



# הגדה של ט"ו בשבט

**TU B'SHVAT HAGGADAH**

By

**Seymour Hefter**

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# Tu B'Shvat Haggadah

By Seymour Hefter

Seymour Hefter, a New Yorker by birth, a social worker by training, and a lifelong enthusiast in all things Jewish, began his 30-year professional life in Jewish communal work in 1958 in Hartford, CT, followed by varied positions in Jewish Educational Programming in Elizabeth, NJ, Wilkes-Barre, PA, and Brooklyn, NY. During his tenure in these communities, he developed several programming tools for Jewish Community Centers and Summer Day Camps, focused on educational, experiential Jewish learning and activities. He published several handbooks based on his programs, including a "Guide to a more Joyous Passover Seder," a "Tu B'Shvat Haggadah," and "Independence Day, USA." The latter was distributed during the 1970s by the U.S. State Department to all its embassies around the world and to the Peace Corp on all continents. Through his innovative Jewish programming in the 1970s and 1980s, which included Center programs in Tallit weaving, Shofar-making, Chanukah "Running of the Torch", he was asked to contribute "How-To" articles to both Volumes I and II of the "Jewish Catalog".



He was married to his wife Ruth for over 64 years. They last resided in Brookline, MA. Together, they were proud parents of Jesse, Seth, David, and Jodi, very proud grandparents twenty times over, and blessed with over a dozen great-grandchildren. Mr. Hefter passed away in 2020 and his dear wife passed away in 2023. They are buried in Israel on the Kibbutz where their dear daughter Jodi/Shoshana, still lives with her family.

From 1988 to 2017, Mr. Hefter worked in psychotherapy. He enjoyed synagogue life, Jewish calligraphy, and reading in his spare time.

This Haggadah captures the spirit of Tu B'Shvat as Mr. Hefter liked to share it with his family and others. He believes in the centrality of community, caring, and "doing Jewish". This slim volume is meant to complement your enjoyment of this special day of the Jewish calendar. For further information, the son of the author can be reached by email at "[jesse.hefter@gmail.com](mailto:jesse.hefter@gmail.com)".



## TU B'SHVAT - THE NEW YEAR OF TREES

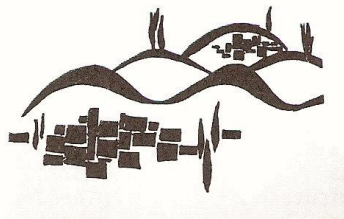
On Tu B'Shvat, the 15<sup>th</sup> day of the Jewish month of Shvat, we celebrate the New Year of the Trees. Shvat is the month when in Israel heavy rains still fall and the slopes of the hills stream with water. The heavy rains mark the end of winter and the beginning of spring. In the middle of the month, the severe rainstorms taper off and signs of spring begin to appear. A riot of flowers of every kind and color carpet the earth.

The almond is the first of the trees to blossom. The flowers have opened and the trees give forth a fresh and pleasant aroma.

The Israeli birds that migrate to warmer climates during the rainy season return home. The warbler, hooden crow, and raven begin building their nests.

The Jewish people in ancient Israel, most of whom were farmers, were aware of and sensitive to these changes in nature. Israel is a land of valleys and hills, of plains and plateaus and for that reason, the climate is different in various parts of the country. While plants in the colder regions are still putting forth their leaves, those in warmer regions already have their flowers. For these reasons, the inhabitants of the valleys used to celebrate the New Year of the Trees on the first day of Shvat, and those who lived in the hills celebrated it on the 15<sup>th</sup> of Shvat. The two great rabbis, Hillel and Shammai, also had different opinions on this. Hillel's view was accepted and ever since, we celebrate the New Year of the Trees on Chamisha Asar B'Shvat (Tu B'shvat) on the 15<sup>th</sup> day of Shvat.

Tu B'Shvat is considered the NEW YEAR of TREES. Tradition tells us that just as the fate of human beings is decided on Rosh Hashanah, the fate of the trees is decreed on Rosh Hashanah L'Ilanot (New Year of Trees)...“which shall flourish and grow and which shall wither and shrink, which shall suffer from adverse weather and harmful insects and which shall brave all dangers.”



*“Let the trees rustle in the summer on the mountain, on the slope of the valleys; let them fringe the roads and give shade by day to the wanderer and shelter to the tired laborer.”*

*Chaim Nachman Bialik*

Some historians believe that hundreds of years ago, the sages of Safed (Tzfat), in northern Israel, organized a “Seder for Tu B'Shvat” to precede the festival. The name of the book

used to conduct the Seder was called “Pri Etz Hadar” or Fruit of the Citrus Tree. Tables were set with white cloths and bedecked with fruits. Besides the fruits were flasks of red and white wine. The white wine (*hold up the bottle*) symbolized the slumber that had descended upon nature from the 15<sup>th</sup> of Av, when the sun’s rays start to weaken. The red wine (*hold up the bottle*) predicted the awakening of the plant, its blossoming and growth on the 15<sup>th</sup> of Shvat. First they drank some white wine, then white wine mixed with red wine, then red wine mixed with some white wine, and finally red wine. The wine's color change during each drink symbolized the changing seasons. The introduction to “Pri Etz Hadar” indicates why the ceremony was inaugurated. “It is a good custom for those who walk upright to eat an abundance of fruit on this day and give expression to words of songs and praise for them....: (Nigleh and nistar).

