

Eating the Scroll – Eating and Digesting the Word of God

In Message 1 we saw some of the **characteristics of Ezekiel** that made him the prophet that he was. One such characteristic is that he was a person who did not spare himself. In this message we will see another important characteristic of Ezekiel. He was **a man who knew... how to eat God's words [and] how to digest and assimilate them**. Because of this, he was able to see visions of God. In the context of Ezekiel 2 and 3, to be rebellious is to not hear, eat, and digest the words of God. Hence, to not be rebellious is to hear, eat, and digest the words of God. I was deeply touched by our brother's testimony in Message 9 related to rebellion. The way he was saved from the condemnation of the devil was by eating and digesting Ezekiel 28 and Isaiah 14. Our brother not only read these chapters but also ate and digested them. Ezekiel was the same kind of person. He not only saw a vision; he internalized, digested, and assimilated it to the extent that what he saw became his constitution. Then, when he spoke the vision, it was not a mere teaching; it was the very thing that had been constituted into him.

After eating God's word, there needs to be digestion. I think that we are somewhat familiar with eating; however, we do not talk that much about what it means to digest the word of God. Whenever the word of God came to Ezekiel, it was followed by the hand of Jehovah. The hand of Jehovah appears at least seven times in the book of Ezekiel. [W]e can see that **through the hand of Jehovah, the word of Jehovah was worked into Ezekiel...** [W]hen God speaks, He creates and accomplishes things. All of God's words are operative. Hebrews 4:12 says, *"The word of God is living and operative and sharper than any two-edged sword, and piercing even to the dividing of soul and spirit and of joints and marrow, and able to discern the thoughts and intentions of the heart."* This verse shows us that digesting the word is much more than merely hearing the word or enjoying the word. It means that we take something into us that is living and operative. Once the word comes into us, it operates in our inner being, separating and dividing our soul from our spirit. Moreover, it discerns the thoughts and intentions of our heart. This is digestion. It is not merely eating or hearing. I hope that we will not consider this word to be something so fundamental that we already know it. Rather, I hope that the Lord will impress us that in this message there is **something deeper** for our experience—something that we need very much.

Ezekiel was told not only to feed his stomach but also to fill his inward parts. Food first goes into the stomach, where it is digested, and then it goes into the inward parts, where it is assimilated. This is the same with the word of God; we eat it, digest it, and assimilate it, and then we speak. Real prophesying is not merely speaking. Sometimes we are happy for people just to speak in the prophesying meeting. However, what we really want to have in the prophesying meeting is **prophesying**. Prophesying is an extraordinary kind of speaking because it comes out of having eaten, digested, and assimilated the word of God. After having eaten, digested, and assimilated the word of God, what we speak is weighty. It is not something light, nor is it a kind of temporary inspiration from a few minutes of morning revival.

Although much of our speaking in the prophesying meeting is not up to the standard of genuine prophesying, we know the difference. When a person speaks something that has not only impressed him or inspired him but has become him, we recognize it. For example, when certain brothers talk about enjoying the Lord, we can clearly see that it is not a doctrine to them. We know that they enjoy the Lord. Also, when some speak about the gospel, we realize that the gospel is their living. This is real prophesying. **It is to speak something that has been not only enjoyed by us but also digested by us**. If we see this, the standard of our prophesying meeting will rise significantly. On the one hand, we can all prophesy; on the other hand, prophesying is not a light matter. Rather, it is a great matter that requires great exercise. I hope that we will receive this word from Ezekiel.

Eating is also a **very personal** matter. I cannot eat food for you, and you cannot eat for me. In the same way, having a personal, affectionate, private, and spiritual time with the Lord is a personal matter. We should not apply eating the Lord to only meetings and say, "Oh, I went to a training or conference, and I was so nourished. That is enough." The trainings and conferences are certainly nourishing. We are fed in every meeting, **but** they should not be the main eating in our Christian life. We will not have a personal, affectionate, private, and spiritual relationship with the Lord if our eating is **only** in the meetings.

Many saints are listening to this spoken message through translation... We need to realize that there is a "device" that will translate the written words of the Scriptures into spirit and life. When God created man, He installed this device into him as an "app" in man's spirit. Our spirit functions as a translator, a converter, that converts the written words of the Bible into spirit and life. When the written word is processed through only our mind, we receive mere knowledge. However, when we process the same words of the Bible through our spirit, we receive spirit and life. Now we need to learn how to use this "app." To continue this illustration, I have a smartphone, and sometimes my children point out certain apps that came preinstalled on my phone, apps that I never knew existed. Since I did not know that I had these apps, I never used them. Now I know that they exist, but I do not know how to use them. I am afraid that many of us are like this with regard to our spirit. We have an amazing app that came preinstalled with our regenerated spirit. This app has been there since our regeneration, but we may have never used it. However, once we discover how to use it, we will realize that it is fantastic. Some people are addicted to their mobile devices. Instead of spending so much time using the apps on our phones, we need to learn how to use the app in our spirit that converts God's written words into spirit and life; we should go so far as to get "addicted" to using this app. Then when we prophesy, our speaking will also be spirit and life; our speaking will convey spirit and life to those who hear.

Conclusion

In chapter 6 of *Enjoying Christ as the Word and the Spirit through Prayer*, Brother Lee provides four practical points for how we may eat the word. **First**, we should not read too much and should not try to take in everything at once. If we eat too much, we will definitely experience **indigestion**. The important thing is not how much we take in but that when we read the Word, we receive the life supply and are nourished. Sometimes, we are nourished by eating just a small portion. **Second**, we should not try to **understand everything** that we read. This can become a big trap. It will take a long time before we understand everything that we read. Of course, we need to have the long-term aspiration to understand everything that we read; however, understanding comes through reading the Bible many times.

Third, once we understand something, we should **ponder over it** a little and muse upon what we have read. Psalm 119:15 says, "*I will muse upon Your precepts / And regard Your ways.*" Musing is to speak aloud. Meditation is often done in silence, but musing cannot be done silently. You must use your mouth and speak aloud. To muse on the word is to taste and enjoy it through careful consideration. This involves prayer and speaking to oneself. Praising may be included in this kind of musing on the word. Another word for muse is ruminate. When applied to animals, the word ruminate means to "chew the cud," as a cow does. **Fourth**, we should **pray** over what we do understand. As we read in this way, something will jump off the page and enlighten us, touch us, or impress us. When that happens, we need to immediately pray over that point. This is a very personal matter because of the kind of prayer that is involved. We muse over what has touched us. It may lead us to confess something. We need to use the Word in this way to contact the Lord. This kind of contact is very personal. In our prayer we apply the word to our situation, our spiritual condition, our environment, and to everything related to us. (Excerpt from the Ministry of the Word: Crystallization-Study of Ezekiel (1), 257-282)