

## **The Copyright Infringement Tu B'Shevat Seder**

By Patrick Aleph for OneShul.org

### **How Is This Seder Different From Any Other Seder?**

Inspired by a friend of mine, I have taken a seder (in this case, the Tu B'Shevat seder) and blatantly lifted from other haggadot (seder services) that I liked, with little regard to how legal or ethical that may be. The theory is, if you're citing your sources and you aren't making any money off of it, it must be OK.

*Just kidding.*

This seder was pulled together from many sources under Creative Commons. Feel free to take from it, reinvent it, pass it out to your friends, or whatever you would like.

Oh, and that thing about my friend. *That part actually is true.*

### **What is Tu B'Shevat?**

"There are four new year days: the first of Nisan is the new year for reckoning the reigns of kings and the feasts; the first of Elul is the new year for the tithe of cattle; the first of Tishrei is the new year for reckoning of the years and taking stock of human lives; the first of Sh'vat is the new year for the fruit trees. -- Mishnah Rosh Hashanah (from PeelaPom.com)

### **Is This Some Kind of Hippie, Tree Hugging Thing?**

It can be.

Because of the connection to the environment, many Jews have taken Tu B'Shevat to be an "eco-kosher" day: having vegan, locally sourced dinners, planting trees, etc.

The origin of Tu B'Shevat is actually kabbalistic. As Rabbi Wikipedia reads:

In the Middle Ages, Tu Bishvat was celebrated with a feast of fruits in keeping with the Mishnaic description of the holiday as a "New Year." In the 16th century, the kabbalist Rabbi [Yitzchak Luria](#) of [Safed](#) and his disciples instituted a *Tu Bishvat seder* in which the fruits and trees of the [Land of Israel](#) were given symbolic meaning. The main idea was that eating ten specific fruits and drinking four cups of wine in a specific order while reciting the appropriate blessings would bring human beings, and the world, closer to spiritual perfection (Wikipedia).

## **How Do We Do the Seder?**

They say PunkTorah is filled with fruits and nuts. Today, our detractors get to be right.

The tools of the trade include:

- Seder plate
- Bowl and pitcher for washing hands
- Holiday candles and candle sticks
- Kiddush cup
- White and red wine (or grape juice)
- Sweet smelling herbs aka b'sommim (cloves, cinnamon, etc)
- Three kinds of fruit/nuts...
  - Fruits/nuts with a hard outside and soft inside (such as pomegranates)
  - Fruits with a hard inside and a soft outside (such as cherries)
  - Fruit that can be eaten in whole

You'll also need a service, which if you are reading this...guess what...you have one!

If you have a lot of fruit left over, a juicer is also nice. For a great article on Jewish Juicing, visit *NewKosher.org*

## **On With the Seder...**

### **Lighting of Holiday Candles**

Meditation based on Humanistic blessings and kirtan chant.

Barukh haor b'olam.

Barukh haor b'adam. (x4)

Barukh haor Yom Tov. (x4)

Barukh atah Adonai Eloheinu melek ha-olam asher kidshanu b'mitzvotav, vitzivanu l'hadlic ner shel yom tov.

### **Blessing For Washing Hands**

Barukh atah Adonai Eloheinu melek ha-olam asher kidshanu b'mitzvotav, vitzivanu n'atilat yadayim

## **Kohenet Shehechianu (From PeelAPom.com)**

N'varech Shekhina Elohenu Ruach HaOlam  
Shehecheyatnu V'kiy'matnu V'higiatnu Laz'man Hazeh

*Speak to the earth, and she shall teach thee (Job 12:8)*

## **The Neo-Hasid Sedder (from Neo-Hasid.org)**

**First Cup – The World of Asiyah (Actualization)**  
**Fruits and nuts with a hard outside and an edible inside**  
**Pour a glass entirely of white wine or juice**

### **Blessing For the Wine**

Baruch ata Adonai, Eloheinu melech ha-olam, borei p'ri ha-gafen.

### ***Discuss:***

Although seemingly inedible from the outside, each of the foods eaten at the level of Asiyah, when peeled or shelled, hold gifts that transcend their outward appearance. Like winter, where everything lays dormant and hidden, these fruits and nuts contain inside them the potential to reveal what is hidden within. Because of their hard exterior, these foods can represent the human tendency to judge others by their outer appearance. They can also represent the ways we separate ourselves from other people. Eating these fruits reminds us that whoever we are, we all carry a divine spark within.

When have you “judged a book by its cover” only to realize that you were mistaken?

### **Blessing For Fruit**

Baruch Atah Adonai Eloheinu Melech ha-olam Borei peri ha-etz.

*Eat the fruit.*

**Second Cup – The World of Yetzirah (Formation)**  
**Fruits with pits at their center**  
**Pour a small amount of red and fill the rest with white**

### **Blessing For the Wine**

Baruch ata Adonai, Eloheinu melech ha-olam, borei p'ri ha-gafen.

**Discuss:** We now drink our second cup of wine. Just as each new stream begins with a trickle, each flower with a single bud, just a few drops of color transform the hue of our wine. Although we discard the pits of these fruits, they are the seeds, the means to rebirth. These fruits can remind us that every flowering tree was once bare and that the means to growth can sometimes come from the innermost overlooked places. They can symbolize the potential within us that we have not tapped.

What is something you have done or created that started out very small and became bigger or more important over time?

### **Blessing For Fruit**

Baruch Atah Adonai Eloheinu Melech ha-olam Borei peri ha-etz.

*Eat the fruit.*

### **Third Cup – The World of Beriah (Creation) Fruits that are entirely edible Half red wine, half white**

### **Blessing For the Wine**

Baruch ata Adonai, Eloheinu melech ha-olam, borei p'ri ha-gafen.

**Discuss:** We drink our third cup of wine. We now have half a cup of red wine and half a cup of white - even though the trees will be full and green and their flowers will blossom, their growth is not complete. So much more will be created; so much more is to come.

These fruits can 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.

When do you feel truly whole and happy?

### **Blessing For Fruit**

Baruch Atah Adonai Eloheinu Melech ha-olam Borei peri ha-etz.

*Eat the fruit.*

### **Fourth Cup – The World of Atzilut (Presence, Emanation, Birth) Red wine with a few drops of white**

**Discuss:** We now come to our final cup; the drops of white in the red remind us of the first cup of this seder and of the cyclical nature of the seasons.

This final section represents what is invisible to the eye. *Instead of eating fruit, we may enjoy sweet smells like cinnamon and rosemary [B'sommin].*

Beyond the cycle of eating is the cycle of breathing, when something lives both within and without us at the same time, when it is so much a part of us that we cannot even see it. At this level all things are already part of each other. We all have this kind of connection with the earth and with God. Like smells, the ways we remember this connection are subtle: the feel of the soil or the smell of dew, the color of the changing leaves, the sounds of birds migrating, or the clasp of a hand.

What helps you remember and appreciate what you cannot see?

### **Blessing For Spices**

Baruch Atah Adonai Eloheinu Melech ha-olam Borei peri b'sommin.

### **After Seder Blessing**

Blessed be You, the One who created so many different living things, all needing each other, to make one Life interwoven through them all, as one soul. Blessed be the Life of all worlds