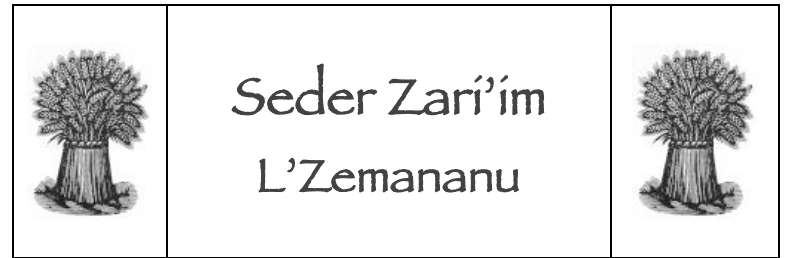


Hagaddah



Mary Azarian



The Way of the Seed
for Our Times



Seder Zari'im L'Zemananu

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2. Aretz - Living Earth
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I. Introduction

Over three thousand years ago, drought and famine drove a small tribe of nomadic people to Ancient Egypt seeking food. However, the unsuspecting tribe entered into a land sustained by exploiting the hungry. The abundant food of Ancient Egypt was taxed to sustain a state system that extracted food from productive farmers through the power of a priesthood, with esoteric knowledge to calculate the flood seasons, and a ruling class who spent the tax-revenue to maintain a vast army.

Escape from that regime is marked by a 'seder' that recreates emergence from oppression as both an inner journey and a formation into a free people. It is not surprising that the food system that arose from that small tribe was inspired by ideals of justice. The Ancient Israeli cosmology of a decentralized family farm-based religion was written down by rabbinic Elders in 'Seder Zari'im' (Way of the Seed) after Israel was conquered by Rome in 70 CE. After millennia of exile, as Israel returns to her land, the Way of the Seed offers renewed inspiration for all peoples to plant themselves once again in the Land, wherever we are, and to transform today's dominating power; a multi-national food system fed by depletive farming systems, powered by exploitative labor, causing climate change and loss of biodiversity on an unprecedented planetary scale.

The seed is in our hands.



'While the Temple still stood the Altar made atonement for man, but now that the Temple no longer stands, our Table is our Altar.'

Talmud Menahoth 97a

Talmudic Commentary: *'when the poor are at the table'*

Starting with a table of diverse heirloom seeds and completing a year later with a table laden with harvest, Seder Zari'im is a community meal to attune us with natural cycles of sustenance, and Hebraic traditions of community food justice; in a time of globalized food systems on a magnitude that unites all peoples in a planetary table. In this spirit, we create a *'tikkun shulchan aruch'*, extending to the cycles of life that brought the food to our table, and then returning the foodscrap to feed the earth.

Set the Table with:

Alumot - sheaves or grains of organic wheat and barley,

Aish - Metal bowl, kindling and matches to parch the sheaves.

Mayim – bowl of living water from a natural source, ie: rain, spring or river,

Zera - Seeds of diverse heirloom seed varieties native to your place, especially rare threatened varieties

Challah - or homemade bread according to your tradition

Mazon - Organic kosher meal produced by local farmers

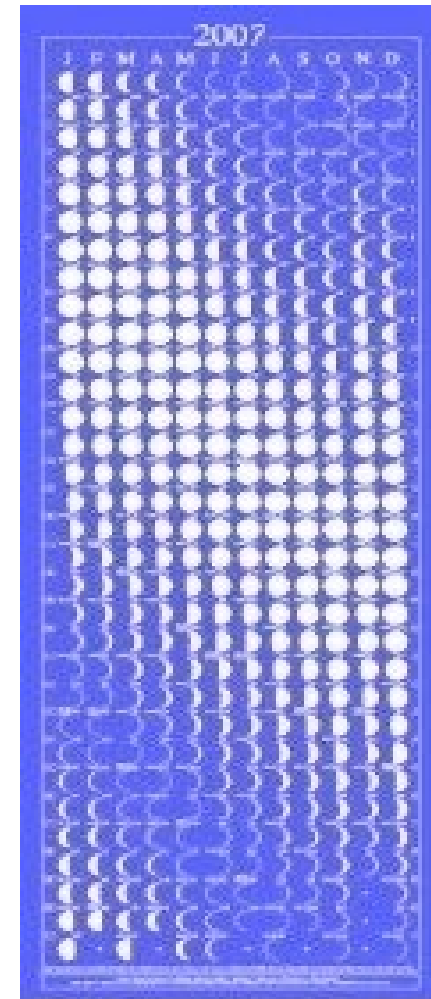
Adamah - soil and compost bucket for foodscrap.

See Appendix for resources to purchase heirloom grains and seedⁱⁱ.

1. Shamayim

Where are we in the Seasons of Sun and Moon?

What cycle of the moon are we in now?ⁱⁱⁱ



What is the Hebrew date?

