

Jewish Youth Songwriting Contest Lyrics for 2010-2011

Theme: Jewish Environmentalism

Composers may choose any of the paragraphs below as lyrics for their song. Or composers may scroll down for suggestions of single sentence lyrics.

Paragraph Lyrics:

Midrash Kohelet (Ecclesiastes) Rabba 7:13

When the Holy One created Adam, He took him for a tour of all the trees in the Garden of Eden and He said to him: See how my works are so glorious and pleasant! All of this I have created for you! Make sure that you do not ruin and destroy My work, for if you do, no one will be able to fix it after you are gone!

Daily Prayer, Siddur Amidah , Yotzer Or (Former of Light) -- May be sung in Hebrew
Praised are You, Our God, Ruler of the universe, former of light, creator of darkness, maker of peace and the creator of all things. In Your mercy light shines over the earth and upon all who inhabit it. Through your goodness the work of the creation is daily renewed. How great are Your works, O God, in wisdom You have made all of them. The earth is filled with your creations.

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יי אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם,
יוֹצֵר אוֹר וּבוֹרֵא חֹשֶׁךְ, עוֹשֵׂה
שְׁלוֹם וּבוֹרֵא אֶת הַכּוֹל:

Ba-rukh A-ta A-do-shem E-lo-hey-nu me-lekh ha-o-lam,
Yo-tzer or uvo-re kho-shekh,
Os-se sha-lom u-vo-re et ha-kol.

Psalms 96:11-13 – May be sung in English or Hebrew

Let the heavens rejoice and the earth exult! Let the sea and all within it thunder, the fields and everything in them exult! Then shall all the forest trees shout for joy, at the presence of the Eternal

One, who is coming to rule the Earth; God will rule the world justly and its people in faithfulness.

יְשַׂמְחוּ הַשָּׁמַיִם, וְתִגַּל הָאָרֶץ; ; יִרְעַם הַיָּם,

וְיַמְלֵאוּ.
 יַעֲלוּ שְׂדֵי, וְכָל-אֲשֶׁר-בוֹ ; אִזּוּ יִרְנְנוּ, כָּל-עֵצֵי-יַעַר.
 לִפְנֵי יְהוָה, כִּי בָא-- כִּי בָא, לְשֹׁפֵט הָאָרֶץ :
 יִשְׁפֹּט-תֵּבֵל בְּצֶדֶק ; וְעַמִּים, בְּאַמוּנָתוֹ.

Yis-me khu ha-sha-ma-yim , v'ta-gel ha-a-retz;
 Yir-am ha-yam u-m'lo-o
 Ya-a-loz sha-dai, v'khol a-sher bo.
 Az y'ra-n'nu kol a-tze ya-ar.
 Li-f'nei A-do-shem ki va –
 Ki va Lish-pot ha-a-retz.

Job 12:7-9

You need only ask the beasts, and they will teach you;
 The birds of the sky, and they will tell you;
 Or speak with the earth, and it will teach you;
 And the fish of the sea, they will tell you.
 Among all these, who does not know that the hand of the Lord has done this?

Kohelet (Ecclesiastes) 1:7

All streams flow into the sea,
 Yet the sea is never full.
 To the place from where the rivers flow,
 There they return.

Kohelet (Ecclesiastes) 3:19

For in respect of the fate of man and the fate of beast, they have one and the same fate: as the one dies so dies the other; all share the same breath of life.

Pirke Avot (Ethics of Our Fathers) 4:3

Do not be scornful of any person and do not be disdainful of anything. For there is no person without his hour, and no thing which does not have its place.

Rebbe Shneour Zalman (1745-1813) Tanya 42

All that we see –
 The heaven, the Earth, and all that fills it –
 All these things are the external garments of God.

Martin Buber, *Late Masters*, p. 220 Rabbi Yitschak Eisik said:

The motto of life is 'Give and Take.' Everyone must be both a giver and a receiver. He who is not is like a barren tree.

Psalms 92:13 – May be sung in Hebrew

The righteous shall flourish like the palm-tree; he shall grow like a cedar in Lebanon. Planted in the house of the Lord, they shall flourish like the palm-tree.

צְדִיק, בְּתֶמַר יִפְרַח ; כְּאֶרֶז בְּלְבָנוֹן יִשְׁגֶּה.
שְׁתוּלִים, בְּבַיִת יְהוָה ; בְּחִצְרוֹת אֱלֹהֵינוּ
יִפְרִיחוּ.

Tza-dik ka-ta-mar Yif-rakh;
K'e-retz Bal-va-non Yis-geh
Sh'too-lim, B'vet A-do-shem;
B'kha-tzrot E-lo-hey-nu Yaf-ri-khu

Song of Songs 2:11 –13

For now the winter is past, the rains are over and gone. The blossoms have appeared in the land. The time of the singing has come; the song of the turtledove is heard in our land. The green figs form on the fig tree, the blossoming vines give off fragrance. (–The Hebrew “*zamor*” can mean either pruning or singing.)

