



Rosh Hashanah

A holiday collection of texts and songs

Seder Simana Tova

Eating Symbols of Goodness for the New Year

In Sephardi tradition, a whole *Seder* was developed for Rosh Hashanah, including a variety of different fruits and vegetables. An appropriate blessing was chosen for each one, sometimes drawing on the natural characteristics of the item (such as the many seeds of the pomegranate) and sometimes involving wordplays on the Hebrew name of the item. We give a selection of these traditional foods and blessings below, accompanied by some modern Israeli songs and short additional readings.

Blessing over the apple and honey

יְהִי רְצוֹן מִלְפָּנֶיךָ יי אֱלֹהֵינוּ וְאֱלֹהֵי אֲבוֹתֵינוּ
וְאִמּוֹתֵינוּ, שְׁתַּחֲדֵד שׁ עֲלֵינוּ שָׁנָה טוֹבָה וּמְתוּקָה,
מִרְאשִׁית הַשָּׁנָה וְעַד אַחֲרֵית הַשָּׁנָה.

May it be Your will, Adonai, God of our fathers and mothers, to renew for us a good and sweet year, “from the beginning of the year through the end of the year” (Deuteronomy 11:12).

Blessing over pomegranate

יְהִי רְצוֹן מִלְפָּנֶיךָ יי אֱלֹהֵינוּ וְאֱלֹהֵי אֲבוֹתֵינוּ
וְאִמּוֹתֵינוּ, שְׁנַהֲיֶה מִלְּאִים מִצְוֹת כְּרִימּוֹן

May it be Your will, Adonai, God of our fathers and mothers, that we be full of Mitzvot like a pomegranate [is full of seeds].





Blessing over grapes and figs

יְהִי רְצוֹן מִלְפָּנֶיךָ יי אֱלֹהֵינוּ וְאֱלֹהֵי אֲבוֹתֵינוּ וְאִמּוֹתֵינוּ
שֶׁנֶּזְכָּה לְרֵאוֹת בְּמַהֲרָה בְיַמֵּינוּ אֶת הַנְּאֻמָּר עַל יָדֶי
נְבִיאֶיךָ: "וַיָּשָׁבוּ אִישׁ תַּחַת גַּפְנוֹ וְתַחַת תְּאֲנָתוֹ וְאִין
מִחְרִיד כִּי פִי ה' צָבָאוֹת דָּבָר."

May it be Your will, Adonai, God of our fathers and mothers, that we be privileged to see speedily and in our days that which was foretold by your prophet: "But each person will sit under their vine and under their fig tree, and none shall make them afraid; for the mouth of Adonai of hosts has spoken it" (Micah 4:4).

Blessing over carrot (Gezer)

This blessing uses the word *Gezer* as a play on words for *Gzar-Din* (judgment)

יְהִי רְצוֹן מִלְפָּנֶיךָ יי אֱלֹהֵינוּ וְאֱלֹהֵי אֲבוֹתֵינוּ וְאִמּוֹתֵינוּ
שֶׁתִּקְרַע רַע גְּזֵר דִּינֵנוּ, וְיִקְרָאוּ לְפָנֶיךָ זְכוּיֵינוּ.

May it be Your will, Adonai, God of our fathers and mothers, to tear away all evil decrees against us, as our rights are read before us.

Blessing over leek (Karti)

This blessing uses the word *Karti* as a play on words for *sheyikaret* (be cut off)

יְהִי רְצוֹן מִלְפָּנֶיךָ יי אֱלֹהֵינוּ וְאֱלֹהֵי אֲבוֹתֵינוּ
וְאִמּוֹתֵינוּ, שֶׁיִּכָּרֵת רָשָׁע מִן הָאָרֶץ.

May it be Your will, Adonai, God of our fathers and mothers, that evil be cut off from the Land.

