

## לכה דודי: פיוט THE WORDS WITHIN THE

The פיוט of לכה דודי is not an easy פיוט to understand. One difficulty lies in defining the word: דודי in the statement: לקראת כלה? The תכלאל המבואר<sup>1</sup> explains:

תכלאל המבואר – לך הקדוש ברוך הוא, ונצא יחד.

*Translation: Come G-d, let us go out together.*

In his סידור המפורש, Yaakov Weingarten provides a different definition:

דודי – אהובי (מצודת דוד שיר השירים א', יד') והכונה לכנסת ישראל. וכאן קודם קבלת שבת מכונה כנסת ישראל בשם "דוד" והשבת שם כלה. ובחרוז "בואי בשלום" שהוא לאחר קבלת שבת – שהיא כעין הכנסה לחופה, נקראת בעל – "בואי בשלום עטרת בעלה" – על פי מהרש"א שבת לב', ב'.

*Translation: Dodi means my beloved. The word represents the Jewish people. Before the Jewish people accept the duties and responsibilities of Shabbos, they are called: Dod and Shabbos is called: bride. In the last paragraph: Bo'Ee B'Shalom which is recited after the Jewish people have accepted the duties and responsibilities of Shabbos and which is deemed similar to the act of entering under the Chuppah, the Jewish people are called: husband, as we say: Bo'Ee B'Shalom Ateres Ba'Alah. This is in accordance with the comments of the Maharsha on Maseches Shabbos, 32, 2.*

The definition of the word provided by the תכלאל המבואר is the definition adopted by most translators. However, this definition is open to challenge: Why do we invite הקדוש ברוך הוא to join us to greet the שבת? More importantly, if the word דודי represents G-d, why do most translators explain the second paragraph of לכה דודי that begins: לקראת שבת לכו ונלכה as a call to the Jewish community to welcome the שבת. If the definition of the word: דודי is G-d, the paragraph that begins: לקראת שבת לכו ונלכה should likewise be interpreted as a call to G-d to join us in welcoming the שבת.

The link between the themes of welcoming שבת; i.e., paragraphs, 1, 2 and 9 of the פיוט, and the prayer for the re-establishment of the בית המקדש, paragraphs, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 and 8 is another issue that is difficult to explain. Rabbi Samson Raphael Hirsch, זצ"ל, describes the connection as follows:

'לקראת וכו' – is the call upon all the members of the Jewish community to welcome and receive the Sabbath as the source of all blessings. Truly, even as the Sages have said it, the Sabbath is the most precious pearl' that G-d could give His people from

1. The סידור follows נוסח תימן.

His treasure chamber. Happy is he who, in keeping with the purpose of the Sabbath, welcomes that day by placing himself and his whole world, together with all of his endeavors and ambitions, his successes and failures, his gains and his losses at the feet of G-d. Our Sages have taught that a person who follows this course, knowing that he has either fulfilled his duty entirely or, at least, made atonement for past error, and who, for the twenty-four hours of the Sabbath that follow, does not permit himself even to think of his ordinary weekday pursuits, with each Sabbath receives *me'en olam habbah* a glimpse of the bliss of the world to come. All of terrestrial life, with its misery and woe, with its care and distress, retreats before the serene majesty of the Sabbath, and the eyes of man, reflecting his contented smile, sense the nearness of the grace of his Father in Heaven Who, with a tender look of approval rewards him for having delivered up to his Maker, for a period of twenty-four hours, the struggle and strife of the week. But even as all the pain and sorrow of the individual recede before the holy Sabbath, which brings comfort and hope to every wounded heart, so the Sabbath also transforms the sad and sorrowful outlook as regards Yisrael's collective fate as a nation into glorious vistas of hope and consolation. Yerushalayim is once more **מקדש מלך עיר מלוכה**, the Sanctuary and the City of G-d, of that G-d Whom the Sabbath proclaims as the King of the Universe in all His supreme sovereignty. Once again He gathers His people about Him like a garment of glory, so that the sons of His nation will all serve to glorify Him. . . . This is the confident hope which each Sabbath awakens within us anew. **לא תבושי וכו'**, Zion will not be deceived in its trust, nor will she be found unworthy of the fulfillment of the hopes thus fostered. Even now that she is in ruins, Zion still remains the mother of her people, consoling and comforting its remnants. In vain **והיו וכו'** do ruthless tyrants seek to destroy her; they will perish, but Zion and Yisroel will live on. In due time the attacks of the nations against her will cease and the ancient covenant which G-d made with Zion long ago will come into view once more serenely and in all its glory. All the rest of mankind to the left and to the right of Zion shall then join her, and, once the sovereign power of G-d will be revealed through Zion's resurrection for all to see, joy and serenity will hold triumphant entry on earth.

