

SONG OF SONGS

*For learning purposes.
Not for distribution.*

Opening Prayer

For the sake of unification
of the Holy One, blessed by He,
and His Divine Presence
—with reverence and love
and love and reverence—
to unify the Name of *Yod Ke*
with *Vav Ke*
in a perfect unity
in the name of all Israel,
we hereby come
to chant—in a pleasant voice—
the *Song of Songs*,
to rectify its source in a place on high.
May the pleasantness of Adonai, our God,
be upon us.
[O God,] establish our handiwork for us
—our handiwork establish.

Chapter 1

- 1 The song of songs, which is Solomon's
- 2 Let him kiss me
with the kisses of his mouth
for your love is dearer than wine.
- 3 Like the fragrance of good oils,
your name is like flowing oil,
therefore young maidens love you.
- 4 Draw me, we will run after you;
the king has brought me into his chambers;
we will be glad and rejoice in you,
we recall your love more than wine;
they loved you sincerely.
- 5 I am black but comely,
daughters of Jerusalem,
like the tents of Kedar,
like the curtains of Solomon.
- 6 Do not look upon me [with contempt]
that I am so black,
for the sun has tanned me;

- my mother's sons were incensed
against me;
they made me keeper of the vineyards,
[but] my own vineyard I did not watch.
- 7 Tell me, you whom my soul loves,
where do you graze your flock,
where do you rest your flock at noon;
why should I flit about
around the flocks of your companions?
- 8 If you do not know,
[you who are the] fairest of women,
go forth in the footsteps of the sheep
and pasture your kids
near the dwellings of the shepherds.
- 9 To the steeds in the chariots of Pharaoh
I have likened you, my beloved.
- 10 Your cheeks are comely
with rows of gems,
your neck with [pearl] necklaces;
- 11 Circlets of gold we will make for you
with spangles of silver.
- 12 While the king was at his table,
my spikenard gave out its fragrance.
- 13 A bundle of myrrh is my beloved to me;
between my breasts he shall lie.
- 14 A cluster of henna is my beloved to me
in the vineyards of En-gedi.
- 15 Behold you are beautiful, my beloved,
behold you are beautiful;
your eyes are like doves.
- 16 You are handsome, my beloved,
most handsome; indeed our bed is fresh.
- 17 The beams of our houses are cedars;
our panels are cypresses.

Chapter 2

- 1 I am a rose of Sharon,
a rose of the valleys.
- 2 As a rose among the thorns,
so is my beloved among the daughters.
- 3 As an apple tree
among the trees of the forest,
so is my beloved among the sons;
in its shade I delighted and sat,
and its fruit was sweet to my palate.

- 4 He brought me to the banqueting house,
and his banner is raised over me in love.
- 5 Sustain me with dainty cakes,
refresh my bed with [the scent] of apples;
for I am lovesick.
- 6 His left hand was under my head
and his right would embrace me.
- 7 I bind you under oath,
daughters of Jerusalem,
by the gazelles and the does of the field;
that you do not cause
hatred nor disturb this
love while it still pleases.
- 8 The voice of my beloved!
Behold he comes,
leaping over the mountains,
skipping over the hills.
- 9 My beloved resembles a gazelle
or a young hart;
behold, he stands behind our wall,
observing through the windows
peering through the lattices.
- 10 My beloved spoke and said to me,
“Rise up, my beloved, my fair one,
and go forth.
- 11 For behold, the winter is past,
the rain is over, and gone.
- 12 The blossoms have appeared on the land,
the time of singing has come,
and the voice of the turtledove
is heard in our land.
- 13 The fig tree has produced its green figs,
and [on] the grapevines tender grapes
give out their fragrance;
arise my beloved, my fair one,
and go forth.
- 14 My dove, in the clefts of the rock,
in the concealment of the cliff,
show me your countenance,
let me hear your voice;
for your voice is sweet
and your countenance is comely.
- 15 Seize for us the foxes,
little foxes that destroy vineyards;
[for] our vineyards
are with tender grapes.”

