

# MIDRASH ON THE DYNAMICS OF MUSICAL PRAISE AND WORSHIP

By

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## PREFACE

For most of my life, I was taught, as every educated person in today's culture, that human progress has reached its zenith in the culture of the 20-th century. Founded on the cornerstones of the scientific method, logical reasoning, and the principle of the equality of all people, we possess the greatest lifestyle for the greatest number of our people of any who had ever walked the earth.

Naturally, a few things needed to be ignored to maintain that belief. While we can talk to anyone anywhere in the world with a click of a mouse button, we can't keep our families together. While we can manipulate the building blocks of life to build disease-free crops and new sheep, we fail to give ourselves meaning to go on living. Our children are the best fed ever, and also have unprecedented drug problems. We can destroy the world with the push of a button, and yet have exorcised the ONE who can save it from our political life and most of our churches in favor of traditions that do not speak to our needs today. Scientists and creationists argue endlessly about origins, the flood, the past history, speaking with words that neither can define to the satisfaction of the other.

Maybe its time we started questioning the basics of a society that has ceased to function as it should. What are our priorities, anyway?

Certainly, anyone wishing to follow Christ in any age must affirm that our first priority must be to find His voice in our spirit, the second to determine its message, and the third to do what He asks. Yet, three successive generations of born-again stand idle while the world fights its wars, and sends pastors to jail for once-unheard-of crimes. Two decades of people believing in miraculous healing, the restoration of New Testament gifts, and a new outpouring of the Spirit to meet the unprecedented needs of this generation blessed so by technology and confused so by its fruit, have given way to 80% of the Christian world hating the institutional churches, myriads of God's graces going unused, and a rapid growth of religious based terrorism.

God, as always, undoubtedly has a solution. Will we ever hear it? Surely we are being called now, and so many stand ready. But can we hear?

Our world is always the world we create for ourselves. Indeed, that is why the scientific culture cannot satisfy. Scientific progress demands that the laws it seeks to investigate do not change during the research process; yet faith demands that those things, which are unseen, can become real, changing the world. The two are incompatible at the root. Science can only describe what faith has chosen to make visible of God's will. Any attempt to build a culture upon such a foundation is

bound to result in the cycle we now see of endless subservience to what has always been, because that is the very food science needs to survive.

If the world is going to change, only faith can change it: the faith that God has a plan, and can make it happen. As individuals, God can speak to us in the depths of our being; He can bless us with unheard of grace and power. Yet, as people, we cannot even begin to communicate about what He is doing, we cannot ever share what He gives to each other, until we can learn to talk about it. And we can't learn to talk about it until we abandon our society's pre-instilled notion that things cannot change, for it is that notion that forms the limits of our language in areas of faith.

As in every major move of God that born fruit, if the world is to benefit from the solutions He now wishes to give us, we must go back to the Scriptures to seek what He might be saying. But we must do it today in a way never before attempted. We have to search the Scriptures for new ways to communicate about Him and His Kingdom. We must question the very structure of our language and the predispositions to see only the limited things that it forces upon us. If logic is condemning us to miss the call of God, logic has got to go!

The theologians will shudder. Logic has been the foundation of all Christian theology, from the Church Fathers until today. Without it, surely, they will insist, we will be misled to serve demons.

The Bible says you shall know them by their fruits, not by their arguments. The earliest Christian documents are not logical. Logic begins with the translation to Latin, and the attempt to bolster the early church by an appeal to Plato and Aristotle. But where has 2000 years gotten us? Almost every war today is fought in the name of God. 95% of our culture hates the very math and science that the logical society is based on. Our written laws are nearly non-functional when it comes to family, or corporate fairness.

Eusebius, the first church historian whose writings we have available to us, builds the theology of the church on non-logical Philo, not on logical Aristotle. The defenders of Masada read non-logical Jubilees and Enoch, not logical Plato.

The real reason our logical approach to God must change, however, is that it is intrinsically unGodly. God is not a logical principle, He is a loving RELATIONSHIP. God doesn't prove things by argument; He cries when we leave Him, He rejoices when we return, He molds us with His hands, He lets His Beloved Son die in the hopes we will let Him save us. None of these concepts are logical.

From this perspective, the cause of the current state of society is clear. By choosing to communicate about God only in logical terms, we have cut ourselves off from His non-logical communication. When what could be achieved by logic reached its limit, we found ourselves empty and confused.

So, if logic is to be left behind, what is to go in its place? Where is the substitute, and, more importantly, where is the proof that it will do what we need it to do, instead of fulfilling the predictions of the theologians?

Suppose that 10 million or so people all chose to serve God. Then suppose they got into a country all by themselves for, say 1500 years. What could God do with their language, their customs, and their social institutions?

We don't need to guess. The people are the Children of Israel, and the 1500 years ended in 70 AD. The entire record of this miracle of cultural development is in the Old Testament. We do not need to be under the law to read it and to use it as insights to our Father's personality. Viewed correctly, even the language they developed is a tool to bring us to the heart of God.

Their culture had a method of exposition very different from logic. It is called Midrash. Using lateral thinking, they tell a story. The story seems to have nothing to do with the question asked. But the story is cute, it is clever, and it is remembered. Then, in the secrecy of the hearer's heart, God works on the story as heard, and opens the heart to new revelation. God is not bound by the words of logic, but communication between living people about His revelation still happens.

Jesus used it. We call it parables.

Preachers have tried to copy it. We call their stories nice. But, we think it can be taught by logical methods, and then, when we try to teach it, we get preachers who bore audiences instead. It cannot be "taught"; it can only be absorbed, but that is how any real language is learned.

This book is a midrash. When I first started in music ministry, I studied the logical expositions in the textbooks. I learned to sing "bel canto" style; I learned to play a variety of instruments; I studied choral leading, songwriting, children's voices, several dozen technical courses I won't even list, and courses in all the logical expositions of why we sing in church, how to teach congregations, and where it's in the Scriptures.

Thirty-five years later, I know for a fact that, unless we do it God's way, we are wasting our time. And unless we stop making the Scriptures logical presentations, we will never hear God's way as a people.

It is time for a midrashic presentation of the foundations of music ministry.

## 0: THE ETERNAL AMEN

Hebrew is a language constructed to talk about a relationship with God. It doesn't have tenses, like past, present and future (I mean Biblical Hebrew, of course); it has what you might call "existential placers".

If you stop and think about it, tenses, and even the flow of time, are an invention of man. God gives us cycles of time (And God said, Let there be lights in the firmament of the heaven to divide the day from the night; and let them be for signs, and for seasons, and for days, and years. Gen. 1, 14) marked by recurring phenomena, the sun and the moon. WE developed the idea that 2003

follows 2002. You can trace the development through Egyptian, Sumerian, and Hebrew, if you want. The change happened about 700 BC. Actually, once you know this, it solves the whole evolution question: If man invented the passing of time, the decision to assign a date to a fossil is not attempt to use time to date the fossil, but rather an attempt to use the fossil to establish a benchmark for the passing of time. The fossil takes whatever date we wish, since we invented dating.

"Existential placers" are the grammatical term I have invented for what ancient languages do with their verbs. Since God is always the same, there is little sense in saying "God did" or "God will do". It makes better sense to say "God's action is just becoming visible", or "God is now getting people to do this or that", and that is how Hebrew, and the other ancient Near-East languages, are constructed.

For example, in Hebrew, when t- is added to the front of a verb, it signifies that God has made the "sign" of what He is about to do visible. When n- is added, it signifies the "reflexive", that is the speaker is doing something to himself. Add m-, and the causative comes about: If 'oed means a gathering of the saints, then moed is the call for a feast so they will gather. If obal is vibration, then mobal is the power that caused the earth's fundamental vibrations to be upset during the flood.

Add alef (which we will call a-), and you say "sharing with the world the reality of whatever". For example, "dam" is blood, and Adam is he who shares what God has given the world though flesh and blood. The Jews explain that the shape of alef in Hebrew is the form of the ox. So the alef plows the earth with whatever is attached behind it.

H- is the word "the". Shaped as a hut with a hole to one side of the roof, it is the symbol of life on earth as it seeks to manifest heaven. It was h- that turned "Abram" - "exalted father" (the title of the counselors of the Sumerian government mentioned in the epic of Gilgamesh, and according to the Talmud inherited from Araphaxad) into "Abraham" - "Father of life" (Gen. 17:5). It is H that turns the spells of the Egyptians (Lat) into the original technology later forgotten (Lahat) (Ex. 7-8 as compared with the Denderah walls - see my work on the "Rain Machine"). At the end of a word, it signifies the feminine equivalent, as in "aish" - "man" (literally "sharer with the world of "ish" - fire) into "aishah" - "woman" (this is the source of the teaching that the man is under the woman - man hears from God; woman hears from her husband and then, as his helpmate, brings about on his understanding of God on the earth). And it is H that is the root word of the verb "to be" in Hebrew. "The" is the worldly manifestation of God's ideas.

The letters work in combination. For example, attaching at- to a word places it in the objective case. It means to share with the world the sign of something, and therefore signals what a person is working on. As in: God created at-h-heavens and at-h-earth. God here is Elohim - the living plural of El (AL) - or the "sharing with the world the reachings of the eyes to heaven" (the shape of L).

Even as suffixes, on the ends of words, the masculine plural is -im and the feminine is -ot. Now, feminine is the choice of ending for abstractions, which of course are mere signs of something, as t- would imply, or earthly manifestations, as -h implies. The masculine ending implies the reality. For example, the waters of creation is m'im, the "causes". "Hallel" (The worldly manifestation of repeated l - or reaching to heaven with your vision) is to shine with the praise of God, the Book of

Psalms is called the “tehellim”, or the “collection of signs that someone's been shining with praise of God.”

The Jewish scholars point out that the letters a, m, and t are the beginning, middle and last letters of the Hebrew alphabet. As a word, they spell "amet", meaning "truth". So truth, in Hebrew, is what lasts forever, from beginning through middle to end. But also, truth is that which God makes available to be seen as a sign, causes people to act on, and wants to share with the earth.

