

אודה לאל - Odeh LaEl

R. Shma'ya Kosson

About the Piyut

This unique Piyut is sung at various times in many communities. The text urges the listener to remain aware of oneself and to keep their soul pure regardless of the constraints of time and space. The universality of the message may be the reason that this Piyut has been reinterpreted many times by a variety of musicians in various periods, including modern day versions by Israeli artists Ehud Banai and Evyatar Banai.

The 'chorus' of the Piyut mentions *koch'vei boker* (the stars of the morning). As a result, this Piyut has become a morning Piyut, customarily sung by some communities as the first Piyut of the morning, before the daily morning prayers, and as part of the traditional morning *bakashot*.

Hebrew Text

Simu lev al ha-neshama / leshem sh'vo v'achlama

לְשֵׁם שְׁבוּ וְאַחֲלָמָה

שִׁימוּ לֵב עַל הַנֶּשְׁמָה

V'ora k'or ha-chama / shiv'a'tayim k'or boker

שִׁבְעָתַיִם כָּאוֹר בֹּקֶר

וְאוֹרָה כָּאוֹר הַחֲמָה

Odeh la-El levav choker / b'ran yachad koch'vei boker

בְּרוּ-יַחַד כּוֹכְבֵי בֹקֶר

אוֹדָה לְאֵל לִבָּב חוֹקֵר

Mi-kiseh kavod chutzavah / lagur b'erezt arava

לְגוֹר בְּאַרְץ עֲרָבָה

מִכֶּסֶּא כְבוֹד חֲצָבָה

Le-hatzila mi-lehava / u'l'ha-ira lifnot boker

וְלִהְיֶינָה לְפָנוֹת בֹּקֶר

לְהַצִּילָה מִלֶּהָבָה

Uru na ki v'chol laila / nishmat'chem ola l'mala

נִשְׁמַתְכֶם עוֹלָה לְמַעַלָּה

עוֹרוּ נָא כִּי בְּכָל לַיְלָה

Latet din cheshbon mif'ala / l'yotser erev va-voker

לְיוֹצֵר עֶרֶב וּבֹקֶר

לְתֵת דִּין חֶשְׁבוֹן מִפְּעֻלָּה

Ha-ne'eman b'fikdono / yachzirena lo kirtzono

יַחְזִירֵנָה לוֹ כִּרְצוֹנוֹ

הַנֶּאֱמָן בְּפִקְדוֹנוֹ

Ish lo gava ba-avono / Va-yehi erev va-yehi voker

וְיִהְיֶי עֶרֶב וְיִהְיֶי בֹקֶר

אִישׁ לֹא גָוַע בְּעוֹנוֹ

V'hachayu ha-aniya / yechida tama u-nekia

יַחֲדָה תָּמָה וְנִקְיָה

וְהַחַיּוֹ הָעֲנִיָּה

Va-asher nafsho lo chiya / va-asher yizkeh l'or haboker

אֵיךְ יִזְכֶּה לְאוֹר הַבֹּקֶר

וְאֲשֶׁר נִפְשׁוֹ לֹא תָחִי

Noam adonai lachazot / nizkeh u'vashana hazot

נִזְכֶּה וּבִשְׁנָה הַזֹּאת

נֵעַם ד' לְחַזוֹת

Bi-smachot tachat r'gazot / boker tishma koli boker

בֹּקֶר תִּשְׁמַע קוֹלִי בֹקֶר

בְּשִׂמְחוֹת תַּחַת רִגְזוֹת

English Translation

Pay heed, pay heed, to your own soul:
As bright as is the sun's warm glow,
I thank the God who probes all hearts
In this wilderness she roams,
To redeem us from wrath's flame
Awake! Awake! For every night
And there accounts for her deeds that day
If He finds her fair and fetching,
Like a bride dressed for her wedding,
Thus restoring her to Him,
No one need die in his sin,
Don't let her be a homeless waif,
He who cannot keep her safe,
May we see this very year God
And say, our griefs replaced by cheer,

Opal, amethyst, and gold,
Far brighter than the morning!
When stars sing in the morning.
A gemstone hewn from God's throne,
And light our way before morning.
Your soul ascends to a place on high
To the Maker of night and of morning.
Clothed in prayer and thanksgiving,
It will be in the morning.
You'll be her faithful guardian.
For after night comes morning.
Once so innocent and chaste.
What light will he have in the morning?
In His graciousness appear
"You shall hear My voice in the morning."

Recording by R. David Menchem and Yishai Menachem