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BEN STEINBERG
COMPOSER OF MODERN CHAZZANUT

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In this first decade of the 21st century, there is a concern about the evolution occurring in the music of today's in the Reform synagogues. Congregations are moving away from the traditional, modal, melodies of prayers to melodies that have been composed in the youth camp movements. This music which is inspired by the folk music of the 1960's and uses guitar gives the worship service a 'sing-a-long' feel. There is a belief in these congregations that only by having this type of music in worship are people able to fully participate in prayer. Many of the congregations have eliminated the older melodies and traditional nusach of the worship in favor of these new 'modern' songs. The songs that come from the camps are easy to sing but many of the melodic lines have little to do with the text, the liturgy and the traditional nusach that has been sung for generations. Along with the trend to congregational participation, the great choral music of the 19th and 20th century is also disappearing from modern Reform worship.

Even though this trend of using mostly camp music in synagogue worship is increasing, there are still a few composers who are trying to keep the traditional chazzanut and choral composition alive. Ben Steinberg is considered one of the greatest of the modern composers who using traditional chazzanut in his works. His combining of the traditional nusach and chazzanut with western harmonies helps make these melodies palatable to the modern ear. His compositions have a grace and gentleness that is accessible to volunteer choirs and inviting to the congregation. His view has about synagogue music is formed from a lifetime of being surrounded in traditional chazzanut and modern western composition. Ben has a great knowledge and understanding of Hebrew liturgy, choral technique and music composition that has enabled him to enrich

synagogue music for decades, and shown him to be a leader and innovator of contemporary Jewish choral music.

According to Ben Steinberg, Jewish music is in his blood. He was born in on January 22, 1930 in Winnipeg, Canada. His father was Alexander Steinberg, the first hired fulltime cantor at Congregation Shaarei Shomayim in Toronto. Ben grew up surrounded by chazzanut and nusach. He claims, "I knew the elements of nusach before I could even talk..."[1] His father, told stories of when other chazzanim came to Toronto for concerts, they would come to the Steinberg apartment to hear Ben, the Little Chazzan, sing. They would stand Ben on a chair and call out a mode for Ben to sing, and he would sing for them. In those days, many prominent cantors performed concerts in Toronto, which was considered a culturally intense Jewish City. By the middle of the 1930's there were approximately 48,000 Jews in Toronto. It became a very important cantorial center and there where many skilled chazzanim who sang there. In the 1940's Steinberg began to sing with Cantor Labele Waldman, a very popular cantor in Toronto. His choral conductor, Oscar Julius also liked to work with Ben. Julius always asked for Ben to join the choir, because of his sharp ear.

Ben began to sing as a cantor at the age of eight. He toured Canada going from city to city, as a concert cantor and sang with his father on the bima and in the choir of Shaarei Shomayim on Shabbat. On the bima, his father and he would daven the prayers, as a call and response, making the melodies up as they sang. For Ben this was very easy, "...in the traditional service in which I grew up, nusach was part and parcel. It was very

[1] Ben Steinberg, interview by author, tape recording, Port Washington, NY., 15 March 2005

easy to slide through the modes and so on."[2] At age 12 he began to conduct his father's choir when his voice changed, ending his singing and concert career.

Ben's love of music led him to pursue a music education. He attended the Royal Conservatory of Music in Toronto from 1948-1951 and followed that by studying music education at the University of Toronto where he studied composition, voice and piano. From 1953-1958 he taught in the Toronto area. After this, Steinberg was the head of the music department of Winston Churchill Collegiate Institute, and the Forest Hill Collegiate Institute, both also in Toronto. At Holy Blossom Temple, the first official synagogue in Toronto, he became the director of school music in 1950 and in 1960 the music director there for nine years. In 1970 Ben joined the staff of Temple Sinai in Toronto as music director and has been with them ever since. In 1996 he was officially named the "Composer-in-Residence" of Temple Sinai of Toronto.

Throughout his career as music director, Ben Steinberg has been composing music, writing articles about Jewish music and about working with and creating congregational choirs and. He has also written two books, now out of print. One book is on organizing community choirs and one on how to work with children's choirs. His compositions are many and range from instrumental works to vocal cantatas. Since 1963, he has written seven musical Shabbat services, several works for solo and accompaniment, and many cantatas and concert pieces.

The use of choir in synagogue music has been important to him since his days singing for his father at Shaarei Shomayim. Using a choir, according to Steinberg, can assist the cantor in engaging the congregation prayerful song. The choir helps to keep

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[2] Ben Steinberg, interview by author, tape recording, Port Washington, NY., 15 March 2005

the tempo even for the congregational parts of the singing, and help enhance the mood the cantor wants to bring to the prayers. In an article, based on a previous article "One People, One Voice" written in 1988, found on the Union of Reform Judaism Website, Steinberg gives some of his reasons he believes a congregational choir is necessary and that synagogue choral music needs to be well written.

> "A choir is a voice—a strong expression of Judaism and community. When a synagogue choir sings well-written prayer settings, it communicates with congregants in a remarkably direct way, usually with far more effect than through spoken words. In a real sense, music is our most eloquent language."[3]

In other words, Steinberg feels that through a good adult choir, congregational understanding of text and liturgy can be increased. Using a choir can help educate congregants in various aspects of Jewish life, history and religious meaning. More than entertainment, the synagogue choir helps to enhance the worship service experience as long as the choir has well written music and the members have the basic choral skills and standards. A well-written choral piece help to, "...illuminate the meanings of prayer texts, injecting into them understanding and discernment, as well as an emotional component that surpasses mere words."[4] Thus allowing the competent choir to inspire and guide the congregation when it is appropriate to join and when it is appropriate to participate by listening. A good choir is the supports the cantor in this. Only by having good compositions are adult choirs able to truly be an asset to the worship.

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[3] Steinberg, Ben, *Synagogue Choirs as Instruments of Prayer*, Union for Reform Judaism Website 2006 visited 17 February 2006 11:24 am. www. urj.org/worship/choral/steinberg

[4] ibid.

Along with an adult choir, Ben Steinberg supports the use of a children's choir in the synagogue. Having a children's choir fills several needs in congregational life. A children's choir helps to pass on the musical traditions to the next generation. It gives the children involved a sense of dignity, and importance by allowing them, to be a large part of synagogue worship. This can lead to those choir members feeling good about continuing a relationship with the Jewish world and the life in a synagogue. Today's proud member of a children's choir is tomorrow's proud member of a congregation. As with the adult choir, Steinberg suggests that the repertoire sung by the children's choir should be well written. These compositions, while they do not need to be difficult, should have some challenge to them, demanding some musical ability and skill so the level of the children's musicianship can grow.

One type of music that is often done in synagogue children's choirs, as well as in today's worship, is the style of the 'camp songs'. These songs are now used frequently in worship because there is a belief that by using these melodies the congregant can participate more within the service. Steinberg has very strong feelings about the use of these songs in synagogue worship setting. He believes everything has its place and, for Steinberg, camp songs do have their place, in a camp. He spent many summers at Camp Kutz and Camp Eisner and has enjoyed those songs in that atmosphere. However, he does not enjoy them in the synagogue and feels they do not belong in a synagogue worship setting. "...it never occurred to anybody that that music (camp songs) would attempt to replace synagogue music, adult synagogue music."[5] Knowing he might offend some people with the term 'adult synagogue music' verses 'camp songs', Steinberg supports his position by saying he does not consider the camp songs as 'adult'.

He feels that these camp songs are not demanding enough for the singer or listener and they have very little relationship to Jewish musical traditions. For him, a good composer of 'adult' synagogue music should be literate in Hebrew so the words can be properly accented, have a good musical background, and be literate in the text and liturgy of the Jewish worship service. An understanding of the traditional nusach and davening is also helpful. He has seen that many camp songwriters lack the basics of understanding text, Jewish music, and the ability to put a melody that fits the text. The Hebrew in many of the songs does not follow correct pronunciation, and there have been uses of inappropriate melodies for the texts. Steinberg firmly believes that, "The music has to complement the text and reveal the text."[6] otherwise, it does not work. The music should allow the listeners to understand what the liturgy is about, even if they do not understand the Hebrew and is the cantor's job to express the text to give the congregation this understanding. A composition for synagogue worship can be more than just folksy to give the congregant the feeling of participation. It can be more intricate and involve a more traditional style of mode and melody.

This leads to another aspect of synagogue music that Steinberg believes is missing from these popular camp songs is the use of the traditional modes of davening. The continued use of the 'camp songs' in worship is helping to eliminate the use of the traditional nusach and the rich traditions of the chazzanut. Still, the use of camp songs in synagogue worship is not entirely to blame for the loss of this musical style. From the very beginnings of Reform Judaism, the style of music has changed and evolved from the traditional davening to a more modern Western harmonic sound. Davening was not

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[5] Ben Steinberg, interview by author, tape recording, Port Washington, NY., 15 March 2005
[6] ibid.

considered dignified by the early Reform Jews of Germany and the United States. The Eastern European style of going in and out of the modes, with the congregation coming in at the appropriate times was discomforting to the founders of the Reform movement. Because of this, the call and response davening of the cantor and congregation has all but disappeared in the Reform Synagogue. One exception might be the chanting of the *Bar'chu*, but even that prayer is now often sung in a group together instead of having the cantor sing the first line and congregation reply. The loss of this style of prayer is a shame, for when done well it is a wonderful way to pray. Those who are able to pray by davening their prayers in this way have great skill and knowledge of Hebrew, liturgy, and the ancient modes. Steinberg would like to see this skill return to the services of the Reform Synagogue.

In a many ways, Steinberg is trying to keep the ancient musical tradition alive by writing music that combines the old style with the sounds of our modern world. He composes choral and instrumental pieces with the modern Western harmonic style he learned while studying at the Royal Conservatory and adds a solo part that is reminiscent of the cantorial recitative of old. The traditional modes he was immersed in as a child have specific structures, motifs and rhythm, while the contemporary music style has a plethora of modes, harmonic sounds and rhythms. Steinberg's greatest gift is the ability to combine these two styles, creating a fusion of old and new making the various prayer modes palatable to the modern ear. He writes for many skill levels, from the melodies in which a congregation can easily join in, to pieces designed specifically for cantor and choir, to the more sophisticated chamber music for choir and orchestra. He uses a call and response between cantor and choir reminiscent of the call and response davening of

his youth when he sang with his father. Being a modern composer, Steinberg also has a great understanding of the changing voice of the American Cantorate. He knows that modern Reform cantors are not just men. With more women choosing a career as cantor, the character of the music in the synagogue is different. Steinberg's compositions are not just for the tenor or bass singer, as the early cantorial recitatives were, he knows how to write music for all vocal styles. When he is commissioned to write a piece, he looks at who is going to be singing it and composes it in a key and style that best fits the soloist. Steinberg also knows that religious music has been influenced by the contemporary music of its society. People respond well to the familiar sounds, rhythms and harmonies. A good composer knows this and writes for the ever-changing modern musical ear. About this Steinberg says, "Artistic response to social change is not at choice—it is inevitable."[7] Every generation has it's own musical sound that resonates with its members. A composer who is able to combine the contemporary sound while retaining an older style of nusach that is pleasant to the ear has great skill.

Steinberg's ability to fuse the modern harmonies with the traditional nusach is shown in many of his compositions whether they are strictly for concert use or for worship. His blending of the cantorial recitative and the modern choral sound creates an extraordinary experience in the synagogue. Composed in 1990, the *Modim Anachnu Lach* prayer from the service *Kol Shalom (The Voice of Peace)* is a wonderful example of the fusion of the two musical styles in which Steinberg excels. In this composition Steinberg gives the listener a flavor of the chazzan and the meshorer, the chorus singer,

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[7] Hoffman, Lawrence A. and Janet R. Walton. *Sacred Sound and Social Change: Liturgical Music in Jewish and Christian Experience.* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1992), 269

of the 17th and 18th centuries. The melody goes back and forth between the cantor and the choir in some sections and the choir provides harmonic support to the cantor in others. The choral parts are structured and modern, while the cantorial recitative has a feeling of freedom. The feel of the ahavah rabah prayer mode is prevalent in the cantor's line. The *Modim Anachnu Lach* prayer, from the *amida* section of the worship service, praises and thanks God for guarding us, being merciful and giving us never ending love. As in all his compositions, Steinberg relies upon the text to drive the melody and rhythms. He puts the music to the words so smoothly that it seems as if that is exactly how it is suppose to go. John Planer, past-president of the Guild of Temple Musicians, has this to say about Steinberg's setting of *Modim Anachnu Lach*:

> "It was Ben's setting of *Modim anachnu Lach* that first called my serious attention to that text. I had read it over and over. I knew the syntax and vocabulary. But I had never really considered how beautiful its sentiments--I had never really internalized it--until I sang Ben's setting in *Kol Shalom*. As I age, I grow ever more grateful for the time that *HaShem* has granted me. The *Modim* text expresses that gratitude--to *HaTov* and *Ha-m'Racheim*. And the words *mei-olom kivinu lach* speak to me deeply--interpreting *kivinu* more as "hope" than "wait for."[8]

A composition that can bring more understanding and insight of the text is what Steinberg strives to do. The use of a traditional prayer mode and melodic movement of the cantorial line gives strength and meaning to every word of the text making this setting of the prayer incredibly powerful and moving.

With all the emphasis Steinberg puts on composing music that combines the traditional nusach modes with the modern harmonic style, it is ironic that one of his most popular pieces has no traditional modality at all. *Shalom Rav*, part of the service *L'cham*

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[8] John Planer, Professor, Thoughts on Ben Steinberg, e-mail message to Marla Goldberg, 7 December, 2005

Shirah commissioned in 1969 by Cantor Roy Garber, has become one of the most beloved prayers sung in today's Reform Synagogue. Cantor Garber specifically asked for a service that was nusach based, but *Shalom Rav* would not conform to any traditional modality. "*Shalom Rav* would just not allow me to shoehorn it into nusach. The text has a life of its own, and has a rhythm of its own..."[9] No matter what he tried, Steinberg could not make the prayer fit into a traditional mode, so he stopped trying. He just let the song write itself, and it was composed very quickly. He did not want to use it in *L'cham Shirah* due to its lack of traditional nusach modes, but his wife convinced him it was too beautiful to keep from the world. When the deadline for the completion of *L'cham Shirah* came near, and Steinberg had not been able to compose any other melody to *Shalom Rav*, he decided to leave it in the service. It's been popular ever since.

Aside from the *Shalom Rav*, traditional nusach can be found in Steinberg's liturgical compositions. *Yis'mechu*, a text found in the traditionally found in the Shabbat musaf liturgy, describes how people should rejoice on Shabbat. "Those who keep the Sabbath and call it a delight shall rejoice in your Kingdom." In the traditional modality of the musaf nusach, according to the Katchko *Thesaurus of Cantorial Liturgy, vol. I,* the melody of *Yis'mechu* has a feel of the *Ahavah Rabah* with its lowered third and raised fourth. However, in the Reform movement, the musaf service has been removed. The *Yis'mechu* text was kept by placing it in other worship moments such as the Friday night worship. Several composers have given new melodies to this text. Some stay with the modality of the traditional Shabbat nusach, others add a more westernized flavor to the melodic and harmonic style. Ben Steinberg, in his 1988 composition of *Yis'mechu,*

combines the western harmonies and the modality of the traditional hazzanut to create music that finds the best of each style to give this prayer a sense of both the modern world and the hazzanic modal traditions handed down through the generations. Within this composition, there are fragments of the ahavah rabah mode mixed within western style harmonies and chords.

