

CHANTS FOR HEALTH

Musical Meditations for the Body, Mind, and Spirit

Thomas F. Heston, MD, FAAFP

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Why Chant?

Chants are musical meditations that calm the mind and uplift the spirit. They have a long, rich history that validates their role in strengthening the human soul and invigorating the physical body. Chants have this amazing power because they go right to the core, right to the very essence of what makes us human.

In early Western civilization, music was given a divine origin capable of shaping the cosmos, healing the sick, and purifying the mind. Although we don't know exactly how the earliest music sounded, we do know music played a central role in early Greek civilization and philosophy. [Pythagoras](#) (ca. 500 BC) taught that music not only provided a way to understand the universe--it also was a creative force that shaped destiny. [Plato](#) (ca. 400 BC) emphasized the important role music played in education. [Aristotle](#) (ca. 350 BC) even stated that one becomes the right kind of person by listening to the right kind of music.

The [Old Testament](#) affirms these Greek ideas. For example, it describes musical healing when David played the harp for Saul, and thereby cured his madness (I Samuel 16:23). The [Old Testament](#) also describes the creative powers of sound. In Genesis, God created our universe through His *spoken* words--"And God said, *Let there be light; and there was light.*" (Genesis 1:3). It is interesting to note that in this account of the origin of the universe, sound exists before light is even created. This is similar to our own individual existence, in which hearing is developed while we are still in the womb, but vision is developed only after birth.

Ancient Eastern teachings also emphasized the primacy of sound and the spoken word in the creation of the universe. For example, in the ancient Eastern scripture [Satapatha-Brahmana](#), it states "*In the beginning was God with power through speech.*"

Contemporary research confirms these findings. [Don Campbell](#)'s book [The Mozart Effect](#) details the powerful effects of music on creativity, health, and learning. For example, he reports that listening to classical music has been shown to benefit patients in coronary care units. [Anthony Storr](#), psychiatrist and Fellow of the Royal College of Physicians, notes in his book [Music and the Mind](#) that music is a powerful instrument of education. Furthermore, he warns that this power can be used for both good and evil. [Wenger](#) and [POE](#) in their book [The Einstein Factor](#) elaborate on research showing the strong influence of music upon intellectual development.

In **Chants for Health** I combine simple, repetitive music with divine scripture from the [Bible](#). These chants are similar to the Eastern tradition of mantras, which are in Sanskrit, and the Christian church tradition of [Gregorian Chants](#), which are in Latin. **Chants for Health** are different, however, in that easily understandable, contemporary English is used. Since English is the primary language spoken on earth today (with the possible exception of Chinese), this use of simple English makes the combination of music and divine words more powerful and accessible to people alive today.

So, why chant?

- Music and the spoken word are the primary means by which we can strengthen and uplift our spirits.
- **Chants for Health** are the powerful combination of simple music with divine words.
- Chants allow us to directly influence our soul.
- Chants purify our physical bodies, and can assist the healing process.
- Chants aid our intellectual development and improve learning.
- Chants calm the mind and bring us peace.

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How to Chant

There is no correct way to chant. Rather, chanting is your personal journey to a higher spiritual level. You should feel free to customize these chants to your own situation.

Nevertheless, the following guidelines are recommended:

- Repeat the chant over and over for a minimum of 100 times a day for 1 month. The 100 repetitions do not have to be all at once, rather you can break the repetitions up into convenient groups. For example, you can chant 4 times a day repeating the chant 25 times.
- It is recommended that you chant out loud, but it is also acceptable to chant silently.
- No special body position is necessary. You may chant while exercising, while walking, while sitting alone in a chair, or with a group of people around a table. You can chant while driving your car or riding the bus.
- You may vary the musical tones in the chant. However, it is recommended that you always keep the chant musical. This helps impress the message deep down into your mind and soul.

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Chants 1 - 11

1.

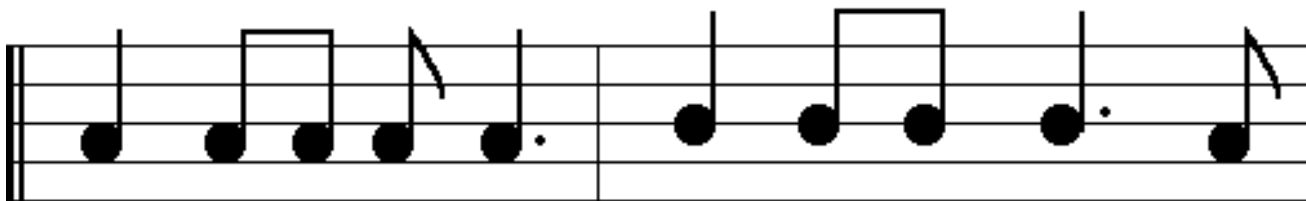
Proverb 22:19



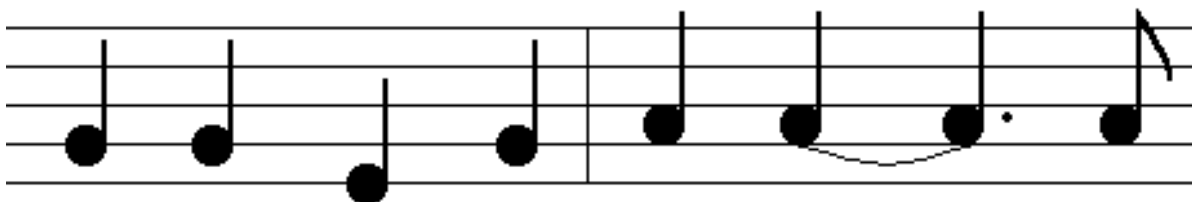
Trust in the Lord.

