Ashir Beshir Ḥadash

**Introduction:** This *zemer* for the Sabbath describes everything God created during the six days, culminating in the seventh day of rest. The joy and the sweetness of Torah study on the Sabbath are emphasized. The faithful keepers of the Sabbath will see the rebuilt Temple and return to Zion. While exile is compared to a burning fire, the poem ends with depictions of the reinvented service and sacrifice in the Temple.

**Category:** Zemirot (Songs)  
  
**Genre:** Zemer for the Sabbath  
  
**Occasion:** Sabbath  
  
**Name:** אשיר בשיר חדש, Ashir Beshir Ḥadash  
  
**Composer**: Yosef ben Nisan Poziemski  
  
**Location:** Święte Jezioro, Lithuania, 17th century  
  
**Acrostic:** אני יוסף בן ניסן חזק “I am Yosef son of Nisan, be strong!”  
  
**Source:** Vilna Siddur, Volume 4, page 101  
  
**Visual Representation of Meter:** – – v – – – / – – v – –  **Description of Meter:** Each line consists of two half-lines: the first half-line contains two full vowels, followed by a vocal sheva and a full vowel, followed by two more full vowels. The second half-line consists of two full vowels, followed by a vocal sheva and a full vowel, followed by one more full vowel. **Source:** Vilna Siddur, Volume IV, p. 98  
  
**Davidson number:** א 7932  
  
**Karaite origin:** Yes

**About the Author:** Yosef ben Nisan Poziemski was born in Święte Jezioro in southwestern Lithuania. Yosef’s father, Nisan, was murdered, possibly during the Cossack attacks in 1654‒1655, when the important Karaite center of Troki, Poland-Lithuania, was destroyed. As a martyr, the name of Yosef’s father is traditionally followed by the words “May God avenge his blood”.

In the heading of his poem in the Vilna Siddur, Poziemski is introduced as the author of “opinions” (Heb. *nimmuḳim*) on *Sefer Ha-mivḥar*,the famous commentary on the Torah by the Byzantine Karaite Aharon ben Yosef. In addition, he worked as a *sofer*, a copyist of religious texts, and a communal secretary during Karaite administrative meetings. In a letter dated in 1674, Yosef is asked to decorate with bright colors a liturgical text for one Moshe ben Shemu’el in Szaty (Lith. Šėta). The customer mentions Yosef’s son, Nisan, and his daughter, Sesonit, and he praises Yosef’s scholarship of rabbinic literature and Kabbalah.

