



VOICES

HEARING GOD
IN A WORLD OF
IMPOSTORS

Old Testament

PAM GILLASPIE

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by

pam gillaspie

NOTES

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Voices: Hearing God in a World of Impostors, Old Testament

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Dedicated to . . .

Jan Silvius, of all the wisdom you've passed my way over the years, nothing surpasses your bottom-line query . . . *Where is it written?* Thank you for always pointing to the plumb line and for tirelessly helping me apply truth with wisdom.

Kay Arthur, thank you for always standing doggedly for truth in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation. It is my honor to partner with you for the furtherance of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

Acknowledgements

With every study I write, I am more and more humbled by the hours that so many put into the work before it ever gets to press. To my Bible study class who have labored with me in the hours of piloting to my editors and co-laborers at Precept to my family and friends who have acted as sounding boards along the way, there are not words enough to express my gratitude. Thank you from the bottom of my heart!

VOICES

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There is nothing quite like your favorite pair of jeans. You can dress them up, you can dress them down. You can work in them, play in them, shop in them . . . live in them. They always feel right. It is my hope that the structure of this Bible study will fit you like those jeans; that it will work with your life right now, right where you are whether you're new to this whole Bible thing or whether you've been studying the Book for years!

How is this even possible? Smoke and mirrors, perhaps? The new mercilessly thrown in the deep end? The experienced given pompoms and the job of simply cheering others on? None of the above.

Flexible inductive Bible studies are designed with options that will allow you to go as deep each week as you desire. If you're just starting out and feeling a little overwhelmed, stick with the main text and don't think a second thought about the sidebar assignments. If you're looking for a challenge, then take the sidebar prompts and go ahead and dig all the way to China! As you move along through the study, think of the sidebars and "Digging Deeper" boxes as that 2% of lycra that you find in certain jeans . . . the wiggle-room that will help them fit just right.

Beginners may find that they want to start adding in some of the optional assignments as they go along. Experts may find that when three children are throwing up for three days straight, foregoing those assignments for the week is the way to live wisely.

Life has a way of ebbing and flowing and this study is designed to ebb and flow right along with it!

ENJOY!

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HOW TO USE THIS STUDY

Flexible inductive Bible studies meet you where you are and take you as far as you want to go.

1. WEEKLY STUDY: The main text guides you through the complete topic of study for the week.

2. FYI boxes: For Your Information boxes provide bite-sized material to shed additional light on the topic.

FYI:

Reading Tip: Begin with Prayer

You may have heard this a million times over and if this is a million and one, so be it. Whenever you read or study God's Word, first pray and ask His Spirit to be your Guide.

3. ONE STEP FURTHER and other sidebar boxes: Sidebar boxes give you the option to push yourself a little further. If you have extra time or are looking for an extra challenge, you can try one, all, or any number in between! These boxes give you the ultimate in flexibility.

ONE STEP FURTHER:

Word Study: *torah*/law

The first of eight Hebrew key words we encounter for God's Word is *torah* translated "law." If you're up for a challenge this week, do a word study to learn what you can about *torah*. Run a concordance search and examine where the word *torah* appears in the Old Testament and see what you can learn from the contexts.

If you decide to look for the word for "law" in the New Testament, you'll find that the primary Greek word is *nomos*.

Be sure to see what Paul says about the law in Galatians 3 and what Jesus says in Matthew 5.

4. DIGGING DEEPER boxes: If you're looking to go further, Digging Deeper sections will help you sharpen your skills as you continue to mine the truths of Scripture for yourself.

Digging Deeper

What else does God's Word say about counselors?

If you can, spend some time this week digging around for what God's Word says about counselors.

Start by considering what you already know about counsel from the Word of God and see if you can actually show where these truths are in the Bible. Make sure that the Word actually says what you think it says.

WEEK ONE

What Voices are Calling?

*My sheep hear My voice,
and I know them, and they follow Me . . .*

—Jesus, John 10:27

Jesus warned His disciples that in times to come “false Christs and false prophets will arise and will show great signs and wonders, so as to mislead, if possible, even the elect” (Matthew 24:24). In a world of sensational spiritual claims, do you ever wonder when you should listen and when you should run? It's time to stop wondering and start discovering biblical answers. Examining the Bible for ourselves, we'll look at how God has communicated with people over the ages, as well as at the biblical accounts of other voices that seek to destroy so we can learn to discern and stand firm in these last days. While *Voices Part One* focuses on the Old Testament, we'll start with an overview of the nature of Scripture as we begin.