## THE SEDER TABLE

A number of objects which symbolize the spirit of the festival should be on the Seder table. These include a tablecloth, a floral centerpiece, and lighted candles.

Place four platters on the table

- one with a variety of at least 5 fresh fruits (fruits can be cut into small pieces)
- one with a variety of at least five different dried fruits
- one with a variety of at least 5 different canned fruits
- one with a variety of at least 5 different kinds of nuts

Put four bottles of wine, whose colors vary from white to dark red, on the table. These could include a white wine (like Sauterne), rose, Tokay, and Malaga (berry-based wines should not be used). Juices can be substituted for very young children.

Arrange a setting in front of each participant including a plate, wine cup, several toothpicks (to take samples of fruit), fork , teaspoon, and an Haggadah. Paper goods and plastic ware can be used.

Prepare two flower bulbs (or plant cuttings), containers to hold them and pebbles for filling and set them in the middle of the table. Keep at hand parts for a model Huppah (see Page 8).

FRESH FRUIT	DRIED FRUIT	CANNED FRUIT	NUTS
Tangerines	Raisins	Spiced crab apples	Walnuts
Grapefruit	*Figs	Cherries	Pecans
Coconut	Apricots	Pineapple chunks	Cashews
Oranges	Pears	Peaches	Almonds
*Grapes	Peaches	Plums	Sunflower seeds
*Pomegranates	Prunes	Pears	Chestnuts
Kumquats	*Dates	Spiced apple rings	Hazelnuts
Pineapple		Cranberries	
		*Olives	

The fruits listed above with a star (\*) next to them are mentioned in the Bible. Care should be taken to try and include them among the fruits prepared for the Seder.

In this Haggadah are passages from the Bible, the Talmud, and from the writings of modern poets. Everyone present at the Seder should participate, young and old. Read those parts suitable to the age of the participants. Discuss the sections that are interesting to you.

“When you have gathered in the fruits of the land, on the fifteenth day of the seventh month, you shall keep the feast of the Lord for seven days: the first day shall be on of solemn rest, and the same on the eighth day. ON the first day you shall take the fruit of goodly trees (ETROG), palm branches (LULAV), boughs of thick trees (MYRTLES-Hadasim) and willows of the brook (WILLOWS-Aravot), and you shall rejoice before the Lord your G-d for seven days. You shall always keep this festival seven days, in the seventh month. You shall dwell in the booths (SUKKOT) for seven days, so that you will know I made the children of Israel live in booths, when I brought them out of the land of Egypt. (Leviticus 23:39-43)



*“And 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 every man shall sit under his vine and fig tree;  
And none shall make them afraid;  
For the Lord of hosts has spoken.” (Micah 4:3-4)*

*“For the Lord, your G-d, brings you into a good land of brooks, of water, of fountains and springs flourishing in valleys and hills; a land of wheat and barley, and vines and fig-trees and pomegranates; a land of olive trees and honey.” (Deuteronomy 8:6-8)*



Hassidim in their celebrations would pray that during the coming year, *etrogim* would grow in beauty and perfection for the date of all trees was decided on this day.

There is a tradition among some Jews to place hundreds of cloves in the shell of an *etrog* after Sukkot and to use it as part of the Havdalah service, which concludes Shabbat. If one is available, it should be circulated and sniffed. If not, use regular spices.



Please read the following:

## ברוך אתה יי אלהינו מלך העולם בורא מיני בשמים

Blessed are You, O Lord our God, King of the Universe, who creates all kinds of spices, Amen.



“They shall build houses and inhabit them,  
They shall plant vineyards and eat their fruit;  
They shall not plant and another eat:  
For the days of my people shall be like the days of  
a tree,  
My chosen ones shall long enjoy the work of their  
hands.  
They shall not labor in vain nor bring about terror;  
For they are the blessed seed of the Lord  
And their offspring with them.  
Before they call, I will answer,  
While they yet speak, I will hear.  
The wolf and the lamb shall feed together,  
The lion will eat straw like the ox;  
Dust shall be the serpent’s food.  
They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy  
mountain.”

Isaiah 65, 21-25

Rabbi Yochanan Ben Zakkai used to say: if you should have a sapling in your hand and be suddenly told that the Messiah has come, plant the sapling first and afterwards go to welcome the Messiah?”

