DEEP CALLS UNTO DEEP
Learning to Hear God’s Voice in Your Everyday Life

Bob Hazlett
When all that generation had been gathered to their fathers, another generation arose after them who did not know the Lord nor the work which He had done for Israel.

~Judges 2:10 (NKJV)

In every generation, God allows new voices to emerge. God has used people to carry His sound in the earth throughout history. The prophets reminded people what God had done and gave them hope for what God was about to do. Their goal was not only to record history and release destiny, it was to create an environment where people could know God by observing His activity and understanding His heart.

I was privileged to grow up in a home where talking about God and His activity was commonplace. I am also grateful to live in a generation that has been preceded by great leaders who have reminded us who God is by revealing His words and His activity through prophetic ministry. Prophetic ministry should be a fresh voice and not an echo. Different streams and schools of prophecy all add dimension to God’s voice. The Holy Spirit teaches us each in a unique way.

My hope is that, as I share what I have learned, you too will be taught by the Spirit and become a unique voice for God in this generation. I honor the giants of the faith, known and unknown, whose shoulders I stand upon. The reason I am writing this book and the volumes to follow is to help a new generation to be taught by the Spirit and find their voice.
Jesus And Cheesesteaks
On my fourteenth birthday, my parents presented me with a gift, a book by A.W. Tozer entitled *The Pursuit of God*. I was definitely more excited about their second gift, a *Sports Illustrated* magazine subscription. Having grown up in the Philadelphia area, I am passionate about two things: cheesesteaks and complaining about my sports teams. The Phillies were in the pennant race that year, and the Eagles were solid contenders in football playoffs. Being a Philadelphia sports fan is a continual exercise in the exhilarating quest to win the big game accompanied by the frustrating reality that we rarely do. Needless to say, the last thing on my mind was reading a book by a guy who, by the look of his picture, wasn’t a passionate enthusiast of anything, except maybe libraries. I have come to realize that A.W. Tozer is perhaps one of the most passionate pursuers of God that has ever lived.

One night, I surprised myself by picking up Tozer instead of the sports magazine. There is not much that can move a fourteen-year-old boy to tears unless his team loses the big game or his cheese falls off his steak sandwich. However, when I read *The Pursuit of God*, something stirred deep within me. As I read the first chapter, “Following Hard after God,” I was gripped by the awareness that God is passionately pursuing me, and His pursuit stirs a passionate response in me.

“To have found God and still to pursue Him is the soul’s paradox of love.” —A.W. Tozer. Keep running after Him!

Over the decades since, I have returned to that book many times. I have yet to read the whole thing through at one time, and it is not because the writer lacked passion. Rather, the opposite is true. Every time I read that first chapter, it creates
the same effect it did back then. I become a pile of mush in the presence of God. Just the mention of Tozer sometimes makes me teary eyed. He followed hard after God, and now, years after his death, he still inspires me to do the same.

I get excited about hearing God and helping others enter conversation with Him. I am a student and a teacher of prophetic ministry, and that is the topic of this book. However, any exploration of God’s sound has to start with a pursuit of His heart—a lesson I learned from Tozer. To pursue the roar of God’s voice without taking the time to chase after His heart is to miss the point entirely.

Prophetic people are first people of God’s presence. Without His presence, we are more likely to be speaking from our own head than His heart. We have to know Him in order to sound like Him. To speak God’s words without knowing His heart is like eating a cheesesteak without the cheese or the steak—empty! Paul said it in these words: “If I have the gift of prophecy . . . but have not love, I am nothing” (1 Cor. 13:2, NIV).

