

## HOLY ROAR – Halal and Shabach

(new slide) Personal testimony of an encounter night the same week we got Raj's diagnosis.

The most common command in scripture? **“be not afraid.”**

In my heart? There was anxiety, worry, and a fear for the future. Mixed with fury.

But you know another command that is in the Bible some 50 times? A command I needed in that moment? **“Sing”**

**“Be not afraid”** - we know it in our head. *“Cast your cares on God”* and all the other verses.

But in our heart? There's anxiety, worry, and all of fear's extended family.

This is one crucial reason we're commanded to sing.

To get what's in our head into our heart again.

Colossians 3:16 - ***Let the message of Christ dwell among you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom through psalms, hymns, and songs from the Spirit, singing to God with gratitude in your hearts.***

We don't live the Bible we know and love Monday through Friday.

One reason for this? ***We don't sing.***

Teaching **and** singing are inseparable to the Word of God dwelling in us richly.

Why? Many reasons, but one I want to highlight tonight as we open...

It brings alignment between your head and your heart. We are embodied souls. And worship helps close the gap between the head and the heart. And this isn't just ethereal talk not based in reality.

*Academic studies have shown singing in a group releases chemicals like endorphins and oxytocin into our bodies, which lowers stress levels and diminishes cortisol. One 2005 study that looked at the therapeutic affects of group singing found that it had benefits even if it is of “mediocre quality.”*

It's why God says to make a joyful noise, not necessarily a good one.

And it's why God's word commands us to sing some 50 times.

But in this series we'll go beyond this WHY we worship.

These 7 Hebrew words we will study also speak to HOW.

**Tehillah** – “The song of praise” - it means a new song. A spontaneous song.

A personal song rooted in personal experience.

**Zamar** – “The music of praise.” – it means to make music. To touch the string of an instrument.

**Barak** – “The posture of praise.” – it means to kneel or salute. To thank and bless God.

It speaks to a posture of humility.

**Yadah** – it also speaks to posture. “The hands of praise.”

It means to worship with extended hands. To revere and hold out our hands.

**Towdah** – “the expectation of praise.” It means an extension of the hand. A sacrifice of praise. A confession of trust in the goodness of God. Thanksgiving for something not yet received.

TONIGHT: **Halal** and **Shabach** – the celebration of praise and the shout of praise.

Halal – To boast. To rave. To shine. To celebrate. To be clamorously foolish. To make a show.

>>>>>>*Gary Owens video*

In 2 Samuel 6:20-22 as David is leading the ark of the Covenant - this marker of God's blessing and his presence – back to Jerusalem for the first time in his reign. David gets caught up, strips off his outer garments, and gets to singing and dancing and rejoicing.

In **2 Samuel 6:20-22** it says:

*When David returned home to bless his own family, Michal, the daughter of Saul, came out to meet him. She said in disgust, "How distinguished the king of Israel looked today, shamelessly exposing himself to the servant girls like any vulgar person might do!"*

*David retorted to Michal, "I was dancing before the Lord, who chose me above your father and all his family! He appointed me as the leader of Israel, the people of the Lord, so I celebrate before the Lord. Yes, and I am willing to look even more foolish than this, even to be humiliated in my own eyes! But those servant girls you mentioned will indeed think I am distinguished!"*

(New slide) ***"He appointed me as leader of ...the people of the Lord"***

David was setting the tone as the leader.

Now you'll sometimes have people acting a fool, wilin' out making a scene that isn't matching the tone of the service, and if they are lovingly confronted they'll point to this passage.

But what is key to this passage: David was the leader.

Here in worship? Chris is our leader. Don't worry, Chris gets loud. We go in.

When Chris puts his guitar down you know it's about to go down.

But he also leads us into contemplation, even somber moments of reflection.

And as a congregation we follow his lead. We aren't disjointed in our worship, we're one body.

***"I celebrate before the LORD."***

That word celebrate is "halal," which can be translated to make a show of it.

David's show wasn't put on for the people or a spectacle for those around him.

It was for God.

*"Worship feels showy. It feels like you're putting on a show."*

That's our halal, which literally means "to put on a show" in the Hebrew.

