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ZMIROT: COME LET US SING

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INTRODUCTION

Shabbat zmirot¹ (sing. zemer) are songs or hymns sung by Jews around the Sabbath meals. The practice of communal singing around the Sabbath meals can be dated as far back as Temple times, but scholars identify the first instance of zmirot texts being codified in written form as taking place in the 12th century.² As Naomi Cohn Zentner writes, "One of the earliest sources for zemiroth is the famous Mahzor Vitry (ca. 12th c.), named after its compiler Simhah ben Samuel of Vitry, a student of Rashi" (Zentner 2023, 495). While this written codification was taking place in the Ashkenazi lands, Sephardic Jews also have a practice of table singing on Shabbat, though today the term "zmirot" more commonly refers to a portion of the prayer service in these communities. There was a resurgence of documented zmirot starting in the 16th and 17th centuries, when zmirot were written with the rise of the Kabbalah, and then later Hasidism in the 18th century (Levin 1981, xi). Neil Levin, an ethnomusicologist and former professor of Jewish music at the Jewish Theological Seminary, further claims that the order of the zmirot was codified in the 19th century, however Naomi Cohn Zentner, an ethnomusicologist at Bar Ilan University, claims "It was only after the Birkat hamazon appeared in print (Prague, 1514) that selected zmiroth poems became staples throughout central Europe and a canon

¹ There are several ways to spell zmirot (i.e zemirot, zemiroth, z'mirot, or zmires). In this thesis, I favor the spelling zmirot [*zmîrôt*] to represent the pronunciation which includes no gap between the "z" and "m". A community that speaks an Ashkenazi Hebrew or speaks Yiddish would likely say zmires, and there are some outside of those communities who would also pronounce z'mirot/zemirot with a schwa, thus the addition of the "e" or the apostrophe. The spelling in Hebrew is simply מו and all of these pronunciations are considered legitimate. "Zemer" and "Zmirah" are both terms for a single piece in the repertoire.

² Simha ben Samuel of Vitry is said to have died in 1105 which, logically, then dates this compilation to the late 11th century.

formed. Indeed, all subsequent publications of zmirot, including their order, followed the order of the Prague publication and do so until the present day." (Zentner 2023, 495)

Halachah (Jewish law/way) requires one to eat three meals each Shabbat, which creates natural opportunities for singing. The Babylonian Talmud records a debate regarding the number of meals required on the day of rest: The Talmud (Shabbat 117b) states "הַנוּ רַבָּנַן: כַּמָה סָעוּדוֹת חַיֵּיב אָדָם לָאָכוֹל בַּשְׁבָּת — שֵׁלשׁ. רַבִּי חִידְקָא אוֹמִר: אָרְבַע". "How many meals is a person obligated to eat on Shabbat? Three. Rabbi Hidka says: Four." Ultimately, it is decided that three is the accepted opinion. These meals are on Friday night, Saturday afternoon, and just before sunset on Saturday. This final meal is referred to as S'udah Shlishit (the third meal) which is the only specifically named meal. The origins and original rationale for singing zmirot has been lost to history, but Rabbis such as Joseph Hahn of Frankfort (1568-1637) advocate for its practice as it avoids frivolous conversation around mealtime on Shabbat (Zemel 1998, 3). The Kabbalists say it is to heighten the experience of Shabbat by elevating the soul to achieve *dveikut*, a closeness or literal clinging to G-d (Zemel 1998, 9). Today, many Jews sing them for the sheer enjoyment of doing so. In my interviews with 15 individuals about their experiences with zmirot, and Shabbat singing more broadly, joy is a common theme. Everyone with whom I spoke, in some form or another, described the joy of singing this music with other people. Albert Kohn, a PhD student in the department of history at Princeton who wrote "Songs Were for Me Your Statutes Wherever I May Dwell (Psalms 119:54)": A History of the Jewish Custom to Sing Around the Shabbat Table, 1200-1600," in his honors thesis at List College writes: "This joy-based relationship to Shabbat Zemirot is distinct from the scholarly-spiritual relationship. To sing out of joy is not about the words one sings or

about having the appropriate intentions when doing so, it is simply about enjoying one's self. Most Jews singing Shabbat Zemirot likely did not understand the poetic Hebrew sufficiently to elucidate the meaning and significance of the words they sung... For the scholarly elite, singing Shabbat Zemirot was a spiritual practice deeply embedded within the Jewish tradition; for most lay Jews, it was simply a culturally-normative good time" (Kohn 2018, 46). Of the fifteen people I interviewed, seven of them stressed that they are not experts on the subject of zmirot, including two who wrote masters theses on the subject. This further illustrates that this musical practice emphasizes the enjoyment of singing, rather than mastery.

The goals of this thesis are to learn more about what Shabbat zmirot mean to people, to document the songs that are commonly sung among contemporary American Jews across an array of religious communities, and to consider how zemirot could be incorporated into the lives of Reform Jews. While denominational labels are starting to become outdated as many people find themselves living in between these broad categories, they are still used to identify communities, and broadly, their practice. The end of this thesis includes a repertoire list gathered from my experiences, as well as those whom I've interviewed, in an effort to preserve the melodies, as well as recommend them to be sung at Shabbat tables. This is in no way comprehensive of all zmirot as the number of melodies sung to these texts far too vast, but it does offer a snapshot of the songs sung around Shabbat tables at the time of my research (2023-24) across a variety of communities.

DEFINITIONAL CHALLENGES AND SCOPE

The Jewish Encyclopedia's definition of zmirot is as follows: "The Hebrew hymns chanted in the domestic circle, particularly those which precede or follow the grace after the chief meal on the eve and the afternoon of the Sabbath" (Jacobs and Francis 2024). This definition addresses the core repertoire of songs sung during Shabbat meals, but in my research I have found music making during Shabbat meals often utilizes a broader range of texts. For this reason, in this thesis I expand the definition of zmirot from their traditional understanding to a broader umbrella concept of Shabbat table singing that does not impose boundaries on what is accepted into the tradition and what is not included. Each community has slight variances when it comes to the texts they sing as well as their melodies in accordance with their tradition. This expansion stems from an understanding among those I interviewed, and those with whom I've shared Shabbat meals, that singing Shabbat zmirot involves a much broader repertoire, which includes popular Jewish songs of the time. For example, in the back of The NCSY Bencher, (a bencher is a set of prayers and songs about Shabbat and jewish culture which centers around thanksgiving for meals), there is a section entitled "Shirei Am" or "Popular Songs" which are shorter songs that also add to the celebration of Shabbat (Oneg Shabbat). These songs are sometimes referred to as "the shorter zemers³" (Griffel, 2023) & Becker, 2023), a phrase I heard in my interviews with Joey Becker (a traditional egalitarian Jew who attended Pardes Institute for Jewish Studies in Jerusalem, and while

³ The term "zemers" combines the Hebrew term with an English pluralization, demonstrating the way that the Hebrew phrase is used in common parlance by American Jews.

there discovered zmirot, inspiring him to be active in the musical Shabbat world), and Alex Griffel, (an Orthodox Jew who also attended Pardes with a previous background in singing zmirot). This shows the weight these songs hold in their mind alongside the longer zmirot texts, but also that they are a distinctly separate entity. These songs contrast with the main canon of zmirot, which are characterized by longer texts, a poetic structure, and frequent quotations from other canonical Jewish texts. The zemer *Mah Yedidut*, for example, has 20 references to Tanach, the Talmud, and the Midrash combined (Scherman 2003, 51-52).

There were multiple conflicting views from those whom I interviewed regarding how to define zmirot. Many saw them as part of the traditional home liturgy for Shabbat meals and strictly referred to the zmirot as the canon of longer poetry that is found in a standard bencher. Anything outside of those texts could be seen to enhance Shabbat, but for them it wouldn't be zmirot. Others were willing to expand the definition to include anything sung in celebration of Shabbat. One interviewee reported that, for them, zmirot should also include any text from Psalms. Alan "Yudi" Sufrin, A Breslov Chassidic Jew who was the "court musician" for the Biala Rebbe in Borough Park and also composed "biblegum pop" music with his wife in the band Stereo Sinai, includes anything sung during the meal as "zmires," even niggunim or humming along to others while they sing with words. If a child wants to sing the Pokemon theme song with "yai dai's", then that is celebrating Shabbat for them and should be acceptable (Sufrin, 2023). While this may not be a widespread approach, he is indicating that there should be flexible definitions depending on the situation.

Cantor Rosalie Will, an HUC ordained cantor who is the executive director for Sing Unto G-d and "has more than 25 years of experience training songleaders, leading worship, and creating singing communities" (Will, 2024), stated, "On Friday nights, the music we would sing was Israeli and "Jewish" [which ultimately meant music in Hebrew]. "On Saturday night, it was justice and Americana! If this music was introduced in a different part of Shabbat, it would feel foreign to me" (Will, 2023). Her experience with song sessions in the Reform Summer camp world also had its parameters to what was customarily sung on Shabbat. When speaking about what repertoire was sung at Camp Yavneh (a Zionist Hebrew speaking camp in New Hampshire), Josh Jacobson, a Modern Orthodox Jew who is also considered one of the foremost authorities on Jewish choral music, said "Certainly the semi-sacred Israeli songs that we mentioned earlier would be sung, the ones with just one or two lines of lyrics in addition to the traditional multi-verse zmirot, we would sing those on Shabbat" (Jacobson, 2023). This repertoire is elevated to the status of "semi-sacred". Because these songs are a meaningful part of the Shabbat experiences of those with whom I spoke, I include them in this study. For many contemporary American Jews, these songs contribute to the soundscape of the Shabbat meal as much as, or more than, the songs that form the core zmirot repertoire. Given the diverse types of songs that contemporary Jews sing around the Shabbat table, I advocate for a broad understanding of Shabbat zmirot that includes the core repertoire, as well as popular Jewish music which may not inherently contain explicitly religious content. I believe the traditional canon of poetry should be preserved, but by no means should they encompass the entirety of zmirot singing. In this study, I argue that song sessions, a musical practice common to Reform Jewish summer camps and other youth gatherings,

function in a similar manner to domestic zemirot singing and serve the same purpose of Oneg Shabbat.

HISTORY

The origin of Shabbat zmirot is debated among scholars as we don't have any textual evidence of the songs themselves until the 12th century with the *Machzor Vitry* (Zentner 2023, 495). Some historians believe that this practice was started after the time of the Second Temple, contemporaneous with the liturgy of the siddur.

In her thesis, "Zemirot Shabbat: An Exploration of Sabbath Table Songs," Cantor Sarah Zemel presents several pieces of evidence that the singing of Shabbat zmirot extends back quite far in Jewish history: According to Abraham Lopez Cardozo, "The custom of singing table songs (Zmirot) on Shabbat and holidays is said to be more than two thousand years old. Philo, in describing the life led by the Essenes, mentions [the Essenes'] custom of singing Zemirot, which add light and joy to the Jewish soul, together, at the table, in appreciation of God's goodness" (Cardozo 1987, xii). Neil Levin cites the Talmud in stating that "evidence can be found in the Talmudic references to the discontinuation of the practice as a sign of mourning after the destruction of the Second Temple and the dissolution of the Sanhedrin.... the very fact of the injunctions against their use indicates that such singing accompanied Sabbath meals (as well as other feasts) long before the Diaspora" (Levin 1981, vii) [Neil Levin's claim draws on Mishnah Sota 9:11: "When the Sanhedrin ceased [to function] song ceased from the places of feasting, as it is written, 'They drink wine without song' (Isaiah 24: 9)."]. A.W. Binder claims "Zemirot, table songs, had begun to develop as far back as the days of the Second Temple. Thus it is believed that Zur mishelo, one of the group of Zemirot for the Sabbath eve, whose author is unknown, belongs to the early tannaitic period, perhaps even before Jabne" (Millgram 1965, 303).

Abraham Zvi Idelsohn, a prominent Jewish ethnomusicologist and composer, has a different opinion, stating "No post-Biblical texts of folk-songs were retained from before the paytanic period. From that time on, some songs created in Babylonia and Palestine as early as the tenth century spread throughout the Diaspora and became the standard songs of the Jewish home" (Idelsohn 1992, 360). Regardless of when this tradition came about, its origins sparked a tradition that lasts to this day.