(Ta’anit, 5)

### THE FIFTEENTH OF SHEVAT by S. Shalom

On the fifteenth of Shevat  
When 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.



## TREES by Joyce Kilmer

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 had lain;  
Who intimately lives with rain.  
Poems are made by fools like me,  
But only God can make a tree.



## First cup of Wine

As we drink the first cup of wine, a white wine, we remember that nature has been asleep, awaiting warmer weather and the annual cycle of rebirth of growing matter. Let us recite together

**ברוך אתה יי אלהינו מלך העולם בורא פרי הגפן**

Blessed are You, O Lord our God, King of the universe, who creates the fruit of the vine, Amen.

Throughout this Seder, it will be the custom to eat at least 16 varieties of fruits and nuts. You need only eat a small amount of each. The first tray to be passed around will contain fresh fruits. Take samples of at least four fruits on your plate, including at least one fruit that you will be eating for the first time this season.

Let us recite together two blessings, one for the fruit and one for eating something new.

**ברוך אתה יי אלהינו מלך העולם בורא פרי העץ**

Blessed are You, O Lord our God, King of the universe, who creates the fruit of the tree, Amen.

**ברוך אתה יי אלהינו מלך העולם שהחינו וקימנו והגענו לזמן הזה**

Blessed are You, O Lord our God, King of the universe, who has kept us alive, preserved us, and enables us to reach this occasion, Amen.

## LIKE A TREE BESIDE A RIVER

### *Psalm 1*

*“Happy is the man who has not walked in the counsel of the wicked,  
Nor stood in the way of sinners,  
Nor sat in the seat of the scornful.  
His delight is in the law of the Lord;  
He meditates in His law day and night.*

*He shall be like a tree planted  
beside a river,  
That brings forth its fruit in season,  
Whose leaf does not wither  
Whatever he does shall prosper,*



*Not so the wicked;  
They are like the chaff that the wind blows away.  
The wicked shall not rise in judgment,  
Nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous.  
For the Lord regards the way of the righteous,  
But the way of the wicked shall perish.”*

*Once, while the sage Honi was walking along a road, he saw a man planting a carob tree. Honi asked him: “How many years will it require for this tree to give forth fruit?”*

*The man answered that it would require seventy years.*

*Honi asked, “Are you so healthy a man that you expect that length of time and eat that fruit?”*

*The man answered, “I found a fruitful world because my forefathers planted for me. So will I do for my children?”*

*(Talmud Taanit 23)*

Today, with the growth of the State of Israel, the festival of Tu B’shvat has been revitalized, for the planting of trees is essential for the development of the land.

On the fifteenth day of Shvat each year, the people of Israel, young and old alike march out in town and field, over mountain and through desert, towards marsh and sand dune to plant new trees, fulfilling the prophecy of Isaiah:

*“And they shall build up the wasted areas,  
They shall raise the former desolations,  
They shall repair the waste cities,  
The ruins of many generations.”*

*(Isaiah 61, 3-4)*



## מה נשתנה הלילה הזה מכל הלילות

A child walks around the Seder table and each person asks him a question about “Why is this night different from all other nights?”

Why do we eat fruits?  
Why do we plant trees?  
Why does a farmer water his plants?  
What tree grows needles?  
What is the fruit of the palm tree?  
What is the fruit with wrinkles?  
(Make up your own questions)

More than one child can circle the table and answer the questions.

*I will be as the dew unto Israel;  
He shall grow as the lily,  
And cast forth his roots as Lebanon,  
His branches shall spread;  
And his beauty shall be as the olive tree,  
And his fragrance as Lebanon;  
They that dwell under his shadow shall return;  
They shall revive as the corn,  
And grow as the vine;  
The scent thereof shall be as the wine of Lebanon.*

*(Hosea 14, 5-7)*

*For he shall be as a tree planted by the waters,  
That spreadeth out her roots by the river;  
He shall not see when heat cometh,  
But his leaf shall be green;  
He shall not be anxious in the year of drought,  
Neither shall he cease from yielding fruit.*

*(Jeremiah 17,8)*



*“We have gathered up human particles...and combined them in the fruitful and creative nucleus of a nation revived. We have built villages and town, planted gardens and established factories...we have breathed new life into our muted and abandoned ancient language...Such a marvel is unique in the history of human culture.”*

*David ben Gurion*

*...In ancient Israel, it was a custom to plant a cedar sapling at the birth of a boy, and a cypress sapling when a girl was born. The cedar symbolized strength and stature; the cypress signified gentleness and sweetness. The children cared for the trees planted in their honor; and when they grew up and were to be married, branches were cut from these trees and used on the huppah during the marriage ceremony.*

*Talmud Gittin 57*

Symbolically, we will now plant two flower bulbs (or transplant two cuttings) to commemorate this ancient custom. (Two children place bulbs in small containers filled with small pebbles.) The bulbs will be taken home and cared for until they blossom.

