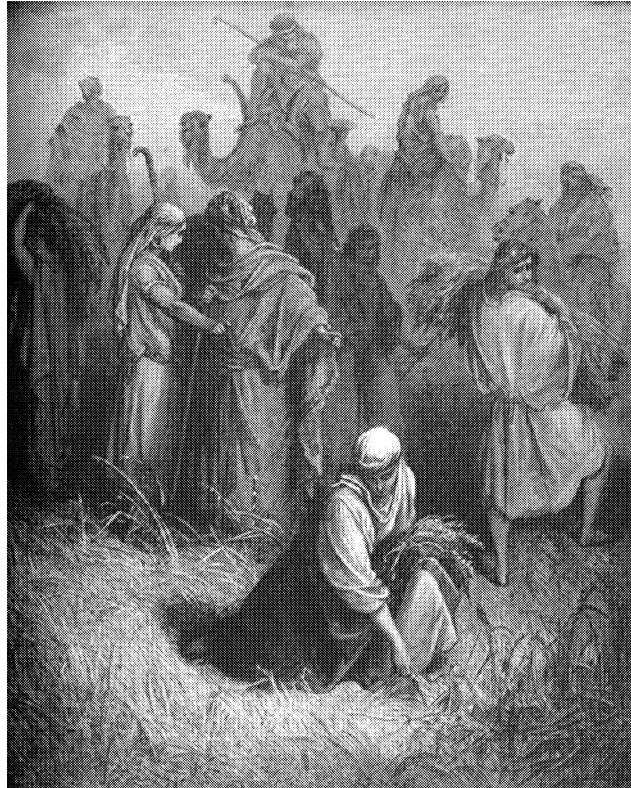


# הַגָּדָה שֶׁל שָׁבוּעוֹת



HAGGADAH SHEL SHAVUOT



## INTRODUCTION

In 1962, Rabbi John Rayner זכר צדיק לברכה introduced the innovative and beautiful ritual of a *Shavuot Haggadah*. Inspired partly by the *Pesach Haggadah*, and partly by the mediaeval, kabbalistic custom of spending *Shavuot* night in the study of biblical and rabbinic passages (*Tikkun Leyl Shavuot*), a revised version of that early experiment was published in 1986 in memory of Peggy Lang who had been Organising Secretary at the LJS.

The *Shavuot Haggadah* has stood the test of time and served to illuminate the history and teachings of a festival possessing fewer rituals than *Pesach* and *Sukkot*. The LJS owes Rabbi Rayner a huge debt of gratitude for bringing to the congregation a wealth of texts drawn from the Bible and Rabbinic literature, songs and the beautiful symbolic ritual of presenting a 'Seder' plate of five symbols to which the Torah is compared: water, wine, honey, milk and oil.

The readings reflect the agricultural origins of the festival and show how *Shavuot* came to be associated with the anniversary of the Revelation at Mount Sinai. The custom is to read this *Haggadah shel Shavuot* around the table at a communal *Chavurah*, sharing dairy and sweet foods together, recalling the verse in which Torah is likened to milk and honey, 'Honey and milk are under your tongue' (*Song of Songs 4:11*). It is also customary to decorate the table and the synagogue with flowers.

The current temporary revision is based on the 1986 version, but incorporates liturgical translations that are in line with the 1995 Liberal prayerbook, *Siddur Lev Chadash*, edited by Rabbi Rayner.

Sivan 5769/2009

Magnified and sanctified be the great name of the One by whose will the world was created. May God's rule become effective in your lives and in the life of the whole House of Israel. May it be so soon, and let us say: Amen.

May God's great name be praised to all eternity.

Blessed and praised; glorified, exalted and extolled; lauded, honoured and acclaimed be the name of the Holy One, who is ever to be praised, though far above the eulogies and songs of praise and consolation that human lips can utter; and let us say: Amen.

For the House of Israel and its Rabbis, their disciples and disciples' disciples, and for all who engage in the study of Torah, here or in any other place, we pray that their Divine Parent may grant them, and all those present, abundant peace, grace, love and compassion, long life, prosperity and redemption; and let us say: Amen.

May great peace descend from heaven, and abundant life be granted, to us and to all Israel; and let us say: Amen.

May the Most High, Source of perfect peace, grant peace to us, to all Israel, and to all humanity, and let us say: Amen.

*Kaddish de-Rabbanan*

Yit-gaddal v'yit-kaddash  
sh'méh rabba, b'alma di v'ra  
chi-r'utéh, v'yamlich  
mal-chutéh, b'chayyeychon  
uv-yomeychon, uv-chayyey  
d'chol beyt yisraél, ba-agala  
u-vizman kariv, v'imru amén.  
Y'hé sh'méh rabba m'varach  
l'alam u-l'almei almayya.  
Yit-barach v'yishtabbach,  
v'yitpa-ar v'yitromam  
v'yitnassé, v'yit-haddar  
v'yit-alloh v'yit-hallal sh'méh  
d'kudsha b'rich hu, l'éla min kol  
bir-chata v'shirata,  
tush-b'chata v'nechemata  
da-amiran b'alma, v'imru amen.  
Al-yisraél, v'al rabbanan v'al  
talmideyhon, v'al kol talmidey  
talmideyhon, v'al kol man di  
askin b'oraita di b'atra ha-deyn  
v'di b'chol-atar va-atar, y'hé  
l'hon u-l'chon sh'lama rabba,  
china, v'chisda v'rachamin  
v'chayyin arichin u-m'zona  
r'vicha, u-farkana min-kadam  
avuhon di vish'maya, v'imru  
amén.  
Y'hé sh'lama rabba min sh'maya  
v'chayyim aleynu v'al kol yisraél,  
v'imru amén.  
Oseh shalom bimromav, hu  
ya-aseh shalom aleynu v'al kol  
yisraél, v'al kol b'ney adam,  
v'imru amén.

יתגדל ויתקדש שמה רבא.  
בעלמא די ברא כרעותה, וימליך  
מלכותה בחייכון וביומיכון ובחיי  
דכל בית ישראל, בעגלא ובזמן  
קריב, ואמרו אמן.  
יהא שמה רבא מברך לעלם  
ולעלמי עלמיא.  
יתברך וישתבח ויתפאר ויתרום  
ויתנשא ויתהדר ויתעלה ויתהלל  
שמה דקדשא בריך הוא, לעלא מן  
כל ברکتא ושירתא תשבכתא  
ונחמתא, דאמירן בעלמא, ואמרו  
אמן.  
על-ישראל ועל-רבנן ועל-  
תלמידיהון ועל-כל תלמידי  
תלמידיהון ועל-כל-מן די עסקין  
באורייתא די באתרא הדין ודי  
בכל-אתר ואתר, יהא להון ולכון  
שלמא רבא, חנא וחסדא ורחמין  
וחיין אריכין ומזונא רויחא  
ופרקנא מן-קדם אבוהון די  
בשמיא, ואמרו אמן.  
יהא שלמא רבא מן שמיא, וחיים  
עלינו ועל כל ישראל, ואמרו  
אמן.  
עשה שלום במרומיו, הוא יעשה  
שלום עלינו ועל כל ישראל ועל  
כל-בני-אדם, ואמרו אמן.

**KINDLING THE LIGHTS**

**הדלקת הנרות**

'You shall count seven weeks...' (Deuteronomy 18:9). Seven weeks have passed since the first day of *Pesach* – a week of weeks – and so tonight we celebrate *Shavuot*, the Feast of Weeks. For our ancestors, this day marked the beginning of the wheat harvest and the gathering of the first fruits. In later tradition, *Shavuot* became *Z'man Mattan Toratenu* – 'The Season of the Giving of our Torah'. As we kindle these lights, we pray that the teachings and values of the Torah will continue to illumine our lives, as it is written: 'For the commandment is a lamp, and the Torah is a light' (*Proverbs* 6:23).

