

Sarah Riskind

# Hanerot Halalu

*flexible canon for Hanukkah*

2016, revised 2022

Duration: flexible



[www.sarahriskind.com](http://www.sarahriskind.com)



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## Hanerot Halalu

*flexible canon for Hanukkah*

Duration: flexible

### Performance Notes:

In 2016, I set out to create a Hanukkah songbook for my family. After arranging eight of our favorite traditional songs, I composed my own canon on a whim. It was originally paired with my original setting of Mi Y'malel as a set entitled Ancient Miracles.

Now that six years have passed, along with most of a pandemic (which vastly impacted music-making everywhere), I have heard Hanerot Halalu in many forms: a straightforward choral canon, a multi-track violin solo, a reimagined version sung by Roomful of Teeth, and more. This version provides an assortment of arrangements that can serve as a jumping-off point for further creativity:

1. **Original canon melody** (B tonic), with chord suggestions (as in all versions)
2. **Original canon melody** (C tonic)
3. **Solfège** version (C tonic) (provided as a learning tool)
4. **Solfège** only version without a five-line staff (provided as a learning tool)
5. **Solfège** exercises to acclimate singers to the mode
6. **SSA** a cappella arrangement (C tonic) (most material derived from canon) (with optional improvisation section)
7. **TBB** a cappella arrangement (C# tonic) (most material derived from canon) (with optional improvisation section)
8. **SAB** a cappella arrangement (C tonic) (most material derived from canon) (with optional improvisation section)

### The Mode:



If you sing a harmonic minor scale, then sing another scale with the same pitches starting on the fifth, you will end up with the Phrygian Dominant or *Ahavah Rabbah* mode (in Jewish prayer terminology). This mode is extremely common in Jewish music, as well as in Turkish, Arabic, Indian, and other musical traditions around the world. In the Solfège exercises in this collection, I have chosen a tonic of *mi* to correspond closely to harmonic minor and to reduce the chromatic Solfège needed down to one syllable, *si* (sol raised by a half step).

## The Improvisation

One of the most enjoyable and effective ways for singers to become comfortable with this mode is to improvise! The improvisation sections in the SSA, TBB, and SAB arrangements are completely optional, but I highly encourage you to try it. Here are some suggested steps to teach it:

1. Start by having singers **loop the harmony** parts. If you'd like, ask a pianist play the chords as well, ideally with some arpeggiation to set a mood.
2. Invite the singers to **sing other notes in the chords** if they choose, but emphasize that nothing will be considered a "wrong note." You should do the exercise with them.
3. Continue looping the passage, but encourage singers to **add other notes** in the scale, little melodies, etc... and do this for a long time, so that shy singers might eventually be encouraged to try it.
4. If singers seem open to trying **solo or small group** improvisation moments, assign them/cue them encouragingly. Lead others in applause/finger-snapping afterwards, praising the effort rather than just the result.
5. **Alternative approaches:** have all singers sing up and down the scale, but pause/hold notes as desired; have singers lead their sections in Solfège with hand signs; assign pitches but invite rhythmic improvisation...

– Sarah Riskind

Previously based in Seattle and Boston, conductor and composer **Sarah Riskind** (b.1987) is the Director of Choral Activities at Eureka College in central Illinois, Music Director of the Baroque Artists of Champaign Urbana, and a past faculty member at The Walden School. Riskind's compositions are featured in the Project Encore catalogue of contemporary choral music and available at [www.sarahriskind.com](http://www.sarahriskind.com) as well as Swirly Music. Among her works are Jewish and Judeo-Christian music, secular pieces with improvisatory elements, and choral settings with string obbligato parts. She holds degrees from the University of Washington, the University of Wisconsin at Madison, and Williams College.

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## Hebrew Transliterated Text and Translation

Hanerot halalu anachnu madlikin  
Al hanisim v'al hanifla'ot  
V'al hat'shu'ot v'al hamilchamot  
She'asita lavoteinu  
Bayamim hahem bazman hazeh.

