

BRING ME A MUSICIAN

Psalm Songs

To the ancient Hebrew, music was inseparable from the entire spectrum of life. And music played a central role in the corporate worship of Israel. When asked to give the word of the Lord, Elisha responded “Bring me a musician” (2 Kings 3:15). In fact, speaking the Word without musical accompaniment was considered a minor sacrilege. The original Hebraic language of worship was an intoned and inflected speech/song. It was a beautiful sound which allowed hearts to be unified in inspired communication with God. The hymnal of the children of Israel was the Book of Psalms, which was written in five volumes and composed over a 1000-year period—a collection of poetic lyrics whose melodies have been lost over time.

In this project, Pastor Chuck Smith, founder of Calvary Chapel, whose love of God’s Word is known and recognized by millions around the world, uses his voice as a call, inviting listeners to respond to the powerful combination of music and the Word. The supporting music to this orchestration of Scripture and sound is provided by John Andrew Schreiner, whose compositions and production have had worldwide impact, most notably on live and recorded performances by Fernando Ortega, and in his role as sound painter and composer of *The Odes Project*.

Pastor Chuck has a long history of calling God’s people to serve in proclaiming the Word in worship. In the early ’70s, he called young musicians together to record *The Everlastin’ Living Jesus Music Concert*, and formed Maranatha! Music to serve the proclamation of the Word and worship. As the story of Elisha informs us, this is not a new practice; it has been replicated through time. But as our hearts are opened to God’s word and we learn the language of praise from the psalmist afresh, a new song inspired by God’s Holy Spirit is birthed in each of us.

The lyrics of The Psalms were well known by the first Christians and woven into their everyday life. Just as our everyday lives are filled with sounds and images carried by iPods and cell phones, the early Christians spoke to each other; and as the Bible makes clear, The Psalms inspired the speech of believers. Of the 287 Old Testament quotations found in the New Testament, 118 are from the Book of Psalms. Furthermore, music was a vital part of the functional life of New Testament believers. At informal assemblies, the brethren were encouraged to celebrate in psalms, hymns, and odes (also know as spiritual songs).

It is our prayer that this series of “spoken psalm songs” will ignite a new song in your heart as you hear God’s word afresh. May the listening and responding fill you with the peace and comfort of the One who inspired this project and every creative act of true worship. Psalm 46 says that the voice of God was “uttered and the mountains melted.” Our hope is that this recording will help you hear God’s voice and that your heart will be melted by His Love. His speech is full of joy and gladness; may our lips show forth His praises.

Charles Fromm, Ph.D.
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