EARS TO HEAR, EYES TO SEE
UNDERSTANDING WHAT IT MEANS TO SEE

“Hear now this, O foolish people, and without understanding; which have eyes, and see not; which have ears, and hear not…”

~ Jeremiah 5:21

1. “Who hath ears to hear, let him hear”
   a. One of the most popular concepts in scripture, in over a third of Bible books
   c. Associated often with Jesus’ parables – which engenders more confusion.
   d. How do you get ears to hear? How do you get eyes to see? Wouldn’t this be important?

2. What it Means
   a. Can be hard because the phrase itself is cryptic. Use the Bible as a dictionary.
   b. Commentaries will say it simply is Jesus saying… "Listen up! This is important.”
   c. The first time it shows up is not in the NT, but in the OT → Deu 29:3-4
   d. Isaiah 29:9-12 – God closes the book; it doesn’t take physical ears to hear - Isa 29:18
   e. Isaiah 44:18 – They have not known nor understood
   f. Jer 5:21 – Foolish people, without understanding... see also Jer 5:4 – the way of the Lord
   g. Jer 17:22-23 – They obeyed not; ... stiff necked... not receiving instruction
   h. Eze 12:2 – A rebellious house does not hear
   i. Jesus said they could not hear because they did not believe – John 8:43-47
   j. Hearing God’s words is not just about the ears, but about believing – Rom 10:17
   k. Faith is the knowledge of God and his will, and knowing that it is true.
   l. When God says something, you understand what he is saying – Eph 5:17

3. God’s Punishment
   a. “ears to hear” is often mentioned in the negative context of not hearing...
   b. Deu 8:3 – God tempted them so that they would learn to trust God’s words – Jer 25:4-7
   c. The parables were not intended to ease understanding – Ps 49:3-4, Ps 78:2
   d. OT - Isaiah 6:9-11 – Isaiah sent to make them not hear and understand
   e. NT – Jesus sent to make them not hear and understand – Matt 13:9-16, John 12:37-40
   f. Mystery – Paul quotes Isaiah 6 to Israel when they don’t hear his gospel – Acts 28:26-28

4. What We Are to Make Men See
   a. They did not see and hear under the OT – Isa 64:4
   b. They did not see and hear when Christ came for the NT – Rom 11:7-8, 2 Cor 3:14
   c. They did not see when Paul preached the mystery of God’s grace – 1 Cor 2:9
   d. We are to make all men see what God is doing today – Eph 3:9
   e. To make men see means we don’t speak in parables, hard sayings, or hidden gospels
   f. Having ears to hear and eyes to see is understanding God’s will and walking by faith in it

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