

Rise Up, O' Ye Levites!

(The Place of Music and
Musicians in the Current
Move of God)

By Ron Goodman

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Preface

Some years ago, the Lord began to reveal to me a hidden nugget of truth buried in what I considered at the time to be “Old Testament rubble”; the Tabernacle of David. Being the astute man of vision that I am, I uncovered it, gave it a quick glance, then promptly laid it aside (to get on with life, you know).

Well here we are in the year 2009, and many others such as Don Potter, Ray Hughes, Kevin Connor, etc., have excavated, exposed, and dissected this truth for all to see and wonder over. So why am I writing this book? I don't know the answer, other than I believe that the Lord has asked me to. Maybe some who haven't read the other books will read this one, or some may need reinforcement of what they've already learned. Maybe this particular emphasis needs to be heard. Who knows for sure?

One thing I am sure of, we are living in the day spoken of by the prophets: "After this, I will return and will build again the tabernacle of David which is fallen down; and I will build again the ruins thereof,

and I will set it up: That the residue of men might seek after the Lord.” (Acts 15:16, 17) While this may indeed also have other meanings, I believe it refers to the restoration of passionate worship to the earth.

It recently occurred to me that there are at least four primary components to the Tabernacle of David:

1. The Location - Mt. Zion
2. The Ark of the Covenant - Presence of God
3. The Levites - Worshipers
4. The Tent - Structure

Jesus has already addressed the question of location to a woman of Samaria: “The hour cometh and now is, when the true worshipers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeks such to worship him.” (John 4:23) The restoration will take place everywhere that there are worshipers.

Experiencing the presence of God is a topic that has been well covered in the church over the past few years. The emphasis on praise and worship has been a breath of fresh air in the church, and the Spirit of

God has been manifesting Himself with much more frequency. The cornerstone of the revivals in Toronto, Brownsville and other places throughout the world has been the manifest presence of God. For that we are all grateful.

This book is being written to address the third and fourth components of this restoration, the calling of the Levites into the tent. Musicians all over the earth are being stirred by the wind of the Spirit to bring themselves and their gifting into the house of God. Others are being called into His presence as worshipers or intercessors; and some are being called simply as "Throne Room attendants". All fit the bill as "spiritual Levites." This is the time! "Rise Up, O' Ye Levites!

Rise Up, O Ye Levites!

Rise Up, O Ye Levites!

Whose hands are made for war
Whose fingers fight the fight of faith
That rages evermore.

Take weapons of the Spirit,
Unsheathe the two edged sword.
Fear not, mighty Levites,
The battle is the Lord's!

Do all that's in your heart to do
The wind of Father God is stirring you!

Rise up, O ye Levites!
The King has summoned you.
For David's tent is being restored
And there's much work to do.
So, man your positions
Atop Zion's hill;
Be glad, holy Levites,
The Lord's your portion still!

Do all that's in your heart to do
The wind of Father God is stirring you!

Rise up, O ye Levites!
Rogues of righteous rage,
Come forth from your exile,
Break out of your cage.
Convene a vast assembly
On this stolen ground;
Rejoice, mighty Levites,
And echo Heaven's sound.

Do all that's in your heart to do
The wind of Father God is stirring you!

Chapter One

Rogues...

“And now art thou cursed” Gen 4:11

*“...and Levi...cursed be their anger...”*Gen 49:5-7

Probably, no group in society has developed such a horrendous reputation as have musicians. We've all heard the stories of sexual immorality, rampant drug abuse, rebellion, vandalism and violence in excessive degrees. Even in the church, there are classic tales of conflict between the organist, pianist, guitarists and choir directors knocking heads over volume, soloists competing for dominance of the stage, and drummers trying to drown out everyone! Jealousy, strife, anger and dissension are the rule and not the exception. Are musicians born with the proverbial chip on their shoulder? The answer is no; not one chip, but two. They are born under a double curse.

The Line of Cain

(Adapted from the teaching, "The Blood of Cain"
by Don Potter)

Just as we are formed by a particular genetic code that is passed thru our bloodline, we are also born with a spiritual DNA. Everyone on the face of the earth since Adam (with one notable exception) was born in sin. The sins of the fathers are passed on in a never ending succession of iniquity. We inherit not only physical, but also spiritual characteristics.

We read in Genesis 4 that Jubal was the father of all who played the harp and flute. Jubal was also a direct descendent of Cain, the first killer of record. Cain's murder of Abel, his brother, stemmed from jealousy when God refused to accept his sacrifice as He had Abel's. Implicit in this story is the fact that Cain knew what God would receive, but in an act of self will, he decided to do it his way instead of God's.

Cain was cursed for his crime and relegated to a life of wondering, loneliness, fear and hard labor. He was the first refugee. In His mercy, God put a mark on him to protect him from the same fate that befell

Abel.

Musicians today are born with a propensity toward the same self-will, jealousy, rage and murderous thoughts. They are also beset with the feelings of the curse that accompanies it, if not with the actuality of it. If you are a musician, or if you know one, you have no doubt experienced first hand the envy of another's gifting, position or equipment. You have probably felt the isolation and despair of being marked a misfit. What God intended as mercy, you may have, because of guilt, interpreted as severity.

Satan, the accuser of the brethren, takes the judgment levied against Cain and hurls it at you. We know that until we are washed in the blood of the Lamb, all judgments against us are true, in that if we have broken one law, we are guilty of breaking them all.

It is important for the believing musician to understand the tactics of the enemy in this regard. You will remember God's first indictment of Cain was that his offering was not acceptable. That statement was true. The accuser takes the very same statement

God made to Cain and transfers it to us. The difference is now, the charge is a lie!

The Scripture says clearly God not only allows, but in fact, commands that we bring offerings of music to His throne. (Ps. 100, Ps. 33, Ps. 150, etc.) Because the accusation is framed in God's own words, we accept it at face value and endeavor to keep our music out of God's presence; being convinced that it is not worthy of Him.

This in turn fosters feelings of isolation, both from our Heavenly Father and our earthly siblings. This can become a deadly, downward spiral. But, it's not the only curse we have to rise above.

The Tribe of Levi

Musicians in the House of God are spiritual descendants, not only of Cain, but also of Levi. The Levites, as you recall, were given oversight of the tabernacle ministries, and were assistants to the Aaronic priesthood. They were the worship leaders of the Old Testament.

Much has been said over the years in sermons,

books, commentaries, etc. about Jacob/Israel blessing his sons before his death. What is often overlooked is the fact that there are two sons that he cursed. Simeon and Levi.

