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# MUSIC AS *MIDRASH*:
# THE ROLE OF JEWISH MUSICAL LANGUAGE IN THE CREATION AND COMMUNICATION OF MEANING

SALLY LYNN NEFF

Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of
Requirements for Master of Sacred Music Degree

Hebrew Union College – Jewish Institute of Religion
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January 23, 2002
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# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank my thesis advisor, Cantor Benjie Ellen Schiller, for her insight, her encouragement, and her countless hours of proofreading. I also am grateful to the entire faculty especially Cantor Faith Steinsnyder, Dr. Joel Hoffman, Alan Sever, Dr. Mark Kligman, Cantor Martha Novick, Cantor Israel Goldstein, and Dr. Geoffrey Goldberg. Thank you to Mark Dunn and to Jocelyn Nixon.

I especially appreciate the loving support and aid of my parents, Drs. Martin and Joanne Neff, who have helped me through school financially, academically, and not least of all emotionally. I thank my sisters Roni Neff and Debra Nathans and also Dr. David Greenberg who have all helped me along the way. I would like to dedicate this thesis to my family and especially to my grandparents who did not live to see the day that I will become a cantor.

**CONTENTS:**

# INTRODUCTION:

# MUSIC AS *MIDRASH*: THE ROLE OF JEWISH MUSICAL LANGUAGE IN THE CREATION AND COMMUNICATION OF MEANING

Most people recognize that music is a pathway to spirituality, but few realize that it can also serve as a *midrash* to texts. According to *The Encyclopedia of Judaism*, *midrash* is: "rabbinic commentary on the Bible, clarifying legal points or bringing out lessons by literary devices: story, parable, legends."[1] The term *midrash* is itself derived from the word *d'rash*, which means to search, to investigate. Although generally the *midrash* refers to a specific body of literature, stories and clarifications of traditional texts continue to be written and are given the same name.

Music is a language. Its vocabulary and grammar include mode, key, rhythm, motive, and a wide variety of notational tools. Jewish musical language, for instance, consists of *trope* and *nusach* as well as elements that have been adopted from the various countries in which Jews live. In this paper I will discuss the components of Jewish musical language and the ways in which they help to create and communicate meaning.

Jewish music is a language analogous to Yiddish. Yiddish is an amalgamated language. It is like middle German, but also has borrowed words from Hebrew.

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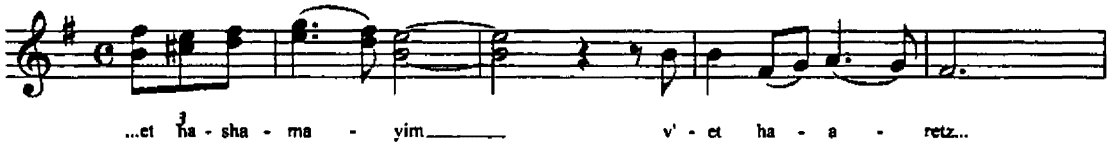
[1] *Encyclopedia of Judaism*, s.v. "*Midrash*," 1989, 487.

These borrowed words highlight the aspects that were most important in the Jewish mind and heart – *Toyre* (Torah), *rachmanus* (lovingkindness), etc. The German was adapted on the Jewish tongue and combined with Hebrew to form a uniquely Jewish language. Music has worked the same way. Trope, *Nusach, Mi Sinai* tunes, and even folk songs are the basic vocabulary of Jewish music. No matter how many other musical mannerisms we adopt from surrounding cultures, the use of these Jewish musical tools expresses something especially important or sacred in a modern composition.

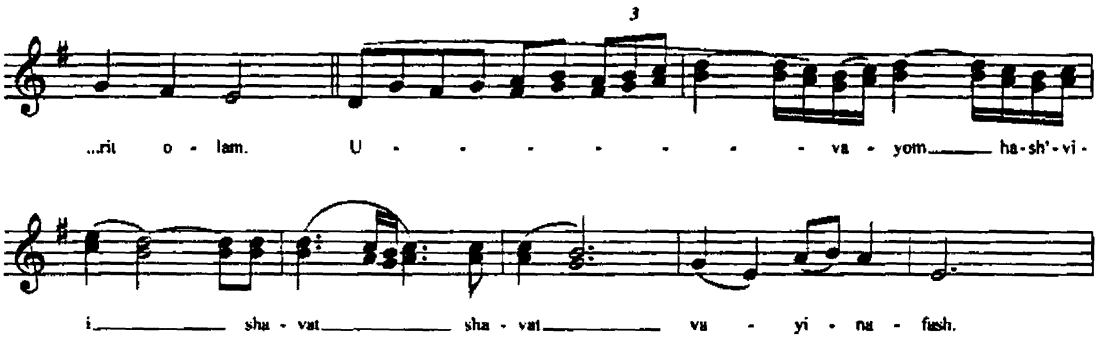
Music can communicate the literal meaning of a text through a technique called word painting and can be accomplished both in obvious ways and also through very subtle means. Robert Solomon's setting of *V'shamru* is an excellent example (CD Track 1).[2] Solomon utilizes word painting to express the text "*et hashamayim v'et ha-aretz*" (the sky and the earth) by putting higher notes for the word, "sky" and lower notes for the word, "earth."




Solomon uses a more subtle method of word painting in the last seven measures of the piece. Most musical pieces are divided into sections or groupings of four and eight when written in 4/4 time. Here, however, there is an exception. Solomon separated the last part of the piece by using a double bar line. Where the

[2] Robert Solomon, "*V'sham'ru*: Sabbath Prayer," Unpublished manuscript.

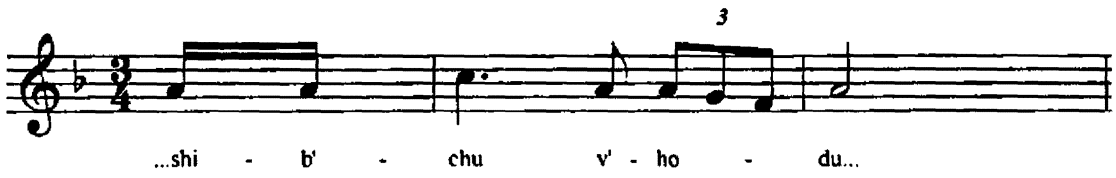
text tells us that God rested on the seventh day, Solomon paints it by making this a seven measure phrase.




Word painting is a wonderful way to use music to express text, but it is not what I mean by musical *midrash*. Although it is the most basic level of what I am speaking about, I am trying to show something deeper. In the above examples, the music illustrates for us that the sky is up and the earth below and that God created the world in seven days. The music paints that picture, but we don't *need* the music in order to understand the text. By using musical language in more unusual ways, composers can not only illustrate the basic meaning of the words, but also can add their own *d'rash*, a reflection of their life experience, their theology, or simply their way of reading the liturgical text. They can use their music to teach a lesson that one could not necessarily ascertain merely by reading the text without the music. This is the difference.

One simple example of musical *midrash* is Alter's setting of *Hama'avir Banav* for the three festivals (CD track 2). He sets the words *shib'chu v'hodu* (they gave

praise and thanks) to the melodies of the cantillation from the *Shir Hashirim* (Song of Songs):[3]




Tradition tells us that the love poetry in *Shir Hashirim* (Song of Songs) speaks of the love between God and the people Israel. At the moment in the prayer preceding the *Mi Chamocha*, the liturgy describes what happens when Israel witnesses God's wonders in parting the Sea of Reeds. By strategically placing the cantillation of *Shir Hashirim* in this specific location, Alter may be suggesting that here is the moment when the love between the people and God begins. I believe Alter uses music to say that Israel is not only thanking and praising God, but also is in effect falling in love with God as God redeems them. It would be almost impossible to get this reading from the text alone. The music provides the *midrash.*

Music is a language for understanding the underlying emotion of a text. To locate its meaning, one must learn the grammar and vocabulary of the particular culture from which it comes. In Judaism, where textual interpretation is a quintessential part of our society, the unique language of Jewish music has been especially important for creating *midrashim* on Biblical texts and on prayers. Our

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[3] Cantor Israel Alter, *The Festival Service: The Complete Musical Liturgy for the* Hazzan (New York: Cantor's Assembly, 1989), 5-6.

composers are just as prolific as our rabbis in interpreting texts; all we need to do is to open our ears and listen.

# CHAPTER 1: TROPE

## PART I : *TA'AMEI HAMIKRAH* - HISTORY AND TRADITIONS

The Hebrew words for the cantillation marks are *neginot, te'amim*, and *ne'imah*. *Neginot* comes from *n'gina* or song. *Te'amim* derives from *ta'am* meaning accent or taste – revealing the sense of the word. Some say that *Ne'imot* comes from the Hebrew *na'im*, meaning sweet (making the words of the Torah sweet), but Dr. Joel Hoffman traces the word to the Hebrew root: *nun.ayin.mem* meaning "melody." The word has also been traced to the Greek word, *neume* meaning musical sign.[1] The English word, trope, is derived from the Latin, *tropus* and the Greek *tropos*, meaning turn, way, manner or style.[2] Over time, trope has become a catch-all phrase. Tropes are musical signs, they are grammatical markings, and they help us to understand the underlying flavors of the text.

Many rabbis have agreed with and strengthened the premise that tropes are important aids to our understanding of sacred texts. Abraham Ibn Ezra (1089-1164) states: "All interpretations which are not according to the logic of the tropes do not follow or listen to them."[3] Rashi (1040-1105) says, in reference to the *Te'amim*, "Had I not seen the accent -- I would not have known how to explain, but the accent

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[1] A.W. Binder, *Biblical Chant* (New York: Sacred Music Press, 1959), 11; Joel Hoffman, E-mail correspondence, 20 December, 2001.
[2] *Macmillan Dictionary for Students* (1984), s.v. "trope."
[3] Binder, *Biblical Chant*, 14.

teaches us to separate two words from one another."[4] Many rabbis of that time believed that either the tropes were divine or the cantillation was. In that case, the tropes were merely a written version of the melodies that God gave on Mt. Sinai, a part of how God meant for us to understand the Torah.

Rabbi Yehudah Ha-Levi states in the Kuzari[5]:

> Verbal communication finds various aids either in pausing or continuing to speak, according to the requirement of the sentence, by raising or lowering the voice, in expressing astonishment, question, narrative, desire, fear or submission by means of gestures, without which speech by itself would remain inadequate. Occasionally the speaker or reader even has recourse to motions of eyes, eyebrows, or the whole head and hands, in order to express anger, pleasure, humility or haughtiness to the degree desired. In the remnant of our language, a divine gift and institution, there are implanted certain elements calculated to promote understanding and to take the place of the aforementioned aids to speech. These are the cantillation accents (trope) with which the holy text is read.[6]

When discussing cantillation, many scholars focus on its grammatical rather than its musical function because assertions about the musical purpose and history of trope are difficult, if not impossible to prove. While the grammar of the *te'amim* is clear, the musical interpretations are harder to analyze because melodies and

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[4] Macy Nulman, "Understanding *Ta'amei EMeT*," *Journal of Jewish Music and Liturgy* 11 (1988-89): 36.

[5] The *Sefer ha-Kuzari* is a book of philosophy written by Yehudah ha-Levi (before 1075-1141). It is a polemic against Aristotelian philosophy, Christianity, and Islam. Ha-Levi composed it as a dialogue between a Jewish scholar and the Khazar king. It helped many Jews, challenged from all sides, to defend their faith. [*Encyclopedia Judaica*, [CD-ROM] version 1.0, 1997, s.v. "Judah Halevi" by Eliezer Schweid.]

[6] Edna Sultan, "On the Significance of Cantillation," *Journal of Jewish Music and Liturgy* 8 (1985-86): 37.

traditions vary widely among Jewish communities around the world. It is not the purpose of this study to determine the original aim of the cantillation markings. What matters here is how Jews have used them over the centuries. It is quite apparent that the tropes have served not merely as grammatical markers, but as interpretative aids and musical signs.

There are two systems of trope markings. The trope in books that were habitually read aloud in the public forum (*Torah, Haftarah, M'gillot*, etc.) is called *Ta'amei chaf-alef*. The symbols in books that were not generally publicly recited (Job, Proverbs, and Psalms) are known as *Ta'amei EMeT* (*EMeT* stands for the first letters of the names of the books in Hebrew – *Iyob, Mishle, and Tehillim*).[7] Even in the shapes of some of the symbols themselves, a distinction is made between public and private readings. The melodies for the *Ta'amei EMeT* have been lost to the Ashkenazic community, although various groups of Sephardim still do chant these books.

Differing systems of cantillation have developed for the various books in *Ta'amei chaf-alef*. The trope marks are virtually identical, but the musical meaning of each marking changes depending on the book.[8] The modes of the tropes tend to reflect the mood of the holidays on which the books are read. As I will discuss later in this thesis, the melodies for the reading of the books likely had a strong influence on the development of the *nusach* for the holidays with which they are associated. There are also special ways of chanting certain Torah portions to match the unique mood of a particular section of the Torah. For example, the Song of the Sea has a

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[7] Nulman, "Understanding *Ta'amei EmeT*" 36.
[8] The systems are Torah, High Holiday Torah, Haftarah, Esther, Song of Songs / Ruth / Ecclesiastes; Lamentations.

special trope, as do the Ten Commandments. The melody must change in order to emphasize these exceptional moments in the Torah.[9]

The practice of chanting sacred books is far more ancient than the notation of the trope marks themselves. Even in the Torah, Moses tells the people to study this "song."[10] The song could refer to Moses's song or poem to the children of Israel, his departing speech, but it could also refer to the whole Torah.

Most scholars trace the practice of cantillation, although certainly not its redaction, to the time of Ezra the scribe. Neh. 8:8 says, "And they read in the book the law of God, distinctly; and they gave sense, and caused them to understand the reading." This is clarified in the Babylonian Talmud which says, "and caused them to understand the reading -- [refers to] the syntactical functions of the accents." The Palestinian Talmud says, "and they gave sense -- these are the [melodic functions of the] accents.'"[11] The *midrashic* commentary, Song of Songs *Rabbah*, tells us that "He who reads the Bible in its delightful beauty and melody, of him it is said, 'honey and milk are under thy tongue.'"[12]

The Talmud teaches that we are to recite the Bible in singsong chants, helping to make the meaning of the text easier to understand.[13] The Talmud called for cantillation for several obvious reasons. The singing of the text aids in understanding. In addition, singing projects better than speech, and therefore more people could hear it. Music can also express emotional meaning better than texts

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[9] Binder, *Biblical Chant*, 15.
[10] Binder, *Biblical Chant*, 11.
[11] Amnon Shiloah, *Jewish Musical Traditions* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1992), 101.
[12] Ibid.
[13] Binder, *Biblical Chant*, 12.

can. A person can recite a speech in a monotonous manner, whereas it would be more difficult to do so with a song. Variation in tone is an intrinsic property of melody and of cantillation. Music is also an excellent aid in the processes of learning and memorization. Rarely will a speech become stuck in one's head in the same manner as a song or even a series of notes. Although musical renditions of sacred texts were an important part of Jewish tradition, Jewish law forbade the chanting of the Torah in the style of secular chant. The rabbis felt that it would show a lack of respect for sacred texts to chant them in the same way as a secular song.[14] The style of the intonation of sacred texts is purely Jewish, both culturally and religiously.

The concept of chanting is not solely Jewish, however. People of varying cultures in that time period chanted their sacred texts. The Greeks and Syrians chanted their histories. Early Christian liturgies were sung. Cantillation was common in Vedic recitation in India and among Buddhists in Japan as well.[15] As early as the first century CE, the Byzantines were transcribing their chants. At first, they simply used inversions of Greek letters to represent the music. Later their notation evolved into a unique system of writing. The Byzantine notational system, like that of the *ta'amei hamikrah*, appears both above and below the letters and indicates both grammar and melody.[16]

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[14] Abraham Z. Idelsohn, *Jewish Music: Its Historical Development* (New York: Dover Publications, 1992), 36.
[15] *Encyclopedia Judaica*, s.v. "Masoretic Accents: Historical Development" by Avigdor Herzog.
[16] Christos Vrionides, *The Byzantine Chant of the Greek Orthodox Church* (New York: Wayside Press, 1959), 9.

A method for writing Jewish chant did not develop contemporaneously because Jews were forbidden by their tradition to add markings to sacred scrolls.[17] People learned to chant through an oral tradition. The invention of the codex, or bound book, forever changed the nature of Jewish song. Because a book was a less sacred document than a scroll, a system of musical notation could develop.

A process of evolution that began in the seventh century created multiple systems of vowel and accent pointing for the Hebrew Bible. This culminated in the Massoretic school of Tiberias in the ninth century. [18] The Masoretic notational system prevailed over the Babylonian and Palestinian systems. In fact, over time it has been almost universally adopted.[19]

Tradition attributes the Masoretic system of accents mainly to Aaron Ben-Asher of Tiberius. The method of transcribing accents and grammar was codified in the ninth century when Aaron ben Asher wrote an important treatise on grammar and a codex. Known today as the Aleppo Codex, it is the earliest manuscript that contains the whole Bible with its corresponding vowel pointing and chant marks. It is the prototype of the Tiberian biblical text.[20] Through the use of the codex for notation, the Masorites created a system of *n'kudot* and *te'amim* that the reader could memorize and chant from the sacred scrolls.

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[17] Eliyahu Schleifer, *Sacred Sound and Social Change: Liturgical Music in Jewish and Christian Experience*, eds. Lawrence Hoffman and Janet Walton (London: University of Notre Dame Press, 1992), 25.
[18] Ibid.
[19] Ibid. and Daniel Meir Weil, *The Masoretic Chant of the Bible* (Jerusalem: Rubin Mass, 1995), 2.
[20] Angel Sáenz-Badillos, *A History of the Hebrew Language*, trans. John Elwolde (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1993), 107-8.

Many scholars believe that the Masorites invented the trope markings and vowel signs only in order to clarify the grammatical meaning of the texts, and make clear the proper pronunciation, as they saw it. The Masorites themselves claimed that they were merely transcribing an oral tradition that could be traced as far back as the "Elders of Bathyra." There is much documentation, to support the claim that the Bible was indeed chanted to specific non-secular melodies. For example, Clement of Alexandria, in the second century C.E., hundreds of years prior to Ben Asher, speaks of an "authoritative tradition of 'accents and points'."[21] It is difficult to judge what the actual history was.

Although many scholars believe that the oral tradition of the chants predated their transcription by many centuries, others feel that the melodies were only applied to the trope markings at a later date.[22] These scholars believe that the tropes served only to mark grammar and a method of accentuation in the declamation of text, to enable the reader to "give to his sentence an accent of meaning which is linked to the traditional reading."[23]

The twenty-six trope symbols, alone or in combination, indicate different melodic motives. To add more confusion to the equation, sometimes the tunes depend on the order in which the trope symbols appear. Many scholars cite this as proof that the Masorites had inherited a notational system that neither they nor anyone else in the future could really understand.[24] Why should the same marking,

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[21] John Wheeler, "The Rediscovery of Biblical Chant: 'The Music of the Bible Revealed' by Susan Haik-Vantoura," *Journal of Jewish Music and Liturgy* 14 (1991-92): 28.
[22] Ibid., 27.
[23] James D. Price, *The Syntax of Masoretic Accents in the Hebrew Bible* (New York: Edwin Mellen P, 1990), 13.
[24] Wheeler, "The Rediscovery of Biblical Chant," 28.

such as the *munach,* be chanted differently whether before a *pazer* or a *rivi'i* (CD track 3 and 4)? Much like figured bass and other early forms of musical notation, *te'amim*, or trope left room for creative interpretation and expansion.

Ultimately, the *te'amim* serve both grammatical and musical purposes. In terms of grammar, they provide for the syntax of the sentences. Tropes are divided into "lords" and "servants," also known as disjunctives and conjunctives. The "lords", or disjunctives, appear at the end of clauses, phrases, and full sentences. "Servants", or conjunctives, connect words within a phrase. Therefore, the placement of conjunctive and disjunctive *te'amim* can change the entire meaning of the verse. For example, Exodus 31:15 can be read correctly as "whosoever does any work on the Sabbath day, he shall surely be put to death" or incorrectly as "whosoever does any work, on the Sabbath day he shall surely be put to death." The chant mark, *tevir*, which is a "lord" causes the reader to pause and allows the true meaning of the sentence to come across.[25]

Trope, like vowel markings, also aid in the pronunciation of the text by providing the placement of the accent. This can alter the meaning of the word by changing its tense or by making a word possessive. For example, *Ba-á* in Gen. 29:9 is in the present, but the change of accent in Ex 34:28, to *Bá-a*, changes it to the past tense. Sometimes, this accent change can even change the meaning of the word altogether. In I Samuel 4:20 *Shatá* means to drink, but when the accent is changed to *Sháta*, the word means to put the heart to something.[26]

If the meaning of the tropes were purely grammatical, fewer symbols would be necessary. There are twenty-six trope marks. Each indicates varying strengths of

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[25] Shiloah, *Jewish Musical Traditions*, 102.
[26] Nulman, "Understanding *Ta'amei EMeT*," 40.

pauses and breaks. However, just as in English, one does not need more than a few grammatical markings to aid in the understanding of a sentence; a comma, a period, a colon, a hyphen, and a semi-colon would more or less cover the grammatical function of the tropes. In the twelfth century, Manuel du Lecteur stated that each accent must have had a distinct melodic meaning. He felt that if this were not the case, there would have been fewer of them.[27] Some scholars believe that the grammatical rendition of the text could be managed with one-sixth of the cantillation markings.[28] This is not quite accurate because the complex grammatical system of "lords" and "servants" breaks down the language in a much more detailed fashion than what we have with English. However, certain trope marks such as *zakef gadol, shalshelet,* and *y'tiv* are grammatically interchangeable with other, more common markings.[29] Therefore, unless their unique grammatical purpose has been lost, musical identity is a good explanation for their existence.

Jewish communities throughout the world vary in their ways of chanting the trope marks. The diversified chants are influenced by the style of music of the surrounding cultures in which they developed. Eight different regional traditions of cantillation coexist today.[30] Although some scholars, such as Idelsohn, have tried to prove that the various chants have a common Palestinian origin, the majority now believe that this theory is mainly conjecture and impossible to validate.

Although I do not think that the tropes were meant to be a precise notation of a musical system, I would say that at the very least, the chant markings did serve as a

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[27] Wheeler, "The Rediscovery of Biblical Chant," 26.
[28] Breuer as quoted in Weil, *The Masoretic Chant of the Bible*, 3.
[29] Dr. Joel Hoffman, E-mail correspondence, December 20, 2001.
[30] Schleifer, *Sacred Sound and Social Change*, 26.

musical point of departure, rather like a blueprint. The details of the specific notes came later. In early accounts, tropes were described as functioning to indicate rising and falling tones, stopping and starting. Tropes were the markers of the "melodic curve." Due to the phenomenon of oral tradition, cantillation methods have always been based upon regional traditions. However, as people continue to write more and more books on the subject, they transcribe the cantillation according to their own tradition. They spread their particular variety of chant more widely. In addition, the written documentation changes the nature of the cantillation itself, which must be transcribed in a way that conforms to western musical notation.[31] Therefore, systems of cantillation become almost shackled and certainly more standardized.

*Te'amim* clarify meaning in three ways: accent and pronunciation, grammar, and melody. We can apply the methodology of Jewish scholarship here and discover new and subtle meaning. With accent, we understand the *p'shat* – the literal meaning of the words themselves. Grammar provides the *remez*, a way to understand not only the vocabulary, but how to words fit together to make a comprehensible idea. Music can reveal the *sod* – the hidden meaning of the text. In the Talmud, we learn that "the Bible should be read in public and *made understood* to its hearers in musical and sweet tones" (italics mine).[32] Even as early as the Talmudic period, there was the recognition that the music aided the comprehension.

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[31] See Solomon Rosowsky, *The Cantillation of the Bible* (New York: Reconstructionist Press, 1957); Binder, *Biblical Chant*; Wolff and Portnoy, *The Art of Cantillation* vols. I and II; and others.
[32] Binder, *Biblical Chant*, 12.

Beginning approximately in the twelfth century, mystics were commenting on the significance of the chant markings. It is well known that the tradition of Jewish mysticism stresses the importance of the formation of Hebrew words. Every letter has significance, as does each vowel and chant mark. It was their belief that the *te'amim*, representing the feminine element of oral Torah, would impregnate the letters of the written Torah with the deepest levels of meaning. The mystic studies the hidden meanings of the Torah first through contemplation of the letters, followed by the vowels, and then finally the chant marks. Each level would enable the scholar to gain ever deeper insights into the true, mystical underpinning of the Torah texts.[33]

Over time, mystics have understood the cantillation marks in varying ways. Abraham ibn Ezra (1089-1164) saw them as corresponding to the zodiac. He looked at the ways that stars influence planets and moons, and he believed that the cantillation marks moved the letters similarly. This attitude affected his understanding of the texts.[34] Contemporaneously, the *Sefer ha-Bahir*, one of the earliest works of Kabbalistic literature (redacted by mystics in Provence in the twelfth century), was also discussing the chant marks, but was more concerned with the order of their use. There is a discussion, for example, why the *segol* always follows the *zarka*. The *zarka*, in mystical language, translates as: "that which has been thrown," and the *segol*, or "treasure," follows it. The *zarka* and *segol* symbolize two aspects of the Divine emanation, *Shechinah*. *Zarka* shows thrown-ness because

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[33] Elliot Wolfson, "Biblical Accentuation in a Mystical Key: Kabbalistic Interpretations of the *Te'amim* – Part II," *Journal of Jewish Music and Liturgy* 12 (1989-90): 5.

[34] Elliot Wolfson, "Biblical Accentuation in a Mystical Key: Kabbalistic Interpretations of the *Te'amim* – Part I," *Journal of Jewish Music and Liturgy* 11 (1988-89): 3.

the *Shechinah* is in exile, thrown from Her place of origin. The *segol* refers to the imminence of the *Shechinah* in this world.[35]

According to the Kabbalistic tradition, *te'amim* foster mystical understanding in two ways: they impart knowledge about the nature of the heavenly realm, and the theory of the *te'amim* enables proper recitation of the texts, which in turn allows the reader to experience God's spirit.[36] According to some mystics, the *te'amim* symbolize the emanations (*sefirot*).[37] According to others, the order of the trope marks tells the tale of the struggle between Divine and demonic powers in the angelic realm. Sometimes meaning is derived from the letters in the name of a particular *ta'am*, or trope-mark, as when an acrostic in the name reveals a secret meaning.[38]

The mystical folklore has much to say on the subject of the *ta'amei hamikrah*. It is a long and very complicated tradition, barely comprehensible to the uninitiated, yet nonetheless crucial to the deepest levels of understanding Torah. R. Isaac ha-Kohen believed that through cantillation, "the soul is aroused and the Holy Spirit shines within it, and it [the soul] is elevated and it comprehends sublime thoughts which it could not comprehend beforehand."[39]

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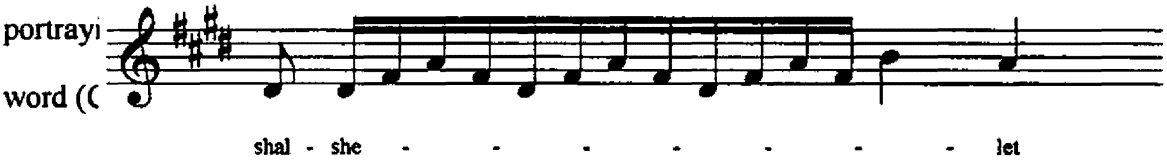
[35] Ibid., 4.
[36] Ibid., 7.
[37] According to the Zohar, God has ten emanations that are collectively called *sefirot*. These represent different aspects of the Divine. One of the goals of the mystic is to reach understanding and even communion with increasingly higher levels of *sefirot*. [Daniel C. Matt, *The Essential Kabbalah: The Heart of Jewish Mysticism* (San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, 1996.), 7-11.]
[38] Wolfson, "Biblical Accentuation in a Mystical Key: Kabbalistic Interpretations of the *Te'amim* – Part I," 7.
[39] Ibid., 10.