When we experience God's love, it causes us to long for God’s heart and pursue His presence even more. Then God meets us and stirs an even greater hunger within us. This phenomenon was demonstrated in another passionate pursuer of God, David. He didn’t just chase God, he ran fervently after God’s heart. Psalm 42 is a description of that pursuit. Many scholars believe this was written by David and performed by the Sons of Korah. They were kind of an ancient Hebrew boy band that led worship in the temple. David longed to be in God’s presence. For those of you offended by my comparison of spiritual hunger to a carb-loaded, grease-filled sandwich, David paints an even less appetizing picture in Psalm 42.
Licking Your Own Wounds

“My tears have been my food day and night” (Ps. 42:3, NIV). That’s a pretty sorry picture. If you take a moment to read the whole psalm, you’ll find that David was at an absolutely destitute point in life. He was despondent and longing for God’s presence. He described his soul as downcast and in turmoil within him. And it wasn’t David alone who is wondering. The people around him repeatedly questioned David about whether God was even with him any more. This was worse than losing a big game; he felt labeled as a big loser.

It seemed like God was nowhere to be found, and that created a thirst in David. It was a thirst so extreme that it had him eating his own tears and licking his own wounds. Do that for very long and you will have a thirst even Gatorade can’t quench! “As the deer pants for streams of water, so my soul pants for you,” David cried (Ps. 42:1, NIV).

God doesn’t know how to think small. Everything He does is over the top. Not only did God hear David’s cry, he responded in an amazing way. David asked to be refreshed by a sip from a stream. However, God’s answer came to him in a deluge. “Deep calls to deep in the roar of your waterspout,” David wrote. “All your breakers and your rolling waves have swept over me” (Ps. 42:7).

God responds to us the same way He did to David millennia ago—extravagantly! Ask God for a sip and He will answer you with a tsunami. Ask Him for refreshing, and He will let you drink from a fire hydrant. Our over-the-top God loves to meet us in our deepest moments of darkness and pour out His presence, grace, and provision in remarkable ways.
If You Are Disturbed, That’s Normal

David was disturbed in his soul because it seemed God was not there. Actually, it was the closeness of God that was causing the disturbance. As Tozer so eloquently argued, it is God’s passionate pursuit of us that stirs hunger in us for more of Him. God disturbed David to bring him even closer than he was already. God initiated the pursuit. God initiated the sound. His deep called out to David’s deep.

God is not bothered by us being bothered. He is not upset that we get upset. He is not disturbed when we are disturbed, even with Him. I believe He is the one stirring the atmosphere around you, drawing you into His presence.

My hope is that this book will inspire you in the same way that Tozer and David inspired me. I hope this book disturbs you. I hope it hits you in that deep spot. I want you to hunger to be hungrier and thirst to be thirstier. I want you to be passionate about pursuing and communicating with God. I hope you become hungrier for God’s heart, God’s sound, and maybe even Philly cheesesteaks. I want you to hear the roar!
What God Sounds Like

God is in the communication business. He always has been. I am a student and teacher of prophecy and prophetic gifts, so communication with God is a topic I enjoy. However, this book is not just about prophecy, and it is not only for those who aspire to prophetic gifts. God is building a communications company, a generation who communes and communicates with Him. God raises new voices in every generation. However, we live in a time when God is raising an entire generation with a new voice! This will be a prophetic company going about the Father’s business.

I believe the best way to tell any story is from the beginning. If you want to learn how God sounds, you should go to the source. There are hundreds of Old Testament examples of how God speaks through men and women. There is also great instruction and understanding in the New Testament about prophecy. We should have an understanding of both. This book will focus on how God and mankind communicated in the beginning. Jesus came “to seek and to save what was lost” (Luke 19:10, NIV). He came to restore our original value and relationship with God. This book will explore the ancient sound of God, how it was lost, and what it sounds like today.

He Called Me Son

Words have power. One word has the power to change a life. If you believe the Genesis account of creation as I do, all that we see began from one word: “light.”
There was a moment when one word changed my life. It was the mid-1990s, and life was going pretty well for me. I was a pastor, and ministry had been successful and fulfilling. Around that time, people kept telling me about a revival going on in Pensacola, Florida, and urging me to go check it out.

I don’t know what the word *revival* means to you, but I grew up around such events. To me, it brought a picture of super-excited people becoming super emotional and dancing around. I was not against that, but I had been there and done that—or so I thought. I was skeptical, but I decided to check it out anyway.

