When You Gave Light to Israel

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snow has been falling from the lowered sky,
a snow colder than snow.

_Translated by the author with John Batki_

**ANADAD ELDON / ISRAEL**

When You Gave Light to Israel

_When you gave light to the sun_
_and sun to the morning,_
_I went to you, your only child._

_The trees screened the flowing water,_
_on their branches you hung white birds;_
_and on me, pupils, dark as my shoes._

_Bare-footed, the trees are rooted_
_upright, making God’s years green._

_Give my legs back those years my father spent by the swamps_
_that ran here from hillock to hillock—_
_whistling, hanging his clothes out to dry._

_He built a channel for tears; for pain_
_shelter in my eyes._

_When I see white birds, resting_
_on the tops of trees, it seems_
_God or his angels are about._

_Translated by Bat-Sheva Sheriff and Jon Silkin_