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Substance of Sermon preached by our Pastor

on Thursday, October 20, 1983.

Lesson. Revelation 14.

As well the singers as the players on instruments shall be there.

Psalm 87. 7.

The discourse should begin with an explanatory word. Our beloved sister Marjorie in her earlier days, especially in Norwood, was talented in singing the high praises of God, also in playing an instrument, the organ. One of the words I believe flowed into my spirit concerning her we have now read, obviously in the spiritual equation of it. You will understand therefore the preface given, and by the assistance of our Blessed Lord we shall hope to see and have confirmation that we are among these. "As well the singers as the players on instruments shall be there." The inference primarily is to the temple built on Mount Moriah, but more abundantly to Glory itself. You will have seen that John had an amazing vision, and he not only saw but heard. I would like to make an observation, also coupled with an inquiry. What of Heaven do you know? A number of you are approaching the last stages of the pilgrim journey which surely is to the destined land of pure delight, love and joy. I ask the question of this congregation. You profess to know the Lord Jesus, you believe He has redeemed you by His blood and you have a good hope of Heaven, of eternal Glory. To pursue the inquiry, what up to the present moment do you know personally, spiritually, divinely, efficaciously of Heaven? It would be desirable for you to have a time of deep spiritual meditation to arrive at an answer the Lord will confirm. It is certain before His dear people reach Glory they will know many things concerning Heaven, for Glory when Christ comes is in them begun. We have prayed for, and expressed gratitude to the Lord for the supreme blessing He has granted us that our latter days are our best. I believe a number of you are able to ascribe to this note of praise and gratitude to our God that spiritually your latter days have been the best of all. If you are willing to join in the note of adoration, thanksgiving and praise to Almighty God, why are your last days your best?

The answer must be because you have enjoyed foretastes of Heaven. When the Lord Jesus comes to your heart, sheds abroad His love in your soul; when He looks, and loves, and smiles and indulges you, when you get divine blessings from Him you enjoy for a season foretastes of bliss.

I want to develop the subject on this line. "As well the singers as the players on instruments shall be there." We said that the Lord granted to John this vision so he saw, and it was not only seeing, but hearing, and this the Lord has granted some of us. The last hymn we shall be singing makes known in the case of the hymn writer, he was in such a wonderful, indulged frame and spirit so he could sing, "Hark!" He could hear the singing: the preacher has heard it. That is why he has not only divine authority of the Trinity to bring before you such a word, but he has confirmation of it in his own experience. He has heard the singing in Heaven. I wonder how many of you have been brought so close to eternal bliss, that you felt to hear in your soul the melody of music in Heaven? So Kent says, "Hark! I am in the enjoyment of it. You dear ones round me, listen! Can you hear it?"

"Hark! how the blood-bought hosts above
Conspire to praise redeeming love,
In sweet harmonious strains. Hark!"

I am sure with the dear friends in advanced years if they have this blessing you will be ready to conclude that you are very close to the Kingdom, and it will not be long before you open your eyes in bliss. I suggest this is a blessing we may anticipate, to know a degree of it before we are safely landed.

"Hark! how the blood-bought hosts above
Conspire to praise redeeming love,
In sweet harmonious strains;
And while they strike the golden lyres,
This glorious theme each bosom fires,
That grace triumphant reigns."

and he says, "Join thou, my soul; join in it." If we take our Hymnal there^{ant} two hymns I will name to you, or short extracts. Concerning the holy angels, "Worthy the Lamb that died," they cry,
To be exalted thus."

how do you respond?

"Worthy the Lamb," our lips reply,
"For He was slain for us."

Joseph Hart in his unique hymn on Heaven must have had a beautiful season. He says Jesus leads the song in Glory.

