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The Sixth Chapter of Amos

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A. St. J. B.
Instrumental Music

THE SIXTH CHAPTER OF AMOS.

When preachers and other members of the churches of Christ present the truth to the people about them, they are often met with such expressions as these: "Yes, but you don't believe in music;" "Yes, but you don't believe in the organ;" "Yes, but you think it wrong to use musical instruments in your worship." When we tell them that musical instruments in the worship of God through Christ are not divinely authorized, we are often told, "Yes, but in olden times they used musical instruments—David was a good man, and he used them."

After hearing such and such like expressions as the foregoing for many years we have decided to quote the sixth chapter of Amos and comment thereon. Here is the chapter.

"Woe to them that are at ease in Zion, and trust in the mountain of Samaria, which are named chief of the nations, to whom the house of Israel came! Pass ye unto Calneh, and see; and from thence go ye to Hamath the great: then go down to Gath of the Philistines: be they better than these kingdoms? or their border greater than your border? Ye that put far away the evil day, and cause the seat of violence to come near; that lie upon beds of ivory, and stretch themselves upon their couches, and eat the lambs out of the flock, and the calves out of the midst of the stall; that chant to the sound of the viol, and invent to themselves instruments of music like David; that drink wine in bowls, and anoint themselves with the chief ointments: but they are not grieved for the affliction of Joseph

"Therefore now shall they go captive with the first that go captive, and the banquet of them that stretched themselves shall be removed. The Lord God hath sworn by himself, saith the Lord the God of hosts, I abhor the excellency of Jacob, and hate his palaces: therefore will I deliver up the city with all that is therein. And it shall come to pass, if there remain ten men in one house, that they shall die. And a man's uncle shall take him up, and he that burneth him, to bring out the bones out of the house, and shall say unto him that is by the sides of the house, Is there yet any with thee? and he shall say, No. Then shall he say, Hold thy tongue: for we may not make mention of the name of the Lord. For, behold, the Lord commandeth, and he will smite the great house with breaches, and the little house with clefts.

"Shall horses run upon the rock? will one plough there with oxen? for ye have turned judgment into gall, and the fruit of

righteousness into hemlock: ye which rejoyce in a thing of nought, which say, Have we not taken to us horns by our own strength? But, behold, I will raise up against you a nation, O house of Israel, saith the Lord the God of hosts; and they shall afflict you from the entering in of Hamath unto the river of the wilderness."

ANALYSIS OF CHAPTER.

1. In the first verse of this chapter the prophet Amos pronounced a woe upon those who were at ease in Zion, and trusted in the mountain of Samaria

2. In the second verse is found a comparison of kingdoms or dominions, such as those who were at ease in Zion were making for their comfort.

3. In the third verse those who were at ease in Zion were further addressed, and were declared to be they who 'put far away the evil day, and cause the seat of violence to come near."

4. In the fourth verse that same class was introduced as consisting of those who "lie upon beds of ivory, and stretch themselves upon their couches, and eat the lambs out of the midst of the flock, and the calves out of the midst of the stall."

5. Then in the fifth verse those same persons on whom the "woe" was pronounced in the first verse were addressed, and they were called those "that chant to the sound of the viol, and invent to themselves instruments of music like David."

6. In the sixth verse they were spoken of as those "that drink wine in bowls, and anoint themselves with the chief ointments; but they are not grieved for the affliction of Joseph."

7. Then the seventh verse says, "Therefore now shall they go captive with the first that go captive, and the banquet of them that stretched themselves," the Lord said, "shall be removed."

8. Then in the eighth verse we read the following: "The Lord God hath sworn by himself, saith the Lord the God of hosts, I abhor the excellency of Jacob, and hate his palaces; therefore will I deliver up the city with all that is therein."

9. Then in the ninth, tenth, and eleventh verses the Lord made mention of the dreadful condition of that same class of people when the time would come for the captivity to take place.

