

בנות מצוה בנות מצוה בנות מצוה

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*Happy Occasions are meant to be  
shared with family and friends  
With great joy we invite you to  
celebrate with us as we become*

*B'not Mitzvah*

*Paula Balsam  
Ronni Ginsberg  
Denise Greenman  
Catherine Herzig  
Jennifer Levine  
Ilene Madwed  
Kathy Paseltiner  
Amy Rosenberg  
Roz Rubin*

*Saturday, the tenth of December  
Nineteen Hundred and Ninety-Four  
7 Tevet, 5755  
at nine-thirty in the morning*

*Temple Beth El  
Stamford, Connecticut*

## **B'not Mitzvah Honors**

### **Opening and Closing the Ark for Removal of Torah Scroll:**

Madwed Family  
Rosenberg Family  
Balsam, Gross and Frumkin Families

### **Aliyot:**

Rishonah	Ilene Kirschner Madwed
Sh'neeya	Amy Rosenberg
Sh'leesheet	Kathy Paseltiner
R'vee-eet	Roz Margot Rubin
Cha'mi'sheet	Ronni Ginsberg
Shi'sh'eet	Paula Balsam
Acharonah	Jennifer Evelyn Levine
Maftir	Catherine Falvey-Herzig
	Denise Greenman

**Hagba** (Raising the Torah Scroll): Rosalea Fisher

**G'lilah** (Dressing the Torah Scroll): Doris Besman

**Holding the Torah:** Scott Gross

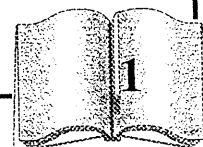
### **Opening and Closing the Ark for Return of Torah Scroll:**

Ginsberg Family  
Levine and Davis Families  
Rubin Family

### **Opening and Closing the Ark for Aleynu:**

Greenman Family  
Herzig Family  
Paseltiner Family

<b><u>Kiddush Cup Carrier:</u></b>	Ilana Ginsberg
<b><u>Pitcher Carrier:</u></b>	Cortney Rosenberg
<b><u>Bowl and water Carrier:</u></b>	Dana Madwed
<b><u>Challah Carrier:</u></b>	Jason Greenman



It is a great honor today for us to be called to the Torah as B'not Mitzvah. We have spent 15 months preparing; learning Hebrew, studying Jewish History, practicing the prayers of the Shabbat morning service and in the process, trying to become better Jews. We have grown together as a group in struggling and working hard - sometimes late into the night. We have laughed together too and formed friendships as we moved closer to our goal.

We thank all of those people who have made this day possible. We mention specifically; Hazzan Rabinowitz who has gone above and beyond the call of duty, as usual. His dedication has inspired us all. We also thank Rabbi Hammerman and Rabbi Hantman for their time and patience. We thank our Hebrew teachers Doris Besman and Bracha Moshe. Frank Rosner gets a big thank you for all of the aliyot he has given us, good practice for us all. Thank you to Peter Poser for your help with the invitations. For their advice, we thank the previous Adult B'not Mitzvah class. We thank you, our husbands, children, relatives and friends who have supported us and joined us today.

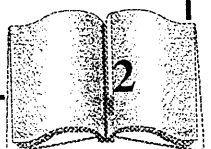
We have been given the opportunity to achieve a better understanding of our rich Heritage. We have formed bonds with each other as well as past and future generations that we will carry with us forever. Shabbat Shalom.

If a parent wished to study Torah, and has a child who must also learn -- the parent takes precedence. However, if the child is more insightful or quicker to grasp what there is to be learned, the child takes precedence. Even though the child gains priority thereby, the parent must not ignore his own study. For just as it is a Mitzvah to educate the child, so, too, is the parent commanded to teach himself. *Maimonides*

### **From a Mother to her Daughter on her Bat Mitzvah**

An official personal protector statue, inscribed as follows:

"Hello Bat Mitzvah Girl, I am your personal protector!  
I will protect you against shaky hands,  
a squeaky voice, stomach butterflies,  
and forgetting all the Hebrew you ever knew.  
I guarantee a super party, exchangeable gifts  
and a personal feeling of pride!"



