

SONGS AND BLESSINGS FOR FOOD

COMPILED BY RABBI ADAM M. ALLENBERG

SONG BEFORE EATING

Traditional Yiddish song,

trans. to Hebrew for Ha-Shomer Ha-Tzair Zionist Youth Movement

**We haven't eaten yet,
we haven't drunk yet,
[yet] we have an appetite.
Bring us food,
and we will eat, all of us,
so we will rise and wake up.**

*Od lo achalnu
Od lo shatinu
Yeish poh lanu tei'avon.
Ochel havu lanu
v'nochal kulanu
Az nari'a v'naron.*

עוד לא אכלנו
עוד לא שתינו
יש פה לנו תיאבון.
אוכל הבו לנו
ונאכל כולנו
אז נריע ונרוון.

**We haven't eaten yet,
we haven't drunk yet,
[and] we are dry in the throat!
We are already ready,
[for] all of us to eat,
and we will say "B'tei'avon!"**

*Od lo achalnu
Od lo shatinu
Yaveish lanu b'garon!
Muchanim k'var anu
le'echol kulanu
v'nomar b'tei'avon!*

עוד לא אכלנו
עוד לא שתינו
יבש לנו בגרון!
מוכנים כבר אנו
לאכול כולנו
ונאמר בתיאבון

YIDDISH VERSION

**We haven't eaten yet,
we haven't drunk yet,
[and] we are dry in the throat!
Bring us some libation,
with a little noodles,
so we will rise and wake up.**

*Od lo achalnu
Od lo shatinu
Yaveish lanu b'garon!
Havu lanu mash'keh,
Mit a bissel kashkeh,
Az nari'a v'naron!*

עוד לא אכלנו
עוד לא שתינו
יבש לנו בגרון!
הבו לנו משקה
מיט אַ ביסל קאַשקע
אז נריע ונרוון!

BLESSING OVER BREAD | המוציא | Ha-Motzi

**Blessed are You, Adonai our God,
Ruler of All Creation,
Who-brings-forth
bread from the Earth.**

*Baruch Atah Adonai
Eloheinu Melech ha-olam,
Ha-Motzi lechem min ha'aretz.*

ברוך אתה יי,
אלהינו מלך העולם,
המוציא לחם מן הארץ.

Competing verses for a classic American Jewish blessing (sources unknown)

Haaaaaa-motzi lechem min ha'aretz,
We give thanks to God for bread.
Our voices join in happy chorus,
as our prayer is humbly said.

Haaaaaa-motzi lechem min ha'aretz,
We give thanks to God for bread.
Our voices rise in song together,
as our daily prayer is said.

BLESSING AFTER THE MEAL | BIRKAT Ha-MAZON | בְּרַכַּת הַמָּזוֹן

FOR SHABBAT AND FESTIVAL DAYS | לַשַּׁבָּת וְיוֹם טוֹב

A song of ascents: When Adonai restores Zion's fortunes, we should be like dreamers. Then will our mouth fill with laughter and our tongue with glad song. Then will they say in the nations: "Great things has Adonai done with these." We shall rejoice. Restore, O Adonai, our fortunes like wadis in the Negev. They who sow in tears in glad song will reap. He walks along and weeps, the bearer of the seed-bag. He will surely come in with glad song bearing his sheaves.

Shir ha-ma'alot b'shuv Adonai et shivat Tziyon ha-yinu k'chol'mim. Az y'malei s'chok pinu ul'shoneinu rinah. Az yom'ru va'goyim: Higdil Adonai la'asot im eileh. Higdil Adonai la'asot imanu, hayinu s'meichim. Shuva Adonai et sh'viteinu ka'afikim ba'negev. Hazor'im b'dimah b'rinah yiktsoru. Haloch yeleich uva'cho, nosei meshech ha'zara, bo yavo v'rinah, no-sei alumotav.