The rabbis have gone beyond merely stating the importance of the tropes for expressing meaning. They have used the tropes to create both mystical and general *midrashim*. Within the system of Torah trope, the marking most conducive to creating musical *midrash* is the *shalshelet*,[40] because it is extremely rare. Anything that is unusual will cause speculation by the rabbis.

The *shalshelet* appears only four times in the entire Torah, and in each case, the rabbis believed that it was there for a reason. The *shalshelet*, according to the method of chant most commonly used in North America, sounds like a vocal exercise, a repeated arpeggio on the notes of a major chord. Edna Sultan, in her article, "On the Significance of Cantillation," describes it as a "triple yodel,




The first appearance is in the story of Lot. It appears on the word, *vayitmamah* (he hesitated).[42] Lot was reluctant to leave his home in Sodom, despite the warnings of the divine messengers. Rabbi Joseph Kaspi believed that the *shalshelet* was placed there in order for us to really see what Lot was feeling, as Lot was likely gesticulating to and fro in his indecisiveness.[43] Perhaps this is more of an example of word painting than of *midrash*, but I would say that the trope here serves to really make us *feel* Lot's hesitation. It is easy to imagine that if God asked you to leave a place because the people were evil and deserved destruction, your decision to

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[40] The name *shalshelet* means chain.
[41] Sultan, "On the Significance of Cantillation," 37.
[42] Genesis 19:16.
[43] Ibid., 39.

leave would be a simple one. Perhaps the Torah means for us to understand that the decision to leave was difficult, and that Lot had much to lose by deserting his home.

The second instance of the *shalshelet* appears when Eliezer is given the task of finding a bride for Isaac.[44] Eliezer asks God to give him a sign so that he will recognize the proper bride. Sultan suggests that the *shalshelet* shows Eliezer's trepidation about the task of choosing the bride. I see two other options. In the UAHC Torah commentary, Rabbi Gunther Plaut suggests that the *shalshelet* sign is used to indicate Eliezer's hesitation.[45] Many commentaries have been written to suggest why Eliezer might have been hesitant. Perhaps Eliezer was hesitant because it was his first prayer to Abraham's God, the Jewish God. One could also say that the *shalshelet* does not indicate his hesitation in prayer, but rather his careful preparation for it or his joy in praying.

The third *shalshelet* appears as Joseph is being tempted by Potiphar's wife. He refused her with a *shalshelet* on the word *vay'ma-ein* (and he refused).[46] This could be either the *shalshelet* of triumph, as Sultan sees it, or the *shalshelet* of hesitation. Rabbi Bahyai Halawa saw the *shalshelet*, meaning chain, as showing that Joseph felt "'enchained' by his conscientiousness, steadfastly resisting." He sees this trope mark as being a non-verbal "melismatic *midrash*."[47] There are many possible *midrashim* for a single text. In this case, I suppose it would be up to the interpreter of the *te'amim* to determine his or her own *midrash* by the manner in which he or she chooses to chant this passage.

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[44] Genesis 24:12.
[45] W. Gunther Plaut, ed., *The Torah: A Modern Commentary* (New York: Union of American Hebrew Congregations, 1981), 162.
[46] Genesis 39:8,
[47] Sultan, "On the Significance of Cantillation," 38.

The fourth *shalshelet* appears as Moses performs his last sacrifice to God. He slaughters the animal with a *shalshelet* on the word *vayishchat* (and it was slaughtered)[48] The *shalshelet* marks his last sacrifice in a momentous way. In this moment he is about to relinquish the office of high priest to his brother, Aaron. The cantillation shows us his "trepidation and anguish,"[49] and even makes us share these feelings with Moses.

Even in places where the *midrash* is merely word painting, the *shalshelet* easily lends itself to various and even conflicting understandings of the texts. Just as the letters in the words themselves can spawn multiple and variant *midrashim*, so, too, can the chant marks, especially the rare ones. "He who will avail himself of the properly chanted rendition of the respective passage, will establish a sympathetic contact of a live aesthetic experience through the traditional intonation of the ancient modes."[50]

As interesting as the rules of chanting are, the exceptions to the rules, which have themselves become conventions, are also worthy of discussion. The best example is in the chanting of the Book of Esther on Purim. To go along with the whimsy of the holiday, the tradition for the chanting of this book has, over time, developed variations which serve both as *midrashim* in their own right, and as explications of external, textual *midrashim* on Esther. This is a tradition that has

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[48] Leviticus 8:23.
[49] Sultan, "On the Significance of Cantillation," 38.
[50] Ibid.

developed through a long history. Even as far back as Talmudic times, people were taking liberties with the rendition of this text.[51]

Different communities throughout the world have diverse ways of chanting Esther. It is therefore difficult to catalogue a definitive method. For our purposes, I will talk about those outlined in A. W. Binder's book on Biblical chant. There are two main types of deviations used to illuminate the Esther text: variations in the type of cantillation and additions of external melodies (unrelated to traditions of the *ta'amei hamikra*).

In sections of the book that are particularly sad or foreshadow impending doom, Esther is chanted in the trope of the book of Lamentations. To those who are quite familiar with the Jewish musical culture, the melodies from Lamentations would bring both to mind and to sentiment those feelings that they experience on *Tisha B'Av* – loss, mourning, destruction.[52] This practice seems to be most prevalent among Ashkenazi Jews and appears to have developed after the sixteenth century. By the nineteenth century the tradition had become an established *minhag* (custom).[53] The borrowing technique serves to make the text understood not merely by the mind, but also by the spirit.

The cantillation for Esther and for Lamentations is very similar. Both seem to alternate between major and minor. The chanting of some of the tropes, for example, *darga / tevir,* is identical in the two systems. This similarity between the two seems

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[51] Geoffrey Goldberg, "Maier Levi of Esslingen, Germany: A Small-Town Hazzan in the Time of the Emancipation and his Cantorial Compendium: Volume I" (Ph.D. diss., Hebrew University, 2000), 176.

[52] According to Binder's book, *Biblical Chant*, Esther 1:7, 2:6, 3:15, 4:1, 4:16 and 7:3 are chanted according to the Lamentations trope.

[53] Goldberg, "Maier Levi," 183.

to connect the experiences of joy (Esther) and sorrow (Lamentations), even through the chanting of the books themselves. The tradition of using some Lamentations trope when chanting Esther brings home this point. It is the Jewish custom, as is illustrated in the wedding ceremony, to never allow ourselves to be so overcome with joy that we ignore the sorrows in the world.[54] In a holiday as lighthearted as Purim, it is easy to forget the seriousness of the threat posed by the Haman figure. The borrowing of the Lamentations chant would serve to bring a moment of seriousness to an otherwise jovial occasion.

The traditions for the deviations are not only *midrashic* in their own right, but sometimes actually derive from *midrashic* sources. In one particular case, the Lamentations mode is used to explicate the text according to *Midrash* Esther 2:11. The *Midrash* tells us that the vessels used in the feast of Ahasuerus were those taken from Nebuchadnezzer in 586 BCE. Therefore, using the Lamentations mode brings this scene to mind, and will either serve to remind the educated of this story, or will possibly create a subconscious understanding in the unlearned.

The other technique of melodic borrowing that we see here is the importation of external melodies. Certain sections of Esther are chanted to melodies or to *nusachot* for the holidays rather than to trope. Like the use of the Lamentations trope, this melodic quotation brings the listener ever deeper into the moment of the storytelling. Here is an example:

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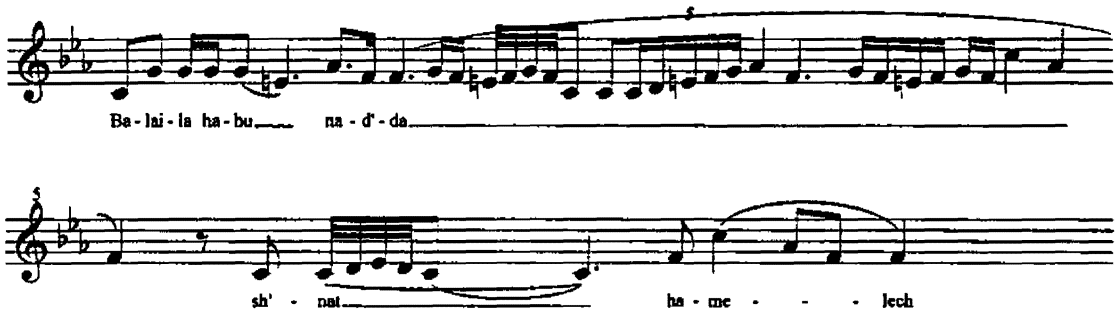
[54] The reminder that there is sorrow even in joyous times is one of the reasons that Jews break a glass at the end of the wedding ceremony.

*Midrash* Esther 10:1 teaches that on the night when King Ahasuerus was experiencing sleeplessness (Esther 6:1), God also felt restless. In order to illustrate this, the melody for "*Ha-Melech*" (the King) is used.[55]




I believe that there are two reasons that this is *midrash*ic. Firstly the melody for "*Ha-Melech*"[56] will cause the listener to make a connection between King Ahasuerus and the "King of Kings" (CD Track 6) God is not mentioned in the text of the book of Esther, but appears here in the musical *midrash*. God may not have acted directly, but this music was inserted to express the idea that God was with the Jewish people emotionally. The melody, because it is *nusach* for the High Holidays, brings the holy days to mind and may remind us of God's lovingkindness.

The melodic changes used in Esther are more than just emotional decorations of the text. By using Lamentations trope or melodies from other sources, the tradition highlights what is important, compared to what is lighthearted fun. Our traditional melodies interpret this book for us like a *midrash*.

Examining trope, the earliest known form of Jewish musical notation, has allowed us a glimpse into the way music has enabled deeper, sometimes *midrash*ic

[55] Binder, *Biblical Chant*, 103.
[56] This is a High Holiday *nusach*.

understandings of text from the earliest times. It clarifies text by helping with grammar and punctuation, but also establishes particular moods, and highlights important moments in the sacred literature. In a modern context, trope allows us to add a beautiful layer of ancient tradition to our repertoire of modern sounds.

# CHAPTER 1: TROPE

## PART II : TROPE AS A TOOL FOR *MIDRASH* IN MODERN SYNAGOGUE MUSIC

Cantillation was one of the earliest forms of Jewish musical notation and therefore, Jewish musical *midrash*. This tool had specific purposes in the communication of Biblical texts, and it is still used today. As with many devices, however, the use of the musical language of trope has expanded. Even now, in order to communicate another level of meaning, the sounds of trope have been adopted in modern settings of synagogue music. When cantillation is taken out of context, it no longer serves the same role. Musical motifs of the *ta'amei hamikra* call to mind concepts of Torah, tradition, and teaching. When accompanied, or otherwise placed into a different context, the *midrash* can be especially interesting.

Most modern musical settings that use trope melodies do so to accompany Biblical texts. The composer takes the motives of cantillation and varies them or sets them to an accompaniment. By changing the nature of the trope in this manner, the composer makes the musical setting a piece, as opposed to simply a transcription of the *te'amim*. In some cases, most of the piece will be set in the Western style with only a small section showing trope influences. There are instances in which non-Biblical texts are set in a way that reflects cantillation, but they are few and far

between. One example is Isaacson's *"B'ni,"* in which he employs the motive of the *"tipcha."*[57]

One case of a textual setting that makes use of trope to accompany a Biblical text is Lazar Weiner's *Va'ani Zos.*[58] This is a prayer that appears in the Torah service and comes from the book of Isaiah:[59] "As for me, this is my covenant with them, says the Lord: Let not my spirit, and the words that I have put in your mouth, depart from you, nor from your children or their children, from this time forth and for ever."[60]

The setting comes from his collection, "*Vay'hi Binsoa Hooron*: Torah Service." The piece is scored for solo voice and piano or organ. The music alternates between two states. Both in the beginning and the end there is a very steady and clear rhythmic pulse which gives the sense of rocking. The accompaniment is simple there: conveying steadiness through the use of off-beats. In the middle, the melody becomes much freer and more chant-like, and therefore the accompaniment becomes sparser to allow the voice freedom to soar. Most of the music is tonal. The use and style of keyboard accompaniment are common to the general non-Jewish culture. In a few select moments, however, Weiner uses trope-like motives and chants that are clearly part of the Jewish musical tradition.

The text in measures 8-10 translates: "My spirit that is on you and my words." Weiner uses trope-like rhythms and patterns (mainly the motif of the *tipcha*), but he

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[57] Michael Isaacson, "*B'ni*" in *Seasons in Time – Vol. I (Lifecycle)* (New York: Transcontinental Music Publications, 1991).
[58] Lazar Weiner, "*Vaani Zos*" in *Vay'hi Binsoa Hooron: Torah Service* (New York: Mills Music, 1958), 16-17.
[59] Lawrence Hoffman, ed. *Gates of Understanding* (New York: Central Conference of American Rabbis, 1977), 233.
[60] Chaim Stern, ed. *Gates of Prayer* (New York: Central Conference of American Rabbis, 1975), 425.

then returns to a more melodic, flowing style for the remainder of the text, "'that I put in your mouth – let them not depart from your mouth or from the mouths of your children or their children.'"

There are possible arguments for calling this text-painting as well as for labeling it *midrash.* Weiner paints this text by using trope to represent God's spirit and God's words, then returning to Western harmonies for references to humanity. It is also *midrashic,* however, because it teaches us that the development of tradition is part of tradition itself. The words come from God, so Weiner accompanies them with the sounds of cantillation. Then God put the words in our mouths, and they, in turn, come out of our lips (or Weiner's pen) in a different musical language. You could say that Weiner is implying that the words will not depart from our mouths if we are able to interpret them musically, according to the sounds of our own generation. The combination of the two musical styles makes for unique Jewish music (CD Track 7).

An example of cantillation used in a liturgical art song is Lawrence Avery's setting of *Baruch Habah* for a wedding.[61] The text is from psalm 118: "Blessed is he who has come! He Who is powerful above all, He Who is blessed above all, He Who is great above all, He Who is supreme above all – may He bless the groom and bride."[62] Avery sets this text to *Shir Hashirim* (Song of Songs) trope, connecting the Biblical love to that of the couple getting married. The setting is almost an exact rendition of trope, but the harmonization is modern (CD track 8).

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[61] Lawrence Avery, "*Baruch Haba,*" in *Kol Dodi: Jewish Music for Weddings*, eds. Mary Feinsinger and Mark Dunn (New York: Transcontinental Music, 2001), 43.
[62] Rabbi Nosson Scherman and Rabbi Meir Zlotowitz, eds. *The Complete ArtScroll Siddur*, Rabbi Nosson Scherman, trans. (New York: Mesorah Publications, 1985), 218.

Another example of a prayer that uses trope, in this case Torah trope, is *V'ahavtah* by Cantor Israel Goldstein (CD track 9).[63] The *V'ahavtah* prayer is part of the recitation of the *Shema*. The text is a Biblical quotation that is frequently chanted in services according to Torah trope. Israel Goldstein's setting of this text utilizes Torah trope and expands on it to create his own musical *midrash*.[64]

Cantor Goldstein originally set this music for cantor and children's choir. The published version, however, which I will discuss in this paper, is for solo voice and piano. The texture of the music is very simple. Because it so resembles the trope that many congregations use to chant the *V'ahavtah* every week, I imagine it would not be hard to utilize this arrangement in the context of a service. Much of the original version of the music is in the style of call and response; the cantor chants a section, and the choir responds. Because that resembles the way that the text would be taught, it embeds into the music the rhythm of the mentor / student relationship. The published edition retains the repetitions without having separate parts and therefore keeps the educational element, despite the solo voice.

The greater part of the melody is quoted from the trope. Goldstein used it almost verbatim, except that he adds accompaniment and forces the trope motives to fit into a measured framework. He also digresses into a more melodic style in certain sections. Many composers have set biblical texts to the rhythm and mood of cantillation, and therefore this is not entirely a new concept. Goldstein does this in an

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[63] Cantor Israel Goldstein is the director of the Hebrew Union College - School of Sacred Music in New York. The mission of the school is not only to train future cantors, but also to preserve the Eastern European cantorial art. Cantor Goldstein has devoted much of his time and resources toward this worthy goal.

[64] Israel Goldstein, "*V'ahavtah*" (New York: Sacred Music Press, 1996).

interesting way, however, as he fits the trope into a solid rhythm and accompaniment which could almost mask the origin of the melody.

The introduction has a clear and simple rhythm and a melody that is repeated exactly. Trope, on its own, has a real sense of timelessness. It is unmeasured and is difficult to fit into a time-signature. Goldstein introduces his piece in a very measured way. As the music begins, the rhythm is very clearly defined and even the trope-like melody is made to fit in to this rhythm.

The key signature and the opening bass note both imply the key of G. The first chord, however, is a C chord in the 6/4 position. The function of such a chord in Western music is generally to create a dominant which would resolve to the tonic of C (The C 6/4 resolves to G as a dominant to C). In addition, Goldstein does not introduce the f-sharp of the key of G until the sixth measure. Prior to that, he uses f-natural. Throughout the piece, there is an unstable quality to the key because of frequent switches between f-natural and f-sharp. In addition, there are many phrases with temporary modulations. This leads to a sense of ambiguity in the key.

He begins with the word "*V'ahavtah*" then repeats it sequentially down one step. In the original, this repeat was sung by the children's choir, but in the published version for solo cantor, the cantor sings the echo. The repetition has two meanings. It gives the sense of teaching, and it highlights the importance of the word. Word repetition is a common technique for creating emphasis. This prayer is about a commandment to love God. What I will illustrate with my analysis is that Goldstein uses both Jewish and Western musical tools to communicate his interpretation of how to express that love.

In measure 8, we arrive at the text: "with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your being." He diverges from the trope with which he had started the piece. Instead, he rocks back and forth between B and G. This is reminiscent of the swaying that takes place during *davening*. He still retains a chant-like quality in this section, but not one derived from trope. In addition, he shifts in this section from G-major to the relative minor, E. Since Torah trope is in a major key, the move to minor takes the listener to a different place but only for a brief moment. By the time we get to the last word of this phrase, we are back in G-major and back to trope. By leaving trope and instead utilizing the style of *davening* in this section, Goldstein highlights this phrase. I believe that the text indicates the question that he is trying to answer with his music. The words say, "with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your might." With this arrangement, Cantor Goldstein will explore what this means to him.

For the phrase, beginning on measure 13, "Set these words which I command you this day," Goldstein returns to trope. The setting is virtually identical to the cantillation. The accompaniment is still unsure of its key, moving from a G-major centered moment into E-minor. The melody feels traditional, whereas the accompaniment and harmonies are modern. I believe that the overlap attempts to resolve the difficulty of living a traditional Jewish life in a modern world. In listening to this piece, one doesn't feel grounded in a musical time-frame.

What is most interesting to me in this particular phrase is the setting of the word, "*hayom*" (today), which Goldstein emphasizes. He approaches the E, which also happens to be the highest note in the piece, with a large leap. He also marks the note with a fermata, unusual in a piece that is otherwise highly measured. There is

absolutely no way in which this word could not stand out. I believe that he highlights it because it is the central focus of the question that he addresses. Goldstein uses the juxtaposition of musical styles and the style of the mode of teaching to explore how to express love for God in the context of today.

In measure 19, we move to the text: "Teach them faithfully to your children: speak of them in your home and on your way, when you lie down, and when you rise up." Goldstein again switches from cantillation to a more melodic declamation of text combined with both tonal and slightly a-tonal Western harmonies. In addition, the *tessitura* is much higher than most of the rest of the piece. The text stands out because the style of the music changes, and the placement in the vocal range is higher and louder. I believe that this is Cantor Golstein's intension. He is a teacher of Cantorial music in a Reform seminary, where pupils are much more grounded in Western than Jewish music. He takes this text out of the traditional Jewish context because in his teaching he must start from the non-Jewish musical milieu in order to reach his students.

At the very end of the music, Goldstein resumes a more trope-like style. On the word, "*Uchtavtam*" (and you shall write them) he uses the motive of a *t'vir*. Although the rest of the sentence is not as exact a notation of trope, it is similar to the *mercha-tipcha sof-pasuk* that would end an *aliyah*. He does this to accompany the words, "write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates." As much as Goldstein must use Western musical tools to communicate with his students, he himself was raised as a traditional Jew, and therefore the language of *his* home and *his* gates will be the more traditional language. He returns to that at the end of the piece.

A teacher must often combine languages. In order to instruct, the professor must use the language that the student is trying to learn, but he must also relate to the student in a way that the learner can understand. Cantor Goldstein communicates his desire to do both with this piece and thereby expresses his love for Judaism through bringing tradition and modernity together in the mouths and voices of his students.

In modern contexts trope can be used to express Biblical texts, literally taking the words out of their musical context and reminding the listener from whence they came. In addition, composers can take cantillation motives out of their framework, thus illustrating a point in the music. *Te'amim* started out as a way of expressing Biblical texts only. Over time, the tradition has adopted cantillation to help us sing and pray our liturgy with added meaning. *Te'amim* are the oldest part of the Jewish musical language, yet they bring depth to our latest musical endeavors even today.

# CHAPTER 2: *NUSACH HATEFILLAH*

## PART I : *HABOCHEIR B'SHIREI ZIMRA*: THE TRADITION OF *NUSACH HA-TEFILLAH*

Traditional *nusach* of the prayer service has emotional meaning both for those who are intimately familiar with it as well as for those who are less so. Cantor Pinchas Spiro called it a "living link to our past" and marveled at the "distinct character and flavor" that it lends to the service.[1] Irene Heskes tells us in her book, *Passport to Jewish Music*, that if a congregant were to fall asleep in the synagogue, he would be able to know a tremendous amount upon awaking, merely by listening to the music. He would know the "day of the week; time of day; month of the year; current or approaching holiday, festival, fast or feast day; and [whether there were] any local personal events -- births, marriages, deaths."[2]

The origin of the *nusach hatefillah* for the Ashkenazic tradition is vague. Various scholars trace the roots of our Jewish musical practice to a variety of different sources, but the general consensus seems to be that the *nusach* is firmly rooted in Biblical chant through modal character, style, and in some cases, motive. [3]

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[1] Pinchas Spiro, "The Rejuvination of the Weekday Modes," *Journal of Synagogue Music* 11:1 (July 1981): 26.
[2] Irene Heskes, *Passport to Jewish Music: Its History, Traditions, and Culture* (New York: Tara Publications, 1994), 71.
[3] see Idelsohn, *Jewish Music*, 73.; Gershon Ephros, "The *Hazzanic* Recitative: A Unique Contribution to our Music Heritage," *Journal of Synagogue Music* 6:3 (March 1976): 23; Baruch J. Cohon, "The Structure of the Synagogue Prayer Chant," *Journal of Synagogue Music* 11:1 (July 1981): 58; and others.

To discuss *nusach hatefillah*, it is essential that we define certain frequently confused terms: scale, mode and *nusach*. A scale is a series of notes in sequential order. A piece of music will generally use a scale of notes from which the music can be taken. Most scales have equivalent interval relationships in all octaves.

A mode is a much more complicated concept. In western music, a mode is basically equivalent to scale. We are most familiar with two western modes: major and minor. There are also several so called "church modes" which are, like major and minor, seven note scales based on half and whole steps. Two examples of "church modes" would be *dorian*, which is similar to minor but with a raised $6^{th}$, and *mixolydian*, which is like a major but with a lowered $7^{th}$. When scholars were first trying to define the Jewish modes, they discovered that they are not exactly the same as "church modes." Jewish modes have their own scales, sometimes with steps that are larger than whole steps. Our modes are not necessarily consistent in differing octaves. Clearly, they constitute an alphabet for a uniquely Jewish musical language.

A mode correlates with a special "scale." *Nusach* is more complicated, consisting of modes plus melodic motives, which generally come from cantillation, folk tunes, popular cantorial moves, and the so-called *Mi-Sinai* melodies.[4] The mode alone is not enough to communicate the feeling of the service; the motives combined with the mode are what give the *nusach* its distinctive character.

In addition to providing an auditory sense of the seasons and holidays, *nusach* also communicates ethos. When a mode is used in a particular *nusach*, the *tessitura* and motives that accompany the scale of the mode help to express the emotional

[4] *Mi Sinai* melodies are folk tunes from France and South-Western Germany that have become so much a part of western Ashkenazic musical culture, that people feel that they are from Mt. Sinai [Idelsohn, *Jewish Music*, 136].

composition of the liturgical moment. For example, the mode *Ahavah Rabbah*, which is sung in a weekday service, if properly rendered will not feel the same as the *Ahavah Rabbah* of the Sabbath. This is the case even when the mode expresses the same text. The *nusach* for the Sabbath is different, even when the mode is the same.[5]

It is difficult to pin down the origin of the Jewish modes. They seem to come from a variety of times and places. Aspects can be traced to wide varieties of cultures including Arabic and Slavic. However, just as most languages can trace their ancestry to various linguistic sources, the Jewish musical language has become its own entity, affected by its roots, but not ruled by them.

