

A Tu B'Shvat Seder

The Tremont St. 20s & 30s
Temple Beth Shalom
Cambridge, Massachusetts
15 Shvat 5763 ♣ January 16, 2003 (REVISED)

*This seder is designed to be read by a group in turns around the table, round-robin style, without a designated “leader”. Each participant should read one bulleted (♣) paragraph in turn. **Lines in bold should be recited aloud by the entire group.** Instructions to the group, like this, are in italics.*

INTRODUCTION: ABOUT TREES

- ♣ Rabbi Yochanan ben Zakkai said, “If you are holding a sapling in your hand and you hear that the Messiah is coming—first plant the sapling, and then go and greet the Messiah.” (*Avot de Rabbi Natan*)
- ♣ “And G-d planted a garden in Eden ... and G-d made to grow from the ground all sorts of trees, pleasant to look at and good for eating.” (*Genesis 2:8-9*) From the beginning of creation, the Holy One was first occupied with the planting of trees. The Talmud says, “You too, when you enter the Land, must occupy yourselves first with nothing else but the planting of trees, as it is written, ‘When you come into the land, you shall plant trees.’ (*Leviticus 19:23*)”³
- ♣ Trees give us oxygen and wood, shade and fragrance, fruits and forests, paper and syrup, landscapes and almonds. We could no more live on this earth without trees than we could live without sunshine, air, or water. And since the power to plant and destroy trees is in our hands, Judaism gives us a holiday to celebrate them.¹
- ♣ A custom reaching back to the Talmudic period suggests that on Tu B'Shvat we plant a cedar for every boy born the previous year and a cypress for every girl. When a man and woman marry, branches from his tree and her tree can be cut and used to weave their *chuppah*, their wedding canopy.¹
- ♣ The Torah tells us that just as we rest every seventh day, the earth must rest every seventh year. This is called the *shemittah* year and is observed in Israel to this day. The land needs time to replenish itself; otherwise, its nutrients will dry up, and its crops will wither. And we need to be reminded that we are stewards, not owners, of the land.¹

- ☞ G-d said: “Here, I give you all plants that bear seeds that are upon the face of all the earth, and all trees in which there is tree fruit that bears seeds—for you shall they be, for eating; and also for all the living things of the earth, for all the fowl of the heavens, for all that crawls about upon the earth in which there is living being—all green plants for eating.” (*Genesis 1:29-30*)
- ☞ According to the Torah, fruit is the natural food of man, provided by G-d “ready-to-eat.” G-d told Adam and Eve to eat fruits and vegetables; only after the Flood did G-d permit Noah and his descendants to eat meat. When the Messianic Age is at hand and the conditions of the Garden of Eden are restored, then “The lion will eat straw like the ox ... They shall not hurt or destroy in all My holy mountain” (*Isaiah 11:7,9*). People will again eat fruits and vegetables, no more taking the life of living creatures for their food.²
- ☞ The Garden of Eden, the Torah’s metaphor for heavenly bliss and closeness to G-d, is an orchard of fruit trees. The Kabbalah often refers to the *Shechinah* as “the Holy Apple Orchard.” To appreciate Tu B’Shvat, we must appreciate the spiritual aspect of fruit and fruit trees.²

THE FOUR QUESTIONS

It wouldn’t be a proper seder without four questions, would it?

- ☞ Why do fruit trees need a New Year at all?
- ☞ Why do we make a seder for Tu B’Shvat?
- ☞ On all other days, we are lucky to get in our three to five recommended daily servings of fruits. Why on this day should we eat as many as thirty different kinds of fruits?
- ☞ On all other days, we drink red wine with meat and white wine with fish or chicken. Why on this day do we drink wine of four colors, progressing from white to red?⁶

WHY DO FRUIT TREES NEED A NEW YEAR?