שִׁיר הַמַּעֲלוֹת בְּשׁוּב יְיָ אֶת שִׁיבַת צִיּוֹן הֵי יִנּוּ כְּחֹלְמִים: אֲזַיִמְלֵא שְׂחוֹק פִּינוּ וְלִשְׁוֹנֵנוּ רְנָה אֲזַי אִמְרוּ בְּגוֹיִם הַגְּדִיל יְיָ לַעֲשׂוֹת עִם אֱלֹהֵי: הַגְּדִיל יְיָ לַעֲשׂוֹת עִמָּנוּ הֵי יִנּוּ שְׂמֵחִים: שׁוּבָה יְיָ אֶת שְׁבִיתֵנוּ כְּאֶפְיָקִים בְּנִגְבִּי: הַזֹּרְעִים בְּדַמְעָה בְּרִנָּה יִקְצְרוּ: הַלֹּךְ יֵלֵךְ וּבֹכֵה נִשָּׂא מִשֶּׁךְ הַזֶּרַע בָּא יָבֵא בְרִנָּה נִשָּׂא אֶלְמֹתָיו:

Translation of Psalm 126 adapted from Robert Alter's *The Book of Psalms*

¹Each Shabbat we add these verses from Psalm 126, "Those who sow in tears, they will harvest in joyous song." These words acknowledge life's challenges and takes comfort in the generous redemption we receive through each season of the Earth's constant cycle.

Sometimes, the singing of Birkat Hamazon begins with a simple call and response between those sharing the meal. It's an invitation. "Let us bless," it begins. The rabbis permitted--even suggested--that a person could invite others to join him/her in giving thanks in any language they wish. In Spanish, "Bendigamos"; in Russian "Davaite blagoslovit'." Notice that it's not a question, but a statement. An invitation. In English "Let us bless."

THE INVITATION | זְמִינּוֹן

When 3 or more have eaten together, the opening invitation is offered. If a minyan (10 Jewish adults) or more is present, the words in the parentheses are added.

LEADER

Friends, let us bless.

COMMUNITY

May Adonai's name be blessed now and forever.

LEADER

May Adonai's name be blessed now and forever. With your permission friends, let us bless our God, of whose bounty we have eaten.

COMMUNITY

Bless our God, of whose bounty we have eaten and by whose goodness we live.

LEADER

Bless our God, of whose bounty we have eaten and by whose goodness we live.

EVERYONE

Bless God and bless God's name.

LEADER

Chaverai n'varech.

COMMUNITY

Y'hi shem Adonai m'vorach mei'atah v'ad olam.

LEADER

Y'hi shem Adonai m'vorach mei'atah v'ad olam. Birshut chaverai, n'varech (Eloheinu) sh'achalnu mishelo.

COMMUNITY

Baruch (Eloheinu) sh'achalnu mishelo uv'tuvo chayinu.

LEADER

Baruch (Eloheinu) sh'achalnu mishelo uv'tuvo chayinu.

EVERYONE

Baruch Hu u'varuch Sh'mo.

הַמָּזְמוֹן:

חֲבֵירֵי נְבָרְךְ!

הַמְסוּבִין:

יְהִי שֵׁם יְיָ מְבָרְךְ מֵעַתָּה וְעַד עוֹלָם.

הַמָּזְמוֹן:

יְהִי שֵׁם יְיָ מְבָרְךְ מֵעַתָּה וְעַד עוֹלָם. בְּרִשׁוֹת חֲבֵירֵי, נְבָרְךְ (אֱלֹהֵינוּ) שְׂאֲכַלְנוּ מִשְׁלוֹ.

הַמְסוּבִין:

בָּרוּךְ (אֱלֹהֵינוּ) שְׂאֲכַלְנוּ מִשְׁלוֹ וּבִטְבוֹ חַיֵּינוּ.

הַמָּזְמוֹן:

בָּרוּךְ (אֱלֹהֵינוּ) שְׂאֲכַלְנוּ מִשְׁלוֹ וּבִטְבוֹ חַיֵּינוּ.

כָּלֵם/כָּל אֶחָד:

בָּרוּךְ הוּא וּבָרוּךְ שְׁמוֹ:

FOOD FOR THOUGHT:

"TO PLANT A SEED AND BELIEVE THAT IT WILL GERMINATE, OUTCOMPETE WEEDS, BLOOM, SET FRUIT, AND BE HARVESTED AND SOLD AT A FAIR PRICE IS A GREAT LEAP OF FAITH...NEXT TO SPIDERS, FAITH IS THE FARMER'S BEST FRIEND."