The geographical location in which people use a mode can indicate its origin, but not necessarily its age.[6] For example, the *Magein Avot* mode is also an Arabic *maqam* (mode), called *bayati* (home-like). Scholars had, until recently, traced this mode back to the fifteenth century. More recent evidence suggests that a fragment of musical notation found in the Cairo *genizah* and written by an apostate monk is approximately in the mode of *Magein Avot*. This had to be recorded before 1130, when the monk died. Scholars believe that this mode is even older and perhaps can be traced back to the time of R. Yehudai Gaon in the eighth century. Scholars such as Eric Werner suspect that the mode probably even pre-dates Christianity.[7]

The *Magein Avot* mode is similar to the western, natural minor scale. Unlike minor, however, the seventh is *always* lowered in the *Magein Avot*. The significant part of the scale is the pentachord, or five-note scale. The fifth is dominant. Similar

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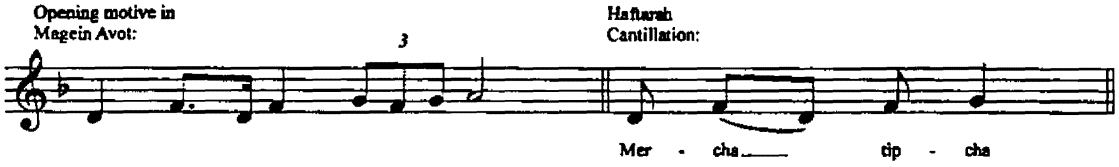
[5] Spiro, "The Rejuvenation of the Weekday Modes," 31.
[6] Eric Werner, *A Voice Still Heard: The Sacred Songs of the Ashkenazic Jews* (University Park: Pennsylvania State UP, 1976), 55.
[7] Ibid., 56.

to the minor scale in western music, *Magein Avot* tends towards a modulation to the parallel major or to the similar Jewish mode of *Adonai Malach*.[8]

Despite these similarities with western music, *Magein Avot* has characteristics that make it unique to Jewish music. Freed, in his book, *Harmonizing the Jewish Modes*, recommends that the arranger of Jewish music should concentrate on the special features of *Magein Avot*. He suggests emphasizing the lowered seventh and avoiding characteristic progressions of minor (root down a fifth as in V-i, down a third as in VI-iv, and up a second as in iv-V).[9] This technique brings out the Jewish flavor and prevents harmonizations of pieces in *Magein Avot* from sounding minor. Many of the motives of *Magein Avot* either come directly out of the cantillation of the Prophets or are very similar to them. We hear motives of Haftarah cantillation in the *Magein Avot* that sound like the *mercha, tipchah, revii, darga, tevir* and others.[10] For example (CD track 10):[11]




*Magein Avot* is named after the pseudo-repetition of the *Amidah* for Friday evenings. The *Magein Avot* mode is usually used in connection with narratives, instructive prayers, and proclamations of faith. The prayer for which this mode is

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[8] Idelsohn, *Jewish Music*, 84.
[9] Isadore Freed, *Harmonizing the Jewish Modes* (New York: Sacred Music Press, 1990), 41.
[10] Idelsohn, *Jewish Music*, 84.
[11] Freed, *Harmonizing the Jewish Modes*, 41; Marshall Portnoy and Josée Wolff, *The Art of Cantillation Volume 2: A Step-By-Step Guide to Chanting Haftarah and M'gillot*, ed. Sally Neff (New York: UAHC Press, 2001), 83.

named is itself instructive as it summarizes the contents of the Friday night *Amidah*, highlighting the essential themes of the service, as well as providing a description of the nature of the Divine. In addition to the prayer for which it is named, the *Magein Avot* mode is also used for the *Shema* of the High Holidays (clearly a declaration of faith), and many other similar prayers.[12]

In a contemporary context, the western counterpart to the *Magein Avot*, the minor scale, has emotional associations. People think that minor means sad. Music psychologists attribute this to the half-step tendency tones, such as the half-step between the second and third scale degrees, between the fifth and sixth scale degrees, etc. that can be found in the minor scale. These tones pull the listener strongly in one direction or another and give a sense of unease and incompletion. Some scientists have explained this by looking at the function of the ear itself. Our inner ear gives us our sense of balance. It is therefore not surprising that sound could affect our emotional equilibrium as well.[13]

Because of its similarity to minor, *Magein Avot* has many of the exact same tendency tones as well as another important emotional feature. Unlike minor, *Magein Avot* uses the fifth scale degree as a strong recitation tone. Melodies tend to spend a lot of time on that fifth. The fifth is not the tonic, however. Although it is a stable note in the mode, it is not the most stable note. We do not feel resolved in *Magein Avot* even when we are on the tonic chord because we spend very little time singing the tonic note. Below you will find some examples of motives of *Magein Avot.*

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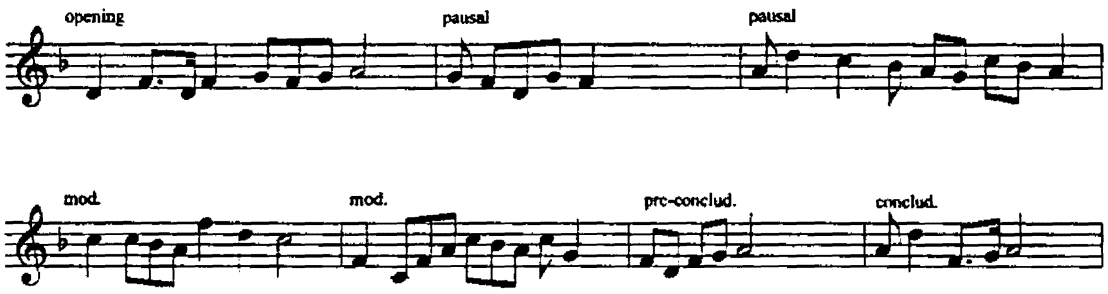
[12] Werner, *A Voice Still Heard*, 48.
[13] Anthony Storr, *Music and the Mind* (New York: Ballantine Books, 1992), 41.

Notice how little time is spent on the tonic: D. Also notice that the concluding phrase ends on the dominant: A.




(CD track 11)[14] Because of the soul-stirring power of the *Magein Avot* mode, Jews feel its sense of sadness and emotional pull. As a result, it has been used not only in prayers but also in countless folk tunes.

While *Magein Avot* is probably the oldest Jewish mode, *Ahavah Rabbah*, the mode of the seemingly quintessential Jewish sound, is paradoxically the youngest. Unlike *Magein Avot*, which has a similar sound to the cantillation for the Prophets, *Ahavah Rabbah* seems not to be based on any of the systems of cantillation and according to Idelsohn was not used at all among Yemenite, Persian, Babylonian, Moroccan, Italian, Portuguese or West-German communities.[15] Current scholarship believes that this mode was introduced from Turkey via Russia and Poland. Tremendous study over the years has been dedicated to attempting to find the *ursource* of this mode, but to little avail. It has similarities to many varieties of music. Ethnomusicologists have traced it as far back as the fifth century BCE, as well as to many more recent sources. Eric Werner believes that the mode was probably brought into the West on many separate occasions before it became

[14] Freed, *Harmonizing the Jewish Modes*, 41.
[15] Idelsohn, *Jewish Music*, 87.

commonly used.[16] What many people think of as the quintessentially Jewish mode was virtually unknown in Ashkenazic music until the fifteenth century. Only after that time was it carried by migrant cantors into the rest of Europe.[17]

*Ahavah Rabbah* has been used in many examples of non-Jewish music. We find it in Byzantine chant after the fourteenth or fifteenth century. During the seventeenth century, the Cossacks were using it in their folk melodies. Eric Werner points out the incredible irony that the Jews came to so love a mode that was employed by those who hated them. One must wonder if the mode came to be adapted because of a desire to be like the gentiles, as some sort of Jewish self-hatred. Perhaps the music was loved simply because it was the music of the larger culture. Maybe the use of this mode was a way of making the secular holy. In some Hasidic circles, for example, people believe all melodies contain Divine sparks, and secular melodies can be uplifted by using them for holy purposes. On the other hand, perhaps it is analogous to the integration of sounds of American jazz and rock and roll into modern settings of synagogue music. Few people would say that Craig Taubman's *Friday Night Live* is an attempt to make secular musical sounds holy, but rather it is simply an incorporation of a familiar musical idiom into prayer.

Regardless of its origin, Jews adopted the *Ahavah Rabbah*. In western Europe, the *Ahavah Rabbah* mode communicated a plea for God's mercy, a supplication, or a remembrance of the dead. The Hasidim in Eastern Europe however, came to use the mode for all types of prayers and songs, both the joyous and the sad. Thus you could hear the joyous "*Havah Nagillah*" and the sad "*El Maleh*

[16] Werner, *A Voice Still Heard*, 57.
[17] Ibid., 58.

*Rachamim*" using the same mode. Because of this, *Ahavah Rabbah* has lost its emotional context and now sounds simply "Jewish."

For whatever purpose *Ahavah Rabbah* is used, it seems to communicate the extreme form of the emotion. Sad texts set to this mode are heart-wrenchingly sad. Happy texts seem to make the pulse race with joy. One reason that this mode carries such significance is because of our connection with its Eastern European history. It makes us feel linked to our Ashkenazic heritage. I believe, however, that it is not only this association that gives the mode its power.

What makes the *Ahavah Rabbah* produce such wild effects? Perhaps it is the distinctive interval of the augmented second. Incidentally, we also hear this interval in the western scale of harmonic minor, where its purpose is to raise the seventh to create a leading tone to the tonic. In *Ahavah Rabbah*, the augmented second appears right next to the tonic. The second scale degree is usually a somewhat stable tone, but with the augmented second placed at this juncture in the scale, *Ahavah Rabbah* immediately throws off the listener's equilibrium. In fact, the first five notes of the scale contain two half steps and an augmented second, all of which feel unstable.

Another factor that contributes to the unsteadiness of *Ahavah Rabbah* is the fact that the scale of the mode contains a major third, which usually indicates a major type sound and much stability. Nothing is more precarious than feeling secure briefly and having your balance quite immediately thrown off. The tonic is major, but the feeling, because of the lowered second and the half step between five and six, is minor.[18] *Ahavah Rabbah* feels somewhat like living in the fifth scale degree of a

[18] Freed, *Harmonizing the Jewish Modes*, 17.

minor scale: unstable, unrooted. The absence of a leading tone to the tonic of the *Ahavah Rabbah* perpetuates this feeling.

*Ahavah Rabbah* is filled with half-stem tendency tones and with unusual, unstable progressions and harmonies. *Ahavah Rabbah* leaves you literally dizzy, whether from joy or from sorrow, and thus most effectively communicates the tremendously emotional content of Jewish prayer and song.

The *Adonai Malach* mode, like *Magein Avot* seems to be rooted in the tradition of cantillation. Idelsohn believes that it was derived from the mode of Torah cantillation. He holds that many synagogue modes developed on the back of Biblical texts that were a part of the liturgy. As the words would be chanted in a particular style of cantillation, the scales and sounds would carry over to the other prayers, and thus the modes were born.[19]

*Adonai Malach* is similar to the *mixolydian* mode, with a major third and a minor tenth. Another characteristic is that the note below the tonic is a half-step below it, while the upper 7th is a whole-step below it. This mode proves to be an excellent illustration of why a mode cannot be as precisely defined as a scale can. Here, the register of the voice will determine where the 7th falls. This, along with the major third / minor tenth dichotomy, gives the scale a unique sound and strongly distinguishes it from the simple major of western music. *Adonai Malach* exists in the synapse between the major world and the minor one. This, again, like the other Jewish modes, creates a sense of inbalance that is a tool for the expression of emotional content. In addition, because the lower registration of the scale sounds

[19] Idelsohn, *Jewish Music*, 73.

major while the upper registration sounds minor, we can, within one mode, communicate a wide variety of emotional content.

*Adonai Malach* is frequently used for praise and thanksgiving passages and implies a sense of sovereignty. Its characteristic opening passage of the major triad sounds sturdy, strong, and even triumphant; but the minor aspects of this mode temper it. It expresses its name *Adonai Malach* (God rules) aptly because the mode itself seems to define a theology. The major aspects of this scale communicate the feeling that God rules, is sovereign, strong, mighty, and immutable. On the other hand, the scale has minor aspects as well. These transmit the sense of God's mercy and kindness; God looks with love upon the people. The mixture of major and minor in different parts of the scale can communicate different levels of emotional meaning in a text that covers various moods. Even on its own, however, this mode manages to imply a theology; it is a musical *midrash*.

*Magein Avot, Ahavah Rabbah,* and *Adonai Malach* are not the only three Jewish modes. Other examples include *Yishtabach* and *Ukranian Dorian*. These modes appear to be mainly offshoots or frequent destinations for temporary modulations from the three major modes that I have already discussed.

*Yishtabach* mode is based on *Magein Avot*. It begins there, but modulates to major on the 4th scale degree. Then it returns to *Magein Avot*. Because a modulation like this is common, some question whether *Yishtabach* even qualifies as a mode. However, it has a characteristic modulation, using an augmented second in the return to *Magein Avot*. Freed feels that the combination of natural minor, major on the 4th and harmonic minor with a lowered second on the re-modulation give the mode

enough of a distinctive feeling as to warrant its own name.[20] I find it very interesting that while *Magein Avot* appears to dominate much of the Friday evening service, it is *Yishtabach* that commands the Sabbath morning service until the entrance of the *Ahavah Rabbah* mode. *Yishtabach* embodies the mixed emotions of the Sabbath. It has the calm of *Magein Avot*, the joy of the major modulation on 4, and the intensity of the augmented second on the return modulation. That augmented second prepares the ear and the spirit for the *Ahavah Rabbah* to come and makes the transition smooth.

*Ukranian Dorian*, also called *Mi Sheberach* or *Av Harachamim*, is characterized by the augmented fourth degree. It can take two forms. The upper tetrachord may have either a raised 6th and lowered 7th, or a lowered 6th and raised 7th. In either case, there is an augmented interval. *Ukranian Dorian* is a frequent destination of the *Adonai Malach* mode, further communicating the merciful or pleading aspects of that mode.

We use modes in a particular service in order to divide liturgical sections, structure the service, highlight important moments or prayers, and clarify meaning. The music not only separates, but also communicates liturgical text. I will now examine the weekday morning and the Friday evening services to explore them and the ways in which the *nusach* communicates messages that might not be apparent from the liturgy alone.

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[20] Freed, *Harmonizing the Jewish Modes*, 45.

Cantor Pinchas Spiro divides the weekday service into three sections which he refers to as "Musical Formulas."[21] Because the weekday morning service is usually done simply and even quickly, the motives are basic, consisting mainly of a pentatonic scale and hurried repetitive, recitation tones. The first musical formula spans the beginning of the service until the *Yishtabach* prayer. The purpose of this beginning section of the service is to bring the worshipper to prayer, preparing the soul as the service begins. I find it fascinating, then, that the melody is basically identical to that which we use to bless the Torah. The reasoning could be simply that this chant is easy. It is also possible to view this phenomenon *midrashically.* Perhaps the reason for the musical similarity is that we are trying to awaken ourselves spiritually, just as we would in preparation for the reading of Torah.

The second Musical Formula is from *Yishtabach* through the *Amidah.* Everything that precedes this is an introduction. This section of the service contains the *Barechu*, the *Shema*, and all the material that precedes the central prayer of the service: the *Amidah.* It is chanted in a variation of the *Ahavah Rabbah* mode. As I discussed earlier, this *Ahavah Rabbah* is not the same as the one for the Sabbath. The *tessitura* is lower which means that although the key is the same, the notes used are lower in the vocal range. In addition, the music for this service is less ornate. Although this is a simple version of the mode, we must remember that *Ahavah Rabbah,* because of its somewhat unstable sound, communicates a particular emotional, spiritual feeling, which is necessary at this point in the service. The liturgy has awakened us and reminded us of Torah, now we turn toward the *Amidah* for petition and supplication. The music takes us to the next step. After we have

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[21] Spiro, "The Rejuvination of the Weekday Modes," 27.

prepared our souls for prayer, arousing our bodies and our intellects, now we are ready to awaken our feelings and our spiritual needs. The music, even though simply rendered, helps us towards this end.

The third Musical Formula occurs in the repetition of the *Amidah*. The *Avot* section is based around a pentatonic scale. It seems to be in *Magein Avot*, but the pentatonic quality here makes it difficult to completely define the mode because it does not tend to be fully used. It has the sound of the Torah blessings as well as that of the cantillation of the Haftarah. The sound resembles minor and feels like a teaching. The recapitulation of the *Amidah* is both a prayer and a teaching; therefore the music must communicate both.

In the Reform setting, we rarely have the opportunity to chant a complete weekday morning service. Therefore I would like to look at the more complex traditional Friday evening service as well. Few cantors in the Reform movement sing the Friday night service within the proper modes. The custom in the Reform movement has been to move many of the features of the Saturday morning *Shabbat* service to Friday night. This is a result of increased attendance at the Friday service as opposed to the Saturday morning one. Because this is an innovation, there is no official formula that incorporates liturgical moments such as the Torah service and the repetition of the *Avot* into the modes of Friday evening. The traditional Friday night *nusach*, however, contains within it a distinct musical journey as well as *midrashim* on the texts of the liturgy. To ignore this is to miss out on the best that our Jewish musical language has to teach us. Therefore it is important for cantors to study this *nusach* and even attempt to find ways to adapt it.

Cantor Richard Cohn gave a lecture at the Hebrew Union College in which he discussed the Friday evening *nusach* and its *midrashic* implications. He began by pointing out that the Shabbat service has seven musical sections (symbolic of seven days of the week).[22] In the first section, when we begin to chant to opening psalms, worshippers have just arrived. They may not yet be emotionally and spiritually prepared for the Sabbath. Getting ready for Shabbat is not necessarily a relaxed event. People must return from work, shower, dress, cook, and prepare the family and home. When they finally arrive at the synagogue, they often feel harried and somewhat stressed. It might not yet feel like *Shabbat*. The music in the beginning of the service can aid people in making the spiritual transition. Cohn believes, therefore, that it makes little spiritual sense to begin, as many do, with a somber *niggun*, but rather that the music in the beginning of the service should reflect how people feel upon arrival and then musically lead the congregation into the Sabbath mood, gradually.[23] The tradition brings us into the Shabbat moment gradually. The *Kabbalat Shabbat* service begins in *Adonai Malach*. It is joyful; it has a ring to the sound. As we discussed earlier, the mode communicates a proclamation of the sovereignty of God. We need to sense that power as we must, for a day, put away our worship of worldly things.

The second section contains the hymn, *L'cha Dodi*. This is generally sung as a "tune," and so there are many choices available. Occasionally, cantors sing seasonal melodies. In addition, there is a custom among Hasidim to change the

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[22] Cantor Richard Cohn, "The *Nusach* Paradigm of the Friday Evening Service and Its Contemporary Application," lecture at Hebrew Union College – Jewish Institute of Religion, New York, 17 October 2001.

[23] Others feel that the soft *niggun* introduces the mood of the Sabbath. We are speaking here only of what the traditional modes of the service might imply.

melody for each stanza or for certain particular verses (depending on the community).[24] The sense of discontinuity in these changes illustrates the idea behind *L'cha Dodi*. According to the mystical understanding of this prayer, the Jewish people are separated from God. The male and female aspects of the Divine are divided. A sense of brokenness keeps Jerusalem from being a city of peace.[25] *L'cha Dodi* reflects all of this and at the same time tries to bring them together with the recurring refrain. Generally, the mode is *Adonai Malach* (except among Hasidim where it is in minor).[26]

The third section consists of psalms ninety-two and ninety-three. These tend toward *Magein Avot* and a minor feeling, conveying intensity. As I discussed before, it is the tendency notes in both minor and *Magein Avot* that give the music a certain emotionality. The music is leading the congregation to the call to prayer. The minor feeling of *Magein Avot* leads the ear and the emotions towards the spirit of *Shabbat*.

The fourth section begins with the *Barechu* and takes us through *Ge'ulah* – from the official call to prayer through the section of the liturgy that speaks of Israel's redemption. The mode for the *Barechu* is major, but the tonic is not the low note; the fifth is. The *Barechu* circles around the tonic. It is at the center, rather than at the bottom. This feels somewhat unresolved, but also declamatory.

The fifth section extends from *Hashkiveinu* through *V'shamru*. *Hashkiveinu* is in *Magein Avot*. This highly passionate text, which asks God to grant us peace, also implores God to keep us far from war, famine and disease. Thus, the first half is

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[24] Jeffrey A. Summit, *The Lord's Song in a Strange Land: Music and Identity in Contemporary Jewish Worship* (New York: Oxford UP, 2000), 39.
[25] Scherman and Zlotowitz, eds., *The Complete Artscroll Siddur, 350-53*.
[26] Dr. Eliyahu Schleifer, "Modal Structure of the Friday Night Service in the Ashkenazi Tradition According to Current Orthodox Practice (1999)," class hand-out Hebrew Union College, Jerusalem, Israel, 1999.

set to gentle, restful tones, and the second half, to passionate ones. It tends to be an excellent example of word-painting.

The *V'shamru*, although originally a Biblical text, is rarely chanted according to the *ta'amim.*[27] There are hundreds of congregational and solo settings.[28] Some of these keep the mode constant in *Magein Avot*, some modulate to *Adonai Malach* for the verses.

*Hashkiveinu* and *V'shamru* are placed back to back, with no intervening prayers. The mood however, is very different. Whereas *Hashkiveinu* is usually a solo, *V'shamru* is often a congregational melody. The tone of the texts themselves reflects this. The first is a supplication and the second a quotation from the Torah. You could almost say that the first is a prayer from humanity to God and the second from God to humanity. Generally, our way of singing these parts of the liturgy is in itself a musical *midrash*. A solo voice can send out our prayer to God, but in order to hear God's prayer to us, we must announce it as a community. Sometimes we hear God's voice best through the gathering together of voices within a community.

The sixth section, the pseudo-repetition of the *Amidah*,[29] is also in the *Magein Avot* mode. The mode combines for us the sense of major and minor that we heard battling in the fifth section. Once we arrive at this part of the service, we are in a different emotional place. We have prayed our *Amidah* and now can feel that we are in the Sabbath moment. As Abraham Joshua Heschel explains, on the Sabbath, time becomes sacred instead of space. "It is not a different state of consciousness but a

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[27] Exodus 31:16-17.
[28] See Moshe Nathanson, ed. *Zamru Lo* vol. I (New York: Cantor's Assembly, 1974), 72-83 for some examples.
[29] The Friday evening service does not contain a complete repetition of the *Amidah*, but rather an abridged version that summarizes the main points.

different climate. The primary awareness is one of our being *within* the Sabbath rather than of the Sabbath being within us."[30] When we enter the world of *Shabbat*, we are in a different spiritual space. The unclear tonal center and questionable modality of major / minor help not only to communicate this unique realm that is the Sabbath evening, but to help the feeling of *Shabbat* to permeate our spiritual selves.

The Eastern European tradition of *chazzanut* differs from modern synagogue practice in the way that the seventh section (the *Aleinu* ) tends to be expressed. Traditionally, the service concluded in a simplified *Magein Avot*, like the study mode. You would leave the synagogue floating in the other-worldliness of the *Magein Avot* mode. This makes sense given that the *Aleinu* speaks of Godliness and ends with a vision of the world to come. In a traditional service, the major mode will not appear until Saturday morning. According to Cantor Richard Cohn, the tradition of the modern synagogue is to end with the Friday night *Aleinu* in a Major mode. The seventh section of the service then returns us from our emotional Sabbath prayer experience to the communal joy that can take place on Shabbat. We experience a sense of release as we return to the major mode.

There is more to *nusach* than just modes. There are also certain melodies and melodic motives that are associated with religious occasions. These are called "*Mi Sinai*" tunes. They are melodies that have become so ensconced in Ashkenazic musical tradition that people feel as though they came to us from Mt. Sinai. One of the most famous examples of a *Mi Sinai* tune is the Kol Nidre.

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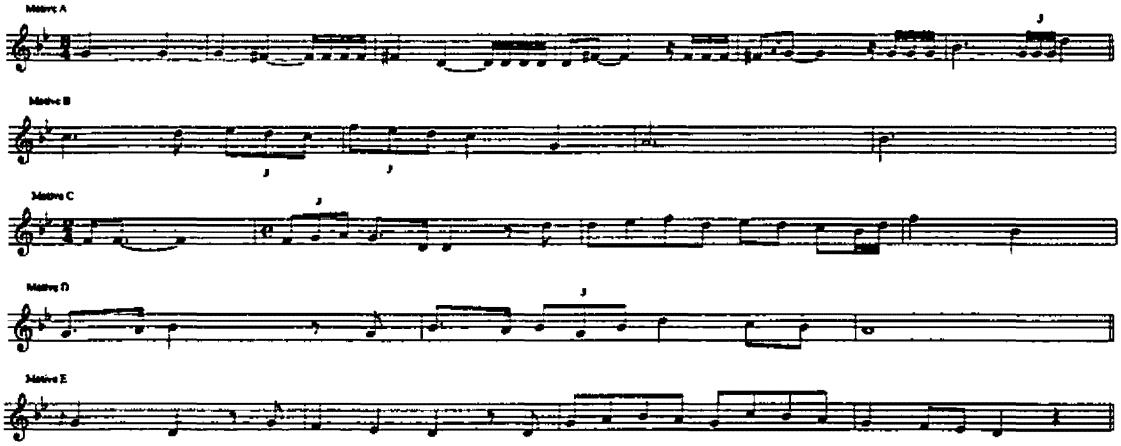
[30] Abraham Joshua Heschel, *The Sabbath: Its Meaning for Modern Man* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1951; reprint 1994), 21.

There are many speculations about the origin of the melody that we know for *Kol Nidre*. One of the most popular myths is that it was sung by the *Marranos* in Spain. This myth probably came about due to a theory published by Joseph S. Bloch in 1917.[31] In the late 1400's, the Jewish people who lived in Spain were forced to either convert to Christianity or leave the country. Many people converted. The "Old Christians," those who had been born into the religion, referred to the "New Christians" as *Marranos* – a word that literally means pigs. The "New Christians" made vows to be faithful to the Christian religion and to abandon the faith of their forefathers and mothers. It is easy to imagine, therefore, that a text in which people pray to God for the absolution of the vows of the previous and future years could have been particularly meaningful for these "New Christians," many of whom still maintained their Jewish identity in private. Because of this, a myth about the origins of *Kol Nidre* has become quite wide-spread. People felt that the tune clearly illustrated the pain the "New Christians" must have felt about having to renounce Judaism. As clear-cut as this theory may seem, all the evidence contradicts it. The melody is not generally sung among Sephardic, or Spanish Jews. It is widely known only among Ashkenazic or German populations. In addition, the melodies and motifs of the prayer are strongly influenced by German and gypsy folk songs; therefore it is unlikely that they developed among a Spanish population that would have been unfamiliar with those tunes.

The first evidence that the *Kol Nidre* was sung to any particular melody was in 1600. Mordechai Jaffe, of Prague, describes the *Kol Nidre* as being sung to a fixed melody. This fact stopped people from being able to make further changes to the

[31] *Encyclopedia Judaica*, [CD-ROM] version 1.0, 1997, s.v. "Kol Nidre" by Bathja Bayer.

prayer's text because such textual changes would no longer fit with the melody. The beloved tune was apparently a new development, as prior to this there were many textual alterations. Scholars believe that the melody was created between the middle of the fifteenth and the middle of the sixteenth centuries.[32] The oldest musical notation, however, did not occur until Ahron Beer, a cantor in Berlin who lived from 1765-1821, included it in his collection of synagogue songs. His version of *Kol Nidre* contains the motives that we expect to hear, but it is not quite the same as what we generally sing today.[33] The melody has evolved over time, but it carries with it certain characteristic motives without which it would not feel like *Kol Nidre*. Here are some examples of typical *Kol Nidre* motives (CD track 12):[34]



The combination of *Mi Sinai* motives with the characteristic modes of the service make up the *nusach*. As I have shown, the modes and motives themselves can be a simple form of *midrash* because they communicate feeling through key and intervallic relationships. For example, the *Kol Nidre* text seems to be a bland expression of a legal document annulling our vows before Yom Kippur, yet the music

[32] Abraham Z. Idelsohn, "The *Kol Nidre* Tune," *Hebrew Union College Annual* 8-9 (1931-32): 495-96.
[33] Ibid., 498.

is filled with semi-tones and tendency notes which pull at the emotions. The melody is chanted at the beginning of Yom Kippur, which is already an intense moment. Combined with the music, this powerful musical tradition has given the text a deeper meaning. It helps people to think about the sins of un-kept promises both to themselves and to others. Therefore the *Mi Sinai* tune has itself become *midrashic.*

In this section, I have illustrated that modes and *Mi-Sinai* tunes can, on their own or in the context of a service, be *midrashic.* In the next section, I will examine how the interplay between traditional *nusach* and modern music can enhance the ability of Jewish music to communicate text.

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[34] Motives taken from Emanuel Barkan, "*Kol Nidre,*" Unpublished manuscript.

## CHAPTER 2: *NUSACH HATEFILLAH*

### PART II : *NUSACH* AS MUSICAL *MIDRASH*: THE *HAMELECH* OF THE HIGH HOLIDAYS

*Nusach* has a specific context that is familiar to the Jewish ear. As I have already stated, people who know the tradition well can determine the time of year and time of day based on the melodies that they hear. Therefore, when *nusach* is used out of its traditional context, it once again has an opportunity to serve as a musical tool for creating *midrash* on text. Just as trope in modern music expresses special meanings that are different from those that would be communicated in their original context, *nusach* and *Mi Sinai* tunes have also been used for *midrash* in musical compositions

The translation of the *Hamelech* prayer is as follows: "The King who sits on a throne [that is] exalted and uplifted. He who dwells in eternity, exalted and holy is His name. And it is written: 'Joyfully exalt in God, [you] righteous ones, for the upright, praise is fitting. Through the mouth of the upright, You are extolled; and with the words of the righteous You are blessed; and by the tongue of the pious, You are exalted."[35]

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[35] Rabbi Avrohom Davis, ed., trans. *The Complete Metsudah Siddur* (New York: Metsudah Publications, 1990), 501.

There are many settings of the prayer, but in this paper I will discuss one of the more modern arrangements, one by Cantor Steven Richards.[36] Cantor Richards uses the traditional *nusach* for the *Hamelech* of the High Holiday morning service. Through his application of harmonies, textures, and accompaniment, he adds another layer to the meaning behind the music and makes of it his own musical *midrash*.