What I found in Pensacola was super-excited people becoming super emotional and dancing around, but they were also genuinely encountering God and genuinely happy. They were happy to line up at 6 A.M. in the Florida summer sun. They were happy to stand, worship, pray, and get to know one another until 6 P.M. when the doors opened. By that time, the line looked almost one mile long. I don’t know what you would call that. I think the word *revival* works.

The first night I stood in the back thinking, “These people are much too happy for church people.” Unfortunately, my perspective at the time was that serving God was hard work with little reward, and God was mostly disappointed with our efforts. On the second night, someone found out that I was a pastor and put me in front in the pastor’s section. I was telling myself this was a good thing until I realized I was right in the middle of the flag wavers.

I don’t know if you have ever been to a meeting like that—I had not. I enjoy exuberant worship now, but at the time it disturbed me a little. Nearly being hit by flailing arms and flopping flags was not my idea of church. Sometimes God has to disturb you in order to get your attention. He has to offend your old idea in order to give you a new one. I had picked an aisle seat
for quick escape if necessary only to find that I was pinned in by an ocean of flying flags. No escape!

Trying my hardest to ignore the flag waving, I concentrated on worship. Just when I was really getting into the lyrics of one of the songs—“Let your glory fall in this room, let it go forth from here to the nations”—the pastor interrupted the song.

“There’s a preacher here tonight,” the pastor began.

Inside my head, the thought occurred to me that there were many preachers there that night. There was a whole section of us sitting right there in front. Just as quickly as that cynical thought crossed my mind, another thought came from outside my head: “He’s talking to you.”

I listened as he continued. “You were standing in the back last night, criticizing this revival.” Well, maybe he was talking to me. “But God wants you to know that He brought you to the front tonight because He’s going to change you.”

His words shifted to a first-person perspective. “Son, I am going to use you to . . .” There was a lot more that he said, but I missed the rest because something inside of me began to break open. I was no longer hearing the words of a preacher, but that of a Father. I began to weep, and I am not a weeper.

I cried so much that I walked out to gain my composure, and I sat down in the back hallway to get my wits back. I was telling myself, “I’m not the preacher he was talking about, and that word was not for me.”

Just then a woman approached. She looked intently at me and said, “You are the preacher. That word was for you!” One word can change your life. It was not the vastness of the promises that impacted me, but the personal nature in which God spoke. He called me son.
I believe God’s sound, His roar, is not primarily to tell us what to do, or correct us from doing wrong. His voice comes to tell us who we are and to empower us to do what we were created to do. His sound sometimes has to be dramatic to get our attention when the raging noise of the world overcomes our ability to hear. The skeptical sounds in our heads and the chaotic sounds around us drown out His voice. I am glad God is not shy. If He has to, He will roar! All you have to hear is one word, and it will change your life.

I realized something that night that is true for all of us. God’s sound is not so much about a special calling or a great destiny to touch the nations. It is that we all carry a special identity. He called me son. When you hear God’s sound, it gives you permission and power to become who God says you are. He doesn’t just want to take you to your dream; He wants to teach you who you are. God knows that if you go to the nations but don’t know who you are, you can lose your identity out there. If you build a great business and base your identity on it, you gain nothing. If you go out on the streets and see lots of amazing healings and miracles but aren’t grounded in sonship, you miss the most important point. When you realize that the greatest title you can possess is not prophet, performer, millionaire, or minister, you will embrace your greatest identity: to be a son or daughter of God.

God’s Hovering Presence

_In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. Now the earth was formless and empty darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the Spirit of God was hovering over the waters. And God said ..._  
~ Genesis 1:1-3 (NIV)

This book is about God’s sound. The sound of His voice is how He created the earth. Genesis has always been one of my favorite books of the Bible. It displays God’s original intent for
man and the created world. It is full of stories of God’s exploits, and it clearly demonstrates God’s desire to partner with us relationally to accomplish His purposes on the earth. Just as I learned that night in Pensacola, the book of Genesis reminds us that our true identity and destiny is to be sons of God, created in His image and likeness.

