



# THE EXHORTER'S CALL

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## JOYFUL SONG

According to Jewish tradition, God not only spoke the world into existence, he sang it.

Have you ever stopped to imagine the LORD God singing? In Zephaniah 3:17 the bible records God's great love for His people and for Jerusalem: "*The LORD thy God in the midst of thee is mighty; he will save, he will rejoice over thee with joy; he will rest in his love, **he will joy over thee with singing.***"

If God joys over us with singing, how much more so should we rejoice over Him in song?

Psalm 150:6 reads: "*Let every thing that hath breath praise the LORD. Praise ye the LORD.*"

I have attended services where people have mechanically and half-heartedly sang a few lines of a hymn or song as if they were meeting a quota of three songs before the pastor's sermon. That is not praise. That is not worship. That is not an expression of joy.

Song is an integral part of the kingdom of God. Praise and worship will be on the lips of every born again believer for all eternity as we recognize with joy the mighty deliverance Christ wrought at the cross.

In Revelation, the bible records that new songs are sung in heaven. The psalmist repeatedly declares to sing unto the Lord a new song. Even the Prophet Isaiah tells of God's desire for us to sing a new song in joyous celebration for the wondrous works that he shall do when He makes an end of evil upon the earth.

Don't underestimate the importance of song in your daily Christian walk.

Our strength comes from joy in the Lord. Rejoicing in song is a powerful spiritual principle that will pay tremendous dividends in your personal life. There is no foothold for fear, depression, bitterness, or any other negative emotion when you are focused on praising the Lord in song. Of course, you may not feel like doing it. That is irrelevant. By making the decision to praise the Lord in song, those feelings quickly flee. Remember, God inhabits the praises of His people and where the Spirit of the Lord is there is freedom.

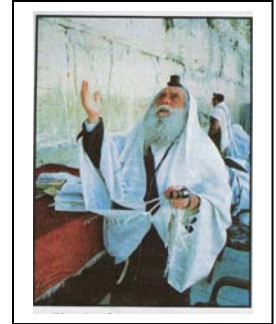
You may have tried a number of self-help techniques to deal with problems in your life, but rejoicing in song before the Lord is the key to setting you free from the oppressions you face in the world today. It is also a noticeable witness to others that may overhear you as you go through your daily work routine. Sooner or later, someone will ask you why you always seem so happy. First Peter 3:15 gives this admonition: "*But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear:*"

Imagine not only praising the Lord, but witnessing for Him in joyful song. Why not give it a try?



שְׁאֵלוֹ שְׁלוֹם יְרוּשָׁלַיִם

Yē-rū-sha-lī'im ←--- Shalomí ←--- Sha-alū



### THE APPLE OF GOD'S EYE

Zechariah 2:8 *“For thus saith the LORD of hosts; After the glory hath he sent me unto the nations which spoiled you: for he that toucheth you toucheth the apple of his eye.”*

The expression “apple of the eye” refers to the pupil. The pupil is the most sensitive part of the eye and is responsible for collecting the light that allows vision. You have undoubtedly been poked in the eye at some point in your life, how did it feel? Did it hurt? If it was intentional, did it make you angry?

God has suffered deliberate and intentional pain and provocation as people have deliberately gouged the “apple of his eye” for centuries. It is no longer fashionable to talk of the wrath of God, but there is coming a day when the Holy One of Israel will arise and claim His righteous vengeance.

In speaking of the last days regarding the nation of Israel, Isaiah 42:13-14 tells us: *“The LORD shall go forth as a mighty man, he shall stir up jealousy like a man of war: he shall cry, yea, roar; he shall prevail against his enemies. I have long time holden my peace; I have been still, and refrained myself: now will I cry like a travailing woman; I will destroy and devour at once.”*

Hebrews 10:31 informs us that: *“It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.”*

The duty of every true Christian is to support Israel and the Jewish people. This is not to say that they are perfect or that they have not made mistakes, only that they are “beloved for the Father’s sake.” God’s everlasting covenant with Israel is not based on their performance, but rather is based on His Name’s sake. It grieves my heart when I hear of mainline Christian denominations divesting from Israel and making demands for “Palestinian” concessions. How little do they know of God’s Word and even secular history?

The drama that continues to play out in the Middle East is not one of Israel’s making or even that of Western powers such as the United States, despite what many a well-intentioned commentator may say. History has proven that Israel has literally bent over backward to accommodate peace with its neighbors and all to no avail.

Isaiah 42:6 indicates that the Jews were given as a light unto the Gentiles to show forth the knowledge of God. Interestingly, Jesus once said the light of the body is the eye. As Christians we are frequently referred to as the body of Christ. We owe a tremendous debt to the Jewish people regardless of how they may perceive us. Remember, we worship a God who chose to manifest himself in Jewish form.

Anti-Semitism? Be not deceived, God is not mocked. Whatsoever a man sows, that shall he reap.



## John 15:7

**“If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you.”**

### PEACE and POWER

Are you abiding in Christ? That is the first pre-requisite to a prosperous and successful life. There are many people who have yet to make Jesus Christ their Savior AND Lord. Perhaps you are one of them. Perhaps you have been turned off from the things of God by the behavior of those professing to be Christians. That's where part two of the verse above comes in.

Christians are still human beings. Without following the second admonition in this verse, they are just as subject to mistakes, prejudices, and errors as the unbeliever, albeit still forgiven by the Father. If you are a Christian abiding in Christ, let me ask you this: Does His Word abide in you?

Ask what you will? It shall be done?

You see, this is a safe promise to make for one reason: IF you are abiding in Christ, and IF His Word abides in you, it transforms your inner man and places your will in harmony with God's. When your prayer is offered and the petition is made, both you and God can have confidence in that prayer because His good will now indwells your heart. The Bible states that from the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks. (Luke 6:45)

The word "IF" always implies a choice. Do you know what the Bible has to say about YOUR life? Does His Word really abide in you? In Christ there is perfect peace. In His Word there is awesome power. Remember, God created everything in the universe through His Word alone. He simply spoke His will into existence. If you find yourself lacking in either of these 2 areas, peace or power, it is time to examine the two conditions that make them possible:

- 1) Are you abiding in Christ as a born-again believer, confessing Him as Lord and Savior?
- 2) Have you studied His Word for yourself, committing it to your heart to abide in your life?

Why not take this time right now to evaluate your life? May God bless and keep you. AMEN.

**Rick Wagnon** is a born-again, Spirit-filled, firm believer in Christ who was saved eternally and securely by the grace of God through the blood of Jesus. His father is a former Baptist minister who became Spirit-filled and received ordination from Rhema Bible Church bringing Rick up with a solid foundation of faith and knowledge of God's Word. Rick is married to a beautiful, loving wife of faith and blessed with two fine sons that love the LORD. Rick currently serves as the Bioterrorism Training and Education Coordinator for the State of Oklahoma and operates as the Intelligence Officer and Security Liaison in emergency capacities after a life-long commitment to public service in law enforcement and protective security. Rick is available for special services within your church or fellowship and loves to worship the LORD.

