

שַׁעַר אֲשֶׁר נִסְגָּר - *Sha'ar Asher Nisgar*

R. Solomon Ibn Gabirol

About the Piyut

Shaar Asher Nisgar is a Piyut in the *reshut* tradition, written by R. Shlomo Ibn Gabirol, one of the greatest Spanish poets. This Piyut is sung in the Moroccan Jewish community as part of the Bakkashot tradition--singing Piyutim at dawn on Shabbat morning--for the Torah portions, *Va'yera*, *Chayei Sarah*, and *Va'yetze*. It is sung with a different melody on each of these Shabbatot, in accordance with the corresponding Torah portion. In the Iraqi Jewish community, this Piyut is traditionally recited on the eve of Hoshana Rabbah. The poem is a love song that expresses deep longing between two lovers, using language that echoes the of Song of Songs.

Hebrew Text

<i>Sha'ar asher nisgar / Kuma petahehu</i>	קוּמָה פְּתַחְהוּ	שַׁעַר אֲשֶׁר נִסְגָּר
<i>Utzevi asher barah / Elai Shelahehu</i>	אֵלַי שְׁלַחְהוּ	וּצְבִי אֲשֶׁר בָּרַח
<i>Leyom bo-akha adai / lalin bevein shadai</i>	לְלִיּוֹן בְּבֵין שָׂדֵי	לְיוֹם בּוֹאֲךָ עָדִי
<i>Sham reihakha hatov / Alai tenihehu</i>	עָלֵי תִנְיַחְהוּ	שָׁם רִיחְךָ הַטּוֹב
<i>Ma ze demut dodekh / kala yefe-fiya</i>	כַּלָּה יְפֵה-פְּיָה	מָה זֶה דְמוּת דְדוֹדְךָ
<i>Ki tomri elai / Shilha vekahehu</i>	שְׁלַחְהוּ וְקַחְהוּ	כִּי תֹאמְרֵי אֵלַי
<i>Hahu yefe ayin / Adom vetov ro-i</i>	אָדָם וְטוֹב רֹאֵי	הֲהוּא יְפֵה עֵינַי
<i>Re'I vedodi ze / Kuma meshahehu</i>	קוּמָה מְשַׁחְהוּ	רַעֵי וְדוּדֵי זֶה

English Translation

The gate long shut ---
Get up and throw it wide;

The stag long fled---
Send him to my side.

When one day you come
To lie between my breasts,

That day your scent
Will cling to me like wine.

How shall I know his face, O lovely bride, The lover you are asking me to send?

A ruddy face, and lovely eyes?
A handsome man to see?

Aye, that's my love! Aye that's my friend! Anoint that one for me.

Recording by Meitarey David Ensemble