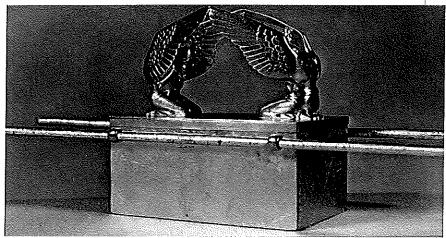


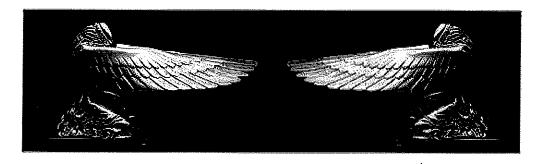
Love, Longing, and Liberty: Reflections on Shir HaShirim

The Annual Rapoport Family Memorial Lecture
- March 12, 2015 –

Dr. Erin Leib Smokler (erinleib@gmail.com)







	v		

1. Machzor Vitry

One recites the scroll of the Song of Songs on the Sabbath when that occurs during the intervening days [i.e. *chol ha-moed*] of the Festival. (Gloss 1: But if no Sabbath occurs at this time, one recites on the 7th days of Passover.) (Gloss 2: Therefore we recite the Song of Songs on Passover because it refers to the redemption from Egypt; as it says, "[I have likened you...] to a mare in Pharoah's chariots "[Song of Songs 1:9], etc. And the entire work refers to the four exiles, if one understands [rightly]."

2. שיר השירים פרק א

ט לְסֵסָתִי בְּרָכְבֵי פַרְעֹה דָּמִּיתִידְ רֵעְיָתִי: י נָאווּ לְחָיֵיִדְ בַּתֹּרִים צַנָּארֵדְ בַּחְרוּזִים: יא תּוֹרֵי זָהָב נַעֲשֶׂה־לֶּדְ עִם נְקְדּוֹת הכִּסִף:

2. Song of Songs 1: 9-11

(9) I have likened you, my darling,

To a mare in Pharoah's chariots:

(10) Your cheeks are comely with plaited wreaths,

Your neck with strings of jewels.

(11) We will add wreaths of gold

To your spangles of silver.

3. רש"י על שיר השירים א: ט

לססתי ברכבי פרעה דמיתיך רעיתי. למ"ד זו כמו למ"ד (שם י) לקול תתו המון מים וכמו למ"ד לריח שמניך לקבוצת סוסים הרבה שאספתי מחנותי לצאת לקראתך ברכבי פרעה להושיעך כמו שנאמר (חבקוק ג) דרכת בים סוסיך סוסים הרבה שם דמיתיך רעיתי שתקתיך מצעקתך שנ' (שמות יד) ואתם תחרישון זאת ראיתי בספרי אגדה. דבר אחר דמיתיך רעיתי שם הראיתי לכל שרעיתי את :

3. Rashi on Song of Songs 1:9

This "lammed" is like the "lammed" of (Jer. 10:13): "At the sound of (לְקוֹל) His giving a multitude of waters," and like (above verse 3): "At the fragrance of (לְלִית) your oils." At the gathering of many steeds, for I gathered my camps to go forth toward you in the chariots of Pharaoh to save you, as it is said (Hab. 3:15): "You trampled in the sea with your steeds," many steeds. There I silenced you, my beloved. I silenced you from your cry, as it is written (Exod. 14:14): "and you shall be silent." I saw this in Aggadic works (Song Rabbah). Another explanation: There I demonstrated to all that you are my beloved.

4. רש"י על שיר השירים א:יא

תורי זהב נעשה לך. נמלכנו אני ובית דיני לפני בא פרעה שאשיאנו ואחזק את לבו לרדוף אחריך עם כל שבח גנזי אוצרותיו כדי שנעשה לך תורי קשוטי הזהב :

עם בקדות הכסף. שהיה בידך כבר שהוצאת ממצרים שגדולה היתה ביזת הים מביזת מצרים:

בקדות. כלי כסף מנוקדים ומצויירים בחברבורות וגוונים:

4. Rashi on Song of Songs 1:11

We will make you rows of gold: I and My tribunal decided before the arrival of Pharaoh that I should entice him and strengthen his heart to pursue you with all the best of his hidden treasures, so that we should make rows of golden ornaments for you.

with studs of silver: that were already in your possession, that you took out of Egypt, for the plunder at the sea was greater than the plunder in Egypt.

studs: silver objects studded and decorated with stripes and hues.

