

Module : Gathering**Session 2** : Gathered and Positioned to Hear - Part 2

Continued directly from Session 1

The act of gathering is necessary to receive and hear the proclaimed proceeding Word of God.

Gen 49:2a **GATHER** together and **HEAR**
Luke 5:15b crowds were **GATHERING** to **HEAR**
Deut. 4:10a **ASSEMBLE** the people that they may **HEAR**

PRINCIPLE 10: AT TIMES, GATHERINGS WILL HAVE AN UNUSUAL PROTRACTED APOSTOLIC INTENSITY.

Recall that at Ephesus, Paul spoke daily in the synagogue for a period of two years (Acts 19:10). To the Ephesian elders he said he had delivered to them the whole counsel of God within the space of three years, reasoning daily in public and from house to house (Acts 19:20, 27,31). This is intense by any standard. These believers had the spiritual capacity/stamina to engage God's Word on a profound level. I believe that as the end of the age nears, that God's people will have to have more protracted times of interaction with His declared Word through authentic apostles.

AT Troas, Paul spoke the Word of God literally for a whole day and night to those gathered. This was literally an all-night meeting, in which Paul probably spoke doctrine.

Acts 20:7-12

On the first day of the week, when **we were gathered together** to break bread, Paul **began talking to them**, intending to leave the next day, and he **prolonged his message** until midnight. There were **many lamps** in the upper room where **we were gathered together**. And there was a young man named Eutychus sitting on the window sill, sinking into a deep sleep; and as Paul kept on talking, he was overcome by sleep and fell down from the third floor and was picked up dead. But Paul went down and fell upon him, and after embracing him, he said, Do not be troubled, for his life is in him. When he had gone back up and had broken the bread and eaten, **he talked with them a long while until daybreak**, and then left. They took away the boy alive, and were greatly comforted.

'Many lamps' is obviously literal, but could be applied symbolically as well. Lamps represent the Word of God. Many lamps indicated an enhanced level of brightness or revelation from the Word. Hence Paul needed much time in which to dispense of the Word. This was also because he was going to leave them the following day. As time with key apostles who dispense grace through the Word becomes limited, so will gatherings in which they share become all of the more critical and intense. Saints in this environment need to have great spiritual stamina to receive the Word.

In a season wherein God is restoring greater accuracy to the Body of Christ, there comes a need to give more earnest attention to the Word of God, the basis for restoration of all truth. Such was the case in Nehemiah's day. During the exile in Babylon, the people of God had no or little access to the Scriptures. So after their return to Jerusalem, there was much to be restored to the nation spiritually. Ezra and Nehemiah played a vital role in this regard.

Nehemiah 8:1-3

- 1 And all the people gathered as one man at the square which was in front of the Water Gate, and they asked Ezra the scribe to **bring the book of the law of Moses** which the Lord had given to Israel.
- 2 Then Ezra the priest brought the law before the assembly of men, women and all **who could listen with understanding**, on the first day of the seventh month.
- 3 He **read from it** before the square which was in front of the Water Gate **from early morning until midday**, in the presence of men and women, those who could understand; and **all the people were attentive to the book of the law**
- 4 Ezra the scribe stood at a wooden podium which they had made for the purpose. And beside him stood Mattithiah, Shema, Anaiah, Uriah, Hilkiah, and Maaseiah on his right hand; and Pedaiah, Mishael, Malchijah, Hashum, Hashbaddanah, Zechariah and Meshullam on his left hand.
- 5 Ezra **opened the book in the sight of all the people** for he was standing above all the people; and when **he opened it, all the people stood up**.
- 6 Then Ezra blessed the Lord the great God. And all the people answered, **Amen, Amen!** while lifting up their hands; then they bowed low and worshiped the Lord with their faces to the ground.
- 7 Also Jeshua, Bani, Sherebiah, Jamin, Akkub, Shabbethai, Hodiah, Maaseiah, Kelita, Azariah, Jozabad, Hanan, Pelaiah, the Levites, explained the law to the people while the people remained in their place.
- 8 They **read from the book**, from the law of God, **translating to give the sense so that they understood the reading**

Ezra read the Word of God and explained it for approximately six hours, and the people were fully attentive to it. This is supernatural – a sign and wonder. Gatherings of this nature are critical when there is the restoration of a key doctrine, practice or emphasis in the global church. In the context of Nehemiah chapter 8, the Celebration of the Feast of Tabernacles was restored to the nation. This was last observed in the days of Joshua. See Nehemiah 8:13-18, where LEADERS (Heads of Households) met to receive INSIGHT and INSTRUCTION for this.

