

***INJUNCTIONS TOWARDS AN  
AFROCENTRIC THEOLOGY OF WORSHIP  
MUSIC: AN OLD TESTAMENT  
PERSPECTIVE***

*by*

**John Adesheun Karonwi**

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**Supervisor: Prof D J Human**

**Co-supervisor: Dr S S Ndogo**

## DECLARATION

I declare that **Injunctions towards an Afrocentric Theology of worship music: An Old Testament perspectives** is my own work and that all sources that I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references.

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SIGNED- JOHN ADESHEUN KARONWI

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DATE

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

TO GOD ALMIGHTY:

“For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him” Col. 1:16 (KJV)

“In him was life; and the life was the light of men.” John 1:4 (NLT)

“To God belong wisdom and power; counsel and understanding are his” Job 12:13 (NIV)

A work like this can never be done through an individual effort. My appreciation firstly is ascribed to the Sovereign God for His immeasurable grace and strength to achieve this success. To my wife, Abby and boys, Jerry and Judah for their love and patience, to my family and friends for their prayers and encouragement, to Tomi Ayenakin and Tunde Okunlade for proof reading these pages. And finally, to my supervisors for being there to encourage and correct. Thank you all.

## ABSTRACT

Worship music on the African continent has become a very contentious issue, especially in the contemporary religious settings. Music generally has also been identified to play a vital role in all forms of worship in Africa. Thereby, it has been packaged and segmented in various classes and *genres* that suites its practitioners, such that they can interact and freely express themselves.

Music in African worship is extremely unique, such that it is intimately connected to African customs and practices. African music has created a new phase to Africans response to the Gospel. On the other hand, music has been instrumental in the contextualisation of African theology. Above all, music as well as prayers (i.e. imprecatory psalms) played an important role in the biblical worship and celebrations such that it expresses love and praise to Yahweh.

However, this research is predicated on the concern that contemporary worship music practices are no longer 'spirit led', and does not demonstrate a fundamental biblical premise. The true meaning of worship in the contemporary church has been lost, such that the term 'worship' is now synonymous to music and dance.

Addressing these challenges, biblical injunctions are established to enlighten the modern church on the use of music in worship and to re-direct its path to a more authentic worship practices.

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## ABBREVIATIONS

Standard abbreviations will be applied as indicated in the following versions of the Bible.

ESV	English Standard Version
NIV	New International Version
NKJV	New King James Version
NASB	New American Standard Bible
NLT	New Living Translation
LASB	Life Application Study Bible
JTSA	Journal for the Study Bible Testament
ISBE	International Standard Bible Encyclopaedia
JSOT	Journal for the Study of the Old Testament
TDOT	Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament
CAM	Contemporary African Music
CCM	Christian Contemporary Music
SDA	Seventh Day Adventist
ZCC	Zionist Christian Church
CAC	Christ Apostolic Church

# CHAPTER ONE

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Introduction

Music is associated with people's deepest most profound thoughts both from a compositional and performance perspective. Almost all aspects of life have some musical accompaniment, and any society regardless of how primitive or modern it may be, music forms part of their essential identity. "Music is also an emotive issue in many contemporary Christian congregation. Many are either attracted or put off by the kind of music played and sung, and their faith is interwoven with songs that have shaped their faith" (Long 2001:54).

Worship music is multi-focused and multifunctional. Its multi-focusing and multifunctionality encompass singing to God (whether for God as in praise and worship or for ourselves as in praying to God through music" (Adedeji 2007:86-87). Tshabalala and Patel (2010:73) further write that music is a significant component of church worship for most Christian. For this reason, worship music which by nature, is associated with one's spirituality, has to be the most celebrated of all.

The role of musical artistry in worship is to freshen up the overly familiar, to highlight shifting moods, and to engage the people with God and the Christian community (Neff 2014:28). Worship music which may borrow from African cultural flavours in its expressions and mode represents an experience highly regarded.

It is not to be overlooked that many local churches are producing a body of liturgical music that is a worthy cultural expression of their Christian faith (Whelan 1983:173). With that in mind, a well thought through approach to worship music is not always attainable within various church traditions. This study is an attempt to draw from the biblical account itself, injunctions towards a theology of worship music within the African context.

## **1.2 Actuality**

“Music is mentioned frequently in the Old Testament writings, and is thus shown to be an early activity of the Hebrews” (Squire 1962:14). Religious music could specifically be said to have gained a new dimension from renaissance which brought about great changes even to the science of theology. Various structures were introduced in terms of worship, liturgy and music right from the Old Testament. “The choice of liturgy and music is more than a preference; it is a symbolic expression of identity and of religious meaning implicit within that identity” (Carol *et al* 2002:10).

The introduction of music as a tool and a key element for encouraging sacred worship in Africa has brought about great changes to the pattern of worship, with the use of musical instruments, especially in the multicultural and contemporary African settings. “The people of God have given a major place to the use of music in their worship, even from Old Testament times” (Segler 1967:92). Therefore, a well-considered theological position need to be considered with regards to African worship music.

In the contemporary churches, worship has become synonymous with music and song. It is true also of the term ‘praise and worship’. “The gospel song has been

considered by many to be a religious folk music” (Squire 1962:242). As a result, music and singing has been elevated to a place of prominence in church meetings and services. In fact, the term "worship service" is used to describe a congregational gathering comprised largely of music, song and dance.

The greatest controversy of Christian music is the use of the so called '*secular beats*' like pop, blues, rock, salsa, jazz, hip-hop and other popular styles in Christian worship. Some Christians has denounce the use of these styles of music completely in their church. The arguments are, "that those styles, its instrumentation and rhythm are primarily associated with club houses, various satanic practices, and social vices and also because of the bad behaviour it arouses in youths" (Adedeji 2007:93). Warren (1995:284) infers that "today's objections are aimed against innovations such as the use of synthesizers, drums, drama and video in worship".

One could say categorically that the use of musical instruments in worship is not a sin, neither should it attract controversy if it is rightly applied. It must be noted that musical instrumentation in worship should be an accompaniment.

Instruments of music have been in existence almost from the beginning of time. Severally, references were made to the instrument of music in the Old Testament. They were used at occasions to summons the people for temple worship. "Singing was used for instructive purposes and for admonishing the people of God" (Faull 2011:2). They were used to warn the people of impending danger, also used during

periods of rejoicing and in worship to God.<sup>1</sup> “Music also induces an attitude of worship; it elicits from deep within a person the sense of awe and mystery that accompanies a meeting with God” (Webber 1994:195).

Music generally still plays the same role in the contemporary Africa. There is rarely an occasion in every culture where music is not in use. Wherever instruments are not available, voices are used as in ‘acapella’ (this is a norm in most African countries).

“Instrument of music was authorized of God in worship from Old Testament times, thereby the people of God have given music a major role in their worship” (Segler *et al* 1996:87). ‘And the priests waited on their offices; the Levites also with instruments of music of the Lord, which David the king had made to praise the Lord, because his mercy endures forever, when David praised by their ministry; and the priests sounded trumpets before them, and all Israel stood’ (2 Chr 7:6). “There were many ways to contribute to the worship in the tabernacle. Some prophesied, some led in thanksgiving and praise and others played instruments” (Galvin *et al* 2005:639).

The priests played their role by waiting on their offices, so also the musicians and singers. This shows diversity in the ministry of music. In other word, those who are gifted in playing the instruments played, and others engage in dimension of worship, in praise and thanksgiving.

The foundation of biblical music emanates from the Old Testament’s Moses and Miriam’s song of victory after spoiling the Egyptians and crossing the Red sea (Ex 15:1). Led by the duo, the people now sing a victory psalm that deals with the events

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<sup>1</sup> It’s a source of profound encouragement to realize that God gave us music to deepen and develop our relationship with him (Kauflin 2008:99).

they have just witnessed. “Almost certainly the song was composed to be sung by the worshipping community but it is modelled upon hymns celebrating a military victory” (Clements 1972:91).

Music and dance is an expression of love and thanks towards God, just the way it was an important part of Israel’s celebration. Songs can be a great channel of expressing our joy and relief especially after been delivered from danger.

“God has created several elements to assist and encourage sacred worship, one of such is music. Music helps to reflect the glory and activity of the triune God” (Kauflin 2008:99). Music plays a very important role in the Old Testament Israelite culture and even in our society today, because music mostly relates to events and memories of good and sometimes bad experiences. “The poetic form is not only suited for celebration but will also help the people to remember and pass on the story of what God has done for them” (Adeyemo 2006:105).

We can further reiterate, that it was a creative way of passing down oral traditions from one generation to another. An example is the song by Moses and the Israelites (Ex 15:1) One could say this victory song, as recorded by Moses is the oldest festive epic poem in the world.

“During the reign of David when music came to its important and vital place in Hebrews life, it became the practice to appoint Levites by the thousand for musical service, 1 Chr 9:33; chapters 15, 16, 23 and 25” (Squire 1962:17). Davidic worship clearly demonstrated that Israel’s worship involved more than the sacrificial system (Webber 1994:35). Music was introduced in the tabernacle activities as a non-ritualistic form of

ministry where priests are designated with the task to minister via the accompaniment of musical instruments.<sup>2</sup>

Some of the psalms probably would have been utilised during the Israelites' temple worship. Nonetheless, "scholars generally agree that the psalms were used in Israel's worship" (Gottwald 1985:525). Both vocal and instrumental music were well cultivated among the Hebrews and the New Testament believers as well as among contemporary African Christian churches.

Therefore, to what extents do these developments offer us critical and pragmatic approaches for contemporary worship music application in order to avoid the evolving of practices that are not biblically informed as we are wrestling with today?

The African contexts in particular are highly musical. Traditional practices are embedded with musical explorations that gives meaning to these events. By the same token, specific musical instruments, musical styles and songs are associated with some of these sacred events.

Music has a strong influence on human experiences, such that it transcends our understanding and appeals to our intuitive nature. "If music in the worship service were man's idea, then it would be optional and we could do without it. But if music in the worship service is God's command, then we have no option" (Fisher 1992:151). Music fulfils God's command first and then the experience benefits man" (Berglund 1985:38).

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<sup>2</sup>The question is: to what extent can these be adapted in contemporary African church settings without raising eye-brows, remains a concern?

Worship on the other hand, “is never an act of man based upon his own merit with the intention of satisfying man’s desire. Therefore, it is not an understatement that music plays an important part in forms of worship. An additional perspective worth exploring, pertains to how the practice of music can be blended to create an acceptable balance in holistic worship.

Music has been and is still part of different forms of worship in the African context, including idol, traditional and ancestral worship. This makes it difficult to differentiate music for a particular form of worship, or rather to identify a pattern of music to certain worship. “Many people worship with the body, this means that they consider themselves to have worshiped if they have been in the right place doing the right things at the right time” (Ryken *et al* 2003:6).

Squire (1962:17-18) therefore asked a very important and relevant question that requires attention. What is the purpose of music within a community of worship, do we have to use it at all. Can music associated with other forms of worship be used in the church at all?

The importance of music in the Old Testaments was revealed severally in the daily life of antiquity. “For instance, writers describe how people used music to express an array of emotions, convey valuable information and entertain. Moreover, there are numerous ceremonies and celebrations where musical performance played a major part. 2 Chronicles 5:3-14, describe how music played a major role at the temple celebration. Several passages contain descriptions of actual instruments, names of musicians, as well as places and times music were played” (Burgh 2006:1).

However, it is impossible to read the Old Testament and be unaware of the many sacrificial acts of worship. Festivals were part of the yearly liturgical calendar and in particular the book of Psalms which not only provides the varied vocabulary, but also the rich musical variety of worship expressions. Early Christians borrowed from the Old Testament worship traditions, even though some of the music and forms of worship became of no effect, but they continued with many other forms.

Hill (1996:844) therefore explained that “quite naturally the form and practice of Christian liturgy has changed over time – eventually drifting from a Jewish to gentile enterprise. Baptism and the Lord’s Supper became for the early Christians two of the major liturgical acts”. These two ordinances are symbolic and significant part of worship practice. Jesus instituted the Lords supper at his last meal with his disciples as part of the Jewish festival (Matt 26:26-30).

The point that Hill makes with regard to baptism as holding ‘great significance for worship because it places the believer formally in a worshipping community’ may also be applied to the Lord’s Supper as defining the nature of Christian worship as Christocentric (Hill 1996:844-845).

It is also of great importance to note that songs were part of the characteristics of this worship, mentioning the song of Zachariah in Luke 1:67-69 and the hymn in Philipians 2. “Jesus and the disciples sang from the hymns” (Mk 14:26) likewise Paul in some of his Epistles made reference to worship song (Col 3:16; Eph 5:19). Therefore, singing also creates an atmosphere for other forms of worship (Fisher

1992:154). On the other hand, these worship song forms must also be seen in the context of the religious features of the Roman world (Hurtado 1999:93).

### **1.3 Problem statement**

The introduction of music into the tabernacle and Israelite temple services (1 Chr 16) became an integral part of the Old Testament worship. “Levites led the people day and night in praising the Lord through song, musical instruments and dance” (Webber 1994:35).

From this initiative there could be observable principles on non-ritualistic approach to worship through music. Are these principles applicable today? With a variety of contemporary worship traditions in practice, all claiming a biblical basis, how do we ensure that contemporary worship music practices are biblically influenced?

“Why all the music, what is the function and value. Is it there for window dressing, to beautify the service, or is there a deeper reason why music plays such a prominent role in the corporate worship of the church? (Wunderlich 1966:93).<sup>3</sup>

The contemporary music practices within most African church settings do not demonstrate biblical premise, rather it merely reflect preference and artistic display. Looking at a New Testament theological analysis “the explicit scriptural statements about worship music are contained in Colossians 3:16 and its parallel passage in Ephesians 5:18-20- ‘Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly as you teach and

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<sup>3</sup> See Berglund (1985:15-37) and Segler *et al* (1996: 87-98).

admonish one another with all wisdom, and as you sing psalms, hymns and spiritual songs with gratitude in your hearts to God” (Pass 1989:88).

Paul in the above scripture exhort the New Testament believers to keep house Gods word in their heart, such that they must be thought for instructions and directions for worship.

How does one ensure that biblical injunctions inform a theology of music practices? “The problem with Contemporary Christian Music (CCM) is how to make it biblically and functionally effective; i.e. making it musically and socially acceptable to people and at the same time without contravening biblical principles” (Adedeji 2007:86).

This mean that contemporary church need to strike a balance between music and entertainment. Worship music is beyond ordinary artistic display of skills, it must be differentiated by it message and forms.

African contemporary churches now provide the setting in which all generations have an opportunity to interact, serve and worship together. This is often classified and branded in various styles that suites the various generations. It must be noted that “the purposes of music in worship are to create an awareness of God and a mood for worship. To enhance inner life of worshippers, to unite the congregation for a worship experience” (Segler & Bradley 1996:92).

Meaning that the contemporary music practices within the African churches should be theologically informed, and not a reflection of preference.

Does African culture play a role in the formation of musical expressions within the church, and do we have set biblical principles that shape church paradigms today?

Because all music selected for worship should contribute to a particular purpose for which the congregation is assemble, to turn hearts and lives toward God. Furthermore, a congregation can be led to understand the primary purpose of worship music. Their knowledge concerning congregational music should also be increased (Segler & Bradley 1996:98).

#### **1.4 Research methodology**

This research is based on a literature review and employs a method of biblical study as the case may be.

An applied interpretation methods form a pertinent issue concerning theology of music in Africa. Biblical studies have been one of the basic approaches to conducting an interpretation of the research theme. The major methods of performing interpretation, which have been utilised by some African scholars, are traditional approaches and contextual methods (Holter 2000:10, 18).

African Independent Churches (AIC) are known for utilising contextual methods in their endeavour to interpret biblical texts. For instance, in South Africa, liberation theology was applied as a means of protest against political oppression. “The contextual nature of African readings and the difference in social, economic, political and religious conditions on the continent have resulted in the development of various reading approaches” (Ukpong 2002:17).

Modifications to the method have been developed and proposed by various scholars. For exemplary purposes few models are considered cursorily and other methodological categories are also explored. A hermeneutical approach is applied, which will apparently be narratives. "Narrative involves a deployment of skills and resources against a backdrop of often ideologically patterned" (Blommaert 2006:4).

The study of worship music as a *genre* is one of the key areas that will be explored. The discipline of music has several branches of practical and speculative study. "The largely practical ones are performance (music making), composition (music writing), music education, music psychology, and music therapy. The speculative ones and the disciplines they have traditionally related to are musicology (history and literary criticism), ethnomusicology (anthropology and linguistics), popular music studies (sociology and cultural criticism) and music aesthetics (philosophy)" (Lucia 1992:167).

The application is based on principles interpreted from biblical texts. "The bible ought to constitute the main source of Jewish and Christian music texts. One of the distinctive features of music is the text, i.e. the wordings" (Adedeji 2007:90). "At any rate the bible is highly valued as the 'Word of God' significant for life and survival. It follows that the bible is symbolical almost magical" (Yorke 1997:149-152). The Bible is Gods message to his people, which contains stories, prophecies and guidelines for godly living that are relevant for modern application.

The cultural influence of contemporary music on the communities of African Christians is so vast. Such that:

African Christianity have made a great contribution to Christendom through scholarship, participation in church councils, defence of the faith, movements like monasticism, theology, translation and preservation of the scriptures, martyrdom, the famous catechetical school of Alexandria, liturgy and even heresies and controversies (Mbiti 1990:223-224).

It is vital for purposes of this study to underline the contextual elements: firstly by the considerations of the African cultural factors as it relates to music and worship in our community. Also to slightly diversify into the religious traditions construe to a totalising worldview, it transcends the local, thereby creating possibilities for meaningful analysis. We shall therefore apply the literal-compilation method, by observing the view point of various authors to arrive at our own viewpoint.

The literature review will also be interchangeably used with a critical method of interpretation. To achieve the end result of this study, basic Old Testament scripture will be examined with a diachronic application perspective. And “in order to achieve the objectives probing is conducted highlighting the socio-historical and literary contexts (West 1999:141). These mean the approach by which music terms and languages evolved, analysed and are developed.

There are certain hermeneutic models that have sprung out focusing on African social and cultural contexts. African Cultural Hermeneutics presupposes adherence to the Bible as God’s Word. The Bible is believed by some to possess potent words that are effectual resembling similar words in African traditions (Adamo 2001:29). Since this subject is African, therefore in order to perform a proper hermeneutics of this topic, the Afrocentric elements must be fully considered.

