

# LESSON 5

## MUSIC IN THE OLD TESTAMENT WORLD

### Introduction

"One hand washes the other." You may not have heard this old saying, but it catches the spirit of this lesson. Music and worship complement each other. Against the background of early developments in the ancient world, this part of our journey will complete our voyage through the Old Testament.

There is common agreement concerning the universal acceptance of music as a vital and essential medium for corporate and private worship. Most churches tend to formalize their own patterns of worship based upon biblical principles, tradition and local culture. Music is a vital part of Free Church worship, especially considering how much time is devoted to music in the churches' main worship services.

This part of our journey will begin with a survey of the development of music in the ancient world which is revealed by the discovery and description of certain ancient musical instruments. From this crude beginning, music in its most rudimentary form is identified already with various religious expressions. Even the Greeks considered music to be of divine origin.

Then we will retrace our steps through the Old Testament but will pay special attention this time to both the early and late developments of Hebrew music. The Hebrews are the benefactors of the music from other Eastern civilizations. Although complete details are lacking concerning the way music is used by the Hebrews, the Old Testament provides abundant evidence of the prominent role music plays in Jewish life and worship. One's concept of music in worship will be broadened through an examination of the development of music as it applies to worship. Let us begin this survey with a hurried trip through the ancient world before we trace the usage of music.

### Ancient Developments

Since you have proven yourself to be a sturdy travel companion already, you may appreciate a quick look at the compass. We will be travelling from East to West, from the ancient lands of the Sumerians and Egyptians to those of the Greeks and Romans. Before getting into this ultimate "time capsule" once more, let me condition you for the trip by introducing you to the origin of music in general.

Music is a vital part of \_\_\_\_\_ Church worship.

*(Free)*

The Hebrews were \_\_\_\_\_ of the music from other \_\_\_\_\_ civilizations.

*(benefactors, eastern)*

The word "music" is a Greek term. It is the adjectival form of "muse." In classical Greek mythology, this term referred to any of the nine sister goddesses who presided over certain arts and sciences. The verbal form of the word suggests that among the Greeks music was thought of as something common or basic to activities concerned with the pursuit of truth or beauty. Pythagoras and his followers considered music and arithmetic inseparable.

Historically, the origin of music is very obscure and deeply imbedded in the history of mankind. Students of ancient music cannot state for certain whether music originates as a functional, practical vehicle or whether it is inherent in people as a means of emotional expression. Some writers claim that music has a utilitarian purpose above that of mere pleasure; that is, music is concerned with poetic recitation and dancing or is associated with ceremonies of death, birth, puberty, mating and primitive worship. Research into the practices of present day primitive tribes gives evidence that music is still being used in these ways.

Archaeology is helpful in providing information about the life-styles of early mankind but thus far it has shed little light concerning musical practices and even less about how music sounded. Our knowledge of this music comes mainly from representations of musical instruments and their players found on pottery and on the friezes of buildings and mosaics. Possibly, writers of this time sense that their readers know how their music sounded and that there is no reason for it to be described. We are also limited in our knowledge of early music by the lack of a well-formed method of musical notation. The addition of written musical symbols is not developed until the Middle Ages.

One of the theories advanced concerning the origin of music is that it is used to accompany primitive religious expression. Music is often referred to as the "hand-maiden of religion." As far as erudites know, virtually every religion employs music of some kind to express emotions and to unify group participation.

Findings made in ruins of great ancient cities like Susa, the capital of Sumeria, Babylon and Nineveh, are important for our knowledge of ancient music. It seems that later civilizations received a considerable number of musical instruments and perhaps some of their musical ideas from the ancient Near East.

The two oldest civilizations to achieve musical significance were Sumer and Egypt. These nations are located in areas well-suited for sus-

The word "music" is a \_\_\_\_\_ term.

(Greek)

The origin of music is very \_\_\_\_\_.

(obscure)

Name two reasons for the lack of knowledge about ancient music.

(Compare your answers with the text.)

