

Searching the Scriptures

“Searching the scriptures daily to see whether these things were so” (Acts 17:11).

Vol. 1

December 17, 2023

Issue 13

Are There Mechanical Instruments In Heaven?

By Ethan Jennings

One attempt to justify the use of mechanical instruments in our worship comes from Revelation 14:2, which states, “And I heard a voice from heaven, like the sound of many waters and like the sound of loud thunder, and the voice which I heard was like the sound of harpists playing on their harps.”

The argument made by liberal folks goes something like, “See, there are mechanical instruments in Heaven --- the harps. Therefore, God condones them, and we need to use them today.” But is this true? Well, there are four reasons why this argument fails.

First, notice the first part of the verse, “And I heard a voice from heaven.” From where did John hear the voice? From earth? No, from Heaven! Nowhere do we read about anyone on earth ever using a mechanical instrument in worship in the New Testament. Here is the list of all references in the New Testament to singing on earth (Matt. 26:30, Mk. 14:26, Acts 16:25, Rom. 15:9, 1 Cor. 14:15, Eph. 5:19, Col. 3:16, Heb. 2:12, Heb. 13:15, Jas. 5:13). For the sake of space, I can’t print these passages, but I highly encourage you to read them. You will find no reference to mechanical instruments whatsoever.

Second, notice the words concerning the harps, “and the voice which I heard was like the sound of harpists playing on their harps.” Notice that John did not hear harps playing but a voice that was like the sound of harps. Therefore, there’s not even a reference here to the use of mechanical instruments in Heaven. John was comparing the voice he heard to the lovely sound of a harp in this passage.

Third, notice the context. Verse 3 says, “And they sang a new song before the throne and before the four living creatures and the elders; and no one could learn the song except the one hundred and forty-four thousand who had been purchased from the earth.” Notice, not only does it say that the 144,000 were the only ones who could learn this specific song (the 144,000 were symbolic of those saved in the twelve tribes of Israel according to Revelation 7:4-8), but also that they sang. They didn’t play anything. Even if one were to successfully argue that these passages proved there are mechanical instruments in Heaven --- which they won’t --- there is no proof that man was the one playing the instruments.

Finally, one needs to understand that the book of Revelation is symbolic. It states so in the very first verse of the book. The KJV reads, “The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto Him, to shew unto his servants things which must shortly come to pass; and He signified it by His angel unto His servant John” (Rev. 1:1). Notice the word signified. It literally means “symbolic.” When reading the book of Revelation, one needs to remember two main things. (1) It consists of things which must shortly come to pass, and (2) it was signified or symbolic.

God commands us to sing unto Him with only one instrument, the heart. Ephesians 5:19 states, “Speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody with your heart to the Lord.” The phrase “making melody” comes from the

Greek “psalto” which literally means “to pluck or strike the cords on a musical instrument.” To psalto with the heart is what it says. Instead of using the mechanical instruments man wants us to sing with, let’s use the one instrument God commands us to use to worship Him, the heart.

Something’s Not Right

By James Hahn

When teachers of error are praised and teachers of truth are condemned, something’s not right. When compromisers of truth are commended for their “wonderful attitude” and defenders of truth are charged with self-righteousness, something’s not right. When false doctrine goes uncontested and truth proclaimed is called “traditionalism,” something’s not right.

Yes, all of these things are going on and something’s not right. Men can verbally declare their soundness all they want, but when they show more support for those who teach false doctrine and compromise the truth than they show for men who courageously proclaim and defend the truth something’s not right.

Prayer List

- Holly Gerber
- Cheryl Smith (Surgery Recovery)
- Robert Cantonwine
- Doan’s Grandson, Wilson
- Roger Hillis (Surgery Recovery)
- Nora and her family
- Baby Dillon (Newborn Concerns)
- Douglas, Madison, & Stella Muhs
- Those Battling Cancer
- Darrell Brinkley (Surgery Recovery).
- Harrold Brinkley (Darrell’s brother) has Stage 4 bone cancer.
- Stacy Smith (loss of her dad)

Did I miss anyone? Are there any updates? Please let me know. - Ethan

Daily Bible Reading

Dec. 17: Amos 7-9, Rev. 8

Dec. 18: Obadiah, Rev. 9

Dec. 19: Jonah, Rev. 10

Dec. 20: Micah 1-3, Rev. 11

Dec. 21: Micah 4-5, Rev. 12

Dec. 22: Micah 6-7, Rev. 13

Dec. 23: Nahum, Rev. 14

Dec. 24: Habakkuk, Rev. 15

The Olney Church of Christ Meets At:

220 North Van Street Olney, IL. 62450

Worship Times:

Sunday 9:30 A.M. Bible Study

Sunday 10:20 A.M. Worship Service

Sunday 2:00 P.M. Worship Service

Wednesday 7:00 P.M. Bible Study

Website: www.olneychurchofchrist.org

Check out our Facebook page!

Our Radio Program airs on 92.9 FM.
Sundays at 8 A.M.

Elders: *Mike Gerber, Travis Hall*

Deacons: *John Frost, Dave Goff,
Roger Sholders*

Preacher: *Ethan Jennings*
(Contact: 765-280-6855)

Prayer Leaders

Bible Study: Roger Sholders

Worship: Mike Gerber

Afternoon: Travis Hall

Wednesday: Mark Craig

Next Week Assignments:

Reading: Jeff Wright

Announcements: Dan Doan

Table: Roger Sholders

Serve: Steve Anderson, Douglas

Muhs, Travis Hall, Mark Craig

Invitation

(Wednesday December 27th)

Larry Stivers

Anniversaries

Birthdays

Dec 21 – Linda Craig

Dec 21 – Christie Wagner

Dec 22 – Jailyn Hall

Dec 22 – Lauren Muhs