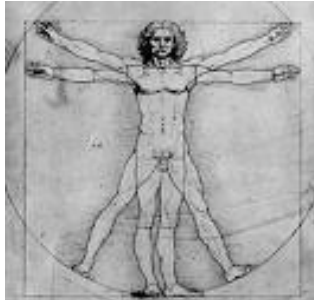
2. Aretz – Living Earth

'On the Spheres and their Intelligences' in Moreh Nevuchim Guide for the Perplexed, 1:72 Maimonides states:

'We must consider the entire globe as one individual being which is endowed with life, motion and a soul. Not as some persons maintain, inanimate matter like the component elements of earth, fire, air or water, but an animate, organized, intellectual being capable of comprehension and response. Consider the opinions of our Sages, in the ideas repeatedly expressed in the Midrash and our prayers, such as:

*'The heavens declare the glory of G-d.
Creation declares his handiwork.
Day to day pours forth speech.
Night unto night declares knowledge.
Theirs is not speech. Their voice cannot be heard, yet their
sound goes out through all the earth to the ends of the
world.'* Psalm XIX

It is a great error to interpret this as a mere figure of speech. Our Sages clearly state that the heavens and earth themselves are in true reality praising G-d, and declaring his wonders without words of lip and tongue.'



Olam Katan

(Macrocosm – Microcosm)

"The creation of the world was like the creation of humanity, for everything that G-d created in the world, G-d created in the human being. The heavens are the head of humankind, the sun and the moon are the human eyes, the stars are the hair on the human head" Otzar Ha'Midrashim, *Olam Katan* 406

Conversation

'The Hebrew word 'siach', plant is related to the word 'sicha' which means speech, and to the word 'suach' re-creation, This teaches that all of the plants in the field converse with each other and all of the other creatures of the Earth. Safer Ha'Aggadah Bialik p. 10

The apparent contradiction in the text of Genesis is explained by the implicit involvement of Adam in the creation process. In the account of the Third Day of Creation, the Torah records,

'The earth brought forth vegetation, plants yielding seed after their kind, and trees bearing fruit with seed in them, after their kind; and God saw that it was good. 1:12

There was evening and there was morning, a third day.' 1:13

Yet in the second chapter of Berashit:

1. The heavens and the earth were completed, and all their hosts. 2 By the seventh day God completed His work which He had done, and He rested on the seventh day from all His work which He had done. 3 Then God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it, because in it He rested from all His work which God had created and made. 4 This is the account of the heavens and the earth when they were created, in the day that the LORD God made earth and heaven.

5 No shrub of the field was yet in the earth, no plant of the field had yet sprouted, for the LORD God had not sent rain upon the earth. There was no man to cultivate the ground. 6 But a mist used to rise from the earth and water the whole surface of the ground. 7 Then the LORD God formed man of dust from the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living being.

The difference between the two texts suggests that in the Third Day the plants were created but remained beneath the surface of the ground, waiting until Adam came, saw their need and prayed for their completion and growth. This caused the rains to descend so that the plants could flourish'. Bialik Sefer Ha'Agaddah Berashit

2. Onot – Seasons

How can we play a musical score without knowing how to play an instrument, or hearing the music? How can we understand pre-exile Eretz Israel culture without an experience of farming?

Almost all Ancient Israelis were small-scale organic farmers.

Rabbi Ahai ben Josiah said, 'He who buys grain in the market, to what may he be compared? To a child who is cut off from his mother, and although it is taken to homes of wetnurses, it is not satisfied. And he who buys bread in the market, to what is he compared? To a man who digs his own grave - a wretched, precarious existence. But he who eats of his own produce is like a child reared at his mother's breast.'

The Fathers According to Rabbi Nathan

Avot d'Rabbi Nathan 30:6

'G-d created the world so that all shall live in pleasantness, that all shall be equal, that one shall not lord over the other, and that all may cultivate the land. However, when warrior-minded people multiplied they began to rely on their might, and left off cultivating the land and turned to robbery.' Hochmat haNefesh 22b, Rabbi Judah'

'It is forbidden to live in a town where there are no vegetable gardens.'
Rabbi Yose ben Bun, Talmud Kiddushin 4:1

"G-d Elohim placed Adam in the garden of Eden to till it and to tend it." Genesis 2:15



4. Mazon - Sustenance

The word for 'grain' in Hebrew, 'dagan', is from the ancient Canaanite god Dagan who represented the forces of the weather, the moon and fertility (Sam 5:2, Judges 16:23, 1 Kings 22:10, Hosea 9:1). In distinction to the Canaanite sacrifices to the fertility god for a fruitful harvest (See: Book of Nabatean Agriculture, Ibn Whashiya), Ancient Israelites' believed that soil fertility was based on food justice. Not only is the earth experienced as a living organism, but humans are an intrinsic component of the living earth biosystem. In addition to 'feeding the soil' through the use of compost, manure, cover cropping, rotation and fallow practices; 'feeding the community' was required for the land to be fruitful.



In the first volume of the Mishnah, Seder Zeriim, 'Order of the Seed' (written down from the 2nd to the 5th century CE) the Elders explain guidelines on blessings, and practices to ensure that all of the community is provided with food and dignity through tithing and gleaning (leaving the corners of the fields). The ancient Israeli knew that by feeding the people, all the people, the earth would in return provide its bounty to all.



Kosher bread seal
used to mark 'Tekoa Bread' before baking

Biblical Diet

אֶרֶץ חִטָּה וְשֵׁעוּרָה וְגֶפֶן וְתַאֲנָה וְרִמּוֹן אֶרֶץ זֵית שֶׁמֶן וְדִבְשׁ (דברים ח 8)

"a land of wheat and barley, grapevines, fig-trees and pomegranates, a land of oil-olives and honey" Deuteronomy 8:8

The diet of the ancient Israeli consisted of a daily fare of over one half wheat, supplemented with legumes (such as lentils and chickpeas), olives and olive oil, fruit, such as: almonds, figs and dates), pomegranate, apricots, wild-gathered vegetables such as: mallow, nettle, mustards, purslane and herbs, cultivated garlic, onions, native cucumber and melon, with goats milk, goat cheeses, fish, egg and wine.