*Hamelech* is part of the *Shochein Ad* section of the morning service. The prayer talks about "*hamelech al kisei rom*" (the King on His high throne). Representations of sovereignty in theology can be problematic for worshipers in today's post-modern culture. Many people have difficulty with the concepts that surround kingship. Because we live in a democratic society, we cannot easily relate to or understand a sovereign God. We want to see God in a less vertical and more horizontal way. Music that expresses sovereignty, even though it may be powerful and beautiful, doesn't speak to people's need to relate to God as a friend.[37]

God's sovereignty is one of the main themes of the High Holidays, and much of the *nusach* musically conveys this theme. The High Holidays are fear filled times, however, and thinking of God as a King can make them even more frightening. It is interesting that in this prayer, a text that specifically addresses God's sovereignty, Richards approaches the High Holiday *nusach* with gentleness. In his setting of *Hamelech* for the High Holidays, Steven Richards utilizes modern harmonies, High Holiday *nuschaot,* and *Mi-Sinai* tunes to create a powerful commentary on the nature of kingship, especially as it applies to our theology today.

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[36] Steven Richards, "*Hamelech*," unpublished manuscript.
[37] Lawrence A. Hoffman, *The Art of Public Prayer: Not for Clergy Only*, 2nd ed. (Woodstock: SkyLight Paths Publishing, 1999), 138.

The piece is set for cantor, choir, and keyboard. The tempo is moderate, the mood, soft. Each voice enters sequentially beginning with the keyboard, followed by choir and finally the cantor; the music enters first, unencumbered by words or voice, then voice without text, and finally the liturgy itself. The first chord begins *pianissimo* and is a dissonant sounding F-diminished chord that resolves immediately to A-minor. The entire introduction is, in fact, filled with dissonance and resolution. The dissonances are in open position; there is a lot of space between the notes, and therefore they don't seem harsh, but rather, give a sense of emotional pull. The ear waits for resolution, which is given quickly but then immediately followed with another pattern of dissonance and resolution. Right away in the first measure, Richards creates a physical yearning for release that somehow brings out the emotions of the listener.

To the congregant who does not know what to expect after the introduction, hearing the entry of the choir on "oo," singing the motives of the *Kol Nidre*, is intensely satisfying. Richards supplies two measures of insecurity and dissonance followed by one of the most familiar Jewish melodies in existence. It is part of the *nusach* to place the *Kol Nidre* tune here, but the way that Richards approaches it harmonically is innovative. In the beginning measures of the piece, we already have our first taste of Richards' musical *midrash*. God is the great unknown. The high holidays inspire confusion, doubt, and emotional dissonance. This prayer addresses difficult questions: What is God? What is kingship? Richards starts to respond to the issues of the text by musically illustrating that God, despite being a "King," is familiar and gentle.

The first word of this text, "*Hamelech,*" (the king), does not come until the eighth measure. Even then, it is not sung in the manner that one would expect for illustrating royalty. As is the tradition, the word outlines a gentle minor third, as opposed to the fifth that is frequently invoked in such moments. In addition, the minor third is in the middle of the vocal range rather than the higher part of the voice, inspiring majesty, or the lower part, inspiring fear.

After the text "*hamelech hayosheiv,*" (the king who sits), the choir sings "oo" on themes of *Kol Nidre*. The rest of the sentence, "*Al kisei ram v'nisah*" (on a throne high and exulted) comes only after the choir has sung their calming, yet emotionally laden melody. This is not a king we need to fear, but to love. The choir sings the "*al kisei rom*" text in a majestic fashion, as would be expected, with *tenuti* and a leap of a fourth. Yet the accompanying chord is the flat-two rather than a dominant, serving to temper the quality of the high and mighty feeling inspired by the melody. Because flat-two is a semi-tone above the tonic, it has a strong tendency towards resolving downward, either to the leading tone of the dominant or to the tonic itself. In this case, however, it passes through the tonic to something similar to a dominant, and it leads instead to a modulation to D major. This moves the listener to feel a sense of expectation and desperation for resolution. Thus, the modulation is intensely satisfying, and brings us to the text "*shochein ad,*" (He who dwells in eternity, exalted and holy is His name). Richards gives us the majestic quality of "*al kisei ram,*" yet uses it to lead us musically and lovingly into the text about God's holiness. This appears in the major key to brighten the mood and provide a breath of fresh air, something new and special.

As Richards moves into the *Shochein Ad* section of the prayer, he utilizes mostly *nusach*, but the rhythm and harmony does not communicate a sense of majesty as much as of gentleness. The concept of a loving God is artfully conveyed through Richards' use of semi-tones and tendency notes. For example, in the middle section (measures 17-27) the melody is purely *nusach*, but the choir sings it in thirds. It is accompanied with some beautifully dissonant chords: part of the modern western musical style, whereas he could have accompanied this instead with clear-cut chords and strong fourths and fifths in the harmonies. The dissonance and resolution combined with the gentle thirds in the harmony make this music pleasant to listen to, relaxing and calming in a way that most High Holiday music is not. It does not leave the listener quaking with fear of the sovereign God who will pass judgement during the holiday, but of kindness, gentleness and reassurance. I believe that Richards might be saying that if God is assessing us, we would surely pass the test because God loves us as a parent or a friend does.

The final chord of the piece is a simple open fifth, which leaves us open to the future. It is an undefined chord; it has no third to communicate its tonality and it exists almost outside of any key. The final note is the leading tone to "A" – the original key of the piece and also the key Richards uses for the *Kol Nidre nusach*. In addition, the fifth below it in the accompaniment is the leading tone to the key of "D" – the tonality in which Richards used most of his western harmonizations. Richards' understanding of theology as expressed in this piece is open ended and somewhat undefined, ever open to new possibilities of understanding. His ending chord, were the piece to continue, could lead us almost anywhere. American Jewish theology is

an unanswered question: itself a chord with an open fifth. We know where it is. We do not know where it will take us.

*Nusach* is a language through which we experience our Jewish, spiritual world. The texts are mostly the same from service to service, but the *nusach* tells us where we are and in some ways who we are. It tells us what to think and feel, and when to sense stability or the lack of it, as we experience our prayers. This is the principal element that gives Jewish music its unique power to communicate feeling. The cultures that have shaped us as a people and the lands in which we have been both enslaved and liberated have influenced our music. Still, it has its own unique character. It reflects the best of every land of our dispersion and the greatest aspects of our culture.

## CHAPTER 3: VARIATIONS OF MEANING IN THE *AHAVAT OLAM* PRAYER

Because music is a language with which composers can create *midrashim* for prayers, it is reasonable to assume that one prayer, set in a variety of different ways, will have various interpretations. In this chapter, I will illustrate how four composers – Adolph Katchko, Max Helfman, Frederick Piket, and Aminadav Aloni – use a selection of musical tools to communicate their own personal *midrashim* on the prayer, *Ahavat Olam*. Each composer comes from a different musical, theological, and social culture. This influences how each understands this prayer and thus enables him to create his own unique *midrash*. The ways in which composers set the text reveal not only how they understand it, but also what they think is most important in it. Exploring the music can help to illuminate the theology and worldview of the composer. It is not enough of course, to use the setting of one song to make such broad determinations, but it is certainly possible to claim that at least in the moment of writing this music, the composer might have felt a certain way about his theology.

The following is the translation of *Ahavat Olam*:

- With an everlasting love, You loved the House of Israel, Your people.
- Torah and commandments, statutes and laws, You taught us.
- Therefore, יי, our God, when we lie down and when we rise, we will discuss Your statutes, and rejoice in the words of Your Torah and in Your commandments forever.
- For they are our life and they lengthen our days, and on them we will meditate day and night.

- [May] Your love never be removed from us Blessed are You, יי, Who loves His people Israel.[1]

In the above translation, I have divided the text in the way that seems to me to be the most straightforward. I separated the lines into sentence groupings, which also happens to be the way in which most strophic melodies for this text split the verses.[2] We will see however, that Katchko, Helfman, Piket, and Aloni do not necessarily see the text break down in this manner.

Adolph Katchko was born in 1886 in Warta, a small town in Poland. Much of his family died in the Holocaust. Katchko began his musical learning early in his life by singing in synagogue choirs. He was well educated in Talmud and was proud of his Jewish learning. At the age of eighteen, Katchko traveled to Berlin to continue his musical education. He studied voice and composition, and in the course of his study, he became an accomplished interpreter of Schubert melodies. He began singing as a cantor in Warsaw when he was twenty-three years old. He moved to the United States in 1921 and served as cantor in various synagogues in New York. He taught *nusach* to many future cantors before the establishment of cantorial schools. One of his best known accomplishments was the publication of the three volume *Thesaurus of Cantorial Liturgy*, published by the Sacred Music Press in 1952.[3]

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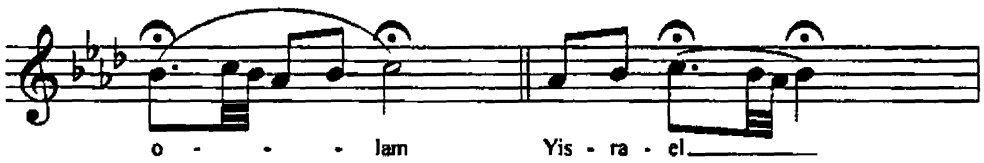
[1] Rabbi Avrohom Davis, ed., trans. *The Complete Metsudah Siddur*, 312-13.
[2] For examples, see Moshe Nathanson, ed., *Zamru Lo*, 57-63.
[3] Shoshana Lash, "The Life and Music of Cantor Adolph Katchko" (MSM diss., Hebrew Union College, 1996), 1-10.




The word *amcha* (Your people) ends on the tonic F with a half note. Ending on the tonic and with an extended note implies a conclusion and therefore makes the phrase feel finished. When he then adds the word, *ahavtah* (You loved), it stands out because the ear is ready to hear something new. It therefore serves to highlight that important notion of love, which is already emphasized by the mere fact that the phrase both begins and ends on the word love.

The second period begins with *Torah umitzvot* (Torah and commandments) and ends with *limad'ta* (You taught us). Katchko modulates briefly to a major III. This is a typical modulation for *Magein Avot*.[7] The period contains two parallel phrases -- *Torah* through *mishpatim* (laws), and *otanu* (us) through *limad'ta* (You taught us). In the first phrase, Katchko employs ascending motion. Each word proceeds ever higher in the voice. The second phrase then uses descending motion which takes place almost entirely on the word *limad'ta*. The ascending motion in the first phrase builds up the tension and the descending response releases it, but Katchko uses this technique for more than just musical tension and release. With each item: *Torah, mitzvot, chukim*, and *mishpatim*, the music, and the sense of holiness rises, but in order for us to arrive at *otanu limad'ta* – God teaching us, God must bring it down to our level.

[7] One of the most popular congregational melodies for *Ahavat Olam* written by Eric Mandell, for example, has this modulation on the text *Al Kein Adonai Eloheinu* (Therefore Eternal our God). [Nathanson, *Zamru Lo*, 59.]

this section of the Friday evening service. Right away in the first phrase, even in the first word, Katchko begins to write his musical *midrash.*

There are several interesting things that I would like to discuss from the first period of the first section (*Ahavat Olam – Ahavtah*).[6] The opening leap of a fifth, the similarities of decorations on *olam* (eternal) and *Yisrael* (Israel), and the endings of the words *amcha* (Your people) and *ahavtah* (You loved).

Firstly, Katchko begins the piece with a leap of a fifth, on which he writes the word, *dolce* (sweetly). The fifth leap is a common way of indicating a call. The call of the *shofar*, for instance has a leap of a fifth. Generally a call is not communicated "sweetly." Musically, there are many other ways that he could have commenced the piece that would have been easier to communicate *dolce.* For instance, he could have used a smaller leap or even ascended or descended by step-wise motion. His choice is no accident, however. Katchko is trying to get our attention. He has a message to communicate, but the subject is God's love and therefore, he wishes to communicate it sweetly.

Katchko uses the technique of word-painting for the word, *olam* (eternal), both by putting a decoration on it and by adding two *fermatas.* These techniques lengthen the amount of time that it takes to sing the word. Katchko puts a very similar decoration, though not quite as long on the word *Yisrael*, perhaps signifying that Israel has an eternal nature to it:

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[6] A period is a series of phrases that are related by harmonic organization or tonal structure. [Douglas M. Green, *Form in Tonal Music*, 2nd ed. (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1979), 55.]

Adolph Katchko's setting of *Ahavat Olam*[4] would most likely be sung in a Friday evening prayer service in a traditional Conservative or Orthodox synagogue (CD track 13).[5] The music is set for solo cantor and in a traditional venue would not have been accompanied because the playing of musical instruments is forbidden on the Sabbath. The liturgy is set in a traditional cantorial recitative style. This means that not only is there a lack of accompaniment, but there is tremendous freedom built into the composition. There are no barlines, many fermatas, grace notes, and runs - each implying some rhythmic freedom. There is a certain style of singing that would accompany this text as well. One of the marks of a trained cantor is his or her ability to chant a recitative such as this one in a stylistically correct manner, so as to be liberal with rhythm and to take liberties with the notes and the timing.

The music is set in a high tessitura. This fact, combined with the fast runs and *fermatas*, gives the listener a sense of a soaring beauty. Time stands still in this piece because of its unmeasured-ness. It is truly an excellent composition for the Sabbath evening, when time becomes sacred. Katchko uses these techniques to give the piece a certain mood, but his *midrash* on the text goes well beyond them.

Katchko's *Ahavat Olam* can be divided into three sections. Section I begins with *Ahavat Olam* (eternal love) and ends with *otanu limad'ta* (You taught us). Section II extends from *Al kein* (therefore) through *l'olam vaed* (forever and ever). Section III concludes the piece from *Ki Heim Chayeinu* (for they are our life) until the end of the *chatimah* (the conclusion of the prayer). The piece is in *Magein Avot*, as is typical for

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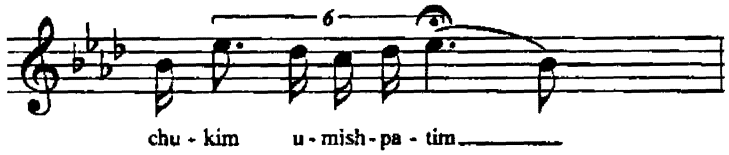
[4] Cantor Adolph Katchko, *A Thesaurus of Cantorial Liturgy: Volume Two for Sabbath and Festivals* (New York: Sacred Music Press, 1986), 13-14.

[5] This does not preclude its performance in other locations, but this is the most likely venue for a piece of this nature.

The little motif that Katchko uses for the text *chukim umishpatim* (laws and statutes) is a typical move in *chazzanut*:




This is an example of word painting because to use a move like this is rather like *chukim umishpatim* (laws and statutes) of *chazzanut*. It is such a standard move that it is almost a rule to include it. The text of this section is repeated in the next period as well, emphasizing that the concepts of law were an important part of the prayer for Katchko. God expresses love for the people Israel through the law and the tradition. Katchko repeats the words and uses the moment to once again plant us firmly in F-*Magein Avot*.

The second section of the piece begins with *Al Kein* (therefore). The text *Al Kein* is ornamented and then repeated exactly except for an additional ornament at the end of the word. *Al Kein* also plants us in B-flat minor, and we will stay there for several lines. The music for *Al Kein* through *b'chukecha* (with Your laws) is a decoration on a B-flat minor harmony. The ornamentation of the *Al kein* implies to me that Katchko is really certain or needs to try to convey certainty about this text. In addition, the B-flat minor harmony, which is so firmly established, creates a feeling of grounding, surety. There is no change here. The harmony feels solid; even in the varying notes it feels planted. Harmonic changes are rare in this section, and when they do occur, they are predictable. For three entire lines here the harmony remains grounded in B-flat minor, the notes embellishing that chord. The message might be that though the winds have scattered our people throughout the world, we still remain planted through God's laws. I believe that

God's laws are the important factor that connects God and humanity for Katchko. In fact, Katchko repeats the words *nasiach b'chukecha* (we will discuss Your statutes) twice, in sequence, highlighting their importance.

The third section, beginning with *Ki Heim Chayeinu* (for they are our life) is set to a sweet melody in B-flat *Magein Avot*. He marks this section *Lento* (slow). Like his marking of *dolce* in the beginning of the piece, this may seem counter-intuitive. Many composers have set this text to a dance-like melody (Davidson, Helfman, and others). In addition, because this part of the melody seems so tuneful and because there is a repeat sign, it is easy to imagine singing it in a more congregational style. Instead, Katchko asks the singer to slow the tempo even more. He uses tempo, melody and repetition to highlight these words. He doesn't feel the need to force this on us or convince us. The text -- these are the life and the length of our days- and sing-able music will turn our hearts without forceful sounds. We end in B-flat, higher than where we began. It is unusual for a piece of this style to end in a different key from where it started. Musically, emotionally and spiritually, we are uplifted.

Katchko's setting of this prayer emphasizes the importance of Torah and laws. God gave these to us as an expression of *Ahavat Olam* (eternal love), and this is precisely what Katchko chooses to emphasize in his arrangement of the text. He uses the tools of traditional *chazzanut* to create his *midrash* on this prayer. The unaccompanied recitative style, the rhythmic freedom, the key changes, repetitions, and *fermatas* all help him to make his point. He uses his music to show us that Torah and laws are central to him. One can surmise that Katchko believes them to be as our path to divine love. Torah and law are the center, and through them, we reach towards God. The other composers will have a different take on the matter.

Max Helfman, the son of a cantor, was born in Radzin, Poland in 1901. He moved to the United States with his family when he was only eight years old. Helfman received an extensive musical education, studying at Mannes College of Music in Manhattan and the Curtis Institute of Music in Philadelphia. He studied and excelled in composition, conducting, and piano. He was involved in the conducting of both amateur and professional choirs in New York and New Jersey. These positions provided him with much of his early recognition. His jobs as synagogue music director and organist led him to compose Jewish music. After the 1941 publication of *Shabbat Kodesh*, his writing was in demand. Helfman's music was highly influential not just for its beauty, but for its innate spirituality. "Both musically and spiritually, he 'won souls;' he changed lives. He directed the career of many students into the Jewish field, students who otherwise might have severed contact with their heritage."[8] Helfman was also very involved as a teacher. He taught at the Brandeis Camp Institute, the Hebrew Union College, and the University of Judaism.[9]

Helfman writes his Ahavat Olam[10] for a different environment than Katchko does (CD track 14). Because there is accompaniment, we can assume that he intends the piece to be performed either in a Reform synagogue or in a concert setting. Helfman had a different life experience from Katchko, and it therefore makes sense that he would have a different idea of what the prayer means to him. Whereas Katchko seems to have emphasized *Torah* and *mitzvot*, I will show that Helfman saw the prayer differently.

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[8] Susan Berkson, "Max Helfman: A Study of His Music" (MSM diss., Hebrew Union College, 1989), 7.
[9] Ibid., 1-8.
[10] Max Helfman, *Ahavat Olam*, Jack Gottlieb, ed. (New York: Transcontinental Music Publications, 1975), TCL-678-10 currently out of print.

Helfman scores his *Ahavat Olam* for cantor, choir, and organ. It is in the key of F-minor. The music is clearly divided into seven sections, separated one from the other by double bar-lines. The first section is scored for cantor, tenor, bass and organ. This means that the music begins in a low register. Helfman could have chosen to give this music to other voice parts, but he wants to make a point with his orchestration. He means to say perhaps that the piece is bas[s]ed here, in this text.

All three vocal lines sing the text of this section, but the roles are not equivalent. The cantor is the primary voice and the tenor and bass mainly serve to accompany the more ornate cantorial line. The tenor and bass do not repeat any text, but the word, "*Ahavtah*" (You loved) is extended. The cantor repeats the word "*amcha*" (Your people) and has an ornate decoration on the word "*ahavtah.*" Thus the words or concepts that Helfman emphasizes in this first section of the piece are *amcha* and *ahavtah.*

The second section is in measures 12-24. The texture becomes simpler as it condenses to only cantor and organ. The accompaniment in this section is much sparser, and in fact much of it is simply chordal. This allows the cantor space to take a little liberty and in those measures where the accompaniment allows it, the style of singing is also reminiscent of cantorial recitative. The section begins with this freedom.

The first three measures contain a repetition and decorations on the word Torah. Torah is repeated five times. This word painting represents the five books themselves through the expansion, repetition, and decoration on the word. The harmony remains almost the same for the entire repetition: essentially an expansion and decoration of an f-minor chord. The piano accompaniment becomes tighter for the words "*umitzvot*" (and commandments) and "*chukim*" (laws), but there is freedom again for the word

"*umishpatim*" (statutes), which is extended in length and stands alone in a singular 4/4 measure.

The freedom in accompaniment with the cantorial style chant continues for the rest of the section. The second phrase contains only two words, *otanu* (us) and *limad'ta* (You taught). The word "*otanu*" (us) is repeated four times over five measures and is highly decorated. One possible interpretation is that he is attempting to fit us "*otanu*" over "Torah" (represented by the five measures), to superimpose one upon the other. In addition, the repetition and variation of the word *otanu* both highlights and paints the word. Each repetition differs from the one that preceded it, just as each generation is unlike the one that came before. Helfman is very focused on "us" in his setting of this prayer. Part of his struggle is in understanding how that "us" fits in to the concepts of Torah and tradition. He spends a lot of music on words relating to us and not so much on God. The repeated words in this section are *Torah* and *Otanu.* The only non-ornamented word is *limad'ta* (you taught us). The teaching, and the fact that it is God who did it, is less important than the concepts themselves and how they relate to us in the world today.

In the third section of the piece, the choir reenters the picture. The entrance of the choir creates a different feeling, a new level of richness to accompany a text that we have already heard in the second section. He is repeating the text, but he is saying something new with it. Just as in Section II, Helfman again repeats the words *otanu* and *limad'ta.* He is reinterating the importance of "us" and of our lives in his vision of the prayer's meaning.

Because there are seven sections in Helfman's *Ahavat Olam,* the fourth section (measures 39-48) is central; three sections precede it and three follow it. The text is: "We

will discuss Your statutes and we will rejoice in the words of Your Torah forever." The text is about how we will process God's laws and our feelings regarding the Torah. It is not about God, but about us. Helfman highlights this part by putting it in the center, and then even more by making the phrasing symmetrical within this nuclear section. There is one hyper-phrase – large phrase unit – that can be divided into three-phrases. The second of the three phrases would then be the center of the center of the piece. Clearly this will mark an important moment in the setting.

The first of the three phrases is a four-measure phrase (measures 39-42). Helfman marks this section *l'istesso tempo* and lightly. The mood changes to one that is quite joyful. The choir sings and leads us through a temporary modulation V/III-III, reestablishes the key, and progresses to IV. The sopranos have the melody, while the other parts serve as accompaniment, but not a passive one. Helfman uses sequences; he moves motives around the scale and the different voice parts like a basketball, reinforcing the themes and creating a strong sensation of movement. It also shows that each voice agrees and is a part of the whole, the "us." The motion is generally descending.

The second phrase in the section is a two-measure phrase (measures 43-44). The main event is the repetition of the word *V'nismach* (and we will rejoice) in sequential fashion. This is the *center* of the piece and is probably one of the more important concepts that Helfman is trying to emphasize. Again, for him, this is about "us."

One could argue that this two measure unit does not merit being labeled separately. The large leaps and changes in direction make it distinct and therefore it does stand out. In addition, this moment is sandwiched between two four-measure phrases, a symmetrical ideal and common musical tool.

The third phrase closes the section. This phrase has four measures (measures 45-48). The texture changes here. The text passes from voice to voice with the words "*l'olam vaed*" ("forever and ever"). It brings to mind the concept of passing on tradition from generation to generation. It is a descriptive setting of these words. "*L'olam*" is passed from voice to voice, but all the voices arrive at *vaed* together. The melody concludes on scale degree two and the section ends on V, but not just a regular V. The chord is missing the third, the very note that defines the chord and gives it its tonality! The chord is left in its most simple form (an open fifth), but at the same time it is an empty sound. Both the fact that the melody ends on the second scale degree, and that the harmony is a dominant with no third leaves the music with an open-ended feel to it. Maybe Helfman does not feel certain about the fact that these are our life and the length of our days forever and ever.

Sections V, VI, and VII all use the same text. Section IV makes the phrase, "We will discuss your statutes and rejoice in the words of Your Torah and in Your commandments forever" in to a question by having an open-ended sounding conclusion. Sections V, VI, and VII all give the same textual answer to that question: "For they are our life and the length of our days." Nevertheless, the three sections give that text three distinct meanings. Perhaps Helfman is defining his own theological questions, or maybe he has written different possibilities into the music to accommodate differing interpretations of religious feeling.

Section V interprets the text in the manner of a Hasidic dance. The cantor sings the solo line accompanied by the choir. The choir's role is almost like a percussion instrument, using the words to create a rhythmic underpinning to the cantor's melody. It is therefore of little importance that they leave out some of the words. The melody is

fast, has many grace notes and some runs. It is truly dance-like. The text in this section is joyful, the study is delighted, and the love between God and Israel is an expression of that happiness.

Section VI (measures 60-78) sets the same text in the form of a fugue. The fugue begins with the bass, then tenor, followed by soprano and alto entering together. The words "*V'orech Yameinu*" (and for the length of our days) repeat again and again, but we do not arrive at "*Uvahem negeh yomam valaila.*" (and on them we will meditate day and night) until later. The fugue, because it perpetuates and repeats musical patterns, expresses the words by painting them. Our days often are fugue like: moving ever forward, fluctuating and varying, chasing after dreams.

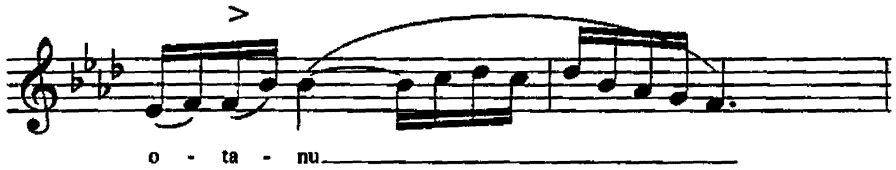
When we arrive at section VII in measure 79, ("and on them we will meditate day and night") we see that it is necessary to slow down from the rhythm that we followed in the previous section (" the length of our days"). It is difficult, if not impossible, to meditate on actions and on life without taking a moment to step outside of the rhythm and fugue of life, and slow down the pace. Therefore, as section VII completes the text, both the harmonic rhythm and the tempo slow considerably. It is a drastic change in comparison to what preceded it. The music almost seems to be going to sleep at *va-laila* (night) as the rhythm slows more and more, and we arrive at the tonic.

The music has an unusual conclusion. We arrive at the tonic note and chord and would expect that the piece should then conclude in that tonality. However, Helfman ends the piece by adding a dominant chord in the accompaniment as the tonic note still sounds in the top voice. The music leaves the listener hanging. Although the tonic note provides a feeling of some resolution, the dominant harmony leaves a question unanswered. Helfman does not resolve this text for you. It is up to us to define our

relationship with God and Torah. Helfman gives us three possible ways to look at this final section of the *Ahavat Olam*, but they are only possibilities, not definitive answers.

Helfman sets his piece in a way that would be best for a concert situation. I feel that it would draw attention away from the progress of the service too much to be fitting in the prayer milieu. Although a really good synagogue choir, could tackle it, the music is rather complex. On the other hand, as a concert piece, it could be a real showstopper. The variety of musical moods and styles will keep the listener excited and for one who chooses to hear it, the piece has a lot of lessons to teach.

The musical language is that of Western music, although the occasional cantorial motif does sneak its way into the music. For example in measures 21-22:




Helfman, through the techniques of imitation and repetition, highlights words mainly having to do with "us." He looks at this text and sees God's love through the lens of the happiness that the people experience. The relationship lies with the people. With only this music to go on, one might conclude that Helfman looks at God through the lens of Israel's experience -- through questioning, joy, study, even doubt.

