

Shir Hashirim

Introduction

A book that is traditionally read at Pesach is Shir HaShirim, “The Song of Songs” (meaning “the best of all possible songs”). There are several reasons why Shliach Sha’ul is correct when he interprets the book as making reference to the Moshiach and his wedding banquet with his people. In Ep 5:25-27, Shliach Sha’ul says, “Husbands, love your wives.” The Song of Songs contains love poems and refers to Ben Dovid’s Chasunoh (*wedding ceremony and celebration*) in Song of Song 3:11. Sh'lomo HaMelech here, the son of Dovid, is not the ultimate Prince who brings peace. One greater than Sh'lomo is here, the Sar Shalom, the rose of Sharon, the lily of the Valley, the fairest of ten thousand. And He does have a Kehillah Bride who is faithful to his Brit Chadasha covenant with her. He is her king (1:2-4,12) and her shepherd (1:7-8). She is tahm-mah-tee “my perfect one” (5:2; 6:9).

Here is a “Banqueting Table” Prayer:

“I BELIEVED; THEREFORE HAVE I SPOKEN (Ps 116:10a).

O HASHEM, SAVE MY NEFESH (Ps 116:4).

I ADMIT I HAVE SINNED, NOT ONLY IN WHAT I HAVE DONE, BUT IN WHAT I AM, (Ps 51)

I ABHOR MYSELF (Job 42:6) AND MY IDOLS WITH G-DLY SORROW FOR MY SIN, TURNING IN TESHUVAH (Isa 44:22) TO MY MELITZ YOSHER IN HEAVEN (Job 33:23), MOSHIACH ADONEINU (Mal 3:1).

YOUR BANNER, OVER ME, HOLY MOSHIACH, IS LOVE (Song 2:4); YOU CARRIED MY SIN AWAY ON THE TREE AS THE SA'IR L'AZAZEL YOM KIPPUR SCAPEGOAT KAPPORAH TO SATISFY THE TORAH (Isa 53:11-12). YOU REMOVED MY FILTHY ROBES (Zech 4:3-5; 3:8; 6:11-12), AND SEATED ME AT YOUR BANQUETING TABLE (Song 2:4). I TRUST YOU AS HASHEM'S PESACH KORBAN FOR MY REDEMPTION (Isa 53:7; Ruth 3:12). I OPEN THE LATCH AND INVITE YOU TO COME THROUGH THE DOOR OF MY HEART AS MY GO'EL AND MOSHI'A (2Sm 22:3; Dan 3:25), AND KOHEN (Ps 110:4) AND KAPPORAH (Isa 53:8) FOREVER. IN THE NAME OF HA'AV (Jer 3:19), HABEN (Prov 30:4; 8:30), AND HARUACH HAKODESH (Ps 51:11). OMEIN."

¹ Shir HaShirim, which is Sh'lomo's.

² Let him kiss me with the neshikot (*kisses*) of his mouth;

for better is dodecha (*thy love*) than yayin (*wine*).

³ Tovim is the fragrance of thy shmanim (*ointments*);

thy shem (*name*) is like shemen (*ointment*) poured forth;

therefore do the alamot love thee.*

⁴ Draw me; so will we run after thee;
the Melech hath brought me into his chadarim (*chambers*).

We will be glad and rejoice in thee;

* **1:3** alamot, young unmarried virgins; pl of almah virgin; see Shir Song 6:8; Isa 7:14; Gn 24:43; Ex 2:8; Prov 30:19, where the word has this explicit or implicit meaning throughout the Tanakh; see *The Translator to the Reader*

we will extol dodecha (*thy love*) more than yayin;
uprightly have they loved thee.

⁵ Shechorah (*black, dark, sun-blackened*) am I, yet
lovely,

O ye banot Yerushalayim,
like the oholim (*tents*) of Kedar,
like the curtains of Sh'lomo.