Meat was eaten only four times a year (and then only by the wealthy) during the three harvest holidays of Passover, Shavuot, Sukkot, and Simchat Torah.

Ancient Jews usually began their day with a light breakfast of milk, fresh ground/fresh baked bread, cheese, olive oil dip, and fresh seasonal vegetables. The main meal was eaten in the evening, often with vegetables pickled in brine or vinegar, followed by a simple stew of seasonal herbs and garden vegetables, thickened with whole grains.

Discussion: *What is the impact of our diet on the ecosystems that sustain us?? What makes a diet and a food system 'holy'?*

3. Zeri'im – Ancient Seed

'And ye shall eat neither bread, nor parched grain, nor green ears, until the selfsame day that ye have brought an offering unto your God: it shall be a statute forever throughout your generations in all your dwellings.'

Leviticus 23:14

Parched Spring Wheat^{iv}



' They reaped the spring wheat, put it into baskets and brought it to the Temple in Jerusalem. Fresh, tender grains were beaten with reeds so the grain was not crushed, and put it into a long pot perforated with holes so that the fire would take hold of all of the grains. They parched the green wheat with fire to fulfill the precept. They spread out the parched grains in the Temple Courtyard so that the wind blew over it to cool and dry it. They put it into a special mill that carefully separated the husks without damaging tender grain. They removed a tenth of an ephah. What was left could be eaten by anyone. Rabbi Akiva declared it was liable for the dough offering and tithes for the poor and hungry.'

Menahot 66a

"If you bring a grain offering of the first fruits to the Lord, offer the crushed heads of the spring aviv grain roasted in the fire"
Leviticus 2:14

AISH

*Roast sheaves of spring wheat in a fire-pan.^v
Blessing: 'Baruch Atah Adonoi Elohanu Melach Ha'olam borei menai Mezonot'. Partake of the parched wheat.*

Hold up and pass around the sheaf of emmer or wheat.



grows wild in the land of Israel. Joseph traveled to Egypt for emmer. The original matzah was made with emmer. The Eretz Israeli emmer that nourished ancient civilizations, is almost extinct today.

Barley^{vi}

Hold up and pass around the sheaf of barley.

'When you come to the land which I give to you, and reap it's first harvest, bring the omer of the first harvest fruits to the priest. And he will wave the omer before God from the morrow of the Sabbath.'

Vayikra 23:10-11



"And you shall count from the day you brought the waved barley omer before g-d, seven complete Sabbaths, and then offer a new flour of the wheat bread of first harvest to God" (Vayikra 23:15-17).

5. Tzedakah – Seder Zari'im^{vii}

The Way of the Seed



'These are the things for which no measure is prescribed: gleanings, first-fruits, the festive offering, deeds of loving-kindness and the study of Torah. These are the things whose fruits a person enjoys in this world while the capital remains in the world to come: honouring father and mother, acts of loving-kindness, and making peace between person and another. But the study of Torah equals them all.' Mishnah Peah 1.1

Brochot - Blessings
Peah – Corners - Gifts to the Poor,
Demai – Produce of the Am Ha'Aretz
Kilayim - Diverse Varieties,
Shevi'it' - Sabbatical Year and the Jubilee
Trumot - Heave Offerings
Maserot - Tithes
Second Tithes and the Fruit of the Fourth Year
First Fruits and Other Priestly Gifts Outside the Sanctuary

Peah - Gifts to the Poor: 1) to leave the corner of the field unharvested...(9) to leave the forgotten sheaf; (10) not to go back to take the forgotten sheaf; (11) to set aside a tithe for the poor; (12) to give charity according to one's ability; (13) not to harden one's heart against the poor.

Kilayim - Diverse Varieties: (1) not to sow diverse seeds together; (2) not to sow grain or vegetables in a vineyard; (3) not to mate animals of different species; (4) not to work animals of different species together; (5) not to wear clothing of both wool and linen.

Trumot - Heave Offerings: (1) to set aside a great heave offering;

Maserot – Tithes: to set apart the first tithe of produce each and every year the fields are sown and give it to the Levites.



Shevi'it - Sabbatical Year and the Jubilee: (1) that the land shall rest unworked in the Sabbatical year,... (4) that one shall not harvest what grows by itself in the manner of harvesters, (22) that the open land round about their cities shall never be sold, but they may redeem it at any time whether before the Jubilee or after the Jubilee.

See the appendix for a complete list of the mitzvot.