The text that proves that zmirot were in fact sung and had been established as tradition is found in the *Machzor Vitry*. "This machzor was compiled by Rabbi Simchah ben Shmuel of Vitry (d.1105) and his terse directives imply that singing zemirot was already an established custom in his time. In describing the laws of Shabbat, he states simply, but clearly, that 'after the meal it is the custom to recite zemirot' (Malino 2001, 5). The *Machzor Vitry* is also the first published work in which there are recorded zmirot texts. The Machzor itself is one of the oldest siddurim that exists, and it includes both rulings and liturgy. According to Sarah Zemel, "[The *Machzor Vitry*] is the earliest known version of Ashkenazic liturgy. As one of the earliest known of all siddurim, it allows modern scholars to understand better the liturgical practices of the Jews of the Middle Ages. It is significant that several zemirot Shabbat are included in this siddur. Their inclusion in this important historic work testifies not only to the age of these particular zemirot texts, but to the prevalence of the custom among Jews of the time." (Zemel 1998, 11)

The versions of the zmirot that are published in that machzor are the texts "Barukh HaShem Yom Yom" (Praise The Lord Each Day), "D'ror Yikra" (Let Freedom be Heard), and "Ki Eshmera Shabbat" (When I Observe the Shabbat), according to Albert Kohn (Kohn 2018, 3). "D'ror Yikra" and "Ki Eshmera Shabbat" are still sung frequently, and modern melodies are being composed to this day. Additionally, Kohn cites another later version of the same Machzor from northern France which states "After this, they eat half of the meal. They bring before them fish or various delicacies and recite upon them the beautiful song [נאה זמר] composed by the Rabbi our teacher Shimon the son of the Rabbi, our teacher, Yitzkhak (may the memory of the righteous be a blessing), and afterwards the song composed by Dunash son of Librat and afterwards the song composed by the Rabbi, our teacher, Abraham ibn Ezra" (Kohn 2018, 3). This further establishes these three zmirot as the first recorded zmirot in the following order: "Baruch Hashem Yom Yom", "D'ror Yikra", and "Ki Eshmera Shabbat".

In Neil Levin's *Zmirot Anthology*, he observed that there was a renaissance of the creation of zmirot in the 16th and 17th century, when zmirot were widely celebrated and written with the rise of the Kabbalah, and then later Hasidism in the 18th century. After the Jewish expulsion from Spain at the end of the 15th century, Kabbalah took on new doctrines which emphasized a messianic rationalization of this great tragedy. As such, poetic expressions of "perfection" through Sabbath observance were expressed through new melodies and texts for zmirot. One of the easiest ways to disseminate information was through beautifully simple popular melodies. So grand thinkers of Kabbalah, such as Isaac Luria and Israel Najara (one of his disciples), could bring complex ideas such as *partzufim*–mystical configurations of Divine presence–to Jewish communities with ease.

Luria's zmirot have even been called the most remarkable products of all Kabbalistic poetry (Levin 1981, xiii).

As such, the majority of the zmirot texts that are used today were written during this time. One of the most famous texts written by Israel Najara (16th Century) is "Ya Ribon", which first appeared in 1587 according to Neil Levin (Levin 1981, xii). A common practice that this text demonstrates is that of the "nominal acrostic," in which the author signs their name in the first line of each stanza (excerpted below) which spells out "Yisrael."

> יָה רִבּוֹן עָלַם וְעָלְמַיָּא, שְׁבָחִין אַסַדֵּר צַפְרָא וְרַמְשָׁא, רַבְרְבִין עוֹבְדֵידְ וְתַקִיפִין, אֵּלֶהָא דִי לֵה יְקֵר וּרְבוּתָא, לְמְקַדָּשֵׁךְ תּוּב וּלְקֹדֶשׁ קַדְשִׁין,

Other notable texts that were composed at this time include "M'nucha V'simcha" (*Moshe [Unknown last name]* 1545), "Yom Zeh L'Yisrael" (usually ascribed to Isaac Luria however according to the *Yedid Nefesh* bencher it is actually Isaac Chandali), "Yom Zeh M'chubad" (*Yisrael* [Unknown last name]), "Azamer Bishvachin" (Isaac Luria), and "Atkinu S'udata" (Luria).

Albert Kohn notes that this burst of energy in zmirot composition in the 16th century was well-received by the contemporaneous Jewish community. "While it is difficult to estimate the public popularity of this repertoire of Shabbat Zemirot during the Middle Ages, after the start of print things become much clearer. In 1514—two years

after the start of Hebrew printing in Western Europe—an edition of Shabbat Zemirot was published in Prague. The fact that about a fifth of the second ever publication of Hebraica in Western Europe was dedicated to Shabbat Zemirot indicates how invested Jews at the start of the sixteenth century were in this domestic custom." (Kohn 2018, 27)

It is noteworthy that many of the melodies for these texts were either inspired by, or directly borrowed from the surrounding culture. The earliest evidence of this comes from a south German manuscript from the 1500s. Naomi Cohn Zentner outlines four other cases in which melodic borrowing is a strong characteristic of Shabbat zmirot, including melodies from folk songs and opera arias being applied to "Tzur Mishelo" (Zentner 2023, 496). Even today, many of those whom I interviewed spoke of singing "Dror Yikra" to the Beach Boys' "Sloop John B," "M'nucha V'Simcha" sung to a popular yiddish melody Auf Dem Fayer, "Yom Shabbaton" sung to Mordechai Ben David's "Shiru Lamelech", as well as a tune for "Yom Zeh M'chubad" to The "Bumble Bee Tuna Song." This melodic borrowing can also move in the opposite direction, such as Yonatan Razel's "D'ror Yikra" being sung to "Adon Olam" which was introduced at Hava Nashira, the premier Jewish worship and music conference of the Reform Movement. The faculty desired to sing this melody but, because the text of "Dror Yikra" is unfamiliar to many attendees, felt that it would be better received if set to "Adon Olam," which is more commonly known among Reform Jews (Jacobs, 2023). The attempt was not entirely successful, as some confused Razel's melody with a similar-sounding Sephardic setting of "Adon Olam." The reason "D'ror Yikra" and "Adon Olam" can be sung to so many different songs is because they are both written in iambic tetrameter

"Most of the melodies, as we know them, date from a period spanning the early 17th to the early 20th century" (Levin xiii). While the texts of Shabbat zemirot have been published in many written documents, melodies have primarily been transmitted orally, often within family units. The first instance of zmirot melodies being published came in 1877 from Abraham Baer in his work "Oder, Der Practische Vorbeter". Since then, many anthologies of zmirot have been compiled in an attempt to preserve and transmit these melodies. People continue to write new zmirot melodies as musical tastes change. Levin continues, "Accommodations to changing trends, imposition of environmental influences and oral transmission itself have all combined to ensure a continual evolutionary process" (xiii). Since then, many melodies written in recent decades have become popular, to the extent that their relatively recent origin has been obscured to the point that they seem to be as old as the receiving of the Torah.

Ultimately, there is an accepted custom and order for these zmirot. They are codified purely based on the custom of one publication which was then accepted as the standard. The *NCSY* (National Conference of Synagogue Youth) *Bencher* (2012) and ArtScroll *Interlinear Family Zemiros* (originally published in 2002 with a 2023 15th "impression") preserve that order, despite the *NCSY Bencher* omitting certain zmirot that the ArtScroll *Interlinear Family Zemiros* bencher includes. The more religiously traditional ArtScroll *Interlinear Family Zemiros* contains far more repertoire than any of progressive benchers which is reflective of what is being sung around the tables in those communities. Since there is no formal ruling for the order in which zmirot are to be used and at which meal, some progressive benchers will not have a consistent order of which zmirot go in what order. In comparing the three benchers *Yedid Nefesh* (2009), *B'kol*

Echad (2010), and the *NCSY Bencher* (See below), the first three zmirot listed for Friday night are all different, with the exception being "M'nucha V'Simcha" which is not found until the fifth zemer in *B'kol Echad*.

	Yedid Nefesh	B'kol Echad	NCSY Bencher
Zemer #1	M'nucha V'Simcha	Baruch El Elyon	Kol M'kadesh Sh'vi-i
<u>Zemer #2</u>	Yah Ribon	D'ror Yikra	M'nucha V'Simcha
Zemer #3	Yom Zeh L'Yisrael	Ki Eshmera Shabbat	Mah Y'didut

All other seven zmirot for Friday night are different in this example. This speaks to the customary nature of these texts as well as the preferences for progressive communities. The consistency between all of these benchers lies within "Shalom Aleichem" and "Eishet Chayil", and the melodies for S'udah Shlishit, "Mizmor L'David" and "Yedid Nefesh". "Shalom Aleichem" and "Eishet Chayil" are all found before the meal.

SINGING ZMIROT OUTSIDE THE FAMILY HOME

Because many progressive Jews do not grow up singing zmirot in the home, exposure to this repertoire and practice often comes about through communal Shabbat meals, such as at a Jewish summer camp, or a college Hillel program. Those I interviewed explained to me that these experiences were deeply meaningful and continue to inspire their Shabbat practices decades later. Interviewees specifically named a Melave Malka singing circle that was housed at Columbia Barnard Hillel in the late 1990s and early 2000s, as well as the Pardes Institute of Jewish Studies in Jerusalem as important sites from which the singing of zmirot has spread.⁴

Hadar Institute, a center of Jewish life, learning, and practice which was founded in 2006, has emerged as one of the most important musical centers of the non-Orthodox Jewish world. The Rising Song Institute, a musical retreat hosted by Hadar, has played a large role in disseminating melodies across the United States as well as laying a foundation on which to build singing communities. For example, Chicago alone has three groups following the lead set by Hadar: Chicago Niggun Circle, Traditional Egalitarian Shtiebel and the Windy City Minyan were all inspired by experiences at Hadar Rising Song Institute. Hadar encourages participants to start their own song circles in their home communities, and provides resources to help individuals to do so (Becker, 2024).

⁴ Melave Malka literally means "Escorting the Queen" and is the name of the meal after Shabbat which is customary among some religious Jews to metaphorically send the Sabbath Bride off in a similar fashion to the way she was welcomed during Kabbalat Shabbat. Like the meals of Shabbat, there is a specific repertoire of songs associated with Melave Malka. In this context of this thesis, I choose to focus on singing during Shabbat itself, and therefore do not study Melave Malka in depth.

I attended an event in 2024 at Base LNCLN in Chicago where zmirot were sung after a very musically oriented Kabbalat Shabbat and Ma'ariv service (Friday night services). The organization Base is very similar to Chabad, in that it is held in the home of a Rabbinic couple and provides a network of people with whom to be in relationship, but is more progressive religiously. On their official website, this Base advertises itself saving "Some stuff we do: delicious sacred meals, raucous discussion, invigorating Torah- and service-learning, and soulful singing. Wherever you are coming from and wherever you are going we can't wait to connect" (Base LNCLN, 2024). The group of people consisted of a conglomerate of roughly 50 Shabbat observant, or at least Shabbat conscious, 20-30s young adults who wanted to be in relationship with other like minded people. Towards the end of the meal, there were benchers and packets of additional musical selections which were handed out to the roughly 35 people still left at the tables. As people were finishing their meals, Joey Becker, the same traditional egalitarian Jew who discovered zmirot at Pardes, started a niggun quietly with a smaller group of people who slowly got louder, as an indication and an invitation that those who wanted to sing zmirot could join. Some people remained on the periphery having their conversations, some people decided to leave, but a group of roughly 25 remained and joined. Throughout the next hour and a half, about 15 zmirot were sung and, while difficult to tell how many people knew each melody, there was a very large sound and the vast majority of people had their eyes closed or glued to their benchers while singing along, indicating their immersion in the music. This scenario happens often in the Chicago area and has expanded for the past 9 years since BASE's founding in 2015. While Base does

not explicitly advertise itself for its musical nature, this is a common occurrence at many of the Base locations around the US.

ACCESSIBILITY

While the zmirot repertoire is vast and diverse, my research has made clear that many contemporary Jews, particularly those who affiliate with non-Orthodox movements, prioritize accessibility when selecting melodies. This accessibility is found in several different elements of the music: (a) Accessibility of the Hebrew Texts, (b) Simplicity of Form, and (c) Repetition, including melodic repetition using vocables.

Accessibility of the Hebrew Texts

Pieces in the traditional canon of Shabbat zmirot are often lengthy, and their arcane Hebrew texts can be challenging to non-native speakers. Given the quick pace of some settings, singers must be able to move through these texts briskly, which can be an obstacle to participation. For this reason, many individuals select songs with simpler texts.

Marsha Bryan Edelman (a Modern Orthodox Professor of Music and Education at Gratz College, as well as Director of Education and Administrator for the Zamir Choral Foundation) expressed this point in an interview. When I asked if she has a strong emotional connection to any of the zmirot, she replied, "No. There are tunes I like more than other tunes. I think it's the tunes that speak to me more than the actual texts. The reality is that the zemer texts, I wouldn't say inscrutable, but they're more difficult. They're not everyday vocabulary, they're harder to understand... I wouldn't say that about... 'Mi Ha'ish' or the other psalm texts that are added to the mix...they speak to me more because I can understand them better. They're in more accessible Hebrew or for whatever reason I'm just more familiar with them...for example 'Esa Einai.'" (Edelman, 2023)

Simplicity of Musical Form

Score

Many of my interlocutors preferred to sing pieces that have a simple musical form, which enables one to quickly grasp the piece's musical movement, and participate in the singing. These songs generally utilized a strophic (verse-chorus) form, or had two or three sections that repeat for the duration of the piece. The former is common to lengthy zmirot (which often have a refrain after each verse), which can help to bolster the familiarity of the piece among the singers. One example of this is Ari Goldwag's setting of "Yah Ribon":



Verse 1- יָה רִבּוֹן עָלַם וְעָלְמַיָּא, אַנְהְ הוּא מַלְכָּא מֶלֶך מַלְכַיָּא

עוֹבַד גְּבוּרְתֵּךְ וְתִמְהַיָּא, שְׁפַר קֶדָמָךְ לְהַחֲוָיָּא.