We light these lights  
For the miracles and the wonders,  
For the redemption and the battles  
That you made for our forefathers  
In those days at this season, through your holy priests.

### Text Source

The candle-lighting prayer Hanerot Halalu is a liturgical poem based on Mishnah tractate Sofrim 20:6, from the writings known as the Talmud. A central text in Judaism, the Talmud contains complex layers of rabbinic law that influence the life and worship of observant Jews.

### Pronunciation Resources

Visit <https://www.jewishchoralmusic.com/singing-in-hebrew> for a guide to singing in Hebrew. There are also many online recordings and videos of other melodies with the same text.

### Hanukkah

Hanukkah (or Chanukah/other spellings) is a historical holiday that commemorates the 168 B.C.E. victory of the Jewish resistance forces, led by the Maccabee family, over the army of Antiochus Epiphanes. In the face of violence, destruction, and forced assimilation into Greek culture, the Maccabees' courage allowed the Jews to preserve their culture and religion.

Later in history, another story was told: when the Maccabees reclaimed the holy Temple in Jerusalem, there was only one jar of oil to keep the sacred light burning. This miraculous oil lasted for eight nights, inspiring eight nights of celebration and the practice of lighting a menorah (more accurately called a *Hanukkiyah*) with an additional candle on each of those nights.

Around the 1920s, American Jewish families began exchanging Hanukkah gifts, due to the holiday's proximity to Christmas. Other traditions include making fried potato pancakes called *latkes* and jelly doughnuts called *sufganiyot* (in order to celebrate the oil), playing *dreydl*, and singing the Hanukkah blessings while lighting the candles. Although it is a popular holiday today, it is not one of the most important religious holidays for Jewish people; Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur (typically in September and/or October) carry much more significance.



B tonic version

# Hanerot Halalu

*flexible canon for Hanukkah*

Sarah Riskind (b. 1987)

**Prayerful, but not too slow**

1 **A**  $\text{♩} = 44$

Ha-ne-rot ha - la - lu a - nach - nu mad - li - kin al - ha - ni -

# SAMPLE SCORE

# DO NOT COPY

11 C<sup>maj7</sup> (or Am7) **B**

13 **C** **B** **Am (or C)** **B**

17 C<sup>maj7</sup> (or Am7) **B**

# Hanerot Halalu

*flexible canon for Hanukkah*

Sarah Riskind (b. 1987)

**Prayerful, but not too slow**

1 **A**  $\text{♩} = 44$

Bbm (or Db) C

Ha-ne-rot ha - la - lu a - nach - nu mad - li - kin al - ha - ni -  
sim v' - al ha - nif - la' - ot,

# SAMPLE SCORE

# DO NOT COPY

11 D $\flat$ maj $7$  (or Bbm $7$ ) C

Bbm (or Db) C

si - ta la'a - vo - tei - nu

13 **C** C

Bbm (or Db) C

ba - ya-mim ha - hem, baz - man ha - zeh al y' - dei ko - ha -  
ne - cha ha - k'do - shim.

17 D $\flat$ maj $7$  (or Bbm $7$ ) C

Bbm (or Db) C

ne - cha ha - k'do - shim.

Solfège Version

# Hanerot Halalu

*flexible canon for Hanukkah*

Sarah Riskind (b. 1987)

1

**A** [Ab=Do]

mi mi mi si ti do ti ti re do ti do ti la ti la la ti

# SAMPLE SCORE

5

**B**

**DO NOT COPY**

9

ti la si fa mi fa si la ti do re mi mi re do re do ti

13

**C**

ti ti ti mi re mi mi mi fa fa mi ti ti mi do ti

17

la re re mi fa mi mi re mi

# Hanerot Halalu

*flexible canon for Hanukkah*

Sarah Riskind (b. 1987)