Frederick Piket was born in 1903 in Istanbul, Turkey. He began to study violin at the age of five. In 1924, Piket studied music at Vienna State's Academy of Music where, in addition to violin, he studied piano and music theory. In order to fulfill the wishes of his parents, Piket also studied medicine. He did not enjoy the field at all and eventually

decided to devote his life to his musical interests in the hope of becoming a conductor. He was successful, conducting in Austria, Switzerland, and Germany. Piket also enjoyed composition and his talents were soon discovered. Hitler's rise to power forced Piket to move to Barcelona, Spain. In 1940, Piket moved to the United States. In the early 1950's, Piket worked as an organist at the Jewish Community Center in White Plains, and later as Musical Director for the Free Synagogue in Flushing, New York. Piket had a strong Jewish identity, and wrestled with his ideas about Judaism and God. Much of his struggle comes through in his music. Although he was well studied in *nusach*, he did not like feeling confined by it. His music is strongly influenced by twentieth century harmony. In addition, it was very important to him to communicate a message with his music, and not just a pretty melody.[11]

Like Helfman, Piket also uses the techniques of twentieth century harmony in his composition, Piket's harmonies, however, are much more dissonant (CD track 15).[12] He disliked being locked into *nusach* because he didn't like being restricted to strict musical formulas.[13] At first, Piket's music can be difficult to listen to because it is not terribly melodic. The dissonant, atonal harmonies are crucial to his music, however. Piket wrote for a sophisticated listener. He did not believe in the use of "little melodies and childish harmonizations" in the expression of prayer. He said: "the words of our liturgy are too great, too important, too powerful to be left forever to the interpretations of those small

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[11] Jennifer G. Blum, "'Allergic to *Nusach*': The Life and Sacred Works of Frederick Piket" (MSM diss., Hebrew Union College, 1998), 1-9.
[12] Frederick Piket, *Ahavat Olam* (New York: Transcontinental Music Publications, 1993).
[13] Jennifer G. Blum, "Allergic to Nusach," 1.

musical amateurs."[14] Text was terribly important to him, as was communicating meaning to the congregation.[15]

Piket creates his *midrash* and incorporates it into his music particularly through the use of the interplay between the solo cantor line and the accompanying organ. He chooses not to use any part of the traditional Jewish musical language to communicate his *midrash* on this prayer. This is a statement in itself. His expression of the love of God for the people Israel will not take place within the context of conventional Jewish musical sounds, but rather within the musical context of twentieth century composition.

The music is written for solo cantor and organ. The key is G-minor; he actually set the piece in two keys, but I will use the G-minor for this paper. The harmonies are complex. The mood of the beginning of the piece is calm and the tempo slow. The organ begins with a simple repeating pattern that plays on the off-beat in a way that the listener will likely find unsettling. It is difficult to feel the regular beat that underlies this syncopated writing. Superimposed above this, the cantor begins the melody, a simple line of unencumbered rhythms. To the listener, the rhythm may sound free, like *chazzanut*, but in reality, the rhythm is very clear, and the singer must be careful not to stray from the beat. The music and words that the cantor sings here should be kept in mind; they will reappear later as accompaniment to a different text.

Beginning with measure 10, Piket introduces another tune that will appear later in the accompaniment. The music for "*Torah Umitzvot*" (Torah and commandments) is nearly identical to that for "*chukim umishpatim*" (laws and statutes). This illustrates musically that the text is basically a poetic repetition. Piket then uses a picardy third,

[14] Ibid., 15.
[15] Ibid., 13.

which serves as an example of word painting, adding a sense of musical "enlightenment" to end the word, "*limad'ta*" (you taught us).

The text that begins with measure 18 is the "*Al Kein*" text. The feel of the piece is different here. The tempo changes as does the rhythmic pace of the text. The accompaniment is a simple descending line from scale degree 7 down to 1, and this continues in one form or another throughout the piece. It makes sense that there should be a descending line here because it illustrates that this text is the basis of our faith. The *Shema*, the most basic tenet of Judaism, tells us that we should discuss God's laws. The tradition of learning and discussion has come down to us from our ancestors. Therefore, the descending line grounds this text. The melody, however, tells a different story. The rhythmic meter of the text speeds up. This causes the listener to pay attention, to be aware that something is happening here. We are indeed surprised when we hear the F-sharp resolving to G on *b'chukecha* (with Your statutes)– a C-diminished chord, resolving uncomfortably into an increased dissonance of D-flat, F, G. Considering the text here, it seems strange that Piket would want a "discussion" of God's laws to be illustrated with a dissonance.

One reason for the dissonance may be that in our time as well as in Piket's, there is much disagreement about how to follow God's laws in a modern world. This discord in our theology has split the Jewish people practically into separate nations. Another potential interpretation is that it could be Piket's own discomfort with God's laws and statutes. The music leaves you questioning, just as Piket himself and many of those in his generation questioned the role of God in the world.[16] This was the generation that witnessed the horrors of the Holocaust and experienced the upheaval of modernity.

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[16] Ibid., 15.

The sense of confusion and questioning that Piket conveys carries through the next phrase when Piket uses his music as the tool to ask the question, "And we will be happy with the words of Your Torah and Your commandments forever?" That which the liturgist no doubt saw as a statement, Piket challenges by placing a completely dissonant chord (A-flat, C, D, F-sharp) on the word *l'olam* (forever), an unusual way to end a section.

At this point in the music, we have heard doubt and questioning, but now we seek resolution. Piket brings back the vocal melody from the beginning of this prayer (the *Ahavat olam beit* Yisrael text) in the accompaniment for the words "*Ki heim chayeinu*" (for they are our life). The vocal line is sung more or less on a single pitch. Superimposing this text on that accompaniment, Piket connects the concept of God's eternal love for the people Israel with the idea that Torah is our life and the length of our days. It is as if Piket is saying that those two things are, on some level, equivalent. God's love allows us to question Torah, which gives us our life.

The accompaniment continues with the melody that went with the "*Torah umitzvot*" text while in the vocal line we have a new melody for "*uvahem nehgeh*" (and on them we will meditate). We again have a sense of questioning, urgency and confusion, this time accomplished through the use of *fortissimo,* dissonant chords. But the ending gives us a peaceful resolution. In the last few measures, as we hear the *chatimah* (the blessing that ends the prayer), on one low repeated C in the vocal line, the rhythm slows and there is a descending bass in the organ. The piece ends on a C-Major chord in the organ with a *fermata.* The voice also has a *fermata* - on the rest that ends the piece. To me this seems symbolic of the individual's death. Piket might be saying in the words of Hamlet, "The rest is silence." The slowing rhythm illustrates eternality. The

fact that the organ continues to hold the chord even after the voice has stopped, may imply a sense of continuation after death. Something lives on; God's love for the people Israel is eternal. Despite all of our fears, we are grounded in the ending by the blessing, our assurance that God loves the people Israel.

Piket fills his setting of *Ahavat Olam* with theological questions and doubts about the nature of God's love. The music is sparse, but it is dense with meaning. In the entire piece there is only one word repetition and two fermatas. The first fermata is over a breath mark and the second is over a rest! The word repetition is on *Ki heim chayeinu* (for they are our life). Piket's focus is on life and death; it is about theological doubt. With his *Ahavat Olam*, Piket seeks to answer his own serious religious dilemmas. The answer that he provides speaks of his own connection to Judaism. He seems angry with God due to his life-experiences, nevertheless he devotes his life to working in a synagogue and writing Jewish music. He tries to answers his own doubts musically – "These are the life and the length of our days."

Aminadav Aloni was born in Palestine in 1928. His family discovered his musical talents at a young age when, at four or five years old, he returned from the movies and played the theme song on a neighbor's piano. He studied piano from that time forth. In 1945, Aloni came to the United States to study music and piano at Los Angeles City College and at the Julliard School in New York. Aloni earned his living by teaching piano lessons and performing in jazz clubs. In 1966 he began to accompany Cantor Samuel Fordis at the Valley Beth Shalom Synagogue in California. He eventually became the music director there and stayed for thirty years. In 1968, Aloni was diagnosed with Hodgkin's lymphoma, which led him to much self-reflecting and to the

beginning of his career in composing. He wrote mostly secular music and had a passion for musical theater. In 1970, Cantor Fordis commissioned him to write the *Chassidic Service*. He continued to write Jewish music from that point until his death in 1999.[17]

Aminadav Aloni composes his *Ahavat Olam* for the High Holidays (CD track 16).[18] He draws on the High Holiday *nusach* in an unusual way to create his *midrash* on this text. Aloni uses three musical styles in this composition: classical, folk, and *nusach*. Through his combination of musical style, texture, and language, Aloni gives us a musical *midrash* on musical expression itself as he struggles with the question of how a modern American Jewish composer can best express prayer.

The music is written in the key of C-Major. He scores it for choir, cantor and keyboard. The texture changes throughout the music. The piece has seven parts, which is a classic expression of Jewish time. Section I comprises measures 1-12. The music begins with the choir singing in unison. The text goes back and forth between Hebrew and English just as we do in Reform services today, and the melody is a lovely, simple tune that sounds like a Broadway or folk song.[19] The harmonies are simple as is befitting the folk-tune like melody. The accompaniment is mostly chordal and although it is written for keyboard, it would also work nicely with guitar. The folk approach applies only to this section, however, which is completely oriented towards the people. The choir symbolically represents the American Jewish people. With the simple melody and accompaniment, the first section has a definite American folk flavor to it.

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[17] Seth Warner, "The Music of Aminadav Aloni," program for masters recital (New York: Hebrew Union College, 7 March, 2001), 1-2.
[18] Samuel Adler, ed., Yamim Noraim *(Days of Awe): Volume I* Rosh Hashanah (New York: Transcontinental Music Publications, 1990), 61-68.
[19] The setting uses English only for the first verse. It appears as follows: "*Ahavat Olam*, with everlasting love hast Thou loved the house of Israel, *beit Yisrael amcha ahavta: Ahavat Olam.*"

Measure 13 begins section II. We now have a two part texture of cantor and choir. The cantor sings the melody that the choir had introduced in the first section, but the text, although it is the same words, is now entirely in Hebrew. The choir accompanies the cantor by singing the *Mi-Sinai* tune for the evening service of the High Holidays on the syllable "la." Aloni juxtaposes tradition and modernity, using the American sounding melody with the Hebrew text and accompanying them with the traditional *nusach.*

Measure 25 begins the third section. The music shifts from C major to A minor and the texture changes to solo cantor and keyboard. The cantor sings the first section of this prayer, accompanied only by the organ. Here the text discusses Torah and its laws. It is particularly interesting that this is the only part of the setting that makes no use of *nusach* whatsoever. American Jewish composers today often abandon Jewish musical traditions and instead use western compositional styles. People are beginning to reject this as being inauthentic with respect to the liturgical tradition. The style of the music is loftier, more reminiscent of European art music and thus seems removed from the popular musical idiom of the people as well as from the traditional *nusach.* Perhaps Aloni sets the text about Torah and laws to this loftier music because so many people today feel a lack of connection to and knowledge of traditional Jewish study and practice. To some Jews, Torah and laws seem distant.

The fourth section, which begins in measure 34, modulates back to C major and brings back the choir, singing in four parts. The musical texture becomes more complicated, and the style once again juxtaposes two compositional techniques. The melody uses the *nusach* once again for the words "*al kein Adonai Eloheinu*" (therefore Eternal our God), but then switches to a powerful forte and a classical sound on the

words "*b'shochbeinu uvkumeinu nasiach b'chukecha*" (when we lie down and when we rise up, we will discuss your statutes). I believe that Aloni uses *nasiach* (discussion) with himself in this composition to figure out what kind of musical language best expresses the prayer.

The fifth section begins in measure 41. When reading a text apart from the music, there is an expectation that the music will correspond to the words. In this section, however, the text, "we will rejoice in the words of Your Torah," is set in the manner that you would expect for the previous section, "we will discuss Your statutes." The words in the rejoicing section are "discussed" back and forth between the women's voices and the men's voices as if the rejoicing cannot be accomplished without discussion.

In measure 54 we reach the penultimate section and return to the cantor singing the *nusach* on the text "*ki heim chayeinu*" (for they are our life). The accompaniment is the folk-like melody from the beginning but played on the organ. The juxtaposition of old and modern remains the issue, but the balance has not yet been achieved and will not be until the seventh section.

Aloni achieves the balance by combining all the musical flavors. In the seventh section, we hear once again (as we did in the first) about *Ahavah* (love). The choir sings, "*V'ahavat'cha al tasir mimenu*" (Your love will not depart from us) to the folk like melody. The cantor continues in the *nusach* with "*l'olamim*" (forever), lending a sense of eternality to the phrase with the word itself, the use of High Holiday *nusach*, and the repetition of text three times over the course of six measures. The piece ends with the choir singing the Amen to the *Mi-Sinai* tune.

I believe that in this piece, Aloni struggles for musical reconciliation among traditional motives, his classical training, and the desire of American Jews to hear

familiar folk-like melodies. What is the best way for a modern Jewish composer to express text? Aloni tries them all in this setting and the answer that he comes to in the end, after combining the sounds of art music, the idiom of American folk music, and the traditional Jewish melodies, is profound. These musical tools do not need to exist in a vacuum. Because he uses them all, this piece has the unique capacity to touch every Jew. God has given us music, all different kinds of music. Aloni's use of the varieties of God's musical creation, as expressed in the seven sections of this piece, is a most powerful way of expressing God's *Ahavat Olam* for the people and Aloni's *Ahavat Olam* for God and the people; therein lies the *midrash.*

In this chapter, I have looked at four different settings of *Ahavat Olam.* Although the composers use the same text, each comes from a unique perspective, bringing his own particular understanding of what is important and meaningful into the music. Each composer struggles with different questions. I believe that Katchko emphasizes *Torah* and *mitzvot*, while Helfman focuses upon the relationship of God with the people. Piket explores his theological questions, and Aloni explores the nature of Jewish music itself. Every arrangement of a piece expresses the composer's *midrash* on that text. Although each of these settings is sung frequently, if we neglect to ask why a composer set something in a specific way, we may miss his *midrash.* Perhaps, more importantly, we lose the opportunity to pass along the composer's message to our congregations. Whether or not their theologies are in line with our own, we can live through their experiences of the Divine, with our engagement in their inspired song.

# CONCLUSION:

# MUSIC AS *MIDRASH*: THE ROLE OF JEWISH MUSICAL LANGUAGE IN THE CREATION AND COMMUNICATION OF MEANING

*"It is the audible over against the visual*
*that breathes the spirit of life*
*into the dead letters."*[1]

As with any system of language, Jewish music has evolved continually. We began with cantillation and gradually incorporated influences and styles from various cultures and from our own experiences. Jewish musical sounds originally evolved from adopting the melodies and harmonies of the surrounding cultures, and also from our own need to express pain as well as joy, both personal and communal. Because of the difficult lives of the Jewish people, our music is intensely powerful. The various influences that have shaped our melodies throughout our history, have caused our music to be quite complex.

To speak and understand a language, it helps to look at its roots, to understand its idioms, to become immersed in its culture. When music is linked with prayers, we must first understand the text and then explore all of the different influences expressed through musical style. Once we decode all the elements, we begin to see into the mind of the composer.

Just as rabbis have a regular opportunity to enlighten the congregation about textual and religious meaning, cantors and composers have that same chance. In

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[1] Edna Sultan, "On the Significance of Cantillation," 36.

addition, we have the ability not just to speak the meaning, but to make others feel it. In his book, "Music and the Mind," Anthony Storr discusses the singular ability of music to touch us deeply. "Music," he says, "can make us weep or give us intense pleasure. Music, like being in love, can temporarily transform our whole existence."[2] This transformation is a gift that we share with those who hear us sing. To do so is our holy task.

[2] Anthony Storr, "Music and the Mind," 4.

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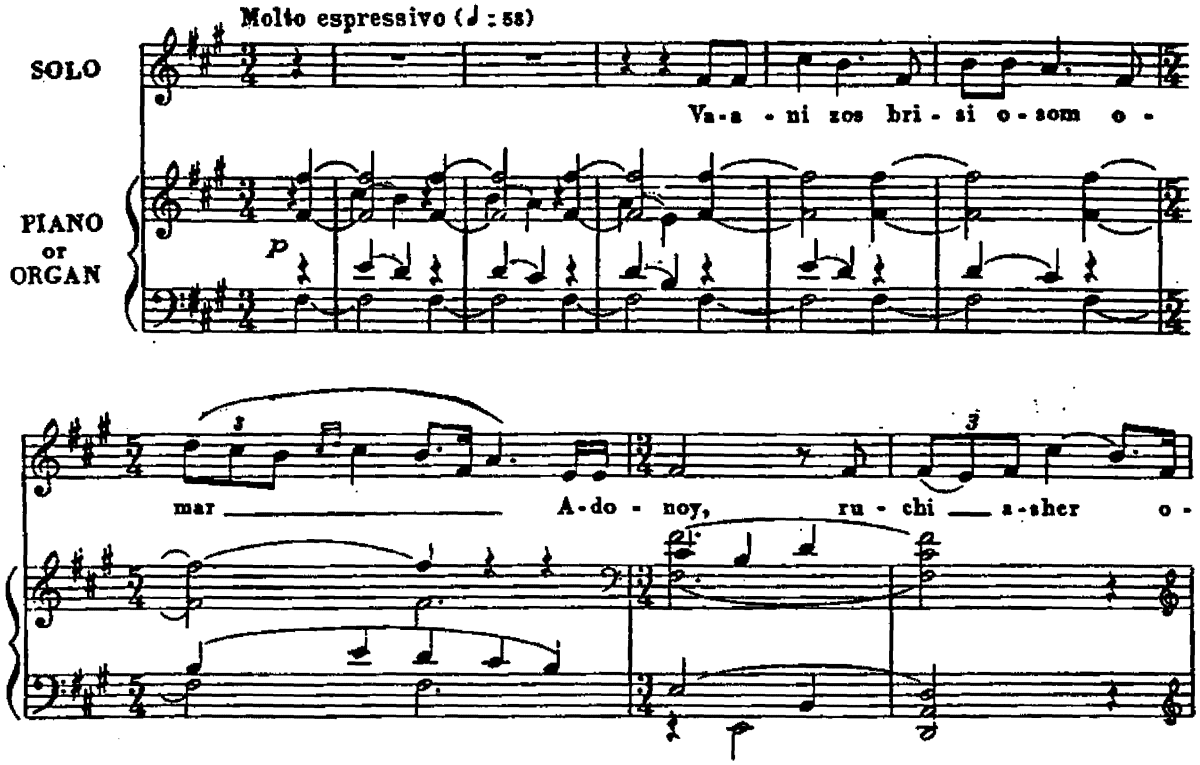
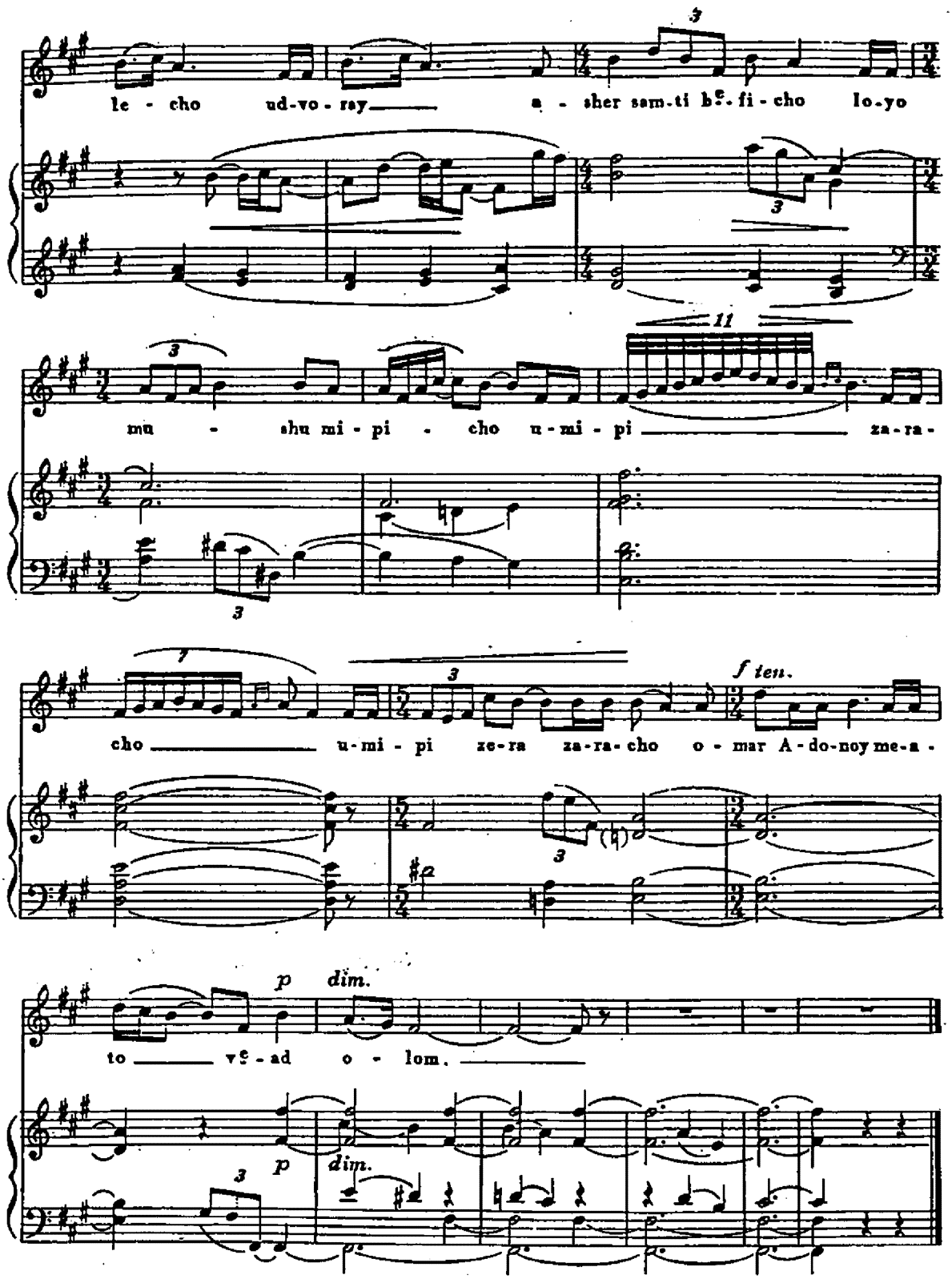
# Vaani Zos

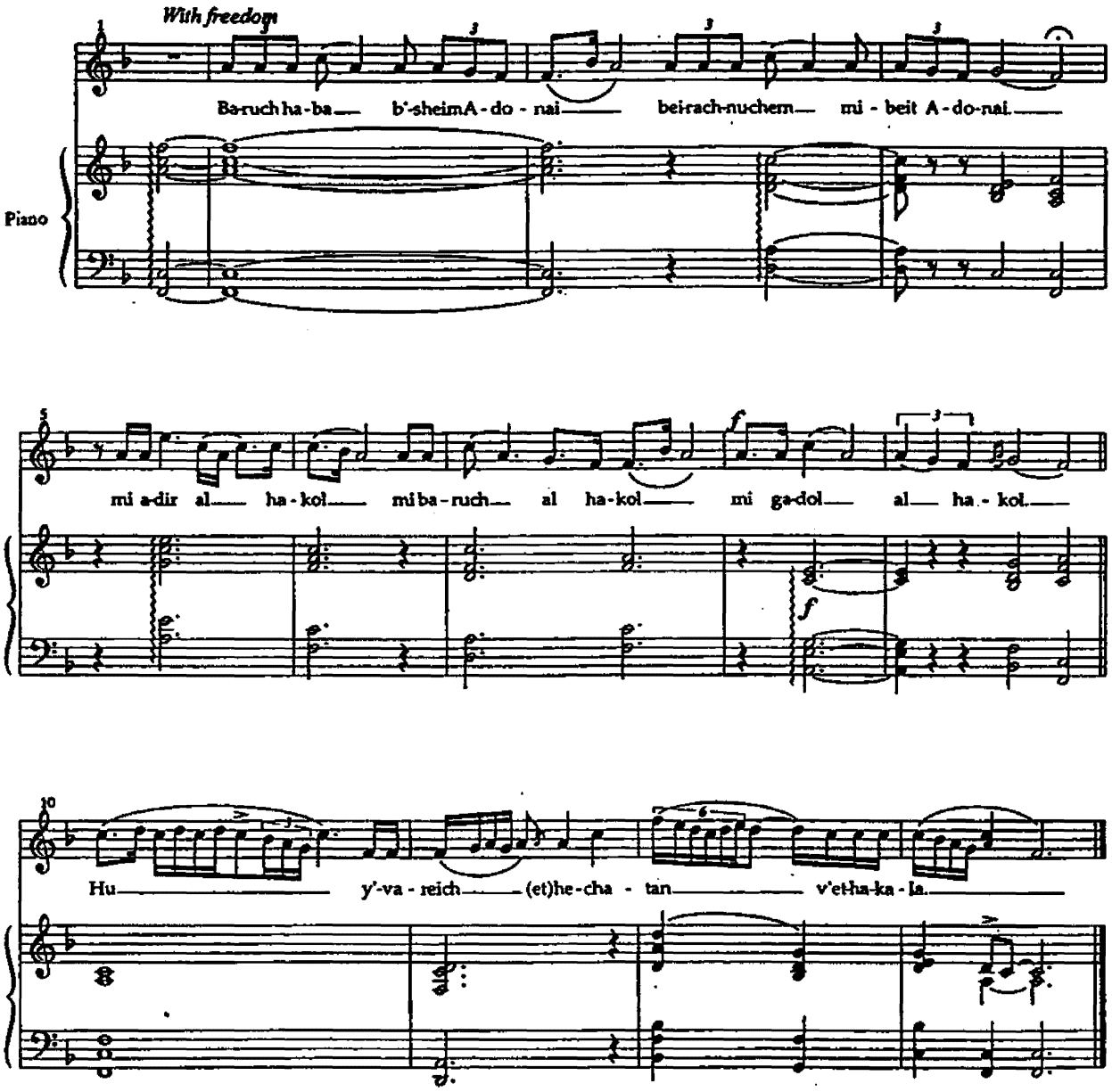

Molto espressivo (♩ : 58)
SOLO
Va-a - ni zos bri - si o - som o -
PIANO or ORGAN
p
mar A-do - noy, ru - chi a-sher o -


le - cho ud-vo - ray a - sher sam-ti b♭-fi - cho lo-yo
mu - shu mi - pi - cho u - mi - pi za-ra -
cho u-mi - pi ze-ra za-ra-cho o - mar A-do-noy me-a -
f ten.
to v♭-ad o - lom.
p dim.
p dim.