Chorus- יָה רִבּוֹן עָלַם וְעָלְמַיָּא, אַנְהְ הוּא מַלְכָּא מֶלֶך מַלְכַיָּא

Verse 2- אָסַדֵּר צַפְרָא וְרַמְשָׁא, לָךְ אֱלָהָא קַדִּישָׁא דִּי בְרָא כָּל נַפְשָׁא, אַסַדֵּר צַפְרָא וְרַמְשָׁא, לַךְ אֵלָהָא קַדִּישָׁא דִי בְרָא בָּל גַפִּשָׁא.

אִיִרִין קַדִּישִׁין וּרְנֵי אֶָנָשָׁא, חֵיוַת בָּרָא וְעוֹפֵי שְׁמַיָּא.

Chorus

Other popular Jewish music sung on Shabbat has less text and the structures lend themselves to an AABB form, with some including a 3rd C part which would also be repeated. An example of this AABB Form is "Acheinu" by Abie Rotenberg:



Part A: אַחֵינוּ כָּל בֵּית יִשְׂרָאֵל, הַנְּתוּנִים בְּצָרָה וּבַשִּׁרָיָה, הָעוֹמְדִים בֵּין בַּיָם וּבֵין בַּיַבָּשָׁה Part B: הַכָּמְוֹם יְרַחֵם עֵלֵיהֶם, וְיוֹצִיאֵם מִצָּרָה לְרְוָחָה

וּמַאֲפַלָה לְאוֹרָה, וּמִשִּׁעְבּוּד לְגְאֵלָה, הַשְׁחָּא בַּעֲגָלָא וּבִזְמַן קָרִיב

This zemer takes its text from the traditional text of the weekday Torah service, and has been popularized lately because of the events surrounding the state of Israel, specifically on October 7, 2023. Though not traditionally associated with Shabbat or considered part of the zmirot canon, it has recently become a fixture of some Shabbat tables. The text translates to: "As for our siblings, the whole house of Israel, who are given over to trouble or captivity, whether they abide on the sea or on the dry land: May G-d have mercy upon them, and bring them forth from distress to relief, from darkness to light, and from subjugation to redemption, at this moment, speedily and in the near future."

The musical range of this zemer is quite large for the average layperson and stretches the entire breadth of what a community would be expected to be able to sing. In practice, this text is usually sung through as written at least twice. The second time through, a deeper connection and familiarity to the zemer usually brings out a different musical expression and color.

Repetition and the Use of Vocables

An important advantage to the simple forms described above is repetition. Like some pop music without a complicated bridge, the few melodic phrases are repeated frequently. In many zmirot, verses are all sung to the same melody, but with different words. The repetitive structure allows for people to learn the melody of each verse and chorus much quicker without needing to know how to read or understand music. An important point to note is that with many zmirot after the final verse and chorus, it is customary to continue singing the melody as a niggun, using syllables like "Yai lai lai" or "Yai dai dai". This moves the singing away from the text and allows for a deeper dive into the melody itself. In this way, singers may devote less attention to following the text, and can focus solely on expressing the melody. When Joey Becker hears the communal silence upon concluding singing any particular zemer, he states "The song is the 6 days of the week and the silence [afterwards] is the shabbos of the song" (Becker, 2023).

ZMIROT AS THEY RELATE TO REFORM JUDAISM

Today, three important sites at which Jewish communal singing happens outside of a service are summer camps, youth groups, and progressive conventions (ie. Hava Nashira, Songleader Boot Camp, the URJ Biennial, etc). While these conventions are largely music driven, what links them to summer camps and youth groups is simply that Jews are sharing meals together, and then pray Birkat Hamazon (post-meal blessings). At summer camps, campers and staff share three meals a day for at minimum, a week, and at maximum, an entire summer. Youth group retreats and conventions are much shorter but also have frequent communal meals. In each of these settings, there is a desire to offer as much Jewish content and tradition as possible to teach people of all ages about traditional Jewish practice. Birkat Hamazon is not something that is commonly recited by the average Reform Jew because Reform Jews frequently prioritize other elements of their lives, especially on Shabbat, over this religious practice around communal meals. Most traditional Jews stay very much within their community for Shabbat and eat either with their immediate family every shabbat or within their community. That simply does not happen anywhere close to the same rate in Reform Jewish circles. The impact of not coming together for Shabbat meals is that this tradition is lost until people gather at these events. Therefore, when they attend summer camps, youth groups, and progressive conventions on Shabbat, people are exposed to this tradition in some facet and there is an opportunity for zmirot to be included.

As described above, in Reform Jewish households, eating three communal meals on Shabbat is not something that is required in order to be a practicing Jew. Because the Reform movement adopted the position that Halachah is not binding, Reform Jews believe that there is no obligation to keep Shabbat according to tradition. Similarly, there is also no obligation to desist from technology and other activities on Shabbat, though most Reform leaders encourage Jews to attend prayer services and engage in some sort of spiritual practice. For many Reform Jews, there is a tension between going to services and having these meals and other activities. For many, activities such as youth sports present a significant obstacle to the cultivation of a Shabbat atmosphere in Reform households.

In contrast, in a halachically observant household, communal meals, singing, study, and communal games frequently occur within the clearly defined boundaries of Shabbat. This atmosphere is built into their lives and has lent itself well to celebrating Shabbat through song. I recognize that zmirot are significantly easier to implement in halachically observant households, but I strongly believe that zmirot have a place in non-halachically observant households, despite the prevalent barriers. Marsha Edelman put it brilliantly: "There was a time when people were disparaging Debbie Friedman because it was camp songs, kids were singing them. Or we would sing Chassidic Song Festival songs as part of our services at camp, but adults didn't sing that stuff... after a while, they did. Part of the reason is that those kids grew up and became those adults and still wanted to sing those songs" (Edelman, 2023). This is reminiscent of the famous quote from the movie Field of Dreams: "If you build it, they will come".

Additionally, a Reform education coming from religious schools and from summer camps typically does not include education on how and/or why certain practices exist in the current form. For example, the Birkat Hamazon that is chanted in URJ Summer camps is considered to be abbreviated by someone who is more traditional because there is a lot that is omitted. The same dynamic applies to a prayer service. This can result in a sense of confusion and disorientation when Reform youth encounter Jewish practices different than their own. For example, it can be difficult for even a very engaged Reform Jew who enters college feeling strongly knowledgeable about Jewish life and practice, then suddenly to find themselves in an environment with a different service, a long and unfamiliar Birkat Hamazon, and songs after a meal that are completely foreign to them. If they were to have exposure to zmirot, this could help smooth out the transition while exposing them to more of our history.

Reform Summer camps have an interesting relationship to zmirot. There is a tradition at all URJ Reform Summer camps to sing and have "song session" after the Friday night meal. A song session is where the camp comes together to sing and dance to Israeli music, modern Jewish music, and the occasional non-Jewish pop tune. There may be some overlap with the traditional texts such as "Ki Eshmera Shabbat", but as a rule these songs are not what most would consider zmirot. This song session comes directly out of Birkat Hamazon, in many cases, or is directly after the Friday night meal. There is a heightened energy and sense of importance to this song session above all the others. The setlist is usually representative of that. For example, at Shwayder Camp of Temple Emanuel in Colorado, there is a setlist for the Friday night song session that has remained unchanged for at least 15 years and many of the melodies sung are strictly to be sung during this song session. While this camp is unique in that the song session setlist has remained entirely unchanged, Rosalie Will states that "Every camp has their traditions that it wouldn't be Shabbat without" (Will, 2023). Each summer camp has a different

repertoire around this song session but they all have a greater importance to the camp on Friday night.

Though the Reform world currently does not have a practice of Shabbat table singing, song sessions fill a similar role. In fact, song sessions occur directly after the meal, are in celebration of Shabbat, and bear a similar feeling of connection with a slightly different energy. Zmirot and Shabbat table singing are usually significantly more intimate, a capella, and contained/constrained to the table. In contrast, a Friday night song session may start at the table, but eventually leads to everyone dancing and singing around the tables, if they aren't pushed to the side. Song sessions include guitars and any musical instrument a songleader is willing to use to enhance the experience. The energies of both are exceptionally similar. The song session tends to be much more active and boisterous as people will get up and start dancing with instruments. Shabbat table singing, while having the potential to be equally energetic, tends to be more sedate as people are seated at a table. A large reason for this difference of expression lies in the religious practice of required meals and no instrumentation on Shabbat for those who sing zmirot.

To consider the relationship between song sessions and traditional Shabbat zmirot, it is helpful to consider a similar scene in which two forms of singing collided in public space. Rabbi Emanuel Feldman describes an encounter in Jerusalem that points out the similarities between diverse communal singing experiences, which he refers to as "Two kinds of Shabbat zmirot:"

... From the windows of the yeshiva on my block comes the sound of many voices on Shabbat afternoon, Zemirot are being sung. The voices are lusty, enthusiastic, the sound enveloping the streets below: HaShem ro'i lo echsar, "The Lord is my shepherd I shall not want, he maketh me to lie down in green pastures, He restoreth my soul . . . "-the traditional words sung at twilight as Shabbat fades into the week. The voices rise up and swell. Other words; yom ze mekhubad, "This day is honored from among all the days, for on this day He Who fashioned the universe rested...." From below the adjacent hills there rise up other voices. From the distance, as the voices bounce off the canyons and echo upward, they sound like zemirot. The voices are lusty, enthusiastic, enveloping the hills and the rocks. But as you approach the sound and look across the hills, you see tens of thousands of people sitting in a stadium watching a soccer game, and you realize that this is not the sound of zemirot, but the sound of a crowd cheering their heroes down on the field. The crescendo of voices rises and falls, and they are singing the songs of their team. Jerusalem Betar is playing Netanya for the league championship. As the twilight of Shabbat fades into the night, the voices swell and rise up; "Go Jerusalem, Go Jerusalem, Go Go Go!" From the windows of the veshiva, a hundred voices cry out as one: Rahem behasdekha, "Have mercy in Thy compassion upon Thy people, upon Zion the dwelling place of Thy glory... From the grandstand in the stadium, ten thousand voices cry out as one: "Go Jerusalem, Go Go Go!" (Feldman 1993, 3)

This story illustrates how two things that may not be so similar can have such

similar qualities and characteristics. By titling this piece "Two Kinds of Shabbat Zemirot: Images of Jerusalem" Feldman is drawing a parallel between the secular and the religious of Israel being all part of Klal Yisrael (the whole Jewish community). While some people may see a Reform camp song session as similar to cheering at a soccer game, and to some they may sound the same, I don't see the soccer game and zmirot as similar, as one is secular and one is religious. To me, the song session and zmirot are similar because they are both expressions of a love for G-d and Judaism. Their goals are the same. So, too, I view Reform song sessions and zmirot as part of this umbrella of Shabbat table singing which, broadly, is called zmirot. They are both part of the same musical culture, and as such I believe they are the Reform iteration of zmirot.

As rich as the song session experience can be for young Jews, Jewish leaders have a responsibility to provide more mature experiences for these individuals as they grow older. The song session flows naturally into learning zmirot. The content and accessibility of zmirot bridge the gap in large form due to their intimacy and potential for stronger, more mature connection. Song sessions are largely catered toward a younger audience, whereas zmirot melodies and texts require a baseline level of engagement and knowledge which they should have by this point in their lives. Educating Jews who are in their 20s and 30s about the beauty of zmirot provides a useful form of programming as these congregants set about the work of building their own Jewish homes.

A possible challenge to teaching zmirot is the Hebrew and Aramaic languages of the zmirot repertoire. Yet, many of the song session songs are written in Hebrew which, at one point, was unfamiliar. I firmly believe that once these young Reform Jews grow up, the "Hebrew training wheels" need to come off. Many Jewish professionals shy away from teaching Hebrew and Aramaic because it is more difficult to learn a song in an unfamiliar language than a song in English. Yet, these young Jews learn how to read in Hebrew school and many of those who go to camp learn all of Birkat Hamazon, in addition to many other prayers and songs in Hebrew. The notion that these texts are not accessible because it is "too much" stems from improper education. As Cantor Zoe Jacobs, a Reform Cantor in London, says "If we can do four verses of Lecha Dodi, surely we can do four verses of D'ror Yikra... if we are less afraid and we get them transliteration and we give them time to catch onto it, actually it's less of an issue" (Jacobs, 2023). If the texts are not all taught at once, and are broken up appropriately, this music is well within the capabilities of the average Reform Jew.