In this *Yis'mechu*, as in much of his music, Steinberg highly focuses on the text. The phrases of this piece do not seem symmetrical. They do not seem to follow a typical 4 or 8 bar pattern. Many of these phrases in the refrain can be examined in by the half phrase, due to ending on the 'i' chord on the second measure. Harmonically, the piece uses more substitution chords than traditional chordal patterns.

Written mostly in the key of 'cm', the musical form of *Yis'mechu* has a verse refrain style in which each verse takes on a different melodic pattern to fit the text. It follows an A-B-A-C-D-A plus conclusion pattern. Section 'A', the refrain, while in a minor key has an upbeat, joyous sound to it. The rhythm is syncopated and bouncy. In cut time, tempo I shows the half note equaling 80. Steinberg gives us the description of the tempo as 'Lively'. All this helps to emphasize the joy of Shabbat that the text shows. "*Yis'mechu b'mal'chutcha shomrei shabbat v'korei oneg shabbat-Those who keep the Sabbath and call it a delight shall rejoice in thy kingdom.*"

Yis'mechu begins with a two-measure introduction that introduces the feel of the refrain. Harmonically, the two-measure introduction is a succession around focusing on the ii° chord giving a feel of the presence of the V. It leads us to the 'i' chord that begins section 'A' in measure 3. Section 'A' is made up of measures 3-15, 30-41, and 68-80, respectively. I will discuss this section using the measures used in the first time the

[9] Ben Steinberg, interview by author, tape recording, Port Washington, NY., 15 March 2005

refrain is heard. As previously stated, section 'A' begins in verse 3 with the 'i' chord. It begins a two bar half phrase that shows a succession framing that 'cm' chord. Measure 4 brings in the unusual use of a ^{b}VII chord, not normally found in the key of cm, in second inversion. It is followed by a 'ii' chord (replacing the traditional iv) and ending the phrase back at the i chord in measure 4. This first half phrase one follows the text, "*Yis'mechu b'mal'chutcha*". The second half of the phrase two, beginning in measure 5, follows the text, "*shomrei shabbat v'korei oneg shabbat*". The chords are a part of a succession going back and forth from the i and the iv chord. Measure 5 stays on the iv chord in root position. The melodic line of the accompaniment parallels the vocal line on beats 2 and 3 with the notes 'A^{b}'-'G'-'F' going down the scale in the treble clef using a two eight notes followed by a quarter note rhythm. In beat 4 of measure 5, going into beat 1 of measure 6, there is a link that follows this rhythmic pattern of three notes going down the scale in the bass clef beginning on the 'F' then going to 'E^{b}' to the 'D'. The vocal line the melody begins on beat two with two eighth notes followed by a half note. As in the accompaniment, the notes go down the scale from 'A^{b}' to 'F'. Its repeat, used as a link, in the accompaniment has the identical rhythm, played a third down. This melody is also repeated in the next measure in the vocal line. Measure 6 begins with the iv chord and continues to a vi of iv chord that goes to the iv in measure 7. The phrase continues with the i_6 chord followed by a ii_6 going to the i and ending with a half cadence on the V at measure 9. There is a melodic link in the accompaniment and the pattern begins again in measures 10 and 11. These measures are repeated in the chord progression of measures 3 and 4. Measures 12-15 also follow a succession surrounding the i and iv chords with the ii_7 chord and a ^{b}VII chord, once again in second inversion,

making up the phrase until a cadence if the i chord which begins on measure 16 and links us to section 'B'. Measure 16 temporarily changes the time signature to 3\2. This link slows the tempo to a half note now equaling 72. We return to cut time in measure 17 as we begin the new section.

Section 'B' using the text, "*Am m'kadeshei sh'vi-i, kulam yisb'u v'yitangu mituvecha-All the people who hallow the 7th day shall full enjoy thy goodness*" becomes more lyrical. It seems to focus on the holiness of Shabbat using the smoother, lyrical feel to give the sense of sacredness the words indicate. Section 'B' is one full phase, going from measure 17 to measure 25. It begins with a succession going from the iv in second inversion to a ii^{o7} and back to the iv in measures 17 and 18. Measures 19 and 20 are a rhythmic repetition of measures 17 and 18. The four measures are a good example of a melodic sequence. The chordal progression goes from a ii_7 chord in second inversion to a vii^6_4 chord to a V_6 and back to the i. In measure 21 the i chord goes from 1st inversion to a straight i chord. Measure 22 is a link to the next phrase. It uses the iv chord. The final measures of the phrase in section 'B' begins on measure 23 with a iv_6 chord. The phrase continues with a VI_6 to a iv_6 in measure 24, and ends with a half cadence in measure 25 with the V_7. The next 4 measures give a transition from section 'B' to the return of the refrain. Measures 26 through 29 progress from a iv, in second inversion, to a ii_7 to a ii to a VII chord in second inversion that brings us back to the i chord of the first measure of section 'A' in measure 29. This measure is also a rhythmical repetition of measure 2, from the introduction, which directs the melody back to the refrain. At this repetition, we return to tempo I.

This repetition of the refrain is exact until measures 42 and 43 where the transition to section 'C' begins. Measure 42 beings a link in that emphasizes the Bb in the key, which had been changed temporarily in measure 42 to a B natural. Its melodic pattern is similar to the link in measure 16 with a slight rhythmic variation. In measure 16 there is, beginning on beat 2, 4 eighth notes followed by a half note on beat three. The eighth notes go up the scale from 'F'-'G'-'A^b' back to the 'F' and ending on the half note with a 'G'. Measure 44 extends the rhythmic pattern by having two eighth notes followed by two quarter notes, and ending with a whole note, but follows the melodic pattern this time beginning on the 'D' going from 'D'-'E^b'-'F' back to 'D' and ending on the 'E^b'. This link also retards helping to bring us to what can the thought of as a temporary key change to A^b major. In section 'C' Steinberg slows the piece down even more. The half note now equals 60. It is described as 'Warmly'. It frames the text, "*V'hashvi-i ratzita bo v'kekashto-You were pleased with the 7th day and did hallow it (make it holy).*" While it is still in cut time, it almost has a feel of common time. While one could identify the harmonic chords in this section in its original key of 'cm', this section has the feel of the key of 'A^b' major without a 'D^b' being used. In 'cm' measure 44 would be considered to use the i chord and measure 45 would be using the VI. The chords we could use in 'cm' would be: i | VI | III | iv | V | i | v | ii | V | V_7 | V_7 | V. Notice the interesting use of both the minor v and the major V chord. However, since measure 45 uses the VI (of cm) it is can be easier to show the chordal progressions and successions in 'A^b', the VI of 'cm'. The chordal progressions and successions function better this way. This temporary key change to 'A^b' continues through measure 55. Using the key of 'Ab' we find the chordal harmonies to be: vi | I

| V | vi | VII | iii | vii | VI | VII | VII_7. Then we return to the original key in measure 55 with the half cadence on the G major chord. The use of the major key, the slowing of the tempo and the feel of the change of time signature all help to show the warm feeling of God's being pleased with Shabbat.

Measure 55 into measure 56 is a short link to section 'D' that is back in the key of 'cm'. This section, consisting of measures 56-67, colors the text, "*Chemdat yamim oto karata, zecher l'ma-asei b'resheit-The most desirable day you called it, in remembrance of the creation*" by changing time signatures and using specific pauses within the melodic phrases. The melodic style and rhythmic feel in this section are the most interesting of the composition. The tempo decrease in this section is the greatest decrease in the piece. The link of measures 55 and 56 retard the tempo to the quarter note equaling 70. In the middle of this section, the tempo begins to increase slightly. The composer indicates that this section should be sung 'Freely'. It therefore has more of a recitative feel than the rest of the composition. Measure 57 changes time signature from cut time to common time. The time signature for measure 58 is 5\4 and ends with 'train tracks' indicating a significant pause between the words, "*karata*" and "*zecher*". This pause before the word, "*zecher-remember*" strengthens its meaning, giving more emphasis of the idea to 'remember the creation'. This is a good example of how the music can fit text, and give true meaning to the words and emotions behind them.

Measures 59 and 60 return to common time, measures 61-62 are in 3\4 time and we return to common time in measures 63-67. This is all done to follow the words of the text. Section 'D' has one three measure phrase and two four measure phrases. Phrase one in this section has an interesting use of the flat ii chord in measure 68 on the text,

"oto karata" (*you called it*). The progression of this phase is: iv III | ^{b}ii | VI | VII_6. The use of the ^{b}ii, the neapolitan chord, gives a more interesting style and sound to the piece. The second phrase progresses by beginning with a VI and going to the VII to the i to the v back to a VII_6 and then back to the VI in measure 63. There is an interesting use, once again of a minor v in this instead of the 'normal' major V chord even though it is a weaker chord. This is used in measure 62 as a connection of *l'ma-asei v'reisheet* talking about the remembrance the making of creation. It goes minor for only a moment, and then v'reisheet (creation) is major. It is a wonderful painting of this text. This is also the section where the time signature goes to 3\4 time and then back to common time. The final phrase, which leads us back to section 'A' progresses to the V chord as a half cadence. The chordal structure of this phrase is: iv_6 iv | i_7 i^4_3 | ii_7 V_6 | V. Measure 67 transitions to next section, the refrain, with a fermata. The vocal line holds over to measure 68, while the accompaniment is silent. We return to the cut time and tempo I of section 'A'.

This section follows the same 'A' pattern until measure 80 where the coda, or conclusion of the composition begins. This coda begins with a short rhythmic and lyric repetition of measure 80 in measure 81. We repeat the word, '*oneg*' to show the joy of Shabbat. The chords in the coda are a succession around i and V going to the final full cadence of the piece. Instead of using the typical i -iv - V - i sequence, Ben Steinberg substitutes the ii chord for the iv making the final cadence: V ii | V_7 i ||. The conclusion of the piece has the vocal holding a C with the accompaniment playing a brief reprise of the basic '*Yis'mechu*' theme revolving around the i chord. This concludes the composition with a Western style full cadence that fulfills the feeling on completeness of

the Western ear. In this way, this Yis'mechu gives a taste of a recitative style of the traditional modes of the hazzanut while keeping a harmonic structure familiar to a modern audience.

Ben Steinberg's composition of *Yis'mechu* has many wonderful nuances and its melodic, harmonic, and rhythmic style paint the text of this piece with a mixture of modern and traditional modal and sounds and cantorial recitative. Its combination of a bouncy refrain and more sedate, recitative style of verse, gives this piece an interesting flavor. One critic, after hearing this *Yis'mechu* performed in concert, said the piece was jazz. At first, it looks simplistic in style. The refrain is joyous, bouncy and infectious. It is in the 'verses' where the analysis shows there are a lot of twists and turns, within the music that show how deceptively grand this piece really is. The changing of time signatures, the temporary key change, and the tempo changes all contribute to the technical excellence of this Steinberg piece. It is this very deceptiveness that makes this composition interesting and shows the great diversity of style that Ben Steinberg brings to all his music.

Most of Ben Steinberg's music uses the modalities of the traditional cantorial nusach. Like the *Mi Chamocha* of A. W. Binder, another composer who believes the text drives the melody, the use of the ahavah rabah mode is prominent in one of his versions of *Mi Chamocha/Tzur Yisrael.* Both compositions are written in 'E' ahavah rabah. Steinberg's piece is primarily for choir and cantor, while Binder's composition uses congregation and cantor. Looking at the melody lines of both of the pieces will show how these versions of this prayer are similar and different. Alone the melodic lines sound like any traditional nusach in the ahavah rabah mode. It is in the

accompaniment of Steinberg's piece that gives this *Mi Chamocha* more of the flavor of a "Western Music" composition. Focusing just on the melody shows the influence of the traditional modes in Steinberg's music.

For these pieces both composers begin with a lyrical melody sung by either choir or congregation comprising of three phrases. In Binder the phrases are four measures each, in Steinberg the first and second phrase are four measures each, and phrase three adds a fifth measure. In both versions the congregational/choir part is set in common time. The second phrases of each composition are repetitions of the first phrases, with some motive variation in the melodic line. They are followed by a cantorial recitative and end with a phrase of four measures. In Binder, the final phrase is a repetition of the motive of the third phrase, in Steinberg the phrase has a similar beginning to the third phrase, but changes going into the cadence. Steinberg's version of *Mi Chamocha* continues to the *Tzur Yisrael* however, the 'fine' could be at this point.

While the melodic lines are different, there is one small motive similarity found in both pieces. Binder uses the motive two times, while Steinberg uses it once. The motive is found at the end of phrase three of each composition leading to the cantorial recitative and in the final measure of Binder's Mi Chamocha. In the Binder, the motive begins on beat one with four eighth notes going down the scale beginning at the 'B' and ending on a quarter or a half note on an "E". This melody, being in the ahavah rabah mode, there is a 'G #' instead of a 'G-natural'. In measure four and five of phrase three, in the Steinberg, this motive also appears in an extended form. Like Binder, Steinberg begins on a 'B' and goes down the scale to the 'E', with a 'G#' in the scale. However, instead of using eighth notes this motive is extended, using quarter notes going to a whole note.

Technically this cannot be considered a motive in the Steinberg piece, being the only time this motive is used. Still, for those who are familiar with the Binder version the brief addition of this motive gives a bit of comforting familiarity to the listener.

Looking at how these composers paint the text of the *Mi Chamocha* can also show the differences in their individual style. Although both versions are in 'E' ahavah rabah, the melody and rhythms attached to the text differs. In the first phrase of Binder's composition, on the words "*Mi chamocha ba-eilim adonai,*" the melody arcs. It begins on the tonic 'E' and, with some passing tones, rises to the dominant "B" at the height of the phrase and returns to the 'E'. Steinberg's first phrase does not have this arc pattern. The melody begins on the tonic, 'E', and ends on the dominant, 'B'. This is a significant difference due to how they write for the word, "*adonai*". Should the melody rise when we sing God's name, or can the melody descend? An ascending melodic line on God's name can represent a spiritual ascendance. It is nice to rise up to *Adonai.* In contrast to this idea, a descending line that returns to the tonic of the scale can give a feel of completion to the line. This might give the feel of God being the beginning and the end. There is another idea to examine in this idea of ending the phrase on the tonic or the dominant. In Binder's *Mi Chamocha* as stated above, the phrase has a feel of ending. It is more separate from the next phrase of the piece. It makes the first two phrases a bit separate from each other. "*Mi chamocha ba-eilim adonai,*" stands apart from, "*Mi chamocha nedar bakodesh.*" In Steinberg's version, ending on the dominant gives the feel of wanting to continue onto the next phrase. The words do not feel complete without both phrases together.

