

Music IQ Songs

A new dimension in music for young people

presents

Do You Know God's Prophets?

**an easy and fun
song for young people**

**includes
easy piano accompaniment
and
chord and fretboard symbols for guitar**

**by
Brent Hugh**

Do You Know God's Prophets?

a song by Brent Hugh
mixolydian mode, triple subdivisions,
triple and irregular groupings

Moderately, $\text{♩} = 80$

E F#min E E

Piano

1. Mo-ses came from E-gypt, he led the children of
2. En-och built a ci - ty, filled with right - eous
3. Ja- cob saw a lad - der, reach - ing in - to

D E D C#min Bmin

Is - rael, peop - le, heav - en,
in - to the God took it God blessed him
Prom - ised up and his Land. heav - en. fam - 'ly

Chorus

E F#min E D E

Do you know God's pro - phets? Pro - phets from the

16

D E D C#min Bmin C#min

Bi - ble,* Do you know God's chos - en pro - phets?

22

E F#min E D E

Do you know God's pro - phets? Pro - phets from the

27

D E/G# D/F# E D E

Bi - ble,* Do you know God's chos - en pro - phets?

Do You Know God's Prophets? page 3

"Do You Know God's Prophets" is not really a finished song. On the contrary--it is a song for you to finish. A few sample verses about prophets from the Bible have been included, but to really make this song your own, you should make verses about prophets and righteous people from the scriptures who are most meaningful for you personally.

Part of the challenge (and fun!) of writing verses about the different prophets is figuring out how to condense a person's entire life and teaching into three short lines. Writing these lines is a lot like writing a haiku--there are very few words, so each one must tell.

If you really can't fit a prophet's story into one verse, you can, of course, write a series of verses about one prophet. For example, here are two verses about Jonah:

Jonah tried to **run** and hide,
from God **and** his **command** to
save a **wicked city**.

Jonah thought God's **children**,
Were a **small** select **few**, but
God loves **all** who **repent**.

When singing such verses, you can repeat the verse twice (or more) in a row before singing the chorus, if you prefer.

When you write your own verses, the rhythms of the melody can be re-arranged slightly if need be. It is very easy to convert a half note in the melody into two quarter notes, if you need to fit in an extra syllable; the places you can do this are indicated in the music by two quarter notes tied together. The most important thing is to make the natural stresses of the words come in the right places in the music. In my example above, I have indicated the strong beats (the first beat of each measure) by making that syllable **underlined and bold**.

xxxxxxxxx _____ xxxxxxxxxxxx _____ xxxxxxxxxxxx _____
xxxxxxxxx _____ xxxxxxxxxxxx _____ xxxxxxxxxxxx _____
xxxxxxxxx _____ xxxxxxxxxxxx _____ xxxxxxxxxxxx _____
xxxxxxxxx _____ xxxxxxxxxxxx _____ xxxxxxxxxxxx _____
xxxxxxxxx _____ xxxxxxxxxxxx _____ xxxxxxxxxxxx _____
xxxxxxxxx _____ xxxxxxxxxxxx _____ xxxxxxxxxxxx _____

If you want students to write their own verses, it may be helpful to use one of the two templates shown at the bottom of this page (templates may be reproduced for student use).

The upper template is simpler and shows strong beats with Xs and weaker beats with underlines. Put one syllable per beat, trying to keep strongly accented syllables on strong beats.

The lower template is slightly more complicated; it shows places where "extra" syllables can fit it. Strong beats are indicated by Xs, weak beats by underlines, and optional weak beats by dashed underlines. Again, put one syllable per strong or weak beat; use the optional beats for syllables if necessary.

*In the Chorus, the phrase "Prophets from the Bible" can be altered to fit your particular situation. These alternatives might be helpful in some situations:

Do you know God's prophets,
Prophets from the scriptures,
Do you know God's chosen prophets?

Do you know God's prophets,
Prophets from church history,
Do you know God's chosen prophets?

Do you know God's prophets,
Prophets from the Pentateuch,
Do you know God's chosen prophets?

Do you know God's prophets,
From the Book of Judges,
Do you know God's chosen prophets?
(also "From the Book of Kings",
"From the Book of Samuel", etc.)

By making a small change in the rhythm (change the melody in m. 14 to a dotted half note and in m. 15 to three quarter notes), you can use these words:

Do you know God's prophets,
New Testament prophets,
Do you know God's chosen prophets?

