



Longing for Longing

Words and music by Kobi Oz

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Rather than chasing my tail
It did me good to return
Here I've reached the source again
It's like light-years have passed
And now a huge embrace
And again hearts join as one
Here the doubt crawls in

בְּלִי לָלֶכֶת סָחוּר וְסָחוּר
זֶה עָשָׂה לִי טוֹב לְחִזּוֹר
הִנֵּה שׁוֹב הַגַּעַתִּי לְמִקּוֹר
זֶה כְּמוֹ עָבְרוּ שָׁנוֹת דּוֹר
וְעַכְשָׁיו חִיבוּק גְּדוֹל
וְשׁוֹב הַלְּבָבוֹת בְּיַחַד
הִנֵּה מִזְדַּחֵל לוֹ הַסֶּפֶק

My longing for longings
Turn my days into a vision of the
unreal
And though I struggled - so much
And made it – no doubt (1)
These delightful diversions (2) left
me vexed

גִּעְגּוּעֵי לְגִעְגּוּעִים
הוֹפְכִים יָמֵי לְחִזּוֹן תַּעֲתוּעִים
גַּם אִם יִגְעַתִּי מְדִי
וּמִצָּאתִי וְדָאִי
הַתַּעֲצָבָתִי מִרוֹן שַׁעֲשׁוּעִים.

From section to another section
From mist to dark
From the unhealable past
Again I was honored to return
And now a huge kiss
I feel suddenly at home
But here – here – here comes the
suffocation

מִמְדוֹר לְעוֹד מְדוֹר
וּמִמְאֶפְלָה לְשָׁחוּר
מִעֵבֶר שְׁאִין בּוֹ שׁוֹם מְזוֹר
שׁוֹב זְכִיתִי לְחִזּוֹר
וְעַכְשָׁיו נִישׁוּק עֵנֶק
אֲנִי מִרְגִּישׁ פְּתָאוֹם בְּבֵית
אָבֵל הִנֵּה הִנֵּה בָּא לוֹ הַמְחַנֵּק

I missed you so much
Miserable without you
Without intimacy I'm laid low
Lacking friend or neighbor
And suddenly the silent encounter
And stroke of your curls
And my heart-heart beats
backwards

חֶסְרָה הָיִיתְךָ כָּל כֶּן
בְּלַעַד־ךָ מְדוּכָדֶךָ
בְּלִי קִרְבָּה אֲנִי מוֹנַח
לֹא רַע לֹא אַח
וּלְפִתַּע דּוֹם פְּגִישָׁה
וּמְלֻטָּף אֶת תְּלַתְלֶיךָ
וְלִבִּי דוֹפֵק דוֹפֵק לוֹ לְאַחוֹר

1. This is a play on a well-known phrase - יגעת ומצאת תאמין - 'believe that through struggle you will make it'
 2. "Diversions" is a particular translation, playing on the more straightforward understanding of שעשועים - entertainment - and the underlying suggestion of illusion.
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Kobi Oz introduces this song by suggesting that the Jewish People spent two thousand years longing for Zion, but now we have a State here, all Israelis do is long for a trip abroad! Incidentally, he lays this critique at both the observant and the non-observant: He refers to the Rabbis' complaint at how many men leave their families on Rosh Hashana to pray at Rabbi Nachman's grave in Uman...

Do you ever feel this dynamic of longing from afar but discomfort on arrival with regards Israel?

Can you see this circular image of longing – arriving – wishing to leave once more - as referring to more than just a relation to the Land of Israel?

- Do you ever experience a similar cycle when thinking about your relationship to your Judaism?

The music for this song has been likened to the Gypsy Kings. Would you say there is anything significant about this song having a 'gypsy' feel to it?

Why do you think this song – describing an almost-tragic lack of satisfaction – is so upbeat?