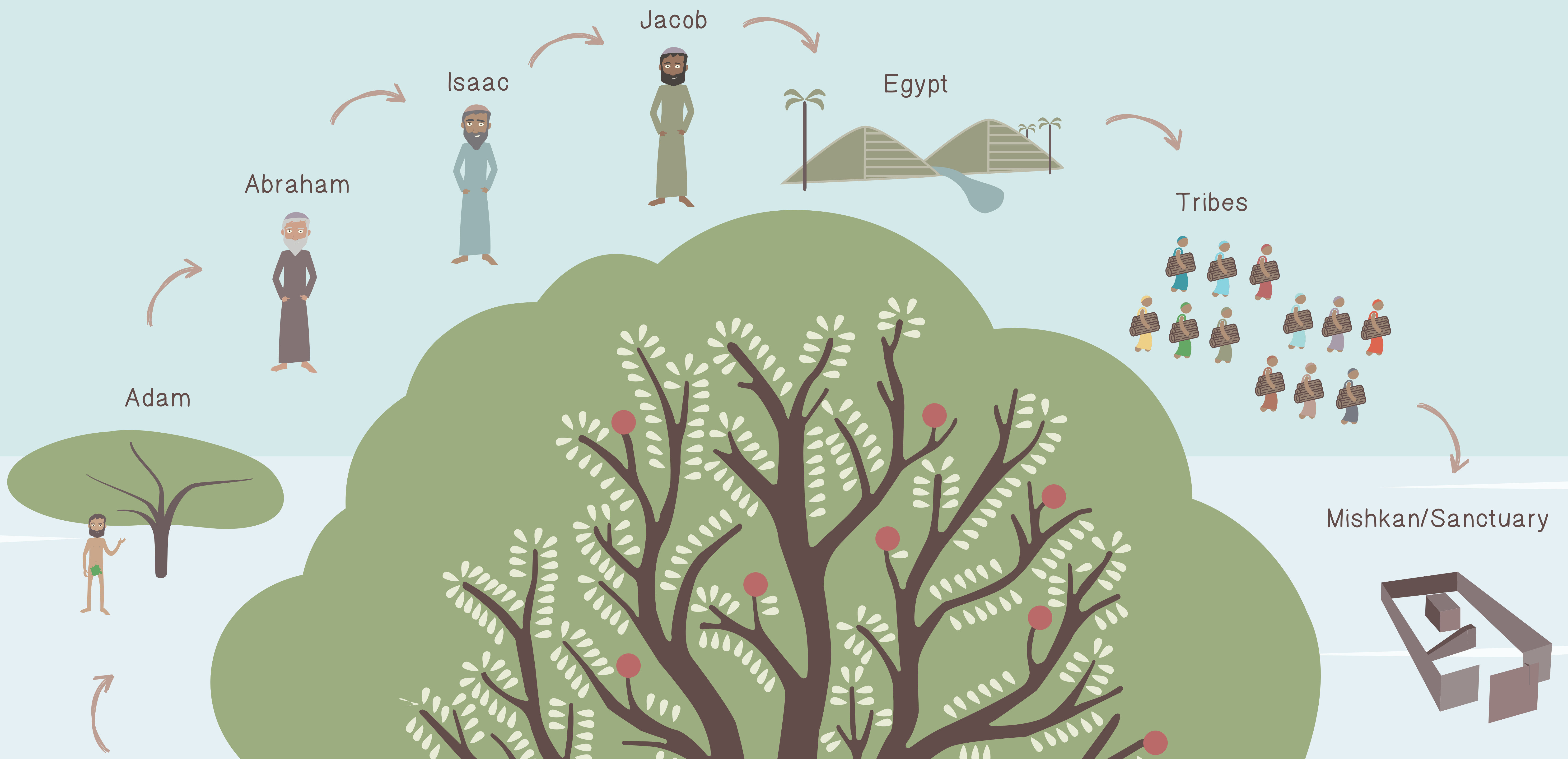


RELATING TO TREES IN JEWISH WISDOM



“They [the Sages] said that Adam took trees from the Garden of Eden and gave them to Abraham, and Abraham to Isaac, and Isaac to Jacob. Jacob took them down to Egypt, and from there the tribes of Israel took them out. This is the acacia wood [commanded for use in the Sanctuary].”

(Rabbi Ibn Sho'eiv of Spain, 13th century approx)

“Then the trees of the forest will sing with joy before God.”
 (Psalm 96 -12)

For the human is a tree of the field
 (Deuteronomy 20:19)

כי האדם עץ השדה

“When G-d created the first man He created him in the Garden of Eden and said to him ‘See they are. And everything that I created, destroy My world – for if you do, there

took him and showed him all the trees of the field. My works, how beautiful and praiseworthy I created it for you. Be careful not to spoil or will be nobody after you to repair it.”

(Midrash Kohelet Raba 7:13)



Trees are so important to people that they are compared to human beings, which is to say, destroying those trees destroys human life, because it may destroy the lives that depend on them.

Rabbeinu Bachya
 (Spain, 1255-1340 C.E.)

These Jewish Sages highlight the Torah's use of trees to generate within us compassion and awareness of interdependence, both essential for living in ecological balance.

“Is the tree of the field a man, to go into the siege before you?”
 (Deuteronomy 20:19-20)

BAL TASHCHIT
 the prohibition against waste and needless destruction -- also begins with trees.

43
 grape



38
 olive



29
 fig



14
 palm



TREES MENTIONED IN TORAH

Number of times each tree is mentioned in the Tanach.

1
 nut



1
 citrus



1
 peanut



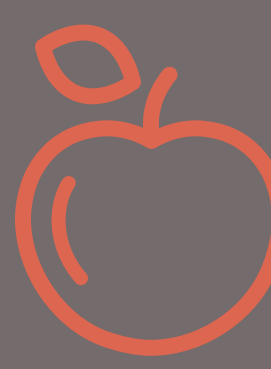
4
 almond



6
 sycamore



6
 apple



9
 pomegranate