- 16 My beloved is mine, and I am his
who pastures among the roses.
- 17 Until the sun spreads
and the shadows flee;
you turned away, my beloved, and became
like a gazelle or a young hart
on [the] distant mountains.

Chapter 3

- 1 On my bed at night
I sought him whom my soul loves;
I sought him but did not find him.
- 2 I will rise now
and roam through the city,
in the marketplaces and in the streets;
I will seek him whom my soul loves;
I sought him but did not find him.
- 3 The watchmen found me,
those who circle about the city;
him whom my soul loves
have you seen him?
- 4 Scarcely had I departed from them
when I found him whom my soul loves
I grasped him
and would not let him go
Until I brought him to my mother's house
and to the chamber
of her who conceived me.
- 5 I bind you under oath,
daughters of Jerusalem,
by the gazelles and the does of the field,
that you do not cause hatred
nor disturb this love
while it still pleases.
- 6 Who is this ascending from the wilderness
with palmlike pillars of smoke
in a cloud of myrrh and frankincense
of all the powders of the perfume-seller?
- 7 Behold the bed of Solomon;
sixty mighty men are around it
of the mighty men of Israel.
- 8 All of them holding swords,
skilled in battle;
each with his sword at his side
for fear of the nights.

- 9 A canopy
has King Solomon made
of the wood of Lebanon.
- 10 Its pillars he made of silver,
its covering of gold,
its curtain of purple wool,
its interior bedecked with love
from the daughters of Jerusalem.
- 11 Go forth and gaze, daughters of Zion,
upon King Solomon,
upon the crown
with which his mother adorned him
on the day of his wedding
and on the day his heart rejoiced.

Chapter 4

- 1 Behold, you are beautiful, my beloved;
behold you are beautiful;
your eyes are like doves,
from within your kerchief
your hair is like a flock of goats
descending from Mount Gilead.
- 2 Your teeth are like a counted flock
which have come up from the washing,
all of which are perfect,
and none are blemished among them.
- 3 Like a scarlet thread are your lips,
and your mouth is comely;
like a slice of pomegranate
are your cheeks
from within your kerchief.
- 4 Your neck is like the Tower of David,
built as a model of beauty;
a thousand shields are hung upon it,
all the quivers of the mighty.
- 5 Your two breasts are like two fawns,
twins of the gazelle
who pasture among the roses.
- 6 Until the sun spreads
and the shadows flee,
I will go to Mount Mariah
and to the hill of frankincense.
- 7 You are completely beautiful, my beloved,
and you are without blemish.
- 8 With me [will you come] from Lebanon, O bride,
with me from Lebanon will you come;

- you will look from the peak of Amana,
from the peaks of Snir and Hermon,
from the lions' dens,
from the mountains of leopards.
- 9 You captured my heart, my sister, O bride,
you captured my heart
with but one of your eyes,
with one necklace of your necklaces.
- 10 How beautiful is your love,
my sister, O bride,
how superior is your love to wine
and the fragrance of your oils
to all perfumes.
- 11 Your lips drip flowing honey, O bride;
honey and milk are under your tongue,
and the fragrance of your garments
is like the fragrance of Lebanon.
- 12 A locked garden is my sister, O bride,
a locked up spring,
a sealed fountain.
- 13 Your arid fields
are a pomegranate orchard
with luscious fruits;
henna with spikenard.
- 14 Spikenard and saffron,
calamus and cinnamon,
with all the trees of frankincense,
myrrh and aloes,
with all the major spices.
- 15 You are a garden spring,
a well of living waters,
and flowing streams from Lebanon.
- 16 Awake, wind from the north,
and come, wind from the south,
blow upon my garden
so that its fragrance may flow;
let my beloved come to his garden
and eat its luscious fruit.