## 1.5 Aims and objectives

The Old Testament concept of worship music connotes the idea of homage, and it connects the modes by which African Christians<sup>4</sup> today fulfil their mission. The use of music in contemporary African churches has dominated and attracted more attention than the subject of holistic worship.

It is not an overstatement that music, song and dance play an important role in the African Christian communities and cultures. It is a medium of expression of the inner feelings. “God obviously wants us to worship him with music, but he hasn’t given us as many details as we’d like to know” (Kauflin 2008:100). However the aims of this study are outlined as follows:

- ◆ Derive a biblical understanding of a set principles in order to shape the church paradigm, and also to suggest ways of applying this understanding within the Africa Christian culture.
- ◆ To explore into the Old Testament narratives of music and worship administration, as well as forms of worship within the Afrocentric religious context. Music and worship in African Pentecostal churches and African Independent Churches is also explored. In order to compare and adopt the right standard of the use of music.
- ◆ Discovering an Old Testament authority of the use of music as a tool in worship within the churches. In order to achieve this, an Old Testament portrayal of worship music is dissected, selected psalms dedicated to the director of music and a case of 1 Chronicles 25 is examined as well.

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<sup>4</sup> These are Africans practicing the Christianity religion, or Christ followers.

- ◆ An exploration of the theology of worship music with regards to selected contemporary African settings. To determine and adopt a theology of worship music, taking into consideration current theological premise. Musical inculturation within the African religious context, a Theo-musicological approach and musical forms from different denominations is explored. This is done exemplary and eclectically.
- ◆ Proposing a theology of worship music in African contexts. And to define the conception of good worship music or great singing as worship, as well as the interpretation of the word ‘worship music’, originally was used in the church and was performed at special festivals such as Harvest, Thanksgiving and so forth” (Adedeji 2005:2).

## **1.6 Hypothesis**

The hypothesis of this research can be formulated as follows:

Worship music plays an important role in the African culture, just as it was in Israelite’s culture.

- ◆ Underscoring the vitality and enriching the understanding of praise and worship music in an African context.
- ◆ Exposing some biblical principles of music and dance in the Old Testament tradition, thereby extracting the benefits as a means of enhancing worship music in contemporary African churches.

## 1.7 Chapter division

The scheme in this investigation is developed as follows;

**Chapter one** constitutes the introduction, outlines the study by stating the actuality, problem statement, scope of study, aims and objectives, indication of the research methodology, hypothesis, past and present research on the topic as well as researchers contribution to the past and present.

**Chapter two** provides basically a literature review. Overview of the topic, some perspectives of the African worship music, synopsis of the South African approach to worship music and a case of local church music will be explored.

**Chapter three** describes the Old Testament portrayal of music and specifically worship music. An exploration of biblical music and worship, a study of some selected psalms dedicated to the director of music, and the case of 1 Chronicles 25.

**Chapter four** considers a theology of music in Africa. This portrayal includes theological determinants of music, current theological premise and key theological orientations. Adopting a theology of African worship music is discussed. Other vital aspects will be music inculturation within the African religious context; theomusicological approach as well as different forms from different denominations.

**Chapter five** comprises of a synthesis of the topic, starting with the introduction. The summation of findings and practical implications of the research are discussed.

Recommendations and conclusion could be implemented as a means of improving musical acts in African religious communities. The dissertation ends with a proposed hypothesis.

## **1.8 Terminology and Orthography**

Terminology and orthography will be appended as the dissertation progresses.

English translations of the Bible will be used in this study, unless otherwise specified.

Every version of the Bible used in the course of this dissertation shall be appropriately specified.

### **1.8.1 Terminology**

Some important terminologies in this dissertation are listed below:

**African:** There are various ideas on what it entails to be African. But in the context of this study, they are the people that resides on the African continent.

**Afrocentric:** This is a cultural ideology or worldview that is limited to the black community or people living in Africa.

**African context:** This is referred to in this study as the circumstances that forms the event, statement or idea within the African setting in terms of which it can be fully understood.

**African culture:** It consist of varied tribes, with diverse population having its own unique characteristics, and inhabiting the African continent as well as diaspora.

**African churches:** They are independent Christian denominations started in Africa by Africans.

**African hermeneutics:** is a contextual approach that analyses the African culture as a point of departure for conducting hermeneutics.

**African worship music:** This includes religious songs, dance, instrumentation as well as poetry, either contemporary or traditional, that originates from Africa, for Africans and by Africans.

**African Independent Churches (AIC):** They are churches originating in Africa, by Africans and primarily for Africans.

**Charismatic Christianity:** This terminology describes Christian or worship group characterised by their quest for ecstatic experiences, such as speaking in tongue, deliverance and healing.

**Contemporary African music:** This style of music can be categorised as popular, urban choral music with its root in traditional music of the rural.

**Diachronic analysis:** Is an approach involving a study or development of a subject.

**Gospel music:** This is a Christian music genre, though it varies according to culture and social context. Dominated by strong use of harmony with Christian, it is composed and performed for religious purposes.

**Music:** Is an art of whose medium is sound; it is govern by various elements such as melody, harmony, rhythm, dynamics etc.

**Old Testament:** This is the first section of the bible containing 39 canonical books of the Hebrew Scriptures.

**Pentecostal Churches:** African Pentecostal churches are a dominant force in most part of African countries, a fastest growing stream of churches, even in Western Europe and Northern America.

**Popular music:** popular music is usually considered to be the music of the people, not of the elite, appealing to as wide a spectrum of people as possible (Isanga, 2006:248).

**Theology:** A systematic study of the nature of God and religious truth.

**Worship:** This is referred to as a feeling or an expression of reverence to a deity or god.

### **1.8.2 Orthography**

Bible translation of choice is the New International Version (NIV) and the New King James Version (NKJV), unless otherwise indicated. But for purposes of comparison, the New American Standard Bible (NASB), the English Standard Version (ESV) and other versions are utilised.

In addition to those sources listed, there are many other: biblical books, commentaries, dictionaries, journals, articles and electronic sources, directly or indirectly related to this research area.

## CHAPTER TWO

### LITERATURE REVIEW

#### 2.1 Introduction

African people respond in many ways to their world of which they are intensely aware. This response generally takes on the form of worship which is eternalized in different acts and sayings. "Traditionally, when Africans worship, they sing and dance together. They have a tendency to become emotionally or spiritually involved in the service (Dube 1959:131). "These acts may be formal or informal, regular or extempore, communal or individual, ritual or un-ceremonial, through word or deed" (Mbiti 1990:58). Worship in African societies makes the traditional use of music extremely unique.

While music was used over the centuries elsewhere in the world as entertainment, "most African music was rooted in recounting stories, celebrating life events, or conveying a message" (Hartwig 2010:500). Music, for example, generates such immense acclaim that one could easily forget that millions of Africans are dying with millions more at risk. Indeed, an analysis of the language used to describe African music in the West invariably utilizes the language of the positive image (Graham 1992:14).

"African music is intimately connected with African customs and practices, where the ancient African culture lives on in accordance with its hereditary customs" (Weman 1960:11). "African music, with few exceptions, is to be regarded as music for the dance, although the dance involved may be entirely a mental one". Admittedly, it could

be said that the African Instituted Churches had challenged the missionary traditions and grew in numbers because their African music and dance liberated and created a new phase of African response to the gospel (Schmalenberger 1998:37).

Pentecostal Christianity in post-colonial Africa has gradually emerged as an influential shaper of culture and identity through its use of music, media, and dance. This is because “most religious rituals, ceremonies and festivals are always accompanied by music, singing and sometimes dancing” (Ehianu 2014:73). “African indigenous religious ritual music is one area that requires scholarly attention” (Lebaka 2001:1). This is also because religious music culture has positively affected all forms of worship in the African continent and beyond.

Charismatic Christianity has navigated the shift from a missionary-driven avoidance of indigenous music and dance to the incorporation of indigenous musical elements. This leads to the popularisation of pentecostal music and dance that blends indigenous music forms, Christian symbolism and popular cultural expressions. The resulting forms have not only shaped Christianity, but also the surrounding culture and its political environment (Kalu 2009:3-11).

Kalu (2009:15-17) further explains that “It is germane to explore briefly the role of music and dance in Christian worship and the inherited missionary traditions behind the Pentecostal attitude”. Music has always been central in the human expressions of heartfelt responses to the divine. Singing and liturgical dance serve as modes of praise and worship and as muscular strategies for inculcating the gospel message because they unite the body, soul, and spirit of the worshipper during worship. Music in worship

further brings theological reflections about God and relationships with human beings and the world of nature.

“Music, instruments and dance constitute, invariably, a complex and inherent part of human culture and heritage. Essentially, music, dance and instruments have symbiotic relationships and purpose in various traditions” (Makahamadze *et al* 2008:292-293). In African Pentecostal Churches<sup>5</sup>, the centrality of songs is undeniable. Congregational singing is the backbone of Pentecostal worship, often in celebratory form, generally forming the first half and conclusion of services” (Warrington 2008:97).

It is conceivable that even without the encouragement of the European missionaries; African Christians would still have sung their faith in their own style. For singing comes naturally to the African people and in all their activities. On different occasions appropriate musical forms are employed to give expression to fears, aspirations, hopes, sorrows and joy of African people (Atiemo 2006:146).

The role of songs in contextualisation of the Christian faith is widely recognised in African churches. Various scholars have insisted on the importance of songs in contextualising the gospel in a manner that resonates with African people (De Gruchy 1997: 40-46). Among others, Bediako (1995:89-94) saw the “implicit theology” expressed through songs as “a liberating force for African academic theology and for the academic theologian”. No doubt, the contemporary Gospel has been influenced

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<sup>5</sup> African Pentecostal churches are a dominant force in most part of African countries, a fastest growing stream of churches, even in Western Europe and Northern America.

with and through music, such that it has made tremendous impact on the African culture.

There have been questions raised as well as debate by both insiders and outsiders of the Christian faith on what exactly constitute a gospel or worship music. “There is need to theorize the fundamentals of Christian music, exhuming the biblical, musical and socio-cultural basis for its performance practices, especially for Africa” (Adedeji 2008:85). This chapter evaluates various report and information found in selected literatures with regards to worship music in Africa.

## **2.2 African worship music**

The importance of music cannot be overruled in the contextualisation of African Theology. “The cultural heritage of Africa, its community structure, the religiosity and spiritual experience of Africa, past and present is a reality, a fixed deposit that cannot be disregarded” (Becken 1973:148). However, songwriters and song leaders have culturally influenced the theology of the African music tradition, which may have affected the relevance of the songs. Nkurunziza (2012:58-79) analyses locally composed songs to explore how some aspects of the received theology and the cultural background of the Burundian Pentecostal songwriters affects the relevancy of local songs. He argues that “the significance of the songwriters in an attempt to contextualise their theology cannot be denied”.

Nkurunziza (2012:76-79) further argues that “songs can only reflect a genuine contextual Pentecostal theology if the theological framework informs Pentecostals theological reflection and praxis”. This is critical of both the inherited theology and the

popular culture. Graham (1992:9-10), on the other hand, explains that the music industry in Africa has responded in a variety of ways to the problems of creating and maintaining a viable and vibrant culture.

“The extensive use of urban vernaculars in popular music has led to its popularity, and if these urban vernaculars are used as part of mother tongue education, socio-cultural relations between the school and society may improve” (Makoni *et al* 2010:2-4). Despite the fact that educational strategies based on language practices in popular songs subvert social hierarchy, the use of urban vernaculars reshapes and blurs linguistic boundaries and thus, constructs pluri-lingual identities. Using urban vernaculars not only provides access to education for a large portion of the population, but also consolidates ‘global’ identities while affirming cultural roots.

“Theology in Africa needs its songwriters, its musicians, its poets and writers of prayer and liturgy. Ways have to be found to integrate the insights of academic theological wisdom into the rhythm of Africa, or we shall fight a losing battle” (Nkurunziza 2012:18-20). This is true because songs have been identified as one of the mediums by which Christians in Africa contextualised their theology.

‘The foundation of gospel music’s engagement with popular music in some parts of Africa could be traced to the 1980s in Ghana. Typical was the Genesis gospel singers, whose song ‘*Momma Mo Akoma Ntutu*’ Ashanti: "Don't let your heart be troubled" won acclaim, perhaps because it comforted people amidst the collapse of the Ghanaian economy and political turmoil. Gradually musical artists shifted from the clubs to the churches. Reggae grew popular as Bob Marley and the Wailers reflected the resistant

spirit that empowered people amidst the crises of the continent. Marley appeared to be wailing against the failed rulers of soft states and their white patrons.

The major shift in musical production was significant in the 1980's as the waxing of records gave way to cassette tapes and the growth of the cassette market. Emigration broadened the range of musical creativity. As British immigration laws barred Africans, soon, a *genre* of immigrant high life emerged, nicknamed "burgher high life," that used synthesizers and drum machine beats instead of the traditional percussion instruments. This became very popular in West Africa.

The 1990's witnessed the emergence of "Raglife" as reggae was transformed into hip-hop. The reigning genre was "hip life," an amalgamation of high life and hip-hop. The Ghanaian artist Reggie Rock-stone was one of the earliest pioneers. This signalled a profound form of African American cultural influence on the African youths. Some started to rap in vernacular languages. This *genre* survived into the end of the millennium as hip-hop mixed with gospel music in a transformation that signified that the Pentecostal movement, compelled to negotiate with the alluring power of popular culture, changed character in every decade (Kalu 2009:18).

In Tanzania, Sanga (2006:17-24) has indicated that popular church music has become one of the newer musical genres in town, characterised by incorporating the electric guitar, keyboard and drum machine, also by the body movement that accompany the performance. This style of music has developed from the 19<sup>th</sup> century's into modern traditional tunes where Christian lyrics were inculcated into choir repertoire. Popular church music is defined as music of the people and for the people; this is simply

because it appeals to a wide spectrum of people as much as possible. For the purpose of this research, it will be referred to as traditional worship music.

### **2.3 Forms of African worship**

Worship cannot be isolated or relegated to just one place, time or segment of lives. Real acts of worship must be the overflow of a worshipping life (McArthur 2012:13). Every worshipper seeks to offer that which is acceptable in various ways and at different times. Evidence shows that African people worship God at any time and in any place, and that there are no rules obliging people to worship at a given place or time (Mbiti 1990:71). It should also be recollected that music remains a factor that plays an important role in almost all forms of African worship<sup>6</sup>. “It is impossible to imagine that African people could assemble and part solemnly without singing and dancing in honour to God, or as an expression of their feelings” (Mbiti 1975:218). Worship is therefore presented in different forms among the African people.

#### **2.3.1 Offerings and sacrifices**

Old Testament Levitical sacrifices consists of domestic animals and birds (Lev 1:2, 5:7, 11). Israelites also offered from their harvest products composed of barley and wheat according to Leviticus 23:10-14” (Kamuwanga 2010: 684). “Worship is clearly not about getting something from God but about giving to God” (Rayburn 2010:132). One of the most common forms of worship among the African people is in form of offerings and sacrifices. There are countless examples of these form of worship both in the Christian and non-Christian communities.

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<sup>6</sup> African worship embodies underlying patterns of thought and experience (Jones 2002:2).

Offerings and sacrifices could be interchangeably referred to as a form of ritual in African worship, because “through ritual man transcends himself and communicates directly with the divine in the African traditions” (Ray 1976:17). “Ritual however is a religious rites or a ceremonial procedure in a set. In all of these, music and dance as a meaningful and enjoyable movement, plays a crucial role in rites and customs of many traditional societies. It is employed as an essential aid to the functioning of a human society” (Lebaka 2001: 84, 87).

Sacrifices in the Old Testament bear some similarities to those of the ancient Near Eastern religions: both groups sacrificed, worshipped and gave festivals in honour of the divine. “Worship is an offering presented to God as a *gift*. The ancient believers practice giving and worship as part of a quest to please their gods, but modern Christianity worship in responses to God’s generosity and greatness” (Lucarini 2008:55).

“Sacrifices is an essential ingredients in the Old Testament worship and also formed a part of that service which Israel was required to render to its GOD” (Kurtz 2004:17). However, the sacrificial element must be pure and without blemish, this symbolizes holiness, which is an attribute of God.

Sacrifices in African contexts refers to an event where an animal is killed, or when food or object is presented wholly or partly to a ‘god’, to some living or dead spirits, to a supernatural being or to the supreme God. African music is often associated with ritual, religion and sacrifices especially with ritual dancing. "Ritual is assumed to operate directly on individuals. Ritual is also a communicative performance that always provides a sense of continuity and predictability” (Krause 1998: 86).

There are songs whose words give accounts of historical events; songs which voice protest against fate; songs which are sung at particular times of the year or at special events in a person's life like birth, puberty, marriage and death (Cornish 1963: 223).

In the Old Testament God required animal sacrifice to provide a temporary covering for sins committed by the people (Lev 4:35). The nation of Israel was commanded by God to offer various sacrifices in accordance with certain prescribed procedures. The animal had to be presented spotless and without blemish. Leviticus 18 describes another form of sacrifice which demonstrates atonement and removal of sin.

Sacrifices serve the purpose of instructing people how to approach God in obedience and submission. Conscientising people of their sin and guilt as well as reminding them of their broken relationship with God and His offer of redemption through the death of his son Jesus Christ (Peterson 1993:39; Frame 1996:5).

Offering, on the other hand, can be presented in various forms except that it does not involve the killing of an animal. It is an integral part of every worship proceedings.<sup>7</sup> Offering is therefore helpful and essential for it to be a meaningful time of worship when presented. The making of sacrifice and offerings is a psychological device to restore an ontological balance. It is also an act and occasion of making and renewing contact between God and human being, the spirits and human, i.e. the spiritual and the physical world (Mbiti 1990:58).

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<sup>7</sup> Offering is also something that is given to God or a god as part of religious worship.

There are concrete examples from different parts of Africa which illustrate offerings and sacrifices. The *Abaluyia*<sup>8</sup> (Kenya, East Africa), is convinced that God is the only one to whom sacred rites and sacrifice are made. For instance there are formal occasions where sacrifices are presented to Him. This includes birth and naming ceremonies, as well as weddings and funerals. These sacrifices are intended to secure peace for the living dead, while at harvest time they express joy and gratitude to God. The Lozi, on the other hand pour libation<sup>9</sup> to God and ancestors. The libation consists of water, milk and honey poured out at royal burial sites and set places for ordinary ancestors” (Arnot 1889: 71 *et al*, Mbiti 1990:58-59).

The *Yoruba* people (Nigeria, West Africa) make many types of sacrifices and offerings, which constitute ‘the essence of the religion. Almost all types of foods and drinks and living things are used for this purpose. “As they excel in the number of divinities which they recognize, it is these divinities who are the recipient of the offerings, even though the worshippers are the ones who practically eat what has been offered” (Mbiti 1990:59-60).

