

## שחר אבקשך - Shachar Avakeshcha

R. Solomon Ibn Gabirol

### About the Piyut

This poem was written by the great poet and philosopher Rabbi Solomon Ibn Gabirol during the 11th century. The Piyut opens with a statement of time - the dawn. This leads into a description of the light as a differentiator, creating and renewing things, giving them their form and volume. At this hour, daybreak, the poet chooses to request an audience with his God, between the uncertainty of the night and the fullness of the dawn. The poet is searching for the light that will clarify, explain, and differentiate the things as God did during the creation of the world.

### Hebrew Text

*Shachar avakeshcha tzuri u'misgabi*

שחר אבקשך צורי ומשגבי

*E'eroch lefanecha shachri vegam arbi*

אערוך לפניך שחרי וגם ערבי

*Lifnei gedulatcha e'emod ve'ebahel*

לפני גדלתך אעמוד ואבהל

*Ki eincha tir'eh kol machshevot libi*

כי עינך תראה כל מחשבות לבי

*Ma zeh asher yuchal halev vehalashon*

מה זה אשר יוכל הלב והלשון

*La'asot u'ma koach ruchy betoch kirbi*

לעשות ומה כח רוחי בתוך קרבי

*Hineh lecha titav zimrat enosh al ken*

הנה לך תיטב זמרת אנוש על כן

*Odcha b'od tih'yeh nishmat Eloha bi*

אודך בעוד תהיה נשמת אלה בי

### English Translation

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

Recording by the Mark Eliyahu Ensemble