Genesis begins with the creation story. The opening verses paint a picture of the setting in which God chose to focus His creation. It depicts the state of the earth in the womb of God’s creation. This version of the earth was a prehistoric, muddled mess with infinite potential because it was coming from the imagination of an infinitely good and loving God. The earth was described as formless, empty, chaotic, and full of darkness. Yet it is also described as deep. It was a raging, hot mess, but God saw the roar of potential in it. This was potential contained within the earth’s embryonic state because it was a potential birthed out of God.

This earth was then the focus of two purposeful actions by the Creator: He hovered and He spoke. The Spirit of God hovered over the waters. It’s an intimate picture that displays a cultivating presence charging the atmosphere with creative potential.

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God’s principles taught outside of experience with God’s presence & power may produce results but will rarely reproduce people who know God.

God wasn’t far away, orchestrating His creative genius in a removed, remote, detached manner. He also was not being an over-protective helicopter parent, trying to guard the earth or keep it in a shielded environment. It’s the same way in your life. God’s Spirit hovers and moves to initiate His plan. He draws
close to your chaos and dwells in it, just as His deep touched the earth’s deep. His presence is what conceives the possibilities of what you can become.

The word *hover* is used again in Deuteronomy 32:11 where it is also used to describe God’s loving presence. He is likened to “an eagle that stirs up its nest and hovers over its young, that spreads its wings to catch them and carries them on its pinions.” The hovering action of the mother eagle stirs up the infant birds, allowing them to be carried away by the mother. This is how they learn to fly. This is the same picture of God’s care described in Genesis 1. The Spirit of God hovered over the waters, and His Spirit stirred up the possibilities created by His presence. God’s Spirit continues to hover over His creation, infusing it with the potential for a creative miracle. The great worshipper-king David knew this hovering presence well. In Psalm 42, David describes a similar picture of God’s deep presence interacting with His creation. David, in the midst a time of personal despair, intimately described God’s activity in this way: “deep calls unto deep in the roar of your waterfalls” (Ps. 42:7, NIV). This imagery echoes the creation story. Deep light is calling forth unto the deep darkness of the waters.

“The Bereshit Rabba,” an ancient rabbinical interpretation of Genesis, makes this note about the condition of earth before creation:

*On the passage, “And the earth was empty and formless” (Gen. i. 2), our Sages remark as follows: “The words tohu and bohu mean mourning and crying; the earth mourned and cried on account of her evil lot.”*

Creation was crying out for the sound of God. The apostle Paul, a rabbi himself, was well aware of this understanding of the creation account when he wrote the words, “We know that the whole creation has been groaning” (Rom. 8:22, NIV). Paul was
referring to the raging sound of a waiting world. What is the world waiting for? “The creation waits in eager expectation for the sons of God to be revealed” (Rom. 8:19, NIV). Just as the primitive earth cried out for the sound of God, today’s earth cries out to hear the sound of God’s children. That roar comes from relationship with God. According to Paul, this is the sound of sonship. “The Spirit you received brought about your adoption to sonship. And by him we cry, ‘Abba, Father’” (Rom. 8:15, NIV).

Similar to the groaning of the earth, David was crying out for more of God. His turmoil was evident throughout that psalm. Yet that pain doesn’t end in hopelessness. He reminded himself to put his hope in God. He hungered and thirsted after God’s presence just as desperately as a parched deer longs for the refreshing of a stream of water. He knew that his downcast soul was hopeless without the refreshing touch of God’s Spirit. He also knew that God never disappoints.

Just as God’s Spirit was the one hovering over the earth and stirring the waters in the opening scene of creation, so also it was God’s Spirit who was stirring the hunger within David. Deep need was intimately stirred by deep, creative power. Deep hunger and thirst was initiated by God’s deep, overwhelming presence. David thought he was the one crying out to God when actually it was the Spirit’s hovering activity that was charging the environment with the potential for a miracle.

God’s desire for us hovers over our lives and stirs us up to a place of hungering after Him. He meets us and satisfies our need, but it is a thirst that is never quenched. We are satisfied but never contented. Deep continues to call out to deep.

