

# Tu B'Shvat and Shabbat Shira With Rebbe Nachman and the Orthodox Union

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Rav Natan of Breslav writes: “Tu BiShvat is always adjacent to Shabbat Shira, and sometimes it falls on Shabbat Shira itself” – as it does this year (and 30% of all years). Rav Natan explains this proximity in an involved Chasidic digression (Likutei Halakhot Orla 3), based on a teaching of his Rebbe, Rav Nachman of Breslav (Likutei Moharan II 8). We will attempt to present the main elements of the explanation here, including many illustrations from revealed sources that are not mentioned by these awesome Chasidic masters.

Our prayers are almost always requests for mercy, as the gemara states (Berakhot 20b), that prayer is “mercy”. The natural world has its laws of nature, and the Torah has established laws of punishment “measure for measure”, but in our prayers we ask that these laws be circumvented: We ask HaShem to send rain even if the forecast wouldn’t predict it, or to be lenient with us even if we really did transgress.

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