

# Invitation to **Piyut**



הזמנה לפיוט

**North America**



## 18 PIYUTIM & MIZMORIM

ח"י פיוטים ומזמורים

Heshvan/Kislev 5771 - November 2010

# Invitation to **Piyut North America**

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Recorded at **B'nai Jeshurun**, New York City, July 2010

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## *Piyut – the Soundtrack of Jewish life*

*Piyut is a chain of tradition of Jewish culture on every level. It is the melody of the heart and the longing for all of the good that lies within the Jewish world and its many communities...*

(Ephraim Hazan)

Where in that chain are we today?

What is the story beyond the words and the music that have been shared around the Jewish world for hundreds of years?

The piyut began as sacred poetry adorning the prayers of the individual and the community, as well as religious rituals. Over the years the piyut, a living creative work that is constantly renewed, widened its scope and reached out beyond the range of formal prayer.

*Piyut is a prayer that expresses the full range of emotions relating to the divine: praise, thanks, joy, despair, jealousy, anger, longing, and awe...*

(Haviva Pedaya)

There are piyutim that follow the yearly cycle: Shabbat songs and piyutim for holy days and festive occasions; songs of supplication; and piyutim that follow the human life cycle: from birth - piyutim for Brit-milah and for the birth of a daughter - through Bar and Bat Mitzvah, to marriage, and back to the beginning. The piyutim are made for those moments when we seek to be present and alive, and which we wish to hold on to, to encounter meaning, to experience a connection to God, to our heritage, our family, our community and our people.

And it is also an opportunity to meet the multicultural nature of Jewish identity, to go deeper into the roots of our heritage in order to expand our expression of prayer.

*Hazmanah Le-Piyut - Israel*, founded in 2005, is one of the leading projects in making the world of piyut accessible and alive. In connection to our main effort – creating the web site [www.piyut.org.il](http://www.piyut.org.il) we have promoted and taken part in many different projects and activities in the fields of education and culture.

Music is a central and essential component of prayer at *B'nai Jeshurun in New York City* ([www.bj.org](http://www.bj.org)). For the past few years *BJ* has been exploring and incorporating melodies and piyutim from different parts of the Jewish world in collaboration with *Hazmanah Le-Piyut - Israel* ([www.piyut.org.il](http://www.piyut.org.il)). This collaboration has expanded *BJ's* musical horizons, and it has been a productive and enriching experience. We now wish to share our experience with synagogues and minyanim throughout North America. Our goal is to bring into our synagogues, schools and communities the beauty and depth of piyutim from around the Jewish world, with an emphasis on the Sephardic and Mizrahi traditions, which have been largely overlooked.

We are grateful for the generous support of the Charles H. Revson and Avi Chai foundations, as well as for their guidance and advice.

We are happy that you have joined us in this journey and we look forward to our exploring together this wonder-full trove of Jewish creativity.

Rabbi J. Rolando Matalon, *B'nai Jeshurun*

Yair Harel, *Hazmanah Le-Piyut - Israel*

Heshvan/Kislev 5771- November 2010

# 18 PIYUTIM & MIZMORIM

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3. **Adon Olam** אדון עולם \_\_\_\_\_ 16  
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# 1

## ידיד נפש ר' אלעזר אזכרי

צפת, המאה ה-16

ידיד נפש אב הרחמן	משוך עבדך אל רצונך
ירויץ עבדך כמו איל	ישתחנה מול הדרך
כי יערב לו ידידותך	מנפת צוף וכל טעם
הדור נאה זיו העולם	נפשי חולת אהבתך
אנא א-ל נא רפא נא לה	בהראות לה נעם זיוך
אז תתחזק ותתרפא	והיתה לה שפחת עולם
ותיק יהמו רחמיך	וחוסה נא על בן אוהבך
כי זה כמה נכסף נכסף	לראות בתפארת עניך
אנא א-לי מחמד לבי	חוששה נא ואל תתעלם
הגלה נא ופרש חביב	עלי את סבת שלומך
תאיר ארץ מכבודך	נגילה ונשמחה בך
מהר אהוב כי בא מועד	והצני פימי עולם







## *Yedid Nefesh - Beloved of My Soul*

R. Elazar Azkari, Tzfat, 16<sup>th</sup> Century

Beloved of my soul, Merciful Father	draw your servant after your will
Your servant would run swift as a deer	to kneel before Your splendor
For Your love is sweeter to him	than honey nectar and all pleasing savor
Exalted Glorious Beautiful Light of the World	my soul is love-sick for You
Please, My God, please heal her	by showing her the beauty of Your radiance
Then she will be strengthened and healed	and be Your maidservant forever
Ancient One arouse Your mercy	spare the son of Your beloved friend
For he has a long time longed	to behold the magnificence Your might
Please, My God, My Heart's Delight,	oh come quickly do not forsake me
Reveal Yourself my dearest	and spread over me Your canopy of peace
Let the earth be illuminated with Your glory	let us be delighted and rejoice in You
Make haste my beloved for the time has come	show me Your favor as in the days of old

### ABOUT THE PIYUT

This piyut, which holds a highly respected place among the traditions of Jewish liturgy, was written by R. Elazar Azkari, a philosopher and ethicist who was a major figure among the mystics 16<sup>th</sup> century Tzfat.

The poet himself defined his piyut as “a supplication for union and the desire of love” and it is indeed sung by all communities at times of great emotional and spiritual awakenings, such as the dawn hour, the welcoming of the Shabbat or the third meal of Shabbat .

The poem is imbued with love, longing and emotion and it reflects the sensitive and mystical tendencies of the author.

Another noteworthy fact is that the acrostic is the tetragrammaton, God's ineffable name, and not, as is customary, the author's name. This again reflects the deep spiritual feelings of the author.



## Commentary

The term 'Yedid Nefesh' refers to God, as well as to the individual and the people of Israel. This is exemplified when the prophet Jeremiah voices God's lament over the future when he will leave His people and His Temple: "I will forsake My house, abandoned my inheritance, I will deliver the one I love (yedidut nafshi) into the hands of her enemies". (Jeremiah 12:8).

'Yedid Nefesh' - that is how the poet, whose soul is love sick, calls his beloved, God. In the first line of the poem, there are three references to God: Yedid, Av and Melech – lover, father, king (or master, as the poet calls himself a servant). The people of Israel are God's children and servants. The parent-child relationship represents the natural and unconditional love. For even children who go astray are still their father's children. And their father forgives them because of his love for them. The second relationship is one of complete surrender of the servant to his master. Only through this relationship, through complete surrender to the Master of the universe, is complete freedom achieved. This notion is also expressed in the words of R. Yehuda Halevi: "Servants of time are servants of servants. Only the servant of God is free."

R. Elazar Azkari turns to God as a son would to a merciful father, and as servant of God who wants to entirely devote himself to his creator. He turns to his king, the King of all Kings, and requests that He draw him, his servant, to do His will. Like the beloved in Song of Songs longs for her lover and say to him "Draw me, we will run after thee. The king hath brought me into his chambers" (Song of Songs 1:4). The poet also requests to enter the inner chamber of the King, the highest point, the divine will. Like King David, he requests to reach the source of life and vitality, the knowledge of God: "With you is the source of life, by Your light do we see light. Draw your kindness to those devoted to you, and your righteousness to the upright." (Psalms 36:10-11).

Yarutz avdach kemo ayal - The poet's feet are light as a deer's as he runs towards God. He runs like that very deer whose soul yearns and reaches out to God: "Like a deer yearning for water channels, so my soul years for You God." (Psalms 42:2). And when he merits this, then he kneels and bows, and lowers himself before the greatness and glory of God - yishtachaveh el mul hadarach.







In this poem, the body and soul are intertwined. This is depicted through references to the senses, and the poet's choice of verbs: draw, run, kneel, taste – and it is interesting that R. Elazar Azkari, in his book, “Sefer Haredim”, categorizes the commandments according to the limbs of the body which are obligated to fulfill them: eyes, heart, mouth, hands, legs, etc. We constantly feel the two aspects of desire: the desire for God's physical dwelling place, the Temple, and the spiritual desire for the knowledge of God and closeness to Him.

Ki zeh khamseh nichsof nichsaf, lirot betiferet uzach - Like Jacob, who is identified with the sefirah of Tiferet (beauty/magnificence), who was entirely consumed with longing for his father's house (Genesis 31:30), so the poet longs and yearns for the magnificence, for the house of his father, whether it be the celestial or earthly. It is interesting that in Ezekiel prophecy, which closes his prophecies of rebuke, we find a description of the ruined Temple and the exile in words that are echoed in our poem: “You, O mortal, take note: On the day that I take their stronghold from them, their pride and glory (tiferet), the delight of their eyes and the longing of their souls...” (Ezekiel 24:25).

Higaleh na u'fros haviv, alai et sukkat shelomach - The poet is asking for the rebuilding of the temple and the redemption of these exiled. He asks of God to speed the redemption and not to ignore and hide His face from His people. Only then will there be a canopy of peace spread over the people of Israel, as is stated in the prayer which proceeds the Amidah on Friday night: “Spread over us and Jerusalem your city a canopy of mercy and peace.” The kabbalists established that in saying these words, one should focus on receiving the additional Shabbat soul.

Maher ahuv ki ba moed, vechonenu kimei olam - The poet concludes his poem with the words of David, the anointed king, and of Malachi, the prophet who sealed the era of prophecy of the people of Israel, by saying: “Behold I send Elijah the prophet to you before the coming of the great and awesome day of the Lord.” (Malachi 3:23).

# Yedid Nefesh - Beloved of My Soul

R. Elazar Azkari

Morocco/Algeria

Ye di \_\_\_\_\_ ne fesh \_\_\_\_\_ av ha \_\_\_\_\_ rah ma \_\_\_\_\_

6 answer  
an \_\_\_\_\_ me shoch \_\_\_\_\_ av dach \_\_\_\_\_ el re \_\_\_\_\_ tso na \_\_\_\_\_ ach ai lai \_\_\_\_\_

11 1. 2. 3.  
\_\_\_\_\_ ya Ha dur \_\_\_\_\_ na eh \_\_\_\_\_ ziv ha \_\_\_\_\_ o

17  
lam \_\_\_\_\_ ai lai lai \_\_\_\_\_ Naf shi \_\_\_\_\_ cho lat \_\_\_\_\_

22  
A ha \_\_\_\_\_ va tach \_\_\_\_\_ A na \_\_\_\_\_ el na re

27  
fa \_\_\_\_\_ na la \_\_\_\_\_ be har \_\_\_\_\_ ot la \_\_\_\_\_ no am \_\_\_\_\_ zi

33 1. 2.  
vach \_\_\_\_\_ ai la lai \_\_\_\_\_ Az

Iraq

E half flat  
Ye did ne fesh \_\_\_\_\_ av ha \_\_\_\_\_ rach \_\_\_\_\_ man me

6 E half flat B half flat  
shoch av dach \_\_\_\_\_ el re \_\_\_\_\_ tzo \_\_\_\_\_ nach \_\_\_\_\_ ya rutz av

11 E half flat  
dach \_\_\_\_\_ ke mo a \_\_\_\_\_ yal \_\_\_\_\_ yish ta ha ve \_\_\_\_\_ mul

16  
ha \_\_\_\_\_ da \_\_\_\_\_ rach \_\_\_\_\_





Yedid nefesh av harachaman	meshoch avdach el retzonach
Yarutz avdach kemo ayal	yishtachaveh el mul hadarach
Ki ye'erav lo yedidutach	minofet tzuf vechol ta'am

Hadur na'eh ziv haolam	nafshi cholat ahavatach
Ana el na refa na lah	beharot lah noam zivach
Az titchazek vetitrapeh	vehayta lach shifchat olam

Vatik yehemu rachamecha	vechusa na al ben ahuvach
Ki zeh khameh nichsof nichsaf	lirot betiferet uzach
Ana Eli machmad libi	chusha na ve'al titalam

Higaleh na u'fros haviv	alai et sukkat shelomach
Tair eretz mikevodach	nagila venismecha bach
Maher ahuv ki ba moed	vechonenu kimei olam

# לכו נרננה לה'

## תהלים צה

- א. לכו נרננה לה' נריעה לצור ישענו
- ב. נקדמה פניו בתודה בזמרות נריע לו
- ג. כי א-ל גדול ה' ומלך גדול על כל א-להים
- ד. אשר בידו מחקרי ארץ ותועפת הרים לו
- ה. אשר לו הים והוא עשהו ויבשת ידיו יצרו
- ו. באו נשתחנה ונכרעה נברכה לפני ה' עשנו
- ז. כי הוא א-להינו ואנחנו עם מרעיתו וצאן ידו
- היום אם בקלו תשמעו
- ח. אל תקשו לבבכם כמריבה כיום מסה במדבר
- ט. אשר נסונו אבותיכם בחנוני גם ראו פעלי
- י. ארבעים שנה אקוט בדור ואמר
- עם תעי לבב הם והם לא ידעו דרכי
- יא. אשר נשבעתי באפי אם יבאון אל מנוחתי





## *Lechu Neranena - Come let us sing*

### **Psalms 95**

1. Come, let us sing joyously to the Lord  
raise a shout for our Rock and deliverer;
2. Let us come into His presence with praise;  
let us raise a shout for Him in song!
3. For the Lord is a great God  
the great King of all divine beings
4. In his hand are the depths of the earth  
the peaks of the mountains are His
5. His is the sea, He made it;  
and the land, which His hands fashioned
6. Come, let us bow down and kneel,  
bend the knee before the Lord our maker,
7. For He is our God  
and we are the people He tend, the flock in His care.  
O, if you but heed His charge this day:
8. Do not be stubborn as at Meribah,  
as the day of Massah, in the wilderness,
9. When your fathers put Me to the test,  
tried Me, though they had seen My deeds
10. Forty years I was provoked by that generation  
I thought, "they are a senseless people;  
they would not know My ways."
11. Concerning them I swore in anger  
"they shall never come to My resting-place!"

