

משנה ביכורים א

יש מביאים ביכורים וקורין, מביאים ולא קורין, ויש שאינן מביאין. ...

אלו מביאים ולא קורין: הגר מביא ואינו קורא שאינו יכול לומר "אשר נשבע ה' לאבותינו לתת לנו" (דברים כו, ג). ואם היתה אמו מישראל, מביא וקורא. וכשהוא מתפלל בינו לבין עצמו, אומר אלהי אבות ישראל וכשהוא מתפלל בבית הכנסת אומר אלהי אבותיכם. אם היתה אמו מישראל אומר אלהי אבותינו.

There are some who bring *bikkurim* and recite the declaration; others who only bring, but do not recite; and there are some who do not bring. ...

These bring but do not recite: The convert, since he cannot say: "Which the Lord has sworn to *our* ancestors, to give to us" (Deuteronomy 26:3). If his mother was an Israelite, then he brings *bikkurim* and recites. When he prays privately, he says: "God of the fathers of Israel," but when he is in the synagogue, he should say: "The God of *your* ancestors." But if his mother was an Israelite, he says: "The God of *our* ancestors.

ירושלמי ביכורים א, ד

תני בשם רבי יהודה: "גר עצמו מביא וקורא." מה טעם? "כי אב המון גוים נתתיך" (בראשית יז) – לשעבר היית אב לארם, ועכשיו מכאן ואילך אתה אב לכל הגוים. רבי יהושע בן לוי אמר "הלכה כרבי יהודה". אתא עובדא קומי דרבי אבהו והורי כרבי יהודה.

It was taught in the name of R. Judah: "A convert themselves brings and recites." What is the reason? "For I have made you the father of many nations" (Genesis 17) – in the past you were the father of Aram, but from now on you are the father of all the nations. R. Joshua b. Levi said, "The law is like R. Judah." A case came before R. Abbahu and he taught like R. Judah.

Maimonides Responsum to Obadiah the Ger (תשובות הרמב"ם), ed. Blau, no. 293)

Thus said Moses the son of Rabbi Maimon of Spain—may mention of this righteous man bring blessing—who was among those exiled from Jerusalem:

We have received the inquiries of our teacher and master Obadiah, the wise and discerning proselyte – may the Lord recompense his actions fully, and may his reward be complete from the Lord, God of Israel, beneath whose wings he has come to rest. You have inquired concerning the blessings and prayers when you recite them in private or with the congregation: Should you say “Our God and God of *our ancestors*,” “The One who has sanctified *us* through His commandments and commanded *us*,” “The One who has distinguished *us*,” “The One who has chosen *us*,” “[the land] that You gave as an inheritance to *our ancestors*,” “You who brought *us* forth from the land of Egypt,” “The One who performed miracles for our ancestors,” and other such phrases.

You should say all this in the prescribed fashion. Change nothing; rather, it is appropriate that you recite the blessings and prayers just as they are recited by those born as Jews, both when you are engaged in private prayer and when you are serving as the prayer leader.

The basis for this is that Abraham our Father taught the masses, enlightened them, and made known to them doctrinal truth [i.e. monotheism] and [the fact of] God’s unity. He rejected idolatry and abolished its practices, and he gathered many under the wings of the Divine Presence, and taught them and instructed them and commanded his own children and the members of his household after him, to keep the way of the Lord as it says in the Torah, “For I know him that he will command his children and the members of his household after him, to keep the way of the Lord, etc.” (Genesis 18:19).

Therefore, throughout the generations, whoever converts to Judaism and whoever confesses the unity of the Divine Name, as it is prescribed in the Torah, is counted among the disciples of Abraham our Father, peace be upon him, and they are all members of his household, and he is the one who brought them back to the good ways. Just as he brought back the members of his own generation with his speech and with his teaching, so he brought back all those who would convert in the future through his testament that he left for his children and his household after him.

Therefore Abraham our Father, peace be upon him, is the father to all his *kosher* descendants who go in his paths, and father to all his disciples and to all converts who convert.

Therefore, you shall pray, “Our God and God of our ancestors,” because Abraham, peace be upon him, is your father, and you can say, “that You gave as an inheritance to *our ancestors*,” because God gave the land to Abraham, as it says, “Rise and walk throughout the land, to its length and its width, for I give it to you.