7. Minim - The Kashrut of Biodiversity

'If, along the road, you chance upon a bird's nest in a tree with fledglings or eggs and the mother sitting over them, do not take the mother together with her young, in order that you may fare well and have a long life.' Deuteronomy 22:6-7

'The Torah does not permit a killing that would uproot a species, even if it permitted the killing of individuals in that species for food. And here, the one who kills the mother and the child on the same day, it is as if that person has made that species extinct.' Nachmanides, 13th Century Spain; Commentary on Deuteronomy. 22:6

'Even those things that may appear superfluous to Creation such as fleas, gnats or flies -- even these are part of the web of Creation. G-d's purpose is carried through everything, even through a snake, a scorpion, a gnat and a frog.' Breishit Rabbah 10:7

Pass around heirloom seed and identify the plant families ie:
cucurbit (squash, cucumber), brassica (broccoli) etc.^{viii}

Heirloom food crops, selected by generations of traditional farmers for flavor, disease-resistance and drought-hardiness, are almost lost today. Seed-saving has been the right and responsibility of farmers since the emergence of agriculture. Today the seed industries sell hybrid seeds dependent on pesticides and high water use. The traditional drought-hardy, nutritious heirloom animals, wheat and vegetable varieties that sustained earlier civilizations are **almost extinct today**.^{ix}

Discuss: What is the relevance of biodiversity for a just food system?

8. Community

MAYIM

Wash for Challah^x

Pass the bowl of living water and empty bowl. Pour water over your hands. Elevate your hands and say:

***Baruch Mekor Ha'Chaim asher kidishanu be mitzvotav
vitzevanu al netillat yadayim.***

***May blessings from the Source of Life
imbue the work of our hands.***

Enjoy the meal.

ADAMAH

*"You shall offer a portion (challah) of the first of your dough as a gift."
Numbers 15:20*

***Baruch Mekor Ha'Chaim L'hafrish challah.
May blessings from the Source of Life imbue this portion's
returning.***

*Separate a portion of the challah to return to the earth. Put the challah-
portion and foodscraps in the compost bucket. Complete the meal by
burying the challah and foodscraps in soil.*



Discussion

What is your ideal of a Jewish farmer?

Are genetically engineered foods kosher?

On what three factors was the amount of peah (corners) determined? See: Talmud, Peah, Mishnah 2, 1b

On what factors were the times for gleanings determined?
See: Talmud Peah, p4, Mishnah 5

What can we do to restore the spirit of Seder Zariim for today?



9. Farming as a Pathway to Peace

'Israel's agriculture is totally Western in its reliance on modern high-yielding hybrids. This, urbanization and habitat erosion critically threaten Israel's indigenous landraces, many of which date back many centuries, if not to Biblical times.'

Israel Gene Bank Report 1966

'In the West Bank there is a considerable decline in local varieties due to introduction of hybrid 'high-input' varieties. At least 90% of Palestine's farmers have no irrigation. Both the drought-hardy traditional cultivars and farmers' traditional knowledge of seed selection are disappearing.' Dr. M. S. Ali Shtayeh <berc.ps>

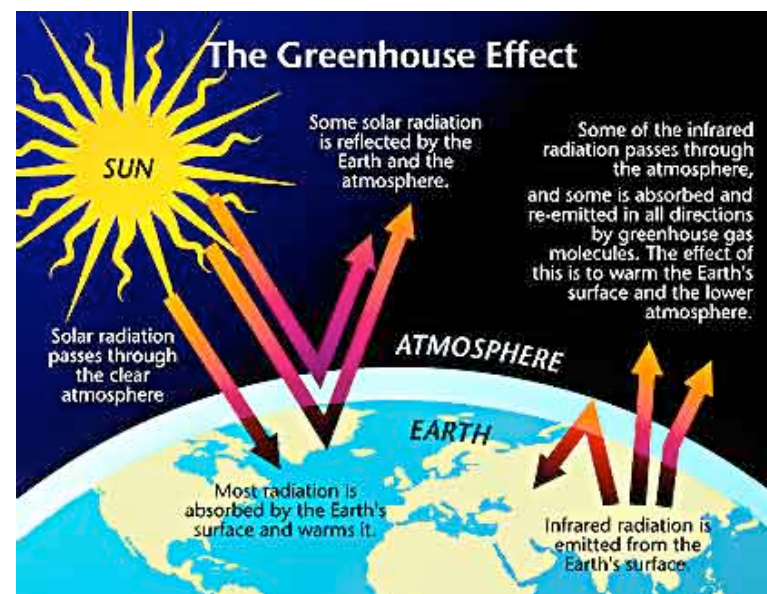
Fact or Propaganda?

1. About 80% of the water that falls in Judea and Samaria flows in underground aquifers into Israel, where it is extracted.
2. About 60% of Palestinians earn their primary income from agriculture yet 95% have NO access to irrigation. About 50 banned pesticides and herbicides, including DDT, are used in the West Bank by Arab farmers who cannot read the English instructions.
3. All of Israeli vegetables are hybrids which cannot be saved by farmers. There are no certified Arab-Israeli organic farmers. 80% of Arab-Israelis were farmers a generation ago, and about 3% farm today.

10. Global Warming, Shabbat & Local Food^{xi}



What causes global warming?



What is the potential of Shabbat and local food to help alleviate global warming?

In the Fields of Efrat

Yehuda Steinberg Yedinitz, Moldavia, circa ~ 1900

In the fields by Bethlehem the farmers of Israel stood amid the wheat. Some swung their scythes among the stalks and sang: "They that sow in tears shall reap in joy;" Others bound sheaves, singing: "He that goes forth and weeps, bearing precious seed, shall come again rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him;" and still others gathered the grain into the threshing-floor, and they sung: "My standing wheat knelt and bowed to my sheaf. Lord! Bless my strength to gather my grain." The field was filled with work and song.

