

PESIKTA DE-RAB KAHANA Ch. 1:3*

*William G. Braude and Israel J. Kapstein, trans., *Pesikta de-Rab Kahana* (Philadelphia, 1975), pp.8-12.

[ג] צאינה וראינה בנות ציון (ג: יא), בנים המצויינין לי במילה ובתגלחת ובציצית. במלך שלמה (שיר השירים ג'), במלך שהשלום שלו. ד"א במלך שלמה, המלך שהשלים מעשיו עם בריותיו. השלים אש לאברהם אבינו, השלים חרב לאבינו יצחק, השלים מלאך לאבינו יעקב.

3.A. *Go forth, O younglings whose name Zion indicates that you bear a sign (tzywn)*²¹ (Song 3:11): O sons of Israel, you who for My sake bear the sign of circumcision, the sign upon head and face of hair unshaved,²² and the sign of fringes on the corners of your garments, *gaze upon King Solomon (Shelomoh)* (*ibid.*)-upon the King of the universe who has the power to make peace (*hishlim*) by making His creations surrender to one another and even by making Himself surrender (*hashillum shello*). The words *Upon King Solomon (Shelomoh)* mean that the sons of Israel are bidden to gaze upon the King of the universe who has the power to make His creations surrender (*hishlim*) to ²³His creatures--He made fire surrender to Abraham; He made the sword's edge surrender to Isaac; He made an angel surrender to our father Jacob.²⁴

21. JV: Go forth, O y, daughters of Zion.

22. See Lev. 19:27.

23. "surrender to"-O1, and parallels in Num. Rabba 12:8; O: "make peace with."

24. The fire did not even singe Abraham when he was thrown into the furnace; the knife touched Isaac's throat, yet he was saved; the angel who fought Jacob had to admit defeat and beg for peace.

ד"א במלך שלמה, המלך שהוא עושה שלום בבריותיו. א"ר יוחנן המשל ופחד (איוב כה: ב), א"ר יעקב דכפר חנן המשל זה מיכאל, ופחד זה גבריאל, עמו (איוב כ"ה), ומשלימים עמו ולא זה מזיק את זה. וא"ר יוחנן מימיה לא ראתה חמה פגימתה של לבנה, ולא מזל קדים לחבריה, ולית מזל חמי מה דקדמוי. אמר ר' כולהון סלקין כהדין דסליק בסולמא הפיך

3.B. Or the words *Upon King Solomon (Shelomoh)* mean that the sons of Israel are bidden to gaze upon the King of the universe who [without enforcing surrender] makes peace (*shalom*) among His creatures. In reference to this comment R. Johanan cited [*Merciful*] *dominion and fear are [at peace] with Him* (Job 25:2), and, in keeping with R. Jacob of Kefar Hanan's identification of [*Merciful*] *dominion* as Michael and *fear* as Gabriel,²⁵ asserted that the words *are [at peace] with Him*²⁶ imply the surrender of both angels to God so that one does not injure the other. R. Johanan said further: [*All things in creation are at peace with Him* (Job 25:2) because He has given each one its specific place]. Thus the sun has never seen the black, unshining face of the moon;²⁷ no planet rises out of its turn before another; no planet beholds the one above it, for all the planets revolve, so R. Levi²⁸ said, as on a spiral stairway.²⁹

25. The opposition set up in this verse is between God's mercy and God's judgment. God's continuing dominion of man depends upon His mercy which is represented by the angel Michael; God's judgment, of which man stands in terror, is represented by Gabriel (see Num. Rabbah 12:8).

26. The verse goes on to say *He maketh peace in His high places*.

27. That the moon might not be humiliated.

28. "R. Levi"-O1, C, Cas, and Yalkut; S: "R."

