



## Old Testament Worship & Music References "Toward a deeper understanding"

By Chris R. Hansen

### THE CHOIR SENT OUT AHEAD OF THE ARMY

*2 Chronicles 20:15-31*

He said: "Listen, King Jehoshaphat and all who live in Judah and Jerusalem! This is what the LORD says to you: 'Do not be afraid or discouraged because of this vast army. For the battle is not yours, but God's. Tomorrow march down against them. They will be climbing up by the Pass of Ziz, and you will find them at the end of the gorge in the Desert of Jeruel. You will not have to fight this battle. Take up your positions; stand firm and see the deliverance the LORD will give you, O Judah and Jerusalem. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged. Go out to face them tomorrow, and the LORD will be with you.'" Jehoshaphat bowed with his face to the ground, and all the people of Judah and Jerusalem fell down in worship before the LORD. Then some Levites from the Kohathites and Korahites stood up and praised the LORD, the God of Israel, with very loud voice.

Early in the morning they left for the Desert of Tekoa. As they set out, Jehoshaphat stood and said, "Listen to me, Judah and people of Jerusalem! Have faith in the LORD your God and you will be upheld; have faith in his prophets and you will be successful." **After consulting the people, Jehoshaphat appointed men to sing to the LORD and to praise him for the splendor of his holiness as they went out at the head of the army, saying: "Give thanks to the LORD, for his love endures forever." As they began to sing and praise, the LORD set ambushes against the men of Ammon and Moab and Mount Seir who were invading Judah, and they were defeated.** The men of Ammon and Moab rose up against the men from Mount Seir to destroy and annihilate them. After they finished slaughtering the men from Seir, they helped to destroy one another. When the men of Judah came to the place that overlooks the desert and looked toward the vast army, they saw only dead bodies lying on the ground; no one had escaped. So Jehoshaphat and his men went to carry off their plunder, and they found among them a great amount of equipment and clothing and also articles of value--more than they could take away. There was so much plunder that it took three days to collect it.

On the fourth day they assembled in the Valley of Beracah, where they praised the LORD. This is why it is called the Valley of Beracah to this day. **Then, led by Jehoshaphat, all the men of Judah and Jerusalem returned joyfully to Jerusalem, for the LORD had given them cause to rejoice over their enemies. They entered Jerusalem and went to the temple of the LORD with harps and lutes and trumpets.** The fear of God came upon all the kingdoms of the countries when they heard how the LORD had fought against the enemies of Israel. And the kingdom of Jehoshaphat was at peace, for his God had given him rest on every side. So Jehoshaphat reigned over Judah. He was thirty-five years old when he became king of Judah, and he reigned in Jerusalem twenty-five years. His mother's name was Azubah daughter of Shilhi. He walked in the ways of his father Asa and did not stray from them; he did what was right in the eyes of the LORD.

*Be ready to used by God in any way He wishes to use you.*

*Submit to the will of God's Spirit*

*Be moldable in the hands of God.*





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### THE MUSICIANS CALLING

*1 Chronicles 25:1-8*

David, together with the commanders of the army, **set apart some of the sons of Asaph, Heman and Jeduthun for the ministry of prophesying, accompanied by harps, lyres and cymbals.**

Here is the list of the men who performed this service: From the sons of Asaph: Zaccur, Joseph, Nethaniah and Asarelah. The sons of Asaph were under the supervision of Asaph, who prophesied under the king's supervision. As for Jeduthun, from his sons: Gedaliah, Zeri, Jeshaiiah, Shimei, Hashabiah and Mattithiah, six in all, under the supervision of their father Jeduthun, who prophesied, using the harp in thanking and praising the LORD. As for Heman, from his sons: Bukkiah, Mattaniah, Uzziel, Shubael and Jerimoth; Hananiah, Hanani, Eliathah, Giddalti and Romamti-Ezer; Joshbekashah, Mallothi, Hothir and Mahazioth. All these were sons of Heman the king's seer. They were given him through the promises of God to exalt him. God gave Heman fourteen sons and three daughters.

**All these men were under the supervision of their fathers for the music of the temple of the LORD, with cymbals, lyres and harps, for the ministry at the house of God. Asaph, Jeduthun and Heman were under the supervision of the king. Along with their relatives--all of them trained and skilled in music for the LORD--they numbered 288. Young and old alike, teacher as well as student, cast lots for their duties.**

*Musicians are set apart*

*Musicians are to submit to authority*

*Musicians are to be trained and skilled in music for the Lord*

*Musicians each take turns in sharing their skills*

### MUSIC LEADS THE WORSHIP

*2Chronicles 23:13*

She looked, and there was the king, standing by his pillar at the entrance. The officers and the trumpeters were beside the king, **and all the people of the land were rejoicing and blowing trumpets, and singers with musical instruments were leading the praises.** Then Athaliah tore her robes and shouted, "Treason! Treason!"

