

# Worshipping the Lord Jesus Christ through Music and Song

King and Stager write: “Music, song, and dance were an integral part of daily life in antiquity, just as today. They were closely associated with Israelite religion, society, and culture, particularly Temple worship, warfare, festivals of every kind, and the life of the court.”<sup>41</sup> More specifically, music and song served to prepare prophets to prophesy, *to praise God for His greatness, mercy, and goodness*, to signal the New Year, to sound alarms, to call assemblies, to accompany the sacrificial service, to celebrate deliverance from one’s enemies, to rejoice while worshipping in the temple, to accompany temple dedications, and more. Ultimately, the most significant purpose of inspired music is to encourage individuals to worship God and to give glory to Him.

God often inspired music. According to a Dead Sea Scrolls passage, David “wrote psalms: three thousand six hundred; and songs to be sung before the altar over the perpetual offering every day. . . . And all the songs which he composed

were four hundred and forty-six. . . . He composed them all through the spirit of prophecy which had been given to him from before the Most High.”

Similar to our own day, inappropriate music also existed in antiquity and was associated with revelers (Isa. 5:12; Amos 6:5), idol makers, and false worship (Dan. 3:5).

Musical instruments consisted of three categories—stringed instruments, wind instruments, and percussion instruments. Hebrew technical terms that denote musical instruments generally do not equate with modern instruments, and the English terms in the chart remain tentative. According to the scriptural record and archaeologists’ discoveries, ancient musical instruments were made of silver, gold, bronze, iron, pottery, or bone.

The chart’s listing of music, song, and musical instruments is not comprehensive. Other passages, such as the Psalms, reveal additional elements of music in the biblical world.

Person(s)	Miscellaneous Notes	Reference
Jubal	“The father of all such as handle the harp and organ.”	Gen. 4:21
Laban	Laban wished to send Jacob away with music and singing.	Gen. 31:27
Moses and the Children of Israel	A song that praises God for Israel’s deliverance from Egypt.	Ex. 15:1–19
Children of Israel	“When the trumpet soundeth long, they shall come up to the mount” (Sinai).	Ex. 19:13

<b>Person(s)</b>	<b>Miscellaneous Notes</b>	<b>Reference</b>
<b>High Priest</b>	Had bells on his sacred robe.	Ex. 28:34–35
<b>Children of Israel</b>	Trumpets were blown on the New Year.	Lev. 23:24
<b>Children of Israel</b>	Silver trumpets were used to call assemblies, sound alarms, and accompany select sacrifices.	Num. 10:1–10
<b>Children of Israel</b>	A song that marks the occasion when God provided Israel with water.	Num. 21:16–18
<b>Tribes of Israel</b>	Trumpets were sounded in war.	Num. 31:6; 2 Chr. 13:14
<b>Moses and Joshua</b>	Shortly before Moses’s death, Moses and Joshua “spoke” a song to all Israel.	Deut. 32:1–46
<b>Seven priests</b>	Jericho fell at the sound of rams’ horns.	Josh. 6:1–20
<b>Deborah and Barak</b>	A song that celebrates Israel’s deliverance from Canaanite bondage.	Judg. 5:1–31
<b>David</b>	David played the harp, and an evil spirit departed from king Saul.	1 Sam. 16:14–23
<b>Women of Israel</b>	A song marking David’s victory over Goliath.	1 Sam. 18:6–7
<b>David</b>	A song to the lord when David was delivered from his enemies.	2 Sam. 22:1–51
<b>Israelite musicians</b>	Royal coronations were accompanied by music.	1 Kgs. 1:39–40; 2 Chr. 23:11–13
<b>A musician</b>	Prepared Elisha (and others) to prophesy.	2 Kgs. 3:15–16; cf. 1 Sam. 10:5–6
<b>A choir of Levites</b>	Singing in the tabernacle.	1 Chr. 6:31–32
<b>David, Israel, and Levite choir</b>	Sing and play musical instruments as the ark is moved to Jerusalem.	1 Chr. 13, 15, 16
<b>A choir of Levites</b>	A song of thanksgiving and praise that is sung at the Jerusalem temple dedication.	2 Chr. 5:12–14
<b>King Asa and Judah</b>	A covenant with the lord that was accompanied by trumpets and cornets	2 Chr. 15:8–15
<b>Appointed singers</b>	A song for the Israelite army as they warred against the Ammonites and Moabites.	2 Chr. 20:18–23

Person(s)	Miscellaneous Notes	Reference
<b>Levite choir</b>	A song of worship at the temple and connected with sacrifices.	2 Chr. 29:25–30
<b>Priests and Levites</b>	Song and music on the occasion of the laying of the temple's foundation.	Ezra 3:10–12
<b>Group of singers</b>	Accompanied Ezra and the priests on their return to Jerusalem.	Ezra 7:7
<b>Levite choir</b>	Associated with the temple and temple worship.	Neh. 11:22–23
<b>Levites</b>	The dedication of Jerusalem's walls.	Neh. 12:27–28
<b>Sons of God shout for joy</b>	When God laid the earth's foundations, "the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted with joy."	Job 38:6–8
<b>Various singers and musicians</b>	Male and female musicians were a part of the king's court.	Eccl. 2:8
<b>Israel</b>	Music accompanied feasting.	Isa. 5:12
<b>Babylonians</b>	People commanded to worship a golden image when they heard certain music play.	Dan. 3:5

## Musical Instruments

### Stringed Instruments

Lyre, harp, sackbut, psaltery, dulcimer      1 Kgs. 10:12; 1 Chr. 13:8; Neh. 12:27; Dan. 3:5–15

### Wind Instruments

Horn, ram's horn, trumpet, flute, pipe?      Josh. 6:4–20; 1 Sam. 10:5; 1 Chr. 13:8; 15:28; Ps. 150; Dan. 3:5–15

### Percussion Instruments

Bells, tambourine or hand drum, cymbals      Ex. 28:34–35; 1 Sam. 18:6; 1 Chr. 13:8; Ps. 68:25