

ט"ו בשבט תשפ"ב

Tu B'Shvat Seder Friday Jan 14th 2022

East Northport Jewish Center

Rabbi Ian Silverman Cantor Steven Walvick



Hag Sameah

חג שמח

לשם הארץ ומלאו

The Earth is the Lords in all of its fullness (psalms)

This Seder is dedicated this year to the enhancement of forests and climate and to actions that we human need take to help. As we drink our wine and celebrate with our special fruits of the land of Israel, let us reflect on earth, water, soil and air, the elements that sustain us.

Blessing over the wine (white)

ברוך אתה ה' אלוקינו מלך העולם בורא פרי הגפן

The following midrash is very relevant to the realities indicated below:

In the hour when the Holy One, blessed be He created the first human being, He took him and let him pass before all the trees of the Garden of Eden and said to him: "See my works, how fine and excellent they are! Now all that I have created, for you have I created it. Think upon this and do not destroy and desolate My World, For if you corrupt it, there is no one to set it right after you." Midrash Ecclesiastes Rabbah 7:28

תלמוד בבלי מסכת תענית 23א

TB Taanit 23a

R. yochanan said, " This righteous man (Honi) was always troubled by the psalm that said, "song of Ascents, When we returned back to Zion we were like dreamers...those who sow in tears shall reap in joy...(Ps 126) could it be that a person could dream for seventy years? One day when R. Yochanon walked on the way he saw Honi planting a carob tree. When will the tree be at its peak of giving fruit he asked Honi. It will be at its peak in seventy years. See he said to Honi...you are dreaming now in planting in that you are intending for your grandchildren to be sustained by it in seventy years. Honi magically fell asleep for seventy years and woke to see his grandchildren playing in the limbs and gathering its fruit.

The land is sacred. Of course in the Torah it is the land of Israel that is the *Eretz HaKodesh* ...the sacred land. But it is also God's intent that every nation has its' *eretz HaKodesh sacred land*. Because the Tanach tells us *Lshem HaAretz oomelo'o*...God owns the entire terra firma...and God owns the planet. And he gives it to every nation on lease...hence we learn that is so when he distributes humankind on the planet and spreads them *kol Goy leleshonotam, lemishpachotam ooleartzotam*...every nation according to its language its families and its land. Therefore for these nations, their land too is God bestowed.

Further we learn that the Jewish people expanded in areas around the twelve tribe inheritance of and their land too was subject to laws of the land like Teruma and Maaser and Sheviit...further we see that in every land Jews must abide by the law regarding trees 'orlah' in which we cannot use the fruit until the fifth year. Further we learn in Psalms...*notein lechem lechol basar ki leolam chazdo*...God gives nourishment to every living being because "His mercies are everlasting." If the land becomes unsustainable God's name shall be defiled.

In as much as we despoil the land and make it uninhabitable...humankind is despoiling the universal God whose intent is to make life upon the land, human and animal, thrive.

We are sadly failing at this challenge:

Humanity is threatened as never before and major changes need to occur to put our imperiled planet onto a sustainable path – and as soon as possible. Even though a small number of individuals still deny the reality of climate change, there is strong scientific and environmental consensus across a wide range of disciplines that climate change is real, serious, worsening, and caused by human activity (anthropogenic) among all major scientific and environmental organizations, journals, magazines, and museums, and nearly all peer-reviewed scholarly articles, in addition to all reputable colleges and universities and most governments and large corporations. The evidence is overwhelming and continuing to pile up.

We eat fruits that symbolize the land and the soil, whose crust is on the surface...

ברוך אתה ה' אלוקינו מלך העולם בורא פרי העץ

Praised are you our God Ruler of the Universe, who created fruit from the ground.

(we eat from peeled fruit or fruit with shelled exterior)

Note that our blessing of *nehenim*, blessings of pleasures, are said for fruits or *foods from any land*. Because *the miracle of creation adheres to all soil*, and not blessing God for it is akin to stealing from the Creator of the universe.

