



Bs"d, Shvat 5777 – February 2017

Tu Bishvat – "New Year" for Trees

Talmudic Source:



"There are four "New Year's" designations throughout the year. The first day of *Nisan* marks the "New Year" for Kings and for festivals. The first day of *Elul* marks the New Year for animal tithes [*ma'aser behema*]. According to Rabbi Elazar and Rabbi Shimon, it is the first day of *Tishrei* which marks the "New Year" for animal tithes. The first day of *Tishrei* marks the "New Year" for "*Shemittin*" [seventh year cessation of work], for designating Jubilee years, for planting trees and vegetables. The first day of *Shevat* marks the "New Year" for trees, according to *Bet Shamai*. *Bet Hillel* says "New Year" for trees is celebrated on the fifteenth of *Shevat*." {tractate *Rosh Hashana*, Chapter 1, *Mishna* 1}.

Biblical Source:

"Be sure to tithe all the produce of your plantings, annually." {*Parshat Devarim*, chapter 14, *pasuk* 22}. "From this source we understand the need to designate a date that distinguishes between years for the purpose of identifying the appropriate tithing period. Our sages accepted *Bet Hillel's* position, *Tu Bishvat* [the fifteenth of *Shevat*] as the "New Year" for trees." {tractate *Rosh Hashana*, 1/1}.

Tu Bishvat Customs:

Tu Bishvat was formally incorporated into the Jewish calendar in Israel at the time of the arrival of the Kabbalists from Spain and Portugal. Rabbi *Yitchak Lurie Ashkenazi* [*AR"l z"l*] instituted "a day of eating fruit from the land of Israel".

For additional information see the Ministry of Education website- Dr. *Yoel Raphael*.

<http://cms.education.gov.il/EducationCMS/Units/Moe/TuBishvat/seder/Mavo.htm>



Seder Tu Bishvat:

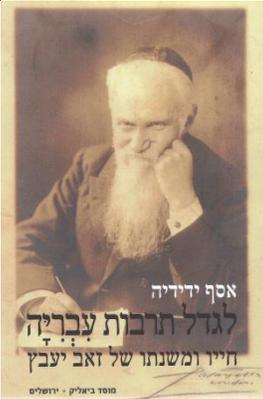
The publication of a book entitled: "*Chemdat Yamim*" gave wide publicity to this custom and established a ceremonial observance, similar to Seder Pesach. This was published separately under the title: "*Pri Etz Hadar*". For additional information see Wikipedia: entry: *Tu Bishvat*.

Tu Bishvat 5650 [1890] – Tu Bishvat 5777 [2017]

It was Rabbi *Zev Yaavetz zt"l*, who was the first to plant trees on *Tu Bishvat*, 5650 [1890], 127 years ago, in *Zichron Yaakov*. Over the course of years this became a popular custom. The Jewish National Fund [*Keren Kayemet I'Yisrael*] adopted and enhanced this custom until it became widespread. Up till today, 240 million trees have been planted all over Greater Israel.



Press [here](#) to download the rare pamphlet, "*Rosh HaShana Le'llanot*", authored by *HaRav Zev Yaavetz*, in its entirety



אסף יודיה
לגדל תרבות עבריה
חייו ומשנתו של זאב יעבץ
מועד ביאליק - ירושלים
HaRav Zev Yaavetz



Tu Bishvat Assembly in *Kfar Yaavetz* 5774



Chief Rabbi *HaRav David Lau, shlit"o*, planting a tree in *Kfar Yaavetz, Tu Bishvat* 5774

"HaRav Zev Yaavetz ztz"l, amongst the early founders of the Mizrachi Movement Spiritual Center, was one of the pioneers reviving a uniquely Israeli Tu Bshvat, connected to the renewed settlement of the people of Israel in it's land, the land of Israel. In the school curriculum he wrote for the new farmers in *Eretz Yisrael*, in 5648 [1888], he suggested the renewed marking of holidays that had been celebrated in the past in memory of historical incidents of national importance..." {quotation from the book: 'The Establishment of a Jewish Culture: Life and Thought of Zeev Yaavetz'- Jerusalem, Bialik Institute, 5761. Click here for the full article.}

The Planter's Prayer:

The *Rishon LeTzion* [Sephardic Chief Rabbi 5699-5713] *HaRav Ben Zion Meir Chai Uziel* composed the planter's prayer, giving a spiritual dimension to the Israeli experience of planting trees on *Tu Bshvat*, New Year for Trees.

	<p>Planter's Prayer Rabbi Ben-Zion Meir Hai Uziel Heavenly Father Thou who buildest Zion and Jerusalem And establishes the Kingdom of Israel. Look down from Thy holy habitation, From heaven, And bless thy people Israel And the land that thou hast given us As you swore unto our fathers. Take pleasure in Thy land And bestow upon it of Thy goodness And Thy grace. Give dew for a blessing And cause beneficent rains To fall in their season, To satiate the mountains of Israel And her valleys, And to water thereon Every plant and tree.</p>	<p><i>And these saplings Which we plant before thee this day, Make deep their roots And wide their crown That they may blossom forth in grace Amongst all the trees in Israel For good and for beauty.</i></p> <p><i>Strengthen the hands Of all our brethren Who toil to revive the sacred soil And make fruitful its wastes. Bless, o Lord, their might, And may the work of their hands Find favor before Thee. Look down from Thy holy habitation, From heaven, And bless thy people Israel And the land that thou hast given us As you swore unto our fathers. Amen.</i></p>
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The planter's prayer in Hebrew and in English can be downloaded right [here](#) from our website.

Birkat Hallanot:

<p>Grave of Menachem Ussishkin-Chairman KKL 1923-1941 in the Nikanor Cave Complex.</p>	<p>Birkat Hallanot [the blessing of the trees] at the Nikanor Cave, Botanical Gardens, Hebrew University, Mount Scopus, Jerusalem, in the presence of HaRishon LeTzion, Rabbi Shlomo Moshe Amar shlit"a, Chief Rabbi of Jerusalem.</p>	

Virtual Planting in the forests of KKL:

		<p>"Hence, I invite you and your families to take an active part in all that is transpiring under the aegis of KKL on Tu Bshvat. Via our website you can plant a tree in KKL forests, from anywhere in the world. I believe that every tree planted by you is part of a continuum in the chain of generations of realizing the Zionist Dream. In addition, it is a significant contribution to the preservation of the environment around us. In my mind there is no more fulfilling endeavor." Sincerely, <i>Danny Atar</i>, Board Chairman, KKL</p>	
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To plant a virtual tree, please connect to the virtual planting site of KKL: http://salkkl.kkl.org.il/haklek_veta/knisa_hakleveta.aspx

For your information: Tu Bshvat plantings will take place this year 5777 on Friday 14 Shevat [10-02-2017].