

How an Ancient Sound Was Restored

In 1998, Israelis celebrated both their 50-year birthday as a modern state as well as the first year of Jubilee (see Lev. 25) in the land of Israel since the state's rebirth in 1948. While Jews and Christians everywhere commemorated the miracle of the restoration of the Jews to their land, another restoration of sorts was also occurring there: the restoration of an ancient sound.

That sound would be one reminiscent of those that once echoed through the halls of King David's palace and through the corridors of Solomon's temple—a sound of harps and lyres, of trumpets and tambourines, of Levites singing “Hodu L' Adonai Ki Tov” (“Give thanks to the Lord, for He is good”) with the company of Israel's reply, “Ki L'Olam Chasdo” (“and His mercy endures forever”; see Ps. 107; 118; 136).

That restored sound would come by way of the then newly formed record label Galilee of the Nations (GOTN) and its inaugural Messianic praise and worship album, *Adonai*. *Adonai* was the first album of its kind, a world-class production featuring Messianic recording artists from the land of Israel, including Karen Davis, Barry and Batya Segal, Esther “Eti” Horesh and many others. The album received immediate international acclaim, securing distribution in 160 nations and selling over 250,000 physical units—and still counting.

A New Stream of Praise and Worship Music

Adonai was a breakthrough album that penetrated the mainstream Christian music market in the United States. Three major factors contributed to the success of *Adonai* and the new label.

First, during the 1990s, the popularity of contemporary praise

and worship music was on the rise among American Christians, especially among the charismatic churches but increasingly among conservative churches as well. Yet never had the mainstream Christian music industry heard sounds such as Galilee of the Nations was bringing forth, a “new stream” of praise and worship music birthed in Israel by Jewish believers in Yeshua (Jesus)! The unique blend of Hebrew and English lyrics, combined with the use of ancient Hebraic instruments, was an altogether new sound—one that coincided well with the 90s’ trend towards “new” Christian music styles.

Second, and more significantly, *Adonai* released at a time in which more and more Christians were developing a love for the Jewish people—as their eyes were opening to the trustworthiness of God’s promises towards His covenant people and the prophetic significance of the rebirth of Israel as a nation-state. To this day, the eyes of Christians all over the world are being opened to these truths. As this happens, many of these Israel-loving believers are turning to Messianic music as a way of connecting with the land and people of Israel as well as reconnecting with their spiritual heritage.

Last, this same time period was marked by a growing number of Christians beginning to embrace the Jewish roots of the faith. Not only were Christians looking *forward* to God’s end-time promises of the restoration and redemption of Israel, but believers began also looking *backward*, beholding the great heritage to which they, as followers of the Jewish Messiah, had been “grafted in” (Rom. 11:17-18).

The combination of these three factors helped to prepare the ground for a breakthrough introduction of the Messianic sound into the mainstream Christian music scene, providing significant opportunity for GOTTN to take the Messianic message to the world through its unique medium.

15 Years of Messianic Praise and Worship

Since *Adonai's* 1998 release, Galilee of the Nations has produced and/or published albums from dozens of talented Messianic recording artists—including several directly from the land of Israel. For instance, Karen Davis has garnered a significant worldwide following as a Galilee of the Nations solo artist. Karen has been with Galilee of the Nations from its earliest days.

Since Karen's debut as a GOTTN artist on the *Adonai* album, she has released five additional highly acclaimed albums, such as *Yeshua*, *Israel My Beloved*, and *Songs in the Night*. Karen is a native of Detroit, Mich., and currently serves as worship leader at Kehilat HaCarmel, a thriving Messianic congregation atop Mount Carmel in Israel. There, Karen's husband, David Davis—a protégé of the late David Wilkerson—is the founding pastor. The Davises make an incredible ministry team and travel around the world—from Haifa to Houston to Hong Kong—sharing the hope of Messiah in both word and song.

Furthermore, Karen's home congregation is continually playing host to Christian tourists from across the globe. This constant influx of visitors to Karen's congregation has made her one of Messianic music's most internationally recognized and beloved artists.

Those early successes of GOTTN paved the way for the label's 50-plus projects that have followed. These include solo projects from artists such as Joel Chernoff and Ted Pearce; group albums from the likes of Zemer Levav, LAMB and Meha Shamayim; and a number of world-renowned *Adonai*-esque compilation projects like *The Road to Jerusalem*, *Son of David* and many others. Each of these made their mark on the Messianic music scene.

The Future for GOTTN

The promises of God in Scripture are clear: Revival is coming to the Jewish people (see Romans 11, for example). As more and

more Jews come to know Yeshua, there will follow an emergence of more Messianic musicians who will contribute their own unique expressions of praise, providing the “sounds of revival” for a growing, Spirit-empowered movement. Furthermore, as more Christians worldwide begin to embrace the roots of their faith and stand with God in His purposes for Israel, Messianic music will continue to be an excellent outlet whereby Christians can incorporate their love for Israel into their daily lives.

Galilee of the Nations has been the source for Messianic praise and worship for 15 years and has become the world leader in the genre. Pray for the label’s continued efforts to send Messianic music, and the message therein, to believers everywhere.

Finally, let us all join with worshipers of Messiah worldwide in the continued celebration of the restoration of a people, a land and a sound!

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