

Tu B'shvat – How Deep Are Our Roots?

1. **Talmud Rosh HaShanah chapter 1, Mishnah 1:** There are four Rosh HaShanahs. The first of Nisan is the Rosh HaShanah for kings and holidays. The first of Elul is the Rosh HaShanah for tithing animals. Rabbi Elazar and Rabbi Shimon said, "The first of Tishray [is the Rosh HaShanah for tithing animals]." The first of Tishray is the Rosh HaShanah for years, Shemitah, Yovel, for planting and for vegetables. The first of Shvat is the Rosh HaShanah for trees, according to Beit Shamai. Beit Hillel says it is on the fifteenth [of the month].
2. **Magen Avrohom, Ch. 631:** It is customary to increase then [on 15th of Shevat] with species of fruits from trees.
3. **Devarim 20:19:** For a human is like a tree of the field.
4. **Talmud Rosh Hashana 14a:** Why is Shevat the new year for trees? R. Elazar citing R. Oshiya says, since most of the rains have passed (and new growth begins), even though most of the season is yet to come."
5. **Talmud Taanis 5b:** Tree, o Tree, how shall I bless you? Shall I say to you that your fruits will be sweet? Why, your fruits are already sweet! Shall I say that your shade will be pleasant? Why, your shade is already pleasant! Shall I say that a stream of water will flow beneath you? Why, a stream of water already flows beneath you! Therefore, May it be the will of Hashem that all the shoots planted from you will be like you! You too, Rav Nachman, with what shall I bless you? Shall I bless you with Knowledge of Torah? Why, you already have knowledge of Torah! With wealth? Why, you already have wealth! With children? Why, you already have children! Therefore, May it be the will of Hashem that your offspring will be like you!
6. **Psalms 1:** Happy is the man that has not walked in the counsel of the wicked, nor stood in the way of sinners, nor sat in the seat of the scornful. But his delight is in the law of the LORD; and in His law does he meditate day and night. And he shall be like a tree planted by streams of water, that brings forth its fruit in its season, and whose leaf does not wither; and in whatsoever he does he shall prosper. Not so the wicked; but they are like the chaff which the wind drives away. Therefore the wicked shall not stand in the judgment, nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous. For the LORD regards the way of the righteous; but the way of the wicked shall perish.
7. **Shemos 6:25:** Elazar, son of Aaron, took for himself the daughters of Putiel as a wife, and she bore Pinchos. Rashi: of the seed of Yisro, who fattened calves for idolatrous worship.
8. **Midrash:** "like a tree planted by streams of water" – That even all the winds of the world can not uproot it from its place.
9. **Psalms 92:** The righteous shall flourish like the palm tree; he shall grow like a cedar in Lebanon. Those that are planted in the house of the Lord shall flourish in the courts of our God. They shall still bring forth fruit in old age.
10. **Talmud Kiddushin 82a:** Torah not only honors a man and protects him from harm in his youth, but also provides him with a future and security in old age..... They shall still bring forth fruit in old age.
11. **Rav A.Y. Kook:** The yearning for planting trees comes from the desire to bestow kindness to the future generations. This is most powerfully manifest in the Carob tree.
12. **Midrash Esther Raba 7:13:** The bucket this refers to Moshe, as it says 'and he surely drew water for us.'
13. **Devarim 1:3:** It was in the fortieth year, in the eleventh month, on the first of the month, when Moshe spoke to the children of Israel, according to everything that Hashem commanded him to them....Moshe began explaining this Torah...

- 14. Pirkei Avos 6:7:** Great is Torah, for it gives life to its observers in this world, and in the World To Come. As is stated (Proverbs 4:22): "For they are life to he who finds them, and a healing to all his flesh."
- 15. Bereishis 1;11-12:** Let the earth sprout grass, seed-yielding herbs, fruit trees bearing fruit of its own kind...The earth brought forth grass, herbs yielding seed of its kind, and trees bearing fruit...
- 16. Talmud Ta'anis 23a:** All that man's days [of Choni Hame'agel] he was troubled by the verse "A song of ascents, when Hashem will return the captivity of Zion, we will be like dreamers." Choni said, "is it possible for anyone to sleep for 70 years with one continuous dream?"...This man found a world containing carob trees. Just as my ancestors planted for me, so too, I plant for my children."