Suggested: Ab=Do

1 **A**

mi mi mi si ti do ti ti re do ti do ti la ti la la ti

## SAMPLE SCORE

5 **B**

do r do t la si a si fa hi si si mi fa si si si

9

ti la si fa mi fa si la ti do re mi mi re do re do do ti

13 **C**

ti ti ti mi re mi mi mi fa fa mi ti ti mi do ti

17

la re re mi fa mi mi re mi

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## Solfège Exercises

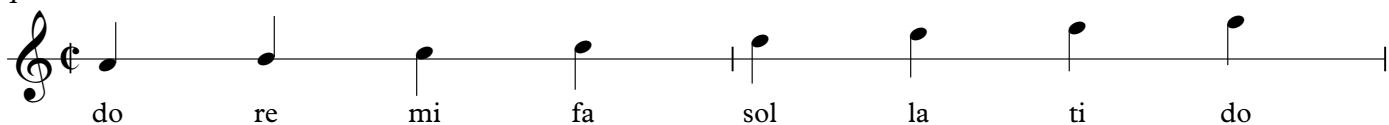
# Hanerot Halalu

*flexible canon for Hanukkah*

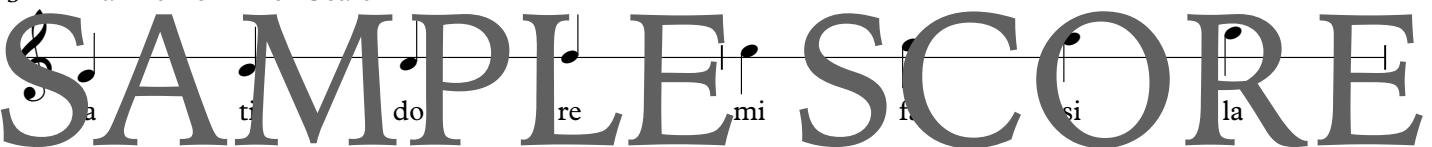
Sarah Riskind (b. 1987)

