

Birkat Levanah, New Moon Blessing¹

And we go round and round and round
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A sliver, a quarter, a half and full light
Revealing yourself in the darkness of night
This is the cycle the rhythm of time
Days turn to weeks into months into years
And we go round...

A sliver, a quarter, a half and full heart
Revealing the mysteries that set us apart
Earth sleeps in the winter, awakening spring
Light kisses the summer igniting the fall
And we go round...

A sliver, a quarter, a half and then whole
Renewed by your presence, touching the soul
It is new, it is ours, we see it again
Hachodesh hazeh hodesh lahen²
And we go round...

Nisan, Iyar, Sivan, Tammuz,
Av, Elul, Tishre, Cheshvan,
Kislev, Tevet, Sh'vat, Adar
Bruchah ha-mekadeshet kol eit³
And we go round...

¹ Lyrics by Debbie Friedman and Rabbi Tamara Cohen; music by Debbie Friedman

² "This month is your month"

³ "Blessed is She who renews each season."

Kavanah for the Sh'ma

Let the whisper of the Infinite
Enter the secret chamber of your heart.
Yearning is a gift -
It pierces
The shell you build around who you
truly are.

The Source of kindness
And the Source of justice
Are, in truth,
One Source,
The only one,
The Source of love.

There is no other,
No otherness;
All that has been, all that is, and all that
shall be,
All comes from One and all is One.⁴

⁴ Alexander Massey, "A New Shema" (excerpt) <https://www.ritualwell.org/ritual/new-shema>

V'ahavtas

So you shall love what is holy
with all your courage, with all your
passion
with all your strength.

Let the words that have come down
shine in our words and our actions.
We must teach our children to know
and understand them.

We must speak about what is good
and holy within our homes
when we are working, when we are at
play,
when we lie down and when we get up.
Let the work of our hands speak of
goodness.
Let it run in our blood
and glow from our doors and windows.

We should love ourselves, for we are of
God.
We should love our neighbors as
ourselves.
We should love the stranger, for we
were once strangers in the land of Egypt
and have been strangers in all the lands
of the world since.

Let love fill our hearts with its clear
precious water.
Heaven and earth observe how we
cherish or spoil our world.

Heaven and earth watch whether we
choose life or choose death.
We must choose life so our children's
children may live.

Be quiet and listen to the still small
voice within that speaks in love.
Open to that voice, hear it, heed it and
work for life.
Let us remember and strive to be good.
Let us remember to find what is holy
within and without.