- ☞ Tu B’Shvat did not start out as a holiday with ethical messages, special celebrations, or rituals. Originally it was a legal tool for counting the age of a tree, which was important for two reasons: *orlah* and *ma’aser*. *Orlah* is the name given to fruit produced during a tree’s first three years. According to Jewish law, that fruit may not be eaten or sold; it is set aside, left alone, as a reminder that all food comes from G-d.¹
- ☞ The question is, How do we know how old a tree is for purposes of counting *orlah*? Since a tree may be planted at any time, it would be difficult to remember the age of each individual tree. Jewish law established 15 Shvat as the birthday of all fruit-bearing trees. Come 15 Shvat, every tree is one year older.¹

- ☞ *Ma'aser* means “one-tenth” in Hebrew. In Temple times, every year the people had to give a tithe, or tenth, of their new fruits to the priests and the Levites. This was an offering of thanks to G-d as well as a way to support the priests and the Levites, who could not own land (or trees). The rabbis determined that for the sake of tithing, the agricultural year would begin on 15 Shvat.¹
- ☞ Why was this date, 15 Shvat, chosen? One opinion was that a tree that blossomed before Tu B'Shvat did so with rainwater from the previous year, before Rosh ha-Shanah, while a tree that blossomed after Tu B'Shvat did so with water that it absorbed after Rosh ha-Shanah.²

WHY HAVE A SEDER FOR TU B'SHVAT?

- ☞ It was an ancient custom to celebrate the first day of each season. A Talmudic passage describes the year as divided into six seasons. From 15 Shvat to 15 Nisan is the season of *kor*, cold, which comes after the season of *choref* (winter) and before the season of *katzir* (reaping and harvesting).⁴
- ☞ Just as Tu B'Shvat is a “Rosh ha-Shanah” for trees, it is also, in certain ways, a second Rosh ha-Shanah for people. Because it signals the beginning of Nature’s spring renewal, it has become a day of spiritual renewal for the Jewish people. Tu B'Shvat represents a seasonal “turning point,” when the harshness of winter begins to wane. Freezing winds may blow outside, but inside the tree, the sap of Spring has begun to flow.²
- ☞ At the Passover Seder, we celebrate the past redemption of the Jewish people from Egypt, and anticipate our future redemption and return to the Land of Israel. But at the Tu B'Shvat Seder, we look forward to the redemption of all humanity, and our return to the Garden of Eden.

WHY EAT SO MANY KINDS OF FRUITS?

- ☞ Tu B'Shvat has become a day for celebrating the trees and their fruits, for praising and thanking G-d for all the fruit-bearing trees of the world. Today, when we can no longer bring our gifts of fruit to the Temple, we offer G-d the fruit of our lips.²
- ☞ The Jerusalem Talmud says: “In the next world, a person will be judged for all the fine fruit that he saw but did not eat.” The Kabbalists explained: Reciting a blessing before eating draws down a flow of Divine energy through the fruit or other food to restore the soul. A blessing over a fruit also draws down Divine energy to the “angel” of that fruit to cause renewed growth to replace the fruit that was consumed. But a person must eat the fruit and make the blessing in order to keep this Divine energy flowing.²

WHY DRINK WINE OF FOUR COLORS?

- ☞ Wine symbolizes the secret of the special oneness of the Jewish people and, beyond that, the oneness of all humanity. When grapes are crushed, their skins are broken, to produce the wine of unity. The mystic secret is that we are in

different bodies, but share one spiritual essence—the *Shechinah*, which is the Soul of our souls.²

- ☞ The kabbalists placed pitchers of white and red wine on the table for Tu B'Shvat. For them, white represented hibernation, the waning of life's power during the winter months of shrinking sunlight. Red represented the reawakening and gradual strengthening of nature's life force. Through the seder, as we will see, they pre-enacted and fostered the ascendance of this life force. With the triumph of the red, spring would not be far behind.³
- ☞ **May it be Your will, O Lord our G-d and G-d of our ancestors, by virtue of the fruits which we shall now eat and over which we will make blessings, that You abundantly bestow on the fruit trees Your grace, blessing, and favor. May the angels appointed to rule over the fruit trees be strengthened by Your glorious grace, causing the trees to sprout and grow once again, from the beginning to the end of the year, for good and for blessing, for good life and for peace. And let us say: Amen.**
(from Chemdat Yamim, a kabbalistic text on the holidays)