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<sup>8</sup> Luhyahs, as they are popularly called, are Kenya’s second largest ethnic tribe, they count for 14percent of the Kenyan population.

<sup>9</sup> Pouring of liquid e.g wine or oil as a sacrifice to god.

### 2.3.2 Prayers

Prayer is one of the most common forms of worship among the African people. “Music helps to deepen the experience of prayer, inspire the mind and make the rite more solemn because it springs from the nature of the celebration” (Bgnini 1990:47).

“Prayer is central to Christian worship. Sometimes in some culture may be accompanied with offering and sacrifice”. Prayer is the single most important means of opening ‘the windows of heaven’ in order to attract God’s presence in the worship service (Dever 2014:1-3). “Prayers and supplications are often addressed to God, but in other cases they are presented to a spirit being, and in some extreme cases to ‘the living dead or to ancestors” (Gaines 2007:112).

Praying is reportedly practical among the African people; it is more expressive and postural, such as kneeling down, prostrating in a comfortable manner or standing on a point with eyes closed.

It is customary among most Africans to pray early in the morning as a sign of worship and invocation before the day’s work. “Prayer of protection is common to both biblical and African religious traditions. The cries of the psalmist to Yahweh for protection evidently parallel similar responses by different people of the world when faced by challenging situations and difficulties” (Kamuwanga 2010:4). The Lozi<sup>10</sup> community of western Zambia, before they start sowing on their fields the Lozi assemble at sunrise, under the leadership of their headman who erects an altar of sticks and clay” (Mbiti 1990: 63). The dependence and enthusiasm that Africans express in prayer to their God (or gods) is to an extent related to their traditional background and context.

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<sup>10</sup> They are ethnic group of western Zambia, inhabiting the region of Barotseland. Numbering approximately 600,000 out of 10million.

On the other hand, it is said that prayers, like the making of sacrifices and offerings is at the heart of Yoruba<sup>11</sup> religious life (Mbiti1990:64). People pray at any time and at any place, whether in church or shrine. Prayers are often offered among the Africans for protection against all sorts of evil, sicknesses, for victory in battles over enemies and even for longevity of life as well as material blessings.

Prayer for protection is a common phenomenon both scripturally and within the African religious traditions. This is evident in the plea of the psalmist for Yahweh's protection when he is challenged by the enemies. In Psalm 91, the author who appears to be in a challenging situation, seeks God's protection in the midst of danger. The relationship between Yahweh and His people led them to trust Him and implore Him in times of need (Clifford 2003:17).

Most of these forms of worship are music oriented. Muchimba (2008:37) explains that the *expressionistic* nature of African worship is evident, not only in the use of the call and response pattern of worship but in its expression through the innate cultural practices of responding through shouting, ululating, singing, clapping, gesticulating, gyrating, dancing and processing .

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<sup>11</sup> The Yoruba are group of people located Southwestern and North central of Nigeria, as well as Southern and central Benin in West Africa. They numbered over 40 million in total.

### 2.3.3 Religious intermediaries

Out of wide spread attitude of respect which African people show in various ways towards God, some at certain times that humans should not act, or unworthy to approach God alone (Mbiti 1990:67). This was the reason why most people feel they need a mediator to help with prayer or to present their offerings and carry out rituals to God or the living dead respectively. Priests, prophets, shamans, diviners, witch-doctors, rainmakers, among several others are common intermediaries in the African religions. Some of the roles of intermediaries in African countries are; for example if anything is lost, if a barren woman desires children, if there is a mysterious disease, if a man is troubled by strange dreams, or for many other causes, the diviner is sought out and has recourse to geomancy<sup>12</sup>.

In some African religions, the physical world in which human beings dwell is assumed to be very far away from the spiritual world. Thereby, the need for intermediary is to help bridge the gap between the average or the physically minded and the spiritual world.

“In African religion, ancestors also perform critical mediatory function. Consequently, they are venerated daily and periodically through acts of hospitality and rites of passage” (Shorter 1983: 199).

Priests are reported to function in many societies. As a rule, they are formally trained and commissioned (ordained). They may be male or female, hereditary or otherwise.

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<sup>12</sup> This is the art or practice of making predictions based on patterns made by a handful of earth thrown on the ground or by lines connecting randomly placed dots.

Their duties include making sacrifices, offerings and prayers, conducting public and private rites and ceremonies. "Their duties further includes giving advice, performing judicial or political functions, caring for temple and shrines where these exist and above all fulfilling their office as religious intermediaries between humans and God"(Mbiti 1990:68).

In some African traditions, oracles are generally the mouthpiece of divinities and spirits, and tend to be connected with divination. Rainmakers for example, are found in almost every African society, and on the whole they exercise their profession in consultation with gods, through prayer, sacrifice and trust.

African traditional religions constitute life itself. Consequently life and everyday activities are immersed from the start in a religious context-while one is eating, working or relating to others (Benegas 2002:2). All these acts are religious because they are regarded as life, which is why it would be inappropriate to speak of an intermediary (with regard to day-to-day religion).

While it is true that life and activities are immersed in a religious context, there are priests who can get closer to divine beings in given moments, not just any moment, but because of their initiation. They interpret certain events or situations and ask of the divinity solutions for problems. "It is religion, more than anything else that colours the universal understanding of the African people and their empirical participation in that universe, making life a profoundly phenomenon" (Mbiti 1990:256).

“African worship at its core is deeply spiritual and ecstatic, based as it is on a cultural context in which the spiritual and the physical are inseparable and “supra-rational”. Human contact with God through acts of worship, therefore may be direct or through the intermediaries (Chetty 2009:259). The Pedi traditional healers are examples of intermediaries who consult their gods for healing on behalf of their people<sup>13</sup>. They employ music by calling on their ancestors to draw closer and heal during times of ritual.

#### **2.3.4 Other expressions of worship in Africa**

Many of the religious activities and ceremonies are accompanied with one or another form of music; this is because Africans are fond of singing “Music and religion share an intimate relationship since the beginning of civilization (Human 2011:45). God is often worshipped through songs in most African religious cultures. “Music, singing and dancing reach deep into the innermost part of African people, by which many things come to the surface under musical inspiration” (Mbiti 1990:66). There are several expressions of worship on the African continent. Most of these forms are either inspired by music or accompanied with a form music and dance.

People often have the custom of incorporating God’s name into their children’s names as a form of worship. This expression of worship is common among Africans. This name giving also indicates that the parents are thanking God for the child.

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<sup>13</sup> “The Pedi frequently say that the badimo (ancestors) are intermediaries of God” (Lebaka 2001:60).

Incorporating the names of God in children's name are reported among the Azande<sup>14</sup>, Banyarwanda<sup>15</sup>, Barundi<sup>16</sup> and Nuer<sup>17</sup>. Examples are *Bizimana* meaning "God knows everything") and *Ntawuyankira* meaning "no one can refuse him his way". Others express gratitude to God, such as *Ndihokubgayo* "i am alive because of him" and *Ntirandekura* meaning "he has not let me die yet". Other names dedicate the child to God e.g *Mujawimana* "servant of God" and *Bigirimana* "for the sake of God". And in others, people express praise to God for his goodness, for example *Niyonzima* and *Uwimana* meaning "He is God" (Mbiti 1975:213). These names become lifelong testimonies of particular concept of God which people wants to express; and when so used, the concepts are immortalised.

In other tribes in Nigeria, West Africa, there is a tradition of naming a business or project after God. This depicts a sign of worship, as well as inviting God into the business or project in order to achieve success. Mbiti (1990:72) affirms that shrines are found all over the land of Yoruba; and all the 1,700 Yoruba divinities are said to have a shrine in people's houses. Positively, people must employ their cultures, worldviews, hopes, fears and experiences in appropriating the unchangeable Christian message centred on Jesus Christ (Mbiti 1975:19).

It is well known that Africa has always been a worshipping continent. Its people have always looked up to something on which their life and hope was pegged (Becken 1973:148). However, there are many African people whose worship of God is reported

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<sup>14</sup> They are ethnic group living in the North-eastern part of Democratic Republic of Congo, Southwest and South-central part of South-Sudan. They are about 1.1 million in population.

<sup>15</sup> These are about 1 million people who live in Western Uganda.

<sup>16</sup> They are located in East Africa, bordered by Rwanda north and Tanzania east and south.

<sup>17</sup> The Nuer people are ethnic group concentrated in South Sudan, also found in south western Ethiopia. About 1.8 million people speaking Nuer language.

to be neither formal nor regular. This is due to insufficient information, and there are acts of worship which have not been recorded in writing (Mbiti 1975:178). If culture is a preservational structure instituted by God, then so is music, because music is an integral part of every human culture (Pass 1989:28).

Religious rites and ceremonies are often accompanied by one or more of these activities which are a very popular part of African life in general. Mbiti (1975:218) asserts that examples of music, singing and dancing in worship are certainly more plentiful. "In most African cultures, drums were very important in the use of rituals and religious ceremonies, such that the people from different African tribes relied on the use of music to express themselves" (Faulkes 2012:1). The Bavenda in South Africa people worship God with singing and dancing. When the ILA<sup>18</sup> invoke god to send rain, they do so with singing and presumably dancing.

African people seek God's help and attention through several other means apart from the aforementioned. This is because of the belief that though God is divine, yet he responds when mortals call on him, either through sacrifice, offerings, prayers, invocation or through any other forms of rituals. Mbiti (1990:29-30) explained further that African knowledge of God are strongly coloured and influenced by the historical, geographical, social and cultural background or environment of each people.

For instance, African worship always have the tendency to be emotional and very spiritual, compared to the westerners which is strict and orderly with less feelings.

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<sup>18</sup> ILA is an androgyne in Hindu, known for their sex change. He is referred to as the chief progenitor of the lunar dynasty of Indian kings. Interestingly, because lots of Indians resides in parts of Africa (such as Durban, South Africa) Hinduism practices are inevitable.

Meaning that our forms of worship is also influenced by the social, historical and geographical factors.

#### **2.4 Music and worship in African Pentecostal Churches**

Pentecostalism has made a remarkable contribution to practical and contextual theology in Africa. The Pentecostal movement attempts to pattern church life according to the scriptural mode of the Acts of the Apostles in order to re-enact the power evident in the early church (Ehianu 2014:71).

“African rhythm and ritual united with a Wesleyan piety to create the passionate music that still influences all Pentecostal worship services” (Parham 1991: 57, 71).

Educationists have revealed that music has provided a contextual theology that is relevant to the continent; this is because it helps the people of Africa to understand the realities of spiritual world view through the spiritual eyes of understanding and also their pattern of worship. “God, according to Pedi<sup>19</sup> tradition, is the primordial ancestor of the tribe. He works hand in glove with the ancestors. As such, ancestors deserve to be worshipped” (Lebaka 2001: 68).

Pentecostalism’s small charismatic liturgy — its worship, music and dance — is its most attractive feature. “Worship in a contemporary Pentecostal tradition is the creative act of calling the assembled worshippers to worship, and facilitating the opportunity for an encounter or experience with God as we respond to his presence, with music and singing being key tools to aid in facilitating this” (Warrington 2008:182).

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<sup>19</sup> The Pedi previously known as ‘Northern Sotho’ and now ‘Bapedi’ live in the Limpopo Province of South Africa.

“Some have argued that by privileging experience and performance, charismatic religion engages the whole person instead of emphasizing reason. Pentecostal charismatic spirituality has created a new religious culture that all other religious forms have imbibed” (Kalu 2009:18-22). This charismatic religious culture is now quite evident in secular life.

Religious music is used in celebrating rites of passage and in promoting politics, and has generated an economic boom in the entertainment industry. One cannot deny the fact that charismatic Pentecostals have attracted much attention in the contemporary and social Africa. Reason for this is also because the Pentecostal movement was able to mediate the indigenous and the popular contemporary cultures.

The tradition of the African contemporary music and dance in Pentecostal churches have almost superseded the hip-hop, jazz and rock music. This transition has reached a stage such that “a number of high-profile secular *or juju* musicians<sup>20</sup> (who create new rhythms from indigenous musical culture) have become gospel singers, evangelists, and pastors. Politicians and the celebrants of rites of passage borrow freely from gospel music and dance.

Part of the aims of this dissertation is to explore the new musical tradition of the contemporary African churches (like Pentecostals), and how the cultures were able to negotiate between the holistic and the popular music and dance.

Chitendo (2012: online) described gospel music as;

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<sup>20</sup> These musicians play a popular style of music derived from the traditional Yoruba percussions.

An artistic product emerging from cultural workers who are influenced by the Christian cumulative tradition. These artists utilize various musical styles and instruments to communicate Christian themes. These include the *mbira* beat from a traditional Shona musical instrument, *sungura*<sup>21</sup> or *museve*<sup>22</sup> (like an arrow, it pierces the heart) from Zimbabwean popular music, rap and hip hop from African American culture, reggae from the African-Caribbean culture, Congolese *soukous* and other types.

It is however important to note that the scope of the popular culture of music and worship has shaped the character of the Pentecostal movement in adopting a new and modern musical lifestyle. “The ambivalent attitude of the Charismatic towards the popular music and dance partially arose from its complex cultural discourse, and the involvement created a pathway for negotiating with an equally evolving popular culture”.

Pentecostals show a sensitive appreciation of the language of power in the indigenous worldview” (Kalu 2009:21-23). However, the vehement claims in Pentecostal churches to miracles and the teaching that “God is not a poor God and that all his followers must therefore be prosperous materially, physically and spiritually seem to run contrary to the actual socio-economic conditions of most adherents of Pentecostal churches” (Isiramen 2014:287). This subtlety has ignited a debate about Pentecostal cultural discourse.

Pentecostalism has been characterized in conflicting ways: some argue that it is world-rejecting and anti-modern, that it urges born-again Christians to break completely with their past and their families and become individualistic; and that it demonises

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<sup>21</sup> It's a local music genre from Zimbabwe since the early 1980s.

<sup>22</sup> It is another *genre* of Zimbabwean music which emerge in the late 1940s.

indigenous cultures and worldviews, and therefore constitutes a regression in the development of an indigenous African Christianity.

Pentecostals know and appreciate the power behind music and dance as well as the prolific dynamics in the Christian liturgy. “One attraction of the Pentecostal churches is the perfect synthesis of African music with the Christian *genre*. The religious rituals, ceremonies and festivals are always accompanied by music, singing and sometimes dancing” (Nnamani 2007:245).

They endeavour to create a balance in order to achieve to the greatest possible degree the functions of reinforcing boundaries of exclusion and inclusion, constructing identity, building community, converting souls to Christ, and achieving contact with the supernatural. Webber (1994:124) emphasises how in recent times Pentecostalism has significantly influenced the use of contemporary music in worship services across denominations, as well as diversifying the range of musical accompaniment.

“The leading of the Holy Spirit, praying and singing in tongues and uninhibited emotional expression have come to characterise Pentecostal worship” (Work 2006:578). More so, “the understanding that God is completely sovereign and will, at his discretion, choose to do away with the schedule is something that distinguishes Pentecostal-Charismatic traditions from others” (McIntyre 2008: 40-52).

The impact of the new Pentecostal music<sup>23</sup> swept into the village publics and reshaped the celebration of rites of passage. Soon, politicians adopted gospel songs in their campaigns either by borrowing the lyric and changing the words or by posing as honest

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<sup>23</sup> New Pentecostals music describes a popular *genre* of gospel contemporary music,

born-again Christians. For instance, in Nigerian 'patois or pidgin English'<sup>24</sup>, where the Pentecostals declare that "*Jesus, you don win; kpata kpata you go win again*" (meaning: Jesus, you have won again, and whatever befalls, you will win again), the politicians would replace "Jesus" with the name of the politician or symbol of the political party declaring that 'no matter what happens' (*kpata kpata*) they will win.

Marleen de Witte (2012: online) captures the significant shift, namely, that Pentecostals created a popular culture that others imitated:

In this new public sphere religion intertwines with both national politics and commerce and entertainment. Charismatic Pentecostalism is part and parcel of the business and entertainment culture of the commercial media, just as entertainment, business, and marketing are integral to charismatic churches. Its impact, then, lies not only in its institutional forms and rapidly growing number of followers, but also in more fluid forms of consumer culture and entertainment business. Through the media, it has widely diffused influence on general popular tastes and styles that may not be religious per se, but are clearly shaped by charismatic-Pentecostal discourse and practice.

The meaning of the term Christian or gospel music has always been assumed in the works of writers and practitioners (Wilson-Dickson *et al* 1992). However, there is the need for a rigorous examination of the term in order to do justice to our topic of discussion. Is Christian music any type of music that is composed by people who call themselves Christians? Or does it include Christian lyrics that are composed and performed by anybody, whether Christian or not? These questions are inclined to be theological rather than musical (Adedeji 2007:88).

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<sup>24</sup> Pidgin English is a Nigerian lingual-franca. A form of simplified English spoken by majority, especially the uneducated ones.

The rise of gospel music and dance is a pyrrhic victory; and the pentecostal use of music and dance blurred lines between entertainment and worship. A new religious culture has been created by the indigenous and modern cultures. These cultural policies has affected the Pentecostals attitude towards cultural worldview. On the one hand, gospel music has unveil how mass adaptation of pop culture could serve as a resource by valorizing the pace and breadth of religious communication, dealing with the problem of the relevance of the church in a changing culture, confronting the generational gap, and serving as an inculcation tool.

Mass adaptation could challenge the message and representation of the gospel, reshape the character of the movement, and create the specter of the tail wagging the dog, if popular culture drives the life of the church. For instance, if hip-hop music could attract young people to church, does that sanctify it from its secular origin as a music designed to make the hip to hop?

“In recent times, contemporary churches have celebrated "U2charist," that is, celebrating the Eucharist with the African music and lyrics of the rock Band U2” (Adogame *et al* 2005:155). Does this secularize the gospel? Even more insidious, technology has exposed the hidden dangers in musical lyrics and rhythms. The music has revealed the masking of lyrics underneath hypnotic rhythms. By back-fast-tracking, the real lyrics could be heard. Satanists are alleged to indulge in this fad.

The growth of the gospel music industry has raised the question about money and mass mediation of religion. Meanwhile, image problems arise when "psalmists"

become pop stars. Media pander to materialism, financial gain and focus on the individual's desires and quest for prosperity. Does this culture contest the holiness ethics prescribed for Levites or the frugal injunctions against materialism when Jesus sent the disciples on mission?

