שבת מנוחה, Shabbat Menuḥa

**About the Poem:** A poem for the Sabbath day, inspired by the biblical commandment to remember and observe the Sabbath day (Ex. 20:8). The day is a gift and inheritance to the children of the Three Patriarchs.

**Category:** Zemirot (Songs)  
  
**Genre:** Zemer for the Sabbath  
  
**Occasion:** Sabbath  
  
**Name:** שבת מנוחה, Shabbat Menuḥa  
  
**Composer**: Simḥa son of Shelomo Ha-ḳusdini  
  
**Location:** Eupatoria, Crimea; Istanbul, Ottoman Empire

**Date:** Died 1810  
  
**Acrostic:** שמחה בן שלמה חזק, “Simḥa son of Shelomo, be strong!”  
  
**Description of Meter:** Eight syllables per line, with each sheva counting as a full syllable.  
  
**Fixed word:** שבת, “Sabbath”  
  
**Source:** Vilna Siddur, Volume 4, page 110  
  
**Davidson number:** ש 331  
  
**Karaite origin:** Yes  
  
**About the Author:** There are several Karaite scholars by the name of Simḥa ben Shelomo; however, according to Jacob Mann (*Texts and Studies*, p. 317), the author of the poem *Shabbat Menuḥa* was the Karaite scholar who was born in Eupatoria (Gozlow/Gözlewe) in the Crimean Peninsula and studied under Simḥa Yitsḥaḳ Lutski. After the Russian invasion of Crimea in 1772, he fled to Istanbul; his epithet “Ḳusdini” means “of Ḳusdina”—i.e., Constantinople (Istanbul). His wife, Berucha, was the sister of the Crimean scholar Yitsḥaḳ ben Shelomo (1755–1826), the author of *Or Ha-levana* (“The Light of the Moon,” Zhitomir, 1872) on the Karaite calendar reform.

Simḥa ben Shelomo corresponded with the Karaites in Damascus, Crimea, Jerusalem, and Cairo. Some of the correspondence deals with the rebuilding of the Karaite synagogue in Hasköy, Istanbul, after its destruction in a fire. In addition, these letters mention that his wife and their two sons, Shelomo and Yehuda, died prematurely, which caused him great anguish. Simḥa authored several literary works, including a commentary on the philosophical work *‘Ets Ḥayyim* by Aharon ben Eliyahu (c. 1328–1369), an exposition on ritual slaughter, and a commentary on the Ten Principles of Karaite Jewish faith.