Coming from different eras also effects how the music of Binder differs from Steinberg in the pronunciation of text and emphasis of syllable. Binder, writing in the early twentieth century, followed the Ashkenazic pronunciations of Hebrew. For the majority of his lifetime (1985-1966) Hebrew was considered a dead language rarely used for everyday speech. It was language for prayer. For the majority of Steinberg's life, the State of Israel has existed along with a spoken Hebrew that is the guide to pronunciation of the prayers in most synagogues today. Two examples in the pronunciation differences occur in the first line of the prayer. In Binder's version of the '*Mi Chamocha*' the emphasis of the word '*ba-ei-lim*' is on the second syllable. It is on a half note while the other syllables are an eighth and a quarter note. In the Steinberg, the emphasis is on the last syllable, '*ba-ei-lim*' with the first two syllables having eighth notes and the lasts syllable consisting of two quarter notes. The word '*adonai*' is also emphasized differently. In Binder the emphasis is on the '*do*' using four eighth notes and in Steinberg the emphasis is on the '*nai*' with this syllable staying on a whole note. Thus, the differences between the Ashkenazic and the modern Hebrew pronunciation are clearly shown. Ben Steinberg feels strongly that the use of modern Hebrew in today's music is very important. According to him the music should conform to the text, and how that text is pronounced.

In the cantorial recitative section, both composers give a feel of freedom to the phrases and text. Binder does not give a definite time signature for the soloist. There are no definite measures indicated. It seems to be written more for someone who understands the traditional chazzanut patterns over the modern strict time of those who are more familiar with western music. There is a freedom given to the singer at this point

in the piece. Steinberg gives several time signatures in this section to help the modern singer who is used to having time signatures to indicate tempo and melodic pattern. He beings with a measure of a 4/4 time in the measure 16 the first measure of the recitative, goes to a 6/4 time in the second measure and returns to the 4/4 time in measure 18. In measure 19 the time changes, again to a 5/4 signature, and returns to the 4/4 signature in the next measure. The final time change is on measure 23 where it is indicated to be a 2/4 time right before the choral section begins again in measure 24, back in the 4/4 time signature. The specific use of changing time signatures aids the soloist, who might be unfamiliar with the traditional chazzanut style, in the phrasing of lyrics. Binder's version appears to assume the soloist is a chazzan and knows the modality and phrasing of a cantorial recitative. Steinberg's version does not take that knowledge for granted and allows for either a soloist who is trained to sing with the correct style, or for a soloist who is untrained in this style to be able to sing this section with the characteristics and phrasing of a cantorial recitative. Steinberg also clearly states that this recitative section should be sung 'slowly and freely'.

In the final phrase, '*adonai yimloch l'olam va-ed*', Binder repeats the melody and motives of phrase two, with some minor adjustments in rhythm due to the pronunciation of the text. It begins with a pick-up note at the end of the recitative to emphasize the '*do*' in the word '*adonai*' and has a slight variation of rhythm in the second measure of the phrase to accommodate the word, '*l'olam*'. Instead of two quarter notes followed by a half note, this second measure of the phrase has two quarter notes followed by a dotted quarter note and an eighth note. The last two measures of section only differs in the final

note, which, for the fine, is a half note on the tonic, instead of a quarter note. This gives this piece a sense of completion. Musically, nothing else is needed.

The final phrase of the Steinberg piece is not a repetition of an earlier phrase. Beginning on measure 25, with a two eight note pickup on measure 24, the melody and rhythm of the phrase *'adonai yimloch l'olam va-ed'*, follows the text by emphasizing the syllables according to modern Hebrew, and gives of the majesty of the words. Once again, Steinberg emphasizes the second syllable of the word, *'adonai'* this time by putting that syllable on dotted half note, on a high 'E' on the first beat of the measure. The end of the phrase does not end on the tonic, or the dominant for a half cadence, but on the fourth note of the scale, the 'A'. This leads directly into the next prayer, *'Tzur Yisrael'* which actually is what comes next in the Steinberg piece. However, it could be ended at this point in the music even though it does not conform to the western listener's taste of ending on a tonic. Ending on the fourth, does show that there is more to come in the service whether or not there is a musical continuation to the *'Tzur Yisrael'* or not. The unusual use of this fourth of the scale may make some people uncomfortable, but it does make the listener pay attention and, thus, focus more on what is being sung.

The flowing style of Steinberg's music can be shown in his *Meditation; Oseh Shalom* for choir and organ. This piece is a great example how he takes a simple melody and expands it with unique harmonies to create a gorgeous meditation that is extremely fitting for the message the words convey and its place within the worship service. As the ending of the *t'filah* following the silent personal prayers of the congregant, this *Meditation; Oseh Shalom* allows the listener to share in the feeling of peace and hope of peace that is expressed in the text.

The text of this prayer is brief, just one line. *Oseh shalom bimromav, hu ya-a-seh shalom aleinu ve-al kol yisrael, v'im'ru amen—May the one who creates peace in the high heavens create peace for us, for all Israel, and let us say, amen.* Steinberg's composition likewise is brief, a mere 25 measures, of which only half uses the text. The beginning of this piece is organ alone. This can give those who are still absorbed in prayer a chance to complete their thoughts without feeling intruded upon by words being articulated. For those who have completed their personal prayers by the beginning of this piece, the opening twelve measures help with the shifting of personal prayer back to the communal aspect of prayer.

Looking at this composition, a modern musician might see it in the key of B^b major. It has all the notes and chords of B^b. However, Steinberg's use of the IV, vi and vii chords over the use of the dominant V chord also gives this piece of a feel of the traditional prayer mode, *Adonai Malach.* This is what makes this meditation another good example of the way he fuses the traditional and modern sounds. The tempo is adagio, with the quarter note equaling 72, giving the this prayer its smooth, flowing feel. For 12 measures, the organ plays alone. The choir does not enter until the last beat of measure 12. The phrases are basically six measures each and end on the I chord, but the division of phrase is more implied than discernable to give the flowing feel to the piece. The piece's first phrase begins with a pick-up measure with just a quarter note on the high D. Measure 1 of the phrase, and the composition, starts with on the vi chord using the notes of E^b, G and B^b with a passing tones of A and D that help to lead the melody to measure 2. The phrase progresses to the vi chord in measure 3 and returns to the I in measure 6. Beginning with measure 1, the chordal structure of the phrase is: vi | ii^7 -

vi^4_3 - V^6_4 – vii^{o7} | vi | IV- vii^o_6 | V – vi^4_3 – V - vii^{o6}_4 | I – I^7 – I || Measures 1 and 3 both stay on a specific chord with little significant change. They do have passing tones, but mostly remain on specific chord. In measure 1 it is the 4, in measure 3 it is the vii. In measure 4 the first four beats are primarily the IV only changing to the vii on the last beat. The last measure of the phrase stays in the feel of the I chord, adding a seventh in beat two before returning to the tonic chord. The cadence of this phrase, going from the vii^o to the I gives the Adonai Malach style within this modern piece. The use of the seventh chord throughout this phrase, and the whole composition, gives its harmonies a beautiful dissonance and resolve that gives simple melody a fullness and drive. Dynamically, the phrase begins piano and begins to crescendo in the end of measure 5 for a mezzo-piano in measure 6. The melodic structure of the phase has a slight subdivision using a 2 measure then a 4 measure pattern. With the exception of a pause in measure 2 the line is continuous. This feeling of perpetual motion is strongest in measure 4 giving the line that flowing feel that makes this piece so calming.

Phrase two, measures 7 through 11, are mostly a succession between the I and iii chords with a IV and ii added in the first beat of measure 8 and again used in the cadence in measure 10 going back to the I in measure 11. The phrase follows this structure: iii – I^6 - I^6 – I | IV – ii - iii^7 – iii | I – I – I- I | I^{sus} – I^6 – iv^9 – ii^7 - IV^6_4 | I || This time the cadence is more modern with the use of the ii-IV-I movement. There is a retard on the last beat of measure 8 going into measure 9 followed by a rallantando in measure 10 before returning to Tempo I in measure 11 for a transition into the choral section of the piece. The dynamics of this phrase are a continuation of the crescendo beginning in phrase 1 going to a mezzo-forte in measure 7 and remaining there until the end of

measure 12 in the next phrase. The melodic structure in the second phrase only has implied pauses and has no discernable subdivision.

In measures 12-25, the choir restates the melody given by the organ in the first two phrases of the piece. There is a slight difference in chordal progressions and successions and a slight difference in the melodic line, making this section B of the composition a variation rather than a repetition of section A. With the exception of 4 ½ measures in the middle of this section the choir sings in unison. Phrase 1 of section B follows a similar melodic pattern of the first phrase in section A. There is an implied pause on measure 14 that parallels the pause on measure 2. The difference here is that in measure 2 there is an actual eight rest, while in measure 14 there is no rest, just a pause marking. The last four measures of the phrase have no feeling of pause and Steinberg even marks for no breath in measure 16 to give the feel of continuous flow. The phrase begins with the choir singing the unison from measure 13 through 16 and then dividing into parts beginning on measure 17. The division of parts continues through the second phrase to the beginning of measure 21. The choir ends with the unison for the last measures of the composition. This gives the section B more of a feeling of an arc with these measures having more texture, thus making them the high point of section. It gives it a feel of having no pause and moves the composition to the end. The word '*yisrael*' is where Steinberg places this high point.

As in section A, the chordal structure of section B begins with a iv chord to set up the first phrase. Measures parallel section A with which ones only have a single chord with passing tones, and which measures have observable choral changes. Most of the chordal pattern is the same as in section A, but there are a few alterations in the structure.

The chordal structure in section B phrase one, beginning on measure 13 and ending on measure 18, is: vi | ii – ii - ii - vii^{o6}_4 - ii | vii^{o5}_3 – vi – vi^6_4 – vi^7 | IV – IV – IV- V - vi | V - V^7 | I - I ‖. Unlike section A phrase 1, in this phrase the cadence does not have the vii^o leading to the I and the but the more modern cadence progression of V-I.

Measures 19 through 25, the final phrase of the composition has more distinct pauses, but still has the feel of the continuous flow of sound that is prevalent throughout the piece. There are eight note rests on the third beat of measure 21 and 22, and there is a pause marked before the fourth beat of measure 24 giving a slight separation from the main part of the text and the 'v'im'ru, amen'. Chordal progressions and successions can be seen in this phrase that has this pattern: iii - iii^7 – vi | ii – ii^7 | ii^7 – IV^{sus} – IV^7 | I^7 | iii – iii - I | ii^6_4 – IV^7 - ii^6_4 – vii^o | I | I ‖. Steinberg's ending of the composition with the cadence of vii^7 – I brings the feel back to the *Adonai Malach* mode of the traditional chazzanut.

There is no cantorial part in this *Meditation; Oseh Shalom*, but because of his primary use of the vii^o over the V chord in the cadence, Steinberg gives us the feel of the traditional mode without making those use to a modern choral sound uncomfortable. The beauty of this composition is in the fusion of the modern chordal structure and the chordal progression of the *Adonai Malach* mode. The flowing nature of the piece helps the to impart the feeling of peace the text of the prayer evokes making this *Meditation; Oseh Shalom* another great example of Steinberg's gift of fusing two musical styles together.

A very popular composer, Ben Steinberg receives commissions from all over North America and is a frequently requested lecturer on Jewish Music History and Style all over the world. He has traveled to Japan, Hong Kong, Israel, and Australia. His works vary from solos with single accompaniment to fully orchestrated cantatas with soloist, adult and children's choir. Cantor David Margules describes Steinberg as, "the most prolific composer of Jewish music today."[10] The popularity of his music, lecturing, and choral conducting skills keeps Steinberg's schedule, traveling from city to city giving insights into his musical style and beliefs, extremely busy.

Steinberg's music has touched and influenced many cantors, composers and other modern temple musicians. Those who know his music appreciate his gift for creating melodies that keep the integrity of the text intact while subtly weaving the traditional modes throughout the piece. This can have a profound and powerful impact on the listener. Cantor Benjie Ellen Schiller describes Steinberg's music as gentle, and sensitive with easy and smooth transitions and a lush beautiful flow. She admires his use of chazzanut in the compositions and how the accompaniment complements the cantorial line without overpowering it. Schiller is also impressed with Steinberg's understanding of what the contemporary listener can handle when combining a modern choral sound with the traditional modes of the chazzan keeping those modes alive in today's synagogue music.

> "So, what he's done for us, for all of us, is given us a model of how chazzanut can be used. So, even a *Mi Chamocha* that's a melodic choral piece, let's say he would have the *malchut'cha* section, the *shira hadasha* section and the *v'ne'emar* in chazzanut, absolutely in nusach with a solo

[10] Jewish News Weekly of Northern California-website http://www.jewishsf.com

for the cantor."[11]

Steinberg's music can have a majestic feel, without being ostentatious. Most compositions that are majestic only feel right in the concert hall. Steinberg writes majestic pieces that can be used more regularly. They can be used in the synagogue and people are drawn the melodies.

Another aspect of Steinberg's writing that impresses Cantor Schiller is the majesty of his style and his lyricism. "He is able to use the art of melody."[12] She finds a beauty in the harmonies and patterns in Steinberg's writing. The long flowing, lyrical lines he used, as he does in the *Meditation; Oseh Shalom*, helps to create a sophisticated musical style with its elements of chazzanut and modern composition. The melodies may be simple, but his arranging of them is exquisite. "Ben can take a simple melody and can refine it to create a flowing, lovely, piece."[13]

Steinberg's music is not only accessible for the cantor and choir, but for the congregation as well. The refrains are very singable and give an enriching contrast to the beautiful, technical cantorial recitative. Cantor Mark Childs describes Steinberg's music as a style that, "...speaks to the congregations that have a cultivated taste in synagogue music, a high-level amateur choir, a vocally gifted cantor, and still like to participate in the singing."[14] With the trend of more congregational musical participation in Reform worship, having music that allows for congregation singing as well as musical moments needing more skilled musicians is important. This is one of Steinberg's fortes. John Planer lauds Steinberg's ability to do this. "He provides distinct roles for cantor, choir,

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[11] Benjie Ellen Schiller, interview with author, tape recording, New York, NY, 10 November 2005
[12] ibid
[13] ibid
[14] Mark Childs, Cantor, Views on Ben Steinberg, e-mail message to Marla Goldberg, 14 December, 2005

accompaniment (organ or instruments), and the congregations—the four basic elements of liturgical music in the synagogue."[15] It is wonderful way to keep the call and response style of prayer in our congregations today.

