

BETWEEN THE LINES

A Deeper Look...

#956- BIBLE MUSIC: The Sound of Worship

The Scripture is filled with music. There are ballads of sorrow, songs of thanksgiving, marvelous doxologies... Oh, if only we could hear the songs of Zion!

Just for fun, let's take a look at some of the various instruments utilized in the Bible times...

Stringed Instruments:

- Daniel 3- *soomponehyah* or *seefonehyah*: Translated "dulcimer" it is nothing like the dulcimer of our modern age. We have many flavors of hammered dulcimers in various cultures of the world and the singularly American Appalachian mountain dulcimer. The "dulcimer" of the Bible today might be more correctly related to a psaltery.
- II Chronicles 15- *nevel*: One of the styles of "harp" in the Scripture... the "great harp"... also translated as "lyre" in some references.
- Daniel 3- *kinnowr*: A "lesser harp."
- I Samuel 18- Some have speculated that a lute-type instrument is referred to here.
- Daniel 3- *sabbeka*: A trigon. Probably Babylonian and not typically Israeli.

Wind Instruments:

- Joshua 6- *shofar*: The ram's horn. Probably the most important instrument in the heart and history of Israel.
- II Chronicles 5- *chatsotserah*: A trumpet. Blown as the shofar but made of bone, shell, bronze, copper, silver, or gold.
- I Corinthians 15- *salpigx*: One of the variants of the root *salpig*... also a trumpet.
- Isaiah 5- *chaliyl*: A primitive clarinet, sometimes called "flute" or "pipe."
- I Corinthians 14- *aulos*: The Greek reference to that same flute or pipe.
- Genesis 4- *uggah*: Translated "organ". It is, again, better rendered as "pipe."

Percussion Instruments:

- Exodus 28- *paamonim*: The ornamental, pomegranate shaped bells of the High Priest's vesture.
- Zechariah 14- *metsilloth*: Only mentioned once, they were attached to the bridles of horses.
- II Samuel 6: *menaana*: A U-shaped handle with tinkling pieces of metal suspended to make what might be called a *Sistrum*.
- Exodus 15- *toph*: A timbrel of tabret. A stretched membrane that was beaten like a tambourine/tamboura.
- I Chronicles 16- *metziltayim* or *tziltzal*: Much like our modern cymbal.
- I Corinthians 13- *chalkos echeo*: The "echoing brass"... a gong!

Conclusion: How do you praise? Is your worship music intended to make your congregation feel good or do you really know the joy of just approaching the Holy One for unified praise?

Just for the flavor and color I'd ask you to consider the 150th Psalm as translated in the TANAKH...

Hallelujah.
Praise God in His sanctuary;
 praise Him in the sky, His stronghold.
Praise Him for His mighty acts;
 praise Him for His exceeding greatness.
Praise Him with blasts of the horn;
 praise Him with harp and lyre.
Praise Him with timbrel and dance;
 praise Him with lute and pipe.

Praise Him with resounding cymbals;
praise Him with loud-crashing cymbals.
Let all that breathes praise the Lord.
Hallelujah.

Songs Of The Church: We certainly are a bit impoverished in that we have no "recordings" of the early church music that sustained the apostles as they assaulted the empire. What would it be like to hear Paul and Silas singing through the night (Acts 16)? (Something tells me that Paul sang in the key of Q-flat exclusively!)

We don't know what they sounded like but we do have argued texts that some have believed to have been put to music very early in the church. Here's a partial listing of those passages...

Luke 1:68-79	I Timothy 3:5
Luke 2:14	I Timothy 3:16
Luke 2:29-32	I Timothy 4:6
Acts 2:42	Jude 24-25
I Corinthians 12:3	Revelation 4:11
I Corinthians 13	Revelation 5:9,12,13
Ephesians 4:5,6	Revelation 7:15-17
Philippians 2:6-11	Revelation 11:17-19
Colossians 3:16	

Search The Word- 1: Even if you are Protestant (and, maybe, especially *if* you are Protestant!) I challenge you to spend some time with Mary's Magnificat (Luke 1:46-55) and track down the Old Testament allusions and references...

Malachi 3	Psalm 72	Psalm 138
Jeremiah 11	Psalm 106	Psalm 11
Psalm 41	Psalm 107	Psalm 71

Search The Word- 2: Many have speculated that the hymn the Lord sang with His disciples as they concluded in the upper room (Mark 14) was taken from Psalm 113-118. Why not read that section and see if you can imagine what they might have sung?