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## Parshat Shoftim + New Planting in Homesh!

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Although Tu B'Av was the last day to plant smaller trees in Israel to gain an extra YEAR of *orlah*, older trees which already have an established root system in a larger pot of soil can still be "transplanted" before Rosh Hashana and start the 2nd year of *orlah* after Rosh Hashana.

This past week the **Yeshiva students in Homesh** planted a whole bunch of **NEW large fruit trees** thanks to people who donated them like you. Now that the Gov has canceled the expulsion order instituted with the expulsion of Gush Katif, they are starting to move **BACK** into Homesh and build there!



Planting NEW fruit trees in Homesh



**Parshat Shoftim and its message about Fruit Trees**

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## Is It True That It's Forbidden to Cut Down a Fruit Tree?

This weeks Parsha is **Shoftim** the Torah says:

D'varim (Deuteronomy) Chapter 20:19

יט. כִּי תִצְוֶה אֶל עִיר יָמִים רַבִּים לְהִלָּחֵם עָלֶיהָ לְתַפְשָׁהּ לֹא תִשְׁתִּית אֶת עֵצָהּ לְנִדְחֵם עָלֶיהָ וְרָחוּ  
כִּי מִמֶּנּוּ תֹאכְלֶנָּה וְאַתָּה לֹא תִכְרֹת כִּי הָאָדָם עֵץ הַשָּׂדֶה לִבָּא מִפְּגִיעַ בְּמִצּוֹר

*"When you besiege a city for many days to wage war against it to capture it, you shall not destroy its trees by wielding an ax against them, for you may eat from them, but you shall not cut them down. Is the tree of the field a man, to go into the siege before you?"*

From this verse we derive that we may not uproot or cut down a fruit tree if we do not have an acceptable reason to do so. We also learn that...

### **Man is like the Tree of a Field עֵץ הַשָּׂדֶה - כִּי הָאָדָם עֵץ הַשָּׂדֶה**

**Nine Ways to Be Like a Tree:**

#### **1. Always grow towards the light.**

As we go through life, we must always move towards holiness and light, reaching ever higher for that which is beyond us (Talmud Berachot 48a).

#### **2. Even the smallest scratch can have lasting effects.**

A seemingly small scratch on a young sapling can leave a lasting scar on the fully grown tree. Think, then, about how critical the formative years are and how careful we must be when educating our children.

#### **3. Grow deep roots.**

As we grow, we must remain connected to our source Hashem. How do we bind to G-d? By doing mitzvahs. The word mitzvah is a cognate of tzavta,

“attachment”; when we perform a mitzvah, we are creating a bond with the One who gave us the commandments and connecting to our root source.

#### **4. Provide refuge for others.**

Just as a tree selflessly provides shade and shelter, be a source of comfort for others and provide resources for those in need.



#### **5. Grow sweet fruits for others to enjoy**

Beyond providing shade, a tree also bears fruit. Proactively reach out to others; bring sweetness and sustenance into their lives. Even if it takes many years for the seeds you sowed to come to fruition.

#### **6. Let your leaves return to the earth.**

Just as the leaves of a tree fall to the earth to enrich the soil, we must give back to the world to sustain others.

#### **7. Be supple in the wind.**

Only a tree that can bend in the wind will survive a storm. Likewise, we must be accepting of what G-d sends—never breaking or giving up hope.

#### **8. Grow stronger through your life experiences.**

Just as the rings of a tree record its growth – through years of drought and rain, fire and calm – so, too, must we continue to grow, always adding another level of wisdom learned from the vicissitudes of life.

#### **9. Be impactful.**

Trees don't only provide immediate benefits like: provide food, sustenance for farmers and communities, shade, wood, furniture, tools, games, paper,

hats, baskets, and so much more... they enrich the ecosystem, filter the air, and give off oxygen. Make a lasting impact on the world.

**FINAL NEW video - Purchasing Produce During Shmitta - Part 3**



You can STILL support and become a partner with a farmer helping them plant trees before Rosh Hashana! Share in the Mitzvah and Blessing!

***Click to plant your tree NOW!***

Share this email and the blessing.

*Thank you to Chabad.org for some of the content*