Some feel that the origin of music lies in its accompaniment of primitive \_\_\_\_\_ expression.

(religious)

Draw a circle around the two oldest civilizations to achieve musical significance:

Israel    Egypt    Sumer

taining life when people cease their nomadic wanderings.

The Sumerians had a highly developed civilization. Some of the oldest records of a musical system have been deciphered from clay tablets used by the Sumerians. Singers were used in their temple services. Music schools were established for the training of singers. The Babylonians, who were later successors to the Sumerians, continued their musical practices.

Primitive drums, tambourines and rattles have been excavated, dating as far back as 3000 B.C. Pictures in bas-relief at Susa made as early as 2600 B.C. show musicians at their temple gates playing flute, oboe, horn and bow instruments. Actual harps have been found at Babylon, where two stringed harps with upright or horizontal strings, lutes, curved horns and straight trumpets of brass were used from ca. 2000 B.C. onward. Therefore, nations leave behind their musical story as they rise and fall. Their writers often fail to tell about the origin or sound of their music, but the following words written by a Sumerian in ca. 2400 B.C. indicate what music meant to the people of that era.

Music fills the temple courts with joy,  
Chases the city's gloom away,  
Calms the passions,  
And stops weeping.<sup>1</sup>

Music must have had an important impact on the total life of the Sumerians.

The Egyptians were evidently familiar with many of the same instruments used by the Sumerians. The lyre, the favourite Sumerian instrument dating back to the era of 3000 B.C., is unknown in Egypt until the time of Abraham (ca. 2000 B.C.). William Hooper describes Egyptian music as follows:

Egyptians considered music a sacred expression. The musicians were priests, male and female, who were also the sacred dancers. Melodies had their own individual divine power or ethos; in fact, the Egyptians would not alter melodies or use foreign tunes. Music of their religion probably had a certain dignity to it, for none of the instruments employed in worship were considered of a "profane" nature.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> See Allen Percival, *History of Music* (London: The English Universities Press, Ltd., 1961), pp. 15-18, for a discussion of the music of this era.

<sup>2</sup> William L. Hooper, *Church Music in Transition* (Nashville: Broadman Press, 1963), pp. 2,3.

(Compare your answers with the text.)

The Sumerians wrote about their musical system on

\_\_\_\_\_

(clay, tablets)

List musical instruments used as early as:

3000 B.C. \_\_\_\_\_

2600 B.C. \_\_\_\_\_

2000 B.C. \_\_\_\_\_

(Compare your answers with the text.)

The Egyptians probably were familiar with many of the instruments used by the \_\_\_\_\_

(Sumerians)

Some of the Egyptian musical instruments may have come from Southeast Asia. The Egyptians also borrow instruments from Mesopotamia and Syria, while the Hebrews receive some of their instruments from the Phoenicians and the Egyptians.

While the musical systems of these and other eastern countries, such as India, China and Japan, contribute to musical development along cultural lines, there is little interchange with Western music. In this regard there is no discernible influence upon Western church music. While mentioning the music of Egypt and Babylonia, one must not overlook the impact made by these countries upon Jewish practices during the periods of captivity, and upon Greek music through cultural interchange. These influences are not evident in such matters as musical instruments, melodies and musical usage. They come to us today through our direct connection with Jewish and Greek music.<sup>3</sup>

Greek mythology ascribed a divine origin to music and names as its inventors and earliest practitioners gods or demigods, such as Apollo, Amphion and Orpheus. In this dim prehistoric period world music is considered to have magical powers. People thought that music could heal sicknesses, purify the body and mind in addition to working miracles in the realm of nature. Similar powers are attributed to music in the Old Testament. One need only to recall David's curing of Saul's madness by playing the harp (1 Sam. 16:14-23), or the trumpet blasts and shouting that toppled the walls of Jericho.

