

# Jeremiah 15:16 Commentary

Jeremiah 15:16 Thy words were found and I ate them, and Thy words became for me a joy and the delight of my heart, for I have been called by Thy name, O LORD God of hosts.

- **I ate:** Ezek 3:1-3 Rev 10:9
- **Thy Word:** Job 23:12 Ps 19:10 119:72,97,101-103,111
- **called:** Jer 14:9

## GOD'S WORDS DISCOVERED AND DIGESTED PRODUCE DELIGHT

Here is the Greek (**Septuagint - Lxx**) for Jeremiah 15:16 -

hupo ton athetounton (**atheteo** = to regard as nothing) tous logous sou sunteleson (**sunteleo**) = bring to an end, a command in **aoist imperative**) autous kai estai o logos sou emoi eis euphrosunen (euphrosune = joy, mirth, merriment) kai charan (**chara**) kardias mou hoti (that) epikekletai (**epikaleomai**: call upon as an appeal for aid) to onoma sou ep emoi **kurie pantokrator**.

This gives us an interesting translation in English

**Consume** them (continuation from last phrase of Jer 15:15 in the Greek = "those who set at naught Thy words... consume them" = an imprecatory prayer!); and Thy Word shall be to me for the joy and gladness of my heart: for Thy Name has been called upon me, O Lord Almighty.

The **context** of Jeremiah's declaration helps us interpret this great passage. In Jeremiah 15:1-9 we see Jehovah's decree of judgment of untold horror promised to the people of Judah for not repenting. This is the message of judgment that Jeremiah is to declare - one of doom and gloom! And so Jeremiah cries "Woe to me, my mother, that you have borne me as a man of strife and a man of contention to all the land! I have not lent, nor have men lent money to me, yet everyone curses me." Clearly Jeremiah is in anguish and distress at the gravity of the message and at the negative reception it receives. Nevertheless even in this difficult situation Jeremiah chooses to cry out in Jer 15:16, expressing his declaration of dependence on the Lord.

Jeremiah loved God's Word, but the people of Judah to whom he was prophesying judgment considered His Word a reproach which gave them no delight. And so earlier we read Jeremiah's question...

To whom shall I speak and give warning, that they may hear? Behold, their ears are closed, and they cannot listen. **Behold, the Word of the LORD has become a reproach to them. They have no delight in it** (Jer 6:10) (To which Jehovah answers) "Thus says the LORD, "Stand by the ways and see and ask for the ancient paths, where the good way is, and walk in it; and you shall find rest for your souls. But they said, 'We will not walk in it.' (Jer 6:16)

Beloved, is this not a picture of all of us when we have unconfessed, presumptive sin? What do we do? We avoid time in the Word and fellowship with saints who speak the Word! The last thing we want to hear is God's Word which always profitable for "teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness" (2Ti 3:16-note)! We don't want to be reproved. The last person we want to listen to (so we skip church) is a preacher who proclaims God's truth to "**reprove, rebuke, exhort**" (2Ti 4:2-note)!

**Charles Haddon Spurgeon** also helps set the context writing "There is no line in the whole of Jeremiah's prophecy more characteristic of him than that exclamation, "O that my head were waters, and mine eyes a fountain of tears, that I might weep day and night for the slain of the daughter of my people." (Jer 9:1) ([Hidden Manna](#))

Jeremiah is in real difficulty. His hometown rejected him and got rid of him. His own family rejected him. His life is in danger!

As an aside, I have often taught that Jeremiah proclaimed God's Word and never had a convert. While the response to God's Word was sadly minimal, there is a passage in Jeremiah 39 which suggest that there was at least one convert (although we cannot discern for certain that he came to faith under Jeremiah's preaching -- it is certainly very possible). And so God instructs Jeremiah to

"Go and speak to **Ebed-melech the Ethiopian**, saying, 'Thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, "Behold, I am about to bring My words on this city (Jerusalem) for disaster and not for prosperity; and they will take place before you on that day. But I will deliver you on that day," declares the LORD, "and you shall not be

given into the hand of the men whom you dread. "For I will certainly rescue you, and you will not fall by the sword; but you will have your own life as booty, **because you have trusted in Me**," declares the LORD." (Jeremiah 39:16-18)

So let's unpack this great verse, which has been my "life verse" for that past 30+ years.