We praise You, Eternal God,  
Sovereign of the Universe: You  
sanctify us by Your  
commandments and enjoin us to  
light the festival candles.

ברוך אתה יי אלהינו מלך  
העולם אשר קדשנו במצותיו  
וצונו להדליק נר של יום  
טוב.

Baruch attah Adonai, Eloheynu melech ha-olam, asher kid'shanu  
b'mitzvotav v'tzivvanu l'hadlik ner shel yom tov.

**BLESSING EACH OTHER**

May God bless you and keep  
you.  
May God look kindly upon you,  
and be gracious to you.  
May God reach out to you in  
tenderness, and give you peace.

יברוך יהוה וישמרך:  
יאר יהוה | פניו אליך ויחנך:  
ישא יהוה | פניו אליך וישם  
לך שלום:

Y'varech'cha Adonai v'yish-m'recha,  
Ya'ér Adonai panav élecha vi-chunekka,  
Yissa Adonai panav élecha, v'yasém l'cha shalom.

## KIDDUSH

## קדוש

'You shall rejoice before the Eternal One your God' (*Deuteronomy 16:11*). As we celebrate these early days of summer and commemorate the day when our ancestors stood at Sinai, let us rejoice in the joy of the Torah, which is compared to wine. For just as 'wine gladdens the human heart' (*Psalms 104:15*), so do the teachings of the Torah bring gladness, as it is written: 'For the precepts of the Eternal One are just, rejoicing the heart' (*Psalms 19:9*).

We praise You, Eternal God, Sovereign of the universe, Creator of the fruit of the vine.

We praise You, Eternal God, Sovereign of the universe. You have called us from all peoples that we might serve You, and taught us laws to sanctify our lives. In Your love You have given us festive days and seasons for rejoicing. We thank You for this Festival of Shavuot, the Season of the Giving of our Torah, that we may join in worship and remember the Exodus from Egypt. For You have called us to serve You as a holy people, and given us the Festivals for gladness and joy.

We praise You O God: You sanctify the House of Israel and the festive seasons.

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ  
הָעוֹלָם, בּוֹרֵא פְּרֵי הַגֶּפֶן.

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ  
הָעוֹלָם, אֲשֶׁר בָּחַר בָּנוּ מִכָּל  
עַם וְרוֹמְמָנוּ מִכָּל לְשׁוֹן,  
וְקִדְּשָׁנוּ בְּמִצְוֹתָיו. וַתִּתֵּן לָנוּ  
יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ בְּאַהֲבָה מוֹעֲדִים  
לְשִׂמְחָה, חַגִּים וְזִמְנִים  
לְשִׂשׁוֹן, אֶת יוֹם חַג הַשְּׁבֻעוֹת  
הַזֶּה, זְמַן מַתַּן תּוֹרַתְנוּ מִקְרָא  
קֹדֶשׁ, זְכוֹר לִיצִיאַת מִצְרָיִם. כִּי  
בָנוּ בְּחֵרְתָּ וְאוֹתָנוּ קִדְּשָׁתָּ מִכָּל  
הָעַמִּים, וּמוֹעֲדֵי קֹדֶשׁךָ  
בְּשִׂמְחָה וּבְשִׂשׁוֹן הִנַּחֲלָתָנוּ.  
בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ, מְקַדֵּשׁ יִשְׂרָאֵל  
וְהַזְּמִינִים.

Baruch attah Adonai, Eloheynu melech ha-olam, boré p'ri ha-gafen.  
Baruch attah adonai, eloheynu melech ha-olam, asher bacha banu  
mi-kol am v'rom'manu mi-kol lashon v'kidd'shanu b'mitzvotav.  
va-titten lanu Adonai Adonai Eloheynu b'ahavah mo-adim l'simchah,

Let me then to your people, near and far,  
Be, as 'Ruth' implies, a friend;  
For your faith is my faith,  
And your prayer my prayer,  
And my law your Torah.  
From my womb shall David come;  
Therefore never let these cease:  
Israel's messianic hope,  
And our search for lasting peace.

(Words by Rabbi John D. Rayner)

[The spirit of] David, king of  
Israel, lives for ever.

דָּוִד מֶלֶךְ יִשְׂרָאֵל חַי וְקַיִם.

David melech Yisraél, chay chay v'kayyam

in the locket of bone that deep  
eye beam of fiercely gentle love  
she had once from mother, daughter,  
sister; once like a warm moon  
that radiance aligned the tides  
of her blood into potent order.

At the season of first fruits we recall  
two travellers, co-conspirators, scavengers  
making do with leftovers and mill ends,  
whose friendship was stronger than fear,  
stronger than hunger, who walked together  
the road of shards, hands joined.

*Marge Piercy*

*Singing*

*(To the tune of Yah Ribbon)*

Naomi, ask me not to leave your side,  
To return to my own land;  
Where you go, I will go,  
Where you make your dwelling,  
There I too shall abide.  
For your people shall be mine,  
And your God my God shall be;  
Where you die I wish to die,  
And there let them bury me.

Do not banish me from your company,  
Do not beg me to depart;  
For your joy is my joy,  
And your pain my sorrow,  
And yours my memory.  
Let me then my refuge find  
Under God's protecting care;  
All their sadness, all their dreams,  
Let me with your people share.

chagim uz'manim l'sason, et yom chag ha-shavu'ot ha-zeh, z'man  
mattan toratenu mikra kodesh, zécher li-tzi-at mitzrayim. ki vanu  
vacharta v'otanu kiddashta mi-kol ha-amim. u-mo-adey kosh'cha  
b'simchah uv'sason hin-chal-tanu. baruch attah Adonai, m'kadésh  
yisraél v'ha-z'manim.

## HAVDALAH

*When Shavuot falls on a Saturday night, all look towards the festival lights and recite  
the following blessing:*

We praise You, Eternal God,  
Sovereign of the universe, Creator of  
light.

We praise You, Eternal God,  
Sovereign of the universe: You have  
taught us to distinguish between  
holy and mundane, light and  
darkness, between the seventh day  
and the six days of work, between  
the holiness of the Sabbath and that  
of the festivals. We praise You, O  
God, for teaching us to distinguish  
between holy and holy.

## SHEHECHEYANU

We praise You, Eternal God,  
Sovereign of the universe: You  
have kept us alive, sustained us,  
and enabled us to reach this  
season.

Baruch attah Adonai, Eloheynu melech ha-olam, shehecheyanu,  
v'kiyy'manu, v'higiyanu laz'man ha-zeh.

*The wine is drunk*

## הבדלה

ברוך אתה יי אלהינו מלך העולם,  
בורא מאורי האש.

ברוך אתה יי, אלהינו מלך  
העולם, המבדיל בין קדש לחול,  
בין אור לחשך, בין יום השביעי  
לששת ימי המעשה. בין קדשת  
שבת לקדשת יום טוב הבדלת.  
ברוך אתה יי, המבדיל בין קדש  
לקדש.

## שחיינו

ברוך אתה יי אלהינו מלך  
העולם, שחיינו וקימנו  
והגיענו לזמן הזה.

## THE MEAL

## הסעודה

*The Shavuot "seder plate" should be prepared beforehand with five small glasses: one filled with water, one with wine, one with honey, one with milk and one with oil.*

The Rabbis used to say: the Torah is compared to five things, water, wine, honey, milk and oil. Why water? As it is written: 'Ho, everyone who thirsts, come to the water' (*Isaiah 55:1*). Why wine? As it is written: 'Drink of the wine I have mixed' (*Proverbs 9:5*). Why honey and milk? As it says: 'Honey and milk are under your tongue' (*Song of Songs 4:11*). Why oil? As it says: 'Your name is oil poured out' (*Song of Songs 1:3*). (*Deuteronomy Rabbah 7:3*).

Let us praise the Eternal One  
who gave us the Torah and who  
blesses with the holiness of the  
Divine Presence.

בְּרוּךְ שֶׁנָּתַן תּוֹרָה לְעַמּוֹ  
יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּקֶדְשׁוֹ.

Baruch she-natan torah l'ammo Yisraél bik'dushato.

Bread, too, is a symbol of the Torah, as it has been said, 'Why do you spend money for that which is not bread, and your earnings on things that do not satisfy? Listen attentively to Me, and eat what is good, and let your soul enjoy abundance. Incline your ear, and come to Me; hear, and your soul shall live' (*Isaiah 55:2-3*). The bread we eat tonight reminds us, too, that Shavuot was once the festival of the wheat harvest, as it says, 'You shall observe the Feast of Weeks, the first fruits of the wheat harvest' (*Exodus 34:22*). 'You shall bring from your settlements two loaves of bread as a wave-offering.' (*Leviticus 23:17*).

We praise You, Eternal God,  
Sovereign of the universe, by  
whose will bread comes forth out  
of the earth.

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ  
הָעוֹלָם, הַמּוֹצֵא לֶחֶם מִן  
הָאָרֶץ.

Baruch attah Adonai, Eloheynu melech ha-olam,  
ha-motzi lechem min ha-aretz.

*The meal is eaten*

## Reflecting on Ruth

The Book of Ruth, which is set at harvest time, is traditionally read at Shavuot. Ruth, a Moabite woman, who loses her Israelite husband, chooses to go with her mother-in-law, Naomi, to Bethlehem instead of returning to her own people. In rabbinic literature, Ruth is seen as a righteous convert who embraces the Torah and the covenant of Sinai. She is the great-great grandmother of King David, who, according to tradition was said to have been born and died on Shavuot.

### *The Book of Ruth and Naomi*

When you pick up the *Tanakh* and read  
the Book of Ruth, it is a shock  
how little it resembles memory.  
It's concerned with inheritance,  
lands, men's names, how women  
must wiggle and wobble to live.

Yet women have kept it dear  
for the beloved elder who  
cherished Ruth, more friend than  
daughter. Daughters leave. Ruth  
brought even the baby she made  
with Boaz home as gift.

Where you go, I will go too,  
your people shall be my people,  
I will be a Jew for you,  
for what is yours I will love  
as I love you, oh Naomi  
my mother, my sister, my heart.

Show me a woman who does not dream  
a double, heart's twin, a sister  
of the mind in whose ear she can whisper,  
whose hair she can braid as her life  
twists its pleasure and pain and shame.  
Show me a woman who does not hide

Enlighten our eyes with Your Torah, make us faithful to Your commandments, and whole-hearted in the love and awe of Your Name, so that we may never be ashamed or disgraced, or stumble.

V'ha-ér eyneynu b'toratecha, v'dabbék libénu b'mitzvotcha, v'yachéd l'avénu l'ahavah ul'yir-ah et sh'mecha. l'ma-an lo névosh, v'lo nikkalém, v'lo nikkashél l'olam va-ed.

God spoke all these words, saying: I the Eternal One am your God who brought you out of the land of Egypt, the house of bondage. (Exodus 20:1-2)

When the Holy One, blessed be He, gave the Torah, no bird chirped, no fowl flew, no ox bellowed, the Ophanim did not take wing, the Seraphim did not proclaim God's holiness, the sea did not stir, no creature uttered a sound; the world was silent and still, and the Divine Voice spoke: 'I the Eternal One am your God who brought you out of the land of Egypt ...' (Exodus Rabbah 29:9)

Blessed be our God who has created us for His glory, separated us from those who go astray, and given us a true Teaching, and planted within us eternal life.

Baruch Eloheynu she-b'ra-anu lich'vodo, v'hiv'dilanu min ha-to-im, v'natan lanu torat emet, v'chayyey olam nata b'tochénu.

וְהָאֵר עֵינֵינוּ בְּתוֹרַתְךָ, וְדַבֵּק  
לְבַבְנוּ בְּמִצְוֹתֶיךָ, וְיִחַד לְבַבְנוּ  
לְאַהֲבָה וּלְיִרְאָה אֶת שְׁמֶךָ,  
לְמַעַן לֹא נִבּוֹשׁ וְלֹא נִכָּלֵם וְלֹא  
נִכָּשֵׁל לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד.

וַיְדַבֵּר אֱלֹהִים אֶת  
כָּל-הַדְּבָרִים הָאֵלֶּה  
לְאמֹר: אֲנֹכִי יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ  
אֲשֶׁר הוֹצֵאתִיךָ מֵאֶרֶץ  
מִצְרַיִם מִבֵּית עֲבָדִים:

בְּרוּךְ אֱלֹהֵינוּ שֶׁבְרָאֵנוּ  
לְכָבוֹדוֹ, וְהִבְדִּילָנוּ מִן  
הַתּוֹעִים, וְנָתַן לָנוּ תוֹרַת  
אֱמֶת, וְחַיֵּי עוֹלָם נָטַע בְּתוֹכְנוּ.

A Song of Ascents.

When God restored the exiles to Zion, it was like a dream. Then our mouths were filled with laughter, our tongues with joyful song. Then they said among the nations: 'God has done great things for them.' God has done great things for us, and we rejoice. Restore our fortune, O God, as streams revive the desert. Then those who have sown in tears shall reap in joy. Those who go forth weeping, carrying bags of seeds, shall come home with shouts of joy, laden with sheaves.

Shir ha-ma'alot: b'shuv Adonai et shivat Tziyyon hayinu k'chol'mim. Az yimmalé s'chok pinu ul'shonénu rinnah. Az yom'ru va-goyim, higdil Adonai la'asot im élleh. Higdil Adonai la'asot immanu, hayinu s'méchim. Shuvah Adonai et sh'viténu ka-afikim ba-negev. Ha-zor'im b'dim'ah b'rinnah yiktzoru. Haloch yéléch uvachoh nosé meshech ha-zara, bo yavo v'rinnah nosé alummotav.

Friends, let us praise God.

*Praised be the name of God, now and forever.*

Let us praise our God of whose abundance we have eaten.

*We praise our God of whose abundance we have eaten, and by whose goodness we live.*

שִׁיר הַמַּעֲלוֹת

בְּשׁוּב יְהוָה אֶת-שִׁיבַת צִיּוֹן  
הָיִינוּ כְּחֻלְמִים: אֲזַי מָלֵא  
שְׁחוֹק פִּינוּ וּלְשׁוֹנֵנוּ רִנָּה אֲזַי  
יֹאמְרוּ בְּגוֹיִם הַגְּדִיל יְהוָה  
לְעֲשׂוֹת עִם-אֱלֹהֵי: הַגְּדִיל יְהוָה  
לְעֲשׂוֹת עִמָּנוּ הָיִינוּ שְׂמֵחִים:  
שׁוּבָה יְהוָה אֶת-שְׁבוֹתֵנוּ  
כְּאֶפְיָקִים בְּנִגְבֹ: הַזֹּרְעִים  
בְּדַמְעָה בְּרִנָּה יִקְצְרוּ: הַלּוֹךְ  
יֵלֵךְ | וּבִכָּה נִשָּׂא מְשֶׁךְ-הַזֶּרַע  
בְּאֵיבּוֹא בְּרִנָּה נִשָּׂא אֶלְמֹתָיו:

חֲבֵרֵי נְבָרְךָ.

יְהִי שֵׁם יְיָ מְבָרָךְ מְעַתָּה וְעַד  
עוֹלָם.

נְבָרְךָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ שֶׁאֲכַלְנוּ מִשְׁלוֹ.

בְּרוּךְ אֱלֹהֵינוּ שֶׁאֲכַלְנוּ מִשְׁלוֹ  
וּבִטְוֵבוֹ חֵיֵינוּ.



We praise You, Eternal One, our God, Sovereign of the universe, whose goodness sustains the whole world. With grace, love and compassion You provide food for all Your creatures, for Your love is everlasting. Through Your great goodness we have never lacked our daily bread; may we always have sufficient, for Your great name's sake. Your goodness is the source of sustenance for all who live. We praise You, O God, Provider of food for all.

