**YESHIVAT HAR ETZION**

**ISRAEL KOSCHITZKY VIRTUAL BEIT MIDRASH (VBM)**

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**A River Flows from Eden:**

**The Garden of Eden**

**as the Inner Source of the Jewish Holidays**

**Rav Uriel Eitam**

**Shiur #18:**

**“And When You Shall Come into the Land**

**and Shall Have Planted Every Kind of Tree for Food”**

**Tu Bi-Shevat:**

**The Mitzva of *Orla* and the Repair of Adam’s Sin**

**I**

**The Mitzva of *Orla***

**Tu Bi-Shevat and the Mitzva of *Orla***

In the first *mishna* in Tractate *Rosh Hashana,* Beit Hillel states that Tu Bi-Shevat, the fifteenth of Shevat, is “the new year for the tree.” This determination has several halakhic ramifications regarding the laws governing fruit. The first of these, which impacts also upon those that follow, is the determination of a tree's three years of *orla.*[[1]](#footnote-1)

What is the mitzvaof *orla* and what is its connection to Tu Bi-Shevat? Let us begin with an examination of the passage in the Torah dealing with *orla*:

And when you shall come into the land and shall have planted every kind of tree for food, then you shall regard the fruit thereof as forbidden (*va’araltem orlato*); three years shall it be forbidden (*arelim*)to you; it shall not be eaten.

And in the fourth year all the fruit thereof shall be holy, for giving praise to the Lord.

But in the fifth year may you eat of the fruit thereof, that it may yield to you more richly the increase thereof: I am the Lord your God. (*Vayikra* 19:23-25)

The fruit produced by a tree during the first three years after its planting is forbidden as *orla*. During the fourth year, it is designated for proclaiming God's praises: "And in the fourth year all the fruit thereof shall be holy, for giving praise to the Lord." The fruit of that year is referred to as *neta revai,* the planting of the fourth, and it is to be taken up to Yerushalayim and consumed there. After that year, the fruit is permitted for ordinary consumption, subject to the standard agricultural cycle of various tithes and gifts.

The term *orla* is first mentioned in the Torah in connection with the mitzvaof circumcision in *Bereishit* 17, when Avraham is commanded to remove the *orla* of his flesh, i.e. the foreskin. (Ibid. 34:14, the term *orla* alone is used to refer to the foreskin.) The *orla* is a cover, the removal of which is required by the covenant with God (see Rashi, *Shemot* 6:12). This cover impairs a man, rendering him an *arel*, and its removal allows him to enter into that covenant (see Rashi, *Bereishit* 17:1). In other contexts as well, the term *orla* denotes something that seals shut and impairs, e.g. the *orla* of lips (*Shemot* 6:12, 30) and the *orla* of the heart (*Devarim* 10:16).

In our *parasha*, the Torah teaches that this is how the Jewish people are to relate to the fruit of a tree during the first three years after its planting. This fruit, which may appear at first glance to be good for all intents and purposes, must be related to as *orla*: "You shall regard the fruit thereof as forbidden" — literally: “The fruit thereof shall be for you as its *orla,* making it *arel*.” These verses imply that the fruit is inherently problematic, both because of the Torah's decision to use the term *orla* in connection to it, and because of the repeated use of this term: "Then you shall regard the fruit thereof as forbidden (*va’araltem orlato*); three years shall it be forbidden (*arelim*)to you."

Still, we must explain what defect lies in such fruit, requiring that it not be eaten; moreover, how does the fruit go from being forbidden during the first three years to becoming holy in the fourth year?[[2]](#footnote-2)

**The Mitzva of *Orla* and the Story of Adam**

The Midrash gives us the key to understanding the matter, exposing a depth in the reason for the mitzva of *orla* and shedding new light upon it. The Midrash states as follows:

Rabbi Yehuda ben Pazi expounded: Who will remove the dust from your eyes, Adam, who could not comply with what you were commanded for even one hour? Surely your children will wait with *orla* for three years.

Rav Huna said: When Bar Kappara heard this, he said: Rabbi Yehuda, the son of my sister, expounded well: This is what is written: "And when you shall come into the land and shall have planted every kind of tree for food." (*Vayikra Rabba* 25, 2)

The Midrash contrasts Adam, who sins, to the people of Israel, who keep the mitzvaof *orla*. It sees the mitzvaof *orla* as a test that parallels the test given to Adam, a test that Adam fails, but the people of Israel successfully pass. In the end, the Midrash points to the verses in the section dealing with *orla* themselves as the source of this comparison. How does the section dealing with *orla* allude to the story of the sin of Adam and Chava in the Garden of Eden?