Chapter 5

- 1 I have come to my garden,
my sister, O bride;
I have gathered my myrrh with my spice.
I have eaten my sugarcane with my honey;
I have drunk my wine with my milk;
eat, friends;

- drink and become intoxicated,
beloved ones.
- 2 I slept but my heart was awake—
a sound! My beloved knocks;
open for me, my sister, my love,
my dove, my perfection,
for my head is drenched [as thought]
with dew,
my sidelocks drip with the rains
of the night.
- 3 I have removed my robe;
how can I put it on?
I have washed my feet;
how can I soil them?
- 4 My beloved sent forth his hand
from the portal
and my [body] longed for him.
- 5 I arose to open for my beloved; and my hands dripped myrrh,
and my fingers flowed with myrrh from the handles of the lock.
- 6 I opened for my beloved,
but my beloved had vanished and gone,
my soul departed as he spoke;
I sought him but could not find him,
I called him but he would not answer.
- 7 The watchmen found me;
those who go about the city,
they struck me, they wounded me;
they stripped my ornament from me;
[even] the guards of the walls.
- 8 I bind you under oath,
daughters of Jerusalem;
when you find my beloved
what will you tell him?
That I am lovesick [for him].
- 9 With what does your beloved
excel another beloved,
most beautiful among women?
With what does your beloved
excel another beloved
that you bind us under oath?
- 10 My beloved is pure white and ruddy,
surrounded by myriads.
- 11 His head is [like] finest gold,
his locks [are curled], and
they are raven black.
- 12 His eyes are like doves
upon brooks of water,

- bathed in milk,
well set in their fullness.
- 13 His cheeks are like a bed of spice
like towers of perfumes;
his lips are like roses,
dripping [with] flowing myrrh.
- 14 His hands are like rolls of gold
studded with precious gems;
his [body] sparkles like ivory
overlaid with sapphires.
- 15 His legs are pillars of marble
set in sockets of fine gold;
his appearance is like Lebanon,
chosen like the cedars.
- 16 [The words of] his palate are sweet,
and he is all delight;
that is my beloved,
and this is my friend,
O daughters of Jerusalem.

Chapter 6

- 1 Where has your beloved gone
O fairest among women?
Where has your beloved turned
that we may seek him with you?
- 2 My beloved has gone down to his garden
to the beds of spices,
to graze in the gardens
and to gather roses.
- 3 I am my beloved's
and my beloved is mine,
who grazes among the roses.
- 4 You are beautiful, my beloved, as Tirzah,
comely as Jerusalem,
awesome as the hosts [of angels].
- 5 Turn your eyes away from me
for they make me haughty;
your hair is like a flock of goats
descending from Mount Gilead.
- 6 Your teeth are like a counted flock
that have come up from the washing,
all of which are perfect,
and none are blemished among them.
- 7 Like a slice of pomegranate
are your cheeks
from within your kerchief.

- 8 They are sixty queens and eighty concubines and young
maidens without number.
- 9 But she is unique, my dove,
my perfect one;
she is unique to her mother,
she is pure to her who begot her;
daughters saw her
and acclaimed her,
queens and concubines,
and they praised her.
- 10 Who is this that grazes down
like the [breaking] dawn,
beautiful as the moon,
bright as the sun,
awesome as the hosts [of angels]?
- 11 I went down to the garden of nuts
to see the moist plants of the valley,
to see whether the vine had blossomed,
if the pomegranates had sprouted.
- 12 I did not know
my soul set me
like chariots of a noble people.

Chapter 7

- 1 Turn back, turn back, perfect one,
turn back, turn back
that we may observe you;
what can you [offer] the perfect one
that equals the encirclement of the camps?
- 2 How fair were your feet in sandals,
O daughter of nobles;
the roundness of your
flanks are like
jewels, the work of a craftsman.
- 3 Your navel is like a round bowl,
which lacks not for mixed wines;
your stomach is like a heap of wheat
hedged about with roses.
- 4 Your two breasts are like two fawns,
twins of the gazelle.
- 5 Your neck is like an ivory tower,
your eyes are like pools in Heshbon
at the gate of the populated city;
your face is like a tower of Lebanon,
looking out as far as Damascus.