**Tornadoes, Waterfalls, and Waterspouts**

I was always a kid who loved learning, but I was easily bored. I just couldn't sit still long enough, and I couldn't focus on just
one activity well. In sixth grade, my teacher moved my desk next to hers to help me concentrate better, but it didn’t work out well because my constant fidgeting frustrated her.

She wasn’t the only one frustrated. So was I—until I walked into Mr. Mercier’s eighth grade math class. He took advantage of every holiday or special occasion to dress up and teach us math principles with costumes, crazy glasses, and memorable stories. My favorite was the math assassin story, “Artie Chokes Two for a Dollar at the Grocery Store.” It was in Mr. Mercier’s class that I realized I learned best through stories and pictures. He made math so enjoyable that I took honors math all the way to calculus. Passionate people are contagious.

God knows I learn best through pictures, and that is how He often speaks to me. The way I learn affects the way I teach. I think in pictures, so I teach in stories.

I had one of those pictures one night while worshipping God. I didn’t ask for it, it just came. I saw a picture of a dense cloud form. As I watched, it turned into what looked like a tornado. It was like watching a 3D version of a weatherman’s animation screen, but someone else was controlling the graphics.

The tornado moved over a body of water and sucked the water into it, forming a waterspout. The two merged into one body and then moved all over dry land, pouring out water over the parched terrain. Vegetation started growing where the land had been barren before.

I knew this vision was from God, and I responded the way I usually respond when God speaks to me: “Huh?” I was totally confused. I didn’t have a clue what the picture meant.

I find that when God speaks, He often leaves us questioning. Then when we ask questions, He usually doesn’t answer the questions we think He should answer. Instead, He
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initiates communication in order to create an environment in which we ask the questions that He really wants to answer. He doesn’t always give the answer we want. He does give us the one we need. Prophetic experiences are, by nature, ambiguous. I am convinced God is not looking for a monologue; He is seeking a dialogue. He draws us closer into relationship with Him as He speaks to us. He starts the conversation, and He hooks us into asking the questions that lead us to His heart.

“What is that?” I asked as I was bewildered by the vision of the waterspout.

The answer came quietly in my heart: “It is deep calling to deep.”

Now I was even more puzzled. Deep calling to deep? What did that mean?

Some people think interpreting God’s symbolic language requires profound spiritual intuition. Not really—it’s easy if you have the right phone app. My Bible and a biblical language program led me to Psalm 42:7. I read the familiar psalm with totally new eyes! This was David’s psalm about God meeting him in his time of greatest need. “As deep calls to deep, in the roar of your waterfall [waterspout] all your waves and breakers sweep over me.” As I studied the words, I realized two things: that waterfall and waterspout can be used interchangeably in this context, and that the roar of the waterfall is the same word used for God’s voice in Genesis!

I started studying more about waterspouts. They are akin to a tornado that forms over a body of water. I learned that the pressure created by the cloud forms the waterspout. As it touches down in water, the water is sucked up into the spout. Eventually the water of the cloud and the water from the surface become so intermingled that you can’t distinguish the two. What is in the cloud goes into the water, and what’s in the water goes...
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into the cloud. The substance of the cloud becomes one with the substance of the body of water. I’ve heard the idiom “raining cats and dogs,” but as a waterspout eventually moves over dry land, the cloud can literally rain fish and frogs!

This is what God was showing me when He said it’s a picture of deep calling to deep. As God calls out to us, it stirs something within us that calls back out to Him. His presence comes and infuses our lives in such a way that we are a part of Him and He is a part of us. Eventually, through constant communion in and with His presence, it becomes impossible to distinguish between what is us and what is God.

God was showing me a prophetic picture of how we go deeper in the Spirit—through communion. That communion, impacts everything we touch. When we become one with Him, we rain heaven on earth.

Like David, throughout our lives we all find ourselves in situations in which we are crying out for more. That cry is stirred by God’s hovering presence, just like the cloud hovering over the body of water; it exerts pressure and eventually forms a waterspout. As we cry out for more of Him, He responds with an overflow of His presence. He comes into us as we are united with Him.

