

## ***Introduction to Intercessory Worship and the House of Prayer***

### **I. FOUNDATIONS OF THE PRAYER MOVEMENT**

A. Foundations are the most important part of a building, but usually the most unseen. As “houses of prayer” become more visible on the landscape (600,000 by 2020), many are attempting to evaluate the structure (or even attempting to build the structure) without proper regard for the foundation upon which it is built.

1. The legitimacy of a house of prayer is often explained by *insufficient biblical implications* or *uncertain outcomes*. The purpose of this class is not to lay out the full biblical foundation for *Night & Day prayer in the spirit of the Tabernacle of David*, but just introduce it as a necessary foundation for the Harp & Bowl Model. However, I will say that it is God’s desire—and even a requirement for Jesus’ return—that day and night prayer with worship ascend from every tribe tongue and nation.

B. Before we begin to look at structures and models, I want to briefly examine the foundations of Harp & Bowl and why we are seeking to do it. It is one thing (and an important one) to be excited about prayer, worship, and justice. It is another to observe the biblical precedence for a house of prayer. But it is quite another thing to understand *why* the Lord commanded it, *why* it was practiced by the ancients, and *why* it is wisdom for us today.

C. Just four of the primary points in the theological foundations of night and day prayer:

1. The Glory of God (and the worthiness of Jesus). (Rev. 4:11; Rev. 5; Is. 6, 24-27, 42, 54; Ps. 145:1-7; 1 Ch. 16:23-34; Ps. 136; Ps. 106; etc)

***You are worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honor and power... (Rev. 4:11)***

***2 And they sung a new song, saying, You are worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof...11 and I heard the voice of many angels round about the throne and the beasts and the elders...12 Saying with a loud voice, Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing. 13 And every creature I heard saying, Blessing, and honor, and glory, and power, be to him that sits on the throne, and to the Lamb for ever and ever... (Rev. 5)***

2. God's desire for replication (on earth as it is in heaven). (Lk. 11; Mt. 6; Dan. 7:10; Rev. 4:8, 5:8, 14:2-3, 15:2-3; Ex. 25; Heb. 7:25, 8; Rom. 8:34; Eze. 22:30-31; Is. 59:15-16; Gal. 4:26; Ps. 138:4; Is. 56:7; etc.)

*...Your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. (Lk. 11:2)*

*...He ever lives to make intercession... (Heb 7:25)*

*...they do not rest day or night...<sup>9</sup> the twenty-four elders fall down...and worship Him who lives forever... (Rev 4:8-9)*

3. Urgency of the Hour (Mt. 9:38; Joel 2; Acts 2; Ez. 9; 2 Ch. 7:14; Mat. 13:24-30; Hag. 2:6; Heb. 12:25-29; Zeph. 2:11; Ps. 109; Ps. 47:7; etc.)

*Yet once more I shake not only earth, but also heaven. (Hag. 2:6)*

*1 Do not keep silent, O God...<sup>2</sup> [The wicked] have also surrounded me with words of hatred, and fought against me without cause. 4 ...but I become prayer. (Ps. 109:1-4)*

4. Revelation of prayer (and worship) to move God's heart and usher in (hasten) His return (justice). (1 Th. 5:17; Lk. 18; Mt. 9:38; 2 Th. 3:1; Ps. 22:3; Is. 62:6-7; Rev. 22:17; Mal. 1:11; Amos 7; Gen. 18:17-33; Ex. 32:10-14; Jon. 3:5-10). The principle of intercession (Jn. 1:1-3; Gen 1; Heb. 1:3, 11:3; Jas. 1:18; Ps. 33:6; Ps. 2:8; Jer. 29:7; etc).