The next chapter will deal with the calling out of the Levites, but first let us look at the curse. “Simeon and Levi are brethren...cursed be their anger, for it was fierce; and their wrath, for it was cruel.” (Gen. 49:5-7) A close examination of the story shows that, once again, we find a heritage of rage, murder and self-will. Is it any wonder that musicians have such a bad track record?

“O wretched man that I am. Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?” (Rom. 7:24)

Chapter Two

...Of Righteous Rage

Redemption! What a word! What a concept! What a surprise! Picture if you will, the barrenness of the Sinai desert. A dry and weary land where there is no water. The mountain is covered with thick clouds of smoke and fire. Thunder fills the air as lightning illuminates the sky. The lone prophet descends from a face to face encounter with ultimate holiness, only to be confronted by an unspeakable abomination: a golden idol, surrounded by the naked, adulterous people of God. In his rage, Moses smashes Yahweh's hand-written tablets of stone and cries, "Who is on the Lord's side? Let him come unto me.' And all the sons of Levi gathered themselves together unto him. And he said unto them, 'Thus saith the Lord God of Israel, put every man his sword by his side, and go in and out from gate to gate throughout the camp, and slay every man his brother, and every man his companion, and every man his neighbor.' And the children of Levi did according to the word of Moses:

and there fell of the people that day about three thousand men." (Ex. 32:26-28) "At that time, the Lord separated the tribe of Levi to bear the ark of the covenant of the Lord, to stand before the Lord to minister unto Him, and to bless in His name unto this Day." (Deut 10:8-9) It is noteworthy that the Levite's first act of service to the Lord, the one that carved for them their special place in His heart, did not involve the elimination of their fierce nature, but rather the sanctification and utilization of it.

Don't misunderstand me here. I am not implying, nor do I believe that there is not the very real necessity for cleansing of the musician's character. Works of the flesh have no place in the Kingdom of God. Those that are in the flesh cannot please God, period!

Moses' instruction to take up the sword was, no doubt, just what the Levites were waiting to hear. Their response was immediate, their skills were honed, their weapons were razor sharp, and the results were deadly.

In these days of what we believe to be end time revival, God has set apart for himself a tribe of

spiritual Levite warriors. Some are already within the church's four walls; many more are still out in the world. But they are all waiting, with a cauldron burning deep within.

Those who have been born again wonder why this fire wasn't extinguished at their salvation. Instead, it intensifies. They question their experience with God because it hasn't made them "nice". They are impatient with the activities of the church that seem to have no direct connection to the presence of God. They have little interest in the music of the church (more on that later); and when asked to participate, they have the nagging suspicion that they don't really fit in. (If you identify with the above, you may be a Levite).

God has set apart for Himself a group of people who are itching for a fight, but don't know why. These warriors of the Spirit will answer the call to take up the sword of the Lord, the Word of God, against the enemies of the Kingdom.

Jesus said that from the time of John the Baptist until now, "...the Kingdom of Heaven allows

violence, and violent men take it by force.” (Matt. 11:12) While all believers are members of the Army of the Lord, God has His special operations units to call upon in especially intense times of warfare. It takes a certain amount of resolve and dogged single-mindedness to be able to stand the heat of battle. It’s no place for the squeamish or faint-hearted.

Yes, God will deliver you from works of the flesh and impurities of character, but He has left within you a fiery nature He can purge and use for His own purposes.

Chapter Three

Passion Is the Issue

Perhaps, one of the more widely held debates in the church over the past 30 years has been whether or not a believer should listen to secular music. There have been crusades for the purpose of exposing the rock-n-roll lifestyle and backward masked messages. Mass record-breaking events were popular in the mid-seventies in some Christian circles.

At the same time, papers were being written and lectures given teaching the believer's freedom in Christ, espousing their duty to penetrate the culture of the day and become a viable player in it.

This debate hasn't been settled in 30 years, so we'll not even enter it here, but I think I know the reason why so many musicians have turned away from the music of the church and turned to other sources for their inspiration. The issue is passion, or the lack thereof.

One significant hallmark of this current move of God is the restoration of passion to His people. The spiritual Levite has a fire burning deep within, not only of rage, but also of desire for intimacy with God. Much of the music of the mainstream church for the last few decades has not reflected that desire, although there have been some exceptions. The music of the black church in America has always given release to the many deep emotions of its people. The creative nature of their expression has given birth to many modern styles of music: Blues, rhythm and blues, rock-n-roll, and jazz. Many Pentecostal churches “on the other side of the tracks”, were also characterized by their intense times of praise and worship, including shouting, dancing, running and rolling. Artists, from Elvis to Aretha, had their beginnings in the church.

For the most part however, Sunday morning music in America has not mirrored the fervor or musicianship of the times. It has often been, in a word, boring. Larry Norman expressed it this way:

"I want the people to know
That He saved my soul

But I still like to listen to the radio
They say rock and roll is wrong
We'll give you one more chance
I say I feel so good I gotta' get up and
dance

I know what's right, I know what's wrong,
I don't confuse it

All I'm really trying to say is
Why should the Devil have all the good
music?

I feel good everyday

Cause Jesus is the rock and

He rolled my blues away!

(Why Should the Devil Have All the Good Music? Larry
Norman 1972)

In order for music to be an effective tool in the hands of God, it needs to flow from the heart of the musician. It is not a mistake or coincidence that you have the taste in music that you do. The music that flows naturally when you sit down to play for your own enjoyment is the music that God has placed in

your heart. If it moves you, then God can use it to move others. More importantly, if it flows from your heart, it also moves the heart of God.

Music is inherently good, because all that God made was good. "All good and perfect gifts come down from the Father of lights." All things were created by him and for Him, and without him nothing was made. Satan is not a creator, but rather a thief, usurper and pervert-er.

Music that is labeled satanic or demonic is simply music that was taken from its creator and used for evil purposes. If a kitchen knife is stolen and used to commit a murder, that does not make the knife evil; it is rather, an effective sharp instrument that has been used for a purpose other than that for which it was designed. Certainly the devil has used music, and continues to do so. He uses it is because he knows the power in it. The reason the spirit of religion wants to keep your music locked up inside of you is because he is afraid of its power. Passionate music, coupled with the anointing of the Holy Spirit and flowing from an army of Levites, is something our enemy would rather not have to contend with.

For as long as I can remember, I have had a deep love for the blues. When my guitar and I sit down for a visit, this particular style always seems to dominate the repertoire. Recently, while singing at an intercession conference at a small church in Mississippi, a prophecy was given that God wanted to use the blues in that area as a tool of harvest and as a weapon of warfare. It didn't take much encouragement before we were playing all of our "B. B. King licks" at the prayer time. The Holy Spirit honored His Word and our obedience by an awesome manifestation of His presence. The Lord knew what music was in my heart and that I would play it passionately for Him. He also knew what would effectively penetrate that particular culture.