10. The twelfth verse asks two questions in order to set forth the absurdity of the conduct of that class of people in perverting judgment and righteousness

11. The thirteenth verse speaks of them as those who rejoice in a thing of nought, who say, "Have we not taken to us horns by our own strength?"

12. The last verse of the chapter sets forth a further threatening against those same people upon whom the first verse pronounces a "woe."

COMMENTS.

1. The first verse of the chapter under examination pronounced a woe upon certain Jews, that are plainly described as those that are at ease in Zion and trust in certain mountains, and addressing the same Jews in the fifth verse the same prophet further described them as those that *chanted to the sound of the viol, and invented to themselves instruments of music like David*. This shows that in the days of the prophet Amos the time had really come when God pronounced a "woe" even upon the Jews who invented to themselves instruments of music like David.

2. Now let us go back to 1 Chron. 15: 16, where we read the following: "And David spake to the chief of the Levites to appoint their brethren to be singers with instruments of music, psalteries and harps and cymbals, sounding by lifting up the voice with joy." This verse mentions the beginning of both the instrumental music and the choir business in the public worship of the Jews. David was the father of both the use of musical instruments, and of the choir singing in the Jewish public worship. But the prophet Amos said, *Woe unto them that chant to the sound of the viol and invent to themselves instruments of music like David*.

3. Reader, what do you now think of those who quote David in favor of instrumental music in worship, but fail to tell you what Amos said *against* following David's example even among Jews while the Jewish law was in force? Are they treating you fairly and honestly? Just think of a preacher who has read the 6th chapter of Amos quoting what David said concerning instrumental music without mentioning Amos? Is that preacher *honest*?

4. The "woe" that was pronounced by the prophet Amos has never been recalled nor modified. The Jews persisted in using musical instruments, and the "woe" pronounced by the prophet Amos was carried out against them, and it is still against them. This does not mean that their use of musical instruments was their only wrong. They did other things that were very wrong, but that does not prevent God's woe from being against them on account of their choir and instrumental music inventions.

5. Of those who claim to be Christians the Roman Catholics were the first to adopt instrumental music in public worship, and God's "woe" is against them. That same "woe" is against all Protestants who follow Rome's example. All who adopt such instruments in public worship seem to feel glad, and rejoice as if they had done something great. The Jews no doubt did the same, and God said to them, "Ye which rejoice in a thing of nought, which say, Have we not taken to us horns by our own strength?" Yes, to rejoice in an organ, or any other kind of a musical instrument is to rejoice *in a thing of nought*. A musical instrument is a mere *thing* which has no life, no spirit, no sense, but is an empty, *soulless* THING. Those who rejoice in it certainly "rejoice in a thing of nought."

6. Christians are required to worship God in spirit and in truth (John 4: 24), and are required to pray and sing with the spirit, and with the understanding (1 Cor. 14: 15.) Therefore, they are certainly not required to worship God either by prayer or singing with musical instruments, for in such instruments there is *neither spirit nor understanding*. They even interfere with people understanding what is sung with them.

7. As the "woe" which the prophet Amos pronounced has never been recalled nor modified it still hangs over all Jews, and reaches to all professed Christians who use musical instruments in trying to worship God as David did. Reader, *does this woe hang over you?* It certainly does if you hold membership in a church that uses musical instruments, for in so doing you *endorse them*. Can you be saved while the "woe" of an inspired prophet hangs over you? Be careful! Don't follow your human leaders any far her. If they were *honest* they would have told you what the prophet Amos says about David and his musical instruments. Then don't trust them any more. They are deceiving you on other subjects. Then come and hear the TRUTH as it is preached at the meeting house of the church of Christ in this community, and at the same time be like the Bereans of old who, when they heard the gospel preached, searched the Scriptures daily to learn whether the things spoken were so

DANIEL SOMMER.

NOTICE:—This tract is especially prepared for distribution during protracted meetings. Disciples should have them on hands at all times. Send for some at once. Price: 10 cents per dozen, 50 cents per hundred, \$1.00 for three hundred, and \$3.00 a thousand. Address,

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