Music is always an inseparable part of Greek religious ceremonies. The lyre is the characteristic instrument in the cult of Apollo; while in that of Dionysus, it is the aulos. Both of these instruments probably came into Greece from Asia Minor. The aulos is a double-pipe reed instrument (but not a flute) with a shrill piercing tone. This instrument is used in connection with the singing of a certain kind of poetry (the dithyramb) in the worship of Dionysus, from which it is believed the Greek drama developed. As a consequence, in the great dramas of the classical age, choruses and other musical portions are accompanied by, or alternated with, the sounds of the aulos.

The lyre and its larger counterpart, the kithara are instruments with five to seven strings (later as many as eleven); both are used for solo

Some of the musical instruments used by the Egyptians may have come from \_\_\_\_\_.

(Southeast, Asia)

Eastern music made no \_\_\_\_\_ influence upon \_\_\_\_\_ church music.

(discernible, Western)

Ancient people often believed that music had \_\_\_\_\_ powers.

(magical)

Music is always an inseparable part of Greek \_\_\_\_\_ ceremonies.

(religious)

<sup>3</sup> Robert Douglass, *Church Music Through the Ages* (Nashville: Convention Press, 1967), pp. 5,6.

playing and to accompany the singing or recitation of epic poems.<sup>4</sup>

The Greeks believed that music had an effect upon the will and, therefore, the character. How music influences the will is explained by Aristotle in his "Doctrine of Imitation." According to Aristotle, music influences the passions or states of the soul: that is, gentleness, anger, courage, temperance, and their opposites and other qualities. Hence, when listeners hear music that causes an association with a certain passion, they become imbued with that passion. Because music has the potential for affecting character, Aristotle taught that children should study music that would contribute to character building.

Plato developed the "Doctrine of Ethos" which is similar to Aristotle's "Doctrine of Imitation" in that music is said to have an effect on the moral qualities of people. Music is considered a system of sound and rhythm that is ruled by the same mathematical laws that rule the universe.

Thus music was not thought of as passive; that is, something to lay and listen to, but a dynamic force in the universe. This dynamic quality explains the attribution of miracles to the legendary musicians of mythology, such as Orpheus who uses the power of music to subdue the demons on his way to retrieve Euridice from the underworld.

Although little is known about Greek music or its history, it is similar to that of the early Christian Church in two fundamental respects. In the first place, it was monophonic, that is, melody without harmony or counterpoint. There is some evidence of rudimentary or unsystematic two-part Greek music, but it is not considered an important musical development. Secondly, Greek music was associated with a text, dancing or both. In other words, the melody and rhythm are closely bound up with the melody and rhythm of poetry.

The Romans based their musical art on Greek music, especially after Greece became a Roman province in 146 B.C. The Romans invented instruments of the trumpet and horn type; however, these instruments were used principally for military purposes rather than for worship.

Let us take a little break now that our world tour through one aspect of ancient civilizations is over. The many connections will become even clearer as we continue our trip through the galleries of Hebrew antiquity. This part of our

Aristotle taught that music influences the

\_\_\_\_\_ of the \_\_\_\_\_

*(passions, soul)*

Plato taught that music is a \_\_\_\_\_ force in the

\_\_\_\_\_.

*(dynamic, universe)*

The Romans invented the trumpet. How did they use it?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
*(Compare your answer with the text.)*

<sup>4</sup> See Donald J. Grout, *A History of Western Music* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, Inc., 1960), pp. 4,5.

journey will begin with early Hebrew music and will take us through the period of Judges. The period of the Kings marks the transition to later Hebrew music which will conclude with the period of Restoration under the leadership of Ezra and Nehemiah.

### Early Hebrew Music

From what has been observed thus far, the concept of music as a function apart from normal everyday living was alien to the ancient world. Music was very much a basic, organic part of daily life. Any study of the use of music in the Old Testament must be interpreted from this perspective.