The **עיון תפלה** provides a different explanation:

**עיון תפלה-מקדש מלך. זו ירושלים, על שם הכתוב (עמוס ז', יג') כי מקדש מלך הוא. מכאן ואלו מדבר המשורר נגד ירושלים, וענין ירושלים לשבת הוא על יסוד מאמר חז"ל (שבת קיח', ב') אלמלא משמרין ישראל שתי שבתות כהלכתן מיד נגאלין, ועתה כשישראל מקבלין את השבת לשמרה כהלכתה ינחם את ירושלים ויתן תקוה בלבה שקרובה גאולתה לבוא.**

*Translation: Mikdash Melech-This is a reference to Yerushalayim based on what is written (Amos 7, 13) Ki Mikdash Melech Hoo. From this point forward, the composer speaks about Yerushalayim. The link*

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*between Yerushalayim and Shabbos is based on a statement by Chazal: (Maseches Shabbos 118, 2) if the Jewish people observe Shabbos properly for two weeks in a row, they will be immediately rescued. In this poem we pray that in the merit of the Jewish people accepting the observance of Shabbos according to its rules, G-d will have pity on Yerushalayim. Observing Shabbos provides the hope that the ultimate redemption is nearing.*

In a תשובה in which former Sephardic Chief Rabbi Bakshi Doron tries to pinpoint when קבלת שבת takes place, Rabbi Doron provides the following explanation for the link between שבת and the rebuilding of the בית המקדש:

בנין אב – סימן ו. קבלת שבת במחשבה, בדיבור ובמעשה-ו. ירושלים והשלום בלכה דודי – הפיוט לכה דודי שנתקבל בכל תפוצות ישראל כקבלת שבת בדיבור, פותח בקבלת השבת ובמעלותיה, בכתוב שמור וזכור, ולקראת שבת, אולם שאר חלקי הפיוט מדברים בירושלים שבחה וגאולתה, ובסיום הפיוט הכמיהה לשלום, בואי בשלום עמרת בעלה, את ברכת השלום נוהגים בכל תפוצות ישראל להזכיר בתפילת קבלת שבת בפרק מזמור לדוד, המסתיים בה' יברך את עמו בשלום, ויש להבין מה ענין ירושלים והשלום לקבלת שבת, מה ראה רבי שלמה אלקבץ זצ"ל להדגיש את שבחה של ירושלים והתפילה לגאולתה, בפיוט לכה דודי שכולו קבלת שבת, מדוע סיים בשלום, ומה טעם בכל קהילות ישראל מקבלים פני שבת בפרק מזמור לדוד המסתיים בשלום.

*Translation: The poem: Lecha Dodi that has been universally incorporated into the Jewish liturgy for Friday night and has been deemed to be the moment when accepting the duties and responsibilities of Shabbos is performed by the means of words, opens with the paragraphs: Shamor and Zachor and Likras Shabbos. The subsequent paragraphs present a different theme; i.e praise of Yerushalayim and a request that Yerushalayim be rescued. At the end of the poem, we find a longing for peace; Bo'Ee B'Shalom Aterest Ba'Alah. The poem includes a request for peace even though it is a universal custom to recite chapter 29 of Tehillim which ends with the words: and may G-d bless the Jewish people with peace, before saying Lecha Dodi. We need to understand the connection between Shabbos, Yerushalayim and peace. We further need to understand what prompted Rabbi Shlomo Alkabetz, זצ"ל, to emphasize the praise of Yerushalayim and a prayer for its rescue in the poem of Lecha Dodi which he composed to be the words by which we accept the duties and responsibilities of Shabbos. Why did he end with a message of peace and why in all congregations do we still welcome Shabbos with chapter 29 of Tehillim which also ends with the theme of peace.*

