

# מַה-טוֹב

## Checklist:

- Reading: read *mah tovu* without error
- Comprehension: Answer the questions in full, well thought out sentences
- Vocabulary: Do the root words exercises.

When you have completed the checklist, ask your teacher to test you to see if you are ready to move on to the next prayer.

Mah Tov

מה-טבו אהליך יעקב משכנותיך ישראל  
ואני ברב חסדך אבוא ביתך אשתחווה אל-היכל קדשך  
ביראתך  
י אהבתי מעון ביתך ומקום משכון כבודך  
ואני אשתחווה ואכרעה אברכה לפני יי עשי  
ואני תפילתי לך יי עת רצון אלהים ברב-חסדך עניי באמת  
ישעך

How good are your tents, O Jacob, your dwelling places, O Israel.

I, through Your abundant love, enter your house; I bow down in awe at Your holy temple.

Adonai, I love Your temple abode, the dwelling-place of Your glory.

I will humbly bow down low before Adonai, my Maker.

As for me, may my prayer come to You, Adonai, at a favorable time. O God, in Your abundant faithfulness, answer me with Your sure deliverance.

### Comprehension

Where do you think this prayer comes from? Do you think it all comes from the same place? If not, how many different sources do you think are in this prayer?

The line "How good are your tents, O Jacob, your dwelling places, O Israel" was spoken by Balak as he tried to curse the Israelites. Does that sound like a curse? Try to image where Balak was when he said this. Why do you think his curse came out in these words?

Where would you guess this prayer occurs in the service (beginning, middle, end)? Why do you think that?

## Vocabulary

The word **משכן** comes up twice in the prayer, once in the first paragraph (this version has extra letters), and once in the third paragraph. What do you think this word means?

**משכן** is also the word for the Tabernacle (the portable ark the Jews carried through the desert). Does that change your thought about the meaning of the word you answered above? How are those definitions related?

A number of Hebrew words are repeated throughout this prayer in different paragraphs. Find at least 3 words that are repeated more than once in the prayer and write them below, along with which paragraphs you found them in. (Adonai does not count as one of those words)