

Y'did Ne-fesh

Y'did ne-fesh, av ha-ra-cha-man,  
m'shoch av-dach el r'tzo-nach.  
Ya-rutz av-dach k'mo a-yal,  
yish-ta-cha-veh mul ha-da-rach.  
Ki ye'e-rav lo y'di-du-tach  
mi-no-fet tzuf v'chol ta-am.

Ha-dur, Na-eh, Ziv ha-O-lam,  
naf-shi cho-lat a-ha-va-tach.  
A-na, Eil na, r'fa na la  
B'har-ot lah no-am zi-vach.  
Az tit-cha-zeik v'tit-ra-pei  
v'ha-y'tah lach shif-chat o-lam.

Va-tik, ye-he-mu ra-cha-me-cha.  
v'chus na al bein o-ha-vach.  
Ki zeh ka-mah nich-sof nich-saf  
li-r'ot b'tif-e-ret u-zach  
A-na, Ei-li, mach-mad li-bi,  
Chu-shah na, v'al tit-a-lam.

Hi-ga-leih na u-f'ros cha-viv a-lai  
et suk-kat sh'lo-mach.  
Ta-ir e-retz mi-k'-vo-dach  
na-gi-lah v'nis-m'chah bach.  
Ma-heir, a-huv, ki va mo-eid.  
V'cho-nei-ni ki-me'i o-lam.

יְדִיד נֶפֶשׁ

יְדִיד נֶפֶשׁ, אָב הַרְחֵמֵן  
מְשׁוֹף עֲבָדְךָ אֶל רְצוֹנְךָ.  
יְרוּץ עֲבָדְךָ כְּמוֹ אֵיל  
לְשִׁתְחִוָּה מִוֶּל הַדָּרֶךְ.  
כִּי יַעֲרֹב לוֹ יְדִירוֹתְךָ  
מִנְּפֶת צוּף וְכָל טֶעֶם:

הָדוּר, נְאֻה, זִיב הָעוֹלָם,  
נַפְשִׁי חוֹלַת אֲהַבְתְּךָ.  
אָנָּה, אֵל נָא, רַפָּא נָא לָהּ,  
בְּהִרְאוֹת לָהּ נֵעִם זִינְךָ.  
אֲז תִּתְחַזַּק וְתִתְרַפָּא,  
וְהִיְתָה לָךְ שְׂפַחַת עוֹלָם:

וְתִיק, יְהִמו רַחֲמֶיךָ  
וְחוּס נָא עַל בֶּן אוֹהֲבֶיךָ.  
כִּי זֶה כְּמֵה נִכְסֶיךָ נִכְסֶיךָ  
לְרְאוֹת בְּתַפְאֲרַת עֲזֶיךָ.  
אָנָּה, אֵלִי, מְחַמֵּד לִבִּי,  
חוֹשֶׁה נָא, וְאַל תִּתְעַלֵּם:

הַגִּלְה נָא וּפְרוֹשׁ, חֲבִיב, עָלַי  
אֶת סִכַּת שְׁלוֹמְךָ.  
תְּאִיר אֶרֶץ מְכַבֹּדְךָ  
נְגִילָה וְנִשְׁמְחָה בְּךָ.  
מְהֵר, אֲהוּב, כִּי בָּא מוֹעֵד  
וְחַנְּנֵי כִימֵי עוֹלָם:

Soul-mate

Soul-mate, Merciful Parent,  
draw Your servant to do Your will.  
Your servant will run like a ram,  
will bow down before Your splendor.  
For Your love is tastier  
than nectar or any imaginable delight.

You, pleasing in Splendor, Light of the World,  
my soul is love-sick for You.  
Please, God, heal her  
with the pleasure of Your light.  
Then she will be strengthened and healed  
and will be Your hand-maiden forever.<sup>1</sup>

Ancient One, let Your mercies be aroused.  
Have pity on Your beloved child,  
who has so longed  
to see the beauty of Your power.  
Pray, my God, my heart's desire,  
hurry, please, and do not hide.<sup>2</sup>

Reveal Yourself, Beloved, spread over me  
Your canopy of peace.  
Let the land be lit up with Your glory,  
let us rejoice and revel in You.  
Come quickly, my Love, the time has come.  
Show me Your grace as of old.

Many communities follow the Chasidic custom of beginning Kabbalat Shabbat with *Y'did Ne-fesh*, a love poem to God, written by Rabbi Eleazar Azikri, a sixteenth-century Kabbalist of Safed (Tz'fat). The first letters of the four verses form an acrostic, spelling out the four-letter name of God.

The poet speaks of God as parent, master, and especially lover, expressing a profound desire for union with the Divine Presence and asking for healing, mercy, and protection. The fourth verse expresses the poet's desire to be sheltered under God's canopy of peace, a theme that resonates with the *Hash-ki-vei-nu* prayer in the *Ma-a-riv* service.

The text given here is the original, based on the author's autograph manuscript. In Chasidic communities, another equally popular version has evolved, which contains some significant variants. Several alternatives are given below.

Y'did ne-fesh, av ha-ra-cha-man, אָב הַרְחֵמֵן  
m'shoch av-d'cha el r'tzo-ne-cha. מְשׁוֹף עֲבָדְךָ אֶל רְצוֹנְךָ.  
Ya-rutz av-d'cha k'mo a-yal, יְרוּץ עֲבָדְךָ כְּמוֹ אֵיל  
yish-ta-cha-veh mul ha-da-re-cha. לְשִׁתְחִוָּה מִוֶּל הַדָּרֶךְ.  
Te'e-rav lo y'di-du-te-cha תְּעַרְב לוֹ יְדִירוֹתְךָ  
mi-no-fet tzuf v'chol ta-am. מִנְּפֶת צוּף וְכָל טֶעֶם.

<sup>1</sup>Alternate version: *v'ha-y'tah lah sim-chat o-lam* וְהִיְתָה לָהּ שְׂפַחַת עוֹלָם (and she will rejoice in You forever).

<sup>2</sup>Alternative version: *Ei-leh cham-dah li-bi, chu-sah na v'al na tit-a-leim* אֵלֵה חֲמַדָּה לִבִּי חוֹשֶׁה נָא וְאַל נָא תִּתְעַלֵּם (These things my heart desires; have mercy and do not hide.)

Some communities also sing *Sha lom A-lei chem* (page 49) or *Shab-bat ha Mal kah* (page 47) at the start or conclusion of services.