A Family Seder for Rosh Hashanah
Sixth & I Historic Synagogue

חַכָל שֵׁנָה וּבֵרְכֹתיהֶן:
Let the New Year begin with all its blessings!
A Family Seder for Rosh Hashanah

L'Shanah Tovah by Peter and Ellen Allard

Chorus:
L'Shanah Tovah, a happy new year!
L'Shanah Tovah, a healthy new year!
L'Shanah Tovah, a sweet new year!
For you and you and me!

We dip our apples in honey,
A sweet beginning to a sweet new year;
We eat dates and pomegranates and we make a wish
For a happy and peaceful year. (chorus)

Teshuvah, we change for the better,
Tefillah, we pray for the best,
Tzedakah, we help other people in need,
And God will take care of the rest. (chorus)

We gather together today to experience the 2,000-year-old custom of a Rosh Hashanah seder. Just like the Passover seder – when we eat symbolic foods, Sephardic Jews (those from Spain, North Africa and the Middle East) have a seder for Rosh Hashanah during which blessings are offered over various foods that express our hopes for the new year.

Tachal shanah u'vir-cho-te-ha!
Let the new year begin with all its blessings!

Sh'ma Yisrael Adonai Eloheinu, Adonai Echad.
Hear O Israel, Adonai is our God, Adonai is one.

Baruch Atah Adonai Eloheinu Melech ha-olam Shehecheyanu, v'kiyamanu, v'higianu, lazman hazeh.
Blessed are You, Adonai our God, Who has given us life, sustained us and brought us to this day.

Baruch Atah Adonai Eloheinu Melech ha-olam borei p'ri hagafen.
Blessed are You, Adonai our God, Who creates the fruit of the vine.
Baruch Atah Adonai Eloheinu Melech ha-olam borei p’ri ha-etz.
Blessed are You, Adonai our God, Who creates the fruit of the tree.

Dates – A Wish for Peace

Y’hi ratzon mil’fanecha Adonai Eloheinu
She-yi-tamu oyveinu v’soneinu v’chol m’vak-shei ra’ateinu.
May it be Your will, Adonai our God, that this new year be a peaceful year for us and for all the world.

Mirembe by Noam Katz

Mirembe, mirembe, salaam v’shalom,
Make peace in the village, make peace in the home;
Make peace in the morning until daylight is done,
Mirembe, mirembe, salaam v’shalom!
Ya lai lai, Ya lai lai, Ya lai lai lai lai
Ya lai lai, Ya lai lai, Ya lai lai lai lai

Pomegranate – A Wish for Mitzvot

Y’hi ratzon mil’fanecha Adonai Eloheinu
She-ni-he-yeh m’le’im mitzvot ka-rimon.
May it be Your will, Adonai our God, that we be as full of good deeds as the pomegranate is full of seeds.

Mitzvah Goreret Mitzvah by Andy Vogel

Mitzvah goreret mitzvah (woo!) (hands in air)
Aveirah goreret aveirah (oh-oh!) (wag finger side to side)
Mitzvah goreret mitzvah, goreret mitzvah,
Ya la la la la! (repeat)

Li-h’yot tzadik – Zeh tov? (Zeh tov!) Zeh tov? (Zeh tov!)
L’hiyot tzadik – Zeh ma-zev?? Tov m’oh-oh-oh-od! (thumbs up!)
(first verse)
Beans – A Wish for Prosperity/Tzedakah

Y’hi ratzon mil’fanecha Adonai Eloheinu she-yirbu ze-chu-yoteinu.

May it be Your will, Adonai our God, that we be blessed with all we need in the new year.

Pumpkin /Gourd – A Wish for Happiness

Y’hi ratzon mil’fanecha Adonai Eloheinu she-tikra ro’a g’zar dineinu v’yikar-u l’fanecha ze-chu-yoteinu.

May it be Your will, Adonai our God, that we be blessed with happiness.

Go ahead, count your blessings. Pick one that fills you with happiness, and then please share it by singing the bracha in the traditional chant used for morning blessings...

Baruch Atah Adonai Eloheinu Melech ha-olam...

Thank You, God, for the blessing of:_____________

Beets – A Wish for Freedom

Y’hi ratzon mil’fanecha Adonai Eloheinu She-yistalku oyveinu v’soneinu v’chol m’vuk-shei ra’ateinu.