The rebuttal is that entertainment appears crucial for the survival of any form of religion in the contemporary marketplace of culture. It is an inculturating pathway for touching a youthful audience already wired in the electronic culture and bored with the equally-packaged institutional religion. Religion and popular culture are meshed to attract the youths.

Quentin J. Schultze in *Televangelism and American Culture: the Business of Popular Religion* builds on two dimensions: the connection between businesses, commerce, and televangelism, and the utilization of popular cultural techniques in mass mediating religion. Therefore, religion and popular culture have a reciprocal influence on each other in creating a Christianity in which it is difficult to distinguish popular entertainment from religion.

## **2.5 A South African approach to worship music**

One major impact of western missions on African life was the introduction of the hymn as an appropriate form of song for Christian worship. There are some practical reasons for this. One of the reasons was because it was difficult for early missionaries to learn a new music so foreign to their own. More so, African polyrhythms were complex and African tonal languages varied from region to region (Corbitt 2002:5).

Missionaries therefore came to South Africa in the 19<sup>th</sup> century and brought with them capitalistic and industrial systems, ideologies and culture. They arrived here without knowledge of the African cultural system. There was a typical instance of the contradictory relationship between the first and the third worlds, between Africa and the West. The approach towards Africa as the 'superior' culture was the evangelizing of the Christian poor. And through this process, these local and global systems became engage with one another in relations characterised by symbol as well as struggle (Comaroff 1985: 129-130).

European missionaries did not only introduce choral music to the African people in South Africa, but the influence of the missionaries, and particularly the education they provided spawned a societal phenomenon in the form of black Christian elite who were mainly responsible for reflecting white's taste in their endorsement of Western choral music (Stewart 2000:2-6).

There is no doubt that music has been an important part of the South African culture since antiquity. The Western Christian church has been part of the development of music in South Africa, where harmony was adapted into the African style of singing. Stewart (2000:3-9) further concurs that Africans did not originally sing in harmony. This practice was adapted from the Western missionary system.

*Makwaya* is a common *genre* in South Africa, because there is no single term to categorise the western style of choral singing which was the legacy of white missionary influence in South Africa (Stewart 2000:3-11). *Makwaya* soon became a popular

*genre. Makwaya* is an Nguni term for choirs and defined as “African sacred or choral music”. *Makwaya* music was developed as a result of the contact between local singing traditions in Southern Africa and the ‘Christian hymnody’ of Europe. The success of this interchange was due to the fact that traditional music in the south is predominantly vocal, characterised by choral singing in complex, overlapping responsorial pattern (Manuel 1988:28-29).

*Makwaya* was said to be associated with the emerging African middle class in the rural and urban areas (Coplan 1985:72, 118). The music was taught to choirs through the tonic-solfa notation<sup>25</sup>. Later, choirmasters resolve to teach their choirs to sing by heart or out of their head (Coplan 1985:117). This music became an important part of the musical culture in Lebowa<sup>26</sup>, for example, where urban *kiba* singers grew up’ as well as in other areas where school-going children and adolescents often performed this music (James 1999:155).

I can summarily posit that African music can be a positive means, and a meeting points for various African cultures, especially in South Africa.

### **2.5.1 Music in African Independent Churches: Zion Christian Churches case study**

The middle of 1960 to the end of 1990s saw greatest interest in the lives of the African Independent Churches (AIC) as a world phenomenon (Kealotswe 2014:2). These fast growing churches have so much influenced and have impacted the missionary

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<sup>25</sup> Tonic solfa is a system of using syllables to denote musical scales, in which the syllables are moveable depending on the scale.

<sup>26</sup> Referred to as Lebowakgomo, is a Bapedi ethnic group, Southeast Limpopo (North of South Africa).

founded churches in Africa. “The African Independent Churches (AIC) lived in the shadow of past experiences imposed on them by Western explanations, reasons and theories. Their lives, identity, religious and cultural practices were defined by Western values” (Molobi 2013:2-3).

AIC now come to the awareness of a common goal and that is to bring Africans to Christ. However, because of personality clashes and theological differences they have not been able to form a united church. “Not all AIC are Pentecostal or charismatic, but the majority reflect this emphasis. Most of them practice healing and exorcism- with speaking in tongue and prophecy having an important place in their church life” (Harper 1986:4-6).

One can conclude that these churches are somewhat independent but still look for help from older churches and have seen the need of various groups coming together for only one purpose and that is Christ for Africa but there are still barriers.

A Southern African denomination and member of the African Independent Churches (AIC), Zionist Christian churches (ZCC) in the early twentieth century began to spread like wild fire to almost all parts of South Africa. This was probably because of their incorporation of African element into their worship music. “Zionists churches have their unique tradition which is rooted in African traditional religion. In trying to search for African identity and culture, the Zionists as well as other African Christian churches, have begun to explore the resources of indigenous music and dance” (Oosthuizen 1994:3).

“However, Zionist Church music and dance are vulnerable to such misconceptions simply because the Zionists practice syncretic religion which is a fusion of Christianity and traditional African beliefs” (Merriam 1982: 8). Music in Zionist Christian Church has a very strong communication medium, with a binding force. More so, their worship pattern is characterized by elements of African ritual. The whole idea is that: music making in the Zionist church is used as a means of communication between the ancestors and the living.

Amongst the black South Africans, music is a social art emphasizing communication and thus vocal music is predominant. The Africanisation of the western hymn by the Zionist Churches is one of the ways in which indigenization is practiced. For example, the rhythm of the western hymn does not evoke dancing feelings. However, clapping and drumming in the African ways change the hymn into something worth dancing to” (Pewa 1997: 3-4). Zionists form of worship is not practiced for the sake of practicing it. The underlying ideas behind Zionism in relation to African religion enjoy the support of the Christian Bible (Prozesky 1990: 9-10).

The music of the ZCC might be branded as a popular gospel music, because features of the styles render it as a refracted image of South African black folk music.

In Zionists church, music making gets a lion's share compared to preaching and praying. Music is regarded as a very strong communicative medium. It is not surprising because music plays a very important role in the daily life of an African (Weman 1960:33). In traditional African societies, music making is generally organized as a social event. In other words, music has that binding force which unites people. This is

one of the factors that makes Zionists singing to be unique compared to other contemporary denominations (Nketia 1982: 33-34).

This was as a result of cultural osmosis that arose specifically in Kwazulu-Natal that appeared among the black cultural leaders, to create an authentic but modern African culture, which moved away from the imposed white Christian style to an individual identity created by the black elite: Thus developed a style similar to popular African music (Stewart 2000:3-19).

ZCC kind of music belongs at least to sections of the black nation reflected overwhelmingly in the membership of the AIC (African Independent Churches). Apart from the uniquely ZCC features of this kind of culturally inflected music, there are also peculiar ways in which the music is put to use in this church, including how such uses differ from those evident in the greater community sharing its origins (Lesibana 2013:).

Pewa (1997:74-75) with a slightly different view states that the Zionist engage in singing and dancing as the tool used to drive away any form of evil, especially witchcraft and sorcery. It is believed that any form of illness is caused by witchcraft and sorcery, and that power to conquer the evil is invited through singing.

## **2.6 Summation**

“African people have no creed to recite. Their creeds are within them, in their blood and in their heart. Africans have a body of beliefs about God. Their belief is better expressed through concepts of God, their attitude towards him as well as various acts of worship and most especially through music” (Mbiti 1975:218).

Christians cannot be 'biblical' and at the same time relegate the pursuit of music to the realm of luxuries or an optional extra. Music is a necessity for our worship (Pass 1989:28-29). In addition, the nature of music as gift and task carries over from the order of creation into the order of preservation. What has changed, of course is our ability to handle God's gift with any degree of responsibility.

The foremost priority of music in worship is to honour God and also to strengthen his people. Music is a great unifier, through music everybody is assisted in worship. Furthermore, worship without music does not easily soar" (Routley 1980:131). Music in worship should express a sense of wonder and awe in God's presence; leading the thought of people towards God rather than individual. The words of our song and the music should also be consistent with each other, thereby the pleasing melody should glorify God and uplift people's spirits.

In this chapter an attempt was made to review relevant past and present literature. The findings from various reviews indicated the significance of worship music, as well as the theological basis for the understanding of music and singing within the African Christian community.

## CHAPTER THREE

# OLD TESTAMENT PORTRAYAL OF WORSHIP MUSIC

### 3.1 Introduction

In the previous chapter an attempt was made to review past and present literatures on music and worship. The findings from various reviews indicated the significance of worship music, as well as the theological basis for the understanding of music and singing within the African religious community. The priority of music in worship is to honour God and also to strengthen the moral his people.

There are indications that the instrument of music was authorized by God in the Old Testament worship, which were called 'instruments of God, and with them, Heman and Jeduthun with trumpets and cymbals for those that should make a sound (Wheeler & Dam 1980:1). The Old Testament describes music as an essential element of ancient culture. Although we don't know how ancient music sounded, judging from the ways it was used we do know that music was important then as it is now (Burgh 2006:1).

Music, like poetry, is more powerful and evocative than prose, hence it plays an important role in the worship of God. Musician and lyricist Baloché (2009:10) explains that "Instruments, rhythm and sound express longings and feelings that our words can't convey. When lyrics and music are combined, our deepest emotions are given voice"

Asher (2015:2) affirms that the general survey of the Old Testament established clearly that instrumental music was not part of divine worship prior to the command of David. Furthermore, its inclusion in the temple was an addition. However, it was an authorized addition, God commanded David by a prophet to do so. Consequently, Hezekiah included it in his restoration of the temple service.

“Then Hezekiah the king rose early and gathered the officials of the city and went up to the house of the LORD. <sup>21</sup> And they brought seven bulls, seven rams, seven lambs, and seven male goats for a sin offering for the kingdom and for the sanctuary and for Judah. And he commanded the priests, the sons of Aaron, to offer them on the altar of the LORD.....” (2 CHR. 29: 20-21, 25).

In the above passage, sacrifices were offered with joy in the nation as a result of restoration of the temple worship. The king played an active role in the rededication of the temple, just as Solomon did in the initial dedication.

Music has been in existence from the beginning of time. And that Jubal was the father of all those who handle the harp and organ<sup>27</sup> (Gen. 4:21). “Jubal was a famous musician, particularly an organist, and the first to give rules for the noble art and science of music” (Wheeler and Dam 2006:2).

There are several scriptural evidence that music was a vital, unique, and expressive part of life in antiquity. Although most of the sounds are lost to us, artefacts and texts reveals important details about the instruments, performers, types of songs and particular the settings where music was played. “While the technology and uses of music may have changed over time, music tells about important life events in both

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<sup>27</sup> The words "harp" and "organ" are from words that were more general in meaning. The New American Standard says "lyre and pipe." The words in the Hebrew apparently mean "string" and "wind" instruments (Wheeler and Dam, 2006:2-3).

ancient and modern worlds” (Burgh 2006:5). Music seems to have occupied an important space in the private life of the Hebrews, Amos 6:4-6. The Hebrew temple was like the school of music which was consecrated to the worship of Yahweh. Some of the songs are also religious songs accompanied by instrument of music, to celebrate victory after battle has been won.

Instruments of music were called ‘Instruments of music of the Lord’ in 2 Chronicles 7:6, the priests waited on their offices and the Levites also with instruments of music of the LORD, which David the king had made to praise the LORD, because his mercy [endures] forever. When David praised by their ministry; and the priests sounded trumpets before them, and all Israel stood” (Faull 2011:4-5). The exact manner in which ritual music is been practiced during temple sacrifice may not be specifically known. However, instrumental music and vocals combined, always play a central act in almost every forms of worship.

“Since there were no instruments commanded in the tabernacle worship by Moses, and none were found in worship unto God prior to the command of David” (Ashe 2015:2-3). It is obvious that David is the one who set them in the temple. Furthermore, their use constitutes an alteration of and addition to the worship authorized by the Law of Moses.

On a particular instance, 4000 men were used to praise the Lord with these instruments. I Chronicles 23:5 reads: "Moreover four thousand were porters, and four thousand praised the LORD with the instruments which I made, [said David], to praise [therewith]." When Solomon dedicated the temple, it was so well received by God that

His glory filled the house of God. The priests could not minister at the altar for the cloud of His glory.

Williams (2013:3-12) indicates that the temple in Jerusalem became the prominent focus of Jewish worship. It appears that the emphasis on worship in the temple was primarily on sacrificial offerings and praise to God through music. The music comprised of numerous and various instruments of music, as well as well-trained vocal choirs (whose singing was perhaps somewhat similar to the melodious four-part harmony common in many churches today). Numerous passages of Scripture<sup>28</sup> refer to the music, both vocal and instrumental, used in worship to God during that time.

Music played an important part in Israel's worship and celebration, (examples are psalms of the ascents<sup>29</sup>) such that it was an expression of love and thanks, and it was a creative way to pass down oral traditions. Williams and Anstall (1990:2-3) explain that "there are specific forms or liturgies of worship which were first seen in the Tabernacle of the early Israelites, and were consummated in the Temple worship which took place in Jerusalem". The worship of God in the Temple in Jerusalem was the first and most prominent focus of Jewish worship, which included the form and frequency of prayer and sacrifice.

Worship is currently undergoing an "unprecedented revolution" (Webber 1994:121). This "revolution" is predicated on correcting the accumulated aberrations in worship

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<sup>28</sup> Some passages that describes the instruments of worship are: 2 Sam. 6:5; 1 Chr. 13:8; 1 Chr. 23:5; 2 Chr 23:13; Neh. 12:36.

<sup>29</sup> Psalms of the ascents is a title given to fifteen of the psalms in the Septuagint and the Vulgate.

practices and reclaiming authentic forms of biblical and ancient worship through the reforms of the liturgy and of worship practices” (Schmidt-Lauber 2006: 412-419) .

Williams and Anstall (1990:5-6) further reiterated the need to understand worship elements. First, the primary type of activity was sacrifice. The cadence in the spiritual lives of most Old Testament Jews was the celebration of the Holy feast days and their corresponding offerings. And what determined the manner in which these sacrifices would take place? God had given the instructions in Exodus and Leviticus which describe in detail the manner in which worship is to be offered to God. Secondly, worship in the Temple and in fact all Christian worship was and is to reflect worship in Heaven”<sup>30</sup>.

This chapter will explore the significance of music and worship in the Old Testament. It will further examine its practices with the choice of selected Psalms.

### **3.2 Old Testament music and worship**

The Old Testament is more than just a ‘resource’ for Christian worship. In a very real way, the Old Testament is part of how God shapes who believers are as Christians. It is often said that we can’t understand the New Testament without understanding the Old Testament (Huvser-Honig 2008:4).

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<sup>30</sup>The worship of heaven, the liturgy, has been established forever by God Himself. Hebrews 8:1-2 demonstrates that what is done on earth should be patterned after that in Heaven — both in the Old and New Covenants (Williams *et al* 1990:6).

Throughout the Old Testament narratives, especially the ‘Torah’<sup>31</sup>, specifically in the books of Leviticus and Numbers respectively, the order of worship and sacrifice were critically spelt out and instructions given how to sacrifice, what to sacrifice in corporate worship and who performs the liturgical rituals of worship. If these principles were not put in place, there will be chaos, as everyone will set themselves up to offer sacrifices and lead in worship.

The Old and New Testament respectively has references in relation to the concept of worship. The biblical concept of worship “connotes the idea of homage, and it refers to the attitude and activity that recognize and describe the worth of a person or thing to which the worship is addressed” (Smith 1993:312).

Worship is given as the description of believers’ primary responsibility in relation to God. The term worship has by extension or it is associated with what the church does on or during its Sunday morning and evening services. Goodrick & Kohlenberger (2004:2521) indicates that in Hebrew, worship includes the acts of bowing down, kneeling or prostrating oneself in humility in order to show *honor* and *reverence*. This action derived from the Middle Eastern custom of greeting is determined by the rank of the parties involved.

The etymology of *weorthcipe* is *pertinently clarified* by showing two Old English words with German origins were combined: ‘*worth*’ (to honor) and –‘*ship*’ (to create), meaning that when people worship they literally “create honor” for God (Lucarini 2008:53). More specifically, it has come to refer to the singing or music ministry of the church.

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<sup>31</sup> Torah refers to the law of God as revealed to Moses and recorded in the first five book of the scriptures. It is also called the Pentateuch.

Even though worship is altogether referred to as the slow music played in the church, while praise is the upbeat of songs rendered and music as an unavoidable part of the worship proceedings.

The purpose of this dissertation is to demonstrate that this current notion as to the nature of worship is not only theologically inadequate, but that it reflects a need for the African churches to respond by developing a sound theological basis for the use of music and practice of worship. Zschech (2002:52) makes an observation that worship and music in the modern Church should be to praise by declaration, proclamation of God's deed and confrontational battle cry.

A theological basis for worship and the place of Church music within the theological framework will also be suggested by investigating some of the important Biblical evidences and developments in Christian history.

The Old Testament music incorporated some characteristic features, such as: Rhythm<sup>32</sup>, Monophony<sup>33</sup>, Improvisation<sup>34</sup>, Modality<sup>35</sup>, Antiphony<sup>36</sup>, Ornamentation<sup>37</sup>, Hymn songs<sup>38</sup> and Orchestration<sup>39</sup>.

As in all oriental music, the Hebrews' music was not as much harmony as melody. All the singers, old and young, male and female, usually sang in unison. However, there are exceptions. Sometimes the leaders would sing the first half of a verse and the congregation would finish it. Other times the leader would sing a verse and the rest would repeat it. At other times he, the leader, would sing and the people would sing the refrain of "Amen" or "Hallelujah." Sometimes the different classes of people would sing parts. For example, young maidens or young men would sing the melody. "Song

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<sup>32</sup> It has been observed it follows a more complex pattern of arrangement, which negates the use of our modern regular beats structure.

<sup>33</sup> This symbolizes the unharmonized melodic line; however instrumental accompaniment could form a harmony in this feature.

<sup>34</sup> A long period of acquired skills training and practice of music is needed for the performing process.

<sup>35</sup> This describes the use of different musical motifs within a particular scales.

<sup>36</sup> It is a situation where sets of musicians interact in a call and response act. Pss 24, 118 and Isa 6:3 are typical example of an Antiphonal music. This may rightly indicates that the congregation and the trained musicians would have engaged in a musical interactive performance.

<sup>37</sup> It signifies the use of enhancement based on the skills of the performer.

<sup>38</sup> Within the service they were performed by either a soloist, called the cantor, or by groups. Some of the hymns were freely organized with groups of melodic motives their variants connected to create a continuous melodic chant.