THE FRUITS AND GRAINS OF ISRAEL

- ☞ The Torah speaks of seven species of fruits and grains that are the pride of the Land of Israel. The fruits are grapes, figs, pomegranates, olives, and dates; the grains are wheat and barley. Celebrating Tu B'Shvat by eating fruits associated with Israel links us to the Holy Land.²
- ☞ Fear not, O land, be glad and rejoice; for the Lord has done great things.
Be not afraid, beasts of the field;
for the pastures of the wilderness are clothed with grass.
The trees have borne their fruit,
fig tree and vine have yielded their strength.
O children of Israel, be glad; rejoice in the Lord your G-d.
For he has given you the early rain in his kindness,
Now he makes the rain fall as formerly,
The early rain and the late;
And threshing floors shall be piled with grain,
And vats shall overflow with new wine and oil. *(Joel 2:21-24)*
- ☞ **For the Lord your G-d is bringing you into a good land, a land of brooks, fountains, and springs, flowing forth in valleys and hills; a land of wheat, barley, vines, fig trees, and pomegranates; a land of olive oil and date honey...** *(Deuteronomy 8:7-8)*
- ☞ The Midrash says: "When the world was created, G-d made everything a little bit incomplete. Rather than making bread to grow out of the earth, G-d made wheat so that we might bake it into bread. Why? So that we might become partners in the work of creation."

Over the dates, olives, figs, pomegranates, and table grapes:
- ☞ **Baruch atah [HA-SHEM], [elokeinu] melech ha-olam, borei p'ri ha-eitz.**

Over pomegranate juice:

- ☞ **Baruch atah [HA-SHEM], [elokeinu] melech ha-olam, shehakol nihyeh bidvaro.**

Over wheat crackers:

- ☞ **Baruch atah [HA-SHEM], [elokeinu] melech ha-olam, borei minei mazonot.**

Over bread (following ritual handwashing, if desired):

- ☞ **Baruch atah [HA-SHEM], [elokeinu] melech ha-olam, ha-motzi lechem min ha-aretz.**

The bread may be eaten with olive oil or honey.

THE FOUR WORLDS

- ☞ Ten is the number of awesome Divine power. G-d created the universe with ten utterances. G-d delivered the Israelites from Egypt by means of ten plagues. Moses received from G-d's hand another "ten utterances": *Aseret ha-Dibrot*, the Ten Commandments. There are ten days from Rosh ha-Shanah to Yom Kippur: the Days of Awe, a time of Divine Judgment. There are ten Sefirot, or spheres, in the Kabbalistic Tree of Life.
- ☞ But four is the number of stability, groundedness, continuity. In the Passover seder, we frame the retelling of the Exodus around four questions and four cups of wine. At Sukkot, we celebrate the harvest by raising four species: etrog, palm, myrtle, and willow.
- ☞ The archetypal family has four possible members: father, mother, son, daughter. The human heart has four chambers, whose rhythm keeps us alive. The beasts of the earth have four feet, giving them speed and strength to run long distances. It takes four walls to make a room or house, and four poles to make a *chuppah*.
- ☞ There are four cardinal directions: north, south, east, west. The earth itself is said to have "four corners." The moon has four distinct phases: new, waxing, full, and waning. There are four seasons to the year: winter, spring, summer, and fall. So four is the number of the earth, and four is the number of Tu B'Shvat.⁶
- ☞ The Kabbalah speaks of four worlds. Each lower world is farther from the Infinite One; it receives its life and vitality from the world above it. Each higher world is within the world below it as its essence, and each lower world is a "garment" for the world above it.²
- ☞ In order from highest to lowest, the worlds are:
 - אצילות *Atzilut*, nearness to G-d or Emanation directly from G-d;
 - בריאה *Beriah*, Creation;
 - יצירה *Yetzirah*, Formation—the world of the angels;
 - עשייה *Asiyah*, Action or Completion—our own material world.⁵The mystic goal is to reach G-d at the center of reality.²