Translation taken from the JPS Tanakh

### **ABOUT THE MIZMOR**

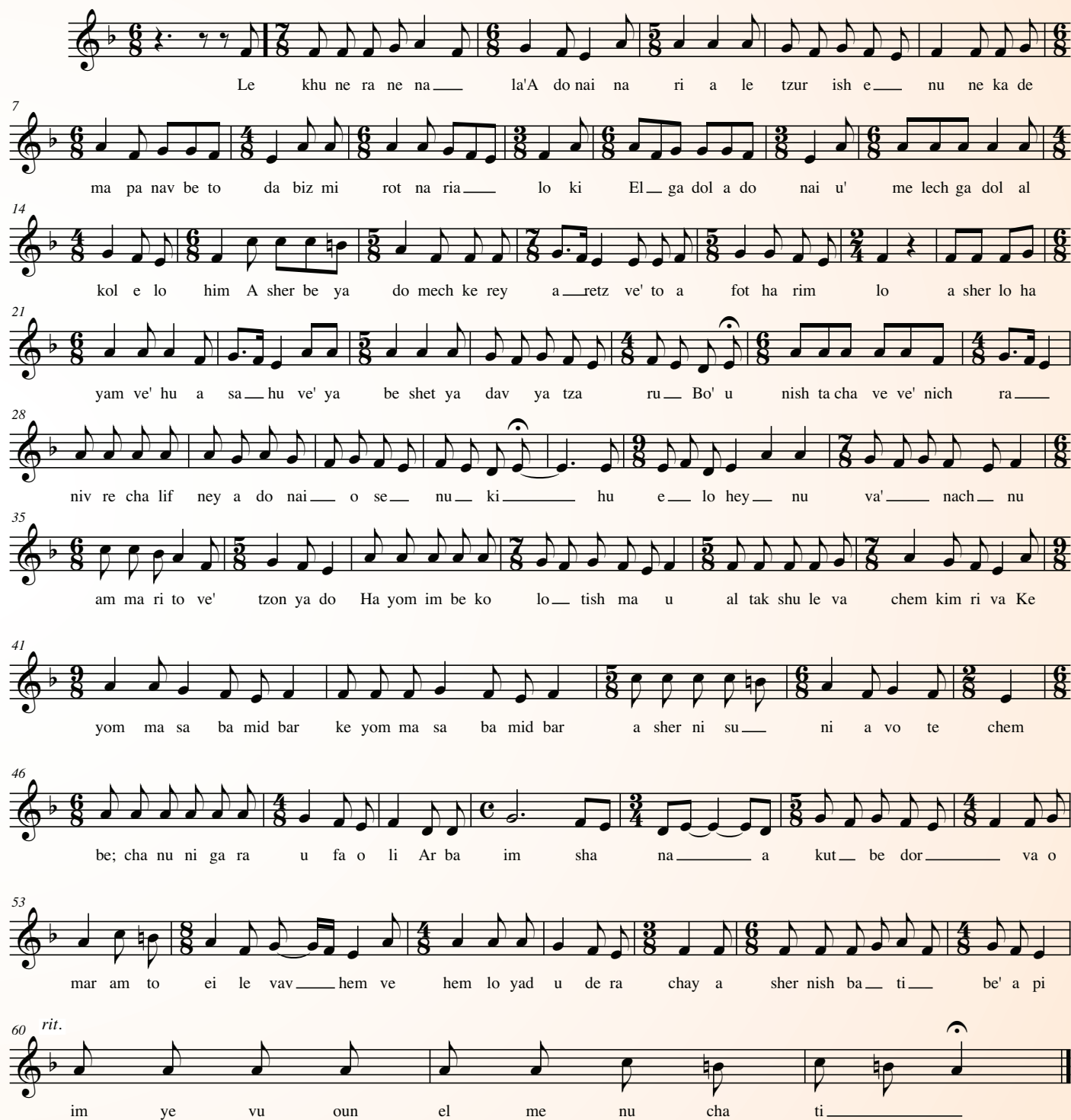
The group of Psalms 92-100 is introduced by the words "A Psalm, a song, for the Sabbath day" (92:1), revolves around the idea of God's sovereignty and might (92:9; 93:1; 94:2; 95:3; 96:4; 97:1; 98:9; 99:1 and 100:3), and concludes with a call to all nation to praise and worship God with joy. The special message conveyed in these psalms secured for them a place of honor in the prayer book. Psalms 92 (Mizmor shir leyom hashabbat) and 93 ( Adonay malach geut lavesh), are the central part of Kabbalat Shabbat, 94 (El nekamot) is the psalm for Wednesday and 100 (Mizmor letoda) is recited every day in the Morning Prayer. The remaining Psalms, 95-99, were included in the prayer as an introduction to the Friday night services in many communities. The idea of God's sovereignty resonates emphatically with Shabbat since only a mighty ruler can allow himself cease completely of all activity, as indeed it is written in the Ten Commandments (Ex. 20:11): "For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth and sea, and all that is in them, and He rested on the seventh day". This is reiterated in the opening of this psalm (95:4): "In His hands are the depths of the earth, the peaks of the mountains are His. His is the sea, He made it; and the land which His hands fashioned".

The psalm is usually chanted by the whole congregation with one of the various tropes of Psalms and serves as a wonderful introduction to the Shabbat prayers.

## Lechu Neranena - Come let us sing

### Psalms 95

Morocco



Le khu ne ra ne na\_\_\_ la'A do nai na ri a le tzur ish e\_\_\_ nu ne ka de

7 ma pa nav be to da biz mi rot na ria\_\_\_ lo ki El\_\_\_ ga dol a do nai u' me lech ga dol al

14 kol e lo him A sher be ya do mech ke rey a\_\_\_retz ve' to a fot ha rim lo a sher lo ha

21 yam ve' hu a sa\_\_\_hu ve' ya be shet ya dav ya tza ru\_\_\_ Bo' u nish ta cha ve ve' nich ra\_\_\_

28 niv re cha lif ney a do nai\_\_\_ o se\_\_\_ nu\_\_\_ ki\_\_\_ hu e\_\_\_ lo hey\_\_\_ nu va'\_\_\_ nach\_\_\_ nu

35 am ma ri to ve' tzon ya do Ha yom im be ko lo\_\_\_ tish ma u al tak shu le va chem kim ri va Ke

41 yom ma sa ba mid bar ke yom ma sa ba mid bar a sher ni su\_\_\_ ni a vo te chem

46 be; cha nu ni ga ra u fa o li Ar ba im sha na\_\_\_ a kut\_\_\_ be dor\_\_\_ va o

53 mar am to ei le vav\_\_\_hem ve hem lo yad u de ra chay a sher nish ba\_\_\_ ti\_\_\_ be' a pi

60 *rit.* im ye vu oun el me nu cha ti\_\_\_







1. Lechu neranena la'Adonay, naria letzur yishenu
2. Nekadma panav betoda, bizmirot naria lo.
3. Ki El gadol Adonay, u'melech gadol al kol Elohim
4. Asher beyado mechkerei aretz, veto'afot harim lo
5. Asher lo hayam vehu asahu, veyabeshet yadav yatzaru
6. Bo'u nishtachaveh venichra'a, nivrecha lifnei Adonay osenu
7. Ki hu Elohenu, va'anachnu am marito vetzon yado, hayom im bekolo tishma'u
8. Al takshu levavchem kimriva, keyom massa bamidbar
9. Asher nisuni avotechem, bechanuni gam ra'u fa'oli
10. Arbaim shana akut bedor vaomar am to'ei levav hem, vehem lo yad'u derachai
11. Asher nishbati be'api, im yevoun el menuchati

## אָדוֹן עוֹלָם

### מַחְבֵּר לֹא יָדוּעַ

בְּטָרָם כָּל יִצִּיר נִבְרָא	אָדוֹן עוֹלָם אֲשֶׁר מֶלֶךְ
אֲזִי מֶלֶךְ שְׁמוֹ נִקְרָא	לַעֲת נַעֲשֶׂה בְּחִפְצוֹ כָּל
לְבָדּוֹ יְמֶלֶךְ נוֹרָא	וְאַחֲרֵי כָּכָל הַכָּל
וְהוּא יְהִיָּה בְּתַפְאָרָה	וְהוּא הִיָּה וְהוּא הִנֵּה
לְהַמְשִׁיל לוֹ לְהַחֲבִירָה	וְהוּא אֶחָד וְאֵין שֵׁנִי
וְלוֹ הָעֵז וְהַמְשָׁרָה	בְּלִי רֵאשִׁית בְּלִי תַכְלִית
בְּלִי שְׁנוּי וְתַמּוּרָה	[בְּלִי עֶרְךָ בְּלִי דְמִיּוֹן
גָּדֹל כֹּחַ וּגְבוּרָה]	בְּלִי חֲבוּר בְּלִי פְרוּד
וְצוּר חֲבָלִי בַּעֲת צָרָה	וְהוּא אֵלִי וְחִי גּוֹאֲלִי
מִנֵּת כּוֹסֵי בְּיוֹם אֶקְרָא	וְהוּא נָסִי וּמְנוּס לִי
וְהוּא צוֹפֶה וְהוּא עֹזְרָה]	[וְהוּא רוֹפֵא וְהוּא מְרַפֵּא
בַּעֲת אִישָׁן וְאַעִּירָה	בְּיָדּוֹ אֶפְקִיד רוּחִי
אֲדַנִּי לִי וְלֹא אֵירָא	וְעַם רוּחִי גְּנוּיָתִי
מְשִׁיחֵנוּ יִשְׁלַח מְהֵרָה	[בְּמִקְדָּשׁוֹ תִּגַּל נִפְשִׁי
אָמֵן אָמֵן שֵׁם הַנוֹרָא]	וְאֵז נִשְׁיֵר בְּבֵית קִדְשִׁי





## *Adon Olam - Lord of the World*

### **Anonymus**

Lord of the world, who reigned before	any creature came to be
By His will all things were made,	and then He was called our King
And when all has ceased to exist,	He alone, revered, will reign
He has been, and still He is,	and in His majesty He will be
He is One—there is no other	who might ever approach His grandeur
Without beginning, and without end,	strength and dominion belong to Him
<i>Beyond imagining, beyond measure,</i>	<i>unchanging and beyond compare</i>
<i>Set apart, yet utterly whole,</i>	<i>and wondrous in His might and power</i>
He is my God, my Redeemer lives,	He is a Rock in my hour of despair
He is my banner, He is my refuge,	He is my sustenance when I call
<i>He is the healer and He is the balm,</i>	<i>He keeps watch and comes to my aid</i>
And in His hand I place my soul	when I sleep and when I wake
As my spirit dwells in my body,	God is with me—I will not fear
<i>In His abode my soul will rejoice,</i>	<i>for our redeemer is on his way</i>
<i>And in the Temple on that day</i>	<i>we will sing the awesome Name</i>

The italicized verses are found in the Babylonian tradition of Adon Olam

### **ABOUT THE PIYUT**

This is one of the more ancient piyutim amongst those widely known and sung throughout the communities of Israel. Some attribute this piyut to R. Shlomo Ibn Gabirol (The Rashbag), although there is no solid proof that he is the author. It is customary to sing this piyut before morning prayers.

Medieval rabbis regarded this poem with high esteem. Rabbi Yehudah the Pious of Germany wrote: “*I guarantee that the prayers of one who says Adon Olam with attention are heard, and that Satan shall not act against his prayers... some say that even the evil inclination within him will reside and not entice him*” (Sha’arei Tfilah 308:10b.)

The reason for this reverential approach can be attributed to the rare combination between some of the most important principles of faith and the sense of natural, emotional proclivity to the Divine.

## Adon Olam - Lord of the World

Anonymus

Algeria



Algeria musical score in G minor, common time. The melody is written on a single staff. The lyrics are: A don o-la m a sher malach be te rem kol ye tzir niv ra. The score includes measure numbers 1, 5, 9, and 13.

