



99.44% PURE ACOUSTIC

Lyrics and Liner Notes

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BY THE SHECHINAH'S HOLY LIGHT

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Inspiration

When I was in yeshiva in Jerusalem, this happened to another bochur (student). I didn't write the song until many years later. I had to fill in details, and continue the story, but this is, as they say, "based on a true story". Or perhaps, based on a faulty memory. But, this is essentially how I remember the story.

There's a glossary of terms below for the non-English words.

1. WALKIN' IN JERUSALEM A BOY CAME UP TO ME
HIS CLOTHES WERE TORN AND TATTERED LIKE THE SHOES UPON HIS FEET
I OFFERED HIM SOME MONEY, HE SAID THAT'S NOT WHAT HE NEEDS
HE'S LOOKIN' FOR 5 *SHABBOS* GUESTS TO GREET THE *SHABBOS* QUEEN
2. THAT NIGHT IN A SMALL APARTMENT THERE WERE 5 GUESTS AND 9 KIDS
SHABBOS PERMEATED EVERYTHING THEY SAID AND DID
THEY FILLED THE ROOM WITH *SIMCHA* AND THEY LOCKED THE WORLD OUTSIDE
AND WHEN THEY STARTED DANCING I SAW ANGELS WELL WITH PRIDE

CHORUS: A BITE OF BREAD AND A BOWL OF SOUP WAS ALL THEY HAD TO EAT
BUT THEY HAD TORAH, LOVE AND LAUGHTER, *SHABBOS* SONGS SO SWEET
THE MEAL IT DID NOT LAST TOO LONG, BUT WE WERE UP ALL NIGHT
BASKING IN THE SPLENDOR BY THE *SHECHINAH'S* HOLY LIGHT

3. TO SEE THEIR JOYOUS FACES YOU WOULD NOT KNOW THEY WERE POOR
SOME ARE BORN TO MONEY, THEY HAVE SO MUCH MORE
THE PARENTS SHARED THEIR SECRET, TO BE HAPPY WITH YOUR LOT
THANK G-D FOR EVERYTHING DON'T THINK ABOUT WHAT YOU HAVE NOT

CHORUS

4. SOME YEARS HAVE PASSED AND I'VE BEEN BLESSED WITH MY OWN FAMILY
WE ALWAYS TRY TO HAVE SOME GUESTS TO GREET THE *SHABBOS* QUEEN
WHEN MY MIND TURNS TO MONEY AND THE BILLS THAT I CAN'T PAY
I THINK ABOUT THAT *SHABBOS* WHEN LIFE'S TROUBLES FLEW AWAY

CHORUS

Glossary:

Shabbos = Sabbath

Simcha = Joy

Shechina = Divine presence

THIS LAND IS OUR LAND

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Inspiration

I have always loved the Woody Guthrie song about America, “This Land is Your Land”, so I do what musicians do when we love a song...we steal it. OK, I just completely rewrote the lyrics to tell of our beloved Israel in a way I could really relate. As for the music, Woody Guthrie didn’t write music, just lyrics. His tunes came from old songs in the public domain, so I was free to borrow that.

There’s a glossary of terms below for the non-English words.

C H O R U S THIS LAND IS OUR LAND, IT IS NOT THEIR LAND
G-D GAVE IT TO US, TO OUR FATHER ABRAHAM
THROUGH ISAAC AND JACOB
AND ON FOR ALL ETERNITY
THIS LAND G-D GAVE TO YOU AND ME

1. FROM THE JORDAN VALLEY, TO THE GOLAN HEIGHTS
 THE SUMMER BREEZE OF JERUSALEM NIGHTS
 FROM THE SINAI DESERT TO THE SPARKLING GALILEE
 THIS LAND G-D GAVE TO YOU AND ME

C H O R U S

2. FROM THE *ROSH YESHIVOS* TO THE *KIBBUTZNIKS*
 FROM EGGED DRIVERS TO EX-REFUSENIKS
 FOR ALL THE JEWS AROUND THE WORLD
 TRAPPED IN THEIR LIFE OF LUXURY
 THIS LAND G-D GAVE TO YOU AND ME

C H O R U S

3. AS I WAS WALKING BY THE WESTERN WALL
 I’M SURE I HEARD, SOME ANGELS CALL
 THEY SAID SO MANY DIED, SO ALL THE WORLD WOULD SEE
 THIS LAND G-D GAVE TO YOU AND ME

C H O R U S

Glossary:

Rosh Yeshivos = Rabbis who run centers of Torah study

Kibbutzniks = People who live on a *kibbutz*, traditionally an agricultural cooperative

KOSHER SYMBOLS BLUES

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Inspiration

I thought kosher symbols were supposed to make things *less* confusing?