THE LOWEST WORLD: ASIYAH

- ☞ In the Tu B'Shvat seder, fruits and nuts are considered to fall into categories that represent the four worlds. This analogy is based on the word *kelippa*, which in Kabbalah signifies a negative force that conceals G-dliness. The word *kelippa* means “shell,” or by extension, “pit.”

FRUITS AND NUTS WITH AN INEDIBLE SHELL

- ☞ The world of *Asiyah* is the level of existence at its most basic. The fruits we eat are the most weighed down by their physicality.³ *Asiyah* is represented by fruits and nuts with an edible inside but an inedible outer shell or peel—because in this world, the path to the center is blocked from the start.²
- ☞ The Hebrew name for the almond is *sheked*, from the root meaning “early rising” or “vigorous wakefulness.” An almond tree is seen to rouse itself from hibernation with leaves and blossoms while other trees still linger in their winter sleep.³
- ☞ **Baruch atah [HA-SHEM], [elokeinu] melech ha-olam, borei p’ri ha-eitz.**

Eat from the fruits with inedible outsides: pomegranates, citrus fruits, melons, bananas, and nuts that have hard shells. Both shelled and unshelled nuts may be provided; each participant should break at least one nut from its shell to eat it.

Over melons, bananas, and peanuts:

- ☞ **Baruch atah [HA-SHEM], [elokeinu] melech ha-olam, borei p’ri ha-adamah.**
If eating a fruit that is new—one that you have not tasted yet this season—make the following blessing:
- ☞ **Baruch atah [HA-SHEM], [elokeinu] melech ha-olam, she-hecheyanu v-kiyamanu v-higiyanu la-zman ha-zeh.**

THE FIRST CUP: PURE WHITE

Pour a cup of white wine (or grape juice).

- ☞ G-d established the seasons necessary for fruit trees and other crops. After the Flood, G-d promised Noah that they would never again be changed. “As long as the earth exists, seed time and harvest time, cold and heat, summer and winter, and day and night shall not cease.” (Genesis 8:22)
- ☞ The first cup of wine is completely white. It symbolizes the white of winter, the sleeping earth. The growth of the past year is completed; the potential for next year’s growth lies dormant until the time is ripe.⁶
- ☞ **Baruch atah [HA-SHEM], [elokeinu] melech ha-olam, borei p’ri ha-gafen.**

THE SECOND WORLD: YETZIRAH

- ☞ *Yetzirah* is the world of Formation—the process of creating Something out of Something else at hand.⁵
- ☞ When G-d made earth and heaven—when no shrub of the field was yet on earth and no grasses of the field had yet sprouted, because G-d had not yet sent rain upon the earth and there was no man (*adam*) to till the soil (*adamah*), but a flow would well up from the ground and water the whole surface of the earth—God formed man from the dust of the earth. He blew into his nostrils the breath of life, and man became a living being. (*Genesis 2:4-7*)
- ☞ G-d planted a garden in Eden, in the east, and placed there the man whom He had formed. And from the ground G-d caused to grow every tree that was pleasing to the sight and good for food, with the tree of life in the middle of the garden, and the tree of knowledge of good and bad. (*Genesis 2:8-9*)
- ☞ Today is the New Year of the trees. It is also a New Year for us, for “a person is like a tree of the field” (*Deuteronomy 20:19*). Now, when the trees begin to renew themselves and prepare to produce new fruits, we should each consider how to renew ourselves to produce “new fruits” in the service of G-d.²