2.

Psalm 27:14



Don't be impatient, wait for the Lord, and



He will come and save you.

Be



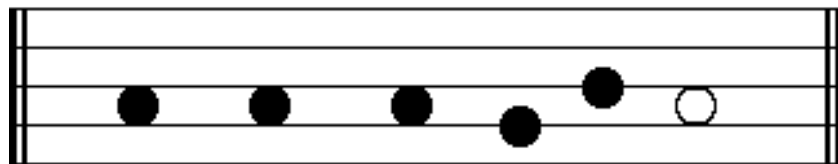
brave, stouthearted and courageous, yes



wait and He will help you.

3.

Matthew 6:34



Live one day at a time.

4.

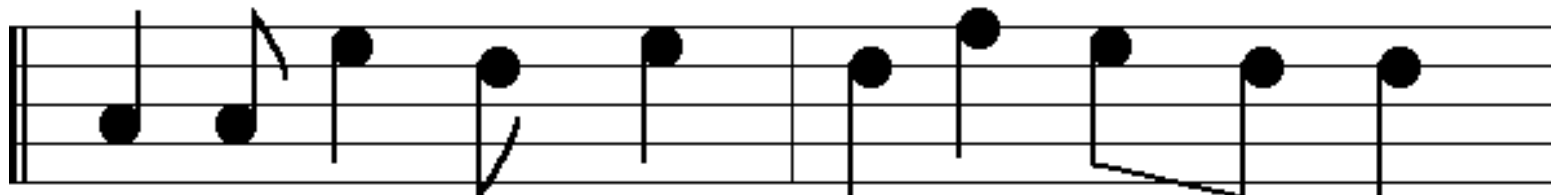
Luke 17:21



For the Kingdom of God is within you.

5.

Joshua 1:9



Yes, be Bold and Strong, Banish Fear and Doubt



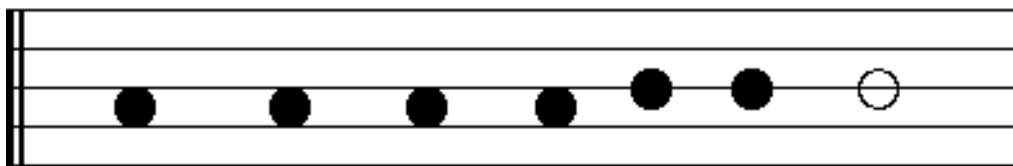
For Remember the Lord Your God is With You



Wherever You Go.

6.

Isaiah 40:31



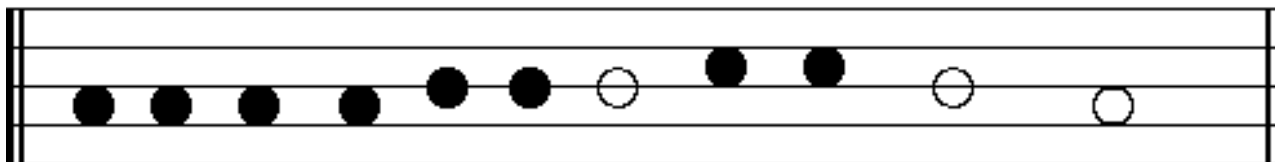
They that wait upon the Lord



shall renew their strength.

7.

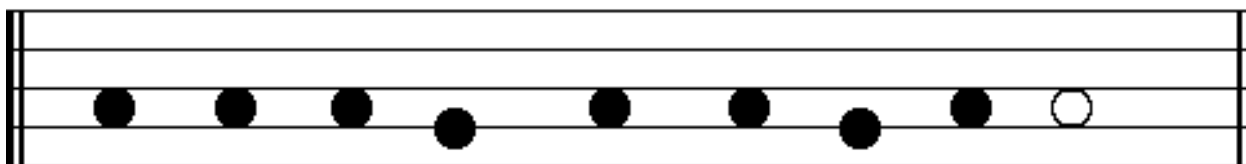
Mark 9:23



Anything is possible, if you have faith.

8.

Matthew 9:29



Because of your faith, it will happen.

9.

