

Rosh HaShana: Yehi Ratzon – Symbolic Foods Text and Instructions

All of the Yehi Ratzons start out the same way:

"Yehi Ratzon Mil'fa'necha, Ad-noi El-heinu Vei'l-hai Avosainu..."

(The "-" represents the letter "o," which was purposely left out so as not to write out the name of G-d.)

"May it be your will, Hashem our G-d and the G-d of our forefathers..."

Listed below are the various foods and the endings, which are appropriate to them:

For dates: "...She'yitamu son'ainu." "...that our enemies be consumed."

For pomegranate: "...she'nirbeh ze'chu'yos k'rimon"

"...that our merits increase like (the seeds of) a pomegranate."

For the apple in the honey: "...she'tichadesh aleinu shana tova u'm'tuka."

"...that you renew us for a good and sweet year."

For fenugreek (or carrots - as the Yiddish word for carrots - Mehren - can also mean "to increase," this Yehi Ratzon is appropriate as well):

"...She'yir'bu ze'chuyo'sainu." "...that our merits increase."

For leek or cabbage: "...She'yikar'su son'ainu." "...that our enemies be decimated."

For beets: "...She'yistalku oy'vainu." "...that our adversaries be removed."

For gourd: "...She'yikora g'zar de'nainu v'yikaru l'fanecha zechu'yosainu."

"...that the decree of our sentence be torn up and may our merits be proclaimed before you."

For fish: "...She'nif'reh v'nir'beh ki'dagim." "...that we be fruitful and multiply like fish."

For the head of a fish or sheep: "...She'ni'hiyeh l'rosh v'lo l'zanav."

"...that we be as the head and not as the tail."

All of these Yehi Ratzons are said on the first night of Rosh HaShana, after Kiddush has been made, and after the blessing over the Challos (bread) has been made and the bread has been eaten. (There are those who have the custom to eat these foods and recite the Yehi Ratzon on the second night as well.) After the bread had been eaten, one should take the date, make the blessing that one would normally make on fruit ["Borei Pri Ha'etz"], and then take a bite of the date. Before one has eaten the whole date, one should recite the Yehi Ratzon. After the date, one can then have all, none, or some of the other foods.