Also, when they celebrated the Feast, the Word of God was read publicly everyday for seven consecutive days (Neh.8:18). I believe that we ought to have seasons of intense protracted engagement in the Word of the Lord.

[illegible]

PRINCIPLE 12: THE NEED FOR LEADERS TO GATHER IN TIMES OF RESTORATION OF STRATEGIC DOCTRINE, SPIRITUAL ACTIVITY OR EMPHASES.

In reference to significant issues regarding direction and the configuring of the entire nation, God always addressed LEADERS first. Gatherings of strategic leaders is a prerequisite to them gaining greater insight into the Word of the Lord, as it prophetically unveils God's present intent and focus for the Body of Christ in the world .

Note in the book of Nehemiah chapter 8, the entire nation meets to hear the Word of the Lord on a particular day. But on the next day, only leaders met to receive INSIGHT into the Feast of Tabernacles, a practice lost for generations, and then also received INSTRUCTIONS as to how to implement and restore this practice to the nation.

Nehemiah 8:13-18

- 13 Then on the **second day** the heads of fathers households of all the people, the priests and the Levites were **gathered to Ezra the scribe** that they might **gain insight into the words of the law.**
- 14 **They found** written in the law how the Lord had commanded through Moses that the **sons of Israel should live in booths during the feast of the seventh month.**
- 15 So they **proclaimed and circulated a proclamation** in all their cities and in Jerusalem, saying, Go out to the hills, and bring olive branches and wild olive branches, myrtle branches, palm branches and branches of other leafy trees, to make booths, as it is written.
- 16 So the people went out and brought them and made booths for themselves, each on his roof, and in their courts and in the courts of the house of God, and in the square at the Water Gate and in the square at the Gate of Ephraim.
- 17 The entire assembly of those who had returned from the captivity made booths and lived in them. The sons of Israel had indeed not done so from the days of Joshua the son of Nun to that day. **And there was great rejoicing.**
- 18 He read from the book of the law of God **daily, from the first day to the last day.** And **they celebrated the feast seven days,** and on the eighth day there was a solemn assembly according to the ordinance

Again – God's strategic developments within the Church will be facilitated in and through leaders. Leaders need to meet regularly for GRACE impartation and spiritual development. Paul shared the whole counsel of God with the Ephesian elders. These would in turn dispense grace to their respective households of faith.

When God wants to transition Israel out from Egyptian slavery – the 'House of Bondage' – He communicates only with Moses, not the entire nation.

Exod. 3:16 **"Go and gather the elders of Israel together** and say to them, 'The LORD, the God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, has appeared to me, saying, "I am indeed concerned about you and what has been done to you in Egypt.

[See also Numbers 10:4].

PRINCIPLE 17: GATHERING ENHANCES CORPORATE PRAYER POWER

Act 12:12 And when he realized this, he went to the house of Mary, the mother of John who was also called Mark, where **many were gathered together** and **were praying**.

Gathering together facilitates and accentuates the power of corporate agreement in prayer.

PRINCIPLE 18: GATHERING AS ONE - A STANDARD BY WHICH GOD WILL JUDGE

Isaiah 11:12 And He will lift up a **standard for the nations** and **assemble the banished ones of Israel**, And will gather the dispersed of Judah From the four corners of the earth.

Part of the purpose of the gathering is so that God can set up a standard of divine principles within the life of His sons. God cannot judge men without a standard. The united church who gathers as one becomes the standard by which everything is measured.

PRINCIPLE 19: GATHERING REMOVES REPROACH

Zeph. 3:18-20

- 18 **"I will gather** those who grieve about the appointed feasts-- They came from you, O Zion; **The reproach of exile** is a burden on them.
- 19 "Behold, I am going to deal at that time With all your oppressors, I will save the lame And gather the outcast, And I will turn their shame into praise and renown In all the earth.
- 20 "At that time I will bring you in, Even at the time when **I gather you together**; Indeed, I will give you **renown and praise** Among all the peoples of the earth, When **I restore your fortunes before your eyes**," Says the LORD.

Gathering is the context in and through which God removes any reproach or shame attendant with His people.

PRINCIPLE 20: GOD GATHERS MANY TO THE REMNANT ALREADY GATHERED

Isaiah 56:8 The Lord GOD, **who gathers the dispersed of Israel**, declares, "Yet others **I will gather to them, to those already gathered.**"

The gathering process already afoot is reflective of the compassion of God – (see Isaiah 54:7,8). Note that He gathers sons to those sons 'already gathered'. Never underestimate the power of oneness within a few – this is the remnant principle. The gathering of the first fruit remnant will be catalytic in its effect.