ה סַפֶּר שָׁנְמָּחֶסְ וְנִשְׁחַּיֵּר בּוֹ שְׁמוֹנִים וְחָמֵשׁ אוֹתִיּוֹת כְּפָרְשַׁת וַיְהִי בְּנְסֹעַ הָאָרֹן, מְטַמֵּא אֶת הַיָּדִיִם. מְגֹלָה שְׁפָּתוֹנִים וְחָמֵשׁ אוֹתִיּוֹת כְּפָרְשַׁת וַיְהִי בִּנְסֹעַ הָאָרֹן, מְטַמֶּא אֶת הַיָּדִיִם. בְּקֹּדְשׁ מְטַמְּאִין אֶת הַיָּדִיִם. רַבִּי יְהוּדָה אוֹמֵר, שִׁיר הַשִּׁירִים מְטַמֵּא אֶת הַיָּדִים, וְקֹהֶלֶת מְטַמְּאִין אֶת הַיָּדִים רַבִּי יְהוּדָה אוֹמֵר, שִׁיר הַשִּׁירִים מְטַמֵּא אֶת הַיָּדִים, וְקֹהֶלֶת מְטַמְּצִי נְּיחִ הַלֵּל. אָמֵר רַבִּי שְׁמְעוֹן בְּוֹ שְׁמָבְי בָּיח שְׁמָּאִי וְמָחָלְכָּר. רַבִּי חִקְּלֶן אָנִים וְּשְׁנִים וְעַוֹּיִם שְׁמִוֹן אוֹמֵר, קֹהֶלֶת מָשַּמְא אֶת הַיָּדִים שְׁנִי מִפִּי שִׁבְּעִים וּשְׁנִים וְקוֹבְ בְּיוֹם שְׁהוֹשִׁיבוּ אֶת רַבִּי אַלְעַזֶּר בְּן עַזְרִיה בַּיִשִּירִם שָׁלֹא תְּטִבְּי בִּיוֹם שְׁהֹא תְּטִבְּי בְּיוֹם שְׁהוֹשִׁיבוּ אֶת הַיָּדִים. אֶמֵּר רַבִּי עֲקִיבָּא, חֵס וְשְׁלוֹם, לֹא בָּחָלִק אָדָם מִיִּשְׂרָאֵל עֵּל שִׁיר הַשִּׁירִים שְׁלֹא תְּטִבְּא מְיִבְים לְּדָשׁירִים שְׁלֹא תְּיִבְּא, חַס וְשְׁלוֹם, לֹא בָּחְלְבְּא עִיר הָשִּׁירִים לְיִשְׁרָאל, שֶׁל שִׁרְבִּי הְּלְשִׁירִם לְּדְשִׁירִם בְּלְבָּא שְנִי מִּלְּלְוּ אֶלְּא עֵל קֹהֶלְתוּ בְּן הַיִּלְבְא, שְׁבָּל הָבְּילִים, וְשִׁלְבּן וְבְשְׁבָּא בָּן הַלְלְהְוּ וְבָּוֹ בְּבִי עֲקִרבּי בְּוֹלְבְּי וְבְּיִים לְּבָּי עֲבְּיִרִים לְּדְשִׁיבִּי וְשְׁבָּב, וֹחְלְבוּ בְּלְּר בְּבִי וֹחְלְבוּ בְּבְּי וְבְּבְּית בְּבִי וְחָלְבוּ בְּבְּי בְּבִּי עָבוֹי בְּבְּי וְבְּבְּית בְּבִי וֹחְלָבוּ בְּבְּי בְּנִיבְי בְּבְּי בְּבְבְּי בְּבִּי וְמְשְׁבִּי בְּי וְבְשְׁבִּים בְּיִבְּים בְּיִבְים בְּבְּיבְים בְּבְּיבִים בְּיִבְים בְּיִבְּים בְּבְּים בְּיִיבְים בְּבְּבְיב וְיִבְיִּים בְּבִיבְים בְּיבְּים בְּיבְיבִים בְּיבְים בְּבִּיבְים בְּבְּבְיבוּ בְּבְּיבְיבוּ בְּיבְיבוּ בְּבְיבוּים בְּיבְיבוּ בְּבְּיבְיב בְּיבְיבִּים בְּבִּיב בְּבִיב בְּיבְים בְּבְיבְים בְּבְיבְים בְּבִיב בְּיבְים בְּבְיבּים בְּיבְים בְּבּיב בְּבִּים בְּבְּבְיבוּ בְּבְּבְעוּת בְּלְבּיב בְּשִׁיבְיב בְּבְיב בְּבְּבְיבוּת בְּבְיבּים בְּבְּבְיבוּ בְּבְּבְיבוּיב בְּיבְבְיבְיבּי בְּבְיבְים בְּיבְבְיב בְּבְיבְיבְבְּבְּבְּים בְּבְּבְיב