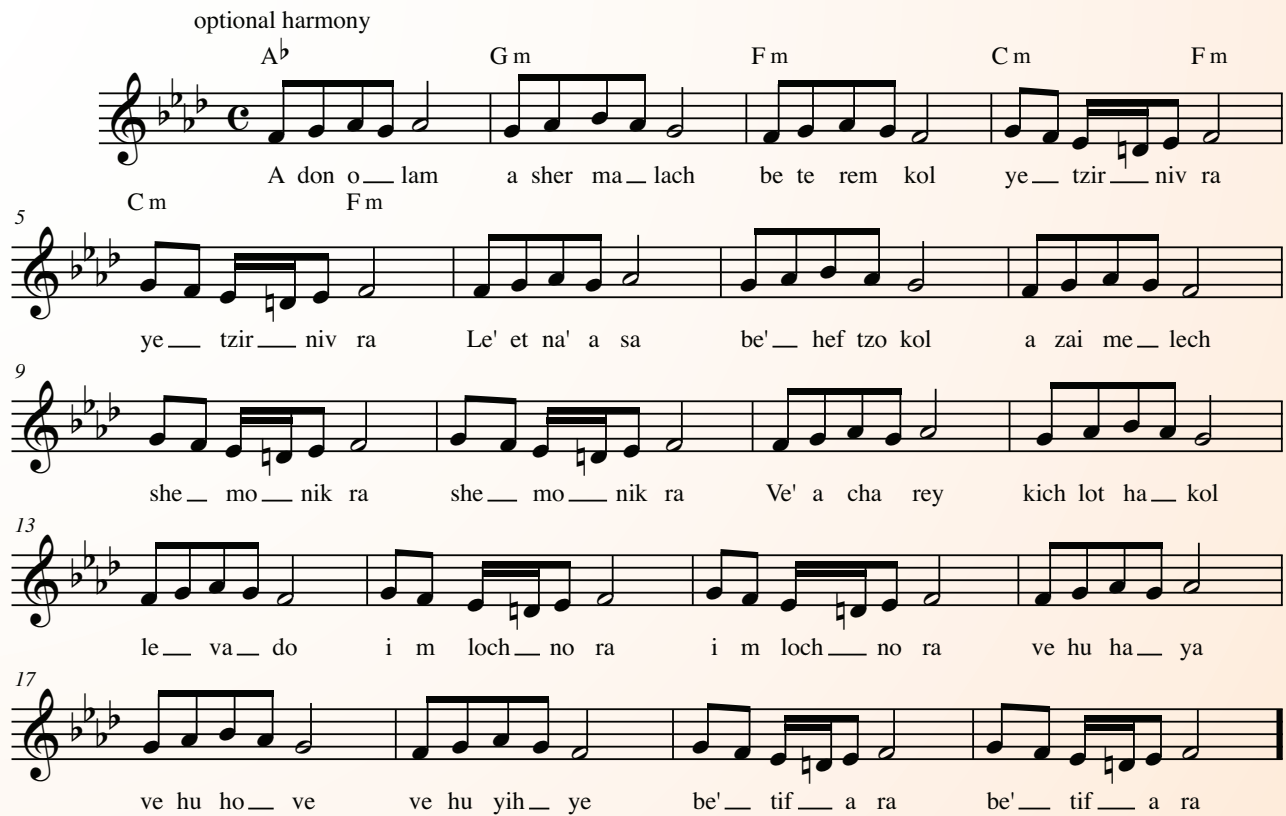
A don o-la m a sher malach be te rem kol ye tzir niv ra

5 Le' et na' asa be chef tzo kol a zai me le ech she mo nik ra

9 Ve' a cha rey kich lot ha kol le va do yim loch no ra

13 Ve hu ha ya ve hu ho ve ve hu yih' yeh be tif a ra

Yemen



Yemen musical score in G minor, common time. The melody is written on a single staff. The lyrics are: A don o lam a sher ma lach be te rem kol ye tzir niv ra. The score includes measure numbers 1, 5, 9, 13, and 17. Chords are indicated above the staff: A b, G m, F m, C m, F m, C m, F m.

optional harmony

A b G m F m C m F m

A don o lam a sher ma lach be te rem kol ye tzir niv ra

5 ye tzir niv ra Le' et na' a sa be' hef tzo kol a zai me lech

9 she mo nik ra she mo nik ra Ve' a cha rey kich lot ha kol

13 le va do i m loch no ra i m loch no ra ve hu ha ya

17 ve hu ho ve ve hu yih ye be' tif a ra be' tif a ra



Iraq (Maqam Higaz)



A don o lam a sher ma la ch be

6 te rem kol ye tzir niv ra Le' et na'a

11 sah be chef tzo kol a zai me le ch she

16 Variation of the melodic line  
mo nik ra

22 etc...

Adon olam asher malach	beterem kol yetzir nivra
Le'et na'asah becheftzo kol	azai melech shemo nikra
Ve'acharei kichlot hakol	levado yimloch nora
Vehu haya vehu hoveh	vehu yih'yeh betifara
Vehu echad ve'eyn sheni	lehamshil lo lehachbira
Beli reshit beli tachlit	velo ha'oz vehamisra
Beli erech beli dimyon	beli shinuy u'tmura
Beli chibur beli perud	gedol koach u'gevura
Vehu Eli vechai go'ali	vetzur chevli be'et tzara
Vehu nisi umanos li	menat kosi beyom ekra
Vehu rofeh vehu marpeh	vehu tzofeh vehu ezra
Beyado afkid ruchi	be'et ishan ve'a'ira
Ve'im ruchi geviyati	Adonay li velo ira
Bemikdasho tagel nafshi	meshichenu yishlach meherah
Ve'az nashir beveit kodshi	amen amen shem hanora

## לשוני כוננת

מחבר לא ידוע

לְשׁוֹנִי כוֹנֵנֶת      אֶ-לֹהֵי וַתְּבַחֲרִי  
בְּשִׁירִים וְשִׁמְתִּי      בְּפִי טוֹב מִמֶּסְחָר

וְנִגְדָּדְךָ כוֹנֵנֶת      צָעַדִי מִמְלֶשֶׁחַר  
וְלִי גֵרוֹן תַּתֶּה      בְּקֶרְאִי לֹא נָחַר

וַיִּצְרֵי הַלְבֵּנֶת      כְּמוֹ צֶמֶר צַחַר  
וְלָכֵן לֹא שָׁתָה      לִבִּי בִּי סִחְרָחַר

הָיָה סִתְרִי עֲתָה      בְּאֶתְמוֹל וּכְמָחָר  
וּמִגִּנִּי אֲתָה      אֶ-לֹהֵי אֵל תֵּאֲחָר







## *Leshoni Konanta - My Tongue You have Fashioned*

**Anonymus**

My tongue You have fashioned Songs that you have placed	My Lord, and have chosen in my mouth, they are better than any other discourse
And my footsteps you have directed And you have given me a throat	towards you from the first that has not gone dry from calling out to you
And you have purified my <i>Yetzer</i> Therefore my heart did not stray	to be as white as wool nor grow dizzy within me
Be now my protector You are my shield	as yesterday and tomorrow My Lord, do not delay

### **ABOUT THE PIYUT**

This piyut is attributed to R. Shelomo ibn Gabirol and is sung in the Sephardic communities as part of the Request for Dew and the Request for Rain, which are recited respectively on Passover and Shemini Atzeret. Although it has become part of these two prayers which praise God for maintaining the natural order and plead with Him to bring forth the blessing of rain and dew, the piyut itself contains no reference to these themes. It was probably written as a Reshut, (permission) a genre of poems in which the poet or the cantor asks for permission to pray or introduces ornamentally a work of established liturgy such as the Keddushah or Nishmat Kol Hay.

In this poem the author recognizes the great talent he has, but at the same time acknowledges God as the one who granted him that talent, and commits himself to use it to praise God. The poem describes a very personal and intimate relationship between the poet and God and illuminates the importance of poetry in particular and aesthetics in general as part of the religious experience.

## *Leshoni Konanta - My Tongue You have Fashioned*

Anonymus

Sfarad/Ladino

Le sho ni ko na n ta E lo

5 hay va ti v char be shi rim she

9 sam ta be fi tov mi mis char ve ne

Leshoni konanta      Elohai vativchar  
Beshirim she'samta      befi tov mimischar

Venegdach konanta      tze'adai mimishchar  
Veli garon tata      bekoree lo nichar

Veyitzri hilibanta      kemo tzemer tzachar  
Velachen lo shata      levavi bi secharchar

Heyeh sitri ata      ke'etmol u'chmachar  
U'magini ata      Elohai al te'achar





## שחר אבקשך ר' שלמה אבן גבירול

ספרד, המאה ה-11

שחר אבקשך צורִי ומשגִּבִּי      אֶעֱרֹךְ לִפְנֵיךָ שְׁחָרִי וְגַם עֶרְבִי  
לִפְנֵי גִדְלָתְךָ אֶעֱמִד וְאֶבְהֵל      כִּי עֵינֶיךָ תִּרְאֶה כָּל מַחֲשָׁבוֹת לִבִּי  
מִה זֶה אֲשֶׁר יוֹכֵל הַלֵּב וְהַלְשׁוֹן      לַעֲשׂוֹת וּמִה כֹּחַ רוּחִי בְּתוֹךְ קֶרֶבִּי  
הִנֵּה לִךְ תִּיטֵב זְמַרְתָּ אֲבוֹשׁ עַל כֵּן      אוֹדֶךָ בְּעוֹד תִּהְיֶה נִשְׁמַת אֶ-לֹה בִּי





## *Shachar Avakeshcha - At Dawn I Seek You*

R. Shlomo Ibn Gabirol, Sfarad, 11<sup>th</sup> Century

At dawn I seek You, my rock and my fortress  
my morning and evening prayers I lay before You  
Before Your greatness I stand in fright  
for Your eyes can see into the thoughts of my heart  
What is this that the heart and tongue can  
bring about, and what is the strength of my spirit within me?  
Behold the singing of man will be pleasant to You, therefore  
I thank You while the soul of God is within me

### ABOUT THE PIYUT

This piyut also belongs to the reshut genre (see comm. to piyut # 4) and was written by R. Shlomo Ibn Gabirol, the 11<sup>th</sup> century poet and philosopher.

It describes the feelings of the poet during the early hours of dawn. The emergence from the uncertainties of night and expectation to the light and warmth of sunshine converge at the moment of dawn and therefore create a perfect atmosphere for prayer and meditation. It is not surprising that the time set for singing piyutim in both the Aleppo and Morocco tradition is early morning, and that both of them include this piyut. Although the piyut seems at first glance to be just a rephrasing of the common theme of asking permission to pray, delving into it will reveal that it deals with a very powerful religious experience.

The poet describes his longing and quest for God's closeness, a closeness that feels him with such emotions that cannot be expressed by words. Only poetry, which includes music and involves the whole body, can bring to light all the aspects of soul and spirit connecting to the ZImrat Enosh, the totality of mankind.

# Shachar Avakeshcha - At Dawn I Seek You

R. Shlomo Ibn Gabirol

Sfarad/Ladino

Second voice by Esti Keinan

Sha har a va kesh cha tsu  
last time  
sh char a va kesh cha

5  
ri u' mis ga vi E'e roch le fa

5  
tzu ri u' mis ga vi E' e

9  
ne cha shach ri ve gam ar bi

9  
roch le fa ne cha sha cha ri ve gam

13  
lif ney

13  
ar bi







Shachar avakeshcha tzuri u'misgabi  
Lifnei gedulatcha e'emod ve'ebahel  
Ma zeh asher yuchal halev vehalashon  
Hineh lecha titav zimrat enosh al ken

e'eroch Lefanecha shachri vegam arbi  
ki eincha tir'eh kol machshevot libi  
la'asot u'ma koach ruchy betoch kirbi  
odcha beod tihyeh nishmat Eloha bi

# 6

## א-ל אדון מחבר לא ידוע

א-ל אדון על כל המעשים  
ברוך ומברך בפי כל הנשמה  
גדלו וטובו מלא עולם  
דעת ותבונה סובבים הודו  
המתנאה על חיות הקדש  
ונהדר בכבוד על המרכבה  
זכות ומישור לפני כסאו  
חסד ורחמים מלא כבודו  
טובים מאורות שבראם א-להינו  
יצרם בדעת בבינה ובהשכל  
פח וגבורה נתן בהם  
להיות מושלים בקרב תבל  
מלאים זיו ומפיקים נגה  
נאה זיום בכל העולם  
שמים בצאתם ששים בבוואם  
עושים באימה רצון קוניהם  
פאר וכבוד נותנים לשמו  
צהלה ורנה לזכר מלכותו  
קרא לשמש ויזרח אור  
ראה והתקין צורת הקבנה  
שבת נותנים לו כל צבא מרום  
תפארת וגדלה שרפים וחיות ואופני הקדש





## *El Adon - God Master of all Creations*

### **Anonymus**

God master of all creations  
blessed and praised by every soul  
His greatness and goodness fill the universe  
knowledge and wisdom surround Him  
He is exalted above the celestial beings  
and adorned in honor above the chariot  
Virtue and honesty stand before His throne  
grace and mercy are abundant in Him  
Good are the luminaries created by our God  
crafted with knowledge, wisdom and insight  
Strength and might He placed in them  
to reign over the universe  
Full of brilliance they radiate brightness  
beautiful is their brilliance throughout the world  
They rejoice in their rising and delight in their setting  
performing with reverence the will of their Creator  
Glory and honor do they give to His name  
revelry and song for His Majesty  
He called forth the sun and it shone light  
He saw fit to regulate the form of the moon  
All the hosts of heaven give Him praise  
Serafim, Ophanim and Celestial Beings  
attribute magnificence and greatness

### **ABOUT THE PIYUT**

One of the most ancient poems known to us, which is assumed to have been written between the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> century in Israel. Like other ancient poems it is not rhymed and its structure resembles closely that of certain psalms. It contains an alphabetical acrostic with two letters of the aleph bet in each stanza. The poem revolves around the description of the creator exulted by all creation but most specifically by the heavenly bodies – the sun and the moon, and the heavenly creatures – angels, seraphim, cherubim etc. It is located in the first blessing before the Shabbat morning Shema and is a natural continuation to its opening theme: “blessed are You God, our Lord, Master of the universe, who created light and crafted darkness, made peace and fashioned all things”.