Baruch attah Adonai, Eloheynu melech ha-olam, ha-zan et ha-olam kullo b'tuvo b'chen b'chesed uv'rachamim. Hu noten lechem l'chol basar ki l'olam chasdo. Uv'tuvo ha-gadol tamid lo chasar lanu v'al yechar lanu mazon l'olam va'ed, ba-avur sh'mo ha-gadol, ki hu zan um'farnes la-kol, umetiv la-kol umechin mazon l'chol b'riyyotav asher bara. Baruch attah Adonai ha-zan et ha-kol.

We thank You, Eternal God, for the pleasant, good and spacious land You gave our ancestors; for our deliverance from slavery; for the Covenant You have sealed into our hearts; for the Torah You have taught us, and the laws You have made known to us; for Your gracious gift of life and love; and for the food that sustains us day by day.

ברוך אתה יי, אלהינו מלך  
העולם, הזן את העולם כלו  
בטובו בחן בחסד וברחמים  
הוא נותן לחם לכל בשר כי  
לעולם חסדו. ובטובו הגדול  
תמיד לא חסר לנו, ואל יחסר  
לנו מזון לעולם ועד. בעבור  
שמו הגדול, כי הוא זן ומפרנס  
לכל, ומטיב לכל, ומכין מזון  
לכל בריותיו אשר ברא. ברוך  
אתה יי, הזן את הכל.

נודה לך יי אלהינו על שהנחלת  
לאבותינו, ארץ חמדה טובה  
ורחבה, ועל שהוצאתנו יי  
אלהינו מארץ מצרים, ופדיתנו,  
מבית עבדים, ועל בריתך  
שחתמת בלבבנו, ועל תורתך  
שלמדנתנו, ועל חקיך  
שהודעתנו ועל חיים חן וחסד  
שחוננתנו, ועל אכילת מזון  
שאתה זן ומפרנס אותנו תמיד,  
בכל יום ובכל עת ובכל שעה.

'Thus shall you say to the house of Jacob' refers to the women; 'and declare to the children of Israel' refers to the men. (*Mekhilta ad loc.*)

*Singing*

Moses charged us with the Teaching, as the heritage of the congregation of Jacob. (*Deuteronomy 33:4*)

Torah tzivvah lanu Mosheh, morashah k'hillat Ya'akov.

**On the third day, as morning dawned, there was thunder, and lightning and a dense cloud upon the mountain, and a very loud blast of the horn; and all the people who were in the camp trembled.** (*Exodus 19:16*)

כה תאמר לבית יעקב: אלו הנשים. ותגיד לבני ישראל: אלו האנשים.

תורה צוה לנו משה  
מורשה קהלת יעקב:

ויהי ביום השלישי בהיות  
הבקר ויהי קולת וברקים  
וענן כבד על-ההר וקול  
שופר וזק מואד ויזדרד  
כל-העם אשר במנונה:

Because at Pentecost time sleep is sweet and the night is short, the Israelites slept all through that night; and when the Holy One, blessed be He, found them asleep, He stationed trumpeters above them, to rouse them. That is what Scripture alludes to when it says, 'On the third day, as morning dawned, there was thunder, and lightning.'

Therefore the pious ones of old used not to go to sleep that night, but to stay up and study Torah. (*Zohar, Emor, 98a*)

This has now become the practice of most students, and it is possible to explain it on the simple ground that, since the Israelites slept through that night, so that the Holy One blessed be He, had to wake them up, as the Midrash tells us, it behoves us to rectify the matter. (*Magen Avraham to Shulchan Aruch, Orach Chayyim, 494*).

On three foundations does the world rest: on the Torah, on the worship of God, and on acts of kindness.

Al sh'loshah d'varim ha-olam oméd:  
Al ha-torah, v'al ha-avodah, v'al g'milut chasadim.

Having journeyed from Rephidim, they entered the wilderness of Sinai and encamped in the wilderness. Israel encamped there in front of the mountain. (*Exodus 19:2*)

The Torah was given openly and publicly, in no-man's-land. For if it had been given in the land of Israel the Israelites could have said that the nations of the world had no share in it. That is why it was given in the wilderness, openly and publicly, in no-man's-land: so that whoever wishes may come and accept it. (*Mekhilta ad loc.*)

And Moses went up to God. The Eternal One called to him from the mountain, saying, 'Thus shall you say to the house of Jacob and declare to the children of Israel...' (*Exodus 19:3*)

עַל שְׁלֹשָׁה דְבָרִים הָעוֹלָם  
עוֹמֵד: עַל הַתּוֹרָה וְעַל  
הָעֲבוּדָה וְעַל גְּמִילוּת חֲסָדִים:

וַיִּסְעוּ מִרֶפְדִּים וַיָּבֹאוּ  
מִדְבַר סִינַי וַיַּחֲנּוּ בְּמִדְבַר  
וַיַּחֲנּוּ-שָׁם יִשְׂרָאֵל נֶגֶד הַהָר:

נִתְּנָה תּוֹרָה דִּימוּס פְּרֻהֲסִיָּה  
בְּמִקּוֹם הַפְּקָר, שְׁאֵלוֹ נִתְּנָה  
בְּאַרְצָךְ, הִיוֹ אוֹמְרִים לְאֲמוֹת  
הָעוֹלָם אִין לְהֵם חֶלֶק בָּהּ.  
לְפִיכֶךְ נִתְּנָה בְּמִדְבַר, דִּימוּס  
פְּרֻהֲסִיָּה בְּמִקּוֹם הַפְּקָר,  
וְכַל-הַרוּצָה לְקַבֵּל יָבֵא וּקְבֵל.

וּמוֹשֶׁה עָלָה אֶל-הָאֱלֹהִים  
וַיִּקְרָא אֵלָיו יְהוָה מִן-הָהָר  
לֵאמֹר כֹּה תֹאמַר לְבֵית  
יִשְׂרָאֵל וְתִגִּיד לְבָנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל:

Nodeh l'cha Adonai Eloheynu al she-hinchalta la'avoteynu eretz chemdah tovah ur'chavah, v'al she-hotzétanu me-eretz Mitzrayim, uf'ditanu mi-beyt avadim, v'al b'rit'cha she-chatamta bil'vavenu, v'al torat'cha she-limmad'tanu, v'al chukkecha she-hoda'tanu, v'al chayyim chén va-chesed she-chonantanu, v'al achilat mazon sha-atah zan um'farnés otanu tamid b'chol yom uv'chol ét uv'chol sha'ah.

For all these things we thank and praise You. May Your name be praised continually by all who live, as it is written: 'When you have eaten and are satisfied, praise the Eternal One your God who has given you this good earth.' We praise You, O God for the earth and its sustenance.

V'al ha-kol Adonai Eloheynu anachnu modim lach, um'var'chim otach, yitbarach shimcha b'fi kol chay tamid l'olam va'ed, ka-katuv: v'achalta v'savata uvérachta et Adonai Elohecha al ha-aretz ha-tovah asher natan lach. Baruch attah Adonai, al ha-aretz v'al ha-mazon.

Have compassion, Eternal God, on Your people Israel and all the inhabitants of Your world. Guide and sustain us, grant us prosperity and liberty, and may we soon be freed from all our troubles. Let us not be in need of gifts or loans, but only on Your generous providence, so that we may never be embarrassed or put to shame.

וְעַל הַכֹּל יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ אֲנַחְנוּ  
מוֹדִים לָךְ, וּמְבָרְכִים אוֹתְךָ,  
יִתְבָּרֵךְ שְׁמֶךָ בְּפִי כָל חַי תָּמִיד  
לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד. כִּכְתוּב, וְאָכַלְתָּ  
וְשָׂבַעְתָּ, וּבֵרַכְתָּ אֶת יְיָ אֱלֹהֶיךָ  
עַל הָאָרֶץ הַטֹּבָה אֲשֶׁר נָתַן  
לָךְ. בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ, עַל הָאָרֶץ  
וְעַל הַמְּזוֹן.