## Paula Balsam

It all started in the Fall of 1990 when I signed up for an 8 week course in Hebrew Reading, so that I could follow along in the prayer book, and it never ended. Becoming a Bat Mitzvah was, in my mind, on par with going to the moon. Eventually our class of three with the Hazzan was opened to the congregation as a class for B'not Mitzvah. I thought of quitting, but in order to make an informed decision continued to come on Thursday nights without making a commitment. Although I enjoyed the classes, that commitment was long in coming. I felt it was too difficult, and to be truthful, too frightening, but the Hazzan encouraged me and, with lots of patience, got me to the point of feeling comfortable chanting the Haftorah and Torah portions. At this point, I'm looking forward to it with a little trepidation and a lot of excitement and joy in sharing this experience with my husband, Merv, and my children Marla, Michael, Lori and Don and grandchildren Scott, Rachel and Eric and all those who are special in my life.

For the past four months, the Hazzan's voice has been ringing throughout the house. The tape recorder has been on before dinner, after dinner and before bedtime. The Hazzan's voice has accompanied us in the car as we drove to work and went to visit friends and relatives. And Paula's voice, at first diffident and uncertain, but later strong and confident, has been chanting right along as she was learning her portions of Torah and Haftorah. When Paula decided to become Bat Mitzvah, she approached the task with the same thoroughness and dedication that she has with everything she does, and I know I will be very proud of her at the B'not Mitzvah. *Merv*

Mom

In the words of the old Rabbi, "Better late than never!". You are an inspiration to us all and we are thrilled to be able to share this wonderful mitzvah with you. We love you. *Midge, Michael, Scott and Rachel*

I am so proud of my mother today. This Bat Mitzvah is even more meaningful because she wants to be there, not because she has to be there. I know it was a difficult decision for her, but I have no doubt that she'll do a fantastic job. One question: If she's finally becoming an adult in the Jewish religion, why have I been listening to her all these years? *Lori*

We want to take this moment to let you know how very proud we are of you and how very much we love you and wish we could share the day with you. Your joining our family 37 years ago, was a very fortunate day for all of us. All of our love and heartiest congratulations on your Bat Mitzvah. *Mom and Dad*

My sister-in-law, my sister, my friend. I hope this day is as special to you as you are to me. You never get older -- only better. Love and Hugs, *Phyllis*

We grew up in a traditional Jewish home reflecting customs of that time. We learned Yiddish and English, but not Hebrew -- now you have closed the gap and added another dimension to our Jewishness with your hard work and commitment.

Morton, Jeff and I are very proud of your accomplishment. It enriches all of us. Love, *Sarita*



## Ronni Ginsberg

I grew up in a Reform household celebrating the Jewish Holidays with family and going to Temple once or twice a year. I went to Sunday school but never learned Hebrew or understood many of the prayers. I still had a very strong sense and feeling of being Jewish.

I always knew that I wanted to learn more and become more observant. When I got married one of my girlfriends gave me silver candlesticks to use on Shabbat. I knew I would use them often and now that we have children, that has become one of our customs each Friday night, to light candles, have challah, wine and a family meal together. In this hectic world it is a time for us all to stop and reconnect, be together, and talk.

I enjoyed going to Temple, listening to the music + the prayers but I knew there was always a piece missing. I felt like an observer rather than a participant. One of my goals was to one day learn to read Hebrew.

Like so many things, it got pushed to the back burner. As my children got older and they started learning the Hebrew alphabet and reading, it became more important for me to learn. I still kept saying, "not now; I have no time, maybe next year."

I am a Breast Cancer survivor. Having been struck with this disease two separate times, I am here to say that it has positively changed my life. There is not a day that goes by that I don't think about it and the fear that it will return. The difference is, that now I live and enjoy each day. I can't put off things for tomorrow because life is too short and too uncertain.

Last year I started adult education at Temple to learn Hebrew. I learned the alphabet and slowly started to read. I felt like a child learning to read for the first time. This was the first New Year that I could actually follow the prayers and it was very exciting. Now I can help my children with their Hebrew homework. Becoming a Bat Mitzvah was an added bonus to all this for me. There were many, many times I felt I couldn't go through with all this. I would make excuses and say I didn't have the time or patience to persevere. But somehow I stuck it out. Through many tears and much laughter I can say that I am very proud of myself and want to thank my family and friends for their encouragement, patience and help. An added hug and thank you to the Rabbi and Hazzan for their patience and unending time. Shalom - Ronni.

Hi! My name is Ilana. In Hebrew it is Tova. I feel special that my Mom is having a Bat Mitzvah. I hope she learns lots of Hebrew so she can teach me a lot more than I already know. My Mom should be feeling special too. A lot of my friends should be coming because their moms go to Hebrew class.