⁶ Let your eyes burn not into me because I am
black,
because the shemesh hath burned its eyes into
me;

bnei immi (*my step-brothers*) were angry with me;
they made me the keeper of the kramim (*vine-*
yards);

but mine own kerem (*vineyard*) have I not kept.

⁷ O tell me, thou whom my nefesh loveth,
where feedest thou? Where makest thou thy flock
to lie down at noon?

For why should I be as one who veils herself
among the edrei chaverecha (*the flocks of thy*
chaverim, fellow companions)?

⁸ If thou know not, O thou fairest among nashim,
go thy way forth by the footprints of the tzon,
and feed thy young goats
beside the mishkenot haro'im (*the tents of the*
shepherds).

⁹ O my love, to a susah (*mare*)
among the chariots of Pharaoh do I compare thee.

¹⁰ Thy cheeks are lovely with ornaments,
thy tzavar (*neck*) with necklaces.

¹¹ Ornaments of zahav will we make for thee,
studded with kesef.

¹² While the Melech is at his table,
my spikenard perfume has yielded its fragrance.

¹³ Dodi (*my beloved*) is to me
a sachet of myrrh that lieth in my bosom.

¹⁴ Dodi (*my beloved*) is to me as a cluster of henna
blossoms
in the kramim (*vineyards*) of Ein-Gedi.

¹⁵ See, thou art yafeh (*fair*), my love; see, thou art
fair;
thine eynayim are yonim (*doves*).

¹⁶ See, thou art yafeh (*handsome*), dodi (*my
beloved*), yea, na'im (*pleasing*);
also our couch is verdant.

¹⁷ The beams of our bais are cedar,
and our rafters are cypress.

2

¹ I am the rose of Sharon,
and the shoshan (*lily*) of the valleys.

² As the shoshan (*lily*) among thorns,
so is my love among the banot.

³ As the tapuach (*apple tree*) among the trees of the
wood,
so is dodi (*my beloved*) among the banim.
Betzilloh (*in his shade, shadow*) chimmadti (*I de-
sire*),*

* **2:3** See Song 5:16

and his p'ri (*fruit*) is sweet to my taste.

⁴ He brought me to the Bais HaYayin,
and his degel (*standard, banner, flag*) over me is
ahavah.

⁵ Sustain me with cakes of raisins,
comfort me with apples:
ki cholat ahavah ani (*for I am faint with ahavah,*
lovesick).

⁶ His left hand is under my rosh,
and his right hand doth embrace me.

⁷ I charge you, O ye banot Yerushalayim,
by the gazelles, and by the deer of the sadeh,
that ye arouse nor awake HaAhavah
till it pleases.†

⁸ Kol dodi (*the voice of my beloved*)!
Hinei, he cometh leaping upon the harim,
bounding over the hills.

⁹ Dodi (*my beloved*) is like a gazelle
or a young deer;
hinei, he standeth behind our Kotel (*Wall*);
he looketh forth at the chalonot (*windows*),
peering through the lattices.‡

¹⁰ Dodi (*my beloved*) spoke,
and said unto me:
Rise up, my love, my fair one,
and come away.

¹¹ For, hinei, the winter is past,
the geshem (*rain*) is over and gone;

¹² The flowers appear on ha'arets;
the time of zemer (*song, singing of birds*) has come;

† 2:7 i.e., until its own time — see 3:5; 8:4 ‡ 2:9 Rv 3:20

and the voice of the turtledove is heard in
Artzeinu (*our Land*);

¹³ The te'enah (*fig tree*) putteth forth her early figs,
and the vines with the tender grape give forth
fragrance.

Arise, my love, my fair one,
and come away.

¹⁴ O my yonah (*dove*), that art in the clefts of the
rock,

in the seter (*secret place*) of the cliff,
let me see thy countenance,
let me hear thy voice;
for sweet is thy voice,
and thy countenance is lovely.

¹⁵ Catch the shu'alim (*foxes*),
the shu'alim ketanim (*little foxes*),
that spoil the kramim (*vines*);
for krameinu (*our [blooming] vines*) have tender
grapes.

