

No.  
183.

"IF YE THEN BE RISEN WITH CHRIST, SEEK THOSE THINGS  
WHICH ARE ABOVE, WHERE CHRIST SITTETH ON THE  
RIGHT HAND OF GOD." COL. 3. 1.

MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS.  
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*An Address (revised) at*

Forest Gate, E. 7.

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by

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MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS.

An Address by Mr. P.W. Heward  
At Forest Gate, Aug. 26, 1918

Psalm 47; Jeremiah 33:6-18.

When we open the precious Scriptures, beloved friends, we have in front of us many commands and arrangements which were given by God during a period of about fifteen hundred years. There are no contradictions in Scripture, but, necessarily, there are different commands to different persons, as God dealt with them under different circumstances, and every command from God is suited to the circumstances where God, in wisdom and love, places His people. Appointments by God taken out of their setting would be as unbecoming as to take a command given to a manager of a business and to say it applies to the office boy. God has different arrangements for different people, and every command is suited to its context. Let us be clear upon this point. The way in which people handle the Scripture is often indicative of a heart out of harmony with Him. These things are too serious for anything but sorrow, but they are so unwise. Satan often tries to draw us back from sorrow by rather showing us the ridiculous character of man's opposition of truth. Those who object that God has given certain commands in Exodus, and different commands in Matthew, seem to ignore the fact that He can give HIS arrangements for HIS DIFFERENT people at DIFFERENT times, in a right way. What would they think of a doctor who had only one prescription? Surely all can see the un-wisdom of this! What if a man who was suffering from one disease, heard of a doctor commanding some medicine useful to another who was suffering from a totally distinct disease and then concluded that if it was NOT prescribed for him as well, the doctor CONTRADICTED himself! One can see the absurdity of this, but the natural heart seems to draw back from no absurdity, if I may so put it, when one is attacking the things of God. It is only the grace of God that we are brought into loving harmony with His truth. O that we may enjoy this in the Holy Spirit. All GOD'S arrangements are suited to the cir-

cumstances. Let us have that clearly impressed upon our mind. God gave a law to Adam suited to the garden where he was placed. God gave a law to Israel in accord with the fact that He was dealing with them as an earthly nation professing to seek after appointed righteousness, along the path of works. The Lord Jesus has given a law to His beloved people as a HEAVENLY company, though they still walk this earth - a heavenly company who, having a heavenly position and a heavenly hope, are thereby out of harmony with a world which has no heavenly hope, and, in this way, out of harmony with their surroundings into which, however, they are sent as a distinct and humbly witnessing people. Every commandment of the Lord (I repeat it) is made to fit its surroundings. In such a connection we approach the subject of Musical Instruments.

There is a great deal in the Bible about Musical Instruments, and they are brought before us particularly in two contexts - a context of defiance against God, and a context of worship towards God. Those are the two special aspects. Music against God is found in Genesis, and music against God is found in Revelation. In the family of one of the earliest types of Antichrist, we read "His brother's name was Jubal; he was the father of all such as handle the harp and organ". In the last book of the Bible we are shown that a literal rebuilt Babylon will not only be a center of commerce, but of gaiety, for when it is thrown down, as Rev. 18:22 says, "The voice of harpers, and musicians, and of pipers, and trumpeters, shall be heard no more at all in thee". Babylon will be full of its musical instruments till Babylon is laid low. And so we find that men have ever REJOICED amid their iniquity, and have with Belshazzar had feasts and have praised the gods of gold and silver, of brass, iron, wood and stone, and the God in Whose hand their breath is they have not glorified. We find that musical instruments were used against God by the first great king of revived Babylon - Nebuchadnezzar. His decree read thus, "To you it is commanded, O people, nations and languages, that at what time ye hear the sound of the cornet, flute, harp, sackbut, psaltery,

dulcimer and all kinds of music, ye fall down and worship the golden image that Nebuchadnezzar the king hath set up". And God particularly declares of some who were comfortable among Israel, that they chanted to the sound of the viol, and invented to themselves instruments of music like David; they drank wine in bowls, and anointed themselves with the chief ointments, but they were not grieved for the affliction of Joseph (Amos 6:5) I suppose ~~these~~ <sup>that</sup> these passages are sufficient to deal with the sad subject of man's rejoicing against God. Oh how solemn it is to see a happy sinner! Would that sinners were brought to weep in agony. Though we would do good to all men, especially to the household of faith, we do not see it is doing good to dull a sinner's concern. A happy sinner is out of place, God said to those who had wandered from Him, "Rejoice not", because they had gone into iniquity. God grant many MISERABLE sinners, that they may feel the burden of iniquity and cry out for mercy.

When a man is a child of God ALL HIS POSITION is changed. He is no longer a child of the devil. As such he has been brought into judgment. He has owned that Christ's judgment was his, and therefore he looks back, and not forward, to judgment - to the righteous wrath linked with the Great White Throne.

