

Psalm 95

L'chu n'ra-n'nah la-do-nai,
na-ri-ah l'tzur yish-ei-nu.
N'kad-mah fa-nav b'to-dah,
bi-z'mi-rot na-ri-a lo.

Ki eil ga-dol A-do-nai,
u-me-lech ga-dol al kol e-lo-him.
A-sher b'ya-do mech-k'rei a-retz,
v'to-a-fot ha-rim lo.

A-sher lo ha-yam v'hu a-sa-hu.
V'ya-be-shet ya-dav ya-tza-ru.
Bo-u, nish-ta-cha-veh, v'nich-ra-ah,
niv-r'chah li-fnei A-do-nai, o-sei-nu.

Ki hu E-lo-hei-nu,
va-a-nach-nu am mar-i-to,
v'tzon ya-do, ha-yom
im b'ko-lo tish-ma-u:

Al tak-shu l'av-chem ki-M'ri-vah,
k'yom Ma-sah ba-mid-bar,
a-sher ni-su-ni a-vo-tei-chem,
b'cha-nu-ni gam ra-u fa-o-li.

❖ Ar-ba'im sha-nah a-kut b'dor,
Va-o-mar am to-ei lei-vav heim,
v'heim lo ya-d'u d'ra-chai.
A-sher nish-ba-ti v'a-pi:
Im y'vo-un el m'nu-cha-ti.

לְכוּ נִרְנְנָה לַיהוָה
נְרִיעָה לְצוּר יִשְׁעֵנוּ:
נִקְדְּמָה פָנֵינוּ בְּתוֹדָה
בְּזִמְרוֹת נְרִיעַ לוֹ:

כִּי אֵל גָּדוֹל יְיָ
וּמֶלֶךְ גָּדוֹל עַל כָּל אֱלֹהִים:
אֲשֶׁר בְּיָדוֹ מַחְקְרֵי אָרֶץ
וְתוֹעֲפוֹת הָרִים לוֹ:

אֲשֶׁר לוֹ הַיָּם וְהוּא עָשָׂהוּ
וַיִּבְשֹׁת יַדָּיו יַצְרוּ:
בְּאוֹ נִשְׁתַּחֲוֶה וְנִכְרַעָה
נִבְרָכָה לְפָנָיו יְיָ עַשְׂנוּ:

כִּי הוּא אֱלֹהֵינוּ
וְאִנְחָנוּ עִם מַרְעִיתוֹ
וְצֹאן יָדוֹ, הַיּוֹם
אִם בְּקִלּוֹ תִשְׁמְעוּ:

אֵל תִּקְשׁוּ לְבַבְכֶם כַּמְרִיבָה
כִּיּוֹם מַסָּה בַּמִּדְבָּר:
אֲשֶׁר נִסּוּנִי אֲבוֹתֵיכֶם,
בְּחַנּוּנִי, גַּם רָאוּ פְעָלֵי:

❖ אַרְבָּעִים שָׁנָה אָקוּט בְּדוֹר
וְאָמַר עִם תַּעֲיֵי לְכַב הֵם
וְהֵם לֹא יָדְעוּ דְרָכָי:
אֲשֶׁר נִשְׁבַּעְתִּי בְּאַפִּי
אִם יִבְאוּן אֶל מְנוּחָתִי:

Psalm 95

Come, let us sing to Adonai,
let us shout out to the Rock of our salvation.
Let us receive Adonai's countenance with thanks,
with hymns let us shout out to God.

For a great god is Adonai,
a great ruler, above all other gods.
In whose hand are the depths of the earth,
and to whom the mountain peaks belong.

The sea is Yours, Adonai; You made it.
Your hands created the dry land.
Come, let us prostrate ourselves, bow down,
bend the knee before Adonai, our Maker.

For You, Adonai, are our God,
and we are the people You tend,
the flock of Your hand, if this day
we would only heed Your voice:

Do not harden your heart as at Merivah,
as on the day of Massah in the wilderness¹,
when your ancestors tried Me,
they tested Me, though they had seen My deeds.

❖ For forty years I loathed that generation,
I said: "They are a people whose hearts go astray,
they do not know My ways."
So, I vowed in my anger:
"Never shall they enter my resting place."

Welcoming Shabbat

Kabbalat Shabbat, the special service to welcome the Sabbath, was introduced by the kabbalists of Safed (Tz'fat) in the 16th Century. These Jewish mystics would re-enact a teaching from Talmud, relating how our sages would dress in their best clothes and walk in the fields to welcome the Sabbath queen.

Rabbi Moshe Cordovero, one of this group, selected seven psalms (95, 96, 97, 98, 99, 29, and 92) to comprise the Kabbalat Shabbat Service. They represent the six working days and Shabbat. His brother-in-law, Shlomo Alkabetz, wrote *L'chah Do-di*, a poem comparing Shabbat to a bride.

When Shabbat coincides with or occurs during a festival, the six preliminary psalms and *L'chah Do-di* are omitted; on these occasions the service begins with Psalm 92, the Psalm for Shabbat.

If the service you are attending allows time for reciting all seven psalms, you may wish to use them as a meditation. Recall with each of the first six psalms each work day of the week now ending, then put that day aside in your mind, to help you prepare for Shabbat's arrival.

The *Kabbalat Shabbat* service begins with *Psalm 95, L'chu n'ra-n'nah*, a psalm in appreciation for all that God has done for us. It ends with God warning us not to "go astray in the wilderness" as our ancestors did, but rather to follow God's path and heed God's voice.

¹ *Merivah* means "quarreling" and *Massah* means "testing", a reference to Exodus 17:7, in which the name *Massah u-Merivah* is given to one of the places in the desert where the Israelites complained about the lack of water.