

Eternity Daily Bible Study

(A ministry of Eternity Christian Fellowship)

Walking In The Spirit - 44

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Topic: Spiritual Senses – Hearing – Part 1

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When Jesus finished teaching a parable or group of parables he would often say:
Matthew 11:15 MKJV *He who has ears to hear, let him hear.*

Jesus is not simply referring to the physical sense of hearing but to the spiritual sense that enables people to understand God's truth in the inner man - thus grasping the meaning of the parable and treasuring its spiritual content.

During Isaiah's vision and call he was called to preach until the people no longer listened. When the spiritual sense of hearing is finally non-functional it is a sign of a terminally ill nation that will soon be plunged into a destructive judgment (Isaiah 6:8-13)

Isaiah 6:8-13 MKJV *And I heard the voice of the Lord, saying, Whom shall I send, and who will go for us? Then I said, Here am I; send me! (9) And He said, Go, and tell this people, You hear indeed, but do not understand; and seeing you see, but do not know. (10) Make the heart of this people fat, and make their ears heavy, and shut their eyes; lest they see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their hearts, and turn back, and be healed. (11) Then I said, Lord, how long? And He answered, Until the cities are wasted without inhabitant, and the houses without man, and the land laid waste, a desolation, (12) and until Jehovah has moved men far away, and the desolation in the midst of the land is great. (13) But yet in it shall be a tenth, and it shall return and be consumed like the terebinth and like the oak being felled, yet has its stump; the holy seed is its stump.*

Jesus applies this exact same devastating prophecy to those who could not grasp His parables:

Matthew 13:10-15 MKJV *And the disciples said to Him, Why do You speak to them in parables? (11) He answered and said to them, Because it is given to you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of Heaven, but it is not given to them. (12) For whoever has, to him shall be given, and he shall have more abundance. But whoever does not have, from him shall be taken away even that which he has. (13) Therefore I speak to them in parables, because seeing they see not, and hearing they hear not; nor do they understand. (14) And in them is fulfilled the prophecy of Isaiah which said, "By hearing you shall hear and shall not understand; and seeing you shall see and shall not perceive; (15) for this people's heart has become gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and they have closed their eyes, lest at any time they should see with their eyes and hear with their ears and should understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them."*

And indeed Israel was destroyed and left devastated by the Romans because of this national failure to listen to Jesus!

Luke 19:41-44 MKJV *And as He drew near, He beheld the city and wept over it, (42) saying, If you had known, even you, even at least in this day of yours, the*

things for your peace! But now they are hidden from your eyes. (43) For the days will come on you that your enemies will raise up a rampart to you, and will surround you, and will keep you in on every side. (44) And they will tear you down, and your children within you, and will not leave a stone on a stone because you did not know the time of your visitation.

On the other hand those who listen to God and grasp the teachings of Jesus are blessed:

Matthew 13:16-17 MKJV *But blessed are your eyes, for they see; and your ears, for they hear. (17) For truly I say to you that many prophets and righteous men have desired to see those things which you see, and have not seen them; and to hear what you hear, and have not heard them.*

So vital is our spiritual sense of hearing that Jesus warned His disciples:

Mark 4:24-25 MKJV *And He said to them, Take heed what you hear. With that measure which you measure, it shall be measured to you. And to you who hear, more shall be given. (25) For he who has, more shall be given to him; and he who has not, from him shall be taken even that which he has.*

Jesus is telling them that those who truly harken to God will receive more and more revelation while those who are disobedient will lose any knowledge of God that they have. Paul reinforces this when he says to Timothy:

2 Timothy 4:3-4 MKJV *For a time will be when they will not endure sound doctrine, but they will heap up teachers to themselves according to their own lusts, tickling the ear. (4) And they will turn away their ears from the truth and will be turned to myths.*

People will not want truth but will instead want teaching that 'tickles the ear' and gratifies their lusts. Instead of listening to God and the Bible they will turn aside to myths. The harder the heart, the worse the person hears God. Defiantly disobedient people will literally 'stop their ears' (as they did with Stephen) in order to resist God's truth:

Acts 7:51-58 MKJV *O stiff-necked and uncircumcised in heart and ears! You always resist the Holy Spirit. As your fathers did, so you do. (52) Which of the prophets did your fathers not persecute? And they killed those who foretold the coming of the Just One, of whom you have now been the betrayers and murderers; (53) who received the Law through disposition of angels, and did not keep it. (54) And hearing these things, they were cut to their hearts. And they gnashed on him with their teeth. (55) But being full of the Holy Spirit, looking up intently into Heaven, he saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing at the right hand of God. (56) And he said, Behold, I see Heaven opened and the Son of Man standing on the right hand of God. (57) And crying out with a loud voice, they stopped their ears and ran on him with one accord. (58) And throwing him outside the city, they stoned him. ...*

Jesus even rebuked His disciples severely when they did not understand His teachings:

Mark 8:14-21 MKJV *And the disciples had forgotten to take loaves, and they did not have more than one loaf in the boat with them. (15) And He charged them, saying, Take heed! Beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and of the leaven of Herod. (16) And they reasoned among themselves, saying, It is because we have no loaves. (17) And knowing it, Jesus said to them, Why do you reason that it is because you have no loaves? Do you not yet perceive nor understand? Have you still hardened your heart? (18) Do you have eyes and do not see? Do you have ears and do not hear? And do you not remember? (19) When I broke the five loaves among five thousand, how many hand baskets full of fragments did you take*

up? They said to Him, Twelve. (20) And when the seven among four thousand, how many lunch baskets full of fragments did you take up? And they said, Seven. (21) And He said to them, How do you not understand?

Thus the spiritual sense of hearing has to do with understanding the things of God. The disciples were expected to 'get it' when Jesus spoke about the leaven of the Pharisees. The fact they did not understand this mini-parable concerned Jesus so much that He wondered if they had hardened their heart. Jesus was astonished that after the feeding of both the five thousand and the four thousand they would say 'it is because we have no bread'. This is similar to what the Israel in the Wilderness failed to do when they kept grumbling even after God had performed many miracles on their behalf:

Hebrews 3:7-11 MKJV *Therefore, as the Holy Spirit says, "Today if you will hear His voice, (8) do not harden your hearts, as in the provocation, in the day of temptation in the wilderness, (9) when your fathers tempted Me, proved Me, and saw My works forty years. (10) Therefore I was grieved with that generation and said, They always err in their heart, and they have not known My ways. (11) So I swore in My wrath, They shall not enter into My rest."*

If we look at the last two examples of the disciples and the people of Israel we find that the lack of 'hearing' came about because they were unable to spiritually connect the dots. They always looked at their current circumstances instead of learning from their spiritual experiences and from the faithfulness of the Lord. They were unable to say "hmm Jesus is easily able to supply bread so bread is not the problem, He must mean something else" or "God brought us this far from Egypt, He will supply water as well."

So hearing God involves arriving at the correct spiritual conclusions – about God, about parables and about life's circumstances, after being given adequate evidence for reaching those conclusions. This is what is called the hearing of faith:

Galatians 3:2-5 MKJV *This only I would learn from you: Did you receive the Spirit by works of the law, or by hearing of faith? (3) Are you so foolish? Having begun in the Spirit, do you now perfect yourself in the flesh? (4) Did you suffer so many things in vain, if indeed it is even in vain? (5) Then He supplying the Spirit to you and working powerful works in you, is it by works of the law, or by hearing of faith?*

Romans 10:17 MKJV *Then faith is of hearing, and hearing by the Word of God.*

The hearing of faith is powerful and results in miracles and in salvation. It connects us with God's transforming power!

The goal of the spiritual sense of hearing is a saving faith that results in holy obedience. We receive the word of God, believe the word of God then build our lives upon the word of God:

Matthew 7:24-25 MKJV *Therefore whoever hears these sayings of Mine, and does them, I will liken him to a wise man who built his house on a rock. (25) And the rain came down, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house. And it did not fall, for it was founded on a rock.*

To summarize things so far:

- 1) There is a spiritual sense of hearing
- 2) It enables us to grasp spiritual truth such as parables
- 3) Its absence is a sign of impending doom for the nation (or church)
- 4) We are to be very careful how we hear or we can lose the knowledge we have
- 5) It involves reaching proper spiritual conclusions from available evidence
- 6) When we fail to do this we 'harden our hearts' and this is serious
- 7) People can go astray listening to myths or blocking out God out all together
- 8) Proper hearing results in godly faith

- 9)Such faith results in salvation and miracles and God's transforming power!
10)As we hear God in faith we can build strong spiritual lives 'on the rock'.

Blessings,

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