Song #1

ישראל דושמן: מילים

מנשה רבינא: לחן

השקדיה פורחת,
ושמש פז זורחת
צפרים מראש כל גג
מבשרות את בוא החג:

ט"ו בשבט הגיע – חג האילנות

ט"ו בשבט הגיע – חג האילנות

הארץ משועת:

הגיעה עת לטעת!

כל אחד? טע פה עץ,

באתים נצא חוצץ:

ט"ו בשבט הגיע – חג האילנות

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Hashkeidia porachat vShemesh paz zorachat

Tsiporim merosh kol gag mevasrot et bo Hechag

Tu bshvat higia hag hailanoth 2X

Haretz meshavaat higia et lataat

Kol echad yita po etz, beitim netzeh chozetz

Tu bshvat higia....

The almond tree it blossoms; And a playful sun it shines

Birds chirp from every roof; Announcing this coming of the day...

Tu bishvat has come the holiday of trees

The land it screams it is time to plant; Everyone plant her with spade, pretty soon a shoot will come...Tu Bishvat Has come the Holiday of trees.

Soils are limited natural resources. They are considered renewable because they are constantly forming. Though this is true, their formation occurs at extremely slow rates. In fact, one inch of topsoil can take several hundred years or more to develop. Soil formation rates vary across the planet: the slowest rates occur in cold, dry regions (1000+ years), and the fastest rates are in hot, wet regions (several hundred years). Soil and topsoil is the amazing element that allows our forests to flourish and our food to grow.

Various agents, like wind, water, deforestation, overgrazing by cattle, etc., cause soil erosion. Studies continue to support the fact that humans are the root cause of soil erosion, whether erosion occurs from wind or water. Some Other Causes of Soil Erosion: 1. Urbanization has emerged as an inevitable trend in human development Wang, et al., (2018) . The process of wearing away soil and rocks and carrying pieces away is called erosion. Soil erosion can be a slow process that continues relatively unnoticed or can occur at an alarming rate, causing serious loss of topsoil. Soil erosion is the permanent change of the main characteristics of soil that could see it lose its fertility, pH, colour, humus content or structure. (from Sports Systems University of South Carolina)

We drink a second cup of wine adding some red wine or grape juice recognizing that the bareness of autumn is allowing important saps to flow through the trees and ground water to nourish the soil as it prepares for spring.

Baruch...Hashem, Elokeinu Melech HaOlam Boreh Pri Haetz...

ברוך אתה ה'...בורא פרי העץ

We eat from wholly edible fruit...(raisins, figs, seedless grapes)

Air; A Continually warming climate that is in good part being warmed by excessive carbon emissions and deforestation.

A further indication of how serious climate threats are is that in the two weeks prior to the final submission of this seder, the following occurred: Israel experienced a major, long-lasting heat wave, with temperature records broken in many cities; California and several other US western states experienced massive wildfires along with some record temperatures; the Koreas were struck by two severe typhoons; the US state of Louisiana was hit by a category four hurricane; there were reports that melting of ice in Greenland had passed a point of no return and that rapid melting of Arctic permafrost is releasing 'shocking amounts of dangerous gases." A monster FS5 tornado tore a swath for 270 miles in Kentucky and Ohio. This is truly an Earth emergency and earthlings are standing at a global precipice. Meantime the quality of air in so many countries is thick with pollution due to lax regulation. Some poorer areas in the US are also victimized. The Bronx Expressway and lack of green in that borough as the temperature of the air raised over 8 degrees warmer than in Central park. Lungs are affected. Asthma is triggered. This is not right. It is unjust and it is dangerous.

Song #2

Jerusalem of Gold ...Avir Harim Tzalul Ke Yayim ve reah oranim nisa
beruach haabayim im kol paamonim...ovtardemoth elan vaeven shevuya
bechaloma ha'ir asher badad yoshevet ooveliba choma
Yerushalayim shel zahav veshel nechoshet ve shel or...halo lechol shiraich
ani kinor.

ירושלים של זהב

נעמי שמר

מילים ולחן: נעמי שמר

קיימים 76 ביצועים נוספים לשיר זה

אקורדים

אור הרים צלול כין
ורח אורנים
נישא ברוח הערביים
עם קול פעמונים.

