

# LIFE GROUP DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

## *The Heart of Worship – Words of Praise*

### ***“Tehillah & Shabach”***

#### THE GOSPEL GAIN:

*The heart of worship is praise that flows out of a faith in God and a fresh encounter with God.*

#### **Gathering Together (Icebreaker)**

Ok, it's story time (pick one or more prompts below and share the story with your group):

- What is the loudest sound that you have ever made? What was the setting of said loud sound-making and why did you make it? What emotion were you feeling at the time?
- When was the most recent time that you either applauded for something or someone or that others applauded for you? What was the occasion and why were there applauding?
- What is the best concert/show/play that you have ever been to? What made it so awesome?

#### **Growing Together (Truth/Equipping)**

There are seven different Hebrew words in the Old Testament that have all been translated using the English word “praise.” Now, while using praise is not technically incorrect, each separate Hebrew word has lost some of its specific and nuanced meaning in its translation into English. In this sermon series on the heart of worship, we are seeking to rediscover some of those biblical implications for our contemporary worshipping community. This week we’re studying the words ***tehillâh*** and ***shâbach***.

***Tehillâh*** (תְּהִלָּה – *teh-hil-law*) – noun: a praise, a hymn (a song of praise), a laudation, a telling of God’s glorious deeds, a formal giving of thanks - This noun is closely related to the verb *hâlal* (“to praise”). It usually refers to praise offered to God.

Read the following verses where these use of praise is expressed. What do they teach about praise?

- Psalm 33:1-3 -
- Psalm 34:1-3 -
- Psalm 40:3 -
- Psalm 71:14 -
- Psalm 51:15 -
- Psalm 106:47 - “Save us, O Lord our God, and gather us from among the nations, that we may give thanks (*yadah*) to your holy name and glory (*shabach*) in your praise (*tehillah*).”
- Isaiah 42:12, 43:21 -

The New Testament concept:

- Ephesians 5:18-20 -
- Revelation 5:6-10 -

Did reading these Scriptures awaken an emotion in your heart or a thought in your mind about God? What relevance do/should these old words about worshipping God have in your personal life?

Like in Psalm 149:1, we're commanded to sing a "New Song" to the Lord 9 times in Scripture? Why do you think that is? What's the point of singing *new songs*? Have you ever sung spontaneous unrehearsed songs to the Lord?

**Shâbach** (שִׁבַּח - *shaw-bakh*) – verb: *to address in a loud tone, commend, extol, praise, give thanks, celebrate triumph* – This word is used to describe the emotion of elation at the workings of God. Shabach is what happens at the end of some worship songs when you just want to clap and yell and praise God with a loud noise. It is considered a "*holy roar*."

Read Psalm 98 to gain the essence of this holy roar. Does this Psalm reflect the attitude of your heart when it comes to worship? What happens when we don't "feel" like praising the Lord? Discuss.

### **Getting Real Together (Accessibility)**

Tehillâh is a song that is born out of a deep faith in God and His character as well as in fresh encounters with God. If you were you write a *tehillah* about God's character or about a fresh encounter with Him, what would you write about? What event or characteristic would your "song of praise" center around?

What worship songs have been most meaningful to you and why? Has an old, familiar song ever taken on new, rich meaning and depth for you? If so, talk to your group about that experience.

Often, we can be uncomfortable with some forms and expression of worship. Other times we are self-conscious of our own expressions of worship and therefore we don't "go all out" in our worship when we wish we would. Why do you think this dichotomy exists in our own hearts? What's the solution to uninhibited expressions of praise to God?

As we concluded with in the message, what aspect of praising God needs to increase in your life? What are some practical steps that you can take to grow in your expressions of worship?

- *Yadah* – raising hands in reverence, shooting the hands up like an arrow -
- *Halal* – celebrate, singing, dancing, to boast, to be willing to be thought of as foolish -
- *Zamar* – making music, playing instruments -
- *Towdah* – adoration, sacrifice of praise, expressing thankful expectations -
- *Barak* – kneeling in humble adoration as we bless God -
- *Tahillah* – singing a song of praise, applause -
- *Shabach* – making a loud noise, shouting, extoling, cheering -

### **Praying Together (Supplication)**

- If you find yourself getting pushed outside of your comfort zone with this series of worship, know this: it's ok. God knows where you are, even though He wants you to grow in your expression of praise to him. God wants your full, free expression of praise. Let's pray that God grows us as individuals and as a worshiping community into conformity with His heart of worship!