

MUSICAL INSTRUMENT ADDITIONS WERE NEVER AUTHORIZED DURING THE OLD TESTAMENT PERIOD

by David Lee Burris

But you say, “The Instrument is mentioned in the Old Testament.” Yes, but let us see what the Old Testament actually says about it...

God Only Authorized Trumpets for the Mosaic Tabernacle @Appointed Times of the Religious Calendar.

Author John Price in Old Light On New Worship(2005) points out the limited authorization given to even these trumpets: “The only musical instrument used in the public worship of the Tabernacle was the trumpet. As with every other element of the Tabernacle worship, musical instrumentation was regulated by specific divine command. We see the trumpet commanded in Numbers 10 and regulated in the following three ways: 1) The trumpet (including the number of them) was the only musical instrument authorized for use in the Tabernacle worship: Numbers 10: 1-2, ‘The Lord spoke further to Moses saying, *Make yourself two trumpets of silver, of hammered work you shall make them...* 2) The priests were the only persons authorized to use the trumpets: Numbers 10:8, *The priestly sons of Aaron, moreover, shall blow the trumpet; and this shall be for you a perpetual statute throughout your generations.* 3) The occasions were specified when the trumpets would be used, including worship during the appointed feasts: Numbers 10:10, *Also in the day of your gladness and in your appointed feasts, and on the first days of your months, you shall blow the trumpets over your burnt offerings, and over the sacrifices of your peace offerings, and they shall be as a reminder of you before your God. I am the Lord your God.* These two trumpets were the only musical instruments used in public worship throughout the time of the Tabernacle in the wilderness.”

Generations Ago Evangelist Edd Holt Noted The Following: “Musical instruments were invented by Jubal, a descendant of Cain. (Genesis 4:21). This is mentioned to show that the instrument had been invented many years before it was used (added *Post-Tabernacle*) in the worship by David. When Israel came out of Egypt God gave them a law at Mt. Sinai. There was no commandment in it for the use of the instrument. For their government, God gave them Judges, after they had reached the land of Canaan. But they wanted a king, like the nations around them. He allowed them to have a king, though it was not His pleasure. It was during this form of government that David added the instruments of music to their worship. It was not in the law which God gave them at Mt. Sinai. But David, a king in a government which God had given in His anger and later took away in His wrath, David added the instruments to the law of God, 449 years after that law was given. Surely, David said, ‘Praise Him with the psaltry and the harp, *praise Him with the timbrel and the dance; praise Him with stringed instruments and pipe.*’ (Psalms 150: 3,4). He used both the instruments and the dance in his worship. They do as well who would prove that polygamy is now right because David practiced it then, as you can do who would prove that instruments of music should be used in Christian worship because David used them in the Old Testament.” [20th Century Edd Holt could not have even imagined that Protestant Denominations of the 21st Century would be practicing the dance as an expression of worship.]

God Considered the Stringed Instruments of Old Testament Worship An Unauthorized Addition...

“Take away from me the *noise* of your songs,
For I will not hear the *melody* of your stringed instruments.” (Amos 5:23)

“There is nothing wrong per se with inventing and playing musical instruments. The problem was that they were inventing musical instruments for the purpose of worship. That’s why the Lord said ‘take away from Me the noise of your songs...’ It was something they were claiming to offer God as worship but it was really **‘will-worship’**; a people preferring to please themselves in their practice rather than to please God.” – *A Defense of the Practice of Avoiding the Use of Musical Instruments in Christian Worship*

Continued from Edd Holt: “But let us hear what is later said in the Old Testament about David and his instruments. Several hundred years after David, Amos a prophet of God pronounced a series of ‘woes’ upon the people. ‘Woe to them... that invent for themselves instruments of music, like David.’ (Amos 6:1-5). Did David invent the instrument in the sense of making the first one? No, Jubal did that. David invented them in that he added them to the worship of God. (1ST Chronicles 16). But after David was dead and gone, God said, ‘Woe to them... that invent for themselves instruments of music, like David.’

But if Amos had not said a word against David’s instruments, it would not be right for us to use them in our worship. We do not live under David, Christians are under law to Christ (1ST Corinthians 9:21). We must hear Him and not David, or Moses. Christianity is the religion of the New Testament not the Old Testament. He who would be justified by the law of the Old Testament is fallen away from grace. (Galatians 5:4).”

Wayne Jackson says, “It appears to say that what David did was to **devise instruments to enhance his own pleasure** in the worship of God and that in **motive**, corrupt Israel followed in kind.”

Adam Clarke, whose scholarly works were produced over a span of forty years, and who likely was the most renowned scholar of the Methodist Church, wrote:

“I believe that David was not authorized by the Lord to introduce that multitude of musical instruments into the Divine worship of which we read; and I am satisfied that his conduct in this respect is most solemnly reprehended by this prophet; and I farther believe that the use of such instruments of music, in the Christian Church, is **without** the **sanction** and against the **will** of God; and that they are **sinful**” (p. 684, emphasis original).