## *El Adon - God Master of all Creations*

Anonymus

Algeria/Morocco

El a don al kol ha ma a sim ba ruch u'm vo  
6 rach be fi kol ne sha ma Me le im  
11 ziv u'm fi kim no ga Na e zi vam be chol ha o lam S  
18 me chim be tze tam sa sim be vo am o sim be e mah  
24 re tzon ko ne hem ai la la la la la





El adon al kol hama'asim  
baruch um'vorach befi kol hanesama  
Godlo vetuvo male olam  
da'at u'tvuna sovevim hodo  
Hamitga'eh al chayot hakodesh  
venchedar bechavod al hamerkava  
Zchut u'mishor lifnei kis'oh  
Chesed verachamim malleh kvodo  
Tovim me'orot shebera'am Eloheinu  
yetzaram beda'at bevinah u'vhaskel  
Ko'ach u'gyura natan bahem  
lihiyot moshlim bekerev tevel  
Mele'im ziv u'mefikim noga  
na'eh zivam bechol ha'olam  
Smechim betzetam vesasim bevo'am  
osim be'emah retzon konehem  
Pe'er vechavod notnim lishmo  
tzahola verina lezecher malchuto  
Kara lashemesh vayizrach or  
Ra'ah vehitkin tzurat halevana  
Shevach notenim lo kol tzva marom  
Tiferet u'gdula serafim ve'ofanim vechayot hakodesh

## 7

### מן המיצר

#### תהלים קיח

- ה. מן המצר קראתי י-ה ענני במרחב י-ה  
ו. ה' לי לא אירא מה יעשה לי אדם  
ז. ה' לי בעוזרי ואני אראה בשנאי  
ח. טוב לחסות בה' מבטח באדם  
ט. טוב לחסות בה' מבטח בנדיבים  
י. כל גוים סבבוני בשם ה' כי אמילם  
יא. סבוני גם סבבוני. בשם ה' כי אמילם  
יב. סבוני כדבורים דעכו כאש קוצים בשם ה' כי אמילם  
יג. דחה דחיתני לנפל וה' עזרני  
יד. עזי וזמרת י-ה ויהי לי לישועה  
טו. קול רנה וישועה באהלי צדיקים ימין ה' עשה חיל  
טז. ימין ה' רוממה ימין ה' עשה חיל  
יז. לא אמות כי אחיה ואספר מעשי י-ה  
יח. יסר יסרני י-ה ולמות לא נתנני  
יט. פתחו לי שערי צדק אבא בם אודה י-ה  
כ. זה השער לה' צדיקים יבאו בו  
כא. אודה כי עניתני ותהי לי לישועה  
כב. אכן מאסו הבונים היתה לראש פנה  
כג. מאת ה' היתה זאת היא נפלאת בעינינו  
כד. זה-היום עשה ה' נגילה ונשמחה בו

## 8

### אנא ה' הושיעה נא

- כה. אנא ה' הושיעה נא אנא ה' הצליחה נא







## *Min Hametzar - In distress I called on the Lord*

### **Psalms 118**

5. In distress I called on the Lord; the Lord answered me and brought me relief
6. The Lord is on my side I have no fear; what can man do to me?
7. With the Lord on my side as my helper, I will see the downfall of my foes
8. It is better to take refuge in the Lord, than to trust in mortals
9. It is better to take refuge in the Lord than to trust in the great [human benefactors]
10. All nations have beset me; by the name of the Lord I will surely cut them down
11. They beset me, the surround me; by the name of the Lord I will surely cut them down
12. They have beset me like bees; they shall be extinguished like burning thorns;  
by the name of the Lord I will surely cut them down
13. You pressed me hard, I nearly fell; but the Lord helped me
14. The Lord is my strength and might; He has become my deliverance
15. The tents of the righteous resound with joyous shouts of deliverance,  
the right hand of the Lord is triumphant!
16. The right hand of the Lord is exalted! the right hand of the Lord is triumphant!"
17. I shall not die but live and proclaim the works of the Lord
18. The lord has punished me severely, but did not hand me over to death
19. Open the gates of victory for me that I may enter then and praise the Lord
20. This is the gateway to the Lord, the righteous shall enter through it
21. I praise You, for You have answered me, and have become my deliverance
22. The stone that the builders rejected has become the chief cornerstone
23. This is the Lord's doing; it is marvelous in our sight
24. This is the day that the Lord has made - let us exult and rejoice in it

Translation taken from the JPS Tanakh

## *Ana Adonay Hoshia Na - O Lord, Deliver us*

25. O Lord, deliver us! O Lord, let us prosper!

## ABOUT THE MIZMOR

These verses are sung in the Hallel, a prayer of praise and thanksgiving recited on Holidays and on the first day of the month. The Hallel comprises psalms 114-118, and is also referred to as The Egyptian Halle because its opening verses relate the story of the Exodus.

The Hallel starts with thanksgiving for the redemption from Egypt and continues to praise God and Monotheism as opposed to paganism. It bestows blessings on different groups and stresses the joy of living and singing. It then shifts to a more serene mood, telling the difficulties and the hardships of the individual but again rises in a poetic crescendo to praise God who has delivered the individual from all his hardships and who is the only one whom the poet can rely on. The last part of the Hallel, where the verses of this Piyut appear, is psalm 118 which is meant to be recited as a psalmody – the leader reading one half of the verse and the chorus or the congregation responds. It is still sung in this manner in some congregations whereas in others verses 21-29 are repeated, once by the leader and once by the congregation. This style lends itself to music and indeed there are many different tunes for these verses.

Min HaMetzar (Psalms 118, 5-9):

The structure of these verses parallels their reading in psalmody since each one of them oscillates between the negative and the positive, darkness and light, distress and relief. The poet describes his difficult moments but stresses that in the face of danger, despair and betrayal, he always had one solid factor – his faith.

The first verse of this section inspired many Hassidic interpretations. According to R. Chayim of Tczernovicz it is an allusion to the Shofar which produces a powerful voice through a narrow mouthpiece. Similarly the prayers of Rosh HaShana draw their power from the congregation of people in a narrow place, where they unite their voices and hearts in prayer to produce a powerful call to the Divine.

R. Yehuda Leib Alter of Gur explains, following the Ball Shem Tov, that one should explore his fears and call out to God from the deepest, narrowest crevices of his soul because that is exactly where the redemption can come from. In other words we are most vulnerable where we are sensitive and if we use our emotions and spiritual strength correctly we can overcome all hardships.





Others still expand on that idea to say that the translation should be this: I called out to God from the narrow place, but he answered me “you are already in the open”, meaning that the act of crying out, identifying the problem and expressing the will to overcome it is in itself part of the redemption.

In the next verses (10-12) there is an echo to David’s personal tribulations and his wars against neighboring nations but simultaneously it conveys the feeling of steadfast faith in the face of intensifying danger. The second leg of each verse is exactly the same to symbolize the unwavering trust while the first leg speaks of an ever growing danger – they beset me, they beset me and surround me, they beset me like bees. But the threat intensifies to not only be completely extinguished but to be proven ephemeral – like thorns consumed by fire – a common metaphor in the bible to a thing of no inner value.

In the following verses (13-20) the poet speaks of the times when he felt that God has abandoned or even persecuted him and how he came later to realize that God is his helper. The license to argue with God, complain and even accuse Him is one of the compelling aspect of Psalms, and can also be found in psalms 6;10;13;22 and elsewhere. Interjected into the poet’s pleas and complaints are descriptions of triumph and joy. These show the source of strength and faith for the poet in difficult times as he visualizes the great joy and jubilation at the time of his redemption.

The theme in the next verses (21-22) is the personal redemption. First is the praise for the Divine response: I will extol You for You have answered me and became my redemption. Then there is an allegory where the poet compares his youth, being rejected and ostracized to a stone deemed unfit for construction only to be found later on worthy to become the cornerstone, just as the poet rose to glory. The theme of early rejection and later vindication is common in psalms as a part of King David’s life story and is especially evident in psalm 69.

25. O Lord, deliver us! O Lord, let us prosper!

Unlike the previous verses which are repeated by the congregants upon their completion by the leader or the conductor, each half of this verse is repeated separately. This could be explained as stemming from its special structure or due to the exclamatory nature of it as it professes faith in and complete reliance on God.

## *Min Hametzar - In distress I called on the Lord*

### Psalms 118

Tripoli/Sfarad-Yerushalaim

D G D

Min ha me tzar ka ra\_\_\_ ti yah\_\_\_ a na ni ba mer chav yah\_\_\_

A D

A do nai li lo\_\_\_ i ra\_\_\_ ma ya a seh li\_\_\_ a dam A do nai li be\_\_\_ oz rai\_\_\_

7

va' a ni er eh be' son ai\_\_\_ tov la cha sot ba\_\_\_ do nai\_\_\_ mi be to ach be\_\_\_ a dam

10

Tov la cha sot ba\_\_\_ do nai\_\_\_ mi be to ach bi ndi vim\_\_\_ Kol go yim se va\_\_\_ vu ni\_\_\_

13

be shem a do nay ki a\_\_\_ mi lam Sa bu ni gam sa va\_\_\_ vu ni\_\_\_

15

be shem a do nay ki a mi lam\_\_\_ Sa bu ni ki\_\_\_ dvo riom\_\_\_

17

do a chu ke esh ko tzim\_\_\_ be shem a do nai ki a\_\_\_ mi lam Da

19

cho de chi ta ni\_\_\_ li pol\_\_\_ Va'A do nai a za ra ni\_\_\_ o\_\_\_ zi ve zim\_\_\_ rat yah\_\_\_

22

va ye hi li liy\_\_\_ shu a kol ri na v' i\_\_\_ shu a\_\_\_ be' o ha ley tza di kim\_\_\_

25

ye min a do nai o sa\_\_\_ cha yil Ye min a do nai ro\_\_\_ me ma\_\_\_



# Ana Adonay Hoshia Na - O Lord, Deliver us

## Psalms 118

Sfarad-Yerushalaim



Chord progression: B m, B m, B m/F# F#7, B m, B m

6 E m A na A do nay ho

12 E m B m E m B m A na A do nay

17 B m B m C B m F#

22 na A na a do nay

27 Hatz li ch na A na A do nay ha tz li cha

na A na A do nay ha tz li cha na

Min hametzar karati Yah anani bamerchav Yah  
 Adonay li be'ozrai va'ani er'eh besonai  
 Tov lachasot baAdonay mibetoach bindivim  
 Sabuni gam sevavuni beshem Adonay ki amilam  
 Sabuni kidvorim do'achu ke'esh kotzim  
 Dacho dechitani linpol va'Adonay azarani  
 Kol rina vishua be'ohalei tzadikim yemin  
 Yemin Adonay romemah yemin Adonay osah chayil  
 Yasor yisrani Yah velaymavet lo netanani  
 Pitchu li sha'arei tzedek avo bam odeh Yah  
 Odecha ki anitani vatehi li lishua  
 Me'et Adonay hayta zot he niflat be'enenu

Adonay li lo ira ma ya'aseh li adam  
 Tov lachasot baAdonay mibetoach ba'adam  
 Kol goyim sevavuni beshem Adonay ki amilam

beshem Adonay ki amilam  
 Ozi vezimrat Yah vayehi li lishua  
 Adonay osah chayil  
 Lo amut ki echyeh va'asaper ma'asei Yah

Zeh hash'a'ar laAdonay tzadikim yavo'u bo  
 Even ma'asu habonim hayeta lerosh pina  
 Ze hayom asa Adonay nagila venismecva bo

Ana Adonay hoshia na, Ana Adonay hatzlicha na



## רפא צירי

ר' רפאל ענתבי

ארם צובא-מצרים, המאה ה-19

או: ר' רפאל אדרעי

מרוקו, המאה ה-20

רפא צירי א-ל גאמן	כי אתה רופא אמן
את ראשי שור חלשי	ותן כח לנפשי

פתח שער הרחמים	כח שוכן בפרומים
על עבדך שים חסדך	אין מרחם בלעדך

א-ל חי רצה תפילתי	וחושה לעזרתי
במהרה דרור קרא	לעם בן הגבירה







### *Refa Tziri - Heal my pain*

R. Refael Antebi, Aram Tzuba, 19<sup>th</sup> Century/R. Refael Edrei, Morocco, 20<sup>th</sup> Century

Heal my pain Oh Loyal God	for you are a skilled healer
You lead me, You see my weakness	and grant strength to my soul
Open the gate of mercy	High dweller of the heavens
Upon your servant bestow your grace	there would be no mercy if not for You
Oh Living God desire my prayer	and hasten to my aid
And speedily call for the redemption	of the nation born to the Lady [Sara]

### ABOUT THE PIYUT

In this piyut we feel the pain of the poet and the people of Israel. He speaks of pain, suffering and affliction and pleads for mercy, healing and consolation. The request is not in the physical sense only but in the spiritual as well – give strength to my soul.

The poet addresses god in a rather uncommon term – expert healer, and thus emphasizes the dependence of the individual and the nation God to heal the wounds of the exile and of the personal suffering. God is described as faithful, following the verse in Deuteronomy (7:9): “Know, therefore, that only the Lord your God is God, the steadfast God who keeps His covenant faithfully”.

The Aram Tzuba tradition attributes this piyut to R. Refael Antebi, the greatest poet among the Jews of Aram Tzuba, whereas the Moroccan tradition claims it was written by the poet R. Refael Edrei, who lived in Morocco in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century.

