

Eliaz Cohen

HEAR O LORD

POEMS FROM THE DISTURBANCES OF 2000-2009

TRANSLATED BY

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עֲכָשׂוּ תַעֲצָמוּ אֶת הָעֵינַיִם
דְּמִינֵנוּ:

דְּבַר מְכַל זֶה לֹא קָרָה
בְּעַת-לִילָה אוֹלֵי הַנֶּהָה
זֶה מָה שְׁנֵהָ הָיָה
פְּרִי מַחוּ הַמְשׁוֹרֵר
שֶׁל הַקּוֹדֵחַ

דְּבַר מְכַל זֶה לֹא קָרָה

[וְלֹא עָלוּ הָאֱלֹף בְּסַעֲרָה]

וְעֲכָשׂוּ פִקְחוּ אֶת הָעֵינַיִם חֲזָרָה

close your eyes now
imagine:

none of this happened
a night phobia perhaps a hallucination
that's what it was
the fruit of the feverish
poet-mind

none of this happened

(and the thousand did not ascend in a storm)

now open your eyes again

שִׁמְעֵ אֲדֹנָי

(ייחוד לימים נוראים)

שִׁמְעֵ אֲדֹנָי, יִשְׂרָאֵל עַמּוֹךְ יִשְׂרָאֵל אֶחָד

וְאֶהְבֵּת אֶת יִשְׂרָאֵל עַמּוֹךְ
בְּכָל לִבְבְּךְ
וּבְכָל נַפְשְׁךְ
וּבְכָל מְאֹדְךְ
וְהָיוּ הַבָּנִים הָאֵלֶּה אֲשֶׁר נִהְרָגִים עֲלֶיךָ כָּל הַיּוֹם
עַל לִבְבְּךְ
וְשִׁנַּנְתָּם בְּרַקִּיעֶיךָ
וְדַבַּרְתָּ בָּם:
בְּשִׁבְתְּךָ בְּבֵיתְךָ
וּבְלִכְתְּךָ בְּדֶרֶךְ
וּבְשִׁכְבְּךָ וּבְקוּמְךָ
וּקְשַׁרְתָּם לְאוֹת עַל
יָדְךָ (סְפָרוֹת כְּחֵלוֹת וְרַחֲנִיּוֹת) וְהָיוּ לְטֹטְפוֹת בֵּין
עֵינֶיךָ (כְּמוֹ פְּגִיעַת הַצְּלָפִים)
וּכְתַבְתָּם (בְּדָם) עַל־מְזוֹזוֹת בֵּיתְךָ
וּבְשַׁעְרֶיךָ

Hear, O Lord

(prayer for days of awe)

Hear, O Lord, Israel, your people, Israel is one

And you shall love Israel your people

With all your heart

And with all your soul

And with all your might

And these sons who are being killed for you daily shall be
upon your heart

And you shall teach them diligently in your heavens

And you shall talk of them:

When you sit in your house

And when you walk by the way

And when you lie down and when you rise

And you shall bind them as a sign upon

your hand (phosphorescent blue numbers) and they shall be as frontlets
between your eyes (like the sniper's shot)

And you shall write them (in blood) on the doorposts of your house

And on your gates

חֲדָשׁוֹת

בְּחֲדָשׁוֹת בְּרָדִיו אָמְרוּ
שׁוֹב פָּגְעוּ בְּכֶסֶפִּים
וְאִשָּׁה אַחַת מִצָּאָה אֶת מוֹתָהּ
(שָׁעַד עֵתָה הִיא אוֹבֵד בְּגַאיוֹת)

*

עוֹד אָמְרוּ:
בִּישִׁיבַת הַמְּשָׁלָה יִדוּנוּ בְּרַעֲיֵדוֹת הָאֲדָמָה שְׁעֵלוֹלוֹת
(וְלֹא חֲשִׁים אֵיךְ הָאָרֶץ כָּבֵר רוֹעֵדָת)

*

כְּדוֹר תּוֹעָה מִחֶפֶשׁ כְּתָבַת רֶפֶה
רְאִיתִי אִישׁ מִבְּקֵשׁ אַחִים בְּדֶרֶךְ אֶרֶכָּה
בְּרֹאשׁ הָאֲנָלִיטִי נוֹרָה אֲדָמָה מִזְמָן נִדְלָקָה
מִזֶּג הָאוֹיֵר יָבֹא בּוֹקָה מִבְּלָקָה

*

הַיָּם יִהְיֶה נֹחַ כְּשֶׁנִּגִּיעַ אֵלָיו
בְּלֹא כַח.
זֶהוּ סוֹף הַחֲדָשׁוֹת.

*

בְּרָדִיו אָמְרוּ חֲדָשׁוֹת
וּבִלְבָב הָיוּ יִשְׁנוֹת נוֹשְׁנוֹת
וְלִקְחָנוּ אֶת הַפְּקֻלָּה עַל שְׁכָם
חֲרִיצֵי גְבִינָה, אַחַד לָחֶם
שָׁבְנוּ לְלִכְתּ

News

The news on the radio said
another terrorist attack at the Kisufim
and a woman met her death
(which until now was lost in the valleys)

*

they also said:
at the government meeting they will discuss the threat of earthquakes
(unaware that the earth is already trembling)

*

a wayward bullet is searching for its soft address
I saw a man seeking brothers all along the way
in the analytical mind a red light went on long ago
the weather will come in desolation and ruin

*

the sea will be calm when at length we reach it
with depleted strength.
And that's the end of the news.