ובתרדמת אילן ואבן
שבוייה בחלומה
העיר אשר בדד יושבת
ובליבה חומה

ירושלים של זהב
ושל נחושת ושל אור
הלא לכל שיריך
אני כינור
ירושלים של זהב
ושל נחושת ושל אור
הלא לכל שיריך
אני כינור

The mountain air is clear as wine. and the aroma of pines is carried in the twilight with the sound of the church bell...and in the dormancy of tree and stone settled in their dreams, a city stands alone and in her heat a wall. Jerusalem of Gold of bronze of light, I am the violin to your song...

Sefer Hinuch Mitzvah 329 *do not despoil.*

To not destroy fruit trees: That we have been prevented from chopping down trees when we besiege a city to distress the people of the city and to sadden their hearts. And about this is it stated ([Deuteronomy 20:19](#)), "you may not destroy its tree, etc. and you shall not chop it down." And likewise not to do any damage - such as burning or ripping a garment or breaking a vessel for no reason - entered under this negative commandment

שרש המצוה ידוע, שהוא כדי ללמד נפשנו לאהב הטוב והתועלת ולהדבק בו, ומתוך כך תדבק בנו הטובה, ונרחיק מכל דבר רע ומכל דבר השחתה, וזהו דרך החסידים ואנשי מעשה אוהבים שלום ושמחים בטוב הבריות ומקרבים אותן לתורה, ולא יאבדו אפילו גרגיר של חרדל בעולם, ויצר עליהם בכל אבדון והשחתה שיראו, ואם יוכלו להציל יצילו כל

דבר מהשחית בכל כחם, ולא כן הרשעים אחיהם של מזיקים שמחים בהשחתת עולם, והמה משחיתים את עצמם במדה שאדם מודד בה מודדין לו. כלומר, בה הוא נדבק שמח לאיד לא ינקה רע. והחפץ בטוב ושמח בו נפשו (משלי יז, ה) לעולם, וכענין שכתוב בטוב תלין לעולם זה ידוע ומפרסם.

The root of this commandment is well-known - it is in order to teach our souls to love good and benefit and to cling to it. And through this, good clings to us and we will distance [ourselves] from all bad and destructive things. And this is the way of the pious and people of [proper] action - they love peace and are happy for the good of the creatures and bring them close to Torah, and they do not destroy even a grain of mustard in the world. And they are distressed by all loss and destruction that they see; and if they can prevent it, they will prevent any destruction with all of their strength. But not so are the wicked - the brothers of the destructive spirits. They rejoice in the destruction of the world, and they destroy themselves - [since] in the way that a person measures, so is he measured;

We drink our third cup adding more red to the glass as we envision the pinks and the greening of flora at spring time.

ברוך אתה ה'...בורא פרי הגפן

Song#3

הנצנים נראו בארץ עת הזמיר הגיע וקול התור נשמע בארצנו:

The blossoms have appeared in the land,
The time of pruning^cOr “singing.” has come;
The song of the turtledove
Is heard in our land.

[{ס} :] (לכי) סֶמֶךְ הַתְּאֵנָה הַחֲנֻטָּה פְּגִיחָה וְהַגְּפָנִים סִמְרָר גְּתָנוּ גֵיחַ |

The green figs form on the fig tree,
The vines in blossom give off fragrance.

Arise, my darling;
My fair one, come away!

Water

Sarah Fecht “How Climate Change Impacts our water” Columbia University “State of the Planet

Climate change impacts the world’s water in complex ways. Consider a water cycle diagram, like the one below; global warming is altering nearly every stage in the diagram. These changes will put pressure on drinking water supplies, food production, property values, and more, in the U.S. and all around the world.

In fact, “most of the climate change impacts come down to water,” says [Upmanu Lall](#), director of the Columbia Water Center. When people talk about climate change affecting agricultural output, sea level rise, wildfires and extreme weather — “they’re all essentially a water story,” says Lall.

