

Tu B'Shevat Ice Cream Seder Shopping List:

Ice Cream Flavors: Vanilla, Mint Chip, Strawberry, Chocolate

Fruit with outside non edible layer - banana, orange

Fruits with soft outside and pit inside - cherry, peach, nectarine

Fruit that is both soft both on the inside and outside - grapes, berries

Nuts, if you can eat them



Leader: Welcome to our Tu B'Shvat Seder. According to the Mishnah there are actually 4 Jewish New Year Days. There are three days that everyone has heard of: Pesach, Rosh HaShanah, and Tu B'shvat. The fourth New Year Day is on the 1st day of the month of Elul. This is the day that our ancestors counted the number of animals that they owned.

Today, we are here to celebrate Tu B'shvat. All of the things we will eat at our seder (including Ice Cream) have special meaning for us. Aside from just ice cream, we will be eating several different kinds of fruits. Tu B'Shvat is the celebration of trees and we sample different fruits to help us think about what the trees give to us.

PART ONE: WINTER

Question: Other holidays honor events and people. Can you name a holiday that honors an event or person? This holiday honors trees. Why does this event honor trees?

Reader: It is winter. In winter, it is cold and harsh outside and we like to be inside where it is warm and cozy. When we think of winter we think of a fruit with a hard outer shell, one that we can't eat, and a softer, edible inside.

Leader: For the winter portion, we will taste a sweet treat of vanilla ice cream. The ice cream is white and cold, like the ground outside. Before we eat the ice cream, choose a fruit topping that is like the winter - a fruit with an outside layer that is not edible and an inside that is.

Before you eat, let's say the blessings together. The first is the blessing for the fruit from the tree and the second is a blessing for a sweet treat.

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יי אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם בּוֹרֵא פְּרֵי הָעֵץ

Barukh Atah Adonai, Eloheinu melek ha-olam, borei p'ri ha-eitz

Blessed are You, Adonai our God, ruler of the universe, who creates the fruit of the tree.

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יי אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם שֶׁהַכֹּל נִהְיָה בְּדַבָּרוֹ

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PART TWO: SPRING

Question: Ordinarily we eat whatever fruit is in season. What fruits are usually in season during summer? Winter? Fall? Spring? Why is it important for us to taste fruits that are commonly grown in Israel?

Reader: Some fruits are soft on the outside and hard on the inside - the opposite of an orange, banana, or a melon. This is symbolic of the fact that a person may be fragile, but that on the inside, everyone has strength. The part we spit out or throw away is really a miracle - it is the seed from which another tree can grow.

Leader: There are many fruits that fit into this category. Two special fruits that connect us to Israel are the olive and the date. Both have soft outer layers and a seed or pit that cannot be eaten. Choose some fruit topping to eat with your next ice cream flavor - mint chip. Mint, which is also an herb, symbolizes life such as the budding of trees in spring.

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PART THREE: SUMMER

Question: The trees and plants that grow in the world are very important to us. What do we get from trees and plants? What can we do to make sure we continue to have trees and plants growing?

Reader: Some fruits are soft both on the inside and on the outside - we can eat the entire piece

of fruit. Because these fruits can be easily bruised or damaged, we know to treat them with care. We also need to take care of the environment because it is fragile. If we handle it in the wrong way, it can be hurt or crushed.

Leader: As we enjoy our strawberry ice cream, we think of the summer days with the sun shining. We top our strawberry ice cream with fruits like grapes and berries.

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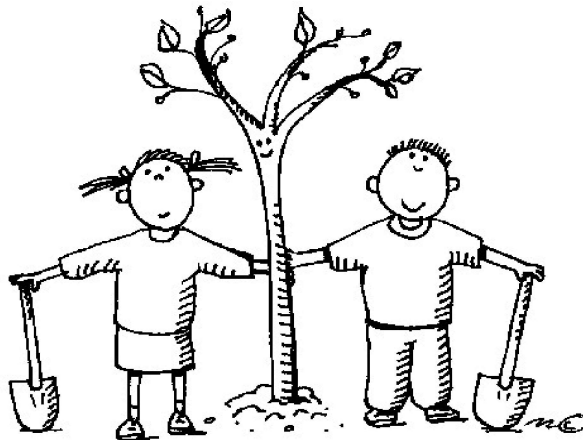
PART FOUR: FALL

Question: We celebrate Tu B'Shvat during the winter months. Why do we think about planting trees when spring is several months away?

Leader: Many years ago in Israel, there lived a righteous man whose name was Honi. One day, Honi saw an old man planting a carob tree. His grandchild was helping him. Honi laughed. "Foolish man," he said. "Do you think that you will still be alive to eat the fruit of this tree?"

The old man replied, "I found trees in the world when I was born. My grandparents planted them for me. Now I am planting for my grandchildren."

Weary from the heat of the day, Honi retired to a shady spot for a nap. But



the short nap became a sleep of 70 years. When he woke up, he did not know that his hair had turned as white as snow. He was surprised to see a full-grown carob tree and an elderly man picking its fruit. “Are you the man who planted the tree?” Honi asked.

“No,” the man replied. My grandfather planted it for me.

Reader: Nuts come directly from trees. They are hard both inside and out symbolizing the consistent role that God plays in our lives. The environment is God’s creation and we only have the right to make use of it. We do not have the right to destroy it or abuse it. If you plant a tree or save a precious life (human or plant), it is as if you have saved the world.

Leader: Chocolate ice cream symbolizes that even though leaves turn brown and seem to die in the fall, all good things are actually taking place. The leaves are changing colors and eventually turning brown, falling to the ground and fertilizing the trees soil. Chocolate can remind us that something so dark can be so sustaining, so nourishing.

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In every seed, there is the promise of a new and vital plant. So it is with every child. Each young life holds the promise of a new generation.

May this year be fruitful and blessed!