Some have attributed it to Rabbi Elazar HaKanah, one of Israel's earliest and most prolific liturgical poets (pazanim). Others have pointed out that its form is heavily influenced by later Spanish-Sicilian poetry.

Tonight, my children weep and wail.
Tonight, my Sanctuary was ruined and my palaces burned.
The entire house of Israel expresses my agony, and cries for the fire God kindled.

Tonight, my children weep and wail.
They live, they have not seen, O men of Babylon.
She left her home and shut the door behind her.
Gone into captivity, devoured by the devourer.
Cast that day into a consuming flame, a glowing ember lit by the Lord.

Tonight, my children weep and wail.
Tonight, the wheel of fortune spun to doom, my first and second Houses destroyed.
She is not to be pitied, this wayward woman,
drunk with toxic waters swelling her belly.
Cast out of her home, she has forsaken past happiness.
Hate had the upper hand over love.
She is like a living widow, a deserted woman.
"And Zion said, 'The Lord has forsaken me.'"

Tonight, my children weep and wail.
Tonight, I am dejected, the lights dimmed.
My House destroyed, the priestly watchmen discontinued.
Tonight, woe surrounds me, winds about me.
He summoned an assembly of five harsh decrees.
Tears shed in vain set the pattern forever.
The Lord brought it all about as predestined.

Tonight, my children weep and wail.
Tonight, five appalling tragedies occurred.
A decree against our ancestors, denying them the land;
afflicting them with oppressing pain and worse.

Tonight, my children weep and wail.