

THE GREAT WENCHOSTER BIBLE
Deuteronomy 26: 1-11

1. And it shall be, when thou art come in unto the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee for an inheritance, even though there be no Deed of Conveyance or Declaration of a Gift, and possessest it against all protesting, which may involve expensive lawyers, and dwellest therein and build houses, taverns, barns, and sundry buildings of indeterminate purpose, take care to lay foundations upon the rock and not sand, otherwise they shall be shaken and fall with an almighty crash. In centuries to come someone will tell a story about this.
2. Now pay attention. Thou shalt take of the first of all the fruit of the earth, tubers and roots (but not the potatoes which I have planted in another hemisphere and which thou shalt not eat for several generations,) grapes and pomegranates, and thy wife's melons, which thou shalt bring of thy land that the LORD thy God giveth thee, subject to what I have said beforehand, and shalt put it in a basket, a big one, decorated with fig leaves and nice raffia work, and an handle wherewith thou mayest grip tightly, and shalt go unto the place which the LORD thy God shall choose to place his name there. And thou shalt know it for there shall be a big sign outside saying, This is the Lord's House.
3. And thou shalt go unto the priest that shall be in those days, or his curate, or even his non-stipendiary, and say unto him, I profess this day unto the LORD thy God, that I am come unto the country which the LORD sware unto our fathers for to give us, and my arrival was not without travail and dust and thirst, for the transport system hereabouts is lacking in regularity. And why do camels always come in threes?
4. And the priest shall take the basket out of thine hand, gripping the aforementioned handle tightly, and thou shalt let it go without protest, and he shall set it down before the altar of the LORD thy God, making sure that it obscure not the floral arrangements nor upset the candlesticks, not the slightly effete acolytes.
5. And thou shalt speak and say before the LORD thy God, A Syrian ready to perish was my father, and his name is recorded in our scrolls, and he went down into Egypt, and sojourned there with a few – and had quite a few, actually - and marvelled at the pyramids and the temples, but worshipped not their gods, and became there a nation, great, mighty, and populous, for there was much begetting which will come to be written down somewhere one day:
6. And the Egyptians evil entreated us, and afflicted us, and said rude words about us, and made fun of our organs, and laid upon us hard bondage and did cause taxes to be increased and brick production doubled, and did set a tariff upon straw so that we were in dire straits. They wanted money for nothing and their bricks for free.
7. And when we cried unto the LORD God of our fathers, the LORD heard our voice for it was loud and annoyingly repetitive, and looked on our affliction, and our labour, and our oppression, and our tattered clothing and the lack of variety and roughage in our diet and the scarcity of beer,
8. And the LORD brought us forth out of Egypt with a mighty hand, and with an outstretched arm, and with much shewing of the legs and thundering from his bowels, and with great terribleness, and with signs, and with wonders and a stench:

9. And he hath brought us into this place, and hath given us this land despite it being already occupied, even a land that floweth with milk and honey, which maketh our sandals to become soggy and the hems of our garments exceeding sticky.
10. And now, behold, I have brought the firstfruits of the land, over there, in that raffia basket, which thou, O LORD, hast given me. And thou shalt set it before the LORD thy God, and worship before the LORD thy God, and shall leave it there, and the priest shall dispose of it as seemeth best to him, maybe into his own pantry:
11. And thou shalt rejoice in every good thing which the LORD thy God hath given unto thee, the wine and the mead and the melons that our womenfolk have proffered, and unto thine house with the floor coverings and the mats and curtains, thou, and the Levite, whoever he is, and the stranger that is among you who arrived unexpectedly and did seek shelter and food and drink. And thou shalt dispense of thy bounty unto those that ask. And there was something about potatoes, but we know not what they are.