

Harps and Bowls by Dr. Bryan Cutshall

The Melodious Prayer

Introduction - Song and prayer has always gone hand in hand, but usually not together. I remember the first time I ever heard a person sing in the spirit. It was not in a different language, it was in my own language. I will never forget as the whole church soaked in the song about the coming of the Lord, sung by a woman who never sang a special. We were not even listening to her voice, but rather her spirit and her words. I have since learned that singing in the spirit, is simply about allowing your spirit to sing, regardless of your prayer language.

Revelation 5:8-10: *8 Now when He had taken the scroll, the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders fell down before the Lamb, each having a harp, and golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints. 9 And they sang a new song, saying: "You are worthy to take the scroll, And to open its seals; For You were slain, And have redeemed us to God by Your blood Out of every tribe and tongue and people and nation, 10 And have made us kings and priests to our God; And we shall reign on the earth."*

- A. I want you to picture this scene. **(Revelation picture of Elders casting crowns)**
 - 1. There is a scroll in the right hand of God the Father. No one is worthy to take it and open it. John begins to weep. But one of the Elders got up off his throne and said to him, "Do not weep, there is One who is worthy." Jesus steps up and takes the scroll.
- B. Look again at these 4 living creatures and the 24 Elders. Each has two things: A harp and a bowl. **The harp is a symbol of praise and the bowl is a symbol of prayer.**
- C. Then a very unusual phrase enters the scripture. It is so unusual, it seems impossible. It says, *They sang a new song.* How is this possible? How can 24 different people sing a new song spontaneously? This is where we begin to understand the harps and bowls ministry to the Lord.
- D. Most of our music is written, edited, rehearsed, arranged and performed. God loves that type of praise, but is also looking for a harps and bowls praise. Harps and bowls praise is a prayer that is sung to the Lord. It is a spontaneous melody that flows from the heart.

Ephesians 5:19-20: *19 speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord, 20 giving thanks always for all things to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.*

- A. This verse tells us how to speak to each other, and also how to speak to God.
- B. This verse implies that there are spiritual songs that come from making melody in our heart to the Lord.
 - 1. Nothing rehearsed. Nothing written. Just a response to God.

Psalms 33:2-3: *2 Praise the LORD with the harp; Make melody to Him with an instrument of ten strings. 3 Sing to Him a new song; Play skillfully with a shout of joy.*

- A. God wants the melody of your heart.
- B. Harps and bowls are not just about praise and worship and praying. It is about singing your prayer to the Lord from your own heart. That is the new song He describes in Scripture. The song that others have written, perfected and arranged are wonderful, but God wants something from your heart.