29. See Saul Lieberman in Lev. Rabbah M, 871.

כתיב המקרה במים עליותיו וגו' (תהלים קד: ג), תני ר' שמעון בן יוחאי הרקיע של מים והככבים של אש והן דרים זה עם זה ואינן מזיקי זה את זה. הרקיע של מים והמלאך של אש והם דרים זה עם זה ואינן מזיקין זה את זה. א"ר אבין לא סוף דבר בין מלאך למלאך, אפי" מלאך עצמו חציו אש וחציו מים והוא עושה שלום בם. ואית ביה חמש אפיין, וגוייתו כתרשיש וגו' (דניאל י: 1)

3.C. With regard to the verse *Who layest the beams of Thine upper chambers in the waters, who makest the flaming fires Thy ministers* (Ps. 104:2-3), R. Simeon ben Yohai taught: The firmament is water, and the stars are fire, yet they dwell with each other and do no harm one to the other. The firmament is water, the ministering angel is fire, yet they live with each other and do no harm one to the other. R. Abin added: Nor is the peace between one angel and another the end of the matter! For each angel is himself part fire and part water, and between the two He makes peace. Indeed the verse [*The angel's body was like the beryl, and his face as the appearance of lightning, and his eyes as torches of fire, and his arms and his feet like in color to burnished brass, and the voice of his words like the voice of a roaring multitude* (Dan. 10:6) indicates that within each angel there are five elements all different] from one another, yet not one harms the others.³⁰

30. "Yet not one harms the others"--C.

וכתי' ויהי ברד ואש וגו' (שמות ט: כד), ר' יהודה אומר צלוחית של ברד מלאה אש. רבי נחמיה אמר אש וברד פתוכין זה בזה. אמר ר' חנין טעמיה דר' יודה כהדא פרטתא דרמונא דחרצנייתה מתחמיה מלגאו. אמר ר' חנין טעמיה דר' נחמיה כהדא שאשתא דקנדילא דמיא ומשחא מערבין כחדא דהיא דלקא מן גביהון.

3.D. [That hostile elements can even work together is illustrated by the verse] *So there was hail, and fire flashing continually amidst the hail* (Exod. 9:24). R. Judah's explanation of this verse was that phials made of hail and filled with fire [came down]. R. Nehemiah said: Fire and hail, mingling, were made to work together. R. Judah's explanation, said R. Hanin, brings to mind the pomegranate within whose pulp the seeds are visible; while R. Nehemiah's explanation, R. Hanin went on to say, brings to mind a crystal lamp wherein equal amounts of water and oil work together to keep the flame of the wick burning above the water and oil. ³¹

31. [The simile is of a rather deep lamp, filled half with water and half with oil, the oil, being lighter, floating above the water. The wick is short, so that it does not extend below the level of the oil, and the light fed by the oil burns above both the oil and the water. When all the oil is gone, the wick is automatically doused by the water, and so the earthenware lamp is prevented from heating up and cracking and perhaps burning down the house. L. N.]

ויהי ברד ואש מתלקחת (שמות ט'), מהו מתלקחת, א"ר יודה בר סימון מיתא מתקריא לעשות שליחותיה. א"ר אחא למלך שהיו לו שני ליגיונות קשים והיו דבובין זה בזה, וכיון שהגיעה מלחמתו של מלך עשו שלום ביניהם. כך אש וברד דבובים זה לזה, וכיון שהגיעה מלחמתו של הב"ה במצרים ויהי ברד ואש מתלקחת (שמות ט'), נס בתוך נס

3.E. In the verse just cited, namely, *So there was hail and fire mtlkht* (Exod. 9:24), what is the precise meaning of *mtlkht*? R. Judah bar Simon, dividing the word into two, said: Both the fire and the hail were resolved to die (*myta*) in their determination (*lhkt*)³² to carry out God's charge [that they work together for Him]. R. Aha illustrated their action by the parable of a king who had two fierce legions that were hostile to each other, but when the king's own war had to be fought, they made peace with each other [and fought for him]. So, too, fire and hail are hostile to each other, yet when the war of the Holy One had to be fought in Egypt "It came to pass that hail and fire resolved to die . [for Him]"

(Exod. 9:24)-a double miracle [for each of the two willingly surrendered its own being to the other].

32. Saul Lieberman's reading and explanation are followed here (PRKM, p. 473). Cf. "These last (lightning and thunderbolts) provided a most marvelous spectacle, for they ran through the hail, their natural antagonist, and yet did not melt it nor were quenched by it, but unchanged coursed up and down and kept guard over the hail" (Philo, *The Life of Moses*, I, 118; ed. Colson, 6, 337).

