

HAPPY
TU BSMAT



Machar 2015



הנה מה טוב ומה נעים
שבת אחים גם יחד



**Hineh mah tov u-ma na-im
shevet achim gam yachad**

*Behold how good and pleasant it is
when peoples dwell together in unity.*



Tu B'Shvat was first mentioned in the Rabbinical writings of the Talmud by the name "New Year for the Trees".

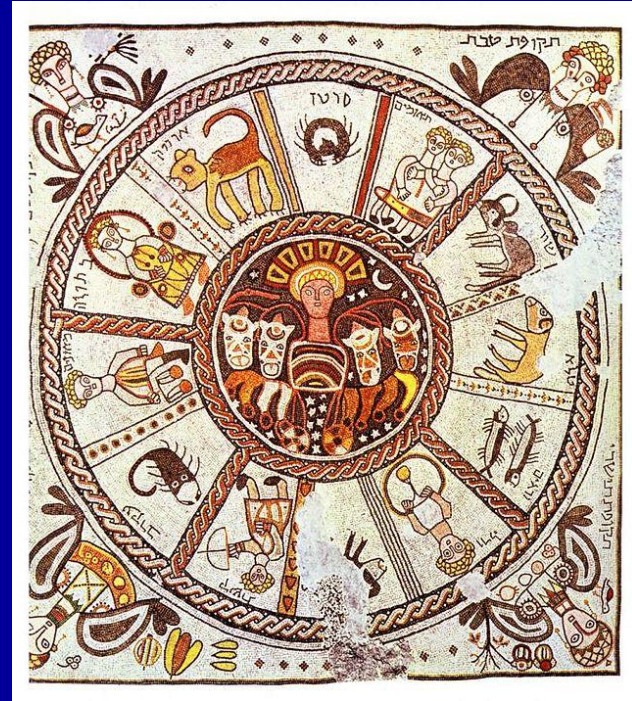
It is the new year for the fruits of the trees – the end of the previous agricultural year and the beginning of the new one.





The roots of Talmudic Tu B'Shvat are in the days of the temple when the Israelites would make the yearly "tree tithes ", or taxes.

Tu B'Shvat is one of four New Years, each marking a different cycle:



- 🕒 The first of Nisan is the Rosh Hashanah for kings and holidays.
- 🕒 The first of Elul is the Rosh Hashanah for tithing animals.
- 🕒 The first of Tishray is the Rosh Hashanah for years.
- 🕒 The first of Shvat is the Rosh Hashanah for trees.



After the Jewish expulsion, in the Diaspora, Tu B'Shvat evolved and took on the characteristics of a holiday. The plate of dried fruits was a symbol of the Jewish People's unbroken bond with Israel and the yearning to someday return.



The tradition of a Tu B'Shvat Seder was established by the Kabbalist Rabbis of Tzefat in the 16th century. They set the tradition of drinking four glasses of wine of changing hues and eating fruits as symbolic representations of the varied aspects of nature.