<sup>39</sup> The sound of the Temple's orchestra consisted of never less than twelve instruments and rarely exceeded thirty-six." The trumpets were never mixed with the rest of the orchestra—being used for signals exclusively. One pair of cymbals was used in Temple rituals also as a signal instrument, not unlike the *gong* in the modern theatre.

is eloquently described as the “divinely *instituted*, divinely *commanded* and divinely *regulated* means of responding to God” (Gordon 2010:31).

The musical accompaniment sustained the melody. Sometimes the same psalms would be repeated by another person in a lower or higher key. This repetition would seem monotonous, but it did cause the Psalms to be familiar to the worshippers. One must remember that oriental music today is still strangely foreign to our Western ears.

It should be remembered that harps, flutes, and cymbals were good instruments for melody. It was, without doubt, a shrill sound compared to our music today. The different meters mentioned by Josephus seem to tell us that the music of the Old Testament may have been more varied than we suppose (Faull 2011: 23).

If we were able to step into the biblical period, one would find a culture filled with music where people used music in their daily lives. Such music was capable of expressing a great variety of moods and feelings or the broadly marked antitheses of joy and sorrow, hope and fear, faith and doubt. In fact, every shade and quality of sentiment is found in the wealth of songs and psalms and in the diverse melodies of the people” (Burgh 2014:3-4).

### **3.3 Selected psalms dedicated to the ‘director of music’**

The Book of Psalms is a collection of 150 lyric poems<sup>40</sup>. “There is no portion of the bible that is as frequently read as the book of Psalms. The book provides instruction,

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<sup>40</sup> A lyric poem is defined as that which directly expresses the individual emotions of the poet” (Jackson, 1998:5).

inspiration, motivation and consolation” (Jackson 1998: 3-4). “Psalms have been used extensively in personal devotions and meditations, and the relevance of psalms for both public and personal worship is almost universally acknowledged” (Curtis 1997:286).

Psalms are inspired responses of various individuals to God’s revelation of himself in the Old Testament era. “The history of the interpretation of the Book of Psalms is a powerful corrective to the illusion of objective scholarship that has long prevailed in scholarly circles” (Crenshaw 2004:210). They were written by several authors over a large period of time, unlike other books most psalms were meant to be sung and not read. Thereby, it is not imperative that someone would read through the psalms before studying a particular psalm.

“David is commonly thought to be the author of the book of Psalms, but only about 73 has his name as headings in the book”(Copeland 2009:5). Though the Book of Psalms is called by some critics ‘the hymnbook’<sup>41</sup> of the Second Temple. “This should not be taken that psalms were composed during exile or post-exilic period. It should also not mean that there was no place for hymns during the time of the first Temple” (Pereira 2013:106). There are few psalms penned down to be written by Moses, if these be, it definitely means that psalms does exists during the period of the first temple. Moreover, one could say that the period of Solomon witnessed the age of the proverbs when the psalms had its “peak” and “valley”.

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<sup>41</sup> Hymnbook is a compilation of religious songs usually of praise to God. (see Hawkins *et al*, 2002:310).

“Psalms is one of the only two Old Testament books to identify as a composite work containing multiple authors, Proverbs is the other” (Swindoll 2009:11). The book was originally titled *Tehillim*, an Hebrew term which means “praise songs”, while the English title of ‘psalms’ originated from the Septuagint’s Greek title *Psalmoi*. It also means “songs of praise”.

In summary, “Psalms are Christian ‘hymn book’ to assist us in our praise to God. He further writes that they are Christian’s ‘prayer book’ in which we learn how to approach God in prayer” (Copeland 2009:2-6).

Galvin (2005:824) outlined the completed compilation of the Book of Psalms as follows:

Book I        Psalms 1-41: This first collection of psalms, mainly written by David tells how mankind was created, fell into sin and was then promised. These psalms writers praise God for his justice, expresses confidence in God’s compassion, recounts the depravity of humanity and plead for vindication from their enemies.

Book II        Psalms 42-72: This collection of psalms, most of which were written by David and the sons of Korah, is similar to the book of Exodus. These psalms just like Exodus described the nation of Israel as ruined and then recovered. This psalms include a prayer for rescue, a call to worship, confession of sin and an encouragement to trust God.

Book III        Psalms 73-89: The third collection of the ‘songs of praise’ mainly written by the Asaph or Asaph’s descendants is similar to Leviticus. These

Psalms celebrates the sovereignty of God, His hands in history, his faithfulness and covenant with David. The Psalms also praise God because his perfect holiness deserve our worship and reverence.

Book IV Psalms 90-106: Most of these collection of psalms have been written by unknown authors, except Psalms 90 written by Moses. The psalms is similar to the book of numbers. It discusses the relationship of the nation of Israel to surrounding nations. It includes prayer of Moses, a psalm about the oppressors and a psalms praising God as king.

Book V Psalms 107-150: This fifth collection supposed to have been written by David and it's similarity to the book of Deuteronomy was concern with God and his word. These psalms praise God's work, recounts the blessing of righteous living and thanksgiving for deliverance. Most of these psalms were originally set to music and used in worship.

"Each of these books ends with a doxology, while psalms 150 constituted in its self an appropriate doxology to the compilation as a whole" (Pereira 2013:110)

Mobberley (1988:11) indicated that two purposes of the book seem to have been served by including the psalms in the Bible: public worship and personal devotion. Psalms have important liturgical uses in religious services.

Introductory statements above the texts of a number of psalms include specific instructions as to how the poem is to be used in worship or in celebration.

There are several psalms dedicated to the director of music, often referred to as the 'Chief musician' or translated as 'Director of music' by the New International Version

(NIV) and other versions. Gann (1998:17) asserts that this inscription would mean instructions to the Choirmaster as to how the particular psalms was to be sung. In Psalm 4, we have a clear statement for the “Director of music with stringed instruments. More so, that this psalm is to be sung with stringed instruments, which shows that the psalms was meant for Temple (tabernacle) worship.

### **3.3.1 Selected Psalms**

Psalm 4 begins with a petition which are significant for a prayer song: it ask that its petitions be heard. Although Yahweh has created room and shown great grace (v 3), however the oppression of the enemies has not abated yet. In extraordinary distress, the petitioner calls to Yahweh for help and rescue (Kraus 1988:147). Yahweh is called ‘God of my righteousness’ because he has espoused the cause of the oppressed person with a liberating verdict and against all claims to justice by influential men of power, has incorruptibly confirmed the fidelity of his covenant and of his association with the poor man.

Psalm 8 is a psalm with an instruction to the Director of music ‘*according to gittith*’, through his inspired insight, David sees the Creator in the transparency of creation. Sabourin (1974:177-178) asserts that as in many other psalms, two main feelings fill the psalmist’s soul; awe of God and joy in his glory. The ‘*babes and sucklings* (v 2) could represent the ever growing Israelites generations which confound the plans of the enemies (Jer. 31:35). Moberley (1988:23-24) on the other hand confirms that the song is a profound meditation about the nature of the humanity God has created. It begins with the words of wonder about God’s magnificent physical universe. Galvin

(2005:831) agrees to this injunction that “the greatness of God assures the worth of mankind. God the all-powerful Creator, cares for his most valuable creations”.

Psalm 19 in its instruction to the Choir master consists of two independent songs which in subject-matter, mood, language and meter differ from each other so much that they cannot be composed by the same author. Weiser (1962:197) argues that verses 1-6 are a nature psalms arising from a poet’s profound vision and expressed in forceful language. Verses 7-14 comprise a psalm whose theme is the Law and whose thought and language are characterized by a homely simplicity.

The author of the hymn in praise of nature (vv. 1-6) was inspired by an attitude of mind similar to the one which inspired the author of Psalm 8.

“The psalm is a magnificent hymn of Creation. It deals not just with earth as a place for human habitation, but with the whole of the known universe” (Mobberley 1988:34). The first section of this anthem indicates that God makes a personal investment of handiwork and speech which creates the physical universe and the laws of nature by which the universe is regulated.

The second section of this hymn to God’s majesty tells of a second magnificent creation, the laws by which the social and political universe of humanity is regulated, this is, of course, moral law. What the psalmist does maintain in this hymn are the purity, accuracy and universality and eternal quality of the laws, commandments and precepts of the Lord. Their precious value is extolled to gold; their importance to human creation is sweeter than honey.

Psalm 77, a hymn of Asaph in the song book three, for the choir director. This first stanza begins with a strophe that describes a relentless searching (77:1-3). Twice in

the opening line the psalmist says he cried out to God, hoping that God would listen. The occasion was some sort of big trouble, the precise nature of which we are not told. But the deep trouble provoked a relentless searching for God (Futato 2009:254).

“The poetry is in two distinctive parts, the first being the meditation on the apparent absence of God’s love in the psalmist’s life. The second is a brief account of the deeds of the Lord in Israel’s history” (Mobberley 1988:87). “The Psalmist indicates that Israelites gained strength and comfort by planting their faith firmly in the God who worked in history” (Graham 1975:151). This psalm has been classified as a lament. But, unlike laments which often feature victims with an overpowering fear of enemies and serious physical and mental disabilities, this psalm is concerned with spiritual alienation from God.

The psalmist movingly confesses how he searched in vain for God during sleepless nights (v 4a); tormented by anxiety, he was unable to find the right word; his brooding over the things of the past and over the things of the present always ended up with the same question: the question of whether God had ceased to be gracious and whether his word had become silent forever (Weiser 1962:531).

One of the several hymns for the director of music, Psalm 109 contains the most vehement of the imprecations in the psalter. Futato (2009:348) analyses that for 15 verses (vss 6-20) the psalmist calls curse after curse on his enemies to the point of praying for annihilation of the enemy’s entire family. Psalms 109 is the lament of someone who has been falsely accused. What the psalmist had been accused of we are not told, but we know that the accusations are slanderous, false, and hateful. Kidner (1977:388) further concurs that the psalmist is under an all-out attack on his

character, which has already reduced him to a shadow. The depth of the wound shows itself in the repeated phrase (v 4-5).

Psalm 109 also uses war language in verse 3, but it is the most systematically explicit psalm of protest and plea about being subject to false accusation (Goldingay 2008:275). The psalm is also a lament, prayed by a man who, if we understand the psalm aright, is accused of being guilty of the death of a poor man (v 16), presumably by means of magically effective curses (v 17). It can be assumed that the accusation brought by his adversaries at the trial by ordeal, which we can infer from their words preserved in vv.6-19, was one of sorcery which was forbidden in the Yahweh religion and liable to punishment (Weiser 1962:690).

Futato (2009:348) concluded that “the imprecations against the wicked in the book of psalms were also shadows of the final judgement, appropriate for the era of the theocracy, but not for this age”. However, I am of the opinion that, imprecatory prayers are still common in Africa, especially among many West African churches. In these churches, it is believed that every misfortune is caused by the enemies, and that individual must imprecate against such harm.

Some of the psalms with specific reference to the choirmaster and to temple singers such as the sons of Korah and Asaph, in one important sense the individual psalms are prayers. “In recognition of this attribute they are incorporated into denominational prayer books and psalters” (Mobberley 1988:10).

My observation of psalms dedicated to the director of music is that: they are mostly either imprecatory prayers offered to God for intervention. They are also songs of praise towards Yahweh with the use of musical instruments.

I also noted Clemens's<sup>42</sup> allegorical meaning of the Hebrew instruments as mentioned in psalms.

Most of the psalms which identifies David as the author with inscriptions to the 'director of music' implies that the songs are musical work. More so, all these psalms has universal application which is applicable even in our contemporary worship music.

### **3.4 1 Chronicles 25**

1 Chronicles 25 is devoted to the rostering and duties of the temple musicians, the first of several special classes of Levites. "The passage suggests that singing in the temple liturgy was typically accompanied by the playing of musical instruments. As in the case with the priest, the Levitical musicians are ordered in families and arranged in courses (1 Chr 24: 20-31)" (Hill 2003:308)

David introduced a new ministry and worship order, and more significantly, eliminated sacrifices, the focus now being on spiritual sacrifices, while David functioned as both priest and king (Corner 1976:127). Webber (1994:35) concurs, that music began to play an important role in worship during this period, influencing worship practices to this very day.

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<sup>42</sup> "Praise him with the sound of trumpet,' for with sound of trumpet he shall raise the dead. 'Praise him on the psaltery,' for the tongue is the psaltery of the Lord; 'and praise him with the timbrel and the dance,' refers to the church meditating on the resurrection of the dead. 'Praise him on the chords and organ.' Our body he calls an organ, and its nerves are the strings by which it has received harmonious tension, and when struck by the Spirit, it gives forth human voices. 'Praise him on the clashing cymbals.' He calls the tongue the cymbal of the mouth, which resounds with the pulsation of the lips. . . The one instrument of peace, the word alone by which we honor God, is what we employ. We no longer employ the ancient psaltery and trumpet, and timbrel and flute". (Clemens A. 1930:129). (extracted from "Ancient comment on instrumental music in the Psalms" by William Green)

The musicians were divided into twenty-four groups to match the 24 groups of Levites (1 Chr. 24:7-25). This division of labour gave order to the planning of temple work, promoted excellence by making training easier, gave variety to worship because each group worked a term, and provided opportunities for many to be involved (Galvin 1986:640).

Braun (1986:246) writes that David, assisted by the leaders of the Levites sets apart three groups of Levitical musicians, Asaph, Heman and Jeduthun. The services of these men was connected with the dynamic of prophesy in the sense that it was inspired by God (1 Chr 6:31, 13:8, 23:5, 25: 6, 2 Chr 5:12, 7:6). Their ministry in music was not merely the product of good musicianship; it was a gift of God being exercised through them. It should be noted that prophesying is explicitly connected with the musical instruments 1 Chronicles 25:1 (Guzik 2006:2).

“The Asaph, who prophesied according to the order of the king: 12 Psalms are attributed to Asaph. Jeduthun, who prophesied with a harp to give thanks and to praise the Lord: Jeduthun’s music ministry was inspired by the Spirit of God that it could be said that he prophesied with a harp” (Guzik 2006:3-4). Some contributed to the worship in the tabernacle by prophesying (25:1), some led in thanksgiving and praise (25.3), and others played instruments<sup>43</sup> (Galvin 1986:639).

Guzik (2006:4-6) asserts that Asaph, Jeduthun, and Heman were under the authority of the king: these enormously talented and Spirit-anointed men knew how to submit themselves under the leadership of David, under the authority of the king.

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<sup>43</sup> Heman the king’s seer: He is called *the king’s seer*, either because the king took special delight in him, or because he frequently attended upon the king in his palace, executing his sacred office there, while the rest were constantly employed in the tabernacle.

The prominent place of the sons of Heman, and that all these were under the direction of their father for the music in the house of the Lord.

Braun (1986:247) affirms that the three families of Levitical singers are set apart for service. This work, according to verse 1, is ascribed to David and the heads of the Levitical families, and takes place according to (vs 8) by casting of lots<sup>44</sup>.

David appoints the temple musicians in consultation with commanders of the army, 25:1a (The KJV used the word '*separated*' in the place of appointed<sup>45</sup>). Although strong association between musicians and the military are known in the ancient world, it is unclear whether these consultants are military personnel or Levitical officers. However, the task or function of the temple musicians is the ministry of prophesying (25:1b). The musical ministry of prophesying is accompanied by particular instrumentation, namely 'harps, lyres and cymbals'<sup>46</sup> (Hill 2003:310).

Myers (1965:171) gave a good illustration on how cult or temple prophecy operates, where Jahaziel prophesied in answer to Jehoshaphat's prayer, and Jahaziel was a Levite (2 Chr. 20). There are evidences that the Levites took the place of cult prophets, as may be seen in the parallel passages of 2 Kings 2 of 3:2 and 2 Chronicles 24:30. In any case, as at the time of compiler of their list, cult prophecy must have been well

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<sup>44</sup> The terminology 'casting of lots' is pointing out that the procedure covers everyone (Braun 2006:247).

<sup>45</sup> Baker et al (2008:1781) indicates that the word is used most often literally or figuratively with the sense of, to divide, to distinguish, to select or to detach.

<sup>46</sup> These instruments and many others were described as an integral part of Old Testament worship. (Galvin 1986:982).

established and claimed for its authority the appointment of classes of musicians in the service by none-other than David.

The psalmist did set a precedent for everything being done decently and in order. It is striking that David did not act alone but in congress with the 'officers of the army'<sup>47</sup>.

David's plan for the efficient functioning of the temple was given to him by God. It is noted that each individual performed his assigned duties for two weeks a year. The rest of the time was devoted to ministering to the people in the tribes where they lived. A major part of their time was to be spent teaching the word of God (Barber 2004:218-219).

The essence of davidic worship was uniquely exemplified on the occasion when the ark was ceremoniously returned to Jerusalem and the people of Israel celebrated "with all their might before the LORD, with songs and with harps, lyres, tambourines, and cymbals" (2 Sam 6:5). Scripture then tells us further that David was so delighted that he "danced before the Lord with all his might" (6:14). The king then sacrificed burnt offerings and fellowship offerings before the tent housing the ark (the one and only time sacrifices were offered). Webber (1994:214) agrees to this that dance, once repudiated in worship, is now in the process of being accepted as an outward act of heart-felt worship. Liesch (1988:212) explains that dance is an abstract form of "pure" movement perfectly suited to liturgical use.

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<sup>47</sup> The word 'army' are not to be understood as military commanders. Rather borrows language from the Pentateuch (Num. 4:3, 23, 30, and 35) where the word 'army' is used for the service of the Levites as a security force for the temple precincts (McKenzie 2004:194).

McKenzie (2004:194) concludes that the music that David puts in place for the singular event of the transfer of the ark in chapter 15-16 is apparently institutionalized as a permanent feature of the temple worship. It is striking that David did not act alone but in congress with the 'officers of the army'<sup>48</sup>.

Reed (1995:6) clarifies that the tabernacle worship was not the invention of Moses; it was built according to a divine blueprint. The Israelites were instructed: "let them make me a sanctuary; that I may dwell among them. According to all that I shew thee, after the pattern of all the instruments thereof, even so shall ye make it" (Ex. 25:8-9; 25:40; 27:8; Num. 8:4; cf. Acts 7:44; Heb. 8:5). Throughout the description of the tabernacle furnishings, it is reiterated that all things must be made according to the God-given pattern.

Another point to note in this chapter is the orderly thoroughness which is commended when God's people prepare to sing praises. Is there no place here for spontaneous worship? Of course there is. Motyer (1987:105) confirms that "three times in chapter 25 1-3 the function of the musicians is said to be 'prophesying' meaning that they are open to whatever unexpected ministry the Spirit of God may pour into their mouths". But in the same verses they are also said, three times, to be 'under direction', meaning the freedom is within a framework.