ונראה שהמקור להזכיר את ירושלים והשלום בקבלת שבת, היא במטבע שטבעו חכמים בברכות. בתפילת ערבית בכל יום מסתיימת קריאת שמע, בשומר עמו ישראל לעד, ואילו בשבת תקנו לברך "הפורס סוכת שלום עלינו ועל כל ישראל ועל ירושלים", ולפי שהשלום וירושלים כלולים בברכת השבת, הדגישם רבי שלמה אלקבץ זצ"ל בלכה דודי, אם בכל ערב התפילה מסתיימת בבקשה לשמירה גשמית שהקב"ה ישמור צאתנו ובואנו, בשבת שיש בה פריסת שלום, ואוירה של קדושה, הבקשה מסתיימת בשלימות הרוחנית, לפי

שהשבת כתכלית מעשה שמים וארץ, יש בה לגלות כבודו יתברך, ולהעיד על הבורא וגדלותו, שלימות זו נמצאת בירושלים במקום אשר צוה ה' את הברכה וזה שער השמים, וזה מקור הברכה בשבת להרגיש ולחוש את קרבתו יתברך, ולהודות לו ככתוב "מזמור שיר ליום השבת טוב להודות לה'".

*Translation: It appears that the source for referring to Yerushalayim and peace as part of Kabbalas Shabbos is the wording of one Bracha that we recite on Friday night. In Tefilas Arvis each day, we end the third Bracha of Kriyas Shema with the words: Shomer Amo Yisroel La'Ad. On Shabbos we conclude the same Bracha by saying: Ha'POrais Succos Shalom Aleinu V'Al Kol Yisroel V'Al Yerushalayim. Since we incorporate both a reference to Yerushalayim and a prayer for peace in a Bracha whose theme includes Shabbos, Rabbi Shlomo Alkabetz, ז"ל, incorporated those same themes into his poem of Lecha Dodi. Each evening we end the Brachos of Kriyas Shema with a prayer for our physical needs and that G-d guard us as we come and go. On Shabbos which is a day in which G-d spreads peace and there is an atmosphere of holiness, the theme of the Bracha changes to a request for spiritual completeness. Since Shabbos also represents creation, it is necessary to speak of G-d's greatness as well. The completeness of spirit that we seek can only be found in Yerushalayim, the place where G-d extended His blessing and was the gate to heaven. That is the source of the blessing of Shabbos, to feel the closeness of G-d and to acknowledge Him, as it is written: Mizmor Shir L'Yom Ha'Shabbos. Tov L'Hodos La'Shem.*

Another issue raised about the words in the **לכה דודי: פיוט** concerns the order of the words in the line: **שמור וזכור בדבור אחד**.

מאור ושמש<sup>2</sup> דברים פרשת ואתחנן-שמור את יום השבת לקדשו וגו'. ובדברות הראשונות נאמר (שמות כ' ז') זכור את יום השבת וגו'. ויש להבין, מה שאנו אומרים בפזמון 'לכה דודי', שמור וזכור בדבור אחד וכו', ולמה שינה הפייטן לכתוב 'שמור' קודם 'זכור'. הענין, דאיתא (ברכות ח' א') לעולם יכנס אדם שני פתחים ואחר כך יתפלל, והרבה פרושים נאמרו על זה; ועיקר הפרושים של שני הפתחים הוא יראה ואהבה, שהם שני שערים ופתחים, שעל ידי זה יוכל להתפלל ותעלה תפילתו למעלה. כי צלותא בלא דחילו ורחימא לא פרתח לעילא. והיראה היא מדת מלכות - שמים, והוא השער לה' צדיקים יבואו בו, והיא הפתח ושער הראשון, ואחריו הוא השער האהבה. ואיתא בזוהר הקדוש (הקדמה ה ב) תרי שבתות; שבת דמעלי שבתא ושבת דיומא שבתא, ושמור הוא מדת מלכות שבת דמעלי שבתא, וזכור הוא יומא שבתא. ולפי זה שפיר יסד הפיוט שמור וזכור בדיבור אחד, ברישא שמור והדר זכור, כי יראת שמים הוא שער הראשון אשר צדיקים יבואו בו.

