

There are some things that only music and songs can express, explain, and extol.

As we look at the use of song, music, instruments, and even dancing in the OT it seems to stem from their use collaborated with the LORD, the ark, and worship.

Remember, God commanded joy and rejoicing to be the tone of the three feasts of Israel.

Exodus 23:16; 34:22-23; Deuteronomy 16.

The feasts were to be performed with rejoicing and joy at the work and blessing of God. That is why the text in the NASB translates “perform” as “celebrate.”¹

Thus, music and even dancing² was used to express that as time went on.

Miriam may be in early illustration of this “performance.”

David took the use of music and instruments to a whole new level in Israel when the ark came to rest in the city of David:

2 Samuel 6:12

12 Now it was told King David, saying, “The Lord has blessed the house of Obed-edom and all that belongs to him, on account of the ark of God.” David went and brought up the ark of God from the house of Obed-edom into the city of David with gladness.

2 Samuel 6:17

17 So they brought in the ark of the Lord and set it in its place inside the tent which David had pitched for it; and David offered burnt offerings and peace offerings before the Lord.

Proverbs 29:6

6 By transgression an evil man is ensnared,
But the righteous sings and rejoices.

¹ *Deuteronomy 16:1, 10, 15.*

² *Exodus 15:20-21; Judg 11:34; 21:21; 1 Sam 18:6;*

Psalm 98:4–6

- 4 Shout joyfully to the Lord, all the earth;
Break forth and sing for joy and sing praises.
- 5 Sing praises to the Lord with the lyre,
With the lyre and the sound of melody.
- 6 With trumpets and the sound of the horn
Shout joyfully before the King, the Lord.

“The prehistoric age is considered to have ended with the development of writing, and with it, by definition, prehistoric music. "Ancient music" is the name given to the music that followed. The "oldest known song" was written in [cuneiform](#), dating to 3400 years ago from Ugarit. It was deciphered by Anne Draffkorn Kilmer, and was demonstrated to be composed in harmonies of thirds, like ancient [gymel](#),³ and also was written using a [Pythagorean tuning](#) of the [diatonic scale](#). The oldest surviving example of a complete musical composition, including musical notation, from anywhere in the world, is the [Seikilos epitaph](#).³”

All ancient nations had a style or kind of music unique to them:

Egypt, China, Mesopotamia, India, etc..

However, it seems to be very different from the music as found in the history of Israel.

Why?

When you study music around the world, Babylonia, Greece, Rome, Egypt, etc... their songs are dominated by man: man's world, man's life, man's gods.

When you study the music of the Bible, the music recorded there in lyrics is dominated by God: God's man, God's world, God's eternity, God's glory.

The OT has always demanded distinction in everything related to God.

There is no other god like Israel's God.

³ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/History_of_music accessed 12/10/2017

There is no other Creator, Savior, or re-Creator.

Listen to a few songs from the OT as we begin.

Exodus 15:1–7

- 1 Then Moses and the sons of Israel sang this song to the Lord, and said,
“I will sing to the Lord, for He is highly exalted;
The horse and its rider He has hurled into the sea.
- 2 “The Lord is my strength and song,
And He has become my salvation;
This is my God, and I will praise Him;
My father’s God, and I will extol Him.
- 3 “The Lord is a warrior;
The Lord is His name.
- 4 “Pharaoh’s chariots and his army He has cast into the sea;
And the choicest of his officers are drowned in the Red Sea.
- 5 “The deeps cover them;
They went down into the depths like a stone.
- 6 “Your right hand, O Lord, is majestic in power,
Your right hand, O Lord, shatters the enemy.
- 7 “And in the greatness of Your excellence You overthrow those who rise up
against You;
You send forth Your burning anger, *and* it consumes them as chaff.

Psalm 9:title–2

For the choir director; on Muth-labben. A Psalm of David.

- 1 I will give thanks to the Lord with all my heart;
I will tell of all Your wonders.
- 2 I will be glad and exult in You;
I will sing praise to Your name, O Most High.

Psalm 96!

See Psalm 47

Psalm 48:title–1

A Song; a Psalm of the sons of Korah⁴.

1 Great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised,
In the city of our God, His holy mountain.

So, you see, there is a divergence in the use of music: the arrangement of six to eight notes respectively into song.

Where did this begin?

Why the divergence?

It started in Genesis 4 with the separation of Cain and Abel.

From Cain, the killer of Abel, came a man named Lamech.

Genesis 4:11 = “cursed are you from the ground...you will be a vagrant and a wanderer on the earth.”

Genesis 4:14 = Cain reiterates his punishment.

Driven from the face of the ground...from Your face I will be hidden...I will be a vagrant and a wanderer on the earth...whoever finds me will kill me...”

The result of this is Lamech, a great-grandson of Cain.

Lamech -> two wives - Adah: Jabal (“father of those who dwell in tents and have livestock”) and Jubal (“father of handlers of the lyre and pipe).

Zillah -> Tubal Cain (forger of bronze and iron)

This is a cursed lineage (v.11ff).

Notice also Lamech = sang a song here (vv. 23-24) indicating violence against him⁵.

Notice also - violence filled the earth up to Noah leading to the flood (Genesis 6:1-9).

See Genesis 8:20-22

⁴ *This is the same Korah who defied Moses and was swallowed up by the ground. However, according to Numbers 26:11 the sons of Korah did not die in that rebellion. They went on as keepers of the tent of meeting and, as such, they developed songs in praise to God.*

⁵ *This echoes back to Cain's punishment and protection from God. Lamech took it upon himself to kill those who attempted to kill him.*

“The NIV’s rendering (as most English versions) arranges v. 22 in poetic stanza. The figure of merismus (opposites) dominates, indicating the inclusiveness of all seasons and times⁶.”

This is different from Adam, who himself was not cursed but the ground was (Genesis 3:17

As time goes on, the divergence from Adam’s line through Seth and Cain’s line through Lamech becomes apparent.

This is the issue.

The line of Cain developed and grew in their music, as indicated by the world’s traditions of music, exalting man, the gods, and everything from the best of earthly life to extreme perversion.

The line of Adam and Seth seems to have take a different route.

The glory of God was the issue.

Song/shout began with the angels (Job 38:7)

It continued with Adam (Genesis 2:23).

And now is recited here with God (Genesis 8:22).

Point is: music/poetry and skillful shouting belongs to God.

⁶ Mathews, K. A. (1996). [*Genesis 1-11:26*](#) (Vol. 1A, p. 397). Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers.