

Birkat Hamazon – Grace After Meals

The commandment to thank God after a meal is of Scriptural origin: "And you shall eat and you shall be satisfied and you shall bless..." (Deut. 8:10). As the verse indicates, the Scriptural requirement applies only when one has eaten his/her fill. From earliest times, however, the Jewish people has undertaken to express its gratitude even after a modest meal, provided one had eaten at least as much bread as the volume of an olive. On *Shabbat*, *Birkat Hamazon* begins with Psalm 126, an ancient prophetic poem of yearning for return from Babylonian exile. The blessing continues with an invitation, said only when three or more people are present, wherein the group "comes together" to praise God. After the invitation, there are traditionally four sections: the first thanks God for nourishment, the second for the land of Israel, the third is for Jerusalem, and the fourth section is for God's goodness. The prayer concludes with several additions. This version is accepted by most within the Reform Movement.

On Shabbat:

Shir Hama-a-lot, b'shuv Adonai et shivat

Tzion hayinu k'cholmim.

Az y'malei s'chok pinu ul-shoneinu rina,

az yomru vagoyim: Higdil Adonai la-a-sot im eileh.

Higdil Adonai la-a-sot imanu, hayinu s'meichim.

Shuva Adonai et sh'viteinu ka-afikim banegev.

Hazor'im b'dima b'rina yiktzoru.

Haloch yeileich uvacho, nosei meshech hazara.

Bo yavo v'rina nosei alumotav.

A song of ascents. When Adonai brought the exiles back to Zion it was like a dream. Then our mouths were filled with laughter and our tongues with song. Then was it said among the nations: "Adonai has done great things for them." Truly, Adonai has done great things for us. And we rejoiced. Bring us from exile, Adonia, as the streams return to the Negev, those who sow in tears shall reap in joy. Those who go out weeping, bearing sacks of seeds, shall return with joy, bearing their sheaves.

Leader: Chaveirai n'vareich.

Group (Leader repeats): Y'hi sheim Adonai m'vorach meiatah v'ad olam.

Leader: Birshut chaveirai n'vareich Eloheinu she-achalnu mishelo.

Group (Leader repeats): Baruch Eloheinu she-achalnu mishelo uv-tuvo chayinu.

All: Baruch hu u-varuch sh'mo.

Let us thank God. Blessed is the name of God now and forever. With your permission, let us thank God whose food we have eaten. Blessed is God whose food we have eaten and through whose goodness we live. Blessed is God and Blessed is God's name.

Baruch atah Adonai Eloheinu melech ha'olam,

hazan et ha'olam kulo b'tuvo

b'chein b'chesed uvrachamim,

hu notein lechem l'chol-gasar, ki l'olam chasdo,

Uv-tuvo hagadol tamid lo chasar lanu

v'al yechar lanu mazon l'olam va'ed.

Ba-avur sh'mo hagadol, ki hu Eil zan um-farneis lakol,

umeitiv lakol umeichin mazon l'chol b'riyotav asher bara.

Baruch atah Adonai, hazan et hakol.

Blessed is Adonai our God, Sovereign of the universe, who sustains the entire world with goodness, kindness and mercy. God gives food to all creatures, for God's mercy is everlasting. With abundant goodness we have never lacked, and may we never lack sustenance forever in God's great name. God sustains all, does good to all, and provides food for all the creatures created. Blessed is Adonai, who provides food for all.

שִׁיר הַמַּעֲלוֹת, בְּשׁוּב יְיָ אֶת שִׁיבַת
צִיּוֹן הֵינּוּ כְּחֻלְמִים.
אֲזַי מְלֵא שְׂחֹק פִּינוּ וּלְשׁוֹנֵינוּ רִנָּה,
אֲזַי יֵאמְרוּ בְּגוֹיִם: הִגְדִּיל יְיָ לַעֲשׂוֹת עִם אֲלֹהֵי.
הִגְדִּיל יְיָ לַעֲשׂוֹת עִמָּנוּ, הֵינּוּ שְׂמֵחִים.
שׁוּבָה יְיָ אֶת שְׁבִתֵנוּ כְּאֶפְקִים בְּנֶגֶב.
הַזְרְעִים בְּדַמְעָה בְּרִנָּה יִקְצְרוּ.
הַלֹּחַף יִלְךְ וּבִכְהָ, נִשְׂא מִשָּׂךְ הַזְרַע.
בֹּא יְבֹא בְּרִנָּה נִשְׂא אֶלְמַתִּיו.

חֲבֵרֵי נְבִרָךְ.
יְהִי שֵׁם יְיָ מְבֹרָךְ מֵעַתָּה וְעַד עוֹלָם.
בְּרִשׁוֹת חֲבֵרֵי נְבִרָךְ אֱלֹהֵינוּ שְׂאֲכָלְנוּ מִשְּׁלֹךְ.
בְּרוּךְ אֱלֹהֵינוּ שְׂאֲכָלְנוּ מִשְּׁלֹךְ וּבְטוּבוֹ חֵינּוּ.
בְּרוּךְ הוּא וּבְרוּךְ שְׁמוֹ.

