

Me Ain Olam Haba

The musical score is written in 4/4 time and consists of three staves. The first staff has the lyrics "Me ain o - lam ha - ba" with a long line under "ba". The second staff has the lyrics "Me ain o - lam ha - ba i - om". The third staff has the lyrics "Sha - bat Me - nu - cha" followed by a first ending bracket labeled "1." and a second ending bracket labeled "2." with the lyrics "-cha Sha - lom" under the second ending. Chord symbols Dm, C, and Bb are placed above the notes.

Music and words: traditional Hebrew

Dance: W & A van der Zwan

Meain olam haba (2x)

The world to come is before me

Meain olam haba iom

The world to come is before me

today

Shabat Menucha

Sabbath, place of rest

Shalom

Peace

This traditional melody has been with us for a long time, first as a chant we learned from the Dutch singer Jetty Armaiti Scholten, later also as a dance.

We sang it at the funeral of Ariënne's mother, who died on December 6, 1996.

Meain means 'in front of'. *Olam haba* is a well known Jewish expression, referring to the 'World to come', the time when time ends and lions will sleep with sheep, as there will be no strife and only peace.

The Hebrew words to this dance are traditional Jewish for the Sabbath celebration, as is the melody. In a poetical and expanded translation, the words can be rendered as:

Through the Sabbath we stop our work to remember the Creation and maybe catch a glimpse of the World to Come, where perennial Peace will be a reality.

With this translation, we place this dance in the Jewish tradition of the *Bereshith mysticism*, named after the first word of the Hebrew Bible *Bereshith* ('In the Beginning'). This form of mysticism tries to understand life and connect to the Source by going back to the very beginning of Creation.

Sabbath is the day of rest and originated from the creation story in Genesis, telling us how God rested on the seventh day and looked back to see that all was good (*tov* in Hebrew, as *tof* still used in colloquial Dutch). In the Jewish tradition, the days of the week do not have names but have numbers that culminate in the Sabbath Day, the seventh and most important day of the week.

The peace at the beginning of Creation was absolute and knew no opposites like our concept of 'peace' (the contrary of war) and the faithful Jews believe that at the end of time this peace will return. Then the Sabbath won't end but will last forever, as time will cease to exist. As in the Islamic tradition, the Hebrew tradition is Moon oriented, so the day starts in the evening when the first star can be seen and ends when the sun is down and again the first star appears. When this happens, it is clear that the miracle hasn't happened this time and that this Sabbath has ended. Next week another chance!

The Sabbath is like a fissure in time and space and allows us to break through the limitations of time and space to the very beginning *and* to the end of Creation, thus connecting with the Divine.

On Sabbath, the veil that divides us from the divine is thinner than usual. In the Cabala tradition, this is expressed as God descending to earth in the form of the Shechina (Hebrew: *הגניכש*, the immanence or 'bride' of God, comparable with Shakti in the Hindu tradition). Through the Shechina we can experience something of the heavenly and absolute peace *shalom*.

In the dance, this play with time and space is expressed in the swaying between past, present and future (left, center and right).

As so often in these dances, we work from the heart, our spiritual workshop where we can process our emotions and experiences and generate peace. The covering of both hands in the partner part is traditional Jewish. It is a full hearted greeting, offering both hands so not holding back anything. The moment of standing still is an obvious symbol of the Sabbath, the day of rest. We turn clockwise (evolution, the active force that helps us to progress with our work towards peace): while we go inside to connect with the Creation, we also are fully alive on this planet and do what we can for the spiritual evolution of the planet and all that lives on it.

The practical and earthly side of the Jewish tradition is expressed in the last movement of the dance, where we spread our experience over the earth and reconnect to form a circle once again.

Movements

1. Me ain olam haba (2x)
2. Me ain olam haba iom
3. Shabbat menucha
4. Shabbat menucha
5. Shalom

As this is a partner dance, choose partners at the beginning. The dancers hold hands in a circle.

1. Cross left over right on AIN, sway to the right on -LAM and left - right on HABA. Repeat.
2. Make a turn clockwise, ending towards your partner while bringing the peace to your heart with your hands.
3. Stand in place and take each other's right hand. Next cover with your left hand the back of your partner's right hand.
4. In this position, make a half turn clockwise and stand in place until the end of the word MENUCHA.

5. While chanting SHALOM, slowly turn to the center with the hands spread out to the earth. At the end the hands meet and the dance can start again.