Blessing over beet (Selek)

This blessing uses the word *Selek* as a play on words for *she'yistalku* (may they vanish)

יְהִי רְצוֹן מִלְפָּנֶיךָ יי אֱלֹהֵינוּ וְאֱלֹהֵי אֲבוֹתֵינוּ
וְאִמּוֹתֵינוּ, שֶׁיִּסְתַּלְקוּ כָּל מְבַקְשֵׁי רַעֲתֵנוּ, "תֵּרֶם יָדְךָ
עַל צָרֶיךָ, וְכָל אוֹיְבֶיךָ יִכָּרְתוּ"

May it be Your will, Adonai, God of our fathers and mothers, that all those who wish us ill vanish, "Your hand shall be lifted against Your adversaries, and all Your enemies shall be cut off" (Micah 5:8)

Blessing over green beans (Lubia)

This blessing uses the word *Lubia* as a play on words for *utelabnenu* (we will be whitened)

יְהִי רְצוֹן מִלְפָּנֶיךָ יי אֱלֹהֵינוּ וְאֱלֹהֵי אֲבוֹתֵינוּ
וְאִמּוֹתֵינוּ, שֶׁיִּרְבוּ זְכוּיֵינוּ וְיִתְלַבְּנוּ.

May it be Your will, Adonai, God of our fathers and mothers, that our merits be increased and we be whitened.

Blessing over the head

The head of a kosher animal (e.g. sheep) or of fish was traditionally used; others may prefer to use the head/top of a vegetable or fruit.

יְהִי רְצוֹן מִלְפָּנֶיךָ יי אֱלֹהֵינוּ וְאֱלֹהֵי אֲבוֹתֵינוּ
וְאִמּוֹתֵינוּ, שֶׁנִּהְיֶה לְרֹאשׁ וְלֹא לְזֵנֵב.

May it be Your will, Adonai, God of our fathers and mothers, that we may become a head and not a tail.





It is leaving us, wrapped in a halo of honor,
Accompanied by the sounds of tens of thousands of shofarot,
It is going from us, never to return.
Over hours, days, weeks, and months
We have done our best to get to know it,
We have struggled to live with it – it wasn't easy.
It constantly revealed itself to us in new forms.
Sometimes its mood was tempestuous or passionate,
Sometimes it was gentle,
Spreading a kind and calming atmosphere around it.
Sometimes its face glowed like the bright blue of spring,
Sometimes it was serious with the gloomy hues of fall.
One moment it bathed us in summer's heat,
The next it brought down waves of freezing cold upon us.
It gives us a few hours of festival
Against countless hours of routine.
It shared with us some of its boundless blessings and surprises,
But also some of its curses and rage.
But now, now of all times,
Just as we have gotten to know it
And gotten used to all its twists and turns,
Just as we have determined to accept it as it is –
Now it sneaks away and leaves us behind.
We attach various names to it now:
The outgoing year, the past year, the last year,
And now its place is taken by the new year, Shana Hadasha.
It comes as the summer fades,
Its head adorned with a large crown of blessings and prayers,
Its bounty dipped in honey and apple-fragranced roses,
Surrounded by boisterous good wishes:
May you be written and sealed for a good year!
A good and happy year!
May a new year bring new blessings!
A new year – new hopes.

Rabbi Avidor Hacoheh



A SONG FOR TISHREI

Lyrics : Rachel Shapira | Melody : Dany Amihud

The skies are changing
Before the farmers' eyes.
The neighbors are preparing
For the High Holidays.

השמים משתנים
לעיני החקלאים.
השכנים מתכוננים
לַימים הנוראים.

Someone is thinking of you
And listing your deeds.
Come home quickly
With the cool breeze.

מישהו חושב עליך
ורושם את מעשיך.
בוא הביתה במהרה
עם הרוח הקרירה

Mandarins are ripening
In due time.
The teachers are coughing
And going early to bed.

מנדרינות מבשילות
בפרדס במועדן.
המורות משתעלות
והולכות לישון מקדם.