What music is in your heart? Have you been afraid to offer it as a gift to the Lord? Have you instead been offering what you thought He wanted to hear, but keeping your real music hidden? Can you be passionate about the gift you are bringing? You can't express your passion for God with anything less than that which flows directly from your heart to His.

At the initiation of the first Tabernacle of David,

the King danced before the Lord with all his might. At its restoration, God is calling forth a Royal Priesthood who will worship with all that is within them.

This is the passion that God is restoring to the church. This is the passion that will make the world sit up and take notice. This is worship in Spirit and in truth.

Chapter Four

Worship, Intercession & Warfare

“A three stranded chord is not easily broken”

Compartmentalization. It's a “man thing” some psychologists say. You know, the ability to separate one's life into separate and distinct slices that when put together, make up the whole pie, yet have no significant relation to or impact on the other slices. Maybe it's because of the male-dominated leadership in the church, or perhaps because these concepts have been restored to the church in progressive revelation; but the church has compartmentalized three activities that I believe were designed to be one, natural flowing river of God: worship, intercession and warfare.

When the disciples asked Jesus to teach them to pray, He taught them that time in the Father's presence should begin and end with worship. He also taught them that repentance, petition and contention

for the Kingdom flow out of acknowledgement, reverence and adoration of our God.

God, who is a triune being (Father, Son and Holy Spirit), designed much of His creation based on the Trinitarian concept. Protons, neutrons and electrons make up the atom. Man is body, soul and spirit. Musical chords are based on combinations of three tones. Just as removing one wheel of a tricycle causes a lack of stability, power and effectiveness; removing one strand from any of these "chords" reduces its potency.

Worship, intercession and warfare are activities that take place in the presence of God. They are carried out by those who surround the throne and come near enough to the Father's heart to hear its beat. Their ears are opened to hear his every desire, whim or command. When we approach His throne in worship, we are often privileged to hear what's on His heart. We feel His emotions, His grief and His anger. We respond by pleading with Him to do something on earth to line it up with His heavenly desires. We ask Him to go to war against our enemies for us. We worship Him as He fights the battles. We join with

him at His urging. We keep the eye of our heart focused always on Him.

Without His presence, intercession and warfare are hollow, vain repetitions. In His presence, our hearts are always drawn to worship His majesty. Our thoughts are drawn to His thoughts, and our ways to His ways. We find that He often takes care of our concerns even before we ask, as we keep our minds on Him and His concerns. We rejoice as we realize that the dreadful army we thought would give us an epic battle has been consumed by the fire of His presence.

Divorced from His presence, our worship, intercession and warfare become meaningless rituals. Separated from each other, they lose the ability to allow His presence to permeate every area of our lives, privately and corporately.

Compartmentalization, after all, can be a good thing, if the only compartment we enter is the Holy of Hollies.

For some time now, I have believed that certain secular musicians such as Santana, Grateful Dead, Miles Davis, the Allman Brothers, John Coltrane etc.,

had found a spiritual dimension in music that few Christian artists had found. I knew that most were not in the Holy Spirit, but I believed they had found a place that God had created for music to operate in, where it is given the ability to penetrate the heart. I recently saw a televised interview with Carlos Santana which put it into perspective. He said, “When I play the guitar, I’m not just playing. I’m either praying, cursing or making love.” He indeed had the scent of the trail, and had pursued it as far as his spiritual condition would allow. Sin, after all, is missing the mark and falling short of the Glory of God. His “praying”, though probably misdirected, is a form of intercession and the “cursing” and “making love” are perversions of the biblical concepts of spiritual warfare and worship.

The place is there in the Holy Spirit for our music to become more than just pretty melodies. It can be worship, intercession and warfare; all to the glory of God!

Chapter Five

The Power of Two

Music was created by God to be married to our worship, intercession and warfare. Music, in and of itself, can be a powerful force able to manipulate emotions and penetrate into the heart of men. It's no wonder that in today's culture, music and musicians have been elevated to the status of idols. A skillful musician can have the world eating out of his hand.

We in the church also know the power available to us through Holy Spirit-led and empowered worship, intercession and warfare. I believe we are just beginning to experience and understand the dynamics that occur at the joining together of these disciplines.

There are two scriptural principles that I believe apply here. First, "If one can put a thousand to flight, two can put ten thousand". Second, "If any two on earth agree as touching any one thing, it shall be done". The magnitude of power is greater than

the sum of its parts. It increases exponentially, creating the equivalent of a chemical explosion in the spirit. The agreement of the two supplies the faith so the "blast" achieves the targeted result. I have found that this principle works, not just in the agreement of two people, but also if one person combines any two of the following entities:

Music and Worship

No news here. Music has always been a part of our worship, hasn't it? Of course, but let me exhort the continued exploration of ways to bless the Lord with our breath and hands. Our instruments can be used for much more than simple accompaniment for vocals. Our spirits can soar into the heavenlies, riding on the wings of a violin, sax, guitar or flute. Vocalists can step out in faith and sing prophetically, blending the word of the Lord with a heavenly melody. Spontaneous eruptions of praise and adoration can take us higher still. "Sing to the Lord a new song; play skillfully with a loud noise." (Ps. 33:3)

Music and Intercession

I have witnessed a sanctuary full of devout believers struggling in obedient prayer for their city, and that struggle would transform into a mighty flowing river when one anointed musician would begin to play what was in his or her heart. Why so? Any time we use throne room patterns to conduct spiritual ministry, the results are positive. Revelation 5:7 tells us that the 24 elders stationed before the throne each had in their hands a bowl and a harp. The "bowl" was a censor of incense, representing the prayers of the saints. I don't think we would be too far a field to say that the "harp" represents music. The psalms are filled with prayers set to music. The pattern is established, and as our friend Dick Reuben says, "When the pattern's right, the glory will fall."

When I accepted my last position as worship leader of a small congregation, I was prompted by the Lord to always play my guitar during prayer times, unless the pastor instructed me otherwise. Our corporate prayer was often a highlight of the service; it flowed easily into worship, and set the table for us

to feast on the Word. The two are definitely made for each other. Try it, you'll see.

Music and Warfare

There are many scriptural precedents linking music and spiritual warfare or deliverance. David played and drove the evil spirits away from King Saul. King Jehosaphat sent the singers before the army into battle, and God wrought a mighty victory. Trumpets were sounded before God leveled the walls of Jericho. Psalm 149 is an entire chapter dedicated to the relationship between worship and warfare. "Blessed be the Lord my strength, which teacheth my hands to war, and my fingers to fight." (Ps.144:1)

With so much Word to stand on, one wonders why more deliverance ministries don't include musicians on their teams. Obviously, not just any musician will do; and instrumental prowess shouldn't be confused with spiritual power. The principles concerning novices in the ministry should definitely be observed. Maturity, purity and stability are a must for all involved in deliverance ministry.