On the other hand, [regarding] “who brought us out of Egypt” and “who performed miracles for our ancestors,” if you wanted to change them and say, “who brought Israel out of Egypt” and “who performed miracles for Israel,” say that. But if you do not change it, nothing at all is lost: once you have entered under the canopy of the *Shekhinah* and attached yourself to us, there is no difference at all between us and you for any matter.

And certainly you should bless, “who chose us” and “who gave to us” and “who bequeathed to us” and “who separated us,” for the Creator, may God be exalted, has indeed chosen you and separated you from the nations and given you the Torah – for the Torah was given to us and to the converts, as it says, “the assembly, one law for you and for the convert, a law forever for your generations: as it is for you, so shall it be for the convert before the Lord. There shall be one instruction (Torah) and one law for you and for the convert who dwells among you” (Numbers 15:15-16).

Know that our ancestors who left Egypt, most of them were idolaters in Egypt who mixed with the non-Jews and learned their ways, until God sent Moses our Teacher, p.b.u.h., master of all the prophets, and he separated us from the nations and brought us under the wings of the *Shekhinah* –us and all the converts, and gave us all a unified Law.

Your lineage should not be a light matter in your eyes. If we trace our lineage back to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, your trace yours back to the One who Spoke and the world came into being. It is thus explicit in Isaiah (44:5): “One shall say, “I am the Lord’s, and another shall call in the name of Jacob.”

All that we wrote to you with regard to blessings, that you should not change, there is proof from tractate Bikkurim, where we learned: “The convert brings and does not recite, for he cannot say ‘which the Lord swore to our ancestors to give us’. And when he prays alone, he says, ‘Our God and the God of the ancestors of Israel’. And when he prays in the synagogue, he says, ‘Our God and the God of our ancestors’.”

This is the view stated anonymously in the mishnah. It belongs to Rabbi Meir, but it is not the halakhah, as is explained in the Jerusalem Talmud: “There we said, It was taught in the name of Rabbi Judah, a convert himself brings [*bikkurim*] and recites. What is the reason? ‘For I have made you father to many nations’: in the past you were father to a person; from here on in you are father to all of humanity. Rabbi Joshua ben Levi said, the *halakhah* is in accordance with Rabbi Judah. A case came before Rabbi Abbahu, and he taught in accordance with Rabbi Judah.”

So it was clarified to you that you should say “which the Lord swore to give to us,” and that Abraham is father to you and to you and to all the righteous who were instructed to go in his way. And the same is true for the rest of the blessings and the prayers: you should not change anything.

Thus wrote Moses son of Maimon of blessed memory.

פסקי התוספות בבא בתרא פרק ה, סימן רלב, ד"ה למעוטי

גר מביא ואינו קורא. ר"ת לא הניח לגרים לברך ברכת המזון דתנן כשמתפלל אומר אלהי אבות ישראל ובבית הכנסת אומר אלהי אבותיכם ואם אמו מישראל אומר אלהי אבותינו ור"י פירש דלא קי"ל הכי אלא גר מביא וקורא ואומר אלהי אבותינו אך אינו אומר נתת לנו אלמא גרים בני חובה.

חידושי הרשב"א, בבא בתרא, פא, ע"א

הא דאמרינן דאדמת הגר מימעטא מאדמתך, היינו משום דגר עצמו פטור וכמו שאמרנו דתנן גר מביא ואינו קורא שאינו יכול לומר אשר נשבעת לאבותינו לתת לנו ...

ומיהו איכא מאן דאמר דאין הלכה כן אלא כל הגרים מביאין וקורין ואפי' אין אמו מישראל, דגרסי' התם בירושלמי: תני בשם ר' יהודה גר עצמו מביא וקורא ...

ולפי זה אף כשהוא מתפלל, בין עם הצבור או בינו לבין עצמו, אומר "אבותינו", וכן בברכת המזון. וא"ת אכתי איך יאמר ארמי אובד אבי, י"ל דשלשת האבות הן הן אבות כל העולם, וא"ת עוד והא כתיב לתת לנו, י"ל דכיון שהן כבני האבות ראויין היו ליטול חלק בארץ אלא שליוצאי מצרים נתחלקה הארץ והגרים הרי הם כטפלים.