The Hebrews were able to draw heavily upon the vast wealth of musical development from other Eastern countries, although little is known about the practices of music in worship. Except for several specific instances, such as the returning of the Ark of the Covenant to Jerusalem and the dedication of Solomon's Temple, insight is lacking as to how the Hebrews use music in their worship experiences. There are, however, sufficient references in the Old Testament to convince us that music plays an important part in Jewish religious life. Hooper explains:

The Scriptures, of course, were not written to describe Jewish musical practices, but the life and worship of the Hebrew people as they encountered Jehovah and his purpose for them as a nation. Music is a part of this life and worship and a fairly adequate description of the place of music is found in each period of Jewish history.<sup>5</sup>

The most outstanding examples from these scriptural accounts will furnish insight into the influence of music and its use in Hebrew worship practices.

The first musician mentioned in the Bible is Jubal who is referred to as the father of those who play the lyre and pipe (Gen. 4:21). The Hebrew words used are *kinnor* and *'ugav*. The *kinnor* is a type of harp or lyre, and the *'ugav* is a flute or pipe. This reference is the first mention in the Bible of musical instruments from other civilizations.

Music has a place in the social structure as well as in worship in the early biblical period. Laban shows his displeasure with Jacob and asks:

<sup>5</sup> Hooper, *Church Music in Transition*, p. 3.

In the ancient world, music was a \_\_\_\_\_ part of \_\_\_\_\_ life.

(basic, daily)

Little is known about how the Hebrews used \_\_\_\_\_ in \_\_\_\_\_.

(music, worship)

List the first two musical instruments used in the Bible.

(Compare your answers with the text.)

Music has a place in the \_\_\_\_\_ structure as well as in \_\_\_\_\_ in the early biblical period.

(social, worship)

Why did you flee secretly and deceive me, and did not tell me, so that I might have sent you away with joy and with songs, with timbrel (a type of small drum) and with lyre? (Gen. 31:27).

Exodus 15 relates the hymn of praise by Moses, aided by his sister Miriam, and the Israelites following their deliverance from Egypt. The Hebrews had been exposed to Egyptian musical instruments during their Egyptian bondage. One such instrument still in use today is the *shophar* or ram's horn. This instrument is played as Moses ascends Mount Sinai to receive the Ten Commandments from God (Exod. 19:16). When the *shophar* is blown, it instills fear in the people, and the resulting impact is one of trembling.

According to Exodus 28, the Lord gives instructions for the holy garment which Aaron is to wear for "glory and beauty." Bells of pure gold are alternated with pomegranates all around the hem of Aaron's robe (Exod. 28:33,34; 39:25).

Merrymaking is also an important function of music during the periods of the Patriarchs and the Judges. Certainly Moses must have been distressed as he descends Mount Sinai with Joshua and hears the noise of the people. It is not surprising that he is shocked to find them reveling while worshipping the golden calf, the symbol of Egyptian deity. Joshua interprets what he heard as a sound of war, but Moses describes it as the sound of singing (Exod. 32:17,18).

The *shophar* is also blown to signal a special day of rest on the Day of Atonement (Lev. 23:24). This memorial day is also called the "Feast of Trumpets" and corresponds to the Jewish New Year. The latter is based on the new calculation of time from the Exodus which becomes a new era for the Hebrews.

Another musical instrument used by the Hebrews which was derived from the Egyptians is a trumpet-like horn called the *chatsotrah*. Moses sends priests into battle, in addition to soldiers, with the instruction to blow these instruments as an alarm.

During the early period of Hebrew cultic practices, music plays a relatively minor role with limited significance. The blowing of the *shophar* is the only music of a religious nature. As the ritual of the Israelites develops, various customs of secular life are included in worship. Musical instruments used in this period are either of secular origin or are borrowed from other countries.

During the period of the Judges, there appears to be continuous flirtation with pagan deities of the various Canaanite tribes. Joshua's

The ram's horn is also called the \_\_\_\_\_ by the Hebrews.

(shophar)

Music was also used in \_\_\_\_\_ by the Hebrews.

(merrymaking)

The *shophar* is also blown on the \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_

(Day, Atonement)

Is the following statement true or false?