5. Mishna Yadavim 3:5

A book [i.e. a Torah scroll] which was erased leaving only eighty-five letters in it, like the portion of (Numbers 10: 35-36), "And it was when the Ark was raised...," renders the hands impure. A scroll on which are written eighty-five letters, like the portion of, "And it was when the Ark was raised...," renders the hands impure. All sacred scriptures render the hands impure. The Song of Songs and Ecclesiastes render the hands impure. Rabbi Yehudah says: The Song of Songs renders the hands impure, but there is a dispute regarding Ecclesiastes. Rabbi Yose says: Ecclesiastes does not render the hands impure, and there is a dispute regarding The Song of Songs. Rabbi Shimon says: Ecclesiastes is among the [relative] leniencies of Beit Shammai, and the [relative] stringencies of Beit Hillel. Rabbi Shimon ben Azzai said, "I have a recieved tradition from the mouths of seventy-two elders, on the day they inducted Rabbi Elazar ben Azaria into his seat [as head] at the Academy, that The Song of Songs and Ecclesiastes render the hands impure," Rabbi Akiya said, "Mercy forbid! No one in Israel ever disputed that The Song of Songs renders the hands impure, since nothing in the entire world is worthy but for that day on which The Song of Songs was given to Israel; for all the Scriptures are holy, but The Song of Songs is the Holy of Holies! And if they did dispute, there was only a dispute regarding Ecclesiastes." Rabbi Yochanan ben Yehoshua, the son of Rabbi Akiva's father-in-law, said, "In accordance with words of Ben Azzai, thus did they dispute, and thus did they conclude."

6. שיר השירים ב:ה

ַ סַמְּכוּנִי בָּאֲשִׁישׁוֹת רַפְּדוּנִי בַּתַּפּוּחִים כִּי־חוֹלַת אַהָבָה אַנִי:

6. Song of Songs 2:5

Strengthen me with raisins (alt. raisin cakes), Refresh me with apples, For I am faint with love.

7. Pachad Yitzchak, Pesach, note 6b

"Nothing in the entire world is worthy but for that day on which The Song of Songs was given to Israel" [Mishna Yadayim 3:5]. Precise attention to this statement causes us to notice the emphasis to be found in the words "that day." This phrase suggests that the giving of the Song of Songs happened on a known day. Behold, it is explicit in the writings of our rabbis that the day of the giving of the Song of Songs was the same day that King Solomon brought the Ark of the Covenant into the Holy of Holies at the end of the initiation process of the Temple. The Vilna Gaon [insert full name, dates] explains that the holiness of the content of the book of Song of Songs is rooted in the holiness of the cherubs (the *keruvim*), about which are written "their faces toward one another" [Shmot 25:20]. They are entangled in one another the way that a man and his companion are entangled [reference to 1 Kings 7].

8. שמות כה: כ-כב

כ וְהָיוּ הַכְּרֲבִים פּּרְשֵׁי כְּנֶפָיִם לְמַעְלָה סֹכְכִים בְּכַנְפֵיהָם עַל־הַכַּפּּרֶת וּפְנֵיהָם אִישׁ אֶל־אָחִיוּ אֶל־הַכַּפּּרֶת יִהְיוּ פְּנֵי הַכְּרֵבִים: כא וְנָחָהָ אֶת־הַכַּפּּרֶת עַל־הָאָרֹן מִלְמָעְלָה וְאֶל־הָאָרֹן חָתֵּו אֶת־הָעַדַת אֲשֶׁר אָשֶׁר אָבָיד: כב וְנוֹעַדְּתִּי לְךְּ שְׁם וְדְבַּרְתִּי אִתְּדְּ מֵעֵל הַכַּפּרֶת מִבִּין שְׁנֵי הַכְּרֵבִים אֲשֶׁר עַל־אָרוֹן הָעַדָת אֵת כָּל־אָשֶׁר אָצַוָּה אוֹתְדְּ אָל־בְּנֵי יִשְׂרְאֵל:

8. Exodus 25:20-22

- (20) The cherubs shall have their wings spread out above, shielding the cover with their wings. They shall confront each other, the faces of the cherubim being turned toward the cover.
- (21) And you shall place the ark cover on the ark from above, and into the ark you shall place the testimony, which I will give you.
- (22) There I will make myself known to you, and I will speak to you—from above the cover, from between the two cherubs that are on top of the Ark of the Pact—all that I will command you concerning the Israelite people.