"Verily, verily, I say unto you", said the Lord Jesus, "He that heareth My word, and believeth on Him That sent Me hath everlasting life, and DOES NOT COME INTO JUDGMENT, but has passed from death unto life". Hence God has always associated rejoicing with salvation, and with the types of it. A miserable saint should be as much an anomaly as a happy sinner. God means His people to have gladness. Thou hast put gladness in my heart, writes the psalmist. Man's corn and man's wine could not give such gladness as the joy which transcends the joy of harvest. "The joy OF the Lord". "Rejoice IN the Lord" - such statements - Divinely repeated - are very precious. The believer is to bless the Lord AT ALL TIMES, and have His praise continually IN HIS MOUTH. Hence we are not surprised that God has definitely associated musical instruments with His praise. God has emphasized musical instruments in connection with a climax of praise, and if we have not musical instruments,

there is an evidence that we have not reached the CLIMAX, there is a suggestion of a coming short, though it may be, in one sense, a (dispensational) appointment to cause us to cry more fervently, "Even so, come, Lord Jesus". One desires of the Lord a great stress, a Scriptural stress on musical instruments in the praise of God, provided the right time and place are before us.

In the Earlier Scriptures we have brought before us musical instruments with respect to the temple. Abraham is not associated with musical instruments, nor is Isaac, nor Jacob. Did Israel have the musical instruments of the temple in the wilderness? The wilderness with the children of Israel was, in many respects, parallel with Abraham's experience in the land of promise. It was an experience of waiting in view of a climax. Doubtless, Abraham had a very full view, which Israel did not, of the city which hath the foundations, and of the better, that is a heavenly, country. God made known His WAYS unto Moses, and only His acts unto the children of Israel, but they did always err in their hearts, they did not know His ways; for as the heavens were higher than the earth, so were His ways higher than man's ways. But were there musical instruments in the wilderness? We find such a statement as this, "Make thee two trumpets of silver, of a whole piece shalt thou make them, that thou mayest use them for the calling of the assembly, and for the journeying of the camps. When ye blow an alarm,...When ye blow an alarm the second time,...Ye shall blow an alarm,...Also in the days of your gladness, and in your solemn days, and in the beginnings of your months, ye shall blow with the trumpets over your burnt offerings, and over the sacrifices of your peace offerings". Thus we have brought before us that the musical instruments of the trumpets were somewhat exceptional in the wilderness, and were emphasized with regard to three definite things, - the calling of a large assembly; warfare; and sacrifices - and, as to these, the second was mentioned with respect to the promised LAND, rather than the desert (Num. 10:9). Where the GREAT assembly is before us, where the warfare is appointed where the sacrifices are found, we somewhat anticipate musical instruments.

And when Israel reached the land of Canaan they took Jericho not only with the sound of the two trumpets - the number is increased; and there is a special stress on rejoicing. You may recollect in the book of Leviticus how the trumpet is particularly brought before us in the month containing the climax of the feasts, "Speak unto the children of Israel, saying, In the seventh month, in the first day of the month, shall ye have a sabbath, a memorial of blowing of trumpets, an holy convocation". And with respect to the tenth day, the Day of Atonement, we read that when the JUBILEE year arrived, "Then shalt thou cause the trumpet of the jubilee to sound on the tenth day of the seventh month". The seventh month is the trumpet month. Now Israel's entry in the land was typical of the kingdom, but Joshua did not lead them into rest, he led them in the FIRST month, not the seventh. They had the trumpets, it is true but there was a reminder that they had not reached the full climax. It was not then the antitypical year of jubilee. In the Judges we do not have musical instruments. Saul's reign is not one of musical instruments, but when we reach David's kingdom, the king after God's own heart we are told that "four thousand were porters, and four thousand praised the Lord with the instruments which I made", said David, "to praise". And we are particularly reminded in 2 Chronicles 29 that when the burnt offering began the song of the Lord began also, with the trumpets, and with the instruments ORDAINED BY DAVID KING OF ISRAEL. So in Nehemiah where we have the return, and not only the building of the temple, but the building of the city, (Ezra emphasizes the temple, Nehemiah lays more proportionate stress on the city - the wall), and we note references to musical instruments. There was great praise unto God. "Certain of the priests' sons with trumpets" (says 12:35), and the next verse adds, "And his brethren, Shemaiah, and Azarael, Milalai, Gilalai, Maai, Nethaneol, and Judah, Hanani, with the musical instruments of David the man of God, and Ezra the scribe before them". Here then we have a prominence of musical instruments with respect to the temple, AND with respect to the kingdom. I say "with respect to the temple"

because, though David did not build the temple, David with all his heart made preparation for it. David provided for the temple, though Solomon was used of God to erect it. Musical instruments are, therefore, particularly associated with the kingdom, and why? The people on reaching the kingdom enjoyed their earthly calling. At least they would have done so, had they not wandered from the Lord,