We're putting on a show for our God. We do it with excellence, so it may feel like a performance to some. But we, like David, don't do it for public perception, we do it to make much of Jesus, who is worthy of our halal.

Psalm 149:3 **"let them [halal] his name with dancing and make music to him with the timbrel and harp"**

When I worship, who am I concerned with people deeming worthy of respect? Me or God.

***One of the greatest mistakes we make in worship is when we hold back because we're worried about what others might think. We think we might look foolish.***

*That's great but that's not for me*

That's why David is sure to say in the very next chapter of Psalms:

***"Let everything that has breath [halal] the Lord."***

Halal is the celebration of praise – and we don't all halal in the same way.

How great is the breadth of expression of passion in worship across the world? Even across time?

Through your giving, we support the work of missionaries through the **International Mission Board**, and there's a great article on their website called "worship around the world." There's videos, audio clips, photos, and descriptions of what worship looks like in various cultures.

I share this because the danger is always in thinking our preference or our style is THE style, and looking down on others.

What I do know for certain: God isn't up in Heaven saying I wish they would tone down that enthusiasm. Dial back the passionate celebration.

You know why? Heaven is a celebration. It's a wedding feast.

Do you worship God with the same level of excitement and celebration?

Do you worship with halal?

***Ask yourself, when I enter into worship...***

***am I more concerned with myself remaining dignified, or God being glorified?***

**Shabach – To address in a loud tone. To shout. To commend, glory, and triumph.**

Paul tells the church in Colossians in the verse we opened with to sing Psalms.

And depending on who you ask, half to two-thirds of the Psalms are laments.

Paul made room for lament. God's Word makes room for lament.

And again, worship is a part of letting God's Word dwell richly in us.

But I love how David often closes his Psalms and laments...

Psalm 63 was written as he was running for his life from King Saul. Living cave to cave, hiding place to hiding place, he laments: ***"my whole body longs for you in this parched and weary land where there is no water"*** but he also writes: ***"Because your steadfast love is better than life, my lips will [shabach] you."***

*I don't view worship through the lens of my circumstances.  
I shabach, and in doing so view my circumstances through the lens of worship.*

The book of Revelation helps apply this lens.

In **Revelation 14** – John gets a sneak peak of this eternal shabach - this shout of praise. Revelation 14:2-3 says: ***And I heard a sound from heaven like the roar of mighty ocean waves or the rolling of loud thunder. It was like the sound of many harpists playing together. This great choir sang a wonderful new song in front of the throne of God...***

The voice of the 144000 seems to echo the voice of God. Their shabach sounds like the roar of rushing waters, which in scripture can speak to God's voice (as we see in Ezekiel 43)... but here it is the shouts of praise of this multitude. The shabach sounds like claps of thunder, which in scripture can speak to God's voice (like we see in Job 37 and Ps 29)... but here it is the shabach of this heavenly crowd.

God's voice becomes our voice. And our voice becomes a shout of shabach, bearing witness to God. This loud witness extends past nation and generation.

It bears witness across generations in Psalm 145:4  
***One generation [shabach]s your works to another; they tell of your mighty acts.***

It bears witness across the nations in Psalm 117:1  
***[Shabach] the Lord, all you nations, [shabach] him all you people of the earth.***

***What is the soundtrack to your life?***

Is the soundtrack to my life going to be cynicism based on circumstance?  
Or shabach based on the victory I've found in Christ?

The question to ask yourself?

Do I let my present circumstance dictate my worship, or that eternal perspective – we win?  
Do I project my circumstances onto my worship,  
Or do I project my worship on my circumstances?

The late Reverend Maurice Jones, commenting on Colossians 3:  
***“Every great spiritual revival in the Christian Church has been accompanied by a corresponding outbreak and development of Christian [worship]. And this phenomenon was a conspicuous feature in the first age of the Church's history, with its vivid enthusiasm and its never ceasing consciousness of the wonder and delight produced by the marvelous achievements of the Spirit of God.”***

Is revival so elusive because our worship needs development? Not into something altogether new, but something psalmic, Hebraic, and found in these seven words – specifically Halal and Shabach?

In our desire to be dignified have we lost our halal?  
In our day to day trials have we lost our shabach?