Now, when you say "amen", which is formed from the word amet, you drop the sign letter t- and agree to let the truth manifest in you, as the n suggests. When we say "amen to a prayer", we agree to take what God is beginning to manifest in the life of our brother or sister, to let it happen in the world, to share it with the world and to be part of the process. And of course, that moves it closer to the front of the alphabet, so God won't have to wait so long for it be shared with the earth.

## 1. THE SONG OF GOD

This is Psalm 42:

*1 To the chief Musician, Maschil, for the sons of Korah.>> As the hart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God.*

*2 My soul thirsteth for God, for the living God: when shall I come and appear before God?*

*3 My tears have been my meat day and night, while they continually say unto me, Where is thy God?*

*4 When I remember these things, I pour out my soul in me: for I had gone with the multitude, I went with them to the house of God, with the voice of joy and praise, with a multitude that kept holyday.*

*5 Why art thou cast down, O my soul? and why art thou disquieted in me? hope thou in God: for I shall yet praise him for the help of his countenance.*

*6 O my God, my soul is cast down within me: therefore will I remember thee from the land of Jordan, and of the Hermonites, from the hill Mizar.*

*7 Deep calleth unto deep at the noise of thy waterspouts: all thy waves and thy billows are gone over me.*

*8 Yet the LORD will command his lovingkindness in the daytime, and in the night his song shall be with me, and my prayer unto the God of my life.*

*9 I will say unto God my rock, Why hast thou forgotten me? why go I mourning because of the oppression of the enemy?*

*10 As with a sword in my bones, mine enemies reproach me; while they say daily unto me, Where is thy God?*

*11 Why art thou cast down, O my soul? and why art thou disquieted within me? hope thou in God: for I shall yet praise him, who is the health of my countenance, and my God.*

Don't you just feel so sorry for this guy? He longs for God so badly (verse 2). The Hebrew says He wishes God would notice him. He's in church all the time (verse 4); in some translations, he

even leads the music, though the Hebrew doesn't say that. He knows what God wants to give him (verse 8). In verse 8, he knows God has a song for him, but he can't sing it, or even hear it; he just HAS it, in knowledge, and instead prays for something better. He even prophesies about the concept of Jesus twice ("help" in verse 5 and "health" in 11 are both yeshuah - that's Jesus' Hebrew name with an -h at the end). And yet, all he can hope for is that someday he can go back to church to praise God some more and give his poor tortured soul a few more minutes of relief.

What is this about His soul? In verse 7, we see the problem. Deep calls unto deep. The Hebrew word is "tehom". This is a sign that life is getting ready to happen t+h+m. The word is used three times in Gen 1: 2. When the earth was formless and void, and darkness covered the abyss, the word "formless", the word "void" and the word "abyss" are all forms of this word. It is precisely this darkness that God turns into meaningful life. This guy can't find God, in spite of how hard he tries. He sees his soul and it has never been formed (the proper meaning of "created" in Gen. 1) by God, because God can't find this guy.

He dares to hope for only the smallest blessings. We could hope to get to Mount Zion or to the temple in Jerusalem (the devil got Jesus to such heights by his power alone - check out Matt. 5:5), yet the writer barely hopes to meet God at the Jordan, the barest entrance to the Holy Land, whose very name means to "descend". Mount Hermon is a sanctuary all right - according to legend it's where the demons came down to possess the nephalim (Gen 6). And hill Mizar translates as "little hill". He doesn't even dare hope God will let him climb the mountain to heaven!

What's wrong with this church that it leaves him so unsatisfied?

In verse 1, Maschil is a song that causes (m-) wisdom, if you meditate on it. Let's check it out:

Verse 4 is very different in Hebrew: Voice of joy is "kol rinnah". Kol is the general word for sound. When Adam and Eve had sinned in the garden, they heard the "noise of God on the breeze of the day". They used to hear God accurately in their hearts, now they had to settle for random noise. "Breeze", regardless of your translation, in Hebrew is "ruach", the spirit. Holy Spirit is "Ruach hakodesh", and ruach means spirit, breath, wind, etc. God blows His ruach into Adam to make Him a living being. The Spirit was all around them, but it sounded like noise.

There are at least 6 good words for joy in Hebrew. This word should be "teruah", or shout of joy. Teruah is a technical musical term in Hebrew. It is the trumpet call used to announce a New Year of a new blessing from God at Rosh Hashanah. It is played by letting the note jump between two notes called "atnah" and "silluq". Atnah means "the gift of God" and silluq is the "rest of God". So when you shout for joy, and it comes from your center of your being, it is because you reflect alternately on what God has already given you, how awesome it is just to rest in Him, and back again to what He will give you in the future. It is also almost t-ruach, to become a sign that the spirit is among you. And all this poor person hears is rinnah, or "noise".

His "praise" could be hallel, but he's not shining with anything, so his praise is "todah". The root word is "yod" meaning "hand". The word means you are going to be a sign to others that you are making praise to God with your own hand. Remember, the alternative is to shine. This is what I

learned in my ministry training; the reason we sing in church is to be a sign to each other that we want to praise God. No wonder we're not shining - we don't think we should.

The word "multitude" the first time is "sawk", meaning "multitude". The second time it's "hamon" which means the "noise of a multitude". The word "disquieted" in the next verse is the same word, hamon. Is this why our young people have stopped coming to church? Are we too busy making noise to shine? Is that noise all they remember when they get home?

"Holyday" is chagag. Chagag is the feast set up by laws in response to God's desire for a moed. Why didn't he say "moed"? He's in church not because God told him to go; he's there because the rules told him to go. Just like making people go to church whether they want to or not. No wonder he feels like God can't find him!

So, what's the solution? If he really is tehom, an abyss waiting to be filled, like in Genesis 1, the Spirit of God is still brooding over his waters. If we could stop making noise long enough to wait to hear God say "let there be", our poor person would have: (see Gen 1)

Day 1: Light to shine with the praise of God.

Day 2: A firmament to protect a secret part in his heart where God would speak to him.

Day 3: A place to stand and lift his head in righteousness before God.

Day 4: An inner sense of timing to let his heart beat with God's.

Day 5: Living creatures brought forth by his soul: Ideas, actions, methods, ministries created jointly by him and God to bring life to the earth.

Day 6: A new creating. God would mold him anew into a new creation, and share his spirit again.

Day 7: He could rest secure in God, as in Psalm 127, 2.

But that's not why we opened to this psalm. We need to look at God's song.

Note, there's only one. There's ALWAYS only one. In 2 Chr. 29, 27, the Levites start the SONG of the Lord. In psalm 137, asked for one of many songs of Zion, the Israelites respond that they cannot sing the SONG of the Lord in a foreign land. In Revelation 15:3, we sing the SONG of the Lamb, although we have sung a new song (of our making) TO God in ch. 5, 9. Even in the gospels, after the Last Supper, Jesus' last communal act on earth was to sing A HYMN, not hymns, as I was wrongly taught in my classes.

God only has one song. That's obvious, if you realize He is always unchanging. What is the song He sang/sings to us? He sang it on the day of creation, certainly. While His mind was seeing if "it was good", and his mouth was saying "let there be...", and His hand was molding us in His image, what was on His heart?

Who could tell us. Was there a witness?

From Proverbs 8:

22 ¶ The LORD possessed me in the beginning of his way, before his works of old.

23 I was set up from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was.

24 When there were no depths, I was brought forth; when there were no fountains abounding with water.

25 Before the mountains were settled, before the hills was I brought forth:

26 While as yet he had not made the earth, nor the fields, nor the highest part of the dust of the world.

27 When he prepared the heavens, I was there: when he set a compass upon the face of the depth:

28 When he established the clouds above: when he strengthened the fountains of the deep:

29 When he gave to the sea his decree, that the waters should not pass his commandment: when he appointed the foundations of the earth:

30 Then I was by him, as one brought up with him: and I was daily his delight, rejoicing always before him;

31 Rejoicing in the habitable part of his earth; and my delights were with the sons of men.

Wisdom was there, and is our witness. Wisdom even heard the song, for in verse 31, it rejoiced in the earth and, according to Job 37:8, the morning stars were singing along. How do we get Wisdom to speak to us?

The wisest man to ever live was Solomon. Solomon wrote 3005 songs, but only one massive DEFINITIVE song. Perhaps the "Song of Solomon" is the song God sang. God told Solomon the nature of wisdom, and Solomon wrote the song down.

In Hebrew, we read for the title: "Shir hashirim asher l-solomon". Translated as literally as possible: "The song of songs, made by Solomon". If this is God's song, it is certainly the song that inspires all others, and the title is well deserved. The Hebrew construction that our scholars call genitive (English "of"), is with the h- prefix. That means this is the song that is the living manifestation OF songs. The word asher is skipped in most translations. It is simply the word "shir", for "song" with the a- attached. That means it is a sharing of a song. The word can mean "which is", but it also means "worked through" and "for a blessing". The root word of song in Hebrew is "shur" meaning journey. A song, in the Hebrew, is the result of the working out of a journey with God so it may be a report of that journey which blesses others. L- is the prefix that means to (as we look to God), so the song was given to Solomon, as he looked heavenward. Finally, the root of the word Solomon is completeness, for Solomon had wisdom, so eventually he had it all.

The curious thing about the song of songs is the word "beloved". Over and over in the Song: "my beloved is mine..." "my beloved is as a...", beloved, beloved, beloved, beloved. Could this be what God's heart keeps singing? "For my beloved...", "for my beloved..." For His beloved he creates, for His beloved he reveals His law, for His beloved He lets His Son die!



Solomon should have known this. It is to His beloved that God reveals things in peaceful nights of sleep, Psalm 127:2, and note who is the author of this verse that is the very antithesis of the writer of Psalm 42; in verse 1 the author of Psalm 127 is Solomon. Solomon is specifically stated to be the beloved of God in Nehemiah 13, 26.

The word "beloved", in English, comes from the word "love", and this is reasonable. It does the same in Hebrew. But Hebrew has a second word that means "beloved", and this word comes from the word DVD, which means to boil. So, in Hebrew, you can call someone beloved because you love them, or because they make you "hot". The second word is the name of Solomon's father, David.