*Translation: In the first set of the Ten Commandments it is written (Shemos 20, 7) Zachor (remember) the day of Shabbos etc. We must try to understand the order of the words that we say in the poem of Lecha Dodi: Shomor V'Zachor were recited simultaneously. Why did the composer of the poem change the order*

2. Rabbi Kalonymos Kalman haLevi Epstein was born in Cracow in 1751 to his father R. Aharon. R. Kalonymos was a disciple of R. Elimelech of Lizensk, the Seer of Lublin, and other great Chassidic leaders. He died in 1823. His work Ma'or VaShemesh is considered one of the foundations of Chassidic thought. It was published in 1842 by his disciple R. Yisrael Hillel Westreic.

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of the words from how they appear in the Torah. Why did he place the word: *Shomor* before *Zachor*. The answer can be found in what was written in *Maseches Brachos 8,1*: a person should pass through two doorways before entering the synagogue to pray. Many explanations are provided for the instruction given by the *Gemara*. The best explanation is that the two doors represent two emotions, fear and love. They are each doors and entryways that one must pass through in order to properly pray and to have one's prayers reach heaven. Prayer without fear and love will not rise above. Fear is an attribute one feels towards a monarch. That is what was meant by the verse: this is the gate through which the righteous pass. That is the first entryway. Then comes the entryway of love. The *Zohar* teaches us that two *Shabbosim* exist; *Shabbos* of the night (Friday night) and *Shabbos* of the day. The word: *Shamor* represents G-d being the supreme Monarch. *Shabbos* at night represents that attribute of G-d. The word: *Zachor* represents *Shabbos* day. Accordingly, the composer of the poem put the words in correct order. We must first experience *Shomor* and then experience *Zachor*. Fear of G-d is the first door through which the righteous enter.

Some<sup>3</sup> argue that Rabbi Shlomo Alkabetz followed the רמב"ם's wording contained in his version of the middle ברכה of עשרה of שבת מוסף:

רמב"ם סדר תפילות נוסח הברכות האמצעיות—ברכה אמצעית של מוסף שבת, למשה צוית על הר סיני מצות שבת שמור וזכור ובו צויתנו י-י' א—להינו להקריב לך קרבן מוסף כראוי יהי רצון מלפניך י-י' א—להינו שתעלנו לארצנו וכו' ואת מוסף יום המנוח הזה נעשה ונקריב כו' עד על ידי משה עבדך ולא נתתו מלכנו לגויי הארצות ולא הנחלתנו מלכנו לעובדי אלילים גם במנוחתו לא ישכנו ערלים לבית ישראל נתתו זרע ישורון אשר בם בהרת המדת ימים אותו קראת א—להינו וא—להי אבותינו רצה נא במנוחתנו כו' עד ברוך אתה י-י' מקדש השבת.

The words: סוף מעשה במחשבה תחלה are another difficult line to understand. This is how Rabbi Samson Raphael Hirsch, זצ"ל, explains the phrase:

The Sabbath is as old as Creation itself. In fact, it is even older; it is not only *rosb* (first), but *kedem*, (ancient), for סוף מעשה וכו'. Man represents the ultimate goal of physical Creation. It was at man's feet that the Creator willed to lay His completed work so that man might administer it in a G-dly manner and in obedient service rendered of his own free choice. But if man is to discharge this mission faithfully, he is need of constant guidance and discipline, and it was the Sabbath that was charged with the task of supplying this guidance and spiritual training and thus providing an assurance that the goal originally envisioned in Creation would truly be fulfilled. Hence the Sabbath represents the ultimate purpose of Creation and, even as thought and intention always precede the planning of what is to be created, so, too, the Sabbath day existed as part of the Divine plan even before the actual work of creation was begun.

3. Rabbi Menashe Klein in his 'שו"ת משנה הלכות חלק ד' סימן לה'.