There are several parallels between the story of the Garden of Eden and the section dealing with *orla*. Both passages describe man's or the nation's entry into a designated place. In both situations, immediately upon entering the designated place, man or the nation is faced with a prohibition dealing with eating. In both cases, the prohibition deals specifically with the eating of the fruit of a tree. Finally, in both places, some of the fruit is forbidden, while the rest is intended for human consumption.

The wording used in the two passages presents us with additional parallels. The idea of "tree for food," with the special emphasis that we are dealing with "every kind of tree for food" (*kol etz ma’akhal*) in the section of *orla,* is found also in the story of the Garden of Eden, where it is repeated several times:[[3]](#footnote-3) in the creation of the garden: "every tree (*kol etz*) that is pleasant to the sight, and good for food (*tov le-ma’akhal*)" (*Bereishit* 2:9); in the command: "of every tree of the garden you may freely eat" (ibid. v. 15); and in the sin itself: "and when the woman saw that the tree was good for food (*tov ha-etz le-ma’akhal*)" (ibid. 3:6).[[4]](#footnote-4)

No less important than the parallels are the contrasts. The prohibition of *orla* itself seems to be formulated in contrast to the sin of Chava: "And she took of **the fruit thereof (*piryo*)**, and did **eat**" (*Bereishit* 3:6) — "Then you shall regard **the fruit thereof** (***piryo***) as forbidden… it shall **not be** **eaten."**[[5]](#footnote-5) Both verses deal with "the fruit thereof" — of the tree. Against the purloining by Chava comes the distancing and disqualification of "then you shall regard as forbidden," and against the eating comes the prohibition "it shall not be eaten." Thus, the descendants of Adam and Chava stand once again before the test given to their progenitors, and they must rectify the failure of their parents.

We have thus far dealt with the parallels between the passage of the prohibition of *orla* and the story of the Garden of Eden, but the section dealing with *orla* does not open with the prohibition itself, but rather with the heading: "And when you shall come into the land and shall have planted every kind of tree for food." On the face of it, what we have here is a factual description of the expected behavior of those entering the land, who quite naturally will plant trees in order to provide themselves with food, but there is no positive directive aimed at the people of Israel, that they are expected to do this as a matter of principle.

However, this heading as well has a parallel in the story of the Garden of Eden. Just as the story of the Garden of Eden begins with: "And the Lord God **planted** a garden in Eden eastward" (*Bereishit* 2:8), so too the section dealing with *orla* opens with: "and shall have **planted** every kind of tree for food." This parallel reveals that this heading is not merely a realistic description, but also a requirement that has spiritual significance. Just as God plants a garden in Eden eastward with an abundance of fruit trees, pleasant to the sight and good for food, so too the people of Israel are obligated to do the same when they enter Eretz Israel.

**The Return to the Garden of Eden**

Trees and eating are the central themes of the story of the Garden of Eden. Eating is generally seen as a low and physical activity, but in fact it is a far more sublime and all-encompassing act. Eating is the conduit through which God bestows life upon man. Divine vitality feeds humanity's material and spiritual faculties, given to it by way of the ground, the tree and the fruit. It is not by chance that the planting of trees and the eating of their fruit stand at the heart of the story of the Garden of Eden and at the forefront of the mandate to enter Eretz Israel.

In the section dealing with *orla*, Eretz Israel appears as a parallel to the Garden of Eden, and the planting of its fruit corresponds to the planting of the fruit in the Garden of Eden. When Adam and Chava sin, the Garden of Eden is removed from the world and the earth is cursed.

Twenty generations later, Avraham is chosen to establish the people of Israel and restore blessing to the world ("and in you shall all the families of the earth be blessed"; *Bereishit* 12:3); he is promised Eretz Israel, which will in the future be like the Garden of Eden.[[6]](#footnote-6)

However, when Avraham’s descendants enter the land four centuries later, the curse upon the earth is still in effect; the land has yet to reach its full Edenic potential. Thus, the Torah commands the people of Israel to plant "a garden in Eden eastward" within Eretz Israel and to turn it into a Garden of Eden. In this way, the Jewish nation takes part in the repair of the sin of Adam and Chava.

