

Plant Israel at Home

TU B'SHEVAT SEDER

A Celebration of Israel

Organizer's Guide to the Plant Israel at Home Tu B'Shevat Seder

Introduction

The Tu B'Shevat Seder is a fun and meaningful way to have students participate and connect with this unique holiday that celebrates the new year of Israel's trees.

Our Seder program is designed to be interactive and inclusive so everyone can share in the reading. Included in the seder are:

- History of Tu B'Shevat for the teacher/leaders' review
- Celebration of Israel Seder text
- Discussion Activity
- Planting Activity
- Songs for Tu B'Shevat
- Tastes of Israel Recipes

Objectives

Our Tu B'Shevat seder is designed to help people understand the the historical and spiritual significance of trees as they reflect our ancestral connection to the Land of Israel. The readings and images provide your community members with the opportunity to trace that connection throughout the generations - from the Bible, throughout our exile, upon our return and for the future.

Suggested Time Allowance

45 minutes - 1.5 hours depending on supplemental activity selection.

Materials & Foods

Printed copies of the Plant Israel at Home Tu B'Shevat Seder: A Celebration of Israel (ideally 1 per participant) can be downloaded from The Israel Forever Foundation website http://israelforever.org/programs/PlantIsraelatHome/download_tubshevat_seder/.

The following items are included in the seder experience:

- Figs
- Olives
- Dates
- Wheat Product (Cookies, cake, crackers)
- Pomegranate seeds
- Oranges
- Carob
- Grapes or Raisins
- Almonds
- Grape juice - both white & red
- Plates and Cups
- Israeli Flags!

Order of the Seder

Select one or two leaders who will conduct the seder. Readings can be assigned in advance, or at random as preferred. Selections in bold are perfect for reading aloud as a group, and of course everyone should join in the singing!

The Seder begins with welcoming and thanking everyone for attending, where everyone can join in the singing of "Hinei Ma Tov" on page 12.

The readings continue and lead up to the first blessing where you will be drinking the first of 4 cups of wine and tasting the first of the fruits of Israel - the Fig (See pages 13-16).

Please note: The 4 cups of grape juice change color as the Seder progresses to represent the changing of the seasons of Israel - from the whiteness of winter to a touch of color in spring to the rosiness of summer and finally the deep redness of fall. Students can enjoy combining the white and red juices or you can have these each prepared in advance in pitchers or already poured into little cups as preferred.

Select a participant to read aloud *The Grieving Olive Tree* on page 30.

The second blessing focuses on Memory and Commitment. The second cup is light pink in color and the second fruit is the olive (See pages 16-18).

Select a participant to read aloud *A Tree in Israel Speaks* by Yaffa Klugerman about the oldest tree in Tzfat (See pages 30-32).

Next, continue with the third blessing celebrating our return to our land and the building of Israel. Drink the third cup - dark pink in color - and eat dates (See pages 18-21).

Select a participant to read aloud *The Roots of Alon* by Erez Strasburg (See pages 33-35).

Continue with readings on Planting the Seeds Today for Future Generations and the fourth and final cup which is accompanied by a variety of flavors from Israel's bounty (See pages 21-25).

Select a participant to read out loud Dr. Elana Heideman's personal account of Tu B'Shevat's family significance of passing the legacy of celebrating Israel and her trees (See pages 36-37).

Supplementary Activities

i) Discussion

Open the seder experience up to discussion using the thought provoking questions on page 27. Students should be able to identify with the history and traditions of the holiday as well as the purpose and importance of planting trees in Eretz Yisrael as well as at home, wherever in the world we may be.

ii) Planting seeds

Enjoy the traditional Tu B'Shevat planting activity as a way for your community to truly Plant Israel at Home! Participants can plant our special Israeli wildflower seeds, or you can provide seeds from any of the species that grow in Israel including fig, olive, cactus or your favorite Israeli tree. Planting can be done in our personal recycled planters, or students can make/design their own planters.

iii) Cooking Israel

Our selection of Tu B'Shevat recipes can be a community activity, incorporated into the Seder experience by cooking together, or participants can choose the one they like the best to make at home with their family and friends. Host a potluck the following week, or share the recipes IN ADVANCE of the seder and have participants bring their chosen dish to the seder itself for everyone to taste and enjoy! Recipes can be found on pages 42-48.

iv) Songs

Singing is always a great way to celebrate! We have provided the words for two songs:

Eretz Yisrael Sheli - My Land of Israel (See pages 38-39)

HaShkeydia Porachat - The Almond Tree is Blooming (See page 40)

Chag Tu B'Shevat Sameach!

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