

Tells a story in breath, rhythm, song

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What's the Bible for? We asked dozens of writers to respond to this question in seven words or less, as well as to expand on their response in a few sentences. We acknowledged several concerns the question might raise—that it is about the present rather than the past, that it assumes the existence of a single Bible rather than multiple Bibles, that it implies intent without saying whose, that it assumes that the Bible is indeed for something. Still, we encouraged them to devote all seven words to answering the question rather than challenging it, and they delivered a wide variety of answers.

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When I sing a song—even one that's strange, that is only scraps of a rhythm and a few lyrics—the song makes me breathe with it. I don't read as much as I listen with it and soften my body to it. Maybe this is what the Bible is, song after song after song, not asking us to know it as much as to sing with it, finding those rhythms of God's life with us, for us, in us.