Many years ago a great idea was conceived. Put a symbol on the label of products that are kosher, and kosher consumers will know what they can and cannot buy. With the proliferation of symbols, this has become a bit of a nightmare! There are so many symbols. Some are very interesting (I like the horse and buggy K from Amish country). Some are very similar to others. Very confusing. Many years ago, things were less standard in regards to denoting things like *pareve* (no meat or dairy ingredients) or kosher for Passover. I know a lot of people have stared at a giant stack of American cheese slices, seen it marked OU-P and wondered "Pareve? How can that be?" I like to think that funny mistakes can at least be turned into a good story or song, or in this case, both.

There's a glossary of terms below for the non-English words.

1. I GOT SO EXCITED, I FOUND *PAREVE* CHEESE
IT WAS CREAMY AND IT MELTED, IT WAS MARKED O-U P
MADE THE BEST CHEESEBURGER, GAVE MY RABBI A TRY
WHEN I PROUDLY SHOWED THE WRAPPER, HE STARTED TO CRY
HE SAID THE "P" IS NOT FOR PAREVE, IT'S PASSOVER FOOD
WE GOT THE KOSHER SYMBOL BLUES

CHORUS I GOT THE KOSHER SYMBOL BLUES
THREE MILLION SYMBOLS, MOST I CAN'T USE
THERE'S A "K" WITH A SQUIGGLY, A "K" WITH A DOT
USE THE WRONG ONE AND YOU *TREIF* YOUR POT
GOIN' TO THE GROCER, GIVES ME A SCARE
NOW I DREAM OF KOSHER SYMBOLS, AND IT'S A NIGHTMARE
IT ALL SEEMED SO SIMPLE, SO EASY TO DO
I GOT THE KOSHER SYMBOL BLUES

2. I BOUGHT A TREAT FOR *PESACH*, IT WAS MARKED K-P
TASTED JUST LIKE *CHOMETZ*, IT WAS SO YUMMY
MY RABBI SAID IT'S *PAREVE*, IT'S NOT PASSOVER FOOD
A "P" BY A K'S NOT ALWAYS LIKE BY O-U
FLUSH AWAY YOUR *CHOMETZ*, THAT'S WHAT YOU GOTTA DO
NOW MY TOILET'S BACKED UP, AND IT'S FLOODED THREE ROOMS
MY HOUSE IS LIKE A *MIKVEH*, AND MY POTS ARE *TREIF*, TOO
I GOT THE KOSHER SYMBOL BLUES

CHORUS

Glossary:

treif = not kosher

mikveh = ritual bath

Pesach = Passover

pareve = not meat or dairy

chometz = leavened food (forbidden on Passover)

yummy = delicious!

HEAVENLY TEARS

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Inspiration

Heavenly Tears – I know I've caused too many.

1. HELLO, YES I KNOW, IT'S BEEN A LONG, LONG TIME
WOULDN'T BLAME YOU IF YOU'RE MAD AT ME,
BUT I'VE HAD SO MUCH ON MY MIND
SOMETIMES I FEEL PARALYZED, AND DON'T KNOW WHAT TO DO
I'M SORRY IT'S ONLY TIMES LIKE THESE, I TURN TO YOU
2. HAVE I TOLD YOU LATELY, HOW MUCH YOU MEAN TO ME
YOU PUT THE BREATH OF LIFE, INSIDE OF ME
WHY DO I PUSH YOU AWAY, AS IF YOU DIDN'T CARE
YET WHEN I NEED YOU THE MOST, YOU'RE ALWAYS THERE
3. YES I KNOW, I'D FEEL BETTER, IF I LET YOU SHARE MY LOAD
BUT I JUST CAN'T ADMIT, LIFE'S NOT ALL IN MY CONTROL
I KEEP ON REFUSING YOUR LOVE, WASTING THE YEARS
SOMETIMES I SEE THE FOOL I'VE BEEN, SHED BITTER TEARS
4. YES I KNOW, YOU'D BE WILLING, TO GUIDE MY EVERY DAY
YOU'D REVEAL ALL LIFE'S BEAUTY, BUT I'M BLOCKING MY OWN WAY
I'M NOT ONLY HURTING MYSELF, I CAN PLAINLY HEAR
THE UNEARTHLY SOUL SHATTERING SOUND OF HEAVENLY TEARS
YES I KNOW THAT I'VE CAUSED YOU TO BREAK DOWN, IN HEAVENLY TEARS

RETURN AGAIN

copyright Rabbi Shlomo Carlebach

Inspiration

A great Carlebach song. Simple, concise, powerful, very emotional. The music fits perfectly with the words. This song just resonates with a lot of people, including me. Not the kind of song I would/could write, so I'm thankful he did.