**Sources**: Jacob Mann, *Texts and Studies*.

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| Shabbat menuḥa ve’ora Mattana hi me’el nora Halelu ki tov zammera Mizmor shir leyom hash-shabbat. | שַׁ֒בָּת מְנוּחָה וְאוֹרָה  מַתָּנָה הִיא מֵאֵל נוֹרָא  הַלְלוּ כִּי טוֹב זַמְּרָה  מִזְמוֹר שִׁיר לְיוֹם הַשַּׁבָּת: |
| The Sabbath day is contentment and light,  a gift from the awesome God.  Praise Him! For it is good to sing  the psalm, the song for the Sabbath day. | |
| Halelu ki tov zammera  Mizmor shir leyom hash-shabbat. | הַלְלוּ כִּי טוֹב זַמְּרָה  מִזְמוֹר שִׁיר לְיוֹם הַשַּׁבָּת: |
| Praise Him! For it is good to sing  the psalm, the song for the Sabbath day. | |
| Mikkol yamim hi ḥashuva Vetocho ratsuf ahava Sason simḥa yimmatsé vah Ki ḳodesh shabbaton shabbat. | מִ֒כָּל יָמִים הִיא חֲשׁוּבָה  וְתוֹכוֹ רָצוּף אַהֲבָה  שָׂשׂוֹן שִׂמְחָה יִמָּצֵא בָהּ  כִּי קֹדֶשׁ שַׁבָּתוֹן שַׁבָּת: |
| Out of all the days, it is the noblest!  Within, it is decked with love.  You will find joy and delight on it,  for it is the holy restful Sabbath. | |
| Halelu ki tov zammera  Mizmor shir leyom hash-shabbat. | הַלְלוּ כִּי טוֹב זַמְּרָה  מִזְמוֹר שִׁיר לְיוֹם הַשַּׁבָּת: |
| Praise Him! For it is good to sing  the psalm, the song for the Sabbath day. | |
| Ḥannun el baruch umvorach Leḥem yomayim bo ‘arach Liḳro ‘oneḡ ‘al ken berach Adonai et yom hash-shabbat. | חַ֒נּוּן אֵל בָּרוּךְ וּמְבֹרָךְ  לֶחֶם יוֹמַיִם בּוֹ עָרָךְ  לִקְרֹא עוֹנֶג עַל כֵּן בֵּרַךְ יְהֹוָה אֶת יוֹם הַשַּׁבָּת: |
| The merciful God, blessed and extolled,  prepared two days’ bread for that day,  To call it a delight.  Therefore, Adonai blessed the Sabbath day. | |
| Halelu ki tov zammera  Mizmor shir leyom hash-shabbat. | הַלְלוּ כִּי טוֹב זַמְּרָה  מִזְמוֹר שִׁיר לְיוֹם הַשַּׁבָּת: |
| Praise Him! For it is good to sing  the psalm, the song for the Sabbath day. | |
| Hagguf bo yimtsa menuḥa Birot ki hayeta harevaḥa Gam nefesh tosif tet koḥah Leḳaddesh et yom hash-shabbat. | הַ֒גּוּף בּוֹ יִמְצָא מְנוּחָה  בִּרְאוֹת כִּי הָיְתָה הָרְוָחָה  גַּם נֶפֶשׁ תּוֹסִיף תֵּת כּוֹחָהּ  לְקַדֵּשׁ אֶת יוֹם הַשַּׁבָּת: |
| On it, the body finds rest  and sees that there is relief.  The soul will carry on yielding its strength  to hallow the Sabbath day! | |
| Halelu ki tov zammera  Mizmor shir leyom hash-shabbat. | הַלְלוּ כִּי טוֹב זַמְּרָה  מִזְמוֹר שִׁיר לְיוֹם הַשַּׁבָּת: |
| Praise Him! For it is good to sing   the psalm, the song for the Sabbath day. | |
| Baḥar el shochen me’onai Bené sheloshet etanai Shim‘u uru ki adonai Natan lachem et yom hash-shabbat. | בָּ֒חַר אֵל שׁוֹכֵן מְעוֹנָי  בְּנֵי שְׁלֹשֶׁת אֵיתָנָי  שִׁמְעוּ וּרְאוּ כִּי יְהֹוָה  נָתַן לָכֶם אֶת יוֹם הַשַּׁבָּת: |
| The One dwelling above chose  the children of my three noble ones.  Hear and learn how Adonai  gave you the Sabbath day! | |
| Halelu ki tov zammera  Mizmor shir leyom hash-shabbat. | הַלְלוּ כִּי טוֹב זַמְּרָה  מִזְמוֹר שִׁיר לְיוֹם הַשַּׁבָּת: |
| Praise Him! For it is good to sing  the psalm, the song for the Sabbath day. | |
| Niz-har bezachor veshamor Sodo nodef kitsror hammor ‘Al ken ḥova lanu lishmor Vela‘asot et yom hash-shabbat. | נִ֒זְהָר בְּזָכוֹר וְשָׁמוֹר  סוֹדוֹ נוֹדֵף כִּצְרוֹר הַמּוֹר  עַל כֵּן חוֹבָה לָנוּ לִשְׁמֹר  וְלַעֲשׂוֹת אֶת יוֹם הַשַּׁבָּת: |
| For those that are careful about *remember* and *observe*,  his secret will waft like a bundle of myrrh!  Thus, it is our duty to keep  and observe the Sabbath day | |
| Halelu ki tov zammera  Mizmor shir leyom hash-shabbat. | הַלְלוּ כִּי טוֹב זַמְּרָה  מִזְמוֹר שִׁיר לְיוֹם הַשַּׁבָּת: |
| Praise Him! For it is good to sing  the psalm, the song for the Sabbath day. | |
| Shelaḥo ha’el bechavod Menuḥa hayyom me‘avod Ki sheshet yamim ta‘avod Veyom hash-shevi‘i shabbat. | שְׁ֒לָ֒חוֹ הָאֵל בְּכָבוֹד  מְ֒נוּחָה הַ֒יּוֹם מֵעֲבוֹד  כִּי שֵׁשֶׁת יָמִים תַּעֲבוֹד  וְיוֹם הַשְּׁבִיעִי שַׁבָּת: |
| God in His glory sent this:  relief from labor on this day!  For six days, you may work  and the seventh day is the Sabbath. | |
| Halelu ki tov zammera  Mizmor shir leyom hash-shabbat. | הַלְלוּ כִּי טוֹב זַמְּרָה  מִזְמוֹר שִׁיר לְיוֹם הַשַּׁבָּת: |
| Praise Him! For it is good to sing  the psalm, the song for the Sabbath day. | |
| Ḥiddush ‘olamo vicholto  Metsi’ut el ve’aḥduto  Moré lanu yom shabbatto  Ki hayyom ladonai shabbat. | חִ֒דּוּשׁ עוֹלָמוֹ וִיכָלְתּוֹ  מְצִיאוּת אֵל וְאַחְדּוּתוֹ  מוֹרֶה לָנוּ יוֹם שַׁבַּתּוֹ  כִּי הַיּוֹם לַיהֹוָה שַׁבָּת: |
| The creation of His world, and His power  divine existence and his oneness—  His Sabbath day shows them to us  for today is the Sabbath day of Adonai. | |
| Halelu ki tov zammera  Mizmor shir leyom hash-shabbat. | הַלְלוּ כִּי טוֹב זַמְּרָה  מִזְמוֹר שִׁיר לְיוֹם הַשַּׁבָּת: |
| Praise Him! For it is good to sing  the psalm, the song for the Sabbath day. | |

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| Zot mattana naḥali’el Ḳava‘ ot livné yisra’el Lehodi’a‘ mahalal el Vezachor et yom hash-shabbat. | זֹ֒את מַתָּנָה נַחֲלִיאֵל  קָ֒בַע אוֹת לִבְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל  לְהוֹדִיעַ מַהֲלַל אֵל  וְזָכוֹר אֶת יוֹם הַשַּׁבָּת: |
| This gift of God’s inheritance  He set as a sign to the children of Israel:  To proclaim the praise of God  to remember the Sabbath day. | |
| Halelu ki tov zammera  Mizmor shir leyom hash-shabbat. | הַלְלוּ כִּי טוֹב זַמְּרָה  מִזְמוֹר שִׁיר לְיוֹם הַשַּׁבָּת: |
| Praise Him! For it is good to sing  the psalm, the song for the Sabbath day. | |
| Kakkatuv: Zachor et yom hash-shabbat leḳaddesho. | כַּכָּתוּב: זָכ֛וֹר אֶת־י֥וֹם הַשַּׁבָּ֖ת לְקַדְּשֽׁוֹ׃ (שמות כ,ח) |
| As it is written: Remember the Sabbath day and keep it holy (Ex. 20:8). | |