

HEAR
GOD'S
VOICE

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DEREK PRINCE



WHITAKER
HOUSE

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Derek Prince Ministries
P.O. Box 19501
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www.derekprince.org

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CONTENTS



Foreword: The Wonder of Hearing God's Voice..... 7

PART I: OUR SOVEREIGN GOD

1. Taking Time to Hear 11
2. Are You Prepared to Wait?..... 15
3. The Importance of Christ as Our Head..... 19
4. Four Functions of the Head 23

PART II: EARS TO HEAR

5. God's Unvarying Requirement..... 29
6. The Mark of Christ's Sheep 37
7. Three Distinguishing Features..... 43
8. Hearing God's Voice Produces Faith 51

PART III: LED BY THE SPIRIT

9. A Distinctive Lifestyle..... 61
10. Sons and Daughters of God 65
11. Hearing from the Heart..... 73

12. Requirements for Hearing..... 81

PART IV: PREPARE THE WAY OF THE LORD

13. Meeting with God 93

14. Confession Removes Barriers to Hearing..... 101

15. Results of Corporate Confession 109

16. Choosing Humility..... 113

17. Preparing for God’s Glory 119

18. How Can We Be Sure? 123

19. Clear Confirmations..... 131

Afterword: Your Own Journey of Discovery 139

About the Author..... 141

FOREWORD: THE WONDER OF HEARING GOD'S VOICE



How important is it to hear God's voice—beyond what we read in the Bible? Would you say that you are able to hear God speak to you? What price would you be willing to pay to clearly hear His voice?

Many biblical themes can be taught in a straightforward manner, but the matter of hearing God's voice is necessarily subjective. This is not to say the Bible doesn't guide us in knowing God's will and learning to discern His voice. But specific answers to many of our questions in life are not always directly available in the Scriptures. For those questions, we need to receive personal guidance from the Lord. One principle is clear: we must take responsibility for making time not only to listen to, but also to test, what we hear spiritually. No one else can do this for us.

Nothing is more important to our spiritual life than learning to hear God's voice. Derek Prince learned much about this ability through his study of the Scriptures and through his own

experiences. As he did with many other biblical subjects, early in his ministry, Derek taught extensively and effectively on this topic. Then, in his later years, he gained additional wisdom and personal experience—sometimes through the tests and trials he describes in this book. Consequently, the Lord refined and deepened his understanding of this message.

As you read the teachings Derek shares in *Hear God's Voice*, we hope the importance of hearing the Lord's voice for yourself will become clear and that experiencing this wonder will become more accessible to you. As you put these principles and skills into practice in your daily walk of faith, we pray that your life will be transformed and your fellowship with Jesus Christ will be revitalized.

—The International Publishing Team of
Derek Prince Ministries

Part I:
OUR SOVEREIGN GOD



TAKING TIME TO HEAR



I want to begin *Hear God's Voice* by sharing an experience my wife Ruth and I had some years ago. We took a “sabbatical” of six months that turned out to be one of the most intense and challenging times of our lives. Although the experience was very difficult, it ended up being the means by which we eventually heard God’s voice and discovered His life-changing direction for us.

TRIALS AND TESTING

Ruth and I had both felt the Lord was leading us to take an extended rest from our ministry work. We planned a sabbatical in Hawaii because we wanted to hear from God and learn what He was asking us to do next. We felt we had come to the end of the current phase of our ministry, and, naturally, we wanted to know God’s purposes for us.

When we arrived in Hawaii, we had great expectations of having a wonderful respite in a warm climate surrounded by the Pacific Ocean. We thought this six-month break would be relaxing and restful, with plenty of time to read the Bible, pray,

and walk by the ocean and on the beautiful hills. But it didn't turn out like that at all!

I started to feel unwell, and I became increasingly sick. At first, the doctors couldn't determine what was wrong with me. Eventually, I was diagnosed with what is called subacute bacterial endocarditis, which is a progressive infection of the lining of the heart. I ended up spending seventeen days in the hospital and six weeks on intravenous antibiotics.

In addition to this situation, a few months earlier, Ruth had faced a life-threatening illness. It had started when she and I were in New Zealand for meetings with our international directors. Ruth began having intense abdominal pain, and I didn't know what to do. But when she began praying, "Lord, I commit the family to you," and then, "Lord, I commit the ministry to you," and then, "Lord, I commit Derek to you," it got my attention. I thought to myself, "I had better do something quickly!"

I phoned the Derek Prince Ministries directors who were staying at the same meeting place in New Zealand, and they immediately came and prayed. Thankfully, Ruth was raised up. But I felt she really had been at death's door.

A NEW SEASON

In preparation for our time away in Hawaii, I had handed over the administration of the ministry to my son-in-law. Taking six months away from the ministry seemed like a very long time to us. Yet, we believed that by consecrating this period to the Lord, we would receive new direction. Our thought was, "If we give Him six months, that will be wonderful."

Rather ironically, we heard nothing from God about our future until almost the end of those six months. The Lord spent all that time dealing with problems in us that were preventing us from being ready to hear and respond to what He had to say.

Usually, if a preacher speaks about personal problems, most people tend to conclude the issue is one of the following: immorality, alcohol abuse, or misappropriation of funds. In our case, it was none of these! As you might guess, there are plenty of other ways Christians can block God's purpose for their lives. God dealt with some of those issues during our sabbatical—clearing them away so we could more clearly hear from Him. He used our trials to chasten and refine us for His service.

GOD'S CHASTENING

As you may be aware, just before I start teaching in front of a congregation or audience, Ruth and I usually make a confession or proclamation from Scripture out loud. Speaking God's Word has a very powerful effect on the spiritual atmosphere; it sets the scene for the Lord to work through the message that is given.

One of the passages I have learned by heart for this purpose is Psalm 118:13–18. God has used these verses to accelerate my thinking and experience in regard to the way He works to purify us.

You [the psalmist's enemy] pushed me violently, that I might fall, but the LORD helped me. The LORD is my strength and song, and He has become my salvation. The voice of rejoicing and salvation is in the tents of the righteous; the right hand of the LORD does valiantly. The right hand of the LORD is exalted; the right hand of the LORD does valiantly. I shall not die, but live, and declare the works of the LORD. The LORD has chastened me severely, but He has not given me over to death. (Psalm 118:13–18)

The Bible tells us, “For whom the LORD loves He chastens” (Hebrews 12:6). How do you regard the Lord's chastening? By biblical standards, if I am a person without chastening, I am not

a true child of God. Rather, I am someone who is referred to as “illegitimate.”

I have a deep concern for the vast majority of Christians because they do not make any place for God’s chastening. Some actually resist His correction and redirection in their lives. Consequently, they may not be where they ought to be in their relationship with the Lord. They may not be hearing His voice.

What about you? Do you need help to get onto the right path with the Lord? I can assure you that my desire in writing this book is not to accuse or condemn you but to help you.

A LIFESAVING TRIAL

After Ruth and I had come through this period of testing and struggle, a dear brother in the Lord said to me, “Your decision to take a sabbatical saved your life. If you had continued traveling and ministering, you probably would not have had the opportunity to have the close medical supervision that eventually uncovered your problem. You might have died.”

So, I want to express that if you go on being as busy as you are, with as little time for waiting on God as you have allowed, you might jeopardize your future. The gospel is a serious message. It is a message of life and death—and we have to be just as serious in our response to it. We need to take time to hear God’s voice.