

David's Heir: Saul Appoints David Armor Bearer; Appeals to Jesse to Allow David to be His Court Musician; Levitin's *This Is Your Brain on Music: the Release of Opioids Relieves Depression*; David Was a Virtuoso Performer, Composer, Lyricist, Poet, & Vocalist; Psalm Superscriptions: "For the Choir Director"

62. Saul's expression of love was one of appreciation for the David's soul; David's for Saul was one of respect for his office of king and military leader.
63. Saul was so impressed that he immediately made David his armor bearer: "One who carried the large shield and perhaps other weapons for a king. All warriors of distinction had such an attendant."¹
64. His message back to Jesse requested that He allow David to become his assistant:
1 Samuel 16:22 - Saul sent to Jesse saying, "Let David stand before me [Qal imperfect of עָמַד (*amath*): to enter into service], for he has found favor in my sight."
65. Although David was conscripted into Saul's army as an armor bearer, his talents on the lyre became his primary function as the king's bouts with depression increased while he moved deeper into reversionism.
66. The further a believer devolves into reversion, the more susceptible he becomes to demon influence. In 1 Samuel 16:23, we find Saul tormented by fits of depression:
1 Samuel 16:23 - So it came about whenever the evil spirit from God came to Saul, David would take the harp and play it with his hand; and Saul would be refreshed and be well, and the evil spirit would depart from him. (NASB)
67. From this verse we are able to conclude that certain kinds of music become therapeutic treatment for those who suffer from depression.
68. Whenever God permitted demon influence to affect Saul, Saul got down in the dumps; when David played the lyre, Saul is said to have been "refreshed," the Qal perfect of the verb רָוַח (*ravach*): "relief that comes to a troubled mind or spirit," i.e., a relaxed mental attitude.
69. Abundant research has been done on the affect music has on the human mind. With the development of highly advanced technology, these affects have now been documented and published in various papers and books.
70. This following excerpts discuss the neurological mechanics of how music is processed in the brain:

The connection between the cerebellum and music wasn't that hard to see. The frontal lobe is connected directly to the cerebellum. The connections run in both directions, with each structure influencing the other. But there was another player in this neural symphony, a structure deep inside the cortex. I was particularly interested in the ventral striatum—a structure that includes the nucleus accumbens—because the nucleus accumbens (NAc) is the center of the brain's rewards system, playing an important role in pleasure and addiction.²

The NAc is active when gamblers win a bet, or drug users take their favorite drug. It is also closely involved with the transmission of opioids in the brain, through its ability to release the neurotransmitter dopamine. (p. 185)

¹ Thomas Nicol, "Armor-Bearer," in *The International Standard Bible Encyclopaedia*, gen. ed. James Orr (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1956), 1:254.

² The nucleus accumbens is a link in the brain pathways that causes addiction and depression.

To really nail down the story about how pleasure in the brain occurs in response to music, we'd have to show that the nucleus accumbens was involved at just the right time in a sequence of neural structures that are recruited during music listening. The nucleus accumbens would have to be involved following activation of structures in the frontal lobe that process musical structure and meaning. And in order to know that it was the nucleus accumbens's role as a modulator of dopamine, we would have to figure out a way to show that its activation occurred at the same time as activation of other brain structures that were involved in the production and transmission of dopamine.

(A) new mathematical technique, called functional and effective connectivity analysis, would allow us to address these questions, by revealing the way that different brain regions interact during cognitive operations. By measuring the interaction of one brain region with another the technique would permit us to make a moment-by-moment examination of the neural networks induced by music. (p. 186)

We found exactly what we had hoped. Listening to music caused a cascade of brain regions to become activated in a particular order: first, auditory cortex for initial processing of the components of the sound. Then the frontal regions that we had previously identified as being involved in processing musical structure and expectations. Finally, a network of regions—the mesolimbic system—involved in arousal, pleasure, and the transmission of opioids and the production of dopamine, culminating in activation in the nucleus accumbens. And the cerebellum and basal ganglia were active throughout, presumably supporting the processing of rhythm and meter. The rewarding and reinforcing aspects of listening to music seem, then, to be mediated by increasing dopamine levels in the nucleus accumbens, and by the cerebellum's contribution to regulating emotion through its connections to the frontal lobe and the limbic system. Current neuropsychological theories associate positive mood and affect with increased dopamine levels, one of the reasons that many of the newer antidepressants act on the dopaminergic system. Music is clearly a means for improving people's moods. Now we think we know why. (p. 187)

The story of your brain on music is the story of an exquisite orchestration of brain regions and regions as far apart as the cerebellum in the back of the head and the frontal lobes just behind your eyes.