Again, we have noticed musical instruments with special respect to the sacrifices. When the burnt offering began, the song of the Lord began also, with the trumpets, and with the musical instruments. The two are CLOSELY associated. Musical instruments belonged to the sacrifices, and were almost marked out as dependent upon them. Now this is deeply important. God Himself laid a stress upon this, that there might be an expression of Israel's joy, that everything might be brought in glad devotedness. THEY then had a grand building; THEIR gold was brought to God, THEIR silver was given to Him, THEIR sacrifices were indeed numerous, and the musical instruments were arranged to set forth love and a desire in every way to let the praise sound forth with melodious grandeur. Captivity brought a vital contrast. Captivity is distinct from pilgrimage. Captivity involves wandering. Pilgrimage is a pressing on to glory. Captivity involves being removed from glory, though God may chasten toward blessing thereby. Captivity has PART of the pilgrimage aspect. BUT something more. Hence we are not surprised in Psalm 137, "By the rivers of Babylon, there we sat down, yea we wept when we remembered Zion. We hanged our harps upon the willows in the midst thereof. For there they that carried us away captive required of us a song; and they that wasted us required of us mirth, saying, Sing us one of the songs of Zion". That such a captivity was more "complete", in certain contrasts from the kingdom, than wilderness pilgrimage, is plain from the next verse. Not only the harps on the willows, but the song is on the willows. How shall we even sing, how shall we sing the Lord's song in a strange land? Thus the CAPTIVITY interfered with the music.

The Lord Jesus came and walked this earth, despized and rejected of men His life has many remarkable omissions. Only once is gold associated with Him. Gentiles brought it near the time of His birth, picturing in the right order, without knowing it, (a) His glory, (b) His obedience a righteousness, and (c) His suffering, by the gold, frankincense and myrrh, providing in wondrous Divine arrangement, it would seem, for the expenses of the journey into Egypt. But gold is only associated with Him THERE. In like manner, only ~~many~~ once do we read of Christ riding, and then not on the horse to tread down His enemies, but on the ass which speaks of the one who would not lay low the men that opposed Him. In like manner, the life of the Lord Jesus the Man of sorrows, is not associated with musical instruments. True, we often read that He rejoiced, but we are also told He beheld the city and WEPT over it, His true rejoicing is brought to the front; but have you noticed that when there is the expression of His feelings through the body, we read of weeping, not laughter - distinguish rejoicing and laughter. Rejoicing is primarily of the heart and mind, laughter is an expression outside, and may be quite superficial. Sorrow is of the heart, weeping is its expression of the face. When there was the expression through the body in the life of the Lord Jesus, is it in vain that we are told particularly it was weeping? That He rejoiced IN SPIRIT is clear, and God's people are particularly reminded to be AS sorrowful, yet ALWAYS rejoicing. "Rejoice IN THE LORD always" THAT is the sphere of rejoicing. The child of God is in two places, "in the world ye shall have tribulation", "In Me peace", John 16:33. The two positions are brought before us strikingly in John 17 also. The believer has been taken out of the world. "I through the law am dead to the law" is balanced by another statement, "The cross of Christ through which a world has been crucified to me, and I to the world". The believer has been taken out of the world in a moral sense, NOT in a physical sense. This is clear in John 17, "I pray not that Thou shouldst take them out of the world, but that Thou shov'lest keep them from the evil". Yet we have the statement, "As

Thou hast sent Me into the world, even so have I sent them into the world". If they are sent into the world, they must have a position outside the world first. Morally and spiritually they have a heavenly position before they can be sent into the world. Physically they have an earthly position. In their physical earthly position they may expect particular difficulties. In their spiritual position they are told to rejoice in the Lord ALWAYS; for they live above the clouds, yea, above the sun, "made to sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus". Such is the fulness of grace, and such is the height of the heavenly calling. As the musical instruments were particularly associated with Israel's center, the temple, so at the present time believers realize that since Christ has died and been raised from the dead, they, since they are no more of the world than He was, but recognize Him as their Life, have a heavenly center and not an earthly one. The great gathering is heavenly the warfare is in heavenly places, the sacrifices are spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. Where the gathering is, where the warfare is, where the sacrifices are, there let the musical instruments be, The lesson of Hebrews 10 has its force today!

