

Dan David: Music and Life On his Own Terms by Matt Nadler

The gym had already been converted into a “Messianic Marketplace” for the 2008 Messiah conference in Grantham, Pennsylvania. Now it had been transformed again—this time, into a concert hall, as Dan David’s violin concert captured his audience from a makeshift stage. “He joins modern praise with melodies reminiscent of an earlier time,” marvels Mandie Greenberg, “while hovering between Celtic, Jewish, and American cultures. I find his music soothing and inspiring. It jumps between musical worlds with ease and grace.”

This metaphor not only describes the music of Dan David, but also describes his life. Born in 1977, Dan David Aronovich and his family immigrated from the Ukraine to Tel Aviv when he was a year old. His mother, Asia, taught the piano and was a professional ballet accompanist; his father Joseph was a banker. Ever since Dan could remember, music held an almost supernatural quality. At age seven, his parents encouraged him to take up the violin, where he displayed a natural ability. Four years later, they resettled in Montréal, where he continued to hone his skill.

Though his family was technically non-observant, they nevertheless celebrated the holidays, and immersed Dan in Jewish life and culture. At the same time, Tel Aviv and Montréal exposed him to urban society. A prodigious teenager, he learned about classical music from his violin teachers, but he also explored more popular styles.

One song that stuck with him was the hit, “Personal Jesus” by the secular group, Depeche Mode. Despite being composed by an unbelieving band, the lyrics describe (albeit with a biting edge) “your own personal Jesus/someone who hears your prayers/someone who cares,” and commands the listener to “reach out and touch faith.”



Dan understood that his parents would not approve of their son learning about “Jesus.” Still, Dan was rather curious: what would lead Depeche Mode to portray this forbidden figure as someone who cares, someone who would listen, someone who is truly personal?

Having not resolved these questions, 19 year-old Dan enrolled at York University in Toronto. He became interested in the local music, which included the work of Ashley MacIsaac, a Jewish fiddler whose lively Celtic style influenced Dan’s development. “At this point, I also started reading the Bible. This was not allowed by my family at all. They didn’t even want me reading the *Torah!*” Dan exclaims. While at school, he remembers when “I was performing at a local church. One of my uncles flew down and actually offered me money if I would never play in any congregation again!”

Undeterred, and inspired by his fellow musicians, he began composing twenty-eight songs, recording with friends, making demos, and sending them out to record companies.

After listening to one of his demos, one of the top record companies in the world, Bertlesmann Music Group offered him a five-year deal. This put Dan at a crossroads. Should he drop out of school and begin recording and touring full-time? Or should he continue with his education? On one hand, the violin had been a great source of fulfillment. On the other hand, he was still searching for answers, and didn’t necessarily want to be saddled by a major-label contract. Although he was flattered,

he declined the offer, opting instead to finish school, and to develop his craft.

After graduation, Dan decided to pursue his

career on his own terms, and put together a band with his schoolmates. At this time, he began having visions of Yeshua who revealed that He was the Messiah. Dan did not know how to process this information. Neither could he foresee how much this vision would affect him.

Through the connections he had made in Toronto, he toured with Googoosh, the celebrated Iranian singer, which included a concert in Toronto attended by an

audience of over 13,000 aficionados. There, he met Pedro Eustache, a Venezuelan-born multi-instrumentalist, who had performed with luminaries such as Phil Collins, Yanni, and Shakira. Pedro happened to be a believer. “After the concert,” Dan remembers, “Pedro walked over to me and said, ‘God bless you, in Jesus name.’ As he said these words, I suddenly felt the presence of the Lord.”

About six months later, driving home from practice one night, Dan says he heard the voice of Yeshua. “I am always there for you, and I will never leave you. I’ve always been there, even when you didn’t know.” Now it all started to make sense: the attraction he had felt to the Depeche Mode song; the inexplicable Divine presence when he played the violin, and especially the visions he had experienced. He finally realized that his purpose was to devote his music to the Creator. Similar to Eric Liddell, who ran marathons in the movie *Chariots of Fire*, he too felt “God’s pleasure” whenever he played the fiddle. That night, Dan put his faith and trust in Yeshua.

The most difficult challenge that faced him was what to tell his family. Dan was afraid they would never accept his beliefs, and possibly even disown him. He began praying for them. One question led to another, and they eventually were shown the way to Yeshua in a most unusual way—watching Dan on Vision TV in Canada! This, including several family visits, where Dan shared his testimony and answered their questions, brought them to faith. Both his parents now attend City of David Messianic Synagogue in Toronto.

Since becoming a believer in the Messiah, Dan has sought to glorify God and share Him with others. His two CDs, *The Right Place* and *There’s Peace (The Right Place Part 2)*, showcase both an intriguing blend of traditional Celtic styles and more contemporary rock. He is currently working on a worship CD that is intrinsically Messianic.

Dan has found people in the industry who share his vision, such as promoter Leah Ross, his agent. Founder of The Music Insider, located in Nashville, otherwise known as “Music City,” she recalls, “After meeting him, the Lord spoke to my heart. He impressed upon me that Dan was a special gift, and that I was to work with him.”

With the help of other believers, Dan has appeared with Messianic artists Marty Goetz and Ted Pearce, and toured congregations and conferences across Canada and the United States, sharing how one can truly attain peace with God. He has also developed teaching resources, and has authored two books, *Violin Made Easy* and *Scales Made Easy*.

He recently appeared on the 700 Club with his guitarist, Sean Spicer. “Ministering alongside Dan has instilled in me a love for Israel and for my fellow believers in Messiah,” says Sean. “He is not only passionate and sincere about his faith, but as for his talent, he’s at the top of his game.” **MT**



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