

Tu b'Shvat Rituals

Resource sheet by Emily Herzlin

Tu B'Shvat is the New Year of the trees, also the Birthday of the trees. Here are some rituals you can practice on your own to celebrate the trees!

Eating Tree Fruits

The tradition of eating tree fruit on Tu b'Shvat (the 15th of the month of Shevat) comes from the Temple period in Jerusalem. People brought the first fruits of the season to the Temple as an offering to YHVH. Now, as we live in a time without the Temple, we can offer the fruit to our own bodies, and acknowledge how our bodies are like a Holy Temple where the Divine dwells. When we eat tree fruit on Tu b'Shvat, we can imagine we are offering fruit to the Divine within us.

Assemble a variety of tree fruits, pause to notice what they look like and smell like, and invite a sense of gratitude or awe to arise within you, and the intention to nourish the Divine with you. When you are ready, say the blessing:

Baruch atah YHVH, Eloheinu Melech ha'olam, borei p'ri haetz.

Blessed are you, YHVH our God, Creator of the Universe, who has created the fruit of the tree.

Taste, savor, eat and enjoy!

It's a tradition on Tu b'Shvat to eat a fruit that you've never had before, and to say the Shehecheyanu (a blessing for new moments in time)!

Baruch atah YHVH, Eloheinu Melech haolam, shehecheyanu, v'kiy'manu, v'higiyanu laz'man hazeh.

Blessed are You, YHVH our God, Sovereign of all, who has kept us alive, sustained us, and brought us to this season.

There is also a mystical tradition of having a Tu b'Shvat seder. You can find resources on how to lead a [Tu b'Shvat seder here](#).

Blessing the Trees

Go to a park, or find a tree that you love or care about. Stand in front of the tree for a little while silently and appreciate it—take in what it looks like, its shape, colors, the energy of the tree. You might even imagine giving the tree a name.

Let a blessing for the tree arise spontaneously in your mind and heart. You might say to the tree:

May you be blessed with health and happiness.

May you be blessed with rich soil and healthy air.

May you continue to be a blessing to animals and insects.

Or you can read a poem to the trees! [See here for a collection of tree poems](#) for Tu b'Shvat.

You might like to recite the traditional blessing for seeing something beautiful:

Baruch atah YHVH, Eloheinu Melech haolam, oseh maasei v'reishit.

Blessed are you, YHVH our God, Creator of the Universe, who makes the works of creation.

You can even sing Happy Birthday to the trees in English or in Hebrew (*yom huledet sameach!*)

Or sing another song to the trees, like this [Tu b'Shvat nigun](#) by Batya Levine.