretz.

Blessed are You, our G-d, Sovereign of the universe, Who brings forth bread from the earth.

Jewish Text:

“We breathe and the trees breathe.
We breathe in
what the trees breathe out.
So we breathe each other
into existence.
And the breath...
goes in a cycle.” – Art Waskow

We are part of the same cycle of energy as the world around us. We must respect this in order to live harmoniously with the environment, and we must expend our energies wisely.

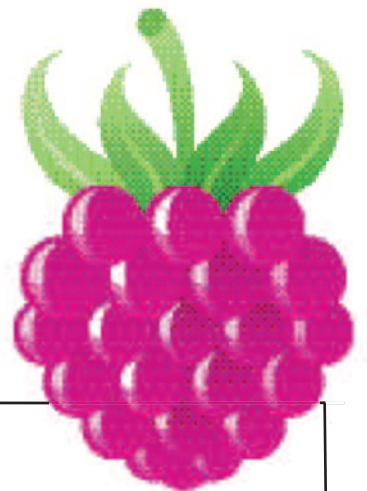
Scientific Fact:

Though accounting for only 5 percent of the world’s population, Americans consume 26 percent of the world’s energy.^v

Action Items:

The following actions help combat vehicle emissions:

- 🌿 **Turn off lights** and appliances when leaving a room
- 🌿 **Open your shades** for sunlight instead of using artificial light
- 🌿 **Un-plug appliances** that are not in use. They continue to use energy even when they are not on. This action can save 1,000 lbs. of carbon dioxide and \$256 per year.
- 🌿 **Switch to** compact fluorescent light bulbs instead of incandescent bulbs.
- 🌿 **Air-dry clothes after washing.** Even using the dryer to partially dry your clothes and letting them air-dry the rest of the way can save more energy and money than using the dryer for all your needs.
- 🌿 **Move your heater thermostat** down two degrees in winter and up two degrees in the summer. Save 2000 lbs of carbon dioxide and \$98 per year.



Discussion:

“When you reap the harvest of your land, you shall not reap all the way to the edges of your field, or gather the gleanings of your harvest. You shall not pick your vineyard bare, or gather the fallen fruit of your vineyard; you shall leave them for the poor and the stranger.”

–Leviticus 19:9-10

Relate this passage to our energy consumption habits. How do we adapt our energy usage to meet the current environmental concerns without sacrificing our comfort? What is our responsibility to the “poor and the stranger” when it comes to energy? Are we actually all connected or does this metaphor not extend into our individual energy usage?

B'tayavon! Enjoy your meal!

Level 4: Atzilut – Nobility

Why are we thinking about planting when spring is yet several months away and it is still cold and wintry outside?

We must remember that Tu B'Shevat is focused on Israel. Right now, spring is about to emerge in Israel and forests are even beginning to show a tinge of green. Trees can now be planted there, in the rain-dampened soil where they will take root. We have read today about our connection to Israel and tasted Israeli fruits as a tangible reminder of the land.

Introduction:

Atzilut means nobility. Think about pure noble spirit, loving-kindness, power and beauty. Feel close to G-d and remember that each creature is part of just one universe. Fire (*aish*) is the symbol of Atzilut. Fire is the energy of life, yet it can also destroy. We must become active citizens in order to stave off our own burning consumption.

We do not eat any fruits to symbolize Atzilut because G-d is timeless, infinite, and impossible to describe. As summer turns to fall, plants turn inward to prepare their seeds. Animals turn inward for rest, and people turn inward to think about the year that has passed and the one that is beginning. Our purpose is to live in balance and harmony with all of G-d's creations. We must be active in discovering that balance and repairing the places in our lives where it does not exist. The fourth cup of wine is fully red to symbolize the full bloom of nature before the cold winter. The strength of the red represents our strength, similar to that of healthy trees with solid roots in the ground and with arms open to the love that connects everything around us.

Pour red wine, lift the cup and say:

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה ה' אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם בּוֹרֵא פְּרֵי הַגֶּפֶן

Baruch atta adonai, eloheinu melech ha-olam, Borei pri ha-gafen.