FYI:

If You're in a Class

Complete **Week One** together on your first day of class. This will be a great way to start getting to know one another and will help those who are newer to Bible study get their bearings.

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Week One: **What Voices are Calling?**

CONSIDER the WAY you THINK

As we start our study, we need to examine our presuppositions and define terms. For now, let's consider what views we're bringing to the table.

How do you think God speaks today?

Why do you believe this?

If someone said "God told me to . . .", how would you respond?

What is your view of Scripture's authority? How much "say" should it have in your life?

What about Scripture's sufficiency? Is it "enough" to answer life's questions?

Digging Deeper

Read or Listen through Genesis

While the workbook will include specific instances of God speaking, the best way to identify these occurrences is to read the Book for yourself. If you're up for it this week, read or listen through Genesis to identify times when God speaks to people and times when contrary, deceptive voices counter His truth. Jot down your notes below so you can compare what you've identified with what we'll be studying together.

God Speaks

Others Speak

Summary

FYI:

Start with Prayer

You've probably heard it before and if we study together in the future, you're sure to hear it again. Whenever you read or study God's Word, first pray and ask His Spirit to be your Guide. Jesus says that the Spirit will lead us into all truth.

FYI:

Inspired by God

The Greek word translated “inspired by God” is *theopneustos* and literally means “God breathed” or “God spirited.” It appears only in the New Testament in 2 Timothy 3:16.

FOUNDATIONS

Before we start systematically working our way through the Bible, let’s see what the Bible says about itself.

SETTING the SCENE

Anticipating his imminent death, Paul writes Timothy, his son in the faith, telling him what he needs to know about life and ministry.

OBSERVE the TEXT of SCRIPTURE

READ 2 Timothy 3:14-17. **MARK** every reference to *Scripture*, including synonyms. **UNDERLINE** everything Paul says the Scriptures can do.

2 Timothy 3:14-17

- 14 *You, however, continue in the things you have learned and become convinced of, knowing from whom you have learned them,*
- 15 *and that from childhood you have known the sacred writings which are able to give you the wisdom that leads to salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.*
- 16 *All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness;*
- 17 *so that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work.*

DISCUSS with your GROUP or PONDER on your own . . .

What does Paul instruct Timothy to do in verse 14?

What had Timothy already done that enabled him to follow Paul’s instruction?

What sacred writings does Paul refer to? What were they able to do?

What does Paul say about the nature of Scripture? What does it do? Why is this important?

At the point of his writing, what scriptures would Timothy have known from his childhood? Explain.

SETTING the SCENE

The apostle Peter, an eye-witness to the life and ministry of Jesus, comments on Paul's letters.

OBSERVE the TEXT of SCRIPTURE

READ 2 Peter 3:14-18 and **MARK** every reference to *Paul*, including pronouns.
UNDERLINE every reference to those who distort Scripture and/or promote error.

2 Peter 3:14-18

14 *Therefore, beloved, since you look for these things, be diligent to be found by Him in peace, spotless and blameless,*

15 *and regard the patience of our Lord as salvation; just as also our beloved brother Paul, according to the wisdom given him, wrote to you,*

ONE STEP FURTHER:

Read 2 Timothy

If you have time this week, go ahead and read through Paul's complete letter to Timothy. It's only four chapters long. Record your observations below.

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Week One: **What Voices are Calling?**

FYI:

Peter's View of Paul

While Peter was an eye-witness to Jesus' life and ministry, Paul was converted after Jesus rose from the dead, ascended into heaven, and appeared to him. Before this Paul hunted and persecuted Christians. Peter, writing under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, attested to Paul's inspiration also.

ONE STEP FURTHER:

Word Study: Scriptures

If you have some extra time this week, find the Greek word for "Scriptures." Then check out how else it is used in the rest of the New Testament. Record your findings below.