Therefore, the Torah opens with the directive: "And when you shall come into the land and shall have planted every kind of tree for food," rather than immediately dealing with the practical commandment that bans the fruit of a tree in its first three years. This opening establishes the parallel between the beginning of human life in the Garden of Eden and the beginning of the life of the people of Israel in the Land of Israel, deputizing the Jewish nation to be the ones who will plant every kind of tree for food in Eretz Israel and in this way transform it into the Garden of Eden.

This profound meaning of the section dealing with *orla*, as the passage dealing with Israel's mission of restoring the Garden of Eden to the world is reflected in *Midrash Rabba* on that section.

The Midrash (*Vayikra Rabba* 25, 1) opens its words relating to the section of *orla* by pointing to the entry into Eretz Israel and the planting of trees as a return to the Tree of Life: "'And when you shall come into the land and shall have planted every kind of tree for food' — this is what is written: 'She is a tree of life to them that lay hold upon her' (*Mishlei* 3:18)."

Moreover, in the continuation, the Midrash points to the planting of trees in this verse as the highest realization of man's closeness to God, and as a fulfillment of what at first glance appears impossible to fulfil, physically cleaving to God:

"And to Him shall you cleave" (*Devarim* 13:5). Can flesh and blood ascend to heaven and cleave to the *Shekhina*, about which it is written: "For the Lord your God is a devouring fire" (*Devarim* 4:24), that you should say: "And to Him shall you cleave"?

Rather, the Holy One, blessed be He, when creating the world, occupied Himself first with planting trees. This is what is written: "And the Lord God planted a garden in Eden" (*Bereishit* 2:8).

So you, when entering the land, occupy yourselves first in planting trees. This is what is written: "And when you shall come into the land…." (*Vayikra Rabba* 25, 3)

Hence, the *mitzvot* of planting and *orla* bear within them the mission of the people of Israel to transform life anew into an experience of devotion to God.

Our section is formulated as the first commandment imposed on the people of Israel upon entering Eretz Israel, and it calls for planting trees in order to reveal the Garden of Eden in Eretz Israel. This, however, is not enough. When the people of Israel enter this Garden of Eden, it falls upon them to rectify the sin of Adam and Chava. To achieve this end, they must undergo a similar test and pass it. The test that stood before the first human beings appears in its new form in the mitzvaof *orla.*

Let us now examine the relationship between the two tests.

**The Tree of Knowledge Was *Orla***

First, let us go back to the comparison drawn by the Midrash between the two tests: "Who will remove the dust from your eyes, Adam, who could not comply with what you were commanded for even one hour? Surely your children will wait with *orla* for three years." The Midrash compares God's test of Adam to the difficult test of the people of Israel and underscores the opposite results. In this way it praises the people of Israel and their repairing what Adam had ruined, even though their test is more difficult.

However, the Midrash's comparison ignores some of the facts. With respect to the sin, indeed Adam does not stand the test for even an hour, whereas the people of Israel stand their test for three long years; but with respect to the difficulty of the test, it seems that Adam's test is harder, for the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil is apparently forbidden to Adam for all time, whereas the people of Israel know that the prohibition of *orla* will lapse after three years. Would this not make the struggle easier?

Nevertheless, the comparison drawn by the Midrash can be seen as a precise parallel. According to this, the Midrash teaches that the Tree of Knowledge is not meant to be forbidden to Adam for all time; rather it is subject to a temporary ban that will eventually expire, just like the prohibition of *orla*. This possibility, that the Tree of Knowledge would have eventually become permitted to man, explicitly arises in the words of the Kabbalists,[[7]](#footnote-7) some of whom even bring it as an explanation of the mitzvaof *orla.*

Thus writes Rabbi Yosef Gikatilla in his *Sha'arei Ora* (10):

Adam, who could not wait even one hour for *orla*, ate from the Tree while it was good and evil… but then [had he waited] the Tree would have been called good and not evil, and he could have eaten of it as much as he desired and lived forever…

Had Adam waited to cut off the *orla*, it would not have been the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil, but only of good. But when he ate from it, it was good and evil…

See now how strong Israel is in God's *mitzvot*. God commanded Adam to refrain for an hour from eating *orla*, but he could not; then He commanded Israel to wait for three years, and they wait. This is what is written: "Three years shall it be forbidden to you; it shall not be eaten."

According to this, the parallel drawn between the first couple and the people of Israel is precise in all respects, and with the mitzvaof *orla*, the people of Israel pass the very same test that the first couple fails, and thus they repair the failure of their forebears.

