



הגדה של ט"ו בשבת

A Tu Bishvat Haggadah

Leader:

We begin to awaken our awareness of Creation with God's warning to the first human being.

Participant:

God led Adam around the Garden of Eden and said,
"Look at My works.
See how beautiful they are, how excellent!
For your sake I created them all.
See to it that you do not spoil or destroy My world,
for if you do, there will be no one to repair it after you."
--Kohelet Rabbah 7:13

Leader:

Tu Bishvat is a celebration of God's Creation. Together, we offer a blessing for Creation.

Together:

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יי, אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, עֹשֶׂה מַעֲשֵׂה בְּרֵאשִׁית
Barukh Atah Adonai, Eloheinu Melekh ha'olam, Oseh ma'asei v'reishit.
We bless You, Adonai, Ruler of the world,
Who makes Creation.

Leader:

What does Tu Bishvat mean?

Participant:

Tu is the sound of two Hebrew letters, *tet* and *vav*. Tet has the numerical value of 9 and *vav* has the numerical value of 6, added together equals 15. Sh'vat is the name of the 11th month. So, Tu Bishvat is the name for the 15th day of the month of Sh'vat.

Leader:

Can you think of an American holiday known by its date?

Leader:

What does the Mishna teach?

Participant:

The Mishna (~ 200 CE) teaches:

The four new years are: on the first of Nisan [the month of Passover], the new year for the kings and for the festivals; on the first of Elul [1 month before Rosh Hashanah], the new year for the tithing of animals ... on the first of Tishrei, the new year for years [Rosh Hashanah]... on the first of Sh'vat, the new year for the trees, according to the words of the House of Shammai. The House of Hillel says, on the fifteenth thereof.

Leader:

According to whom, the House of Shammai or the House of Hillel, do we celebrate Tu Bishvat?

Leader:

Why did our Rabbis create a New Year for the trees?

Participant:

Jewish law requires that a Jew give 1/10th of his or her produce to the Temple as a tax each year. The Rabbis viewed Tu Bishvat as the beginning of the new tax season. Fruit which blossomed before Tu Bishvat could not be given as a tax payment after Tu Bishvat.

Leader:

Why do we celebrate the New Year of the Trees in the middle of winter?

Participant:

In Israel, early winter is a time of heavy rains. Around this time of year in the Holy Land, trees which have been absorbing water from the ground start to draw nourishment from their sap, waking the tree from its dormancy of winter. Leaf buds begin to develop on trees which stood dormant throughout the cold season and the potential for the formation of fruit is revealed.

Leader:

How has Tu Bishvat changed since ancient times?

Participant:

When the Temple was destroyed, Jews no longer looked to Tu Bishvat as a day to mark the new tax season. The Rabbis decided to make Tu Bishvat a day to celebrate Eretz Yisrael -- the Land of Israel. On Tu Bishvat, we eat foods from Israel. Later, the Jewish kabbalists of Tzfat (a town in Israel) created a Tu Bishvat Seder. Like the Passover Seder, this Tu Bishvat Seder has four cups of wine and special foods.

Leader:

What can Tu Bishvat mean to us today?

Participant:

Tu Bishvat has become the Jewish Earth Day. Tu Bishvat reminds us that we are partners with God in preserving our planet and its resources.

Tzadik Katamar

Tzadik katamar

yifrah yifrah

Tzadik katamar

yifrah (2x)

צָדִיק כְּתִמָּר יִפְרַח

כְּאֶרֶז בְּלִבְנוֹן יִשְׁגֶּה

K'erez bal'vanon yisgeh

K'erez bal'vanon yisgeh

K'erez bal'vanon yisgeh

yisgeh (2x)

The righteous will flourish like
the palm tree.

They will grow
like a cedar
in Lebanon.