FARMER DENESSE WILLEY, T&D WILLEY FARMS, CENTRAL VALLEY, CA (TAKEN FROM FIELDS OF PLENTY BY MICHAEL ABELMAN)

BLESSING FOR FOOD

Blessed are You, Adonai our God, Sovereign of All Creation, Who sustains All Creation with kindness, mercy and compassion. God gives bread to all living flesh, for God's kindness is everlasting. God's surpassing goodness leaves none lacking food now and for all time. According to God's great name, for God is generous and good to all, and prepares sustenance for all God's creations. Blessed are You, God, the One sustaining all.

Baruch Atah Adonai, Eloheinu
Melech ha-olam, Hazan et ha-olam
ku-lo b'tuvo b'chein b'chesed
uv'rachamim. Hu notein lechem l'chol
basar, ki l'olam chasdo, uvtuvo ha-gadol
tamid lo chasar lanu v'al yechsar lanu
mazon l'olam va'ed. Ba'avur Sh'mo ha-
gadol, ki Hu El zan um'farneis lakol,
u'meitiv lakol, umeichin mazon l'chol
b'riyotav asher bara. Baruch Atah
Adonai, Hazan et ha-kol.

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יי, אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ
הָעוֹלָם, הַזֵּן אֶת הָעוֹלָם כְּלוֹ
בְּטוֹבוֹ בְּחוֹן בְּחֶסֶד וּבְרַחֲמִים הוּא
נוֹתֵן לֶחֶם לְכָל בֶּשָׂר כִּי לְעוֹלָם
חֶסֶדּוֹ. וּבְטוֹבוֹ הַגָּדוֹל תָּמִיד לֹא
חָסַר לָנוּ, וְאֵל יַחְסַר לָנוּ מִזֶּן
לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד. בְּעִבּוֹר שְׁמוֹ הַגָּדוֹל, כִּי
הוּא אֵל זֶן וּמְפַרְנֵס לְכָל וּמְטִיב
לְכָל, וּמַכִּין מִזֶּן לְכָל בְּרִיּוֹתָיו אֲשֶׁר
בָּרָא. בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יי, הַזֵּן אֶת הַכֹּל:

BLESSING FOR LAND

We thank You, Adonai our God for having given a lovely and spacious land to our fathers and mothers; for having liberated us from the land of Egypt and freed us from the house of bondage; for the covenant which God has sealed in our flesh, for the Torah which God has taught us; for the laws which God has made known to us; for the life, grace and loving kindness which God has bestowed upon us, and for the sustenance with which God nourishes and maintains us continually, in every season, every day, even every hour.

Nodeh l'cha Adonai Eloheinu al
she-hinchalta la-avoteinu eretz chemda
tovah ur-chava, v'al she-hotzeitanu
Adonai Eloheinu mei-eretz Mitzrayim
uf-ditanu mibeit avadim, v'al brit'cha
she-chatamta biv-sareinu, v'al torat-cha
she-limad-tanu, v'al chukecha
she-hodatanu, v'al chayim,
chein va-chesed she-chonantanu,
v'al achilat mazon she-ata zan
um-farneis otanu tamid,
b'chol-yom uv'chol-eit uv'chol-sha'ah.

נוֹדֶה לְךָ יי אֱלֹהֵינוּ עַל שֶׁהִנְחַלְתָּ
לְאַבוֹתֵינוּ, אֶרֶץ חֲמֻדָּה טוֹבָה
וּרְחֻבָּה, וְעַל שֶׁהוֹצַאתָנוּ יי
אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֵאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם, וּפְדִיתָנוּ,
מִבֵּית עֲבָדִים, וְעַל בְּרִיתְךָ
שֶׁחֲתַמְתָּ בְּבִשְׂרֵנוּ, וְעַל תּוֹרַתְךָ
שֶׁלִּמַּדְתָּנוּ, וְעַל חֻקֶּיךָ שֶׁהוֹדַעְתָּנוּ
וְעַל חַיִּים חוֹן וְחֶסֶד שֶׁחֻנַּנְתָּנוּ,
וְעַל אֲכִילַת מִזֶּן שֶׁאַתָּה זֶן
וּמְפַרְנֵס אוֹתָנוּ תָּמִיד, בְּכָל יוֹם
וּבְכָל עֵת וּבְכָל שָׁעָה:

(Chanukah or Purim addition goes here. I have omitted it for brevity alone.)

For all that You provide, Adonai our God, we thank You, and we give You blessing; may Your Name be proclaimed by every living being forever. As it is written: "You shall eat, be satisfied and bless Adonai your God for the good land given to you."² Blessed are You, Adonai, for this land and for this food.