Suggested: Ab=Do

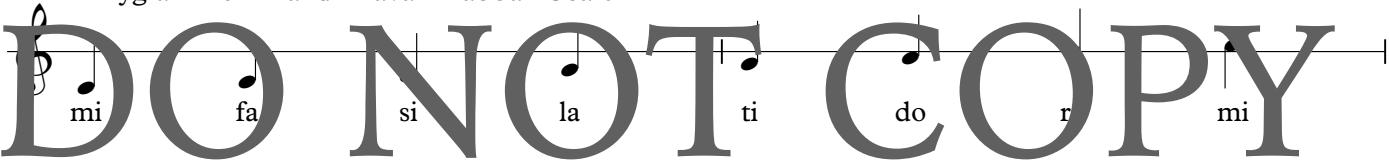
1 Major Scale



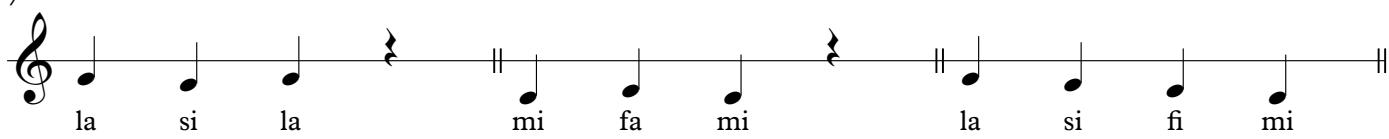
3 Harmonic Minor Scale



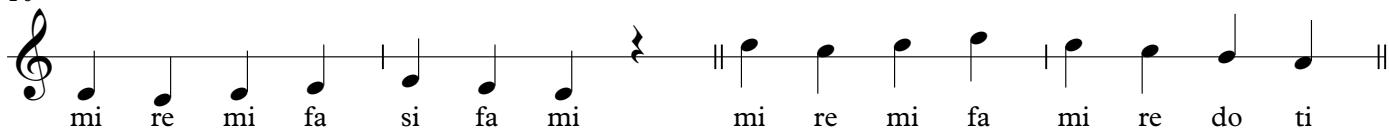
5 Phrygian Dominant/Ahavah Rabbah Scale



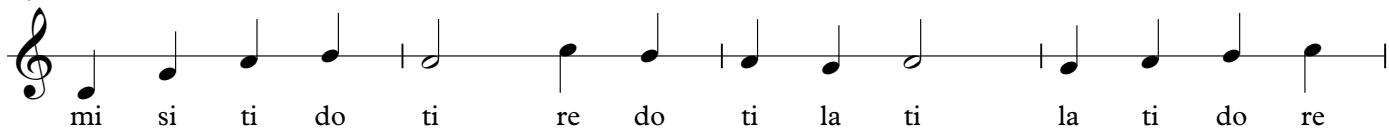
7 Phrygian Dominant/Ahavah Rabbah Patterns (can also be taught by ear)



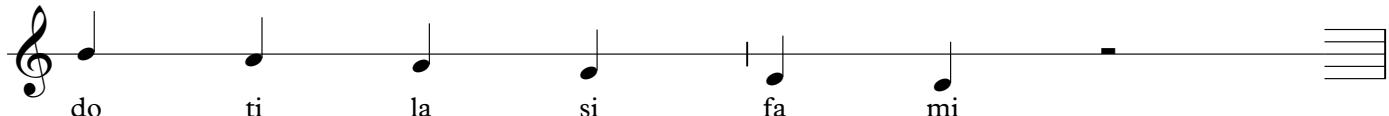
10



14



18



SSA a cappella arranged version  
(optional: add instruments using  
chords in mm. 1-6)

# Hanerot Halalu

*flexible canon for Hanukkah*

Sarah Riskind (b. 1987)

**Prayerful, but not too slow**

$\text{♩} = 44$

1      **A** Solo, Small Group, or Full Choir

Ha-ne-rot ha - la - lu a - nach-nu mad - li - kin al-ha-ni -

# SAMPLE SCORE

5      Solo 2, Small Group, or Full Choir

sim v' al al ha - shu - ot v -

# DO NOT COPY

9

al ha - mil - cha - mot she - a - si - ta la'a - vo - tei - nu

13      Solo 3, Small Group, or Full Choir

ba - ya-mim ha - hem, baz - man ha - zeh al y' - dei ko - ha -

17

ne - cha ha - k'do - shim.

19 **B** *p* Tutti Soprano 1

Ha-ne-rot ha - la - lu a - nach-nu mad - li - kin al - ha - ni -

23

sim v' - al ha - nif - la' - ot, al hat' - shu - ot v -'

*mp*

Tutti Soprano 2

Ha-ne-rot ha - la - lu a -

# DO NOT COPY

al ha - mil - cha - mot she-a - si - ta la'a - vo - tei - nu

nach-nu mad - li - kin al-ha-ni - sim v' - al ha - nif - la' - ot,

31

ba-yamim ha - hem, baz - man ha - zeh al y'-dei ko-ha -

*mf*

al hat' - shu - ot v' - al ha - mil - cha - mot she-a -

*mf* Tutti Alto

Ha-ne-rot ha - la - lu a - nach-nu mad - li - kin al - ha - ni -

35

**C**

*f*

ne - cha ha - k'do - shin.

Ha-ne - rot ha - la - lu a -

si - ta la'a - vo - tei - nu

ba - ya-mim ha - hem, baz -

*sim v'* *a h - nif - ' - o* *al at' - shu - ot*

**SAMPLE SCORE**

36

**DO NOT COPY**

nach-nu mad - li - kin

al-ha-ni - sim v' - al ha - nif - la' - ot, man ha - zeh al y'-dei ko-ha - ne - cha ha - k'do - shin.