Of course, we need not wait until adulthood to introduce people to zmirot. Ideally, this music should be a part of the summer camp and religious school experience. We can

look to the Conservative movement's network of summer camps to understand how this can be implemented: At Ramah camps, much of this music is included during the all-camp Friday night song session, which they specifically call zmirot, so there is more familiarity with these texts compared to the Reform world. When working as a staff member at Ramah in the Poconos, I learned that the camp's practice is to sing zmirot without instruments or amplification after dinner, and the Rosh Shira (head music staff member) stands on a bench in the middle of the room, shouts and claps along to keep everyone together as they lead the camp in zmirot starting with Shalom Aleichem. It's a beautiful tradition where hundreds of people are banging on tables in unison and creating a big noise on Shabbat. For the longer zmirot (for example "Mipi El"), each age group is assigned a verse, and they are all able to have a turn in the verses while the entire camp joins together for the chorus. A large difference from Reform song sessions is that this is done almost exclusively at their tables and the banging on the tables is used as an instrument and to keep time. After this ends, there is a tradition for the older campers (High school age) to break off and have another high energy private song session. At the end of a camp session, the older middle school campers are invited to attend in order to welcome them to the tradition. This gives them a sense of being let in on a secret and something that they can look forward to when they are older. I believe this is an essential part of its success and its continuity. That sense of being included from an early age and being brought into something special needs to be included with zmirot as well.

There is also another component to this private Ramah song session: It can be a bit goofy. Some of the songs that are included are typically sung in elementary school and would not typically relate well to this age group (ie. "There is a Dinosaur", "El Hama'ayan", etc). However, because this is the case, campers can let go of their ego and go over the top with their energy. The high energy and buy-in from the campers are important qualities which may be a challenge to replicate in a different setting. As they begin to wind down, so does the song selection. Songs that are much more mellow and intimate are sung to bring participants together in a completely different way, such as "Hamalach Hagoel" by Abie Rotenberg or "Va'ani Ashir Uzecha" by Josh Warshawsky.

Reform camp leaders can also learn from the musical practices at Ramah's S'udah Shlishit meals. At Ramah in the Poconos, the oldest group of campers is invited into the middle to help lead a mellow selection of zmirot such as "Mizmor L'david" by Ben Zion Shenker, "Yerushalayim Shel Zahav" by Naomi Shemer, and "Acheinu" by Abie Rotenberg. These would lead directly into "Shir Hama'alot" using the same tune as "Y'did Nefesh" and then into Birkat Hamazon. If there is an option to include this music at summer camp, I believe that is the ideal way to bring them to Reform communities because of the buy-in that people have at camp.

Including this music at religious school during a music period is the next best option. Many children do not attend summer camp, so their only exposure to the musical history of the Jewish people may be at religious school and services. A great way to build a singing community is to start with your youngest children. Once an age group is able to read and pronounce Hebrew, this music can be taught due to its ease of accessibility. The longer zmirot and complicated arrangements should be avoided until the end of middle school or early high school as they will be daunting at a younger age. Alternatively, if the chorus or first section of the zemer is the only part they learn, that is a perfectly acceptable way of introducing the zemer without it being overwhelming at that age. Including this music in a music curriculum may be the only time to teach a frequently overlooked part of the Jewish musical history to the next generation.

The best way to model and introduce this type of music to the community as a whole is by hosting a meal at the synagogue on Friday night before/after a service (preferably after), after Saturday morning services for the Kiddush, or Saturday late-afternoon for S'udah Shlishit and Havdalah.⁵ Creating connection to tradition, to community, and to G-d is the primary goal. Communal meals are one of the oldest, tried-and-true ways of creating this connection. Advertise that there will be some light singing just after the meal finishes and make sure to include music that the congregation already knows, in addition to newer zmirot melodies. The key is bridging the tradition with what they already know to create consistency. Then, if this event is received positively, and there is continued interest, a more regular group could get together and the repertoire can be expanded from there. Start simple. It's crucial that the intention of this be to deepen connections through music. It's just as Cantor Rosalie said to me "I think [Shabbat singing] gets to the core of all of this [which] is relationship. What's happening before you start to sing is what makes the singing so good. Dan [Nichols] teaches that too when he'd say you have to play basketball with the kids before you expect anyone to sing with you... you can't just say 'let's sing'" (Will, 2023). With proper preparation and appropriate selection of pieces, communal singing of zmirot can transform the Shabbat experiences of Jews of all ages and backgrounds.

⁵ *Building Singing Communities* (2011), by Joey Weisenberg, is primarily targeted towards prayer leading, but a fantastic reference which includes a basic introduction to Jewish music theory, how to cultivate a comfortable musical environment, and how to teach this style of music.

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Interview List

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Becker, Joey. Interviewed by Kevin McKenzie February 6, 2024.

Edelman, Marsha Bryan. Interviewed by Kevin McKenzie on October 31, 2023.

Griffel, Alex. Interviewed by Kevin McKenzie on April 16, 2023.

Jacobs, Zoe. Interviewed by Kevin McKenzie on December 21st, 2023.

Jacobson, Josh. Interviewed by Kevin McKenzie on June 13th, 2023

Sufrin, Alan "Yudi". Interviewed by Kevin McKenzie on November 9th, 2023.

Will, Rosalie. Interviewed by Kevin McKenzie on July 18, 2023.

REPERTOIRE

The following section is a compilation of the music I received or heard during the interview process of this thesis. It is not a comprehensive collection of zmirot. This music is almost exclusively transmitted orally and people very rarely provide attribution as they sing the pieces. The nature of oral transmission means that melodies are quickly separated from their composers, and as a result, variations of melodies emerge. There may be melodies provided here for which there are variations, but they should still be the same source despite minor inconsistencies. This list follows the traditional order of the zmirot by meal, and is followed by a list of popular/short songs in alphabetical order. There is an appendix which specifies the original source of the document and additional information about certain melodies. The source information for these melodies is provided so that anyone interested may find the rest of the melody for their own use. The composers outlined are correct to the best of my knowledge, however, as this is an oral tradition, some of these sources were harder to track down than others. Only the first page of a source is included out of respect to copyright law.

תם ולא נשלם שבח לאל בורא עולם

Finished but not completed, praised be G-d, Creator of the World

Friday Night Zmirot

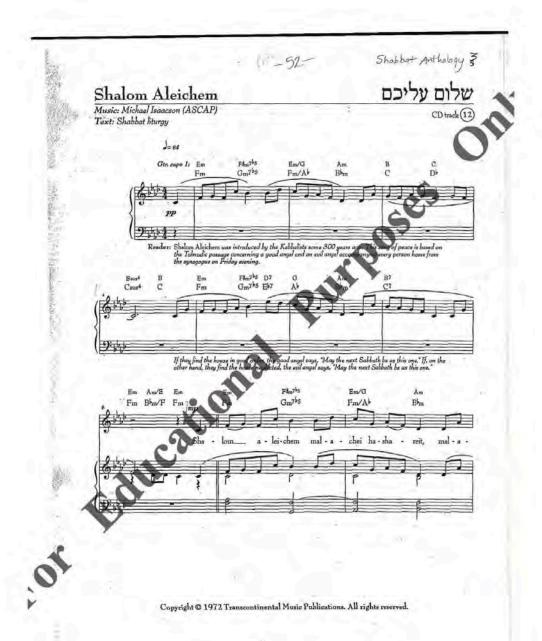


Music: Debbie Friedman - Text: Liturgy / Debbie Friedman



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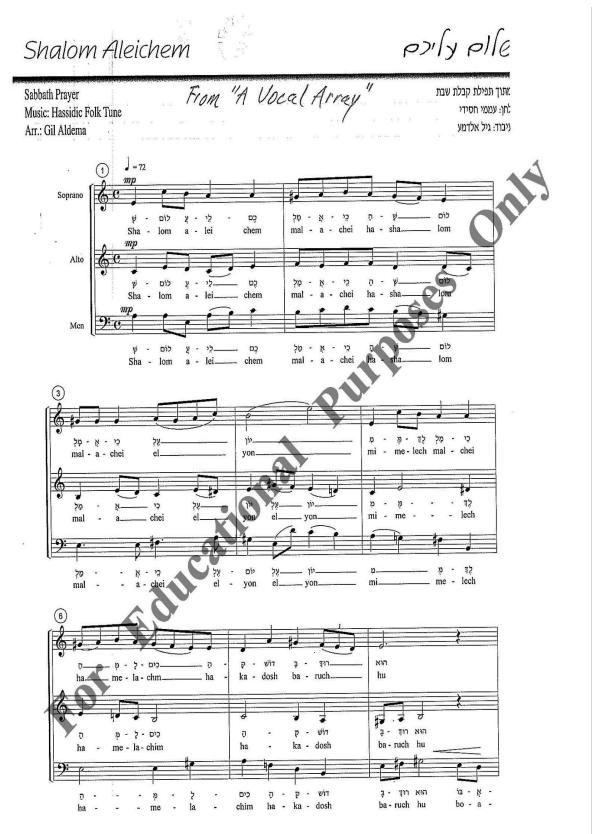


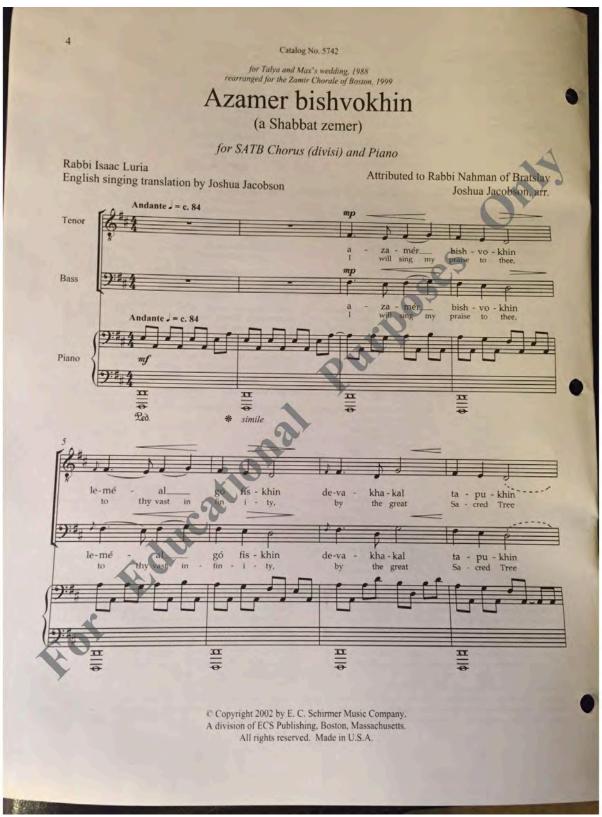
Shalom Aleychem Waltz

- - - 1



Produced at The House Of Sher





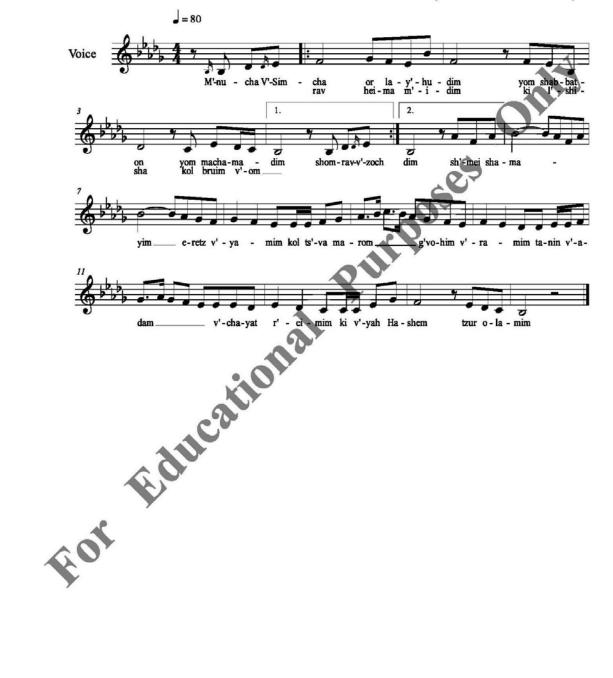
MNUCHO VSIMCHO #I OR LA-Y - HU DIM è V-SIM-CHO M'- NU-CHO YOM SHA-BO - SON YOM MA-CHA-MA - DIM YOM MA-CHA-MA M NU-CHO V-SIM CHO YOM SHA-BO - SON YOM MA-CHA-MA OR LA-Y-HU-DIM DIM NI L-SHI-SHO KOL B'-RU-IM V'-OM'- DIM SHOM-ROV V-ZOCH-HE-MO M- 1 - DIM Rov OR LA-Y2 HU - DIMLA-Y-HU-DIM YON SHA-BO - SON V-SIM-CHO M- NU - CHO Dim SH'-YOM MA-CHA-MA-Tom MA- CHA-MA -DIM KOL TS-VOMO ROM G- VO-HIM V- RO-MIC E - RETS V- YA-MIM ME SHO-MA YIM CHA-YAS R'-E-MIM KI B'YO A-DO- NOY_TSUR_O-LO-MIM V2 Dom V-0-TA-NIN OR LA-Y- HU -Yom SHA-BO- SON DIM V-SIM-CHO_ M'-NU-CHO 0. YOM MA-CHA-MA - DIM YOM MA-CHA- MA, DIM - -AM S- GU - 40 -HU A - SHER DI -SO BER L-

M'NUCHO V'SIMCHO # 2 NU - CHO AY AY AY V2 AY AY AY M'-SIM -CHO O CHO NU-CHO V? OR LA-Y-HЦ M Sim -DII HU - DIM YOM SHA - BO-SON YOM MA-CHA-MA - DIM NU - CHO V- SIM - CHO OR LA-Y-SHOM-ROV V- ZOCH-ROV HE-MO M- I- DIM KI L SHI SHO KOL B-RU-IM V- OM - DIM AY AY AY M- NU- CHO AY AY AY V- SIM - CHO M- NU-CHO V- SIM -- CHO SH'-DIM DR LA-Y- HU -- RETS V- YA-MIM KOL TS-VO MO ROM G-VO-HIM V- RO-MIM ME SHO - MA E KI B- YO A-DO-NOY TSURD - LO-MIM TA-NIN V- O- DOM V- CHA-YAS R- E-MIM CHO V? AY AY AY M2 AY AY AY m"-SIM -CHO NU -Dim. NU -TCHO V--0 OR LA-Y? HU -SIM -CHO TE ¥2 V AM 5- GU -HU A-SHER DI- BER L-L0 - 50 2.