FRUITS WITH AN INEDIBLE CORE

- ☞ *Yetzirah* is represented by fruits with a soft, edible outside but a hard inner pit—because in this world, we are closer to G-d, but the center is still blocked.²
- ☞ The righteous shall flourish like a date palm;
like a cedar in Lebanon they shall thrive.
Planted in the house of the Lord,
in the courtyards of our G-d they shall flourish.
They shall bear fruit even in old age;
they shall be ever fresh and fragrant. (*Psalms 92*)
- ☞ **Baruch atah [HA-SHEM], [elokeinu] melech ha-olam, borei p’ri ha-eitz.**
Eat from the fruits which have inedible pits, such as dates, olives, plums, peaches, apricots, mangos, or avocados.
If eating a fruit that is new—one that you have not tasted yet this season—make the following blessing:
- ☞ **Baruch atah [HA-SHEM], [elokeinu] melech ha-olam, she-hecheyanu v-kiyamanu v-higiyanu la-zman ha-zeh.**

THE SECOND CUP: PALE PINK

Pour a cup of white wine (or juice) and add a few drops of red.

- ☞ *Yetzirah* represents birth and renewal. So the second cup of wine symbolizes spring, the time of rebirth.² It is white just touched with red, the color of the swelling blossoms on the tree which will eventually become the fruit.⁶
- ☞ **Baruch atah [HA-SHEM], [elokeinu] melech ha-olam, borei p'ri ha-gafen.**

THE THIRD WORLD: BERIAH

- ☞ *Beriah* is the level of Divine Creation—of causing Something to arise from Nothingness, as only the Holy One can create: purely by means of linguistic movement.
- ☞ And G-d said: “Let the earth put forth grass, herb yielding seed, and fruit-tree bearing fruit after its kind, in which is its seed, upon the earth.” And it was so. And the earth brought forth grass, herb yielding seed after its kind, and tree bearing fruit, in which is its seed, after its kind; and G-d saw that it was good. (*Genesis 1:11-12*)
- ☞ The Midrash says: “A feast is prepared for the righteous in the Garden of Eden. *Ha-Kadosh Baruch Hu* will sit at the head of the table and all the righteous will sit at His feet. He will have them served all kinds of fruit from the Garden and will feed them from the Tree of Life.” (*Shmot Rabba 25:8*)
- ☞ The Kabbalists noted that the teaching which calls Tu B'Shvat the New Year of the Trees actually says “the tree,” *ilan*, rather than the plural “trees,” *ilanot*. Why? They said that this refers to the cosmic Tree of Life. Its roots are in heaven; through its trunk and branches, the “sap” of Divine vitality and life flows downward to recreate, renew, and energize the world at every moment.²

FRUITS THAT ARE COMPLETELY EDIBLE

- ☞ *Beriah* is represented by fruits that are totally soft and edible, with no interfering husk, shell or pit—because this world is nearer to G-d so that there is no obstacle to our communion with G-d.²
- ☞ These fruits are the closest to pure emanation, and are both the most vulnerable and the most accessible to us. The more vulnerable and accessible we are, the closer we can come to G-d and the purity of creation.³
- ☞ The Midrash says: “Why is the Torah likened to a fig? All the fruits have something inedible in them, but the fig is good to eat in its entirety. So, all the words of Torah have nothing worthless in them.”
- ☞ It is a tree of life to those who hold fast to it, and all who uphold it are blessed. Its paths are pleasantness, and all its paths are peace. Help us return to you, Lord, and we shall return; renew our days as at the beginning.
- ☞ **Baruch atah [HA-SHEM], [elokeinu] melech ha-olam, borei p'ri ha-eitz.**

Eat from the completely edible fruits: figs, seedless grapes, apples, carobs (or carob candy), strawberries.

Over grapes or strawberries:

- ☞ **Baruch atah** [HA-SHEM], [elokeinu] melech ha-olam, borei p'ri ha-adamah.