Often the greatest victories in the spirit realm are won during corporate times of worship when a band of anointed musicians leads a choir of believers into battle.

Let me reiterate that making use of this “two principle” does not have to include the addition of another person in order to be effective. You can increase the power and flow of your private times of worship, intercession and warfare by the addition of music; even by something as simple as singing your prayer. Music and worship, music and intercession, music and warfare... a three stranded chord increased by the power of two. And we’ve only just begun!

Chapter Six

Music and Prophecy

“And Elisha said...‘bring me a minstrel’. And it came to pass, when the minstrel played, that the hand of the Lord came upon him, and he said, ‘Thus

saith the Lord'..." (2 Kings 3:14)

The "power of two" principal is demonstrated most effectively in the linking of music and prophecy. The incident described above, although only mentioned once, does not appear to be an isolated or unusual incident; but rather, a common and accepted practice. The Psalms, which were songs, are full of prophetic utterances. I Sam. 10:5, 6 say, "Thou shalt meet a company of prophets coming down from the high place with a psaltry, and a tabret, and a pipe and a harp, before them; and they shall prophesy and the Spirit of the Lord will come upon thee and thou shalt prophecy with them."

Music is a two-edged sword when combined with prophecy. First, it has the power to unlock the spirit of prophecy. Second, it causes the prophetic word to sink deep into the believer's spirit. Two related New Testament passages (Col. 3 and Eph. 5) demonstrate that music (psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs) have direct connection to both being filled with the Spirit and having the Word of Christ dwell in us richly. Music opens a channel that flows directly in and out

of the heart, thus releasing the flow of anointing.

According to 1 Cor. 12, prophecy is a manifestation of the Spirit given to the church for the common good. Churches have developed various methods of judging prophecies. Some require the one giving the prophecy to be submitted to the leadership before being given to the body; others allow words to be given freely and then make subsequent corrections. However it goes, prophetic words should always be subject to the higher standard of the written Word of God, and to the authority of the local pastor.

Prophecy, in its most basic sense, is simply hearing what God is saying at a given time, and proclaiming that word. In many traditions in the church, these words are spoken, often with great power and fruitfulness. There is great authority and power in the spoken word. Anointed music only intensifies that power, whether played in conjunction with the spoken word, or even by setting the prophecy to music and making the declaration by song.

Singing the Prophetic Song

Singing a prophetic word does not lend any more credence to the word being delivered, but it may increase the ability of the word to enter the believer's heart. The anointing oil of the Holy Spirit is a lubricant that covers the seed of the word. That anointing flows freely through singing or through the spoken word accompanied by music. Many believe singing prophetically is referred to in the Psalms as singing a new song; and in Ephesians and Colossians, as a spiritual song. The inspiration of the Holy Spirit wells up inside of us, overflowing in spontaneous outbursts. Most often, it is a song of worship or praise, but it can also be edification, instruction or even correction. Many times, the songs serve their purpose and are never heard again; others become the seed of lasting songs. Spiritual songs of today are often the hymns of tomorrow.

Psalms, hymns and spiritual songs speak of the character of our God, "Who was, and is, and is to come." Hymns reveal how He has dealt with us historically (Who was), spiritual songs show the

working of God now (Who He is), and Psalms, the word set to music, speak of His Eternal nature (Who is to come).

When we as musicians are operating under the flow and command of God's authority, we can by faith sing prophetically what we are assigned by the leadership as the word of God for that time and place. If we believe, we can sing with the knowledge that the Holy Spirit will anoint us to call into being what we are singing. Again, we see the power of the music fused together with the authority of the Word. Prophetic singing does not have to be spontaneous; it can be a planned event. The key is always the presence and power of the Holy Spirit and our reliance on Him, combined with submission to Godly authority.

The ultimate prophecy, the one that cannot be questioned, is when we, by the Spirit, declare prophetically the written Word of God. Eternal truth, whether sung or spoken, is a powerful force to be reckoned with, indeed. It is the Sword of Heaven.

Rest assured that our enemy will call his forces to keep a lid on this power if possible. The spirit of

religion has seen to it that many churches “have a form of godliness without the power”. Now is the time to lift our voices and break out of dead traditions into the liberty given us by the Word and the Spirit.

Prophecy with the instruments

If Prophecy is hearing and delivering the word of God, then prophetic playing is hearing the sound of heaven and bringing it to earth. Heaven’s sound combines with God’s word to bring about God’s will on earth as it is in Heaven. What a great time to be a spiritual Levite!

Chapter Seven

Echo Heaven's Sound

"Sounds, I hear sounds
And it happens everyday
When I'm thinking of your name
In my heart when I draw near
And incline my ear to hear your voice.
Take me anywhere
I will be your servant
For I long to share these sounds
I hear sounds...
And it happens every day
When I'm thinking of your name
May it please you O' my Lord
And for you I will perform these sounds"

Phil Keaggy

I am a song writer, and I think I understand the value of a good song, especially when entering into the presence of the Lord. The right blend of music

and lyrics can cause the spirit and soul to soar into the heaven-lies as our body tries to follow behind. Many gifted Psalmists from various streams of revival have given birth to volumes of new praise and worship anthems. Many songs from many nations, in many tongues and styles, continue to be written at a staggering pace.

Having said all of that, there are times in the presence of God when a song can only take us so far. It brings us to the gate, but doesn't unlock it. It carries us so high; then, leaves us hanging. There is a thin veil keeping us from intimacy. We can see the Lord and His glory, but can't quite touch Him. It is at these times we must leave the realm of what we know and have rehearsed, and follow the Spirit into unknown, new songs and sounds that bring us into a deeper level of glory and anointing. To press in requires that we have a believing heart, a listening ear, knowledge of our instruments and a willingness to go after God.

A Believing Heart

Hebrews 11:6 says, “Without faith, it is impossible to please Him; for he who comes to God must believe that He is; and that He as a reward-er of them that diligently seek Him.” Anything we do in the Kingdom of God must be done in faith, “For what is not of faith is of sin.” Worship music can be learned and played by any and all skillful musicians, but true worship requires a believing heart reaching out to God. If we seek God with our hearts, we will be rewarded with His presence; and “at His right hand are pleasures forevermore”.

God wants to bring us to a place that our instruments are extensions of our hearts, where we believe that God wants to hear not just what we have to say, but also what we have to play. It's difficult to play before a disinterested audience, and we often think that God doesn't want to hear us at all. Believe me, He does!

