

יונתי זיו יפעתך - Yonati Yifatech Ziv Rabbi Israel Najara

About the Piyut

This is a central matrimonial Piyut, sung traditionally amongst the Jewish communities of Mumbai and Afghanistan. According to the traditions of this community, this Piyut accompanies the groom as he receives the bride walking towards the *Chuppah* (wedding canopy). The groom sings this to the bride, unaccompanied. The lovers in the poem represent both the individuals about to be married and the marriage between the people of Israel and God.

Hebrew Text

<i>Yonati ziv yif'atech / Dama li'ch'sil v'-chimot</i>	יוֹנָתִי זִיּוֹ יִפְעֲתְךָ	דָּמָה לְכַסִּיל וְכִימוֹת
<i>Va-ani l'-ahavatech / ashir shir al alamot</i>	וְאֲנִי לְאַהֲבָתְךָ	אֲשִׁיר עַל שִׁיר עֲלָמוֹת
<i>Nava mi-kol alamot / nava mi-kol alamot</i>	נָאוֹה מִכָּל עֲלָמוֹת	נָאוֹה מִכָּל עֲלָמוֹת
<i>Nad'du li-t'shukatech / me-afapai t'numot</i>	נִדְדוּ לְתִשּׁוּקָתְךָ	מִעַפְפֵי תְנוּמוֹת
<i>Sif'totayich shoshanim / not'fot mor ahava</i>	פְּתוֹתֶיךָ שֹׁשְׁנִים	נוֹטְפוֹת מֵרֶ אֶהָבָה
<i>Eynayich k'mo yonim / bo'arot esh lehava</i>	עֵינֶיךָ כְּמוֹ יוֹנִים	בּוֹעֲרוֹת אֵשׁ לְהָבָה
<i>Mid'barech li areva / mid'barech li areva</i>	מִדְּבָרְךָ לִי עֶרְבָה	מִדְּבָרְךָ לִי עֶרְבָה
<i>Mi-shir sharim v'nogim / hogim oz v'-ta'atzumot</i>	מִשִּׁיר שָׁרִים וְנוֹגִים	הוֹגִים עֲזֹ וְתַעְצוּמוֹת
<i>Rani ki chish ev'neh ir / ha-hulala b'-tevel</i>	כִּי רָנִי חִישׁ אֶבְנֶה עִיר	הֵהָלָלָה בְּתֵבֶל
<i>B'nei edom v'-se'ir / eshbor k'-shever nevel</i>	בְּנֵי אֶדוֹם וְשַׁעִיר	אֲשַׁבֵּר כְּשֶׁבֶר נֶבֶל
<i>Raglech efdeh mi-kevel / raglech efdeh mi-kevel</i>	רָגַלְךָ אֶפְדֶּה מִכָּבֶל	רָגַלְךָ אֶפְדֶּה מִכָּבֶל
<i>V'-al son'ech a'ir / kin'a k'-ish milchamot</i>	וְעַל שׁוֹנְאֶיךָ אֶעִיר	קִנְאָה כְּאִישׁ מִלְחָמוֹת
<i>Al yirpu yadayich od / Tz'viya al tira'i</i>	אַל יִדְּיֶךָ יִרְפוּ עוֹד	הֲצַבִּי אֶל תִּירְאִי
<i>Et yeter tzonech efkod / Yisrael mi-korai</i>	אֶת יֵתֶר צֹאנְךָ אֶפְקֹד	יִשְׂרָאֵל מִקְרָאִי
<i>Eram b'-chol har va-i / eram b'-chol har va-i</i>	אֶרְעִם בְּכָל הָר וְאִי	אֶרְעִם בְּכָל הָר וְאִי
<i>Ashivam me-eret, nod / Oshiv arim n'shamot</i>	אֲשִׁיבֵם מֵאַרְצְךָ נֹד	אֲשִׁיב עָרִים נִשְׁמוֹת

English Translation

My dove, your splendid beauty resembles Orion and the Pleiades
Because of my love for you I will sing a song on *alamot*
Most beautiful of maidens, most beautiful of maidens
My desire for you makes slumber wander far from my eyelids
Your lips are like roses, dripping with loving myrrh

Your eyes are like doves, burning with blazing fire
Your speech is sweeter to me, your speech is sweeter to me
Than the songs of singers and musicians singing of might and strength
Rejoice for I will quickly build the city most praised in the world
The sons of Edom and Seir I will break like pottery
I will free your legs from chains, I will free your legs from chains
And I will arouse my rage against your enemies like a warrior
Your hands will be weak no more, fear not Gazelle
I will remember the rest of your flock, Israel who I have called
I will shepherd them on every mountain and coast, I will shepherd them on every mountain and coast
I will return them from the land of their wandering, I will settle the ruined cities

Translation by Abigail Denmark