



# Music

## Moses Way

BY WENDY HILL

When we think of Moses we think of how he was rescued by the Pharaoh's daughter, brought up in the palace, fled to Midian, talked to the burning bush, and led the Israelites out of Egypt. However Moses, being a leader, was also a great teacher.

One of the most important tasks God gave him was to teach the Ten Commandments to the Israelites. Deuteronomy 6:1–12 outlines his teaching method. It is a thorough method which reveals that Moses must have known that knowledge comes to us in many ways. One way is information derived from the external world. Man's environment provides an infinite amount of information, including music, received through the body senses. Another way to gain knowledge is from inside — the soul and the spirit.

**The Body** God directed Moses to teach the Ten Commandments to the Israelites (Deuteronomy 5:31 and 6:1). Deuteronomy 6:1–12 describes how Moses' method of teaching involved the body senses.

**Aurally** The people used their ears to listen with as Moses spoke. He told them twice to hear his words. 'Hear, Oh Israel, ...' (Verses 3 and 4).

**Visually** Moses wrote the Ten Commandments on tablets a second time as a visual reminder of God's instructions (Deuteronomy 10:1–2). God had already written them the first time after He had spoken and Moses had listened to Him. In the learning process listening comes before reading.

**Orally** Moses talked to the people and told parents to talk to their children (Deuteronomy 6:7).

**Kinesthetically (touch)** Moses told people to touch the Commandments. 'Tie them as symbols on your hands and bind them on your foreheads. Write them on the door frames of your houses and on your gates' (Deuteronomy 6:9). The *Elements of Music* course uses all of the God-given physical senses in a wide variety of ways to help students appreciate and discover more about music and its Maker. The course aims to cater for all learning types. Some students learn quicker when information is presented aurally. Others are visual learners. Some need to verbalise everything while others learn better through touching. Music is essentially an invisible, aural art form, so it is obvious that listening is the most important sense.

### *Aural Learning (listening)*

The power and value of listening should not be underestimated. Music methods since the early twentieth century have revived the importance of the ear and the

importance of listening to pieces before they are learned. This is in contrast to traditional teaching methods which emphasise reading before listening. Learning by ear is not original — God thought of it first. Learning by ear has been God’s way ever since the beginning. In the beginning, God spoke and said, ‘Let there be...’ Then

followed the creation of the heavens and the earth, including man and music. Many times Jesus

began His instructions with the word ‘listen’ because He knew the power of listening as a learning skill. Jesus also said, ‘He who has ears, let Him hear...’ (Matthew 4:23, 11:15, 13:9, 13:43). Understanding His parables involves listening attentively with our hearts and minds as well as our ears. In a similar way, music learning is more effective when the learner hears the music before playing it. A person learns a native language through hearing it. Babies are exposed to language many months before they actually start to talk.

In the *Elements of Music* course numerous questions on CD provide excellent aural training so students can hear what they read and write. Keyboard activities enable them to hear what they play. In Volume One, students are trained to identify and understand four music elements. They learn five more in Volume

Two and a further five in Volume Three. Each element is put to music and heard on the CD. Music examples for listening are mostly selected from the historical period under study. The history component of the course is increased in the second and third volumes. Nine weeks are spent on each major historical

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period. In Volume Two students take a music journey from Ancient Times through Middle Ages, Renaissance and Baroque. Volume Three covers Classical, Romantic, Late Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries.

### *Visual Learning (seeing)*

The next body sense is seeing or reading. Visual information enters the brain through the eyes. In the learning process, reading comes after listening. Music notation is basically a written representation of music already heard. Written music is an aid to recall the composer’s instructions and to assist in memorising. The Bible was written after the act of Creation as a history of what had already occurred and as an aid to remembering the past and who God is. The aim of God’s written Word is to remember God’s instructions and live life accordingly. The aim of music notation

is that the student remember and record the sounds according to the composer's intentions. God gives both eyes and ears to help us learn. 'Ears that hear and eyes that see — the Lord has made them both' (Proverbs 20:12). Volume Two includes reading to teach and confirm basic music concepts. Most CD music examples are notated in the workbook so that students can read and remember what they hear. Rhythms, melodies, chords and scales are all taught visually and aurally.

