

About Music *Letter from Chets Barur*

Dear Malachi and Ethan,

I wanted to write you and let you know what is being said here regarding music. Yoneq has been speaking a lot lately about the spiritual content of songs that we sing in our minchot. He said that we shouldn't sing songs that don't ascend to our Father. We shouldn't so much be singing songs of exhortation that rattle on like a teaching, but never ascend. Examples of this are, "How I Want to be Dressed and Ready to Go," "We are Thankful to be Growing in Your Household," and "Since We Have a High Priest," and many other songs which are very wordy and aren't directed towards our Father.

The music for our worship songs should not distract people from ascending or be corny and trite sounding. Here, we do a few dances at the beginning of every minchah. We do dances like, "For as the Earth Makes Fresh Things Grow," and "Called From Every Nation," and "He Who Scattered Israel," and others, which are prophecy from the Bible. We can do these in the beginning of the minchah, but we should lead up to direct worship songs. There is no acceptable sacrifice without incense. These things are a direction to go in, not a law.

As far as traditional music is concerned, the reason we started playing traditional music was for the sole purpose of evangelism. There is no need for us to keep learning more and more tunes, and focusing our energy in that direction. We should focus our energy on writing our own dances and songs as well as instrumental music. In the future we will only play our own music that promotes *our* culture and not Irish culture other nations. We will only play Israeli, Christian songs, and traditional music until we have our own to replace them. If we are focusing our energy on music of the nations all the time, we will never get our own.

Nun was surprised to hear that some of us were playing tangos and ragtime. He was also surprised that someone made a song to an Ottoman tune. He said that one time he sent an Ottoman tape to Brazil for them to play in their cafe. Nahaliel wrote him back and said that when the customers heard that music, they got up from their tables and started dancing in a very sensual way. Tangos have the same spirit. You'll know a tree by their fruits. If some of the music we play is fleshly, it will show the strongest effect on fleshly people, "Oh yeah, that one," someone once said. I could tell that "that one" was bringing out the flesh in that person.

As far as the bass is concerned, my brother plays pretty rhythmic on the bass, and I haven't heard anything about it. Ha-emeq said that there was nothing wrong with the bass or the first of those three songs that was sent to you, Ethan. What I'm getting from what's being said is that we need some rhythm in our more upbeat songs and even different flavors, we just have to be spiritual and know where the balance is. For example, "We Rejoice in Your Forgiveness," has a kind of country sounding beat, but it is appropriate in that song as long as we don't go overboard to the point that it is country music. To make myself clear, we don't want to imitate country music which is pub music, etc., but there is a certain vitality to it that is happy. We have to know the balance. Nun was shocked to hear that the musicians in Judah didn't gather at least for a week in advance to a festival, to practice together. He said, "No wonder there is so much confusion." He stressed the importance to me of the musicians, and especially the music leaders, going out of their way to communicate to ensure that we all have the same mind, and all are in perfect unity. There is no way that musicians can just appear from all over the tribe and just wing it, without putting time and effort into order and practice.

Ethan, whatever happened to that nice dance tune that you and your abba wrote called, "Zechariah"? Nun and ha-emeq were looking for a dance tune written in the Body that we can start doing. Could you please send a tape of whatever tunes that you know of? I will keep you informed when I hear more about music. I love and miss you both.

In Yahshua's name,
Chêtz Bârûr