



*He would ask everyone to leave after the Seder on Pesach. One time one of those close to him hid inside the room wanting to see what the Vilna Gaon would do. And he saw that the Gaon began to recite Shir HaShirim with great Dveykus – clinging to Hashem, and immediately the soul of the Gaon left him to cling to its G-d and his body looked as if he had died. So much so that the one who had hidden thought he had fainted and approached to awaken him out of fear, lest he die. (Sefer Menuchah U’Kedushah – A talmid of Rav Chaim M’Volozhin)*

The custom of reciting Shir HaShirim after the Seder is first brought down in an obscure Medrash that is only found in the commentary of Rav Zechariah HaRofeh on Shir HaShirim: Rav Tachlifah Zekatron said: Anyone who reads Shir HaShirim in its proper time merits to see the table of Mashiach...he will eat from a planting from Gan Eden. And when is its proper time? The nights of Pesach.

Perhaps we can explain why the night of Pesach is the proper time to recite *Shir HaShirim* based upon the following analogy:

*There was once a great king who sought to marry. All of the kings of the world aspired to give their daughters to him in marriage. He, however, didn’t want to marry a princess, so that she not be conceited. He, therefore, married a lowly girl from amongst some slaves, who had pure and refined lineage. Although her friends as well as all the kings were jealous of her, as long as she was in the house of the king and in good standing they could do her no harm, for her husband was more powerful than all the other kings. However, when she betrayed her husband, became depraved in his eyes and was sent from his house, for he had hidden his face from her, all the kings of the land who hated her said: The day we have awaited has arrived! However, the king had written in her Kesuba that even if he would send her away he would return to her... (The above paragraph is taken from the words of the Vilna Gaon in his explanation of the nature of Shir HaShirim.)*

*Yet despite all this, each year on her wedding anniversary she would invite all her children to a feast where she would act as a royal queen and tell over her story, how her husband had redeemed her from slavery to royalty. When her children would ask in bewilderment, “Why do you still celebrate this when it has already been so many years since you have been sent away from the king?” She would respond by taking out her Kesuba and reading with tears in her eyes her husband’s promise that even if he would send her away, he would eventually return to her...*