רַחֵם יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ, עַל יִשְׂרָאֵל עַמְּךָ,  
וְעַל כָּל-יִשְׁבֵי תֵבֵל אֶרֶץ.  
אֱלֹהֵינוּ, אָבִינוּ, רַעְנוּ, זוֹנְנֵנוּ,  
פְּרַנְסָנוּ, וְכֹלְכַלְנוּ, וְהַרוּיְחָנוּ,  
וְהַרוּחַ לָנוּ יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ מְהֵרָה מִכָּל  
צָרוֹתֵינוּ, וְנֹא, אֵל תִּצְרִיכֵנוּ יְיָ  
אֱלֹהֵינוּ, לֹא לִיְדֵי מַתָּנַת בְּשָׂר  
וְדָם, וְלֹא לִיְדֵי הַלְוָאָתָם. כִּי אִם  
לִיְדֵי הַמְּלָאָה, הַפְּתוּחָה, הַקְּדוּשָׁה  
וְהַרְחָבָה, שְׁלֹא נִבוֹשׁ וְלֹא נִכְלָם  
לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד.

Rachém Adonai Eloheynu al yisraél amecha, v'al kol yoshvey tévél artzecha. Eloheynu avinu, r'éynu, zunénu, farn'sénu v'chalk'lénu v'harvichénu, v'harvarch lanu Adonai Eloheynu m'hérah mikkol tzaroteynu, v'na al tatzrichénu, Adonai Eloheynu, lo lidey mat'nat basar va-dam, v'lo lidey hal'va-atam. Ki im l'yad'cha ha-m'lé-ah, ha-p'tuchah ha-k'doshah v'ha-r'chavah, shelo névosh v'lo nikkalém l'olam va-ed.

Our God and God of our ancestors, be mindful of us and all Your people of the House of Israel. Grant us well-being and blessing, life and peace, on this Festival of Shavuot.

Remember us this day for well-being. *Amen.*

Bless us this day with Your presence. *Amen.*

Grant us this day continued life. *Amen.*

And let the vision of Jerusalem, the holy city, be fulfilled in our time. We praise You, compassionate God, Builder of Jerusalem. *Amen.*

Uv'ney Yerushalayim, ir ha-kodesh bim'héra v'yameynu. Baruch attah Adonai, bonéh b'rachamav Yerushalayim. Amén.

We praise You, Eternal God, Sovereign of the universe, our Creator and Redeemer, the Holy One of Jacob and the Shepherd of Israel, good and beneficent to all.

אֱלֹהֵינוּ וְאֱלֹהֵי אֲבוֹתֵינוּ,  
יַעֲלֶה וַיָּבֵא וַיִּזְכֹּר זְכוֹרֹתֵינוּ  
וְזִכְרוֹן כָּל עַמְּךָ בֵּית יִשְׂרָאֵל  
לְפָנֶיךָ, לְטוֹבָה וְלִבְרָכָה  
לְחַיִּים וְלִשְׁלוֹם בַּיּוֹם חַג  
הַשְּׁבוּעוֹת הַזֶּה.

זְכַרְנוּ יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ בּוֹ לְטוֹבָה,  
(אָמֵן)

וּפְקַדְנוּ בּוֹ לְבְרָכָה, (אָמֵן)

וְהוֹשִׁיעֵנו בּוֹ לְחַיִּים. (אָמֵן)

וּבְנֵה יְרוּשָׁלַיִם עִיר הַקֹּדֶשׁ  
בְּמַהְרָה בְּיָמֵינוּ. בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ,  
בוֹנֵה בְּרַחֲמָיו יְרוּשָׁלַיִם. אָמֵן.

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ  
הָעוֹלָם, הָאֵל אֲבֵינוּ, מִלְכֵנוּ,  
אֲדִירָנוּ בּוֹרְאָנוּ, גּוֹאֲלָנוּ,  
יוֹצֵרָנוּ, קְדוֹשָׁנוּ קְדוֹשׁ יַעֲקֹב,

Everything pertaining to that day involved the number three! The Torah consists of three parts: the Torah, the Prophets and the Writings. Its letters go in threes: *Alef-Bet-Gimmel*, etc. Israel comprises three groups: Priests, Levites and Israelites. The Patriarchs were three: Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. Moses was the 'third person' between God and Israel, for it says, 'I stood between the Eternal One and you' (*Deuteronomy 5:5*). The letters making up his name are three: *Mem, Shin* and *Hé*. He came from the third of the Ten Tribes: Reuben, Simeon and Levi. The name of that tribe is composed of three letters: *Lamed, Vav, Yod*. He was one of three siblings: Moses, Aaron and Miriam. He was hidden for three months, for we read that Moses' mother 'hid him for three months' (*Exodus 2:2*). The day of the Revelation was the third as mentioned in the verse, 'for on the third day the Eternal One will come down in the sight of all the people, on Mount Sinai' (*Exodus 19:11*). And the month was the third, as it says, 'In the third month ...' (*Exodus 19:1*).

(*Pesikta d'Rav Kahana 12:13*)

כָּל-מַעֲשֵׂה אוֹתוֹ הַיּוֹם הַזֶּה  
מִשְׁלֵשׁ. הַתּוֹרָה מְשֻׁלֶּשֶׁת:  
הַתּוֹרָה וְהַנְּבִיאִים וְהַכְּתוּבִים.  
וְאוֹתוֹתֶיהָ מְשֻׁלֶּשִׁים: אֶלֶף,  
בֵּית גְּמָל. וַיִּשְׂרָאֵל מְשֻׁלֶּשִׁים:  
כַּהֲנָיִם וְלוֹוִיִּם וַיִּשְׂרָאֵלִים. בְּנֵי  
אֲבוֹת שְׁלֹשָׁה: אַבְרָהָם, יִצְחָק  
וַיַּעֲקֹב. וּמֹשֶׁה שְׁלִישִׁי בֵּינֵיהֶם:  
אֲנָכִי עִמָּד בֵּין-יְהוָה וּבֵינֵיכֶם.  
וְאוֹתוֹתָיו מְשֻׁלֶּשִׁים: מֹשֶׁה.  
וּמִשְׁבֵּט שְׁלִישִׁי: רְאוּבֵן,  
שִׁמְעוֹן, לֵוִי. וְאוֹתוֹתָיו  
מְשֻׁלֶּשִׁים: לֵוִי. וְאַחִים שְׁלֹשָׁה:  
מֹשֶׁה אַהֲרֹן וּמִרְיָם. וְנִצְפָן  
לְשֹׁלֶשָׁה, וְתִצְפְּנֵהוּ שְׁלֹשָׁה  
יָרְחִים: וְהַיּוֹם שְׁלִישִׁי. כִּי בַיּוֹם  
הַשְּׁלִישִׁי יֵרֵד יְהוָה לְעֵינֵי  
כָּל-הָעָם עַל-הַר סִינַי: וְהַחֲדָשׁ  
שְׁלִישִׁי בַחֲדָשׁ הַשְּׁלִישִׁי.