Do you know God's prophets,
Old Testament prophets,
Do you know God's chosen prophets?

The Theory

These songs for young people came about as a result of my doctoral research at the University of Missouri-Kansas City Conservatory of Music into music preferences of different age listeners. This research had some very surprising and interesting conclusions about how to help young people become more natural and spontaneous musicians. Briefly, the research showed that:

- Music preferences become more set with age; for the general population of school children, music preferences seem to become quite set by the age of 15 or so. However, students younger than this age are amazingly open to many different kinds of music. In general, the younger the student, the more open the student is to new kinds of music.

- This hardening of musical taste with age is (surprisingly!) an important part of the learning process. Without this development of definite musical preferences, refined taste and discrimination cannot develop.

- In some groups (i.e., trained musicians) the hardening of musical preference happens at a much slower rate. Musicians may be quite open to new musical styles, even into their twenties and thirties.

- There are surprising benefits to developing an interest in a broad range of musical styles. (1) Musical prejudice is strongly associated with social prejudice; breaking down musical prejudices is a powerful way to start breaking down cultural prejudices such as racism and sexism. (2) The musically cultured person in the U.S. (and, apparently, most Western/European countries) is no longer a classical music snob, but a musical omnivore who appreciates quality in any kind of music from bluegrass to bebop to Baroque opera.

- Although hardening of musical taste with age is inevitable, it is advantageous to slow down the hardening of preference as much as possible. This is the way that the broadest, deepest, most profound, and most detailed knowledge develops (in music and in other areas of knowledge, as well).

- The reason for this is rather simple: knowledge is a "play of differences". The person with a broad musical taste has a wide field of differences in which to place any new piece of knowledge; new knowledge is seen in comparison and contrast with many, many previous areas of knowledge. Because of this broad range of similar but contrasting knowledge, the new knowledge is understood both in greater depth and in greater detail.

For instance, first graders in a school were divided into three groups.

Group 1: Trained to sing in major keys

Group 2: Trained to sing in major & minor

Group 3: Trained to sing in major, minor, modal scales.

After a year of this training, students in Group 3 sang songs in major keys better than students in both Groups 1 and 2--despite the fact that Group 3 had spent less total time singing songs in major keys. Group 3 understood major keys better because they had several similar but slightly different things (minor scales, modal scales) as a basis for comparison and understanding.

A similar study involved students learning songs using different rhythms.

Group 1: Sang in 2/4, 4/4

Group 2: Sang in 2/4, 4/4, 3/4, 6/8

Group 3: Sang in 2/4, 4/4, 3/4, 6/8, 5/8, 7/8, changing meters

Again, Group 3 outperformed both Groups 1 and 2, even in singing songs in 2/4 and 4/4. Group 1 was the worst of the three groups at singing songs in 2/4 and 4/4, despite the fact that they had been "specializing" in singing these songs for an entire year.

- Research shows that children learn music exactly as they learn language. That is to say, learning starts with listening--for many hours and years. Learning then progresses during a long stage of listening, imitating, and experimenting, during which skills are progressively refined. In language development, this begins with "baby talk", progresses to simple sentences, more complex sentences, and ends with fluent speech. In musical development, the imitating and experimenting stage of learning is best approached through singing--lots of singing, in many different scales, modes, and meters.

- Unfortunately, our popular and mass media musical culture favors a quite narrow range of music. Over 80% of music on radio, television, and the movies is in major keys and in 2/4 or 4/4 meter. Over 90% of music in elementary school music books surveyed was in major and 2/4 or 4/4. Over 90% of song topics on radio involve romantic love and/or sex (not only is this topic of little interest to young children, but even worse, the fixation on this one area of life--admittedly a very interesting one to older age groups--locks out expression of the dozens of human feelings and emotions that young children should have the opportunity to feel through music).

The Practical Application

What are the practical results of these ideas for parents and teachers?

- Young people need to be exposed to a wide variety of music, first by listening and then by singing. They should listen to and sing music in a wide variety of scales, modes, meters, rhythms, and tempos. They should listen to and sing music expressing a wide variety of feelings and emotions and from a wide variety of musical styles.

- Children should start listening to this variety of music at a very young age; the older the child the more set the preferences.

- Parents and teachers--who determine the listening agenda for young children--are older and, so, almost always set in their musical opinions. Adults should realize that much music their children should be listening to is going to sound strange, bizarre, off-beat, weird, or just not interesting to the adult. (Although adults who keep an open mind can develop new music preferences, too, and doing so is good for the adult for the same reason it is good for the child.)