Next, build a model Chuppah or wedding canopy. Stick four dowels (1/4" thick by 15" long) in holes made in the four corners of a piece of Styrofoam, 15"x 15" x 2", or a wooden substitute. Then, place a canopy suitably decorated, on top of the dowels. Finally, add the figurines of a bride and groom beneath the Chuppah. Each step can be done by a different youngster.



### SIMAN TOV U'MAZAL TOV

(Wedding song... May we and all Israel have a good sign and good luck!)

*Simun tov u'mazal tov u'mazal tov v'simaum tov (3)*  
*Ye-heh lanu (repeat both lines)*

*Ye-heh lanu, ye-he lanu, u'l'chol yisrael (2)*



### SECOND CUP OF WINE

The wine to be drunk next is darker. The sun's rays beat down upon the earth and thaw the frozen ground. Soon, we will see signs of the coming Spring.

Let us recite together:

**ברוך אתה יי אלהינו מלך העולם בורא פרי הגפן**

Blessed are You, O Lord our God, King of the universe, who creates the fruit of the vine, Amen.

Some fruits must be eaten while fresh or they will spoil. One way of preserving many fruits is to dry them. The second platter to be passed around will be filled with a variety of dried fruits. Take samples of at least four different varieties. There is your chance to taste many fruits in a different guise.

Let us recite together the blessing for fruit.

## ברוך אתה יי אלהינו מלך העולם בורא פרי העץ

Blessed are You, O Lord our God, King of the universe, who creates the fruit of the tree, Amen.

When Spring comes, our thoughts turn to ideas of love and the flowers and plants that rise out of the ground. One of the most beautiful passages that describe this is taken from the Song of Songs.



*“Rise up, my love, my fair one, and come away!  
For lo, the winter is past,  
The rain is over and gone;  
The flowers appear on the earth;  
The time of the singing of birds is come,  
The voice of the turtle-dove is heard in our land;  
The fig tree puts forth her green figs,  
And the vines with tender grapes give forth their fragrance.  
Arise, my love, my fair one, and come away!  
O my dove, who is in the clefts of the rock  
In the recesses of steep places,  
Let me see your face, let me hear your voice;  
For sweet is your voice, and your face is lovely.  
Let us catch the foxes, the little foxes that spoil the vineyards,  
Whose vines have tender grapes.  
My beloved is mine and I am his;  
He feeds his flock among the lilies.  
Until day breaks and the shadows are gone,  
Turn, my beloved and be like a gazelle or a young hart  
Upon the mountain of Bether.”*

*(Song of Songs 2, 10-17)*

*Rabbi Isaac told the following parable:*

*A man was once wandering in the desert, hungry, thirsty, and exhausted with the heat. He chanced to find a tree whose fruit was sweet, whose shadow pleasant, and which had a brook flowing at its base. He ate the fruit, drank the water, and rested in the shade. When he rose to leave, he addressed the tree:*

*“Oh tree, how can I bless you? If I were to say ‘May your fruit be sweet,’ see, it is already sweet. Were I to say ‘May your shade be pleasant’---it is already pleasant. And were I to say ‘May there be a brook at your feet’---the brook is already there.”*

*My blessing will therefore be; “May all your saplings be like you!”*

*(Talmud Taanit 5)*

“I will bring back my people to Israel from captivity;  
They will rebuild the ruined cities and inhabit them;  
They shall plant vineyards and drink the wine;  
They shall plant gardens and eat the fruit.

I will plant them upon their land,  
No more will they be pulled up  
Out of the land which I have given them.”  
Says the Lord your God.

(Amos 9, 14-15)



As we take a recess for refreshments, take a piece of cake or cookie and recite:

**ברוך אתה יי אלהינו מלך העולם בורא מיני מזונות**

Blessed are You, O Lord, our God, King of the universe, who creates all kinds of food, Amen.

Pick up a cup of coffee, or tea, or juice, and recite:

**ברוך אתה יי אלהינו מלך העולם שהכל נהיה בדברו**

Blessed are You, O Lord, our God, King of the universe, whose Word makes all things exist, Amen.

<b>SEARCH FOR THE HIDDEN WALNUT (Prize for the finder)</b>
--

Hide the nut before the Seder begins.

## GAME TO PLAY DURING A BREAK IN THE SEDER

Fruits can be divided into three categories: those that are wholly eaten like a seedless grape, those that have an outer peel that is discarded, like a banana, and those that have a pit that is discarded, like a peach. Try to make a list of 10 fruits that fit each category.

### THE EMPEROR AND THE PLANTER (from the Talmud)

A very old Jewish man in Palestine was planting a fig tree. The Roman Emperor, Hadrian, happened to pass by and said to him:

“Why do you do that, old man? Surely you will not live long enough to see it bear fruit?”

“In that case”, replied the aged man, “I will leave it for my son, as my father left the fruit of his labor for me.”

