


# על הניסים בימי הודיה לאומיים | Al Hanissim supplement for the Birkat Hamazon and Amidah on all Secular/National Days of Gratitude, by Aharon Varady

 opensiddur.org/prayers-for/special-days/commemorative-days/secular-national/thanksgiving-day/thanksgiving-prayer-on-secular-national-days-of-gratitude/  
Aharon N. Varady (translation)

April 16,  
2013

This *al hanissim* prayer was written for insertion into the *Modim* (we are thankful) blessing of the weekday Amidah and of the *Birkat Hamazon* after the festive meal on any other secular/national day of Thanksgiving.

Hebrew

English

אֲנֹכִי יְהוָה עָשָׂה כָּל נְטֵה שָׁמַיִם לְבִדִּי  
רָקַע הָאָרֶץ מֵאִתִּי (כתיב של ישעיהו מד:כד  
חלק)

אני הוא שנטעתי אילן זה  
להשתעשע בו כל העולם  
ורקעתי בו כל וקראתי שמו כל  
שהכל תלוי בו והכל יוצא ממנו,  
והכל צריכים לו,  
ובו צופים ולו מחכים, ומשם פורחים  
הנשמות בשמחה,  
לבדי הייתי כשעשיתי אותו, ולא  
יגדל עליו מלאך לאמר אני קדמתי  
לך,

כי גם בעת שרקעתי ארצי שבה  
נטעתי ושרשתי אילן זה  
ושמחתי ביחד ושמחתי בהם: (ספר  
הבהיר כב)

“I am YHVH, I make all, I stretch out the heavens alone, the Earth is spread out before me.”<sup>[1]</sup>

I am the one who planted this Tree [of Life] in order that all the world should delight in it. And in it, I spread all (*kōl*). I called it “all” because all depend on it, all emanate from it, and all need it.

To it they look, for it they wait, and from it, souls fly in joy.

Alone was I when I made it. Let no angel rise above it and say, “I was before you.”<sup>[2]</sup>

I was also alone in the time when I spread out my Earth, in which I planted and rooted this Tree [of Life].

I made them rejoice together, and I rejoiced in them.<sup>[3]</sup>

ועל הַנִּסִּים  
ועל הַפְּדוּתוֹת  
ועל הַגְּבוּרוֹת  
ועל הַתְּשׁוּעוֹת  
ועל הַנִּפְלְאוֹת  
שְׁעָשִׂיתָ לְאַרְצֵנוּ  
בְּיָמֵים הָהֵם בְּזִמְנֵי הַזֶּה:<sup>[4]</sup>

And for the miracles,  
and for the redemptions,  
and for the mighty acts,  
and the rescues,  
and the fantastic wonder works,  
that you made for our country  
in those days, in this season.

לְמִי הָאָרֶץ לְרִשֹּׁתָּהּ וּלְכַבּוֹשָׁהּ?  
 שִׁיחַ לְאָרֶץ וְתַגְּדֵי! (איוב יב:ח)  
 לְךָ הָאָרֶץ וּמְלוֹאָהּ תִּבְלֵ וַיֵּשְׁבֵי בָּהּ  
 (תהילים כד:א).  
 כָּפִי שְׂאֲדָם וְחַוָּה נֹצְרוּ בְּבֶטֶן,  
 בְּרַחֵם בְּתַחֲתִיּוֹת הָאֲדָמָה, (תהילים  
 קלט:יא-טו)  
 כִּדְּגָם נִוְלַדְנוּ בְּנֵי אֲדָמָה  
 עִם רַחֲמִים לְעִבְדָּהּ וּלְשֹׁמֵר אֶת גַּנְהָ  
 (בראשית ב:טו).

For whom is the Earth's land to seize and to occupy?  
 Speak to the Earth and she will teach you!<sup>[5]</sup>  
 Yours, HaShem, is the Earth, and the fullness thereof.<sup>[6]</sup>  
 Just as Adam and Hava were knit together in the womb,  
 within the innermost depths of Adamah (the Earth),<sup>[7]</sup>  
 so too were we born as children of the Earth with compassion to cultivate and preserve her Garden.<sup>[8]</sup>

אמר ר' אמוראי גן עדן היכן הוא?  
 אמר ליה — בארץ: (ספר הבהיר לא)

“The Garden of Eden, where is it (now)?  
 Rabbi Amorai explained to them: In the Earth.”<sup>[9]</sup>

כַּמְהַגְרִים בְּאֶרֶץ נְכַרְיָה  
 נִהֵי בְּעֵינֵינוּ  
 כַּחֲגָבִים בְּעֵינֵי בְּנֵי עֶנְק (במדבר יג:ג).  
 אֲבָל כִּי לֹא בַחֲרָפָם יָרְשׁוּ אֶרֶץ  
 וּזְרוּעֵם לֹא-הוֹשִׁיעָה לָמוּ (תהילים מד:ד)  
 חזק.  
 לֹא אֲתָהּ וּ יְדָךְ גּוֹיִם הוֹרִשְׁתָּ  
 וְתַטְעֵם תִּרְעֵ לְאֻמִּים וְתִשְׁלַחֵם (תהילים  
 מד:ג).  
 הָאֲדָמָה אֲפּוֹא זֹעֶקֶת בְּשִׁקֵּט  
 מִדְּמֵי אֲחִינוּ אֲשֶׁר הִיא סוֹפְגֶת (בראשית  
 ד:י)  
 וְאֵלּוּ אָנוּ בּוֹכִים חֲרִישִׁית דְּמָעוֹת שָׁל  
 תוֹדָה  
 עַל הַשֶּׁפַע וְהַמְקַלֵּט שֶׁמֵצְאָנוּ בָּהּ  
 (תהילים קכו).