The parallel between the passages sheds light on the story of Adam and Chava. The reason for the prohibition cast upon the Tree of Knowledge stems from the fact that it is *orla*. As with the mitzvaof *orla*, had Adam and Chava waited a certain period of time, the fruit of the Tree of Knowledge would have been permitted to them and fit for consumption just like the fruit of the rest of the trees in the Garden of Eden.

The parallel also sheds light on the prohibition of *orla* itself. A tree that is *orla* is forbidden, because, like the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil, it too contains a mixture of good and evil. By eating from the tree, one absorbs the evil and it becomes a part of whoever eats of it. Therefore, the Torah prohibits the fruit of the tree. Once the tree is purified of its *orla*, only the good of it remains, and one may feed upon it and receive through it pure vitality that has no evil in it. The process that passes over the tree and refines it transforms it from the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil to the Tree of Knowledge of Good, which can now give life to man.

The connection between the mitzvaof *orla* and the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil is also reflected in the halakhic parameters of the mitzva. The Gemara (*Berakhot* 36b) uses the criterion of "a tree of which the wood has the same taste as the fruit" to determine the plants that are subject to *orla*. This criterion is also used by *Chazal* to characterize the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil (*Bereishit Rabba* 15, 7).

It is also worth noting a difference between the two passages. In the Garden of Eden, only the Tree of Knowledge is subject to *orla*, whereas in the rest of the trees there is no mixture of evil, and therefore Adam is told: "Of every tree in the garden, you may freely eat." In our world, on the other hand, matters are more complicated, and the evil that is expressed through *orla* is found in all trees when they first grow. This decline —like many other declines — is a consequence of Adam's sin. The first result of Adam's sin is the cursing of the ground: "Cursed is the ground for your sake" (*Bereishit* 3:17), and from this ground grow trees and fruits that manifest the flaw of *orla.*

*Chazal* see the curse pronounced upon the ground as the reason that the production of fruit is such a long process, one that does not resolve itself immediately upon planting the tree:

Had man merited, until now this is the way it would have been. A man plants a tree and it immediately gives fruit. But when man sinned, the ground was cursed, as it is stated: “Cursed is the ground for your sake." (*Tanchuma* [Buber] *Kedoshim* 7)

This Midrash also teaches that the phenomenon of *orla* would not exist were it not for the sin of Adam and Chava, for were this not the case, the fact that a tree would give fruit on the day that it was planted would be of no benefit to man, as one would still be required to wait three years before eating the fruit. Therefore, these words of *Chazal* are brought in the Midrash in the section dealing with *orla.*

Owing to the curse pronounced upon the ground, some of that curse and defect is found also in the fruit that grows from it, and therefore all trees produce at first *orla* fruit that is flawed and therefore forbidden to be eaten.

Planting trees in Eretz Israel and not eating *orla* fruit are presented as the *mitzvot* that must inaugurate the life of the nation of Israel in its land, because the Jewish people contend with the curse that was pronounced upon the ground in the wake of the sin of Adam and Chava.

**The Nature of the Test in the Mitzva of *Orla***

What is the focus of the test in the mitzvaof *orla*? The *midrash* with which we opened the discussion defines the mitzvaas dealing with the capacity to wait. The trees planted by the people of Israel are intended for food, but the people must first restrain themselves and wait three years, and only then may they eat the produce of those trees.

The dimension of waiting and restraint contends with man's impulsive tendencies. A person's evil inclination brings one to focus on the desire for pleasure and seek immediate gratification even if that will cause harm to oneself. It enslaves one, causing the loss of self-control. One’s mind is diverted from the core elements of one’s life to a material world of passing pleasures.

Restraint and waiting come not only to test a person's ability to overcome base impulses. They provide a corrected way of life, where eating is not an activity that one is blindly pushed into, but rather a precise and deliberate act of receiving life and goodness, an activity that builds life and causes it to flourish.

The passionate impulse that craves for pleasure underlies the sin of Adam and Chava. The path to sin passes through the evil inclination's seduction, focusing on the alluring facts "that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight for the eyes." The rectification of the sin requires dealing not only with the act of eating, but also with the lust for pleasure. Therefore, *orla* produce is forbidden not only for consumption, but also for any benefit (see *Pesachim* 22b).