V'al ha-kol Adonai Eloheinu
anachnu modim Lach, umvar'chim
Otach, yitbarach Shimcha b'fi kol chai
tamid l'olam va'ed. Kakatuv:
**"V'achalta v'savata uveirachta
et Adonai Elohecha al ha'aretz
ha-tovah asher natan lach."**
Baruch Atah Adonai,
al ha'aretz v'al ha-mazon.

וְעַל הַכֹּל יי אֱלֹהֵינוּ אֲנַחְנוּ מוֹדִים
לְךָ, וּמְבָרְכִים אוֹתְךָ, יִתְבָּרַךְ שִׁמְךָ
בְּפִי כָל חַי תָּמִיד לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד.
כַּכְּתוּב, וְאָכַלְתָּ וּשְׂבַעְתָּ, וּבִרְכַתָּ
אֶת יי אֱלֹהֶיךָ עַל הָאֶרֶץ הַטֹּבָה
אֲשֶׁר נָתַן לְךָ.² בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יי, עַל
הָאֶרֶץ וְעַל הַמִּזֶּן:

² These words are taken from Deuteronomy 8:10.

BLESSING FOR JERUSALEM

May The Lord our God have mercy on God's people Israel, God's city Jerusalem, Zion the abode of God's glory, the royal house of David, God's anointed one, and the great and holy Temple that bears God's name. May our God, our Parent, tend and nourish us, sustain and maintain us, and speedily grant us relief from all our troubles. May God make us dependent not on the alms or loans of others, but rather on God's full, open and generous hand, so that we may never be humiliated or put to shame.

Racheim Adonai Eloheinu al Yisrael
amecha, v'al Y'rushalayim irecha, v'al
Tzion mishkan k'vodecha, v'al malchut
beit David m'shichecha, v'al habayit
hagadol v'hakadosh shenikra shimcha
alav. Eloheinu avinu, r'einu zuneinu,
pam'seinu v'chalk'lenu v'harvicheinu,
v'harvach-lanu,
Adonai Eloheinu,
m'heira mikol-tzaroteinu.
V'na al tatz-richeinu, Adonai Eloheinu,
lo lidei matnat basar vadam
v'lo lidei hal-va-atam,
ki im l'yad'cha ham'lei-a hap'tucha
hak-dosha v'har'chava,
shelo neivosh v'lo nikaleim
l'olam va-ed.

רחם נא יי אלהינו על ישראל
עמך, ועל ירושלים עירך, ועל
ציון משכן כבודך, ועל מלכות
בית דוד משיחך, ועל הבית
הגדול והקדוש שנקרא שמך
עליו. אלהינו, אבינו, רענו, זוננו,
פרנסנו וכלכלנו והרויחנו, והרוח
לנו יי אלהינו מהרה מקל
צרותינו. ונא אל תצריכנו יי
אלהינו, לא לידי מתנת בשר ודם
ולא לידי הלוואתם, כי אם לידיך
המלאה הפתוחה הקדושה
והרחבה, שלא נבוש ולא נפלים
לעולם ועד.

FOR SHABBAT | לַשַׁבָּת

May it be God's will to strengthen us in God's commandments, especially regarding the seventh day, this great and holy Sabbath, for today is great and holy before God--a day on which to rest and repose in love, according to God's command. May it be God's will to grant us relief from all care, sorrow and grief on our day of rest, and may God enable us to see Zion comforted, and Jerusalem, the holy city, rebuilt. For it is God who is the master of salvation and comfort.

R'tzei v'hachalitzeinu Adonai Eloheinu
b'mitzvatecha, uv-mitzvat yom hash'vi'i
ha-Shabbat ha-gadol
v'ha-kadosh ha-zeh. Ki yom zeh gadol
v'kadosh hu l'fanecha,
lishbot-bo v'lanuach bo b'ahavah
k'mitzvat r'tzonecha. U-virtzon'cha
hanach lanu Adonai Eloheinu shelo t'hei
tzara v'yagon va-anacha b'yom
m'nuchateinu. V'har-einu Adonai Eloheinu
b'nechamat Zion irecha, uv'vinyan
Y'rushalayim ir kodshecha, ki atah hu
ba-al ha-y'shuot
u-va-al hanechamot.