בעטרה שעטרה לו אמו ביום חתונתו (שיר השירים ג: יא). א"ר יצחק חזרנו על כל המקרא ולא מצינו שעשתה בת שבע עטרה לשלמה בנה, אלא זה אוהל מועד שהוא מעוטר בתכלת וארגמן ותולעת שני. א"ר חוניה, שאל ר' שמעון בן יוחאי את ר' אלעזר בר' יוסי, אפשר ששמעת מאביך מהו בעטרה שעטרה לו אמו, א"ל למלך שהיה לו בת והיה אוהבה יותר מדאי, לא זו מחבבה עד שקראה אחותי, לא זו מחבבה עד שקראה אמי. כך בתחלה חיבב הב"ה את ישראל וקראן בתי, שמעי בת וראי (תהלים מה: יא). לא זו מחבבה עד שקרא אותן אחותי, שנא אחותי רעייתי (שיר השירים ה: ב). לא זו מחבבה עד שקרא אותן אמי, שנ' שמעו אלי עמי ולאומי וגו' (ישעיהו נ"א: ד), ולאמי כתי'. עמד ר' שמעון בן יוחאי ונשקו על ראשו, א"ל אילו לא באתי אלא לשמוע דבר זה דיי

3.F. In comment upon the verse *Even upon the crown wherewith his mother hath crowned him in the day of his espousals* (Song 3:11), R. Isaac said: We went through all of Scripture, from first to last, and did not find that Bathsheba had made a crown for her son Solomon. Hence it must be concluded that by *the Crown* is signified the Tent of Meeting because, like a crown, it is topped with blue, purple, and scarlet. [Seeking another explanation, however], R. Simeon ben Yohai, according to R. Hunya, asked R. Eleazar bar R. Jose: ³³Have you perhaps heard from your father an interpretation of the verse *Even upon the crown wherewith his mother hath crowned him*? R. Eleazar replied: The verse may be understood by the parable of a king who had a daughter whom he loved inordinately. He did not stop calling her endearing names until he had called her "my sister"; even then, he did not stop his endearment of her but went on to call her "my mother." So at first, in His endearment of Israel, the Holy One called her "My daughter"--*Hearken, O daughter, and consider* (Ps. 45:11). He did not stop His endearment of her but went on to call her "My sister"- *My sister, My bride* (Song 5:1). Even then He did not stop His endearment of her but went on to call her "My mother," as is indicated by the verse *Attend unto Me, O My people, and give ear unto Me, O My nation* (Isa. 5r:4), where *u-le-'ummi*, "My nation," is spelled defectively so that it may read *u-le-'immi*, "My mother."³⁴ Upon hearing this interpretation of *Even upon the crown*, etc.], R. Simeonben Yohai rose, kissed R. Eleazar on the brow, and said to him: Had I come and heard nothing but this interpretation, I would have been content.

33. R. Simeon ben Yohai turned to R. Eleazar because R. Eleazar's father, R. Jose ben Halafta the historian, was the best judge of the range of meaning in any verse in the Song of Songs. That R. Simeon turned to R. Eleazar would indicate that the Song's interpretation and the building of the Tabernacle. The Song was systematically interpreted as symbolizing each of these events, and it was for this reason that R. Simeon asked R. Eleazar how Song 3: r11 was to be construed in reference to the building of the Tabernacle (see Saul Lieberman's Appendix D in Scholem, Gershom G., *Jewish Gnosticism, Merkabah Mysticism, Talmudic Tradition* [New York, 1960], pp. 118-26).
34. The defective spelling of *u-le-'ummi* does indeed occur in O1 and in R. Jose read Song 3:11 as "The crown wherewith He crowned Himself [in calling Israel]'His mother'."