-- (Tehilim 92:13)

THE FIRST WORLD:
עוֹלָם הָעֲשִׂיָה - THE WORLD OF ACTION

Everyone should have:

- a white or light beverage
- fruits/nuts with inedible shells/peels

Participant:

On this way-station
Between the bleak white winter,
When the trees' sap begins to rise
And the colorful flowers of the warm seasons,
When fruits ripen,
We drink four cups,
Each one redder than the one before,
Each showing that the land becomes warmer,
Each one showing that colors of the fruits
Deepen as they ripen,
Each one in praise of God,
Who renews the fruit of trees each year.

Leader:

What is the meaning of the first cup and its fruits?

Participant:

The white beverage symbolizes the dormancy of winter. As we drink this cup of white beverage, may we feel the sleep of the winter as it refuels our bodies and souls, preparing us for rebirth, renewal, and holy actions in the world.

Together:

(blessing over wine / beer / cider)

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ, אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, בּוֹרֵא פְּרֵי הַגֶּפֶן.	Wine
בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ, אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, שֶׁהַכֹּל נִהְיָה בְּדַבְּרוֹ.	Beer/Cider

Barukh Atah Adonai, Eloheinu Melekh ha'olam, borei p'ri hagafen. Wine

Barukh Atah Adonai, Eloheinu Melekh ha'olam, shehakol niyeh bidvaro. Beer/Cider

Wine We bless You, Adonai, Ruler of the world,
Who creates the fruit of the vine.

Beer/Cider We bless You, Adonai, Ruler of the world,
through Whose word everything came to be.

Before we drink the First Cup:

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יי אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, שֶׁהַחַיִּינוּ וְקִיַּמְנוּ וְהִגִּיעָנוּ לְזֶמַן הַזֶּה.

*Barukh Atah Adonai, Eloheinu Melekh ha'olam, sheheheyanu,
v'kiy'manu, v'higi'anu lazman hazeh.*

We bless You, Adonai, Ruler of the world, Who gives us life,
keeps us strong, and has brought us to this time.

Everyone drinks the First Cup.

Participant:

The fruits eaten at this point have protective exteriors, inedible shells or peels. As we eat the fruit of Asiyah, the physical world of action, we crack the shells of our own preoccupations and release our hope for a world repaired. As it is written,

To the walnut garden I went down
to see the buds of the brook,
to see if the vine had blossomed,
if the pomegranate trees were in flower. - Song of Songs (6:11)

Together:

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יי אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, בּוֹרֵא פְּרֵי הָעֵץ

Baruch ata Adonai Eloheinu melech ha-olam, borei p'ri ha-eitz.

We bless You, Adonai, Ruler of the world, Who creates the fruit of the tree.

Everyone eats fruit or nuts with inedible shells/peels.

Food for Thought:
עולם הפעולה – The World of Action

Methuselah

Somewhere in the Inyo National Forest in the White Mountains of California, its exact location a carefully guarded secret, stands Methuselah, possibly the oldest living [non-clonal] organism on Earth. Methuselah is a bristlecone pine, a hardy tree that thrives in the extreme mountain climate, and is thought to be approximately 5000 years old.

This ancient tree is named after Methuselah, the man mentioned in Genesis chapter four as the 8th generation after Adam, who lived to the ripe old age of 969. Methuselah the tree likely germinated right around the time humanity was transitioning from the stone age into the bronze age, and has stood sentinel ever since.

Despite its age, Methuselah isn't a towering giant. Majestic is probably not the first word that comes to mind—gnarled would be a better fit. Bristlecone pines are stocky and twisting, growing short and wide trunks very slowly in harsh conditions. According to the USDA, bristlecone pines like Methuselah can withstand extreme cold temperatures, dry soils, high winds, and short growing seasons. Bristlecone wood is very dense and resinous, and thus resistant to invasion by insects, fungi and other potential pests. In very old specimens, often only a narrow strip of living tissue connects the roots to a handful of live branches.

Despite this remarkable tree's ability to withstand extreme weather, pests, disease and time itself, its location must be kept secret to protect it from us, and the irrevocable harm we could cause in our eagerness to celebrate its miraculous existence.



