



Akdamus

.by Rabbi Meir ben Rabbi Yitzchak, Worms, Germany (d. 1096)

1. Before I begin to read the Words (The Ten Commandments),
I will ask permission,
Of the One Whose might is such that –
Even if all the heavens were parchment,
And if all the forests were pens,
And if all the seas were ink,
And if all people in the world were scribes,
It would be impossible to record
the Greatness of the Creator,
Who created the world with a soft utterance,
And with a single letter, the letter “heh,”
The lightest of the letters.
2. And Angels of Heaven of all kinds,
All full of fear and reverence of their Master,
Have permission to praise him only at set times,
Some once in seven years, others once and no more,
3. How beloved is Israel!
For the Holy One leaves the Angels on High,
To take the People of Israel as His lot –
And they make Him their King,
And declare, “Holy! Holy! Holy!”
Twice a day, morning and evening –
4. And all His desire is that His chosen people
Will study His Torah and pray to Him
For they are inscribed in His Tefillin,
“Who is like Your People, Israel,
One nation in the World!”
5. Thus it is the will of the Holy One,
That I speak in praise of Israel,
And though all the nations come and ask,
Who can it Be, for Whom you give up your lives,
O most beautiful of the nations?
But come with us,
And we’ll satisfy all your desires!

6. And Israel responds with wisdom,
Only a bit of the truth do they reveal,
What is your greatness, say they to the nations,
Compared to the reward that He has in store for us!
And when He sheds upon us His great light,
While you go, then are destroyed in darkness!
7. Jerusalem will be rebuilt!
The Exiles will return,
The gates of Gan Eden will re-open,
And all their brilliance will be revealed to us –
We will enter those gates and take pleasure,
In the radiance of the Divine Presence,
Whom we will point to, and say –
Here is our God, in Whom we hoped,
He will save us!
8. And each righteous one under his canopy will sit,
In the Sukkah made from the skin of Leviathan,
And in the future
He will make a dance for the righteous ones,
And a banquet in Paradise,
From that Great Fish and the Wild Ox,
And from the wine preserved from the Creation –
Happy are those who believe and hope and
Never abandon their faith forever!
9. Now you my listeners,
When you hear your praise in this song,
Be strong in your faith!
And you will merit to sit in the company
Of the holy and righteous ones
In the World-to-Come!
If you've listened well to my words,
Which were uttered in holy majesty –
Great is our God!
In the beginning and at the end
He desired and chose us
And He gave us the Torah.