Blessed are You, our G-d, Sovereign of the universe, who creates the fruit of the vine.

Drink the fourth cup.

Jewish Text:

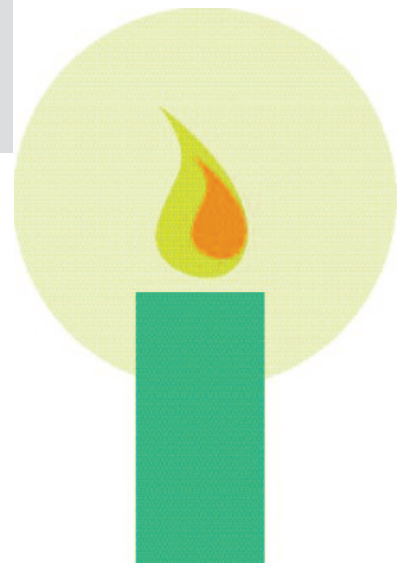
For I have selected him (Abraham)
so that he may instruct his children and his prosperity after him to keep God's ways: to do what is right.
(*Tzedekah U'Mishpat*) – Genesis 18:19

Scientific Fact:

In 2006, Americans drank about 167 bottles of water each, but only recycled an average of 38 bottles per person, which equals about 50 billion plastic bottles consumed, with only 23% being recycled. That leaves 38 billion water bottles in landfills.^{vi}

Action Items:

Each of us must take responsibility for our own part in the worldwide environmental problems. We must act now in order to turn around the devastation that we recognize all around us. As Gandhi said, "You must be the change you wish to see in the world."



The following actions help combat vehicle emissions:

- 🌿 **Participate in GoNeutral's Carbon Offsetting Competition.** Beginning today, there will be a nation wide campus competition to encourage students and campuses to offset as much carbon as possible. To calculate your carbon footprint, please go to <http://www.jnf.org/goneutral/carbonCalc.html>). We will track your progress and show where you are in relation to other schools.
- 🌿 **Encourage your school to compost food scraps.** Set up a compost barrel and volunteer to help out with it. The resulting dirt is rich in nutrients for plants, and it keeps landfills from filling up with biodegradable waste.
- 🌿 **Plant seeds from your seder.** Using the seeds from the fruits you ate during your Tu B'Shevat seder, place each seed in a small paper cup with potting soil. Put the cups in a sunny spot, and remember to water them.
- 🌿 **Participate in Jewish service programs.** Visit www.jewishservice.org to learn about different ways to get involved both locally and globally volunteer this spring break with JNF on Alternative Spring Break (ASB). ASB gives Jewish people between the ages of 18 and 30 a chance to do hands-on volunteering in Israel. For more information, visit our website at www.jnf.org/springbreak.



Discussion:

In an article titled "Generation Q," which stands for "Quiet," New York Times columnist Thomas L. Friedman talks about this generation of college students and how they are "so much more optimistic and idealistic than they should be...[and] so much less radical and politically engaged than they need to be". Are we too complacent as a generation? Does quietly accepting much of what we are given from future generations put us at a disadvantage for making progress, or does it encourage us to make changes rather than just making noise about our outrage? Can we find a happy medium in order to better our lives and the world without destroying the good that past generations have left us? ^{vi} (For the entire article, go to: http://www.nytimes.com/2007/10/10/opinion/10friedman.html?_r=2&n=Top/Opinion/Editorials%20and%20Op-Ed/Op-Ed/Columnists/Thomas%20L%20Friedman&oref=slogin&oref=slogin)

Appendix: Additional discussion questions, songs, and dances, and recipes,



Additional Discussion Questions

1. Assiyah

"Here on Earth too G-d lives, not in Heaven alone. A beautiful tree, a newly plowed field, in them you will find G-d's likeness."

