



Tu Bishvat

The New Year of Trees



Read the text and answer the questions that follow:

The name "Tu Bishvat" means the 15th day of the month of Shvat. It is the Jewish New Year of the trees and it marks¹ the moment when most trees in Israel begin to bloom².

This is not a religious³ holiday like Rosh Hashanah, or a holiday with a historical reason like Chanukah. It is a holiday that developed with the Jewish people when they became an agricultural⁴ society after settling⁵ in Israel many years ago. The early settlers realized⁶ how valuable⁷ trees are: they give us shade in hot days, they give us fruit to eat and the Eucalyptus trees that need a lot of water dry up the swamps⁸ and prevent diseases like the malaria⁹.

It is still cold during the month of Shvat but spring starts with its blooming, especially the almond trees and their pink and white flowers.

How do we celebrate Tu Bi-Shvat?

- We sing songs.
- We plant trees.
- We eat fruit and nuts, especially the ones that grow in Israel. Mostly we eat dried fruits like figs, dates, raisins¹⁰ etc.

The customs¹¹ of planting trees and eating fruit remind us of our love for the Land of Israel. They also remind us that trees help to protect the environment¹²! They give us beauty, shade, food and oxygen¹³!

1 mention לציין	2 flowers open פריחה	3 opposite of atheism דתי	4 farming חקלאות
5 building a new city התיישבות	6 understood הביט	7 costs a lot יקר	8 wet land ביצה
9 disease מחלת המלריה	10 dried grapes צימוקים	11 habits מנהגים	12 surrounding סביבה
13 we breathe it נחמן			

Answer the following questions:

1. What is the meaning of the name "Tu Bishvat"?

Tu Bishvat means _____

2. What kind of holiday is it?

a. Custom b. Religious c. Agricultural d. Historical

3. Which sentence **DOES NOT** answer the question **why trees are so important?**

- a. They dry the swamps
- b. They give us shade
- c. They give us oxygen
- d. They give us water
- e. They give us food

4. Which tree is the first to bloom?

- a. Almond
- b. Blooming
- c. Apple
- d. grape

5. Why do we plant trees on Tu Bishvat?

We plant trees on Tu Bishvat because _____

Fill in the words from the word bank in the following text.

wine	fifteenth	world	Year	only
trees	second	plant	glass	fruit

Tu B'Shvat is the New 1. _____ for the Trees or Rosh Hashanah La-Ilanot. It is on the 2. _____ of the Hebrew month of Shvat. Jewish people all over the 3. _____ celebrate Tu B'Shvat. In Israel, it is just the right time to 4. _____ trees. People who live in other countries give money to the Jewish National Fund (JNF-Keren Kayemet) and they plant the 5. _____ for them. On Tu B'Shvat, people eat dried 6. _____ like: almonds, dates, figs, raisins and carobs. Some people have a "seder" and drink four glasses of wine. The first 7. _____ has only white wine. The 8. _____ glass has white wine and a little red wine. The third glass has red 9. _____ and a little white wine and the fourth glass has 10. _____ red wine.