

The Merry-makers — A Culture of People

Again I will build you, and you shall be built, O virgin Israel! Again you shall adorn yourself with tambourines and shall go forth in the dance of the merry-makers... Then shall the virgin rejoice in the dance, and the young men and the old, together; for I will turn their mourning to joy; I will comfort them, and make them rejoice rather than sorrow. I will satiate the soul of the priests with abundance, and My people shall be satisfied with My goodness, says Yahweh. (Jer 31:4,13,14)

Mevaser of Yoceph — The merry-makers are expressing a life of substance; they are not a performing dance troop. It comes from a new culture, not just a surface show. That dance expression is deep and weighty, because they are together overcoming their enemies, even the generation gap, through trusting, submitting to one another, and working together. The world cannot accomplish this.

This culture, the expression, starts with two to four-year-olds being given structure to their life, and communicating to their hearts that they are important, and a priority, not in the way. All they will ever know is togetherness with all ages: working, eating, dancing, all as a community.

This is real substance, and so it will be opposed. It will come at a great cost, and so when the merry-makers go out, people will see light. In some ways, we can never catch up to the productions and million-dollar light shows the world can produce, but none of that can compare to life. The value of life is like gold purified through testing — through fire.

Daveed ben B'riyth — The song of the merry-makers will not be comprised of just great singers who can sing on tune. Our song comes from deep within, through being released from a great debt, a great weight. I couldn't release myself from the burden I was under. When I first came to Island Pond, there was something deep going on there — something deep, in everyone, from two years old and up. I saw people who were released. It was obvious by the song coming forth from them. It was more than just music; it was what was communicated, and how it was communicated, and even how it was danced. The truth was even deeper than I first thought. After awhile, I "scratched the surface" and realized it was very, very deep.

This is why I am thankful for who our Father is making us become. Together, we have something of substance, because we struggle together to bring out our revelation of forgiveness, and struggle against His enemies, which are now our enemies. We've gained ground on alienation, separation, and other things that break down relationships every day —

even those things that easily divide married couples — through dying to ourselves, receiving our forgiveness, and communicating life. We make the choice to walk that narrow path, acknowledging Him in all our ways.

Paratz of Yehudah — When I first heard about merrymakers, the only mental image that came to me was confetti, kazoos, and colorful streamers. But our Father’s merrymakers don’t have a frivolous happiness or cheer; they are those who have received understanding about death through being delivered from it daily. And so they go out with joy. The songs coming forth from the merrymakers are saturated with appreciation for what our Master Yahshua did for us in death, on our behalf. That is what will make our music a new sound, different from the music produced by the world, with its best techniques.

The spring-time joy, the freshness of our love causes us to make merry, compelling others to know the goodness of our Master Yahshua. We want to provoke others to ask, “*Where does your joy come from?*” We want them to recognize that this is not an emotional “Pentecostal movement.”

Restoring “Baby Training”

Ethan — Daveed ben B’riyth shared how when he first saw the community in Island Pond, there was something deep going on there “in everyone from two years old and up.” There is a connection made in Jeremiah 31, “the young and old together.” Somehow, we need to come back to that.

We find it is so difficult in our communities in New York just to be together, because every mother who could be teaching, or could be passing on something, has a little baby. So they are trying to bond with just their little baby, but there is something missing, and you can just feel it.

Why don’t we have *one* woman take all the little ones, even for a few hours? Maybe it could rotate — one mother one day, and then another mother the next day. They could take them along with their own little ones, and they could all be spending time together. It would be so encouraging if we could return to the paradigm of Island Pond.

Aharon Cohen — The theme of merrymakers adds so much to our life. It happens when the songwriters overflow and turn that overflow of our life into a song. I remember a lot of times Yônêq was teaching in Island Pond, and then one or two days later someone would write a song about it. There was an overflow from the things we heard. And now, many years later, we’re doing so many more things, and the cares and worries of life so easily choke out that merrymaking spirit. Hearing those spiritual songs

coming from the overflow in our hearts encourages us, orients us, and makes us remember our Father.

There is no greater place than child training for children to know who they are. They don't even truly know who they are. They are those "merry-makers" spoken about in the prophecies of Jeremiah. That quality will come forth from them because it has been put into them. This is why they learn to sing, and dance, and be together. It seems like the Holy Spirit brought back to us the importance of that foundation. We went into a paradigm shift somewhere.

Training our little children into the cause they were born for — to be those *merry-makers* — is a greater responsibility and requires more investment than just the mother and child being together in a room. The mother does something else while the child plays with toys. They end up sitting in their room all day long. We hear about these things going on now in many places. You hardly even see the mothers.