The climax in the earlier Scripture leads us to the temple, the climax in the later Scriptures leads us to the temple in Revelation. Here we have not David, but the glorious Lord Jesus, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, beyond David; and we find that with respect to the glory of the day of the Lord there is again a Divine stress on musical instruments. In Revelation we read, "After this I beheld, and, lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne and before the Lamb clothed with white robes and palms in their hands; and cried with a loud voice saying, Salvation to our God Which sitteth upon the throne". In Revelation 15 we have another beautiful stress, "I saw as it were (verse 2) a sea of glass mingled with fire; and them that had gotten the victory over the beast, and over his mark, and over the number of his name,

stand on the sea of glass having the HARPS OF GOD". So in the chapter 14:2, "The voice of harpers harping with their harps". Thus we have a contrast with Babylon, and a contrast with Babylon's glory. In Revelation 5:8 we have harps before the kingdom, but the harps BEFORE the arrival of the kingdom are rather in the hands of representatives of the saints than in the hands of saints. The four and twenty elders have every one of them harps and golden vials full of odours which are prayers of saints. The book of Revelation is full of musical instruments, - on earth condemned till Christ is owned, in heaven approved, In heaven approved because THAT is the real center to which believers belong, and where they will be honored first! Musical instruments belong to the man who has reached his CENTER. When he is there, he has musical instruments. So with Israel at the temple. The absence of musical instruments would indicate a separation from the appointed climax and center. This is, I believe, the consistent teaching of Scripture. Musical instruments lay a stress on the reaching of the height and the true position of those to whom they belong. We have not yet reached our true position as to the body, and as the body plays musical instruments (for the unseen soul does not play them), and as the body is still the body of our HUMILIATION, those of us who have a heavenly calling miss the setting forth ~~in~~ of that heavenly calling when we have the musical instruments. We fail to realize what God has indicated as to the present dispensation leading on to the future. When we have glorified bodies, musical instruments will fit because we are a heavenly people, and will then have reached our climax, will then have reached our center which the Lord has appointed. The silence of Scripture in the epistles, or rather the designedly contrasted emphasis on the heart and ITS psalms as in Ephesians 6 and Colossians 3, with language which reminds of and distinguishes from the psalms of the earlier Scriptures, must be allowed a true dispensational force.

But, you say, will there be musical instruments on this earth again? Undoubtedly. When? Evidently when the Lord has an earthly center, when He has an earthly kingdom there will be musical instruments once more. We read in Jeremiah 33 that, "The voice of joy and the voice of gladness" will be associated with bringing the sacrifice of praise to the house of the Lord, and even in Jerusalem there will be the counterpart of the days of David. I need hardly say that the words of Isaiah are illustrative. "It shall be with tabrets and harps" says Isaiah 30:32. There will be the bringing together of everything which sets forth the glory of the Lord upon the earth. There will be the stress on the Lord's presence, and He will be honored at His holy city Jerusalem. You recollect in Isaiah 60 we are told how EVERYTHING will be brought to Jerusalem - "The flocks of Kedar" says verse 7, "shall be gathered unto thee". "Their silver and their gold" we found mentioned in connection with the ships of Tarshish (verse 9). The glory of Lebanon comes in verse 13, and gold and silver with copper and iron, the four metals of 1 Chronicles 29 are emphasized in the 7th verse. God will THEN have an earthly center and He will make the place of His feet glorious. Then it will be fitting that there should be animal sacrifices which will go up with acceptance upon His altar; then it will be appropriate that there shall be again made manifest on the earth His acceptance of Israel, and blessing to the Gentiles with Israel.

So, beloved friends, the absence of appointed musical instruments today upon earth is a reminder to us of a heavenly calling and an encouragement to look forward to the Coming of the Lord and of the Day of the Lord. Far from being a penalizing, it is a refreshment in what it sets forth. It reminds us, as every coin and stamp, with its earthly "image and superscription", that we are strangers and pilgrims, and that a true climax is yet to come, and as we know that God has no center on earth, our hearts are drawn thereby to the Center which He has, even our beloved Lord in the glory in Whom we are accepted, in Whom we draw near, in Whom we worship, even as in

Him we have received all spiritual blessings. We have often seen the force of such words as in John 4, "The hour cometh when ye shall neither in this mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem, worship the Father". God draws our hearts from that which is of earth! Of the earthly temple the Lord Jesus said, "Not one stone shall be left upon another", but with respect to His people the words are clear, "To Whom coming as unto a living Stone...ye also as living stones are built up a spiritual house", and those stones will never be thrown down. Beloved friends, if the first covenant had a sanctuary of THIS WORDD, with CARNAL, or fleshly, ordinances, let those of us who realize a heavenly sanctuary with spiritual appointments, seek to have the spiritual praise, with the music of hearts which the Lord has touched, that, in the enabling of the Lord, we may indeed give thanks for what has been done. If ever we sorrowfully walk this earth, if ever we are rightly sighing and crying for all the abominations, let us in the power of the Holy Spirit, remember the Divine command, "Rejoice in the Lord alway, and again I will say, Rejoice".

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