



## The Perfect Gift

### A Study Guide for Tu Bishvat 5781

Before reading the *midrash*, think about a special gift you were once given.

- Was it important to you to take care of that gift?
- If anything bad ever happened to that gift, how would that make you feel?
- Do you think you would be able to replace it if it were destroyed or lost?

#### Kohelet Rabbah 7:13

When God created the first human, God took him and led him round all the trees of the Garden of Eden and said to him: “Look at My works, how beautiful and remarkable they are! And all that I have created, it was for you that I created it. Pay attention that you do not damage and destroy My world: if you damage it, there is no one to repair it after you.

#### קהלת רבה ז:יג

בְּשַׁעַה שֶׁבָּרָא הַקָּדוֹשׁ בְּרוּךְ הוּא אֶת אָדָם הָרִאשׁוֹן, נָטְלוֹ וְהִחְזִירוֹ עַל כָּל אֵילָנֵי גֵן עֵדֵן, וְאָמַר לוֹ, רְאֵה מַעֲשֵׂי כַּמָּה נְאִים וּמִשְׁבְּחֵי הוֹ, וְכָל מַה שֶׁבָּרָאתִי בְּשִׁבְלֶךָ בְּרָאתִי, תֵּן דַּעְתְּךָ שֶׁלֹּא תִקְלַקֵּל וְתַחְרִיב אֶת עוֹלָמִי, שְׂאֵם קִלְקֵלֶת אֵין מִי שְׂיִתְקֵן אַחֲרָיִךְ.

This *midrash* describes God giving Adam a tour of the Garden of Eden, showing him the beautiful trees. Adam is told that they are all created for him. He is also warned that he should pay attention to not damage the world because no one else will repair the damage.

- What do you think it means that God created the trees *for* humans?
- What exactly does God warn Adam to do? What responsibilities do humans have for the trees, and why?
- What causes damage to trees, and what can you do to prevent or repair it?