Our children are going to be raised up to be those merry-makers. They are going to be the merry-makers because that is who they are. We have to have gifted women such as Yachebed involved in the training of our children.

ha-êmeq — Yachebed has the gift of capturing little children's attention, and teaching them in a way that is so stimulating for them. Her ability to teach and to really get a joyful heart into children was always clear. So we asked her to take the children for the young mothers during the *Yellow Deli* Reunion. We had the thought that the children could be with her while the mothers were speaking or playing music, and that Yachebed would put something into them.

It was exciting to all these little two and three-year-olds. Suddenly, they were important, and they were part of "us," not just on the side, alone with their mothers, being devoted to run after their little ball of energy all the time. So there she was with these important little ones, sitting in a circle. Yachebed was totally focused, putting into them songs, teaching them words, and hand motions.

We could have told each young mother to go over and sit by themselves with their own child in the grass beside the *Deli*. But she probably wouldn't be seen sitting there with her two-year old, teaching him

hand motions. That little ball of energy won't sit still. That is just not how it works out.

But there they were with Yachebed, clapping and singing together. And at the end, after everyone spoke, she brought them all forward to present an offering, a song, right there on stage. And she had caused them to do that in a very short time. This brought back to memory all the hundreds of songs and presentations that came forth from groups of children in the olden days. That is where our children learned; that is when they picked up their instruments, and those like Chets Barur and Tamar became the musicians they are now. It was then.

Chets Barur's musicianship didn't come about through Mary trying to get little Luke out of the way so she could finally "do something," like sewing. It came through really making investments into the little children. This is what puts dignity into them, and also order into their lives, so they feel as if they are a part of something, not just a little ball of energy, which is what they are between two and three years old.

For example, we used to sing, "Hosanna to the son of David," and they learned who David was. They learned about this sweet psalmist of Israel. Was King David just this perfect person who smoothly went along through life? Is that why he always had time to write songs? Of course, he wrote songs because he was just happy all the time, right?

Actually, we learned a different story. Who is the central figure we think of in the Bible? King David. Okay, start telling the stories. You just go through story after story of troubles, defeats, and sadness, etc. David knew much trouble, and yet, still, he had sweet songs of praise coming forth from his heart. His praise wasn't being stolen from him.

First, to maintain that heart, he had to understand who he was, and afterward, he learned compassion. He really understood forgiveness and mercy, and so he had reason to leap and leap for joy, and sing with all his heart, dancing before the ark, just like that children's song we sing.

He had many failures as a ruler, and yet he was the sweet psalmist of Israel. King David understood something deep, just like the depth we are all talking about, which we have to learn. We will have the songs of Island Pond, but they'll be a lot deeper, because our life is a deep, deep thing, and our children understand that.

The Bible calls our Master Yahshua *the son of David*. He wasn't the son of Jeremiah, or Shaul, but the very son of David, the very David whom Yahweh spoke of, "*Behold, a man after my own heart.*" Who could be higher than that? He is THE ONE; King David is the paradigm.

What do all the stories surrounding King David's life communicate? What do they teach us about how to write songs? What made his songs so beautiful? Who are we, compared to King David, a man after the heart of Elohim? Rejoice! Yahshua is the *son of David*, and we're the brothers of Yahshua, so that means we are "sons of David," too. We have to learn the same lessons he learned, and our songs need to come from the same place his came from.

We can seek to have the heart of King David, and then we'll have the heart of our Father, and then our songs WILL come forth from our Father's heart, and not just "whoopee" emotions. "Happy, happy, happy" is where the Jesus movement songs came from. Mind you, we do feel happy when things are going well, but we're learning that merrymaking is more.

Let's all come together and pray, raising hands in worship and surrender to our Master Yahshua, that His Spirit would be upon us today, and that our Father's grace would be bestowed upon us. We desire His grace in order that we could gain understanding and have revelation to be those *merry-makers* who would fulfill all prophecy. We have to do it. We're the real ones.

First, we express our thanksgiving as we pray. I am so thankful our Father met with us this morning, for how He shared revelation with us and spoke to us (1 Pet 4:11). We must continue to pray for His Spirit to rest upon us, so we will have revelation, understanding, and insight in every way. We must lift up our voice, as Proverbs 2 calls us to do, in order that we could have the understanding we need to be His people. If we do, He will be with us this day. And we always pray to be delivered from evil, and thank Him for the food He provides for us.