# Baruch Habah

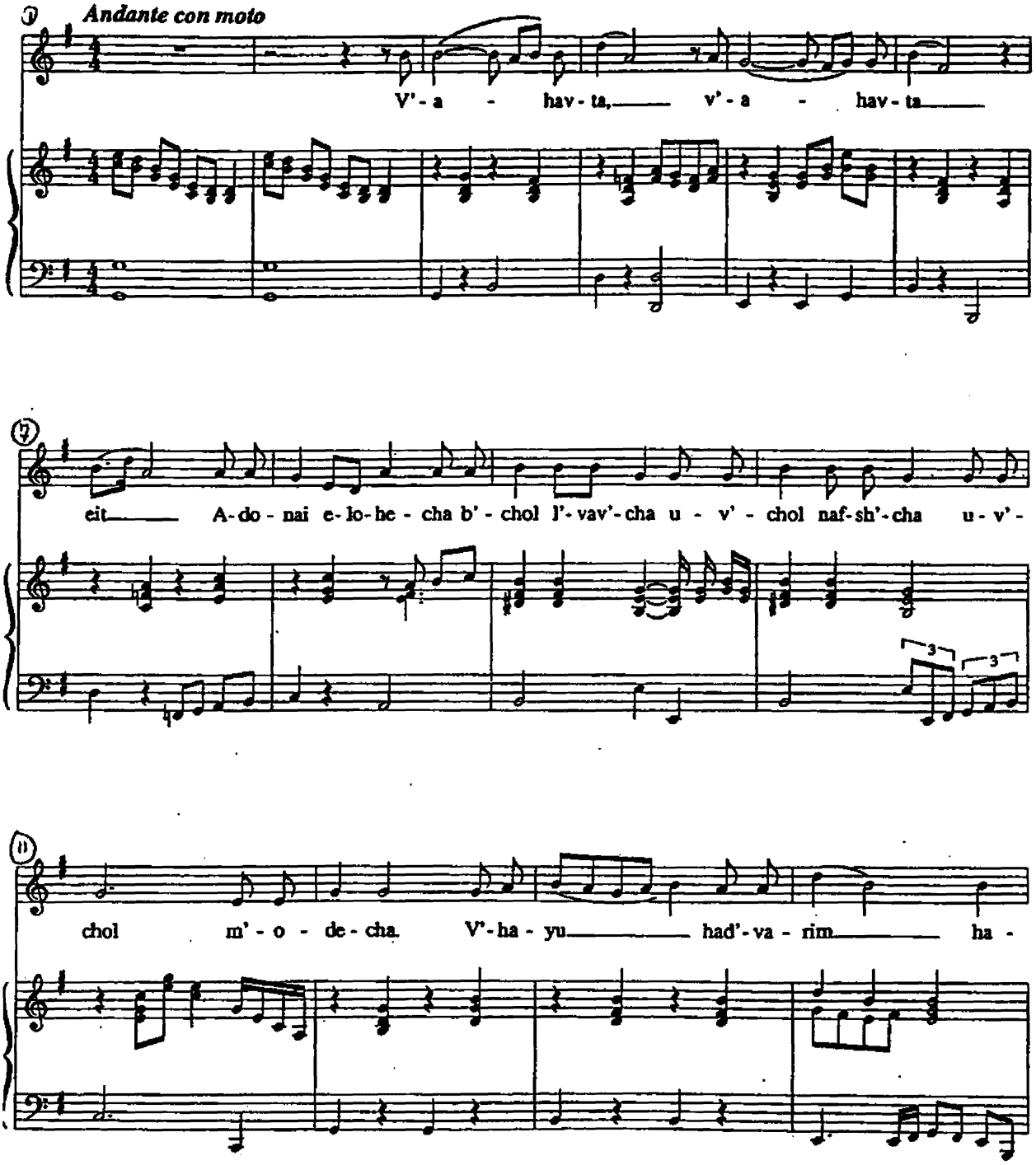
*based on Shir Hashirim cantillation*

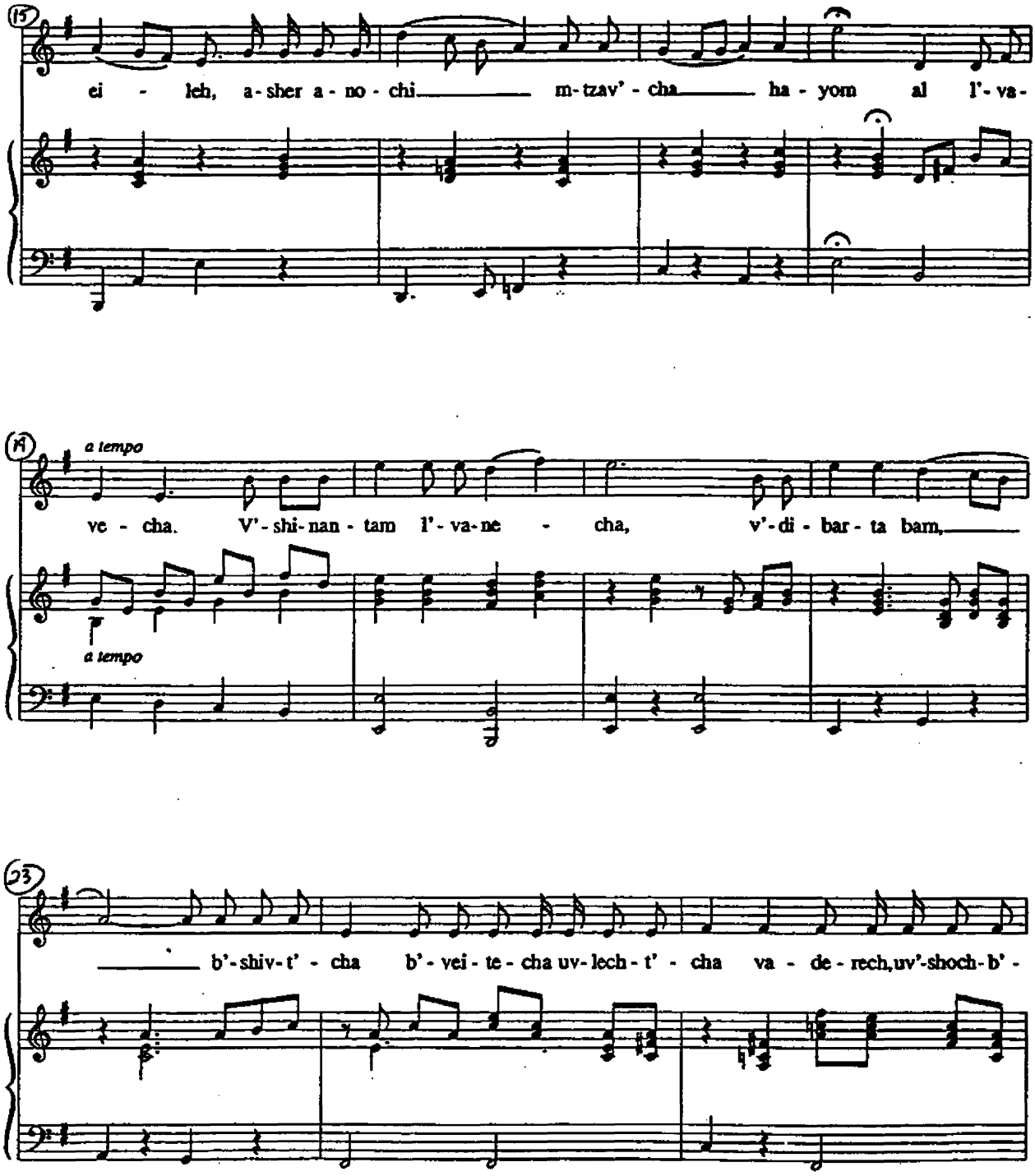
Lawrence Avery

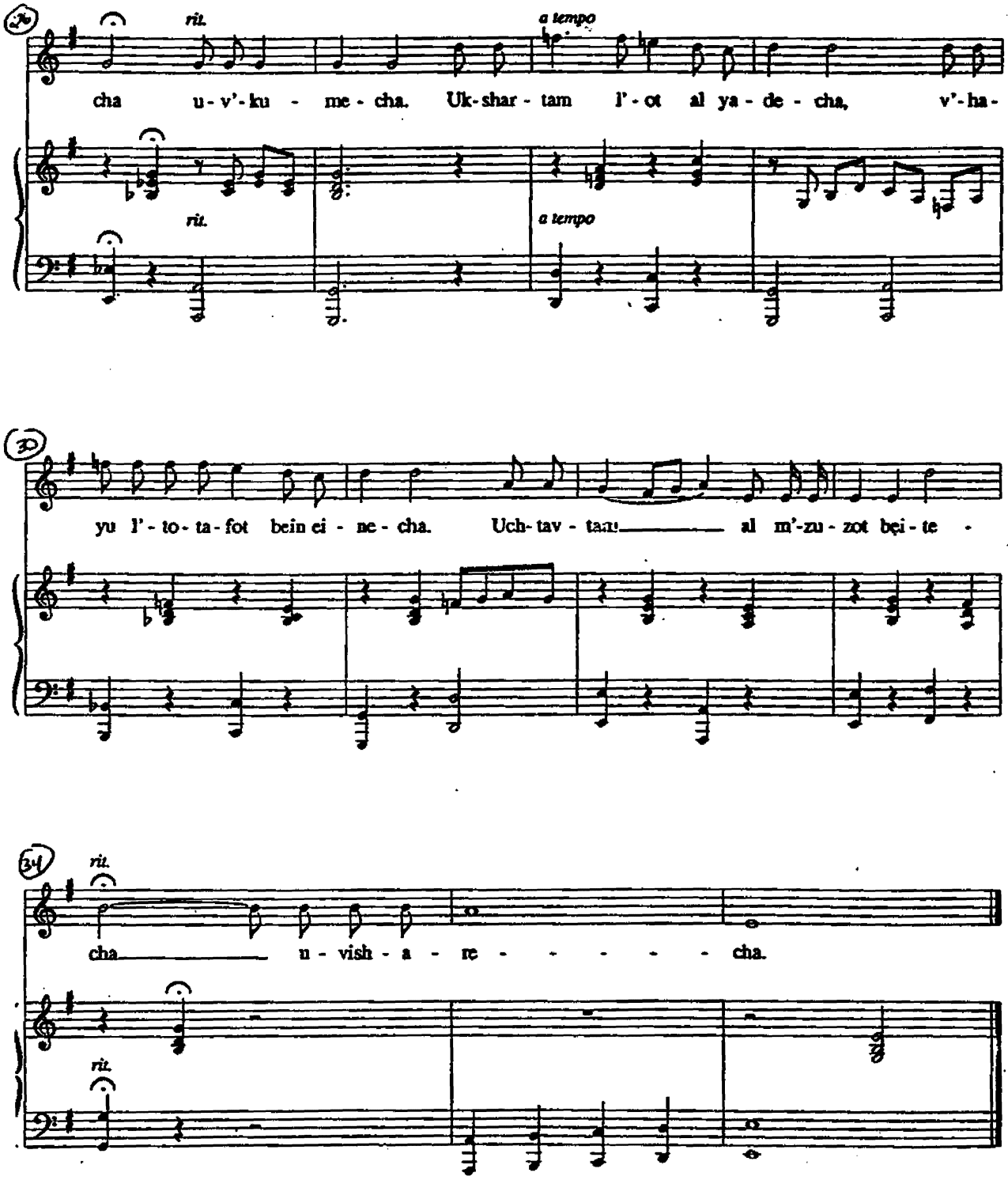


# V'ahavta

Israel Goldstein

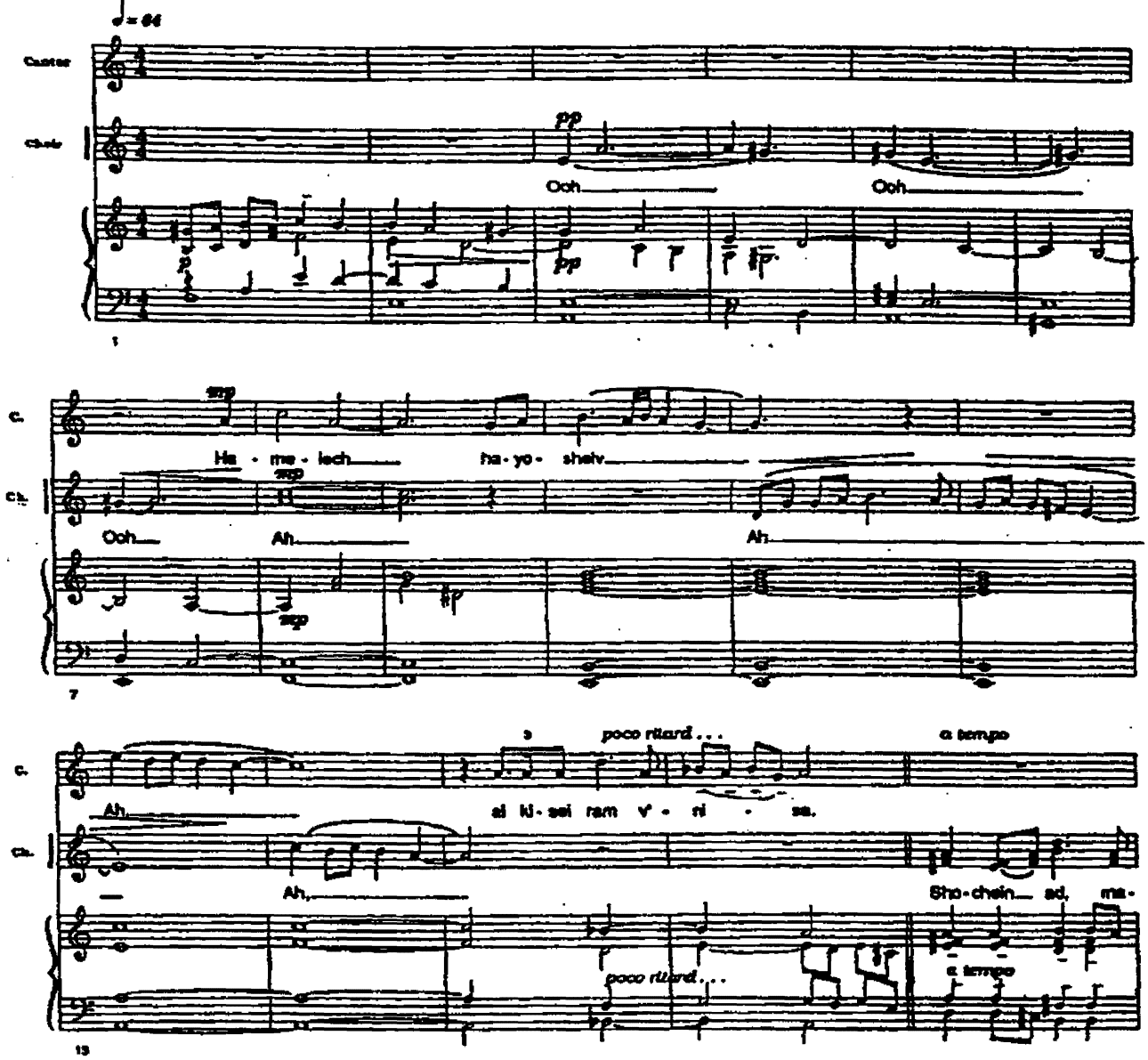


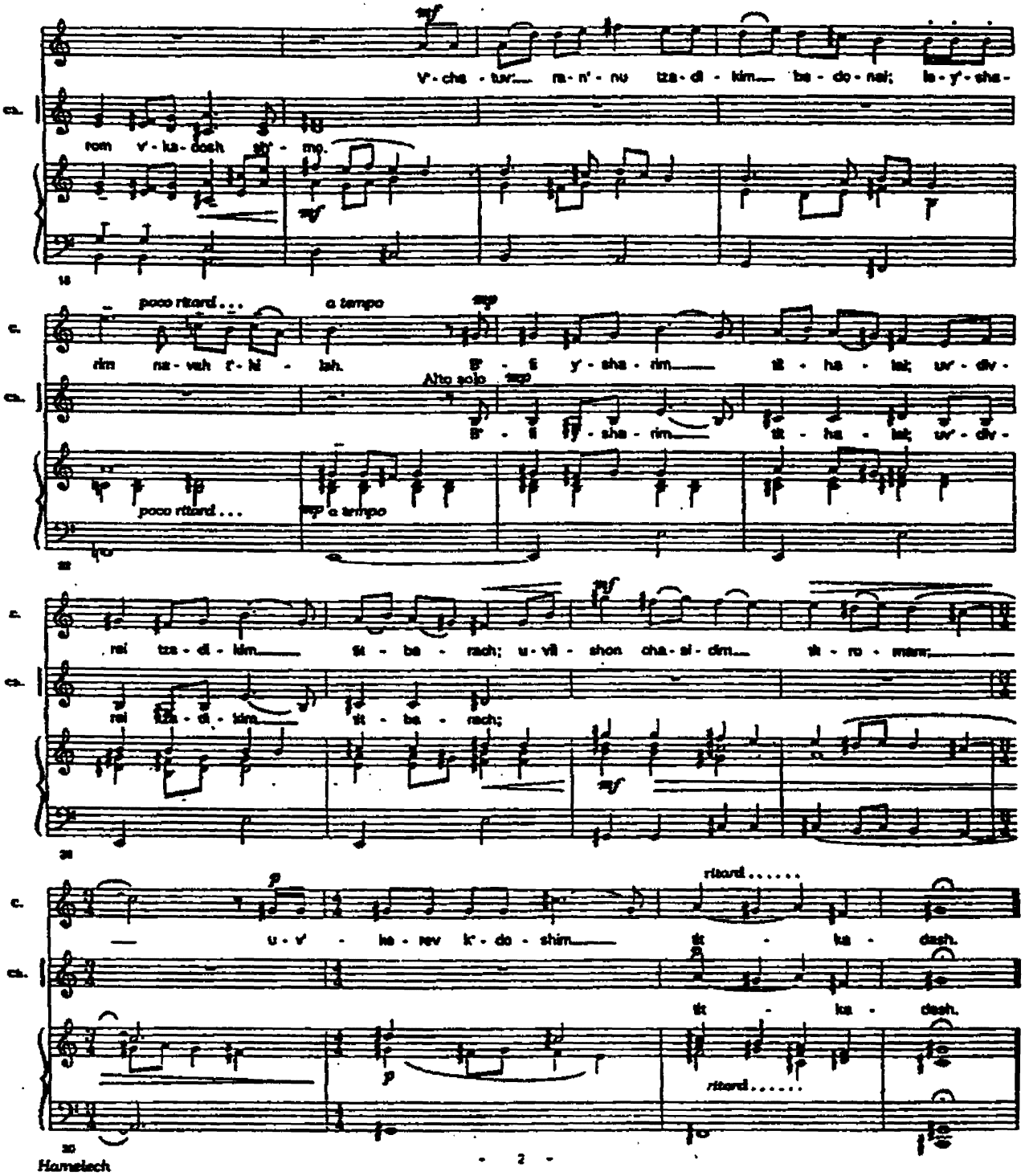

15
ei - leh, a-sher a-no-chi m-tzav'-cha ha-yom al l'-va-
18
a tempo
ve-cha. V'-shi-nan-tam l'-va-ne - cha, v'-di-bar-ta bam,
a tempo
23
b'-shiv-t'-cha b'-vei-te-cha uv-lech-t'-cha va-de-rech, uv'-shoch-b'-


29
rit.
a tempo
cha u-v'-ku - me-cha. Uk-shar-tam l'-ot al ya-de-cha, v'-ha-
rit.
a tempo
30
yu l'-to-ta-fot bein ei - ne-cha. Uch-tav-tam al m'-zu-zot bei-te -
34
rit.
cha u-vish-a-re - - - - - cha.
rit.

# HAMELECH

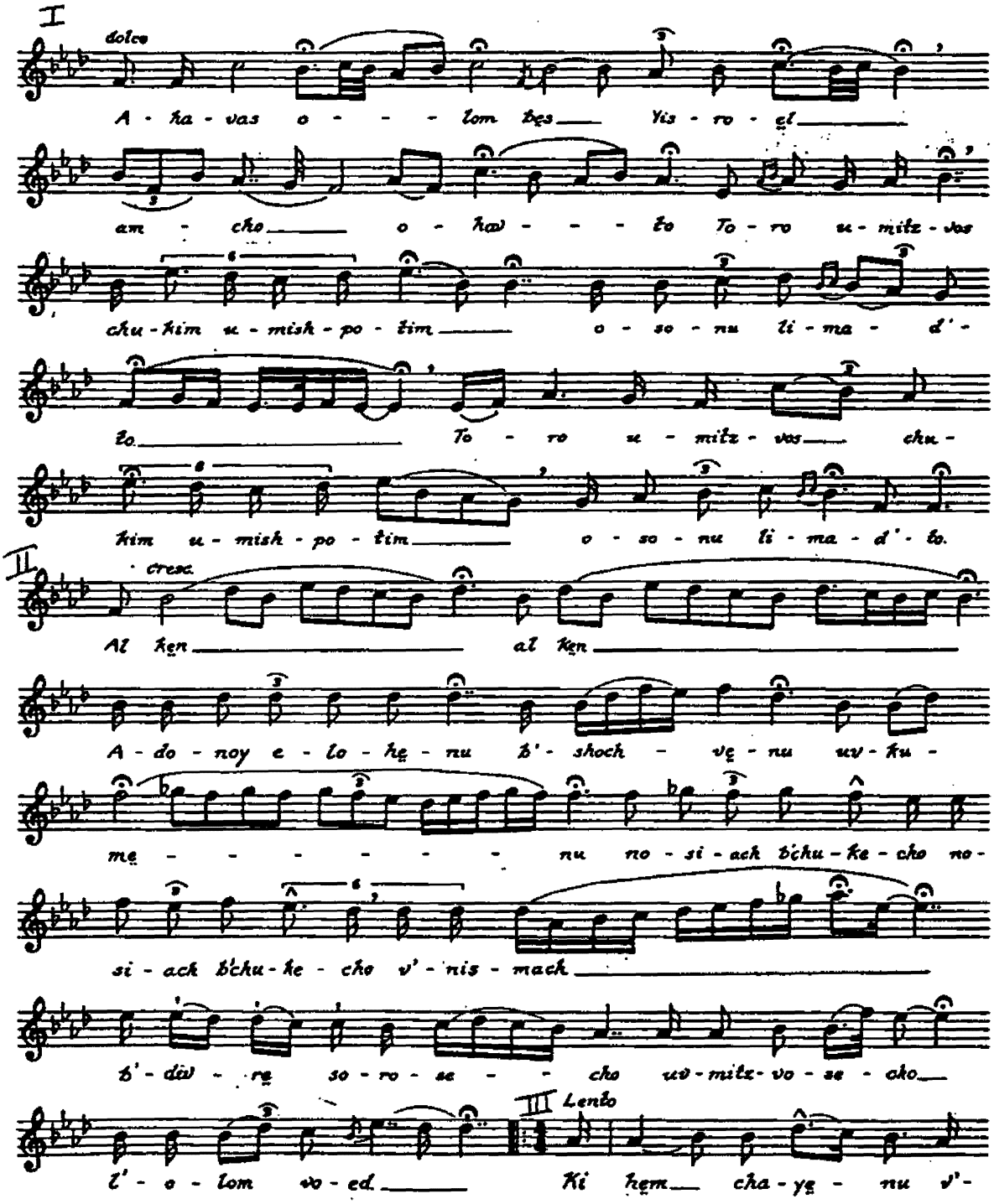
Stephen Richards
*From High Holyday Tunes*



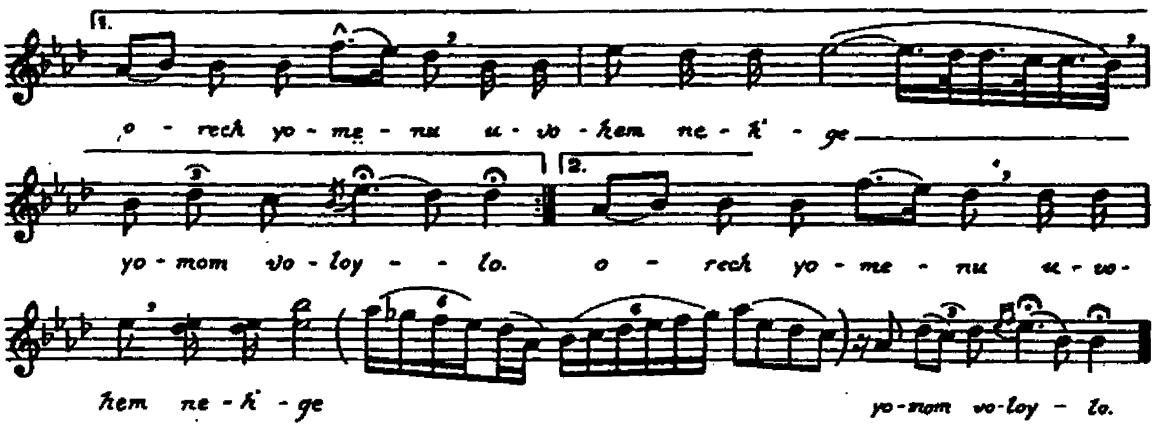

V'-cha-tuv'-nu tza-di-kim be-do-nai; le-y'-sha-
rom v'-ka-dosh sh'-mo.
poco ritard...
a tempo
rim na-veh t'-hi-lah.
B'-i y'-sha-rim
tit-ha-lal; uv'-div-
Alto solo
B'-i y'-sha-rim
tit-ha-lal; uv'-div-
poco ritard...
a tempo
rei tza-di-kim
tit-ba-rach; u-vil-shon cha-si-dim
tit-ro-mam;
rei tza-di-kim
tit-ba-rach;
ritard.....
u-v'-le-rev k'-do-shim
tit-ka-dash.
tit-ka-dash.
ritard.....

13

# 24 אהבת עולם



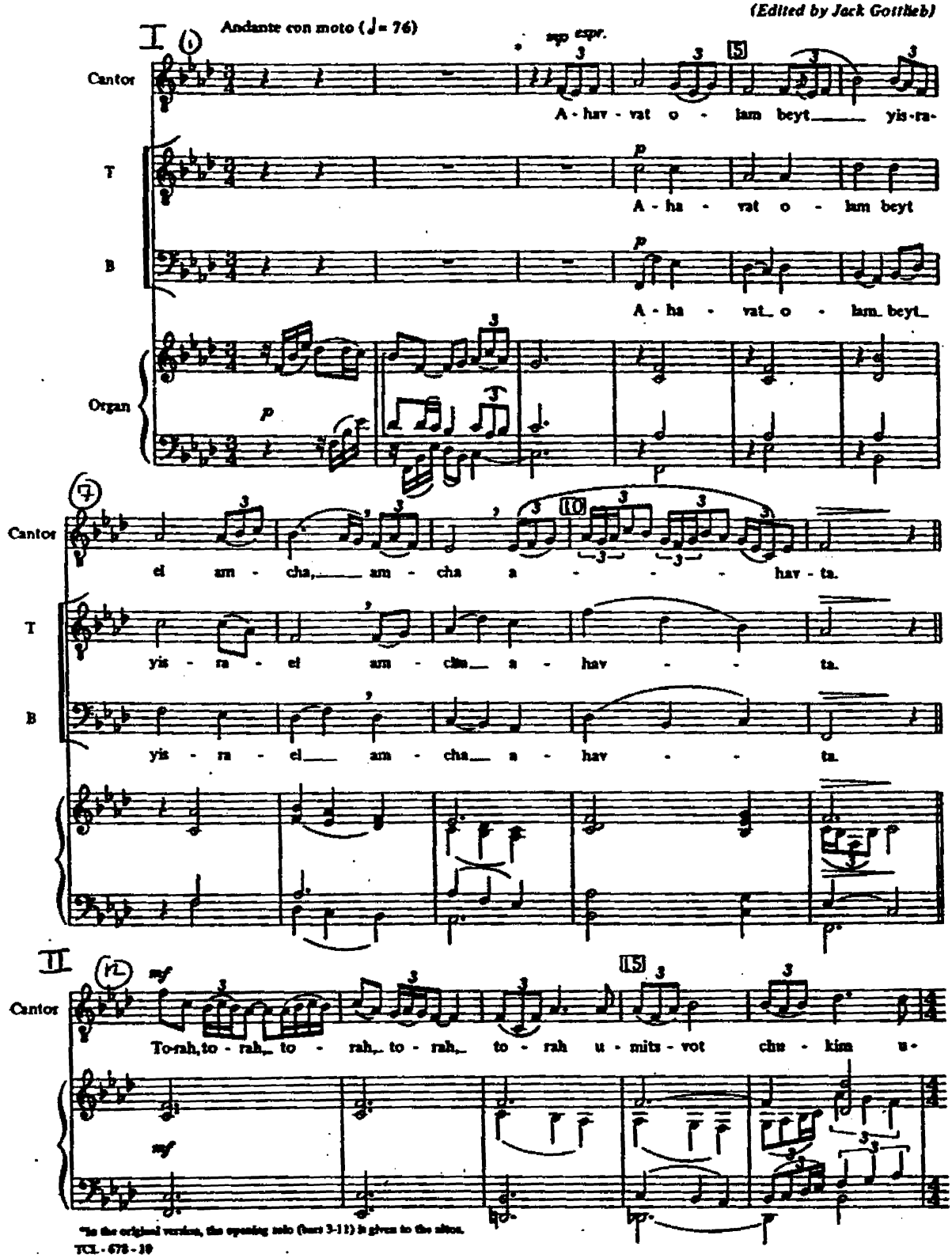
14


1.
o - rech yo - me - nu u - vo - hem ne - k' - ge
yo - mom vo - loy - - lo.
2.
o - rech yo - me - nu u - vo -
hem ne - k' - ge
yo - mom vo - loy - lo.