Looking at the aspect of Steinberg's writing that most impresses cantors, other composers, and musicians is his skill in focusing on the text as he composes. When composing a melody, the first thing Steinberg looks at is the words. He studies the source of the text to get the inspiration to create a melody that complements the meaning of the words. John Planer notes that, "...he is extremely sensitive to the Hebrew texts; his music is soundly crafted."[16] Steinberg's painting of the text brings out the beauty of the prayers, and gives great depth to what is being sung. For Cantor Mark Childs, Steinberg's music is great because, "His settings are thoughtful and really serve as an interpretation of the words."[17]

Even within the praises of Steinberg's music, there is some criticism about his style. It has been noted by some that there is a similar feel to many of his pieces. You can hear a Steinberg tune and know it is Steinberg's. Michael Isaacson, another modern composer, likes Steinberg's music but appears to find it unchanging. In the June 1973 Journal of Synagogue Music he writes that Steinberg's music, "While conservative, pragmatic and always well-mannered, it is also gratefully mindful of its tradition in a deeply lyrical way."[18] In spite of loving the gentleness of Steinberg's music, Benjie

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[15] John Planer, Professor, Thoughts on Ben Steinberg, e-mail message to Marla Goldberg, 7 December, 2005
[16] ibid
[17] Mark Childs, Cantor, Views on Ben Steinberg, e-mail message to Marla Goldberg, 14 December, 2005
[18] Michael Isaacson, Composer, Views on Ben Steinberg, e-mail message to Marla Goldberg, 30 November, 2005

Ellen Schiller says, "In that lyrical style there is somewhat of a mark of his. There are phrases that repeat. I wish, sometimes, that his music had more fire."[19]

As John Planer says in an introduction to the Steinberg work, *Kol Shalom*, prior to performing it,

> "Composers reveal their values and feelings—they expose their very souls—by the insight in which they clothe the meanings of the words, by their sensitivity to each individual melodic line, by the integrity which they keep faith with tradition while reflecting contemporary musical sounds."[20]

This statement truly describes the music of Ben Steinberg. His great knowledge of liturgy, text, chazzanut, traditional modes and modern music help him to create compositions that help to keep Jewish musical tradition alive while keeping it palatable to the modern listener. His understanding of the modern Cantorate and congregation gives compositions that are beautiful to listen to and pleasing to sing. Cantor Marshall Portney describes this music as, "...an important repository of religious expression, based solidly in a deep understanding of the composer's craft, and bridging his thorough grounding in Jewish musical tradition with contemporary expression, combined with the extraordinary gift for melody."[21]

From his beginnings as the 'Little Chazzan', to his creation of numerous works for synagogue worship and reflection, Ben Steinberg remains one of the greatest of the modern composers. It is not just in his compositions that he will leave his mark in the world of Jewish music, it is also in the sharing of his knowledge, not only of composition, but also of choral technique and congregational singing that add to his

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[19] Benjie Ellen Schiller, interview with author, tape recording, New York, NY, 10 November 2005
[20] John Planer, Professor, Thoughts on Ben Steinberg, e-mail message to Marla Goldberg, 7 December, 2005
[21] Marshall Portney, Cantor Main Line Reform Temple, Views on Ben Steinberg, e-mail message to Marla Goldberg, 14, December 2005

contributions. "His greatest contributions will be in his organizational skills in bringing younger composers and performing musicians into the synagogue music genre."[22] Ben has done this by creating musical competitions like the *Ben Steinberg Musical Legacy Award* and the *Guild of Temple Musicians' Young Composer Award.* He inspires singers, not just by creating great music, but by traveling all over the world lecturing on Jewish music and conducting performances of his compositions all over the world. The choirs lucky enough to have this experience gain great insight into what a composer thinks and feels about his or her works.

Whether or not Steinberg's music will stand the test of time remains to be seen. I believe, however, that his ability to fuse modern and traditional musical styles will keep his music in the synagogue for several more generations, keeping our musical traditions and languages alive. As Steinberg says, "Music is central. I like to say that music is not just a language, which it is, but our most eloquent language. Certainly it's the most eloquent language that we have to express prayer texts".[23] Music is a language Ben Steinberg understands very well.

It is this lyrical style that distinguishes Steinberg's music from other modern composers. His ability to blend traditional cantorial modes with modern harmonic sounds lends itself to a specific lyrical characteristic in the music. It is a style that can give the singer and listener a sense of special sense of kavana that Steinberg believes is missing from modern reform worship. The style may mark him, but it also gives us an insight on who Ben Steinberg is as a composer and a Jew.

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[22] Michael Isaacson, Composer, Views on Ben Steinberg, e-mail message to Marla Goldberg, 30 November, 2005

[22] Jewish News of Scottsdale, website www.jewishaz.com/jewishnews/04026/temples.shtml

APPENDIX

A LISTING OF MUSIC BY BEN STEINBERG

SERVICES

Avodath HaKodesh (Sacred Service) 1990.
Saturday morning service for Cantor (high voice), choir, organ and (optional) woodwind quartet.

Kol Shalom (Voice of Peace) 1990.
Friday evening service for Cantor (high voice), choir, organ & (optional) string orchestra or string quartet.

L'Cha Anu Shira (To Thee We Sing) 1969.
Text: Liturgy Friday evening service for Cantor (med.-high), choir, organ. Optional instrumental ensemble.

Pirchay Shir Kodesh (Blossoms of Holy Song)1963.
Text: Liturgy Friday evening service for Cantor (medium), choir, organ. Optional instrumental ensemble.

Shomeir Yisrael (Guardian of Israel) 1993.
Text: Liturgy Friday evening service for Cantor (medium), choir organ. Optional instrumental ensemble (fl, ob, cl, cello, hp.)

Simchat Hashabbat (Joy of the Sabbath) 1969.
Text: Liturgy Sabbath morning Torah service. For Cantor (high), choir,
organ. Optional orchestra accompaniment.

Yizkor (Selections for the Yom Kippur Memorial Service) 1998.
For Cantor (medium voice), SATB choir and organ with optional violin, cello and harp.

SINGLE PIECES FOR VOCAL SOLO OR DUET AND KEYBOARD

A Ben Steinberg Solo Collection
Mah Tovu (How Goodly are Thy Tents; liturgy) 1973.
Ahavat Olam (With everlasting love; liturgy) 1974.
Lo Yareiu (They shall not hurt nor destroy; Isaiah) 1982.
R'tzei Vim'nuchateinu (Accept our rest; liturgy) 1983.
Yism'chu (They shall rejoice; liturgy) 1984.
Vayomer David L'Av igayil (And David said to Abigail; Samuel I) 1979.
Hinei Yamim Ba-im (Behold, the days come; Amos) 1978.

Adon Olam (Lord of the World; Medieval hymn) 1978.
Vocal duet (med. & high) with piano & flute.

Asei L'cha Rav (Create a Teacher...Pirkei Avot) 1995.
For solo voice (high), flute, cello & organ.

A Song of Dedication (B'chochmah Yibaneh Bayit; Through Wisdom is a House Built; Proverbs) 1988. For solo voice (med.-high) & keyboard.

Blessings and Seven Benedictions 1972.
Text: Liturgy; wedding blessings for Cantor (med. or high), organ.
Optional string quartet accompaniment.

Eilu D'varim (These are the obligations; Mishnah) 1977.
Vocal duet (med. & high) with piano & cello.

Esa Enai (I will lift up mine eyes. Ps. 121) 1970.
Medium range.

For He Satisfieth the Longing Heart 1964.
Text: High Holy Day Liturgy. Medium range.

Habayit Hazeh (Concerning this house; Kings I) 1987.
Range: med. or high.

Ki Heharim Yamushu (For the mountains shall depart: Isaiah 54:10) 1999
For high voice and organ.

Lakol Zman (To everything there is a season; Ecclesiastes) 1971.
For solo voice & organ with optional flute obligato.
In both Hebrew & English. Range: med. or high.
(See also under "Single Pieces for Solo and/or Chorus).

L'fanai Taamod (Before Thee I stand) 1997
For soprano, tenor, organ and cello.

Mysteries (from a poem by Leah Goldberg, English translation By Rabbi Donald Weber) 1997.
For vocal duet (med. & high) and organ.

Natati L'fanecha Hayom (I have set before you this day; Deuteronomy) 1992. For solo, choir and organ.

Roni V'simchi (Arise and rejoice; Zechariah 2:14-16) 1997
For solo voice (high) and piano with optional B flat clarinet.

The St. Thomas Cycle 1995.
Three songs for soprano(high), piano & flute.
1. *The Piper* (William Blake)
2. *The 23rd Psalm*
3. *The Shepherds Sing* (George Herbert)

Song for a Marriage (9th Century Hebrew Poem) 1989.
For solo voice (med.-high) & piano.

Vay'chulu (The heaven and the earth were completed; Liturgy) 1973.
High range. Plus opt. fl, cello, hp.

V'ha-eir Eineinu (Deepen Our Insight; liturgy) 1993.
Vocal duet (baritone & soprano) with piano and cello.

Z'mirot (13th Century Hymn texts) 1989.
For vocal duet (med. and high voice) or 2-part choir, flute, piano and narrator.

SINGLE PIECES FOR SOLO AND/OR CHORUS

Anim Z'mirot (I make pleasant songs and weave verses; 13th Century poem by Judah of Regensburg) 1985. Piano + optional instrumental ensemble (flute, oboe, cello & harp).

B'acharit Hayamim (In the end of days; Micah 4:1-5) 1996.
For solo (high voice) , SATB choir, unison children's choir, organ and opitional string quartet .

Baruch Haba (Psalm 118) 1995.

For solo (med. – high), choir and organ plus opt. String quartet & harp.

Choral Meditation 1987.
For humming choir and organ. Optional additional instruments:
Flute, harp, string trio. Combined publication with Mah Y'didot (see following item).

Mah Y'didot (How beautiful are thy dwellings; Ps. 84) 1987.
For solo (high or med.), choir, organ. Optional additional instruments: flute, harp, string trio.

Entreat Me Not to Leave Thee (Text: Book of Ruth) 1980.
For solo (high or med.), flute, SATB choir, organ.
English and Hebrew.

Halleluyah (Psalm 150) 1990.
For SATB choir & keyboard or opt. string orchestra.

Hin'ni He-ani Mimaas (Behold, me, trembling and afraid; High Holy Day Liturgy) 1979. For Cantor (med. - high); A cappella or optional choir & organ.

Hodu Ladonai (Give thanks to the Lord; Ps. 136) 1986.
For solo (med. or high), SATB choir, organ.

In Praise of Wisdom (Proverbs 3 and Psalm 90) 1996.
For SATB choir and piano.

Kad'sheinu B'mitzvotecha (Sanctify us; liturgy) 1982.
For Cantor (med. or high), SATB choir, organ. Plus optional fl, ob, cello, hp.

Lakol Zman (To everything there is a season: Ecclesiastes) 1971.
For solo (high voice), SATB choir and orchestra.

L'chu N'ran'nah (Come, let us sing; Ps. 95) 1969.
For Cantor (med.), choir, organ and congregation.

L'dor Vador (From generation to generation) 1994.
For solo, SATB choir and organ..

Meditation and Oseh Shalom (from "Kol Shalom") 1990.
For SATB or SSA choir and organ with opt. String orch.

Meditation and Yihuyu Leratson (May the words; Ps. 19) 1976.
For unison choir, cello and harp or organ.

Mi Chamocha (Who is like unto Thee
And
Tsur Yisrael (O rock of Israel; liturgy) 1969.
3 ½ m.
For Cantor (med. or high), choir & organ. Optional
Orchestral accompaniment (1111, 2210, timp., str.)

Mishkan Shalom (Dwelling of peace) 1997. In Hebrew
Poem by Yitshak Avigani – free narrator's English translation by Ben Steinberg.
For choir & piano with optional fl, ob, cello & harp.

Nigun Talmidei Besht (wordless) 1976.
For SATB choir & piano. Optional string quartet accompaniment.

Organ Meditation and Oseh Shalom (May He grant peace; liturgy) 1982.
For unaccompanied SATB choir. Plus optional fl, ob, cello, harp.

Psalm 24. 1993.
For solo, SATB choir and organ. Opt. Brass & percussion accompaniment.

R'tsay Adonai Eloheinu (Look with favor; liturgy) 1965.
For unaccompanied choir.

R'tsay Adonai Eloheinu (Look with favor; liturgy) 1989.
For SATB choir and keyboard, with optional flute.

Selections from Hallel (Psalms 113, 116, 118) 1988)
For solo, choir & organ.

Shachar Avakesh'cha (Early will I seek Thee) 1991.
11th century poem for solo, choir & organ.+ optional ensemble accompaniment:
fl, ob, cl, cello, harp.

Shalom Rav (from "L'cha Anu Shira") 1969.
For Cantor, choir & organ. Opt. Other instr. Accompaniments.

Shehecheyanu (Blessed is God for giving us life) 1994.
For choir & organ plus optional violin, cello and harp.

Shiru Ladonai (Sing unto the Lord a new song; Ps. 98, from Pirchey Shir Kodesh).
1963. For Cantor, choir, organ, congregation.

Sim Shalom (Grant us peace; liturgy) 1980.
For Cantor, choir, organ, congregation + optional fl, ob, cello, harp.

S'u She-arim (Lift up your gates; Ps.24) 1993. For choir, bass soloist and organ. High Holy Day N'ilah setting.

T'hilat Adonai (My mouth shall utter the praise of the Lord; High Holy Day liturgy) 1966. For solo, choir, organ.

Tov L'hodot (It is good to give thanks; Ps. 92) 1983. For cantor, choir, organ. Optional additional instruments: flute, oboe, cello, harp.

Tzion B'mishpat Tipadeh (Zion shall be redeemed with justice; Isaiah) 1965. For solo (high), SATB choir, organ; optional orchestra accompaniment: (1111, 2210, timp., str.)

V'erastich Li (Be thou betrothed to me; Hosea) 1972. Hebrew and English. For solo, (opt.) choir and organ. Optional string quartet accompaniment..

Yaaleh (Eve of Yom Kippur) 1992. For Cantor, choir & organ.

Y'hi Ratson (Prayer for the New Month) 1991. For solo, choir, keyboard and (optional) cello.

Yism'chu (They shall rejoice; liturgy) 1964. For SAB choir.Opt.fl,ob,cello,hp.

Yom Zeh L'Yisrael (This is Israel's day of light and joy; 16th Century Poem by Isaac Luria) 1983. For Cantor (med.), choir and organ. Optional additional instruments: fl, ob, cello, harp.

Zeh Hayom (This is the day; Ps. 18) 1986. For solo, choir, organ. Hebrew and English. Optional additional Instruments: fl, hp, str. quartet, or fl, ob, cello, harp.

CANTATAS AND CONCERT WORKS

Ashrei (Happy are they that dwell in Thy house; Ps. 145) 1986. For narrator, solo (med. – high), choir, organ. Optional additional Instruments: fl, hp, str. quartet. Hebrew text; English narration.

Ata Echad (Thou art One; liturgy) 1984. For narrator, solo (med.), choir & organ. Optional additional Instruments: fl, ob, cello, harp. Hebrew text; English narration.

Echoes of children (Text based on writings of children during Holocaust Period) 1979.
Cantata for narrator, solo (high or med.), SATB choir, tape and Orchestra (fl, ob, cl, bsn; 2 hns, 2 tpts, trb; timp, 2 perc; str.) English, Yiddish, Hebrew.

Prayer for Jerusalem (Text based on Psalms, Deuteronomy, Talmud and Medieval poetry) 1990.
For narrator, solo (high voice), SATB choir, cello, harp and organ. In Hebrew, with English narration.

Psalms of Thanksgiving (From Ps. 19, 108, 100, 67 & 98) For narrator, children's choir, organ & optional cello & harp. In English

Sarah's Sacrifice (Poem by Margaret Kaufman) 1991.
For soprano and tenor soloists, SATB choir, organ, flute, harp and Percussion.

The Covenant (original text, based in part on biblical sources and anon. medieval poetry). 1987. For 2 narrators, solo (high or med.), SATB choir, organ & brass quartet. Hebrew text; English narration.

The Crown of Torah (Text based on Pirkey Avot) 1981.
For narrator, solo (med.), unison children's chorus, SATB choir and instrumental ensemble: fl, ob, cello, harp, organ. Hebrew text with English narration.

The Scattered of Israel (Poem by R. Kaminetz) 1980.
Cantata for narrator, solo (med.), SATB choir and organ (English).

The Three Festivals 1992.
Cantata for narrator, solo (med.), choir, unison children's chorus, organ,flute, cello, perc. Hebrew, with English narration.

The Vision of Isaiah (Text: Isaiah) 1970.
For solo (high or med.), SATB choir and organ.
Optional orchestra accompaniment: (1111, 2210, timp., str.) or 8-pc. wind & perc. ensemble.

