

## MUSIC: THE SACRIFICE OF PRAYER

### 1. Leadership of music in worship

Levites gifted and trained in singing and instrumental performance (1 Chron 15:22; 25:7: both have same participle meaning “to understand”)

- Singers in choirs
- Instrumentalists
- Songwriters

### 2. Theological functions of music in worship

(1) Theophany: God revealing himself

- Sinai: divine glory + loud volume + music (trumpet)
  - Temple: divine glory + loud volume + music (trumpets) + joy (2 Chron 5–7)
  - Jerusalem: loud volume + music (trumpets) + joy (Neh 12:43)
- God is enthroned (reference to ark) on the praises of Israel (Ps 22:3)
- The word of Christ dwells in us via song (Col 3:16)

(2) Directed toward God

- Sacrifice
  - Performed and sung in conjunction with the offering of animal sacrifices, particularly the ascension offering (1 Chron 16:37–42; 23:30–32; 2 Chron 5–7; 29:20–35; Ps 27:6; 107:21–22)
  - Prayer/praise *are* a form of sacrifice (Ps 50:23; 51:15–17), i.e., a way of experiencing drawing near to God.
- Praise/thanks
  - Exod 15: Response to redemption, liberation, vindication, judgment
  - 1 Chron 13–16 (13:8; 15:16, 27, 29; 16:4, 7, 41)
  - 1 Chron 23: 5, 30
  - 1 Chron 25:3
  - 2 Chron 5:13; 7:3, 6; 8:14
  - 2 Chron 20:19, 21
  - 2 Chron 29:30
  - Psalms of praise
- Lament/confession: Psalms of lament
- Intercession: Psalms praying for God’s help

(3) Directed to other members of the people of God

- Instruction; exhortation: describing the mighty works of God
- Prophecy (1 Chron 25:1, 2, 3)
- Liturgical direction, e.g., signaling when to assemble (Num 10:1–10) and when to bow (2 Chron 7:1–3; 29:27–30)
- Accompaniment of corporate singing (e.g., 1 Chron 15:16; 2 Chron 29:27)

#### (4) Effects on enemies of God

- Fear (2 Chron 20:18–30)
- Spiritual warfare (1 Sam 16:14–23)
- Psalms re: enemies
- Invitation and announcement of blessing (e.g., Ps 96/1 Chron 16:8–36)

### 3. Liturgical forms

- Occasional and regularly scheduled settings
  - Great historical moments of redemption: Exodus; dedication of Temple; rededication of Jerusalem after the exile
  - Regular sacrificial liturgy (1 Chron 16; 2 Chron 7; 29)
- Performed skillfully, loudly, and joyfully with many different types of instruments (strings, wind instruments, percussion)
  - Loud volume: 1 Chron 15:16, 28; 2 Chron 20:19
  - Instruments: 1 Chron 13–15; 2 Chron 5–7; 29; Ps 150
  - Corporate song: 1 Chron 16:36; 29:9; 2 Chron 20:18–30; 29:28
- Substantive theological content
  - Character of God
    - “his steadfast love endures forever” (1 Chron 16:24, 41; 2 Chron 5:13; 7:3, 6; 2 Chron 20:21)
  - Works of God in both creation and redemption
- Good poetry
  - Heightened level of language (not ordinary, everyday speech)
  - Literary devices to create beauty of form and expression
- Accompanied by a variety of bodily postures (along with other corporate prayer):
  - Standing to pray and praise (Neh 9:2,4; 2 Chron 20:5, 13)
  - Clapping (Ps 47:1)
  - Raising hands in prayer and praise (Exod 17:1–12, Neh 8:5–6; 1 Kgs 8:54; Ps 28:2; 63:4; 141:2)
  - Dancing (Ps 150:4; 2 Sam 6:14)

(The most common posture for other forms of spoken prayer [public and private] is kneeling or prostration: e.g., 1 Kgs 8:54/2 Chron 6:13; 2 Chron 7:3; 29:20, 29; Neh 8:6; Ps 5:7; 95:6; 132:7; 138:2)