Evaporation

Warmer air can hold more moisture than cool air. As a result, in a warmer world, the air will suck up more water from oceans, lakes, soil and plants. The drier conditions this air leaves behind could negatively affect drinking water supplies and agriculture.

On the flip side, the warmer, wetter air could also endanger human lives. A study out of Columbia University’s Lamont-Doherty Earth Observatory found that higher humidity will make future higher temperatures [unbearable](#) in some places, by blocking the cooling effects of our sweat.

Precipitation

When all that extra warm, extra wet air cools down, it drops extra rain or snow to the ground. Thus, a warmer world means we get hit with heavier rain and snowstorms. The northeastern U.S. is so far seeing the [largest increase](#) in the intensity and frequency of heavy precipitation events. And in the Central U.S., clusters of thunderstorms have been becoming more frequent and dropping more precipitation since 1979.

We eat our last category of fruit representing water: fruit with a soft outer layer over a hard pit reminding us of the soft water over the ocean floor. (dates, cherries, plums, apricot etc.)

ב'א'ה'א'מ'ה' בורא פרי העץ

בָּרַכְי נַפְשִׁי אֶת־יְהוָה יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי גְדֻלַּת מְאֹד הוֹד וְהַגֵּר לְבָשֶׁת:

Bless the LORD, O my soul;
O LORD, my God, You are very great;
You are clothed in glory and majesty,

עֻטָּה־אֹר כִּשְׁלֵמָה נוֹטָה אֲשָׁמִים כִּי־רִיעָה:

wrapped in a robe of light;
You spread the heavens like a tent cloth.

הַמְקַרֵּה בַמַּיִם עֲלֵי־יָתִיב הַשָּׁם־עֲבִים רְכוּבֵי הַמַּהְלֵךְ עַל־כַּנְפֵי־רוּחַ:

He sets the rafters of His lofts in the waters,
makes the clouds His chariot,
moves on the wings of the wind.

עֹשֶׂה מְלֶאכֶרֶת רֹחַת מְשַׁרְתָּיו אֵשׁ לְהֹט:

He makes the winds His messengers,
fiery flames His servants.

יִסְד־אָרֶץ עַל־מְכוּנֶיהָ בַל־תִּמּוֹט עוֹלָם וָעֶד:

He established the earth on its foundations...

יִשְׁבְּעוּ עֵצֵי יְהוָה אֲרָזֵי לְבָנוֹן אֲשֶׁר נָטַע:

The trees of the LORD drink their fill,
the cedars of Lebanon, His own planting,

אֲשֶׁר־שָׂם צִפְרִים יִקְנְנוּ חֲסִידָה בְּרוּשִׁים בֵּיתָה:

where birds make their nests;
the stork has her home in the junipers.

הָרִים הַגְּבוּהִים לִיעֲלִים סְלָעִים מְחֹסֶה לְשִׁפְנָיִם:

The high mountains are for wild goats;
the crags are a refuge for rock-badgers...

מה רבו מעשיך | יהוה בלם בחכמה עשית מלאה הארץ חגיגה.

How many are the things You have made, O LORD;
You have made them all with wisdom;
the earth is full of Your creations.

זה הגם גדול ורחב גלים שם רמש ואין מספר תיות קטנות עם גדלו :

There is the sea, vast and wide,
with its creatures beyond number,
living things, small and great.

Song#5 ושבתם מים בששון מעייני הישועה

How dare we despoil God's precious Creation! How dare we destroy biodiversity and in our industry emissions and development disrupt the rhythms of flora and fauna. In aiding and abetting these things by inaction we are jeopardizing the reputation of our God whose will it was for us to safeguard it, and whose will it is to maintain it.

We drink the last cup of the red wine and relish in the deep colors of summer. **ברוך אתה ה' אלוקינו מלך העולם בורא פרי הגפן.**

מה נפקא מינא

Some ideas for us to resolve this year:

To eat less meat and replace with meat substitutes*

To consider electric and hybrid vehicles

To go with children and grandchildren with buckets to clean a beach

To utilize our trails and relish in nature's beauty

To lobby our congress to enact and enforce climate change legislation

All of us together can have a cumulative effect and move the needle.