David was the greatest musician of all time, even by worldly standards. Three thousand years after his death, more than 70 of his songs (the psalms) are sung in every language in the world, every week. Try to say that about the Beatles, or Mozart! This great musician could make the demons leave Saul by how he played the harp. Where does this great talent come from? He was "hot" on God. He loved God with his passions. When Michal (the wife Saul gave him when Saul broke his promise to give him the crown princess because David had killed Goliath) criticized his show of passion in his dance before the ark, he never gave her a child. Solomon was the fruit of David's passionate relationship with Bathsheba once the sin had been purged. Solomon was truly brought up on the passion for God.

The word beloved (DVD) is used 33 times in Song of Songs, and Jesus gave us one year on earth in the flesh for each time God said we make Him hot.

The song of God is that He will do anything for us, because of His passion for us.

This is what the author of Psalm 42 did wrong. This is why his soul was so empty, unlike that of Solomon's, which was brought to "completion". This is why he cried through his meals and never slept at night. He went to church, he learned the teachings. He shouted at the prescribed times. He even prophesies about Jesus. He did everything he was told. But he never got passionate about God.

## 2. THE MUSIC MINISTRY OF HEAVEN

We will look at all of Ps. 68 eventually, but let's start here:

24 They have seen thy goings, O God; even the goings of my God, my King, in the sanctuary.

25 The singers went before, the players on instruments followed after; among them were the damsels playing with timbrels.

Some translations use the word "into" in place of "in" in verse 24, but the Hebrew won't work that way. The word "goings" actually refers to any movement. The word "sanctuary" is nothing so bizarre as "Hermon" in the last story. It is "Kodesh", the "Holy". God is moving around in His place of holiness. God is dancing to our music, when we sing His song.

"Holiness" is a very misunderstood term. We tend to think of it as a goal. It is like the idea that one day we will reach heaven, and so we put up with suffering now. God gave His people blessings in every area of their life; heaven was only discussed in the Bible in later times, after the nations around Israel started talking about it. God first fills us in this life, then, when we die, He takes us to heaven. For Israel, today was proof of their relationship with their beloved. Heaven was the icing on the cake. Of course, you would go to heaven; how could God do anything else to His beloved? Holiness is the same idea.

When Jesus cancelled the debt due to Adam's sin, He gave us all the benefits of all the promises God made to Israel, and heaven was just part of the package. A variation on the word *kodesh* actually means "homosexual"! The root word means to "keep separate". The two words come from the same root because there are various things you might keep yourself separate to do. Holiness, in God's eyes, is the CHOICE to separate oneself from the world and reserve your heart for Him. You become holy when you make the choice, not two hundred years after you die, when some church canonizes you.

Later, we will see how God builds on the fruit of music ministry to move back and forth from heaven to earth. But for now, He remains separate from earth, and moves to our music.

## SECTION A: SINGERS

The singers lead. Why do the singers lead?

We are fearfully and wonderfully made, knitted together by God in our mother's womb. (Psalm 139). He formed us on the sixth day of creation, with His hand.

If you want to know the poet, read his poems. If you want to know the sculptor, look at his sculptures. If you want to know God, the master craftsman, look at his work. Look at your body.

When people take voice lessons, they are taught six things.

Most people focus on two. The two are the least important. The breathing exercises and the vocalizing exercises (la-la-la, etc.) are there for one reason only - to discipline the body that it might be a fit vessel for carrying a song. But God made the body not quite ready to sing without exercises for a reason. It is the chastening to prepare us for fruit of righteousness of Heb. 11: 11, which is why the next verse has us lifting our hands and standing before God, the position from which we sing His praise the most frequently. By training the muscles we get them ready to respond to God's wonderful plan that makes our voices what they are.

In Matthew 15: 11 and 12: 34, when Jesus refers to what coming out of the mouth making a man defiled or not, he was referring to the Jewish law of dietary restrictions, called Kosher, in Hebrew *KSHR*. Now *k-* is a prefix that means "like unto". So the clean fruit of the mouth is like a Shir, or like a song. Responding to God in song is the fulfillment of the teaching that the mouth can bring forth the abundance of the passionate love of God.

The four parts of singing are:

1. Articulation. This refers to the training in the pronunciation of the words. We have already spoken of the fact that the song is the report of a journey with God. In ancient times, the notes were considered part of the words of a song, and were written at the same time. The notes of the Hebrew scale, as restored in my study on the Hebrew notes, are a journey in themselves. Their names in order, are:

|        |                  |                                                                                        |
|--------|------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Majela | Howl             | For we all cry out for God                                                             |
| Tebir  | Pile up          | until our pile of sorrows is so great that we are willing to                           |
| Mahpak | Change           | convert, the Greek metanoia, to open ourselves to Jesus,<br>Who immediately mounts His |
| Merka  | Chariot          | (which we will explain later) and comes with the                                       |
| Atnah  | Gift             | of New Life, and gives us a                                                            |
| Gilgal | Wheel of Morning | new beginning (this is the old name for morning star)                                  |
| Tarha  | Tripping         | and we tumble into a life of knowing His                                               |
| Munah  | Consolation      | and enter into His                                                                     |
| Silluq | Rest             | where we may                                                                           |
| Darga  | Pause            | with Him awaiting the next gift                                                        |

And from then on, as the melodies of most psalms, we travel from Silluq to Atnah, always ending on Silluq, often skipping the tripping or the chariot, as we see fit. Mahpak is the shepherd's chant note. It is tuned to slightly flat E, and carries in the night, and keeps the shepherds in touch with the village. David uses it for his most poignant passages, for it is the heart cry of the soul, ready for God. Remember, shepherds were the first people the angels told about the birth of Jesus. In the psalms, it is most often followed by the note called consolation, as is appropriate.

We sing do, re, mi, fa, sol, la, ti, do. These are nonsense syllables, derived from the first words of a Latin poem a monk picked up one day a thousand years ago. When the Hebrews sing the scale, they sing about how they cried to God, and He set them free, and made them rest in Him.

2. Intonation. We have a choice of thousands of variation in tone quality that our voice can make. Physicists tell us that a note is made up of an unlimited number of "sub-notes" called "harmonics" or "overtones". No two tones are exactly the same, since each harmonic may be changed in volume compared to the others. When police experts identify a voice match, what they do is read off the volume of each harmonic, in order, and compare it to the sample they are matching. Physiologists tell us that the specific combination of harmonics comes from our mouths by our choice of how we hold the muscles around our throats.

Of the thousands of sounds we can make, there are four that are considered by singing teachers to be fundamental, in the sense that all others derive from them. These four are called:

Vocal mode 1: The shout. As in Isaiah 42: 13. The LORD shall go forth as a mighty man, he shall stir up jealousy like a man of war: he shall cry, yea, roar; he shall prevail against his enemies.

Vocal mode 2: The baby whine. The throat feels pulled down, and it is very soft. I Kings 19:12. And after the earthquake a fire; but the LORD was not in the fire: and after the fire a still small voice.

Vocal mode 3: The nasal twang. It is how children taunt each other. Isaiah 37:22. This is the word which the LORD hath spoken concerning him; The virgin, the daughter of Zion, hath despised thee, and laughed thee to scorn; the daughter of Jerusalem hath shaken her head at thee.

The ring mode: The operatic sound that overpowers the entire symphony orchestra. It can be heard a block away, and can shatter a glass. It always comes through, because like the Lord's voice, which cracks the cedars of Lebanon and resounds through the sky to whole world, it contains the harmonic that is specifically tuned to the ears of mankind.

The beauty of all this is how the notes are controlled. Of these four and the thousands of combinations our voices can make to express the thousands of ways in which God can deal with us on our journeys, we will never make any by knowing what the physicists tell us about harmonics. We will never make any by knowing what he physiologists say about our muscles. Any voice teacher will tell you that the way you control intonation is by believing your voice can do it, and expecting it to come out that way. That is the only way, and it works every time, if the muscles are ready. In other words, singing a note is a choice, followed by an ACT OF FAITH.

A verse of a song has 25-30 notes. If a song has 4 verses, that means that singing a song is ONE HUNDRED practice times to use your faith and watch the world vibrate differently because of it. Singing is the training for the just man, who lives by faith. The Praise and Worship session is the Sunday Gym of Faith.

3. Resonance. The passage from Job 37:8 actually says the stars resonated. The word means to "vibrate together with". Physicists tell us that when we sing, the air around our bodies vibrates together with the air inside our bodies. (In fact, any voice teacher will tell you that air should not flow from your mouth when you sing. The purpose of the air in your mouth is to energize other air to resonance.) Eventually the air moves in waves (about 1100 feet per second) and makes our eardrums vibrate in resonance. This makes electrical ions vibrate, which makes our brains vibrate, and that's how we know it's music.

Your body has three reservoirs of air for resonance, called registers. They are the head register, the middle register (by the mouth and throat), and the chest register. This is saying that When God blew His spirit into Adam at creation, He set Adam's body up so that the air (both words are "ruach") in Hebrew collected in three locations. In the head, the air stays in the sinuses (which is why you sound different when you have a cold), in the throat, etc., and in the chest among the lungs, heart, ribs, etc. This is, obviously, because God wishes you to praise Him with your brain (head), mouth, and heart (chest). Like notes, registers are chosen by automatic muscular action resulting from the use of faith. When you sing, each act of faith causes the tone to appear to generate from head, middle, or chest, as you select. Choose all three, and your whole body becomes involved, and feels it. Literally every bone can be made to shake in resonance to the proclaimed journey, and all the air around is energized with a resounding sound of unison involving every inch of your body (the solution to psalm 42:10, the sword cutting the bones, is to bring the bones together by the sharing of the song). This kind of singing FEELS good, as serving God in the Holy Spirit should. The great note, alternating between atnah and silluq is called "teruah" or a shout of joy from your entire being. Add t- to ruach, the word that means "Spirit", and to sing from your

whole being becomes an act of faith that immediately energizes your whole body in sympathetic resonance, a teruah or a t-ruach, a sharing of the spirit that by its sheer power reaches hundreds of feet with the message of God's passionate love.

4. Projection. Singing teachers also feel that it is possible by an act of faith to cause the voice to go to one section or another of an auditorium. This phenomenon is called "projection". To appreciate the analogy, we need to look at the type of leadership exercised by the singers. The Hebrew word is qadmo, derived from qedem, meaning, of all things "prevent" and "east".