If eating a fruit that is new—one that you have not tasted yet this season—make the following blessing:

- ☞ **Baruch atah** [HA-SHEM], [elokeinu] melech ha-olam, she-hecheyanu v-kiyamanu v-higiyanu la-zman ha-zeh.

THE THIRD CUP: LIGHT RED

Pour a cup that is half white and half red wine (or juice).

- ☞ The third cup of wine consists of equal parts red and white. This “balance of powers” gives it the brightest hue of red, as it shines with more light than red wine alone. It blazes like the moon in its fullness or the sun at its zenith. It symbolizes summer: the time of luxuriant growth, of nature in full bloom.
- ☞ **Baruch atah** [HA-SHEM], [elokeinu] melech ha-olam, borei p'ri ha-gafen.

THE HIGHEST WORLD: ATZILUT

- ☞ *Atzilut* is the world of Divine Emanation directly from the *Ein-Sof*, the Limitless One. Contained in these emanations is the potential for all possibilities. This is the world of silence, of nothingness, of pre-creation.

A prayer of Reb Nachman of Bratslav:

- ☞ 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 the growing things,
and there may I be alone to enter into prayer.
There may I express all that is in my heart
Talking to You, the One to whom I belong.
And may all grasses, trees, and plants awaken at my coming.

FRUITS THAT GIVE OUT FRAGRANCE

- ☞ The world of *Atzilut* cannot be symbolized by a fruit's physical characteristics. However, it can be suggested by the scent of a fragrant fruit. The Rabbis taught that a pleasant scent delights and benefits the soul, rather than the body. On this we make the blessing, “Who gives a good fragrance to fruits.”
- ☞ **Baruch atah** [HA-SHEM], [elokeinu] melech ha-olam, ha-noten reyach tov ba-peiros.

Pass around fragrant fruits (such as kumquats or an etrog) for all participants to smell. Scratch the peel slightly to enhance the scent.

THE FOURTH CUP: PURE RED

Pour a cup of red wine (or grape juice).

- ☞ The fourth and last cup of wine, symbolizing autumn, is the deepest shade of red. It is the color of life's blood spilled, of leaves at their most brilliant before they fall to the ground. It is the color of fruits fully ripened which are now ready for harvest, ready to pass on their life essence to nourish and sustain. It is the last color of the setting of the sun—and also, the first color of its rising.⁶
- ☞ **Baruch atah [HA-SHEM], [elokeinu] melech ha-olam, borei p'ri ha-gafen.**

COMPLETING THE CYCLE

- ☞ We have now drawn upward together through the four levels of the universe. We have walked together through the full cycle of the year. And so, arriving at the end, we find ourselves once more at the beginning. Each fall's harvest must carry the seed for the next spring's planting. Our responsibility lies always ahead of us: with the future, with our hope.⁶
- ☞ Once Honi the Circle-Maker was walking along the road when he saw a man planting a carob tree. He asked: "How long before it will bear fruit?" The man answered: "Seventy years." Honi asked: "And will you be alive in seventy years to eat from its fruit?" The man answered: "Just as I found the world full of carob trees planted by my ancestors, so will I plant for my children." (*Ta'anit 23a*)¹
- ☞ A tree endures many winters; it dries out and seems to have reached its end; yet it lives to thrive and produce fruit again. The Jewish people has survived many harsh winters, and we have held onto our hope in G-d. We trust in G-d's mercies, for G-d will not abandon us. As we produced glorious fruit in the past, so will we do in the future.²
- ☞ And they shall build houses and inhabit them,
And they shall plant vineyards and eat the fruit of them.
They shall not build and another inhabit;
They shall not plant and another eat;
For like the days of a tree shall be the days of My people,
And My chosen shall long enjoy the work of their hands. (*Isaiah 65:21-22*)
- ☞ **They shall beat their swords into ploughshares
And their spears into pruning-hooks.
Nation shall not lift up sword against nation,
neither shall they learn war any more.
But they shall sit, every man under his vine and under his fig-tree,
And none shall make them afraid,
For the mouth of the Lord of Hosts has spoken. (*Micah 4:3-4*)**
- ☞ And let us say: **Amen.**

B'RACHA MEI-EIN SHALOSH (THREEFOLD BLESSING)

Participants conclude with the B'racha Acharona (Blessing after Snack), using the special phrasing for products grown in Israel. (If the ha-Motzi blessing was made earlier over bread, the full Birkat ha-Mazon should be recited instead.)