I think that it is nice that Mom became a Bat Mitzvah. Now she can help me when I have Hebrew. I am happy for her. *Steven Ginsberg*

Dear Ronni,

When you and I met I was afraid that while our Jewish background was similar, that your Reform upbringing would clash with my Conservative one.

Thank G-d I was wrong. Your commitment to our kids, our Temple and our faith culminated in a special way for me when you announced you were taking Hebrew classes. This was a big commitment for you to make when you had no background in Hebrew and even less time to study it. I was very proud to be in Temple with my wife, reading the prayers next to me.

When you became swept up in the Bat Mitzvah group, too, I was afraid to say anything, lest you lose faith in yourself, become over stressed or lose confidence. The idea was great, but could you balance it and still smile -- I could only hope and help out where I could.

Now as it looms as a reality, I am very excited for you. So few personal goals are even planned yet accomplished by us busy adults. This is such a meaningful one, well beyond any inconvenience these evenings may have caused the rest of us. I feel excited and very proud. I am as happy as a new dad, having done little of the work, but enamored with the whole thing. This is another wonderful life event for you, and I am very happy to be with you through it all. Love, *Paul*



## Denise Greenman

I would like to express my gratitude and appreciation to my family and friends, who have come from near and far, to see me called to the Torah to become a Bat Mitzvah. I especially want to thank my devoted husband for his continuous support throughout my Bat Mitzvah training. His encouragement for me to strive has been a tremendous asset. Most importantly, I would like to thank my 3 wonderful children, for it is they who inspired me to pursue my knowledge of Judaism, Hebrew and prayer.

Now, 15 months later, thanks to our wonderful Rabbi and Hazzan, I am proud to say I have accomplished this dream. This has been a wonderful experience for me. I have had the opportunity to learn a great deal as well as get to know some very special people.

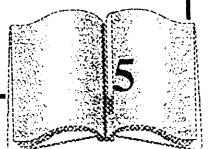
Denise becoming a Bat Mitzvah today, is the fulfillment of a long planned goal. It underscores her commitment and her dedication. By becoming a Bat Mitzvah, she has tied herself to our Heritage's past and gained a new perspective on the future - her entire family, Jason, Jennifer, Michelle and myself are very proud of her and are honored to share today with her. *David Greenman*

Mommy,

I'm glad you learned Hebrew. Now you can help me with my Hebrew School homework. I'm very proud of you and I love you. *Jason*

Mommy,

I like listening to your Hebrew tapes. I love you. *Jennifer*



## Catherine Falvey-Herzig

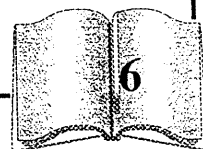
As an adult convert, and having watched my daughter, Shoshana and son, Jeremy become Bat and Bar Mitzvah, I never dreamed of celebrating my own Bat Mitzvah. Until Rabbi Hammerman, Rabbi Hantman and Hazzan Rabinowitz opened a door for me. I've been rushing through that door ever since! I am as honored today on the bima as I was that first day when, after the Bet Din and mikvah, and in the presence of my then husband-to-be, Steven, I first said the Sh'ma. For me today is a dream come true.

Dear Mom,

Mazel Tov and all our love goes with you on an occasion that is so very important to you and that you have worked so hard for.

Love,

*Shani, Jeremy, and Daddy*



## Jennifer Evelyn Levine

### Jennifer's Bat Mitzvah -- From Her Husband's Viewpoint

When Jennifer expressed interest to me in becoming involved in the Temple I was happy for her spirituality and exuberance. Jennifer has even helped me enjoy services the occasional times that I go and helped restore my sense of Judaism. However, not in my wildest dreams did I ever expect my wife to want to fulfill the rite of passage we refer to as the Bat Mitzvah. I thought that Bar/Bat Mitzvah was meant for young Jewish boys and girls seeking to achieve adulthood...it was frivolous and silly for a grown woman to want a Bat Mitzvah...although we could use the Bat Mitzvah money! But over the last few months I have come to realize Jennifer is trying to fill a void not previously accomplished during childhood and become complete in her Jewish identity. She has worked hard in preparation of the Ashrey and her Haftorah part. Geez...she's sang in the car, in the house and even made a few dollars from total strangers in front of Marshalls!!! Good Luck Jennifer. December 10th is your day. Love, H. L.

My Dearest Jen,

When you told me you were going to be Bat Mitzvah, I was so full of pride and love it caused me to pause and reflect on you and your life and how much you've accomplished in so few years.