al ha - mil - cha - mot she-a - si - ta la'a - vo - tei - nu

43

al hat' - shu - ot

v' - al ha - mil - cha - mot she-a - Ha-ne - rot ha - la - lu a - nach-nu mad - li - kin al-ha-ni -

ba - ya-mim ha - hem, baz - man ha - zeh al y'-dei ko-ha -

47

si - ta la'a - vo - tei - nu ba - ya-mim ha - hem, baz - .  
sim v' - al ha - nif - la' - ot, al hat' - shu - ot v' - .  
re - ch ha - do shin... u.  
man... la - ch al y'-dei - la - ne ch ha - do - shin... u.  
al ha - mil - cha - mot she - a - si - ta la'a - vo - tei - nu

# SAMPLE SCORE

51

man... la - ch al y'-dei - la - ne ch ha - do - shin... u.  
al ha - mil - cha - mot she - a - si - ta la'a - vo - tei - nu

### Optional Improvisation Section:

Using the notated scale, any number of singers and/or instrumentalists improvise patterns on neutral syllables/vowels or full phrases of the text. Others sing the notated S2 and A harmonies.

Repeat as many times as desired.

**D**

If no improvisation desired, skip to m. 63.

55

u...

u...

59

# SAMPLE SCORE

63 E *mp* Tutti Soprano 1

**DONOT COPY**

*mp* Tutti Soprano 2

*mp* Tutti Alto

67 *molto rit.*

A sample score page featuring three staves of musical notation. The top staff begins with a forte dynamic (**f**) and includes lyrics "nif - la' -". The middle staff continues the lyrics "ot,". The bottom staff begins with a forte dynamic (**f**) and includes lyrics "nif - la' -". The lyrics "ot," appear again on the middle staff. The notation consists of sixteenth-note patterns and sustained notes.

# SAMPLE SCORE

# DO NOT COPY

TBB a cappella arranged version  
(optional: add instruments using  
chords in mm. 1-6)

# Hanerot Halalu

*flexible canon for Hanukkah*

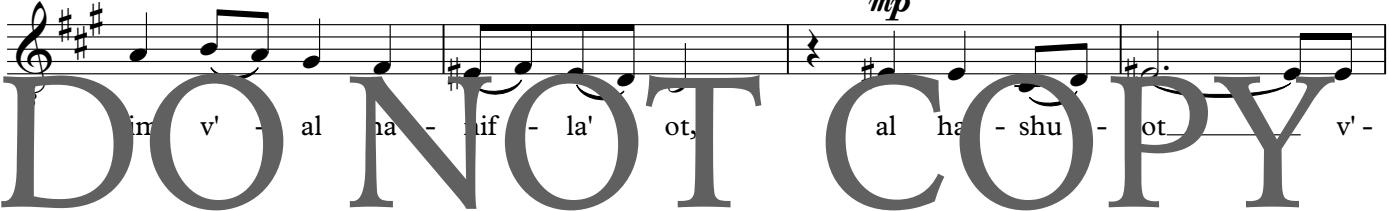
Sarah Riskind (b. 1987)

**Prayerful, but not too slow**

**A** ♩=44

1 C# *mp* Solo, Small Group, or Full Choir Bm (or D) C#  


# SAMPLE SCORE

5 Dmaj7 (or Bm7) C# Solo 2, Small Group, or Full Choir *mp*  


9  

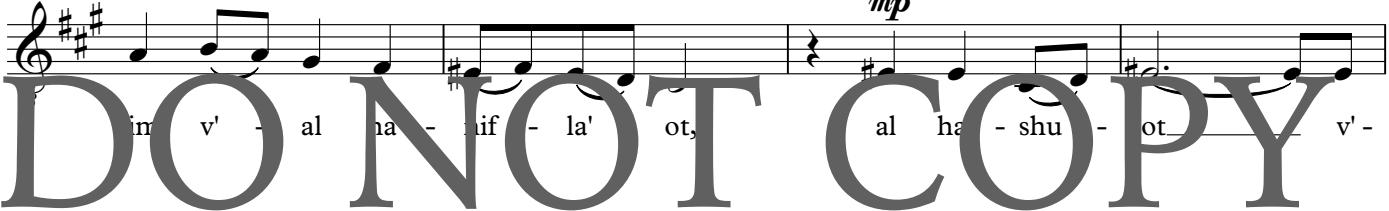

13 Solo 3, Small Group, or Full Choir *mf*  


17  


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5 Dmaj7 (or Bm7) C# Solo 2, Small Group, or Full Choir *mp*  