- ☞ Ba-ruch a-tah [HA-SHEM], [e-lo-kei-nu], Me-lech Ha-o-lam, al ha-mich-yah v'al ha-kal-ka-lah, v'al ha-ge-fen v'al pri ha-ge-fen, v'al ha-eitz v'al p'ri ha-eitz, v'al t'nu-vat ha-sa-deh, v'al e-retz chem-dah to-vah ur-cha-vah she-ra-tzi-tah v'hin-chal-ta la-a-vo-tei-nu le-e-chol mi-pir-yah v'lis-bo-a mi-tu-vah.
- Ra-chem na, [HA-SHEM] [e-lo-kei-nu], al Yis-ra-eil a-me-cha, v'al Y'ru-sha-la-yim i-re-cha, v'al Tzi-yon mish-kan k'vo-de-cha, v'al miz-ba-cha-cha v'al hei-cha-le-cha.
- U-v'nei Y'ru-sha-la-yim ir ha-ko-desh bim-hei-rah v'ya-mei-nu, v'ha-a-lei-nu l'to-chah v'sam-chei-nu b'vin-ya-nah, v'no-chal mi-pir-yah v'nis-bah mi-tu-vah, un-va-re-ch'cha a-le-ha bik-du-shah uv-ta-ha-rah, ki a-tah [HA-SHEM] tov u-mei-tiv la-kol, v'no-deh l'cha al ha-a-retz v'al ha-mich-yah, v'al pri gaf-nah, v'al pei-ro-te-ha.
- Ba-ruch a-tah [HA-SHEM], al ha-a-retz v'al ha-mich-yah, v'al pri gaf-nah, v'al pei-ro-te-ha.
- ☞ CHAG SAMEACH!

SOURCES

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2. Buxbaum, Yitzhak. *A Tu BeShvat Seder: The Feast of Fruits from the Tree of Life*. 1998: The Jewish Spirit Booklet Series.
3. From an adaptation of the *Machon Pardes Seder*.
4. Greenberg, Rabbi Irving. *The Jewish Way: Living the Holidays*. 1988: Simon & Schuster.
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6. Original material by Erica Schultz. 2001.

PREPARATORY NOTES

The seder runs approximately one hour, not counting set-up and clean-up.

For each table of 8 people:

1 bottle white wine and/or 1 bottle white grape juice

1 bottle red wine and/or 1 bottle red grape juice

Water

Israel plate:

1 small bunch grapes

1 pomegranate (if available) or small cups of pomegranate juice

Israeli olives (may be pitted)

Israeli dates (may be pitted)

16-24 wheat crackers

Honey

(Halvah or other Israeli sweets may also be included if desired)

Atzilut plate (options):

1-2 bananas

4 clementines

1 small melon, sliced

1 cup tree nuts in shells (*pistachios work well as shells are easy to remove*)

Beriah plate (options):

Dates (preferably with pits)

Olives (preferably with pits)

4 small plums or apricots (fresh or dried)

1 avocado, sliced

1 mango, sliced

Yetzirah plate (options):

Dried figs

1 small bunch seedless grapes

1-2 small apples or pears, sliced

8 strawberries

Carob candy

Asiyah plate (options):

1 etrog

4-8 kumquats (1 small dish)

Cinnamon, a fragrant tree bark (1 stick or more)

Table service (small plates, clear wine cups, napkins)

Eucalyptus branches or other fragrant greenery (for decoration)

Candles (if desired)