- 16 *as also in all his letters, speaking in them of these things, in which are some things hard to understand, which the untaught and unstable distort, as they do also the rest of the Scriptures, to their own destruction.*
- 17 *You therefore, beloved, knowing this beforehand, be on your guard so that you are not carried away by the error of unprincipled men and fall from your own steadfastness,*
- 18 *but grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To Him be the glory, both now and to the day of eternity. Amen.*

DISCUSS with your GROUP or PONDER on your own . . .

How does Peter describe Paul?

How does he describe Paul's writings? What does this imply? Explain.

Besides Paul, who else does Peter talk about? What characterizes these people? What do they do? What will be their end?

Why are they dangerous to Peter's readers?

How can you identify and stand in the face of similar threats today?

Digging Deeper

Jesus and the Scriptures

Peter and Paul had views on the nature of Scripture, and so did Jesus! If you have time this week, examine the Gospels to see what Jesus said about the Scriptures and record your findings below. A simple way to start is to use a concordance (via book, software, or website) to search on the term "Scripture." Of course you'll never be disappointed by reading the full accounts so you won't miss synonyms and allusions to the Old Testament.

Matthew

Mark

Luke

John

Summary:

ONE STEP FURTHER:

Word Study: Destruction

What does Peter mean when he talks about "destruction" in 2 Peter 3:16? If you have time this week, find the Greek word and see how it's used elsewhere in the New Testament. Record your findings below.

Week One: **What Voices are Calling?**

OBSERVE the **TEXT** of **SCRIPTURE**

READ Hebrews 1:1-2 and **MARK** the word *spoke/spoken*.

Hebrews 1:1-2

- 1 *God, after He spoke long ago to the fathers in the prophets in many portions and in many ways,*
- 2 *in these last days has spoken to us in His Son, whom He appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the world.*

DISCUSS with your **GROUP** or **PONDER** on your own . . .

How did God speak long ago? Who did He speak to?

How has He spoken in these last days?

Should we expect God to speak “in many portions and in many ways” now? Explain your answer.

BACK TO THE BEGINNING

We’ve seen this week that all Scripture is God-breathed. It is all the revelation of God to His people. As we proceed in our study, let’s keep this truth in the forefront of our minds.

ONE STEP FURTHER:

Watch the Verb Tenses

What verb tense does the author of Hebrews use for “spoke” and “has spoken”? What is significant about it? Why does it matter? Record your findings below.

ONE STEP FURTHER:

Long Ago and Last Days

If you have some extra time this week, examine the phrases “long ago” and “in these last days.” What time frames is the author talking about in relation to where we are in history? Record your findings below.

OBSERVE the TEXT of SCRIPTURE

READ Genesis 1–3 for an overview; then **READ** Genesis 1 and **MARK** the verb *said*.

Genesis 1

- 1 *In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.*
- 2 *The earth was formless and void, and darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the Spirit of God was moving over the surface of the waters.*
- 3 *Then God said, "Let there be light"; and there was light.*
- 4 *God saw that the light was good; and God separated the light from the darkness.*
- 5 *God called the light day, and the darkness He called night. And there was evening and there was morning, one day.*
- 6 *Then God said, "Let there be an expanse in the midst of the waters, and let it separate the waters from the waters."*
- 7 *God made the expanse, and separated the waters which were below the expanse from the waters which were above the expanse; and it was so.*
- 8 *God called the expanse heaven. And there was evening and there was morning, a second day.*
- 9 *Then God said, "Let the waters below the heavens be gathered into one place, and let the dry land appear"; and it was so.*
- 10 *God called the dry land earth, and the gathering of the waters He called seas; and God saw that it was good.*
- 11 *Then God said, "Let the earth sprout vegetation, plants yielding seed, and fruit trees on the earth bearing fruit after their kind with seed in them"; and it was so.*
- 12 *The earth brought forth vegetation, plants yielding seed after their kind, and trees bearing fruit with seed in them, after their kind; and God saw that it was good.*
- 13 *There was evening and there was morning, a third day.*
- 14 *Then God said, "Let there be lights in the expanse of the heavens to separate the day from the night, and let them be for signs and for seasons and for days and years;*
- 15 *and let them be for lights in the expanse of the heavens to give light on the earth"; and it was so.*
- 16 *God made the two great lights, the greater light to govern the day, and the lesser light to govern the night; He made the stars also.*
- 17 *God placed them in the expanse of the heavens to give light on the earth,*
- 18 *and to govern the day and the night, and to separate the light from the darkness; and God saw that it was good.*
- 19 *There was evening and there was morning, a fourth day.*
- 20 *Then God said, "Let the waters teem with swarms of living creatures, and let birds fly above the earth in the open expanse of the heavens."*