# AHAVAT OLAM

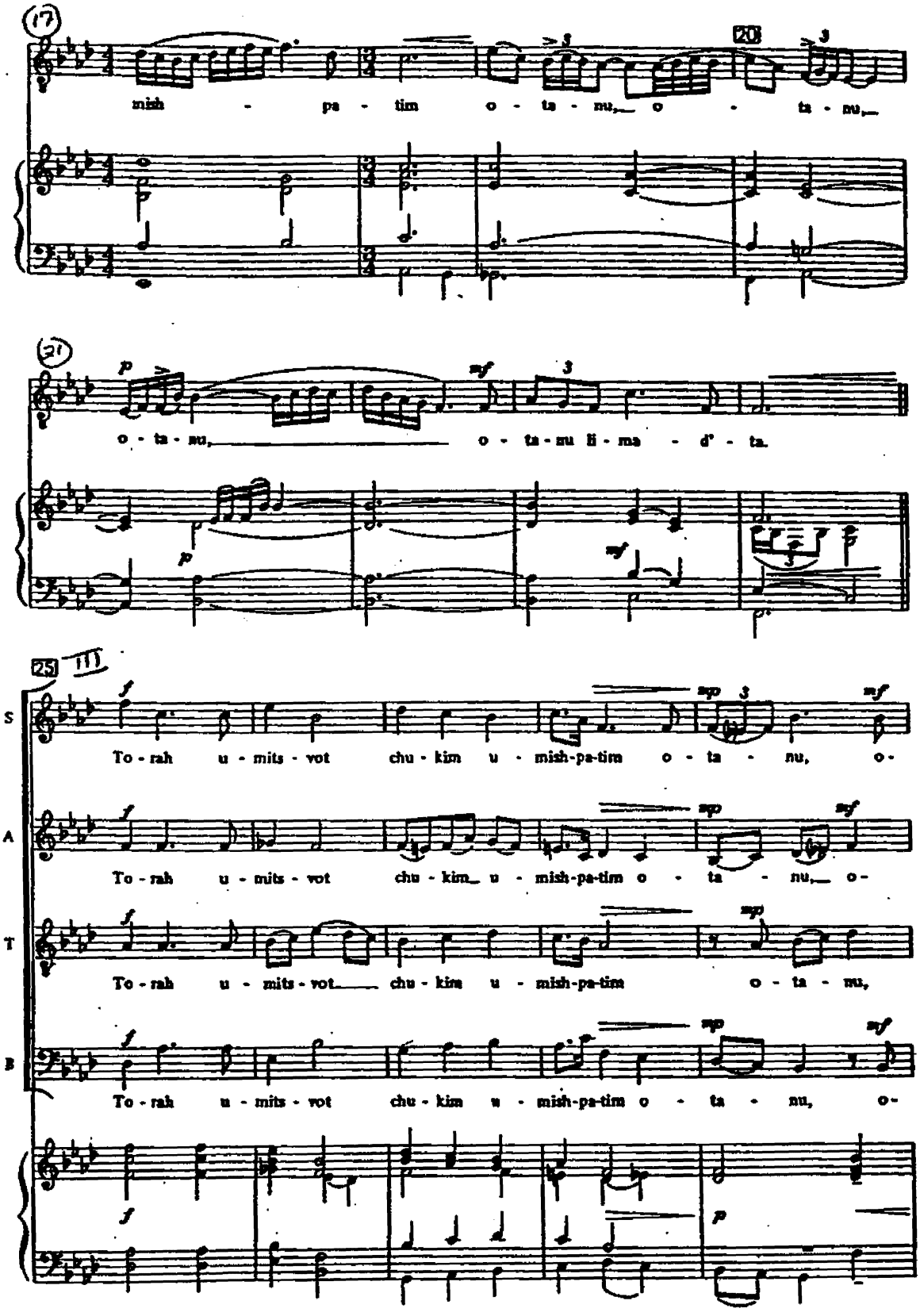
(for Cantor, Choir and Organ)

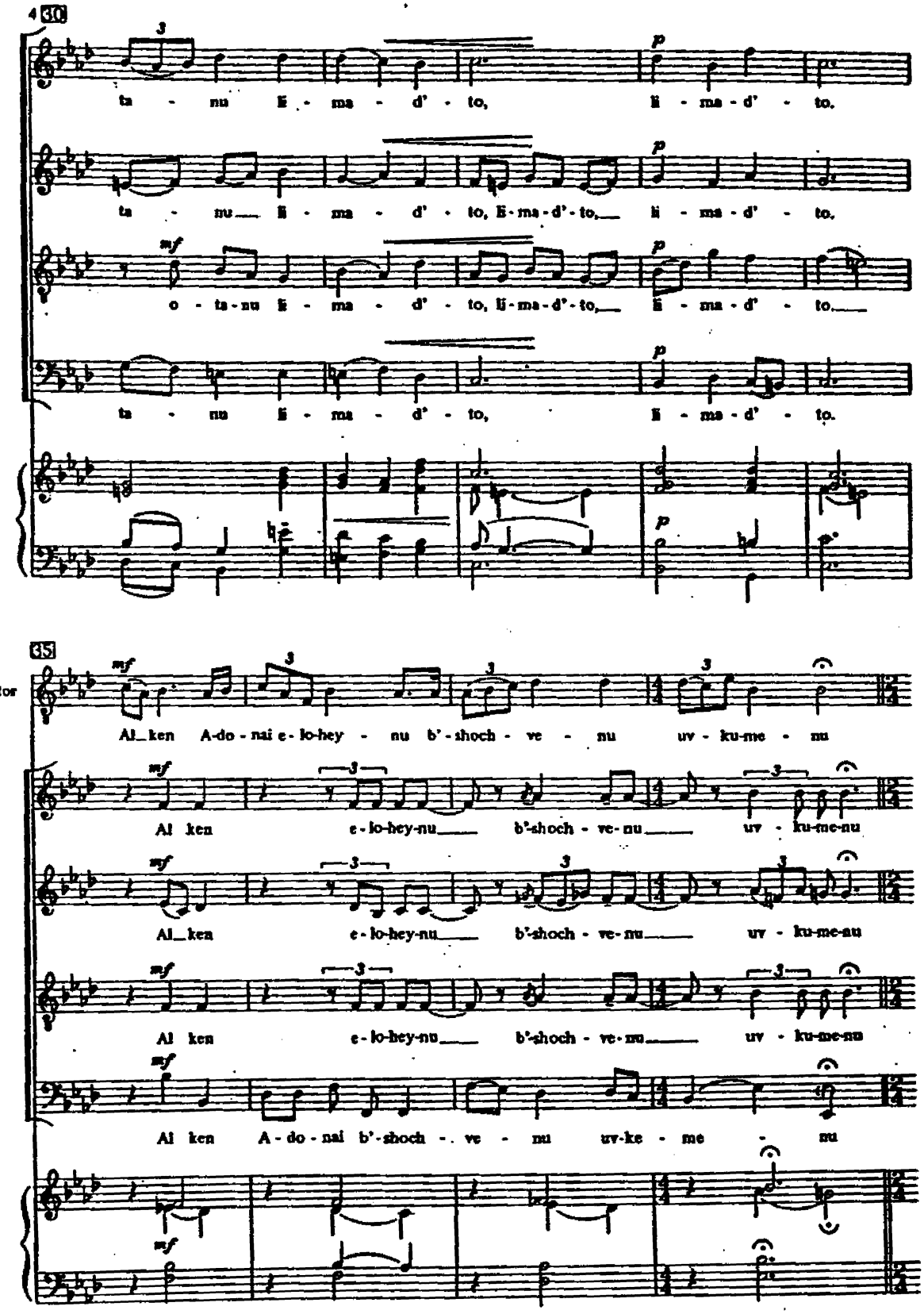
MAX HELFMAN
*(Edited by Jack Gottlieb)*

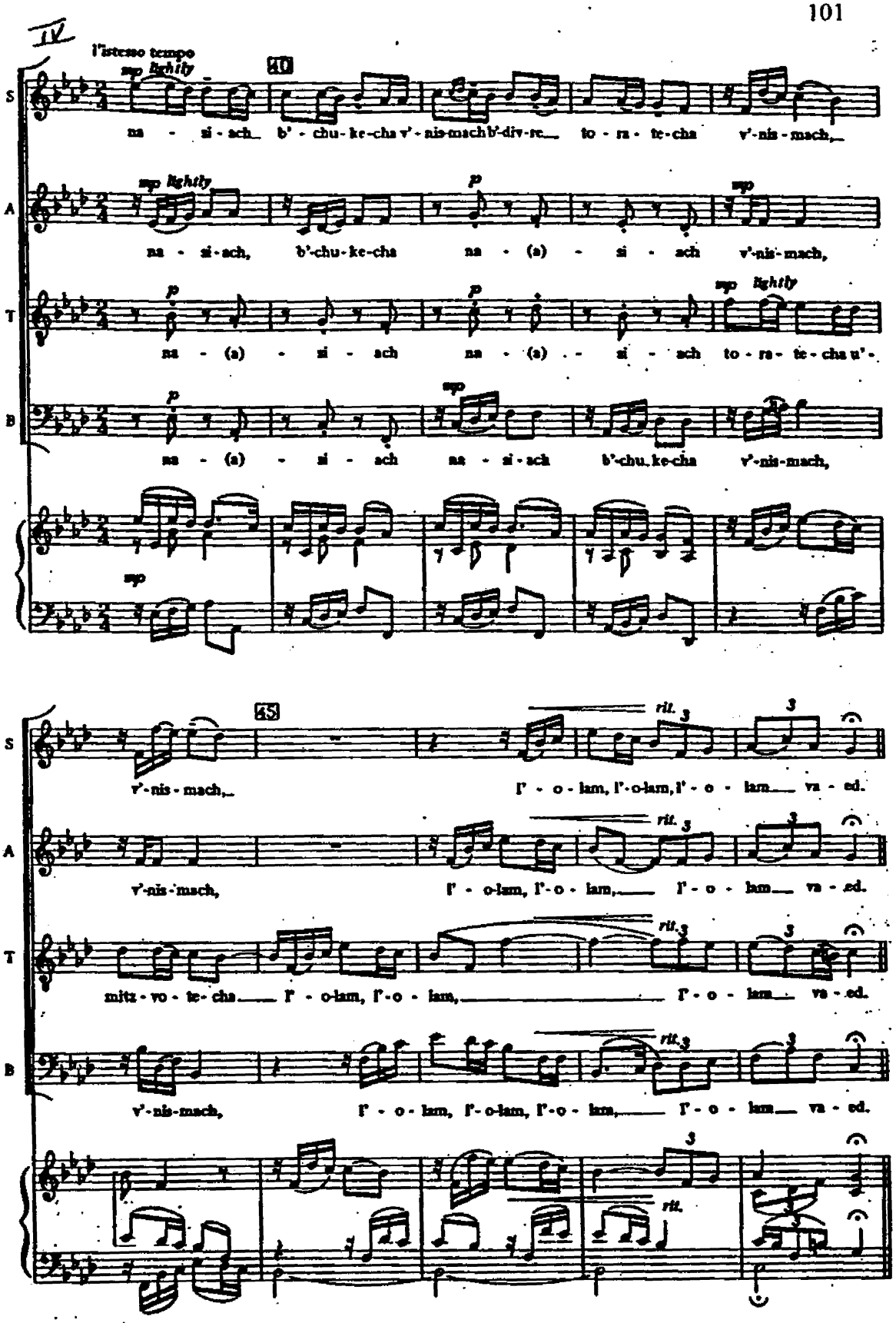


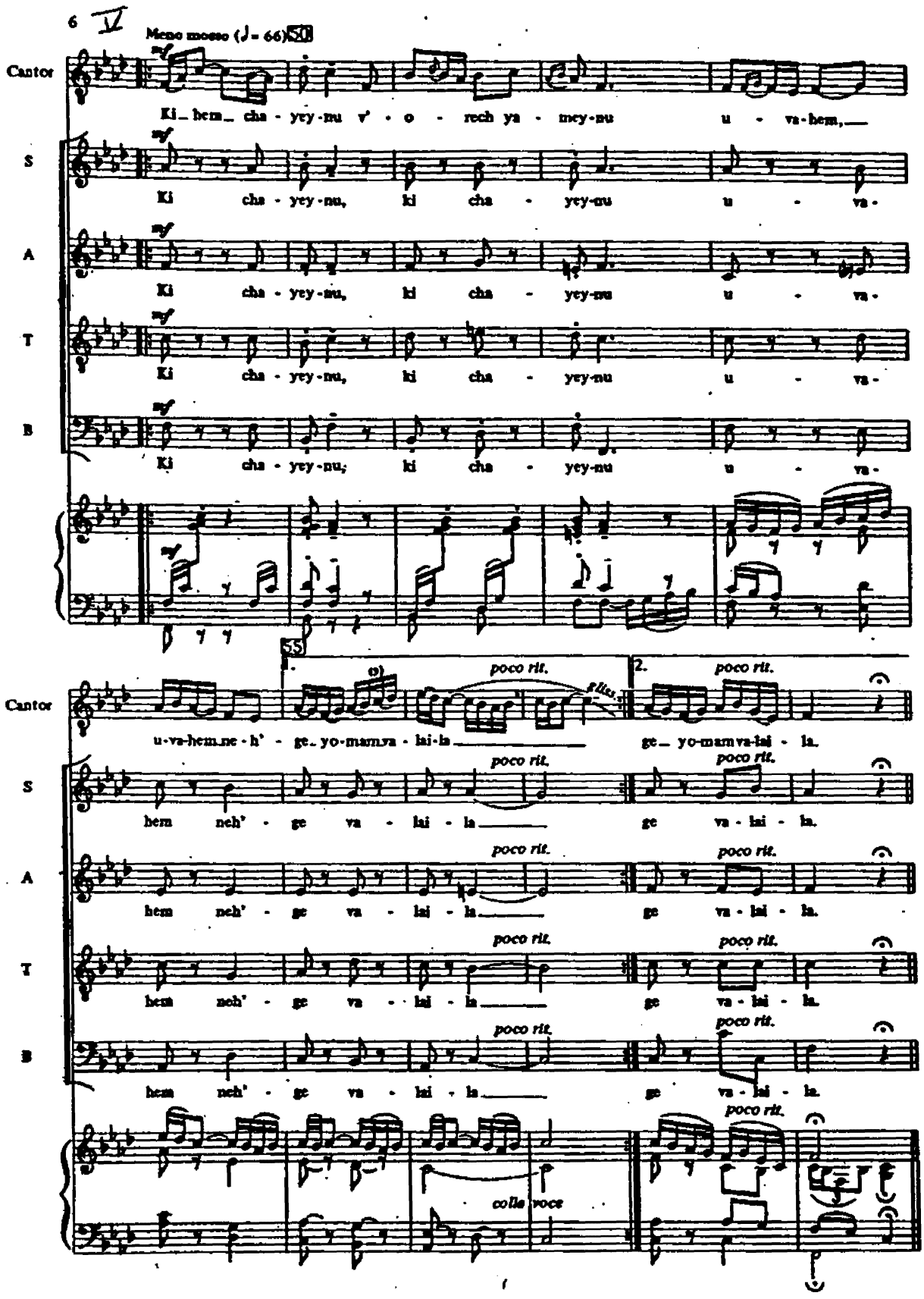

*In the original version, the opening solo (bars 3-11) is given to the altos.

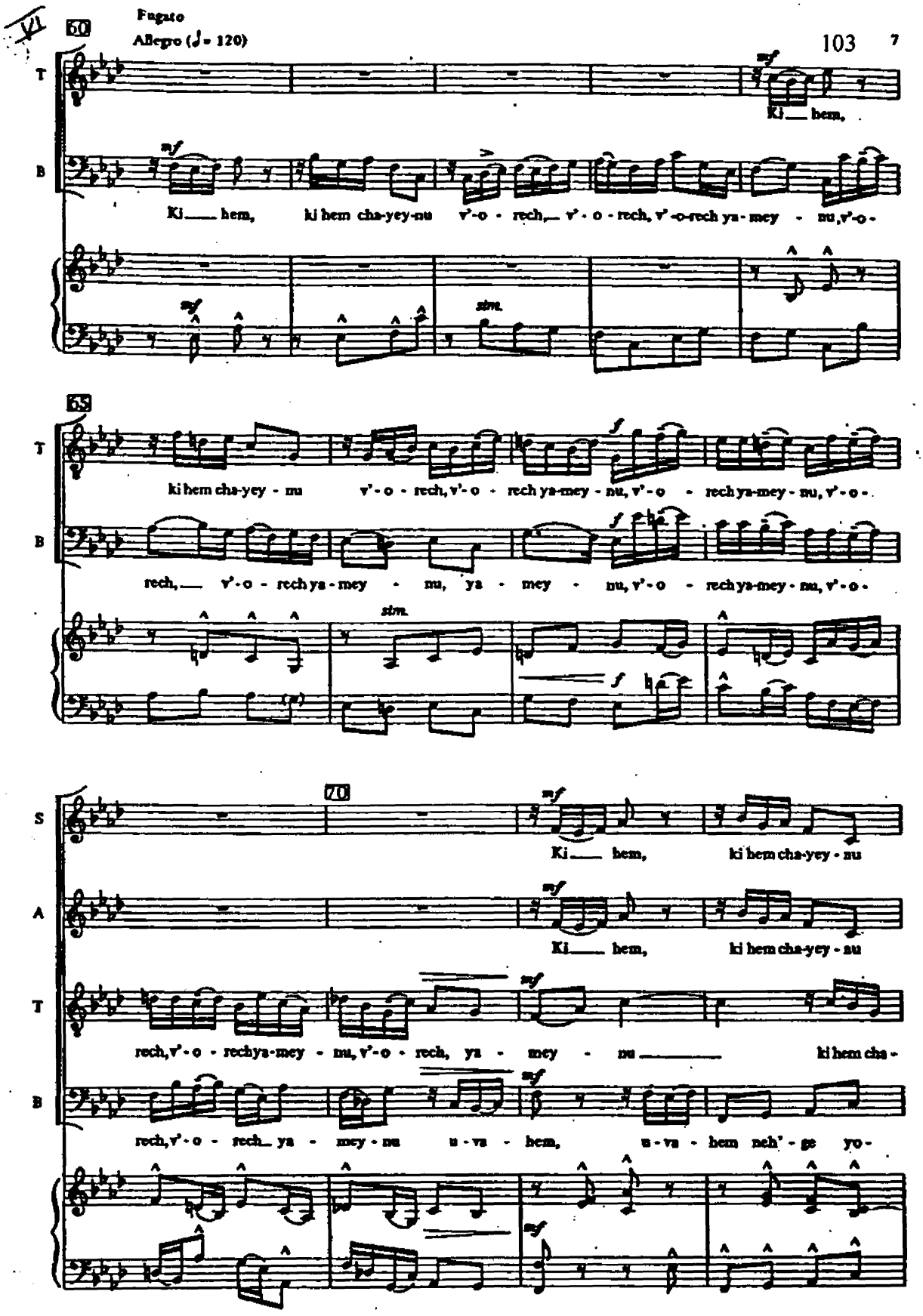
TCL - 678 - 10

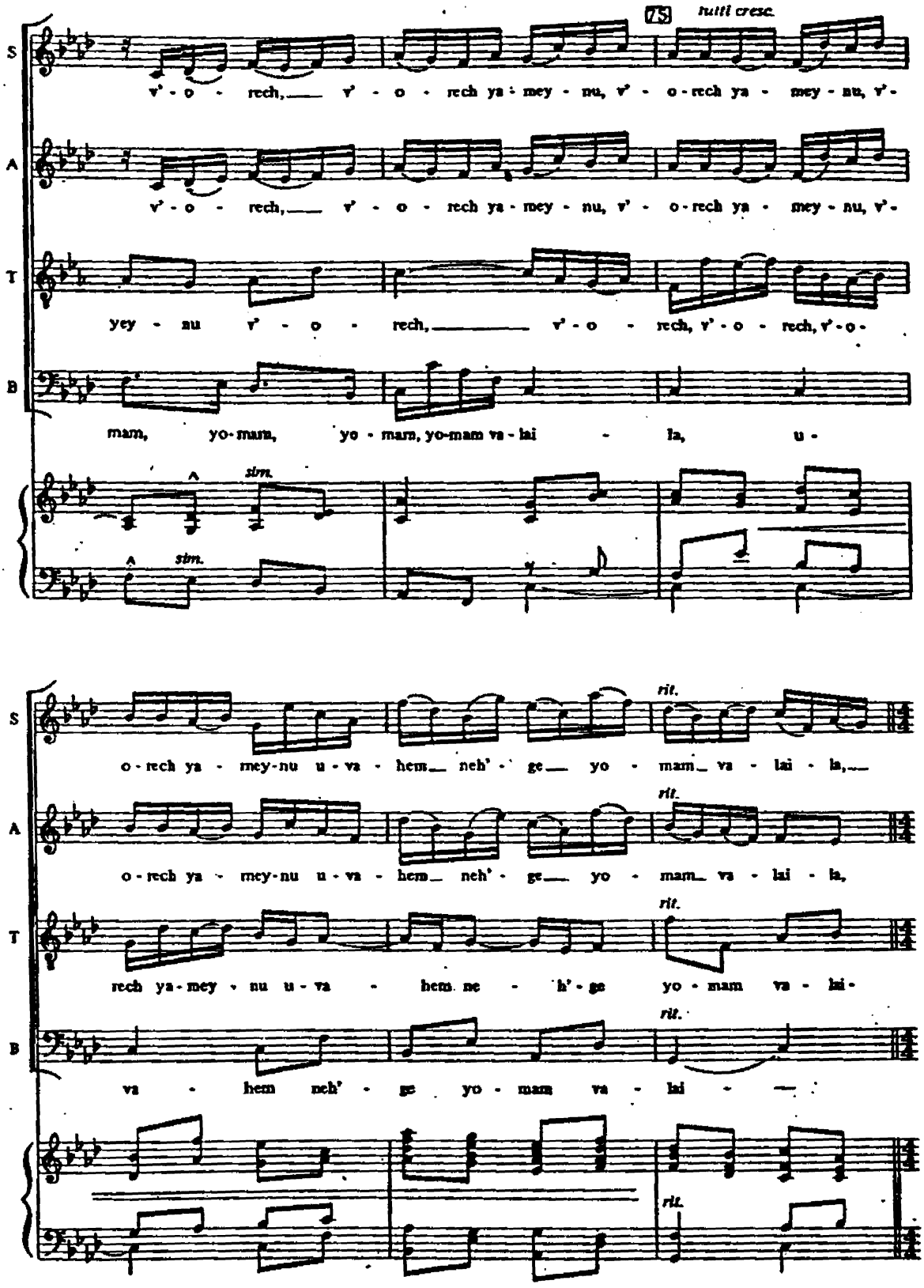

17
20
mish - pa - tim o - ta - nu, o - ta - nu,
21
o - ta - nu, o - ta - nu li - ma - d' - ta.
25
111
S
To - rah u - mits - vot chu - kim u - mish-pa-tim o - ta - nu, o-
A
To - rah u - mits - vot chu - kim u - mish-pa-tim o - ta - nu, o-
T
To - rah u - mits - vot chu - kim u - mish-pa-tim o - ta - nu,
B
To - rah u - mits - vot chu - kim u - mish-pa-tim o - ta - nu, o-


4 30
S
ta - nu li - ma - d' - to, li - ma - d' - to.
A
ta - nu li - ma - d' - to, li - ma - d' - to, li - ma - d' - to.
T
o - ta - nu li - ma - d' - to, li - ma - d' - to, li - ma - d' - to.
B
ta - nu li - ma - d' - to, li - ma - d' - to.
35
Cantor
Al ken A-do-nai e-lo-hey - nu b'-shoch - ve - nu uv - ku-me - nu
S
Al ken e-lo-hey-nu b'-shoch - ve-nu uv - ku-me-nu
A
Al ken e-lo-hey-nu b'-shoch - ve-nu uv - ku-me-nu
T
Al ken e-lo-hey-nu b'-shoch - ve-nu uv - ku-me-nu
B
Al ken A-do-nai b'-shoch - ve - nu uv-ke - me - nu


IV
l'istesso tempo
mp lightly
40
S
na - si - ach b'-chu-ke-cha v'-nis-mach b'-div-re- to - ra - te-cha v'-nis-mach,
A
mp lightly
p
mp
na - si - ach, b'-chu-ke-cha na - (a) - si - ach v'-nis-mach,
T
p
p
mp lightly
na - (a) - si - ach na - (a) - si - ach to - ra - te - cha u'-
B
p
mp
na - (a) - si - ach na - si - ach b'-chu-ke-cha v'-nis-mach,
mp
45
rit.
3
v'-nis-mach, l' - o - lam, l'-o-lam, l'-o - lam va - ed.
v'-nis-mach, l' - o-lam, l'-o - lam, l'-o - lam va - ed.
mitz-vo - te-cha l' - o-lam, l'-o - lam, l'-o - lam va - ed.
v'-nis-mach, l' - o - lam, l'-o-lam, l'-o - lam, l'-o - lam va - ed.
rit.

