

Spring Up, O Well!

Nehemiah says, "For the joy of the Lord is your strength" (Neh. 8:10). We saw this fact demonstrated in a dramatic way when we attended the first Jewish festival that was held in St. Petersburg, Russia. This festival was designed to reach out to the Jewish people.

The music artists shared not only their music, but also their personal testimonies of how they came to know Jesus as their Messiah. The first evening as people gathered into the auditorium, I studied each face. The people seemed expressionless, almost without any emotion, and I did not see one smile. Then the music began.

At the end of the performance these dear Russians were out of their seats dancing joyously before the Lord. What happened? The well of the living water that seemed dry within them was primed, and they were able to drink from the wells of salvation with joy. Many were saved that night, and for the first time living water began to bubble within them, and then it overflowed.

On that night I understood the assignment that was given to me as we traveled throughout Russia. The Lord had spoken to my heart, and He told me to speak aloud in the metro and on the streets of Russia these words, "Spring up, O well!"

Russia had just been delivered out of seventy years of Communism's oppression. God desired to dress the Russian people with the garment of praise that would lift their heaviness. So many in Russia have a serious drinking problem and we learn in Scripture that it is the spirit of heaviness that often causes dependency upon alcohol.

People self-medicate to lift their spirits with the wrong kind of spirit (alcoholic beverages) when only the Lord can lift our spirits permanently. On this night, those attending the

concert were ignited by the joy of the Lord. They all would need this joy to strengthen them for the troubled days ahead.

All believers have a well within them that they can daily draw from to sustain them and give them strength. They draw from this well with buckets of joy. Sometimes we do not feel joyful, but if we will prime our well by praising the Lord anyway, suddenly the joy of our salvation is restored. Don't fail today to let your well of salvation spring up and overflow. Say to your soul today, "Spring up, O well!"

Lord, I need strength to face this day, and I know Your joy is my strength. By faith, even though at first I feel nothing, I choose to praise You. Spring up, O well, and let Your joy overflow from my soul.

Linda Sommer is the author of Around the Word in 365 Days Daily Devotionals, from which this article is adapted.