## Standing again at Sinai

In each and every generation, each individual must see themselves as if they were the ones who stood at Sinai, as it is written: 'You stand this day, all of you, before the Eternal One your God ... to enter into the covenant of the Eternal One your God ... as he promised you and your ancestors, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. I make this covenant with its sanctions, not with you alone, but both with those who are standing here with us this day before the Eternal One our God and with those who are not with us here this day.' (from Deuteronomy 29: 9 ff)

**On the third new moon after the Israelites had gone forth from the land of Egypt, on that very day, they entered the wilderness of Sinai. (Exodus 19:1)**

The Holy One, blessed be He, said to Israel: 'My children, be sure to read this portion every year, and I will consider you as if you were standing before Mount Sinai and receiving the Torah'. When [are we to do so]? 'On the third new moon after the Israelites had gone forth from the land of Egypt' (Exodus 19:1). (Pesikta d'Rav Kahana 12:1)

בְּכָל־דּוֹר וְדוֹר חַיֵּב אָדָם לְרֹאוֹת  
אֶת־עַצְמוֹ כְּאִלוֹ הוּא נֹצֵב עַל  
הַר סִינַי שְׁנֵאמַר: אַתֶּם נֹצְבִים  
הַיּוֹם כְּלָכֶם לִפְנֵי יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵיכֶם  
... לְעַבְרֶךָ בְּכַרִּית יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ ...  
כְּאִשֶּׁר דִּבַּרְתָּךְ וְכַאֲשֶׁר נִשְׁבַּע  
לְאַבְתֶּיךָ לְאַבְרָהָם לְיִצְחָק  
וּלְיַעֲקֹב: וְלֹא אַתְּכֶם לְבַדְכֶם  
אֲנֹכִי כִּרְתַת אֶת־הַבְּרִית הַזֹּאת  
וְאֶת־הָאֱלֹהִים הַזֹּאת: כִּי אֶת־אֲשֶׁר  
יִשְׁנֶה פֹה עִמָּנוּ עַמְד הַיּוֹם לִפְנֵי  
יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ וְאֶת אֲשֶׁר אֵינָנו  
פֹה עִמָּנוּ הַיּוֹם:

בַּיּוֹדֵשׁ הַשְּׁלִישִׁי לְצֵאת  
בְּנֵי־יִשְׂרָאֵל מֵאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם  
בַּיּוֹם הַהוּא בָּאוּ מִדְּבַר סִינַי:

אָמַר הַקָּדוֹשׁ בְּרוּךְ הוּא  
לְיִשְׂרָאֵל: בְּנֵי הָיוּ קוֹרִין  
אֶת־הַפָּרָשָׁה הַזֹּאת בְּכָל־שָׁנָה  
וְאֲנִי מַעֲלָה עֲלֵיכֶם כְּאִלוֹ שְׁאֲתֶם  
עוֹמְדִים לִפְנֵי הַר סִינַי וּמְקַבְּלִין  
אֶת־הַתּוֹרָה. אֵימַתִּי? בַּחֲדָשׁ  
הַשְּׁלִישִׁי לְצֵאת בְּנֵי־יִשְׂרָאֵל  
מֵאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם.

You have shown us love and kindness always; day by day You grant us grace and compassion, deliverance and freedom, prosperity and blessing, life and peace. May we never lack what we need for our good.

Baruch attah Adonai Eloheynu melech ha-olam: ha-él avinu, malkénu, adirénu bor'énu, go-alénu, yotz'renu, k'doshénu k'dosh Ya'akov, ro'enu ro-éh Yisraél. Ha-melech ha-tov, v'ha-métiv la-kol, she-b'chol yom va-yom, hu hétiv, hu métiv, hu yétiv lanu, hu g'malanu, hu gom'lénu hu yig'm'lénu la-ad l'chén l'chesed u'l'rachamim u'l'revach ha-tzalah v'ha-tz'lachah b'rachah vishuah, nechamah, parnasah, v'chalkalah, v'rachamim, v'chayyim v'shalom, v'chol tov, u-mikkol tov al y'chasrénu.

May the Merciful One rule over us for ever. Amen.

May the Merciful One be praised in heaven and earth. Amen.

May the Merciful One be praised by every generation, extolled and glorified by us for ever. Amen.

Ha-rachaman, hu yishtabbach l'dor dorim, v'yitpa'ar banu l'nétzach n'tzachim, v'yit'haddar banu la-ad ul'ol'mey olamim.

רוֹעֵנוּ רוֹעָה יִשְׂרָאֵל. הַמְּלִיךְ  
הַטוֹב, וְהַמְּטִיב לְכָל, שֶׁבְּכָל יוֹם  
וְיוֹם הוּא הַטֵּיב, הוּא מְטִיב,  
הוּא יֵיטִיב לָנוּ. הוּא גִמְלָנוּ, הוּא  
גוֹמְלָנוּ, הוּא יְגַמְלָנוּ לְעַד לְחַן  
לְחֶסֶד וּלְרַחֲמִים וּלְרוּחַ הַצְּלָה  
וְהַצְּלָחָה בְּרָכָה וְיִשׁוּעָה, נַחֲמָה,  
פְּרִנְסָה וְכִלְכָּלָה, וְרַחֲמִים, וְחַיִּים  
וְשָׁלוֹם, וְכָל טוֹב, וּמְכַל טוֹב אֵל  
יְחַסְּרָנוּ.

הַרְחֵמֵנוּ, הוּא יְמַלּוֹךְ עָלֵינוּ  
לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד.

הַרְחֵמֵנוּ, הוּא יִתְבָּרַךְ בְּשָׁמַיִם  
וּבָאָרֶץ.

הַרְחֵמֵנוּ, הוּא יִשְׁתַּבַּח לְדוֹר  
דוֹרִים, וְיִתְפָּאֵר בָּנוּ לְעַד וּלְנֶצַח  
נֹצְחִים, וְיִתְהַדָּר בָּנוּ לְעַד  
וּלְעוֹלָמֵי עוֹלָמִים.

May the Merciful One bring peace and friendship to Israel and all her neighbours. *Amen.*

May the Merciful One bless this House of Prayer, and this table at which we have eaten. *Amen.*

Merciful One, bless us and all our dear ones. As our fathers Abraham, Isaac and Jacob were each of them blessed with 'everything' (*Gen 24:1; 27:33; 33:11*), and our mothers Sarah, Rebecca, Rachel and Leah were each of them blessed with 'good' (*Gen 12:16; 24:16; 29:19; 30:20*). So may You bless all of us together with a perfect blessing. *Amen.*

Kén y'varé'ch otanu kullanu yachad, biv'rachah sh'lémah v'nomar: amén.

May the Merciful One permit us to see a time that is all good.

May the Merciful One make us worthy to witness the time of redemption

We have eaten and been satisfied. Help us to be responsive to the needs of others, and to listen to their cry for food. Open our eyes and our hearts so that we may share Your gifts, and help to remove hunger and want from the world.

הַרְחֵמֵן, הוּא יִשְׁלַח שְׁלוֹם וְרַעוּת בֵּין יִשְׂרָאֵל וְכָל-הָעַמִּים.

הַרְחֵמֵן, הוּא יִשְׁלַח לָנוּ בְרָכָה מְרֵבָה בְּבֵית הַזֶּה, וְעַל שֻׁלְחָן זֶה שְׂאֻכְלָנוּ עָלָיו.

הַרְחֵמֵן, הוּא יְבָרֵךְ אוֹתָנוּ וְאֶת-כָּל-אֲשֶׁר לָנוּ, כְּמוֹ שֶׁנִּתְבָּרַכְנוּ אֲבוֹתֵינוּ, אַבְרָהָם יִצְחָק וְיַעֲקֹב בְּכָל מְכַל כָּל, וְאִמּוֹתֵינוּ שָׂרָה רַבֵּקָה רָחֵל וְלֵאָה הַיְטִיב, טַבַּת טוֹב טוֹב. כֵּן יְבָרֵךְ אוֹתָנוּ כְּלָנוּ יַחַד. בְּבְרָכָה שְׁלֵמָה, וְנֹאמַר אָמֵן.

הַרְחֵמֵן, הוּא יִנְחִילָנוּ יוֹם שְׂכָלוֹ טוֹב.

הַרְחֵמֵן, הוּא יִזְכֵּנוּ לְיָמֵי הַגְּאוּלָּה.

*Singing*

The sun sets in the west, the heavens are covered with a red hue.

From the towns of Judah stream the people to the sound of joy and the sound of the flute.

The sound of rejoicing floats in the air, the voice of joy, the sound of melody and song.

The field with its ears of corn waits for the reaper, every ear - a hundred measures.