Myers (1965:171) expresses a relevant opinion that the tradition of David's found of some kind of musical orders is quite probable because of his interest in music (I Sam. 16:23, 18:10, 19:9; 2Sam 1:17, 5:5, 14) and composition of songs. To judge from cultic

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<sup>48</sup> The word 'army' are not to be understood as military commanders. Rather McKenzie (2004:194) borrows language from the Pentateuch (Num. 4:3, 23, 30, and 35) where the word 'army' is used for the service of the Levites as a security force for the temple precincts.

practices<sup>49</sup> reflected in the Psalms and elsewhere. Music was closely associated with worship; that it was highly developed by the eighth century is shown by the fact that Sennacherib accepted male and female singers as tribute from Hezekiah in 2 Kings 18.

In addition to the message conveyed in the previous chapters- that the installment of the proper personnel is essential and that the selection of duties is done by lot, McKenzie (2004:198) suggests that it is actually by divine force, this chapter highlights the theological significance of music. He further asserts that music and musicians have a special place in the vision of the temple in Chronicles.

However, the present chapter describes music not simply as praise to God, but as revelation from God in the form of prophecy. MacDonald (2003:21) agrees with McKenzie's statement that "spirit-driven song and music enable the worshipper, in spirit, to move into the presence of God and to allow God himself to move into the presence of his congregated people".

I am of the opinion that worship should not always be a private event, rather a corporate function where the worshippers can reflect on the essence of worship. This is because worship is all about the state of the heart and actions in response to the revelation of YHWH.

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<sup>49</sup> Cultic practices here is referred to as temple order or tabernacle worship proceedings (Myers, 1965:171).

### 3.5 Summation

The portrayal of music in the Old Testament worship is devotional and sacred. The praise and worship practices of David's time included numerous musical instruments, singing, chanting, shouting, bowing and standing, lifting of hands, clapping of hands, processions and dancing. All other aspects of music in religious service, that merely show off voices, and entertain the jaded senses of the crowd, without a devotional spirit and moral purpose behind them, may be theatrical and imposing, and to a certain extent moving, but they do not rise higher than the altitude of a passing mood.

Worship as mentioned earlier was often prophetic, (1 Chr 25:1; Pss 46:10, 50:7, 85:8), and the singing of new songs (spontaneous songs given by inspiration of God) was encouraged (Pss 33:3, 96:1, 149:1). Corporate worship within the tabernacle focused not only on joyfully lifting up the name of Yahweh (Pss 34:3; 57:5), giving thanks (Ps 30:4; 35:18), repentance and recommitment (Pss 26:2; 139:23), but also on inviting the manifest presence of the Most-high (1 Kgs 8:11, Chr 5:14, Ps 50:2 (Sharefaith 2015: online)).

When the Israelites returned to Jerusalem from their captivity in Babylon, nearly 400 years after the dedication of the temple, Ezra records that numbered the exiles included 148 “singers: the sons of Asaph.” And when the foundation of the temple was laid, once again it was the sons of Asaph who led the worship (Neh 7:44; 11:17). Asaph and his descendants were purposeful and intentional in passing on the practice and understanding of musical worship to future generations. And their focus was unmistakable: “God is good, for His steadfast love endures forever.” They took seriously the command to proclaim that truth to coming generations (Kauflin 2009:45).

Leonard (2008:6) summarises that liturgical worship, following historic Christian practice, moves through a sequence of entering into the Lord's presence, proclaiming the Word of God, gathering at the Lord's Table, and being dismissed for service in community and the world. There is a corresponding sequence in davidic worship, a progression of praise leading to the moment in which the Lord "comes" or "appears."

The ambiance of the Tabernacle of davidic worship is one of rejoicing together in the presence of the Lord, confessing covenant loyalty to him through acts of praise and homage giving thanks as the Bible calls it.

Many of the psalms seem to have originated in the worship of the Tabernacle of David. Leonard (2008:38) indicates that their wording reflects doubt about whether the Lord really requires the animal sacrifices and burnt offerings of the rites of Moses (e.g., Pss 40:6, 51:16-17). Instead, there is stress on heartfelt devotion to Yahweh, as expressed in musical and vocal praise, and the fulfilment of vows through this praise.

In the continuing development and use of the Psalms in the sanctuary, the Tabernacle of David flavoured the worship of Israel and Judah even after the Mosaic sacrifices were instituted in Jerusalem and the Temple of Solomon was erected.

"The people of God have always praised him. This means that they have always told God that he is very great! There is nobody else as good as he is. God is the best!

Exodus 15:1 reads, "Moses and all the people sang this song to the Lord. They said, "I will sing to the Lord". This was after God led them out of Egypt. Judges 5:1-2 reads, "Then Deborah and Barak sang this song, "Praise the Lord". This was when God beat their enemies. These enemies were the Canaanites. We believe that David wrote

many songs. We call them psalms. David wrote in Psalm 18:3, "The Lord is someone that I always praise (Churchyard 2002:4).

In summary, Old Testament music and worship is meant to be mostly *doxological*, with a vertical focus on God. Furthermore, Scripture emphasizes that worship is *relational*. Peterson (1993:20) correctly argues that, "not only does God 'engage' with his people, but they in turn 'engage' with him".

In other words, worship in the Old Testament times is fundamentally a personal *encounter* with the living God who is present within the worship service (cf Exo 29:42-46). Christian practices of corporate worship can therefore neither be taken lightly, nor expressed glibly or in a humdrum manner (Chapell 2009:21).

## CHAPTER FOUR

# A THEOLOGY OF WORSHIP MUSIC

### 4.1 Introduction

“A survey of music root in the early church is found in the Old Testament, it demonstrates how music and sound have been offered to God as an act of worship. These serves as an aid in the application of sound to the contemporary church, especially in Africa” (Webber 1994: 197). Findings from great ancient cities like Babylon and Nineveh is important for our knowledge of ancient music. “It reveals that civilizations received considerable number of musical instruments and perhaps some of their musical ideas from the ancient near east” (Nelson 1985:65).

“At least since the time of David, singing had a fixed place in the Israelite liturgical tradition. Music has been acknowledged to have great power, to soothe the mind (1Sam 10:5) and to create atmosphere favorable to ministry” (Letsosa and De Klerk 2007:67). In the Old Testament, part of the functions of music was displayed when the hand of God came upon Elisha to prophesy while the music was been played. There is no doubt that the Israelites attribute power to music.

The intimate relationship which exists between music and worship is not disputed. Music is not indispensable to Christian liturgy, but its contribution is irreplaceable. Music is a ministry: it must serve liturgy in all its dimensions, not least the celebrating community itself. Liturgy is never performance (Whelan 1983:172).

Songs are crucial in African Christianity because music is part of culture and Christian faith, music in general can be effectively expressed and communicated only in culturally designed media (Mugambi 1989: 87).

The uniqueness in the traditional use of music in African society reveals that; while music is considered as pure entertainment in some foreign cultures, music in Africa was rooted as a way of life, such that important information and messages can be conveyed and life events can be celebrated (Hartwig 2010:495-498). An example is that of the talking drums<sup>50</sup> through the rhythm of the talking drum, one could announce a visitor, give a warning, celebrate a birth, announce a death, tell a story, or celebrate a victory. Similarly, singing was used in teaching moral values, remembering history or ancestry, or even to give a warning to someone.

The church has continued to respond to God's initiative through its developing music and worship practices that have evolved over time through the working of the Spirit. In the first three centuries of the church's existence, worship was essentially simple in practice, taking place in house-churches (Hurtado 2000:41).

"It is significant to note however that modern scholarship shows that early Christian worship was diverse in its ecclesiology, Christology and liturgical practices and developed differently in different parts of the Christian world" (Johnson 2006:33). There was therefore no single worship tradition that developed in a mono-linear way,

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<sup>50</sup> A talking drum is an African instrument known for its hourglass shape. Originating from West Africa, it is an instrument that can mimic the tone, rhythm, intonation and stress of human speech (Kivite 2012:2).

only in the freedom of the fourth century did cross- fertilization occur which resulted in more conformity.

Church music is in a state of flux especially in Africa. “Some churches have multiple services with different characteristics and/or an eclectic use of music and song. Some churches are moving away from these forms and the dominance of sung worship to more contemplative and liturgical expressions of worship” (Keown 2012:5-11). Commonly though, singing and music dominate gathered worship. The purpose of church music is not artistic excellence, but enabling and encouraging people's worship. “The role of musical artistry in worship is to freshen up the overly familiar, to highlight shifting moods, and to engage the people with God and the Christian community” (Neff 2014:28).

#### **4.2 Determinants of music theology**

The two central foci of Christian worship, namely Scriptures and Eucharist, ride on biblical and historical component called music. It becomes the wheel on which the Word and Eucharist ride” (Webber 1994:195).

Music and song continue to play a vital role in the life of God's people today. Contemporary culture and modern technology brings new possibilities and new challenges to the music ministry of the church. Atiemo (2006:142-143), in his analysis of music theology described that “worship music has become one of the most important expressions of popular Christianity, and it is, basically, the text that determines whether a particular song is gospel”. One important factor that determines a theologically based music, is true and authentic worship.

Segler (1967:98) suggests that music may be used to intensify ideas and feelings that are already in existent in a prepared and chastened mood, which is an antecedent to worship. In other words, through association music can inspire a prayerful mood and thereby aid in worship.

Worship in truth is worship that is grounded in the *truth of God's Word* (Grudem 1994:40). In similar thought, worship in truth is worship that is not only biblically accurate in the *message* it conveys, but in the *worship principles* it applies (Gustafson 2006:182-183).

Worship music declares the scriptures in a heavenly language and provides a means through which the mystery of God in Christ is approachable (Webber 1994:195-196). Worship music may also be prayers of petition or songs of praise and thanksgiving or direct evangelistic message appealing to unbelievers to accept the Gospel of Christ (Atiemo 2006:143).

In a penetrating exegesis of John 4:23, the word 'true' (*alēthinos*)<sup>51</sup> in the expression "true worshippers" (*hoi alēthinoi proskynētai*)<sup>52</sup>, means 'real or genuine'. God thus requires *authentic* worshippers, in contrast to the mechanistic, symbolic worship rituals from the past (Keddie 2001:186).

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<sup>51</sup> Alethinos – Greek word for 'true' (Zodhiates & Baker 2008:2066).

<sup>52</sup> Greek word for 'true worshippers' (Zodhiates & Baker 2008:2065-2066).

It is absolutely clear that God does not require music and worship that is barren, cerebral, lifeless and deadened by mechanical orthodoxy, but rather worship music that is biblically based.

Sound biblical content, through the preaching of the truths contained in God's Word, is therefore a vital component of the worship service because of its ability to pierce the hearts of those hearing the word and thus transform them (Cymbala 2003:63;124).

Because we have encountered God profoundly during times of musical worship, we can wrongly start assuming that words restrict the Spirit, while music enables us to experience God in fresh and powerful ways. If God had wanted us to know him primarily through music, the Bible would be a soundtrack, not a book. Music affects and helps us in many ways, but it doesn't replace the truth about God. By itself, music can never help us understand the meaning of God's self-existence (Kaufflin 2008:5-7). Meaning that, music is only a wheel to the vehicle called 'worship'.

Those who have grown up in church singing hymns this may seem obvious. But in the time of Luther the role and function of music deeply divided the church. The way the different churches responded to these issues set the musical agenda for generations to come. Both Calvin and Zwingli were deeply suspicious of music and its power to manipulate emotions (Tonsing 2009:322). They saw music as a human construct that easily could be misused. For this reason music needed to be strictly controlled in the service.

### **4.3 Current theological premise**

Worship without theology is sentimental and weak; theology without worship is cold and dead. Worship and theology combined motivates a strong Christian faith and empower a fruitful Christian life (Segler 1967:57).

Adedeji (2008:144) describes the theology of music and worship as an examination of what the scriptural views are, and how these views are been interpreted and defended. “A current proposition on the theology of worship music posits that the Christian church has culturally cross-pollinated its worship for almost two millennia. Egeria, a fourth-century Spanish pilgrim, wrote an eyewitness account of worship practices in Jerusalem. Those practices became the basis for the emerging liturgical year. In the sixth century after retaking the Italian peninsula from the Ostrogoth, Emperor Justinian appointed three popes. The result was "blended worship" a mix of East and West” (Neff 2014: 29-31).

There was, and still is the impact of the faith of Israel on the worship of the church which is indirect rather than direct, theological rather than liturgical. The church owes to Israel a worship based on the knowledge of God as Lord, not only of nature but of history (Garret 1963:12-13). Literature also shows that worship has not only become a highly contentious issue in contemporary times, but is also gravely misunderstood” (Stott 2007:45).

A theological view expresses that liturgical worship, a consequence of the acceptance of the Gospel will also employ the living expressive terms of the local culture. It will accept the music of the culture in its totality as a starting point (Whelan 1983:180).

"When the music does not support the Scripture of the day, then it can be viewed as a commodity whose value can too easily be reduced to 'I like that song' or 'I dislike that song.' But the value and function of music in worship is much greater" (Huvser-Honig 2005:3). Music should connect meaningfully with the scriptures in a way that ensures consistency with the truths of the Christian faith and not misleading.

"God has called his people to worship, and the church is without exception. Yet, in contemporary times, it appears that the church no longer truly understands what worship is, let alone its biblical principles and biblical mandate" (Carson 2002:13). Most evangelical churches claim to be scriptural in their practice, however, their worship ironically do not always reflect this norm.

"Naturally the form and practice of Christian liturgy changed over time – eventually drifting from a Jewish to Gentile enterprises" (Hill 1996:844). The Old Testament provided the initial influence and gave birth to the nature of Christian worship forms. In like manner, "the Babylonian captivity and birth of the synagogue provided the essential transition in style from a form based upon the temple and priests to a community worship led by lay people" (Wilson 1992:22).

Though the forms of worship, under God's providence, have unfolded and developed, the focus of worship – its heart and centre has remained the same, namely the triune God (Comfort & Elwell 2001:1311).

#### **4.4 Adopting a theology of worship music**

“It is not about how to use music to facilitate worship as much as it is to help people understand worship and have an intense passion to connect with God” (Barna 2002: 16). All worship is driven by a theology, even if unconsciously. If one’s worship is consumed with songs that exclusively focus on the creature instead of creator, sermons that are structured around the felt needs of the congregation in lieu of a Christ-centred focus, a low view of the ordinances, and prayers that are little more than requests in nature, then inevitably one will be drawn to a theology that is man-centred.

Music should be a medium used to teach key theological truths and should be theologically accurate itself. Separating music and theology leads to the view that music is only something done before getting to the 'real' part of worship-the preaching of the Word (Huyser-Honig 2005:4). Research outcome reveals a startling statistics that only three out of ten adult thinks worship is primarily focused on God, and one in five says they have no idea what the most important outcome of worship is (Sparks 2005:13).

A disconnect between music and theology results in churches that tend to 'entertain' the person in the pew rather than equip him for a deeper understanding of the gospels. These worshippers lack the skills to go out and proclaim the Word throughout the world" (Huvser-Hing 2005:3-4).

Adopting a theology of worship music, “the biblical heart of worship and thus a worshipper’s first priority, should be to *magnify* the Lord because of his nature, character and acts” (Kauflin 2008: 61-62).

Worship is to acknowledge the inherent *worth* of the object of worship, which includes both respect and acknowledgement (Morrow & Billington 1967:9). White (1990: 23-29) is helpful in his explanation that worship is an act in which believers assemble in Christ’s name and encounter God *corporately*.

The inevitable consequence is that many worship services fail in being authentic *worship* experiences, since the pastors themselves have no in-depth understanding of what in fact constitutes the worship of God. There generally seems to be no connection between the discrete parts of the service since the various elements seem to be chosen at random, without anyone truly understanding what either the liturgical or the theological purpose is of worship, let alone its biblical principles (Rayburn 2010: 12).

Most service leaders mistakenly understand the ‘worship’ part of a Sunday service to be the sermon, and what precedes it is merely “opening stuff”, consisting of an “assortment of hymns and prayers that we need to chug through prior to the ‘real thing’ – the Sermon” (Chapell 2009:21). If however, the “real thing” is not the sermon, then evangelicals consider the focus of a Sunday service to be *evangelisation* (Stott 2007:45).

Understanding and applying musical theology deepens worshipers' experience of God and better prepares them to share God's Word in the world. Every music rendered must be theologically based in order to reach out to people (Huyser-Honig 2005:2-3).

Contemporary Christian music is defined by the faith experience of its artists, lyrics that reflect Christian themes, and a collective of corporations, ideas, and audience grounded in a shared, yet diverse, understanding of the Gospel message (Barnes 2008: 321).

Music is however essential in adding further dimension of feeling and beauty (aesthetics) to our worship. If music is so important to worship, then the effects of the building of music are crucial. White (1990:112) further asserts that congregational song must pass the test of experiencing the inmost feelings and thought of the worshippers.

The basis for an authentic and theological based worship is well analyzed thus: "authentic worship is therefore a corporate response to the Almighty that brings him glory and honour by focusing on him alone in his triune manifestation" (Erickson 2007:353).

However, Dawn (1995:171) summed up the need for worship music to pass a theological quality test. He further emphasizes that theological soundness should not be compromised.

#### 4.5 Music inculturation within the African religious contexts

The concept of Inculturation<sup>53</sup> is applicable in theological circles in reference to the adaptation of religious teachings and practices to local cultures, and how the cultures shape the evolution of Christian practices” (Okigbo 2010:6). “It is the incarnation of Christian life in a particular cultural context in such a way that this experience becomes a principle that animates, directs and unifies the culture, transforming it, as to bring about a new creation” (Arrupe 1987:10-11). The concept of inculturation in theology have been identified as a strategy for liberation, this is because its effects on African liturgy and music is so strong. An example is the use of vernacular in composition as well as display of local instruments in performance.

As a theological *praxis*, inculturation theology holds that “the Good News [Gospel] becomes part of the ‘local’ culture when it is expressed and its fundamental truths are embodied in local categories of concepts, symbols, rituals and language” (Keteyi 1998:37).

Pewa (1997:11) indicates that it is worthwhile to understand both the social and cultural backgrounds of those people who produce sound in the form of music. On the other hand African music culture as a dynamic style with which people organize and

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<sup>53</sup> The term *inculturation* may be a neologism, but scholars have recognized its practice as going back to the era of the reformations through the period of the nascent church in Jerusalem (Franzen 1988; Shorter 1988; and Schineller 1990).