FYI:

The Trinity in Genesis

While some scholars believe the plural pronouns in Genesis ("us" in 1:26 and 3:22 and "our" in 1:26) refer either to God's majesty (as ancient kings often addressed themselves) or to angels (1 Kings 22:19-23), most conservative scholars believe this is an early reference to the Trinity.

- 21 *God created the great sea monsters and every living creature that moves, with which the waters swarmed after their kind, and every winged bird after its kind; and God saw that it was good.*
- 22 *God blessed them, saying, "Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the waters in the seas, and let birds multiply on the earth."*
- 23 *There was evening and there was morning, a fifth day.*
- 24 *Then God said, "Let the earth bring forth living creatures after their kind: cattle and creeping things and beasts of the earth after their kind"; and it was so.*
- 25 *God made the beasts of the earth after their kind, and the cattle after their kind, and everything that creeps on the ground after its kind; and God saw that it was good.*
- 26 *Then God said, "Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; and let them rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over the cattle and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth."*
- 27 *God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them.*
- 28 *God blessed them; and God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth, and subdue it; and rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over every living thing that moves on the earth."*
- 29 *Then God said, "Behold, I have given you every plant yielding seed that is on the surface of all the earth, and every tree which has fruit yielding seed; it shall be food for you;*
- 30 *and to every beast of the earth and to every bird of the sky and to every thing that moves on the earth which has life, I have given every green plant for food"; and it was so.*
- 31 *God saw all that He had made, and behold, it was very good. And there was evening and there was morning, the sixth day.*

DISCUSS with your GROUP or PONDER on your own . . .

Fill in this simple chart to record what God said, what happened, and how the results are described:

Verse	What God Said	What Happened	How it is Described

In summary, what happens when God speaks?

What and who does God bless?

What does God command? How do His commands tie in with the blessings?

What do we learn about God Himself from verse 26?

GOD CREATES, COMPLETES, AND RESTS

From your reading you'll recall that in Genesis 2:1-14, God completes His work, places man in Eden, and blesses the seventh day and rests on it.

OBSERVE the TEXT of SCRIPTURE

READ Genesis 2:15-18. **MARK** every reference to God speaking or commanding. **UNDERLINE** every instruction or command He gives.

Genesis 2:15-18

- 15 *Then the LORD God took the man and put him into the garden of Eden to cultivate it and keep it.*
- 16 *The LORD God commanded the man, saying, "From any tree of the garden you may eat freely;*

INDUCTIVE FOCUS:

Marking the Text

Marking the text is a simple way to help see key words. When marking one word, a circle, underline, or highlight works great. If you decide to mark multiple words in a passage, you may choose to use different colored pencils, symbols, or a combination of the two.

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Week One: **What Voices are Calling?**

17 *but from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat from it you will surely die."*

18 *Then the LORD God said, "It is not good for the man to be alone; I will make him a helper suitable for him."*

DISCUSS with your GROUP or PONDER on your own . . .

What does God command the man? Is He clear? What consequences does He lay out?

How restrictive is the command? Explain.

Is anything about God's voice unclear or ambiguous? Explain your answer.

IN THE GARDEN

At the end of Genesis 2, God creates the woman and brings her to the man.

OBSERVE the TEXT of SCRIPTURE

READ Genesis 3:1-5 and **MARK** every reference to the *serpent* including pronouns. **UNDERLINE** everything the serpent says.

Genesis 3:1-5

1 *Now the serpent was more crafty than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made. And he said to the woman, "Indeed, has God said, 'You shall not eat from any tree of the garden'?"*

2 *The woman said to the serpent, "From the fruit of the trees of the garden we may eat;*

- 3 *but from the fruit of the tree which is in the middle of the garden, God has said, 'You shall not eat from it or touch it, or you will die.'* "
- 4 *The serpent said to the woman, "You surely will not die!*
- 5 *"For God knows that in the day you eat from it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil."*

DISCUSS with your GROUP or PONDER on your own . . .