¹⁶ Dodi (*my beloved*) is mine,
and I am his;
he feedeth among the lilies.

¹⁷ Until HaYom (*the day*) break,
and the shadows flee away,
turn, dodi (*my beloved*),
and be thou like a gazelle
or a young deer
upon the hills of Beter.

3

¹ In the nights on my bed
I sought him whom my nefesh loveth;

I sought him, but I found him not.

² So I will rise then, and go about the city
in the streets, and in the rehovot (*open squares,*
places);

I will seek him whom my nefesh loveth;
I sought him, but found him not.

³ The shomrim (*watchmen*) that go about the city
found me;
to whom I said, Saw ye him whom my nefesh
loveth?

⁴ Scarcely had I passed from them,
when I found him whom my nefesh loveth;
I held him, and would not let him go,
until I had brought him into the bais immi (*the*
house of my mother),
and into the cheder of her that conceived me.

⁵ I charge you, O ye banot Yerushalayim,
by the gazelles, and by the deer of the sadeh,
that ye arouse nor awake HaAhavah
till it pleases.*

⁶ Who is this that cometh out of the midbar
like pillars of smoke,
perfumed with myrrh and frankincense
from all the fragrant powders of the rokhel (*mer-*
chant)?

⁷ Hinei, his conveyance,† which is Sh'lomo's;
threescore gibborim (*valiant men*) are around it,
the Gibborei Yisroel.

⁸ They all hold swords,
being expert in milchamah (*war*);
every man hath his cherev (*sword*) at his side

* **3:5** i.e., until its own time, see 2:7; 8:4 † **3:7** See palanquin, 3:9

against the pachad (*terror, dread*) of the nights.

⁹ HaMelech Sh'lomo made himself an appiryon
(*palanquin*),[‡]

of the wood of the Levanon.

¹⁰ He made the pillars thereof of kesef,

the support thereof of zahav,

the cushion of it of purple,

the interior thereof being inlaid with Ahavah,

by the banot Yerushalayim.

¹¹ Come out, O ye banot Tziyon,

and behold Sh'lomo HaMelech

with the atarah (*crown*) wherewith his em
crowned him

in the Yom Chasunoh (*day of his wedding*),

and in the Yom Simchat Libo (*day of the gladness
of his heart*).[§]

4

¹ Behold, thou art yafeh, my love; behold, thou art
yafeh;

thine eyes are yonim (*doves*) behind your veil;

thy hair is like an eder (*flock*) of goats descending
from Mount Gil'ad.

² Thy teeth are like an eder of sheep that are just
shorn,

coming up from washing;

whereof every one is matched,

and none is missing among them.

[‡] **3:9** mobile throne carried on a litter on the shoulders of men

§ 3:11 See Rv 19:6-10; Ep 5:22-33; Yn 3:29; 2C 11:1-2; Isa 54:5-6; Jer 2:2; Ezek 16:8-14,20-21,32,38; Hos 2:16,18-20, and here see the Shulamite as a type of the Kehillah of Moshiach and Sh'lomo Ben Dovid a type of Moshiach Ben Dovid the Ro'eh HaTov, the Good Shepherd

³ Thy lips are like a thread of scarlet,
and thy mouth is naveh (*lovely*);
thy temple is like a half-pomegranate
within thy veil.

⁴ Thy tzavar (*neck*) is like the migdal Dovid
girt with battlements,
whereon there hang a thousand mogen,*
all the shields of Gibborim.

⁵ Thy two breasts are like two ofarim (*fawns,*
young deer)
that are twins, which graze among the lilies.

⁶ Until HaYom (*the day*) break, and the shadows
flee away,

I will get me to the har hamor (*mountain of myrrh*),
and to the hill of frankincense.

⁷ Thou art all yafeh, my love;
there is no mum (*blemish, spot, defect, flaw*) in
thee.

⁸ Come with me from the Levanon,
my kallah (*bride*), with me from the Levanon;
come down from the heights of Amanah,
from the top of Senir and Chermon,
from the dens of the arayot (*lions*),
from the hills of the nemerim (*leopards*).