Torat Chayim (Texts from biblical sources) 1998.
For 2 narrators, solo (med. – high), SATB choir, unison children's choir, organ and optional instrumental ensemble (flute, oboe, B flat clarinet, cello & harp).

To Dispel the Darkness 1992. (13th C. Spanish-Hebrew poetry)

For SATB choir, piano and flute.

Y'rushalayim ("Jerusalem": poem by Shin Shalom) 1973.
For SATB choir and piano. Optional orchestra accompaniment.

INSTRUMENTAL WORKS

Esa Enai (Psalm 121) 1970. For violin & piano.

Invocations 1989.
For oboe and string quartet. Three separate movements.

Lo Yareiu (They shall not hurt nor destroy: Isaiah) 1982.
For violin and piano.

Prelude for Organ 1990.

Prelude and Praise 1992.
For organ solo.

Reflections in Sections 1984.
Six pieces for unaccompanied saxophone.

Suite for Flute, Viola & Harp 1981.
Also transcribed for flute, cello and harp.

Suite Sephardi 1979.
For soprano saxophone or flute, violin, viola and cello.

Suite for String Orchestra 1983.

Three Songs for Flute & String Trio (vl, vla, cello) 1972.
Also transcribed for fl, vla & harp; fl, cello & harp; vl, cello and piano.

Visions for flute and piano. 1994.

Commissioned by Stephen S. Wise Temple, Los Angeles, California
To my grandson, Jeffrey Berger

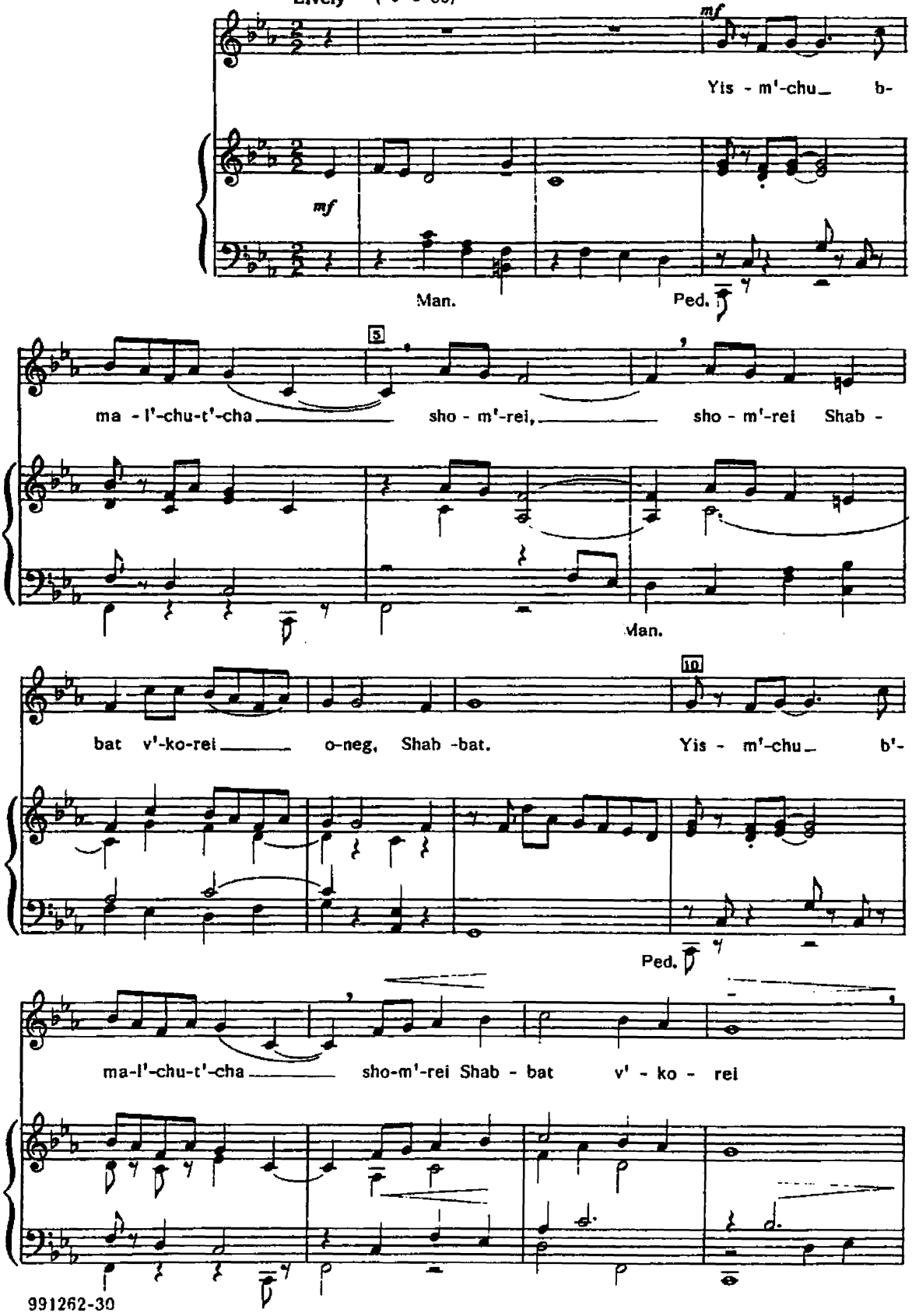
YISM'CHU

(They shall rejoice)

Text: Sabbath Liturgy

Ben Steinberg
(ASCAP)

Lively (♩ = 80)



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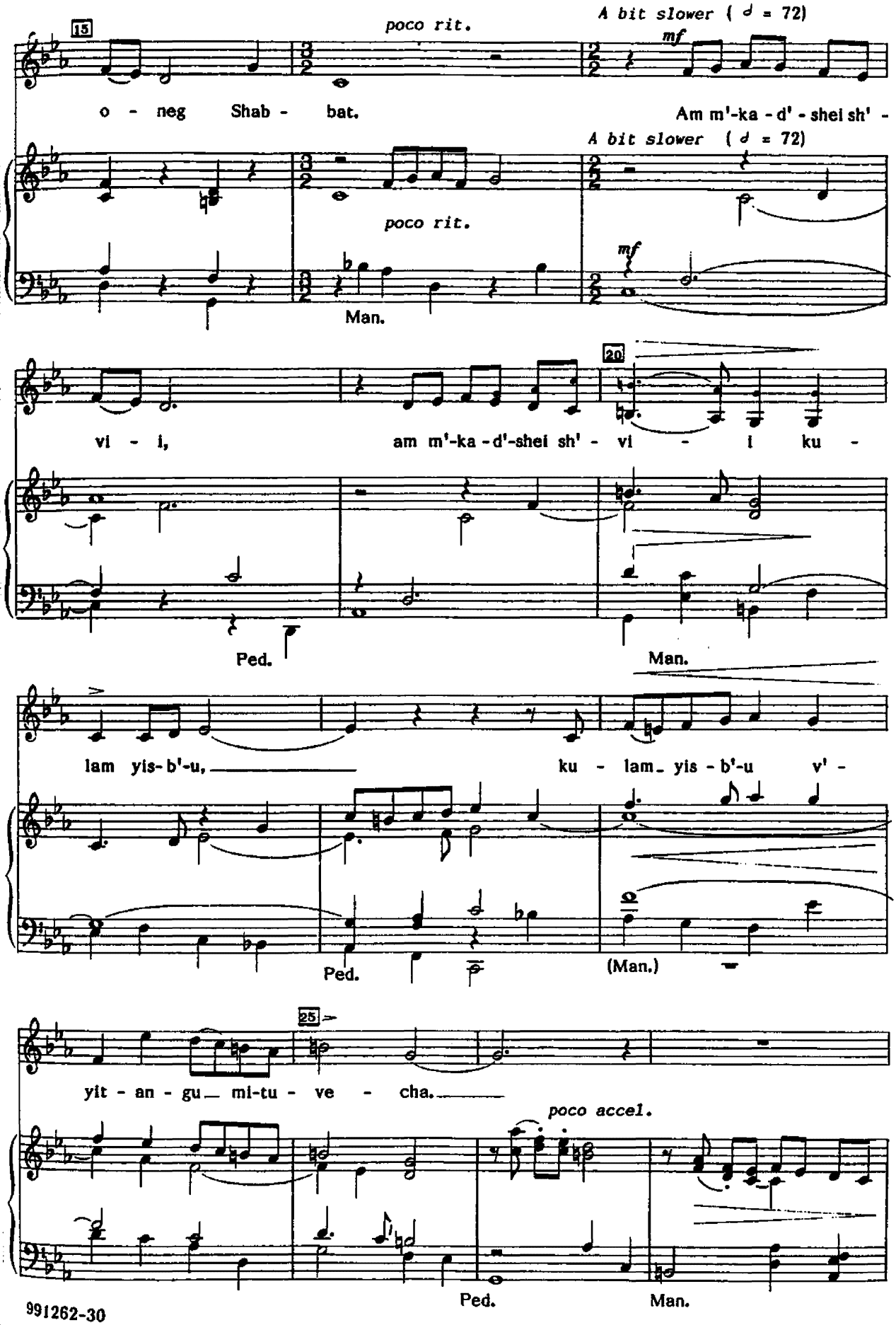
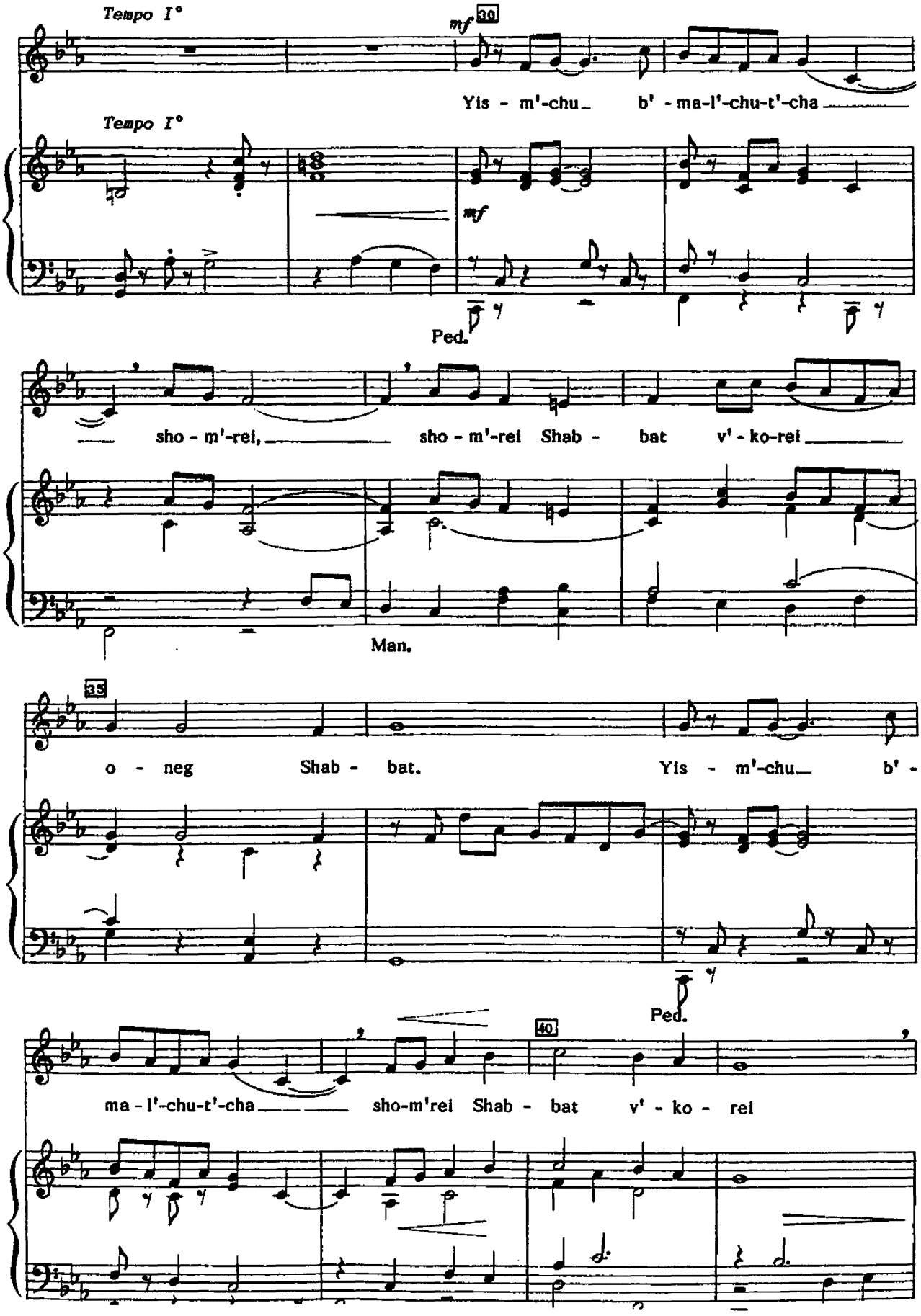
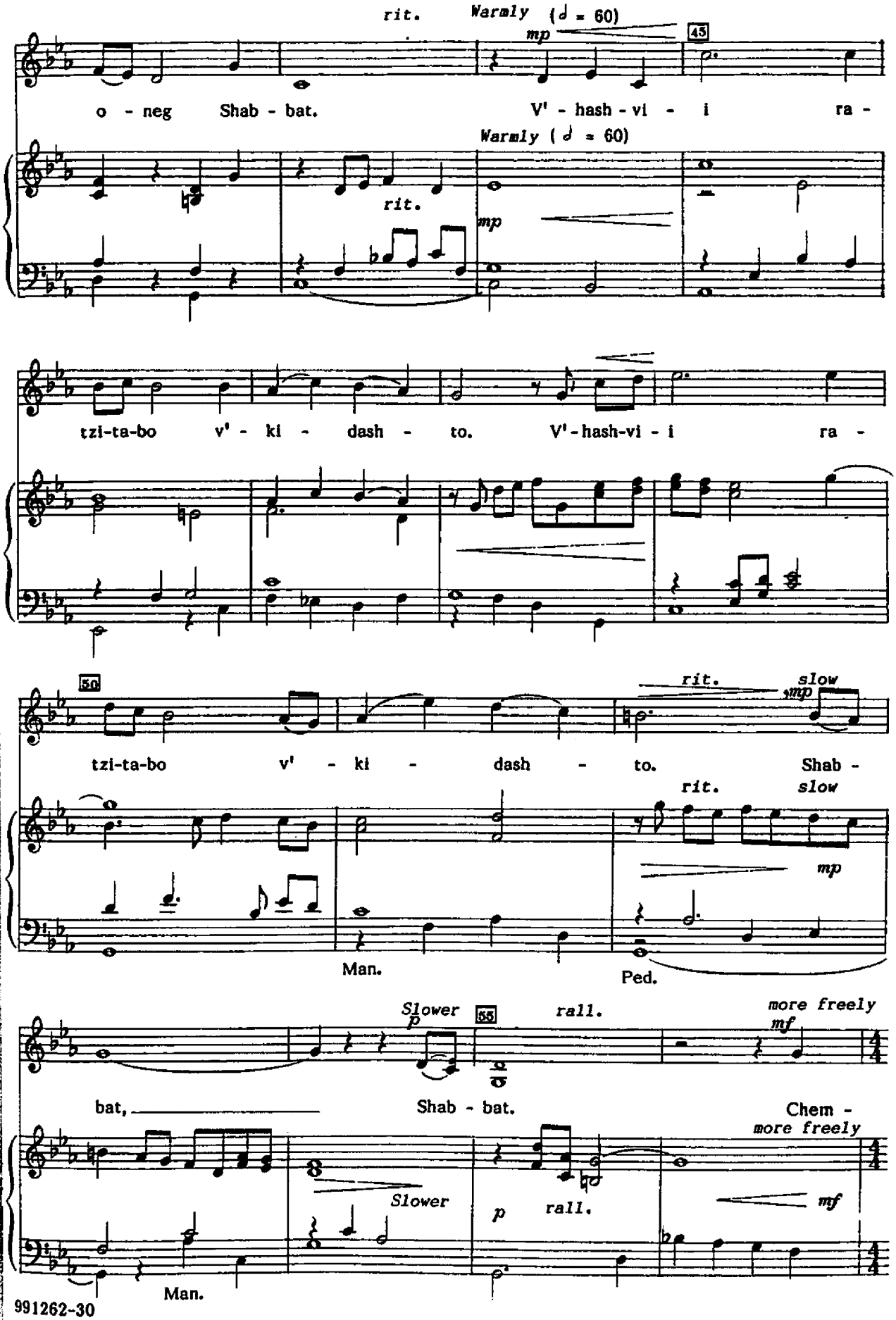
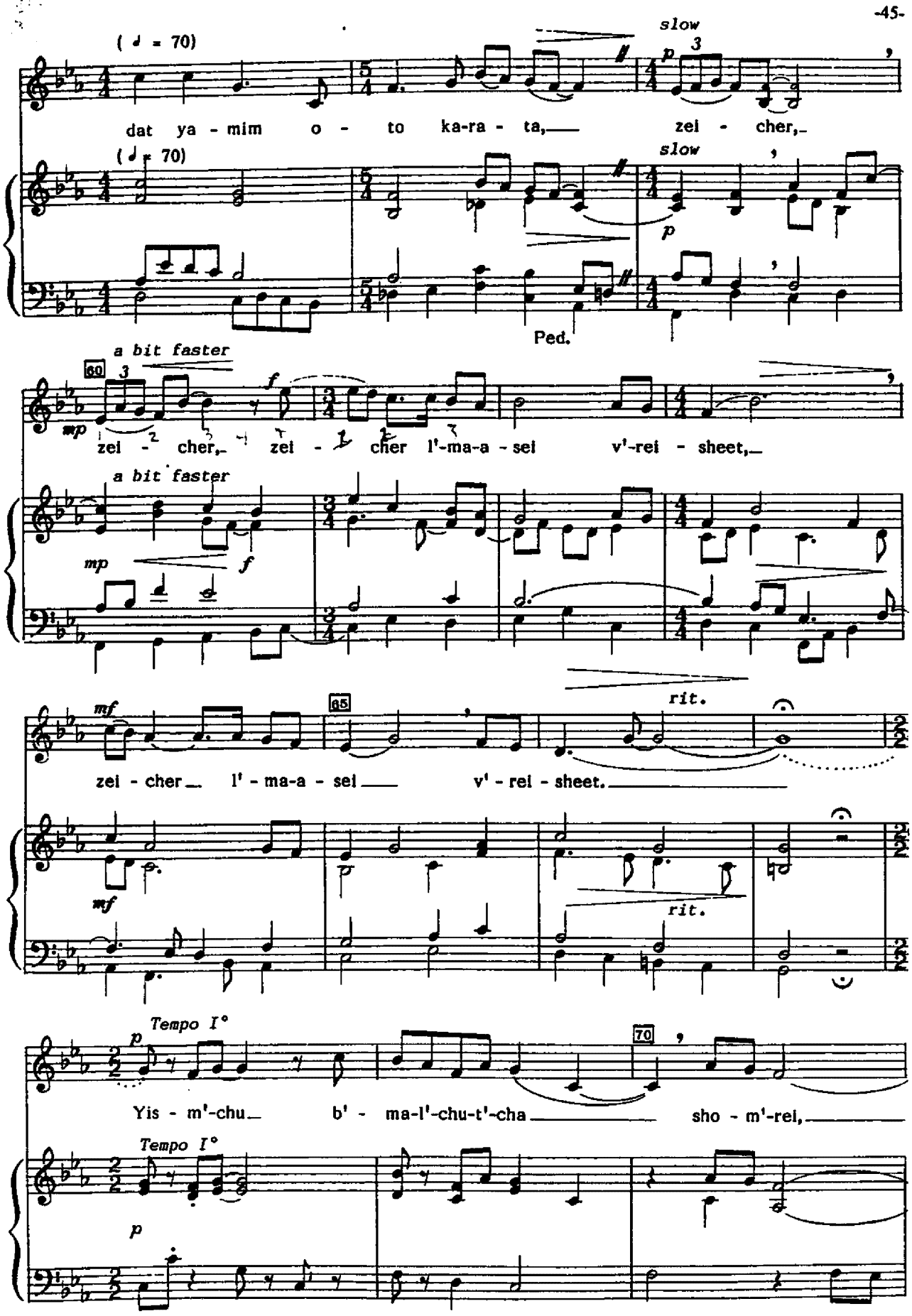
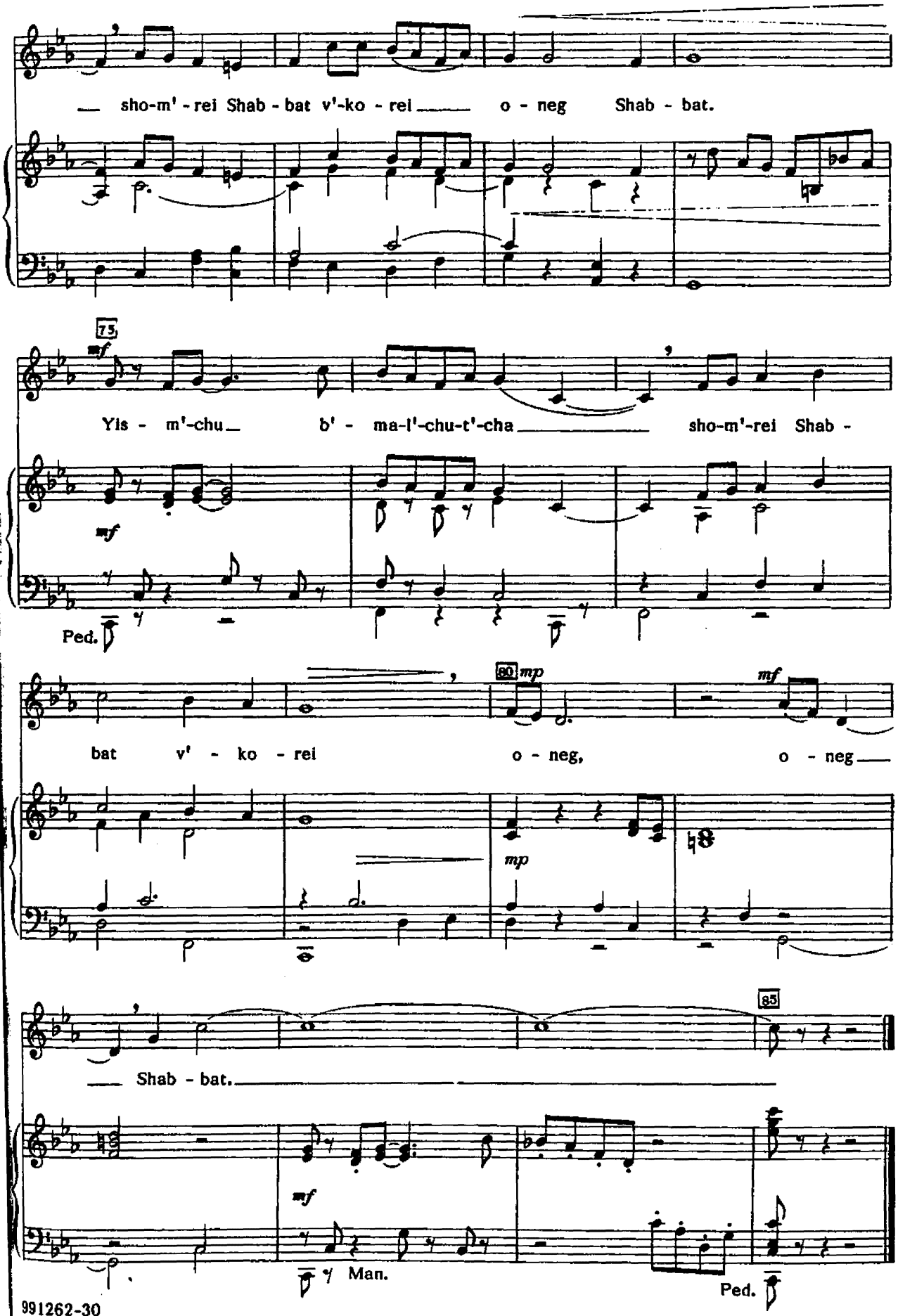