Then came Eliav with his wife and two sons to their portion of the field to begin the harvest. They came to the standing wheat from the four corners of his field. They all were enveloped there, for the full tall stalks covered them over, and it could not be seen when men had come into the wheat. But swiftly glittered the scythes in the hands of the nimble workers. The stalks fell hither and fro as the heads of the reapers were seen above the golden sea. A neighbour called out to Eliav:

'From your standing wheat to your threshing-floor, my neighbor.' "From your vineyard to your wine-cellar," replied Eliav. One blessing in return for another. "The blessing of the Lord on you," called out Eliav's wife to her neighbour. "Have you washed the wool of your flocks?" "The Lord be with you, my neighbour," she replied. "I have both washed it and carded it." "I have already woven thread." "The Lord sends us blessings according to our abilities!"



"Zizz! Zizz" whispered the scythes to each other. It was as if they had scolded and said: "Hush, women. Don't gossip so much Time to work." The women cut short their conversation, and swung their scythes in the corn. "Zizz! Zizz!" whispered the scythes to each other. At that time there passed a wanderer from the land of Moab. He was tired and hungry. Eliav saw him and called out: "The Lord be with you, wanderer! Turn hither, and pluck for yourself ears from the wheat, and bless the Lord that he has sent us his blessing." And the wanderer came, and plucked wheat, ate, and was sated. "Wait, wanderer," Eliav said to him. "Behold I am cutting my wheat; take from the corner." But the wanderer did not understand the significance of the word 'corner'. Eliav said to him: "This is the custom of the Hebrew farmers: when we reap our wheat, we leave stalks in the corner of the field for the poor and the wandering. It is called the corner." The wanderer plucked wheat from the edge of Eliav's field, beat it out, and rubbed it, placed the seed in his pouch, and went on.

The wanderer passed the field of Eliav's neighbour, and a voice called out behind him: "O, blessed of the Lord! Why do you shame me? For I have done you no wrong." And the wanderer was taken aback and said: "O, my lord, when did I shame you? I am a stranger. Only now have I come from the land of Moab, and I have never seen your face until today." "And do you not shame me," replied the farmer, "when you pass my field while I am binding the sheaves and do not gather the gleanings?" "What are the 'gleanings'?" asked the wanderer. "It is the law of the Hebrews," answered the farmer. "The reaper grasps a handful of stalks and the scythe cuts them below. The stalks which have slipped from the hand and escaped the scythe—they are not for the reaper. The Lord has saved them for the poor and the wandering."

The wanderer took the gleanings, rubbed them, placed the seed in his pouch, and went on. The wanderer went up to the mountain, and a voice called to him: "Wanderer! Will you do thus to me? Behold I am making a threshing-heap, and will you not turn to me and collect the forgotten?" "O, my lord, I know what are the 'gleanings' and the 'corner,' but I do not know what the 'forgotten' is."

And the farmer said: "This is the law of the Hebrew farmer - When a man gathers his sheaves to the threshing-heap, and has forgotten sheaves behind him, it is a sign that the Lord has given them to the wandering and the poor. Now you go and pass through my field, and you will seek and find sheaves, and take unto you what the Lord has saved for your sake."

The wanderer went and found the forgotten sheaves, and beat them out, and rubbed them, and placed the seed in his pouch, and went on his way.



Adam Kadmon

Adapted from the Midrash by Eli Rogosa

Reb Yoseph used to rise early in the morning and walk quietly in the dawn hours before other people started their day. The children of the village would visit Reb Joseph to listen to his tales as they watched the shadows on the wall and the flames in the hearth flicker in the quiet hush of the long winter evenings.

In the ancient days, before there were any fishermen on the shores of the Kinneret, even before there was any memories in the hearts of the mountains, there was a giant, named Adam Kadmon, whose body stretched forth from one end of the universe to the other. His skin glistened like jewels. For many years the giant lived enjoying the greatness of all the universe and giving thanks to the Holy One 'Oh Holy One', sighed Adam Kadmon, 'What is this dark and empty place wherein I dwell? I am all alone, so far away from you now.'. The giant asked the Creator to help him. The Creator understood and shrank this enormous being smaller and smaller, until it became earthen heavy.

*From his bones came the hard rocks and stones,
From his breath blew the wind,
From his blood came flowing waters in the streams, rivers, and seas,
From his flesh the soil, and his hair became forests and grasses,
His thoughts became the clouds.*

The Creator asked all the angels to help in the creation of a new creature, to be with the being who became the earth. The Creator and all of the angels gathered up soil from the four directions of the earth-being and formed a Human. The Creator breathed into the human His Breath, which brought him alive. Whatever the Creator formed in the world, He formed in the Human. In every way, the Human is a reflection of the Earth and the Living Earth is a mirror of Man. When Man was formed from the earth, the plants were transformed; they too became a mirror of Man. Each plant corresponds to a part of the human being. When a person is ill, healing can come through the plants that corresponds to whatever has become weak in the human.

Giving Back

Eli Rogosa

When the children of Israel wandered in the wilderness, there was revealed a wellspring of living water. It was in the shape of a sieve-like rock that gushed forth clear, sweet water. This wondrous well followed them throughout their wanderings, over mountains, down valleys. When the children of Israel stopped, the well stopped with them. Fragrant herbs sprouted up by the side of the miraculous waters.