M'nucha V'Simcha

Score

Melody taken from Arum Dem Fayer



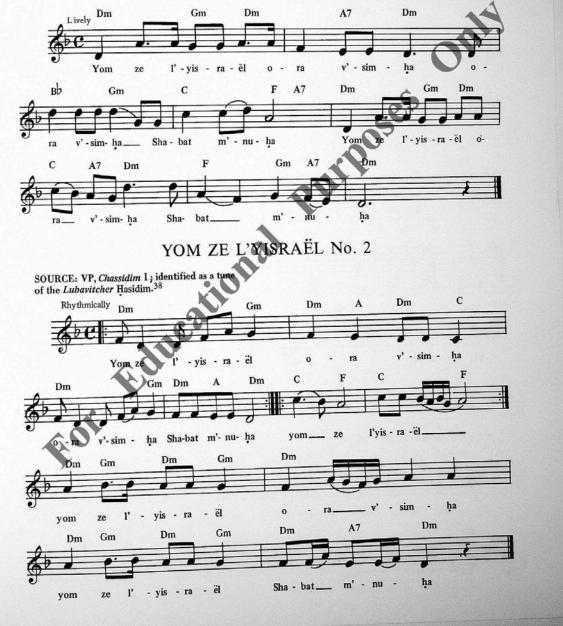
Transcribed by Kevin McKenzie



M'nucha V'simcha Arr. by Joel Caplan for CAI Zamarim



YOOM ZE L'YISRAËL The author of this zemer is considered by most authorities to have been ARIzal, Yitzhak Luria (see introductory note to Atkinu S'udata, p. 25), whose name appears in the acrostic. However, the fact that this poem is in Hebrew, whereas most of Luria's compositions were in Aramaic, has led some to question his authorship. Also, since early prayerbooks contain only stanzas 1-4, and 9, some authorities believe only these were written by Luria. The popular shortened version contains only these stanzas.³⁷





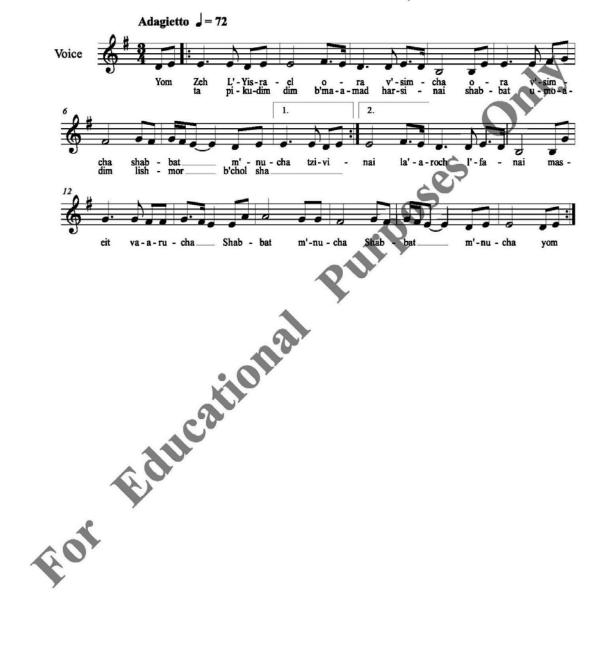
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Score

As Heard at Benjie Ellen Schiller's Shabbos Table

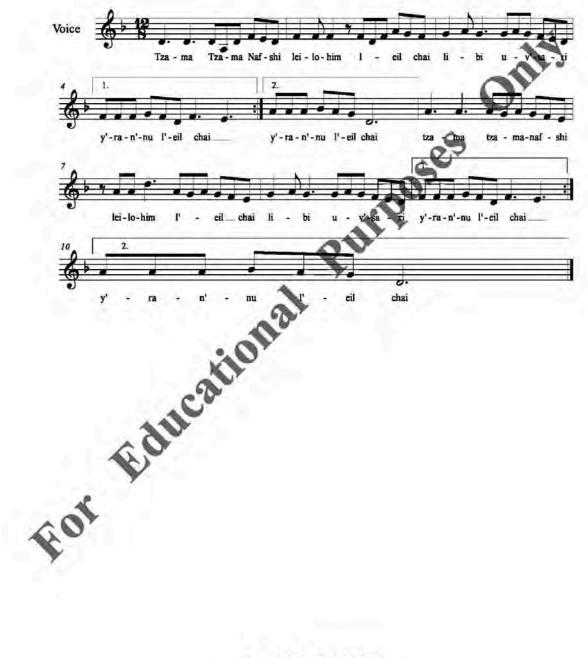


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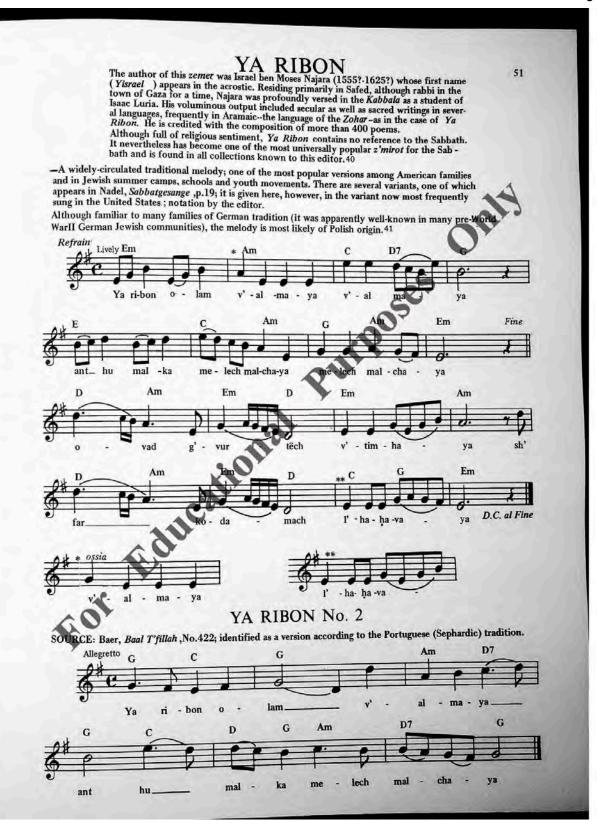
Tzama Nafshi

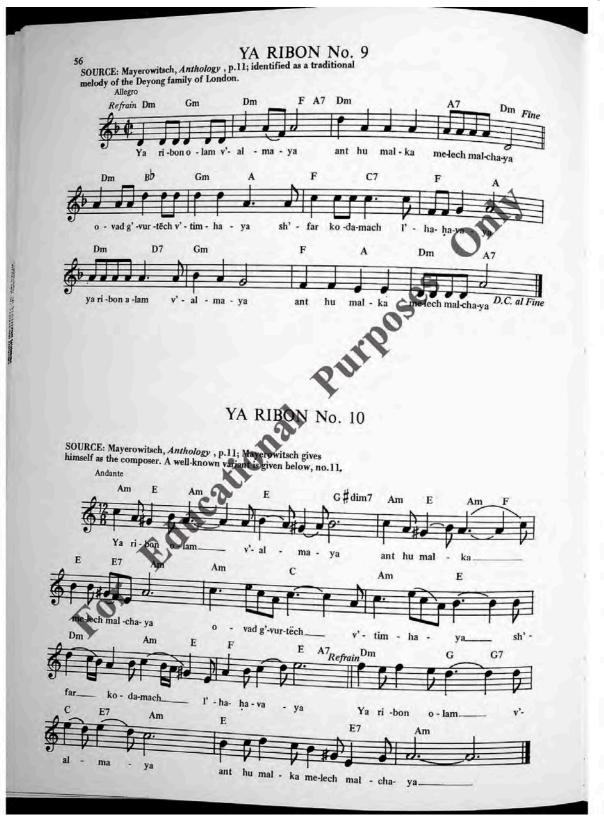
Score

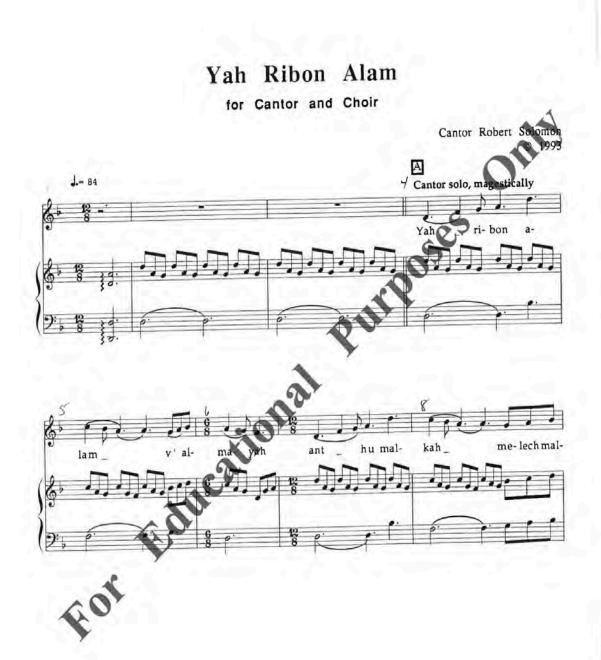
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Transcription by Kevin McKenzie



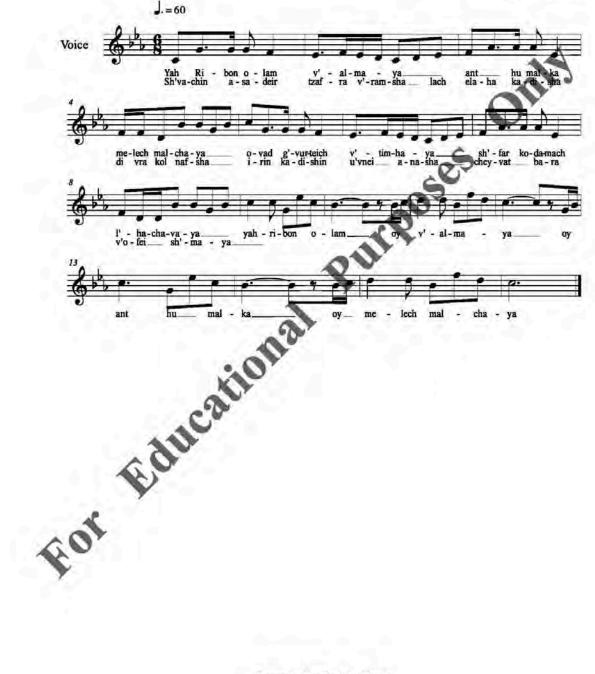






Score

Ari Goldwag



Transcribed by Kevin McKenzie

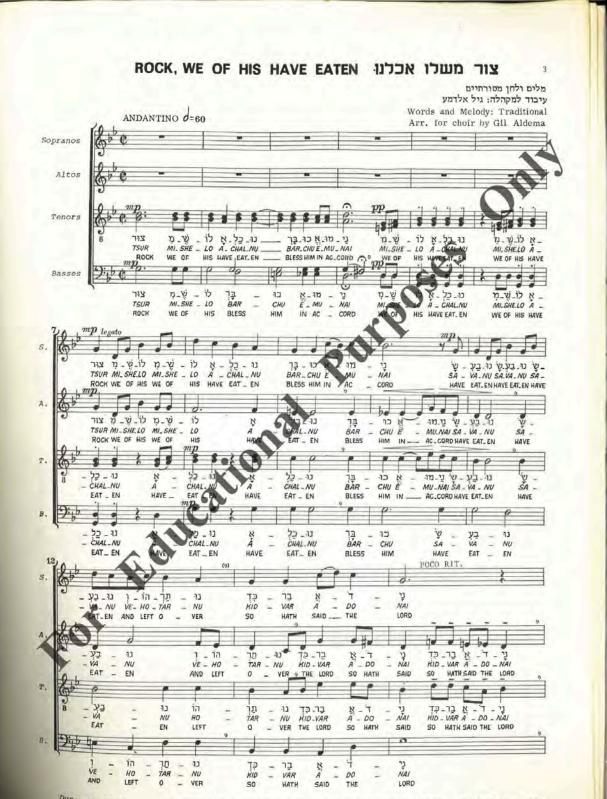


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YO RIBON O-LAM V- OL- MA-YO _ MAL-KO-ME-LECH MAL-CHA YO ANT - HU YO RI-BON_ FAR KO -DO - MOCH VAD G- VUR. SH -IECH VO- CHIN A- SA-DER TSAF-RO V- RAM-SHO - SHO DI LOCH E-LO-HO - RIN KA- DI-SHIN LI-V RO KOL NAF - SHO E - NO- SHO 0 - FE N; Bo-Ro VAS _ CHE -O-LAM V'-MA-YO ANT_HU_ MAL-KO MET LUCH MALCHA-YO YO RI - BON_ SHE FAR KO - DO - MOCH L- HA-CHA-VA - YO VUR TECH 40 0 -SIM-HA-VAD G-MO - CHICH R'- MA- YO OV-DECH V- SA- KI - FIN RAV-R- VIN K' FI- FIN LU YICH -YE G-VAR SH - NIN AL - FIN LO LE - OR G- VUR- TECH B- CHUSH-B- NA - YO YO RI-BON_ O-LAM V-YUR - TECH ANT_ HU_ MAL-KO ME-LELH MAL-CHA- TO RIT. 0 - VAD G-DL-MA-YO SH'- FAR KO-DO- MOLH _ L'- HACH-VA - YO Yo V- SIM-HAontinoeso 0



Tsur Mishelo -- Russian Style Folk Melody -- Arr. Joel Caplanfor Hazamir Festival 2001



Dur: ca. 2'30" @ 1983 ho I M I Louis Music Institute P D B 11253 Tol. Asia Israel. Printed in Israel



Note: The accents may be "all wrong", but it's s uch a pretty melody nonetheless!

