

15 Questions Of Tu B'Shvat

The Spring Yom Tov

Rabbi Yosef Chaim Schwab

1. What does Chamisha Asor (Tu B'Shvat) commemorate?
2. What day does this Rosh Hashanah come out on?
3. Can you eat fruits of trees in the 1st three years? Why?
4. What about the fourth year?
5. Does Tu B'Shvat affect trees outside Eretz Yisrael?
6. What are its Dinim and Minhagim?
7. What aspect of creation do fruits represent?
8. How can you make the 4 year wait into a 3 year wait?
9. How many special foods is Eretz Yisrael praised with?
10. What else happened in Shvat?
11. What Shabbos of note comes out in Shvat?
12. What does the Torah say about the Land of Israel and its fruit?
13. Why is it called Rosh Hashanah L'elton (for a tree) – not L'eltonos (for trees)?
14. Tu B'shvat is one of how many Rosh Hashonos?
15. The 7 species of Eretz Yisrael:
 - A. have a special brocho achronon: what is it?
 - B. take precedence over what?





ANSWERS

1. A) ר"ה לאילן - {for the one tree – (האסרג)} also for its ר"ה maser peros and maser oni.
B) The rising sap of fruit trees indicates it needs no more dependence on rain water in Eretz Yisrael. Also, blossoming and rooting starts at this period of time.
2. 1st day of Shevat (Bais Shammai)
15th day of Shevat (Bais Hillel – this is the Halacha L'maiseh).
3. No, it is Orlah – it's cut off from your benefit.
4. No, unless you make "Netah R'vai" procedure (in Yerushelayim, with a pidyon of 20% to the כהן).
5. Yes, but mostly Cheruvim (Carob Tree - or "Buxer" in Yiddish).
6. We eat the fruits of any of these 5 fruit trees: grapes, pomegranates, olives, figs, dates (some say 30, or 12 or 7 species); we don't say Tachanun; there is no fasting; there are no hespedim.
7. Fruits represent the 3 stages of creation: **1)** Those with soft peels (grapes) indicates the world of Briah/design. **2)** Those with hard cores (avocado) indicates the world of Yetzirah/creation. **3)** Those with hard outside peels (banana, pomegranate, cocoanut) indicates the world of Aseyah/action. We throw away the Klipa/peel in order to get to the Mitzvah.
8. Plant a tree 30 days before Rosh Hashonah (**'א תשרי**). That's already one year, making four years total, equal to 3 years and 1 month. [Its tree age is counted from (**'א תשרי**), its fruit age is counted from Tu B'Shvat].
9. Nine: the 7 minim plus 2 – goats milk (repr. essentials) and date honey (repr. luxuries). Two of the seven are grains: wheat (spelt) and barley (oats and rye).
10. On the 1st of Shvat Moshe gave his last shiur K'lali. It lasted 37 days until his death on 7th of Adar – it's called Sefer D'varim.
11. Shabbos Shirah – when Jews sang the Shirah at the Yom Suf. It was on **ניסן כ"ב** (Wednesday). One of the three songs in Chumash, ten in all of Tanach. Putting out bread crumbs on Shabbos Shirah is a minhag that some Gedolim scorn.
12. A. It can't be sold for Shmittah. B. It belongs to us only, after Moshiach.
C. Hashem watches it constantly. D. Its fruits contain Kedushah.
E. A person is like a tree. F. The days of a tree shall be like the days of Am Yisrael.
H. A man is like a tree planted near water.
I. A carob tree (Chiruv) takes 70 years to blossom—we work for future generations.
13. Because we are halachically concerned with one tree – the Esrog Tree.
14. Four. 1) **'א תשרי** for the world / judgment of mankind, the calculation of orlah, and for tithes (ma'asros) separated from grains and vegetables; 2) **ט"ו בשבט** for trees, and the tithing (ma'aser) of their produce; 3) **'א ניסן** for calculating the years of the reign of the Kings of Israel; 4) **'א אלול** for tithing (ma'aser) of animals).
15. **A)** Brocho Achas Mein Shalosh, (i.e. Al HaMichya and/or Al HaEtz and/or Al HaGefen).
B) Over each other and any of the non-7 minim. They are: Chitah, S'orah, Gefen, T'aina, Remon, Zayis, Dvash. [Wheat, Barley, Vine (grapes), Figs, Pomegranates, Olives, Honey (dates)].