15
poco rit.
A bit slower (♩ = 72)
mf
o - neg Shab - bat.
Am m'-ka - d' - shei sh' -
A bit slower (♩ = 72)
poco rit.
mf
Man.
20
vi - i,
am m'-ka - d'-shei sh' - vi - i ku -
Ped.
Man.
lam yis- b'-u,
ku - lam_ yis - b'-u v' -
Ped.
(Man.)
25
yit - an - gu_ mi-tu - ve - cha.
poco accel.
Ped.
Man.


Tempo I°
mf
30
Yis - m'-chu_ b' - ma-l'-chu-t'-cha
Tempo I°
mf
Ped.
sho - m'-rei, sho - m'-rei Shab - bat v' - ko-rei
Man.
39
o - neg Shab - bat. Yis - m'-chu_ b' -
Ped.
40
ma - l'-chu-t'-cha sho-m'rei Shab - bat v' - ko - rei


rit.
Warmly (♩ = 60)
mp
45
o - neg Shab - bat.
V' - hash - vi - i ra -
Warmly (♩ = 60)
rit.
mp
tzi-ta-bo v' - ki - dash - to.
V'-hash-vi - i ra -
50
rit.
slow
mp
tzi-ta-bo v' - ki - dash - to.
Shab -
rit.
slow
mp
Man.
Ped.
Slower
p
55
rall.
more freely
mf
bat,
Shab - bat.
Chem -
more freely
Slower
p
rall.
mf
Man.


(♩ = 70)
slow
dat ya - mim o - to ka-ra - ta, zei - cher,
(♩ = 70)
slow
Ped.
a bit faster
60
zei - cher, zei - cher l'-ma-a - sei v'-rei - sheet,
a bit faster
65
rit.
zei - cher l' - ma-a - sei v' - rei - sheet.
rit.
Tempo I°
70
Yis - m'-chu b' - ma-l'-chu-t'-cha sho - m'-rei,
Tempo I°

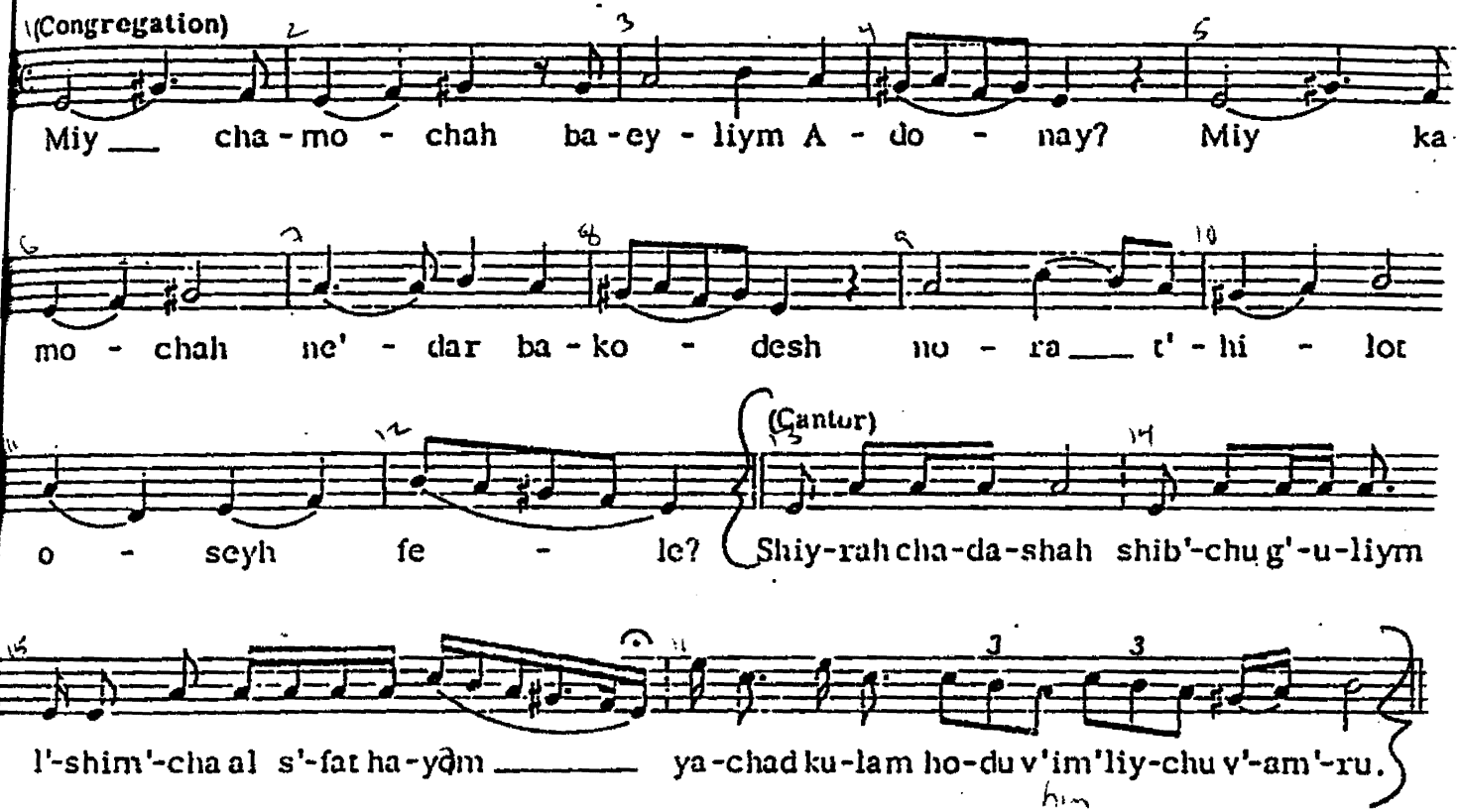

sho-m'-rei Shab-bat v'-ko-rei o-neg Shab-bat.
75
mf
Yis-m'-chu b'-ma-l'-chu-t'-cha sho-m'-rei Shab-
mf
Ped.
80 mp
mf
bat v'-ko-rei o-neg, o-neg
mp
85
Shab-bat.
mf
Man.
Ped.