1. RETURN AGAIN, RETURN AGAIN
RETURN TO THE LAND OF YOUR SOUL

(Repeat)

2. RETURN TO WHO YOU ARE,
RETURN TO WHAT YOU ARE
RETURN TO WHERE YOU WERE BORN AND REBORN AGAIN

(Repeat)

ALL G-D REALLY WANTS

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Inspiration

With all of the “rules”, it is easy to get bogged down and lose sight of the real goal. This song is my attempt to simplify things.

There’s a glossary of terms below for the non-English words.

1. SOMETIMES IT’S HARD TO BE A JEW,
SO MANY *MITZVOS* WE MUST DO
G-D DESERVES OUR ENDLESS PRAISE
BUT CAN’T JEWS TAKE VACATION DAYS
2. GOT MY RABBI ON THE PHONE
WHY CAN’T G-D JUST LEAVE ME ALONE
HE WANTS SO VERY MUCH FROM ME
HE SAID, “G-D ONLY WANTS ONE THING”

CHORUS ALL G-D REALLY WANTS IS YOU, NOTHING LESS COULD EVER DO
YOU CAN’T JUST THINK ABOUT HIM WHEN YOU PRAY
YOU GOTTA THINK ABOUT HIM ALL THE DAY
TORAH’S NOT JUST WHAT YOU LEARN, IT ISN’T JUST SOME THINGS YOU DO
IT’S THE VERY LIFE YOU LIVE
ALL G-D REALLY WANTS IS YOU

3. SO IF YOU WANT TO FEEL FULFILLED
TOSS OUT YOUR OWN AND DO G-D’S WILL
HE MADE US ALL AND KNOWS WHAT’S BEST
HE GAVE US ANSWERS TO HIS TESTS
4. G-D MARRIED US ON MOUNT SINAI
COMMITMENT MEANS OUR VERY LIVES
MITZVOS ARE THE TIES THAT BIND
JOIN US TO G-D IN HEART AND MIND

CHORUS

Glossary:

mitzvos = commandments

AISHES CHAYIL

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Inspiration

I wrote this song for my wife on our anniversary. Secular music is filled with music about partners, but Jewish music has little. Even the classic “song” from Proverbs, “*Aishes Chayil*” (woman of valor), was originally written by King Solomon for his *mother*, not his wife. There is a tradition that the song was originally written by Abraham as a eulogy for his wife Sarah. It has long been traditional for a Jewish husband to sing it in honor of his wife every Friday night at the *Shabbos* table.

There’s a glossary of terms below for the non-English words.

1. WHO’S WORTH MORE THAN PEARLS OR RUBIES
WHO HAS EYES THAT CAN SEE RIGHT THROUGH ME
WHEN I’M DOWN, FEELING HOPELESS
SHE GIVES ME STRENGTH TO GO ON

CHORUS AISHES CHAYIL MI YIMTZA
 V’RACHOK MI’PNINIM MIKRA
 BOTACH BAW LEV BAALOH
 V’SHOLLOL LO YECHSOR (last time: repeat)

2. WHO BRINGS BLESSING TO OUR HOME
WHO MAKES TORAH OUR HOUSE’S CORNER STONE
GIVES HER LIFE, GIVES HER LOVE
FOR ONLY KIND WORDS IN RETURN

CHORUS TWICE

Translation of Chorus, from *Mishlei*, Proverbs xx: :

A woman of valor, who can find?
She is worth far more than pearls.
Her husband trusts in her,
He will lack no fortune.

MIRACLES

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Inspiration

Miracles – written during Chanukah while driving to work over 2 mornings. I wasn't playing guitar at the same time. ☺ The song was inspired by Rabbi Simcha Zeesel's explanation of why Chanukah is celebrated for 8 days, when there was enough oil to burn naturally for 1 day. Thus, only 7 days of burning were miraculous. Rabbi Simcha Zeesel explains that it is no harder for G-d to make vinegar burn than oil. It is only because we have grown used to what happens all the time, and call it Nature. Really, everything is miraculous and it is our challenge to see the miraculous every day, in the mundane as well as the sublime.