Hebrew, and most ancient languages have two words for each of the directions of the compass. "East" is translated "qedem" as above or else "mitzrach" meaning to "cause to shine". Just accounting for this strange fact is difficult unless one believes in the literal word of the Scriptures. Why have two words for each direction?

The simple answer is that several times in written historical time the directions changed around. During the flood the continents were split and roamed around the earth. (Gen 10:25. The Chinese records imply the earth spun at random for 10 days.). This is the only scientifically possible explanation for the sun standing still for Joshua (Josh. 10:12), and the "ten step correction" of Isaiah (I Kings 20:10. Both have parallels in the Chinese annals, and are the only reasonable explanation for the so-called "errors" in astronomy tables and sundial accuracy before 720BC).

The word mitzrach calls the direction "east" because the sun rises there. But "qedem" means the direction of "origin". In other Scriptures it is translated "ancient times", "prevent", "beginning" or "encounter".

The Garden of Eden was in the "qedem". Adam and Eve exited toward the "qedem". Yet the garden remained to their "qedem", as their descendants migrated in the "qedem" before building the Tower of Babel. The word means origin, or "new beginnings". The meaning "east" is so-called because here the day begins. It is a new "encounter", "preventing" any other choice for that day.

Zech. 14:4, says Jesus will return in the East of the Holy Mountain. Matt. 1:2 tells us Jesus' star was seen in the East. Both of these passages use the new word, since the earth's compass points had stopped moving around by this time, but the connection is clear. Qedem means a new beginning.

Singing is the act of reporting a journey with God in worked out words in the MIND  
By placing in tune with it the voice expressing EMOTIONS  
And causing the sympathetic resonance of the entire BODY  
To project it to the entire SURROUNDINGS

Ministry is the result of a journey in which God renews the MIND  
In a way that excites into action the EMOTIONS  
To act for God with the entire BODY  
And to project the result of the anointing to the entire SURROUNDINGS

In other words, singing is the model of the basic outpouring of grace as it changes the world. Each song is a model of a "new beginning", a new revelation that each new person brings to the world as he undertakes his ministry. It is an "encounter" with God that "prevents" the world from continuing in its previous condition.

No wonder the musicians led the armies of Israel! (Josh. 3:3; I Chr. 15:15, etc.) The music went with the presence of God on the Ark, and God ALWAYS leads everything for His people, as He dances among them, in and inspiring their songs.

## SECTION B: THE INSTRUMENTS

In the English we read that the players on instruments follow. In Hebrew, it is the neginim, or stringed instrumentalists that are mentioned. We need to see why.

There are only four families of instruments in traditional music (electronic instruments being new). They are the wind instruments (flute, oboe, clarinet, etc.), the brass (trumpet, tuba, horns, etc.), the strings (plucked, bowed, or hammered as in dulcimer or piano), and the percussion.

First, why are the flutes not mentioned? Surely, the instrument of the shepherds must be part of the heavenly music?

Not in God's eyes. The Bible mentions 3 Hebrew wind instruments, and one Greek, translated in the King James as organ, pipe, and flute. The original words are:

Mashrowkiw, or flute. The word is used only in Daniel 3 as a worship instruments for pagan gods. The root shrowk means to "hiss" or "whistle".

Chalal (not the same as Halel) or pipe. The root word means to pollute or defile. It is used as an instrument of those who hate God (Is. 30: 29), an instrument of taunt (Jer. 48: 36), but also as an instrument of joy (Is. 30: 29 and I Kings 1: 40) and of prophecy (I Sam 10:5). The Talmud says that it is the instrument of choice for climbing up to the temple for the water-pouring feast of Tabernacles and says "he who has not seen the joy at this feast has never seen joy".

'Ogab, or organ, comes from a root word that means to lust. It was invented by Jubal (Gen. 4,21), whose name means to "flow", and is the source of "jubilee", but also the source of the word for Noah's "flood". It is used by those who hate God in Job 21:12, but is one of the many instruments that praise (towdah, not hallel) in Ps. 150:4.

The Greek aulos, which is translated many ways, is mentioned as defeated in Rev. 18:22, and as a funeral instrument in Matt. 9: 23 (translated "minstrels"). And speaking of modern celebrations, what would a Jewish wedding or bar mitzvah be without the clarinet of Kleistchmer music?

God clearly has a divided opinion of this class of instruments. It is fine for joy, but has been much used for derision, and has many shortcomings. It can certainly be used for praise, but is not part of the heavenly music.

This opinion is easily confirmed by the scientific analysis. The wind instruments have an interesting property: they are "half-wave" resonators. The effect of this term is that they generate sounds that are only half there. Specifically, when one analyzes the harmonics of the brass, strings, or percussion, all the harmonics are present. The wind instruments have only the odd ones, and skip the even ones.

In addition to this, the wind instruments are the only class of instruments that demand that air be expelled from the body to produce the sound. So you can't keep the spirit in when you are playing.

What about trumpets? The first time the word "trumpet" occurs anywhere, in ANY language, ANYWHERE in the world, is in Exodus 19. The word Jubile (verse 13) is the flowing sound made by the trumpet, or the feast that it announces. The word for "trumpet" as an instrument is properly "shofar", and its first mention worldwide is Ex. 19: 16, where God Himself is playing the earth as a trumpet by blowing on the mountain.

If there is any doubt, consider why the cowboys of the American west cry "yahoo". It seems that the Indians of Washington State and British Columbia tell a story that many millennia ago, the sky was getting too close to the earth. So, they gave everyone a long pole, and told him or her "when the sky comes down, and you hear the cry of yahoo, push the sky back up". When God thundered His name "Yahweh", and played it as notes on the earth (the vowels are abbreviated to notate the scale in the Old Testament. That is why Pharaoh recognized the name; the Egyptians sang the vowels as their scale according to Plato.), it was heard 10,000 miles away in Washington State!

Within one century, the Egyptians were playing the "thopar", which is the Egyptian word, borrowed from the Israel who had just drowned their whole army (compare Japan and its manufacturing success and westernizing today), for "trumpet". The trumpet is also mentioned in Germanic literature as a primeval instrument by which the dead in Valhalla may be resurrected.

The Israelites tell us that since it was a ram that was the substitute sacrifice for Isaac, we play its horn as a symbol of God's deliverance. That is also why it is the priests' instrument, as it is a call from God. The trumpet calls of New Year's Day are the break in time for God to begin a new year of revelation, as the call of the ram was a break in time for Abraham's sacrifice, and put history on to the track we now know, with an Israel in it.

So that answers our question. The trumpet is God's instrument. It's not in Ps. 68 verse 25 because it's up in verse 8: The earth shook, the heavens also dropped at the presence of God: even Sinai itself was moved at the presence of God, the God of Israel. We don't play it in the music of heaven, because God got us together by playing it himself.

Finally, we can talk about the stringed instrumentalists, and why they follow (the word means follow behind, or take the lead from).

Naganim is the players of stringed instruments. Nagan is the instruments. The root is "nagah" which means to "shine". Now "hallel" shines like lightning; "nagah" is just to reflect light. Hallel is more active. So God likes this accompaniment because it picks up the shining in the singers and

adds to it. There are many other names for stringed instruments in Israel, as there are in English, but God chose this one only for the heavenly music.

Stringed instruments are the most flexible. When you play a flute, or even a trumpet, you have a few variations. You can tongue notes, or over blow, but that's about it. Violinists have about 10 named bowing techniques. There are over 120 ways to strike a piano key, and 8 or so have technical names and musical symbols. The Japanese koto, a 6-foot harp, has 8 notational symbols for notes, and over 20 notational symbols for ways to play each one. A string can be bowed, plucked, hammered, or even shimmered by air moving across it. In all cultures, stringed instruments are considered the closest to the voice.

An early Christian poem, from the "Odes of Solomon", states  
*ODE 6.*

*1 As the hand moves over the harp, and the strings speak,*

*2 So speaks in my members the Spirit of the Lord, and I speak by His love.*

*3 For it destroys what is foreign and everything that is bitter:*

*4 For thus it was from the beginning and will be to the end, that nothing should be His adversary, and nothing should stand up against Him.*

*5 The Lord has multiplied the knowledge of Himself, and is zealous that these things should be known, which by His grace have been given to us.*

*6 And the praise of His name He gave us: our spirits praise His holy Spirit.*

*7 For there went forth a stream and became a river great and broad*

*8 For it flooded and broke up everything and it brought (water) to the Temple;*

*9 And the restrainers of the children of men were not able to restrain it, nor the arts of those whose business it is to restrain waters;*

*10 For it spread over the face of the whole earth, and filled everything: and all the thirsty upon earth were given to drink of it;*

*11 And thirst was relieved and quenched: for from the Most High the draught was given.*

*12 Blessed then are the ministers of that draught who are entrusted with that water*

*13 They have assuaged the dry lips, and the will that had fainted they have raised up;*

*14 And souls that were near departing they have caught back from death:*

*15 And limbs that had fallen they straightened and set up:*

*16 They gave strength for their feebleness and light to their eyes:*

*17 For everyone knew them in the Lord, and they lived by the water of life forever. Hallelujah.*

(Crane's Translation)

This is the replacing of the flute at the water pouring service of Tabernacles with the stringed instrument of God playing our hearts. The stringed instrumentalists prefigure this update.

The stringed instruments are made, tuned, and played by the hand of man. They must be tuned each time, unlike flute or trumpet, and thus the hand of man follows behind the instruments made by the hand of God (the singers).

In fact, there is a branch of psychology called "sentics". It seems that everywhere in the world, people of all cultures have an inborn emotional alphabet that tells what they are thinking when they press a button. Emotions such as joy, anger, jealousy, etc. express themselves in how long the



button is held, how hard, and the precise direction. The field of sentics has documented the patterns and shown that they are universal and operate subconsciously. And, these same patterns are in evidence in the melodies of classical music pieces that express these emotions. In my Guitar Method book, I point out that if the guitarist is looking at the sexy girl or guy in the front row, or has anything against anyone in the group, the fact will surely show in how he pulls on the strings, and the music will cease to be God's.

