

כל עלמות אהבוך - Kol Alamot Ahevucha

R. Israel Najara

About the Piyut

This Piyut comes from the praise tradition of Babylonian Jews, traditionally sung each Thursday. The author, Rabbi Israel Najara, turns to God with nostalgic pain, remembering the time when God carried the children of Israel in His bosom as they traversed the desert. Now the chosen people are abused and exploited by those nations that envied them during their years of favor in the Lord's eyes. In this Piyut, the author requests redemption and salvation for the people of Israel.

Hebrew Text

<i>Kol alamot ahevucha / ki sh'mecha turak shamen</i>	כִּי שְׁמֶךָ תוֹרֵךְ שָׁמֶן	כָּל עֲלָמוֹת אֶהְבוּךָ
<i>Oti tisa v'-cheik'cha / ka'asher yisa ha-oman</i>	כַּאֲשֶׁר יִשָּׂא הָאוֹמָן	אוֹתִי תִשָּׂא בְּחִיקְךָ
<i>Y'did chish'ki r'eh ishki / u-l'kol za'aki maher paneh</i>	וְלִקְוֹל זַעֲקִי מַהֵר פָּנֶה	יְדִיד חֲשָׁקִי רְאֵה עֲשָׂקִי
<i>Ad an echezeh sh'mi nivzeh / ami razeh oyvi shamen</i>	עֲמִי רְזֵה אוֹיְבֵי שָׁמֶן	עַד אֲנִי אֶחְזֶה שְׁמִי נִבְּזָה
<i>Shuva eli toch ohali / et heychali maher baneh</i>	אֶת הַיִּכְלִי מַהֵר בְּנֵה	שׁוּבָה אֵלַי תּוֹךְ אֶהְלִי
<i>Lama yafa t'hi cherpa / k'mo ashpa u-ch'mo domen</i>	כְּמוֹ אֲשַׁפָּה וְכְמוֹ דֹּמֶן	לָמָּה יָפָה תְּהִי חֶרְפָּה
<i>Riva riva mi-yad oyva / achal tuva ota saneh</i>	אָכַל טוֹבָה אוֹתָהּ שָׁנָה	רִיבָה רִיבָה מִיַּד אוֹיְבָה
<i>Oto sim tzur azuv atzur / yavo va-tzur vi-tamen</i>	יָבֹא בְּצוּר וְיִטְמֶן	אוֹתוֹ שִׁים צוּר עֲזוּב עֲצוּר
<i>El am nich'eh uz'cha har'eh / El mit'ga'eh ba-tzar oneh</i>	אֵל מִתְגַּאֵה בְּצָר עוֹנֶה	אֵל עִם נִכְאָה עֵזֶךָ הִרְאָה
<i>Zar'o harbeh sim ka-arbeh / ki he'emin be-elohey amen</i>	כִּי הֶאֱמִין בְּאֱלֹהֵי אָמֵן	זָרְעוֹ הִרְבָּה שִׁים כַּאֲרָבָה

English Translation

All of the maidens love You
For Your name is like finest oil
Carry me in Your bosom
As a nurse carries an infant
My desired love, see my oppression
And quickly turn toward my call
How long will I see my name despised
My nation thin, my enemy fat
Return to me into my tent
Build my sanctuary quickly

Why should the beautiful one be a disgrace
Like a trash heap, like dung
Fight her fight at the hands of her enemy
Who eats her goodness but hates her
Confine him abandoned and powerless
Let him hide himself in a rock
Show your strength to the disheartened nation
Exalted God who answers in troubled times
Multiply their children like locusts
Since they believed in the true God

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