

PARSHAT NITZAVIM-VAYEILECH
DEUTERONOMY 29:9-31:30
HAFTARAH ISAIAH 61:10-63:9
21 ELUL 5783/07 SEPTEMBER 2023



Redemption Song
Painting by Rene Serrano Rodriguez
“Time and music always persist.”

FULFILL THE BOOK,
SING THE SONG

1. Then Moses and the Israelites sang this song (*shirah*) to Yud-Hei-Vav-Hei... (Exodus 15:1)

And Miriam called out to them: “Sing (*shiru*) to Yud-Hei-Vav-Hei... (Exodus 15: 21)

Then Moses recited into the ears of the whole community of Israel the words of this song (*shirah*)... (Deuteronomy 31:30)
2. There is a distinction between poetry and prose. In poetry the subject matter is not plainly set forth as in prose. Additional explanations are necessary in order to indicate the allusions condensed into each expression. Such is the nature of Torah. Its story is not elaborated. It requires additional explanations in order to appreciate its allusions. (Netziv, 1817-1893)
3. Poetry can break open locked chambers of possibility, restore numbed zones to feeling, recharge desire. (Adrienne Rich)

4. Reality is not static and does not consist of eternal essences that can be understood by means of fixed concept. It is the constantly unfolding future of life which bursts forth and renews itself. One cannot thus perceive reality unless it is by using a language and images that are constantly in motion. Poetry seeks to restore vibration to words whose life has become motionless. (Rabbi Marc-Alain Ouaknin, *Mysteries of the Kabbalah*)
5. Judaism is a religion of words, and yet whenever the language of Judaism aspires to the spiritual it breaks into song, as if the words themselves sought escape from the gravitational pull of finite meanings. (Rabbi Jonathan Sacks)
6. Torah is Torah when we perceive the enigmas in its language, when we ride those flying shards, each one gesturing toward the fleeting memory of the Divine Word...not capturing the Divine Word, only continually unpacking its suggestive meaning. (Rabbi Aryeh Bernstein)
7.
We've got to fulfill the book.
Won't you help to sing
These songs of freedom?
'Cause all I ever had
Redemption songs
All I ever had
Redemption songs
These songs of freedom
Songs of freedom.
(Redemption Song, Bob Marley)