We began by saying that *orla* fruit is forbidden to eat because good and evil are mixed in it. We then moved on to the understanding that the prohibition stems from the need to deal with one's evil inclination. Does the mitzvaof *orla* result from the mixture of good and evil in the tree, or from the need to teach a person self-restraint?

The answer to this question seems to be found in the verses themselves. At first glance, the formulation of the mitzvais unnecessarily lengthy: "Then you shall regard the fruit thereof as forbidden; three years shall it be forbidden to you; it shall not be eaten."

However, on closer examination, we see that the wordiness stems from the fact that the verse contains two dimensions. The first dimension, "then you shall regard the fruit thereof as forbidden," deals with the problem in the tree and the fruit themselves: “*va'araltem orlato”* — its *orla*, that is, the *orla* of the tree and the fruit. The second dimension, "three years it shall be forbidden to you," deals with our attitude toward the tree: “*yihyeh lakhem arelim” —* that is,to you. The mitzvaof *orla* contains, according to this, both aspects: the problem of *orla* in the tree itself, and the attitude toward the fruit, an attitude that must be controlled with self-restraint.

Upon initial consideration, there is no connection between these two dimensions. If there is a problem in the fruit, this requires that the Jewish people refrain from eating it, even if there is no need to deal with their impulses; and the dimension of the evil inclination requires that they deal with it even if the food in question is not flawed in any way.

Is there nevertheless a connection between the two dimensions of the mitzva, or are these two different matters that have come together by chance?

**The Holiness of Nature and the Mitzva of *Orla***

In order to answer this question, let us look again at the story of the Garden of Eden.

We find three types of trees in the Garden of Eden: the Tree of Life, the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil, and all the other kinds of trees in the garden. In the wake of the sin, a curse is pronounced upon man:

Cursed is the ground for your sake; in toil shall you eat of it all the days of your life.

Both thorns and thistles it shall bring forth for you, and you shall eat the herb of the field.

In the sweat of your face you shall eat bread until you return to the ground… (*Bereishit* 3:17-19).

What we have here is a general cursing of the ground with a special focus on bread. As we have seen, Rabbi Yehuda explains (*Berakhot* 40a) that the Tree of Knowledge is wheat. Owing to the sin, wheat, which is originally a fruit, turns into dry grains, “the herb of the field;” only with great effort involving many stages of work does it turn back into the "fruit" of bread.

By contrast, the other fruits do not turn from fruit to herb, and remain with their good taste for the benefit of man. However, our study of the mitzvaof *orla* has taught us that even these fruits are impaired, and that the fundamental mitzvadealing with them is the mitzvaof *orla.* What is the ideal state of these fruits, and what changes in them in the aftermath of the sin?

We can describe the fruit in the Garden of Eden as being found at the level of natural holiness. The Garden of Eden is described as a natural world, built of a garden and rivers, trees and fruit. At the same time, the Garden of Eden is a place where man is meant to live close to God and work for Him — "to work it and to keep it" (*Bereishit* 2:15). In addition, this work itself is centered on eating — “Of the trees of the garden you may freely it, but of the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil, you shall not eat of it" (*Bereishit* 2:16-17)[[8]](#footnote-8) — which is a natural activity that characterizes a living creature by its very nature. It follows from this that life in the Garden of Eden is at a special level at which the natural world manifests holiness, and eating constitutes the service of God out of closeness to Him.

Adam’s sin, which leads to the curse pronounced on the ground and to the mixing of good and evil in the natural world, causes the concealment of natural holiness under the faulty cover of a negative "shell." From now on, the natural world hides God more than it reveals Him. In such a world, the initial natural movement that arises is not as pure as it has been in the Garden of Eden, but rather impurities are mixed in, which set up a screen before the holiness and the connection to God. Trees produce fruit that contain the defect of *orla,* and also in man arise natural and spontaneous desires that are not pure. Eating by its nature stems from the evil inclination, and primarily nourishes the material side of man, rather than being found at the center of God's service, and belonging by its nature to the world of the holy. From now on, holiness for man is found primarily in withdrawal of one kind or another from the material.

The two dimensions of the commandment discussed above — the one in the tree and the one in man — arise from the same point and are connected to the same element. The tree and man must undergo parallel processes of waiting, lest the person be nourished from the *orla* and the evil that are found in the initial natural awakening and cover the hidden holiness. When a person protects himself or herself from raw nature, he or she is also capable of meeting the expanses of holiness.