- World musics, jazz, classical music, musicals, religious music, folk music, popular music from different eras (1940s, 50s, 60s, 70s, 80s, 90s) are all quite easily available and can help to round out your child's listening. If you start when your child is young, you will find the child surprisingly open to a variety of musical styles.

- You may find that it is easy to work a variety of music into your daily routine if you make music a functional part of your activities. Associate specific CDs or songs with certain activities. For instance, whenever you're cleaning up the front room, put on that "Classical Music of India" CD. When you're doing dishes, listen to a Big Band CD and while taking a bath, a Beethoven Symphony. Have certain songs you sing while you're getting ready for bed, combing hair, or getting dressed. "Music to help with an activity" is the way most every culture throughout the ages has used music, and you will find that using music in this way helps your child (and you!) keep on task, regulate emotions, and enjoy routine or boring activities.

- Music in different modes and meters suitable for singing by children is quite difficult to find. Most children's songs are in major keys and 2/4 or 4/4 meters. There is nothing wrong with these songs, but it would be ideal to have children sing and hear a wider spectrum of tonalities and rhythms.

My study on changeability of music preference involved 682 adults and public school students. Edwin Gordon has spearheaded innovative research (some of which is mentioned above) on the language model of music learning and the benefits of teaching young students to sing in a variety of scales, modes, rhythms, and meters. See www.unm.edu/~audiate/home.html. My conclusions, summarized above, rely on the work of many, many researchers--far too many to be cited on this brief page. A complete list of studies cited can be found at oz.sunflower.org/~bhugh/musiciq.spm.

The Songs

With these ideas in mind, I realized that a perfect venue for children to learn to sing songs in a wider variety of scales and rhythms is in church youth groups. Many youth groups, Sunday Schools, and religious camps for young people use songs extensively. Many religious youth have a repertoire of dozens of complex songs. With this solid base of music-making as a starting point, if youth groups broaden their musical spectrums even a little by including a few songs in modes and unusual rhythms, the beneficial effect of singing will only be multiplied.

Many church groups are looking for a style of music that is vigorous and fun, yet distinct from the popular music of the world. There is nothing intrinsically wrong with much popular music, but the fact that the popular style is almost always paired with lyrics dealing with romantic love and sexual attraction leads many religious people to search for a different style of religious music for their youth.

Teaching this song

I suggest letting young people hear this music, either by playing the music from the CD or simply by playing the accompaniment, several times--over a period of days or weeks--before trying to sing the song with them. Listening is the first step in learning.

Chanting the words in rhythm is a good activity for learning both the words and the rhythm.

Leaders who having difficulty mastering the rhythm or melody of the song should listen to the recorded version of the song several times daily for a period of days or a few weeks. The melody and rhythm, internalized in this way, will become much easier to grasp and to teach. Adults may have more difficulty than children in learning this music, because the music (purposefully!) goes against some melodic and rhythmic conventions of our musical culture. Young children, who haven't yet been completely indoctrinated into our melodic and rhythmic stereotypes, will learn the song rather easily.

Each measure in this song has three beats, (most) musical phrases have three measures, and each section (verse and chorus) has three phrases. This three by three structure is an ancient musical way of celebrating the holiest Three of all: God, His Son, and the Holy Spirit.

The Accompaniment

The first left-hand note of each measure can be brought out slightly; these notes form the bass line. Using pedal will help to bring this bass line out.

If the left-hand accompaniment is difficult for you, you can play simple block chords in the left hand.

If you want to play an introduction, measures 22-end works well, but it may be more helpful to play the verse through once (mm. 1-10) as an introduction, so that singers hear the melodic rhythm immediately before they sing it.

The Free Music Philosophy

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If you wish to support the composer of this music, the best and easiest way to do so is to visit one of the internet sites listed below and listen to some music or purchase a CD.

Internet Sites

- mp3.com/MusicIQ - free downloadable MusicIQ recordings, CDs, free Music IQ sheet music, and information.
- mp3.com/brent_d_hugh - classical piano recordings by Brent Hugh
- mp3.com/VictorianChristmas - Victorian-era Christmas Carols
- oz.sunflower.org/~bhugh/pathetic.spm - various sheet music, recordings, and other music-related items--many free for

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