The Emperor admired his spirit. “If you do live to see the figs on your tree ripen,” he said, “let me know about it.”

The old man lived to eat the fruit, and remembering the Emperor’s words, brought him a basket of figs. The Emperor was so pleased that he filled the old man’s basket with gold.

A greedy woman who heard of the gift made her husband go to the Emperor, too. “He loves figs,” she said, “and he will surely fill your basket with gold.” The man listened to his wife, brought the figs to the palace, and said: “These figs are for the Emperor, empty my basket and fill it up with gold.”

When Hadrian heard this, he ordered the guards to have all the people who passed by throw figs at the man. When the man finally escaped, he ran home and told his wife what had happened.

“Well”, she said, “you are lucky. Think what would have happened is the figs had been coconuts!”

### THIRD CUP OF WINE

The third cup of wine is still darker. As Spring arrives, the ground becomes soft. The farmers turn the earth and drop in the seeds. Water, sunshine, and time combine in the creation of new life in the ground.

Recite together:

**ברוך אתה יי אלהינו מלך העולם בורא פרי הגפן**

Blessed are You, O Lord our God, King of the universe, who created the fruit of the vine, Amen.

We will now pass around the tray of canned fruits. Please take samples of at least four varieties. By now, you should have taken altogether twelve different kinds of fruit.

Recite together the blessing over fruit:

## ברוך אתה יי אלהינו מלך העולם בורא פרי העץ

Blessed are You, O Lord our God, King of the universe, who creates the fruit of the tree, Amen.

*There is nothing better for a man that he should eat and drink and enjoy his work. This I learned from God. For who will eat and enjoy, if not I? God gives wisdom, knowledge, and joy to the man who pleases Him. To the sinner He gives the task of gathering and heaping up, and his portion will be given to one who pleases God. This also is vanity and a striving after wind."*

*(Ecclesiastes 2: 24-26)*

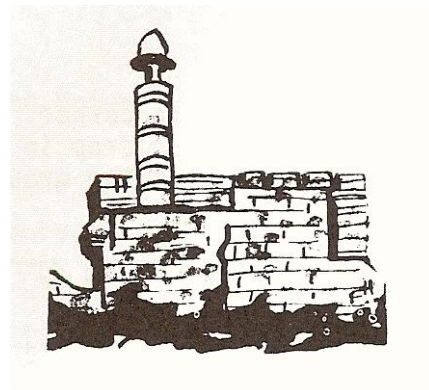
*"To everything there is a season, and a time for every purpose under heaven;  
(Read Responsively)*

<i>A time to be born, A time to plant, A time to kill, A time to break down, A time to weep, A time to mourn, A time to cast away stones, A time to embrace, A time to seek, A time to keep, A time to tear, A time to keep silent, A time to love, A time for war</i>	<i>and a time to die, and a time to pluck that which is planted, and a time to heal, and a time to build up, and a time to laugh, and a time to dance, and a time to gather stones together, and a time to refrain from embracing, and a time to hide and a time to give away, and a time to sew, and a time to speak, and a time to hate, and a time for peace."</i>
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*(Ecclesiastes 3: 1-8)*

### ARTZIE by Rachel

Land of Mine,  
I have never sung to you  
Nor glorified your name  
    With heroic deeds  
    Or the spoils of battle.  
All I have done  
    Is plant a tree  
On the silent shored  
    Of the Jordan  
And my feet  
    Have trodden a path  
Across the fields.



(Rachel, author of the poem, was one of the first pioneers from Russia and a member of Kibbutz Kinneret. She wrote many poems about the land and nature.)



Pass a cup around the table. Ask everyone to put a donation in it. The money collected can be sent to the JEWISH NATIONAL FUND which has planted millions of trees in Israel.



## FOURTH CUP OF WINE

We are ready to drink the fourth cup of wine, the darkest wine of all. Outdoors, the ground has nourished the seeds within it and the crops are growing tall, the flowers are blossoming, and the trees are filled with their blooms. In the months to come, the fields will yield their crops and the trees their harvest of fruits. Nature will provide the life-sustaining foods that keep man and animal alive.

Let us recite together:

### ברוך אתה יי אלהינו מלך העולם בורא פרי הגפן

Blessed are You, O Lord our God, King of the universe, who created the fruit of the vine, Amen.

The housewife selects out of the grains, fruits, and vegetables for sale in the market place, those which will be used for the dinner table. The Bible contains a very beautiful tribute to this woman.