Eitz Ḥayim Hi

עץ חיים היא
למחזיקים בה.
ותמכיה מאשר:
דרכיה דרכי נעם
וכל נתיבותיה שלום:
השיבנו ה' אליך
ונשובה. חדש ימינו
כקדם:

*Eitz ḥayim hi lamaḥazikim
bah, v'tom'ḥeha m'ushar.
D'rakheha darkhei noam
v'khol n'tivoteha shalom.
Hashivenu ADONAI eilekha
v'nashuva, ḥadesh yameinu
k'kedem.*

It is a tree of life for those who grasp it, and all who hold onto it are blessed. Its ways pleasant, and all its paths are peace. Turn us toward You, ADONAI, and we will return to You; make our days seem fresh, as they once were.

THE SECOND WORLD:
עוֹלָם הַיְצִירָה - THE WORLD OF FORMATION

Everyone should have:

- a white/light beverage mixed with a dash of red/dark
- fruits/nuts with inedible pits

Leader:

What is the meaning of the second cup and its fruits?

Participant:

The second cup and second fruits symbolize “Yetzirah” -- Formation. Yetzirah is the world of feelings and creativity. As we drink the second cup, white with a dash of red, we imagine winter turning into spring and pray that we too will blossom into our full creative potential.

Together:

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ, אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, בּוֹרֵא פְּרֵי הַגֶּפֶן. Wine
בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ, אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, שֶׁהַכֹּל נִהְיָה בְּדַבְּרוֹ. Beer/Cider

Barukh Atah Adonai, Eloheinu Melekh ha'olam, borei p'ri hagafen. Wine

Barukh Atah Adonai, Eloheinu Melekh ha'olam, shehakol nihyeh bidvaro. Beer/Cider

Wine We bless You, Adonai, Ruler of the world,
Who creates the fruit of the vine.

Beer/Cider We bless You, Adonai, Ruler of the world,
through Whose word everything came to be.

Everyone drinks the Second Cup.

Participant:

In the world of Yetzirah, we eat fruits with soft outsides and hard inner cores. This reminds us that if we have strong inner energy, we don't need to be hard on the outside. As it is written,

Your stature was like a date palm
and your breasts were like the clusters. - Song of Songs (7:8)

Together:

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יי אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, בּוֹרֵא פְּרֵי הָעֵץ

Baruch ata Adonai Eloheinu melech ha-olam, borei p'ri ha-eitz.

We bless You, Adonai, Ruler of the world, Who creates the fruit of the tree.

Food for Thought:

עוֹלָם הַיְצִירָה – The World of Formation

MY MOM'S FAVORITE STORY involves repeated calls from suburban neighbors warning, "Your son's in the top of another tree!" These days I do it for money. Uncle Sam pays me ungodly sums to retrieve "superior genetic material" from the firs in the ancient Northwestern forests. Maybe the money is corrupting my view. At the end of a long day of cone-picking, that's the green I'm thinking about.

Which is not to say that I've lost the feeling. I'll never lose the rush of being forty feet above the forest canopy in the two-inch crown of a two-hundred-foot noble fir, reaching for the very top cones. The sound of the wind builds like a distant jet as it sweeps toward me over miles of needles. When it arrives I'm in for a serious swing. I know I'm just a tourist — the treetops I'm riding have been doing this dance forever.

Some of my best friends lie in front of log trucks, and over the years I've evangelized to thousands of kids about the evils of clear-cutting. But clear cedar is our paneling of choice, and straight-grained Douglas fir makes the best beams in our rustic homes; the older the tree, the clearer and straighter the grain.

Right now I find myself rushing to finish planting the last of hundreds of pine and fir seedlings as the winter rains end. It's tedious work, made less so by the "help" of my six-year-old. He's only in it for the money — each tree he plants is one more nickel toward the Ninja Turtle paraphernalia his zealot parents never buy him.