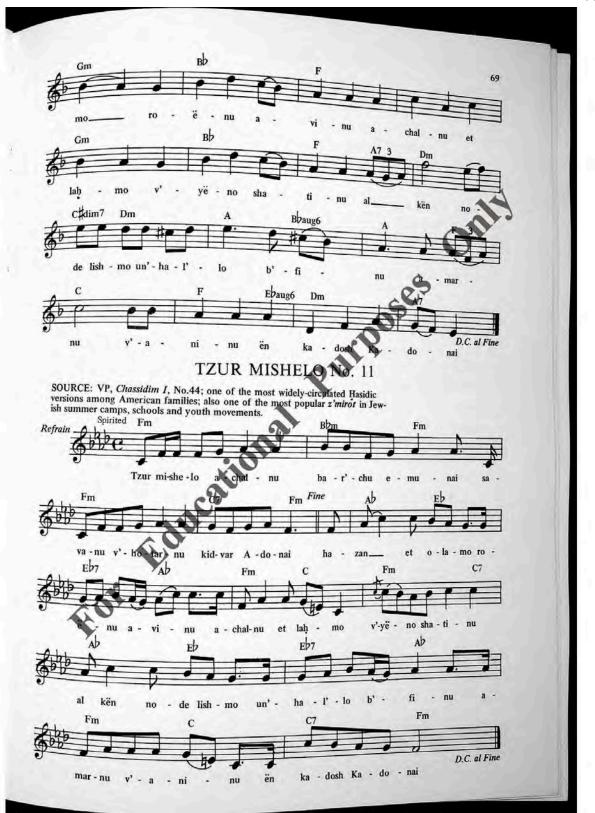
Tzur Mishelo

Score

German Drinking Song



Trascribed by Kevin McKenzie





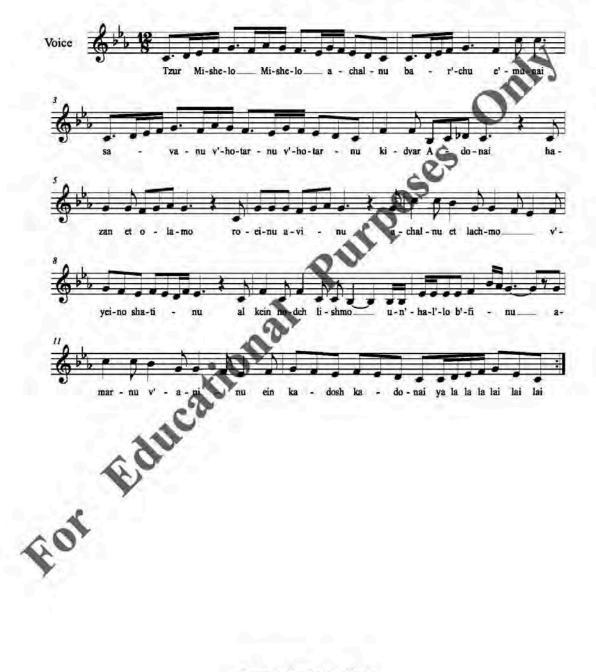
Fram Cantor Jack Mendelom X REF. TSUR MISHELO E-MU-NAI BO-R-CHU SO - VA.NUV- HO SAR-NI O-CHAL-NU TSUR MI-SHE-LO. KI-D-VAR A-DO- NOY ES LACH-MO V -V1- NU RO-E HA - ZON ES O-LO-MO - NU 0 NO-DELISH MO U- N- HA-L-LO __ B- FI - NU AL KEN_ YE- NO SHO-SI-NU MAR-NU V- 0 - NI-NU EN Ko-DOSH KA - DO- NOY 0 -KO TO -DO N-YO-RECH LE- LO-NE - NU AL_ E-RETS (HEM-DO TO- VO SHE-SHIR V B 1 V- TSE-DO HIS-BI-A L- NAF- SHE - NU HIN-CHIL LA-A- VO - SE - NU MO-ZON_ 0 CHAS - DO GO-VAR O - LE - NU V- E-MES A-DO - NOY 4

⁶⁷

Tzur Mishelo

Score

As heard at Benjie Ellen Schiller's Shabbos Table



Transcribed by Kevin McKenzie

Tzur Mishelo

Score





Transcribed by Kevin McKenzie

Shabbat Day Zmirot

BORUCH EL ELYON #1 ad lib. 0 BO-RUCHEL EL - YON A - SHER NO-SAN M'-NU-CHO L' NAF - SHE NU FID - YON MI - SHES VA-A - ND - CHO atangoo vivace V- HU YID-ROSH L- TSI-YON HA- NI-DD-CHO IR NE - FESH NE-E-NO-CHO AD O-NO TUG - YON X HA-SHO-MER_ SHA - BOS_ HA BEN IM HA - BAS_ MIN-CHO_ AL MA- CHA-VAS LO-EL YE- RO-TSU mim RO-CHEV BO-A - RO-VOS_ ME-LECH 0 -LO B' 1 - ZEN BA - N-MIM ES A- MO LISH - BOS 1 -RAF MI-NE MAT-A- MIM B-B2 A -RE- VOS MA-A- CHO-LE MAL-BU-SHE CHO - NOD ZE - VACH MISH-PO-CHO Han and

BORUCH EL ELYON #2 1. 37 BO -RUCH EL EL- YON A- SHER NO-SAN M'NU-CHO _ OY NAF V2-SHE-NU FID-YON MI-SHES VA-A- NO - CHO HU YID -ROSHL HA-NI - DO - CHO AD O.NO TUG -IR _ - NE FESH NE E-NO . CHO YON_ BAS_ SHA- BOS HA -BEN IM HA-04 SHO-MER HA --LO-EL YE- RO TSU K2 - MIN - CHO К'-K2 MIN-CHO LO-EL YE - RO-TSU K- MIN-CHO K'-- MA-CHA - VAS AL MIN- CHO_ AL _ MA-CHA- VAS MIN-CHO K? MIN -CHO_ 3 RO-CHEV BO-A-RO VOS B- MA ME-LECH D-LO-MIM ES A -MO LISH-BOS 1- ZEN BAN-1 MIM t TE A - RE-VOS B - MI- NEMAT- A-MIM B'- MAL-BU-SHE CHO - VOD - ZE-VACH MISH- PO - CHO HA -HO Passantina 6

Rabbi Baruch Ben Shemu'el

Baruch El Elyon commissioned by the Zamir Chorale of Boston

for its fifteenth anniversary

David Burger (ASCAP)

legato p S Ba - ruch Eil el yon a sher me - nu na tan -D A el Ba - ruch Eil 3 yon sher a na tan me - nu hah Т 9:1 В C J-92 andante semplice piano 9 1 0 Ded. 3 儆 mi - sheit va - a - na chah. mp S 0) C chah. le - naf - shei - nu fid von mi sheit va - a na Ve rit. mp A 2 SC shei-nu fidle-nafyon mi sheit va - a - na chah. Ve -. 0 mp C Sed. Ted. -依 Sed. Ted. 麋 楝

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Deror Yikra

Based on traditional Jewish melodies from Turkey, Aden and (Sephardic) Jerusalem



р.1 78 D'ror Yikra

Deborah Sacks-Mintz



V'lamazhir v'lanhizhar sh'lomim tein k'mei nahar

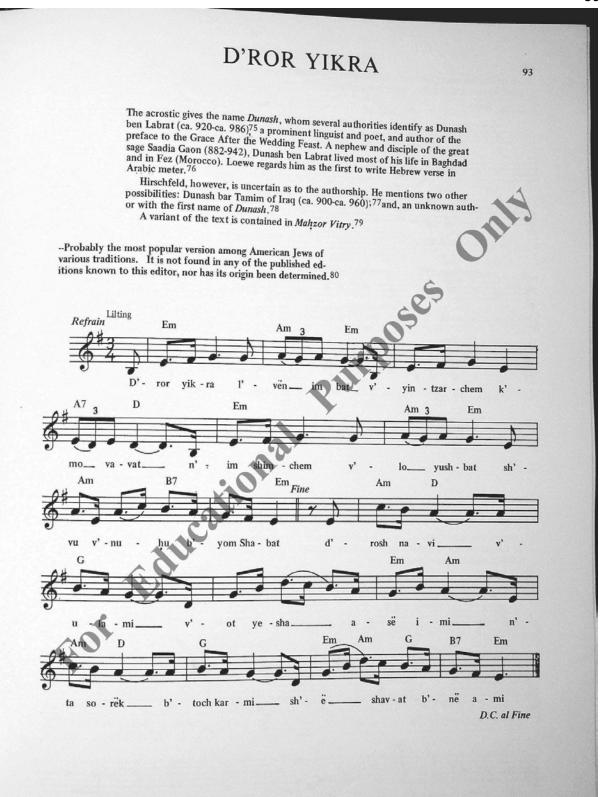
Score

Transcribed by Kevin McKenzie

l'shoneinu l'kha rina.



46 HARVARD HILLEL SABBATH SONGBOOK





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Ki Eshmera Shabbat



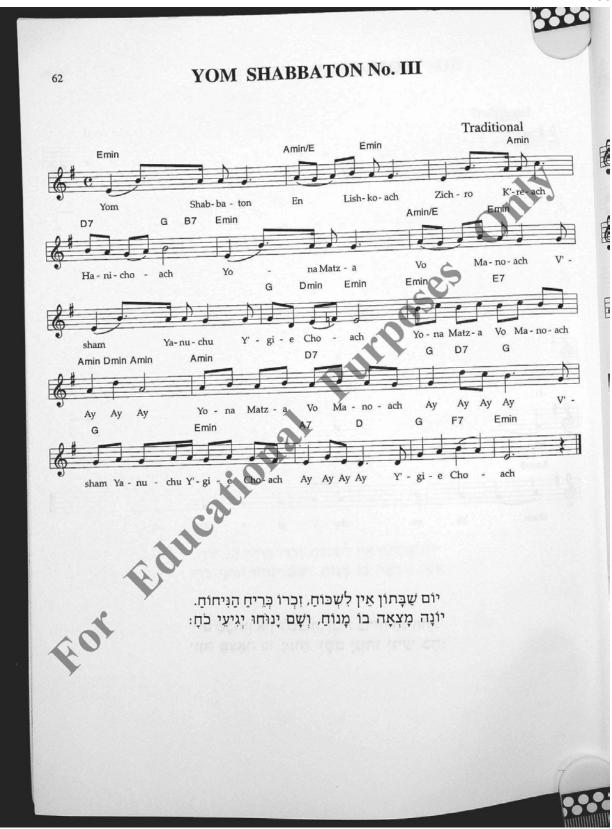


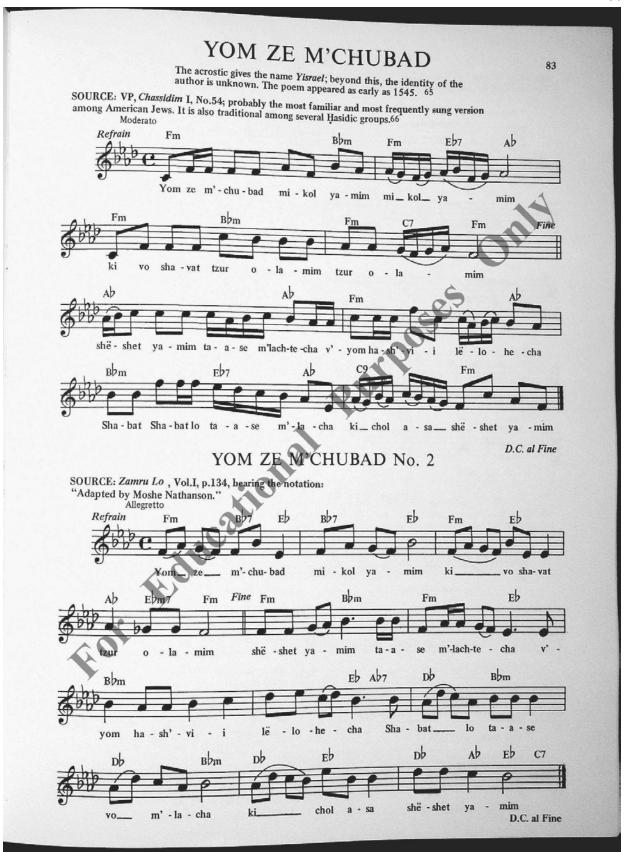


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994002

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YOM ZE М'СНИВОD

YOM ZE M'CHU-BOD MI- KOL YO-MIM KIVO SHO - VAS TSUR D-LOmim MIM TA-A - SE M' -LACH-TE - CHO V- YOM_ HASH - VI - IY LHO SHE-SHES YO -0 SHA-BOS LO SA-A-SE BO M'- LO - CHO KI CHOL O - SO SHE SHE YO -MIM YOM ZE M'CHU-BOD_MI-KOL YO - MIM KI VO SHO-VAS_ TSUR D-LO-MIM YOM_ TE_ Rit. M-CHU-BOD MI-KOL YO -SHO- VAS Mim VO_ KI ad lib. 53 1. ~ L-MIK-KO-E KO- DESH YOM SHA- BO mim RI -SHON HU TSUR 0 - LOC DESH ALSH- TE M SHA-BAS KO- DESH AL KEN KOLISH B-YE-NOY-KA SON YIF-TS'- U S'-MI- MIM E - CHEM