*Music leads the worship*





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### THE APPOINTMENT OF THE SINGERS AND INSTRUMENTALISTS

1Chronicles 15:12-29

He said to them, “You are the heads of the Levitical families; you and your fellow Levites are to consecrate yourselves and bring up the ark of the LORD, the God of Israel, to the place I have prepared for it. It was because you, the Levites, did not bring it up the first time that the LORD our God broke out in anger against us. We did not inquire of him about how to do it in the prescribed way.” So the priests and Levites consecrated themselves in order to bring up the ark of the LORD, the God of Israel. And the Levites carried the ark of God with the poles on their shoulders, as Moses had commanded in accordance with the word of the LORD.

**David told the leaders of the Levites to appoint their brothers as singers to sing joyful songs, accompanied by musical instruments: lyres, harps and cymbals.** So the Levites appointed Heman son of Joel; from his brothers, Asaph son of Berechiah; and from their brothers the Merarites, Ethan son of Kushaiah; and with them their brothers next in rank: Zechariah, Jaaziel, Shemiramoth, Jehiel, Unni, Eliab, Benaiah, Maaseiah, Mattithiah, Eliphelehu, Mikneiah, Obed-Edom and Jeiel, the gatekeepers. The musicians Heman, Asaph and Ethan were to sound the bronze cymbals; Zechariah, Aziel, Shemiramoth, Jehiel, Unni, Eliab, Maaseiah and Benaiah were to play the lyres according to alamothe, and Mattithiah, Eliphelehu, Mikneiah, Obed-Edom, Jeiel and Azaziah were to play the harps, directing according to sheminith. **Kenaniah the head Levite was in charge of the singing; that was his responsibility because he was skillful at it.** Berechiah and Elkanah were to be doorkeepers for the ark. Shebaniah, Joshaphat, Nethanel, Amasai, Zechariah, Benaiah and Eliezer the priests were to blow trumpets before the ark of God. Obed-Edom and Jehiah were also to be doorkeepers for the ark.

So David and the elders of Israel and the commanders of units of a thousand went to bring up the ark of the covenant of the LORD from the house of Obed-Edom, with rejoicing. Because God had helped the Levites who were carrying the ark of the covenant of the LORD, seven bulls and seven rams were sacrificed. **Now David was clothed in a robe of fine linen, as were all the Levites who were carrying the ark, and as were the singers, and Kenaniah, who was in charge of the singing of the choirs. David also wore a linen ephod. So all Israel brought up the ark of the covenant of the LORD with shouts, with the sounding of rams’ horns and trumpets, and of cymbals, and the playing of lyres and harps.** As the ark of the covenant of the LORD was entering the City of David, Michal daughter of Saul watched from a window. And when she saw King David dancing and celebrating, she despised him in her heart.

*Singers and Musicians are appointed by leadership*

*Music leadership is to be skillful*

*Music is to be joyful*

*Musicians and Singers dress appropriately when they are in leadership*





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### THE PRIESTLY ROLE OF THE MUSICIAN

*2 Chronicles 5:1-14*

When all the work Solomon had done for the temple of the LORD was finished, he brought in the things his father David had dedicated--the silver and gold and all the furnishings--and he placed them in the treasuries of God's temple.

Then Solomon summoned to Jerusalem the elders of Israel, all the heads of the tribes and the chiefs of the Israelite families, to bring up the ark of the LORD'S covenant from Zion, the City of David. And all the men of Israel came together to the king at the time of the festival in the seventh month. When all the elders of Israel had arrived, the Levites took up the ark, and they brought up the ark and the Tent of Meeting and all the sacred furnishings in it. The priests, who were Levites, carried them up; and King Solomon and the entire assembly of Israel that had gathered about him were before the ark, sacrificing so many sheep and cattle that they could not be recorded or counted. The priests then brought the ark of the LORD'S covenant to its place in the inner sanctuary of the temple, the Most Holy Place, and put it beneath the wings of the cherubim. The cherubim spread their wings over the place of the ark and covered the ark and its carrying poles. These poles were so long that their ends, extending from the ark, could be seen from in front of the inner sanctuary, but not from outside the Holy Place; and they are still there today. There was nothing in the ark except the two tablets that Moses had placed in it at Horeb, where the LORD made a covenant with the Israelites after they came out of Egypt. The priests then withdrew from the Holy Place. All the priests who were there had consecrated themselves, regardless of their divisions.