I will try by the grace of God to develop ~~the subject~~ according to the mind of God and His eternal praise what is to us naturally a difficult subject. The first thing to say is the Psalm relates to the glory and nature of the Church, the beautiful temple on Mount Moriah, especially to the glory of the Church of Christ. There is the foundation and the gates, the report, and the cosmopolitan nature and the nativity, the Church the birthplace of precious souls, and the census. "The Lord shall count, when he writeth up the people, that this man was born there." And there is the presence of Christ, the source of unction and glory. "All my springs are in thee." "As well the singers as the players on instruments shall be there." And all the beauty and glory of it is, it is for ransomed sinners, redeemed mortals. These are the singers and players on instruments. It is for poor sinners, so none of you however frail, weak, unworthy, sinful, if you have known the mercy of God are excluded from the beauty and praise of His Church and His Church on high, the Church triumphant.

I will ask another question. Do you know what it is to sing the New Song? Is the Lord teaching you the New Song? Take it this way. Vocal chords need training, and it is the Holy Ghost teaches us to sing. In the Bible we have many songs. "The song of songs, which is Solomon's" relates to the Church praising her Beloved, and because she has a Beloved she can sing one of the songs. There is no song greater. What I want to say to you is, take a poor broken-hearted sinner, blessed with repentance and mercy flows freely to your soul, the love of Christ flows into your heart and tunes your soul to sing the New Song. You will start singing and Christ will be your song. Psalm 115 is a notable demonstration of this. "Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto thy name give glory, for thy mercy, and for thy truth's sake." That is a part of the New Song. "Not unto us." It is the love of Christ, the mercy of God, and you will begin to sing. You learn the New Song. Do you believe they are singing eternally in Heaven, or are they silent? We have been reading about it. "And they sung as it were a new song," and only the redeemed among men could learn it. Your spirit sings; you

rejoice in happiness and gladness and peace because of the forgiveness of sins. You sing. It is wonderful. If they sing in Heaven, don't you hope you join in a little? and though you feel it is feeble in contrast it is the same blessed Spirit teaching you to sing the same blessed Song. So by the will of God singing has always formed, from the earliest days when the Lord made His love and mercy known to poor sinners, a part of divine worship. Singing. In the Old Testament we have songs, as the song of Moses. When the Lord delivered Israel at the Red Sea we have the song of praise of Moses. When the Lord delivered Hannah from her persecutors and deep distress and sadness and tears, you have the song of Hannah, and when the Lord was pleased to heal the poor soul of King Hezekiah, and healed his body and delivered the royal city of Jerusalem you have his song. "Therefore we will sing my songs to the stringed instruments all the days of our life in the house of the Lord." These are songs. Do you sing? Ever since the Lord formed His Church singing has been a part and an important part of divine worship. And as long as you have known the denomination which is dear to you, you have been cradled in this: singing is an essential part of the worship of God. You remember the singing pews and you have grown up in this. Do you sing?

We might go aside on a lower plane. It is much to be regretted that younger people do not learn to sing, nor learn music. It would be better if there was the application for it as in days of yore. Do you agree that singing is a vital part, though neglected, in the worship of God? I will gather up the truth in so far as I have advanced it. It is for redeemed sinners and you sing the songs. You may say, "How can I sing?" When the love of Christ touches a penitent heart; when the mercy, grace, love and goodness of God flows into your soul you will sing. You may say you have no voice for music. You will sing spontaneously when the Lord blesses your immortal soul. And what is the issue to all the deliverances the Lord commands for Jacob? Psalm 103 is a song of praise. "Bless the Lord, O my soul: and all that is within me, bless his holy name." It is a song unto the Lord. "As well the singers." How beautiful, and if you will notice for a moment as I remind you of the four paragraphs of Psalm 107, they all issue in song, or in an exhortation to sing. "Oh that men would praise the Lord for his goodness, and for his wonderful works to the children of men!" You see, with all they passed through; wanderings,

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in captivity, in affliction, on the ocean, and "they fell down, and there was none to help. Then they cried unto the Lord in their trouble, and he saved them out of their distresses. Oh that men would praise the Lord." That is the object of God: that men would praise the Lord for His goodness. Take Psalm 42. "Why art thou cast down, O my soul? and why art thou disquieted within me? hope thou in God: for I shall yet praise him." There it is. This may reach a poor downcast soul, one who is very low. This is the vital part, it is the issue, the sequel; praise to God for the help of His countenance. So right through the Book of God we have the same.