The stringed instruments form the perfect accompaniment, because they make the hand of man follow the action in people's hearts of the hand of God, reflecting the errors when they do not, and prefiguring the flow of living water from the temple when they do.

The percussion is the last group of instruments, and it gets three words in the Hebrew. Word by word the verse reads: Qadmo shirim, achar naganim, tavek 'almot toppepot.

Tavek is usually translated "in the midst". It is a much more inclusive word.

The firmament is tavek the waters.

The tree of life is tavek the garden, as is the tree of knowledge of good and evil.

Adam and Eve hide tavek the trees.

Noah was tavek his tent when he got drunk.

Abraham cut his sacrifices tavek.

Tavek refers to being among, available to, and separating. Percussion's job is to keep the beat, to hear God's timing set by each journey, and make it available to all. That is why they are tavek; they communicate between the various singers and instrumentalists.

'Almot is virgins. We have many words for stages of the marriage process in English, such as dating, going steady, pinned, engaged. Hebrew has many words also, although since the courting procedure was different, the words don't match up. This word refers to "never having been exposed to the world", and it is necessary that percussionists do not set a beat other than that which is determined by God.

No one knows for sure what kind of percussion toppep is, except it is clearly some sort of rhythm, and that is well, since it speaks to all manner of percussion. It is used routinely throughout Scripture as a general percussion instrument. Like the strings, it is made and played with the hands.

## SECTION C: THE CONGREGATIONS

Let's look at the next two verses:

*26 Bless ye God in the congregations, even the Lord, from the fountain of Israel.*

*27 There is little Benjamin with their ruler, the princes of Judah and their council, the princes of Zebulun, and the princes of Naphtali.*

The entire psalm is in 5 parts. These two verses complete the fourth part of the five.

The blessing of God, which is in the music, comes into the world through the people who participate in the heavenly music. They are called the congregations and listed in verse 27.

Congregations is MQLT, "causing to come together". Note the word "Qohelet", the Hebrew title of the Book of Ecclesiastes. The blessings, we are told, comes from the well (fountain) of Israel. Israel means "prevailed over God", and was the name given by God to Jacob when the man who wrestled with him could not defeat him. It is a sign that Israel is capable of seizing the promises of God. The fountain, or well, brings back to mind the text of Ode 6, where we see music as a prefiguring of God's playing the strings of our hearts to make living water spring from inside us. The church that sings the song of God in its praise and worship, we are told, will be such a church. The next verse tells us how the church is arranged.

There are four congregations in a church, who need to accept each other and work together. This teaching is found in Scripture in three places. In this verse, in the four branches used in the tabernacle at the Feast of Tabernacles (Lev. 23, 40), and in the parable of the sower (We will follow Matt. 13, 18-23).

Why, in verse 27, do we list only 4 tribes of Israel, and what about the strange details?

Little Benjamin with their ruler also translates as the "insignificant son at the right hand of God who is given dominion". Jesus was held by men to be insignificant, he sits at the right hand of God, and all dominion will one day be His. We, as His Body on earth, inherit this reality. The first congregation is those people who function as Body of Christ. Every church has them. Their families and finances are in order, they are seldom sick, they do the ministries. They are the citron of Lev. 23, the fruitfulness of the orchard. And they are the good seed of the sower, who bear fruit in abundance.

The princes of Judah and their council: Princes is probably the oldest continuing non-changing word in the world. "Sar" means "prince" in Egyptian, then in Hebrew, and survives as "sir" to this day. Judah is the infinitive form of towdah. Council is actually the word "rigmah", and means "bunch". These are the people who talk about God all the time. They have a lot of words, but little action. They don't hallel, they towdah, and they bring bunches of people to church. They need to be there to learn to bear fruit, and they are a blessing in that they spread the word. They are the myrtle plant of Lev. 23, with a lovely smell but no edible fruit. They are the ones who are the seed among thorns. They keep talking to reinforce themselves. If only the sharing of the songs of God would weed around them, so they could mature! This is one of the reason we are called to share our journeys.

Zebulon means exalted. Their light is always on the lamp stand, never under a bushel. Like the date palm in Lev. 23, they bear fruit, whether or not they talk about it. But with no root, when the tribulations come, they do not have the words to contact God, and they fall away. Our songs need to teach them to follow God and hold on in times of trouble.

Naphtali means "twisting oneself into a pretzel" and therefore "wrestling with God". Like the willow branches of Lev. 23, they do not have either the fruit or the words to hold onto, and so they are constantly wrestling with the evil one who wishes to take it away. Like Jacob was changed to Israel after his wrestling, these people need the fountain of Israel.

These are the people for whom the song of God is sung in the church.

### 3. THE CHARIOTEERS OF SALVATION

Psalm 68, section 1:

*1 To the chief Musician, A Psalm or Song of David.>> Let God arise, let his enemies be scattered: let them also that hate him flee before him.*

*2 As smoke is driven away, so drive them away: as wax melteth before the fire, so let the wicked perish at the presence of God.*

*3 But let the righteous be glad; let them rejoice before God: yea, let them exceedingly rejoice.*

*4 Sing unto God, sing praises to his name: extol him that rideth upon the heavens by his name JAH, and rejoice before him.*

*5 A father of the fatherless, and a judge of the widows, is God in his holy habitation.*

*6 God setteth the solitary in families: he bringeth out those which are bound with chains: but the rebellious dwell in a dry land.*

*7 O God, when thou wentest forth before thy people, when thou didst march through the wilderness; Selah:*

The word musician is not part of the Hebrew. The Hebrew states this is a song for excellence.

God will be established (this is the meaning of arise. This psalm tells us the excellent way this will happen. God will arise in us through our ministry of music. When this happens, all those things that distress Him will flee. (Enemies is the same as the name of Job. It means sufferings.) They will simply disperse when He shows Himself (peni).

The righteous will ACT joyful (samech - they will do something), they will rejoice (they will DO something) when He shows Himself (peni), they will simchach sos - ACT joyful until they feel that joy has delivered them. Sos is joy, Sus is salvation, as in JeSUS. This action is the means of God arising.

Verse 4 is the means of doing this action: Sing (shir) to Him, play an instrument (zamar) to His name (shem is the name that designates the purpose. Our songs will tell about Him). Lay a highway (salal - this is its primary meaning) so that He will THEN have a chariot (rakab - the note merka is this word with an m-) to ride upon the 'arabah, not heavens (the translation is wrong), but wastelands or dark places. He rides by His name/purpose, which is Jah, or the giving of life. And we rejoice when He shows Himself.

So God is waiting to arise, but we are His helpers. When we praise Him, we create the highway by which He comes from heaven to earth in His chariot. He sets things to rights without ever leaving His holy place.

He has done it before, and we can see what He did for Israel.

This is the prelude, telling us that this psalm is for excellence in worship, by telling us how God wishes to have us relate to Him and to the world.

Part 2: The History of Israel.

*8 The earth shook, the heavens also dropped at the presence of God: even Sinai itself was moved at the presence of God, the God of Israel.*

*9 Thou, O God, didst send a plentiful rain, whereby thou didst confirm thine inheritance, when it was weary.*

*10 Thy congregation hath dwelt therein: thou, O God, hast prepared of thy goodness for the poor.*

*11 The Lord gave the word: great was the company of those that published it.*

*12 Kings of armies did flee apace: and she that tarried at home divided the spoil.*

*13 Though ye have lien among the pots, yet shall ye be as the wings of a dove covered with silver, and her feathers with yellow gold.*

*14 When the Almighty scattered kings in it, it was white as snow in Salmon.*

*15 The hill of God is as the hill of Bashan; an high hill as the hill of Bashan.*

*16 Why leap ye, ye high hills? this is the hill which God desireth to dwell in; yea, the LORD will dwell in it for ever.*

No comments are necessary, except to point out the trumpet origination in verse 8, and to remind the reader that Og, the King of Bashan, is the only non-Noahite to survive the flood, which the legends say he did by holding onto the ark, and Noah fed him. (Deut. 3: 11). If we are what God needs us to be, He will raise us higher than the only nephalim who "beat the wrap" by surviving the flood.

### Part 3: Our ministry of music

*17 The chariots of God are twenty thousand, even thousands of angels: the Lord is among them, as in Sinai, in the holy place.*

*18 Thou hast ascended on high, thou hast led captivity captive: thou hast received gifts for men; yea, for the rebellious also, that the LORD God might dwell among them.*

*19 Blessed be the Lord, who daily loadeth us with benefits, even the God of our salvation. Selah.*

*20 He that is our God is the God of salvation; and unto GOD the Lord belong the issues from death.*

*21 But God shall wound the head of his enemies, and the hairy scalp of such an one as goeth on still in his trespasses.*

*22 The Lord said, I will bring again from Bashan, I will bring my people again from the depths of the sea:*

*23 That thy foot may be dipped in the blood of thine enemies, and the tongue of thy dogs in the same.*

We are the vehicles of God. The Hebrew does not say thousands of angels, but thousands (the number is not definite in Hebrew) of "changes". The root word is "shanah", year. Each one of us is like a new year, a new blessing from God, as our ministry, learned by our song, is projected to the world. The ministry, our action, is DOING something in joy, with our whole body, creating a new highway for God to be present on earth. No wonder He has led captivity captive (indeed, Jesus raided hell and set the captives free). "Gifts from men" is the word m-atnah.

Part 4 is discussed above.

## Part 5: Summary

28 *Thy God hath commanded thy strength: strengthen, O God, that which thou hast wrought for us.*

29 *Because of thy temple at Jerusalem shall kings bring presents unto thee.*

30 *Rebuke the company of spearmen, the multitude of the bulls, with the calves of the people, till every one submit himself with pieces of silver: scatter thou the people that delight in war.*

31 *Princes shall come out of Egypt; Ethiopia shall soon stretch out her hands unto God.*

32 *Sing unto God, ye kingdoms of the earth; O sing praises unto the Lord; Selah:*

33 *To him that rideth upon the heavens of heavens, which were of old; lo, he doth send out his voice, and that a mighty voice.*

34 *Ascribe ye strength unto God: his excellency is over Israel, and his strength is in the clouds.*

35 *O God, thou art terrible out of thy holy places: the God of Israel is he that giveth strength and power unto his people. Blessed be God.*

It is the praise in the temple that causes kings to bring gifts, because we will teach the world to sing and God will chariot (rideth is rakab) on the heavens when His voice comes through our songs. He will remain in holiness and we shall join Him in His strength and power.