### *Oral Learning (talking)*

Talking is not like listening and seeing but involves the tongue which also has the sense of taste. The tongue is very close to the voicebox, and without it we could not talk. So the tongue is the key to both tasting and talking. This course provides many opportunities to verbalise. Oral questions at the start of each lesson are to refresh the memory of previous lessons. Scriptures and definitions are recited in the Surprise Box questions. Singing the music examples is an excellent way of verbalising. Many music examples are hymns.

### *Kinesthetic Learning (touching)*

Touch is very important in the *Elements of Music* as students write notation and also play the keyboard. Writing is slower than listening, seeing and talking because the body joints, bones and muscles are used. Sound waves, light waves and tongue movements are much quicker.

However, writing is a very useful way to materialise and confirm information already stored in the brain. Writing is vital in recording ideas, especially rhythms and melodies which students make up. If the Bible, history and music had not been written down, an immeasurable amount of information would be lost forever. Keyboard activities put into practice knowledge learned aurally, visually and orally. Playing an instrument is rewarding and assimilates many areas of learning. The Student Workbook has short exercises which cover basic keyboard skills and incorporate the theory learned. The Keyboard Arrangements Books in Volumes Two and Three provide extension work, develop what has already been taught and provide extra practice in scales and chords. The course is not intended to be a keyboard tutor, however students still gain some basic instrumental skills.

One way to gain knowledge is from information from the world outside the person. We have seen how the *Elements of Music* course caters for this by teaching through the body senses.

Another way to gain knowledge is from information from the inside the person. Music is food for the body, soul and spirit.

### *The Soul*

The soul is the invisible, conscious part of man and consists of the will, mind,

memory and feelings. It is the decision-making, intellectual, thinking, understanding and emotional part of man's makeup. The soul must be fed a healthy diet of information. Isaiah 55:2b-3 says, 'Listen, listen to me and eat what is good and your soul will delight in the richest of fare. Give ear and come to me. Hear me that your soul may live'. Moses taught the Ten Commandments not just through the body senses but also the soul. He said, 'Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength' (Deuteronomy 6:5). He told the Israelites to use their memory. '...be careful that you do not forget the Lord...' (Deuteronomy 6:12).

The memory is like a muscle. To keep muscles healthy and fit they need to be exercised. Likewise the memory needs to be exercised. The *Elements of Music* course feeds the soul with exercises and challenges such as memorising scriptures and definitions, musical analysis, puzzles, games, flashcards, charts, colouring, review exercises and quality music.

### *The Spirit*

The spirit is another invisible part of man's design. It is the subconscious part made in God's image. God designed us with an ability to appreciate art and music. We have the physical ability to

sing and play an instrument. We have the emotional and intellectual ability to feel, express, analyse and understand music. We also have the spiritual perspective and

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gift of creativity to combine the music elements with great imagination. The spirit is man's link with God's Spirit through which we gain wisdom and more knowledge. King Solomon prayed to God for wisdom and knowledge in 2 Chronicles 1:10. God gave them to Solomon through the spirit. In Proverbs 2 Solomon summed up the whole learning process. He showed how the spirit is an integral part of a person and influences all parts of the soul and body. He wrote:

'My son, if you accept my words and store up my commands within you [in the invisible part] turning you ear to wisdom [hearing] and applying your heart [spirit] to understanding [soul] and if you call out for insight and cry aloud for understanding [tongue, talking, verbalising] and if you look for it as silver and gold and search for it as hidden treasure [seeing and touching] then you will understand [soul] the fear of the Lord and find the knowledge of God [soul]. For the Lord gives wisdom and from His mouth come knowledge and understanding [soul]... Then you will

understand [soul] what is right and just and fair — every good path. For wisdom will enter your heart [spirit] and knowledge will be pleasant to your soul. Discretion will protect you and understanding will guard you [soul].’