Our faith also comes into play when trying to decide what God wants to hear. You may ask, “Isn't it presumptuous to say that God wants to hear one thing above another?” It is only presumption if we haven't heard from God. After all, “Faith comes by

hearing, and hearing by the Word of God”.

A Listening Ear

As we immerse ourselves in God’s Word and presence, we can begin to hear the sounds that are pleasing to God. If you think the Creator is locked into one style or another, just take a look around. As brilliant and varied as the colors and sounds that surround us in this world, so much more are the sounds that He surrounds Himself with and enjoys listening to. As we draw near to His heart, He will let us listen in on His "collection". He loves to listen to pure, passionate sounds flowing from pure, passionate hearts. The sound that He longs to hear from you is the sound that He is placing within you, the sound that rises up within you when you’re in His presence.

We are created in His image, so it is reasonable to assume that our good features are reflections of Him. Most of us enjoy different sounds at different times, depending on our mood. Why would we think that God is any different? While God is not moody,

there are undoubtedly different sounds and/or songs that accompany the various activities around the throne. There is the joyful sound, the sound of war, the sound of warning, the sound of sorrow and the sound of adoration, just to name a few. As we are listening for the voice of God for direction, I believe we can overhear the sounds that are being heard in His presence, much like we can hear the sounds in the home of the person we are talking to on a telephone. If we listen closely, we can hear the sound of heaven.

Knowledge of Our Instruments

It's one thing to hear a sound, but something entirely different to replicate that sound. Have you ever sat down with your favorite recording and tried to play it just like it sounded? My first experiences with this process were laughable at best. The songs were often barely discernible, but as I became acquainted with my guitar and how to use it, I soon became able to impress my non-musical friends. It takes much the same process to be able to accurately and effectively echo the sounds of Heaven. Time

spent in the presence of the Lord, listening and trying to please Him with our instruments (by the way, your voice is also an instrument) is the only way to develop this skill...turning your "woodshed" into a prayer closet. Don Potter calls it "facing the wall", playing what you hear in your heart until you are rewarded by the sense of His pleasure.

The posture of the body is unimportant; the posture of the heart is not. Listen and experiment. Try new chords, new progressions and new tones. Your spirit will know when you mesh with His Spirit. As you learn it in your secret place, you can then carry it into the cell group, sanctuary or to the street. Why is this important? Probably the most important reason is this: you're making God feel at home. He is known to hang out in places where He enjoys the sounds of His people. Also, when we bring the sound of Heaven into a place or situation, we help to create the atmosphere that causes faith to arise, anointing to flow and the Kingdom of God to come to earth.

If we hear the sound of war in Heaven and bring that sound to earth, we enlist the Almighty to go to

battle for us. The sound of adoration pulls the worshipers into His tent. How do we know? First, it is by faith. Then, it is by the reward of His manifest presence; the sense of His pleasure shining upon us. It will also be confirmed by others in the body of Christ.

Going After God

Jesus said if anyone would come after Him, they must first deny themselves. Nowhere is this truer than in the life of a musician. I remember learning early in my musical history that if I only played music I knew I could play well in front of others, they would always think I was good. Deep inside, I knew I was a fraud; and that someone better could show me up. My pride kept me from being pleased by compliments, because I was always painfully aware that I was never as good as people thought I was.

When I began to learn that God desired my offering of music; and that the way to please Him was by playing what was in my heart, it became a freeing process. It became more important to please Him

than to look or sound good. When I realized He was more interested in my heart than anything else, it released in me a desire for excellence to please Him more and more.

Perfectionism and professionalism can be a hindrance to true worship, because the object of attention is self. A true spirit of worship focuses itself on God and causes us to continually go beyond ourselves to bring Him pleasure. It's bringing the best that we have as an offering to the Most High God, knowing He will multiply our talents and giftings as we use them for His glory. When we step out of our comfort zone to please Him, we will always be rewarded.

The sound of heaven can be brought to earth, and God can use us to do it. Just believe and listen, learn how to play it and be willing to go beyond yourself to do it. You, God, the church, and eventually the world, will be glad you did.

Chapter Eight

THE POWER OF PERCUSSION

(How to beat the devil in
4/4 time)

A few years ago, we had a friend staying in our home who was in the throes of a severe depression. One Sunday evening after I had come home from church, I began to pray for her by picking up a Cabasa and shaking it vigorously as I danced a war dance and sang in the Spirit. Immediately, an accusing voice said, “So, now you’re trying to be a witch doctor”. Thankfully, I have learned as I’ve grown in grace, to discern between the voice of the accuser of the brethren and my Shepherd. Like the little angel and demon on the left and right shoulders in the cartoons, I soon heard that quiet, gentle voice saying, “That’s alright, why do you think the witchdoctor does it? He knows there is power in the percussion and dance,

because I designed it that way”. Now, I don’t believe every voice or thought in my head. If the idea is scripturally sound, the voice is not condemning and I believe it will please God, then I run with it, whether or not it fits in with anyone else’s tradition.

I have observed how over the centuries, the spirit of religion or antichrist has systematically taken away from the church some of its most powerful weapons, i.e. the dance, the shout, trumpets, stringed instruments, clapping, and most especially, percussion. “Praise the Lord with the cymbals!” “Praise Him with the timbrel and dance!” Is it wrong to use the old American Bandstand standard, "a good beat and easy to dance to?"

In the Scripture, percussion is often linked with victory in battle. In Exodus 15, Miriam picked up her timbrel (tambourine) after God overthrew the Egyptians in the Red Sea, and began to sing and dance. By the way, the most common form of dancing is to move your body to the beat of the music. It should be a dance before the Lord, just as the dance that David danced. Be assured, God does think it is O.K. to really dance, not just run in place

or bounce up and down!

Isaiah, Chapter 30, gives us a picture of God going out to battle against Assyria. He is devastating them with His voice and with His rod. Every blow He delivers, He does it to the sound of the timbrel and harp (tambourine and guitar). I believe the Almighty is giving us the privilege of establishing the cadence of His battle as He goes to war on our behalf. When we beat the drum, He knocks out some teeth. When we shake the maracas, He shakes the footing of our pursuer. When we create the sound of battle with the strings, He accomplishes the victory for us.

Psalm 149 lists the timbrel and harp as agents of executing vengeance, binding kings and nobles with chains and fetters of iron. Ephesians 6 informs us that we are not engaging fleshy beings, but spiritual entities. If all this is true, and you know it is, shouldn't we be more diligent in the use of these weapons?