9. רש"י על שמות כה: כ

פרשי כנפים: שלא תעשה כנפיהם שוכבים, אלא פרושים וגבוהים למעלה אצל ראשיהם, שיהא עשרה טפחים בחלל בין הכנפים לכפרת, כדאיתא בסוכה (דף ה ב):

9. Rashi on Exodus 25:20

"Their wings spread": [This means] that you shall not make their wings lying down [resting next to their bodies], but spread high alongside their heads, so that there should be ten handbreadths in the space between the wings and the ark cover, as is stated in Succah (5b).

:10. בבא בתרא יד:

ור"מ, שברי לוחות דמונחין בארון מנ"ל? נפקא ליה מדרב הונא דאמר רב הונא, מאי דכתיב: (שמואל ב' ו') אשר נקרא שם שם ה' צבאות יושב הכרובים עליו? מלמד שלוחות ושברי לוחות מונחים בארון.

10. BT Bava Batra 14b

And whence does R. Meir learn that the fragments of the [first] tables were deposited in the ark? — From the same source as R. Huna, who said: What is the meaning of the verse, 'Which is called by the Name, even the name of the Lord of Hosts that sitteth upon the Cherubim'? [The repetition of the word 'name'] teaches that the tables and the fragments of the tables were deposited in the ark.

11. בראשית ג:כד

ַנַיָּגָרָשׁ אַת־הַאָּדָם וַיַּשְׁכָּן מָקֶדָם לְגַן־עַדָן אַת־הַכָּרָבִים וְאַת לַהַט הַחָרֵב הַמְּתְהַפֶּבָת לְשָׁמֹר אַת־דֶּרֶךְ עַץ הַחַיִּים:

11. Genesis 3:24

And He drove the man out, and He stationed from the east of the Garden of Eden the cherubim and the blade of the revolving sword, to guard the way to the Tree of Life.

12. Pachad Yitzchak, Pesach, note 7a

During the time of the pairings of the *megillot* to the times of the year, *Shir HaShirim* was attached to Pesach. And this is related to that which we've already spoken about, that the day that *Shir HaShirim* was given was the same day that the *keruvim* were initiated into their place in the inner sanctum. The established and standing relationship between the Exodus from Egypt and the initiation of the *keruvim* is explained to us by the Ramban (Nachmanides,1194-1270) in his introduction to the book of Shmot.

The Ramban writes that the book of Shmot is also known as the book of redemption, sefer ha'geulah. But if so, what is the place of [all the writing about] the mishkan (Tabernacle) in this book? It must be that until the Israelites returned to the level of their ancestors regarding hashra'at ha'shechina, the dwelling of the divine presence, they were not yet considered redeemed. Only in that moment when the mishkan—about which God said, "and I will dwell among you"—only when it was complete did the Israelites arrive at redemption. So the construction of the mishkan is part of the book of redemption...This is the rule regarding all the generations to come that no one is worthy of the title 'redeemed' until he or she has made a space for the dwelling of the shechina. This space is called the Temple and this time is the moment that the keruvim were brought into the inner sanctum, for this signaled the completion of the initiation of the Temple. Only when the keruvim stand in the holy of holies—only then—can the people be called redeemed.

13. *Ibid.*, note 7b

והלא גאולת מצרים איננה רק גאולת הכלל. הלא יש דין מפורש ומפורט "כאילו הוא יצא ממצריםת" המחייב את כל יחיד ויחיד ליצור לו גאולה משלו. ואין יצירת גאולה זו שלימה בנפשו של יחיד מישראל עד שהוא בונה בו את בית מקדשו. בלבבי משכן אבנה וגומר....

Behold there is an explicit and clear law that [every person must see himself or herself] "as if he or she left Egypt." This obligates every single individual to create a redemption of his/her own, and no redemption is complete in the soul of the individual Jew until he or she builds there her own *Beit Mikdash* (Temple). [As the famous *piyyut* (poem) states,] "In my heart I will build a *mishkan* (sanctuary)."

14. שמות כה:ח

וָעָשׁוּ לִי מִקְדָשׁ וְשָׁכַנְתִּי בְּתוֹכָם:

14. Exodus 25:8

And they shall make Me a sanctuary and I will dwell among them.