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בקץ הדרכים

AT THE END OF WAYS

טקסט: אורי צבי גרינברג Uri Zvi Grinberg

Lines from "AT THE END OF THE WAYS" by Uri-Zvi Greenberg

[A spokesman of the people]

Master of the Universe!

I stand in the center of an all-Gentile world...

And I am cold in the sun, like an unclothed body
in a field of snow.

ribonó she'l solám!

aní soméd be'emísas solám-kuló-góy...

vekár li bashémesh, kegúf bli xsút bisdé-shéleg.

We are faithful to our religion...

...Until the scattering of the ashes of the burning
bush.

ne'emáním ledatxá...

...udvekím kasanafím la' ilán habosér

śadéy mapál pefráy.

[Narrator-Observer]

But they should know:

This, their spilt blood,
has a limit and a purpose...

péla - po sheyedśú:

vezé damám hanishpáx yésh lo hók vetaxít...

[A spokesman of the people]

And if not -

No more will we come through fire and water,
oh no!

ve'im ló -

lo navó śód ba'esh uvamáyím, ló-ló!

[The people]

We do not wish for exile, the burning wells of
kerosene...

We do not wish to enter heaven through gates of
fire

Not through river-waves in a world of Gentiles...

We wish to be fully aware of our borders and the
entire extent of power!

péynénu rotím galuyót,

shehén be'perót-néft modlakót...

péynénu rotím lehikanés hashamáyma

dérex shasaréy ha'esh

veló dérex galéy neharót bagoyím...

panáxnu rotím

ladáśat gvuléynu heytév

ve'et kól hahekéf she'l hakóah!

[Narrator-Observer]

Or declare and announce:

po she'patá maxríz umodias:

[God in His ugliness]

You are absolved-of-Mount-Sinai!

Go in the valley and roam in the good plain

And see: how lovely is this tree,
how sparkling this river!

patém pturéy-har-sináy!...

lexú vagáy ufishtú bamishór hatóv

ure'ú: má na'é ilán zé,

ma notés nhár zé!...

[The people: cantor with congregation]

This way or that,

Master of the Universe!

You are not accustomed to a Jew standing up
and demanding.

You are accustomed to his praise,
to the cantillation of his prayers...

lexán po lexán, ribonó-she'l solám!

patá ló ragíl sheyehudí kám vetovéas

patáragíl lishvaháv,

lesilsúl nigunáv

[Narrator]

And if, heaven forbid - You should say: Yes,

veʔim, hás vehaʔíla - ʔatá tomár bazé:
kén

Like the ebb and flow of the sea - purposeless,
limiteless -...

kishtóf yám - bli taxít...

[A spokesman of the people]

I tell You: No!

ʔaní ʔomár lexá: ló!

If, heaven forbid - such is Your word.

ʔim, hás vehaʔíla - dvarxá hú kazé.

[The people - in a soft, lamenting prayer]

I will make a tear in my prayer shawl, a tear in
the curtain of the Ark!

ʔaní ʔekráʕ kriʕá betaʔít
vezó tehé kriʕá baparóxet!

The people will turn their back...

haʕám yifén ʕóref...

And I shall go with the people,...

vaʔaní ʔeʔex ʕim haʕám...

And I shall weep, shall weep...

veʔévk - ʔévk

From the poem "At the end of the ways, Rabbi Levi Yitzhak of Berditchov stands and demands the Almighty's answer" in *Streets of the River* by Uri-Zvi Greenberg, 1951.

Note:

x = like German *ch* in *Buch*, Spanish *j* in *Juan*

h = a sound resembling German *ch* and Spanish *j*, but deeper (today pronounced by most Israelis as the abovementioned x)

ʔ = glottal stop, as between *w* and *e* in *however* (today not pronounced at all by most Israelis)

ʕ = a pharyngeal sound (constricted throat), today omitted in usual Israeli pronunciation

ʦ = as *z* in German *Fritz*, *Heinz*, *Kurz* or in Italian *Firenze*, as *ts* in Yiddish *matse*