

HABITATIONS OF PRAISE
“The Use of the Hands: Play Instruments!”
Part II – Percussion

I. A Leaping Logic Journey-

Timbrels used in prophecy and celebration of victory-

Ex 15:19-21

19 When Pharaoh's horses, chariots and horsemen went into the sea, the LORD brought the waters of the sea back over them, but the Israelites walked through the sea on dry ground.

20 Then Miriam the prophetess, Aaron's sister, took a **tambourine**¹ in her hand, and all the women followed her, with tambourines and dancing.

21 Miriam sang to them: "Sing to the LORD, for he is highly exalted. The horse and its rider he has hurled into the sea." NIV

Strong's definition-

OT:8596 – **toph**¹ (tofe); from **OT:8608** contracted; a tambourine: KJV - tabret, timbrel.

OT:8608 – taphaph² (taw-faf'); a primitive root; to drum, i.e. play (as) on the tambourine: KJV - taber, play with timbrels.

Ps 68:24-26

24 Your **procession**³ has come into view, O God, the **procession**³ of my God and King into the sanctuary.

25 In front are the singers, after them the musicians; with them are the maidens **playing tambourines**².

26 Praise God in the great congregation; praise the LORD in the assembly of Israel. NIV

The procession of God into His habitation (sanctuary) includes the tambourine. This procession is an interesting concept in its own right.

Strong's definition-

OT:1979 – **haliy kah**³ (hal-ee-kaw'); feminine of **OT:1978**; a walking; by implication, a procession or march, a caravan: KJV - company, going, walk, way.

OT:1978 - haliyk (haw-leek'); from **OT:1980**; a walk, i.e. (by implication) a step: -step.

OT:1980 - halak (haw-lak'); akin to OT:3212; a primitive root; to walk (in a great variety of applications, literally and figuratively): KJV - (all) along, apace, behave (self), come, (on) continually, be conversant, depart, + be eased, enter, exercise (self), + follow, forth, forward, get, go (about, abroad, along, away, forward, on, out, up and down), + greater, grow, be wont to haunt, lead, march, X more and more, move (self), needs, on, pass (away), be at the point, quite, run (along), + send, speedily, spread, still, surely, + tale-bearer, + travel (-ler), walk (abroad, on, to and fro, up and down, to places), wander, wax, [way-] faring man, X be weak, whirl.

It is from **halak** that the Jewish concept of **halakhah** comes. *Halakhah* is the way of walking, as stated in Psalm 86.

Ps 86:11-12

11 Teach me your way, O LORD, and I will walk [*Heb. halak*] in your truth; give me an undivided heart, that I may fear your name.

12 I will praise you, O Lord my God, with all my heart; I will glorify your name forever. NIV

Jewish theologian, Arthur Green, has this to say about halakhah:

“‘Walking in God’s truth’ is *halakhah*, the normative path trodden by those who wish to follow God’s will, the life prescribed by *Torah* as fulfilled in the context of real, ongoing, and evolving human community.

Halakhah is the way to walk; it is the shortcut through the maze of rabbinic disputation. The *Talmud* text may record the views of one generation after another on a particular practice, including arguments that seem to knock down all the possible courses of action. What is a person to do? How does one act? Then, seemingly from out of nowhere, a voice on the page will say *hilkheta* (Aramaic for *halakhah*), meaning ‘action directive’; *this* is the way to go.”¹

The procession of God is the march into His sanctuary. The tambourines mark the time or cadence of the march. This is one of the major purposes of percussion in music, it marks rhythm or time. As such, in full orchestral work, the percussion section sits as the base or foundation of the music.

How many of you know that timing is important to God? Well, the timing in music is called rhythm and the rhythm in music is typically kept by the percussion section. The marching pace for ancient armies was set by the drum corps and they are still used in parade ceremonies today. The beat of the drums or other percussion instruments help mark for us the pace of the music and help keep us unified in time to the music. An erratic or irregular beat in music is as dangerous to the unity of the musicians as an irregular heartbeat is to the body of man. As a matter of fact, our hearts tend to sympathize with the beat of music, so we can readily see that music with an irregular beat can be hazardous to our health!