*"A woman of valor who can find?  
For her price is far above rubies.  
The heart of her husband trusts in her,  
And he shall have no lack of gain.  
She does him good and not evil  
All the days of her life.  
She rises while it is yet night,  
And gives food to her household,  
And a portion to her maidens.  
She girds her loins with strength,  
And makes strong her arms.  
She stretches out her hand to the poor;  
Yes, she reached forth her hands to the  
needy.  
Her husband is known in the gates  
Where he sits among the elders of the land.  
Strength and dignity are her clothing;*

*And she laughs at the time to come.  
She opens her mouth with wisdom;  
And the law of kindness is on her tongue.  
She looks well to the ways of her  
household,  
And eats not the bread of idleness.  
Her children rise up and call her blessed;  
Her husband also, and he praises her;  
'Many daughters have done valiantly,  
But you excel them all.'  
Favor is false and beauty is vain;  
But a woman that fears the Lord,  
She shall be praised.  
Give her the fruits of her hands;  
And let her works praise her in the  
gates.*

*(Proverbs 31; 10-31)*



The final platter to be passed around will be filled with an array of nuts. Select different nuts, so that now you will have eaten a minimum of at least sixteen different varieties of fruits and nuts.

Let us recite together:

## ברוך אתה יי אלהינו מלך העולם בורא פרי העץ

Blessed are You, O Lord our God, King of the universe, who creates the fruit of the tree, Amen.

### *THEY SAY THERE'S A LAND*

*They say there's a land,  
A land all drenched in sun.  
Where then is that land?  
Whereabouts that sun?*

*They say there's a land  
Whose pillars number seven,  
Where seven planets rise  
From every hill to heaven.*

*A land wherein come true  
All men's hopes, 'twould seem.  
When a man doth enter,  
Akiba greeteth him.*



*"Peace to thee, Akiba,  
Rabbi, peace to thee.  
Where are all the holy?  
Where's the Maccabee?*

*Answer him Akiba,  
The Rabbi sayeth he,  
"Israel all are holy,  
And thou'rt the Maccabee.*

### **NOTE:**

Saul Tschernichowsky was born in 1876 in Crimea, Russia and began writing Hebrew poetry at the age of 16. By 1900, he was recognized as the leading poet after Bialik, a position he maintained until his death in 1943.

*(Jotham, the youngest son of Gideon the Judge, survives the massacre of his 70 other brothers, arranged by Abimelech, his half brother. Abimelech seized power. Jotham then warned the people of Shechem of the danger of placing power in the wrong hands with the following fable.)*

Once upon a time, the trees decided to anoint one of themselves king. They said to the olive tree.

“Reign over us.”

The olive tree said to them, “Should I leave my oil, with which God and man are honored, to rule over the trees?”

Then the trees said to the fig tree, “Come you and reign over us.”

But the fig answered, “Should I forsake my sweetness and my good fruit, to wear out myself ruling over the trees?”

Then the trees said to the vine, “Come and reign over us!”

But the vine answered, “Should I leave my wine, which cheers God and man, to hold sway over the trees?”

Then all the trees said to the bramble (a prickly plant), “Come, rule over us.”

And the bramble answered, “If in truth you anoint me as king over you, then you must come and take refuge in my shade, or else a fire will come out of the bramble and devour the cedars of Lebanon.”

(Judges 9: 8-15)



### *MY HEART IS IN THE EAST* By Yehuda Halevi

*“My heart is in the east, and I in the uttermost west-  
How can I find savour in food? How shall it be sweet to me?  
How shall I render my vows and my bonds, while yet  
Zion lies beneath the fetters of Edom, and I in Arab chains?  
A light thing would it seem to me to leave all the food things of Spain,  
Seeing how precious in mine eyes it is to behold the dust of the desolute sanctuary.”*

(YEHUDA HALEVI was one of the greatest Jewish poets. A practicing physician in Toledo, Spain in the 1100s, Halevi wrote poetry about love and nature. His religious poems, especially those dealing with his passion for Zion, are among his finest.)



## THANKSGIVING RESPONSES

Blessed are You, O Lord, King of the universe, for the fruit of the vine, for the fruits of the trees, for the cookies and cakes, and for the produce of the field; for the desirable, good, and ample land which you have to our forefathers, that they might eat of its fruit and be satisfied with its goodness.

Be merciful, O Lord our God, upon Israel Your people, upon Jerusalem, Your city, upon Zion, the site of Your glory, upon Your altar, and Your temple.

Rebuild Jerusalem, the holy city, speedily in our days. Lead us there and make us rejoice in its rebuilding. May we eat of the fruit of the land and be satisfied with its goodness and bless You for it in holiness and purity.

For You, O Lord, are good and kind to all. We thank you for the land, for the wine, the fruit of the land and its crops. You are blessed, O Lord, for the land, its fruits, cookies and cakes, and for the fruit of the vine.

You are blessed, O Lord our God, King of the universe, who created innumerable living things, each with its needs. We thank You for creating the means to sustain the life of each of them. Blessed are You who is the like of all worlds.

We ask for Your blessing on the many people on this planet who are not as fortunate as we to partake of this nourishment. We pray that there will soon arrive the day when none shall perish for lack of food. Comfort them in their continual anguish and pain in a world that frequently forgets their plight.