– Saul Tehernikovsky, poet, 19th century Israel

1. There were two trees in the center of the Garden: the Tree of Life (representing Torah and eternal life) and the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil (representing death and distortion). Another way of expressing this distinction is that the Tree of Life is objective wisdom, while the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil is personal experience. Why would Adam and Eve have chosen to eat from the latter, especially since G-d had explicitly instructed them not to?
2. How is G-d present in nature, in our lives and in the things we do?
3. Can a person "own" a tree in the same manner that one can own a television?
4. How is the Torah like water?
5. How do your actions affect the world around you, both in the environment and in your community?

Songs and Dances

Dance the mayyim (water) step, A classic Israeli dance step:

You can go to the left or to the right.

Just follow these four easy steps:

(This is mayyim left. Mayyim right is the opposite.)

1. Cross your right foot in front of your left foot.
2. Put your weight onto your right foot and move your left foot out to the left.
3. Cross behind the left foot with your right foot.
4. Move your left foot out to the left again.

Sing the mayyim song:

U'shavtem mayyim b'sason mi'mienai ha'yeshuah

U'shavtem mayyim b'sason mi'mienai ha'yeshuah

Mayyim mayyim mayyim mayyim hey mayyim b'sason

Mayyim mayyim mayyim mayyim hey mayyim b'sason

Hey hey hey hey

Mayyim mayyim mayyim mayyim hey mayyim b'sason

Mayyim mayyim mayyim mayyim hey mayyim b'sason

Try dancing the mayyim step as you sing!

The almond tree, *sh'kedia*, is the first tree to bloom in Israel in the spring.



Sing this classic Tu B'Shevat Song:

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

Tu B'Shevat is here
The Jewish Arbor Day.
Hail the trees' New Year
Happy holiday!

Grace Aguilar - "Autumn Leaves"
Autumn Leaves!

How beautiful your fading glories are,
O'er hill and dell, o'er wood and fell,
ye shed rich light afar,
Of every gorgeous hue and shade-brown,
ruddy, green, and gold,
Each glance more brilliantly arrayed, new glowing rays unfold.

Belly Dancing Oaks

Giant barren oaks
Silhouette against the twilight sky.
Twisted branches reach towards
The heavens,
Resembling the hands and fingers
Of exotic belly dancers
Searching for
Relief in ancient mudras.
The sun's glow
Fades to night,
As the belly dancing oaks
Sigh into
A sleepy breeze.

– Victoria L. Schmidling

Recipes for Tu B'Shevat

by Phyllis Glazer

Delicious, healthy holiday cuisine based on natural ingredients, with dishes that reflect ancient traditions.

An excerpt from the revolutionary cookbook, *The Essential*

Book of Jewish Festival Cooking, by Phyllis Glazer with
Miriyam Glazer

CHICKEN WITH OLIVES, RED WINE, PRUNES & POMEGRANATES

Serves 6

In this recipe there are fruits from the world of Action, with the pomegranate as the fruit with a protective outer skin and an edible interior; the world of Formation, with olives and prunes as the fruit whose seed represents the ability to create life, and grapes (in the form of wine) from the world of Creation -- a fruit used in its entirety, with nothing wasted.

3- 3 1/2 pound whole chicken, in six pieces or chicken breasts with skin left on

1 cup extra virgin olive oil

8 cloves of garlic, peeled

1 tablespoon capers in brine, drained

1 cup green olives, pitted

1 cup pitted prunes, packed

1/2 cup red wine vinegar

1/2 cup pomegranate molasses

4-6 sprigs fresh oregano or thyme

1/2 cup dark brown sugar or honey

1 cup dry red wine

Rinse the chicken and place the pieces in a bowl. Cover with boiling water. Lift one piece of chicken out at a time, and scrape the surface gently with a knife to remove pinfeathers and excess fat. Pat dry and place the pieces in one layer in a non-reactive (preferably glass) oven-to-table dish.

Mix together the olive oil, garlic cloves, capers, olives, pitted prunes, vinegar, and pomegranate molasses and pour over the chicken. Tear each sprig of oregano or thyme into 2-3 pieces and place around the chicken. Cover and marinate in the refrigerator overnight, turning once or twice.

Preheat the oven to 350°F degrees.