It involves a precision choreography of neurochemical release and uptake between logical prediction systems and emotional reward systems. When we love a piece of music, it reminds us of other music we have heard, and it activates memory traces of emotional times in our lives. Your brain on music is all about connections.³ (p. 188)

71. Levitin connects this analysis of music processing with music therapy that is used to treat those who suffer from problems such as bipolar disorder:

Music listening and music therapy have been shown to help people overcome a broad range of psychological and physical problems.⁴
72. Now from these discoveries in neuropsychology we are able to deduce a number of principles from verse 23:
 - (1) Those who treat bipolar disorders examine how a patient's thoughts affect his emotions. So addressing the emotional state of a patient is a primary component in treatment.

³ Daniel J. Levitin, *This Is Your Brain on Music: The Science of a Human Obsession* (New York: Dutton, 2006), 185–188.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 221.

- (2) Emotions can be positive when they respond to truth or expressions of truth. Emotions can be negative when they react to circumstances minus any reference to truth.
 - (3) Emotion reacts to problems, it does not resolve problems. Saul recognizes that he has been rendered ineffective as king of Israel since he has lost enduement. His emotional response puts him deeper into reversionism.
 - (4) Therapists counsel the bipolar individual to "learn how to change negative thinking patterns and behaviors into more positive ways of responding."
 - (5) A person in reversionism is locked-in on human viewpoint rationales. Any "positive ways of responding" cannot line up with biblical truth under such circumstances. Negative thinking does not respond to problems but rather reacts to them.
 - (6) Therapy is said to focus on "managing symptoms, avoiding triggers for relapse, and problem-solving."
 - (7) Symptoms are an outward indication of an internal condition. Human viewpoint manages symptoms; doctrine addresses the problem inside the soul.
 - (8) Relapses are volitional decisions to allow the internal condition to reoccur. Problem-solving is administered through application of doctrine beginning with confession alone to God alone.
 - (9) The method that Saul chose to manage his symptoms was music. David was the recommended virtuoso and his expertise on the lyre provided the perfect stimulus for the sequence of neural events that culminated in his nucleus accumbens pumping dopamine into his system.
 - (10) Result: The demonic influence was overridden by the resultant euphoria and Saul is feeling much better now.
73. What does all this tell us about David? First of all, David was loyal to the king and remained on call to provide private concerts at his majesty's request.
 74. David's mental attitude was focused on doctrine. His behavior patterns indicate that he was focused on the God of Israel in his decision-making.
 75. David was professional in everything that he did from shepherding his father's sheep to playing the lyre, to confronting challenges.
 76. Talent is genetic. You are either born with it or you aren't. Therefore, David's musical ability was in his DNA; in and of itself it had no spiritual significance.
 77. But when a talent is developed and is expressed by the character of the individual, then it can have positive impact on the spiritual life of that individual and upon others.
 78. David's ability to compose music was off the charts. His innate understanding of the structure of music enabled him to compose a score that expressed divine viewpoint.
 79. We can conclude this from reading his Psalms, many of which were the lyrics to his songs. We should all hope that when we get to heaven that God will allow us the privilege of hearing David in concert.
 80. The content of his soul was expressed through his music. Here are some select Psalms whose superscriptions give the instruction **"For the choir director":**

Psalm 4: "on stringed instruments"; **Psalm 5:** "for flute accompaniment"; **Psalm 6:** "with stringed instruments, upon an eight-stringed lyre"; **Psalm 8:** "on the Gittith (an instrument); **Psalm 9:** "on Muth-labben: "Death to the Son"; **Psalm 12:** "upon an eight-stringed lyre"; **Psalm 18:** "A Psalm of David, who spoke to the Lord the words of this song ..."; **Psalm 51:** "... after he had gone in to Bathsheba"; **Psalm 68:** "A song," and **Psalm 70:** "for a memorial."

81. David is credited with writing 73 Psalms most of which were musical compositions while a few were poems.