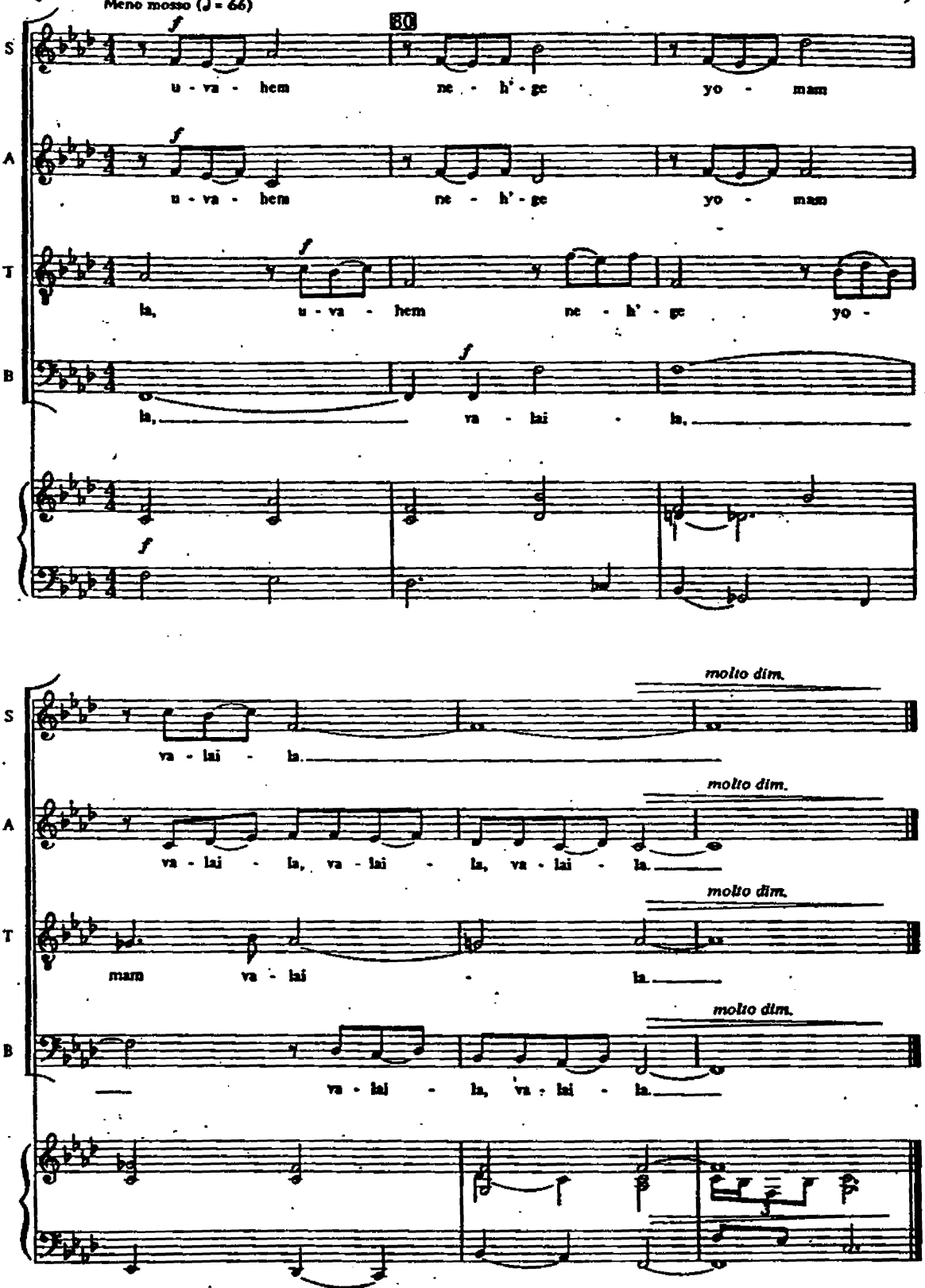

6 V
Meno mosso (♩= 66)
Cantor
Ki hem cha - yey - nu v' - o - rech ya - mey - nu u - va - hem,
S
Ki cha - yey - nu, ki cha - yey - nu u - va -
A
Ki cha - yey - nu, ki cha - yey - nu u - va -
T
Ki cha - yey - nu, ki cha - yey - nu u - va -
B
Ki cha - yey - nu, ki cha - yey - nu u - va -
55
1.
poco rit.
2.
poco rit.
Cantor
u - va - hem ne - h' - ge yo - mam va - lai - la
ge yo - mam va - lai - la.
S
hem neh' - ge va - lai - la
ge va - lai - la.
A
hem neh' - ge va - lai - la
ge va - lai - la.
T
hem neh' - ge va - lai - la
ge va - lai - la.
B
hem neh' - ge va - lai - la
ge va - lai - la.
colla voce


Fugato
Allegro (♩= 120)
60
T
B
mf
Ki___ hem,
Ki___ hem, ki hem cha-yey-nu v'-o - rech,___ v'-o - rech, v'-o-rech ya-mey - nu, v'-o-
sim.
65
ki hem cha-yey - nu v'-o - rech, v'-o - rech ya-mey - nu, v'-o - rech ya-mey - nu, v'-o-
rech,___ v'-o - rech ya-mey - nu, ya - mey - nu, v'-o - rech ya-mey - nu, v'-o-
f
70
S
A
Ki___ hem, ki hem cha-yey - nu
rech, v'-o - rech ya-mey - nu, v'-o - rech, ya - mey - nu ki hem cha-
rech, v'-o - rech_ ya - mey - nu u - va - hem, u - va - hem neh' - ge yo-


75
tutti cresc.
S
v' - o - rech, v' - o - rech ya - mey - nu, v' - o - rech ya - mey - nu, v' -
A
v' - o - rech, v' - o - rech ya - mey - nu, v' - o - rech ya - mey - nu, v' -
T
yey - nu v' - o - rech, v' - o - rech, v' - o - rech, v' - o -
B
mam, yo - mam, yo - mam, yo - mam va - lai - la, u -
sim.
sim.
rit.
S
o - rech ya - mey - nu u - va - hem neh' - ge yo - mam va - lai - la,
rit.
A
o - rech ya - mey - nu u - va - hem neh' - ge yo - mam va - lai - la,
rit.
T
rech ya - mey - nu u - va - hem ne - h' - ge yo - mam va - lai -
rit.
B
va - hem neh' - ge yo - mam va - lai -
rit.

VII

9



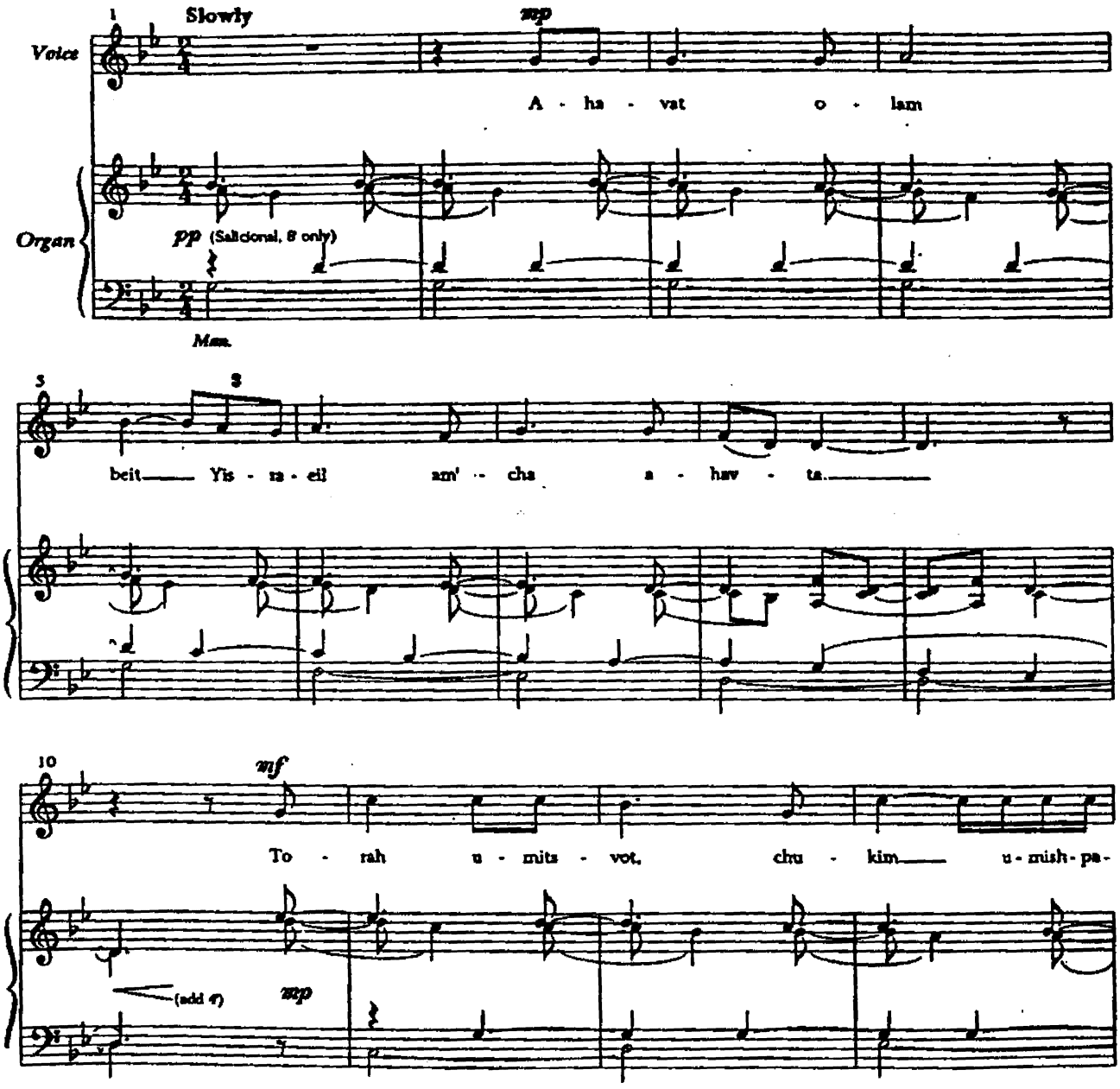

*Bars 79 to 84 are the original ending; an alternate ending is given on next page.

*To Norman Summers*

# Ahavat Olam

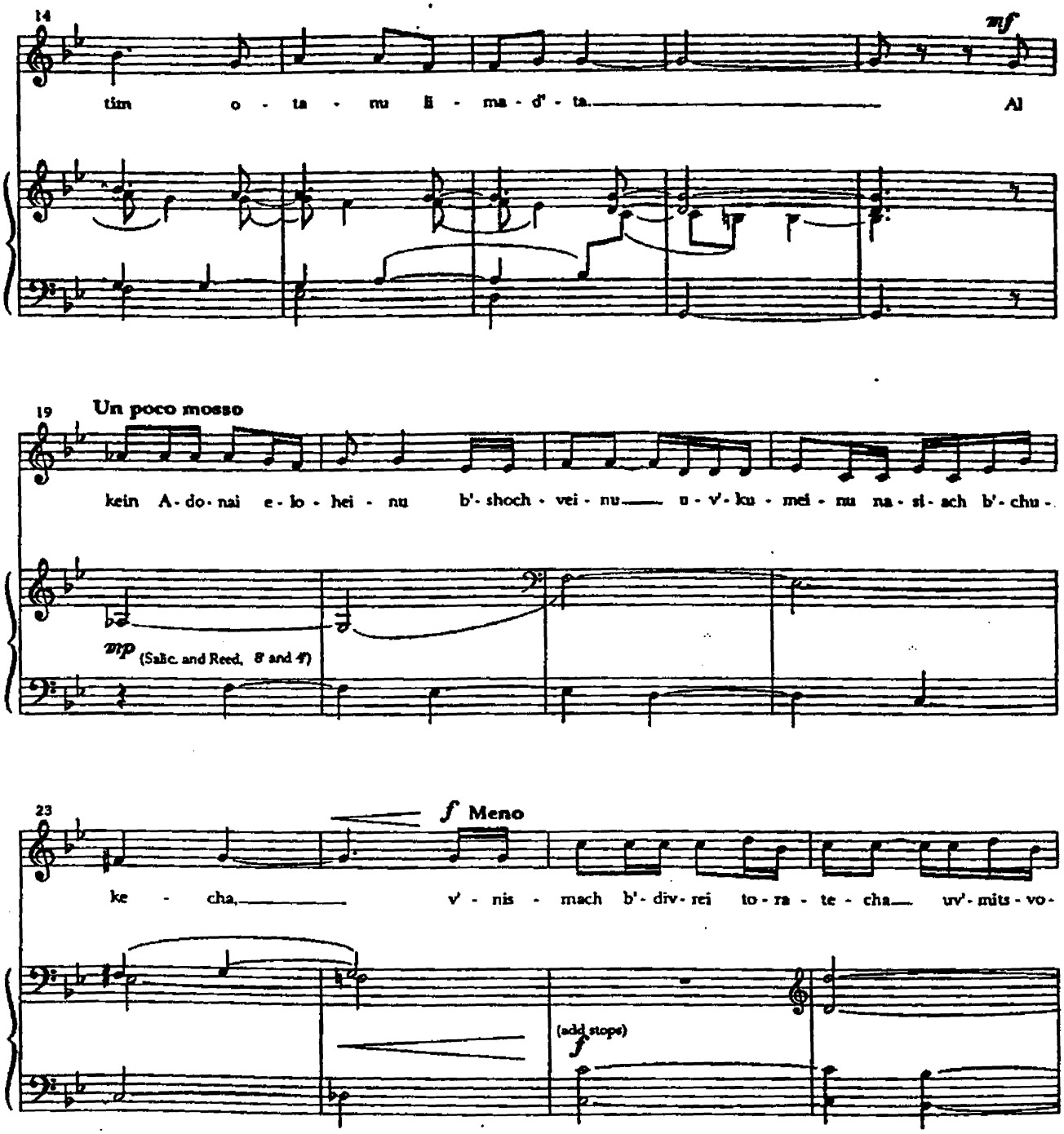
for Voice (medium) and Organ

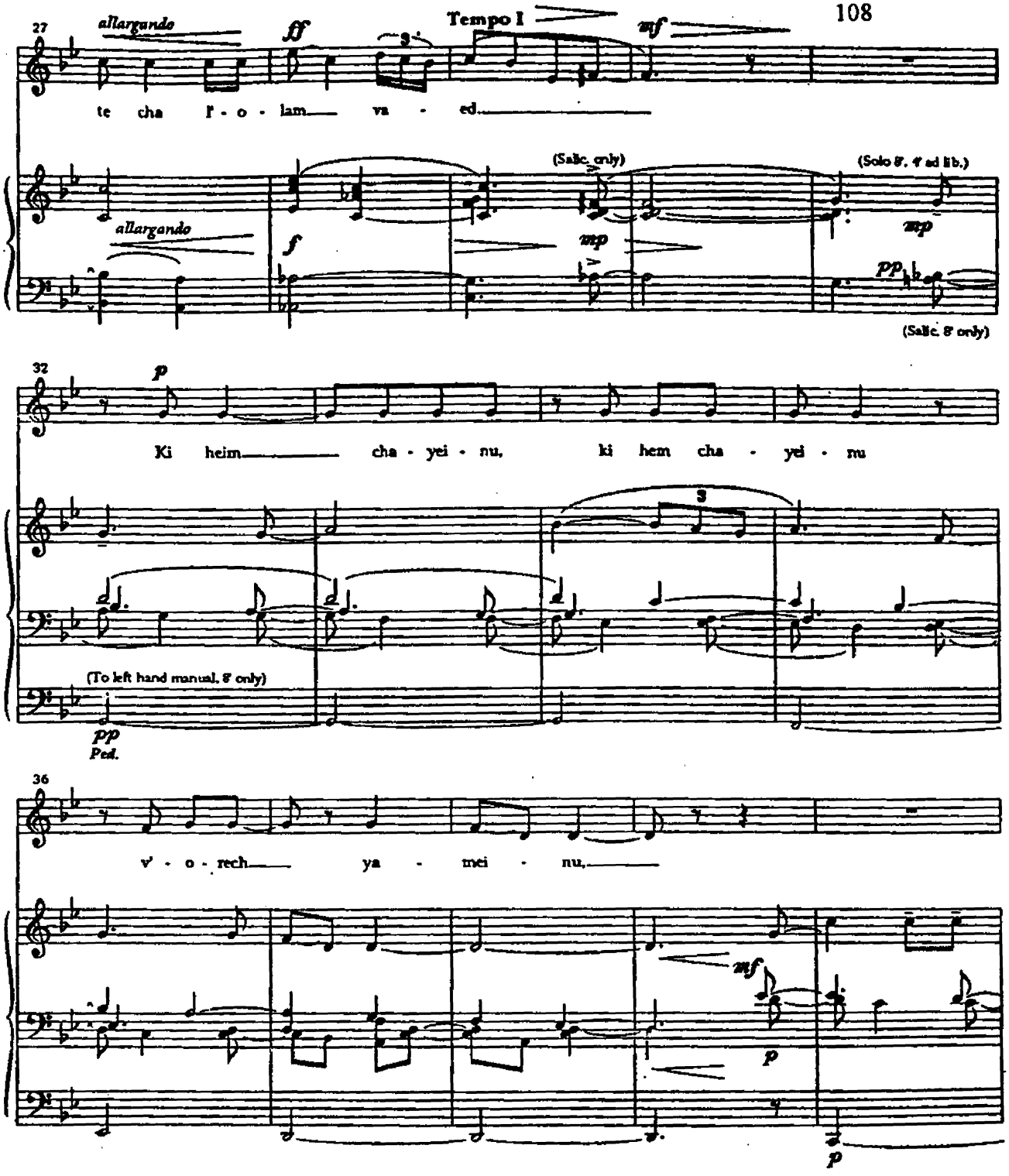
FREDERICK PIKET

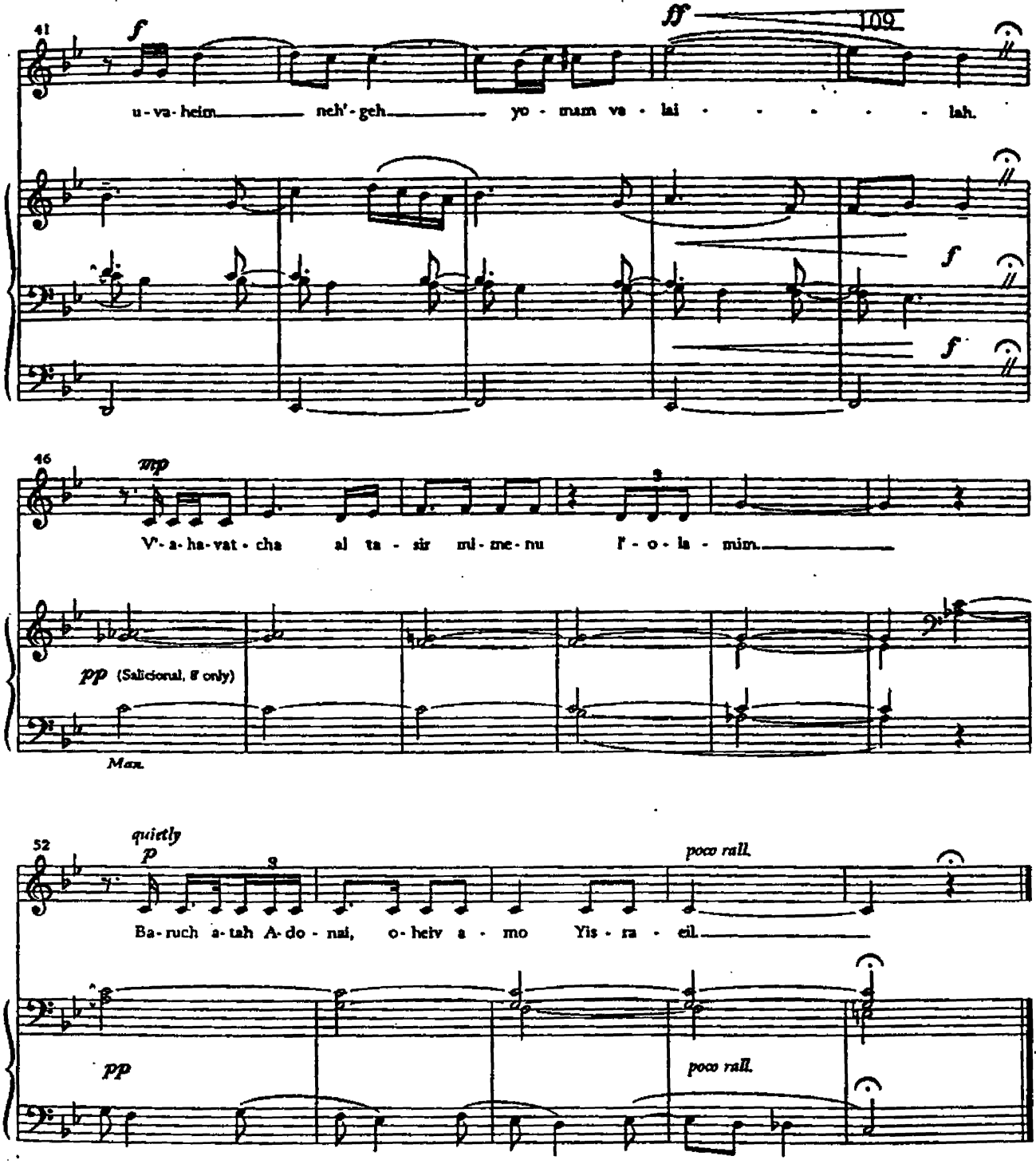





990436-4


14
mf
tim o - ta - mu li - ma - d' - ta. Al
19
Un poco mosso
kein A - do - nai e - lo - hei - nu b' - shoch - vei - nu u - v' - ku - mei - nu na - si - ach b' - chu -
mp (Salic. and Reed, 8' and 4')
23
f Meno
ke - cha, v' - nis - mach b' - div - rei to - ra - te - cha uv' - mits - vo -
(add stops)
f


27
allargando
ff
Tempo I
mf
te cha l' - o - lam va - ed
(Salic. only)
(Solo 8', 4' ad lib.)
allargando
f
mp
mp
pp
(Salic. 8' only)
32
p
Ki heim cha - yei - nu, ki hem cha - yei - nu
(To left hand manual, 8' only)
pp
Ped.
36
v' - o - rech ya - mei - nu,
mf
p
p

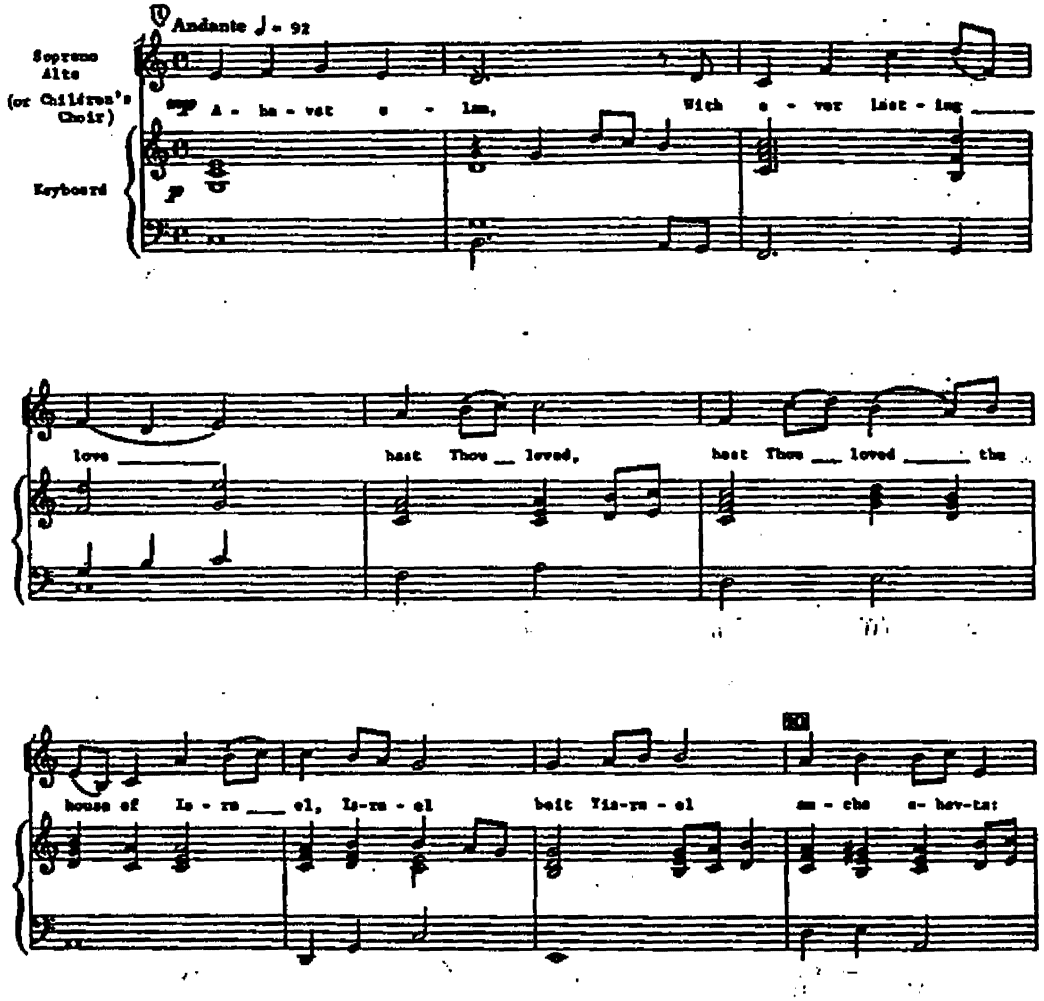

41
f
ff
u - va - heim nch' - geh yo - mam ve - lai - - - - - lah.
f
f
46
mp
V' - a - ha - vat - cha al ta - sir mi - me - nu l' - o - la - mim.
pp (Salicional, if only)
Man.
52
quietly
p
poco rall.
Ba - ruch a - tah A - do - nai, o - heiv a - mo Yis - ra - eil.
pp
poco rall.

# Ahavat Olam

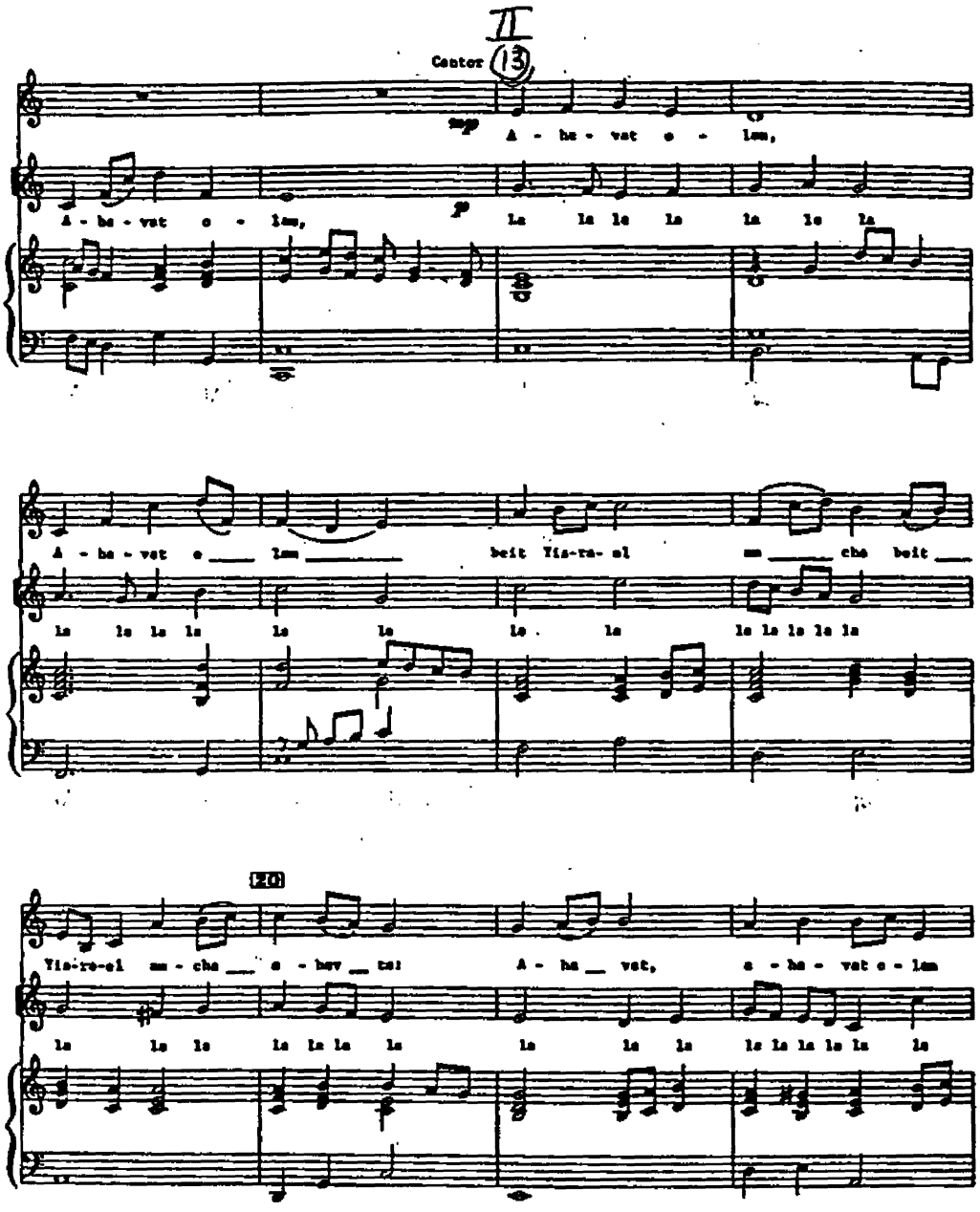
for Cantor, Mixed Choir (SATB) and Keyboard

I

Aminadav Aloni




991600


II
Cantor (13)
mp
A - ha - vat o - lam,
A - ha - vat o - lam,
p
La la le la la le la
A - ha - vat o ___ lam ___
beit Yis-ra- el
am ___ cha beit ___
la la la la la la le la la la la la la
(20)
Yis-ra-el am - cha ___ o - hev ___ ta!
A - ha ___ vat,
a - ha - vat o - lam
la la le la la la la la la la la la la la la la