The only religious music during the early period of Hebrew cultic practices was the blowing of the *shophar*.

(true)

period is one of continuous conflict. There seems to be little time for writing about musical or cultural developments because of preoccupation with war; in fact, the only mention made of a musical instrument in the entire Book of Joshua relates to warfare rather than to worship (Josh. 6:4,5).

Again, in the Book of Judges little mention is made regarding the use of music. The *shophar* seems to be the main instrument mentioned and that, again, with regard to warfare. The whole fifth chapter is devoted to the "Song of Deborah." This poem is considered to be one of the most ancient songs in the Old Testament. While praise is given to God, the song appears to be a narrative of warfare. The use of the tambourine is mentioned where Jephthah's daughter comes out to meet him with "tambourines and with dancing" (11:34). It is entirely possible that other types of music may have been used during this time that are not reported.

Whereas the use of music is present in early Hebrew military and religious practices, it definitely is in the background. You will note that music becomes much more prominent as the earlier wanderings of a nomadic society are replaced by the more stable and formal organization of the monarchy.

### Later Hebrew Music

The period of the Kings marks a change from the nomadic to a more settled life-style for the Hebrews. While this progression towards monarchy results in more time for broad cultural development, the struggle for religious dominance over pagan religions continues. Even though the possibility of war is always on the horizon, Saul recognizes the value of music in building character; therefore, some type of musical training is begun.

There are several ways in which music is utilized during the reign of Saul. First, there begins to appear a group of men called *nevi'im* (singular *navi*) who are forerunners of the prophets. These "ecstatics" wander about the country gathering crowds with furious dancing which exerts tremendous influence on themselves as well as on those who witness their actions. Saul is said to have been influenced by one group of these men and even participates with them (1 Sam. 19:20-24). Secondly, music is used to soothe the human spirit. David plays the *kinnor* (a type of harp) and Saul's evil spirit is quieted (1 Sam. 16:15,16, 19, 23).<sup>6</sup>

Circle the correct answer.

The only mention of a musical instrument in the Book of Joshua relates to:

worship      warfare

(Compare your answer with the text.)

Is the following statement true or false?

Other types of music may have been used during the time of the Judges than is reported in Joshua and Judges.

\_\_\_\_\_

(true)

Give two ways King Saul utilized music in his day.

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

(Compare your answers with the text.)

<sup>6</sup> See also 1 Sam. 18:10 and 19:9.

When David becomes king, music takes on new importance in worship. The Ark is moved into Jerusalem accompanied by music (2 Sam. 6). David makes music a part of worship by selecting the priestly tribe of Levi to be the leaders of worship. Asaph is appointed head of the singers and instrumentalists (1 Chron. 16:5). The male members of the tribe are divided into special groups according to assigned functions. Group leaders are David, Asaph, Jeduthun and Heman (1 Chron. 25:1-6). Two hundred eighty-eight men are devoted to worship with music (1 Chron. 25:7). Robes are worn (1 Chron. 15:27). There are twenty-four groups, each with twelve men who are instructed by one of the sons of Asaph, Jeduthun and Heman (1 Chron. 25:7-31).

Although the Hebrews make extensive use of ancient musical instruments, additional instruments are imported to up-date their orchestras. Some of the new instruments are used in Temple services and others, such as the *toph* and *'ugav*, apparently are used as a part of one's private devotions. In reality, these instruments are difficult to identify because there is a lack of agreement between the different versions of the Bible.