9  


13 Solo 3, Small Group, or Full Choir *mf*  


17  


Musical score for orchestra, page 19, section B. The dynamic is *p* (pianissimo). The vocal part is labeled "Tutti Tenor". The lyrics are: Ha-ne-rot ha - la - lu a - nach-nu mad - li - kin al-ha-ni -

# SAMPLE SCORE

# DONOTCOPY

**DON NOT COPY**

al ha - mil - cha - mot she-a - si - ta la'a - vo - tei - nu  
nach-nu mad - li - kin al - ha - ni - sim v' - al ha - nif - la' - ot,

31

ba - ya - mim ha - hem, baz - man ha - zeh al y' - dei ko - ha -  
al hat' - shu - ot v' - al ha - mil - cha - mot she - a -  
***mf*** Tutti Bass  
Ha - ne - rot ha - la - lu a - nach - nu mad - li - kin al - ha - ni -

35

**C**

*f*

ne - cha ha - k'do - shim.

Ha-ne - rot ha - la - lu a -

si - ta la'a - vo - tei - nu

ba - ya-mim ha - hem, baz -

sin v' - al h - nif l' - ot el at' - shu - ot

# SAMPLE SCORE

39

**DO NOT COPY**

nach - nu mad - i - kin

al ha - ni - sim v' ar ha - ni - la' - ot,

man ha - zeh al y'-dei ko-ha - ne - cha ha - k'do - shim.

al ha - mil - cha - mot she-a - si - ta la'a - vo - tei - nu

43

al hat' - shu - ot v' - al ha - mil - cha - mot she-a -

Ha-ne - rot ha - la - lu a - nach - nu mad - li - kin al - ha - ni -

ba - ya - mim ha - hem, baz - man ha - zeh al y'-dei ko-ha -

47

si - ta la'a - vo - tei - nu ba - ya-mim ha - hem, baz -  
sim v' - al ha - nif - la' - ot, al hat' - shu - ot v' -  
ne - ch ha - koo - smi. u

# SAMPLE SCORE

51

man ha - zeh al y'-dei ko-ha - ne - cna ha - kao - shim.  
al ha - mil - cha - mot she - a - si - ta la'a - vo - tei - nu  
u

**Optional Improvisation Section:**

Using the notated scale, any number of singers and/or instrumentalists improvise patterns on neutral syllables/vowels or full phrases of the text.  
Others sing the notated Bar and B harmonies.

Repeat as many times as desired.

If no improvisation desired, skip to m. 63.

55 **D**

u...

56 **DO NOT COPY**

63 **E**

*mp* Tutti Tenor

Ha-ne-rot ha - la - lu a - nach-nu mad - li - kin Ha-ne-

*mp* Tutti Baritone

Ha-ne-rot ha - la - lu a - nach-nu mad - li -

*mp* Tutti Bass

Ha-ne-rot ha - la - lu a -

**molto rit.**

67

8 rot ha - la - lu Ha-ne-rot ha - la - lu v' - al ha -

kin Ha-ne - rot ha - la - lu

nach nu mac - i ki Ha-ne - rot ha - la

# SAMPLE SCORE

71 **f**

nif - la' nif - la' - ot,

ot,

ot,

# DO NOT COPY

SAB a cappella arranged version  
(optional: add instruments using  
chords in mm. 1-6)

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Sarah Riskind (b. 1987)

