

## Bam leyenen "Koyheles"

Se veyst nit fun rakhmim Koyheleses vort,  
nor erlekh iz es un legamre gerekht.  
I emes i khokhme a guzme iz dort.  
Alts nisktikayt iz: makht, ashires un knekht...

Shoyn alts iz geven do, un gornisht iz nay.  
Az kentshaft me mert, mert men veytog un tsar;  
geyt tomid der vint rund arum frank un fray -  
un glaykh iz der khokhem in toyt mit dem nar.

S'iz umyoysheer unter der zun iberall,  
a sakh more-shkhoyre. Alts vist iz un trib...  
Nor shaynen di verter aroys, vi a shtral:  
"Dayn lebm genis mit dem vayb, vos host lib."!

Beemes, vos beser un shener kon zayn,  
un gresern tayneg farshafn kon dir,  
vi fun ir neshome di tsertlekhe shayn,  
vos varemt un treyst on a sof, on a shir?

Vos gikher un zikher fargringt yedes mol  
yesurim un avles, inuyim un payn,  
vi ir tayer, hartsik un libeful kol,  
vos gist in dir tomid nekhome arayn?

Ven nokh hostu, mench, a hanoe aza,  
vi dan, ven zi fraygebik sheynkt dir ir guf,  
un ir yeder eyver vi zogt dir: "Na! Na!  
O, nem mikh, fun mir hob hanoe, fli uf

## On Reading Ecclesiastes

Koheleth's[1] words know nothing of mercy,  
but they are honest and absolutely correct.  
There is lots of truth and wisdom.  
All is meaningless: power, wealth, and slaves...

Everything has already happened and nothing is new.  
When one increases his knowledge, he increases his pain and sorrow.  
The wind blows constantly, free as a bird,  
and in death the wise man is equal to the fool.

There is injustice everywhere under the sun,  
much melancholy, much desolation and sorrow.  
Only these words shine out like a beam of light:  
"Enjoy life with your wife, whom you love!"

Truly, what could be better and more beautiful  
and could give you more pleasure  
than the tender glow from her soul,  
which warms and consoles endlessly and beyond measure?

What more quickly and certainly eases  
suffering and injustice, torment and pain,  
than her dear, hearty, loving voice,  
which always pours consolation into you?

When else do you, O man, have such a pleasure  
as when she voluntarily gives you her body,  
and every part of her body says to you: "Here! Here!  
Take me, have pleasure from me; fly up

mit mir afn zibetn himl! - un zi  
fargeyt zikh un brent mit a heysn farlang  
fun tsertlekhkayt dayner; un s'trogt ayer fli  
aykh hekher un hekher, un umendlekh lang

es dukht zikh, vi s'hot zikh di tsayt opgeshtelt?..  
Yo, dos iz di beste matone fun Got.  
Yo, shener iz gornisht nito af der velt.  
Un zol zikh alts dreyen fun lebm dos rod

mit ale puronyesn, plogn un shlek -  
alts kon men gring baykumen un goyver zayn,  
ven s'zaynen dernebm, baloykhtn dem veg  
yents libeful kol, yene tsertlekhe shayn.

Alts nishtikayt iz, un di tsayt traybt un traybt  
fun lebm di rod mit ir nishtikn skrip...  
Iz zol zayn azoy! - abi hobm dos vayb,  
vos du host zi lib un vos zi hot dikh lib...

with me to the seventh heaven!" - and she  
melts and burns with a hot desire  
for your caresses; and your fligh  
carries you higher and higher, and endlessly

it seems to you that Time has stopped?..  
Yes, that is God's best gift—  
there is nothing in the world that is more beautiful.  
And let the wheel of life continue to turn,

with all of its calamities, plagues, and disasters—  
everything can be overcome and vanquished  
when there is, nearby, illuminating your road,  
that lovely voice, that tender glow.

All is meaningless, and Time drives and drives  
the wheel of life with its meaningless squeaking.  
So let it be thus! - as long as you have your wife,  
whom you love and who loves you.

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1. The putative author of Ecclesiastes.