On the day that Miriam passed away, although many tears flowed, the well ceased to flow. It dried up completely. The children of Israel cried out in their thirst for the living waters.

Miriam had a young daughter, who quietly watched and learned the ways of her mother. The daughter, Ruchama, merited to enter the Holy Land with her people. Ruchama learned well the teachings of her mother. She knew how to speak softly to the earth, and to listen to its songs. Ruchama settled in a fertile valley, listened to the plants through the seasons, and learned the songs of the new Land.

At first, the children of Israel rejoiced to be in the Holy Land, and settled in the hilly country. They gathered berries, good fruit, wild grains and had food from their animals. But times became hard. Food became scarce. Families went hungry.

One father, Shemiyah, had a family of three children. Shemiyah was a swift runner and a good gatherer of food. Now, however, when he went out, he came back without food. His children went to sleep with hunger in their bellies. Shemiyah went out on a long journey to seek food. He passed many hungry families looking for food like he was. Shemiyah traveled far, but he still couldn't find food. Then he found a very, very old woman, walking straight and strong. He thought to himself, 'This woman must know how to find food, for she has lived to such an old age in strength.' Shemiyah approached the old woman and stood quietly until she nodded to him to speak.

'Grandmother, I seek food for my family. They are hungry. Can you help us?' The old woman was silent, and looked with clear eyes at Shemiyah. Then she spoke, 'If you want to have food, you must feed others'. Shemiyah didn't understand. How could he feed others when he himself had nothing? The old woman said no more and motioned for him to go. Shemiyah journeyed homewards. On his way he found a great tree with ripe figs. He gathered as many as he could hold. He passed a very hungry looking family, and Shemiyah gave them some of his figs. They were overjoyed, and thanked him with grateful eyes. Shemiyah passed a valley with a grove of pomegranate trees, and picked as many as he could carry. When he passed another hungry family, he shared his figs and pomegranates. They couldn't believe their good fortune. For they too had no food, and had never received food from another. But how could they thank him? They had nothing to give back.

Finally Shemiyah reached home. He fed his hungry children what was left, and they went to sleep with full bellies. Yet seek as he could, Shemiyah was not able to find enough fruits. His family became hungrier and hungrier. Finally he returned to the old woman 'Grandmother, I have done what you told me. I have given away most of my food, and fed other families. But we are still hungry.'

The old woman did not speak, but walked out beyond the trees near her home, where was fashioned walls of rocks, so as to form flat areas that hugged the mountainside. There Shemiyah opened his eyes wide. There was more food than he had ever seen growing. A spring of clear, sweet water flowed out of a large rock. He watched as the old woman gathered, but in a manner different than all the others of his people. First she took a sturdy branch and dug into the earth. Whenever she reaped a handful of grain, she threw half of it back into the loosened earth. She spread soil rich with the droppings of her goat herd over the grains. Then she uprooted the old stalks and covered the ground with them. She looked clearly at Shemiyah and spoke,

'When you gather food, return half of the seed to the earth. Feed the earth in return, as I have done. Wait four moons before you

harvest from the new plants. Before you eat of their fruit, offer the first grains that you have gathered to the Creator. Give away as much food as you can to others who have less. Just as you keep Shabbat for you, every seventh day, Keep a Shabbat with the Earth every seventh year, neither planting or selling the fruits of the soil, Then the Creator will help the earth keep you in return.' She gave him two large satchels of grain and blessed him.

Shemiyah returned home and did as the old woman taught. He used half of the grain for food, and planted the remaining grain. He covered the grain with soil rich with goat droppings and old plants and leaves. Then he waited. The rains soon came. His family grew hungrier. They went to sleep with hunger in their bellies. Shemiyah would not harvest the young grains until four moons passed. One day Shemiyah heard people outside. The families he gave the figs and pomegranates to had brought him dates, olives and grapes. More than he had ever seen in moons. What a gift to have such good food to eat!

Soon after, the grain, first the barley, then the wheat, waved tall in the winds, grew plump and turned golden brown. Four moons passed. Shemiyah brought his wife and children up to Shiloh, to the house of the Kohanim to thank the Creator. Everyone asked how to grow food as Shemiyah did. He showed how to dig deep into the earth, and how to feed the earth with old plants and animal droppings.

Many people now went to visit Ruchama. The Kohanim and Ruchama taught the people how to bless the Creator when they planted seeds, how to tend the earth and to take reaping the harvest and leave the corners and gleanings. As years went by, at each harvest season for the grains and for the good fruit of the trees, the people brought gifts of their first harvest to Shiloh, or Beit-El. On the seventh year, the earth rested, seeds were not sown, there was so much that all received freely from the bounty of the land. There was enough for everyone. Although Ruchama passed away, her wisdom of giving back to the earth lived on with her people.

Rabbi Pinchas and the River

Rabbi Pinchas ben Yair was on his way to redeem captives and came to the River Gannai.