**Sources**: *Encyclopaedia Judaica*; Mann, *Texts and Studies*.

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| Ashir beshir ḥadash : lifné adonai  Nafshi, nafshi ‘im levavi: yaḡil badonai. | אָ֒שִׁיר בְּשִׁיר חָדָשׁ : לִפְנֵי יְהֹוָה  נַפְשִׁי : נַפְשִׁי עִם לְבָבִי : יָגִיל בַּיהֹוָה: |
| I shall sing a new song before Adonai!  My soul—my soul, with my heart, will rejoice in Adonai! | |
| Nafshi, nafshi ‘im levavi: yaḡil badonai. | נַפְשִׁי : נַפְשִׁי עִם לְבָבִי : יָגִיל בַּיהֹוָה: |
| My soul—my soul, with my heart, will rejoice in Adonai! | |
| Nissa veshochen ‘ad : hifli beḥochma  Livro beru’aḥ piv : erets veruma  Yammim veromes bam: ḥayya vehema  Ulchol asher ḥafets : ‘asa adonai. | נִ֒שָֹּא וְשֹׁכֵן עַד : הִפְלִיא בְּחָכְמָה  לִבְרֹא בְּרוּחַ פִּיו : אֶרֶץ וְרוּמָה  יַמִּים וְרוֹמֵשֹ בָּם : חַיָּה בְהֵמָה  וּלְכָל אֲשֶׁר חָפֵץ : עָשָֹה יְהֹוָה: |
| He who is high aloft, and eternally dwells, made miracles with wisdom  Creating the earth and the heaven by the breath of His mouth,  The seas and all that crawls in them, wild and domestic beasts.  Whatever Adonai desired, He made. | |
| Nafshi, nafshi ‘im levavi: yaḡil badonai. | נַפְשִׁי : נַפְשִׁי עִם לְבָבִי : יָגִיל בַּיהֹוָה: |
| My soul—my soul, with my heart, will rejoice in Adonai! | |
| Yatsar berov ḥochma : adam le‘ovdo  Ḳaddesh kemal’achav : et shem kevodo  Ma‘asé vereshit kol : ḥatam beyado  Tsa‘ir verav ‘olam : samo adonai. | יָ֒צַר בְּרֹב חָכְמָה : אָדָם לְעָבְדוֹ  קַדֵּשׁ כְּמַלְאָכָיו : אֶת שֵׁם כְּבוֹדו*ֹ*  מַעֲשֵֹה בְרֵאשִׁית כֹּל : חָתַם בְּיָדוֹ  צָעִיר וְרַב עוֹלָם : שָׂמוֹ יְהֹוָה: |
| With great wisdom, He created man to serve Him,  To sanctify His glorious name like His angels;  With His hand, He sealed all creation;  Adonai placed small and great alike in the universe. | |
| Nafshi, nafshi ‘im levavi: yaḡil badonai. | נַפְשִׁי : נַפְשִׁי עִם לְבָבִי : יָגִיל בַּיהֹוָה: |
| My soul—my soul, with my heart, will rejoice in Adonai! | |
| Yosher pela’ot el : gadol venora  En mi yesha‘er en : lahen ḥaḳira  Haflé me’od pelé : derech gedura  Gadol venora hu : ma‘asé adonai. | יֹ֒שֶׁר פְּלָאוֹתאֵל : גָּדוֹל וְנוֹרָא  אֵין מִי יְשַׁעֵר אֵין : לָהֶן חֲקִירָה  הַפְלֵא מְאוֹד פֶּלֶא : דֶּרֶךְ גְּדוּרָה  גָּדוֹל וְנוֹרָאהוּא : מַעֲשֵֹה יְהֹוָה: |
| The upright miracles of the Great and Awesome God:  No one can count them; they cannot be fathomed!  What a marvelous work, a walled path!  Great and awesome are the deeds of Adonai! | |
| Nafshi, nafshi ‘im levavi: yaḡil badonai. | נַפְשִׁי : נַפְשִׁי עִם לְבָבִי : יָגִיל בַּיהֹוָה: |
| My soul—my soul, with my heart, will rejoice in Adonai! | |

