

### C. Later Developments

#### 1. Music in the Synagogue

##### a. The style of worship<sup>9</sup>

- i. Worship in the synagogues was based on the practices of the temple, modified however with the omitting the sacrificial acts and rituals.
- ii. Synagogue worship was organized and conducted by the people, unlike the temple, which was conducted by the Levites. Services consisted of readings from the Law and from the Prophets, Psalms, teaching, prayers and final blessings.
- iii. Psalms, prayers, and readings would be cantillated, that is, recited in a heightened speech resembling simple song. Its basis was the chanting of the text on a single note, but with simple melodic alterations to indicate the grammatical structure.
- iv. Connections between Jewish and early Christian worship is well documented and evident. Even temple worship is relevant here.
- v. There is a direct connection between Jewish worship in the temple and synagogue and early Christianity. Keep in mind you had Jews getting saved and carrying their worship of God into their service to the Lord now. As Andrew Dickson states in his book *The Story of Early Christian Music*, "Christianity did not require an entirely new set of principles to guide its worship." Remember, the same God that they had served is the same God which they were serving, they had been made complete in the Son of God.
- vi. Many of these early Christians, being Jews, would see their "new" faith as a completion of their religion. They were able to continue to use many parts of their worship they were familiar with from Judaism. Therefore, these may explain the "relative scarcity of musical reference in the

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<sup>9</sup> *The Story of Early Christian Music*, by Andrew Wilson-Dickson, 1996, pg. 22, 24

New Testament, for there would be no need to record the detail of established worship.”<sup>10</sup>

- vii. Traditions of the synagogue continued to be absorbed into Christianity despite persecutions that arose (Acts 7:54-60; Acts 8:1-4) (, and the decision from the Church at Jerusalem that declared the Gentiles did not need to keep the Law of Moses (Acts 15:28-29).

### b. Notation of Music

- i. The documentation of the notation of music in the Jewish synagogue from the time of the early church is hard to verify.
- ii. This in turn makes it hard to compare the music of the early church with that of the synagogue.
- iii. Neither Jews nor Christians are known to have noted down any of the music they used for worship until at least the 6<sup>th</sup> or 7<sup>th</sup> Century AD.
- iv. The best and only way to make comparison is by taking the oldest written musical notation known sources from churches and comparing that to the present-day singing of those Jewish communities that have preserved their traditional music over 2,000 years.

## 2. The Early Church

### a. Were Christian’s composing new songs?

- i. It would seem the answer is yes.
- ii. Speaking and making melody (Ephesians 5:19)
  - a) Teaching and admonishing one another (Colossians 3:16)
  - b) The act of Paul and Silas (Acts 16:25)
  - c) The act of the Church (1 Corinthians 14:26; James 5:13)
- iii. While we do not have records of notation, certainly we can see that the early church was singing to the Lord in song.

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<sup>10</sup> *The Story of Early Christian Music*, by Andrew Wilson-Dickson, 1996, pg. 24-25

- iv. It is likely that tunes were made, either passed down by memory, or written and lost to time by persecution or some other means.
- b. Was the Early Church Singing?
  - i. Again, the answer seems to be yes.
  - ii. In about 111AD Pliny the Younger, Roman governor of Pontus and Bithynia, wrote to the Emperor for guidance on the attitude he should take to Christians. Writing as an unbeliever, describes them in the following manner:
    - a) They are wont to assemble on a set day before dawn and to sing a hymn among themselves to the Christ, as to a god, and that they pledge themselves by vow not to some crime, but that they would commit neither fraud, nor theft, nor adultery, nor betray their word, nor deny a trust when summoned; after which it was their custom to separate and to come together again to take food—ordinary and harmless, however.
    - b) It is important to note that your true believers would go on to sing less and less when assembled, as singing would alert their enemies of where they were at. Early on their enemies would be the pagan Romans, and later by such groups as the state churches, Protestant and Catholic alike.

Note: Some of the following info with trace music in the early Roman Catholic and Greek Orthodox systems.

- iii. In c. 364, the Council at Laodicea brought up some resistance to man-made hymns and only allowed singing by priests.
- iv. Hilary, the Bishop of Poitiers (modern day France) (?-368AD), in the middle of the 4<sup>th</sup> Century, regulated the musical service, wrote plainsong (chant), and prescribed its use in his choirs.

- v. Very soon after Hilary, Ambrose of Milan (c. 340-397AD), organized the work of Hilary and others, developing what has become known as “Ambrosian Chant.” He was a Roman citizen, son of a Roman perfect, and at 34 yrs. old, was appointed the governor of northern Italy. Soon after, in 374AD, he became bishop of Milan.
- vi. Ambrose instituted the singing of “hymns and psalms after the manner of the Eastern churches, to keep the people from being altogether worn out with anxiety and want to sleep.”
- vii. Ambrose’s development of plainsong arranged for a more impressive effect using four scales, and more metrical, strophic meters. His purpose in hymns was to combat heresy as well as provide comfort and strength to the congregation.<sup>11</sup>
- viii. According to Gene Kirschbaum in *A Survey of Christian Hymnody*, “over the next few centuries, not much happened, in fact, the use of music was on a decline.”
- ix. This is not surprising when one factors in the following:
  - a) True believers were being persecuted either by the government, or the state churches.
  - b) Singing would have been little to none, since the above persecution was going on.
  - c) Singing would alert state church officials where believers were meeting.
  - d) Etc.

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<sup>11</sup> *A Survey of Christian Hymnody*, by Gene A. Kirschbaum.