O, Ginnai, divide thy waters for me that I may pass through thee. The river replied, 'Thou are about to do the will of thy Maker. I too am doing the will of my Maker. You may or may not accomplish your purpose. I am sure of accomplishing mine. Rabbi Pinchas said, 'If you will not divide yourself, I will decree that no waters will ever pass through you. The river then divided itself for him. A man stood nearby who was carrying wheat for Pesach. The Rabbi once again spoke to the River. 'Divide yourself for this man too. He is engaged in a holy mitzvah. It thereupon divided itself for the man as well. Nearby stood an Arab who had joined them for the journey. The Rabbi once again addressed the River. Divide yourself for this one too, that he may not say. Is this the treatment of a fellow traveller? The River thereupon divided itself for the Arab too.'
Talmud Hullin 7a



www.siskiyous.edu/shasta/lit/mui/jmuir14.htm

Contact Eli Rogosa

Email: growseed@yahoo.com or visit: growseed.org/mideast.html
to purchase ancient grains, heirloom seed, and garden resources
for Seder Zari'im.

APPENDIX

ⁱ Shulchan Aruch, a Hebrew expression meaning 'Long Table' traditionally refers to the

ⁱⁱ Download '**From Generation to Generation – Seed-Saving Guidebook**' on growseed.org/seedstewards.html

ⁱⁱⁱ equinoxastrology.com/MoonCalendar.htm

^{iv} **Parched green wheat** is an ancient way to enjoy early spring wheat. Fresh spring wheat is lightly roasted when it is almost-ripe but green wheat. It is chewy, slightly sweet, with a savory, smoky taste. Parched grain is mentioned frequently in the Torah.

"The day after the Passover, the very day they ate of the produce of the Land, the unleavened bread and the parched grain" Joshua 5:11

'When she glean with the harvesters, Boaz offered her parched grain., Ruth ate parched wheat in the field with Boaz. She ate all she wanted and had some left over. Ruth 2:14,

Jesse sent young David to bring food supplies to his brothers fighting the Philistines, he brought parched grain and bread.' 1 Sam. 17:17, 25:18



John Barleycorn – Mary Azarian

How to parch dry wheat sheaves: Either harvest your wheat in spring when the grains are still green, soft but firm – or soak dry wheat sheaves or grains in water overnight. Roast lightly over an open flame.

^{vi} **From Omer Barley to Wheat**

The omer is a Biblical measure of grain. On the second day of Passover, an omer of barley were waved Temple, after which the new season's of 'chadash' (grains from the new harvest) were eaten. *Shemot 16:16* During the time of the Temple, the representative of the people, an official appointed by the high courts would go into each village field. Barley stalks were harvested and bound into sheaves in a public ceremony with

festive music and dancing. The next day the entire village gathered in the fields and walked together to Jerusalem with great festivity, lead by town musicians and animals with garlands of flowers, to the Temple in Jerusalem, where the barley sheaves were waved by each family and by the priests. The 'waving of the omer' was an Israeli rain and good weather prayer-dance. The sheaves of barley were waved it in the four compass directions in evocation of good wind and weather forces, then up and down in evocation of rains and dew, then to the heart.

Until this ceremony was performed in the Temple, it was forbidden to eat from the new grains of the five species: wheat, barley, emmer, rye and oats. This barley was then be threshed, winnowed, sieved and roasted. After the chaff was separated, it was ground in a stone mill.

'The day after the seventh Sabbath shall you count, 50 days. Then you shall offer a new meal offering to YHVH. You shall bring out of your habitations two wave-loaves; they shall be of fine flour, baked with leaven. They are the first fruits to the living G-d.'
Leviticus 23: 15-17

The 50th day after the first waving of the barley omer began the holiday of Shavuot. Two loaves made of wheat were brought by each family to the Temple to signal the start of the wheat harvest.

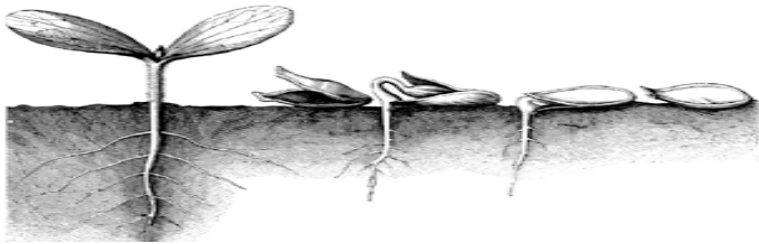
vii **The Mishnah – Seder Zari'im, as listed by Maimonides:**

Peah - Gifts to the Poor include thirteen commandments, seven positive commandments and six negative commandments, which are: (1) to leave the corner of the field unharvested; (2) not to wholly reap the corner of the field; (3) to leave the fallen stalks; (4) not to gather the fallen stalks; (5) to leave the imperfect clusters of the vineyard; (6) not to gather the imperfect clusters of the vineyard; (7) to leave the individual fallen grapes of the vineyard; (8) not to gather the individual fallen grapes of the vineyard; (9) to leave the forgotten sheaf; (10) not to go back to take the forgotten sheaf; (11) to set aside a tithe for the poor; (12) to give charity according to one's ability; (13) not to harden one's heart against the poor.

Kilayim - Diverse Varieties include five negative commandments, which are: (1) not to sow diverse seeds together; (2) not to sow grain or vegetables in a vineyard; (3) not to mate animals of different species; (4) not to work with animals of different species together; (5) not to wear clothing of both wool and linen.

Trumot - Heave Offerings include eight commandments, two positive commandments and six negative commandments, which are: (1) to set aside a great heave offering; (2) to set aside a heave offering of the tithes; (3) not to set aside heave offerings and tithes out of order, but to set them aside in the right order; (4) that an unauthorized person shall not eat a heave offering; (5) that even a tenant or hired worker of a priest shall not eat a heave

offering; (6) that the uncircumcised shall not eat a heave offering; (7) that an unclean priest shall not eat a heave offering; (8) that a profaned woman shall not eat a heave offering nor a gift from consecrated animals.



