

# Week 1

## Anticipating the Voice of God

### He Speaks:

I will stand on my  
guard post  
And station myself on  
the rampart;  
And I will keep watch  
to see what He  
will speak to me.  
Habakkuk 2:1

Call to Me, and I will answer you, and I will tell you great and mighty things, which you do not know.  
Jeremiah 33:3

### Job 6:8

Oh that my request might come to pass,  
And that God would grant my longing!

### Day 1 Expect to Hear It

*God will speak to the hearts of those who prepare themselves to hear; and conversely, those who do not so prepare themselves will hear nothing even though the Word of God is falling upon their outer ears every Sunday.*<sup>1</sup>  
—A.W. Tozer

I spent much of my Christian life not hearing God. I had read about how He spoke to people in the Bible, and even about modern day believers who had an intimacy with Him that allowed them to hear His voice. But I rarely, if ever, experienced that type of connection with God. My relationship with Him was more one-sided. In prayer, I talked and He listened. I approached my Bible reading as an opportunity to learn about God, while never anticipating and expecting that the God of the universe would really speak to me about the personal details of my life.

Then my Bible study took me to Habakkuk, and I read about a man who desperately needed to hear from God and was amazingly confident that God would indeed answer. God shattered the season of divine silence in my life by convicting me about my lack of expectancy and anticipation to hear from God.

**Clear communication with God begins with a believer approaching her relationship to God and His Word with anticipation, expecting Him to speak.**

**Recall a time when your prayers seemed to be unheard and God's voice seemed far away. How did you feel toward God?**

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**Did this instance cause you to doubt that God desires to speak to you?    yes    no    If so, how?**

**Micah 7:7, NLT**

My God will certainly hear me.

**Hearing God begins with a believer approaching God with an expectancy that He will speak.**

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Throughout Scripture, God paints a picture of His relationship with His beloved as one in which He responds and speaks. Biblical characters didn't call to God and then walk away despondent because they assumed God wouldn't respond. On the contrary, they looked expectantly and eagerly for the response God would offer them.

Many of us don't really believe God will speak to us and give us specific directions concerning the details of our lives. We claim to believe that God speaks, but we are secretly discouraged because we don't see evidence of His voice in our lives. Hearing God begins with a believer approaching God with an expectancy that He will speak.

**Habakkuk's Story**

Habakkuk desperately needed to hear from God. A relationship in which He couldn't receive divine instruction was not an option for him. He saw the continued iniquity and destruction of Judah and called out to God for help. It appeared to him, however, that God wasn't hearing or answering.

**Make a list in the margin of personal circumstances that are troubling you and need divine intervention. As you work through this Bible study, focus on these circumstances and how God is speaking to you concerning them.**

In Habakkuk 1:2-3, the discouraged prophet asked two questions of God: "How long?" (v. 2) and "Why?" (v. 3). These questions probably strike a chord with you as well. When the circumstances of life seem to be closing in on us and we see no end in sight, we want to know how long we will have to continue calling out to God with seemingly no response, and why He would continue to allow the circumstances we face.

**Think of one request you have been bringing to the Lord for a long time. Do you still expect God to respond and speak to you, or are you, like Habakkuk, losing hope? Write your thoughts below.**

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We don't know how long Habakkuk had been calling out to God, but when it appeared that He was not answering, Habakkuk pointed an

### **Habakkuk 1:5**

Look among the nations! Observe! Be astonished! Wonder! Because I am doing something in your days—You would not believe if you were told.

### **Proverbs 3:5-6**

Trust in the LORD with all your heart  
And do not lean on your own understanding.  
In all your ways acknowledge Him,  
And He will make your paths straight.

*If we come to Him doubting His ability to speak, we will have a difficult time listening. So we must come expectantly.<sup>2</sup>  
—Charles Stanley*

accusatory finger at God. He became increasingly discouraged and started to lose confidence that the Lord would answer him. God finally spoke up and answered the prophet in verse 5.

**Read this verse in the margin and underline the four actions God commanded Habakkuk to take.**

While the prophet waited on God to answer, God was already answering! Even though Habakkuk wasn't seeing God respond in the way and timing he expected, God was speaking and moving. He always is—even in His silence.

### **Confidence Restored**

With Habakkuk's eyes newly open to God's ability and sovereignty, his confidence was rebuilt. The change in his prayers in verses 12-13 make this apparent. Instead of making his request by accusing a God he thinks doesn't care, he chose words that revealed he expected and looked forward to God's words.

**Use Habakkuk's prayer as inspiration to write your own prayer to the Lord about your confidence in Him and the level of expectancy you have that He will speak to you. Write your prayer in the margin or on a separate sheet of paper.**

Habakkuk acknowledged God's position, power, and ability, and placed confidence in Him. When you and I recognize and acknowledge the magnitude of who we are dealing with, our level of expectancy automatically grows as a result.

**Which prayer of Habakkuk's reflects your current feelings about hearing God's voice?**

**first prayer (vv. 2-3)—doubtful and accusatory**

**second prayer (vv. 12-13)—expectant and thankful**

It wasn't until Habakkuk's approach to God changed from doubtful to confident and expectant that he began to receive directions from God as to what he should do.

Initially, God spoke to prove that He was indeed up to something and to build Habakkuk's confidence, but the second time He spoke to give instructions and guidance. Could your level of expectancy be a determining factor in how clearly and frequently you hear God's voice?

List two new things the Holy Spirit has taught you as a result of today's study.

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What is God asking you to do as a result of today's study?

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Write a prayer of commitment to God regarding what He is asking you to do.

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**Psalm 5:3**

In the morning, O LORD, You will hear my voice; In the morning I will order my prayer to You and eagerly watch.

1. A. W. Tozer, *The Root of Righteousness: Tapping the Bedrock of True Spirituality* (Camp Hill, PA: Christian Publications, 1986), 21.
2. Charles Stanley, *How to Know God's Will* (Colorado Springs: NavPress, 1989), 12.

**Day 2**  
**Wait Patiently for It**

*If you want to hear God's voice clearly and you are uncertain, then remain in His presence until He changes this uncertainty. Often much can happen during this waiting for the Lord. Sometimes He changes pride into humility; doubt into faith and peace; sometimes lust into purity. The Lord can and will do it.<sup>1</sup> —Corrie Ten Boom*

One of the many things I have learned from my friend and mentor Anne Graham Lotz is God *does* speak to His children. She once said to me, "I never make a major decision, especially one that will affect another person, before I have received direction from God." She continued to tell me that for every major ministry decision she has made, she can pinpoint a specific Scripture verse as the one God used to person-

**He Speaks:**

The vision is yet for the appointed time... Though it tarries, wait for it; For it will certainly come, it will not delay.

Habakkuk 2:3