

Glad Tidings

“And we bring you good tidings of the promise made unto the fathers...” (Acts 13:32)

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God Accepted Worship With Harps

(Jerry Fite)

When informing people that you do not worship God in song with mechanical instruments of music, a response often given is, “*God allowed worship with harps in the Old Testament, didn’t He?*” Assuming the person wants to please God in worship as much as you, he or she deserves a truthful and Scriptural answer.

It is true God accepted worship with harps in the Old Testament. He even commands such praise in the Psalms. “*Give thanks unto Jehovah with the harp: sing praises unto Him with the psaltery of ten strings*” (Psalms 33:2). All that breathe are to praise God, and such praise could be accompanied with the harp and other mechanical instruments of music (Psalms 150:1-6).

Acknowledging this, we must also recognize with the changing of God’s law, the way God wants to be worshipped today may have also changed. For example, God commanded His people to remember the sabbath day to keep it holy under the Old

Testament Law (*Exodus 20:8*). Christians in the New Testament are commanded not to judge one another regarding feast days or sabbath days (*Colossians 2:16*). Why? The contextual reason offered by the Holy Spirit is the Old Law written in ordinances was brought to an end through Jesus’ death on the cross (*Colossians 2:14*). If the Law of Moses had not ended, surely God’s people could judge another if they did work on the Sabbath.

In the New Testament, God specifies His desire for Christians to worship Him in song by “*speaking one to another in psalms, hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody with your hearts to the Lord*” (*Ephesians 5:19*). God not only specifies the type of songs we are to use in worship: *psalms, hymns and spiritual songs*; but He also specifies the type of music He wants: *Singing by speaking*. The melody accompanying the singings is specified as *the heart*, not the harp.

Yes, I see God specifies singing, and accompanying melo-

dy is with the heart, but God did not say you could not use mechanical instruments?

This is true, but another principle in how God wants us to apply His Will must be recognized. We must respect His *silence*. The Holy Spirit assumes this respect for God’s silence to show the Law has changed, allowing Christ to be the High Priest. “*For it is evident that our Lord hath sprung out of Judah; as to which tribe Moses spake nothing concerning priests*” (*Hebrews 7:14*). Where did God say the priest could not come from Judah? With the tribe of Levi specified, and respecting God’s silence, God’s people knew the priesthood was from Levi exclusively. To allow another tribe, the law must be changed.

In like manner, God specifies singing in the New Testament. He is silent regarding using mechanical instruments in our worship today. We must respect His silence and do what He specifies. This is why we “*sing*” (*Colossians 3:16*) and dare not “*sing and play*” (*Psalms 33:3*).