Before the death of the prophet Elisha, he was visited by King Joash of Israel who was concerned about an impending battle with Hazael, King of Aram. Hazael oppressed Israel all the days of King Jehoahaz.

Elisha instructed Joash to perform two prophetic acts to bring about deliverance. First, to shoot an arrow out of the window, then strike the ground with the remaining arrows. Joash did fine with the first task, but when it came to the second, he struck the ground only three times. Elisha was furious, exclaiming, “You should have struck five or six times, then you would have struck Aram until you would have destroyed it. But now you shall strike Aram only three times”.

We have been entrusted with the ability and honor of establishing God’s warfare by the seemingly ridiculous (and fun) act of beating a drum. After all, God has chosen the “foolish” things to confound the “wise”. Are we taking our responsibility seriously, or do we play just because we like the sound? We should enjoy what we play, but we must be aware that it is much more than that. When we play, we are engaging in prophetic acts of war. Unless we are instructed to play only a certain number of times, we should continue until we know the victory has been won. This is not a token demonstration...this is war!

Before we entered the era of modern, automated warfare, drums were historically used to lead the armies into battle. Drums create the expectancy and sound of battle. Ray Hughes recounts how low, booming drums were used by the Celts to sap the energy from, and create fear in the enemy before attacking.

One reason that many churches have been slow to embrace the use of percussion in services has to do with the history of its use in the occult, voodoo and other forms of idol worship. Drums have been used to invoke evil spirits into action. While we need to be sure we sanctify everything we use for God's work, we can't give away our weapons to the enemy just because he decides to use them, too. Incantations are used in witchcraft, but we haven't given up the use of prophetic declaration. If Scripture shows us what we should be doing, then there need not be any question as to its appropriateness. Again, the enemy would not be using it if it were not an effective tool or instrument. Armies going into battle search for the best armaments they can afford, no matter which side manufactured them.

As we will see in the next chapter, percussion instruments are just part of the arsenal we have been issued in the army of the Lord. Are you ready to enter the battle? Drummers, percussionists, and dancers, now is the time to rise up!

Chapter Nine

THE WEAPONS OF OUR WARFARE

“Blessed be the Lord my Rock who teaches my hands to war and my fingers to fight.” (Ps. 144:1)

“The weapons of our warfare are not carnal (of the flesh) but mighty (divinely powerful) through God to the pulling down of strongholds”. (II Cor. 10:4)

Every army has their own unique method of fighting and arsenal of weapons. The army of the Lord is no exception. Jesus told his disciples to put down their swords, because His Kingdom was not of this world. Neither is His army, nor its weapons.

Even though this book is about music, I would be remiss not to mention our need of putting on the whole armor of God (Eph. 6): Truth, righteousness, the gospel of peace, faith and salvation (By the way, “Yeshua” is Hebrew for salvation.) The only offensive

weapon listed in this passage is the ultimate one, the Sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God.

Psalm 149 is the encoded warfare manual of the Bible, and Ephesians, Chapter 6, is the code breaker; “For we wrestle not with flesh and blood but with principalities and powers...” Verses 7-9 tell us that if we do what is listed in verses 1-6, we will accomplish the following: execute vengeance on the nations and punishment on the peoples, bind their kings with chains and their nobles with fetters of iron, and execute upon them the judgments written. Since our fight is not with the people, it must be with the spiritual forces that are influencing them. What are these acts of war?

1. Praising the Lord
2. Singing a new song
3. Singing His praise in the congregation
4. Being glad in your Maker
5. Rejoicing in your King
6. Praising His name with dancing
7. Singing praises with the timbrel and lyre
8. Singing for joy on your bed (at home)
9. Taking the high praises in your mouth

10. Taking the two-edged sword in your hand

Psalm 150 is a continuation of the list:

11. The trumpet sound (brass instruments)

12. The harp and lyre (plucked string instrument)

13. The timbrel and dancing (all percussion)

14. Stringed instruments (violin, cello, viola, etc.)

15. Pipes (flutes and woodwinds)

16. Cymbals (metal percussion)

Obviously, this is not intended to be an all-inclusive list, but I believe the spirit of liberty demonstrated would extend to include all musical instruments, styles and forms of expression.

This is how we fight, and this is what we use! It almost seems too good to be true, but we can have a blast, enjoy our God and ourselves, and at the same time, put the enemy in his place. What a plan! I'm not sure that the devil even knows what's hitting him.

CHOOSE YOUR WEAPONS!!

Chapter Ten

Join The Holy Angel Band

In 1998, I was invited to conduct a bi-weekly worship service in a very small church in southeastern Alabama. My friends and I had been helping the pastor conduct some prison ministry and he wanted to bring that atmosphere and anointing into his very traditional congregation. I agreed, but asked the pastor if I could bring in some additional musicians so we could explore the use of our instruments in a corporate setting.

Given the go ahead, I began inviting some who were not only skilled musicians, but whose lives also were a testimony of holiness and right living.

We would come in and set up drums, guitars, bass guitar, percussion, saxophone, harmonica and the occasional keyboard. The Word of God was always close at hand. Chord charts of a few songs were available, but we had no set list and no agenda other

than to please and follow the Lord with our instruments. As I look back on it now, I see it was a time of schooling in the art of “wind-surfing”; riding the waves of the Holy Spirit.

I would have to say that it was one of the most fulfilling times in my spiritual/musical life. There was never a time when we were not graced by an intense manifestation of the presence and glory of our Maker. We would often play for two hours or more, and only “do” four or five songs. We would follow each other, reacting to a lick, rhythm, chord, phrase or sound, and always aware of the sense of His pleasure.

Often, we would be led into prophetic utterances or songs of intercession. More often than not, there were more musicians than congregation in attendance. No matter, we were not playing for them, but for Him. The music would range from mellow to raucous, calm to frenzied, molasses to white water. Still, always the presence, the sense of satisfaction, and the faith that He had taken our offering and used it for His own purposes in the heavenlies.

The music was always surprising. Sometimes

amazingly skillful, other times falling flat on our collective faces, but even then, sensing His approval that we had reached beyond ourselves toward Him. The common remark each week was, "Man! That sure was different!"

In Mississippi one evening, we were joined in on our playing by a sound that none of us were producing. Angels? Maybe. God? Possibly. We know that He does rejoice over us with singing.

What is my point? Simply, that there are still places to go we haven't yet been. There are ways to please God with our music that we have been afraid to even dream about. He enjoys us, our tastes, styles and our chosen instruments much more than we have the ability to comprehend or believe. He not only loves us, He likes us and our music!