S'udah Shlishit Zmirot

B'nei Heichala



Transcribed by Kevin McKenzie

90

Score



Y'did Nefesh



Engraved December 2016

Y'did Nefesh

Eliezer Azikri Pursa, ed. Joshua Breitzer A **Andante** .. = 54 Dm Gm Dm Y' did____ ne - fesh av ha-ra-cha- man____ m' shoch. - de cha av Gm C^7 F 7 Gm A^7 Dm 6 el____r' tzo-ne- cha. Ya - rutz av - de - cha k' yal, yish - ta-cha mo F B♭ С В♭ 14 A^7 F G y' - di-du te mi veh el mul ha-da - re cha_ ye - e- rav_ lo_ cha В 4. 1.2.3. 21 Dm A^7 Dm Dm Dm Dm Gm - fet___ 'am.__ Ha lam._ Yai dai dai dai dai yai dai tzuf_ v'- chol__ ta -C Dm Bb 27 Bb Gm 6 dai dai dai dai (etc.)

Engraved May 2017



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Score Yedid Nefesh From Album Dveykus Vol. 2 Abie Rotenberg . = 60 Voice Ye - did Ne - fesh Ya - rutz av - de - cha m' - shoch yishta-cha - veh av k' ha-ra-cha-man - mo a - yal av - de yista-cha cha 2. 1. el ____ r'-tzo - ne -elmul ha-da - re ____ cha y' - di - do-te cha ah ye' rav ta' - am cha mino fet tzuf. v'-chol v'-chol Ballcational Ż

Transcribed by Kevin McKenzie

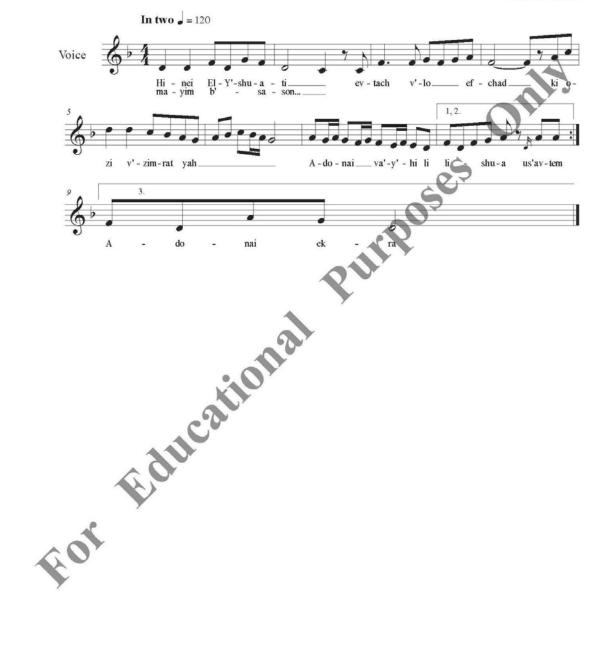




Score

Hinei El Y'shuati

Moshav Band

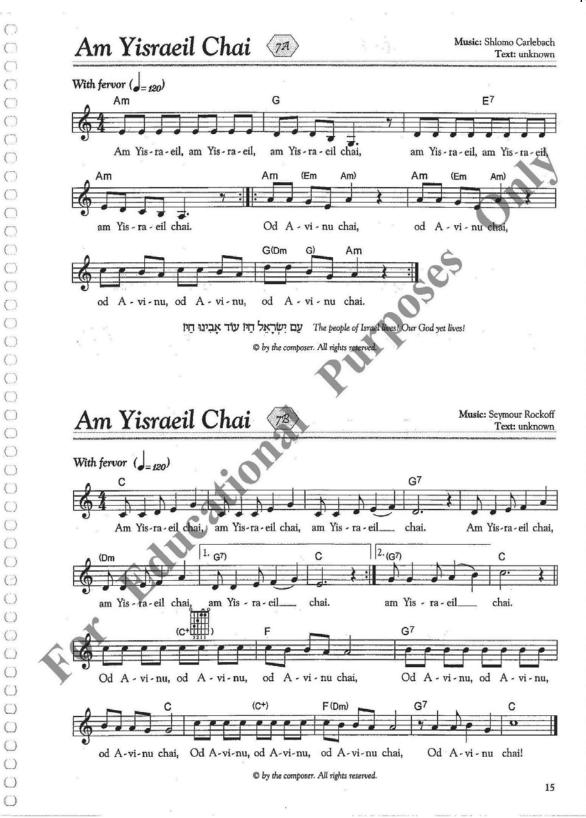


Transcribed by Kevin McKenzie

Popular Songs

Acheinu





.

BILVAVI

Lyrics: Sefer Charedim S. Brazil



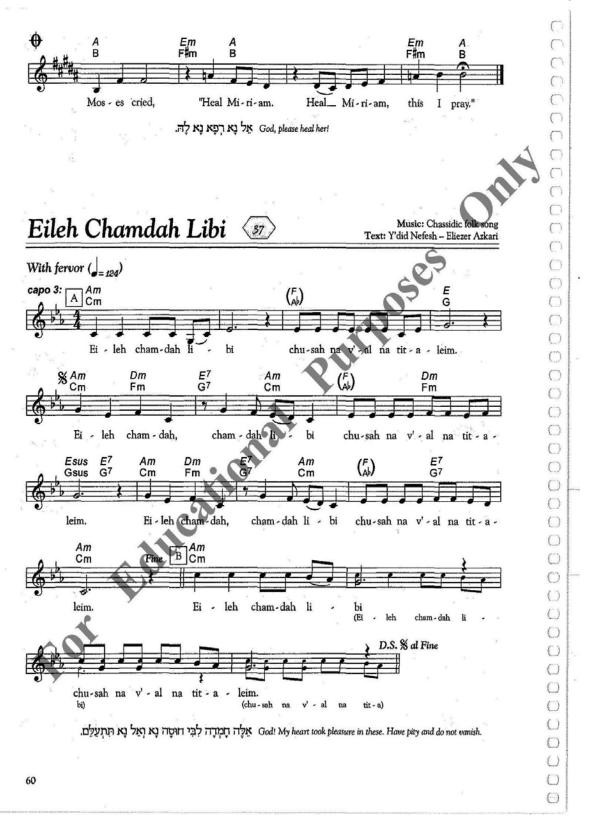


U-l'-kor-ban ak-riv lo et naf-shi et naf-shi ha-y'-chi-da

וּלְנֵר תַּמִיד אֶקַח לִי אֶת אֵשׁ הָעַקָדָה וּלְקַרְבַּן אַקָרִיב לוֹ אֶת וַפִּשִׁי הַיִחִידָה

In my heart I will erect a sanctuary to glorify His honor. In the sanctuary I will place an altar to acknowledge His splendor. For the eternal light I will take the fire of Isaac's binding and with this my singular soul, will Isacrifice before him.



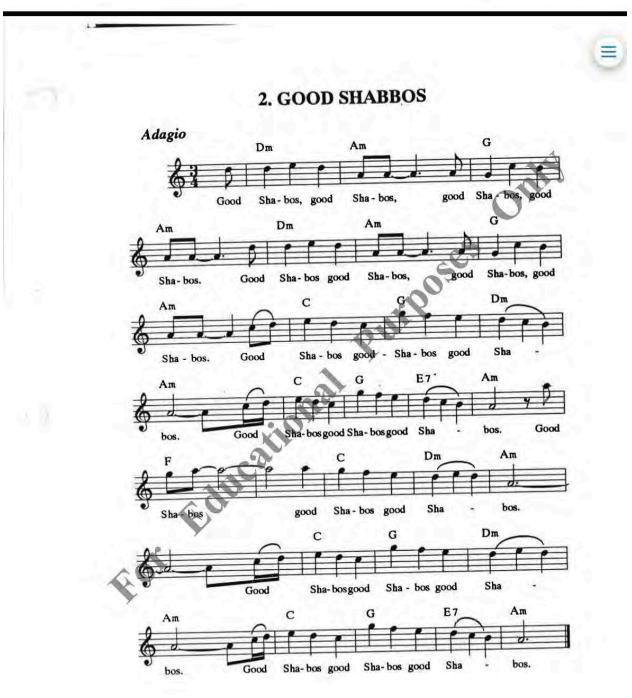




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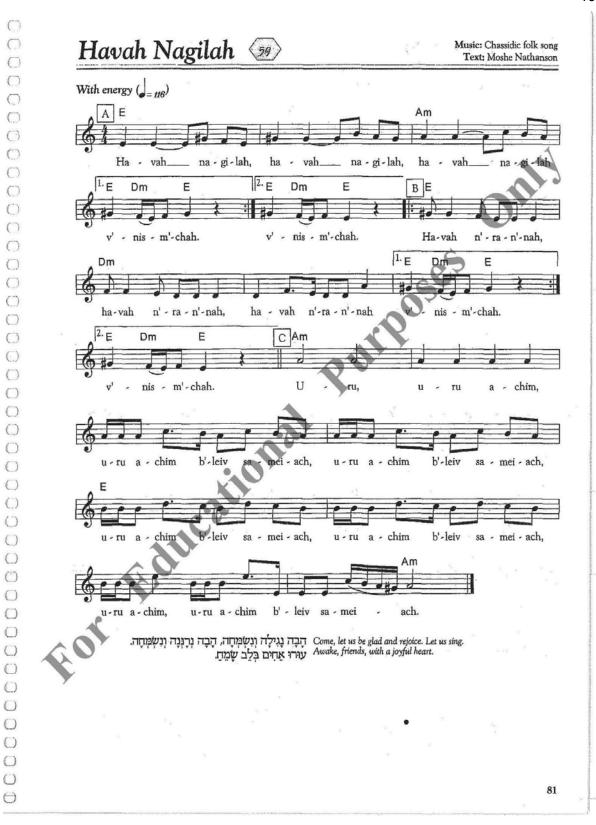
Score