What are the seedlings to me? It's not so simple anymore, but it's a lot easier than most middle-aged political dilemmas. My son's children will inherit the chance to choose between a new house, college tuition, or a soaring forest. *Bill McKinney, Trout Lake, Washington*

Eitz Hayim Hi

עץ חיים היא
למחזיקים בה.
ותמכיה מאשר:
דרכיה דרכי נעם
וכל נתיבותיה שלום:
השיבנו ה' אליך
ונשובה. חדש ימינו
כקדם:

*Eitz hayim hi lamahazikim
bah, v'tom'heha m'ushar.
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It is a tree of life for those who grasp it, and all who hold onto it are blessed. Its ways pleasant, and all its paths are peace. Turn us toward You, ADONAI, and we will return to You; make our days seem fresh, as they once were.

THE THIRD WORLD:
עוֹלָם בְּרִיאָה - THE WORLD OF CREATION

Everyone should have:

- a red/dark beverage mixed with a dash of white/light
- fruits/nuts that are entirely edible

Leader:

What is the meaning of the third cup and its fruits?

Participant:

The third cup and third fruits symbolize “B’riyah” -- Creation. B’riyah is the world of ideas, hopes and dreams. As we drink the third cup, red with a dash of white, we imagine the warmth of summer and the full richness of nature.

Together:

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ, אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, בּוֹרֵא פְּרֵי הַגֶּפֶן. Wine
בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ, אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, שֶׁהַכֹּל נִהְיָה בְּדַבְּרוֹ. Beer/Cider

Barukh Atah Adonai, Eloheinu Melekh ha'olam, borei p'ri hagafen. Wine

Barukh Atah Adonai, Eloheinu Melekh ha'olam, shehakol nihyeh bidvaro. Beer/Cider

Wine We bless You, Adonai, Ruler of the world,
Who creates the fruit of the vine.

Beer/Cider We bless You, Adonai, Ruler of the world,
through Whose word everything came to be.

Everyone drinks the Third Cup.

Participant:

As a symbol of B’riyah, we eat fruits that are soft throughout so that the whole fruit can be eaten. Here, there is no difference between our inner feelings and our outer selves. We create harmony in our lives and in the world around us. As it is written,

The fig tree has put forth its green fruit
and the vines in blossom waft fragrance.

Arise and go, my friend,
my fair one, go forth. - Song of Songs (2:13)

Together:

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, בּוֹרֵא פְרֵי הָעֵץ

Baruch ata Adonai Eloheinu melech ha-olam, borei p'ri ha-eitz.

We bless You, Adonai, Ruler of the world, Who creates the fruit of the tree.

Eretz Zavav Halav

אֶרֶץ זֹבַת חֵלֶב
חֵלֶב וְדַבָּשׁ
אֶרֶץ זֹבַת הַחֵלֶב
זֹבַת הַחֵלֶב וְדַבָּשׁ

*Eretz zavav halav
halav ud'vash
Eretz zavav haḥalav
Zavav haḥalav ud'vash*

Land flowing with milk
Milk and honey
The land flowing with milk
Flowing with milk and honey

Food for Thought:

עוֹלָם הַבְּרִיאָה - The World of Creation

Read and discuss.

The Gemara relates: When they were taking leave of one another, Rav Nahman said to Rabbi Yitzhak: Master, give me a blessing. Rabbi Yitzhak said to him: I will tell you a parable. To what is this matter comparable? It is comparable to one who was walking through a desert and who was hungry, tired, and thirsty. And he found a tree whose fruits were sweet and whose shade was pleasant, and a stream of water flowed beneath it. He ate from the fruits of the tree, drank from the water in the stream, and sat in the shade of the tree. And when he wished to leave, he said: Tree, tree, with what shall I bless you? If I say to you that your fruits should be sweet, your fruits are already sweet; if I say that your shade should be pleasant, your shade is already pleasant; if I say that a stream of water should flow beneath you, a stream of water already flows beneath you. Rather, I will bless you as follows: May it be God's will that all saplings which they plant from you be like you. So it is with you. With what shall I bless you? If I bless you with Torah, you already have Torah; if I bless you with wealth, you already have wealth; if I bless you with children, you already have children. Rather, may it be God's will that your offspring shall be like you. *Taanit 5b:11-12*

THE FOURTH WORLD:
עולם האצילות - THE WORLD OF EMANATION

Everyone should have:

- a red/dark beverage

Participant:

The fourth cup symbolizes "Atzilut" -- Emanation. Atzilut is the purely spiritual world. In Atzilut, we drink a deep red beverage and picture the vibrant colors of autumn before the cold winter. As we drink the fourth cup of pure red, may we become strong, like healthy trees, with solid roots in the ground and with arms open to the Divine Presence around us.

