

## The Jewish Holiday Cycle, Ancient Earth Celebrations and Beyond

Jewish law and celebration have long reflected a deep connection to land, specifically to agricultural land in Israel. In fact, almost every Jewish holiday has at its core an agricultural connection. Exploring those values in addition to the holiday's historic and religious themes, allows the teacher to provide a comprehensive Jewish educational experience that combines ethics, history and spirituality.

<b>Holiday</b>	<b>Agricultural or Environmental theme</b>	<b>Historical Theme</b>	<b>Spiritual Theme</b>
Rosh Hashana & Yom Kippur	Rosh Hashanah is called Hayom Harat Olam - the birthday of the creation of the world.	New Year of Years	Personal judgment, rebirth and renewal, reflection
Sukkot	The Fall Harvest, the end of the yearly agricultural cycle	Jews wandering in the desert for forty years, staying in huts throughout the journey	Final Judgment after Yom Kippur
Shemini Atzeret	Prayer for Rain, world's annual rainfall is decided (judged)	On Sukkot sacrifices were made on behalf of all the nations, on Shemini Atzeret they were just for the Jewish people.	Spiritual conclusion of the very physical holiday of Sukkot.
Hanukah	Celebration of Light at the darkest time of year. Conservation of oil, what was supposed to last for one day, lasted for eight	Macabees fight for their beliefs and win	Miracles: The Macabees winning when they were outnumbered; One day's worth of oil lasting for eight nights
Tu B'Shvat	Biblical: New "Tax" Year of the Trees, Modern: Connection to plants, food and land of Israel	Connection to land of Israel	4 worlds: Just as there are four types of fruit (in the Tu B'shvat seder) we have many layers to our spirituality.
Pesach	Barley harvest, first offerings of the year	Exodus from Egypt	Freedom and redemption renewed annually
Lag Ba'omer	Omer- counting between the barley and wheat harvests, watching spring unfold	Bar Kohva revolt, end of the plague of Rabbi Akiva's students and more	A celebration of the giving of the hidden, mystical Torah through Rabbi Shimon Bar Yochai
Shavuot	Wheat harvest, Spring Celebration	Receiving of Torah at Sinai	Personally receiving torah
Shabbat	Day of ceasing from creation and destruction of the world	Remembering freedom from slavery and completion of Creation	More than fits in this box! Rest, reflection, joy, community and much more!!