'Has the sun set?' the reaper asks.

'Yes indeed,' answer the people.

'Shall I reap? and with this sickle?'

'Yes indeed,' answer the people.

A new year of produce, bringing the blessing of the earth.

Our barns are filled with corn, our presses with wine and oil. (*Based on Mishnah Menachot 10:3-5*)

הַשֶּׁמֶשׁ בְּמַעְרָב יוֹרֵדֵת שׁוֹקֵעֵת כְּסוּ הַשָּׁמַיִם אָדָם הַכָּלִיל: מְעִירוֹת יְהוּדָה נוֹהֵר הָעַם בְּקוֹל מְצַהְלוֹת וּבְקוֹל חָלִיל: תְּרוּעַת גִּיל נְשָׂאָה בְּאוּר קוֹל שְׂשׂוֹן קוֹל רִנָּה וְשִׁיר: הַשָּׂדֶה בְּשִׁבּוּלָיו עוֹמֵד לְקַצֵּר כָּל שְׂבֵלֵת - מֵאָה שְׁעָרִים בָּא הַשֶּׁמֶשׁ - הַקּוֹצֵר יִשְׂאֵל: הֲנָן הֵן וְהֵן - יַעֲנֶהוּ הַקְּהָל: הַאֲקַצֹּר וּבִזָּה הַמַּגָּל: הֲנָן הֵן וְהֵן - יַעֲנֶהוּ הַקְּהָל: חֲלָקָה זֹו - יִסִּיף וְיִשְׂאֵל: הֲנָן הֵן וְהֵן - יַעֲנֶהוּ הַקְּהָל: שְׁנַת תְּבוּאָה חֲדָשָׁה מְבִיאָה בְּרַכַּת הָאֲדָמָה אֲסָמִינוּ מְלֵאוֹ כָּר יִקְבִינוּ - תִּירוֹשׁ יִצְהָר:

*Singing*

Happy are we!  
How good is our portion!  
How pleasant our lot!  
How beautiful our heritage!

אֲשִׁרִינוּ! מַה-טוֹב חֶלְקֵנוּ!  
וּמַה-נְּעִים גּוֹרְלָנוּ!  
וּמַה-יְפָה יְרֻשָׁתֵנוּ!

Ashreynu! Mah tov chelkénu!  
U'mah-na-im goralénu!  
U'mah-yafah yerushaténu!

Those that were near brought figs and grapes, and those who were far away brought dried figs and raisins. And an ox went before them with its horns overlaid with gold and a crown of olive leaves on its head. The flute played before them until they drew near close to Jerusalem. When they had arrived near to Jerusalem they sent messengers before them, and they adorned their first-fruits. The governors, the chiefs and the treasurers went out to meet them. According to the rank of those that came in they used to go forth. And all the craftsmen in Jerusalem stood before them and greeted them, 'Brothers and sisters of such-and-such a place, you are welcome!' (*Mishnah, Bikkurim 3:3*)

The flute played before them until they arrived at the Temple Mount. When they reached the Temple Mount even Agrippa the king would set his basket upon his shoulder and go in until he reached the Temple Court. When the Court was reached the Levites sang the hymn 'I will extol You, Eternal One, for You have raised me up and You have not let my enemies rejoice over me.' (*Psalm 30:2*) (*Mishnah, Bikkurim 3:4*)

הַקְרוּבִים מְבִיאִים הַתְּאֲנִים  
וְהָעֲנָבִים, וְהָרְחוּקִים מְבִיאִים  
גְרוֹגְרוֹת וְצִמוּקִים. וְהַשּׁוֹר הוֹלֵךְ  
לִפְנֵיהֶם, וְקַרְנָיו מְצֻפּוֹת זָהָב,  
וְעֵטְרָה שֶׁל זֵית בְּרֹאשׁוֹ.  
הַחֲלִיל מְכָה לִפְנֵיהֶם, עַד  
שֶׁמְגִיעִים קְרוֹב לִירוּשָׁלַיִם.  
הִגִּיעוּ קְרוֹב לִירוּשָׁלַיִם, שֶׁלְחוּ  
לִפְנֵיהֶם, וְעֵטְרוּ אֶת בְּכוֹרֵיהֶם.  
הַפְּחוֹת, הַסַּגָּנִים וְהַגְּזָבְרִים  
יוֹצְאִים לְקִרְאָתָם. לְפִי כְבוֹד  
הַנִּכְנָסִים הָיוּ יוֹצְאִים. וְכָל  
בְּעָלֵי אֲמָנוּת שֶׁבִירוּשָׁלַיִם  
עוֹמְדִים לִפְנֵיהֶם וְשׂוֹאֲלִין  
בְּשֵׁלֹמָם, אַחֲרֵינוּ אֲנָשֵׁי הַמָּקוֹם  
פְּלוֹנֵי, בְּאַתֶּם לְשֵׁלֹמָם:

הַחֲלִיל מְכָה לִפְנֵיהֶם עַד  
שֶׁמְגִיעִין לְהַר הַבַּיִת. הִגִּיעוּ  
לְהַר הַבַּיִת, אֶפְלוּ אֲגְרִיפֶס  
הַמֶּלֶךְ נוֹטֵל הַסֵּל עַל כַּתְפוֹ  
וְנִכְנָס, עַד שֶׁמְגִיעַ לְעֶזְרָה.  
(הִגִּיעַ לְעֶזְרָה) וְדִבְרוּ הַלְוִיִּם  
בְּשִׁיר, אֲרוֹמְמֶךָ יְיָ כִּי דָלִיתָנִי  
וְלֹא שִׁמַּחְתָּ אִיבֵי לִי:

May the Most High, Source of perfect peace, grant peace to us, to all Israel, and to all humanity.

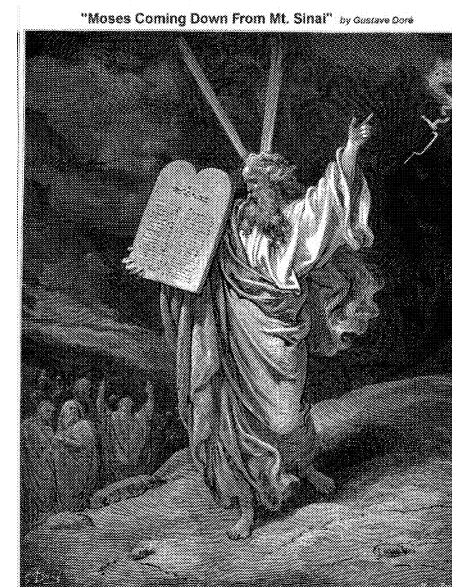
Eternal God, grant strength to Your people. Eternal God, bless Your people with peace.

Oseh shalom bim'romav, hu ya'aseh shalom aleynu v'al kol Yisra'el v'al kol b'ney adam.

Adonai oz l'ammo yittén, Adonai y'varéchet et ammo va-shalom.

עֲשֵׂה שְׁלוֹם בְּמְרוֹמָיו, הוּא  
יַעֲשֵׂה שְׁלוֹם עָלֵינוּ וְעַל כָּל  
יִשְׂרָאֵל, וְעַל כָּל-בְּנֵי-אָדָם.

יְיָ עֹז לְעַמּוֹ יִתֵּן יְיָ יְבָרֵךְ אֶת  
עַמּוֹ בְּשֵׁלֹמָם.



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Exo 32:17 And Moses (smiled, and went down from the mount, and the two tables of the testimony were in his hand: the tables were written on both their sides, on the one side and on the other where they written.