## 4. THE TRANSFORMATION SONG OF EARTH

Day 1. On the first day, God created the light. Evening came; the earth's reaction to the revelation of the light was to get dark! Thus began the cycle that would last as long as the earth. We could not stand the total revelation of God at one time, so we partition our lives into days to appreciate it piecemeal. In the first day, all was light. Adam walked with God, heard His words in his heart. The Greeks called it the golden age, and the entire created universe sang the song of God (Job 37:8) in the wisdom (Prov. 8) of the Word of God (John 1: 3-5). And the day lasted a thousand years (2Pe3:8), or should have, had man not upset the balance by his sin (Is. 24).

Day 2. On the second day, man's sin created the barrier (firmament) separating him from the voice of God. Man invoked God by name (Gen. 4: 26) but in his frailty (the root word of the name Enosh), his songs were of his own making. And the day lasted a thousand years, or should have.

Day 3. On the third day, the seeds of God's redemption of man appeared on the earth when He gave the master plan of creation (the Torah) to Moses on Sinai. He established a people and gave them a place to stand. They were free to study music, and, hearing the song of heaven, create a definitive music ministry on earth.

1 Chr. 25:

1 *Moreover David and the captains of the host separated to the service of the sons of Asaph, and of Heman, and of Jeduthun, who should prophesy with harps, with psalteries, and with cymbals: and the number of the workmen according to their service was:*

2 *Of the sons of Asaph; Zaccur, and Joseph, and Nethaniah, and Asarelah, the sons of Asaph under the hands of Asaph, which prophesied according to the order of the king.*

3 *Of Jeduthun: the sons of Jeduthun; Gedaliah, and Zeri, and Jeshaiiah, Hashabiah, and Mattithiah, six, under the hands of their father Jeduthun, who prophesied with a harp, to give thanks and to praise the LORD.*

*4 Of Heman: the sons of Heman; Bukkiah, Mattaniah, Uzziel, Shebuel, and Jerimoth, Hananiah, Hanani, Eliathah, Giddalti, and Romantiezzer, Joshbekashah, Mallothi, Hothir, and Mahazioth:*

*5 All these were the sons of Heman the king's seer in the words of God, to lift up the horn. And God gave to Heman fourteen sons and three daughters.*

*6 All these were under the hands of their father for song in the house of the LORD, with cymbals, psalteries, and harps, for the service of the house of God, according to the king's order to Asaph, Jeduthun, and Heman.*

*7 So the number of them, with their brethren that were instructed in the songs of the LORD, even all that were cunning, was two hundred fourscore and eight.*

*8 And they cast lots, ward against ward, as well the small as the great, the teacher as the scholar.*

*9 Now the first lot came forth for Asaph to Joseph: the second to Gedaliah, who with his brethren and sons were twelve:*

Note, in verses 2-5, the specific ministries are not assigned by talent. In fact, Heman is listed in 1 Kings 4: 31 as one of the wisest men in Israel: yet his children get passed over for the songwriting ministry, and wind up playing the trumpets. (This is probably because they were the biggest family. The lack of valves on the trumpet made it necessary to have 4 different shaped trumpets, one for each group of notes. That means more musicians were needed to play the scale, since each could only do a few notes.) This is in spite of the fact that the Levites were chosen for the worship leading because they were willing to kill their brother Israelites for their sin against true worship when they built the golden calf (Ex. 32: 28)

Note also, the magic number is 12 people to a group. Anyone with a little experience knows that once a group gets to over 9 people, they sound good regardless of talent, and, once a group get to more than 14, it ceases to be tightly knit group, and becomes a "choir" requiring professional administrative techniques.

The most impressive thing is in verse 7, in the Hebrew. The English is "instructed in the songs of the Lord, even all that were cunning". The Hebrew is "Malmidi-shir l-yahweh kal-hmbin", literally "Made (M-) learners (lmid) by song (-shir) unto (l-) the Lord of (-h) all (kal-) making to (m) understand (bin)". And this understanding is the inheritance of sons of God ("bin" is the standard word for son). So the music trained them in the inheritance of the God of all wisdom. No wonder it didn't matter who did what. The music was part of the inheritance of the chosen people of God.

And the day lasted a thousand years, or should have.

Day 4. The day of the voice of God. We call Him Jesus. He is the light of day appearing in the firmament created by our sin. In Him, the rhythm of God is restored for days (yom - accomplishments), and years (or repetitions, as the chariots of God are in Psalm 68), for miraculous signs, and for the gathering of the people of God. See Gen. 1, 14 - these are the meanings of the Hebrew words for these 4 purposes of the lights.

And the day would have lasted a thousand years, but the sin of the people with the church organs interfered. Their theology was simple. If God wanted a thousand Levites praising Him, the best music would be made by a thousand flutes put at the control of one man. Replacing the heart of man with a flute, and the presence of the Holy Spirit with the control of one man, the pipe organ

stands today as a testament of the thousand-year day of dead churches that make the heart go from abyss to abyss.

There was no music on earth while Jesus was here. (Note in Luke 2: 13, the angels did NOT sing at Christmas). The first music Jesus used in His whole ministry was singing the hymn at the last supper. It was only minutes before the end of His last corporate act on earth. There's a reason for this. John 1 reports that Jesus was there at the creation. He IS God's song to us. 33 years of laying down His life "for my Beloved". He only needed to help us sing when He left.

And now He sings to us, about us: Heb. 2:

*9 But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man.*

*10 For it became him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings.*

*11 For both he that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one: for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren,*

*12 Saying, I will declare thy name unto my brethren, in the midst of the church will I sing praise unto thee.*

And Rom. 15:

*5 Now the God of patience and consolation grant you to be likeminded one toward another according to Christ Jesus:*

*6 That ye may with one mind and one mouth glorify God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.*

*7 Wherefore receive ye one another, as Christ also received us to the glory of God.*

*8 Now I say that Jesus Christ was a minister of the circumcision for the truth of God, to confirm the promises made unto the fathers:*

*9 And that the Gentiles might glorify God for his mercy; as it is written, For this cause I will confess to thee among the Gentiles, and sing unto thy name.*

*10 And again he saith, Rejoice, ye Gentiles, with his people.*

*11 And again, Praise the Lord, all ye Gentiles; and laud him, all ye people.*

Quoting Psalm 22:

*22 I will declare thy name unto my brethren: in the midst of the congregation will I praise thee.*

*23 Ye that fear the LORD, praise him; all ye the seed of Jacob, glorify him; and fear him, all ye the seed of Israel.*

Which applies to Him so clearly:

*16 For dogs have compassed me: the assembly of the wicked have inclosed me: they pierced my hands and my feet.*

*17 I may tell all my bones: they look and stare upon me.*

*18 They part my garments among them, and cast lots upon my vesture.*

That we may sing to each other:

Ephesians 5:19 *Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord;*

Colossians 3:16 *Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.*

James 5:13 *Is any among you afflicted? let him pray. Is any merry? let him sing psalms.*

And to ourselves. The fifth day.

Day 5. The day of life - in us. Which will last a thousand years, or until the bride is ready.

Day 6. The day of man - fully alive. Jesus will return. Creation will rejoice which now groans in agony awaiting the glorious revelation of the children of God (Rom. 8: 22). The song of heaven will become the song of earth in stages:

It begins with the idealization of the ancient powers of man (Rev. 5):

*8 And when he had taken the book, the four beasts and four and twenty elders fell down before the Lamb, having every one of them harps, and golden vials full of odours, which are the prayers of saints.*

*9 And they sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation;*

*10 And hast made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign on the earth.*

And heaven joins in:

*11 And I beheld, and I heard the voice of many angels round about the throne and the beasts and the elders: and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands;*

*12 Saying with a loud voice, Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing.*

And spreads to all the earth:

*13 And every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, heard I saying, Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever.*

Until all creation is unified around the expectation of Him:

*14 And the four beasts said, Amen. And the four and twenty elders fell down and worshipped him that liveth for ever and ever.*

Creation suffers the plagues that must come to fulfill the separation of heaven from earth made necessary by the growing sin. But the elect sing from heaven the song led by heaven itself (Rev. 14):

*1 And I looked, and, lo, a Lamb stood on the mount Sion, and with him an hundred forty and four thousand, having his Father's name written in their foreheads.*

*2 And I heard a voice from heaven, as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of a great thunder: and I heard the voice of harpers harping with their harps:*



*3 And they sung as it were a new song before the throne, and before the four beasts, and the elders: and no man could learn that song but the hundred and forty and four thousand, which were redeemed from the earth.*

*(Rev. 15): 2 And I saw as it were a sea of glass mingled with fire: and them that had gotten the victory over the beast, and over his image, and over his mark, and over the number of his name, stand on the sea of glass, having the harps of God.*

*3 And they sing the song of Moses the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb, saying, Great and marvellous are thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints.*

*4 Who shall not fear thee, O Lord, and glorify thy name? for thou only art holy: for all nations shall come and worship before thee; for thy judgments are made manifest.*

The six days - the six thousand years of man are completed on the earth. The cycle stops: (Rev. 21: 23) And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it: for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof. God is with us totally forever, and

Day 7: All is at rest.

## 5. THE MINISTRY OF MUSIC

What is our ministry today?

Where has our journey been in heaven?

What note is our voice tuned to?

What are the works that our hands can do this day?

To which day of creation is our mind renewed?

Where are the needs of our brothers and sisters?

In our culture's understanding of knowledge, every question has an answer. In midrash, every answer has ten questions. There is a cycle on earth. There is a vibration, and we are each an overtone. The vibration began with the refusal of the earth to accept the full vision of the glory of God on the first day of creation. God said "let there be light"; then evening came, and morning followed, and that was the first day.

