

Seeing and Hearing but Not Perceiving and Understanding

by TJ Smith

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HELLO ALL! I HOPE you have been staying cool during this hot summer. I semi-retired back in December and now am helping Maria build custom homes, so I stay inside as much as possible! Ok, in the last issue, we were speaking of Paul, Moses and Isaiah, and who was right or wrong about knowing how to please God. Let's pick up where we left off. By the way, you can read the entire "Kingdom Come" book at www.tjsmithministries.com for like \$4 for the e-book. Just before we start the study in this issue, here's the final paragraph from the last issue, to refresh your memory:

1 Corinthians 2:9 " . . . according as it has been written, 'Eye has not seen, and ear has not heard,' nor has it risen up into the heart of man, the things which God has prepared for those that love Him" (LITV).

Let's look at the three men's words side-by-side for a better comparison.

Moses: *Yet Jehovah has not given to you a **heart** to know, and **eyes** to see, and **ears** to hear, until this day.*"

Isaiah: " . . . and say to this people, 'Hearing you **hear**, but do not understand; and seeing you **see**, but do not know.'"

Paul: " . . . according as it has been written, '**Eye** has not seen, and **ear** has not heard,' nor has it risen up into the **heart** of man, the things which God has prepared for those that love Him."

There seems to be a disconnect here. Moses wrote 1500 years earlier that *the Hebrews* could know God and please Him. Next Isaiah, 700 years later, wrote that the Israelites were deaf and blind. Finally, Paul agreed with Isaiah, not Moses. What could have happened between the time of Moses and Isaiah that led the people of Israel to break covenant with God and lose the privilege of knowing how to please God?

Even though they still retained the actual Law on tablets of stone, they had continuously sinned against Yahweh through the centuries, killing His prophets, committing idolatry in their worship, sacrificing their children to Molech and Ba'al, and ignoring the command to be a "light on a hill." Paul was telling his readers that something new was coming that would compare to the old covenant, only better. Paul was likely quoting Isaiah 64:4:

“Even from antiquity men have not heard, they have not given ear, Eye hath not seen a God save Thee, and He doth work for those waiting for Him.”¹

Remember, it was Paul’s people to whom the first covenant came. This was the reason Paul persecuted the early believers. He felt they weren’t following Torah. Paul understood what a “covering” meant to the Hebrews.

The reason for this perceived contradiction was that Moses was speaking of the first covenant, Isaiah was looking ahead to the second covenant brought by Yeshua Messiah, and Paul was speaking of the new covenant that he and the rest of the Apostles were anticipating and being transferred into.

Think of it like this: Moses said, “Ok, gang, I got great news. Here’s the chance we’ve been waiting for! Yahweh just gave me the instructions for everything we need to do to please Him! Yep, let’s just do the things on the tablets and we’re good!” Here was the problem: they couldn’t keep them. Isaiah was telling them, “Ok, you blew it, again, but I see another Law coming that we will truly be able to follow . . . grace.” Paul agreed.

So, here is a 1500-year span where this figure of speech, “to him who has ears to hear,” has been used by the Hebrews. When this phrase was used from Isaiah forward, it was tied to the coming Messiah who would bring a new covenant *and* judgment upon the *rebellious house* of Jerusalem. *Rebellious house?* Where am I getting that? Let’s look at one more verse before moving on.

“Son of man [Yeshua], you dwell in the middle of a rebellious house [the Jewish leadership], who have eyes to see and don’t see, ears to hear and don’t hear, for they are a rebellious house” (Ezekiel 12:2, The Kingdom Bible).²

When we read Jesus using this phrase, we have more insight into what He was really saying to the Pharisees and scribes without having to come out and say it.

Part of the Hebrew culture was to reference something and know that the audience understood. For example, if I were going to tell basketball legend Michael Jordan that I was going to dunk the ball on him, he might reply, “Make my day.” That would be a reference to Clint Eastwood’s character Dirty Harry coaxing a criminal to try to outdraw him. Michael Jordan would know the movie as well, and I would know Michael had no gun, and it was just an allusion to me facing a painful future for trying something foolish. Jesus also used this method of allusion to make the point that He was the Son of Man, that they were the rebellious house, and that the appointed time of judgment had come.

The Jews also knew Scripture and knew what Jesus meant. Imagine being a Pharisee and hearing a man declare that this is **you** and **your** generation. No wonder they were upset!

When He spoke to the masses and Pharisees and said, “. . . if you have ears to hear,” they knew that he was pointing back to Isaiah and Ezekiel and accusing them of being that *rebellious house* and that the rebellious house would not understand, because God had closed their ears and eyes from understanding.

Let’s look at another point of interest in this parable. Why did Jesus use parables? I have heard from many, many preachers, authors, theologians, and so-called experts that the reason Jesus told parables was to “reveal” truth to the people. But that’s not what Yeshua said.

Mark 4:11 ***“To you have been given the secret of the kingdom of God, but for those outside everything is in parables,***

Mark 4:12 ***“so that ‘they may indeed see but not perceive, and may indeed hear but not understand, lest they should turn and be forgiven.’”***

There it is! If the Jewish people “outside” of the Kingdom (spiritual) understood the message, they would have repented and been forgiven. Gee, what’s wrong with that? Wouldn’t that have been a good thing? Sure, if you are ok with God not extending redemption to us. It was only because of the Jews’ rejection of Jesus that the new covenant was offered to the Gentiles and Jewish remnant. I have heard teachers poo-poo this logic and disregard Scriptural context.

This was all part of God’s plan to establish His true Israel, which is believers in Christ. (Notice how Satan was not credited with doing the “blinding or deceiving.”)

Ok, that wraps up this issue. I hope you got something out of the articles contributed. This is the best resource for sharing the fulfilled covenant view, and big shoutouts to Brian and Kayla for 20 years of hard work and devotion, as well as Mike and now Adam steering the ship. Thank you to all of you for seeing the need and bringing us all into conversation and learning. ✝

1. Young’s Literal Translation

2. TJ submitted seven commentaries in this new accurate Biblical translation. To order a copy, visit www.bibleprophecyfulfilled.org.