Leader: May it be Your will, O God, and God of our forefathers, that through the eating of the fruits which You have blessed, that the trees will be filled with the glory of their abundance to renew themselves for new blossoming and growth, from the beginning of the year to the end, so that life be filled with goodness, blessings, and peace.



## THE CAROB TREE

Far off, perched on a lonely height in the Judean Hills, grows a carob tree. Gnarled and twisted, but still alive it stands as a sentinel, watching, century after century, over the approaches to Jerusalem. Few know of its existence; still fewer of its glory.

It was in the days of the Romans, during the siege of Jerusalem, that the story of the tree begins, at a time when the Romans were scouring every hill and valley to find trees suitable to make battering rams to break down the walls of the Jewish capital.

On the height where this tree now stands lived a Jewish farmer and his son. The farmer was called the “Man of Rock”, for he was as strong and sturdy as the rock upon which he had built his home.

For many days, this single warriors and his son guarded the road to Jerusalem. From this steep hill they fought like tigers against the Romans. In vain, the invaders bit their lips in shame and anger; two single Hebrews blocked the path. They gathered their forces, and with hundreds of soldiers, surrounded the mountain and beleaguered the lone heroes. The people of Jerusalem saw all that transpired on the distant hill, and from afar they sent their prayers to the “Man of Rock” and his son. The “Man of Rock” knew that he would not be able to hold out much longer against the Romans. He therefore called his sons and said to him “Tonight, we shall break through to Jerusalem. Cleanse yourself, gird on your sword, and prepare!”

By devious paths, father and son arrived in Jerusalem. The Romans vented their wrath upon the hill, destroying everything they found there, uprooting the trees and sowing salt over the land. Titus ordered that the hill remain forever waste, that man not set foot on it, and that neither plant nor tree ever rise there. Titus’ order was proclaimed throughout the camp and the news reached besieged Jerusalem as well. The “Man of Rock” and his son heard the order and their hearts were saddened.

In one of the fierce battles the “Man of Rock” was mortally wounded. He was removed from the field of battle, and his son tended him at his bedside. As the wounded hero lay on his back, his flaming eyes regarded his son with love and pity. “My days are numbered. How good it is that I shall be allowed to close my eyes in holy Jerusalem. In my ears, however, there drums the order of Titus to put our hill to waste; to destroy every tree and every plant. Let not this evil come to pass!” He gathered the last bit of his strength and fixed his eyes on the distance; “I see from afar our home destroyed, and our trees. I shall know no peace in the grave if you, my son, will not cultivate this place.”

The boy fell at this father’s feet, placed his hand upon his heart and swore: “So long as I live I will not forget the hill. I shall remember it, shall remove from it its sorrow and plant on in a tree...” The father’s face lit up. Once again he fixed his eyes on the distance, regarded his son with a look full of love, and died.

The walls of Jerusalem were battered down. The Temple was set aflame. The heroes of Judea fell in battle, and those that survived were taken into captivity. Guards were still kept on the hill of the “Man or Rock” to see to it that the order of Titus not to plant in that place was carried out.

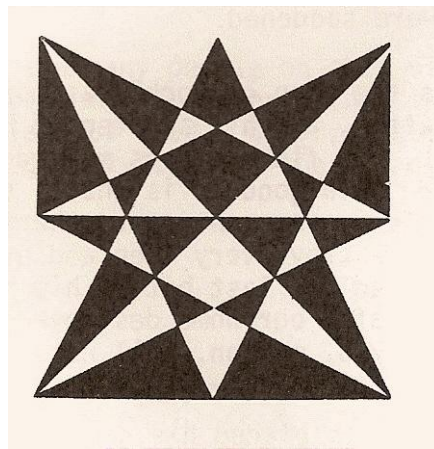
But the boy kept faith. In a hidden cave, he raised a carob sapling and guarded is carefully. On the eve of the 15<sup>th</sup> of Shevat when rain clouds hovered over the mountains, the boy

stole away from under the very eyes of the Roman guards and made his way to the hill. It began to rain and the valley and hills became flooded. The boy made his way through the water. Stones impeded his path. He fell but went on. Soaked and trembling with cold, he climbed on and on, by way of hidden paths, carrying the young sapling in his frozen hands, pressing it to his warm heart.

By dawn, the boy had reached the top of the hill, the scene of his childhood. With his nails, he dug into the rocky soil, and planted the carob sapling. The sun of Tu B'Shvat rose on the mountains. Rays of gold flooded the destroyed city, its hills and bare rocks, and lit up the form of the boy coming down the mountain side. At that moment, the Roman guards spied the lad stealing away and shot at him flights of deadly arrows.

