“The Soul”

Moshe ibn Ezra

With all my soul I long for You in the night.

My soul longs for the home of her soul,

She yearns for her fountainhead,

She pines for her holy dwelling—

She would travel there day and night.

There, with her mind’s eye,

She would look on the delights of His glory;

She would fly to Him without wings;

She would hasten to Him and marvel—

At twilight, as the day fades, and in the dark of night.

She would see His splendor in His handiwork;

She would long to approach Him;

Day after day she would speak His praises,

And night after night.

You have always kept the banner of Your love over me;

Your awe is never absent in my heart.

O’Lord, You have examined me and known me,

You have tested my heart and watched me by night.

I have had my fill of sleepless nights,

Tossing on my sick-bed.

My feet have hurried me to the holy houses of worship,

Even when deep sleep falls upon men;

And they have visions in the night.

I was a fool.

I blundered all the days of my childhood;

I am ashamed that I wasted my youth;

That is why tears are now my food,

Day and night.

O pure one, held in body’s prison,

Observe that this world is nothing but a passageway.

Then rouse, rouse yourself at the beginning of every watch,

Rise and cry aloud in the night.

My youthful days vanished like a shadow,

My years flew away more swiftly than eagles.

Of all my joys,

I cannot remember a single day or night.

Proud men oppress me and gloat over me;

They speak words of peace,

As their teeth bite into me.

Let their evil doings be remembered before You,

Day and night!

You who invoke the Lord’s name—

Call a solemn assembly,

Wash yourselves, hallow yourselves,

Purge your hearts of dross,

Stand fast,

Do not be silent,

Day or night.

“My daughter,

“Know that I shall yet endow you with My grace;

I shall gently lead you to my dwelling,

And install you there.

You have no kinsmen closer than me:

Now go and sleep through the night.