## Refa Tziri - Heal my pain

R. Refael Antebi/R. Refael Edrei

Sfarad-Yerushalaim

Re fa tzi ri El ne\_\_\_\_\_man ki a ta ro fe u man Re

fa tzi ri El ne\_\_\_\_\_man ki a ta ro fe u man At\_\_ro shi shur chal shi

ve ten ko ach le\_\_\_\_naf shi At\_\_ro shi shur\_\_chal shi ve ten ko ach le naf shi\_\_\_\_

Refa Tziri El ne'eman	ki ata rofeh uman
At roshi shur chalshi	veten koach lenafshi

Petach sha'ar harachamim	ram shochen bameromim
Al avdach sim chassdach	en merachem biladach

El chai retzeh tefilati	vechusha le'ezrati
Bimhera deror kera	le'am ben hagevira





# מה נאוו עלי

ר' שמעון ב"ר נסים

בגדד-ירושלים, מאה 19-20

מה נאוו עלי הַהָרִים רַגְלֵי  
קול צופֵיךְ יִשְׂאוּ קול רִנָּה  
עֵין בְּעֵין תִּרְאֵי שְׂכִינָה  
מִבֶּשֶׁר שְׁלוֹם בְּבִגְדֵי עִירֶךָ  
הַתְּנַעֲרֵי מִתּוֹךְ מַגְנָה  
וְשָׁבוּ בְּנֶיךָ לְגִבּוֹלֶךָ

לְשִׁבּוּיִים דָּרוֹר בְּשִׁיר וּמִזְמוֹר  
סִלּוּ סִלּוּ אֶת הַמִּסְלָה  
יָבֹא מִבֶּשֶׁר בְּלִשׁוֹנוֹ מִלָּה  
אֶל בֵּית הַר הַמּוֹר יִהְיֶה שְׂבִילֶךָ  
פָּצְחוּ רִנָּה וּתְהִלָּה  
קוֹמֵי עוֹרֵי כִי בֹא אוֹרֶךָ

צֹאֵי מִכְּבֵּל קִרְיַת עוֹבְדֵי בַל  
שׁוֹשׁ יִשְׁיִשׁוּ כָּל אֲבֵלֵי צִיּוֹן  
בְּנֵה אֶבְנָה לָךְ גִּוָּה אֶפְרַיִם  
כְּנוֹר וְנִבֵּל אֵז יִהְיֶה שִׁירֶךָ  
לְבֹא לַחֲסוֹת בְּצֵל הָעֲלִיּוֹן  
אֶכֶן כִּסֵּא לְדָוִד מִלְכֶּךָ

שְׂאֵי עֵינֶיךָ וּרְאֵי בְנֶיךָ  
תַּחַת חֶשֶׁךְ אֲשִׁים לָךְ אוֹרָה  
הִנֵּה גְדוֹל הוּא אֵים וְנוֹרָא  
בָּאוּ אֵלֶיךָ לְאוֹר בְּאוֹרֶךָ  
אֵז מִצִּיּוֹן תֵּצֵא הַתּוֹרָה  
בְּיוֹם שִׁמְיָי כְּתָר לְרֹאשֶׁךָ

עַד מָתִי כִלָּה יָפָה וּמַעֲלָה  
עוֹרֵי עוֹרֵי עֶדֶת יִשְׂרָאֵל  
וְגַם אֲקִים לָךְ חוֹמַת אֶרֶץ  
לְזֶר בְּעוֹלָה כְּדֹל וְהִלָּה  
אֲחִישׁ אֲשַׁלַּח יְנוֹן וְגוֹאֵל  
זָכַר אֲזַכֵּר חֶסֶד נְעוּרֶךָ



## *Ma Navu Alei - How pleasant*

R. Shimon Bar Nissim, Baghdad–Jerusalem, 19<sup>th</sup>-20<sup>th</sup> Century



How pleasant atop the mountains are the footsteps of the messenger bearing tidings of peace in your city  
The voices of your watchmen will rise up in joy shake off your sorrow  
Your eyes shall behold the Shechina and your sons shall return to your borders

Freedom to the captives in song and melody to the Temple may your path lead  
Pave pave the pathway break forth in delight and glory  
A messenger will come with a word on his tongue Arise and shine for your light has come

Leave Babylon where they worship Bel the harp and lyre will accompany your song  
Greatly rejoice all mourners in Zion come take refuge in the shadow of the Most High  
I shall built for you a magnificent palace I shall set a throne for your king, David

Lift your eyes and see your children they have come to you, to the light in your light  
In place of darkness I will give you light then from Zion Torah shall come forth  
For it will be great and awful on the day you shall place a crown upon your head

Till when beautiful and wonderful bride will you espouse a stranger like a vagabond  
Awake awake people of Israel I will hasten and send Yinon and a redeemer  
And I will raise for you the walls of Ariel I will remember the devotion of your youth

### **ABOUT THE PIYUT**

The Babylonian repertoire suffers from a dearth of overly joyous poems, which is probably why this poem, introduced relatively late into it, has rapidly gained popularity. Not only the words but also the melody are joyous and exuberant and it is sung at every happy occasions, especially at weddings related events. The poem was written by R. Shimon Bar Nissim, who followed his poetry and immigrated to Israel – from Babylonia to Zion. His poem also “immigrated” and was absorbed and accepted by all Jews, Sephardic and Ashkenazi alike.

The poem draws heavily on Biblical verses but especially on the last chapters of Isaiah which also served as an inspiration to the famous poem welcoming the Shabbat – Lekha Dodi.

The central analogy of the poem along the lines of Isaiah’s prophecies is that of the Nation of Israel as a woman. She is the bride, the beloved, who was driven away and sought comfort amongst strangers but is now called to come back home where she will reunite with her children and where her “spouse” – the Lord – will build her a palace and a throne.

It is not surprising, given the positive atmosphere of the poem and the wealth of imagery related to the bride and her beloved, that this poem became very popular wedding song. The divine, historical love of God, the Nation and the Land of Israel reverberates through the poem and illuminates the bridal canopy of the newlyweds.



## *Ma Navu Alei - How pleasant*

R. Shimon bar Nissim

Iraq

Ma na vu aley he ha rim rag ley ma va ser sha lom be vin yan i rech

5 Kol tzo fa\_ ich yis' u be ri na\_ hit na a ri mi toch me gi na

9 A yin\_ be' a yin tir i she chi na ve sha vu ba na yich\_ lig vu lech\_

Ma navu alei heharim raglei

Kol tzofaich yis'u kol rina

Ayin be'ayin tir'i shechina

Lishvuyim dror beshir u'mizmor

Solu solu et hamsila

Yavo mevasser bilshono mila

Tze'i mibavel kiryat ovdei bel

Sos yasissu kol avelei zion

Bano evneh lach neveh apirion

Se'ee enayich u're'ee vanayich

Tachat choshech assim lach ora

Hineh gadol hu ayom venora

Ad matai kalla yaffa u'me'ulla

Uri uri adat yisrael

Vegam akim lach chomat ariel

mevasser shalom bevinyan irech

hitna'ari mitoch megina

veshavu banayich legvulech

el beit har hamor yehi shvilech

pitzchu renana u'tehila

kumi uri ki ba orech

kinor vanevel az yehi shirech

lavo lachasot betzel ha'elion

achin kish ledavid malkech

ba'u elayich la'or be'orech

az metzion tetzeh hatora

beyom simi keter leroshech

lezar be'ulla kedal vahelech

achish eshlach yinon ve'goel

zachor ezkor chessed ne'urech







# אין כא-להינו מחבר לא ידוע

אין כּמוֹשִׁיעֵנוּ Non como nuestro Dio, non como nuestro Rey,	אין כּמִלְכֵנוּ non como nuestro Señor, non como nuestro Salvador.	אין כּאדוֹנֵנוּ non como nuestro Señor, non como nuestro Salvador.	אין כא-לֵהינוּ non como nuestro Señor, non como nuestro Salvador.
מי כּמוֹשִׁיעֵנוּ Quien como nuestro Dio, quien como nuestro Rey,	מי כּמִלְכֵנוּ quien como nuestro Señor, quien como nuestro Salvador.	מי כּאדוֹנֵנוּ quien como nuestro Señor, quien como nuestro Salvador.	מי כא-לֵהינוּ quien como nuestro Señor, quien como nuestro Salvador.
נוֹדָה לְמוֹשִׁיעֵנוּ Loaremos a nuestro Dio, loaremos a nuestro Rey,	נוֹדָה לְמִלְכֵנוּ loaremos a nuestro Señor, loaremos a nuestro Salvador.	נוֹדָה לְאֲדוֹנֵנוּ loaremos a nuestro Señor, loaremos a nuestro Salvador.	נוֹדָה לְאֵלֵהינוּ loaremos a nuestro Señor, loaremos a nuestro Salvador.
בְּרוּךְ מוֹשִׁיעֵנוּ Bendicho nuestro Dio, bendicho nuestro Rey,	בְּרוּךְ מִלְכֵנוּ bendicho nuestro Señor, bendicho nuestro Salvador.	בְּרוּךְ אֲדוֹנֵנוּ bendicho nuestro Señor, bendicho nuestro Salvador.	בְּרוּךְ אֵלֵהינוּ bendicho nuestro Señor, bendicho nuestro Salvador.
אַתָּה הוּא מוֹשִׁיעֵנוּ Tu sos nuestro Dio, tu sos nuestro Rey,	אַתָּה הוּא מִלְכֵנוּ tu sos nuestro Señor, tu sos nuestro Salvador.	אַתָּה הוּא אֲדוֹנֵנוּ tu sos nuestro Señor, tu sos nuestro Salvador.	אַתָּה הוּא אֵלֵהינוּ tu sos nuestro Señor, tu sos nuestro Salvador.

אַתָּה הוּא שֶׁהַקְטִירוֹ אֲבוֹתֵינוּ לְפָנֶיךָ אֶת-קִטְרֹת הַסַּמִּים





## *En K'Eloheinu - There is none like our God*

**Anonymus**

There is none like our God, there is none like our Lord,  
There is none like our King, there is none like our Savior

Who is like our God, who is like our Lord,  
Who is like our King, who is like our Savior

Let us thank our God, let us thank our Lord,  
Let us thank our King, Let us thank our Savior

Blessed be our God, blessed be our Lord,  
Blessed be our King, blessed be our Savior

You are our God, You are our Lord,  
You are our King, You are our Savior

### **ABOUT THE PIYUT**

This short poem is recited by most communities towards the end of the Morning Prayer. An ancient poem mentioned already by rav Amram Gaon, it is not recited by some during weekdays when people are in a hurry but rather on Shabbat only. Its structure is very simple and is basically a repetition of four titles of God: Our God, Lord, King and Savior, when each stanza introduces these four titles with a different proclamation: none is as...; who is as...; we shall give thanks to...; blessed is... and You are... Paradoxically, it is its simplicity that granted it a halo of mystical poem, as if to say that there is much more to the poem than what meets the eye. Some attribute it to early mysticism and Hekhalot literature, a possibility supported by the mantra-like nature of the piyut.

## En K'Eloheinu - There is none like our God

Anonymus

Morocco/Belgrad

*medium slow bolero*

En — k' Elo he nu en — k'A do — ne

5 nu — En — K' mal che nu — En — K' mo shi e nu —

*Medium Fast Malfuf*

10 non co mo nues tro dios — mi — K'A lo hei — nu

15 non co mo nues tro Sen or — mi — K'A do nei — nu

19 non co mo nues tro — mi — k' mal ke — nu non co mo nues tro

24 no chord sal — va dor mi k' mo shi e nu





### Moroccan Version

En k'Elohenu en k'Adonenu  
Non como nuestro Dio,  
non como nuestro Rey,

Mi k'Elohenu mi k'Adonenu  
Quien como nuestro Dio,  
quien como nuestro Rey,

Nodeh l'Elohenu nodeh l'Adonenu  
Loaremos a nuestro Dio,  
loaremos a nuestro Rey,

Baruch Elohenu baruch Adonenu  
Bendicho nuestro Dio,  
bendicho nuestro Rey,

Atah hu Elohenu atah hu Adonenu  
Tu sos nuestro Dio,  
tu sos nuestro Rey,

En keMalkenu en keMoshi'enu  
non como nuestro Señor,  
non como nuestro Salvador.

Mi keMalkenu mi keMoshi'enu  
quien como nuestro Señor,  
quien como nuestro Salvador.

Nodeh l'Malkenu nodeh leMoshi'enu  
loaremos a nuestro Señor,  
loaremos a nuestro Salvador.

Baruch Malkenu baruch Moshi'enu  
bendicho nuestro Señor,  
bendicho nuestro Salvador.

Atah hu Malkenu atah hu Moshi'enu  
tu sos nuestro Señor,  
tu sos nuestro Salvador.