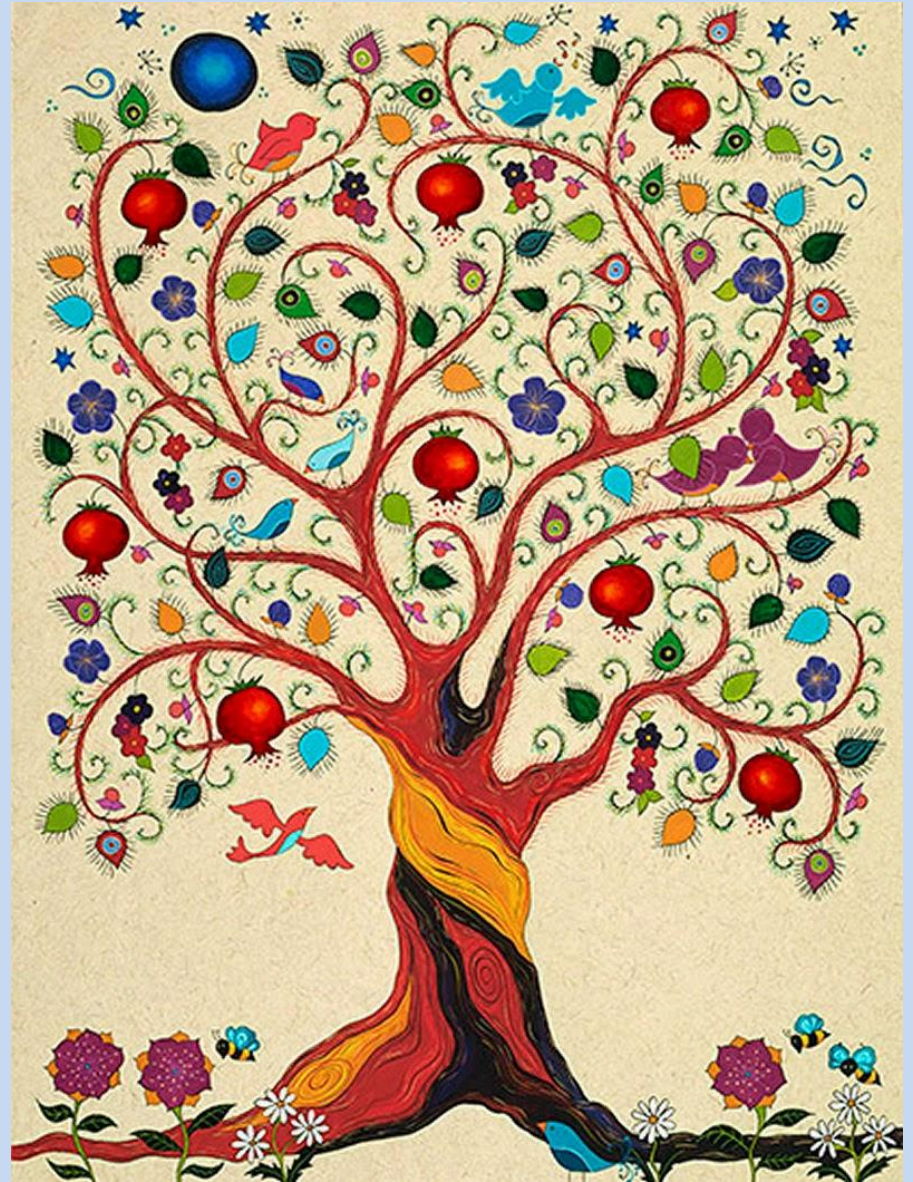
On Tu B'Shvat of 1892, a school-teacher in Israel led his students, saplings in hand, to forest the bare land. Thus began the tradition of planting trees on Tu B'Shvat.



Today, we, as Secular Humanists, celebrate Tu B'Shvat by connecting the traditions of the past with our love of nature and our awareness of the fragility of the environment.



The variety of fruits
and the colorful juices
are a perfect reflection
of the pluralism and
variety within the
Jewish traditions.



The Tu B'Shvat Seder is a celebration of our relationship with nature and a time for reflection. Today, as we celebrate together, let us envision ourselves as partners in shaping, cultivating, and healing the natural world.





Each of the four parts of the Tu B'Shvat Seder represents a season and symbolizes a different aspect of the natural world; each connected to one of the four worlds of Kabbalah, Jewish mysticism.



Asiyah

The World of Action

Autumn



Atzilut

The World of Emanation

Winter



Yetzirah

The World of Formation

Summer



Bri'ah

The World of Creation

Spring



Atzilut– The World of Emanation

Winter

Fill cups with white fruit of the vine.

White is the snow of winter blanketing the Earth in its sleep. Yet the colors of other seasons, now faded, will again return, nourished by the spring thaw.

The ways we connect with nature are often subtle: the feel of the soil or the smell of dew, the color of the changing leaves, the sounds of birds.



The First Cup - Emanation

We raise this cup of white fruit of the vine, to every plant and flower, every shrub and tree, that provide and nourish us, bestowing on us beauty and shade. To the white of winter and

the anticipation to that which

will emanate

from the Earth

with the cycles of the
changing seasons.

L'chayim!

Drink white fruit of the vine.



We smell the sweet scents emanating from the rosemary and cinnamon, representing what is yet invisible to the eye, still to be born.