Many people miss God’s activity of His deep calling to their deep. They cry out for more, and they think more is an outpouring or a miracle. They are expecting God to do something for them. Instead, He desires to do something in them. More is a communion. More is union with Christ. More is Him dwelling in you and you dwelling in Him. More is His deep calling to your deep.

It’s not enough to be refreshed by God’s presence so that we can go back to life as usual. We have to be transformed by His hovering, creative presence. As we become the people who
God has destined us to be in Him, we find the longings of our hearts fulfilled. But watch out! Just when you think you are satisfied, God’s Spirit hovers again and stirs a greater hunger for even more.

God’s Voice Is a Roar
Have you ever been to Niagara Falls? The sound there is amazing. The roar of the waterfall creates a persistent, resonating rumble that thunders for great distances. This is the imagery used in Psalm 42 to describe God’s activity. “Deep calls to deep in the roar of your waterfalls.”

Once again, the depiction of God’s presence as a roar shows us how extravagant He is in His desire to be in communion with us. He could have trickled or sprinkled or sputtered. David would have likely been satisfied with that. We, too, often settle for much less than what God desires for us. Even if we may become contented with less, God isn’t satisfied with giving us sufficient provision to satiate our need for Him. He goes overboard, because that’s the kind of God He is. Offering hope or joy or peace isn’t enough for Him. He desires to give us Himself. He gives so much that it has us crying out for more—the more of communion. Rather than trickling, the waterfall of God’s presence thunders through our lives as a roar.

God is extravagant in His responses. When you thirst for Him like a stream, He answers you with a waterfall! Amazing! Psalm 42

As I researched the word *roar*, I learned the Hebrew word used there is *qol*, which can be translated as roar, voice, sound, or noise. It is found in many instances in the Old Testament, but I was amazed to learn that its first occurrence is in Genesis shortly after the creation story, after Adam and Eve fell into sin.
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Then the man and his wife heard the sound of the Lord God as he was walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and they hid from the Lord God among the trees of the garden. But the Lord God called to the man, “Where are you?”

~ Genesis 3:8--9 (NIV)

It was the sound of God’s voice that called out to Adam and Eve during their darkest moment in the same way that the roar of the waterfall came to David during his darkest moment. Adam and Eve had never known such desperation because prior to the Fall, they had been in continual communion with God. In that moment, the sound—the roar—of God called out to them. He didn’t want to just ease their pain; He was calling them back into His presence.

Like Adam and Eve and David, we find ourselves in times of darkness. Our need for rescue, as extreme as it may seem to us, pales in comparison to God’s desire to draw near to us and to commune with us. His deep is calling out to our deep, bridging the divide between us and drawing us into His presence like a waterspout.

God’s sound beckons us, and God’s sound also contains power. Waterfalls and waterspouts are images of immense force. His voice doesn’t just sound like something; His voice does something. His voice creates.

The Roar + Relationship = Prophecy

In the opening lines of Scripture, the Spirit of God hovered over the surface of the deep, and then God spoke. The simple act of speaking released what was inside of Him into existence. Speaking made the invisible visible. His voice put substance around His desires. When God said, “Let there be light,” the light that was within Him became tangible as it took on a material form. God continues to create in this way today.
As we respond to God’s roar in our own lives and we join in communion with Him, we become people of His presence. He dwells in us and we dwell in Him. As we live in relationship with the Creator, we learn to hear and respond to God’s voice. He enjoys speaking to us, and when we give voice to His words, He continues His creative work.

Prophecy gets a bad rap because people over-complicate it or misunderstand it. At times, prophecy can even be misused because it’s not held within the context of love. It’s not an overly mystical, highly unattainable skill reserved for the elite. Prophecy is as simple as hearing what God says and saying it. It is a byproduct of relationship with God.

When you are in relationship with people, communication is part of the relationship. God likes to talk! If we listen, He often has things to say that will release His destiny and purposes into people’s lives or circumstances. As His deep calls to our deep, the roar of His voice continues to create change in the earth. He speaks, and as we speak what we hear, His words do what they have always done—they bring light to darkness, resources to emptiness, and order to chaos. They roar in a raging world!