רצה והחליצנו יי אלהינו
במצותיך ובמצות יום השביעי
השבת הגדול והקדוש הזה. כי
יום זה גדול וקדוש הוא לפניך
לשבת בו ולנוח בו באהבה
כמצות רצונך. וברצונך הניח
לנו יי אלהינו שלא תהא צרה
ויגון ואנחה ביום מנוחתנו.
והראנו יי אלהינו בנחמת ציון
עירך ובבנין ירושלים עיר
קדשך כי אתה הוא בעל
הישועות ובעל הנחמות.

(Rosh Chodesh and Festival additions goes here. I have omitted it for brevity alone.)

Build Jerusalem, the holy city, speedily in our day. Blessed are You, God, whose compassion builds Jerusalem.

Uv'nei Yerushalayim ir ha-kodesh
bim'heirah v'yameinu. Baruch Atah
Adonai, Bonei b'rachamav Yerushalayim.
Amen.

ובנה ירושלים עיר הקדש במהרה
בימינו. ברוך אתה יי, בונה
ברחמיך ירושלים. אמן

FOR GOODNESS | *Ha-tov v'ha-meitiv* | הטוב והמיטיב

Blessed is YHVH our God, Sovereign of the universe, Who is our God, our Parent, our Sovereign, our Mighty One, our Creator, our Redeemer, our Maker, the Holy One of Jacob, the Shepherd of Israel, the good Sovereign who does good to all. May God who continually shows us kindness continue offering goodness to us. As God has ever bestowed favors upon us, may God continue to bless us with grace, loving kindness, compassion, deliverance, prosperity, redemption, consolation, sustenance, and mercy; a life of peace and all goodness. May God never withhold goodness from us.

Baruch Atah Adonai, Eloheinu Melech ha-olam, ha-Eil Avinu Malkeinu Adireinu Bor'einu Goleinu Yotz'reinu K'dosheinu K'dosh Ya'akov, Ro-einu Ro-ei Yisrael, Ha-Melech Hatov v'Hameitiv la-kol, sheb'chol-yom vayom Hu heitiv, Hu meitiv, hu yeitiv lanu. Hu g'malanu Hu gomleinu Hu yig-m'leinu la-ad l'chein ul-chesed ul-rachamim ul-revach, hatzala v'hatzlacha b'racha vi-shua nechama, parnasa v'chalkala v'rachamim v'chayim v'shalom v'chol-tov, u-mikol tuv l'olam al y'chasreinu.

ברוך אתה יי אלהינו, מלך העולם, האל אבינו, מלכנו, אדירנו, בוראנו, גאלנו, יוצרנו, קדושנו קדוש יעקב, רוענו רועה ישראל, המלך הטוב והמיטיב לכלל, שבכל יום ויום הוא היטיב, הוא מיטיב, הוא ייטיב לנו, הוא גמלנו, הוא גומלנו, הוא יגמלנו לעד, לחן ולחסד ולרחמים ולרוח הצלה והצלה, ברכה וישועה, נחמה פרנסה, וככלכלה ורחמים וחיים ושלוש, וכל טוב; ומכל טוב לעולם אל יחסרנו.

There are numerous blessings in the form that follow that vary from table to table, from setting to season. These are just some of the those representing the vast collection that exists. Consider writing your own and expressing a hope for the world of your own.

Compassionate One: May You rule our lives forever.

Harachaman, Hu yimloch aleinu l'olam va'ed.

הרחמן, הוא ימלוך עלינו לעולם ועד.

Compassionate One: May You be blessed in the heavens and on earth.

Harachaman, Hu yitbarach bashamayim uva'arets.

הרחמן, הוא יתברך בשמים ובארץ.

Compassionate One: May You confer abundant blessing on this house, and on this table from which we have eaten.

Harachaman, Hu yishlach lanu b'rachah m'rubah ba-bayit hazeh, v'al shulchan zeh she'achalnu alav.

הרחמן, הוא ישלח לנו ברכה מרבה בבית הזה, ועל שלחן זה שאכלנו עליו.

Compassionate One: May You bring to us Elijah the prophet, tidings of good to come, redemption and comfort.

Harachaman, Hu yishlach lanu et Eilyahu ha-navi zachor latov vivaser lanu b'sorot tovot y'shuot v'nechamot.

הרחמן, הוא ישלח לנו את אליהו הנביא זכור לטוב, ויבשר לנו בשורות טובות ישועות ונחמות.