### Belgrad Version

Non como nuestro Dio,  
Non como nuestro Señor,  
Non como nuestro Rey,  
Non como nuestro Salvador,

Quien como nuestro Dio  
Quien como nuestro Señor  
Quien como nuestro Rey  
Quien como nuestro Salvador

Loaremos a nuestro Dio  
Loaremos a nuestro Señor  
Loaremos a nuestro Rey  
Loaremos a nuestro Salvador

Bendicho nuestro Dio  
Bendicho nuestro Señor  
Bendicho nuestro Rey  
Bendicho nuestro Salvador

Tu sos nuestro Dio  
Tu sos nuestro Señor  
Tu sos nuestro Rey  
Tu sos nuestro Salvador

En k'Elohenu  
en k'Adonenu  
En keMalkenu  
en keMoshi'enu

Mi k'Elohenu  
mi k'Adonenu  
Mi keMalkenu  
mi keMoshi'enu

Nodeh l'Elohenu  
nodeh l'Adonenu  
Nodeh l'Malkenu  
nodeh leMoshi'enu

Baruch Elohenu  
Baruch Malkenu  
baruch Adonenu  
baruch Moshi'enu

Atah hu Elohenu  
atah hu Adonenu  
Atah hu Malkenu  
atah hu Moshi'enu

# 12

## יגדל

### ר' דניאל בן יהודה דיין

איטליה, מאה 13

יגדל א-להים חי וישתבח	נמצא ואין עת אל מציאותו
אחד ואין יחיד כיהודו	נעלם וגם אין סוף לאחדותו
אין לו דמות הגוף ואינו גוף	לא נערך אליו קדשתו
קדמון לכל דבר אשר נברא ראשון	ואין ראשית לראשיתו
הנו אדון עולם לכל נוצר	יורה גדלותו ומלכותו
שפע נבואתו נתנו	אל אנשי סגלתו ותפארתו
לא קם בישראל כמשה עוד	נביא ומביט את תמונתו
תורת אמת נתן לעמו אל	על יד נביאו נאמן ביתו
לא יחליף האל ולא ימיר	דתו לעולמים לזולתו
צופה נידע סתרינו	מביט לסוף דבר בקדמתו
גומל לאיש חסיד כמפעלו	נותן לרשע רע כרשעתו
ישלח לקץ ימים משיחנו	לפדות מחכי קץ ישועתו
מתים יחיה אל ברב חסדו	ברוך עדי עד שם תהלתו
[אלה שלש עשרה לעקרים	הן הם יסוד דת אל ותורתו
תורת משה אמת ונבואתו	ברוך עדי עד שם תהלתו]







## *Yigdal Elohim Chai - Exalted be the Living God*

R. Daniel ben Yehudah, Italy, 13<sup>th</sup> Century

Exalted be the Living God, and praise He exists and His existence is unbound by time  
He is One and there is no unity like His Oneness inscrutable and infinite is His Oneness  
He has neither form of body nor is He corporeal nor may His holiness be compared to aught  
He preceded all that was created the First, and nothing preceded His precedence  
Behold, the Master of the universe to all creations demonstrating His greatness and sovereignty  
An abundance of prophecy he has bestowed upon His treasured and splendid people  
There has not arisen in Israel another like Moses a prophet who beheld His image  
A Torah of truth God gave His nation by means of His prophet, the faithful of His house  
God will never exchange or alter His Law for any another, for all eternity  
He sees and knows our most hidden secrets He perceives a matter's outcome at its inception  
He rewards man with kindness according to his works  
He places evil on the wicked according to his wickedness  
He will send our Messiah at the End of Days to redeem those waiting for His final salvation  
God will revive the dead in His abundant kindness  
may His splendid Name be blessed forever more

*These are the thirteen principles of faith they are the foundation of the God's law and Torah  
Moses' Torah and prophecy are true blessed eternally be His great name\**

\*The italicized verse are found in the Eastern Jewish traditions

### ABOUT THE PIYUT

In this Piyut the author, R. Daniyel ben Yehudah the Judge of Rome, who lived in the 13<sup>th</sup> century, lists the thirteen Principles of Faith as phrased by Maimonides in his commentary to the Mishnah. The piyut gained great popularity, was adapted to many different tunes and was incorporated into most traditions which usually sing it at the end of the prayers. Many authors tried to imitate the piyut and some even wrote parodies. Interestingly enough, R. Yitzhak Luria Ashkenazi opposed this piyut, mainly because he disagreed with defining and declaring principles of faith, and therefore those who follow his rulings do not include "Yigdal" in their prayer books.

## *Yigdal Elohim Chai - Exalted be the Living God*

R. Daniel ben Yehuda Dayan

Sfarad-Yerushalaim

Yig dal E lo him chai ve' yish ta

5 bach nim tza ve' en et el me tzi u to E

10 same harmony  
chad ve' en ya chid lo ke yi chu do ne'e lam ve'gam en

15 sof le ach du to en lo de mut ha guf ve'

20 G A<sup>b</sup> G Fm Cm G  
e no guf lo na roch e lav ke du sha

25 Cm  
to





Yigdal Elohim chai ve'yishtabach  
Echad ve'ein yachid keyichudo  
Ein lo demut haguf ve'eino guf  
Kadmon lechol davar asher nivra  
Hino adon olam lechol notzar  
Shefa nevuato netano  
Lo kam beyisrael kemoshe od  
Torat emet natan le'amo El  
Lo yachalif ha'El velo yamir  
Tzofeh veyodea setareinu  
Gomel le'ish chassid kemifalo  
Yishlach leketz yamim meshichenu  
Metim yechayeh El berov chassdo  
Eleh shelosh esre laikarim  
Torat Moshe emet unvuato

nimtza ve'ein et el metzi'uto  
ne'elam ve'gam ein sof le'achduto  
lo na'aroch elav kedushato  
rishon ve'ein reshit lereshito  
yoreh gedulato u'malchuto  
el anshei segulato vetifarto  
navi umabeet et temunato  
al yad nevi'o ne'eman beto  
dato le'olamim lezulato  
mabeet lesof davar bekadmato  
noten lerasha ra kerishato  
lifdot mechakei ketz yeshuato  
baruch adei ad shem tehilato  
hen hem yesod dat El vetorato  
baruch adei ad shem tehilato

## צור משלו אכלנו

מחבר לא ידוע

צור משלו אכלנו  
שבענו והותרנו  
בָּרַכּוּ אֱמוּנִי  
כְּדַבֵּר ה'

הֵזֵן אֶת עוֹלָמוֹ  
אָכְלָנוּ מִלֶּחֶמוֹ  
עַל כֵּן נִוְדָה לְשִׁמוֹ  
אֲמַרְנוּ וְעַנִּינוּ  
רוּעֵנוּ אָבִינוּ  
וּמֵיֵנוּ שְׁתִּינוּ  
וְנִהְלָלוּ בְּפִינוּ  
אֵין קְדוֹשׁ כֵּה

בְּשִׁיר וְקוֹל תוֹדָה  
עַל אֶרֶץ חֲמֻדָּה טוֹבָה  
וּמִזֶּן וְצִדָּה  
חֲסִדוֹ גָּבַר עָלֵינוּ  
נִבְרָךְ לֹא-לֵהִינוּ  
שְׁהִנְחִיל לְאַבֹּתֵינוּ  
הַשְׁבִּיעַ לְנַפְשֵׁנוּ  
וְאַמֵּת ה'

רַחֵם בְּחֶסֶדְךָ  
עַל צִיּוֹן מְשֻׁכֵּן כְּבוֹדְךָ  
וּבֶן דָּוִד עֲבָדְךָ  
רוּחַ אֲפָנוּ  
עַל עַמְּךָ צוּרֵנוּ  
זְבוּל בֵּית תַּפְאֲרֵתֵנוּ  
יְבֹא וַיִּגְאֵלֵנוּ  
מְשִׁיחַ ה'

יִבְנֶה הַמִּקְדָּשׁ  
וְשֵׁם נָשִׁיר שִׁיר חֲדָשׁ  
הַרְחֵמֵן הַנִּקְדָּשׁ  
עַל כּוֹס יַיִן מִלֵּא  
עִיר צִיּוֹן תִּמְלֵא  
וּבִרְנִינָה שֵׁם נִעְלָה  
יִתְבָּרַךְ וַיִּתְעַלָּה  
כְּבָרְכַת ה'



## *Tzur Mishelo Akhalnu - The Lord, whose food we have eaten*

**Anonymus**

The Lord, Our Rock, whose food we have eaten, let us bless Him  
We are satiated and there is still food left over, as God has instructed

He nourishes His world, our Shepherd, our Father  
We have eaten of His bread and drunk from His wine  
Therefore we will thank Him and speak His praise  
We said and respond: there is no one holy like our Lord

With song and gratitude we will give praise to our  
God For the desirable good land He bequeathed to our fathers  
With nourishment and sustenance He has satisfied us  
His grace has overwhelmed us as has His truth

Have mercy in Your graciousness on Your nation, Lord, Our Rock  
And upon Zion the dwelling place of Your honor, the Temple of our splendor  
And the son of David, Your servant, will come and redeem us  
The breath of our life, The Messiah of God

The Temple will be rebuilt; the City of Zion will be restored  
And there we will sing a new song and journey up  
The Merciful and the Sanctified One will be blessed and exalted  
Over a full glass of wine, according to God's blessing

### **ABOUT THE PIYUT**

This is an ancient Piyut which is sung as an introduction to the grace after meals in most Jewish communities. It was probably written in Northern France no later than the second half of the 14<sup>th</sup> Century and spread very rapidly throughout the Jewish Diaspora. Despite its popularity and the fact that some authors tried to imitate it, the identity of the author remains unknown.

It is not inconceivable that the piyut was originally meant to serve as an introduction to the Grace after Meals in all joyous occasions and only later on was identified specifically with the Shabbat. Its relation to the Grace after Meals (Birkat HaMazzon), however, is irrefutable. The three first stanzas parallel the three first blessing of the Grace. The opening one praises God who sustains and provides food for all living beings with grace and loving kindness, the second gives thanks to God for the gift of the Torah, the Land of Israel and the covenant, and the third focuses on Jerusalem, the Temple and the Messiah. The last stanza, which ends with the words: "We shall bless the Holy, Merciful one, with an overflowing cup of wine", symbolizing God's abundance, alludes to the custom to recite the Grace while holding a cup of wine which is drunk at the end of the Grace.

Music lovers will find special interest in the following anecdote. In the 1980's, a 16<sup>th</sup> Century manuscript was discovered, containing a musical notation for this piyut. It is an original Jewish tune and not a local, folk song that was borrowed and adopted from the non Jewish tradition. The tune was written by a Christian scholar who has heard it from one or more Jews in what was then south Germany. To the best of our knowledge, this is the oldest sheet music for a Sabbath song and one of the oldest in the general Piyut tradition.



## *Tzur Mishelo Akhalnu - The Lord, whose food we have eaten*

Anonymus

Iraq



5

10

15

20

25

Tzur mi she lo\_\_\_ a chal nu ba re chu\_\_\_ e mu  
nai\_\_\_ Sa va nu ve ho tar\_\_\_ nu ve ho tar\_\_\_ nu kid\_\_\_ var\_\_\_ A do\_\_\_  
nay\_\_\_ Ha zan et o la\_\_\_ mo ro e nu\_\_\_ a vi\_\_\_ nu\_\_\_ A chal  
nu\_\_\_ mi lach mo u'mi ye no\_\_\_ sh ti\_\_\_ nu\_\_\_ al ken no de lish  
mo ne ha le lo\_\_\_ be fi\_\_\_ nu\_\_\_ A mar nu\_\_\_ ve' a ni\_\_\_ nu en ka  
dosh\_\_\_ K'A do\_\_\_ nay\_\_\_ Tzur mi she







Tzur mishelo akhalnu	barechu emunai
Savanu vehotarnu	kidvar Adonay
Hazan et olamo	ro'enu avinu
Achalnu milachmo	u'miyeno shatinu
Al ken nodeh lishmo	u'nehallelo befinu
Amarnu ve'aninu	en kadosh ka'Adonay
Beshir vekol toda	nevarech le'Eloheinu
Al eretz chemda tova	shehinchil la'avotenu
Umazon vetzedo	hisbi'a lenafshenu
Chasdo gavar alenu	ve'emet Adonay
Rachem bechasdecha	al amcha tzurenu
Al tzion mishkan kvodecha	zevul bet tifartenu
Uven David avdecha	yavo veyigalenu
Ruach apenu	meshiach Adonay
Yibaneh hamikdash	ir tzion temalleh
Vesham nashir shir chadash	u'virnana sham na'alleh
Harachaman hanikdash	yitbarach veyitalleh
Al kos yayin malleh	kevirkat Adonay

# 14

## יה רבון עלם ר' ישראל נג'ארה

צפת, המאה ה-16

אנת הוא מלכא מלך מלכיא שפר קדמי להחניא	י-ה רבון עלם ועלמיא עובדי גבורתך ותמהיא
לך א-להא קדישא ברא כל נפשא חיות ברא ועוף שמיא	שבחין אסדר צפרא ורמשא עירין קדישין ובני אנשא
מפיד רמיא זקירי כפיפין לא יעול גבורתך בחושבניא	רברבין עובדך ותקיפין לו יחי גבר שנין אלפין
פרוק ית ענה מפם אריותא עמד די בחרת מכל אמיא	א-להא די ליה יקר ורבותא נאפיק ית עמד מגו גלותא
אתר די ביה יחדון רוחין ונפשין בירושלם קרתא דשפריא	למקדשך תוב ולקדש קדשין ויזמרון לך שירין ורחשין

### תרגום:

י-ה אדון כל העולמים מעשי גבורותיך ונפלאותיך	אתה הוא מלך מלכי המלכים נאה לי להביע
שבחים אערוך בוקר וערב מלאכי מרום ובני אדם	לך א-ל קדוש בורא כל הנפשות חיות שדה ועוף השמים
גדולים מעשיך ואדירים לו יחיה אדם אלף שנים	משפיל רמים זוקף כפופים לא יספיק לספר גבורותיך
האלוקים שלו יקר וגדולה והוצא את עמך מתוך הגלות	פדה את צאנך מפי אריות עמד שבחרת מכל האומות
למקדשך שוב ולקדש קודשים ויזמרו לך שירים ושבחים	מקום בו ישמחו כל רוח ונפש בירושלים עיר כלילת יופי





## *Yah Ribon Alam - Sovereign of all the Worlds*

R. Yisrael Najara, Tzfat, 16<sup>th</sup> Century

Yah, Sovereign of all the Worlds  
Of Your mighty deeds and wonders

You are the King of kings  
It pleases me to proclaim

I offer praises morning and evening  
Heavenly angels and mortals

to You, holy God, creator of all souls  
beasts of the field and birds of the sky

Great and mighty are your deeds  
Even if one lived a thousand years

shaming the proud and elevating up the humble  
these would not suffice to tell of your mighty actions

O God, to whom glory and greatness belong  
Lead Your people out of exile

save Your flock from the mouths of lions  
your people whom You chose above all nations

Return to Your Temple and to the Holy of Holies  
There they will sing to You songs and praises

the place where all spirits and souls will rejoice  
in Jerusalem, the city of beauty

### ABOUT THE PIYUT

This is one of the most famous of R. Yisrael Najara, the greatest poet of the post expulsion period. He was a descendant of the Spanish exiles and served as Rabbi of the community of Gaza in the 16<sup>th</sup> Century. Although Shabbat is not mentioned at all in the poem and despite the fact it is written in Aramaic, it became part of the Shabbat repertoire throughout Jewish Diaspora.

