

Piyut: Lecha Dodi

Name _____

Date _____

Lecha Dodi ("Come, my beloved") is sung on Friday evening to welcome Shabbat, which the poem imagines as a bride or a queen. It was written in the sixteenth century by Rabbi Shlomo Halevi Alkabetz, who was born in Salonika in the Ottoman Empire and lived in Safed in the Land of Israel. The first letters of the first eight verses spell his name. Jewish communities around the world sing it, each to its own melodies.

English	Transliteration	Hebrew
Chorus		
Come, my beloved, to greet the bride;	<i>Lekha dodi likrat kalah,</i>	לְכֵה דוֹדִי לְקִרְאֵת כַּלָּה
let us welcome the presence of Shabbat.	<i>p'nei Shabbat n'kab'lah.</i>	פְּנֵי שַׁבָּת נִקְבְּלָה
Verse 1		
"Keep" and "Remember" in a single word	<i>Shamor v'zakhor b'dibur echad,</i>	שְׁמֹר וְזָכוֹר בְּדִבּוּר אֶחָד
the One God let us hear;	<i>hishmi'anu El ham'yuchad,</i>	הִשְׁמִיעֵנוּ אֵל הַמְיֻחָד
the Lord is One and His Name is One,	<i>Adonai echad ushmo echad,</i>	יְיָ אֶחָד וּשְׁמוֹ אֶחָד
for renown, for glory, and for praise.	<i>I'shem ul'tiferet v'lit'hilah.</i>	לְשֵׁם וּלְתִפְאָרֶת וּלְתִהְלָה

Translation by JIMENA.

What do you think?

1 Have you heard this piyut, or a song like it, before? Where?

2 How does the poem describe Shabbat? Why do you think the poet chose the image of a bride?

3 "Keep" and "Remember" are the two ways the Ten Commandments describe Shabbat. What is the poet saying about them?

Let's listen!

Moroccan synagogue tradition; Israeli Andalusian Orchestra Ashdod

The Israeli Andalusian Orchestra was founded in Ashdod in 1987 to preserve the Andalusian music that Moroccan Jews brought to Israel, music whose roots go back to medieval Spain. It combines Arab Andalusian instruments with a Western orchestra.

4 What instruments and voices do you hear in each performance?

5 How do the two performances feel different? Why might a modern orchestra keep this music alive?

Written by JIMENA.