

# GOD IS LISTENING

SESSION 1: BASIC MUSIC THEOLOGY



## WHEN DRAGONS SING

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*Psalms 148:7-13 (KJV) ~ 7 Praise the Lord from the earth, ye dragons, and all deeps: 8 Fire, and hail; snow, and vapour; stormy wind fulfilling his word: 9 Mountains, and all hills; fruitful trees, and all cedars: 10 Beasts, and all cattle; creeping things, and flying fowl: 11 Kings of the earth, and all people; princes, and all judges of the earth: 12 Both young men, and maidens; old men, and children: 13 Let them praise the name of the Lord: for his name alone is excellent; his glory is above the earth and heaven.*

Apparently it's not only old men and children, but also dragons and deeps that praise the Lord. God must be listening! God deserves praise, and it seems that all creation praises Him as He desires, except us.

Jesus said God is seeking not just for worship, but for worshipers:

*John 4:21-23 ~ 21 Jesus saith unto her, Woman, believe me, the hour cometh, when ye shall neither in this mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem, worship the Father. 22 Ye worship ye know not what: we know what we worship: for salvation is of the Jews. 23 But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him.*

Consider how creation sings...

### STARS AND ANGLES

Job 38:4-7

Revelation 5:11-12

### SAINTS, LIVING AND PASSED

Revelation 5:8-11

### BEASTS?

Revelation 5:13-14

Psalms 148:7-13

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# GOD LOVES MUSIC

## ORDAINED MUSIC

In the cultural and formal worship of the Mosaic Law, worship was both spontaneous and structured.

- Ezra 3:10-11
- 1 Chronicles 16:4-6
- 2 Chronicles 5:11-16

## INSPIRED MUSIC

David is the most obvious musician in Scripture, but there are many more, both in the Psalms and in other passages.

*2 Samuel 23:1-2 ~ 1 Now these be the last words of David. David the son of Jesse said, and the man who was raised up on high, the anointed of the God of Jacob, and the sweet psalmist of Israel, said, 2 The Spirit of the Lord spake by me, and his word was in my tongue.*

- Solomon (The Song of Solomon)
- Asaph and the Sons of Korah (Ps 42:1; 44:1; 45:1; 46:1; 47:1)
- Moses (Ex 15:20-21; Ps 90; Rev 15:1-4)
- Deborah and Baruk (Jdg 5)
- Jeremiah (Lamentations)
- Mary (Lk 1:46-55)

Find the chart to the right, and an itemized list of 185 Bible songs with explanations at <https://overviewbible.com/bible-songs/>

## INSTRUMENTATION

The first mention of a musician in the Bible is Genesis 4:21. Musical instruments were used in worship in the Old Testament (1 Chr 15:16; 16:42; 23:5; 2 Chr 7:6; 23:13; 29:26-27; 30:21; 34:12; Neh 12:36; Ezra 3:10; Isa 38:20; Amos 6:5; Hab 3:19; Ps 68:25).

- In Psalm 149:3 and 150:3-5 we find the mention of *strings*, *percussion*, and *wind* instruments.
- The Jewish Synagogues did not use instruments on the *inside*, and subsequently some think that the NT church followed this practice. But Synagogues were the construct of the post-exilic era, and in no way prescribed as the model for the Church today.
- The NT is entirely silent on instruments, and this is why some churches forbid instruments still today.

## The songs of the Bible

The Bible has all kinds of songs spread across its many books, from songs of temple praise to funeral dirges. Here are a few quick facts about the songs in the Bible.



You can find 185 songs in the Bible

The Bible explicitly says some pieces of poetry were sung, chanted, or intended for musical accompaniment. There's more lyric-like poetry in the Bible that may have been sung, too.

# 185

# 150

80% of these are Psalms

That shouldn't be a surprise—Psalms is one of the longest books of the Bible, and it's nothing but songs.

And Psalms isn't the only songbook in the Bible



Song of Solomon is an epic love song between a bride and groom.



Lamentations is a set of five dirges—songs mourning the fall of Jerusalem.



Longest song: 1,732 words

Psalm 119 is the longest song in its original Hebrew language (and English). This psalm is the Bible-study anthem: it's all about the word of God and how important it is.

Shortest songs: 7 words

The two shortest songs are only seven Hebrew words long. You can find them both in Second Chronicles (5:13, 20:21).

Moses sings the first song in the Bible

This happens after the children of Israel safely cross the Red Sea.

EX 15

RE 15

The song of Moses is the last song, too

John sees those who have overcome the beast singing "the song of Moses". The lyrics are different, but the message is similar.

And the greatest of all the songs in the Bible?



That's Song of Solomon. The wise king wrote 1,005 songs, but this one was his favorite. The Bible calls it the "Song of Songs"—the chief or greatest of all songs.

See all 185 songs at [OverviewBible.com/bible-songs](https://overviewbible.com/bible-songs/)

## WHAT ABOUT DANCING?

While dancing was a common component of the Jewish culture, and frequently mentioned in the context of religious or personal celebrations, within the setting of the Temple, the Synagogues, and the church it never occurs *inside*.

- Psalm 150:4; Exodus 15:20; Judges 11:34; 2 Samuel 6:12-16; Luke 15:25
- Exodus 32:6, 19-25; 1 Sam 30:16; Jdg 21:21

Different Hebrew words are used in the different lists above. But these are not conclusive enough to determine inherent meaning, largely due to the vague and more descriptive Hebrew language.

Last year I overheard two South African pastors, one black and one white, discussing the issue of dance. And I thought, "This is going to be interesting!"

To the question, "Is it wrong for my people to dance?", the answer was tastefully presented, culturally sensitive, and biblically true. The pastor framed his answer with the following three ideas:

- Is the dance sensual?
- Is the dance distracting?
- Is the dance helping to communicate the message of the song, and bring worship to God?

## SONGS, HYMNS, AND SPIRITUAL SONGS

The New Testament divides sacred singing into three categories: Eph 5:19; Col 3:1; Mat 26:3; Acts 16:26.

*Colossians 3:16-17 ~ 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. 17 And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him.*

- Psalms – The OT Psalm are the most obvious, but Scripture in general
- Hymns – Songs about God and Christ
- Spiritual Songs – Expressing the spiritual experience; something about one's salvation, gratefulness, a pathway of darkness and deliverance, or many other spiritual themes.

## MUSIC SPEAKS

With music we communicate ourselves, and we entertain and move others. But above all this, we also speak to God for He is listening when we sing!

Some interesting articles about music from [GotQuestions.org](http://GotQuestions.org):

- Are we supposed to use musical instruments in church?
- Should a Christian listen to secular music?
- What does the Bible say about dancing? Should Christians dance?
- What does the Bible say about music?