⁹ Thou hast ravished my lev, my sister, my kallah;
thou hast ravished my lev with one of thy glances,
with one link of thy necklace.

¹⁰ How fair is thy love, my sister, my kallah!

* **4:4** Since this is the Song of Solomon, Son of David, and since the verse refers to the migdal Dovid, it should be noted that Mogen Dovid in Jewish liturgy signifies Hashem as the protector (shield) of Dovid

How much better is thy love than yayin!

And the scent of thine perfumes than any spice!

¹¹ Thy lips, O my kallah, drip like the honeycomb;
devash and cholov are under thy tongue;
and the scent of thy garments is like the scent of
the Levanon.

¹² A gan (*garden*) locked is my sister, my kallah;
a spring enclosed, a ma'ayan (*fountain*) sealed.

¹³ Thy plants are a pardeis (*park, paradise*) of
pomegranates, with pleasant p'ri;
henna with spikenard,

¹⁴ Spikenard and saffron; calamus and cinnamon,
with kol atzei levonah (*all kinds of incense trees*);
myrrh and aloes, with all the finest spices:

¹⁵ A na'yan (*fountain*) of gardens, a be'er (*well*) of
mayim chayyim (*well of living waters*),
and streams from the Levanon.

¹⁶ Awake, O north wind;
and come, thou south wind;
blow upon my gan (*garden*),
that the fragrances thereof may flow out.

Let dodi (*my beloved*) come into his gan (*garden*),
and let him taste its choice pri (*fruits*).

5

¹ I am come into my gan (*garden*), my sister, my
kallah;
I have gathered my myrrh with my spice;
I have eaten my honeycomb with my devash
(*honey*);
I have drunk my yayin with my cholov (*milk*).

Eat, O friends; drink, yea, drink abundantly,
dodim.

² I sleep, but my lev waketh:
it is the voice of dodi (*my beloved*) that knocketh,
saying:

Open to me, my sister, my love,
my yonah (*dove*) tammati (*my undefiled, my perfect one*);

for my head is filled with tal (*dew*),
and my hair with the drops of the lailah.

³ I have put off my kuttonet (*kesones, chiton, robe*);
how shall I put it on?

I have washed my feet;
how shall I defile them?

⁴ Dodi (*my beloved*) thrust his hand through the
latch-opening,
my heart began pounding for him.

⁵ I arose to open to dodi (*my beloved*);
and my hands dripped with myrrh,
and my fingers with sweet smelling myrrh,
upon the handles of the man'ul (*lock, door bolt*).

⁶ I opened to dodi (*my beloved*);
but dodi had withdrawn and gone;
my nefesh departed when he spoke;
I sought him, but I could not find him;
I called him, but he gave me no answer.

⁷ The shomrim (*watchmen*) that went about the
city found me,
they beat me, they wounded me;

the shomrei hachomat* took away my cloak from me.

⁸ I charge you, O banot Yerushalayim,
if ye find dodi (*my beloved*),
what will ye tell him?

Tell him shecholat ahavah ani (*I am faint with
ahavah, lovesick*).†

⁹ How is thy beloved more than another beloved,
O thou fairest among nashim?
How is thy beloved more than another beloved,
that thou dost so charge us?

¹⁰ Dodi (*my beloved*) is radiant and ruddy,
unrivalled by ten thousand.

¹¹ His head is like the purest gold,
his hair is wavy and shachor (*black*) as the raven.

¹² His eyes are like yonim (*doves*) by the streams of
mayim,
washed with cholov, jewels fitly set.

¹³ His cheeks are like beds of spices,
like sweet flowers;
his lips like shoshanim (*lilies*),
dripping sweet scented myrrh.

¹⁴ His hands are like rods of zahav set with chryso-
lites;
his body is like a polished work of ivory decorated
with sapphires.

¹⁵ His legs are like pillars of marble,
set upon sockets of fine zahav;
his countenance is like the Levanon,
bachor (*one being choice*) like the cedars.