*Therefore pray the Lord of the harvest send out laborers into His harvest. (Mt 9:38)*

*7 ...The LORD has said to Me, 'You are My Son, Today I have begotten You. 8 Ask of Me, and I will give You the nations for Your inheritance and the ends of the earth for Your possession. (Ps. 2:7-8)*

*By the word of the Lord the heavens were made, and all the host of them by the breath of His mouth. (Ps. 33:7)*

- D. This is just a framework for the foundations to be poured into. I encourage you to go deeper in seeking revelation of this subject for yourself. The more understanding and revelation you gain on this core reality of Scripture, the more it will open up the Word to your heart.

## II. WHAT IS HARP & BOWL?

- A. While the phrase needs explanation, it is derived from the New Testament book of Revelation where we are given a glimpse into the activity around the throne in heaven.

*...the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders fell down before the Lamb. Each one had a harp and they were holding golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints. And they sang a new song... (Rev. 5:8)*

- B. Revelation 5:8 describes the elders before the throne with *harps* (representing worship with music) and a *bowl of incense* (representing the prayers of God's people). When God established His throne, **He determined that worship music would flow in an interactive relationship with intercession.** As praise is joined with prayers before the throne, great spiritual battles are released in the heavens and on earth.
- C. "Harp & Bowl" is simply one model (communication tool) developed to help facilitate intercessory worship (prayer + music). It is our attempt here to reflect what we see happening in heaven.
- D. Jesus ever lives to make intercession (Heb. 7:25) and therefore, we, too, want to make **"supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving thanks, for all men"** (1 Tim. 2:1) and to sing forth His praises.
- E. Often repeated is Jesus' prayer in Luke 11, **"...on earth as it is in Heaven..."** But it is mostly repeated with an *uncertain outcome* and in an *incomplete way*.
1. Generally, people have no idea what heaven is like (i.e.: they think "floating on a cloud...") and so the prayer is without substance. They have no revelation on what Heaven looks like or what He is going on (right now) around His throne and so it is a prayer disconnected from reality.
  2. More often, we mis-apply it out of context to our given circumstances (laying aside the fuller and more literal sense of it's meaning) and pray everything from, "Be healed, because you are healed in Heaven," to "I don't know His will, so let His will be done in this situation as it is in Heaven..."

*...Your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. (Lk. 11:2)*

- F. What Jesus is actually saying when the disciples ask Him to teach them to pray is this: “Pray that the Father would give you grace and power to make the earth look like Heaven does **so that** He will come and dwell here!” He is saying to **replicate** what we see going on in Heaven (like Moses and David) so that He will find a place of rest (that reminds Him of home) on the earth.

*Your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. (Mt. 6:10)*

*You are holy, enthroned on the praises of Your people (Ps. 22:3)*

*...make Me a sanctuary, that I may dwell among you; 9 [make it] according to the pattern I show you...40 see to it that you make it according to the pattern which was shown you on the mountain. (Ex. 25:8-9; 40)*

*These are the singers...[who lodged] in the chambers, [and were] free [from other duties]; for they were employed in [that] work day and night. (1 Ch. 9:33)*

- G. **Replication** is what we do when we function in full, habitual agreement with God’s assessment of reality (faith) within the city of New Jerusalem and the eternal realm, and endeavor in a corporate way to make it so in our earthly cities.
- H. In other words, as we see what God, in His perfect will, designed and established around His throne in heaven, we agree with what He established as “good,” and then use Harp & Bowl in our attempt to replicate it on earth.
1. Replication of what is going on around the throne is the key to unlocking the promise of enjoyable prayer (Is. 56:7-10).
  2. It also unlocks a part of our heart and unifies people to pray with one heart. The Harp & Bowl model of intercessory worship helps us to flow more freely in the spirit (and inspiration) between singers, musicians, and intercessors, but keeps the entire room “locked in” and united in our labors in prayer.

- I. This basic structure is a way of communicating so as to corporately position us “in the way” of the wind of God. When He chooses to blow on us we’ll be ready to flow with Him because we are unhindered by confusion and timidity. Just like any good musician or artist, the basic elements are learned first. Once mastered, the elements can be creatively combined and displayed to show forth the glory of the Master Artist.