It was, for instance, the incorporation of the Greco-Roman cultures into the church that facilitated the resolution of the cultural conflicts between Jewish Christians and the Gentile Christians—a conflict that nearly fragmented the church in the first century (Franzen 1988:319).

Nkurunziza (2009:59) further posits that it would be prudent to say that inculturation is more concerned with cultural context.

orient themselves to act through various mediators-institutions such as language, production, marriage, folklore, religion and art (Chernoff 1979:36).

Every African culture is uniquely united, despite subcultural differences. The uniqueness can be attributed to the fact that each style of music is only one musical or cultural reflection of the larger society. “As a result of these it comes as well as being a product of the smaller environment and sub-cultural group. Therefore, each culture in its totality is unique and therefore each cultural expression is unique” (Whelan 1983:174, 201).

Music in worship is closely connected with culture. In the twentieth century the world has experienced a major cultural shift towards what has become known as mass culture. Mass culture has influenced the shape of new musical forms.

In their encounter with Europeans under colonialism and apartheid, black South Africans struggled to preserve their African identity. From the middle of the nineteenth century an emergent urban black intellectual elite used choral music to articulate the experiences and aspirations of their people. The use of music became a means of expressing culture and a form of cultural nationalism that sought to maintain a balance between the integrity of their African identity and their Christian experience by reformulating and reinterpreting elements of biblical Christianity to correspond to their African worldview (Okigbo 2010:3-8).

African Instituted Churches had challenged the missionary traditions and grew in numbers because their African music and dance liberated and created a new phase of African response to the gospel. In the process of decolonization, missionary-founded churches came under increasing pressure to devise encapsulating strategies. Meanwhile, cultural nationalists in the new African states patronized creative

indigenous music, thereby exacerbating the pressure toward inculturation (Kalu 2010:210-211).

The practice of inculturation continues to be integral to the current use of music to negotiate distinctive African identity and to address current problems affecting Africans. Inculturation in the African continent has been particularly strong in liturgy and music. Liturgical performance and song compositions in vernacular, along with the adaptation of indigenous instruments, began gaining ground with the liturgical movements of the 1960s and reached the peak during the four decades after the second Vatican council of the Roman Catholic Church (Okigbo 2010:58). Furthermore, Liturgical Inculturation whereby texts and rites of the Reformed Liturgy of Vatican II are systematically inserted into the framework of the local culture (Sarpong 1975:325).

The first steps toward musical inculturation, however, had begun with the South African eclectic composers. Analyzing their songs, these individuals did not just replicate the style of music in the mission churches: instead they produced songs that reflected indigenous polyphonic style, articulated an African worldview, and transmitted messages that spoke to the African religious and sociopolitical experience under colonialism (Arinze *et al* 1990:95-98).

Since the founding of the African Independent Churches, there has been a growing awareness among black South Africans that Christianity did not require Europeanization. Instead, one might convert to Biblical Christianity without losing one's cultural identity. One way in which black South Africans have strived to retain their cultural identity is through their music. Thus, black "people have used music and

theatre to tell the story of their trauma and pain; to proclaim their aspirations and affirm their humanity” (Keteyi 1998:28). A pattern of musical inculturation and theological transformation were created by early antiapartheid movement, who were also poets and song writers. This became a tool for them to articulate the objective of their struggle against minority rule.

Some of the pioneers of Black Nationalism in South Africa such as John Knox Bokwe (1855-1922), Isaiah Shembe (1870-1935), John Langabalele Dube (1871-1946) and Enoch Makhayi Sontonga (1873-1905) among others. “These men were products of colonial missionary education, where choral music was an integral part of the curriculum. At the mission schools, they imbibed the European tradition of four-part<sup>54</sup> hymn singing in tonic sol-fa<sup>55</sup> that was introduced by the missionaries” (Okigbo 2010:43-44).

African song is determined on a different basis of understanding, and here only generalities can be used as every cultural tradition is different in this respect each containing many types of songs for different purposes (Whelan 1983: 172-176).

Each subculture has its own mode of expression and liturgy reflects this. In terms of music *praxis* it means encountering such diverse styles as (for example in Western cultures) traditional vernacular hymns, plain-chant, modern songs somewhat influenced by popular music<sup>56</sup>, polyphony<sup>57</sup>, music that find its home more readily in contemporary 'art' music, which reflect different subcultural groups. “Essentially, music

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<sup>54</sup> Four part harmony is a four voice texture written representation of music (Benward & Saker 2003:2).

<sup>55</sup> Tonic sol-fa is a method of naming notes, pitches in music.

<sup>56</sup> See terminology for meaning.

<sup>57</sup> These are musical compositions that uses simultaneous melodic and independent parts.

dance and instruments have symbiotic relationships and purpose in various traditions. They are powerful symbolic expressions of people's identity within the social, economic, political and religious contexts" (Makahamadze & Sibanda 2008:290).

The African churches has certainly taken up the challenge to inculturate theology. The African publications are some of the ways by which inculturations are been implemented.

#### **4.6 Towards a Theo-musicological approach**

Theo-musicology<sup>58</sup> is formulated on a basis that all humans express theology, often unintentionally and subconsciously, so that music from different background and cultures can be analysed to reveal theological beliefs. Musical thought and musical works are examined through their relationship to contemporary liturgical practice, theological belief and religious politics (Samantha 2012:2-3).

Theology and musical works in practice could involve a close analysis of revealed underlying theological assumptions. For instance, how does it reflect eschatological beliefs, how does church music, song and dance emphasize key textual moments or how does the pacing of music echo liturgical practice?

"Theo-musicological research into cultural/intercultural reflections on the ethical, the religious as well as mythological; these involves the study of music in the domain or communities of the sacred, the secular, and the profane" (Spencer 1994: 23-24).

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<sup>58</sup> Spencer (1991:1-2) establishes Theomusicology as a valid research approach to studying world religious, mythological and ethical beliefs via music.

By examining the depths of sacrality, secularity, and profanity in the music civilizations of many cultures. The Theo-musicologist can increasingly discern how particular peoples perceive the universal mysteries that circumscribe their mortal existence, and how the ethics, theologies, and mythologies to which they subscribe shape their worlds.

Makahamadze and Sibanda (2008:293-294) posit that In the Old Testament, instruments and dance in the praise of God often accompanied music. This was presupposed in some of the Psalms and encouraged in others (Ps. 26:6; 149:3). This idea is succinctly expressed in Psalms 150: 3-6 that says:

*“Praise the Lord.  
Praise Him with trumpets.  
Praise Him with harps and lyres.  
Praise Him with drums and dancing.  
Praise the Lord with cymbals.  
Praise Him with loud cymbals.  
Praise the Lord all living creatures”.*

Adedeji (2008: 145. 146), on a wider view, discusses that “music therapy and theological practice in an African church has been practiced in one form or the other in medical practicing. However, it could be said that Music therapy has a religious bearing in its origin”. While the case of Saul has always been the reference point in the Scriptures, I Samuel 16:23. Various literatures have also attested to the practice of Music Therapy among the ancient Greek." Since then, music 'has been increasingly used in the treatment of mental and physical handicaps and emotional disturbance.

“Music Therapy has effectively been utilized in the churches even when the practitioners may not be able to explain the technical know-how” (Adedeji 2008: 143). The origin of music therapy can also be traced to antiquity period as discovered by the

ancient Jewish religious culture. Music has always, and still been used as treatment for various ailments, as well as mental and emotional trouble.

Larkin (2014:26), in agreement, reveals that “music provides people with ways of understanding and developing their self-identity; connecting with others; maintaining well-being; experiencing and expressing spirituality”. The results shows how music contributes to positive aging by providing ways for people to maintain positive self-esteem, feel competent, independent, and avoid feelings of isolation or loneliness.

#### **4.7 Different musical forms from different denominations in Africa**

In Africa, every festivity is accompanied by music even though the type of music varies from one celebration to the other and will only be considered good music when it gives the celebration the grandeur the latter deserves (Frattalone 1984:71).

There is an important admonition, derived from Augustine, of the *dangers* of music, especially in slavishly adhering to a specific genre and in so doing making it an idol instead of a means of reaching out to God (Guthrie 2009:26, 29). Diverse music speaks to different generations, and engages the greatest possible number of people at once. That there are churches who try to split the difference. They do traditional music during their early services, then they do modern services later in the day (Hutto 2013:2-3).

Merriam (1982:65) writes that there are misconceptions regarding African music in general. One of them is that African music is old and that it represents what Western music must have been like, ten thousand years ago. This misconception may be as a result of western influence of African contemporary music. Notwithstanding, African

music generally still reflects indigenous rhythm, which is created from its local instruments associated with various occasions.

Although music and dance are vulnerable to misconceptions simply because some African churches, for instance ZCC practice syncretic religion which is a fusion of Christianity and traditional African beliefs” (Pewa 2007: 1-2). This movement is neither Christian nor Traditional, but a syncretism of both, and thus a new religion. Furthermore, African churches are said to have their unique tradition which is rooted in African traditional religion.

In trying to search for African identity and culture, “churches such as Zionist Christian Church (ZCC) as well as other African Christian churches, have begun to explore the resources of indigenous music and dance” (Oosthuizen 1989:28-29).

The Africanization of the western hymn by most African Churches is one of the ways in which indigenization is practiced. For example, the rhythm of the western hymn does not evoke dancing feelings. However, clapping and drumming in the African ways has changed the hymn rendition into something worth dancing to. An example of churches where such is found, is the Cherubim and Seraphim churches<sup>59</sup> (Nigeria, West Africa).

The Cherubim and Seraphim churches use indigenous instruments like local drum, *sekere* (shakers made from calabash netted with strings of beads or cowries), *agogo*

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<sup>59</sup> Popularly referred to as C&S movement, is a denomination in Nigeria, founded by Moses Orimolade, they claimed to have dreams and vision that facilitate the connection of God and humanity (Wikipedia).

(gong)<sup>60</sup> , in addition to other contemporary instruments. The content of their songs and rhythm portray their Africanness” (Aiyegboyin & Ishola 1997: 4).

The Zionist denomination on the other hand organize themselves by African music culture as a dynamic style with which people organize and orient themselves to act through various mediators-institutions such as language, production, marriage, folklore, religion and art (Chernoff 1979:36).

Pewa (1997:87) establishes that one of the outstanding features of African worship is music-making. In the ZCC the basic idea is that music is used as a tool for communication between the living and the ancestors as well as supreme powers. Music and vigorous dances are used as a medium for acquisition of umoya<sup>61</sup> in order to be transformed into trance state and perform healing rituals. This is what makes music to be integral part of Zionist worship. There is no doubt, singing unites people and it soothes the innermost feelings of the people.

Music, in most African churches, is very traditional in form. In a bid to explain this form from the ethnomusicological perspective, Coplan (1985:35) posits that the material and social conditions under which traditional music genres or styles arose and crystallized change, so of course must music and its meaning change for its creators.

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<sup>60</sup> A circular bronze plate, used as an orchestral percussion instrument, also used to summon villagers for public announcement, especially in the South West, Nigeria..

<sup>61</sup> Umoya is a Zulu word which means spirit or essence of a person.

The Seventh Day Adventist church<sup>62</sup> in general allows the use of instruments and dance in worship. Seventh Day Adventists in most African Countries have been influenced by either African Traditional Religions or by Christianity that uses the Bible as the norm. This is because African people are a singing and dancing people. Indeed, traditional African life is characterized by song, dance and play from womb to tomb (Makahamadze *et al* 2008:291). These art forms are often expressed through traditional musical instruments and dances, which are part and parcel of African traditional culture and religion.

Music forms the heart of the Seventh Day Adventist Church worship services. It permeates all church activities from the beginning of the Sabbath to the end. The Adventists believe that God has woven music into the very fabric of his creation. White (1903:68) also concur that “music is one of the most effective means of impressing the heart with spiritual truth”.

Makahamadze & Sibanda (2008:301-302) attest that “rock, jazz and African music are not compatible with the Seventh Day Adventist Church, judging by some lay down principles. Some of these principles states that; members should avoid music that are theatrical, but glorifies God”. SDA’s<sup>63</sup> Music should have a text that is in harmony with scriptural teaching of the church, and should be appropriate for the occasion, setting and the audience for which it is intended.

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<sup>62</sup> The Seventh Day Adventists are a Biblical and Apocalyptic believers who uphold the technical interpretation of Biblical inspiration. Their spirituality is informed by apocalyptic motifs about the end times. (Makahamadze *et al* 2008:295).

<sup>63</sup> SDA means Seventh Day Adventist.

That the music they play and listen to must be clear and not loud. Wheaton (2000:152) supports this notion that loud music stimulates anger, aggression and uncontrollable behavior. The question of whether instruments and dance should accompany music remains a debatable issue in the Adventist World. In some of their churches, instrumental music is encouraged whereas in other churches it is not. Makahamadze (2002: 302) *et al* further states that some SDA churches, however, are hesitant to use drums in the church thinking that they are evil and satanic. But Fisher (1999: 144) denies the misconception, giving that the heavy percussion of the drum influences our emotions by arousing our passions. McElwain (2002: 166) is in agreement with Fisher that “drums are not evil, what is evil is the way they are used”.

Tonsing (2009:321-322) listed ten Lutheran musical *praxis* as follows:

1. Music is a gift or creation of God. We can and may use it to praise God in whatever way we can.
2. We sing because of what Christ has done. We proclaim it, we praise and thank him.
3. We should sing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs.
4. We can and should sing about anything that affects our faith, about our joy and awe, but also our pain and doubt.
5. Songs should be accessible and understandable.
6. Songs should teach good theology.
7. We should take along the best of the past, but leave behind what is theologically inappropriate.

8. Any instruments and any style can be used to praise God—no instruments or styles are ‘holier’ than others, but we should be wary of inappropriate associations
9. We should encourage people to write new creative tunes and texts which fit into contemporary styles. We should proclaim Christ to the generations today.
10. The congregation should participate; the service is not a performance.

The Lutheran music tradition is probably the richest worship music heritage among the protestant churches. This is because it is assumed that music is the profound means by which liturgy is been rendered in God’s presence during worship.

In the time of Luther the role and function of music deeply divided the church. Tonsing (2009:322) further writes that Luther was different. He opened the gates wide for all kinds of music to be used in the service. Luther believed that music can praise God in and of itself; it is not simply a carrier of the word. Sohngen (1967:89) agrees that Luther encouraged people to write songs both words and tunes and did not prescribe any style. And that people should praise God and proclaim his wonders with music.

One attraction of the Pentecostal churches is the perfect synthesis of African music with the Christian *genre*. The rhythm of drum, flute, rattle, whistle and other instruments pervades church premises and crusade venues (Ehianu 2014:73-74). A perfect example is Christ Apostolic Church of Nigeria (CAC). This denomination is in the category of African indigenous churches, also known as African Independent Churches (AIC).

The form of music in Christ Apostolic Church is basically indigenous and spiritual, which includes singing, dancing, clapping and playing of musical instruments. Adedeji (2008:147) confirms that the supernatural abilities of music are established throughout the Scriptures, which may have contributed to the theology of music therapy in Christ Apostolic Church (CAC).

It is believed that it is God who moves through music to perform supernatural miracles and not that the music has the power on its own. The attention is always on God, and that He gives a directive to carry out when miraculous healings would happen.

Adedeji (2008: 147-148) asserts that in the Scriptures, God cured Saul's mental disorder by music (I Sam 16:23); the angels destroyed the enemies of Jehoshaphat when music was played (I Chr 20:22); inspiration came upon Elisha when a minstrel played (II Kgs 3:15); the sound of music made Saul to prophesy (I Sam 10:5,6,10); the wall of Jericho fell with the use of music (Josh 6:20) and Paul and Silas were delivered from the prison through the use of music (Acts 16:25-26).

The practice of music in Christ Apostolic Church is highly rhythmic. Spender (1980:863-864) indicates that out of all the elements of music, rhythm is the vital factor that is acknowledged. The practice of Music in CAC<sup>64</sup> makes use of all the aspects of music. Christ Apostolic Church liturgies are characterized by boisterous music, a practice which is born out of rigorous clapping, loud singing and the use of heavy percussive instruments (Will 1986:522-523).

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<sup>64</sup> CAC is the abbreviation for Christ Apostolic Church

“The element of music that is most characteristic of African music is that of *rhythm*. If rhythm is an essential element of music anywhere, then it is the very soul of African music” (Whelan 1983:177). Singing, clapping, dancing and playing of different musical instruments in form of rhythm, are some of the ways that African people express themselves. In other word, African music is often identified by its rhythmic nature, which stimulates body movement.

During revival, healing and deliverance meetings in CAC which are held from time to time, hymns and special anthems are rendered. During this time, people are told to be ready to receive their miracles. Catchy songs of prayer in fast tempo are also raised by the Revivalist during his ministration, these are also chorused by the participants. The tempo of these songs increases steadily until it reaches an uncontrollable pace (Adedeji 2008:149-150).

Music in Pentecostal Churches are mostly contemporary, in some Pentecostals, it is a sync, referred to as African contemporary music. Thompson (2000:321) indicates that Christian Contemporary music is said to have emerged during the turbulent 1960s, as Christians, especially the young, attempted to make sense of societal changes while older adults strove to maintain social control and churches strained to respond to a growing Rock and Roll sentiment.

However, my view is that contemporary music has so much influenced and transformed the music in most African churches. As a result of this, most African

contemporary churches now depend on Western Christian music as their source of *repertoire*.

#### **4.8 Summation**

The theology of music should be biblical, consistent with reformed theology and must represent the whole counsel of God. Our hymns and songs should imply the sovereignty and grace of God (Best 1993:200). Furthermore, our music must encourage corporate worship, and that choirs and musicians must lead and support the congregation in its worship and not display their virtuosity (Lovelace *et al* 1976:20).

It is not about how to use music to facilitate worship as much as it is to help people understand worship and have an intense passion to connect with God” (Barna 2002:16).

Holistic and authentic worship is a major factor in determining a theologically based music. Segler (1967:98) suggests that “music may be used to intensify ideas and feelings that are already in existent in a prepared and chastened mood, which is an antecedent to worship”.

Guthrie (2009:27-29) stresses a deeper perceptive of worship music, by incorporating three equal functions, which are; i.) The imprinting of biblical truth through the lyrics of the song, the didactic and edification purpose, ii.) The uniting function through the corporate act of congregational singing and iii.) The application of the truths of the lyrics in Christ-like living beyond the walls of the church.

Warren (2007:222) reminds Christians that though music has always played a central, God-ordained role in worship, it has always been a controversial issue in the Church. He makes the incontrovertible point that church music is a product of its day and is rooted in the culture which gives rise to it.