FOR SHABBAT | **לשבת**

Compassionate One: May we inherit a Sabbath of eternal peace.

Harachaman, Hu yanchileinu yom she'kulo Shabbat um'nuchah l'chayei ha-olamim.

הרחמן, הוא ינחילנו יום שכלו שבת ומנוחה לחיי העולמים.

God grants deliverance (on Shabbat and Rosh Chodesh: God is a tower of deliverance) to God's chosen sovereign, and shows kindness to God's anointed one, to David, and his descendents forever. May the One-who-makes-peace to exist throughout the high places, also bring wholeness and peace upon us and upon all Israel, and everyone says, "Amen."

Magdil (ON SHABBAT AND ROSH CHODESH: Migdol) y'shu-ot malko v'oseh chesed lim-shicho, l'David ul'zar-o ad olam.
Oseh shalom bimromav, Hu ya'aseh shalom aleinu v'al kol Yisrael, v'imru: Amen.

מגדיל (מגדול) ישועות מלכו, ועשה חסד למשיחו, לדוד ולזרעו עד עולם. עשה שלום במרומו, הוא יעשה שלום עלינו ועל כל ישראל. ואמרו: אמן.

Be aware of God, you who are consecrated; those who are aware of God will be sustained. Those who deny God are lacking and hungry. Those who seek God shall not lack anything that is good. Give thanks to God, for God is good; God's mercy endures forever. God opens God's hand and satisfies every living thing with favor. Blessed is the one who trusts in God, for God will be their protection. I have been young, and I have been old, but I have not seen a righteous person abandoned, nor that person's seed destitute. YHVH will give strength to our people; may YHVH bless our people with peace.

Y'ru et-Adonai k'doshav ki ein machsor lirei-av. K'firim rashu v'ra-eivu v'dorshei Adonai lo yach-s'ru chol-tov. Hodu Ladonai ki tov, ki l'olam chasdo. Potei-ach et-yadecha u-masbia l'chol-chai ratzon. Baruch ha-gaver asher yivtach b'Adonai, v'haya Adonai mivtacho. Na-ar hayiti gam zakanti, v'lo ra'iti tzadik ne-ezav v'zar-o m'vakesh-lachem. Adonai oz l'amo yitein, Adonai y'vareich et amo va-shalom.

יִרְאוּ אֶת יְיָ קְדוֹשָׁיו,
כִּי אֵין מַחְסוֹר לִירְאָיו:
כְּפִירִים רָשׁוּ וְרָעִבוּ, וְדוֹרְשֵׁי יְיָ
לֹא יִחְסְרוּ כָּל טוֹב: הוֹדוּ לַיְיָ כִּי
טוֹב, כִּי לְעוֹלָם חַסְדּוֹ: פּוֹתַח אֶת
יָדְךָ, וּמִשְׁבִּיעַ לְכָל חַי רִצּוֹן:
בְּרוּךְ הַגֹּבֵר אֲשֶׁר יִבְטַח בְּיְיָ,
וְהָיָה יְיָ מִבְּטָחוֹ:
נֶעַר הָיִיתִי גַם זָקֵנְתִי
וְלֹא רָאִיתִי צָדִיק נֶעְזֵב,
וְזָרְעוֹ מִבְּקֶשׁ לַחֵם:
יְיָ עֲזֵר לְעַמּוֹ יִתָּן,
יְיָ יְבָרֵךְ אֶת עַמּוֹ בְּשָׁלוֹם:

NOTE: There is a traditional blessing formula for eating after snacks. Birkat Ha-mazon is only for after meals, which are designated as any food eaten that requires Ha-motzi first.

AN ALTERNATE BLESSING AFTER MEALS

This blessing (in Aramaic) is based on the shortest blessing formula that still fulfills one's obligation (to say grace after meals) should you find under duress, as in "being invaded by an army" or "pursued by a lion". It is based on a text in the Babylonia Talmud, Masechet Brachot (Blessings) 40b.

Binyamin the shepherd ate bread and recited

Blessed is the Master of this bread.

Rav said, he fulfilled [his obligation to recite a blessing].

But didn't Rav [also] say: Any blessing that does not contain mention of God's name is not a blessing?

[But he did,] He said: Blessed is the All-Merciful, Master of this bread.