May it be Your will, Adonai our God, that we be blessed with freedom.

Mi Chamocha by Debbie Friedman

Mi chamocha ba-eilim Adonai
Mi kamochah, ne’dar bakodesh,
Nora t’hilot, oseh felehol.

Mi Chamocha

The Hebrew word for black-eyed peas - rubyah sounds like the Hebrew word for increase yirbu. Though we wish for prosperity for ourselves, we also remember those who have less. This prayer reminds us of the importance of giving tzedakah.

The Hebrew word for gourd, kara, sounds like the Hebrew word kara which means ‘to tear or rend,’ as well as ‘proclaim.’ The traditional blessing asks that any bad decree be torn up and our merits be proclaimed. If we think of our merits as blessings, then this prayer can serve to remind us to count the many blessings in our lives.

Mi Chamocha is a prayer extolling God’s powers that we recite at every service. It comes from the most pivotal moment in Jewish history, the exodus of our people from slavery in Egypt. As our ancestors stood at the shore of the Sea of Reeds and witnessed the miracle of the sea’s parting and then crossed in safety to freedom, they exclaimed in wonder: Mi chamocha ba-eilim Adonai?! Who is like you, O God?!
Fish Head – A Wish for Leadership

Y’hi ratzon mil’fanecha Adonai Eloheinu
she-nih’yeh l’rosh v’lo l’zanav.
May it be Your will, Adonai our God, that we will be heads and not tails, leaders instead of followers.

Leeks/Scallions – A Wish for Friendship

Y’hi ratzon mil’fanecha Adonai Eloheinu
She-yikartu oyveinu v’soneinu v’chol m’vak shei ra’ateinu.
May it be Your will, Adonai our God, that we be blessed with friendship.

We are Kehillah by Ira and Julia Levin

We are friends, we are chaverim,
We come together to dance and dream;
We live and sing, in harmony,
We are friends, we are chaverim!

We are mishpacha, we are family,
I give to you, and you give to me;
We live and sing, in harmony,
We are mishpacha, we are family!

We are kehillah, we are community,
I help you, and you help me;
We live and sing, in harmony.
We are kehillah, we are community!
We are kehillah, we are kehillah,
We are kehillah, we are kehillah!
(repeat verse to end song)

The seder calls for a fish or sheep's head to symbolize our wish to be heads, not tails; leaders, not stragglers. The sheep’s head also served as a reminder of the ram that saved Isaac's life; we recite the story of the binding of Isaac on the second day of Rosh Hashanah. In lieu of the fish or sheep's head, you may use a head of lettuce or goldfish crackers.

The Hebrew word for leeks or scallions, karti resembles the word yikartu, meaning 'cut off.' The traditional prayer asks that our enemies be 'cut off.' Jews from Persia tear the scallions and throw them behind their backs and over their shoulders. The wish to not have enemies may be interpreted as a desire to build friendships and community.

We dip apples in honey to represent our hope for a Shana Tova u’Metuka, a 'good and sweet new year.' Honey is also one of the attributes of the Land of Israel which is described in the Bible as being a land that "flows with milk and honey." Thus honey on the table expresses both our hope for a sweet year and our connection to our ancient homeland.

It is customary to have a round challah for the High Holidays to symbolize the cyclical nature of the year. The dough is often sweetened with sugar and raisins and dipped in honey to express our hope for a sweet year. Moroccan Jews sweeten the custom even more by dipping the challah in sugar.
Y’hi ratzon mil’fanecha Adonai Eloheinu
Shetichadsh aleinu shanah tova u’metukah.
May it be Your will, Adonai our God, that the new year
be as sweet as an apple dipped in honey.

Baruch Atah Adonai Eloheinu melech ha-olam,
Hamotzi lechem min ha’aretz.
Praised be our Eternal God, Ruler of the universe,
who brings forth the bread from the earth.

May the new year be filled with an abundance of blessings.
May the new year be filled with love and peace.
May the new year be a good year for us all!

Shana Tova u’Metuka!

This service was written by Lisa Baydush © 2010 for Sixth & I Historic Synagogue.
Information contained in this service was compiled from various Internet sources and