

Day 43

# PILGRIMAGE OF GRACE

MATRIMONY



## Lecha Dodi (by Gabriella Tzin)

“Lecha Dodi” is translated into English as “Come my Beloved,” and it is a traditional Jewish song that is part of the Kabbalat Shabbat service held on Friday nights. It was written in the sixteenth century by Shlomo Halevi Alkabetz, who later joined the Kabbalistic movement in Tzfat.

The idea of Shabbat being considered a bride was further elaborated by the Kabbalists of Tzfat towards the end of the sixteenth century, who incorporated the tradition of reciting special psalms before the start of Shabbat on Friday nights. By the twelfth century, a custom was established to recite Psalm 92 as a way of welcoming the incoming Shabbat. The group of Jewish mystics in Tzfat, however, took this practice a step further.

They were known to dress in all white clothing and gather in the fields as the sun started to set on Friday evening. They would commence their Shabbat wedding ceremony by singing six additional psalms, each one representing a different day of the week. After that, they would welcome the coming of Shabbat the bride with the song, “Lecha Dodi.”

The song itself is a beautiful compilation of passages from the Bible, references of Jerusalem, the Messiah, and the Jewish people, prophecies from Isaiah, as well as hints of Talmudic and Midrashic ideology. There are numerous melodies that were written for this song from around the world, each tune differing slightly depending on the culture and sect of Judaism.

Despite the origin of this song being deeply rooted in Kabbalah, “Lecha Dodi” and the depiction of Shabbat as a bride both serve as unique ways to remember the sanctity and beauty of this special day.

## The English translation:

*Come my Beloved  
to greet the bride  
The Sabbath presence  
let us welcome!*

*'Observe' and 'Remember'  
both uttered as one  
The One and Only God  
made us hear  
Hashem is one  
and His Name is one  
for renown, for splendor  
and for praise*

*Come my Beloved ...  
To welcome the Sabbath  
come let us go  
for it is the  
source of blessing  
from the beginning  
from antiquity  
she was honored  
last in deed but  
first in thought*

*Come my Beloved ...*

*O Sanctuary of the King  
royal city  
Arise and depart  
from amid the upheaval  
too long have you dwelled  
in the valley of weeping  
He will shower  
compassion upon you*

*Come my Beloved ...*

*Shake off the dust arise!  
Don your splendid clothes  
My people  
through the son of Jesse  
the Bethlehemite!  
Drew near to my soul  
redeem it!*

*Wake up! Wake up!  
For your light has come  
rise up and shine  
Awaken, awaken,  
utter a song  
The glory of Hashem  
is revealed on you*

*Come my Beloved ...*

*Feel not ashamed  
be not humiliated  
Why are you downcast?  
Why are you disconsolate?  
In you will My people's  
afflicted find shelter  
As the City is built  
upon its hilltop*

*Come my Beloved ...*

*May your oppressors  
be downtrodden  
And may those who  
devoured you  
be cast far off  
Your God will rejoice  
over you  
Like a groom's rejoicing  
over his bride*

*Come my Beloved ...*

*Rightward and leftward  
you shall spread  
out mightily  
and you shall extol  
the might of Hashem  
through the man  
descended from Peretz  
Then we shall be  
glad and mirthful*

*Come my Beloved ...*

*Enter in peace*

*O crown of her husband  
Even in joyous song  
and good cheer  
Among the faithful  
of the treasured nation*

*Enter, O bride!*

*Enter, O bride!*

*Come my Beloved ...*

## **What is Kabbalah?**

- Kabbalah is the Hebrew word for 'receiving' and is the mystical branch of Jewish wisdom. It consists of teachings meant to help finite mortal human beings understand their relationship with the infinite, immortal, and unfathomable Creator.
- Seeking understanding of the existence and relationships between things are a pathway to spiritual growth. Much of this 'path' uses methods of contemplation, which explores the nature of the world and human beings, as well as the meaning of our existence. Many come to an intimate and personal relationship and knowledge of God.
- Note: Many people who make reference to Kabbalah, are not referring to the traditional Jewish mystical prayer and tradition, but non-Jewish New Age, magic and the occult.



## Easter Exultet (Catholic Church, Latin Rite)

It is truly right and just, with ardent love of mind and heart  
and with devoted service of our voice,  
to acclaim our God invisible, the almighty Father,  
and Jesus Christ, our Lord, his Son, his Only Begotten.

Who for our sake paid Adam's debt to the eternal Father,  
and, pouring out his own dear Blood,  
wiped clean the record of our ancient sinfulness.

These, then, are the feasts of Passover,  
in which is slain the Lamb, the one true Lamb,  
whose Blood anoints the doorposts of believers.

This is the night,  
when once you led our forebears, Israel's children,  
from slavery in Egypt  
and made them pass dry-shod through the Red Sea.

This is the night  
that with a pillar of fire  
banished the darkness of sin.

This is the night  
that even now, throughout the world,  
sets Christian believers apart from worldly vices  
and from the gloom of sin,  
leading them to grace  
and joining them to his holy ones.

This is the night,  
when Christ broke the prison-bars of death  
and rose victorious from the underworld.

Our birth would have been no gain,  
had we not been redeemed.

O wonder of your humble care for us!  
O love, O charity beyond all telling,  
to ransom a slave you gave away your Son!

O truly necessary sin of Adam,  
destroyed completely by the Death of Christ!

O happy fault  
that earned so great, so glorious a Redeemer!

O truly blessed night,  
worthy alone to know the time and hour  
when Christ rose from the underworld!

This is the night  
of which it is written:  
The night shall be as bright as day,  
dazzling is the night for me,  
and full of gladness.

The sanctifying power of this night  
dispels wickedness, washes faults away,  
restores innocence to the fallen, and joy to mourners,  
drives out hatred, fosters concord, and brings down the mighty.

On this, your night of grace, O holy Father,  
accept this candle, a solemn offering,  
the work of bees and of your servants' hands,  
an evening sacrifice of praise,  
this gift from your most holy Church.

But now we know the praises of this pillar,  
which glowing fire ignites for God's honor,  
a fire into many flames divided,  
yet never dimmed by sharing of its light,  
for it is fed by melting wax,  
drawn out by mother bees  
to build a torch so precious.

O truly blessed night,  
***when things of heaven are wed to those of earth,  
and divine to the human.***

Therefore, O Lord,  
we pray you that this candle,  
hallowed to the honor of your name,  
may persevere undimmed,  
to overcome the darkness of this night.

Receive it as a pleasing fragrance,  
and let it mingle with the lights of heaven.

May this flame be found still burning  
by the Morning Star:  
the one Morning Star who never sets,  
Christ your Son,  
who, coming back from death's domain,  
has shed his peaceful light on humanity,  
and lives and reigns for ever and ever.

R. Amen.