I always think of you as one who was never afraid to face life on your own terms. You have made your way in this world despite the handicap of being one of five children and never really getting the attention you so well deserved. You have the knack of making friends wherever you are and you're not hindered by new places and new faces.

Beginning when you were 18 years old and went on your own, you have made your own way, never asking for help because you were wise enough to realize that life's experience is the best teacher. You transferred to a new state, Connecticut, and started a life far away from your family. You made new friends and met and married a wonderful man from New York. Although this mother's heart keeps calling you back, you know your place is beside your husband, wherever that may be.

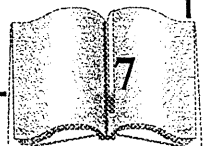
On this day of your Bat Mitzvah, my hope and prayer is that this enriching experience brings you even closer to God and that He continues to love and keep you safe as is the prayer of your mother.

Your loving *Mother*

This is an acknowledgment of one of my heroes - my daughter Jennifer - her life has been far from easy and has had many obstacles, but her spirit and courage have always persevered. The house Jen grew up in was not Shomar Shabbat and I do not say that proudly - However, Jennifer presently lives her religion more deeply than her childhood would have foretold. My daughter decided a long time ago that she would marry a Jewish man and once when she met a nice Gentile guy she liked, I asked her why she never dated him -- her reply -- which I will never forget -- was "Dad, If I want Chinese food, I don't go to an Italian restaurant!" Suffice it to say she is a Jewish woman any father would be proud of -- and the man she calls Daddy, loves and admires her very much. One caution BeeJ -- maybe the reason angels can fly is because they take themselves so lightly.

Jennifer Levine brightens our office. She engages in lively conversation and has a great sense of humor. She enjoys using Jewish expressions and then interpreting them for those who don't know what they mean. Since I have known her, for over a year, Jennifer has been enthusiastic about her Bat Mitzvah and has looked forward to this day with great zeal. She loves her Sisterhood work, the Synagogue and is extremely proud of being Jewish.

*Vivian Sherwood*





## Ilene Kirschner Madwed

"Twenty something" years ago, I made a conscious decision not to become Bat Mitzvah. Actually, a tall, skinny, awkward and shy me made that choice. I attended Hebrew school, had a confirmation and went to services regularly and yet, felt that I did not know enough to go through the ceremony that would proclaim me an "adult" in the eyes of the Jewish community.

Being Jewish has always been important to me. It was more than being born Jewish and celebrating holidays. It is the warmth and connectedness I have always felt. Special times were spent attending Friday night services with my father. Holidays were always celebrated with delicious food prepared lovingly by my Mother. These are traditions I continue with my husband and children. We are also learning to create our own Jewish experiences and traditions in our home.

The appreciation for learning is different at every age. To continue to learn and grow are an on-going process. Studying for my Bat Mitzvah has taken dedication, time and effort. This has also been a treasured time for me. Time for myself -- something that's not easy to do -- for personal growth and something that will enrich the lives in my family.

I stand here today at the completion of a Bat Mitzvah course of study, and at the beginning of a lifetime of learning. I've gained an appreciation for the beauty, simplicity and complexity of our Shabbat Service. I am still tall and at times awkward and shy and less skinny than I was many years ago with a greater understanding of myself and the person that I've become. Thank you to Bert, Dana, Daniel and Andrew for all of your love and patience. Thank you to my family for all the years of love and support.

Ilene, I sit here in total awe and amazement at how you take charge of your life and accomplish those things that are most important to you and our family. You are constantly juggling your job, the JCC Board, numerous committees, caring for and organizing the lives of your four children and living in a house where the Messiah will visit well before the kitchen is finished being remodeled.

Amidst all of this you decided to become a Bat Mitzvah - truly an incredible undertaking! You have studied hard and learned a great deal. We are all very proud of you. But, no one should be more proud of you than YOU. Becoming a Bat Mitzvah is the fulfillment of a great dream. You should be very happy - no one deserves it more.  
Love, *Bert*

Dear Mom,

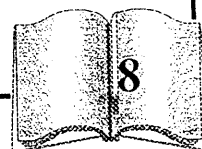
I am really proud of you. You worked really hard on your Hebrew with the Hazzan. You practiced a lot that made you better than better. I am happy you're having a Bat Mitzvah. You have been a great Mom to me, teaching me some Hebrew. Thank you for letting me listen to your tape. I loved practicing with you. I love you a lot.