**All the Levites who were musicians--Asaph, Heman, Jeduthun and their sons and relatives--stood on the east side of the altar, dressed in fine linen and playing cymbals, harps and lyres. They were accompanied by 120 priests sounding trumpets. The trumpeters and singers joined in unison, as with one voice, to give praise and thanks to the LORD. Accompanied by trumpets, cymbals and other instruments, they raised their voices in praise to the LORD and sang: "He is good; his love endures forever." Then the temple of the LORD was filled with a cloud, and the priests could not perform their service because of the cloud, for the glory of the LORD filled the temple of God.**

*The role of a musician is a priestly role  
Singers and Instrumentalist work together for balance  
Unity within the music ministry is important  
Instrumentalists and Singers "praise the Lord" together*





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### MUSIC FOR THE CELEBRATION

*Nehemiah 12:27-47*

At the dedication of the wall of Jerusalem, the Levites were sought out from where they lived and were brought to Jerusalem **to celebrate joyfully the dedication with songs of thanksgiving and with the music of cymbals, harps and lyres.** The singers also were brought together from the region around Jerusalem--from the villages of the Netophathites, from Beth Gilgal, and from the area of Geba and Azmaveth, for the singers had built villages for themselves around Jerusalem.

When the priests and Levites had purified themselves ceremonially, they purified the people, the gates and the wall. I had the leaders of Judah go up on top of the wall. I also assigned two large choirs to give thanks. One was to proceed on top of the wall to the right, toward the Dung Gate. Hoshai and half the leaders of Judah followed them, along with Azariah, Ezra, Meshullam, Judah, Benjamin, Shemaiah, Jeremiah, as well as some priests with trumpets, and also Zechariah son of Jonathan, the son of Shemaiah, the son of Mattaniah, the son of Micaiah, the son of Zaccur, the son of Asaph, and his associates--Shemaiah, Azarel, Milalai, Gilalai, Maai, Nethanel, Judah and Hanani--with musical instruments prescribed by David the man of God. Ezra the scribe led the procession. At the Fountain Gate they continued directly up the steps of the City of David on the ascent to the wall and passed above the house of David to the Water Gate on the east. The second choir proceeded in the opposite direction. I followed them on top of the wall, together with half the people--past the Tower of the Ovens to the Broad Wall, over the Gate of Ephraim, the Jeshanah Gate, the Fish Gate, the Tower of Hananel and the Tower of the Hundred, as far as the Sheep Gate. At the Gate of the Guard they stopped. The two choirs that gave thanks then took their places in the house of God; so did I, together with half the officials, as well as the priests--Eliakim, Maaseiah, Miniamin, Micaiah, Elioenai, Zechariah and Hananiah with their trumpets--and also Maaseiah, Shemaiah, Eleazar, Uzzi, Jehohanan, Malkijah, Elam and Ezer. The choirs sang under the direction of Jezrahiah. And on that day they offered great sacrifices, rejoicing because God had given them great joy. The women and children also rejoiced. The sound of rejoicing in Jerusalem could be heard far away. At that time men were appointed to be in charge of the storerooms for the contributions, firstfruits and tithes.

From the fields around the towns they were to bring into the storerooms the portions required by the Law for the priests and the Levites, for Judah was pleased with the ministering priests and Levites. **They performed the service of their God and the service of purification, as did also the singers and gatekeepers, according to the commands of David and his son Solomon. For long ago, in the days of David and Asaph, there had been directors for the singers and for the songs of praise and thanksgiving to God. So in the days of Zerubbabel and of Nehemiah, all Israel contributed the daily portions for the singers and gatekeepers. They also set aside the portion for the other Levites, and the Levites set aside the portion for the descendants of Aaron.**

*Music can be grand*

*It's okay to pay musicians*

*Music is to be used for special times*





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### MUSIC AND SINGING LEAD THE WORSHIP

*2 Chronicles 29:25-31*

**He stationed the Levites in the temple of the LORD with cymbals, harps and lyres in the way prescribed by David and Gad the king's seer and Nathan the prophet; this was commanded by the LORD through his prophets. So the Levites stood ready with David's instruments, and the priests with their trumpets. Hezekiah gave the order to sacrifice the burnt offering on the altar. As the offering began, singing to the LORD began also, accompanied by trumpets and the instruments of David king of Israel. The whole assembly bowed in worship, while the singers sang and the trumpeters played.** All this continued until the sacrifice of the burnt offering was completed. When the offerings were finished, the king and everyone present with him knelt down and worshiped. King Hezekiah and his officials ordered the Levites to praise the LORD with the words of David and of Asaph the seer. **So they sang praises with gladness and bowed their heads and worshiped.** Then Hezekiah said, **"You have now dedicated yourselves to the LORD.** Come and bring sacrifices and thank offerings to the temple of the LORD." So the assembly brought sacrifices and thank offerings, and all whose hearts were willing brought burnt offerings.

*Music and singing encourage worship  
Worship through song changes us.*

### SKILLED MUSICIANS

*2 Chronicles 34:12*

The men did the work faithfully. Over them to direct them were Jahath and Obadiah, Levites descended from Merari, and Zechariah and Meshullam, descended from Kohath. The Levites-- all who were skilled in playing musical instruments--

*Musicians are to be skilled*