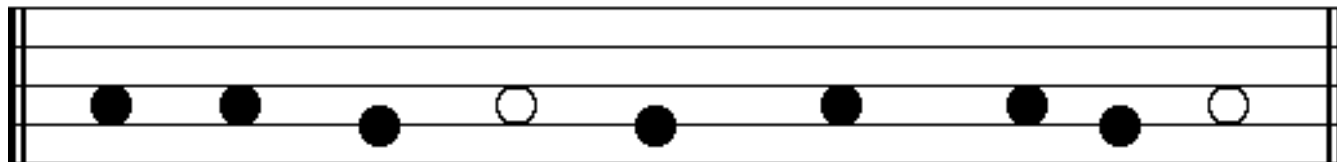
Romans 12:16



Work happily together.

10.

2 Corinthians 1:7



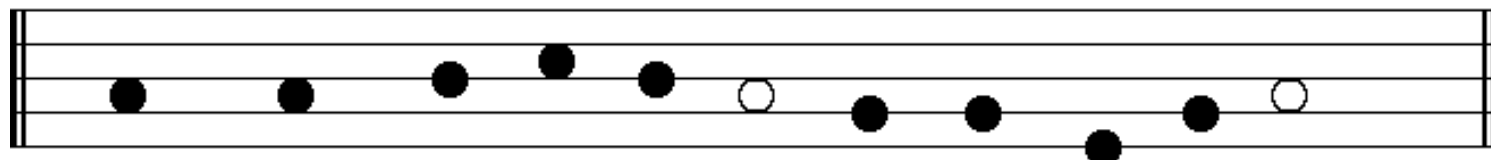
He will give you the strength to endure.

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Chants 11 - 16

11.

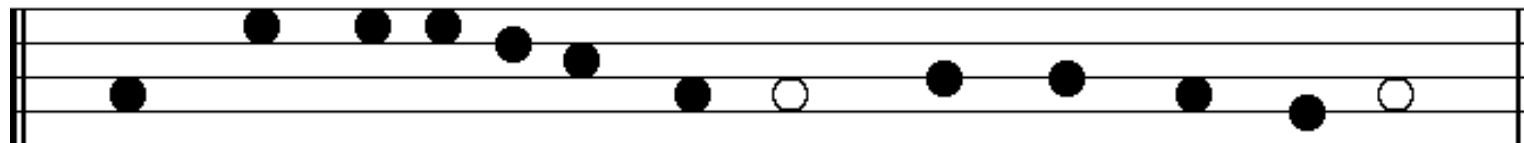
Proverb 12:19



Truth stands the test of time, lies are soon exposed.

12.

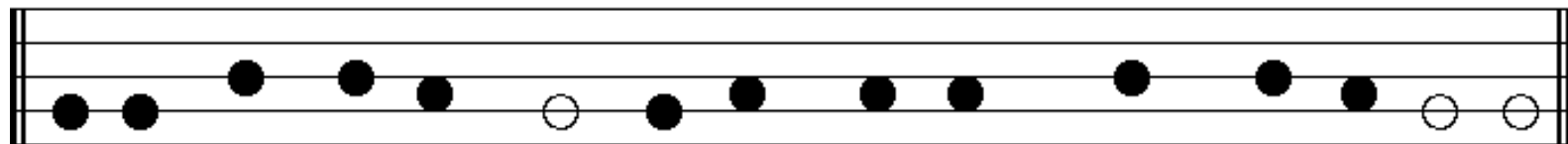
Psalm 4:8



For though I am alone, O Lord, you will keep me safe.

13.

Psalm 13:6



I will sing to the Lord because he has blessed me so richly.

14.

Psalm 16:7



I will bless the Lord who counsels me,



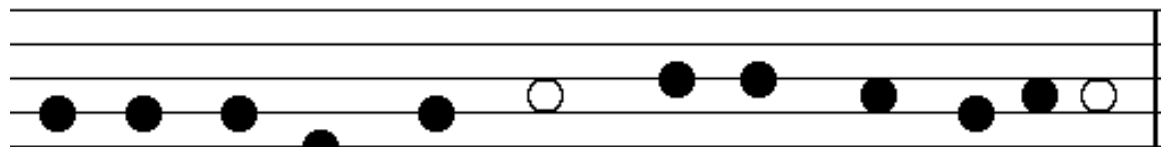
He gives me wisdom in the night.

15.

Psalm 23:4



Yea, though I walk through the valley



of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil.

16.

Psalm 27:3



Yes, though a mighty army marches against me,



my heart shall know no fear

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About the Author

Tom Heston is a Fellow of the [American Academy of Family Practice](#) and a nuclear cardiology specialist certified by the [Certification Board of Nuclear Cardiology](#). He started composing music at the age of 8, and graduated from the University of Washington with a Bachelor's degree in Music Theory and History. He earned his medical degree at [St. Louis University](#).

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Recommended Reading

- [CAMPBELL, Don G.](#) [*The Mozart Effect : Tapping the Power of Music to Heal the Body, Strengthen the Mind, and Unlock the Creative Spirit*](#). Avon Books, 1997.
- [GROUT, Donald Jay.](#) [*A History of Western Music*](#). W.W. Norton & Company, 1996.
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- [WENGER, Wen](#) and [POE, Richard.](#) [*The Einstein Factor*](#). Prima Publishing, 1996.

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