



SIEBENQUELL

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# Raise up your voice and sing!

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In 1892 the Jewish world was enchanted by the powerful language of a 19 year old Jewish youth. Within the span of a few months, he was brought to the attention of Jews throughout the world, because he had published his first poem. His name was Chaim Nachman Bialik and his poem was entitled »El Hazipor« (To the bird).

In this poem, the young poet seeks a conversation with a bird who had recently come from the warm countries of the south, from the land of Palestine. Bialik asks the bird whether God still has mercy on Zion, whether the dew still falls like pearls on Mount Hermon and whether terrible catastrophes also occur there.

In a very short time, Bialik became the national Poet of the Jewish people. Like no one else, he managed to express the Jewish soul. He found the words and the images in order to express their yearnings, dreams, disillusionments and pain.

It is one of the holy tasks of every generation to seek their Chaim Nachman Bialik. For storytellers of their kind force us to face essential questions. What are the well springs from which our longing flows? What is forming our dreams? What is forming our fears? What story still has the power to speak to us all, indeed, to bind us together?

To whom will we entrust our souls? To the angry, screaming haters on our streets, marketplaces and political stages? Or to the storytellers who can still paint pictures of warmth, security, a shared destiny and a future in blessing in our hearts?

El hatzipor (Ode to the Bird)

Shalom upon your return sweet bird,  
From the warm countries to my window -  
How my soul longs to hear your pleasant voice  
in winter when you leave my dwelling.

Sing, tell, dear bird,  
From a land of wondrous distance,  
Are the troubles and suffering great there too  
in the warm and beautiful land?

Do you bear me Shalom from my brethren in Zion,  
From my distant yet close brethren?  
Oh happy ones! Do they know  
That I suffer, how I suffer pain?

Do they know how plentiful my memories are here,  
How many, so many rise against me?  
Sing my bird, wondrous things from a land,  
Where spring dwells for ever.

Do you bear me Shalom from the song of the land,  
From the vales, and tops of the mountains?  
Has God had pity and has comforted Zion?  
Or is it still abandoned to its graves?

And the valley of Sharon and the hill of the incense tree -  
Do they exude their myrrh, and their perfume?  
Has the grandfather woken in the woods  
The sleeping, (dozing) Mount) Lebanon?

Does the dew descend as pearls on Mount Hermon?  
Does it come down and fall like tears?  
And how is the Jordan and its clear waters?  
And how are the mountains, the hills?

My tears have dried up, all hope is fled  
Yet there is no end to my grief.  
Shalom upon your return, my dear bird,  
Raise up your voice and sing!

**Erik Riechers SAC**  
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