



Zalman

Words and music by Kobi Oz

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Zalman wandered the world confused
Asked himself: "Who am I and what for?
I am a farmer I have acres of land
And I run it all
I grow fruit and vegetables
Take care to fertilize and to water
I am the ruler of this piece of the world."
And then a heavenly voice spoke out:

**Zalman that's not you
Look, it's the shmitta fallow year
The field flourishes
without your help
You are not your land
You are just**

Zalman phoned here and there
Told himself "I am the boss of my time
I just make a little call
And right away all's fixed
I have status around the clock
Non-stop career, stocks and shares
I'm always ready for every surprise."
And hop! A heavenly voice spoke out:

**Zalman that's not you
Here comes the Sabbath Bride
Now you're going to rest
Your people are those who pray
Your status is not you
Your land is not you
You
You are just Zalman**

זְלַמֵּן הַסְתוּבֵב בְּעוֹלָם מְבוֹלָבֵל
שָׁאַל אֶת עַצְמוֹ "מִי אֲנִי
וּבְכֵלֵל?
אֲנִי חִקְלָאֵי יֵשׁ לִי שְׂטַח גְּדוֹל
וְאֲנִי מְנַהֵל אֶת הַכֶּל
אֲנִי מְגַדֵּל פִּירוֹת וִירְקוֹת
וּמְקַפֵּיד לְדַשֵּׁן לְעֵבֵד לְהַשְׁקוֹת
אֲנִי הַמוֹשֵׁל עַל חֻלְקַת אֲדָמָה."
וְאָז יִצְאָה בַּת קוֹל וְאָמְרָה

**1 "זְלַמֵּן זֶה לֹא אַתָּה
הִנֵּה תְרָאָה, שְׁנַת שְׁמִיטָה
הַשָּׂדֶה מְלַבֵּב בְּלִי עֲזָרְתְּךָ
אַתָּה לֹא אֲדַמְתְּךָ**

אַתָּה פְּשוּט זְלַמֵּן הַתְּקַשֵּׁר
לְכָאוֹן וּלְכָאוֹן
אָמַר לְעַצְמוֹ "אֲנִי הַבוֹס שֶׁ
הַזְמָן
אֲנִי רַק מֵרִים אֵיזָה טֵלְפוֹן
קָטָן
וּמִיד מְסוּדָר הַעֲנִיין
יֵשׁ לִי מַעֲמָד מְסֻבֵּיב לְשַׁעוֹן
קְרִיירָה נוֹן סְטוֹפ מְנִיּוֹת וּמְמוֹן
אֲנִי תְמִיד זְמִין לְכֹל הַפְתָּעָה."
וְהוֹפ יִצְאָה בַּת קוֹל וְאָמְרָה

**2 "זְלַמֵּן זֶה לֹא אַתָּה
הִנֵּה שְׁבֵת הַמַּלְכָּה
עֲכָשְׁיוֹ תְהִיָּה בְּמִנוּחָה
אַתָּה אֶחָד מֵהָעַם שְׂאוֹמֵר
תְּפִילָּה
מַעֲמִיד לֹא אַתָּה
אֲדַמְתְּךָ לֹא אַתָּה
אַתָּה
אַתָּה פְּשוּט זְלַמֵּן"**

Zalman looked at his good wife
Like a protective oak she spreads her
shade

“Been with her for years, I am her
husband

And still we sleep spoons in bed
We’ve built a wonderful family together
And she’s a woman of valor, real sexy
And me, who am I? I’m her husband.”
And then a heavenly voice spoke out:

Zalman that’s not you

**The woman with you isn’t really with
you**

**Your wife is now keeping niddah
So you’ve gotten it completely wrong**

You are not her husband

You are not your status

You are not your land

You are just

Zalman lay back in his salon armchair
Looked at the walls and glanced out of
the window

“My home is my castle, it’s like a
kingdom”

And again a heavenly voice called out:

Zalman that’s not you

**It’s sukkot now – go out to your
sukkah (4)**

**You nouveau riche, don’t be down
Look up at the stars winking through
the thatching**

Your house is not you

Your wife is not you

Your status is not you

Nor is your land you

You are just

זָלְמָן הִבִּיט בְּאִשְׁתּוֹ הַטּוֹבָה
כְּאִילָן מְגוּוֹן הִיא פּוֹרְשֵׁת צִלָּהּ
”שָׁנִים אָנִי אִיתָהּ, אָנִי בְּעֵלָהּ
וְעַדִּיין כְּפִיּוֹת בְּמִיטָה
הַקָּמְנוּ בְּיַחַד מִשְׁפָּחָה לְמוֹפֶת
וְהִיא אִשְׁתְּ חַיִּל, סְקִסִּית
בְּאֶמֶת
וְאָנִי, מִי אָנִי? אָנִי בְּעֵלָהּ.”
וְאָז יִצְאָה בֵּת קוֹל וְאָמְרָה