Paul tells us that we should ‘fix our eyes not on what is seen but what is unseen. For what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal’ (2 Corinthians 4:18). This is vital in music. Unlike science which depends heavily on the body senses and proving ideas about the outside world, music draws on creativity, expressing ideas from within. Creativity involves the soul (will, mind, memory and emotions), spirit and uniqueness of each individual. The brain and body materialises ideas. God is the Source of creativity because He is the Creator. If we ask Him for wisdom and knowledge as Solomon did He will teach us from His Holy Spirit through our spirit. Music students and musicians get bogged down in the details of music — playing countless pieces, entertaining, striving to be the best, and aiming to pass exams and win competitions. These things are temporary events and only last for our time on earth. The *Elements of Music* course aims to teach for eternity by feeding the spirit with God’s own Word and relating music basics to their Maker. The program takes the student back to foundations by defining the basic building blocks or elements and acknowledging God as Creator. We

should never take the music elements for granted and forget their Maker. Without these God-made elements we do not have music. God is the Source, the Giver and Provider of the gift of music.

In the course many scriptures are memorised relating to music. Students are trained to identify music elements so that, with the help of wisdom and knowledge from the Holy Spirit, they can discern which music is God-honouring. This type of spiritual food lasts forever. The rewards of feeding the spirit as well as body and soul are enormous. In Deuteronomy 6 Moses told the people that if they followed God’s ways they would ‘enjoy long life’ (verses 2, 8) and that ‘things would go well ...’(verse 3). Solomon wrote in Proverbs 2 that God ‘holds victory in store for the upright’ and He ‘is a shield to those whose walk is blameless for He guards the course of the just and protects the way of His faithful ones’ (verses 7–8). The *Elements of Music* course is unique in that it places music into a Biblical perspective and in doing so students gain an overview of music. Music is treated as a tool to learn about God and that is the goal of education. ‘Education is the unfolding of God — His character and His creation’ (Peter Frogley). God’s signature is written in the design of all the music elements. The manual for this course is the Bible and the Music-Maker is God.

This course aims to:

- relate the subject of music to God;
- develop an awareness of how music is evidence of God's creativity and design;
- cover basic theory concepts and aural skills and introduce some history;
- distinguish and identify specific music elements aurally and visually;
- teach how to follow a simple score;
- teach some basic keyboard skills;
- encourage enjoyment and appreciation of different musical styles throughout history;
- enable the learner to intelligently discriminate between balanced and unbalanced music to discern what is God-honouring;
- develop creativity through composing simple God-honouring music;
- develop an understanding of how composers use their God-given musical gifts to organise music elements; and
- enable the learner to proceed to further studies with a solid understanding of music's foundations. ■

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### **What people are saying about the *Elements of Music*:**

'The *Elements of Music* course brings music back to basics so that people of all ages can learn about music and God. Teaching music through the elements helps avoid a lot of confusion for people.'

*Matthew Field, teacher*

'I love the *Elements of Music*. It is like an oasis in the middle of a desert. It progresses nicely and the children are finding it enjoyable and are retaining good revision.'

*Jan Golding, piano and classroom teacher and homeschool mum*

'Great! A very sound and Biblical approach — easy for non-musicians.'

*Fiona Phillips, lecturer and mother*

'We especially enjoy the God-centred teachings and the children really like listening to the CD part of each lesson. Thank you for making God the centre of music.'

*Sandra Saunders, homeschool mum*

'We have really been blessed by the spiritual aspect of the course and how God is the focus. The definitions have been easy to learn with the actions.'

*Debbie Asamaphan, homeschool mum*



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