In our last message, we talked about how the devil had been created to worship. Ezekiel 28 informs us that he had pipes and timbrels (wind and percussion) and Isaiah 14 tells us that he had strings. He had all the instruments to make all the music necessary to glorify God. We know what happened when he wanted some of that incense for himself.

Man also was created to worship God. We have strings (ligaments, tendons, vocal cords), pipes (lungs and throat), and percussion. What is our primary percussion instrument? The heart! It, like percussion in music, forms the foundation of our physical life. Our health and life is measured by its beats. But there is another foundation to our beings that are also percussion instruments.

¹ Arthur Green, *These Are the Words: A Vocabulary of Jewish Spiritual Life*, Jewish Lights Publishing, Woodstock, VT, 1999, p. 41

Ezek 37:1-7

- 1 The hand of the LORD was upon me, and he brought me out by the Spirit of the LORD and set me in the middle of a valley; it was full of bones.
- 2 He led me back and forth among them, and I saw a great many bones on the floor of the valley, bones that were very dry.
- 3 He asked me, "Son of man, can these bones live?" I said, "O Sovereign LORD, you alone know."
- 4 Then he said to me, "Prophesy to these bones and say to them, 'Dry bones, hear the word of the LORD!'"
- 5 This is what the Sovereign LORD says to these bones: I will make breath enter you, and you will come to life.
- 6 I will attach tendons to you and make flesh come upon you and cover you with skin; I will put breath in you, and you will come to life. Then you will know that I am the LORD."
- 7 So I prophesied as I was commanded. And as I was prophesying, there was a noise, a rattling sound⁴, and the bones came together, bone to bone. NIV

When bone meets bone, there is a rattling sound. Our bones are the structure of our bodies. It is the bones that enable us to drum on ourselves. The most common human percussioning is called clapping, but that is a lesson in its own right in this series. Our hearts and our bones, both foundation to our physical being, are the percussion instruments of man.

Strong's definition-

OT:7494 - **ra` ash**⁴ (rah'-ash); from **OT:7493**; vibration, bounding, uproar: KJV - commotion, confused noise, earthquake, fierceness, quaking, rattling, rushing, shaking.

OT:7493 - ra` ash (raw-ash); a primitive root; to undulate (as the earth, the sky, etc.; also a field of grain), partic. through fear; specifically, to spring (as a locust): KJV - make afraid, (re-) move, quake, (make to) shake, (make to) tremble.

Ezek 3:12-13

- 12 Then the Spirit lifted me up, and I heard behind me a loud **rumbling**⁴ sound-May the glory of the LORD be praised in his dwelling place!-
- 13 the sound of the wings of the living creatures brushing against each other and the sound of the wheels beside them, a loud **rumbling**⁴ sound. NIV

Among other things, this rattling of the bones is the same sound as the rumbling of the chariot of God. In the spiritual, we know that the chariot of God is made up of the four creatures. In the natural, God's chariot is seen as the great thunderstorm. In the thunderstorm, we meet the voice of God in wind, percussion, and stringed instruments.

Ps 104:1-3

- 1 Praise the LORD, O my soul. O LORD my God, you are very great; you are clothed with splendor and majesty.
- 2 He wraps himself in light as with a garment; he stretches out the heavens like a tent
- 3 and lays the beams of his upper chambers on their waters. He makes the clouds his chariot and rides on the wings of the wind. NIV

Ps 18:6-17

6 In my distress I called to the LORD; I cried to my God for help. From his temple he heard my voice; my cry came before him, into his ears.

7 The earth trembled and quaked, and the foundations of the mountains shook; they trembled because he was angry.

8 Smoke rose from his nostrils; consuming fire came from his mouth, burning coals blazed out of it.

9 He parted the heavens and came down; dark clouds were under his feet.

10 He mounted the cherubim and flew; he soared on the wings of the wind.

11 He made darkness his covering, his canopy around him-- the dark rain clouds of the sky.

12 Out of the brightness of his presence clouds advanced, with hailstones and bolts of lightning.

13 The LORD thundered from heaven; the voice of the Most High resounded.

14 He shot his arrows and scattered [the enemies], great bolts of lightning and routed them.

15 The valleys of the sea were exposed and the foundations of the earth laid bare at your rebuke, O LORD, at the blast of breath from your nostrils.