The earth could not accept the constant presence of God, and so a cycle, called "day", began. In Hebrew, day is "yom", derived from the word "accomplish". Each day is a period of heat, or swelling up of the desire of the emotions to accomplish something revealed by one small piece of the light of God. It is y + m, the infinitive form of the causes. The unrevealed glory of God drives the cycle to each new day, so we may gain wisdom (Ps. 90:12, Job 32:7), and so we may transform the earth (Rom 8:22). The process is a cycle; the imperfection of the earth requires it. And so our ministry is a cycle. But the tone is a cycle, also.

A tone is a vibration of air, recurring between 20 and 20,000 times per second, and thus between one half inch and 50 feet long. These are the vibrations of air to which most human ears are sensitive. When a string, air column, musical instrument, or speaker cone vibrates that fast, it causes the air around it to vibrate that fast, and because of the nature of air, that makes the vibrating space the size stated. Since our eardrum can vibrate at those rates, it does so, and creates an electro-chemical vibration in our brains, and that tells us that music is “in the air”. We respond to the presence of a cycle in electro-chemical form in our brains, and realize subconsciously that we feel a sample of the reality of the vibration of creation, and so we grasp onto these vibrations as a chance to share the presence of God on earth. The attempts to control these vibrations (tones) is called music. Since the earth began its response to God as a cycle, music is for all the time earth will exist, the sample, the practice run, and the teaching technique for the ministry of bringing the earth to the full glory of God, and by definition, the bringing about of the glory of God is the only ministry there is, although it takes the form of thousands of revelations. We become cycles of revelation, chariots of God, and keepers of the tone all as one single operation, and we celebrate it when we make music to/with/about God. The basic day-tone is why the morning stars resonated, why God can be said to have “sung his thoughts” to Adam, why the “noise” was on the “breeze of the day” after the fall, and why the final song will generate from the four living creatures and the 24 elders before Jesus returns. Life, ministry, music is all one process.

We grow into the ministry of music in seven stages, although many people die before being fully released:

1. We first feel good in our hearts: James 5:13, we sing because we are “merry”, the Greek is “euthumeo”, meaning “in good spirits”.
2. We sing to each other to celebrate what is in our hearts: Ephesians 5:19 *Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord.*
3. As the Levites of old, we come to the maturity of the wisdom trained into us by hearing the songs of God: Colossians 3:16 *Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.*
4. We stand together at the gates of the heavenly temple in awe and respect of God: Rev. 15: 3-4 *And they sing the song of Moses the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb, saying, Great and marvellous are thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints. Who shall not fear thee, O Lord, and glorify thy name? for thou only art holy: for all nations shall come and worship before thee; for thy judgments are made manifest.*
5. We learn of our rights as kings and priests and enter the outer courts: Rev. 14:2-5 *And I heard a voice from heaven, as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of a great thunder: and I heard the voice of harpers harping with their harps: And they sung as it were a new song before the throne, and before the four beasts, and the elders: and no man could learn that song but the hundred and forty and four thousand, which were redeemed from the earth. These are they which were not defiled with women; for they are virgins. These are they which follow the Lamb*

*whithersoever he goeth. These were redeemed from among men, being the firstfruits unto God and to the Lamb. And in their mouth was found no guile: for they are without fault before the throne of God.*

6. We learn to start the “song that makes the whole world sing”: Rev. 5: 9-10 *And they sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation; And hast made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign on the earth.*

7. We keep the earth singing until the Lamb returns: Rev. 19: 1,6-7 *And after these things I heard a great voice of much people in heaven, saying, Alleluia; Salvation, and glory, and honour, and power, unto the Lord our God: And I heard as it were the voice of a great multitude, and as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunderings, saying, Alleluia: for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth. Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready. And he saith unto me, Write, Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb.*

And then we learn to throw:

## SECTION 6: THE MUSIC OF THE BANQUET OF THE EARTH

It was always supposed to have been a banquet. It was always supposed to have been a wedding - God and us. His passion for us was sung throughout and by the universe from the first day. It created the tone, and created the separation of earth from God. Had Adam remained faithful, the separation would never have affected us and we would be tending the garden in His name to this day, removing the wall of separation, and feasting at a banquet in this life:

Gen 2: 8-9a,16a *And the LORD God planted a garden eastward (qedem, the beginning) in Eden (which means “delights”); and there he put the man whom he had formed. And out of the ground made the LORD God to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight, and good for food.... And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat...*

And so, what started as a banquet would finish as a banquet. Is it any wonder that God’s people Israel, made the wedding banquet one of their central customs? The bridegroom arranged the marriage contract, and then went home ALONE, where his father helped him build a cottage, or apartment where the couple would live (and took this opportunity to teach him how to properly care for a wife). When the wedding day arrived, the best man guarded the cottage door until the marriage was consummated and then called the banquet to order. For 1500 years, God taught us what Jesus would do in espousing us. The only difference is that He is revealed day by day a little more, so our banquet is day by day, celebrating, and awaiting the complete revelation. We are in a continual wedding, as the marriage is consummated as the fruit of his husbandry is born in us.

But, notice, God did not start Adam’s banquet immediately. Here’s the whole story:

Gen. 2:7-9,15-18 *And the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul. And the LORD God planted a garden*

*eastward in Eden; and there he put the man whom he had formed. And out of the ground made the LORD God to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight, and good for food; the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of knowledge of good and evil. And the LORD God took the man, and put him into the garden of Eden to dress it and to keep it. And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die. And the LORD God said, It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him an help meet for him.*

First, God meets Adam, and determines his needs. Then He delegates the preparation the banquet to the earth (Verify this in Gen. 1:11, if you wish). Then He gives man his ministry. And only after all this does God tell Adam to enjoy his forever dinner. And yet, God provides ongoing instruction and help. And thus, the music becomes a group activity.

Music ministry is the first banquet most Christians take part in, in each service, and in their lives of ministry on the earth. It needs to be modeled on God's plan. We do not find people to "perform the music". We meet the people and pick the music that will delight (Eden) them as a new beginning (qedem). And we never sing "to them" or "at them". God never started sharing his orchard until Adam had been taught to keep it and perfect it. Music is always a corporate sharing, and ministry of each person to each other, and the Scriptures above (Col. 3:16 and Eph. 5:19) proclaim: sing to "one another" and "to yourselves". And there is always more learning to do, more challenges, because that orchard isn't done yet. Which is why we have groups; which is why we have harmony.

*(Gal. 3:14) That the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ; that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith. And this promise is: (Gen. 12:2-3) And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing: And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed.*

If we are to be a mighty nation that blesses all the families of the earth, and that they shall bless us, and in doing so, be blessed themselves, we would do well to investigate how Abraham's anointing operated, especially as regards the throwing of banquets. In fact, Abraham's banquet that changed his life (and the world) contains within its history the entire pattern of music ministry leadership. Whether a person is called to the title of choir director, music ministry leader, CD producer, praise leader, or whatever other name, it's all in this one portion of the Book of Genesis. The music minister needs four personal characteristics, and has four roles or jobs.

*Genesis 18:1-8: And the LORD appeared unto him in the plains of Mamre: and he sat in the tent door in the heat of the day; And he lift up his eyes and looked, and, lo, three men stood by him: and when he saw them, he ran to meet them from the tent door, and bowed himself toward the ground, And said, My Lord, if now I have found favour in thy sight, pass not away, I pray thee, from thy servant: Let a little water, I pray you, be fetched, and wash your feet, and rest yourselves under the tree: And I will fetch a morsel of bread, and comfort ye your hearts; after that ye shall pass on: for therefore are ye come to your servant. And they said, So do, as thou hast said. And*

*Abraham hastened into the tent unto Sarah, and said, Make ready quickly three measures of fine meal, knead it, and make cakes upon the hearth. And Abraham ran unto the herd, and fetcht a calf tender and good, and gave it unto a young man; and he hasted to dress it. And he took butter, and milk, and the calf which he had dressed, and set it before them; and he stood by them under the tree, and they did eat.*

Let's take it one verse at a time:

*1 And the LORD appeared unto him in the plains of Mamre: and he sat in the tent door in the heat of the day;* The verb appeared is in a “progressive” form in Hebrew, as is the verb sat. The Lord appeared to Abraham regularly, day by day, as Abraham sat, regularly, day by day. This was Abraham's customary pastime. Abraham had an ongoing relationship with God, and, at least this part of it was NOT in his hidden prayer closet. Abraham spent some of his prayer time in his doorway, waiting for people to come by. And he did it every day, in the heat of the day, when the passion of God was getting ready to accomplish something. “Plains of Mamre” also means “pillars of strength”; even though Abraham is 99 years old at this point, he is still physically strong in God. The first of the four personal characteristics of the music minister is a regular relationship with God that stands ready to welcome gifts in other people at the ideal time for God to move, and with the necessary energy.

*2 And he lift up his eyes and looked, and, lo, three men stood by him: and when he saw them, he ran to meet them from the tent door, and bowed himself toward the ground,* Note, Abraham lifted his eyes UP, to see what God might want to give to the music ministry in terms of gifts, not down, to see what talents the earth might offer for exploitation. And he actually LOOKED, and studied, to see God's will to bless these people – just like God did to Adam before He created the garden. Then he RUNS, not walks, to meet them. There's that energy we noted in the first verse, which is why he was at Mamre at the time.

Actually, Abraham has an ulterior motive for running, which shows clearly in Hebrew, though not in English. Since the ancient languages lack tenses, they needed constructions for “getting ready to happen”. Egyptian uses the auxiliary verb “to stand”, as in “he stands to address the assembly” would be Egyptian's way of saying “he will be addressing the assembly shortly”. This verb “stand” is that kind of word. The three men are not just standing there because their feet aren't tired yet – they are getting organized to do something. Abraham senses a blessing from God may be on the way, and he is right.

Are these men, as Scripture says, or angels as we have been taught? They are both. The Hebrew word “ma'alak” means messenger. An “angel”, in English, is a being created to be a messenger, while “messenger” is a man given a job. In Hebrew, the same word is both; so there is both a creature angel and a job of angel. The same is true in Greek, where a human “evangelist” is simply a good (ev) messenger (angel).