The processes which a tree passes through in its first three years, and which remove it from its forbidden status, are hidden from our eyes. By contrast, the processes that humans undergo are well-known to us, with the illusion of what we see with our eyes, causing the external dimension to take hold of the consciousness and arouse desires.

The removal of the *orla* comes with the removal of the initial-external look which envelops and holds human beings, and which lacks the power to reach the good itself, but only that which stirs up the evil inclination. After three years of dealing with release from the hold of the external dimension within humanity, the Jewish people can meet the internal dimension.

The decision to go after the tree, the power of which lies in its seductive exterior appearance, strengthens the exterior of all fruit trees and gives them *orla.* According to this, *orla* itself has the essence of the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil. Outwardly, it contains a negative shell, but what hides behind it is holiness that is revealed when this shell passes from the world. When the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil is cleaned of its impurities, it can bestow life without flaws, so that its prohibition passes. It remains the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil without the evil in it, and the Tree of Life, [[9]](#footnote-9) as explained above in the words of the *Sha'arei Ora*.

(Translated by David Strauss)

1. Fruit that assumes the distinct form of fruit before the fifteenth of Shevat of the fourth year counting from its planting is considered third-year fruit and is subject to the laws of *orla.* Fruit that takes form after the fifteenth of Shevat is considered fourth-year fruit and is subject to the laws of *neta revai.* Beit Shammai argues and gives the first of Shevat as the new year for the tree. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Some have understood the command to destroy *orla* produce as a war against idolatrous practices performed to speed up tree growth (Rambam, *Guide for the Perplexed*, III, 37). According to this interpretation, we are dealing with an oppositional mitzva, and not a matter with its own reason. The Ramban explains the prohibition of *orla* as a derivative of the mitzvaof *neta revai* that follows it. According to him, the idea of *neta revai* is to bring the first produce to God, similar to the mitzvaof *bikkurim*, only that the bringing of this first produce is pushed off for three years, because the produce of the first several years is not good enough to bring to God. The Ramban adds that the fruit of the *orla* years harms the body health-wise, but he does not see this fact as the primary reason for the prohibition. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Prior to our *parasha*, the notion of a "tree for food" is mentioned in the Torah only in the story of the Garden of Eden. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. Here the word "all" is not mentioned, because the verse deals only with the Tree of Knowledge. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. The word *piryo*, "the fruit thereof," appears in our *parasha* for the first time since the story of the Garden of Eden. It appears in the Torah only one more time, at the beginning of the covenant in *Parashat Bechukotai* (*Vayikra* 26:4), in a passage which, according to *Chazal*, deals with a return to the level of the Garden of Eden (see *Sifra, Bechukotai* 1, 3-4). [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. See, for example, the verse: “This land that was desolate is become like the garden of Eden" (*Yechezkel* 36:35). See also at the climax of the blessings in the covenant in *Parashat Bechukotai*: "And I will set My dwelling *(mishkani)* among you, and My soul shall not abhor you. And I will walk (*vehithalakhti*)among you, and will be your God, and you shall be My people" (*Vayikra* 26:11-12).

"And I will walk among you" echoes a term that appears only one time earlier in reference to God, in the story of the Garden of Eden: "And they heard the voice of the Lord walking (*mithalekh*) in the garden toward the cool of the day" (*Bereishit* 3:8). Informing us that God will walk among us is another way of telling us that God will restore the closeness reserved for man in the Garden of Eden. This complete mutual closeness is described in the closing words of the verse: "And I will be your God, and you shall be My people." [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. See *Tikkunei Zohar*, 24, which states that "Adam was removed from the world before his time." See also the words of the Arizal, in *Sha'arei Ha-kavanot*, *Derushei Rosh Hashana*,1. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. See, for example, Abravanel's comments (2, p. 93) on the verse: "to work it and to keep it": "The work/ service was to eat of the trees that were permitted to be eaten, and the keeping was to refrain from eating that which had been forbidden to him.” [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. Simialrly, we find in the Kabbala-based *Seder Tu Bi-Shevat* found in the book *Peri Etz Hadar* that the prayer recited by the participants is directed towards repairing Adam's sin:

And all the sparks that were scattered by us or by our ancestors, and through the sin of Adam who sinned with the fruit of the Tree, let them now once again become joined in the splendor of the Tree of Life.

And in the continuation there, we find: "Fortunate is the person who does this, and will be strengthened in reward for this repair, to awaken his root above in the Tree of Life." [↑](#footnote-ref-9)