

S'lihah, (63)
אלכה ואשובה אל אישי הראשון
ALKA VASHUVAH EL ISHI HARISHON
Isaac b"r Judah Ibn Gayyat. (b. 1038 - 1089)
Zalman M. Schachter-Shalomi

I must return to my very first lover
Like an eye's pupil He kept me safe
Tall is my beloved like a cedar
I can't sleep when I think of Him

How he rescued me from vile hands
How He wed me in all new robes
Speaking to me in holy words
Honoring me with Sacred pact

Endowing me with ample boon
Amidst many joys, delights supreme
Our tryst He stocked for intimacy
Countless lasses in waiting He set to serve me
The choicest foods to fulfill His pledge

In His inner chambers He cleaved to me
While in the courtyards they spiced the air
My Royal Lover took me into His chambers.
And I, bathed to purity my scent arousing
He mounted our couch and between my breasts
He laid, embraced me and held me ...

And in the wink of an eye it happened
All broken - betrayed - as I went off
With attitude defiant, mocking, and dazed.

My Lover, now disengaged, was gone.
My guts wrenched, keening for my Dear One
What was it that I upset? What drove Him away?
He is gone now and no comfort left me.

How I sought Him to no avail,
called Him to no response,
Do turn back My Lord, I wailed,
He had gone and I waited in vain hope.

While my heart cried like a sad violin.

My eyes in tears that do not dry
I lost my dignity, I felt degraded
Besmirched and defiled, foul and dirty
Thrown, tossed about and despised.

Like a young widow I hoped
for the day of comfort
My vulnerable need has turned to frustration
Flames of longing have become a wall
O Mercy, Please, for one not pitied.

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**Come back, come back O Shulamit
Freed from your hurt, from Your desolation
Your Maker seeks to behold you, come quick
Lift your feet and swiftly come from Lebanon
We are reconciled, arouse your love again
Your Lover will restore you,**

**You shall know clearly the face of your flock
Zion, the glorious, grant her
the goodness of your desire
Your devotees will sing
and acclaim the adventure
Yes You heard my voice!
You did not avert Your Ear.**

Invocation before the sacred Union

From the writings of the Rebbe of Baghdad, Rabbi Yossef Hayyim
author of Ben Ish Hayy
He offered this prayer as a parallel to the most powerful Ana Bokoah
attributed to Rabbi Nehunia ben Haqqaneh. It is contained in his teachings
concerning the blossom blessing for Nissan. I sense from the text that it was
also meant to be recited before the holy mating.
(from the Maamar of blessing Nissan blossoms in the Ben Ish HAY
Haggadah

Oh, that the beautiful Presence
in endless compassion shed Light all radiant!

Oh, that Your Will, God Most Exalted
in sound and inflection encoded, manifest in us!

Oh, that the mating most total and sacred
in infinite greatness attain to the crowning!

We sprang from the Light-drop
of the womb of the Tzaddik, to grow to completion.

We entreat in this prayer the hope of our people,
that the blissfull fulfillment send us its blessing.

Oh, that the mating most holy, most sacred
be roused to its peak-point as all power is sweetened!

May the root of the Tzaddik, the way of the Sacred
find its completion right here and right now!

Through Time and Space Your glory shines majestic One.