Most musicians are aware of the pleasure involved in "jamming", spontaneously creating music in conjunction with other players. Imagine then, the inspiration of the anointing, the emotional power of the music itself, combined with the manifestation of His presence. It's almost more than a mere mortal can handle. I believe He will meet with us more often

as we serenade Him from a heart that's right.

Chapter Eleven

CHARACTERISTICS OF A GODLY MUSICIAN

There are more characteristics of godliness than I have the time or ability to deal with here, but I would like us to consider four of them I believe to be significant in the life of a musician: Humility, Excellence, Servanthood and Purity.

Humility

A popular song of the seventies went like this, “Oh Lord, it’s hard to be humble when you’re perfect in every way. I can’t wait to look in the mirror ‘cause I get better looking each day...”. Given those parameters, humility should be easy for us, because we realize how imperfect we all are, not in comparison to each other, but as we measure ourselves by the character of the Lord in the mirror of

His Word.

One Scriptural definition of humility is *having a right estimate of oneself*. Paul, in his letter to the church at Phillippi writes, “Let nothing be done through selfish ambition and conceit; but in lowliness of mind, let each esteem others better than himself.” Musicians are notorious for labeling the best singer, guitarist, song, etc. Humility requires that we give others the benefit of the doubt and believe that given the same set of gifts and circumstances that we have been given, they would be better than we have been.

The worldly system we find ourselves interacting with every day drives us to promote ourselves for advancement. God’s way, however, is this: “Humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time.” (I Peter 5:6) Others may suggest that we “toot our own horns” in order to be noticed, but God says, “Do not lift up your horn on high; Do not speak with a stiff neck, for exaltation comes neither from the east, nor from the west, nor from the south. But God is the Judge: He puts down one and exalts another.” (Ps.75:5-7)

On three separate occasions in Scripture we are

told, “God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble.” Grace is the enablement to accomplish the purposes for which the Father has called and gifted us: “For it is God who is at work in you, both to will and to do His good pleasure.” I think it safe to say that we are all in need of such help.

We can, no doubt, remember those times as small children when our parents gave us money so we could buy them an appropriate gift (birthday, Father's Day, Mother's Day, etc.). Our Heavenly Father deals with His children in the same way, giving each of us just the thing that pleases Him, so we can offer it back to Him. The essence of humility is the realization and recognition that all of "our" good comes from Him. Without Him we can do nothing!

Excellence

“Oh Lord, our Lord, how excellent is Thy name in all the earth” (Psalm 8:1)

It was said of the Lord, during His brief stay on the earth in human form, that He did all things well.

It is recorded that Daniel had an excellent spirit in him. Moses selected artisans, "...in whom the Lord has put wisdom and understanding" to craft the tabernacle. King David chose Levites, who were skillful, to carry on the work of his tabernacle. Why then, have we so often been willing to bring to the altar gifts that we knew were just good enough to get by? Too many times, I have witnessed musicians (and even been guilty of it myself), unprepared and unconcerned, stumbling through pathetic renditions of music in the presence of God and the church. This has got to stop!

I am not implying that we should employ professionalism or perfectionism in our ministries of music, but rather we should always strive to give the best we have to offer at all times; and our best should always be getting better.

Professionalism focuses attention on the one performing and on their particular skills. The applause and adulation are offered to, and accepted by, the artist. The emphasis is on personal greatness and accomplishment. There is an unwillingness to go

beyond our polished act, to risk making ourselves look bad in order to please our King.

Perfectionism, on the other hand, is paralyzing. It is the fear of offering anything unless we are sure it will be perfect. This, of course, is foolishness, because we know that nothing is perfect. We are so wrapped up in our execution that any little miscue will leave us in an emotional tailspin. In either situation, the attention is everywhere but where it should be...on the Lord!

What then is the answer? Rehearse as a professional would, but learn to let the Lord be a part of the process. Let your “woodshed” and your “prayer closet” become one and the same. Learn the music to the best of your ability, and be able to play it better each time out. Also, learn your instrument so you can leave the script at the prompting of the Spirit. Learn to “laugh off” mistakes while trying not to repeat them. Most importantly, learn to let the Lord be the focus of your music. Play for Him, and to Him. Believe me, everyone will know the difference.

Servant-hood

While praying one day, I told the Lord I wanted to be a great musician in the Kingdom of God. The answer immediately came back to me like this: “Being a great musician in the kingdom is like being a great anything in the kingdom; you have to become a servant with your music.” Jesus answered a similar question from His disciples by saying, “He that would be the greatest in the kingdom must be the servant of all.” He later demonstrated what He meant by washing His disciples feet. If He can serve, then so can we.

There are many ways I have found to be a musical servant. The most obvious, of course, is in offering to be involved in the music ministry of the local church, as well as regional activities. Weddings and funerals generally require music, and give opportunity to meet families at their point of need. Sick rooms and death beds are often dark places that are in need of light and hope. From nursing homes to nurseries, music can be a Godsend. Even spending hours playing the same song, over and over, for a

Downe's Syndrome sibling is using music to serve. The greatest service of all is to our Heavenly Father, as we minister to Him from our hearts.

Musicians in the world system often use their gifting as an excuse to have others serve them. I am afraid that we in the church have adapted some of the same philosophy. We expect others to wait on us and clamor over us like we were superstars, just because we can hit the high notes on that one solo. We want to be treated as if our gifts are more important than the others present in the church. Do we not know that we are all members of the same body and that the only one deserving of greater honor is Jesus Christ, our head?

I would be remiss at this point not to mention finances. The laborer is worthy of his hire, certainly, but it is important to determine in your mind if your music is an occupation or a ministry. If an occupation, then set your price and go for it. If however, you believe that God has given you a ministry of music, then be very careful what you require from your recipients.

I have often wondered at those who advertise a

concert and sell tickets, and then spend more than half of the time preaching to an audience expecting to be entertained. I am not against proclaiming the gospel. However, deception should not be employed in dispensing it. There is nothing wrong with packaging the good news in a palatable, marketable container, but drawing an audience to hear sermonizing under false pretenses is just not right. If your music is good enough and anointed, then the seed will be planted as they listen and enjoy. If you are called to the ministry, then ask the Father to provide for you. He instructed His people to take care of the Levites, and He will do the same for you. If He doesn't, then await further instruction.

Purity

“He will purify the sons of Levi, and purge them as gold and silver, that they may offer to the Lord an offering in righteousness.” (Malachi 3:3)

“Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.” (Matthew 5:8)

This may be the characteristic of God that He is most jealous over, for He will not tolerate the works of the flesh to be part of this last day revival. He has been spending much of the last twenty years exposing the sin in the church, and He isn't squeamish about who finds out about it. The things done in the darkness are being shouted from the rooftops. Repentance will come, one way or the other. Better to confess now, and get it under the blood covering, than to wait until the lid is pulled off. Jesus loves penitent sinners, but stands against hypocrites.

