**PO BE’ERETZ CHEMDAT AVOT**

Written by Israeli poets Yisrael Dushman and Chanina Karchevsky in 1912.

When Israeli politician and MK Chaim Boger was the principal of the Gymnasia Herzliya High School in Tel Aviv, he asked Dushman and Karchevsky to write a marching song the students could sing while hiking the Land.

The song became wildly popular among religious and secular Zionists alike, and is sung every year at the Yom HaAtzmaut ceremony on Har Herzl.

This song expresses the Zionist dream of making aliyah, setting the Land and reviving the Hebrew language.

*Here in the Land our ancestors yearned for*

All hopes will be fulfilled,

Here we will live and here we will build,

A shining life, a life of freedom,

Here shall the Shechina dwell,

And here the language of the Torah will flourish.

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**BALADA LACHOVESH**

Written by Israeli playwright, Dan Almagor, at age 21 in 1956.

Tune composed by Effi Netzer in 1968.

The song earned its success and fame when Yehoram Gaon’s rendition won first place in the Israel Song Festival in 1969. It is considered one of Gaon’s most beloved songs, and won first place in a number of other competitions.

The song is a back and forth conversation between a wounded soldier and his paramedic. Like other ballads, the hero of the song, the paramedic, meets his tragic end at the conclusion of the song. Although it was not based on one specific story, it bears similarities to other incidents which did occur. Written after the Six-Day War, the song was seen by many as representing the bravery and heroism of the Israeli soldier.

For many years, the song was played on the radio only on Yom HaZikaron. It is played at many graduation ceremonies at the Military Medical School.

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**YERUSHALAYIM SHEL ZAHAV**

Written by Naomi Shemer in 1967.

Probably the most famous and most moving Israeli song of all time, *Yerushalayim Shel Zahav* describes the Jewish people’s 2,000-year longing for Yerushalayim, referencing Tanach and Talmudic sources as well as borrowing from Rabbi Yehuda HaLevi’s Zionistic poetry. It was written by Naomi Shemer, and commissioned by Jerusalem Mayor Teddy Kollek, for the Israeli Song Festival, held on May 15, 1967, the night after Israel’s 19th Independence Day. East Yerushalayim was controlled by Jordan, and Jews had been banned from visiting the Old City.

Three weeks later, when the Six-Day War broke out, the song became a morale-booster for the Israeli soldiers. On June 7th, 1967, the IDF freed eastern Yerushalayim, the Old City and Har HaBayit from the Jordanians. At the time, Shemer was about to perform for a troop of
paratroopers. She quickly penned a new verse – instead of “Alas... the [Old City] shuk is empty and we cannot visit Har HaBayit,” she wrote: “We have returned to... the shuk; the shofar is sounding at the Har HaBayit,” a reference to IDF Chief Rabbi, Shlomo Goren, sounding the shofar after regaining Har HaBayit.

Yerushalayim Shel Zahav was proposed as the Israeli national anthem.

Yerushalayim Shel Zahav

The mountain air is clear as wine
And the sent of pines is carried
on the twilight wind
With the sound of bells
In the slumber of trees and stone
She is captured within her dream
In her heart, a wall
Yerushalayim of gold, and of bronze and of light
I am a violin for all of your songs

The idea of the song is simple: individuals have the power to change the world, little by little.

You and I will change the world
You and I, and everyone else will join
They've said it before us
So what? You and I will change the world

Chai, chai, chai

Yes, I'm still alive
This is the song my grandfather Sang yesterday to my father
And today, I Am still alive

Modeh Ani

Written by Omer Adam in 2014.

The song Modeh Ani is a popular modern Israeli hit in the Mizrahi genre. The artist thanks G-d for his talents and his ability to create and sing music, recognizing that it is all from Him and dedicating his songs to G-d. Although Omer Adam does not consider himself religious, he turned down an opportunity to compete in the Eurovision Song Contest which was due to take place on Shabbat. He refuses to perform on Shabbat, which, together with the words of the song, show how religious messages have made their way into and become part of mainstream Israeli secular pop music.

Modeh Ani

written by Ehud Manor and Avi Toledano in 1983.

The song was Israel's entry in the Eurovision Song Contest in 1983, winning second place, and was declared “Song of the Year” in Israel.

The song begins with the exclamation that the singer is still alive; despite her thorns, she also has many flowers. The song is a metaphor for the Jewish people.

When Ehud Manor heard that the 1983 Eurovision Contest was going to take place in Munich, Germany, he wrote this song, hinting that, despite the Holocaust and the Munich Olympics massacre a decade earlier, the Jewish people are still here.