* ^{5:7} i.e., the shomrim, the guardians [of the city on the wall]

† ^{5:8} see 2:5

¹⁶ His mouth is most sweet;
yea, he is machamaddim (*altogether desirable*).[‡]
This is dodi (*my beloved*), and this is my friend,
O banot Yerushalayim. §

6

¹ Where is thy beloved gone,
O thou fairest among nashim?
Where is thy beloved turned aside,
that we may seek him with thee?

² Dodi (*my beloved*) is gone down into his gan
(*garden*),
to the beds of spices,
to feed in the ganim (*gardens*),
and to gather shoshanim (*lilies*).

³ I am my beloved's,
and my beloved is mine;
he feedeth among the shoshanim.

⁴ Thou art yafeh, O my love, as Tirtzah,
lovely as Yerushalayim,
awe-inspiring as bannered troops on the march.

⁵ Turn away thine eyes from me,
for they overwhelm me;
thy hair is as an eder of goats
that descend from Gil'ad.

[‡] 5:16 See Song 2:3; Hag 2:7 says Moshiach is the Desired of all Nations § 5:16 T.N. The next chapter is commented on extensively in the Orthodox Jewish Bible Introduction. This section is one of the most important Scriptures in the Bible because it buttresses Isa 7:14 and its foundational meaning.

6 Thy teeth are as an eder harechalim (*flock of ewes*)
 which go up from the washing,
 whereof every one is matched,
 and there is not one missing among them.

7 As a half pomegranate is thy temple
 within thy veil.

8 There are threescore melakhot (*queens*),
 and fourscore pilagshim (*concubines*),
 and alamot (*young unmarried virgins*) without
 number.*

9 My yonah (*dove*), tammati (*my perfect one, my undefiled*) is unique;
 she is the only one of her em (*mother*),
 she is the barah (*choice one*) of her that bore her.
 The banot saw her; they called her blessed;
 yea, the melakhot and the pilagshim† praise her.

10 Who is she that looks forth like the shachar
 (*dawn*),
 yafeh as the levanah (*moon*), clear as the sun,
 and awe-inspiring as bannered troops on the
 march?

11 I went down into the grove of nut trees

* 6:8 T.N. Alamot is plural of almah, “virgin,” alamot, “virgins;” see Shir Song 1:3; Isa 7:14; Gn 24:43; Ex 2:8; Prov 30:19 where the word means explicitly or implicitly “virgin” and where “young woman” is not an adequate rendering, in this case, since the King was hardly interested in only young women in his harem, but demanded “virgins;” the older Jewish translations like Harkavy’s so translated the word as “virgin” in this verse until it became politically incorrect to do so in later, more liberal Jewish translations into English † 6:9 see 6:8

to see the blossoms of the valley,
and to see whether hagefen (*the vine*) flourished
and the pomegranates bloomed.

¹² Before I was aware, my nefesh lifted me up
to the merkevot of ammi (*my people*) of one, a
royal one.

7

¹ Return, return, O Shulamite;
return, return, that we may gaze upon thee.

What will ye see in the Shulamite?
As it were the mecholat Machanayim (*dance of the
Machanayim*).*

² How beautiful are thy feet in sandals,
O prince's daughter!
Thy graceful legs are like jewels,
ma'aseh yedei amon (*the work of the hands of an
artist*).†

³ Thy navel is like a round goblet,
which wanteth not wine:
thy waist is like a mound of chittim (*wheat*)
encircled by shoshanim (*lilies*).

⁴ Thy two breasts are like two fawns
that are twins of a gazelle.

⁵ Thy tzavar (*neck*) is like a migdal of ivory;
thine eyes like the pools of Cheshbon,
by the sha'ar (*gate*) of Bat-Rabbim;
thy nose is like the migdal of the Levanon
which looketh toward Damascus.

⁶ Thine head upon thee is like Carmel,

* **7:1** See Gn 32:3 † **7:2** See Prov 8:30

and the hair of thine head like royal tapestry;
Melech is held captive in its tresses.