Smell: Cinnamon and Rosemary



צַדִּיק כַּתְמָר יִפְרַח
כְּאַרֶז בַּלְבָּנוֹן יִשְׁגֶּה

**Tsadik katamar yifrach.
K'erez balvanon yisgeh.**

*A just person, like a date palm, will flourish.
Like a cedar of Lebanon, will thrive.*



Shiv'at Haminim שבעת המינים

The Seven Species are seven agricultural products – two grains and five fruits – that are listed in the Torah as being special symbols of the Land of Israel. The Seven Species are:



wheat, barley,
grape, fig,
pomegranate,
olive (oil),
and date (honey).

Deuteronomy 8:8

Bri'ah— The World of Creation

Spring

Add a few drops of red fruit of the vine to the white.

As our fruit of the vine turns a light shade of pink, we are reminded of the spring, when nature begins to blossom.

The trees will soon bud and begin to bloom, new life will sprout. But their growth is not complete;

so much more will be created;
so much more is yet to come.



The Second Cup – Creation

Let us raise our glasses to the new life being created this and every year. May these new beginnings all grow to have roots strongly connected to family and past, a sturdy trunk that

allows them to stand proud and firm with their beliefs, and leaves that can change with the changes of time.



Drink white fruit of the vine with a few drops of red.

L'chayim!

Fruits that are entirely edible, like the grape and fig, remind us of the wholeness of the world, where nothing is wasted and everything nourishes everything else. We can take this time to look at the fruit of our own creations and actions and consider how to deepen our relationships in the world and with the earth.



Eat: Grapes / Raisins / Apples / Pears / Blueberries / Raspberries

Hashkediya porachat
veshemesh paz zorachat
Tziporim merosh kol gag
Mevasrot et bo hechag



השקדיה פורחת,
ושמש פז זורחת.
צפורים מראש כל גג
מבשרות את בוא החג:

Tu B'Shvat hegi'ah - chag la'ilanot (x2)

ט"ו בשבט הגיע - חג האילנות!
ט"ו בשבט הגיע - חג האילנות.

The almond tree is blooming
The golden sun is looming
From the rooftops sing the birds
Calling out with cheerful words:



Tu biShvat is here now - the holiday of trees! (x2)

Yetzirah— The World of Formation

Summer

Fill glasses with half white and half red fruit of the vine.

As spring changes into summer,
flowers bloom and Earth fills with
color and life; nature assumes
its full shape and form.

The dark, warm hue of the juice
reminds us of the summer's warmth
and the ripening fruits it brings.



The Third Cup - Formation

As we raise this glass, let us plant a seed which will sprout to form a stronger Machar community and a world of people committed to the freedom and

justice of all humans
and to protecting
the environment.



L'chayim!

Drink half white and half red fruit of the vine.



Although we discard the pits of these fruits, they are the seeds, the means to rebirth. These fruits remind us that every flowering tree was once bare and that the seed to growth can sometimes come from the innermost overlooked places. The fruits symbolize the potential within us that we have not tapped.

Eat: Olives/ Plums/Apricots/Peach



**Lo yisa goy el goy cherev
Lo yilmedu od milchama**

**And into plowshares beat their swords,
And into pruning hooks their spears
Nations won't lift their swords again
Nor shall they learn war any more**



Isaiah 2: 3-4

Asiyah– The World of Action

Autumn

The highest of the worlds is that of Asiya – action. Let us never forget that our existence depends on the preservation of both environment and humans. When we want to have more and pay less, someone at the end of the Earth is enslaved. When dirty industries are moved far away to keep our space clean, the soil, air, and water elsewhere become polluted.

All actions have consequences.



The Fourth Cup - Action

We raise this glass of red fruit of the vine, symbolizing the beautiful colors of autumn, completing the cycle of seasons.



As we drink, let us make a pledge to actively work to take good care of Earth for all living things.

Drink red fruit of the vine.

L'chayim!

Fruits eaten at the level of Asiyah, although seemingly inedible from the outside, each holds gifts that transcend their outward appearance. Like the approaching winter, where everything lays dormant and hidden, these fruits contain inside them the potential to reveal what is hidden within.



Eat: Pomegranates/Clementine/banana

May the New Year of The Trees
begin a year of growth;
may it be a year of renewal for
the trees and for us;
may our eyes be opened to the
wonders of nature,
and may we nurture the world
that nurtures us.