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| Vayhi kechallot tsur : kol hammelacha  Tiḳḳen lema‘aracha : mul ma‘aracha  Hishlim beshesh yamim: kol kahalacha  Uvyom shevi‘i bo : shavat adonai. | וַ֒יְהִי כְּכַלּוֹת צוּר : כָּל הַמְּלָאכָה  תִּקֵּן לְמַעֲרָכָה : מוּל מַעֲרָכָה  הִשְׁלִים בְּשֵׁשׁ יָמִים : כֹּל כַּהֲלָכָה  וּבְיוֹם שְׁבִיעִי בּוֹ : שָׁבַת יְהֹוָה: |
| When the Rock finished all His work,  He arranged battleline facing battleline.  He completed everything in six days, as proper,  And on the seventh day, Adonai ceased. | |
| Nafshi, nafshi ‘im levavi: yaḡil badonai. | נַפְשִׁי : נַפְשִׁי עִם לְבָבִי : יָגִיל בַּיהֹוָה: |
| My soul—my soul, with my heart, will rejoice in Adonai! | |
| Sod hash-shevi‘i ma : yaḳar lemaskil  Dimyon lenafshenu : de‘a lehaskil  Toch shesh ḳetsavot : hi mirba lehachil  Nishmat bené adam : hi ner adonai. | ס֒וֹד הַשְּׁבִיעִי מַה : יָּקָר לְמַשְֹכִּיל  דִּמְיוֹן לְנַפְשֵׁנוּ : דֵּעָה לְהַשְֹכִּיל  תּוֹךְ שֵׁשׁ קְצָוֹת הִיא : מִרְבָּה לְהָכִיל  נִשְׁמַת בְּנֵי אָדָם : הִיא נֵר יְהֹוָה: |
| How precious is the seventh secret to the enlightened,  Equated to our soul, knowledge to be learned,  Inside the six edges, it holds so much!  The spirit of man is the lamp of Adonai. | |
| Nafshi, nafshi ‘im levavi: yaḡil badonai. | נַפְשִׁי : נַפְשִׁי עִם לְבָבִי : יָגִיל בַּיהֹוָה: |
| My soul—my soul, with my heart, will rejoice in Adonai! | |
| Pannaḡ vetsuf tora : yimtaḳ lenafshi  Beyom menuḥa ki : hu yom ḳedoshi  Mikkol ‘amali vo : etsé laḥofshi  Eshev beḥoshech az : or li adonai. | פַּ֒נַּג וְצוּף תּוֹרָה : יִמְתַּק לְנַפְשִׁי  בְּיוֹם מְנוּחָה כִּי : הוּא יוֹם קְדוֹשִׁי  מִכָּל עֲמָלִי בוֹ : אֵצֵא לַחָפְשִׁי  אֵשֵׁב בְּחֹשֶׁךְ אָז : אוֹר לִי יְהֹוָה: |
| The balsam and sap of the Torah will be sweet for my soul,  On the day of rest, for it is my holy day.  On that day, I shall be freed from all toil,  As I sit in the darkness, Adonai will be my light. | |
| Nafshi, nafshi ‘im levavi: yaḡil badonai. | נַפְשִׁי : נַפְשִׁי עִם לְבָבִי : יָגִיל בַּיהֹוָה: |
| My soul—my soul, with my heart, will rejoice in Adonai! | |
| Beyom shevi‘i vo : sechel ve’ora  Nasim leroshenu : keter betora  Ki vo beyom ‘oneḡ : nefesh berura  Geshem leval ya‘tsor : hiz-hir adonai. | בְּ֒יוֹם שְׁבִיעִי בוֹ : שֵֹכֶל וְאוֹרָה  נָ֒שִֹים לְרֹאשֵׁנוּ : כֶּתֶר בְּתוֹרָה  כִּי בוֹ בְּיוֹם עֹנֶג : נֶפֶשׁ בְּרוּרָה  גֶּשֶׁם לְבַל יַעְצוֹר : הִזְהִיר יְהֹוָה: |
| On the seventh day, there is understanding and light!  We shall adorn our heads with the crown of Torah,  For on that day of delight, the soul is pure—  The physical [world] shall not impede, warned Adonai. | |
| Nafshi, nafshi ‘im levavi: yaḡil badonai. | נַפְשִׁי : נַפְשִׁי עִם לְבָבִי : יָגִיל בַּיהֹוָה: |
| My soul—my soul, with my heart, will rejoice in Adonai! | |
| Notseré le‘edotav : simḥu verinna  Yom zé asher berach: shochen me‘ona  Sodot te‘udot hen : lanu lemana  Shabbat ḳero miḳra : tsivva adonai | נֹ֒צְרֵי לְעֵדוֹתָיו : שִֹמְחוּ בְרִנָּה  י֒וֹם זֶה אֲשֶׁר בֵּרַךְ : שׁוֹכֵן מְעֹנָה  ס֒וֹדוֹת תְּעוּדוֹת הֵן : לָנ֒וּ לְמָנָה  שַׁבָּת קְרֹא מִקְרָא : צִוָּה יְהֹוָה: |