- 6 That which is upon your head
is like Mount Carmel,
and the braid of your head
is like [royal] purple wool;
your king is bound in its tresses.
- 7 How beautiful and pleasant are you,
a love with delights.
- 8 Such is your stature
likened to a [stately] palm tree;
and your breasts are like clusters.
- 9 I said I will ascend the palm tree,
I will grasp its branches;
and now, let your breasts
remain like clusters of the vine
and the fragrance of your face
like apples.
- 10 And let your speech be like good wine;
it flows for my beloved in sincerity,
causing the lips of the sleepers to murmur.
- 11 I am my beloved's and he longs for me.
- 12 Come, my beloved,
let us go out to the field,
let us lodge in the villages.
- 13 Let us rise early for the vineyards,
let us see if the vine has blossomed,
if the tender grapes have appeared,
if the pomegranates are in bloom;
there I will give my love to you.
- 14 The baskets emit fragrance,
and at our door are all luscious fruits,
both new and old; my beloved,
I have kept them for you.

Chapter 8

- 1 If only you were a brother to me
who had nursed at my mother's bosom;
when I would find you outside
I would kiss you
and no one would scorn me.
- 2 I would lead you, I would bring you
to my mother's house
that you should teach me;
I would give you spiced wine to drink
of the nectar of my pomegranate.

- 3 His left hand is under my head
and his right hand embraces me.
- 4 I bind you under oath,
daughters of Jerusalem,
why should you cause hatred
or disturb [this] love
while it still pleases?
- 5 Who is she that rises from the wilderness,
clinging to her beloved?
beneath the apple tree I aroused you;
there your mother had birth pains,
there she who bore you suffered.
- 6 Set me as a seal upon your heart,
as a seal upon your arm,
for love is as strong as death,
jealousy is as harsh as the grave;
its flashes are flashes of fire
from the flame of God.
- 7 Many waters cannot quench love,
and rivers cannot drown it;
if a man would give
all the wealth of his house for love,
they would surely scorn him.
- 8 We have a little sister
but she has no breasts;
what shall we do for our sister
on the day she is spoken for?
- 9 If she be a wall,
we will build upon her
a fortress of silver;
if she be a door,
we will enclose her
with panels of cedar.
- 10 I am a wall
and my bosom is like towers;
therefore, I am in his eyes
as one who found peace.
- 11 Solomon had a vineyard
in the Plain of Hamon
he gave over the vineyard to caretakers;
each of them brought for its fruit
a thousand pieces of silver.
- 12 My vineyard is before me;
the thousands are yours, Solomon,
and two hundred
are for those who guard its fruit.

- 13 You who sit in the gardens,
companions, listen to your voice;
let me hear it.
- 14 Flee, my beloved,
and be like a gazelle
or a young hart
upon the mountains of spices.
You who sit in the gardens,
companions, listen to your voice;
let me hear it.

Closing Prayer

Master of all the worlds!
May it be your will
Adonai, our God, God
of our forefathers,
that in the merit of the Song of Songs
that we have recited and studied
—which is the holiest of holy—
in the merit of its verses
and in the merit of its words
and in the merit of its letters
and in the merit of its vowel signs
and in the merit of its cantillation signs,
its [word and letter] combinations,
and its allusions and its secrets
—holy, pure, and awesome—
that emanate from it,
that this be a time of mercy,
a time of attentiveness,
a time of harkening,
[so] we may call to you
and you will answer us;
we shall entreat you
and may you grant our entreaty.
And may there rise up before you
the reciting and study
of the *Song of Songs*
as if we mastered
all of the wondrous and awesome secrets
that are sealed and concealed within it
with all of its ramifications.
And may we merit to [reach]
the place from which the lower souls,
spirits, and higher souls are hewn
and [consider it] as if we had accomplished

all that is our responsibility to attain,
whether in this incarnation
or whether in other incarnations.
And [may we merit] to be among those
who ascend to and merit
the World to Come
with other righteous and pious persons.
And fulfill all the desires
of our hearts for good
be with our hearts
and the utterances of our mouths
when we are contemplative
and with our hands
when we are at our work
and send blessing, success and prosperity
in all of our undertakings.
And raise us up
from the dust of our wretchedness
and lift us from the refuse of our poverty
and return your Divine Presence
to your holy city [Jerusalem]
speedily in our days. Amen.

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