It is especially important for musicians in the church to be pure, because whatever is in one's spirit can be transported by music, from one heart to another. Impurities can be passed along like communicable diseases. The place of healing can become a place of infection.

King David, the great Psalmist of Israel, was far from perfect, but his willingness to be brokenhearted over his sins earned him the title, “man after God's

own heart.” After his sin with Bathsheba he wrote (*and meant*) Psalm 51. Read it and see the proper response to transgression of the law.

Since God is so willing to forgive, and seems to be drawn to the repentant one, does that mean we should sin occasionally so we can be forgiven over and over? “God forbid! How shall we that are dead to sin live any longer therein?” (Romans 6:2)

How do we find purity? We find it by accepting, through faith, the finished work of Jesus Christ on the cross of Calvary. It is His blood that purges us from all sin and impurity as we apply it to our lives.

How do we live in that purity? We live in it by taking heed to the Word of God (Ps. 119). II Cor. 7:1 says, “Therefore, having these promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of the Lord.” As we apply the principles of the Word to our lives, it serves as both a cleansing agent and a mirror that we referred to earlier in the chapter. By looking daily into the Word, we can indeed “get better looking each day.”

Chapter Twelve

PITCHING THE TENT

(A respectful word to leadership)

I have been in the church for all of my forty-eight years, the son of a second-generation Pentecostal Holiness preacher and a Bible school graduate. I have served the Lord in various capacities such as youth pastor, teacher, musician, worship leader and even a one ill-advised stint as pastor. I am currently involved in Apple of His Eye Ministries, which focuses on intercession for and in Israel. I am not against tradition in the church, but neither am I a slave to it; understanding that it is possible to both "worship in vain, holding as doctrines the traditions of men" and err by ignoring the "ancient paths".

There is nothing inherently wrong or right with the way we set up our church services, and I am not campaigning to eliminate any of the music programs

that are currently being used; however, I am saying there is more spiritual power available to the church through its "Levites" than we are currently making use of.

I have often heard it said in the past few years that if we want different results, we must use different methods. We are in a new day and the Lord is doing a new thing in the earth; if we are not careful, we will be stuck in the same old ruts, spinning our wheels. It is incumbent upon the leadership of the church to recognize and utilize all of the army that the Spirit has placed at its disposal. In order for the musicians to remain in the proper submission, the leadership needs to take into account the gifting of those under them.

Many gifted Levites have pursued a career in the "Christian" music business because there was no outlet for them in the church; others have gone into secular arenas. More still, have buried their talents, because they didn't think them to be compatible with the establishment.

You can't take new wine and put it in old wineskins, and the old wine is not sufficient for

today. We need to understand the difference between preference and principle when it comes to the music of the church. Obviously, some styles are not meant for some situations, but the key to it all is in following the leading of the Holy Spirit. Don't do it because I said it, but seek the Lord to hear what He has to say about it. You may be surprised.

This is the time of the restoration of the Tabernacle of David, and you dear leaders as the Chief Levites, have the responsibility of pitching the tent.

Chapter Thirteen

The Israel Connection

Bring Them In

Prince of Peace, bring peace to Jerusalem

Grace and peace unto Jerusalem

You said You would bring peace to Jerusalem

There'll be no peace 'til You are on the throne

And when You return, Lord, You'll bring Your people

home!

Bring them in, O' Lord bring them in

Well, You said You would, bring them in.

Your Word declares "all Israel shall be saved"

Who has seen a nation born again in one day?

Bring them in.....

They are no more guilty than I

No one stood for You at Your time to die
Bring them in.....

You will open up a Fountain, unto David's house
You will overcome this mountain with shouts of
GRACE, GRACE, GRACE!

Jerusalem is the center of God's universe; not New York City, London, Rome, Moscow or Tokyo, and certainly not the one-grocery town where I live. Jerusalem. Mount Zion, the temple mount, is the center of Jerusalem - the place where Yeshua (Jesus) will set up His Throne as King of Kings. The very spot that has become "a cup of trembling" to the entire world will one day be the source of life to the nations.

The place where passionate worship originated will be graced once more with the joyful sound of praising pilgrims from all over the world as they make their way to the mount to worship yet again.

The Apostle Paul tells us that if the casting away of Israel brought blessings upon the Gentiles, then what will it be when She is grafted in again, but life

from the dead! Worldwide revival is dependent upon revival in Israel; first to the Jew, then to the Gentile. That is, and has been, God's plan from the beginning.

I haven't always had this revelation of the importance of Israel in God's end-time plans. My wife, Karen, was immersed in that study, and she was teaching it weekly at our home church while I was studying worship, intercession, warfare and music. Then an interesting thing happened, the Holy Spirit had me begin playing my guitar while she was teaching. He said to think of myself in two ways; as a piece of furniture (an altar of incense in the corner) and as a spiritual body guard. At first, I was very self-conscious and felt like a sore thumb; but in no time, we were aware of a new anointing in the classes. Not only did it affect others in attendance, but I began to be filled with the Word that was being taught. The power of two at work again, two people (who are actually one) and two ministries melded in the Spirit; the sound of heaven and the Word of God.

During these times, the Lord impressed upon me clearly, that if I wanted to be involved in spiritual warfare I needed to see that the ultimate

battleground was Israel. If I wanted to intercede, the first priority was Israel. If I wanted to worship, then remember that the source of the principles I use to express my worship was born in Israel, under the Tabernacle of David. The Son of David, Yeshua my King, was born, died, resurrected, ascended from and is returning to....Israel. If I want a sure blessing on my music and ministry, then I must use it to bless Israel. It all flowed from, and it will all flow back to Israel, God's chosen people and land.

We have been invited to take our places in His tent on the Holy Mount. Some of us have been called to set our feet there; all of us our spirits.

Let's Rise Up, O' Ye Levites!

Let's Go Up To Zion!

Up to Zion

Let's go up to Zion
To King David's Tabernacle
Let's go up to Zion
We can worship God unshackled

Let's go up to Zion
Into mighty Yahweh's presence
Let's go up to Zion
Let our souls feast on His essence
Love, God is Love

In this Holy Place, the veil has been removed
A picture of grace, a prophecy of truth
And now face to face
Father God we come to You

Let's go up to Zion.....
On His Holy Mount, the praises never cease
In hands lifted up, in graceful moving feet
In new joyful sounds
Glories evermore increase
Let's go up to Zion.....

Lyrics and music to **“Rise Up”**, **“Bring Them In”** and
“Up to Zion”

by Ron Goodman.