| You who observe His decrees, rejoice cheerfully,  On the day blessed by the One dwelling above.  Esoteric teachings will be our portion,  Proclaim the Sabbath solemn, commanded Adonai! | |
| Nafshi, nafshi ‘im levavi: yaḡil badonai. | נַפְשִׁי : נַפְשִׁי עִם לְבָבִי : יָגִיל בַּיהֹוָה: |
| My soul—my soul, with my heart, will rejoice in Adonai! | |
| Ḥashim leḳaddesh et: shabbat besimḥa  Lishmor velanu’aḥ : mikkol melacha  Yiru yesod tsiyyon : sham habberacha  Ya‘alu berov simḥa : har bet adonai. | חָ֒שִׁים לְקַדֵּשׁ אֶת : שַׁבָּת בְּשִֹמְחָה  לִשְׁמֹר וְלָנוּחַ : מִכָּל מְלָאכָה  יִרְאוּ יְסוֹד צִיּוֹן : שָׁם הַבְּרָכָה  יַעֲלוּ בְּרֹב שִֹמְחָה : הַר בֵּית יְהֹוָה: |
| Those who rush to hallow the Sabbath with joy,  To observe it and rest from all work,  Will see the foundation of Zion: there is the blessing!  They will jubilantly ascend the mount of the Temple of Adonai. | |
| Nafshi, nafshi ‘im levavi: yaḡil badonai. | נַפְשִׁי : נַפְשִׁי עִם לְבָבִי : יָגִיל בַּיהֹוָה: |
| My soul—my soul, with my heart, will rejoice in Adonai! | |
| Zemer veshir ḥadash: levi yeshorer  Ḳorban bedam sa‘ir : kohen ye‘orer  Me’esh yeḳod galut : libbi yeḳarer  Birot kevo chavod : el bet adonai. | זֶ֒מֶר וְשִׁיר חָדָשׁ : לֵוִי יְשׁוֹרֵר  קָ֒רְבָּן בְּדַם שָֹעִיר : כֹּהֵן יְעוֹרֵר  מֵאֵשׁ יְקוֹד גָּלוּת : לִבִּי יְקָרֵר  בִּרְאוֹת כְּבוֹא כָבוֹד : אֶל בֵּית יְהֹוָה: |
| The Levite will sing a hymn and a new song.  The priest will rouse up a sacrifice with the blood of the goat.  My heart will cool down from the burning fire of exile,  Beholding the arrival of Glory to the Temple of Adonai. | |
| Nafshi, nafshi ‘im levavi: yaḡil badonai. | נַפְשִׁי : נַפְשִׁי עִם לְבָבִי : יָגִיל בַּיהֹוָה: |
| My soul—my soul, with my heart, will rejoice in Adonai! | |
| Amen yehi ratson : me’el mehera  Livnot beyamenu : et bet beḥira  Az shai naḳriva : minḥa tehora  Venishtaḥavé artsa : lifné adonai. | אָמֵן יְהִי רָצוֹן : מֵאֵל מְהֵרָה  לִבְנוֹת בְּיָמֵינוּ : אֶת בֵּית בְּחִירָה  אָז שַׁי נַקְרִיבָה : מִנְחָה טְהוֹרָה  וְנִשְׁתַּחֲוֶה אַרְצָה : לִפְנֵי יְהֹוָה: |
| Amen, may God’s will be soon done:  To build the chosen Temple in our days!  Then we will sacrifice the pure oblation.  We shall bow down to the earth before Adonai! | |
| Nafshi, nafshi ‘im levavi: yaḡil badonai. | נַפְשִׁי : נַפְשִׁי עִם לְבָבִי : יָגִיל בַּיהֹוָה: |
| My soul—my soul, with my heart, will rejoice in Adonai! | |
| Kakkatuv: Vehishtaḥavu ‘am ha’arets petaḥ hash-sha‘ar ha-hu bash-shabbatot uveḥodashim lifné adonai. | כַּכָּתוּב: וְהִשְׁתַּחֲו֣וּ עַם־הָאָ֗רֶץ פֶּ֚תַח הַשַּׁ֣עַר הַה֔וּא בַּשַּׁבָּת֖וֹת וּבֶחֳדָשִׁ֑ים לִפְנֵ֖י יְהֹוָה (יחזקאל מ,ג): |
| As it is written: The people of the land shall bow down before Adonai on Sabbaths and new moons at the entrance of the same gate (Ez. 46:3). | |