As immigrants in a foreign land,  
 we saw ourselves  
 as grasshoppers in the eyes of predatory overlords.<sup>[10]</sup>  
 However, “not by their own sword did they seize land and possess it,  
 nor did their own arm save them.”<sup>[11]</sup>  
 Rather, “through your own hand, HaShem, were the nations driven out and planted in;  
 you separated the peoples and spread them abroad.”<sup>[12]</sup>  
 Consequently, the Earth screams silently  
 from the blood of humanity which it cannot help but soak up,<sup>[13]</sup>  
 while we cry with gratitude  
 for the bounty and sanctuary we have found in her.<sup>[14]</sup>

בְּרוּךְ הַמְשַׁמֵּר אֶת הָאָרֶץ עֲבוּר  
הַחֹלְקִים בְּשִׂפְעָהּ.

Blessed is the One who preserves the Earth for  
those who share in her bounty.

## Transliteration

Ve'al hannissim  
ve'al happurkan  
ve'al haggevurot  
ve'al hatteshu'ot  
ve'al hanifla'ot  
she'asita le'artsenu  
bayyamim hahem bizzeman hazzeh

Lemi ha'Arets lareshet ulikhbosh?  
Siaḥ la'Arets vetorekka!  
Lekha ha'Arets umelov'ahh tevel veyosheve vahh.  
Kefi she'adam veḥavva notseru beveten,  
bareḥem betaḥtiyyot ha'Adamah,  
kakh gam noladnu benei Adamah.  
im raḥamim le'ovdahh uleshomer 'et gannahh.

kimhaggerim be'erets nakheriyya,  
nehi ve'enenu  
kaḥagavim be'ene benei Anak.  
Aval, ki lo' veḥarbam yarshu arets,  
uzero'am lo'hoshi'a lamo.  
Ella, atta yadekha goyim horashta,  
vattitta'em tara le'ummim vatteshalleḥem.  
Ha'Adamah efo zo'eket besheket  
middemei aḥinu asher hee sofeget  
ve'illu anu bokhim ḥarishit dema'ot shel toda  
al hashefa' vehammiklat shemmatsa'nu bahh.

Barukh hammishmar et ha'Arets 'avur haḥolkim bshef'ahh

## Notes [ ± ]

1. ← Isaiah 44:24, pronounced, *roka ha'arets may-iti* (the earth is spread out before me), but written *roka ha'arets mi-iti* מִי אִתִּי? (the earth is spread out. Who was with me?)
2. ← Each nation of the Earth has its respective angel called a Sar, literally “prince.” Let no national pride or spirit assume predominance.
3. ← Sefer HaBahir §22. Per §21, this exposition is from Rebbi Yoḥanan.
4. ← Here, we adopt the tradition of saying בְּזֶמְנָן הַזֶּה (in this season, at this time, now) rather than בְּזֶמְנָן הַזֶּה (at that time). The grammatical variant helpfully emphasizes a conception of time that is not so much linear as it is revisited by us, actively, through imaginative memory, theurgical ritual, and prayer, and perhaps also by cosmic Time itself.
5. ← Job 12:8

- 
6. ← Psalms 24:1, cf. Psalm 50:11, and Deuteronomy 10:14. This land is not yours, and it is not mine. The land is the Garden of HaShem.
- 
7. ← cf. Psalms 139:11–15
- 
8. ← cf. Genesis 2:15, *l'ovdah ul'shomrah*. We are commanded to be responsible stewards of this Garden, the earth's biosphere.
- 
9. ← Sefer haBahir §31. Surprisingly, the idea that the Garden of Eden was literally hidden in the Earth, can be found in the fairy tale recounted by Hans Christian Andersen, "[The Garden of Eden](#)"
- 
10. ← Numbers 13:33. Seeing oneself as an underling should not validate excuses for conquest or privilege. By grasshoppers, the verse suggests that the *Bnei Anak*, the giant children of the *Nephilim*, see newcomers as fast food, i.e., easy pickings. The *Nephilim* first referenced in Genesis ch. 6, are the *bnei elohim* – children of G?D – who descend to Earth, take what they wish, and with their children, introduce predation into nature. Thematically, the *Nephilim* and their children are archetypal of any group or person who makes themselves into an oppressive bigshot.
- 
11. ← Psalms 44:4 (partial).
- 
12. ← Psalms 44:3. My central point here is that a humanity that is not acting as a proper steward of the Earth (as the Garden of Hashem) cedes the role of "gardener" to G?D who, as the one god of both suffering and joy, drives out, spreads, and plants humanity in a manner that might seem just as arbitrary and capricious to us as a human farmer ploughing and planting might seem to the wild creatures of the fields and forests.
- 
13. ← from Genesis 4:10. Either the *dahm* (blood) of Kayin's brother Abel cries out from *Adamah* (the earth) or the *Adamah* itself cries out. HaShem loves the Earth, and the Earth is ever burdened with the sins that humans cannot bear – and HaShem takes note.
- 
14. ← cf. Psalms 126. As we should, but we need to reciprocate for our gratefulness by taking responsibility for our actions and the errors of the generations who came before us that acted with callous ignorance and neglect of the systems supporting life on earth and the welfare of the creatures we share this world with.

“על הניסים בימי הודיה לאומיים | Al Hanissim supplement for the Birkat Hamazon and Amidah on all Secular/National Days of Gratitude, by Aharon Varady” is shared by Aharon N. Varady (translation) with a [Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike 4.0 International](#) copyleft license.

