

## The wonderful lesson of Tu B'shvat

Tu B'shvat, the 15<sup>th</sup> of Shvat in the Hebrew calendar is almost upon us. Tu B'shvat is a wonderful holiday. On this date, approximately, the Shekadia the almond tree begins to bring forth its bud in Israel. It is the beginning of the rebirth of all plant life, which had seemed to have shriveled and lost all semblance of life during the winter. The trees are without leaves, the grass is yellowish brown and the other plants are bereft of their flowers. But miraculously in the next few months the leaves will all have returned to the trees, the grass will grow green and the crops will poke out of the earth and the flowers will return to the plants.

Every place where seeds have been sown or have lied dormant during the winter will miraculously come to life. What causes this great regeneration? We know that it is caused by the heat and light of the sun and by the power of water caused by either rain or irrigation.

Each of us has planted within ourselves the seeds of life; each of us has a soul. No matter how bleak the future looks no matter how dark are present seems to be we can overcome and regenerate ourselves. The word for sun in Hebrew is Shemesh. It is the same word as to minister to others, to help others or in words to do mitzvos. We need to learn how to help others this will shine a great light not only on them but also upon ourselves. The Torah is always compared to water because the more we immerse ourselves in it the more we will be to see our potentialities and the potentialities of other's The Torah's effects are very subtle. The best water is tasteless odorless and is the clearest and we can hardly see how it is working but the plants know and our souls know.

Tu B'shvat teaches us never to despair. Bring a little sun (help others) and water (Torah) into your life. It may take a while but the beauty of life will return.