⁷ How fair and how pleasant art thou,
O Ahavah, for delights!

⁸ This thy stature is like a tamar (*palm tree*),
and thy breasts eshkolot (*clusters [of fruit]*).

⁹ I said: I will climb up to the tamar,
I will take hold of the branches thereof;
now also thy breasts shall be as eshkelot hagefen
(*clusters of the vine*),
and the scent of thy breath like apples;

¹⁰ And the roof of thy mouth like the best yayin of
dodi (*my beloved*),
that goeth down sweetly,
causing the lips of those that are asleep to speak.

¹¹ I am my beloved's,
and to me goeth forth his teshukah (*desire*).

¹² Come, dodi (*my beloved*),
let us go forth into the sadeh;
let us lodge in the villages.

¹³ Let us get up early to the kramim (*vineyards*);
let us see if the gefen budded,
whether the tender grape appears,
and the pomegranates bloom;
there will I give thee my love.

¹⁴ The mandrakes send out their fragrance,
and at our doors are all manner of pleasant fruits,
chadashim (*new ones*) and yeshanim (*old ones*),

which I have stored up and kept for thee, O dodi
(*my beloved*).‡

8

¹ O that thou were like my brother,
that nursed the breasts of immi (*my mother*)!
Then, if I should find thee outside, I would kiss
thee;
yea, and no one would look down on me.

² I would lead thee,
and bring thee into bais immi.* Thou wouldest
instruct me;

I would cause thee to drink of spiced yayin
and the nectar of my pomegranate.

³ His left hand should be under my rosh,
and his right hand embrace me.

⁴ I charge you, O banot Yerushalayim,
that ye arouse nor awake HaAhavah (*the Love*)
till it pleases.†

⁵ Who is this that cometh up from the midbar,
leaning upon her beloved?

Under the tapuach (*apple tree*) I awakened thee;
it was there thy em conceived thee;
there she who brought thee forth conceived thee.

⁶ Set me as a chotam (*seal*) upon thine lev,
as a chotam upon thine zero'a (*arm*);

‡ 7:14 T.N. Just as there are different classes of women in the harem – so there are different residences in the book of Esther, for the malkah, for the pilegash and for the almah or betulah; cf Song 6:8 and Esther chp 2. * 8:2 see 3:4 † 8:4 i.e., until its own time, see 2:7; 3:5

for ahavah is strong as mavet (*death*);
kinah (*jealousy*) as unyielding as Sheol;
the flames thereof are flames of eish,
the flame of HASHEM.

⁷ Mayim rabbim (*many waters*) cannot quench
HaAhavah,
neither can the floods drown it;
if a man would give
all the wealth of his bais for ahavah,
it would be utterly scorned.

⁸ We have an achot ketannah (*little sister*),
and she hath as yet no breasts.
What shall we do for achoteinu (*our sister*)
in the day when she shall be spoken for?

⁹ If she be a chomah (*wall*),
we will build upon her a pinnacle of kesef;
and if she be a delet (*door*),
we will enclose her with panels of cedar.

¹⁰ I am a chomah (*wall*), and my breasts, like
migdalot;
then was I in his eyes
like one that findeth shalom.

¹¹ Sh'lomo had a kerem (*vineyard*) at Ba'al-Hamon;
he gave over the kerem (*vineyard*) unto caretakers;
each had to pay a thousand pieces of kesef for the
p'ri (*fruit*) thereof.

¹² My kerem (*vineyard*), which is mine, is at my
own disposal;‡
thou, O Sh'lomo, the thousand are for thee,

‡ 8:12 see 7:13 [14]

and two hundred for those that tend the p'ri
thereof!

¹³ Thou that dwellest in the ganim (*gardens*),
the chaverim are listening for thy voice;
cause me to hear it.

¹⁴ Make haste, dodi (*my beloved*),
and be thou like to a gazelle
or a young deer upon the mountains where spices
grow.

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