ר' יהושע דסיכנין בשם ר' לוי בשעה שאמ' הקב"ה למשה עשה לי משכן היה לו להביא ד' קונטיסין ולמתוח את המשכן עליהן, אלא מלמד שהראה לו הב"ה למשה למעלה אש אדומה אש ירוקה אש שחורה אש לבנה ואמר לו עשה לי משכן. אמר לו משה להקב"ה רבון העולמים וכי מניין לי אש אדומה אש ירוקה אש שחורה אש לבנה, א"ל בתבניתם אשר אתה מראה בהר (שמות כה: מ) ⁴

3.G. R. Joshua of Siknin taught in the name of R. Levi that when the Holy One said to Moses: "Make the Tabernacle for Me," Moses might simply have brought four poles and stretched skins over them to form the Tabernacle. Since he did not do so, we may infer from the verse cited below that while Moses was on the Mount, the Holy One showed him red fire, green fire, black fire, white fire, and said to him: Make the Tabernacle for Me [in these fiery colors]. Moses asked the Holy One: Master of universes, where am I to get red fire, green fire, black fire, and white fire? The Holy One replied: *AFTER the pattern which is being shown thee in the Mount* [¶]Exod. 25:40)

35. The Tabernacle was to be made in these colors of fire, not out of fire itself. Cf. the conclusion of Exod. 25:9, *Even so shall ye make it*, with Exod. 25:40 which merely requires that the general pattern be followed. Although the latter verse seems to speak only of the lampstand, it is construed, nevertheless, as referring also to the Tabernacle, details of whose construction follow.

ר' ברכיה בשם ר' לוי למלך שנגלה לבן ביתו בלבוש אולו מרגליטון. א"ל עשה לי כזה. א"ל אדני המלך וכי מניין יש לי לבוש אולו מרגליטון, א"ל אתה בסימנך ואני בכבודי. כך אמר הב"ה למשה, משה אם אתה עושה מה של מעלה למטה אני מניח סנקליטין שלי של מעלן ויורד ומצמצם שכינתי ביניכם למטון. מה למעלה, שרפים עומדים (ישעיהו ו: ב), אף למטון, עצי שטים עומדים (שמות כו: ט). מה למעלה ככבים אף למטה קרסים. א"ר חייא בר אבא מלמד שהיו קרסי זהב נראין במשכן ככוכבים הקבועין ברקיע.

3.H. In the name of R. Levi also, [in further reference to the building of the Tabernacle], R. Berechiah cited the parable of a king who appeared before his steward in a garment covered entirely with precious stones and said to him: Make one like this for me. The steward replied: My lord king, how am I to get the materials with which to make a garment covered entirely with precious stones? The king replied: Follow the pattern with whatever materials you have, and I will still reign in my glory. Even so the Holy One said to Moses: If you pattern the Tabernacle here below after the one in heaven above, I will leave My heavenly counselors, come down, and so shrink My presence as to fit into your midst below. Even as *Seraphim stand* (Isa. 6:2) above, so the Tabernacle's *boards of shittim cedars stand* (Exod. 26:15) here below. Even as the stars are above, so the Tabernacle's clasps are here below, a parallel which proves, according to R. Hiyya bar Abba, that the Tabernacle's golden clasps looked like stars fixed in the firmament.

ביום חתונתו (שיר השירים ג: יא), חיתונים היו. וביום שמחת לבו (שיר השירים ג: ג), זה אהל מועד. ד"א ביום חתונתו, זה אהל מועד. וביום שמחת לבו, זה בניין בית העולמים. לכך נאמר ויהי ביום כלות משה (במדבר ז: א)

3.I. By the words *In the day of His espousals* (Song 3:11) is meant the day of God's betrothal of Israel [at Sinai]; [¶]and by the words *in the day of the gladness of His heart* (*ibid.*) is meant the day He entered the Tent of Meeting.

Or by the words *In the day of His espousals* is meant the day He entered the Tent of Meeting; and by the words *in the day of the gladness of His heart* is meant His gladness at Israel's building of the eternal Habitation. [¶]Hence it is said It was on [Israel's] bridal day that Moses brought to a conclusion [God's coming back to earth, etc.] (Num. 7:1).

36. "at Sinai"-parallels in Num. Rabbah 12:8, and Song Rabbah 3:11.

37. For even though the Temple was destroyed twice, God never left the site upon which it had been built. See MTeh 11:3, and PR 15:10.