

# Hearing His Voice

"But now ask the beasts, and let them teach you;  
And the birds of the heavens, and let them tell you.  
Or speak to the earth, and let it teach you;  
And let the fish of the sea declare to you.  
Who among all these does not know  
That the hand of the Lord has done this,  
In whose hand is the life of every living thing,  
And the breath of all mankind?"

*Job 12:7-10*

**T**HE WRENS ARE JUST BEGINNING to return, and they are always a welcome sight in the early days of spring. But more anticipated than sight is the sound of their resplendent voice.

Out of all the myriad voices in the chorus that awakens us each morning, it is the voice of the smallest that predominates. Out of all the many birds that rise and give voice during the dawn, it is the tiny wren—barely larger than a hummingbird—whose voice is the loudest and most distinctive.

We invite the tiny creatures every spring by setting out houses in the trees that surround our home. Very soon the male will

arrive to reconnoiter, flitting about the branches to select precisely the house that suits his fancy. Once he's made up his mind, he will proceed to entice a suitable female to his home.

The male wren sets to collecting twigs and carrying them, one by one, through the small hole into the house. His purpose is single-minded, and identical to that of the male of every other species: to impress the *female* of the species.

During and after his construction project, he will periodically perch on a branch near the house, lift his tiny head skyward, and give forth with his clear, multifaceted song. With



**"You alone are the Lord.  
You have made the heavens,  
The heaven of heavens  
with all their host,  
The earth and all that is  
on it,  
The seas and all that is  
in them.  
You give life to all of them  
And the heavenly host  
bows down before You."**

*Nehemiah 9:6*

a volume and clarity that bears no relation to his tiny size, the male wren will give strong voice to his need for a mate. And, indeed, soon one will arrive. If she likes his nest—and likes *him*—she will favor the male with her company.



The wren is a feisty, charismatic bird who is fearless before any opposition. We have seen them run off blue jays and woodpeckers—birds many times their size—who have strayed too close to the house. We have also been recipients ourselves of their verbal chastisement, when we have been the ones encroaching on their territory.

But very often the tiny wren will have no apparent reason for his vocalization. Gazing out the library window between paragraphs, I will quite often see the small gray bird alight on the step railing, looking so tiny and fragile. But then he will raise his head and sing out with a most glorious and exuberant sound—as if proclaiming something no less profound than “Thank you for my life, God! I praise you!”

We, as intelligent, sophisticated humans don’t do this often enough. It is considered unseemly to raise one’s gaze toward heaven and simply cry out, “Thank you, God, for my life! I praise you!” But the tiny wren does not care about such civilized conventions. He just needs to periodically release the pent-up joy that fills his breast—no matter what others may think.

## LISTENING

OUR HEAVENLY FATHER IS A CREATIVE, imaginative God. He has but one voice, yet that crystalline sound is manifested in myriad ways. No one can say that His voice cannot be heard, since He’s given us so many different ways to hear Him.

Learning of God through His word—learning of His personality and ways from the one dependable authority—is like discovering a golden key that unlocks every treasure house there is. Once we have found Him there, we suddenly find Him everywhere.

Lift your gaze into the glorious sky of a dying day, to the clouds painted in radiant pinks and purples and blazing reds, and you will hear His voice.

Linger in the sylvan quiet of the forest, and you will hear His voice in the gentle rustle of the leaves, the wind as it whistles through the pine needles, the chatter of the busy squirrel.

Listen to the chorus of the blue jay scolding the robin, the wren calling for a new mate, the chirping of the cardinal to his wife—listen to all the marvelous creatures He has made and you will hear God’s voice.

Stand in awe of His might as the thunder rolls and quakes across the land, as the lightning slices apart the night sky, and the heavens send forth their life-giving rain. Listen; it is His voice you hear.



But, of course, this is not just an elementary exercise of putting a name to the sound we hear. Locating the fingerprints and the voice of God in the world around us is simply the first, initializing step to trigger our own vocalizations. Like the diminutive wren we must then raise our own voice to declare His praise.

Most of all, in the stillness and privacy of your prayer closet empty your mind and heart of every distraction, every consideration of self, and let your spirit rise above this temporal plane to the higher plane on which the Lord God dwells. Let all your senses absorb His communion, His gentle condescension to your spirit.

Remove all arrogance and pride, and in humility approach your God. In reverence bow before His throne, and once you have confessed, once you have declared His worthiness, once you have expressed your gratitude—quiet yourself. Speak no more. And listen.

Listen.