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם,
הַזֵּן אֶת הָעוֹלָם כֻּלּוֹ בְּטוּבוֹ
בְּחֶן בְּחֶסֶד וּבְרַחֲמִים,
הוּא נוֹתֵן לָחֵם לְכֹל בֶּשֶׂר כִּי לְעוֹלָם חֶסֶדּוֹ,
וּבְטוּבוֹ הַגָּדוֹל תִּמְיֵד לֹא חָסַר לָנוּ
וְאֵל יִחְסַר לָנוּ מְזוֹן לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד.
בְּעִבּוֹר שְׁמוֹ הַגָּדוֹל, כִּי הוּא אֵל זֶן וּמַפְרִיֵן לְכֹל,
וּמִיֵּטִיב לְכֹל וּמְכִיֵן מְזוֹן לְכֹל בְּרִיּוֹתָיו אֲשֶׁר בָּרָא:
בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ, הַזֵּן אֶת הַכֹּל.

V'al hakol Adonai Eloheinu anachnu modim lach um-varchim
otach yitbarach shimcah b'fi chol chai tamid
l'olam va-ed, kakatuv: V'achalta v'savata uveirachta
et Adonai Elohecha al ha-aretz hatova asher natan lach.
Baruch atah Adonai, al ha-aretz v'al hamazon.

For these blessings we thank Adonai our God with praise. May God's name be praised by every living being forever, as it is written: "When you have eaten your fill, give thanks to Adonai your God for the good land which God has given you." Blessed is Adonai for the land and its produce.

Uv-nei Y'rushalayim ir hakodesh bimheira v'yameninu.
Baruch atah Adonai, boneh v'rachamav Y'rushalayim. Amen.

May God rebuild Jerusalem, the holy city, speedily in our lifetime. Blessed is Adonai, who restores Jerusalem with mercy. Amen.

Harachaman, hu yimloch aleinu l'olam va'ed
Harachaman, hu yitbarach bashamayim uva'aretz
Harachaman, hu yishlach b'racha m'ruba babyit
hazeh v'al shulchan zeh she-achalnu alav.
Harachaman, hu y'variech et kol acheinu beit Yisrael
han'tunim betzarah, v'yotzi-eim mei-afeilah l'orah.

May the Merciful One rule over us forever and ever. May the Merciful One be blessed in heaven and on earth. May the Merciful One send abundant blessings upon this dwelling and the table at which we have eaten. May the Merciful One bless all of our brothers and sisters of the house of Israel who are now oppressed and bring them from darkness into light.

On Shabbat:

Harachaman, hu yan-chileinu yom shekulo Shabbat
um-nucha l'chayei ha-olamim.

May the Merciful One grant us a world that shall be entirely Shabbat and eternal rest.

Oseh shalom bimromav hu ya-seh shalom aleinu
v'al kol Yisrael, v'imru amen.

Adonai oz l'amo yitein Adonai y'varich et-amo vashalom.

May the One who makes peace in the heavens let peace descend on all of us, and let us say Amen. May Adonai give strength to our people; may Adonai bless our people with peace.

וְעַל הַכֹּל יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ אֲנַחְנוּ מוֹדִים לָךְ וּמְבָרְכִים
אוֹתְךָ יִתְבָּרַךְ שְׁמֶךָ בְּפִי כָל חַי תָּמִיד
לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד, כְּכַתוּב: וְאַכַּלְתָּ וּשְׂבַעְתָּ וּבֵרַכְתָּ
אֶת יְיָ אֱלֹהֶיךָ עַל הָאָרֶץ הַטּוֹבָה אֲשֶׁר נָתַן לָךְ.
בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ, עַל הָאָרֶץ וְעַל הַמְּזוֹן.

וּבִנְהַ יְרוּשָׁלַיִם עִיר הַקֹּדֶשׁ בְּמַהֲרָה בְיָמֵינוּ.
בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ, בּוֹנֵה בְרַחֲמָיו יְרוּשָׁלַיִם. אָמֵן.

הֲרַחֲמֵן, הוּא יִמְלֹךְ עָלֵינוּ לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד
הֲרַחֲמֵן, הוּא יִתְבָּרַךְ בְּשָׁמַיִם וּבָאָרֶץ
הֲרַחֲמֵן, הוּא יִשְׁלַח בְּרָכָה מְרֻבָּה בְּבֵית
הַזֶּה רַעַל שְׁלֹחַן זֶה שְׂאֲכָלְנוּ עָלָיו.
הֲרַחֲמֵן, הוּא יְבָרֵךְ אֶת כָּל אַחֲנוּ בֵּית יִשְׂרָאֵל
הַנִּתְּוִנִים בְּצָרָה וְיוֹצִיאֵם מֵאֲפֵלָה לְאוֹרָה.

הֲרַחֲמֵן, הוּא יִנְחִילֵנוּ יוֹם שְׁכָלוֹ שַׁבַּת
וּמְנוּחָ לְחַיֵּי הָעוֹלָמִים.

עוֹשֵׂה שְׁלוֹם בְּמְרוֹמָיו הוּא יַעֲשֶׂה שְׁלוֹם עָלֵינוּ
וְעַל כָּל יִשְׂרָאֵל, וְאָמְרוּ אָמֵן.
יְיָ עַז לְעַמּוֹ יִתֵּן יְיָ יְבָרֵךְ אֶת עַמּוֹ בְּשְׁלוֹם: