

Ochila la'El

Rosh Hashanah Musaf

Singers: Leslie Lyndon (Traditional) and Natalie Grazin (Egalitarian)

אוֹחִילָה לְאֵל, אַחְלָה פְּנִי, אֲשַׁאלָה מִמֶּנּוּ מַעֲנֵה לְשׁוֹן, אֲשֶׁר בִּקְהַל עַם
אֲשִׁירָה עֵזוֹ, אֲבִיעָה רְנָנוֹת בְּעַד מִפְעָלָיו. לְאָדָם מַעֲרָכִי לֵב, וּמִי מַעֲנֵה לְשׁוֹן.
יִי שְׁפָתַי תִּפְתָּח, וּפִי יִגִּיד תְּהִלָּתְךָ. יְהִי לְרָצוֹן אִמְרֵי פִי וְהִגִּיוֹן לִבִּי לְפָנֶיךָ, יִי
צוּרִי וְגוֹאֲלִי.

**Ochila la'El, a'chaleh fanav, esh'alah mimenu ma'aneh lashon, asher bi'k'hal am
ashira uzo, abi'ah r'nanot b'ad mif'alav. L'adam ma'archei lev, u'me'Adonai
ma'aneh lashon. Adonai s'fatai tiftach, u'fi yagid t'hilatecha. Yih'yu l'ratzon
imrei fi, v'hegyon libbi lefanecha, Adonai tzuri v'go'ali.**

*I firmly hope in God and plead with Him.
I ask Him to grant me the gift of speech
That I may sing His praise among people,
and utter chants concerning His actions.
A person can prepare the thoughts in their mind,
But the power of speech comes from the Lord.
Lord, open my lips that I can tell thy praise.
May my words and the meditations of my heart
be acceptable to thee, Lord, my Rock and my Redeemer.*

This is recited on Rosh Hashanah (during Musaf), very soon after the Avodah when we have prostrated ourselves - one of the most powerful moments in the service. For Ochila La'El, the ark is opened, which attests to its importance in the service. This text is very old, and can be found in this form in the 9th century Siddur of Rav Amram Gaon.