



## Blessings Before the Meal

## Blessings After the Meal

**HAMOTZI**  
*On bread, bagels, challah, matzah, pita, and rolls made from any of these five grains: wheat, barley, rye, oat, or spelt*

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה	Baruch Atah
ה' אֱלֹהֵינוּ	Adonai Elohaynu
מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם	Melech Ha'Olam
הַמוֹצִיא לֶחֶם	HaMotzi Lechem
מִן הָאָרֶץ:	Min Ha'Aretz

*Blessed are You, Adonai our G'd, Sovereign of the Universe, Who brings forth bread from the earth.*

**V'ACHALTA V'SAVATA**

וְאָכַלְתָּ	v'Achalta
וְשָׂבַעְתָּ	v'Savata
וּבִרְכַתָּ	u'Vey'rachta

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 make us whole

Giving and Receiving  
 We open our hands  
 From seedtime through Harvest  
 We're partners with the land

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

*Hebrew: Deuteronomy 8:10  
 English: Hanna Tiferet Siegel*

**POTAYACH ET YADECHA**

פּוֹתֵיחַ	Potay-ach
אֶת יָדְךָ	et Yadecha
וּמִשְׂבִּיעַ	u'Masbia
לְכֹל חַי	l'Chol Chai
רָצוֹן	Ratzon (2x)

You open your hand  
 I open my heart  
 To this abundance (2x)  
 And all life—  
 All will is satisfied (2x)

*Hebrew: Psalm 145 English: Shefa Gold*

**BRICH RACHAMANA**

בְּרִיךְ רַחֲמָנָא Brich Rachamana  
 מַלְכָּא דְעֻלְמָא Malka D'lma  
 מַרְיָה דְהַאי פִּיתָא Maray D'hai Pita

You are the Source of Life for all that is  
 And your blessing flows through me

*Blessed is the Compassionate One,  
 Ruler of the Universe, Source of this Food  
 Aramaic: Babylonian Talmud, English: Shefa Gold*

**HA'ADAMAH**  
*For all vegetables and greens from the ground, peanuts, legumes, and some fruits such as bananas, melons, and pineapples*

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה	Baruch Atah
ה' אֱלֹהֵינוּ	Adonai Elohaynu
מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם	Melech Ha'Olam
בוֹרֵא פְּרִי	Boray Pri
הָאֲדָמָה:	Ha'Adamah

*Blessed are You, Adonai our G'd, Sovereign of the Universe, Who creates the fruit of the earth.*

**BORAY NEFASHOT**

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה	Baruch Atah	Blessed be You,
ה' אֱלֹהֵינוּ	Adonai Elohaynu	haShem Eloheinu
מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם	Melech Ha'Olam	Cosmic Majesty
בוֹרֵא נִפְשוֹת רַבּוֹת	Boray Nefashot Rabot	the One who created
וְחִסְרוֹנָן עַל כָּל מַה	v'Chesronan 'Al Kol Mah	so many different
שְׁבָרָתָה	She'baratah	living things,
לְחַיּוֹת בְּהֵם	L'haChayot BaHem	all needing each other,
נִפְשׁ כָּל חַי	Nefesh Kol Chai	to make one Life
בְּרוּךְ חַי הָעוֹלָמִים:	Baruch Chai Ha'Olamim	interwoven through
		them all, as one soul.
		Blessed be the Life of
		all worlds.

*Translation: Reb Dovid Seidenberg*

**HA'EYTZ**  
*For all fruits from permanent trees, such as apples, oranges, and peaches, even if these fruits are dried; also grapes, raisins, and all nuts*

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה	Baruch Atah
ה' אֱלֹהֵינוּ	Adonai Elohaynu
מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם	Melech Ha'Olam
בוֹרֵא פְּרִי הָעֵץ:	Boray Pri Ha'Eytz

*Blessed are You, Adonai our G'd, Sovereign of the Universe, Who creates the fruit of the tree.*

**SHE'HAKOL**  
*For dairy, eggs, fish, liquids, meat, etc.*

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה	Baruch Atah
ה' אֱלֹהֵינוּ	Adonai Elohaynu
מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם	Melech Ha'Olam
שֶׁהַכֹּל נִהְיָה	She'haKol Nih'yeh
בְּדַבְּרוֹ:	B'd'varo

*Blessed are You, Adonai our G'd, Sovereign of the Universe, by Whose word all things came to be.*



## Food for Thought

While you are eating, think of how you are eating before G'd, and how there is no screen of separation between you and the Holy One.

