

# GRACE GAZETTE

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*Wherefore lift up the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees; And make straight paths for your feet, lest that which is lame be turned out of the way; but let it rather be healed.* *Hebrews 12:12-13*

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## TINGLING EARS

*And say, Hear ye the word of the LORD, O kings of Judah, and inhabitants of Jerusalem; Thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel; Behold, I will bring evil upon this place, the which whosoever heareth, his ears shall tingle.* *Jeremiah 19:3*

The Hebrew word which is here translated “*tingle*” literally means to rattle or vibrate. We might liken it to our common expression, of a “ringing in ones ears”. The LORD is saying to Jeremiah that this message which he is to deliver to Israel will be as a loud ringing in the ears of those who are made to hear it. If a sound rings in the ears it cannot be escaped or overlooked, one cannot ignore it or act as though no sound was heard, it is unmistakable and unavoidable.

Sixteen times in the New Testament, eight of which are found in the book of the Revelation, the LORD says “*let him who hath an ear (or ears) to hear, let him hear*”. Clearly the implication is that this message will not be “heard” by some, (even though their eardrums work fine) but rather by those who have the ability given to them to hear the particular message that is delivered.

The LORD told Ezekiel, “*Son of man, thou dwellest in the midst of a rebellious house, which have eyes to see, and see not; they have ears to hear, and hear not: for they are a rebellious house.*” (Eze 12:2) In doing so HE says that those people among whom Ezekiel dwelt were not physically impaired from hearing (i.e.; they have ears to hear) but they could not hear because their hearts were rebellious. This is the same thing which the LORD told the Pharisees, “*And ye have not his word abiding in you: for whom he hath sent, him ye believe not. Search the Scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me. And ye will not come to me, that ye might have life.*” (John 5:38-40) HE went on to explain why they would not and could not hear HIM. “*I told you, and ye believed not: the works that I do in my Father's name, they bear witness of me. But ye believe not, because ye are not of my sheep, as I said unto you. My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me.” (John 10:25-27) “*Why do ye not understand my speech? even because ye cannot hear my word.*” (John 8:43) “*

How is it then that some “hear” while others do not? Moses clearly testifies of this reason in describing the wanderings of Israel in the wilderness. “*Yet the LORD hath not given you a heart to perceive, and eyes to see, and ears to hear, unto this day.*” (Deut 29:4) The LORD JESUS spoke of this same thing when asked by HIS disciples why HE spoke in parables, “*Because it is given unto you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it is not given. For whosoever hath, to him shall be given, and he shall have more abundance: but whosoever hath not, from him shall be taken away even that he hath. Therefore speak I to them in parables: because they seeing see not; and hearing they hear not, neither do they understand.*” (Mat 13:11-13) As HE said to the Pharisees, “*He that is of God heareth God's words: ye therefore hear them not, because ye are not of God.*” (John 8:47)

It is obvious in reading Jeremiah's prophetic warnings to the nation of Israel that they did not (for the most part) “hear” what he said to them. In fact the religious leaders (see Jer. Chap 20) mocked and ridiculed him, rejecting his warning. This is very much akin to the mainstream religionists of our day who ridicule the preaching of grace alone, preferring to declare a mixture of

mans works and free will with the husks of grace and thereby declaring a message which is no grace at all. They preach peace, peace when there is no peace and reject the notion that man has absolutely no solution to the dilemma which he finds himself in. They assure men that all is not bleak since at any time a man can exercise his free will and call upon the LORD or believe the gospel whenever he gets ready, thus delivering himself.

Jeremiah faithfully delivered the message that Jerusalem was going to be destroyed regardless of what the inhabitants of it did. There was no escaping this certain destruction. This did not prevent the "positive thinkers" from prophesying lies and assuring the people that it was not really as bad as Jeremiah declared (see Jeremiah chap 28) and that this "judgment" that was coming was not nearly as dire as Jeremiah predicted.

Man in his natural state is sure to perish. *"It is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment."* (Heb 9:27) *"Behold, all souls are mine; as the soul of the father, so also the soul of the son is mine: the soul that sinneth, it shall die."* (Eze 18:4) HE will *"by no means clear the guilty;"* (Exo 34:7) nor will HE *"at all acquit the wicked"* (Nah 1:3) *"For the wages of sin is death."* (Rom 6:23) *"all the wicked will he destroy."*(Psa 145:20) *"As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one: There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God. They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one. Their throat is an open sepulcher; with their tongues they have used deceit; the poison of asps is under their lips: Whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness: Their feet are swift to shed blood: Destruction and misery are in their ways: And the way of peace have they not known: There is no fear of God before their eyes. Now we know that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law: that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God. Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin."* (Rom 3:10-20)

These words "ring in the ears" of those who can hear. They strike fear into the hearts of those whom the LORD gives ears to hear and eyes to see. They are made to see the hopelessness of their own situation and cry out "O woe is me, for I am a man of unclean lips." They are brought to the brink of despair and can clearly testify of the justice of GOD in casting them into the pit of everlasting destruction. They can discover no power within themselves to deliver themselves from this awful fate and can find no place of deliverance at their disposal nor any ability to remedy their own sad condition.

The gospel is sent particularly for such men as these. The LORD plainly declared, *"For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost."* (Luke 19:10) *"I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance."* (Luke 5:32) The gospel is not an offer nor an appeal but rather a declaration of mercy and a command to those who can hear it, *"Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."* (Mat 11:28) *"Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy, and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price."* (Isa 55:1) *"For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life. And not only so, but we also joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the atonement."* (Rom 5:10-11)

- 1 Ho, ye despairing sinners, hear, Ye thirsty, sin-sick souls, draw near;  
Here's water, whose all-powerful stream Shall quench your thirst and wash you clean,  
Its healing power has always wrought Beyond the reach of human thought.
- 2 Bethesda's pool is not like this, Nor heals nor cures such leprosies;  
Nor Siloam's streams, nor Jordan's flood, Could to my heart seem half so good;  
'Tis Jesus' blood, that crimson sea, That washes guilt and filth away.
- 3 To this dear Fountain I'd repair, With all the wounds and pains I bear;  
I'd keep my station near its side, And wash, and drink, and there abide;  
Nor from the sacred streams remove, Till taken to their source above.