The poet has interwoven into the poem many references from the book of Daniel which is written mainly in Aramaic. The poet sometimes quotes verbatim verses which originally refer to God but does not hesitate to convert verses that referred to Nebuchadnezzar and use them to praise God. This practice attests to the free spirit of this poet in particular and poetry in general but can also be seen as a process of redemption in which the poet elevates the words, originally appropriated by a pagan king, to a status of holy praise to God.

The last stanza, in which the poet expresses a request for not only redemption from exile but also for the return to Jerusalem and the rebuilding of the Temple, does not refer to the book of Daniel. This could be due to the lack of a text that discusses these issues in Daniel or maybe as a symbol of breaking away from the spirit of exile of Daniel and creating a new language, a language of freedom.

The poem is permeated with love and passion to God, it stresses as many of R. Najara's poems do, the insignificance of man in comparison to God but simultaneously the empowerment of being allowed to praise, talk to, and ask God to deliver us.

## Yah Ribon Alam - Sovereign of all the Worlds

R. Yisrael Najara

Iraq

Yah ri bon a lam ve al ma ya a hu  
mal ka me lech mal cha ya Yah ri bon a lam  
ve al ma ya Ant hu mal ka me lech mal cha  
ya o va sey ge vu ra tach ve tim ha ya she far ko da  
mai le ha cha va ya

Yah ribon alam ve'almaya

ant hu malka melech malchaya

Ovadei gevurtach vetimhaya

shefar kodamai lehachavaya

Shevachin assader tzafra veramsha

lach Elaha kadisha di bera kol nafsha

Irin kadishin uvnei enasha

chevat bara ve'of shemaya

Ravrevin ovadach vetakifin

makich ramaya zakif kefifin

Lu yechi gevar shenin alfeen

la ye'ul gevurtach bechushbenaya

Elaha di leh yekar urvuta

perok yat anach mipum aryavata

Ve'apek yat amach migo galuta

amach di bechart mikol u'maya

Lemikdashach tuv u'lekodesh kudshin

atar di beh yechedun ruchin venafshin

Vizamerun lach shirin verach'shin

birushlem karta deshufra





# אגדלך

ר' אברהם אבן עזרא

ספרד, המאה ה-12

ואוֹדֶה בְּרַב פֶּחַד וְאִמָּה	אֶגְדֶּלְךָ אֱ-לֹהֵי כָּל נִשְׁמָה
לְךָ אֶכְרַע וְאֶכּוֹף רֹאשׁ וְקוֹמָה	בְּעֵמְדֵי תוֹךְ קִהְלְךָ צוּר לְרוּמִים
וְהֶאֱרִץ יִסְדָּה עַל בְּלִימָה	רְקִיעֵי רוֹם הֵלֵא נִטָּה בְּמִבְטָא
וּמִי הוּא זֶה בְּכָל קִדְמָה וְיִמָּה	תִּיּוֹכֵל אִישׁ חֲקוֹר אֶת סוֹד יוֹצְרוֹ
אֲשֶׁר הִפְלִיא וַעֲשָׂה כָּל בְּחֻמָּה	מְרוֹמָם הוּא עָלֵי כָּל פֶּה וְלִשׁוֹן
וַיִּתְקַדֵּשׁ שְׁמִיהּ רַבָּא בְּעֶלְמָא	וַיִּתְגַּדֵּל בְּגוֹי קְדוֹשׁ וְעֶלְיוֹן







## *Agadelcha - I will Praise You*

R. Avraham Ibn Ezra, Sfarad, 12<sup>th</sup> Century

I will praise You, God of all souls  
and I will thank you with great fear and awe.  
As I stand among your worshipers, Lord, and exalt you  
before you I will kneel and bow head and body  
The high heavens – Has He not stretched them forth with His speech?  
and the earth He founded upon nothingness  
Can a man explore the secret of his Creator?  
and who is He at the far ends of the East and West?  
He is exalted by every mouth and tongue  
he who did wonders, and has done all with wisdom  
His name will be magnified among the holy nation  
may His great name be sanctified in His world!

### ABOUT THE PIYUT

As in Shachar Avakeshcha (#5) In this piyut the poet, R. Avraham Ibn Ezra, seems to apologize for daring to praise God, but whereas in Shachar Avakeshcha the emphasis is on the time, dawn, which stirs special emotions in the poet, here the focus is on the situation, i.e. the gathering of multitudes of people to sing and praise together. The structure indeed lends itself easily to music and in the Aleppo tradition it is sung every Shabbat in a different melody in accordance with the maqam of the particular Shabbat. It also features in the Babylonian tradition as part of the daily bakashot preceding shahrit and in the Moroccan shirat habakashot. It is widely known now throughout the Jewish world by the more modern tune composed in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century by Mordechai Khalfon, a tune that manages to express the full gamut of emotions in the poem, from the reverence, respect and feeling of insignificance, through the praise and exultation resulting from appreciating God's might and handiwork, to the jubilant, joyous conclusion of uniting with the congregation to sing an eternal song.

## Agadelcha - I will Praise You

R. Avraham Ibn Ezra

Sfarad-Yerushalaim

Cm Dm7b5 G7b13 Cm Cm

A ga del cha e lo hey kol ne sha ma ve o

6 Fm G7 Cm 1. Cm 2. Eb

de cha be rov pa chad ve e ma ma Be Om di toch ke

11 Fm Cm Fm Cm

hal cha tzur le ro mem le cha ech ra ve e chofrosh ve'e

16 Fm G7 Cm Fm G7 Ab Fm

chof rosh ve ko ma le cha ech ra ve e chof rosh ve'e

20 Dm7b5 G7 Cm Cm

chof rosh ve ko ma re ki ei rom ha lo na

25 G Fm Ab G

ta be miv ta re ki ei rom

30 Fm

ha lo na ta be miv ta ve ha'

35 Cm G Cm Fm

a retz ye sa dah be li ma ve ha'

39 Cm G Cm

a retz ye sa dah be li ma





Agadelcha Elohei kol neshama	veodecha berov pachad ve'ema
Beomdi toch kehalcha tzur leromem	lecha echra ve'echof rosh vekomah
Reki'ei rom halo nata bemivta	veha'aretz yesadah al belimah
Hayuchal ish hakor et sod yotzro	u'mi hu zeh bechol kedma veyama
Meromam hu alei kol peh velashon	asher hifli ve'asa kol bechochma
Veyitgadal begoy kadosh ve'elyon	veyitkadash shemeh raba be'alma

## דרור יקרא ר' דונש בן לברט

פס-בגדד-ספרד, המאה ה-10

דרור יקרא לבן עם בת  
נעים שמכם ולא ישבת  
וינצרכם כמו כבת  
שבו נוחו ביום שבת

דרש נוי ואולמי  
נטע שורק בתוך כרמי  
ואות ישע עשה עמי  
שעה שועת בני עמי

דר פורה בתוך בצרה  
נתן צרי באף עברה  
וגם בכל אשר גברה  
שמע קולי ביום אקרא

א-להים תן במדבר הר  
ולמזהיר ולנזהר  
הדס שטה ברוש תדקר  
שלומים תן כמי נהר

הדוף קמי א-ל קנא  
ונרחיב פה וגמלאנה  
במוג לבב ובמגנה  
לשונו לך רנה

דעה חכמה לנפשך  
נצר מצנת קדשך  
והיא כתר לראשך  
שמר שבת קדשך





## *Deror Yikra - Freedom*

Dunash ben Labrat, Fez-Baghdad-Sfarad, 10th Century

Freedom shall He proclaim for His sons and daughters and will keep you as the apple of his eye  
Pleasant is your name and will not cease to be repose and rest on the Sabbath day

Seek my home and my temple and give me a sign of deliverance  
Plant a choice vine in my vineyard turn to the need of my people

Tread the wine-press in Botzra and also Babylon who overpowered  
Crush my enemies in anger and fury hear my voice on the day I call out

Lord, let the dessert bloom like a mountain myrtle, acacia, cypress and elm  
To those who counsel and to those who are cautious give peace as flowing as a river's waters

Conquer those who rise against me, Oh zealous God fill their hearts with fear and despair  
Then we shall open our mouths and fill our tongues with Your joyful song

Know wisdom for your soul and it shall be a crown upon your head  
Keep the commandment of your Holy One observe the Sabbath, your sacred day

### ABOUT THE PIYUT

Deror Yikra is one of the oldest and most popular Shabbat songs, known and sung throughout Jewish Diaspora and history. The many tunes to this piyut vary from ancient original compositions through borrowed and adapted foreign ones to modern day Israeli creations. It was written by Dunash ben Labrat, the tenth Century poet and philologist, who is considered the pioneer of the measured meter in Hebrew poetry and the harbinger of the golden age of Spain. His name appears in the first, second and fifth stanzas as an acrostic and is concealed in a playful manner in the other two.

The piyut revolves around the idea of the spiritual haven provided for the Jew on Shabbat. This personal, microcosmic salvation interweaves with the communal one of the Jewish people and in turn brings macrocosmic redemption to the whole world and elevates it to a higher spiritual level. The Jewish people are analogized in the Midrash to the groom while the Shabbat is the bride, and as spouses they take care of and protect each other. Just as the Jew observes the Shabbat so the Shabbat preserves and protects him. It redeems him from the burden of the daily routine and lets him taste a sample of the world to come, the flavor of the full and real redemption.



## Commentary

Deror Yikra – Deror means freedom and liberty, referring both to Shabbat and to the final redemption.

veyintzorchem kemo bavat – The analogy of the Jewish people to God's pupil of the eye, and that therefore He guards them as one guards and protects his eye is based on Zechariah (2:12): "Whoever touches you touches the pupil of his own eye" and on Deuteronomy (32:10): "He engirded him, watched over him, guarded him as the pupil of His eye".

Derosh navi ve'ulami – Both words refer to the Temple, which is the symbol of God's providence dwelling amongst us. We request that God will be reminded of and return to the abandoned Temple.

Neta sorek b'etoch karmi – The vineyard and the choicest vines are a common analogy in the Bible for the Jewish people (see Gen. 49:11; Isa. 5:1-7; Ps. 80:9). The analogy here can be understood as either referring to the Messiah or that the Land of Israel is the vineyard and the People of Israel are the vines who wish to be replanted there.

Deroch poora betoch Batzra – The meaning of the Hebrew word *poora* is vintage, and it is derived from *pura* – branch. Here the analogy is that God will tread on Israel's enemies as one treads grapes, and it is based on Isaiah (63:1-3): "Who is this coming from Edom, in crimsoned garments from Botzrah... why is Your clothing so red, Your garments like his who treads grapes? – I tread out a vintage alone; of the peoples – no man was with me".

Deroch poora betoch Batzra vegam Bavel asher gavra – These are names of Biblical nations that were later on applied to different nations under whose rule Jews lived. It is interesting to note that in the Babylonian tradition the word Bavel was changed to Edom so as not to offend the hosting nation.

Elohim ten bamidbar har, hadas shita berosh tidhar - The description of the flourishing desert as an indicator of the upcoming redemption is very common in Isaiah. Here the reference is to (41:19-20): "I will turn the desert into ponds, the arid land into springs of water. I will plant cedars in the wilderness, acacias and myrtles and oleasters; I will set cypresses in the desert, box trees and elms as well".

Velamazhir velanizhar shelomim ten kemei nahar – Those who remind others to observe and those who themselves observe Shabbat will be rewarded with flowing peace and harmony.

In this piyut the Shabbat and the redemption are intertwined, and more specifically the concept of Deror as reflected in the year of Jubilee. The Shabbat is for the Jews a day of freedom and liberty from the mundane world, a day which is all spirit and soul. Just as Shabbat follows the six days of work and demands that man will reflect on himself, be drawn into his inner spiritual spark and release himself from the material shackles, so also the Shabbat of the land, the *Shemitta* which follows six years of cultivating the land, is a year that let the earth purge its materialism. And just as there is a week of days and years, there is also a week of *Shemittas*, i.e. seven cycles of seven years each, which culminate with the Jubilee year. Ac-







according to the mystical teachings and the Midrash the future redemption will come in the seventh millennium.

The opening words of this piyut allude to the description of the Jubilee in Leviticus (25:10): “You shall proclaim release throughout the land for all its inhabitants. It shall be a jubilee for you: each of you shall return to his holding and each of you shall return to his family”. The jubilee is the year of complete redemption and the return of all things to their roots. The slaves return to their families, fields return to their original owners, debts are nullified and the land and its cultivators rest and relax.

Deror is also the swallow, the little bird which gave birth to many midrashic commentaries, especially around the verses in Psalms (84:1-2): “I long, I yearn for the courts of the Lord; my body and soul shout for joy to the living God. Even the sparrow has found a home and the swallow a nest for herself”. Rashi comments in the name of the Midrash that the swallow represents the Assembly of Israel. Ibn Ezra remarks that the Hebrew name of the bird, which also means freedom, is due to her habit not to sing while in captivity. In that she is just like the exiled Israelites who feel that their song was muted in their captivity and can only be renewed in the courts of the Lord. Ibn Ezra’s commentary echoes Psalms (137:4) “How can we sing a song of the Lord on an alien soil?”