I will ask one or two questions. One is, do you want to be among those favoured by God to sing His high praises and join the multitude of the heavenly host? When you do begin you feel you are in harmony with Heaven, and with the dear saints who are glorified. The second thing is, you may say, "I am in the depths of trouble." I know all about it. I ask you, do you pray for and hope that one day you will know what it is to hear the song? Is this what you pray and hope for, that the Lord will take off your sackcloth and gird you with gladness, "to the end that my glory may sing praise to thee, and not be silent"? Is this what you are seeking? It may appear remote, but if you sow in tears you will reap in joy. "As well the singers." Is not this the whole purpose of God in redemption, that He should have a people to praise Him for ever? "This people have I formed for myself; they shall shew forth my praise. They will praise Me." "Whoso offereth praise glorifieth me." It is a sweet song. If you get into the heart and soul of dear Joseph's hymn, Jesus leads the song. You can think of Jesus singing, my friends, at the Passover, and when He instituted the holy supper, before He went out into the darkness of Gethsemane. "And when they had sung an hymn, they went out." It was the great Hallel they were singing at the Passover, the collection of Psalms. "And when they had sung an hymn, they went out." Jesus went out to the garden to suffer, but He was singing before He went. He knew what the issue would be; a Church redeemed with blood. He had something to sing about, though there would be unparalleled agony and suffering and He would give His precious life. Think of what He had to sing about; a Church pure, holy, spotless; a bride cleansed, clothed,

glorified. Think of the Saviour singing with His disciples at the Last Supper and after the Passover. "And when they had sung an hymn." This touches my heart deeply. Having joy set before you, you will sing and rejoice. If the Lord blesses you before you see deliverance you will know a little of the substance and evidence of it by faith. You have left the Sanctuary and gone home singing in your soul. So "As well the singers." They will be there; all the redeemed by precious blood, saved by His grace. O the melody and harmony of the music!

"As well the singers as the players on instruments." This is an interesting point, the players on ~~instrument~~ instruments. In the worship of God in David's time, in the temple the harp took a prominent place in the service of praise. All the ten strings of the harp as well as the cymbals. I will dwell on the harp. John heard the harpers harping on their harps in Glory. This is a beautiful word. How do we equate it with the spirit? You will say, what is the instrument? who are the players on it? You answer. See how far you have come in your meditation. The instrument is your own favoured, blessed soul, or heart, full of grace. You will find the Lord makes your heart an instrument and you will play it. Take the hymn where the harps were hung on the willows. It says,

"Your harps, ye trembling saints,
Down from the willows take,"

Think of your heart as a harp, a gracious heart, a redeemed soul. It says,

"Loud to the praise of Christ our Lord,
Bid every string awake."

That is when you are playing on your instrument. How do you play it? By faith, by grace, by the Holy Ghost, and you will strike your instrument and awake every string to the praise of God. Here you see if we mention the harp and playing on it spiritually you will awaken the strings of faith, hope and love. In Glory it will be different. You will not awaken the strings of hope or of faith because you will be Home. But you will awaken the strings of love, joy, holiness and happiness, and all the powers of your glorified spirit: the players on instruments, your ransomed soul. How many players on instruments are here? Did you know your soul under the influence of the Holy Ghost is a musical instrument, a sweet sounding harp or cymbal? "As well the singers as the players on instruments shall be there." Wonderful to look in your ransomed soul,

redeemed by blood, and realise it is an instrument of praise to God eternally, and you will play it by love and in love. You will take all the strings, holiness, happiness, knowledge, the perfection of knowledge and awaken them eternally to the praise of God. How wonderful! How many of you singers and players on instruments will be there? All of you; all in the prescription of the text, in the compass of the vital word. "As well the singers as the players on instruments shall be there" in eternal bliss. Blessed be God.