The most important use of music by the Hebrews is during the Temple services. Phillip Crannell describes these services in the following manner:

1. Sacrificial acts, either on extraordinary occasions, as at the dedication of the Temple, etc, when the blood of the offerings flowed in lavish profusion (2 Ch 7:5) or in the regular morning and evening sacrifices, or on the great annual days, like the Day of Atonement.
2. Ceremonial acts and posture of reverence or of adoration, or symbolizing the seeking and receiving of the Divine favor, as when the high priest returned from presenting incense offering in the holy place, and the people received his benediction with bowed heads, reverently standing (2 Ch 7:6), or the worshippers prostrated themselves as the priests sounded the silver trumpets at the conclusion of each section of the Levites' chant.
3. Praise by the official ministrants of the people or both together, the second probably to a very limited extent. This service of praise was either instrumental, silver "trumpets and cymbals and instruments of music," or it might be in vocal song, the chant of the Levites (very likely the congregation took

Music takes on new importance when \_\_\_\_\_  
becomes \_\_\_\_\_

(David, king)

Even though the Hebrews have many ancient instruments,  
they also \_\_\_\_\_ new \_\_\_\_\_

(import, instruments)

The main use of music by the Hebrews is during \_\_\_\_\_

(Temple, services)

part in some of the antiphonal psalms); or it might be both vocal and instrumental, as in the magnificent dedicatory service of Solomon (2 Ch 5:13), when "the trumpeters and singers were as one, to make one sound to be heard in praising and thanking Jeh." Or it might be simply spoken: "And all the people said, Amen, and praised Jeh" (1 Ch 16:36). How fully and splendidly this musical element of worship was developed among the Hebrews the Book of Ps gives witness, as well as the many notices in Ch (1 Ch 15, 16, 25; 2 Ch 5, 29, 30, etc). It is a pity that our actual knowledge of Heb music should be so limited.

4. Public prayer, such as is described in Dt 26, at the dedication of the Temple (2 Ch 6, etc), or like Pss 60, 79, 80. Shorter forms, half praise, half prayer, formed a part of the service in Christ's time.

5. The annual feasts, with their characteristic ceremonies.<sup>7</sup>

The development of music makes tremendous strides during this era.

Solomon faces rebellion and difficult days during the latter part of his reign. Upon his death the nation is divided into two kingdoms. The ten northern tribes become the Kingdom of Israel, with Jeroboam as leader, while the two southern tribes become the Kingdom of Judah, with Rehoboam, one of Solomon's sons, as ruler.

Jeroboam, once a friend of Solomon and later a leader in the rebellion against him, eventually leads the Kingdom of Israel into the pagan practice of worshipping Canaanite golden bulls. Meanwhile, Rehoboam, who had the Temple in his territory, is forced to sell much of its invaluable treasure to Egypt in order to maintain peace. Although the people are greatly tempted by the onslaught of paganism, David's religion is still the religious ideal in the south and is practised in the Temple.

During this period of national division, a "school of prophets" arose. These were akin to the earlier band of men called *nevi'im*. The prophets are God's spokesmen to the people. Samuel organizes bands of prophets (1 Sam. 19:20). According to Hooper, these men are not exactly "ecstatics." Instead they fall into four main classifications as follows:

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<sup>7</sup> Phillip Wendall Crannell, *The International Standard Bible Enclopaedia* 5 vols. (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1939), 5:3110-11.

1. Those contemporary with Elijah and Elisha (ca. 850 B.C.).
2. Those contemporary with Isaiah (ca. 730 B.C.).
3. Those who were living during the Babylonian supremacy (ca. 600 B.C.).
4. Those who lived after the exile (ca. 520 B.C.).<sup>8</sup>

The "ecstatics" and the early prophetic groups exist side by side from 931 B.C. to 722 B.C., and the third group of prophets flourishes in the Southern Kingdom until 586 B.C. In 537 B.C. the Jews return to Jerusalem to rebuild the Temple. The last group of prophets flourish at this time.

In many instances it seems that the prophets sing as well as speak their messages. In this regard they continue the practices of the earlier *nevi'im*.