The Torah is also analogized to the swallow, according to the R. Yehuda Liva of Prague (*Mahar”al*) In his commentary to the Talmudic Midrashim (B. Menahot 99): “The swallow does not accept human authority... and likewise the Torah... is not under human authority but rather reports directly to God... the swallow can dwell anywhere she chooses and so also the Torah can be everywhere and everything belongs to it... and just as the swallow is fragile and needs special protection so also if one does not observe the Torah it flies away from him like that swallow...”

Similarly R. Abraham Isaac Kook explains in his book *En Ayya* (274:11): “the real freedom is that which fires one’s inner qualities”. The Deror then is a free spirit who wants to live her life according to its innermost, deepest belief, without any pressure from outside factors.

And just as the Jews are commanded to let their inner essence free on the Shabbat day so also God promises that when the time comes the captives in exile will be released, as in the comforting prophecy of Isaiah (61:1-2): “The spirit of the Lord God is upon me. Because the Lord has anointed me. He has sent me as a herald of joy to the humble, to bind up the wounded of heart, to proclaim release to the captives, liberation to the imprisoned, to proclaim a year of the Lord’s favor”.

The final redemption will bring with it spontaneous outburst of joy and singing, which the poet describes in the last stanza by alluding to Psalms (126:1-2): “When the Lord restores the fortunes of Zion – we see it as in a dream – our mouths shall be filled with laughter, our tongues, with songs of joy”.

## Deror Yikra - Freedom

Dunash ben Labrat

Breslav

D min G min A min D min B $\flat$  G min A min G min7 C  
 De - ror Yik ra le - ven\_\_ im\_\_ bat ve yintzorchem\_\_ ke - mo\_\_ ba - vat

5 B $\flat$  G min A D min D min G min A D min  
 Na' - im shim chem ve - lo\_\_ yush - bat she - vu nu - chu be - yom\_\_ Shab - bat De-

9 D min D min A sus4 D min B $\flat$  G min7 D min C  
 rosh navi Derosh navi De - rosh na vi ve' - u - la - mi ve'ot ye sha\_\_ a seh\_\_ i - mi Ne-

13 D min A sus4 G min D min  
 ta so rek be toch kar mi Ne - ta so rek be toch kar mi she' - eh shav at be - nei\_\_ a - mi De-

17 F F G min A sus4 B $\flat$   
 roch De - roch\_\_ poo - ra poo - ra poo - ra be - toch Batz - ra

20 D min B $\flat$  G min B $\flat$  C  
 ve - gam Ba - vel\_\_ a - sher gav - ra\_\_ Ne-

22 F F G min A sus4 B $\flat$   
 totz Ne - totz tza - rai tza - rai tza - rai be' - af ev - ra she-

25 D min G min A 7sus4 D min  
 ma ko - li be - yom\_\_ ek - ra





Deror Yikra leven im bat  
Na'im shimchem velo yushbat

veyintzorchem kemo bavat  
shevu nuchu beyom Shabbat

Derosh navi ve'ulami  
Neta sorek b'etoch karmi

ve'ot yesha aseh imi  
she'eh shavat benei ami

Deroch poora betoch Batzra  
Netotz tzarai be'af evra

vegam Bavel asher gavra  
shema koli beyom ekra

Elohim ten bamidbar har  
Velamazhir velanizhar

hadas shita berosh tidhar  
shelomim ten kemei nahar

Hadoch kamai El kana  
Venarchiv peh u'nemallena

bemog levav u'vimgina  
leshonenu lecha rina

De'eh chochma lenafshecha  
Netzor mitzvat kedoshecha

vehi keter leroshecha  
shemor Shabbat kodshecha

# אמר ה' ליעקב

## מחבר לא ידוע

אֱמַר ה' לְיַעֲקֹב  
 בָּחַר ה' בְּיַעֲקֹב  
 גָּאֵל ה' אֶת יַעֲקֹב  
 דָּרָךְ כּוֹכַב מִיַּעֲקֹב  
 הַבָּאִים יִשְׂרָאֵל יַעֲקֹב  
 וַיֵּרֶד מִיַּעֲקֹב  
 זָכַר אֱלֹה לְיַעֲקֹב  
 תְּחַדֹּת יְשׁוּעוֹת יַעֲקֹב  
 טוֹבוּ אוֹהֲלֵי יַעֲקֹב  
 יוֹרוּ מִשְׁפָּטֶיךָ לְיַעֲקֹב  
 כִּי לֹא נֶחֱשׁ בְּיַעֲקֹב  
 לֹא הִבִּיט אָנוֹן בְּיַעֲקֹב  
 מִי מָנָה עֶפְרַיִם יַעֲקֹב  
 נִשְׁבַּע ה' לְיַעֲקֹב  
 סָלַח נָא לַעֲוֹן יַעֲקֹב  
 עֲתָה הִשָּׁב שְׁבוֹת יַעֲקֹב  
 פָּדָה ה' אֶת יַעֲקֹב  
 צִוָּה יְשׁוּעוֹת יַעֲקֹב  
 קוֹל קוֹל יַעֲקֹב  
 רָנִי וְשִׂמְחִי לְיַעֲקֹב  
 שָׁב ה' אֶת שְׁבוֹת יַעֲקֹב  
 תִּתֵּן אֶמֶת לְיַעֲקֹב

אֵל תִּירָא עֲבָדֵי יַעֲקֹב  
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 אֵל תִּירָא עֲבָדֵי יַעֲקֹב



# Anonymus

God said to Yaakov  
 God chose Yaakov  
 A star will emerge from Yaakov  
 In Days to come Yaakov will strike roots  
 A ruler will arise from Yaakov  
 Remember these things for Yaakov  
 Delight will come with the salvations of Yaakov  
 Your tents are good Yaakov  
 They shall teach your ordinances to Yaakov  
 For there is no sorcery in Yaakov  
 He perceives no wrong in Yaakov  
 Who can count the dust of Yaakov  
 God made a vow to Yaakov  
 Please forgive the transgression of Yaakov  
 Bring back Yaakov from captivity now  
 God has redeemed Yaakov  
 Command salvation for Yaakov  
 The voice is the voice of Yaakov  
 Sing and be joyous for Yaakov  
 God has brought back Yaakov from captivity  
 Grant truth to Yaakov

Fear not, My servant Yaakov  
Fear not, My servant Yaakov  
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Fear not, My servant Yaakov

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*Siddur Sim Shalom*

## ABOUT THE PIYUT

This piyut, which marks the conclusion of and farewell to the day of Shabbat (Motzai Shabbat), is sung throughout the Jewish world. The first half of each stanza quotes a different verse of blessing, comfort and consolation that speaks of Jacob, while the second half is a responsive, repetitive proclamation: “fear not, my servant Jacob”. The piyut contains an alphabetical acrostic. Jacob is the progenitor and as such the symbol of the Jewish people. By combining verses from across the bible the author creates an intricate fabric of statements, promises and words of comfort that are meant to build up and elevate of the persecuted Jewish nation. Maybe this is the reason it is sung at the end of the Shabbat when the relative calm and refuge are over and people start preparing for the dreadful routine of the weekdays.



## Amar Adonay leYaakov - God said to Yaakov

Anonymus

Iraq

A mar A do nai le' Ya a kov Al ti rah Av  
 di Ya a kov Ba char A do nai be' Ya a kov Al ti rah av  
 di Ya a kov

Amar Adonay leYaakov  
 Bachar Adonay beYaakov  
 Ga'al Adonay et Yaakov  
 Darach kochav mi Yaakov  
 Haba'im yashresh Yaakov  
 Veyerd miYaakov  
 Zechor eleh leYaakov  
 Chedvat yeshuot Yaakov  
 Tovv ohalecha Yaakov  
 Yoru mishpatecha leYaakov  
 Ki lo nachash beYaakov  
 Lo hibat aven beYaakov  
 Mi mana afar Yaakov  
 Nishba Adonay leYaakov  
 Slach na le'avon Yaakov  
 Ata hashev shevut Yaakov  
 Padah Adonay el Yaakov  
 Tzaveh yeshuot Yaakov  
 Kol kol Yaakov  
 Roni ve'simchi le Yaakov  
 Shav Adonay et shvut Yaakov  
 Titen emet leYaakov

Al tira avdi Yaakov  
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## א-ל אליהו

ר' אברהם אבן עזרא

ספרד, המאה ה-12

א-ל אליהו  
הנביא הבא נאא-ל אליהו  
בזכות אליהונע בשבי כי בו  
גם לא ראה שנהבו ירתום רכבו  
לא שוב לבוכחשי ומשנאות  
בשר ותרענהרב מחלי בראות  
יפות ובריאותצר עיניו ילטוש  
ישאל תשענההשקה צור מי ראש  
יום עיני לקדושישע א-ל קוראות  
קולו ותבנה [ותרנה]מתי תראה אות  
לך ולך נושאותלפני דל שואל  
אברהם הקרה נאהמלאך הגואל  
אנא הא-ל א-ל



## *El Eliyahu - Lord, please send Eliyahu HaNavi*

R. Abraham Ibn Ezra, Sfarad, 12<sup>th</sup> Century

He will lead his chariot	restless in captivity
His heart did not rest	nor envision sleep
My illness grows as I see	my leanness while my enemies
Are beautiful fat-fleshed	and graze
Our Rock, give them poisonous water	while the enemy shall glare
My eyes to the Holy One	of Israel will be raised
When will You give a sign	of redemption to those who call out
To You, O to You they raise	their voices and weep
Angel of Deliverance	come before this poor seeker
O Lord, God of	Abraham call him forth

### ABOUT THE PIYUT

“El Eliyahu” is a poem for Saturday night (Motzai Shabbat), which is sung to various tunes by most Sephardic communities. The prophet Elijah, as the harbinger of redemption, is a prominent figure in the Saturday night liturgy in which the Jews bid farewell to the Shabbat. Some commentators explain that according to tradition Elijah will not appear on the eve of the Shabbat or holidays, so as not to bother the people who are busy preparing for these special days, and it is therefore appropriate to ask for his arrival once we emerge from the celebratory mood. Others say that since the Talmud states that the observance of two Sabbaths would lead to redemption, we claim at the end of the Shabbat that we did our share and now await the coming of Elijah and with him, the Messiah. It is also very probable that the shift from the Shabbat, a day of rest and spiritual growth, to the weekly mundane routine, engenders a desire to be redeemed and delivered from the daily struggle for food and survival.

The author of the poem, whose name is alluded to in the acrostic, is most probably R. Abraham Ibn Ezra. It is interesting to note that the usually hidden poet reveals himself, be it ever so briefly, in the poem when saying “Please God, the God of Abraham, let me find...”. This is a paraphrase on the words of Abraham’s servant, in Genesis 24:12, asking God to help him find a bride for Isaac. The transition from the prayer for the other to a personal prayer is sort of an invitation and an incentive to those who follow in the footsteps of the great Rabbi Abraham Ibn Ezra to dare and create their own personal, immediate and direct communication channels with God.

## *El Eliyahu - Lord, please send Eliyahu HaNavi*

R. Avraham Ibn Ezra

Iraq (Maqam Bayat/Husseini)

El E li ya hu El E li ya\_\_ hu lich vod E li ya\_\_ hu ha na vi ha veh na

Bo Yir tom Ri ch bo Na ba she vi ki\_\_ bo lo\_\_ sha chav li\_\_ bo gam lo ra ah she na

El Eliyahu El Eliyahu

Bo yirtom richbo

Lo shachav libo

[Bizchut] Eliyahu HaNavi haveh na

Na bashevi ki bo

Gam lo ra'ah shenah

Rav machli bir'ot

yafot u'vriot

Kach'shi u'msanot

Bassar vatirena

Hashkeh tzur mei rosh

yom einai likdosh

Tzar einav yiltosh

Yisrael tish'ena

Matai tar'eh ot

Lacha u'lecha nos'ot

Yesha el kor'ot

Kolan vativkena [vatarona]

Hamalach hago'el

Ana haEl El

Lifnei dal sho'el

Avraham hakreh na





### *Commentary*

He will lead his chariot – the meaning of this stanza is uncertain. It might suggest that the Messiah, whose arrival Eliyahu is supposed to announce, is riding his chariot harnessed to none other than Eliyahu himself. This interpretation is supported by the imagery of the messiah as a rider (Zech. 9:9 and B. San. 98:1): “Rejoice greatly, fair Zion; raise a shout, fair Jerusalem! Lo, your king is coming to you. He is victorious, triumphant, yet humble, riding on a donkey”, and of Eliyahu as the driver of a battle chariot, helping the Israelite triumph (II Kings 2:11-12 and commentators *ibid.*): “A fiery chariot and fiery horses suddenly appeared and separated one from the other; and Elijah went up to heaven in a whirlwind. Elisha saw it, and he cried out, “Oh, father, father! Israel’s chariots and horsemen”!”. Eliyahu is further described as someone who is constantly on the move because Israel is still in captivity – in exile. It is also interesting to compare this description to Eliyahu’s interaction with Ahab, described in II Kings (18:44-45): “Ahab mounted his chariot and drove to Jezreel. The hand of the Lord had come upon Elijah; He tied up his skirts and ran in front of Ahab all the way to Jezreel”.



B'nai Jeshurun  
בני ישורון

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