Together:

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ, אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, בּוֹרֵא פְּרֵי הַגֶּפֶן.	Wine
בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ, אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, שֶׁהַכֹּל נִהְיָה בְּדַבְּרוֹ.	Beer/Cider

Barukh Atah Adonai, Eloheinu Melekh ha'olam, borei p'ri hagafen. Wine

Barukh Atah Adonai, Eloheinu Melekh ha'olam, shehakol nihyeh bidvaro. Beer/Cider

Wine We bless You, Adonai, Ruler of the world,
Who creates the fruit of the vine.

Beer/Cider We bless You, Adonai, Ruler of the world,
through Whose word everything came to be.

Everyone drinks the Fourth Cup.

Participant:

We do not eat any fruits to symbolize the world of Atzilut. The purely spiritual world is impossible to describe. God is timeless, infinite, and beyond all representation. Scents carry us from the material world into the spiritual world. As it is written,

... spikenard and saffron,
cane and cinnamon
with every tree of frankincense,
myrrh and aloes
with every choice perfume. - Song of Songs (4:14)

Together:

May it be Your will, O God, that through our eating of the fruits which we have blessed, that the trees will be filled with the ability to renew themselves from the beginning of the year to its end. So, too, may our lives be renewed with goodness, blessings, and peace.

Food for Thought:
עולם האצילות – The World of Emanation

Poem: Psalm for a Tree, Rabbi Shoshana Rosenbaum

Halleluyah--

How can a tree say so much
while standing perfectly still?

There is one out my window
across the street – I do not know its name
but we pray together, me with my sounds and
mutterings and tree there,
watching me, the opposite of rushed,
opposite of wondering when it should conclude
or what it should skip or when it should move
from this corner. I hope, tree you will blossom
into old age, not be cut short
by the likes of me wanting your sun
or your water.

Today I found another grey hair
burrowed in the roots at my temple.
Sing with me, tree! To the God of grey roots!
For the hope we will grow old together.
Halleluyah!

Participant:

Our Torah and sages ask us to envision a better world where there is abundance for all, a deep relationship between human beings and the earth, and equality and justice for the land and all life. May this vision nurture and nourish our souls. Now, let us give thanks for tonight's fruit and drink and bless the Source which renews all creation.

Recite blessings of gratitude for food and drink.

Together:

We bless You, Adonai, Ruler of the universe,

on cake:
for nourishment
and sustenance.

on wine or grape juice:
for the vine
and for its fruit.

on fruit:
for the tree
and for its fruit.

We thank You for the earth's bounty and for the pleasing, good, and spacious land which You gave to our ancestors. That they might eat of its produce and be satisfied from its goodly yield. Have mercy, Adonai our God, on Your people Israel, on Your city Jerusalem, on Zion the home of Your glory, on Your altar and on Your Temple. Fully restore Jerusalem soon and in our day, bringing us rejoicing in its restoration to eat there of the Land's good fruit in abundance and to praise You in holiness.

For all other foods (i.e. cider)

We praise You Adonai our God, Ruler of the universe, for creating many creatures and their needs. For all that You have created to sustain every living creature, we praise You, the One whose life is eternal.

Adamah v'Shamayim

אדמה ושמים
חום האש צליל המים
אני מרגיש זאת בגופי
ברוחי בנשמתִי

Adamah... V'shamayim...
Hom ha'eish...
Tzlil hamayim...
Ani margish zot b'gufi
b'ruhi b'nishmati

Love the earth
Love the sky
Heat of fire
Drop of water
I can feel it in my body
In my spirit in my soul

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Revised 5781/2021

Compiled by Rabbi Michael Ragozin 5779/2019

Sources:

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