The power that music has is used to enhance the relationship and communication with God, to deepen emotions and response to the Holy Spirit, and used as a means through which emotions could be conveyed to God and back to them. Some of their experiences appear to support psychology's explanation that music as a religious symbol can be used to alter 'consciousness of the worshippers in the direction of the divine' (Fontana 2003: 37).

All worship is driven by a theology, whether consciously or unconsciously. Meaning that: worship must not be focused on the creature instead of creator, the content of worship music must also not be structured around the felt needs of our congregation in lieu of a Christ-centred focus. Moreso, prayers offered to God should not be more of requests, than adoration and praise, otherwise, one will be drawn to a theology that is man-centred.

Music is a medium through which truth about God is expressed, and given that people learn their theology in part through the songs and hymns they sing" (Pass 2007:251).

If all theology, all sermons, had to be set to music, our teaching and preaching would not only be more mellifluous; it might also approximate more closely to God's truth, the truth revealed in and as the Word made flesh, crucified and risen (Wright 2002:12).

In view of these, there is no doubt that “theology in Africa needs its song writers, its musicians, its poets and writers of prayer and liturgy. Ways have to be found to integrate the insights of academic theological wisdom into the rhythm of Africa, or we shall fight a losing battle” (De Gruchy 1997:62).

## CHAPTER FIVE

### SYNTHESIS

#### 5.1 Introduction

The scope of this study is that the modern churches and worship music practitioners have deviated from its original belief. Worship and music without any doubt complements each other, because our inner feelings is often expressed through singing. However, the contemporary church has not only misunderstands the meaning and purpose of worship, but has lost sight of the biblical and historical foundation of worship “in its headlong rush into contemporary relevance”. It is therefore essential for the modern church to rediscover its fundamental orthodoxy or “correct worship” practices” (Chan 2006:11, 51).

Music is not just an expression of our praise to and for God, but it is also a channel for teaching and admonishing one another (Col 3:16). It is as a result of this that Christian communities have adopted various models of worship in order to accommodate their theological and musical structure.

God’s wish for his people is to worship him, and the church is not an exception. However, it appears that the contemporary church no longer understands what true worship is all about, let alone its biblical principles and mandate.

The researcher observed that the use of music in our contemporary corporate worship has brought about great changes to the style of worship, especially with the use of rhythm and orchestral instruments in the multicultural African churches.

In the previous chapters the role of music in worship on the African continent was emphatically described. Singing and liturgical dance serve as modes of praise and worship and as muscular strategies for inculcating the gospel message because they unite the body, soul, and spirit during worship.

The African Christians were not satisfied with the range of music types allowed in the Church. They wanted more in worship. From the Africans point of view, it means music in worship must include the freedom to express oneself, not only in response to the sacred texts of religious songs but also in response to the rhythm of the song, and the drum and other accompaniments (Atiemo, 2006:149).

Music in Africa has helped to create an environment conducive to prayer and spiritual reflection, and it can be a stimulus to contemplate existential issues. However, one of the biggest challenges faced by the contemporary churches is in the realm of worship music. Despite the fact that music has been integral into worship since Old Testament times, yet there are still lapses. An example of such is, lack of balance between the old traditional and the contemporary music in multi-generational worship.

Music in modern church should be a response to God and serve some fundamental purposes. Worship and praise songs must also be a *declaration* of God's greatness and one's own faith in Him.

There is a perception that the music and worship practices of the church needs to be urgently revitalised in order to meet the increasing challenges it faces through undiscerning cultural assimilation. Based on current inadequate music practices in churches, there is need for a new energy required for transformation of the church music. The church has been and will continue to make great impact in the community and the Continent through music. Hence, the need for revitalization.

Biblical studies have been one of the basic approaches to conducting the research. Also an applied Interpretation methods which forms a pertinent issue concerning theology of music in Africa. This study also attempts to draw from the biblical account itself injunctions towards a theology of worship music within the African context.

Having identified the biblical worship practices in the Old Testament as well as the historic and contemporary practices in the church. The key principles and practices for Godly worship have been identified and synthesised thus; First and foremost it was made clear that humanity has been created as *Homo adorans*, that is, he has been created specifically for worship (Atkinson 1990:49).

In light of the above, the guiding principle concerning worship music is that worship is a very important vehicle in worship, and therefore music should fundamentally honour the God and edify the assembled church. Furthermore, music choices should aim at both maintaining the broad theological position of the church, as well as ensuring the unity of the body. As a result of these, music practioners in the church needs to adopt a balanced theology of music.

The fundamental aesthetic therefore would simply be that worship music should be *God-honouring* and that it *enhances* true worship and *enables* the participants to reach out to the transcendent God and to *experience* His immanent presence during the worship experience (Pass 2005:33).

## **5.2 Research summary**

This research is summarized as follows:

5.2.1 Summary of problem statement: The existence of varieties in contemporary church music traditions, most of them claiming to be true worship. However, this research has proven beyond reasonable doubt that most of the music practices in today's church are not only inadequate, they are also not biblically informed. Introduction of music into the Old Testament worship pattern has laid a precept to be followed with regards to worship music practices. This study has also addressed the problem of artistry display in contemporary worship; that worship music should rather demonstrate a biblical premise.

5.2.2 Summary of the research methodology: The methodology of this study is based on a literature review and applied interpretation method. This is pertinently used to dissect the theology of worship music in Africa.

5.2.3 Aims and objectives summation: A biblical principles is required to form a paradigm that will eventually transform the church. This research has explored the Old Testament narratives of music and worship administration. Furthermore, an authority of the scripture is established as the tool in worship by which it should be practiced.

5.2.4 Summation of hypothesis: Every African culture values music, and embraces music as a way of life, just as it was in Israelites culture. The Hypothesis of this research has been formulated to enrich the understanding of praise and worship music in an African context.

The chapters constitutes various outlines that was instrumental in exploring the research topic.

### **5.3 Summation of perspectives**

The Israelite's understanding of music was that music had a strong and influential power. For instance, there is a strong link between music and prophecy in the Old Testament. 1Sam 10:5b (NLT) "*..... They will be playing a harp, a tambourine, a flute, and a lyre, and they will be prophesying*". 'School of Prophets' as they have been called in the scriptures, would have focused on musical education, as the role of the prophets includes composition of song, poetry as well as musical performance. This is because the prophets frequently uttered their messages to musical accompaniment (2Kgs 3:14-15).

Findings in this study exposes the lack of well-balanced music and theological education of our contemporary music and lead worshippers. The contemporary church<sup>65</sup> have also ignorantly designated the song leaders as Worship leaders, as against the Old Testament's idea. A contemporary worship leader correctly agrees that "worship practices have strayed far away from the *true* biblical heart of worship

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<sup>65</sup> Contemporary church is a denomination that emerged within the Western evangelical Protestantism in the twentieth century.

because we have failed to base our practices firmly on the Word of God” (Lucarini 2008:51).

Christians of Charismatic Churches have divide gospel songs into two: *praise songs* and *worship songs*. What differentiates the two is the tempo. 'Worship' songs are slow and poignant and are usually accompanied by raising of hands and swaying the whole body forward and backward. While 'praise' songs are faster and are usually accompanied by dancing. The same song can be either 'praise' or 'worship', depending on the beat to which it is sung. In most cases, such classifications do not take into consideration whether the text of the song is actually about worship or praise<sup>66</sup>.

Further findings also reveal that contemporary worship often lacks any spirituality and a sense of the sacred, of the *holiness* of God, who is purportedly being worshipped. It was observed that the reason for this, is because contemporary worship music has imbibed the culture of the secular music, thereby subverting true worship.

Since modern society is fundamentally entertainment and spectator-driven, contemporary worship music has come to be something to be *watched*. Congregational singing as a consequence is dying out in most contemporary churches, despite protestations to the contrary, especially since Jazz music and other contemporary style of music is complex and often unsingable.

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<sup>66</sup> Singing with understanding- the story of gospel music in Ghana. Baltimore; Edinburgh University Press. (Atiemo 2006:143)

This study shows that all Christian worship music is to be Trinitarian in focus, Christocentric in emphasis, predicated on the Word of God and energised by the Holy Spirit. These, among others, are the biblically-derived principles of worship. It has also been shown that God-honouring worship is worship that is offered in reverence and in submission that acknowledges God's transcendent holiness, as well as with a sincere and dependent heart that wishes to draw near to God and glorify him. Such worship includes total engagement and genuine involvement of the believer in the worship service as they seek to encounter the living God (Gustafson 2006:190).

Theology of African music and worship, expresses that theology is expressed through songs, because songs are crucial in African Christianity as music is part of culture and that Christian faith in general can be effectively expressed and communicated only in culturally designed media. "Liturgical Celebrations in Africa are an occasion to feast and so good music must accompany it. There has been a lot of success in this area seen from the numerous choirs, choir masters in practically every parish" (Chibuko 1995: 19). Since music has now become one of the most important expressions of Christian faith in most African churches. As a result of this, all churches irrespective of location and belief, inculcate music into their pattern of worship. Thereby, theology is formulated through their style of music.

Similarly, music has become a medium through which truth about God is communicated, and given that people learn their theology in part through the songs and hymns they sing. Pass (2007:251) agrees that music is one way of contextualizing the gospel in a form that resonates with hearers.

The concept of African music has been revealed through the functional roles it assumes. For instance, songs are composed for a purpose, i.e. (songs specific to rituals, different types of celebrations, initiation rites, work songs, praise songs, funeral music, etc.) — each with its own set of conventions dictating the use of instruments, styles of singing, musical structure and dance.

Since songs are repeated each time people meet to worship, they are invaluable instruments in transmitting church teachings and doctrine. Songs are probably the only confessional utterance that can be learnt by heart and a means through which theological insights can be passed across.

#### **5.4 Practical implications**

Music is a divine creation for God's praise and man's enjoyment, but certain parameters must be applied: Anything we believe or practice beyond the theology of the Biblical text must be properly labelled as human preferences or cultural tradition.

Furthermore, the theology of worship music indicates that there must be a connection between music and theology in a way that ensures a deep and consistent truth of the Christian faith. Otherwise, it becomes shallow and even misleading. A theology of music ensures that music and theology interact with each other meaningfully.

Worship music should not be limited to building community of believers, but ultimately to also reach out to the unchurched in the society. True worship should have an effect on every believer's life and the gathered church (Rom 12:1-2).

Here are some standards for worship music that could be adopted in contemporary churches;

- The gospel must be reflective in the music and the text, such that the culture for which they are intended can understand.
- Nothing but the best should be offered to God with a humble heart of gratitude, love and grace.
- Our worship music must be genuinely creative, expressing and enhancing a deep Christian theology.
- It must be presented from the heart, reaching out to the targeted audience, it must also be well balanced intellectually and emotionally.
- Worship music should support holistic gathering, and should be related to the group's belief, considering the musical needs of each.

Worship music is theological, and requires theological reflection in order to fulfil its function in the Church. This is by extension, true of worship music as well.

Worship music has a place in all of the main aspects of the life of the Church, including evangelism, worship, education and fellowship. When music is absent, these activities are less effective than when music is present. When a "clear rationale" of worship music is missing, the music is unable to fulfil its role in these activities, and becomes uncertain, misunderstood and even abused. This naturally, affects the impact of the activities of which it is a part (Pass 1989:5-6).

This study is to encourage that the right attitude is channeled towards the practice of worship music in our churches. Expressing who God is, and what he has done and all his attributes should be the focus of the content of worship music. Music is to provide a vehicle for worship that leads the worshipper to sing of God's glory, of his majesty that is consistent with his character and word (Heb10:31; Rom 11:33-36; Rev 14:7).

Worship music is not for human pleasure, rather for God pleasure. "Let them praise his name with dancing and make music to him with tambourine and harp. For the LORD takes delight in his people, he crowns the humble with salvation" (Ps 149:3-4 NIV). Several acts are suggested in this psalm on how praise should be offered to God i.e. with singing, instruments and dance. Praise to God must also flow from a heart filled with joy and triumph in Gods attributes.

Old Testament worship is devotional and sacred. The praise and worship practices of David's time included numerous musical instruments, singing, chanting, shouting, bowing and standing, lifting of hands, clapping of hands, processions and dancing. Davidic worship as mentioned in chapter three of this study was often prophetic (1 Chr 25:1; Pss 46:10, 50:7, 85:8), and the singing of new songs (spontaneous songs given by inspiration of the Spirit) was encouraged (Pss 33:3, 96:1, 149:1).

Many musicians, including some of our role players in churches today, are theologically uninterested and illiterate. So a lot of them have derived their plausibility structure and identity from contemporary culture, instead of the Christian church and tradition. But understanding and applying musical theology deepens worshipers' experience of God and better prepares them to share God's Word in the world.

## 5.5 Limitations and recommendations

Contrary to the Old Testament, teachings in the New Testament on worship patterns is generally limited and, with a few exceptions, information has to be gained by *inference* from the Scriptures. “There is no single highly developed statement on worship in the New Testament” (Webber 1994:41).

The study of worship of the New Testament Church is important to note for theology of worship music, because its theological practice is based on the New Testament teachings for spiritual growth.

This study did not dissect the New Testament style of worship and music, but one essential factor that could be examine is Jesus Christ’s link with music. It was recorded that He used music during a worship session at the Last Supper. The scriptures wrote that ‘He and his disciples sang a hymn before leaving for the Mount of Olives’ (Mk 14:26).

Davis (2010:11) expressed a widely felt concern about the “thinning” of evangelical worship, and the disappearance of many biblical elements of worship. One of these concerns are encapsulated in the loss of transcendence in worship.

The recent trend in marketable worship music which has flooded the world. While not a new phenomenon, the marketing of worship music, in particular, has become a huge international industry over the last decade or so, with a number of implications for the Church, not all of which are positive (Van De Laar 2000:197).

As a result of these, Davis (2010:9) concludes that the contemporary evangelical churches need more attention in the training of pastors and role players in the music and worship team. However, as Davis further observes that, “worship is not a peripheral, but a central concern of the life of the church” – quoting his words, “the church’s highest priority and purpose is worshipping the living God” and is more important than preaching or evangelising.

It is recommended that Christian musicians have sound knowledge of the Scriptures, especially in the area of music. However, it should be noted that theological education does not guarantee uniformity of practice. This is because different Christian denominations have different theologies, as may be determined by presuppositions, cultural back-grounds and peculiar contextual situations (Adedeji 2007:98-99).

To enhance this, my recommendation is that churches needs to move on from volunteer-driven music ministry to full-time facilitators. When it comes to getting a senior pastor, the church will find the best person on *market*. However, when it comes to church music which is a critical ministry, the norm in most churches is a volunteer and sub-standard if not outdated equipment is always in use, which makes the music ministry remains on average the least addressed ministry.

David’s example is worth bringing to the fore as recorded in 1 Chronicles 25:1-31, and as discussed earlier in chapter three, when he appointed full-time musicians to sing, prophecy and play musical instruments. This example should be the standard in our worship and music ministry.

This study summed up recommendations that music and singing employed in worship practice must be outright biblical. Our worship must be divinely rooted in God's word as its authority of faith. It must not be forgotten that the bible contains more than enough principles and directions that could help our understanding of worship music.

Worship music should not be limited to contemporary style of song writing, rather it should be powered by psalms, hymns, spiritual songs as well as instrumental music whose lyrics does not conflict teachings from the scriptures (Eph 5:19; Col 3:16-17; Ps 150).

The quality of music in worship should be nothing but excellence. One of God's attributes is perfection, therefore we must consciously strive to offer unto him meaningful text, backed up by great rhythm, melody and harmony. This also indicates that a careful selection of songs is very necessary, such that the music style must be understandable to suit the theme and structure of the worship service. Piper (2003: 230) advised that "our focus should be on the essence and not the form". The essence of worship signifies our response to Him, because he has commanded us to worship him as his own covenant people.

The premise of offering excellent and quality worship music follows that we must be prayerfully and technically prepared. Meaning that there should be adequate rehearsal by musicians and leaders who are skilled and trained and have prepared themselves before God (1 Chr 25:6-7).

Our worship must be Holy Spirit empowered (Jhn 4:24), because man cannot worship through his own effort. The state of the heart also must be governed by the truth of the word of God. Meaning that the music and song must be done with understanding and conviction by the spirit.

Above all, God must be the object and subject of our worship. Worship directed at anyone apart from the Sovereign God, is idolatry (Ex 20:3, 23:24-34:14). God alone is worthy of all praise and adoration (Ps 145:13). Our music must be offered as a sacrifice principally to God, and our song lyrics should direct all praise, adoration and expressed gratitude to God for his acts of greatness.

## **5.6 Conclusion**

The scope covered in this study has shown the urgent need for a developed theology of worship music on the African Continent. The Old Testament and other biblical accounts has been dissected for principles that could be applied in contemporary religious communities, including guidelines on how best to achieve the result.

We have seen that worship is not just what we do when get together as believers. It is about a life lived in practical awareness of God in every aspects of life and wherever we are.

This study further addressed the current states of contemporary churches in Africa whose understanding of the role of music in worship, as well as biblical worship is found wanting and inadequate.

The role of music in contextualisation of the Christian faith is widely recognised in Africa churches. Various scholars have written on the importance of songs in contextualising the gospel in a manner that resonates with African people.

Worship music on the other hand, has been portrayed as the cultural heritage of Africa, its community structure, the religiosity and spiritual experience, past and present realities, a fixed deposit that cannot be disregarded<sup>67</sup>.

One of the common forms of worship among the African people described in this study is in the form of offerings and sacrifices. Worship is clearly not about getting something from God but about giving to God.

Describing an essential elements of the ancient cultures, “Although we don’t know how ancient music sounded, judging from the ways it was used, but we do know that music was important then, as it is now<sup>68</sup>.

Since music has been identified as a medium through which truth about God is expressed, and given that people learn their theology in part through the songs and hymns they sing. In view of these, there is no doubt that African theology need its musicians, song writers, poets and writers of prayer and liturgy. In addition, academic theological wisdom needs to be integrated into the rhythm of Africa<sup>69</sup>.

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<sup>67</sup> Becken (1973:148).

<sup>68</sup> Burgh (2006:1).

<sup>69</sup> (De Gruchy 1997:62).

Therefore, it is vitally important for today's church to reclaim the authentic teachings of the Scripture and the foundational expressions of the early church regarding its practice of worship music.

Finally, the state of worship music in African Churches have been discussed, with references pointing at difficulties encountered in their worship practices. It is hoped that the principles developed in this work will address some or most of the challenges for the betterment of sacred music in the African community.

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