Describe the serpent. How does the serpent engage the woman in conversation?

What is his point of attack? What does he call into question?

What lie does he tell the woman? Does he tell her any truth? If so, what?

Does anything the serpent says make God's words less clear? Explain.

Have you seen Satan mix truth and lies in our days? If so, how? How can you stand in the face of this kind of enemy?

FYI:

The Deceiver of the World

And the great dragon was thrown down, the serpent of old who is called the devil and Satan, who deceives the whole world; he was thrown down to the earth, and his angels were thrown down with him.

—Revelation 12:9

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ONE STEP FURTHER:

Word Study: Crafty

If you have time this week, find the Hebrew word that translates “crafty.” Where else does it appear in the Old Testament and how is it typically used? For bonus points, see if you can find what root word it’s associated with that appears elsewhere in the account of the fall. Record your findings below.

SIN ENTERS THE WORLD

The woman sees the fruit, desires it, takes it, eats it, and gives some to her husband. Their eyes are opened, they sew fig leaves together to cover themselves, and they hide when they hear God approaching.

OBSERVE the TEXT of SCRIPTURE

READ Genesis 3:9-13. **MARK** every reference to *God* including pronouns.

Genesis 3:9-13

- 9 *Then the LORD God called to the man, and said to him, “Where are you?”*
- 10 *He said, “I heard the sound of You in the garden, and I was afraid because I was naked; so I hid myself.”*
- 11 *And He said, “Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten from the tree of which I commanded you not to eat?”*
- 12 *The man said, “The woman whom You gave to be with me, she gave me from the tree, and I ate.”*
- 13 *Then the LORD God said to the woman, “What is this you have done?” And the woman said, “The serpent deceived me, and I ate.”*

DISCUSS with your GROUP or PONDER on your own . . .

What questions does God ask the man?

What are the possible simple answers to “Have you eaten from the tree of which I commanded you not to eat?” What did the man include in his response and why do you think he did this?

Do you ever respond in a similar way? Explain.

What does God ask the woman? How does she respond?

Does the serpent still deceive today? How can we recognize his deception before it is too late? In order to help answer this, compare the voice of God and the voice of the serpent in Genesis 1–3.

What God Says	What the Serpent Says

Finally, looking back over all of Genesis 1–3 record all the texts that testify to God’s goodness and care for His creation. When Eve went looking for something more, was it because God had not provided adequately? Explain your answer.

FYI:

Clear or Crafty?

From the earliest chapters of the Bible, God speaks clear truth while Satan, who John calls “the serpent of old” (Revelation 12:9), craftily twists words. In his Gospel John also refers to Satan as the father of lies: “He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth because there is no truth in him. Whenever he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own *nature*, for he is a liar and the father of lies” (John 8:44b).

ONE STEP FURTHER:

Judging the Serpent

If you have some extra time this week, read Genesis 3:14-15 to see what God says to the serpent and how He judges him. Record your findings below.

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Digging Deeper

God's Judgment on Adam and Eve

God's judgment doesn't stop with the serpent. He follows through with Adam and Eve and their descendents (you and me) as well. If you have time this week look at God's words to Eve, to Adam, and at His summary of the state of affairs in Genesis 3:16-24.

Eve (Genesis 3:16)

How does God punish Eve?

Adam (Genesis 3:17-19)

What voice had Adam listened to instead of God's?

What judgment does he reap?

What other consequence comes because of Adam's sin?

The state of mankind (Genesis 3:21-24)

Was kicking them out of the garden a punishment or act of mercy? Explain.

How would you characterize Adam and Eve's various interactions with God? How did they change from the first time God spoke to Adam?

@THE END OF THE DAY . . .

Yes, we've only made it through Genesis 3! The first chapters of Genesis are critical in helping us understand not only how God speaks, but also how the adversary perverts and challenges truth. We'll pick up speed soon enough! For now, jot down the different contexts in which God spoke in the first three chapters of Genesis paying attention to what was positive and what was hard. Then, write down your biggest takeaway from this week of study.

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Week Two: **What Voices are Calling?**

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