Devarim (Deuteronomy) 11: 14–17 May be sung in English or Hebrew

I will grant the rain for your land in season, the early rain and the late, that you may gather in your grain, your wine, and your oil. I will also provide grass in the fields for your cattle—you will eat and be satisfied. Take care not to be lured away to serve other gods and bow to them. For the Lord's anger will flare up against you, and He will shut up the skies so that there will be no rain and the ground will not yield its produce; and you will soon perish from the good land that the Lord is giving to you.

14) וְנָתַתִּי מִטֶּר-אֶרְצְכֶם בְּעֵתוֹ, יוֹרֵה וּמְלֻקוֹשׁ ;
וְאֶסְפֹּת דָגָנְךָ, וְתִירְשֶׁךָ וְיִצְהַרְךָ.

15) וְנָתַתִּי עֵשֶׂב בְּשָׂדֶךָ, לְבַהֲמֹתֶיךָ ; וְאָכַלְתָּ,
וְשָׂבַעְתָּ.

16) הִשְׁמְרוּ לָכֶם, פֶּן יִפְתָּה לְבַבְכֶם ; וְסָרְתֶם,
וְעַבַּדְתֶּם אֱלֹהִים אֲחֵרִים, וְהִשְׁתַּחֲוִיתֶם, לָהֶם.

17)
וְחָרָה אֶף-יְהוָה בְּכֶם, וְעָצַר אֶת-הַשָּׁמַיִם

וְלֹא-יִהְיֶה מָטָר, וְהֶאֱדָמָה, לֹא תִתֵּן אֶת-יְבוּל
וְאֲבֹתֵיכֶם מְהֵרָה, מֵעַל הָאָרֶץ הַטֹּבָה
אֲשֶׁר יְהוָה, נָתַן לָכֶם.

14-V'na-ta-ti M'tar ar-tz'-khem b'-i-to, Yo-reh u-ma-l'kosh;
V'-a-saf-ta d'ga-ne-kha, v'-ti-ro-sh'-kha v'-yi-tz'-ha-re-kha.

15-V'-na-ta-ti eh-sev b'-sa-d'-kha, l'v-hem-te-kha,
V'-a-khal-ta v'sa-va-ta.

16-Hi-sha-m'-ru la-khem, pen yif-teh l'va-v'khem ;
V'-sar-tem, v'a-vad'-tem E-lo-him Akhe-rim, v'-hish-ta-kha-vi-tem la-khem.

17- V'kha-rah af ado-shem ba-khem; v' a-tzar et ha-sha-ma-yim
v'lo yi-hi-yeh ma-tar,
V'-ha-a-da-mah, lo ti-ten et y'-vu-lah
V'a-va-d'-tem m'he-rah, me-al ha-a-retz ha-to-vah
Asher A-doshem, no-ten la-khem.

Vayikra (Leviticus) 25:23-24

The land must not be sold forever: for the land is Mine: for you are strangers and residents with Me. Throughout the land you possess, you must provide for the redemption of the land.

Single Sentence Lyrics:

Composers may string together several of the following single sentences. Each is a powerful statement of Jewish environmentalism. A given sentence may appear once in the song, or, many times in the song as a refrain or a repeated chorus. The challenge is to left to the composer.

Siddur

We thank you...for your miracles that are with us each day, and for your wonders and goodness that are with us every moment.

Genesis 2:15

And the Lord took Adam and placed him in the Garden of Eden, to work it and guard it.

Isaiah 45:18

God did not create the earth a wasteland, but formed it for habitation.

Kohelet (Ecclesiastes) 1:4

One generation goes and another generation comes; but the earth remains forever.

Kohelet (Ecclesiastes) 5:8

The advantage of land is supreme; even the king is subject to the soil.

Jerusalem Talmud, Kedoshim 4:12

It is forbidden to live in a town, which has no garden or greenery.

Midrash Sifre (Deuteronomy) 20:19

If not for the trees, human life could not exist.

Baal Shem Tov

Trees and plants have a language of their own.

Proverbs 3:18 quoted in the Siddur - May be sung in Hebrew

She is a Tree of Life to those who hold fast to her, and whoever holds on to her is happy.

עֵץ-חַיִּים הִיא, לַמַּחֲזִיקִים בָּהּ; וְתִמְכֶּנָּה
מֵאֲשֶׁר.

Etz kha-yim hi, la-ma-kha-zi-kim ba;

V'tom-khe-ha M'-u-shar.

Rabbi Solomon ibn Gabirol

The world is a tree and human beings its fruit.

Babylonian Talmud, Berakhot 35a

It is forbidden to enjoy anything in this world without a bracha (blessing).

Baal Shem Tov

Trees and plants have a language of their own.