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## DEFINITION AND CONTEXT

Tu BiShvat (the 15th day of the month of Shvat), has its origins in the time of the Mishnah, in the days of Hillel and Shammai. During this period, four beginnings of the year were established in the Hebrew calendar, one of them being the "New Year of the Trees". What in the beginning was meant to indicate the arrival of the fruits in the agricultural calendar, became a festival in which the love of trees is celebrated, symbol of the profound bond between the Jewish people and the land of Israel.



## THE CHAG'S VALUES



## DID YOU KNOW?

- There are many similarities between the values of Tu BiShvat, and the ones which represent our traditional greeting Tnuati "Chazak Ve'ematz (be strong and have courage).
  - a) The greeting "Chazak Ve'ematz" is performed with the right hand raised, while the thumb covers the little finger, indicating that the strongest protects the weakest, love of others and mutual responsibility. Accordingly, Tu BiShvat emerges as a date which invites us to take responsibility for the ones in need in our society.
  - b) The three raised fingers represent the loyalty to the Jewish people, the Israeli land and culture. Likewise, we can see how in this chag, the profound connection between these three elements is represented.
  - c) "Strong and Courageous", alludes to the desire that our chaverim have a strong body and a courageous heart. The conquest of land is achievable with a strong body. However, in order to deepen the connection to this land, it is undoubtedly necessary to be courageous at heart.





• The first assembly of the Israeli Knesset took place in Jerusalem, on February 14, 1949. According to the Hebrew calendar - the 15th of Shvat (Tu BiShvat) of 5709. Chaim Weizmann, Israel's first president, gave his opening speech, mentioning that:

*"In these days of happiness and joy, enter through the gates of the country, thousands of our brothers who live in nearby and distant lands. We deeply hope that this "ingathering of the exiles" – Kibbutz Galuyot" will further expand and include the masses of our people, so they can put down roots, joining us side by side, in the great task of building the state of Israel and making the desert flourish. We will be raising this desire as our main goal, directing all our thoughts and actions towards it".*

• The olive tree was always considered one of the most important trees to our people. Moreover, we can notice its presence in many of our national symbols:

- a) The Emblem of the State of Israel where the olive represents our desire to reestablish the Jewish government in the land of Israel, based on our eternal values, making the light of Israel shine among the nations.
- b) Israel Defense Forces Emblem where the olive represents that the state of Israel will always offer peace before using the sword.
- c) Jewish Identity – the olive oil is one of the most significant symbols of Hanukkah, a chag which represents the triumph of the Jewish identity against the oppression of the Greek culture and army.



## SYMBOLS AND CUSTOMS

### • EATING FRUITS OF THE LAND OF ISRAEL

One of the chag's most important customs is the eating of the fruits of the land of Israel. In Tu BiShvat, some tend to eat 15 different fruits, alluding to the "15th" day on which the chag's begins. Others choose to only eat the Seven Species of Eretz Israel: Wheat, barley, grape, fig, pomegranate, olive and date.

### • PLANTING TREES IN ISRAEL

The Tu BiShvat tradition of planting trees was initiated by the writer, researcher and historian Zeev Yavetz, who arrived in the Land of Israel in 1887 and became Principal of a School. During this period, he felt the need to renew Jewish settlement in the country by planting trees. In 1892, on Tu BiShvat (the 15th day of the Hebrew month of Shvat), Yavetz went out to plant trees with his pupils, and a new tradition was born: on this day of the year, Israeli children go out to plant trees. The Teachers Union and KKL-JNF formalized the custom in 1908, and provided it with an extra educational dimension. In this way children were given the opportunity to play an active role in the development of the Land of Israel and the care of its landscape.

### • SEDER LEIL SIMCHA LA ILANOT OR A TU BISHVAT SEDER

The Tu BiShvat Seder was originated by the Jewish sages in the 15th century in Safed. As a part of this seder, it is customary to recite a special blessing to the trees so that they bear many fruits, to drink four glasses of wine (red and white in different combinations), eat the fruits of the land of Israel and read fragments from our sources where an allusion to these fruits is made.



## QUOTES RELATED TO THE CHAG

**"For the man is the field tree" (Deuteronomy, 19:20)**

**"כי האדם עץ השדה" (דברים כ', י"ט)**

"Of all the blessed works that we carry out in this land, I do not know if there is a greater one, whose fruits are as productive as planting trees. The trees add beauty to the landscape of our land, improve the climate and increase the inhabitants' health". David Ben Gurion, 1949.



## ARTICLES RELATED TO THE JAG

### EITAN EMBON – ROSH CHINUCH HANOAR HATZIONI B'ARGENTINA

The tree is deeply rooted in the ground from which it emerges. It knows where it came from; by the ground it nourishes itself to achieve an objective. The tree has a clear goal since its birth, this is its reason for being: to reach for the sky, to emerge into the light, to expand through its branches and transcend with its new seeds. In the Tnua, we educate in order to learn, strengthen and perpetuate the roots of our origins, our Judaism.

### ROMI MORALES – MAZKIRUT OLAMIT HANOAR HATZIONI

In a world based on the "now", our madrichim are the ones who lovingly and dedicatedly plant the necessary seeds in the hearts of our chanichim, for a Jewish, Zionist, Humanist, liberal, proud and strong identity to blossom in them. As Tnuot Noar, we are highly committed to the mission of strengthening the roots of our chanichim, so when they "go out to the world" there will be no storm that will manage to uproot them.

### A.D GORDON – FROM OUR SOURCES OF INSPIRATION

At times it will seem that you too are putting down roots in the land that you are digging, similarly to the vegetation surrounding you, you are nourished by the solar rays and food falling from the sky; that you too share the life of the tiniest herb, flower and tree, nesting in the depths of nature, emerging from it and rising towards the immensities of the vast world. (...) And in times of distress (...) we have only one consolation: and it is that here – in Israel – we are on a solid ground, and are capable of remaining strong". Back to the Land, pg. 159-161.



## ZMAN LE PEILUT

### HOW DO YOU CELEBRATE TU BISHVAT IN YOUR KEN?

Take a picture and share it with the rest of the chaverim of hanoar hatzioni across the world.

VISIT OUR WEBSITE FOR THE FULL  
VERSION OF THE ARTICLES:

[www.hholamif.org.il](http://www.hholamif.org.il)