1. THERE ARE EIGHT CANDLES BURNING BY THE WINDOW
 LOTS OF LITTLE FACES LOOKING ON
 THE PARENTS THEY ARE GRATEFUL
 FOR THE LITTLE THINGS THAT MAKE A HOUSE A HOME

CHORUS MIRACLES ARE EVERYWHERE, EVERYWHERE AND EVERYDAY
 SOMETIMES THEY ANNOUNCE THEMSELVES,
 SOMETIMES THEY CAN HIDE
 YOU CAN OFTEN SEE THEM IF YOU TRY
 LOOK AT EVERYTHING YOU HAVE
 SOON I'M SURE YOU'LL SAY
 MIRACLES ARE EVERYWHERE, AND EVERYDAY

2. THE SUN COMES UP EACH AND EVERY MORNING
 THE WINTER ALWAYS TURNS INTO THE SPRING
 WHEN YOU REALLY THINK ABOUT IT
 THERE ARE MIRACLES IN EVERYTHING

CHORUS

THE BIBLE

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Inspiration

I met a cousin who showed me a *chumash* (bible) from the 1860's that belonged to our mutual great-great-grandfather. On the inside cover were births, names and wedding dates for several generations. I'll never forget how it felt to hold that *chumash*.

1. AFTER SEVEN LONG DAYS, THE TEARS HAVE ALL RUN DRY
HE GETS UP FROM HIS STOOL, AND HEAVES A HEARTFELT SIGH
SEARCHING FOR A MEMORY, A SYMBOL OF DAD'S LIFE
IN A BAG, HE FINDS THE BIBLE DAD WAS CLUTCHING WHEN HE DIED
WITH A TREMBLING HAND HE OPENED IT, AND FOUND THESE WORDS INSIDE....

CHORUS: LET ME THANK G-D FOR THE BLESSINGS HE SHOWERS UPON ME
HE WROTE BIRTHDAYS, NAMES AND WEDDING DATES
FOR ALL THE FAMILY TREE
WITH A SHAKY HAND HE'D WRITTEN DATED JUST ONE WEEK BEFORE
G-D GAVE ME LOVE AND BROUGHT ME CLOSE,
WHO COULD ASK FOR MORE

2. THE TEARS BEGAN TO FLOW AGAIN, THEY WERE NOT FOR HIS DAD
HE CRIED FOR ALL THE TIMES HE CRIED, FOR THINGS HE DIDN'T HAVE
AND HE VOWED TO VALUE EVERYTHING HIS DAD HAD TAUGHT HIM TO
AND IN THIS WAY HIS DAD LIVES ON, IN WAYS HE NEVER KNEW
HE GAVE HIS SON HIS FATHER'S NAME, IT'S IN THAT BIBLE TOO

CHORUS: NOW HE THANKS G-D FOR THE BLESSINGS, THEY'RE ALL SO PLAIN TO SEE
HE WRITES BIRTHDAYS, NAMES AND WEDDING DATES
FOR ALL THE FAMILY TREE
IN HIS HEART HE ECHOES WORDS HIS DAD WROTE MANY YEARS BEFORE
G-D GAVE ME LOVE AND BROUGHT ME CLOSE
WHO COULD ASK FOR MORE
G-D GIVES ME LOVE AND BRINGS ME CLOSE
WHO COULD ASK FOR MORE

MY OWN SPECIAL WAY

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Inspiration

Ever want to give a special gift to someone who literally has everything? It must be uniquely yours to give. But what?

There's a glossary of terms below for the non-English words.

1. OPEN MY MOUTH, MAKE THE WORDS COME OUT
LEAD ME TO YOUR BLESSINGS AND YOUR PRAISE
TOO OFTEN I FAIL TO SEE, ALL THE GOOD YOU HAVE DONE FOR ME
I'D LIKE TO THANK YOU, IN MY OWN SPECIAL WAY
2. *TEFILLAH* IS MADE JUST RIGHT, TO SET ONE'S PRAYERS IN FLIGHT
SOARING UP TO HEAVEN EVERY DAY
BUT STILL MY HEART FEELS TRAPPED, IT CRIES FOR ITS OWN PATH
I'D LIKE TO THANK YOU, IN MY OWN SPECIAL WAY
3. KING DOVID WROTE THE WORDS OF A HEART THAT LONGS
KING SHLOMO WRITE THE WORLD'S MOST SOULFUL SONGS
IF EVERYONE IS DIFFERENT THERE MUST BE
A WAY TO SERVE HASHEM MADE JUST FOR ME
4. OPEN MY MOUTH, MAKE THE WORDS COME OUT
HELP ME FIND THE WORDS I LONG TO SAY
YOU'VE BEEN BLESSING ME EVERY DAY, SO EVEN THOUGH I PRAY
I'D LIKE TO THANK YOU, IN MY OWN SPECIAL WAY

