

## How Can I Not Sing to You?

The Spanish song we sang a few minutes ago is ‘The Song’ that Gisela, one of two ladies (a mom and her daughter) who were instrumental in our starting a ministry in Gainesville in 1988 (which ultimately led to establishing *Kol Simcha* in 1992) sang by request. I trust you enjoyed it. Amelyse texted asking if I remembered the song last Shabbat eve. I’d like to ask Marilyn to come and share that God encounter from 1988. I pray that Gisela, wherever she might be, would regain her walk with *Yeshua*...

Should we not sing to the Lord today? He has given us a reason to live. Should we not confess that *Adonai* lives deep in our being? Are rivers of living water not flowing from us? I am reminded that “*Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of realities not seen*” (*Heb. 11:1*). Today is an exciting day! We are the people of Faith; the city set on a hill whose light is unquenchable! We are the Children of Abraham and heirs according to the promise. We are entering into His gates with thanksgiving and into His courts with praise. We are: “*♪ He that dwelleth in the secret place of the Most High and shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty. We will say of the Lord that He is our refuge and our fortress; My God in Him will I trust ♪*” (‘*He That Dwelleth*’ 1979 by John Gimenez). You see “*Because He has loved me, therefore I will deliver Him*” (from *I Am Vol. 1, Maranatha* 1983)

Today is known as *Shabbat HaChodesh* in the Hebrew Calendar. An additional *Torah* scroll is taken out on this Shabbat and Exodus 12:1-20 is read, announcing the arrival of the month of Nisan/Aviv. *Shabbat Hachodesh* is the last of four special *Shabbatot* that surround the festival of Purim. Shabbat *Shekalim* and Shabbat *Zachor* precede Purim, and Shabbat *Parah* and Shabbat *HaChodesh* follow Purim. Nisan 1 (Aviv 1) is this coming Thursday, March 26 so Wednesday night is ‘Happy New Year’ in heaven, the first day of the year for Adonai! *Aviv* is a month of miracles and redemption. This is the month when we celebrate *Pesach*, freedom, ridding ourselves of *chametz* and eating lots of *matzah*!

In marking Shabbat *Hachodesh* in our calendars, we are not only reminded of the coming Passover season, we are reminded that it is within our power to sanctify (bless) and become sanctified (blessed) by becoming closer to Our God. We have the power, through our words (when we say a *b’racha*), to connect to Him. All *b’rachot* (blessings) can be divided into three categories: blessings of pleasure; blessings of *Mitzvot*; and blessings of... praise, thanksgiving, and supplication, so that one can be ever cognizant of our Creator and be in awe of Him.

The Sacred New Year is, thus, around the corner. Have made your *new year’s resolutions in the Lord* yet? What should we resolve to do? As we begin a new year and a new adventure in the life of our congregation, should we not examine ourselves to see if we are abiding in *Yeshua*? This is not just an evaluation of our works, our commitment, or even our suffering for His sake. Instead this is a call at the deepest level possible to ask the question: *Do I really love you Lord? Am I Abiding in You?* Messiah came to give us life and life more abundantly – “*life in its fullest measure*” (*CJB*). What exactly does this mean? Does this mean that we will have everything we want plus more?

Eternal life is our future hope but it is also our present reality; because when we put our faith in *Messiah Yeshua*, eternal life *begins* for us (“<sup>24</sup> “*Amen, amen I tell you, whoever hears My word and trusts the One who sent Me has eternal life. He does not come into judgment, but has passed over from death into life*” *John 5:24*). We won’t know its full glory until we are with the Lord and delivered completely from sin at last. But we can surely have a taste of it now, and that sweet savor will keep us hungering for more: “<sup>7</sup> *If ye abide in Me and My words abide in you, you shall ask what you will, and it shall be done, it shall be unto you ♪*” (*John 15:7*).

In the beginning of this week’s *Parsha* we hear a summary about Shabbat and the as Moses continues: “<sup>4</sup> *Moses also said to all the congregation of Bnei-Yisrael, “This is the word which Adonai commanded saying: <sup>5</sup>Take from among you an offering for Adonai. Whoever has a willing heart, let him bring Adonai’s offering” (Ex. 35:4-5a)*. As it was then it is now. It is still a matter of the heart and our willingness to submit our heart to Him. Clearly the *Torah* is prodding the human heart when it comes to those things that are important to the Lord. All things are

truly a matter of the heart. I want that to be our relationship to *Torah* and the *Adonai* of the *Torah*. If not, then all of these things in Messianic Judaism can just become burdensome and external. There is not a whole lot of righteousness in that. We want to obey and relate to the almighty in *Torah* because we want to please Him from our heart and for no other reason. We are the people that: “<sup>32</sup>*But this is the covenant I will make with the house of Israel after those days’—it is a declaration of Adonai—‘I will put My Torah within them. Yes, I will write it on their heart. I will be their God* <sup>33</sup>*No longer will each teach his neighbor or each his brother, saying: ‘Know Adonai,’ for they will all know Me, from the least of them to the greatest.’ It is a declaration of Adonai. ‘For I will forgive their iniquity, their sin I will remember no more.’” (Jeremiah 31:32-33).*

As the Book of the Exodus comes to a conclusion we see that *Bezalel* who was from the tribe of Judah and *Oholiab* from the tribe of Dan were excellent in their ways: “<sup>34</sup>*He has also placed in his heart the ability to teach—both he and Oholiab son of Ahisamach, of the tribe of Dan.* <sup>35</sup>*He has filled them with wisdom of heart to forge all the works of an engraver, an artisan, and an embroiderer in blue, purple, scarlet and in fine linen, as well as weaving—they can perform every craft and ingenious designs” (Ex. 35:34-35).* We are to be excellent and able to teach. These are superb qualities for team leaders and qualities that I believe our congregation’s sub-leaders and people exude. I am so thankful that the Lord has given us a team of *Bezalels* and *Oholiab*s (both men and women) and with such we are destined for great things—if we do not faint or give up. Please note that these two were not Levites or priests. Yet they were the ones who made it all happen. The fact is that you and I do not have to be ‘*blood capable*’ in order to accomplish. These two (from Judah, a praiser and from Dan, a judge) were the instruments the Almighty used to bring about the completion of the Tabernacle in the Wilderness. It all happened as Aviv approached: “<sup>1</sup>*Then Adonai spoke to Moses saying,* <sup>2</sup>*‘On the first day of the first month, you will set up the Tabernacle of the Tent of Meeting’ ...* <sup>17</sup>*Now it happened during the first month of the second year, on the first day of the month, the Tabernacle was raised up” (Ex. 40:1-2, 17).* We are also approaching the month of the Aviv. It has been two years since we were exiled from FCN on Passover 2018 and I believe we are also bordering on great things, if we faint not: “<sup>33</sup>*These things I have spoken to you, so that in Me you may have shalom. In the world you will have trouble, but take heart! I have overcome the world!” (John 16:33)*

The Book of Exodus closes: “<sup>34</sup>*Then the cloud covered the Tent of Meeting, and the glory of Adonai filled the Tabernacle.* <sup>35</sup>*Moses was unable to enter into the Tent of Meeting, because the cloud resided there and the glory of Adonai filled the Tabernacle.* <sup>38</sup>*For the cloud of Adonai was on the Tabernacle by day and a fire was there by night, in the sight of all the house of Israel throughout all their journeys” (Ex. 40:34-35, 38).* The glory stayed! May it be so for us!