

Music Spotlight

The Soulful Sounds of The Shira Girls Choir

By: Chani Greenberg

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My daughters came dashing into the house after a long day at school. After asking them what they learned in school that day and getting their usual response of “nothing,” they proceeded to ask me if I could take them to get Shira. Before I could answer, my girls had a back and forth exchange for ten minutes over who gets Shira first. Raising my arms in despair, I finally gave them some much needed advice. “Well,” I said smugly, “if you two can’t come to an agreement, why don’t you just let Shira decide who she wants to go with first?” Silence. Utter silence and confused expressions is what their hopelessly out of the loop mother was met with. “Ma,” they informed me, “we aren’t referring to a girl named Shira. We meant the CD. Don’t you know that the 2nd Shira Girls Choir just came out?” The next thing I knew we were in the store buying two Shira Girls Choir CD’s. (It was worth the extra money to keep them from arguing over who gets it each day!) Ever since then, I must admit, I haven’t been able to put it down. (Maybe I should have bought three!!)

It was so refreshing to hear the melodious voices of The Shira Girls Choir. It’s been almost seven years since the release of their debut album “Yisimeich Elokim,” which became an instant best seller in 1998. Almost every girls’ school and camp has at some point sung their songs and the Shira Girls Choir name has become synonymous with music that touches the heart. I am amazed at how inspiring the songs are. I find myself focusing on the core meaning of the words rather than just listening to the music. I really seem to understand the underlying interpretation of the pesukim and tefillos used in these songs. The words seem to come alive.

Beginning with the opening song of “Boruch Haba,” right up until the closing score of “Ki V’simcha,” the fast songs are action packed, upbeat, leibidig and sung so enthusiastically by this lively group of 23 girls ages 9-17. This energetic group of girls make the song “Reu” so much fun to listen to! “Hashem Yimloch” is so thrilling that each time I hear it, I find myself singing along with it as if I too am a member of the choir. The title song “Lechu V’nailcha B’or Hashem”, I predict, will soon become the new Bais Yaakov



theme song. The girls confidently and eagerly sing this song thanking their mothers for raising them to become Bnos Torah who live their lives dedicated to the ratzon Hashem. By utilizing their inner strength, they will succeed in becoming true bnos melech, despite the world’s opposing views. Indeed when I spoke with Chaya Bruria Sachs, the composer, producer and director of the Shira Girls Choir, she communicated to me about how on each album she incorporates one song with English words that are relevant to women. She wants women to come away with a message and to understand our tachtis on this earth. Just as “Yisimeich Elokim” accomplished this

task in its own way, she hopes “Lechu V’nailcha” will accomplish this in a different light.

I truly enjoyed listening to each and every soloist. Their voices are strong and vibrant, each so different, yet so beautiful. I couldn’t help but smile upon listening to the soloist, the youngest girl in the choir who can’t be more than nine or ten years old, who sings the introduction to “Ki V’simcha”. The angelic voice of the choir member who begins “Na’anaisi” really penetrated my heart. I could picture the words floating off the page of tehilim and right up to Hakadosh Boruch Hu as she sang this song so sincerely and innocently. Another song that really touched my soul was “Shir Lama’alos Esah Ainai”. It gave me hope that no matter what challenges Hashem hands down to us, we are never left to cope alone. Hashem is right there by our side.

The music, featuring a full ten piece orchestra, is meticulously conducted and arranged by Yisroel Lamm. The music and vocals compliment each other without one taking away from the other. I usually want to just stand up and start dancing while listening to the music but being that I mostly listen to it in the car while driving, I figure it’s not a very good idea!

This CD is out just at a time when so many girls are graduating elementary or high school, leaving to camp or seminary or moving on to different stages of their lives. What a special gift for your girls that they will cherish for a very long time. Maybe you’ll be lucky enough to catch the Shira Girls Choir live sometime soon in your city as the choir begins planning concerts for women only as part of their national tour. But, in the meantime, enjoy the CD. I know I am!

