Sacred Seven
Two Poems for Shavout Night 5774

Don't go to sleep one night.
What you most want will come to you then.
Warmed by a sun inside, you'll see wonders.

Tonight, don't put your head down.
Be tough, and strength will come.
That which adoration adores
appears at night. Those asleep
may miss it. One night Moses stayed awake
and asked, and saw a light in a tree.

Then he walked at night for ten years,
until finally he saw the whole tree
illuminated. Muhammad rode his horse
through the night sky. The day is for work.
The night for love. Don't let someone
Bewitch you. Some people sleep at night.

But not lovers. They sit in the dark and talk to God,
who told David,
Those who sleep all night every night
and claim to be connected to us, they lie.

Lovers can't sleep when they feel the privacy
of the beloved all around them. Someone
who's thirsty may sleep for a little while,
but he or she will dream of water, a full jar
beside a creek, or the spiritual water you get
from another person. All night, listen
to the conversation. Stay up.
This moment is all there is.

I'm through. Read the rest of this poem in the dark tonight.

Jelauddin Rumi

ראשון
אבי היה אלוהים ולא ידע.
הוא נתן לי את עשרת הדברות לא ברעם ולא בזעם,
לא באש ולא בענן אלא ברכות ובאהבה.
והוסיף ליטופים והוסיף מילים טובות, והוסיף "אנא"
והוסיף "בבקשה".
וזימר זכור ושמור בניגון אחד והתחנן ובכה בשקט בין
דיבר לדיבר,
לא תשא שם אלוהיך לשוא, לא תשא, לא לשוא,
אנא, אל תענה ברעך עד שקר.
וחבק אותי חזק ולחש באוזני, לא תגנוב, לא תנאף, לא
תרצח.
ושם את כפות ידיו הפתוחות על ראשי בברכת יום כפור.
כבד, אהב, למען יאריכון ימיך על פני האדמה.
וקול אבי לבן כמו שיער ראשו.
אחר כך הפנה את פניו אלי בפעם האחרונה כמו ביום
שמת בזרועותיי,
ואמר:"אני רוצה להוסיף שניים לעשרת הדברות:
הדיבר האחד-עשר, "לא תשתנה"
והדיבר השנים-עשר, "השתנה, תשתנה"
כך אמר אבי ופנה ממני והלך ונעלם במרחקיו המוזרים.

יהודה עמיחי
פתוח סגור פתוח" תל אביב 1998 ע' 85"

My father was god, but he didn't know it.

He gave me the Ten Commandments, not with thunder or fury, fire or clouds,

but softly, with love, caresses, kind words.

He added 'please, please' and sang the words 'keep and remember the Sabbath day' and cried quietly: 'don't bear false witness, don't lie'. He'd cry, and hug me. 'Don't steal, don't lust, don't kill'.

He'd put his hands on my head like the Yom Kippur blessing. "respect' he'd say 'love and live long upon this earth'.

His voice was as white as the hair on his head.

Then he turned his face to me, like that last day, when died in my arms, and said: "I want to add two more commandments to the ten. The eleventh: never change. The twelfth: change, change."

So spoke my father and walked away into his strange distances.

- Yehuda Amichai /translated by Amichai Lau-Lavie