Love, *Dana*

Dear Mom,

You are a nice Mommy. You take care of me. I like you. Have a good time at your Bat Mitzvah.

Love, *Daniel*



## Kathy Paseltiner

In the year and a half journey to this day, I have reached a point of connectedness to Judaism that I always knew was missing for me. I would sit through services enjoying the melodies, but never fully understanding the sequence of the prayers or being able to share in any Hebrew reading. The service and Judaism have come to life for me.

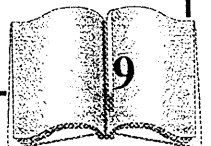
This journey has also deepened the bond with my husband Jeff, and my daughters, Michelle and Nicole. They were there to support me and help me with Hebrew whenever I asked. My daughters, especially, delighted in being able to help me with the prayers that they long ago had mastered.

I feel doubly blessed today, having embraced Judaism seventeen years ago and now becoming a Bat Mitzvah. I thank my teachers Hazzan Rabinowitz, Rabbi Hammerman, Rabbi Hantman and Doris Besman.

I am unbelievably proud of and have a tremendous respect for what my wife has accomplished. Ever since she converted to Judaism she has been determined to become proficient in reading Hebrew. Her determination and the tremendous effort she put into her goal has so richly been rewarded today. *Jeff Paseltiner*

I think it's great that my mother is becoming a Bat Mitzvah. She has worked so hard at this and I am very proud of her. I just hope she is as proud of herself as we all are of her and her wonderful accomplishment. *Michelle Paseltiner*

I am very proud of my mother and I think what she is doing is great. I really respect her for working so long and hard on this and I know that everything will go very well. I know she's proud of herself too, and she definitely should be. *Nicole Paseltiner*



## Amy Rosenberg

If you would have told me 2 years ago that I would be participating in an adult B'NOT MITZVAH class I would have just laughed. All I really wanted was to learn to read Hebrew. After beginning my studies with Rabbi Hantman I realized that's not all I wanted. Encouraged by family and friends I joined the class in September of 93. Initially joining only to be able to better help my daughters' as they begin their studies, but later coming to realize that it was more for me. As an adult I always wondered what it would be like to have a higher comfort level in Synagogue, to feel more connected to the generations of women before me as well as to future generations and mostly to have a better understanding of what it means to be a "Jewish" adult with all its responsibilities and rewards. I began this journey with a group of women some of whom were friends before but all of whom are friends now. I'm grateful for classes that have brought us together and given us a common bond.

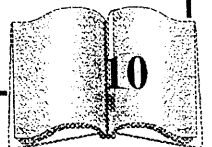
Thank you to Rabbi Hammerman and Hazzan Rabinowitz for their countless hours and to my family and friends for coming. A special thank you to my husband, Howie, and daughters Cortney and Brittany who have endured my many nights out, borrowing tape players and endless chanting. I couldn't have done it without your love and support.

Let me start off by saying how proud I am of Amy. She has completed her B'not Mitzvah lessons with flying colors and has achieved a goal she wasn't even sure she wanted when she first started.

Though Thursday nights have been lonely at times, the girls (Cortney and Brittany) and I would not have changed anything. But it will be nice to have their mom back.

It fills me with warm feelings seeing my wife so comfortable within the Temple walls and I'm sure her feelings will continue and flourish as her understanding and knowledge of Jewish history, language and life grows.  
*Howie*

"I think it's very exciting and neat. I'm very happy for her." Love, *Cortney*

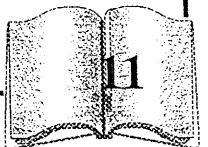


## Roz Margot Rubin

Learning to read Hebrew and to become more comfortable with the prayer and music of the synagogue has been a goal of mine, ever since I was a little girl. Judaism and Zionism have always been an important part of my life -- but I always felt I was missing something by not knowing how to read Hebrew. This desire is what originally led me to start a six week crash course in Hebrew. This class started about four years ago and never really ended (thanks to the patience and dedication of the Hazzan)!

I always knew that I wanted to apply what I learned by participating more in services, hence the decision to become part of this B'not Mitzvah class. I can honestly say that I have accomplished most of my original goals. However, as with most things, I have found that the more I learn, the more I realize how much more there is to learn. Therefore, I know that my learning process is not ending today with this Bat Mitzvah but will be an ongoing process. The past four years of learning, however, has given me an excellent base to work from. For this I thank the Hazzan, who always amazes me with his never ending patience and time devoted to helping others learn the music and prayer of the synagogue. I am also deeply grateful to Rabbi Hammerman who has always provoked me to think about things in a different way. I also thank the rest of the class for making this a more meaningful (and fun) experience. Last, but not least, I thank my family for their support and encouragement especially Mitch and Arielle -- I love you!

