

Shabbat Songs - Zemirot

Shabbat zemirot are poetic songs, typically written by kabbalists in the middle ages, that incorporate elements of liturgy and biblical allusions that elevate and interpret the meaning of Shabbat. There are no set rules about what qualifies something as a Shabbat zemer and the topics contained in many traditional zemirot range from describing meals to the World to Come. The unifying theme of Shabbat zemirot is that they are meant to bring joy to the Shabbat table. The word “zemer” (“zemirot” for plural) means song.

- What rituals or traditions do you have that bring joy into your home on Shabbat or at the end of a long week?
- Can you remember a time when music or singing elevated your mood?
- Is there a tradition you could add to your end of the week rituals--like singing--that might lift your spirits?
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צור משלו Tzur Mishelo

This popular zemer is a poetic rendition of Birkat Hamazon, the blessings after the meal. Interestingly, this song does not refer to Shabbat specifically, so scholars assume it was originally written for any festive meal, not just Shabbat. There are many fun tunes for this zemer--make sure you watch the video of the Malka family singing a tune that is special to their family!

<p>Come, friends, in grateful strains Give thanks and bless ye our Lord! Rock, Whose store our life sustains! Whose sure bounty still remains According to His word.</p> <p>Thy bounty mankind feeds, Thy flock, O Pastor, guiding; Thine the bread that we have eaten, Thy rich grace our drink did sweeten, All our wants providing, For all our daily needs, Father, e'er abiding, Let us praise thy name again, Let us sing with loud refrain "None holy like our King."</p>	<p>Tzur Mishelo Achalnu, Bar'chu Emunai, Sava'anu vehotarnu kidvar Adonai.</p> <p>Hazan et olamo roeinu avinu, achalnu et lachmo vyeino shatinu, al kein nodeh lishmo unhal'lo b'finu amarnu v'aninu ein kadosh kadonai.</p> <p>B'shir v'kol todah n'varech leloheinu, al eretz chemdah tovah shehinchil lavoteinu.</p>	<p>צור משלו אכלנו בָּרְכוּ אֱמוּנֵי, שִׁבְעֵנוּ וְהוֹתַרְנוּ כְּדַבַּר יי. הִזָּן אֶת עוֹלָמוֹ רוֹעֵנוּ אָבִינוּ אֶכְלֵנוּ אֶת לַחֲמוֹ נֵיִינוּ שְׁתִּינוּ, עַל כֵּן נוֹדֶה לְשִׁמּוֹ וְנִהְלֵלוּ בְּפִינוּ אִמְרָנוּ וְעֵינֵינוּ אֵין קְדוֹשׁ כִּיִּי בְּשִׁיר וְקוֹל תּוֹדָה נִבְרַךְ לְאֵלֵהֵינוּ עַל אֶרֶץ חֲמֵדָה טוֹבָה שֶׁהִנְחִיל לְאֲבוֹתֵינוּ מְזוֹן וְצֵדָה הַשְּׂבִיעַ לְנַפְשֵׁנוּ חֲסֵדוֹ גָּבַר עָלֵינוּ וְאַמֵּת יי</p>
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<p>To God our voice we raise In songs of jubilation, For the land of His bestowing, Land with milk and honey flowing, He gave our ancient nation. His food our hunger stays; His grace our soul's salvation. Strong above us mortals frail God's sure mercies shall prevail His truth shall watch our ways.</p> <p>Have mercy on Thy flock, On Zion desolated; Zion, once Thy glory's throne, There Thy presence dwelt alone, Our splendour, now abated. O Thou eternal Rock, For Thee our hearts have waited; Our life's breath, Messiah, speed, Wandering exiles home to lead, Born of David's stock.</p> <p>Our hearts, now mute, shall sing New songs, before unspoken, When we see with marvelling eyes Salem's throngs once more arise To build her ramparts broken. Loud let your voices ring! In pledge and grateful token Raise your cups, His grace confessing! Raise your cups, accept His blessing, Israel's God and King.</p>	<p>Mazon v'tzeidah hisbia l'nafsheinu, chasdo gavar aleinu v'emet Adonai.</p> <p>Rachem b'chasdecha Al am'cha Tsureinu, al Tsion mishkan k'vodecha z'vul beit tifarteinu. Ben David avdecha yavo v'yig'aleinu, ruach apeinu m'shiach Adonai.</p> <p>Yibaneh hamikdash ir tsion timaleh, visham nashir shir chadash uvirnanah na'aleh. harachaman hanikdash yibarach v'yitaleh al kos yayin maleh k'birkat Adonai.</p>	<p>רחם בחסדך על עמך צורנו על ציון משכן כבודך זבול בית תפארתנו בן דוד עבדך יבוא ויגאלנו רוח אפינו משיח ::</p> <p>יבנה המקדש, עיר ציון ותמלא ושם נשיר שיר חדש וברננה נעלה הרחמן הנקדש יתברך ויתעלה על כוס יין מלא כברכת ::</p>
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