” זָלְמָן זֶה לֹא אֶתָּה
הָאִשָּׁה שְׂאִיתָךְ הִיא לֹא
בְּאֶמֶת שְׁלֹךְ
אִשְׁתְּךָ עֲכָשְׁיוֹ שׁוֹמֶרֶת נִידָה
3 אִזְ טָעִיתָ בְּכָל קֵנָה מִיָּדָה
אֶתָּה לֹא בְּעֵלָהּ
אֶתָּה לֹא מְעַמְדֵךְ
אֶתָּה לֹא אֲדַמְתֵךְ
” אֶתָּה פְּשׁוּט”

זָלְמָן נִשְׁכַּב עַל הַכּוֹרְסָא בְּסֶלּוֹן
הִבִּיט עַל הַקִּירוֹת וְהִצִּיץ
מִהַחֲלוֹן
בֵּיתִי מִבְּצָרִי הוּא כְּמוֹ
מַמְלָכָה.”
וְשׁוּב יִצְאָה בֵּת קוֹל וְאָמְרָה

”זָלְמָן זֶה לֹא אֶתָּה
סוּכּוֹת עֲכָשְׁיוֹ צֵא אֶל הַסּוּכָה
נוּבּוֹ רִישׁ אֶל תְּהִיָּה לִי
מְצוּבָרָח
הֵבֵט לְכּוֹכְבֵים הַקּוֹרְצִים
מִהַסֶּכֶךְ
בֵּיתְךָ לֹא אֶתָּה
אִישְׁתְּךָ לֹא אֶתָּה
מְעַמְדֵךְ לֹא אֶתָּה
גַּם אֲדַמְתֵךְ לֹא אֶתָּה
” אֶתָּה פְּשׁוּט”

Zalman asked his ailing father
 "How do I define myself in this world?"
 "You are my son," said his wise father
 And closed his eyes forever
 The father was buried in the ground
 And Kalman his grandson given his
 name
 And Zalman remained with the same
 question
 And a heavenly voice called out with
 the answer:

**Zalman you are he who questions
 He who always gets mixed up
 Between what is yours and who you
 are
 Between your work and the meaning
 of your world
 Zalman that's not you
 When will you finally connect up with
 yourself?
 You are not your property
 Not your success
 You are not your surroundings
 Not even your question
 You are just Zalman....**

זָלְמָן שָׁאַל אֶת אָבִיו הַחֹלֶה
 "אֵיךְ אֶגְדִּיר אֶת עַצְמִי בְּעוֹלָם
 הַזֶּה"
 "אַתָּה הִינּוּ שְׁלִי" אָמַר הָאֵב
 הַחֲכָם
 וְעָצַם אֶת עֵינָיו לְעוֹלָם
 הָאָבָא נָטְמָן בְּחֻלְקַת אֲדָמָתוֹ
 לְנֶכְדוֹ קָלְמָן נָתַנּוּ אֶת שְׁמוֹ
 וְזָלְמָן נִשְׁאַר עִם אוֹתָהּ שְׁאַלָה
 וְיִצְאָה בֵּת קוֹל הַפֶּעַם עִם
 תְּשׁוּבָה

" זָלְמָן אַתָּה זֶה שְׂשׂוֹאֵל
 זֶה שֶׁתְּמִיד מִתְבַּלְבֵּל
 בֵּין מַה שְׁשָׁלַךְ לְמִי אַתָּה
 וּבֵין עֲבוֹדָתְךָ לְמַהוּת עוֹלָמְךָ
 זָלְמָן זֶה לֹא אַתָּה
 מִתִּי פָּבֵר תְּכוֹנֵן יְחָסִים עִם
 עַצְמְךָ?
 אַתָּה לֹא רְכוּשְׁךָ
 לֹא הַצְלָחָה
 אַתָּה לֹא סְבִיבָתְךָ
 אֲפִילוֹ לֹא שְׁאַלְתְּךָ
 אַתָּה פְּשוֹט זָלְמָן."

1. *Shmitta* is the sabbatical year for the land. Every seven years, the land in Israel is left fallow, according to Biblical commandments.
2. On *Shabbat*, the Sabbath, observant Jews refrain from work.
3. *Niddah* is the custom that dictates a husband and wife refrain from touching during the menstrual period.
4. For the 7 days of the festival of *Sukkot*, the family spends its time in a make-shift booth, a Sukkah, whose thatched roof must be open to the stars.

Zalman keeps getting tripped up by identifying himself either by his material possessions or his relation to others.

In what ways do you define yourself?

How do you imagine the heavenly voice might respond to your definition?

Kobi Oz sums up *mitzvot*, commandments, as “pilates for the personality”.

Do you relate to mitzvot in the same way?

Is your Judaism also a form of discipline, or is it an unlimited route to freedom, or something else?

“Your Children are not your Children,” states Khalil Gibran in The Prophet.

If your children are not your children, and your wife not your wife, do we ever own anything?

Does this ecumenical teaching resonate with your understanding of Judaism?