I've already seen a wagtail
Or is it just in my mind.
Another heatwave ended yesterday
Just as the kids went back to school

כבר ראיתי נחליאלי
ואולי זה סתם נדמה לי.
עוד חמסין נשבר אתמול,
גם החפש הגדול.

What shall be and what shall pass
Ask the columnists
As along the coastal road
The squill flowers are rising.

מה יקרה ומה יחלף-
שואלים הכתבים,
כשלארך כביש החוף
מתניצבים החצבים.

What's in the evening news
The headline lets us know
Come home quickly
With the cool breeze.

מה בעתוני הערב
מבשרת הפותרת?
בוא הביתה במהרה
עם הרוח הקרירה.

[Read more](#) about the lyrics of "A song for Tishrei"



Next Year

Lyrics Ehud Manor | Melody : Nurit Hirsch

Next year
We will sit on the porch
And count migrating birds.
Children on vacation
Will play catch
Between the house and the fields.

בשנה הבאה
נשב על המרפסת
ונספור ציפורים נודדות .
ילדים בחופשה
ישחקו תופסת
בין הבית לבין השדות .

You will yet see, you will yet see,
How good it will be next year.

עוד תראה, עוד תראה
כמה טוב יהיה בשנה, בשנה הבאה .

Red grapes
Will ripen till the evening
And will be served chilled to the table.
And languid winds
Will carry to the crossroads
Old newspapers and a cloud.

ענבים אדומים
יבשילו עד הערב
ויוגשו צוננים לשולחן .
ורוחות רדומים
ישאו אל אם הדרך
עיתונים ישנים וענן .

You will yet see...

עוד תראה, עוד תראה ...

Next year
We will spread out our hands
Towards the radiant white light.
A white heron like a light
Will spread her wings
And within them the sun will rise.

בשנה הבאה
נפרוש כפות ידיים
מול האור הניגר הלבן
אנפה לבנה
תפרוש באור כנפיים
והשמש תזרח בתוכן .

You will yet see...

עוד תראה, עוד תראה...





Twelve Moons

Lyrics and Melody : Naomi Shemer

In **Tishrei** the palm tree
 Gave a lovely dark brown fruit.
 In **Cheshvan** the first rain fell
 And danced on my roof.
 In **Kislev** a narcissus appeared
 In **Tevet** - hail,
 And in Shevat the sun broke through –
 For one day.

בתשרי נתן הדקל
 פרי שחום נחמד
 בחשוון ירד יורה
 ועל גגי רקד
 בכסלו נרקיס הופיע
 בטבת ברד
 ובשבט חמה הפציעה -
 ליום אחד.

In **Adar** a fragrance rose
 From the orchards.
 In **Nisan** all the sickles
 Were strongly wielded.
 In **Iyar** - everything grew,
 In **Sivan** - ripening.
 In **Tammuz & Av** we rejoiced
 After the harvest.

באדר עלה ניחוח
 מן הפרדסים
 בניסן הונפו בכוח
 כל החרמשים
 באייר הכל צמח
 בסיוון הבכיר
 בתמוז ואב שמחנו
 אחר קציר

Tishrei, Heshvan, Kislev, Tevet,
 Passed, went by in a rush.
 Also Shevat, Adar, Nisan, Iyar,
 Sivan, Tammuz and Av.

תשרי, חשוון, כסלו, טבת
 חלפו, חלפו ביעף
 גם שבט, אדר, ניסן, אייר,
 סיוון, תמוז ואב

And in the coming of **Elul** to us
 The fragrance of autumn rose,
 And we began our song
 From the beginning.

ובבוא אלול אלינו
 ריח סתיו עלה
 והתחלנו את שירנו
 מהתחלה.

The song "Twelve Moons" is a famous children's song, which is used in preschools and elementary schools in Israel in order to teach the names of the Hebrew months.