Maserot - Tithes include one commandment, which is to set apart the first tithe of produce each and every year the fields are sown and give it to the Levites.



Second Tithes and the Fruit of the Fourth Year include nine commandments, three positive commandments and six negative

commandments, which are: (1) to set apart the second tithe; (2) not to spend its redemption money for any necessities but eating, drinking, and anointing; (3) not to eat it while unclean; (4) not to eat it while mourning; (5) not to eat the second tithe of grain outside Jerusalem; (6) not to eat the second tithe of wine outside Jerusalem; (7) not to eat the second tithe of olive oil outside Jerusalem; (8) that all the fruit of trees in the fourth year after planting shall be holy, and that it is to be eaten by its owner in Jerusalem like the second tithe; (9) to make the tithe declaration.

First Fruits and Other Priestly Gifts Outside the Sanctuary include nine commandments, eight positive and one negative commandment, which are: (1) to set apart first fruits and bring them to the Sanctuary; (2) that the priest shall not eat the first fruits outside Jerusalem; (3) to recite the declaration on them; (4) to set apart a portion of dough for the priest; (5) to give the foreleg, the jaw, and the stomach to the priest; (6) to give him the first fleece; (7) to redeem the first-born son, and to give the redemption gift to the priest; (8) to redeem the first-born of an ass, and give the redemption gift to the priest; (9) to decapitate the first-born of an ass, if one does not want to redeem it.

Shevi'it - Sabbatical Year and the Jubilee include twenty-two commandments, nine positive commandments and thirteen negative commandments, which are: (1) that the land shall rest unworked in the Sabbatical year; (2) that one shall not work the

ground in that year; (3) that one shall not work the trees in that year; (4) that one shall not harvest what grows by itself in the manner of harvesters; (5) that one shall not harvest a vineyard in the manner of harvesters; (6) that one shall renounce ownership in what the land produces; (7) that one shall release all his loans; (8) that one shall not oppress nor demand a debt; (9) that one shall not refrain from making loans before the Sabbatical year, so as not to lose his money; (10) to count the years by sevens; (11) to sanctify the fiftieth year; (12) to sound the shofar on the Tenth of Tishri so that slaves go out free; (13) that the land shall not be worked in that year; (14) that one shall not harvest what grows by itself in manner of harvesters; (15) not to harvest the vineyards in the manner of harvesters; (16) to grant redemption to the land in this year, which is the rule for inherited fields or purchased fields; (17) that the land shall not be sold in perpetuity; (18) the rule for houses in walled cities; (19) that none of the Tribe of Levi shall receive a heritage in the Land of Israel, but cities to dwell in shall be given to them as a gift; (20) that the Tribe of Levi shall not take a share in the spoils of war; (21) to give to the Levites cities to dwell in and open land round about the cities; (22) that the open land round about their cities shall never be sold, but they may redeem it at any time whether before the Jubilee or after the Jubilee.

All the commandments included in this book are thus sixty-seven, thirty of them positive commandments and thirty-seven negative commandments.

viii For resources to restore biodiversity, refer to 'Seed to Seed' by Susan Ashworth and 'From Generation to Generation' that can be downloaded for free on: <growseed.org/seedstewards.html>

ix **Centers of Origin** - Ancient agriculture arose independently in different regions of the world. From a nomadic life of hunting and gathering wild foods, many people gradually settled to tend crops, keep animals and evolved farming communities. In the 1920s, the legendary Russian plant explorer *Nikolai Vavilov* identified global centers of crop diversity, that include Mesoamerica, the Mediterranean Basin Fertile Crescent, the Near East, highland Ethiopia and China, where traditional farmers domesticated thousands of diverse heirloom folk varieties, or 'landraces'. For example, native Andean farmers domesticated potatoes, beans, quinoa and amaranth. India alone, had at least 30,000 rice landraces earlier this century until the introduction of industrial monocropping systems.



Wild landraces from the land of **Israel**, in the southern arch of the Fertile Crescent include: almonds, artichoke, barley, beets and chards, bitter gourd (watermelon), black mustard, celery, chickpea, date palm, emmer 'Em Ha'Hitah' (mother of wheat), pear, fig, flax, lentil, lettuce, melon, olive, pea, radish, and safflower. Many wild edibles are today being re-discovered, including arugula (gargir), purslane (rigella) wild mallow (chubeisha), nettle (serpad), mustards (hardal) and more.

^x **Challah** - The ancient Hebraic tradition of the separation of dough expresses a consecrated participation in the transformation of grain into bread as a regenerative life process. A small portion of the dough was given to the Cohanim, or today returned to the earth or burned, with a blessing *L'hafrish hallah*.

A category of Torah mitzvot are '*t'luyot ba'aretz*' - directly connected with the Land of Israel. The mitvah of Challah, the separation of dough, is directly connected to regenerative nature

cycles with a direct relationship to the land of Israel. By Biblical law, challah is taken only within the boundaries of the Land of Israel. However, the Sages instituted the taking of challah outside of Israel so that people living outside of Israel's borders would not forget the mitzvah.

^{xi} Global Warming: See <climatecrisis.net> by Al Gore.