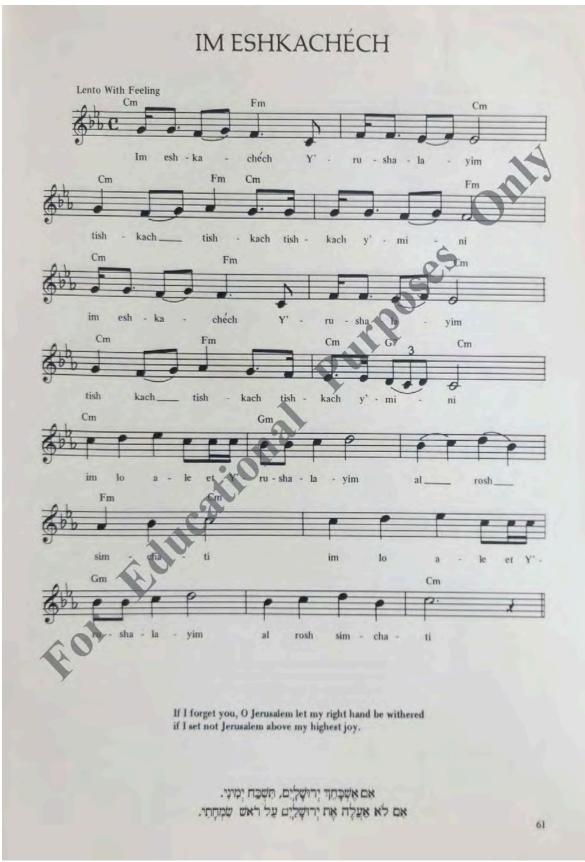
Hamalach Hagoel

Abie Rotenberg



Transcribed by Kevin McKenzie





Im Eshkachech

Score

Michel Twersky



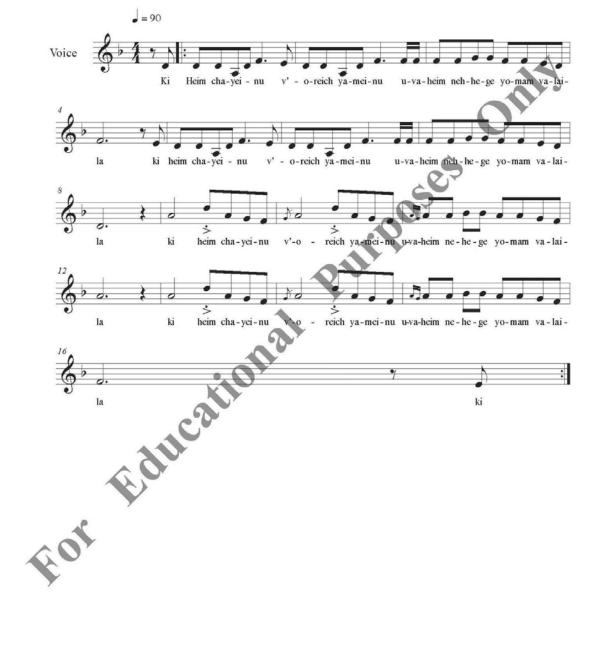
Transcribed by Kevin McKenzie



Ki Heim Chayeinu

Score

Yeshivat B'nei Akiva



Transcribed by Kevin McKenize

Volt ikh ge - hat ko-yekh, volt ikh ge - lo - fn in di ga - sn, 5 3 un ge shri gn sha bes. sho lom tse dek, 3 sha bes. sha bes, sha bes. da ya sho lom, sho ... lom, sho lom. tse dek, tse dek; tse dek, đi đi di di ya da di di di ya di di ya da di di di di ya da di di di ya da 13 di di dì ya da di di di di ya da et di C di di di ya di di di Valt ikh gehat koyech, Volt ikh gelofn in di gasn, Un geskrign: Shabes! Shabes, Shabes, Shabes! וואלם איך געהאם כח ż וואלם איך געלאפן אין די גאסן און געשריגן, שבת, שבת, שבת, שבתו 6

Koyekh

Volt ikh gehat koyech, Volt ikh gelofn in di gasn, Un geskrign: Sholom! Sholom, Sholom, Sholom!

Velt ikk gehat koyech, Volt ikk gelofn in di gasn, Un geskrign: Tsedek! Tsedek, Tsedek, Tsedek! וואָלָט איך געהאַט כּח וואָלט איך געלאָפן אין די גאָטן אין געשריגן: שלום, שלום, שלום, שלוםו

וואָלם איך געהאָט כח וואָלט איך געלאָפן אין די גאַסן און געשריגן: צרק, צרק, צרק, צרק

If I had the strength, I would run through the streets, Shouting: Shabes! Peace! Justice! 114

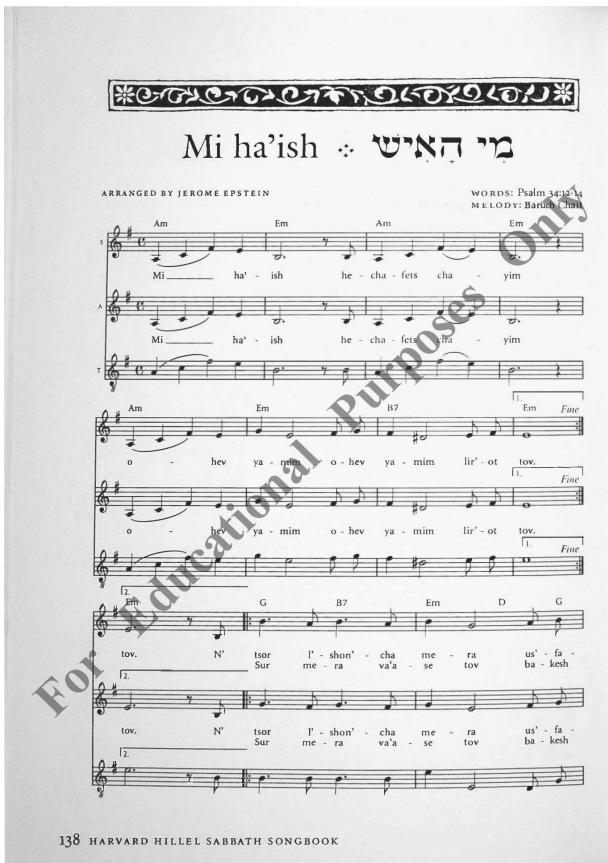
Folk







÷



Na'ar Hayiti











TOV L'HODOT



טוֹב לְהוֹדוֹת לַיָּי וּלָזמֶר לְשׁמְדַ עֶלְיוֹן לְהַגִּיד בַּבּּקֵר חַסְדָדַ וָאֱמוּנָתָדַ בַּלֵילוֹת

It is good to give thanks to the Lord and to sing praises to your name; to proclaim your goodness in the morning and your faithfulness at night.



V'ani Ashir Uzekha

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Yosef Karduner



Transcribed by Kevin McKenzie

125

Score

, JOSH Warshawsky Music



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Aufführungsrocht vorbehalten.

APPENDIX:

P. 38. Sing Unto God- The Debbie Friedman Anthology, 2013. 228

39. Shabbat Anthology Vol III Transcontinental Music Publications, 2005. 5

40. Multiple arrangements of this setting can be found on this website:

https://www.transcontinentalmusic.com/PDG-Shalom-Aleychem-(SATB)-72930

41. Another version can be found in the *Shabbat Anthology Vol II* Transcontinental Music Publications, 2004. 24

42. *A vocal array: Israeli songs arranged for choir*. Modan Publishing House, Tel-Aviv, 2002

43. Jacobson, Joshua. "Azamer Bishvokhin" E. C. Schirmer Music Company, 2002. A performance piece.

44. Composed by the father of Jacob Ben-Zion Mendelson. Received this music in a packet from Jacob Ben-Zion Mendelson.

45. Mendelson

46. Transcribed by Kevin McKenzie. I thought this melody was written for this zemer and only realized this was a piece of contrafactum in sourcing the melody thanks to Cantor Jeff Warschauer

47. Unknown composer. Taken from a packet of repertoire given by Joel Caplan

48. Zim, Paul. The Paul Zim Z'mirot Songbook 53

49. Levin, Neil. *Z'mirot Anthology*. Tara Publications, 1981. 45. The melody I heard varied slightly but is clearly this same piece.

50. Found on Transcon's website:

https://www.transcontinentalmusic.com/PDG-Yom-Zeh-IYisrael-Yismach-Mosheh-74271 A performance piece.

51. *Shabbat Anthology Volume: IV* Transcontinental Music Publications, 2007. 84 A performance piece.

52. McKenzie Transcription. As this melody is quite lilting, Cantor Benjie Ellen Schiller said that this would be sung during S'udah Shlishit.

53. McKenzie Transcription

54. Levin 51

55. Levin 56

56. Found on transcontinental website:

https://www.transcontinentalmusic.com/PDI-Yah-Ribon-Alam--74209 A performance piece.

57. Zim 21. This zemer is not attributed to Goldfarb in the Neil Levin Anthology and is attributed to Goldfarb in the Paul Zim Songbook. After research, it appears without an attributed composer in Friday Evening Melodies by Israel Goldfarb and Samuel Goldfarb (1918) which is how Goldfarb would have attributed something as written by himself. In every instance where there is a piece written by others, something such as "traditional" or

"adopted" would appear in the top right hand corner of the sheet music. Credit to Cantor Josh Breitzer.

- 58. McKenzie Transcription
- 59. As found on his website https://joshwarshawsky.com/yah-ribon
- 60. Mendelson
- 61. Caplan
- 62. *A vocal array: Israeli songs arranged for choir*. Modan Publishing House. Tel-Aviv, 2002. A performance piece.
- 63. Caplan
- 64. McKenzie Transcription
- 65. Levin 69
- 66. Harvard Hillel Songbook 1992. 64
- 67. Mendelson
- 68. McKenzie Transcription
- 69. McKenzie Transcription
- 71. Mendelson
- 72. Mendelson
- 73. Found on Transcontinental Website

<u>https://www.transcontinentalmusic.com/PDI-Baruch-el-Elyon-69167</u> A performance piece.

- 74. Hillel 70
- 75. Zim 44
- 76. Transcribed by Noah Aronson for Zmirot Workshop at Hava Nashira
- 77. A different copy can be found on the Transcon website:

https://www.transcontinentalmusic.com/PDS-Israeli-Songs-for-Choir-76127

in the songbook *Israeli Songs for Choir from Jerusalem 3000*. 1996. A Performance piece.

78. McKenzie Transcription. This piece was intentionally composed to have just one melodic line for communal ease according to the composer.

- 79. Hillel 46
- 80. Levin 93

81. Or Zohar's music can be found on their website and this specific piece can be found here:

https://www.orandfelizamusic.com/product-page/d-ror-yikra-%D7%93%D7%A8%D7%9 5%D7%A8-%D7%99%D7%A7%D7%A8%D7%90-lead-sheet

82. Aronson

- 83. A Sephardi Melody Transcribed by Noah Aronson
- 84. Dan Nichols Anthology Transcontinental Music Publications. 142
- 85. Zim 62
- 86. Levin 83

87. Mendelson

88. Zim 50

90. McKenzie Transcription

91. Zim 68. Note the similar ascending opening motif to B'nei Heichala.

92. Transcribed by Cantor Josh Breitzer based on Joey Weisenberg's transcription from the Kane Street Songster as well as how it is sung at Kol Haneshama Synagogue in Jerusalem. Again note the similar opening motif. I have heard the Schenker Mizmor L'david sung directly into this version, then into the opening blessings for Havdalah. 93 a. Transcribed by Cantor Josh Breitzer.

b. When searching the origin of "Pursa", I inquired of Cantor Breitzer and he led me to this post in the Jewish Prayground Facebook group, November 7, 2017. Rabbi Jonah Rank inquired with Velvel Pasternak z"l directly and received the answer... "The correct name of the Polish town, in the Warsaw area, is actually PURSOV. My information came from Rabbi Mayer Shimon Geshuri, the author of the volumes, Hanigun V'harikud Bahasidut, whom I met in 1970 in Israel. He was the unquestioned authority of Hasidic music at the time and he indicated that the melody came from the town of Pursov. There was no specific Hasidic Court in Pursov."

c. This melody is much more frequently associated with Kabbalat Shabbat among those who I interviewed. Some said this should only be sung on Friday Night

94. As found on his website: https://joshwarshawsky.com/Yedid-Nefesh

95. McKenzie Transcription

96. Sent via email from Cantor Benjie Ellen Schiller, as heard at her Shabbat table

97. Zim 73

98. McKenzie Transcription as heard on Shabbat, Vol. 1 Album. Originally thought this was Carlebach

100. Transcription sent to me by Dave Strickland

101. The Complete Shireinu, Transcontinental Music Publications, 2001. 15

102. The International Jewish Songbook Tara Publications 1994. 213

103. Shireinu. 350

104. Shireinu. 60

105. A version can be found as No.139 in Complete Jewish Songbook For Children

Volume I Transcontinental Music Publications, 2002. This arrangement was sent to me via Marsha Edelman

via Marsha Edelmai

106. Shireinu. 67

107. Music by Shlomo Carlebach. Pasternak, Velvel. *The Shlomo Carlebach Anthology*, 1992. 60

108. McKenzie Transcription

109. Shireinu. 81

110. Music by Shlomo Carlebach. Solomon, Ben Zion. *Shlomo Shabbos: Shlomo Carlebach Shabbos Songbook* 1993

111. McKenzie Transcription

112. Shireinu. 109

113. McKenzie Transcription

114. A transcription can be found here

https://www.polinashepherd.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/Volt-ikh-Yesli-by-2-languages.pdf

Note, the ending niggun here is likely the origin of the same niggun which comes at the end of the Pursov "Yedid Nefesh"

115. Shireinu. 118

116. Shireinu. 138

117. Shireinu. 137

118. Hillel 138. The original document in the Harvard Hillel Songbook has Ashkenazi Traditional as the melody and I have edited the image to reflect the original composer who is Baruch Chait

119. This arrangement taken from David Max:

https://musescore.com/user/62890234/scores/11296627

120. Shireinu. 160

121. Shireinu. 358

122. Shireinu.192

123. Music by Shlomo Carlebach. Pasternak, Velvel. *The Shlomo Carlebach Anthology*, 1992. 88

124. Taken from Josh Warshawsky's website:

https://joshwarshawsky.com/vaani-ashir-uzekha-psalm-59

125. McKenzie Transcription

126. Taken From Josh Warshawsky's website:

https://joshwarshawsky.com/yomam-valailah

127. A version is found in *The Society for Jewish music in St. Petersburg: for voice and piano* Pasternak, Velvel. Tara Publications. 1998

This version is arranged by Kisselgof and was given to me by Joyce Rosenzweig. A performance piece.