CAN I REALLY MAKE A DIFFERENCE?

In the face of this reality, what is there for us to do to help? Some would say nothing. The changes I make in my diet or the car I intend to buy is a miniscule contribution which won't change the course of the

impact of a foregone climate change. But that is like the argument some rabbis made when it came to smoking. They would not outlaw one particular cigarette you choose to smoke because the overall impact of that one cigarette is not life threatening. However cumulatively we know that's a fallacy. The regulation of cigarettes by being declared 'sinful' may will have an effect over time. So too if each of us acts in responsible ways, we can individually make a difference. Get started! Make a difference!

בריך רחמנא מלכא דעלמא מריה דהאי פיתא

Praised are Thou the Merciful One Ruler of the Universe creator of this food. Amen.

***The Problem with too much Meat Consumption**

Meat is an important part of heritage and identity. It's a cultural staple in many communities across the globe. But with a rising global middle class, societies are becoming meat obsessed. Nowhere else is this more prevalent than rich nations whose appetite for beef, pork and processed chicken have reached a tipping point. The research is clear — a diet heavy in meat increases the risk of obesity, cancer and heart disease.

But it also makes the planet sick. The livestock sector — raising cows, pigs and chickens — generates as much greenhouse gas emissions as all cars, trucks and automobiles combined. Cattle ranchers have clear cut millions of square kilometers of forests for grazing pastures, decimating natural “carbon sinks.”

We're not advocating that everyone adopt a “meatless” diet tomorrow. But we all must develop “meat consciousness” and reduce the level of meat in our diets. Shifting to more plant-based foods is essential to combatting climate change, soil, air and water pollution, ocean dead zones, and myriad other problems caused by industrial livestock production.

There are no halachic issues with reducing meat intake

One can be a good Jew and not eat meat on Shabbat (or each day)

From Richard Schwartz's (Jewish Vegetarianism) writings:

I recognize that Judaism permits people to eat meat. Jewish vegetarians and vegans understand that people have a dietary choice, but we feel that this choice should consider basic Jewish teachings and how animal-based diets and modern intensive livestock agriculture impinge on these teachings. For example, we should recognize the tension between the permission to consume animals and the extremely cruel treatment they now

receive on factory farms. With regard to eating meat on Shabbat and holidays, according to the Talmud (Pesachim 109a), since the destruction of the Temple, Jews are not required to eat meat in order to rejoice on sacred occasions. This view is reinforced in the works Reshit Chochmah and Kerem Shlomo and Rabbi Chizkiah Medini's Sdei Chemed, which cites many classical sources on the subject. Several Israeli chief rabbis, including Shlomo Goren, late Ashkenazic Chief Rabbi of Israel, and Shear Yashuv Cohen, late Ashkenazic Chief Rabbi of Haifa, were vegetarians or vegans. Also, Rabbi Lord Jonathan Sacks, former Chief Rabbi of the United Kingdom, was a vegetarian, and Rabbi David Rosen, former Chief Rabbi of Ireland, is a vegan.

The Garden of Eden and the coming of Paradise of Messianic Time will be vegetarian

The foremost Jewish Torah commentator, Rashi, says the following about God's first dietary plan: "God did not permit Adam and his wife to kill a creature to eat its flesh. Only every green herb were they to all eat together." Most Torah commentators, including Rabbi Abraham Ibn Ezra, Maimonides, Nachmanides, and Rabbi Joseph Albo, agree that human beings were initially vegans.

In addition, Rabbi Abraham Isaac Hakohen Kook, first

chief rabbi of pre-state Israel and a major Jewish twentieth-century writer and philosopher, believed that the Messianic period would also be vegan. He based this on Isaiah's powerful prophecy that "a wolf shall live with a lamb, . . . and a lion, like cattle, shall eat straw. . . . They shall neither harm nor destroy on all My holy mount" (Isaiah 11:6–9). Hence the two ideal times in Jewish thought—the Garden of Eden and the Messianic period—are vegan.

I don't know about that, but let's try for both our own personal health and for the planet as a whole to reduce our meat consumption.