*R. Isaiah Horowitz, Kabbalist, d. 1630*

The relation between a person and the food he or she consumes—as expressed in the intention behind the eating of the food—corresponds to the cosmic connection between the material and the spiritual as expressed by every sacrifice on an altar.

*Rabbi Adin Steinsaltz, from The Thirteen Petalled Rose*

When a person sits down at the table to eat, the Divine Presence and an evil spirit both stand by. If the person sings words of gratitude, the Divine Presence pushes forward to receive the words. If the person does not recite an expression of thanksgiving, the evil spirit pushes forward to receive the profane talk.

*Zohar IV:186b*

In the days of the Pilgrims, the Puritans when they arrived at these safe shores, suffered hunger and cold. They sang and prayed to the Rock of their Salvation. And You, standing by them, roused the caring of the Natives for them: who fed them, turkey and corn and other delights. Thus saved You them from starvation, and they learned the ways of peace with the inhabitants of the land. Therefore, feeling grateful, they dedicated a day of Thanksgiving each year as a remembrance for future generations, feeding unfortunates feasts of thanks. Thus do we thank You for all the good in our lives, G'd of kindness, Lord of Peace; thus do we thank You.

*Reb Zalman Schachter-Shalomi, Prayer for Thanksgiving*

When Rav Huna began to eat bread, he would open the doors of his house and proclaim, "Whoever is in need of food may come in and eat at my table."

*Talmud, Ta'anit, 20b*

## Thoughts for Food

### V'ACHALTA

You will eat and be full, and you will bless (v'achalta v'savata u'verachta) Hashem, your G'd, for the good land given to you.

*Deuteronomy (Devarim) 8:10*

Rav Yehudah said: Where do we find that the grace after meals (Birkat HaMazon) is ordained in the Torah? Because it says: And you will eat and be full, and you will bless.

*Berachot 21a*

### B'RICH RACHAMANA

Benjamin the shepherd made a sandwich and said, "Blessed is the (Merciful One, Ruler of the universe) Master of this Bread" and Rav said that he had performed his obligation.

*Berachot 40b*

### ECO-KASHRUT

*From Jewish with Feeling: A Guide to Meaningful Jewish Practice by Reb Zalman Schachter-Shalomi*

- Eco-kashrut is concerned not only with the origin of the things consumed—what animal the meat came from, say, or what dishes it was cooked in—but also with the results of our consumption, such as the environmental and human toll of our actions.
- All consumption has interlocking costs and repercussions. Our challenge is to maximize the kashrut of a given product or action—a matter of degree, rather than a question with a yes-or-no answer.
- An eco-kosher practice is a matter of individual conscience and decision, rather than a matter of legislation... the day-to-day weighing of conflicting considerations, personal as well as social, environmental, and technological, is up to each of us.

### BEFORE, DURING, AND AFTER MEALS SOME LAWS AND CUSTOMS

- Birkat HaMazon (expressions of gratitude after a meal) should be recited with Kavanah (concentration) and all the words should be enunciated slowly and properly, and their meaning understood.
- It is a mitzvah to say words of Torah during every meal. A meal without Torah is considered a sacrifice offered for idol worship.
- One who owns animals or birds may not begin his or her own meal before feeding them.
- If one has small children who cannot feed themselves, they take precedence over the animals and must feed them first.
- If one has guests, feeding the guests takes precedence over feeding the animals, as the mitzvah of Hachnasat Orchim (welcoming guests) is such a great mitzvah that Avraham gave it precedence over greeting the Shechina! (Parshat Chaya Sara)
- When reciting the blessing of "Hamotzi" make sure to pause slightly between the word "Lechem" and the word "Min," otherwise the two "Mem" sounds will blend into each other and it will sound like "LecheMin."
- Bread should never be thrown across the table in a disrespectful way, especially the challah at the Shabbat meal with which a mitzvah is performed. Some people actually have the custom to "throw" the challah to each person at the table. This was the custom of the Chatam Sofer and the Divrei Chaim of Sanz. Even those whose custom it is to throw it should do so in a respectful manner.
- It is a mitzvah for there to be salt on a table before beginning to eat. The reason for this is that the table is likened to the altar in the Holy Temple, and the food we eat is likened to the ritual sacrifices that were offered on the altar. Sacrifices required salt, hence the table requires salt.