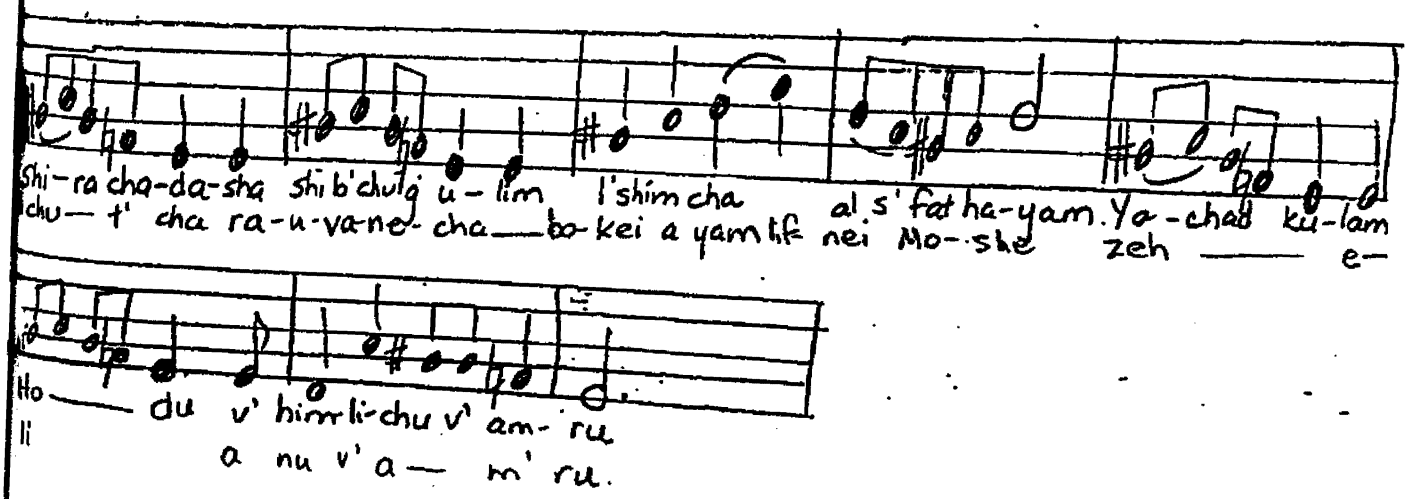
Miy-Chamochah

(Weekday A.M. + eve)

Majestically

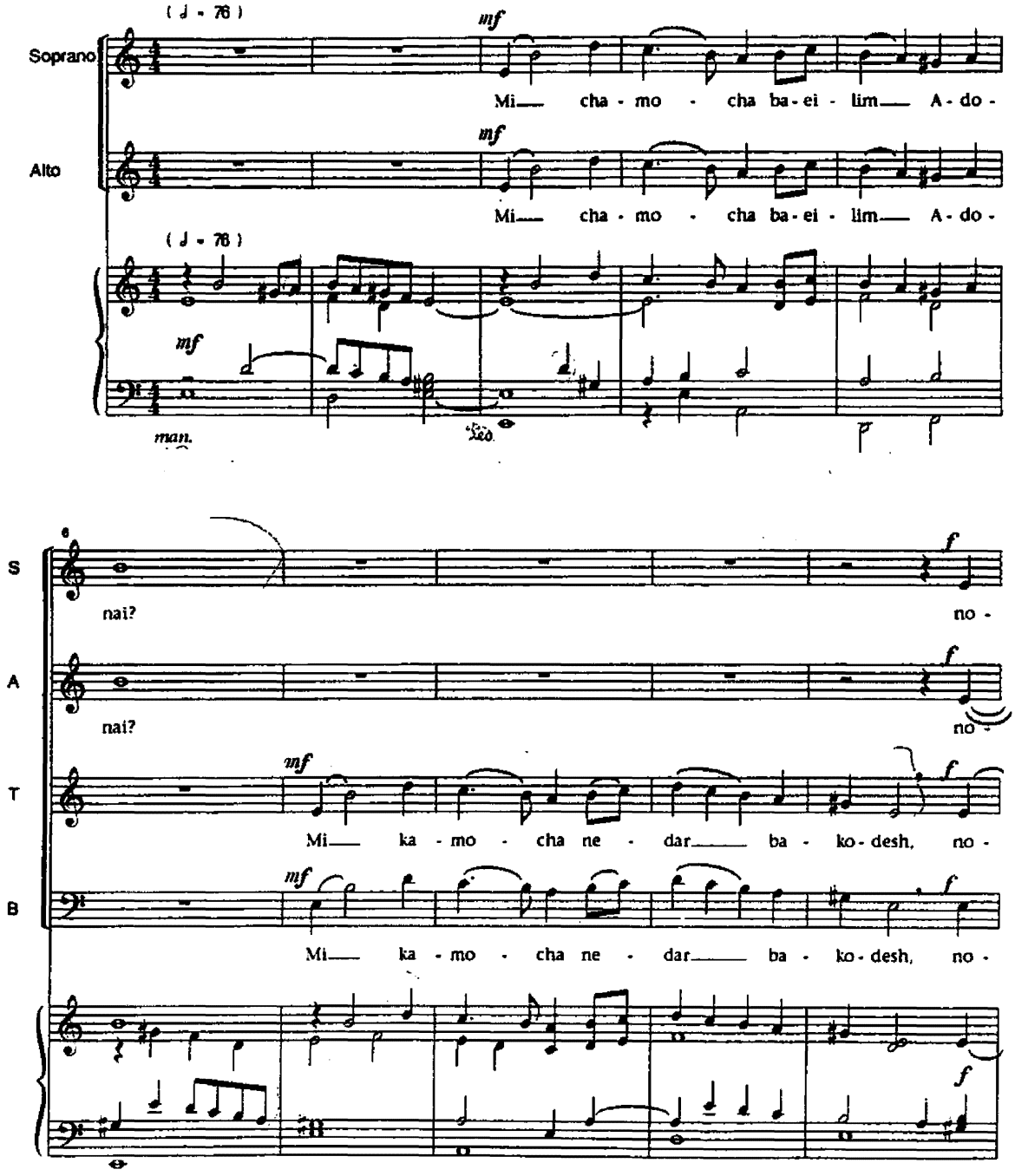
A. W. BINDER

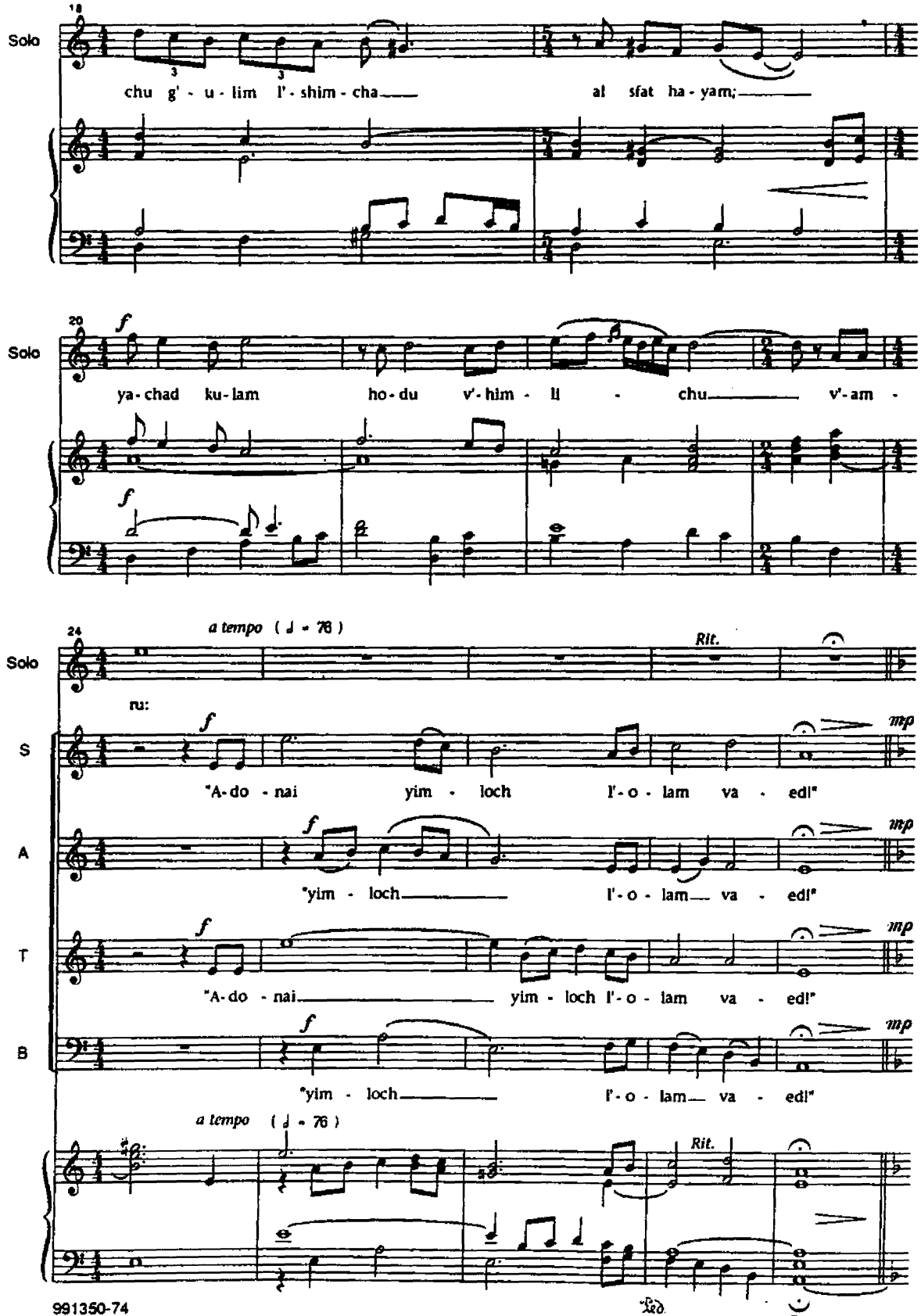


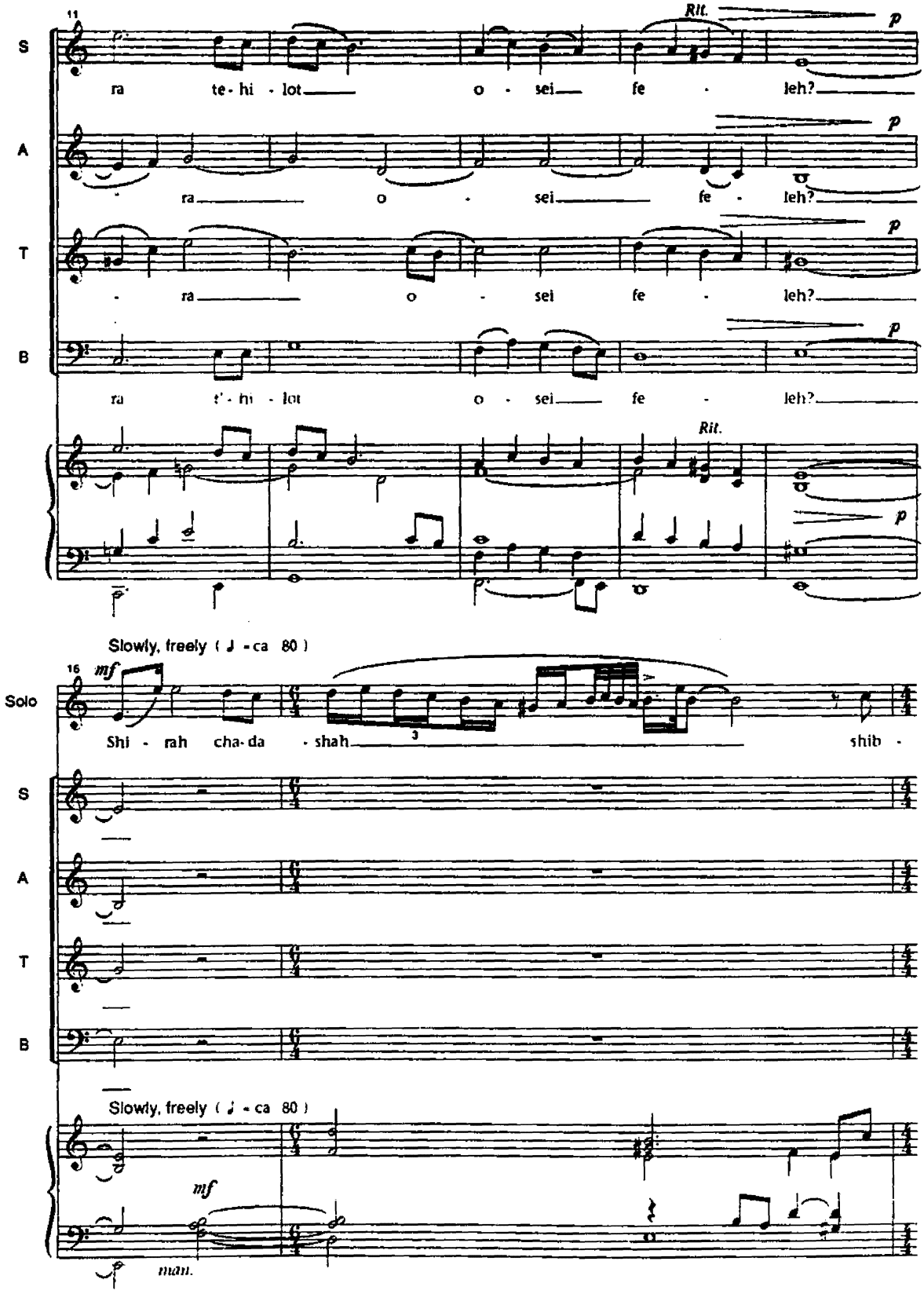


Mi Chamocha; Tsur Yisraeil

Ben Steinberg



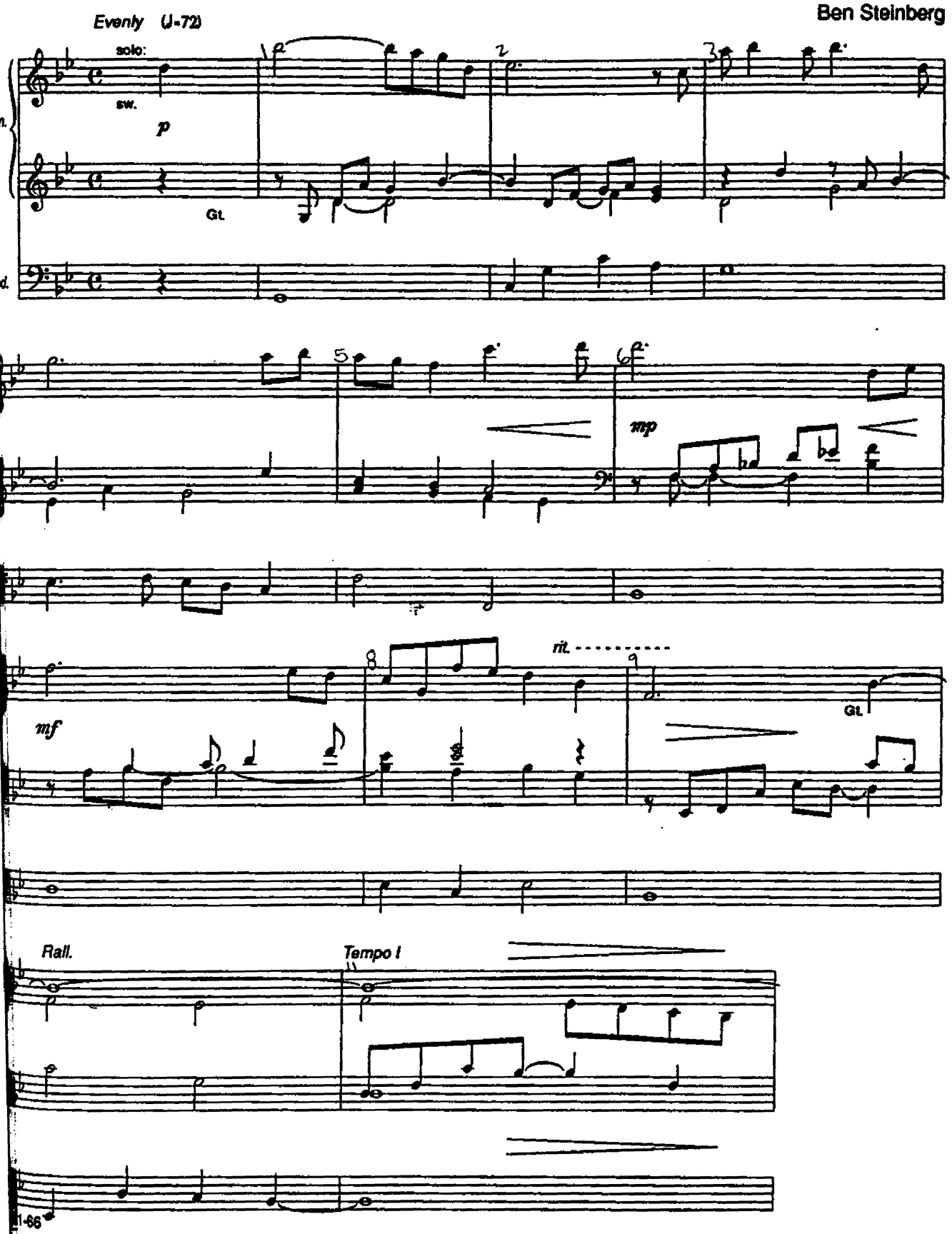

18
Solo
chu g' - u - lim l' - shim - cha
al sfat ha - yam;
20
Solo
f
ya - chad ku - lam ho - du v' - him - li - chu v' - am -
24
a tempo (♩ = 76)
Rit.
Solo
ru:
S
f
mp
"A - do - nai yim - loch l' - o - lam va - ed!"
A
"yim - loch l' - o - lam va - ed!"
T
"A - do - nai yim - loch l' - o - lam va - ed!"
B
"yim - loch l' - o - lam va - ed!"
a tempo (♩ = 76)
Rit.
Ped.

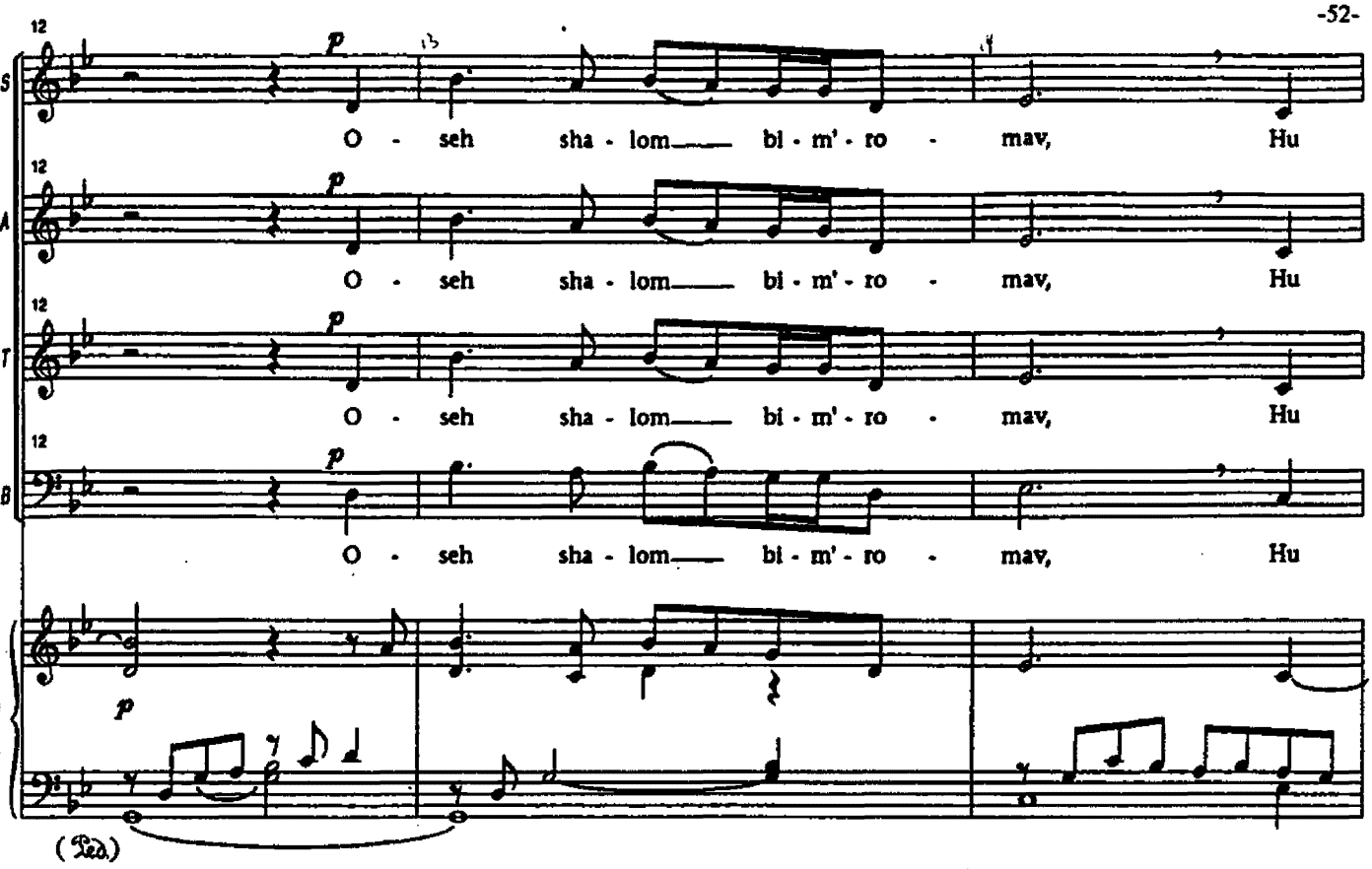

11
Rit.
p
S
ra te - hi - lot o - sei fe - leh?
A
ra o - sei fe - leh?
T
ra o - sei fe - leh?
B
ra t' - hi - lot o - sei fe - leh?
Rit.
Slowly, freely (♩ = ca 80)
16
mf
Solo
Shi - rah cha-da - shah 3 shib -
mf
man.

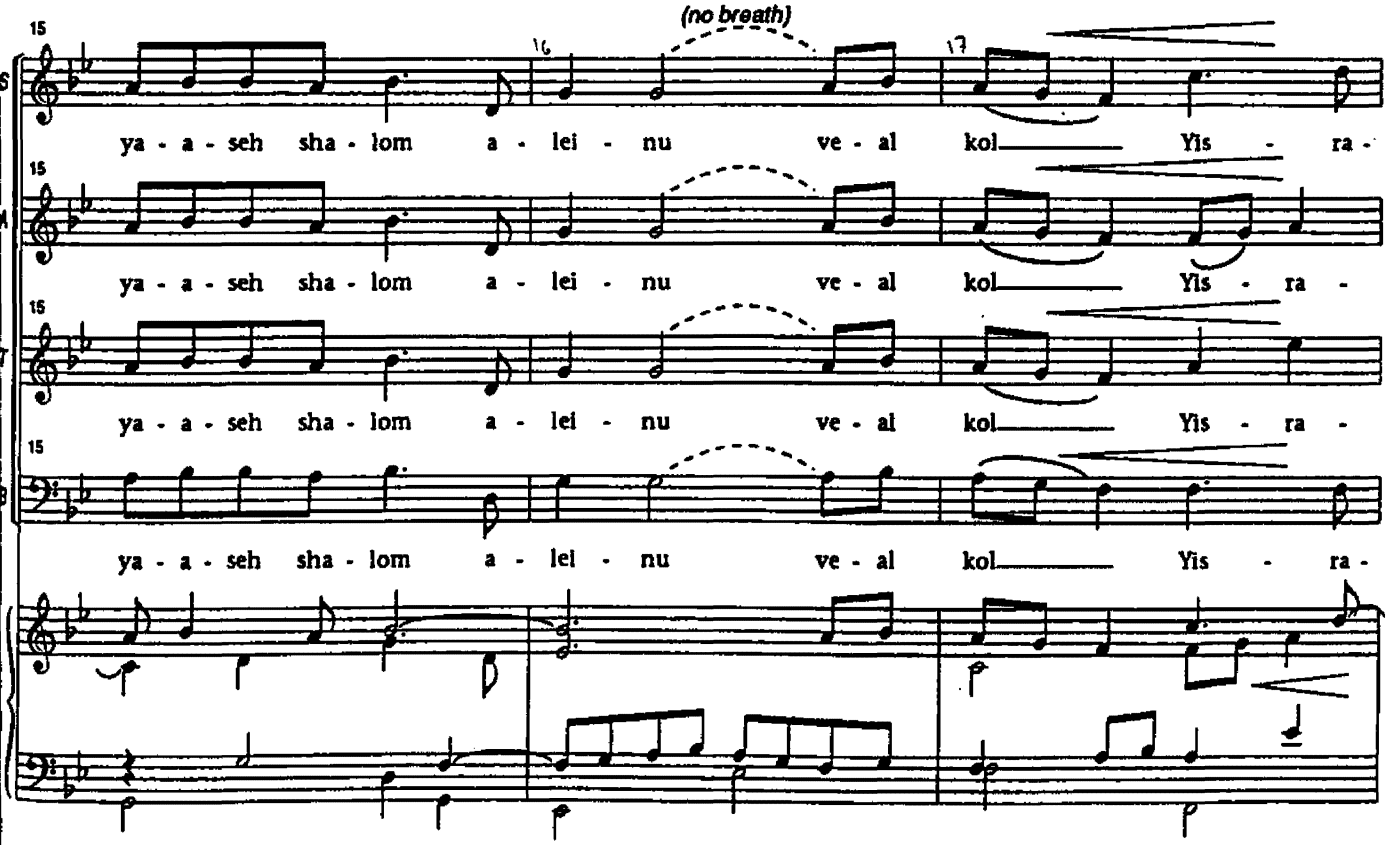
Meditation; Oseh Shalom

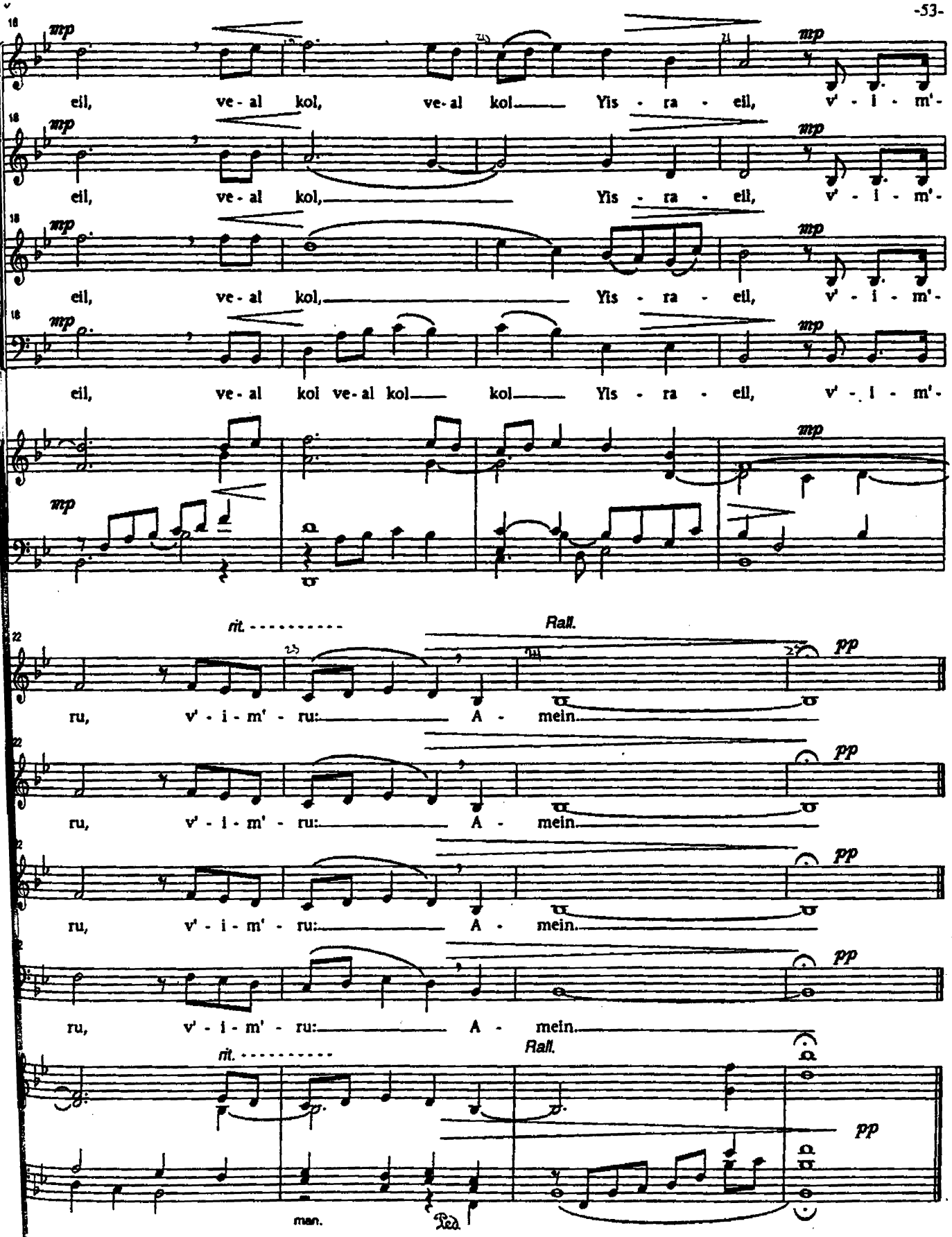
Gates of Prayer, page 157

Ben Steinberg




12
p
O - seh sha - lom bi - m' - ro - mav, Hu
(Ped.)


15
(no breath)
ya - a - seh sha - lom a - lei - nu ve - al kol Yis - ra -


mp
eil, ve - al kol, ve - al kol Yis - ra - eil, v' - i - m' -
eil, ve - al kol, Yis - ra - eil, v' - i - m' -
eil, ve - al kol, Yis - ra - eil, v' - i - m' -
eil, ve - al kol ve - al kol kol Yis - ra - eil, v' - i - m' -
rit.
Rall.
pp
ru, v' - i - m' - ru: A - mein.
ru, v' - i - m' - ru: A - mein.
ru, v' - i - m' - ru: A - mein.
ru, v' - i - m' - ru: A - mein.
rit.
Rall.
pp
man.
Ped.

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Michael Isaacson, Composer, Views on Ben Steinberg, e-mail message to Marla Goldberg, 30 November, 2005

John Planer, Professor, Thoughts on Ben Steinberg, e-mail message to Marla Goldberg, 7 December, 2005

Marshall Portney, Cantor Main Line Reform Temple, Views on Ben Steinberg, e-mail message to Marla Goldberg, 14, December 2005

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