Hooper states:

At funerals it was the custom to have professional female mourners sing while musicians played a clarinet-type instrument called *chalilim* (Jer. 48:36). Apparently there were two methods of singing at funerals: the choral (unison) and the antiphonal. The antiphonal was eventually banned because of its depressing effect on the bereaved. This singing was usually accompanied by handclapping and beating on a form of drum. Matthew 9:23,24 suggests that Old Testament mourning customs existed even into the time of Christ.<sup>9</sup>

Amos is very outspoken against the misuse of music by unjust and unrighteous people and, therefore, says that God does not want their praise in music:

They chant idle songs to the sound of the harp, And fancy to play their instruments like David.<sup>10</sup>

Music must have been influenced by the paganism that pervades Israel. Isaiah refers to banquets which are accompanied by "lyre and harp, by tambourine and flute, and by wine" (Isa. 5:12). These instruments are probably the *kinnor*, *nevel*, *toph* and the *chalil*. All except the *toph* are used in Temple worship. They may also have been used in the worship of false gods. It seems

The prophets seem to \_\_\_\_\_ as well as \_\_\_\_\_ their messages.

(sing, speak)

Amos is very outspoken against the \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_

(misuse, music)

Is the following statement true or false?

The prophets seem to consider music to have a sacred

<sup>8</sup> Hooper, *Church Music in Transition*, p. 10.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>10</sup> E. Werner, "Music," *The Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible*, Vol. III (New York: Abingdon Press, 1962), p. 457).

that the prophets consider music to have a sacred function that is being desecrated through worldly usage.

While in Babylon, the Hebrews are exposed to new musical concepts, although it is painful for them to sing the songs of their homeland.<sup>11</sup> Music is used to signal the worship of the golden image set up by Nebuchadnezzar. Daniel refers to the "horn, flute, lyre, trigon, psaltery, bagpipe and all kinds of music" (Dan. 3:5). The name translated "bagpipe" likely is not the name of a musical instrument but a term that means "playing together, referring to the instruments already listed."<sup>12</sup> These instruments, while named in Aramaic rather than in Hebrew, are very likely similar, but not identical, to the wind and string instruments used by the Hebrews.

Following the overthrow of Persia, fifty thousand Jews return to Jerusalem and start working on rebuilding the Temple. After many delays and difficulties, the Temple is completed in about 516 B.C. There is a beautiful worship experience when the foundation is laid. The people sing and play instruments "praising and giving thanks to the Lord. . ." (Ezra 3:8-13).

Nehemiah gives a beautiful description of the use of music at the dedication of the wall of Jerusalem. Levites are sought and brought to Jerusalem

so that they might celebrate the dedication with gladness, with hymns of thanksgiving and with songs to the accompaniment of cymbals, harps and lyres (Neh. 12:27).

This celebration is followed by the giving of instruction as to the procedures to be followed in the Temple services.

### Summary

You have been introduced to many technical terms during this part of our journey. It may take some practice to "think Hebrew" without the necessity of translating *shophar*, *chatsotrah*, *toph*, *kinnor* or *'ugav*. If you can remember the meaning of two of the above, you are making real progress.

Let me review for you the main developments in both ancient civilizations and Hebrew culture. In both cases the earliest periods use primitive musical instruments as you would have expected, but the movement from primitive to more highly developed music is most evident in Hebrew religious development.

function that is being desecrated through worldly usage.

(true)

In captivity, the Hebrews find it painful to sing the \_\_\_\_\_ of their \_\_\_\_\_.

(songs, homeland)

When the foundation is laid for the rebuilding of the Temple, the people \_\_\_\_\_ and play \_\_\_\_\_.

(sing, instruments)

When Nehemiah and the Hebrews completed rebuilding the wall around Jerusalem, \_\_\_\_\_ was used at its \_\_\_\_\_.

(music, dedication)

<sup>11</sup> See Psalm 137.

<sup>12</sup> Hooper, *Church Music in Transition*, p. 11.

The origin of music is deeply imbedded in the history of mankind. Among the possible uses of music in antiquity one is as an accompaniment for religious expression. The Greeks ascribe a divine origin to music which is considered to have magic powers. Music is a dynamic force for the Greeks by supposedly having power to heal the sick, purify the mind and body as well as influence moral character.