The Representative Remnant

Dew, amongst other things, is symbolic of ONE-NESS (Psalm 133) – which implies an ease of the gathering process.

- Micah 5:7** Then the remnant of Jacob will be among many peoples like dew from the LORD, Like showers on vegetation Which do not wait for man Or delay for the sons of men.
- BBE** And the rest of Jacob will be among the mass of peoples like dew from the Lord, like showers on the grass, which may not be kept back by man, or be waiting for the sons of men.
- ERV** But those from Jacob who are still living and scattered among the nations Will be like dew from the LORD that does not depend on anyone. They will be like rain on the grass that does not wait for anyone.

We need to develop a standard of unity and one-ness within a core group (remnant) that will act as an infectious yeast to positively influence and impact the rest. This is the remnant principle. Note here in the verse above that the 'rest from Jacob' will be among 'MANY people' like dew from the Lord. So you have a small group manifesting all the qualities of DEW – and these are positioned 'among' many people/ among the mass of people/ among nations.

DEW is also indicative of the Word of God. A gathered people must ultimately engage the Word of God and ultimately become the embodiment of that Word.

- Deut. 32:2** "Let my teaching drop as the rain, My speech distill as the dew,
As the droplets on the fresh grass And as the showers on the herb.

There is a level of God's speaking that only comes to a united people. On the day of Pentecost, they were all in one place, in one accord. Also – Acts 13:1-3 : Prophets and Teachers of Antioch ministering to the Lord --- and God spoke .

Teaching (Doctrine)	= leqach	= something received, instruction
Speech	= imrah	= commandment, voice

Teaching or Doctrine relates to the broad framework of belief. 'Speech' – 'voice' refers to the specific speaking of the Lord in a specific context , time or to specific persons. His speech is like dew!

Back to the remnant principle:

- Act 2:1,2** When the day of Pentecost had come, they were all together in one place. And suddenly there came from heaven a noise like a violent rushing wind, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting.

Isaiah 43:5-9

- Note again: - Sons gather; these sons are called by His name (Father).

Note verse 9a : the nations gather to be assembled.

Sons which are held in captivity – blind and deaf even though they have eyes and ears – having the structural and all the spiritual capacity – yet untapped – represent a deficiency of some kind. These captive sons whose spiritual potential is being kept capped, are being called out as part of a general and powerful call of God for His church to ‘gather together’.

The scripture above also alludes to the exodus of people from inaccurate places of religion that bind and imprison God's purpose and potential in them. Take a moment to pray prophetically using the principle embedded in Isaiah 43:5-9 quoted above.

Consider also:

Isa 60:4 "Lift up your eyes round about and see; They all **gather together**, they come to you. **Your sons** will come from afar, And your daughters will be carried in the arms.

QUESTIONS AND ISSUES FOR PERSONAL REVIEW AND GROUP DISCUSSION

1. What should be the primary focus at the gatherings of families of God's people in their respective groupings/jurisdictions?
 2. Is there a biblical basis for having seasons of protracted times of intensified apostolic instruction? If so, suggest in what instances these occur.
 3. Why and when is it essential for leaders/spiritual fathers for meet/gather?
 4. How does the element of a gathered group facilitate the swift and efficient transmission of key apostolic doctrine?
 5. From your study of this session, extrapolate a few hindrances to an authentic Christ-like gathering process.
-

Stay in Touch via my Website and Social Networks

'Follow' Randolph Barnwell personally via Facebook or Twitter to receive regular inspirational and encouraging short posts and tweets highlighting key life principles from God's Word. You may also freely download notes and audio files of each session from www.randolphbarnwell.com. Additional materials on various topics are also available for download here. Enquiries: randolph@gatedc.co.za

Visit and 'like' the 'GATE MINISTRIES Durban Central' Facebook page OR 'follow' Gate Ministries Durban Central on Twitter and keep informed as to themes that will be taught each week. To regularly receive our free bible study notes, ensure you are on our email distribution list – send a request to info@gatedc.co.za.

Other excellent and empowering resources are available from:

thamonaiddoo.com
lifeenterprise.co.za
godihear.com

apostolicleader.co.za
elijahmorgan.eu
egen.co

soleyn.com
gmh.co.za

touchthenations.co.za
thekingdomplatform.com