My respect and admiration for Roz has increased during her preparation for her Bat Mitzvah. This is so for the following reasons: 1) she has defined her role as a Jewish woman within the embrace of Judaism; 2) she has expressly demonstrated her love and devotion to Judaism; 3) she has worked toward the accomplishment of a goal she established for herself. *Mitch*



## Tallis Meditation

קָרוֹךְ אַתָּה	Holy One of Blessing
יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ	Your Presence
מִלֵּךְ הָעוֹלָם	fills Creation.
אֲשֶׁר קִדְּשָׁנוּ	You make us holy
בְּמִצְוֹתֶיךָ	with your Commandments
וְצִוָּנוּ	and bid us
לְהִתְעַטֵּף	to wrap ourselves
בְּצִיצֵת :	in the fringed garment.

From where was the light created? The Holy One of Blessing

of the world to the other.

Weave for us a garment of brightness;  
 May the warp be the white light of morning,  
 May the weft be the red light of evening.  
 May the fringes be the falling rain,  
 May the border be the standing rainbow.  
 Thus weave for us a garment of brightness,  
 That we may walk fittingly where birds sing,  
 That we may walk fittingly where grass is green.

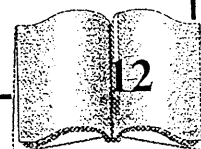
wrapped Himself in a white talis

and the light of Her radiance shone from one end

## I Shall Not Go Alone

I know not where I go or where  
 From this familiar scene;  
 But He is here and He is there;  
 And all the way between;  
 And when I leave this life I know,  
 For that dim vast unknown,  
 Though late I stay, or soon I go,  
 I shall not go alone.

When you educate a man,  
 you educate an individual;  
 When you educate a woman,  
 you educate a whole family.



## Meditations

The vast infinity of Your universe awes us  
and humbles every living creature

The spectrum of creation is truly beyond our powers  
to explain or reason, for we cannot comprehend  
a time and space in our Creator's terms

Oh God - hear our prayers from amidst a world of  
turmoil - listen and guide us all

For we know that our time is short and we, like our  
fragile world, will someday vanish in the vastness  
of Your universe

Yet we truly strive to be just to every living  
soul and open to the many needy

Provide us the insight to our sphere and guide us  
as we seek to set aside the false values and  
vanities that creep up to steal the true richness  
from our lives

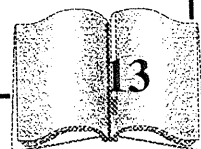
Grant us greater tolerance - for so much of the  
anguish we bear is not worthy of our time

Let us always find friendship, love and acceptance  
so that we will have the vital nourishment  
for existence

Teach us to bend what we must and to find encouragement  
gracefully even in slight gain so that we are stronger  
and more confident as each challenge is met.

Bless us, our families and friends with good health  
and a peaceful spirit

Stand with us as we strive to separate from the  
complexities that embroil us the basic values of  
Torah we all share which will enrich our days.



### **We Are Grateful**

Each morning  
For the fresh promise of a new day  
A day of new experience  
Of warmth and friendship  
Of new tasks undertaken, new fruits planted  
Of efforts brought to fruition  
of bountiful harvests reaped.

### **We Are Grateful**

Each day  
For the creative and nurturing capacities  
we have been granted.  
For the compassion to sense those in fear,  
in hunger and in pain.  
For the opportunity to share some of our bounty  
with those less fortunate.

### **We Are grateful**

Each evening  
For the rest that comes after  
the day's tasks are done.  
For the satisfaction of enjoying  
the fruits of our labors.  
And for the opportunity to share  
this completeness with our neighbors.

### **Reading the Torah**

Somewhere out of time, in the mystery of time  
Somewhere between memory and forgetfulness,  
Dimly though, I remember how I once stood  
At Your mountain trembling, Amid the fire and the thunder.

How I stood there, out of bondage, in a strange land and afraid.  
And You loved me and You fed me, And I feasted on Your words.  
And, yes I can remember, How the thunder was my heart  
And the fire was my soul.

O God, I do remember.  
The fire burns in me anew.  
And here I am, once more  
A witness to that timeless moment.

Present now in the light of Your Torah  
I am reborn.