Among the oldest civilizations developing musical instruments are Sumer and Egypt. The Sumerians had a highly developed civilization. Music schools were established for training singers for temple services. The Babylonians continue the musical practices of the Sumerians. The Egyptians consider music a sacred expression. At least a part of the instruments used in Egypt are imported from Southeast Asia.

Music forms a very important part of everyday Hebrew life and worship. The Hebrews draw heavily upon the musical influences of surrounding nations. Jubal is the first musician mentioned in the Bible. He plays the lyre and the pipe. The lyre, an instrument of five to seven (later eleven) strings, was the favourite instrument of the Sumerians. It is used to accompany solo singing or poetic recitations. The Hebrews call the lyre the *kinnor*.

One of the major wind instruments used in Hebrew worship even today is the *shophar* (ram's horn) which originated in Egypt. It is used to signal the beginning of special days. The *shophar* is the main instrument used in religious ceremony during the early period of Hebrew cultic practices. Other instruments are gradually added as worship practices develop.

There is little musical development during the time of the Judges because of war and flirtation with pagan deities. Musical development increases greatly during the era of the Kings. Saul recognizes the value of music in building character. David soothes Saul's spirit by playing the *kinnor*. The tribe of Levi is appointed to be the leader of worship. Asaph is named chief musician. Choirs and orchestras of large numbers are trained for Temple services. Religious music reaches its apex when David brings the Ark of the Covenant to Jerusalem and at the dedication of Solomon's Temple. When the Jews are taken captive to Babylonia, music ceases to develop. Music thereafter fails to approach the grandeur established during the days of Solomon but plays an important part in the restoration of the Temple under the leadership of Ezra and Nehemiah.

Let me commend you for your openness to the Eastern thought patterns of the Semitic world.

Music forms a very important part of \_\_\_\_\_

Hebrew \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_

(everyday, life, worship)

The *shophar* is used to signal the beginning of \_\_\_\_\_

(special, days)

There is little musical development during the time of the Judges due to \_\_\_\_\_ and the flirtation with \_\_\_\_\_

(war, pagan, deities)

Music plays an important part in \_\_\_\_\_ of the \_\_\_\_\_

(restoration, Temple)

Undoubtedly, you will be more "at home" as we move into the Greek and Roman patterns which become more prominent in the New Testament. You have earned a well-deserved break before proceeding to the next lesson.

### Home Study Exercise

**Basic activity** (*Levels 1, 2, and 3*). After reading the study guide text, answer the following questions.

1. Name two of the oldest known civilizations to achieve musical significance.  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. What viewpoints about music did Aristotle and Plato hold?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. How did the ancients use music?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
4. Name the two musical instruments first mentioned in the Bible. Give the reference.  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
5. Describe the use of the *shophar* by the Israelites.  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
6. How was music used by the early Hebrews?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
7. Name two ways music was utilized during the time of King Saul.  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
8. State contributions to music in Hebrew worship made by David.  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
9. What was the main use the Hebrews made of music?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

10. The prophets spoke out against the misuse of music. How was music being misused?

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11. Why was there little musical development among the Hebrews during the Captivity?

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12. What use do Ezra and Nehemiah make of music?

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**Supplementary activity** (*Levels 2 and 3*). The activities in this lesson are taken from the study guide.

1. Where did some of the musical instruments used in Egypt come from?
2. State uses of music made by ancient civilizations.
3. How was Greek music similar to that of the early Christian Church?
4. What are five uses the Hebrews made of music during the time of the Patriarchs and Joshua?
5. What hindered musical development among the Israelites during the time of the Judges?
6. Show the progression of music during David's reign.

**Advanced activity** (*Level 3*).

1. Show the development of music in Hebrew worship from the Patriarchs through the Babylonian Captivity.
2. Write a paper describing worship in the Temple services.

### **Seminar Discussion**

1. Discuss the place of music in ancient civilizations.
2. What use did the Hebrews make of music?
3. Discuss the development of Israel's music from the Patriarchs through the Babylonian Captivity.
4. What effect did the Babylonian Captivity have on Israel's music?