בְּנִימִין רְעִיא כֹּרֵךְ רִיפְתָּא, וְאָמַר:

"בְּרִיךְ מְרִיבָה דְהָאֵי פִיתָא."

אָמַר רַב: יִצָּא.

וְהָאֵמַר רַב: כָּל בְּרָכָה שְׂאִין בָּהּ הַזְכָּרַת

הַשֵּׁם אֵינָהּ בְּרָכָה!

דָּאָמַר: "בְּרִיךְ רַחֲמֵנָא מְרִיבָה דְהָאֵי פִיתָא."

Sung to an original melody by Noah Aronson.

Also sung with these words, attributed to/by Rabbi Shefa Gold:

You are the Source of Life for all that is,
and Your blessing flows through me.

OTHER FOOD BLESSINGS & SONGS

V'ACHALTA! BY UNKNOWN

Chorus

וְאָכַלְתָּ וְשָׂבַעְתָּ וַיְבָרַכְתָּ - V'achalta, V'savata, Oo-vay-rach-ta x 4

We ate when we were hungry
And now we're satisfied
We thank the Source of Blessing
for all that S/he provides

Hunger is a yearning
In body and soul
Earth, Air, Fire, Water
And Spirit makes us whole.

Giving and receiving
We open up our hands
From Seedtime through Harvest
We're partners with the land

We all share a vision
Of wholeness and release
Where every child is nourished
And we all live in peace

BLESSING FOR THE FARM WORKER FROM THE NATIONAL FARM WORKER MINISTRY / NFWM.ORG

Bless the hands of the people of the earth,
The hands that plant the seed,
The hands that bind the harvest,
The hands that carry the burden of life.
Soften the hands of the oppressor and
Strengthen the hands of the oppressed.
Bless the hands of the workers,
Bless the hands of those in power above them
That the measure they deal will be tempered
With justice and compassion. Amen.

GRACE OVER A THANKSGIVING MEAL FROM INTERFAITH WORKER JUSTICE / IWJ.ORG

Version 1

O God of seed and harvest, we come to this table mindful of Your graciousness.

It is truly a miracle that this food before us: the Kansas wheat, the poultry from Alabama, the corn from Iowa, the potatoes from Idaho, the fruit from California, (foods from other regions may be added) becomes us.

Our eyes, our hearts, our hands, our bodies - alive with the cells and juices of our muscles, bones and flesh - are created and nourished by the food from your bountiful hand.

Keep us mindful of the workers whose labor makes our meal possible. May the nourishment of this meal strengthen us to work for justice and equity, in a compassionate and merciful way, among those who labor in the fields and workplaces to feed us. Amen.

Version 2

O God of seed and harvest, we pause to give thanks for the table set before us and the food that graces it.

[The people gathered take turns naming the various foods on the table being blessed, by saying, “thank you for the _____” until all the foods have been named.]

In a moment we will eat this food, harvested from many parts of the nation and world. It will be transformed into the flesh and blood of our bodies. Keep us mindful of the many workers who labor in field and factory to bring us this food.

From the bounty and nourishment of the meal, we dedicate ourselves to work to abolish poverty, unsafe working conditions, workplace abuse, and unjust wages among those who feed us through their labor. We pray this in the name of the Creator God, who not only fed the Israelites in the desert but transformed simple folk like us into disciples for justice and peace. Amen.

PASTURES OF PLENTY

LYRICS: WOODY GUTHRIE; MUSIC: TRADITIONAL, ADAPTATION OF THE OLD MELODY "PRETTY POLLY"

It's a mighty hard row that my poor hand has hoed
My poor feet has traveled a hot, dusty road

Out of your dust bowl and westward we rolled
And your desert was hot and your mountains was cold

I worked in your orchards of peaches and prunes
Slept on the ground in the light of your moon

On the edge of your city you'll see us and then
We come with the dust and we go with the wind

California and Arizona, I make all your crops
Then it's north up to Oregon to gather your hops

Dig the beets from your ground, cut the grapes from your vine
To set on your table your light sparkling wine

Green pastures of plenty from dry desert ground
From that Grand Coulee Dam where the water runs down

Ever' state in this union us migrants have been
We'll work in this fight and we'll fight till we win

Well, it's always we ramble that river and I
All along your green valleys I'll work till I die

My rights I'll defend with my life if it be
'Cause my pastures of plenty must always be free