16 He reached down from on high and took hold of me; he drew me out of deep waters.

17 He rescued me from my powerful enemy, from my foes, who were too strong for me. NIV

The thundering of the clouds is seen as the rattling of His chariot. The wind, of course, is the wind. And the arrows are sent from His bowstring. We should never forget that worship is warfare. The procession of percussion can be the very manifestation in the senses realm of the chariot of God in the spiritual!

Ps 22:3 “But thou art holy, O thou that inhabitest the praises of Israel.” KJV

What was the habitation of God in the senses realm? The Tabernacle! What instruments were used in making this habitation for God? Wind filled the curtains, cords pulled them tight and were held down by pegs beaten into the ground. The same process in setting up the tent of habitation is used in the musical habitation of praise: wind and strings grounded by solid percussion.

Several different types of percussion instruments are listed in the Old Testament: tambourines, cymbals, high sounding cymbals, sistrums (rattles), triangles, and bells. We have looked at the verses regarding the use of instruments in worship and prophecy numerous times in this series. Tambourines are mentioned in these sections as well.

Today, I want to focus on the most important playing of a drum we can do in life.

Nah 2:7 NIV

It is decreed that [the city] be exiled and carried away. Its slave girls moan like doves and **beat**² upon their breasts.

The slave girls tamboured on their breast as a sign of anguish. This is what the beating of the chest is representative of.

Luke 18:9-14

9 To some who were confident of their own righteousness and looked down on everybody else, Jesus told this parable:

10 "Two men went up to the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector.

11 The Pharisee stood up and prayed about himself: 'God, I thank you that I am not like other men-robbers, evildoers, adulterers-or even like this tax collector.

12 I fast twice a week and give a tenth of all I get.'

13 "But the tax collector stood at a distance. He would not even look up to heaven, but beat his breast and said, 'God, have mercy on me, a sinner.'

14 "I tell you that this man, rather than the other, went home justified before God. For everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted." NIV

Our focus in this series is sacrifices of praise. But what sacrifice pleases God the most?

Ps 51:16-17

16 You do not delight in sacrifice, or I would bring it; you do not take pleasure in burnt offerings.

17 The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; a broken and contrite heart, O God, you will not despise. NIV

We need to be broken. If our heart is indeed an instrument, then its breaking must make an audible sound to God. The pounding of our breast signifies this sound of a breaking and distraught heart.

Judg 7:16-22

16 Dividing the three hundred men into three companies, he placed trumpets and empty jars in the hands of all of them, with torches inside.

17 "Watch me," he told them. "Follow my lead. When I get to the edge of the camp, do exactly as I do.

18 When I and all who are with me blow our trumpets, then from all around the camp blow yours and shout, 'For the LORD and for Gideon.'"

19 Gideon and the hundred men with him reached the edge of the camp at the beginning of the middle watch, just after they had changed the guard. They blew their trumpets and broke the jars that were in their hands.

20 The three companies blew the trumpets and smashed the jars. Grasping the torches in their left hands and holding in their right hands the trumpets they were to blow, they shouted, "A sword for the LORD and for Gideon!"

21 While each man held his position around the camp, all the Midianites ran, crying out as they fled.

22 When the three hundred trumpets sounded, the LORD caused the men throughout the camp to turn on each other with their swords. The army fled to Beth Shittah toward Zererah as far as the border of Abel Meholah near Tabbath. NIV

During the time of the advance, the earthen vessels were used by Gideon's army to conceal their torches. But when the trumpet blew and the jars were broken, the affect of the noise intensified the impact of the sudden appearance of fire in their midst.

2 Cor 4:6-7

6 For God, who said, "Let light shine out of darkness," made his light shine in our hearts to give us the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ.

7 But we have this treasure in jars of clay to show that this all-surpassing power is from God and not from us. NIV

When our earthen vessels are broken before God in a contrite and living sacrifice, the glory of his light shines out to a dying world and puts fear and confusion in the heart of the enemy. Let the sound of our sacrifices of praise be to the timing of God's leading as we follow the Lord of hosts into victory.

Amen!