**Prayerful, but not too slow**

1 **F**  $\text{♩} = 44$

C *mp* Solo, Small Group, or Full Choir B $\flat$ m (or D $\flat$ ) C

Ha-ne-rot ha - la - lu a - nach-nu mad - li - kin al - ha - ni -

# SAMPLE SCORE

5 D $\flat$ maj7 (or B $\flat$ m7) C Solo 2, Small Group, or Full Choir *mp*

sin v' al ha - nif - la' ot al ha - shu - ot v' -

9

al ha - mil - cha - mot she - a - si - ta la'a - vo - tei - nu

13 Solo 3, Small Group, or Full Choir *mf*

ba - ya-mim ha - hem, baz - man ha - zeh al y' - dei ko - ha -

17

ne - cha ha - k'do - shim.

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# DO NOT COPY

19 **G** **p** Tutti Soprano

Ha-ne-rot ha - la - lu a - nach-nu mad - li - kin al-ha-ni-

23

sim v' - al ha - nif - la' - ot, al hat' - shu - ot v'-  
**Tutti Alto**  
Ha-ne-rot ha - la - lu a -

# DO NOT COPY

21

al ha - mil - cha - mot she-a - si - ta la'a - vo - tei - nu  
nach-nu mad - li - kin al-ha-ni - sim v' - al ha - nif - la' - ot,

31

ba-yá-mim ha - hem, baz - man ha - zeh al y'-dei ko-ha-  
al hat' - shu - ot v' - al ha - mil - cha - mot she-a -  
**Tutti Baritone**  
Ha-ne - rot ha - la - lu a - nach-nu mad - li - kin al-ha-ni-

35

**H** *f*

ne - cha ha - k'do - shim.

Ha-ne - rot ha - la - lu a -

si - ta la'a - vo - tei - nu

ba - ya-mim ha - hem, baz -

sim v' - al ha - nif - o

# SAMPLE SCORE

39

**DONOT COPY**

nach - nu mad - i - kin

al - ha - ni - sin v' - al ha - nif - la' - ot,

man ha - zeh al y'-dei ko-ha - ne - cha ha - k'do - shim.

al ha - mil - cha - mot she-a - si - ta la'a - vo - tei - nu

43

al hat' - shu - ot v' - al ha - mil - cha - mot she-a -

Ha-ne - rot ha - la - lu a - nach-nu mad - li - kin al - ha - ni -

ba - ya-mim ha - hem, baz - man ha - zeh al y'-dei ko-ha -

47

si - ta la'a - vo - tei - nu ba - ya-mim ha - hem, baz -  
sim v' - al ha - nif - la' - ot, al hat' - shu - ot v' -  
optional T *mf*

*u*

# SAMPLE SCORE

51

man - la - zeh al y' - lei lo - ha - n - cha h - k'do sh - m.  
al ha - mil - cha - mot she - a - si - ta la'a - vo - tei - nu  
*u*

**Optional Improvisation Section:**

Using the notated scale, any number of singers and/or instrumentalists improvise patterns on neutral syllables/vowels or full phrases of the text. Others sing the notated A and B harmonies ad lib.

Repeat as many times as desired.

If no improvisation desired, skip to m. 63.

55

**I**

u...

# SAMPLE SCORE

56

# DO NOT COPY

63

**J**

*mp* Tutti Soprano

Ha-ne-rot ha - la - lu a - nach-nu mad - li - kin Ha-ne-

*mp* Tutti Alto

Ha-ne-rot ha - la - lu a - nach-nu mad - li -

*mp* Tutti Baritone

Ha-ne-rot ha - la - lu a -

**molto rit.**

67

rot ha - la - lu Ha-ne-rot ha - la - lu v' - al ha -  
kin Ha-ne - rot ha - la - lu al-ha-ni - sim v' - al ha -  
nach - nu mal - i - ki Ha-ne - rot ha - la - lu h -

# SAMPLE SCORE

71 *f*

n - la' - ot,  
nif - la' - ot,  
nif - la' - ot,

# DO NOT COPY