Abraham bows toward the ground as a sign of respect. While probably the greatest single person alive on the planet at his time, Abraham knew it was all God, and he began as all music leaders should, by respecting the gifts of those to whom they will minister as more important. The only way you will ever know what God made somebody to be is if you are willing to respect them enough to let them be themselves. Then you can see what they are getting “set up” to do.

3 *And said, My Lord, if now I have found favour in thy sight, pass not away, I pray thee, from thy servant:* Like John 10:1-5, we know the musicians we are called to work with, because it “clicks”, we find “favor in their sight.” Abraham felt it click in the spirit, and that’s what powered his 99 year old running feet. Is it any surprise that so many musicians stay young to such an advanced number of years? Note, his insistence that he is the servant. Just like Luke 22:26-27: *But ye shall not be so: but he that is greatest among you, let him be as the younger; and he that is chief, as he that doth serve. For whether is greater, he that sitteth at meat, or he that serveth? is not he that sitteth at meat? but I am among you as he that serveth.* This is part of that relationship that the music minister has with God.

4 *Let a little water, I pray you, be fetched, and wash your feet, and rest yourselves under the tree: And I will fetch a morsel of bread, and comfort ye your hearts; after that ye shall pass on: for therefore are ye come to your servant. And they said, So do, as thou hast said.* Look at what he’s NOT offering them: A chance to be famous; a chance to get rich from music; a chance to perform the great classic works; a chance to play with truly wonderful musicians. This list is one I have gathered from the last twenty years of professional advertisements for hiring professional music ministers. Abraham knows any results come from God, not from him, so he offers a little water, a morsel of bread (later he will serve 40 lbs. of bread, a whole calf and as much dairy products as you can carry). But Abraham offers his guests the most important thing: Rest and comfort for the heart. This is the purpose of music ministry, and indeed the purpose of all ministry: to return us to that place of rest where we can hear God, and be comforted in our hearts, and recharged for action. For “after that you SHALL BE ABLE pass on” and “I know that’s my ministry”, says Abraham, “because that’s why you’ve come to me”. The first job of a music minister: to relate to people correctly according to God’s plan.

6 *And Abraham hastened into the tent unto Sarah, and said, Make ready quickly three measures of fine meal, knead it, and make cakes upon the hearth.* Isn’t it wonderful to be asked to sing a solo (or “special” depending on your denomination)? You always knew you had it in you. Or maybe you’re nervous, or worse yet, maybe you’re prideful. I’ve worked with all kinds. The music minister’s second job is to train people in their ministry. Note, Abraham is still running. Make ready quickly, i.e., get that song practiced. Why three measures? Because there were three guests, of course. All music sung at the banquet needs to be chosen in prayer and measured to the needs of the guests for whom it is sung. The meal is to be the best quality: the Bible tells us to sing to God over a hundred times, and never once insists it be of a certain minimal quality. But we are to use “all our skill” (The ONLY reference is Ps. 33:3). Grind the flour as finely as possible; put in the extra practice time. Why do we knead it? The leaven needs to be worked into every part of the dough, so it can put forth the air bubbles to every part, so that the breath of the Holy Spirit fills it all. (Matt. 13:33) This guides how we are to rehearse, and judge when the song is sufficiently prepared. Why make cakes? They are sweeter than bread. Why on the hearth? The bread that Abraham’s hired men ate was baked in big ovens in the open fields. Sarah was asked to bake upon the hearth inside the tent where she was the mistress because all ministry needs to come from the place where we are comfortable and where we encounter God day by day. It worked for that purpose, too. In verse 9, when the strangers asked about Sarah, Abraham had only to direct their eyes: “Behold, she is in the tent”. He wasn’t asking them to use their x-ray vision to see through the tent walls, he was showing them the bread, and what it proved about Sarah. And look at the prize it got Sarah – she had the long awaited baby. This is the second job of a music minister: to

teach others their roles to raise them up to THEIR ministry and get the blessings to transfer to them. And this is the second personal characteristic: the relationships with the music ministry to know where their oven is, i.e., to know their gifts and how to deploy them.

*7 And Abraham ran unto the herd, and fetcht a calf tender and good, and gave it unto a young man; and he hasted to dress it.* He's still running. This time to the herd, the word is "bkr", and is also used for a collection from which selection can be made, and for the word "morning". The word calf is not the standard term for baby cow, 'egel, but simply the word "bn", meaning an inheriting offspring of anything, in this case cattle. This is also the meaning of the fatted calf, moskos, in the banquet thrown for the prodigal son in Luke 15. To understand the meaning for music and for ministry generally, we need to also compare:

Proverbs 15:17: *Better is a dinner of herbs where love is, than a stalled ox and hatred therewith.* The Hebrew means "better is a day's journey's ration of fresh green plants than an older ox which has been around the field plowing a few times and now left in the stall so it will get fat and may thus at least be served at a banquet". The word "ox" is SHUR since the animal is a journey-er, and hence the phrase also refers to a song (shir) derived from a journey that was taken many years ago and is no longer fresh. On his journeys, Mr. Ox has seen many fresh green herbs, and many new days with new accomplishments of God, and he has softened much ground. But, it's the freshness we need, not a fatted stalled journey. Such an ox might be fat, but so tough, it would be hard to chew. Yesterday the carillon at the church down the block played the hymn reminding me: "Faith of our fathers, holy faith; we will be true to thee to death". If the hundred fifty year old faith of the fathers of that hymn were all God had given us today to be faithful to, we would surely have been faithful unto death, since our own death to God's new plans would have already occurred. No wonder so many young people feel like the church music of today is a banquet served with hatred. We must renew our music with fresh green plants, just enough for one day's journey each day.

Now, Abraham fetched no ancient, tough ox. He fetched a new birth, a son. The music minister must serve the main course, chosen (bkr) morning by morning (boker) from the herd, or repertoire collection. We need new children of the old oxen, with tradition not maintained for the future, but fulfilled for today's needs. This is the method of choosing the praise and worship songs, or hymns.

They are to be tender, or easy to chew. Not too high, too low, or too complex for ALL the banquet goers to sing, so all may enjoy their meal. They are to be judged good for these banqueters in the sight of the host.

And then, we give them to a young man. Note, he is nameless. That is because he is every young man. He is everyone with the energy of youth. *Numbers 8:24-26 This is it that belongeth unto the Levites: from twenty and five years old and upward they shall go in to wait upon the service of the tabernacle of the congregation: And from the age of fifty years they shall cease waiting upon the service thereof, and shall serve no more: But shall minister with their brethren in the tabernacle of the congregation, to keep the charge, and shall do no service. Thus shalt thou do unto the Levites touching their charge.* The Hebrew for "keep the charge" is "shamar m-shamrot", or "to set the policies". Like everywhere in the Old Testament, age is revered for its wisdom to direct, and youth for its ability to carry out tasks with inspiration and vigor.

So, how do you dress a calf (song)? You improvise. Slavish dedication to the written note has no place in praise and worship. The chord chart, unifying rhythm, starting and stopping points are enough. Songs are not supposed to sound the same every time they are played. Let the Holy Spirit work, and lead the ideas, and the playing off of each other's ideas. There are lots of ways to cut the cow, and put the meat on the platter. And each banquet is different, because each group of banqueters has different needs. This is the third job of the music minister: to choose the main course, and provide the start/stop points and then to GET OUT OF THE WAY.

*8 And he took butter, and milk,* The third personal characteristic of the music minister is that he knows how to milk a cow. And to do it, and separate and churn the butter is the fourth job. Why are we milking cows, and what's so hard about it anyway?

Milk is the new food for the new calf. It is the revelation of the last generation to the new. It is the foundation of tomorrow's revelation: *1 Pt 2:2: As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby:* But, it's more: In the hot desert, milk keeps barely a few hours. Separating the cream will extend the life a bit, and that luscious cream, if churned to butter, will keep several days without refrigeration. The music director's fourth job is to extend the musical revelation of the Body of Christ by composing new music – to have both today's new food for growth, and the cream of yesterday's for God's people today. For the Kingdom of Heaven gives to those who write its journeys down, the treasures of both: *Matt. 13:52 Then said he unto them, Therefore every scribe which is instructed unto the kingdom of heaven is like unto a man that is an householder, which bringeth forth out of his treasure things new and old.* The proper role of the traditional church music is that it is yesterday's mother cow, feeding today's calf, and when properly churned, it is yesterday's cream.

So, how do you milk a cow? Grab the udders and pull, right? Many city boys have been embarrassed by their country cousins for that bit of erroneous belief. Milking, just like churning butter, has tricks to it. You have to know where to sit, when the time is right, how to grab, and how to use your fingers. And writing worthwhile music demands knowledge and training. Knowledge about scales, chords, acoustics, physiology and psychology of music, group dynamics, and other things. The third personal characteristic of the music minister is that he knows how to milk a cow – he has studied. In general ministry, like they used to say in the elementary education field “love is not enough”. You can't just “feel it”. *2 Tim. 2:15 Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.* The only thing any teacher of workshop can teach you is to articulate what God has told you anyway. The next verse may be helpful to those who are still in doubt about the value of education.

*and the calf which he had dressed, and set it before them; and he stood by them under the tree, and they did eat.* But note who serves the banquet, except the solo bread.

We have seen the four jobs of the music minister: Relate to people, teach, pick music, and advance musical revelation. Similar jobs apply for any ministry leader.



The first three personal characteristics: Right relationship to God, ability to discern gifts in others, knowledge about the matters of the ministry. To get to the fourth, we need to take inventory of what is on the table:

Sarah made the bread, Abraham got the dairy, and the young man fixed the meat. We are missing fruit and vegetables.

If you have ever hiked a National Park, you know the law: You may eat what wild edibles you find, but take nothing out. This law is most ancient, and goes back to the most ancient of times. We already saw in Proverbs about the green growth for today's journey. Abraham did not need to provide the fruit and vegetables because the strangers had them in their pockets. If there is any doubt who brought the fruit, you need only look a few verses down in Genesis 18 to see what the strangers brought to the banquet: the prophecy of the fruit of Sarah's womb and Abraham's life-call. The fourth personal characteristic of the ministry leader is the fruit in his own life put there as a product of the interaction with those he has ministered to. The anointing at the banquet goes both ways.