Mix the brown sugar with the wine and pour over the chicken. Turn pieces skin side up. Remove half the sprigs of fresh herbs. Cover the chicken and bake for 45 minutes, turning once. Remove the cover and continue to bake until the chicken pieces are a rich golden brown - another 15-20 minutes.



HERBED RICE WITH SEASONED CURRANTS

4-6 servings

1 large onion, finely chopped

3 Tbsp. oil

2 cups long-grain rice

scant 4 cups water

half tsp. cinnamon

salt and pepper to taste

half cup pine nuts, toasted in olive oil

3 Tbsp. finely chopped fresh dill

3 Tbsp. finely chopped fresh mint

3 Tbsp. finely chopped fresh n parsley

Seasoned Currants (recipe follows)

Sauté the onions in oil till golden, stirring often. Add the rice and cinnamon and sauté, stirring, an additional minute. Add the water and season with salt and pepper. Bring to a boil, lower heat and cook covered over low heat for 20 minutes, or until water is absorbed. Remove from heat and let sit undisturbed for 10 minutes. Stir in the rest of the ingredients with a fork. Transfer to a serving bowl or platter and garnish of Seasoned Currants (recipe follows).

SEASONED CURRANTS

1 cup currants

1 Tbsp. Balsamic vinegar

4 Tbsp. extra virgin olive oil

1 Tbsp. freshly chopped thyme

2 garlic cloves, crushed

freshly ground black pepper

Mix the remaining oil with the currants, vinegar, thyme and garlic. Season with a generous amount of coarsely ground black pepper. Let stand at least 4 hours before serving.

WARM CASSEROLE OF 7 DRIED FRUITS

Serves 8

In ancient times, dried fruit provided an important source of nourishment during the winter and times of scarcity. A richly-flavored and comforting dish, this casserole of dried fruits makes a superb warm breakfast, snack or dessert throughout the holiday.

NOTE: Since most dried fruit is preserved with sulfur dioxide, it's best to look for organic fruit. If unavailable, immerse the fruit in boiling water for one minute, rinse and pat dry to help remove sulfur dioxide and/or oil coatings.

2 cups packed of each: pitted prunes, dried pear or peach halves, small black mission or other figs

1 cup golden raisins

5 3/4 cups bottled or canned white grape juice

2 bananas, sliced

1 1/2 cups fresh orange juice

2 tablespoons honey

Pinch ground ginger, or 1 thin slice fresh ginger

Rinse the fruit and snip off the tips of the figs with kitchen shears. Place in a very large bowl or non-reactive pot and cover with the grape juice. Add ginger (or a cinnamon stick, if preferred). Place a heavy plate on top, and press down to immerse the fruit. Let stand overnight.

Preheat the oven to 350°F.

Transfer the fruit and juice to a casserole with a cover and arrange the sliced bananas on top. Mix the orange juice and honey and pour over the top. Cover and bake for one hour. Serve warm, as is or with sorbet.

TU B'SHEVAT TRAIL MIX

Some suggestions: mushroom barley soup, whole wheat bread, cheeses, salad (with olives and/or olive oil dressing) and honey cake. Also try the recipes in the back of this booklet: chicken with olives, red wine, prunes and pomegranates, warm casserole of seven dried fruits, seasoned currants, herbed rice with seasoned currants, and trail mix.

i Likkutei MoHaRaN: Rabbi Nahman's Wisdom, p. 306

ii http://www.nsc.org/ehc/mobile/mse_fs.htm

iii "Plant a tree, jet to Cancun? Offset schemes not so simple" by Michael Hill, Associated Press Writer. USA Today online: http://www.usatoday.com/travel/news/2007-05-29-offset-schemes-travel_N.htm

iv <http://www.allaboutwater.org/water-facts.html>

v <http://www.solarenergy.org/resources/energyfacts.html>

vi <http://earth911.org/recycling/plastic-bottle-recycling/plastic-bottle-recycling-facts/>

vii "Generation Q" by Thomas L. Friedman. New York Times Online. Oct. 10, 2007.

