Gather, Hear, Learn, & Teach

(by Kent Heaton)

***“Gather the people to Me, and I will let them hear My words, that they may learn to fear Me all the days they live on the earth, and that they may teach their children”***(**Deuteronomy 4:10**). When the people of God were gathered at Mt. Sinai (Horeb) to receive the law they were given four directives that would guide their lives. Contained within this admonition is the same principle the people of God must follow today.

**“Gather the people to Me.”** The Lord has always wanted men to seek Him. As the people assembled beneath the terrible image of Sinai the Lord wanted them to be brought close to see His power and hear His law. We must come to God to know His will and to seek Him to understand His grace. Later in **Deuteronomy 4** Moses reminds the people how they will need to ***“seek the Lord your God, and you will find Him if you seek Him with all your heart and with all your soul”*** (**v29**). The reason that many people do not know God is they do not seek Him. Zephaniah writes, ***“Gather yourselves together, yes, gather together … seek the Lord, all you meek of the earth, who have upheld His justice. Seek righteousness, seek humility”*** (**Zephaniah 2:1-3**). To know the Lord we must first gather to Him and seek His will.

**“Let them hear My words.”** Two voices challenge the will of man: the voice of man’s reason and the voice of God. More often the will of man chooses to heed the will of man’s reason and knowledge. The flood (**Genesis 6-8**) is a result of man seeking his own wisdom. The wise man reminds us ***“There is a way that seems right to a man, but its end is the way of death”*** (**Proverbs 16:25**). The words of eternal life can only come from Him who possesses eternity. Simon Peter answered Jesus, ***"Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life”*** (**John 6:68**).

**“Learn to fear Me.”** Hearing the word of God brings the fear of the Lord. ***“The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge, but fools despise wisdom and instruction”*** (**Proverbs 1:7**). This is a respectful fear of the power of God tempered by the grace of God. Learning to fear God understands how dependent we are upon Him. He provides everything we have (**Matthew 5:45**; **Haggai 2:8**). His judgments cause us to fear Him. ***“It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God”*** (**Hebrews 10:31**). ***“Therefore consider the goodness and severity of God: on those who fell, severity; but toward you, goodness, if you continue in His goodness. Otherwise you also will be cut off”***(**Romans 11:22**).

**“Teach their children.”** The word of God is not for one generation but for all generations. His love should be passed down from generation to generation. What was good for my ancestors is good for me. God’s message of hope and salvation will save a man in 1492 as well as 2013. Children need to know the love of God and the message of His will. They need to learn to gather with God for wisdom and understanding. The words of the Father must be in their ears to guide them (**Proverbs 6:20-23**). Fearing God is needed by every young person to guide them in life. ***“Do not be wise in your own eyes; fear the Lord and depart from evil”*** (**Proverbs 3:7**).

**Gather, hear, learn and teach**: four principles that will bring peace and happiness in life. Gather to God, hear from God, learn from God and then teach what you have gathered, heard and learned to others.

One Thing We Must Always Do

(by Gary Henry)

***“This was the appearance of the likeness of the glory of the Lord. So when I saw it, I fell on my face, and I heard a voice of One speaking. And He said to me, ‘Son of man, stand on your feet, and I will speak to you’”*** (**Ezekiel 1:28-2:1**).

No matter what uncertainty may assail us, we must not fail to listen to God in every circumstance. We do not know what tomorrow will bring or how God’s purposes will unfold. What may come to pass even five minutes from now is largely beyond our foresight. Yet when we are bewildered and when fear threatens to obstruct our obedience, we can listen to what God has said. Even if we see no connection between what we think we need to hear and what God has actually said, we can choose to maintain reverence. We can listen to God.

Fear can be looked at from many different perspectives, but one thing we should never forget is that fear is basically a feeling, a mood. Like all other feelings, fear grows out of our thinking; it is an emotional response to the way we are “looking” at a given subject. Sometimes fear is a reasonable, understandable response, and sometimes it is not. But in either case, fear is a feeling that should not be allowed to overthrow our faith. Our faith should be based on careful thinking (in perhaps less emotional moments) about what is most likely true, and this foundation should be solid enough to withstand the emotional waves that are sure to beat against it from time to time. *“Faith,”* C. S. Lewis said, *“is the art of holding on to things your reason has once accepted, in spite of your changing moods.”* We can make choices concerning our faith that will make it more durable and stable.

There will be many days when unanswered questions seem to hinder us. God’s silence can be unsettling, it is true. And yet, God has spoken on every issue which He deems needful for us, and this should make a difference in the management of our emotions. *“In the midst of your doubts, don’t forget how many of the important questions God does answer”* (Verne Becker). Our response both to fear and to our ignorance in certain areas should be simple reverence — reverence that is determined and decisive. Whatever may happen or not happen, whatever we may know or not know, we must always say, *“Speak, Lord, for Your servant hears.”*