REPEAT VERSES 3 - 4

Glossary:

tefillah = prayer

King Dovid = King David

King Shlomo = King Solomon

IT WASN'T LIKE THIS IN YESHIVA

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Inspiration

Sometimes we face decisions in life where there just doesn't seem to be an obviously right choice, and the options are all unpleasant. We often see charitable organizations "honoring" someone who appears to be less than virtuous, or not living the philosophy espoused by the organization – but they made a large donation. It seems so hypocritical and demeaning. Occasionally you hear the more inspiring story of a large gift that was turned down by an organization because of who the donor was. But what if turning it down means some families won't have food on their table, or won't make their mortgage payment?

There's a glossary of terms below for the non-English words.

1. BORUCH RAISES MONEY FOR A *CHEDER* SCHOOL, THE FINEST KIDS YOU'VE EVER SEEN
HEARS ABOUT A RICH MAN, LIVES HIS LIFE IN SIN, WANTS TO CLEANSE HIS SOUL WITH GREEN
BORUCH DOESN'T WANT TO GO THERE, BUT THE TEACHERS WERE NOT PAID
SO HE HEADS OFF IN THE EVENING AIR, SHEDS A TEAR ALONG THE WAY

CHORUS IT WASN'T LIKE THIS IN *YESHIVA*, LEARNING TORAH DAY AND NIGHT
THE TORAH AS OUR GUIDING LIGHT
EVERYTHING WAS BLACK AND WHITE
YOU ALWAYS KNEW WHAT'S WRONG FROM RIGHT

2. LEIBEL LIVED HIS LIFE FOR TORAH EVERY DAY, FOR NEARLY NINETY YEARS
NOW HIS BODY'S RAVAGED BY DISEASE, EACH WAKING MOMENT'S FILLED WITH TEARS
EVERY BREATH OF LIFE IS PRICELESS, BUT THE COST IS GETTING' STEEP
THROUGH PAIN UNBEARABLE HE CARRIES ON, WHILE PRAYING FOR ETERNAL SLEEP

C H O R U S

TAG: SOMETIMES THE CHOICES THAT WE'RE FACED WITH SEEM UNFAIR
NO MATTER WHAT YOU CHOOSE, FEELS LIKE YOU LOSE

C H O R U S

Glossary:

Cheder = Ultra-Orthodox Jewish elementary school

Yeshiva = Post-High school center of religious study

ANNUAL BANQUET BLUES

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Inspiration

I probably shouldn't say what the inspiration was for this song. ☺

Actually, I have been fortunate. Most of the banquets I have attended have been well managed, and often inspirational. This song is for the rest.

Intro: THE ROOM WAS OVERFLOWING, THE FACES ALL LOOKED GRIM

THE ANNUAL BANQUET WAS ABOUT TO BEGIN

1. THE EMCEE MADE SURE TO TELL ALL HIS FAVORITE JOKES

THE ONES HIS WIFE NEVER LIKED, THE ONES HE TREASURED MOST

THE EVENING MOVED WITH ALL THE SPEED OF A MUTILATED SLUG

ELEVEN SPEECHES LATER, EYES WERE CLOSED AND EARS WERE NUMB

C H O R U S

GOT THEM ANNUAL BANQUET BLUES

A NOTE FROM YOUR MOTHER CAN'T GET YOU EXCUSED

FROM THE ANNUAL BANQUET BLUES

FLIP A COIN WITH YOUR WIFE

HEADS SHE GOES AND TAILS YOU LOSE

2. THE HONOREE WAS BEAMING, STANDING WITH HIS FAMILY

AN AWARD NOBODY WITH NO MONEY EVER WILL RECEIVE

THEY PROCLAIMED THAT THINGS WERE GREAT, AND THE BEST IS YET TO COME

THEY ANNOUNCED THE BEGINNING OF A BRAND NEW BUILDING FUND

C H O R U S