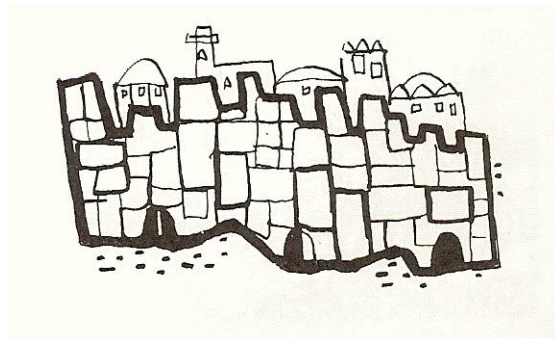
The boy died, but the seedling took root and grew. The carob tree sent out leaves and branches. It spread its leafy crown over the hill, and struck deep roots in to the soil of the Homeland.

David Cohen



*"If I forget you O Jerusalem  
Let my right hand forget its  
cunning,  
Let my tongue cleave to the roof of my  
mouth  
If I do not remember you.  
If I do not hold Jerusalem  
Above my chiefest joy."*

*(Psalms 137: 5-6)*





# LET'S SING

## ATSAY ZAYTIM OMDIM

The Olive Trees are Standing

(Chorus sings first line throughout while soloist sings "la la la...")

A-tsay zay-tim om-dim....  
La, la, la, la, la....



## DONA, DONA, DONA

On a wagon bound for market,  
Lies a calf with a mournful eye,  
High above him there's a swallow  
Flying freely through the sky.

### CHORUS

How the winds are laughing,  
They laugh with all their might.  
Laugh and laugh the whole day through  
And half the summer's night.  
Dona, Dona, Dona, Dona  
Dona, Dona, Dona, Da,  
Dona, Dona, Dona, Dona,  
Dona, Dona, Dona, Da

"Stop complaining," says the farmer  
"Who told you a calf to be?  
Why don't you have wings to fly with  
Like that swallow proud and free."

### CHORUS

How the winds...

"Calves are easily bound and slaughtered  
Never knowing the reason why;  
But whoever treasures freedom,  
Like a swallow has learned to fly."

### CHORUS

How the winds...

## FINJAN

The wind is so cool in the night\*  
The logs on the fire are bright\*  
And sparks all a-dancing arise\*  
A shining like stars in the skies\*

The singing is hearty

All and through the party  
Around and around goes Finjan\*

### CHORUS

La, la, la...

The bonfire glows in the night\*  
Our hearts are so happy and light\*  
We know that we're building our land\*  
A garden will rise from the sand\*

We stand like a mountain  
Our homeland a fountain,  
Around and around goes Finjan\*

### CHORUS

La, la, la...

\* (clap, clap)

## עוד ניגונים

הרחמן הוא יקים לנו עבדו את ה' בשמחה עם ישראל חי אני מאמין	מצוה גדולה להיות בשמחה ישיש עליך ותן בנו יברכך ה' מציון
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## To the open field By Sh. Ben Zion

(Sung to the melody of the Yiddish song Oyf'n Pripichik)

In the open field Bearing sapling trees Children's arms are raised There the Rabbi sings to ) All the boys and girls ) 2x Of the Aleph Bais )	That's the Law my child Learn and mark it well Sow and plant the land Soon the flowers and ) The blossoms will be here ) 2x For the Spring's at hand )
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## HAVA NAGILAH (Come let us be happy)

Hava nagilah (3)  
V'nismacha  
Hava nagilah (3)  
V'nismacha  
Hava niranana (3)  
V'nismacha  
Hava niranana (3)  
V'nismacha

Uru, uru achim  
Uru achim b'lev sameyach 4x  
Uru achim, uru achim b'lev sametach  
(Come let us be merry and gay)

<b>HATIKVA</b>  Kol od baleyvav p'nima Nefesh yehudi homiya U'lifatey mizrach kadima Ayin l'tzion tzofiya  Od lo adva tikvatenu Hatikva sh'not alpayim Lihiyot am chafshi b'artzenyu ) B'eret zion terushalayim ) 2x	<b>L'SHONO HABA-AH</b>  (May we be in Jerusalem during the coming year!)  L'Shono ha-ba-ah b'yerushalayim (3) Hey, Hey, Hey bee-yerushalayim ha-benuyah!  <b>לשנה הבאה בירושלים</b>
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## RAD HAYOM

Rad hayom  
Shemesh dom  
Kochavim notzitzim ba-marome  
Lay-la ba-ah,  
Lail menucha  
Shalom!

## OSEH SHALOM

Oseh Shalom bimro-mov,  
Hu yaaseh aleynu  
V'al kol yisrael  
V'imru amen (repeat entire stanza)

Ya-aseh shalom (2)  
Shalom aleynu v'al kol yisrael (repeat entire stanza 4 times)

This Haggadah was dedicated to my colleagues at the JCC of the Wyoming Valley, especially Louis Smith (a"h), the Executive Director, whose encouragement over the years made the Center a national leader in introducing programs of creative Jewish family living.