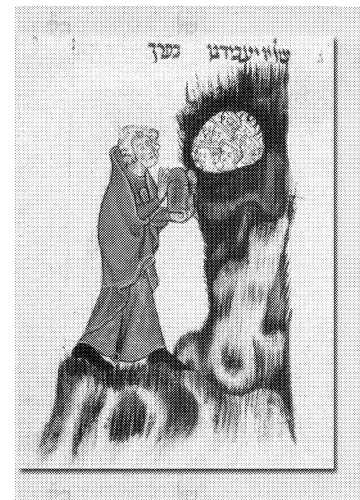
### The Festival of the Harvest and the Day of First Fruits

Once upon a time, our ancestors used to pray to idols, but now God has drawn us near so that we can serve God in prayer (*Pesach Haggadah*). Once upon a time, our ancestors counted seven complete weeks from ‘the day after the day of rest’ (the first day of *Pesach*), fifty days until the end of the grain harvest. They celebrated the Feast of Weeks, not as the day on which the Torah had been given at Sinai, but as a celebration of the Harvest (*Chag ha-Katzir*) and the Day of the First Fruits (*Yom ha-Bikkurim*). As it is written:

You shall count off seven weeks – start to count the seven weeks when the sickle is first put to the standing grain. Then you shall observe the Feast of Weeks for the Eternal One your God, offering your freewill contribution according as the Eternal One your God has blessed you. You shall rejoice before the Eternal One your God with your son and daughter, your male and female slave, the Levite in your communities, and the stranger, the fatherless, and the widow in your midst, at the place where the Eternal One your God will choose to establish His name. Remember that you were slaves in Egypt, and take care to obey these laws. (*Deuteronomy 16:9-12*)

שִׁבְעָה שָׁבָעַת תִּסְפְּרֶנָּה  
 מֵהַחֵל חֲרֹמֶשׁ בְּקָמָה תַּחֲלֶנָּה  
 לְסֹפֵר שִׁבְעָה שָׁבָעוֹת: וְעָשִׂיתָ  
 חַג שִׁבְעוֹת לַיהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ  
 מִסֹּת נְדָבָת יָדְךָ אֲשֶׁר תִּתֵּן  
 כְּאֲשֶׁר יְבָרְכֶךָ יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ:  
 וְשִׂמַּחְתָּ לִפְנֵי יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ  
 אַתָּה וּבִנְךָ וּבִתְךָ וְעַבְדְּךָ  
 וְאִמְתְּךָ וְהַלְוִי אֲשֶׁר בְּשַׁעְרֶיךָ  
 וְהַגֵּר וְהַיְתוֹם וְהָאֵלְמָנָה אֲשֶׁר  
 בְּקִרְבְּךָ בְּמָקוֹם אֲשֶׁר יִבְחַר  
 יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ לְשַׂכֵּן שְׁמוֹ שָׁם:  
 וְזָכַרְתָּ כִּי־עַבְדָּ הָיִיתָ בְּמִצְרַיִם  
 וְשִׂמַּרְתָּ וְעָשִׂיתָ אֶת־הַחֻקִּים  
 הָאֵלֶּה:

An ancient legend in the Book of Jubilees connected the story of Noah and the appearance of the rainbow as a symbol of the eternal covenant with the festival of Shavuot. Never again would God bring a flood to destroy the earth. ‘And so command the Israelites to observe this festival in all their generations as a commandment for them, for it is the Feast of Weeks and the Feast of First Fruits: this feast is two-fold and of a double nature renewing the covenant with God each year.’ (*Jubilees 6: 17 ff.*)



Moses delivers the tablets to the Israelites who are seen peering out from an opening in Mount Sinai which is held upside down like a cask over them forcing them to accept the Torah. (Illustration from Maimonides' *Mishneh Torah*, MS Kaufman A 77)

### The Mishnah recalls the ancient ceremony of bringing the first fruits

The Mishnah, written in the second century of the Common Era, recalls the celebration of this festival as a time of rejoicing over the gathering of the first fruits. When a farmer went out into his field and saw a fig which had begun to ripen early, or a cluster of grapes or a pomegranate, he would tie it around with reed grass and declare: ‘Behold these are first fruits’ (*Mishnah, Bikkurim 3:1*)

Then the inhabitants of the towns and villages would gather their harvest, assemble together and make their way to the House of the Eternal One their God.

*Singing*

And you shall make the Festival  
of Shavuot  
the first fruits of the wheat  
harvest.  
They who sow in tears shall reap  
in joy.  
The earth has given her produce,  
Land of milk and honey.

V'chag Shavuot ta'aseh l'cha  
Bikkurey k'tzir chitim,  
Ha-zor'im b'dimah b'rinah yik-tzoru  
Eretz nat-nah y'vulah,  
Eretz zavav chalav u-d'vash.

### From Harvest to Har Sinai

How did this Feast of the Ingathering and this Day of the First Fruits become the time of recalling revelation – *Z'man Mattan Toratenu* – the Season of the Giving of our Torah, the renewal of the covenant at Sinai?

In the reign of King Asa, the king of Judah, the prophet Azariah, the son of Oded came to him and said: 'Hear me, Asa, and all Judah and Benjamin: The Eternal One is with you, while you are with him. If you seek him, he will be found by you, but if you abandon him, he will abandon you' (2 *Chronicles* 15:2). When Asa heard these words, he destroyed the idols throughout the land, he gathered all the people of his kingdom and the strangers residing with them in Jerusalem in the third month, and on that day 'they entered into a covenant to seek the Eternal One, the God of their ancestors, with all their heart and with all their soul' (*ibid.* v. 12).

And thus the link was made between the 'third month' – the month we call Sivan – and the renewal of the covenant at Sinai.

When the Israelites entered the land which God had promised to their ancestors, they harvested the first fruits of the ground, placed them in a basket and took them to the place which the Eternal One, their God had chosen to cause the Divine name to dwell there. They set down the basket in the presence of the priest and declared before him:

A wandering Aramean was my father, and he went down to Egypt and lived there as a stranger with only a few people. There Israel became a great nation, powerful and numerous. But the Egyptians were evil to us and oppressed us and imposed slave labour on us. We cried out to the Eternal One, the God of our ancestors, and God heard our cries and saw our affliction, our toil and our oppression. And the Eternal One brought us out from Egypt with a strong hand and outstretched arm with great and terrifying signs and wonders. And God has brought us into this place and given us this land, a land flowing with milk and honey. And now, behold I have brought the first of the fruit of the land, which You, O Eternal One have given to me. (*Deuteronomy* 26:5-10)

אֲרָמִי אֲבִי וַיֵּרֵד מִצְרַיִם  
וַיֵּגֶר שָׁם בְּמִתֵּי מִצְרַיִם וַיְהִי-שָׁם  
לְגוֹי גָּדוֹל עָצוּם וְרַב: וַיֵּרְעוּ  
אֹתָנוּ הַמִּצְרַיִם וַיַּעֲנוּנוּ וַיִּתְּנוּ  
עָלֵינוּ עֲבָדָה קָשָׁה: וַנִּצְעַק  
אֶל-יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי אֲבוֹתֵינוּ  
וַיִּשְׁמַע יְהוָה אֶת-קִלְנוּ וַיִּרְא  
אֶת-עַנְיֵנוּ וְאֶת-עַמְלָנוּ  
וְאֶת-לַחְצָנוּ: וַיּוֹצֵאנוּ יְהוָה  
מִמִּצְרַיִם בְּיַד חֲזָקָה וּבְזֹרֵעַ  
נְטוּיָה וּבְמַרְא גָּדֹל וּבְאֹתוֹת  
וּבְמִפְתָּיִם: וַיְבִיאנוּ אֶל-הַמָּקוֹם  
הַזֶּה וַיִּתֵּן-לָנוּ אֶת-הָאָרֶץ  
הַזֹּאת אֶרֶץ זָבַת חֶלֶב וּדְבָשׁ:  
וְעַתָּה הִנֵּה הֵבֵאתִי  
אֶת-רֵאשִׁית פְּרֵי הָאֲדָמָה  
אֲשֶׁר-נָתַתָּה לִּי.

*Singing*

A land flowing with milk and honey!  
אֶרֶץ זָבַת חֶלֶב וּדְבָשׁ.  
Eretz zavav chalav u-d'vash.