### III. Early Music Period – c. 500 AD – 1600 AD

#### A. Rebounding of Music

##### 1. In Worship

- a. Music in worship rebounded in the state church when Pope Gregory the Great founded a school of sacred melody, added four new scales, and established the distinctive character of “Gregorian Chant” which became the basis of cathedral music for the next 1,000 years.
- b. The melodies of such songs as modern-day hymns “O Come, O Come, Emmanuel” and “Of the Father’s Love Begotten” are actual plainsong melodies.
- c. The influence of the “Gregorian” chant was so strong that it soon became the accepted pattern for Western churches.

##### 2. The Dark Ages (450 – 1450AD)

- a. During this time Theodulph of Orleans penned “All Glory Laud and Honour” while in prison in 821, Bernard of Clairvaux (1091-1153) wrote the texts to “Jesus, the very Thought of Thee” and “O Sacred Head Now Wounded”, and Francis of Assisi wrote “All Creatures of Our God and King” on a hot summer day in 1225.
- b. It was also in the 6<sup>th</sup> Century when Eochid (Dallán) Forgaill is believed to have written our present-day hymn “Be Thou My Vision”. The tune is a traditional Irish tune dating many years back.
  - i. The tune “SLANE” (Tune to “Be Thou My Vision):
  - ii. The melody receives its name from a hill approximately 10 miles from Tara. It is reportedly the place of conflict where St. Patrick challenged the Druid priests and King Loegaire.

##### 3. Notation

- a. The earliest Medieval music did not have any kind of notational system. The tunes were primarily monophonic (a single melody without accompaniment) and transmitted by oral tradition.
- b. Enter one Guido D’Arezzo (995-1050AD), an Italian monk. He did much to develop the new possibilities of music notation. This would allow the choristers in his charge to sing new chants without having heard them first; in other words, sight-read.

- i. Other methods of writing down music had been done before, at least a century prior, but with signs placed above the words, they could only serve as a reminder of what the singer already knew. Guido's idea was to place the signs on parallel lines representing certain notes of the mode, the signs then standing for actual notes. Sometimes for additional help the lines were color-coded; yellow or green for the note C, red for F.
- ii. There was no indication of the relative duration of the notes (there are therefore widely differing schools of thought on the performance of the chant), but even so, the basis of modern notation had been laid down.

### B. Changes in Music

1. The following changes came about in the roughly 1,000 years between 600 and 1600AD.<sup>12</sup>
  - a. **Composition** – slowly replaced improvisation as a way of creating musical works,
  - b. **Invention of musical notation** – made it possible to write down music along with directions that could be learned from the score,
  - c. **Principles of order** – music began to be more structured and subject to *principles of order*; eg., the development of modes (keys), scales, rules of rhythm, etc.
  - d. **Polyphony** – the most important and dramatic change to develop was the advent of *polyphony*. The first clear description of music in more than one voice, *Musica enchiridis* ("Handbook of Music"), dated around the end of the ninth century, refers to polyphony as something already being done – not something new. Along with these developments during this 1,000 yrs. came increasing secularization of music.
2. By the sixteenth century, long after the introduction of harmony, the plainsong form of the hymn had almost become forgotten.

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<sup>12</sup> *A Survey of Christian Hymnody*, by Gene A. Kirschbaum.

### C. Changes in Print

1. The rise of printing with the Guttenberg press in 1440 was applied to music notation in 1473.
2. This enabled a more plentiful supply of music, more accurate copies, and the fact that more works could be preserved for later generations.
3. The time between 1450 and 1550 saw a great increase in instrumental music, (this could also be due to more music was starting to be written down) as well as the development of European national styles.
4. In fact, Martin Luther and his movement took full advantage of the printing press. Because of the timing of the moveable type of Guttenberg and when Luther nailed his 95 theses, Luther and his writings made their way throughout Germany and beyond.

### D. Music and the Reformation

1. Martin Luther and his stand was one of many changes that would bring music back to be used by common man in worship.
2. After Martin Luther's excommunication by the Roman Catholic church he was given further protection by Fredrick the Wise (Frederick III), and took this opportunity to write more pamphlets, write a German translation of the New Testament and to consider new reforms of worship.
3. Luther's background as an Augustinian monk him a deep love of music. Not only was he profoundly familiar with the traditional Gregorian chant but his training as a singer lutenist enabled him to compose adequately in the polyphonic style of the times. He knew the power of music for good and ill:

***Next to the word of God, music deserves the highest praise. She is a mistress and governess of those human emotions... which control men or more often overwhelm them... Whether you wish to comfort the sad, to subdue frivolity, to encourage the despairing, to humble the proud, to calm the passionate, or to appease those full of hate... what more effective means than music could you find?***<sup>13</sup>

4. Luther's musical ideas were most striking. Once more his starting point was the church's long-standing musical traditions. He and his helpers began translating the Latin texts in German while carefully and sensitively

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<sup>13</sup> *The Story of Christian Music*, by Andrew Wilson-Dickson, 1996, pg. 60.

re-molding the tunes so that they could fit the different stress-patterns in the German language.

- a. Usually this meant simplifying and making the tune more direct and stronger. Latin hymns the Ambrosian style were the easiest to transform.
- b. Luther also used simple melodies familiar to the ordinary people.
- c. Latin or German devotional songs, school songs, children's songs, folksongs or carols.

#### 5. Luther the Hymn Writer

- a. Luther also wrote many hymns himself, both words and music.
- b. The most famous being "A Mighty Fortress is Our God".
- c. Not only did Luther recognize the power of music as an aid to devotion, to enhance and to elevate worship, he also was keenly aware of the need to educate the younger generations into Christian ways. Young people he believed, could be encouraged to turn away from music with bad associations by acquaintance with music of a more wholesome kind.