*

on the radio they said news
and in our hearts were olds, ancients
and we put our bundles on our shoulders
wedges of cheese, a loaf of bread
we returned to our walking

*

עֲכָשׂוּ אֲנִי חוֹלָה מְאֹד בְּאַהֲבָה
שֶׁהִיא גְעֻגוּעִים
כָּל הַגּוֹף נִמְלָא בְּכֹאֲבִים שֶׁל
מִיתָרִים הַמְבַקְשִׁים לְהַפְרֹט

עֲכָשׂוּ אֲנִי חוֹלָה מְאֹד בְּאַהֲבָה
לֹא רַק אֵיבֵר הָאֲהֲבָה
(שֶׁהוּא הַלֵּב)
מוֹצֵף דָּם עֲנֵבֵי תְּשׁוּקָה עַד לְהַתְּפַקֵּעַ
גְּרוּרוֹת פּוֹשְׁטוֹת בְּכֹל כְּשָׂרִיגִים
רוֹצוֹת לְבוֹא בְּגֵן נְעוּל

עֲכָשׂוּ אֲנִי חוֹלָה מְאֹד.

*

now I am very sick with love
 which is longing
the entire body fills with the pain of
 strings asking to be strummed

now I am very sick with love
 not only the love organ
 (which is the heart)
is flooded to bursting with the blood of the grapes of lust
 cancerous growths are spreading everywhere like tendrils
 desiring to come into the locked garden

now I am very sick.

תְּשִׁלֶּיךָ

א.

כְּמוֹ הַחֲצָבִים
הֵם עֲמָדוֹ שֵׁם
בוֹקְעִים בְּהִמּוֹן עֲמוּדֵי תַפְרַחַת
בְּגִי בֶן הַנוֹם
בַּחֲרֹף הֵם פִּקְעַת אַחַת
בְּגִי הַנוֹם
פַּעַם
הֵם לֵב אֶחָד
פְּרָחִים צְעִירִים מְקַרְבִּים אֵלַי אֵשׁ
נִעְקָדִים

ב.

בְּאֵנוּ דְרָכֶם
מִתְנַדִּים
כּוֹפְפִים עֲמוּדֵי תַפְרַחַת גְּאִים
עַל נִצְנוּ
עַל עוֹנוֹתֵינוּ
עוֹנוֹתֵי רַבּוֹ מִשְׁעֵרוֹתַי
הַכִּסִּים נְדָמִים כְּבָדִים פִּתְאֵם
בְּאֵנוּ אֵלֶיהָ

ג.

בְּאֵנוּ לְנִקְבָה
כְּמַעַט שִׁבְאֵנוּ בָּהּ
וְאֵת אִמְרָתָּה

Tashlich

a.

like the chatzav
they stood there
erupting into many flowering stalks
 in Gai Ben Hinom
in winter they are a single bulb
 in Gai Hinom
at times
they are a single heart
young flowers sacrificed toward fire
 bound

b.

we came by way of them
confessing
bending proud flowering stalks
to our quarrel
to our transgressions
my transgressions more numerous than my hairs
 the pockets suddenly seem heavy
we came to it

c.

 we came to the tunnel
 we almost came inside it
and you said

בוא נִרְכַּל מְעַט
אֶחָד כָּךְ
נוֹכַל לְהַפְטֹר מִחַטָּא
מִמִּילָא
מְלַכְלַךְ פֹּה כָּל כָּךְ

ד.

וְהַשְׁלַכְנוּ אוֹתָם
חוֹצְבִים מְנַקְבִים בָּה
בְּנִקְבָה
בְּהִלְמוֹת פְּטִישֵׁי פִשְׁעֵינוּ
שָׁמַעְנוּ אֲז
גַם מִן הָעֶבֶר הַשְּׁנִי
חוֹצְבִים
פִּשְׁעִים נוֹקְשִׁים
עֲרִבִים זֶה בְּזֶה
וַיִּדְעֵנוּ
כִּי תָם עֲמַלְנוּ.

ה.

מְעַפִּילִים
אֶת וְאֲנִי וְהַנֶּעַר
בְּנֵי יִשְׁמַעְאֵל מְשַׁחֲזִים שְׁבָרִיּוֹת
מְעַקְלוֹת כְּחֻצֵי סֹהַר
מִחֵר יַעֲקֹד בְּנֵנוּ
אֲנַחְנוּ שְׁנֵינוּ
נוֹבִיל אוֹתוֹ אֶל הָר
וְשֵׁם יִרְאֶה

let's gossip a little
afterwards
we can shed the sin
in any case
it's so dirty here

d.
and we cast them away
hewing and piercing in it
in the tunnel
pounding with the hammers of our sins
we heard then
from the other side too
hewing
sins striking
intermingling
and we knew
our work was finished.

e.
ascending
you and I and the boy
sons of Ishmael are sharpening shabria knives
curved like the crescent moon
tomorrow our son will be sacrificed
the two of us
will lead him to a mountain

and there He will appear