Rabbi Nahman once asked Rabbi Isaac to bless him as they were saying goodbye. Rabbi Isaac replied: "Let me give you a parable. A man traveled a long way in the desert. He felt hungry, weary and thirsty, when suddenly he came upon a tree filled with sweet fruits, covered with branches that provided delightful shade, and watered by a brook that flowed nearby. "The man rested in the tree's shade, ate of its fruits, and drank its water.

When he was about to leave, he turned to the tree and said: "O tree, beautiful tree, with what shall I bless you? Shall I wish that your shade be pleasant? It is already pleasant. Shall I say that your fruits should be sweet? They are sweet. Shall I ask that a brook flow by you? A brook does flow by you. Therefore I will bless you this way: May it be God's will that all the shoots taken from you be just like you.' "So it is with you," Rabbi Isaac said to Rabbi Nahman. "What can I wish you? Shall I wish you learning? You have learning. Wealth? You have wealth. Children? You have children. "Therefore I say: May it be God's will that all of your offspring be like you."

- - *Babylon Talmud, tractate Ta'anit, pages 5b-6a*

Mikor HaHayim, Source of all life, please bless the fruits of our labors this evening, and in the year to come. May it be your will Adonai, that our congregation that has been so blessed in this past year by the leadership of our president Bob Morganstern, by diligent work of our board of Trustees, by the creative, compassionate and dedicated efforts of our clergy, educator and staff, continue to be blessed in the year ahead. Just as Rabbi Isaac blessed Rabbi Nahman, so too may the outcomes of our work this evening lead to more and greater and more sacred work in the future, for our congregation, our community and for each other.