**Thy Words** (Hebrew **dabar**) Which Words? First of course Jeremiah refers to God's words, not words of men. This is a good reminder that when we are in distress or discouraged, the BEST place (Person) to turn is to the living word of the Living God! And while this is supposition, I think Jeremiah may have specifically remembered Jer 1:5, 8,10,17,18,19, and similar truths much like he did in Jer 20:11 when he recalled "the LORD is with me like a dread champion (reminiscent of the last words of Paul in 2Ti 4:17-18-note); Therefore (term of conclusion) my persecutors will stumble and not prevail." (Cp the extent of God's provision to us = 2Pe 1:3-note, Ro 8:35-note, Ro 8:37-note, etc

The root of the Hebrew word **dabar** is that which lies behind and so **dabar** is regarded as an extension of the Speaker's personality, in this case God! Stated another way **dabar** speaks of the very revelation of that Individual! How precious that Jesus is the Living Word (Jn 1:1-note, Rev 19:13, Phil 2:16-note, 2Ti 2:15-note, Titus 1:9-note) the flesh and blood revelation of the personality of God (Jn 1:14-note, Jn 1:18-note). Thus the Bible from Genesis 1:1 to Revelation 22:21 is the written revelation of the Person and Personality of the Lord God Almighty. How precious is this Living Word!

**Warren Wiersbe** - The prophet experienced the loneliness of leadership and the anguish of ministry, but God encouraged him as he fed on the Word. God may not take away the pain in your heart, but He can balance it with His joy (**Ed**: As found in His Word = Ps 19:8-note and energized by His Spirit - 1Th 1:6-note, Ro 15:13-note, Gal 5:22-note, Jn 6:63). (With The Word Commentary)

**J Vernon McGee** writes "I received a letter from a man who heard our broadcast when I was in Galatians. He heard one word: Father. That arrested his attention. May I say to you that God is still using His Word today. Oh, how important the Word of God is!"

**NET Notes** - "Your words were found and I ate them." This along with Ezek 2:8-3:3-note is a poetic picture of inspiration. The prophet accepted them, assimilated them, and made them such a part of himself that he spoke with complete assurance what he knew were God's words.

**Thy Words were found** - What is the implication of Jeremiah finding God's Words? Clearly this phrase implies that he was **seeking** God's Words. In a word, even in the midst of oppression, he had a **passion** for God's Word, a **heart attitude** all of God's children should seek to cultivate, because as Yogi Berra said "You won't find anything unless you're looking for it!" So how do we look for God's Word? There is only one sure place - the Bible. There is however, more than one way to seek His Word. In fact, many methods have been proposed. After over 30 years of zealously pursuing the Word and using many of these methods, the best method I have discovered is **Inductive Bible study** (which entails **Observation, Interpretation, and Application**). Yes, inductive study requires more labor, but as one begins to glean the fruit of their labor, this method goes from arduous to ardor, becoming a true labor of love. And a labor **to** love. In other words, one does not dig deeply into the Word of God simply to glean and gain **information** but to commune intimately with the God of the Word and be transformed (not just informed) into the image of His Son! To know the Father's heart, the Son's love and the Spirit's power, should always be our goal when we seek God's Words.

**Spurgeon** - I have said that Jeremiah lets us into a secret. His outer life, consisting in his perpetual faithful ministry, was to be accounted for by his inward love of the word which he preached.

Jeremiah's finding God's Word reminds one of godly King Josiah and the incredible story of the discovery of God's Word which had been lost in the House of God (the Temple!). While Jeremiah's discovery of God's Word brought joy and delight, Josiah's discovery wrought brokenness, repentance and personal revival (some say national revival, but subsequent events prove there was no heart change so this was simply reformation without revival for most of the people of Judah).

2Ki 22:8 Then Hilkiah the high priest said to Shaphan the scribe, **'I have found the book of the law in the house of the LORD.'** And Hilkiah gave the book to Shaphan who read it. 9 And Shaphan the scribe came to the king and brought back word to the king and said, "Your servants have emptied out the money that was found in the house, and have delivered it into the hand of the workmen who have the oversight of the house of the LORD." 10 Moreover, Shaphan the scribe told the king saying, **"Hilkiah the priest has given me a book."** **And Shaphan read it in the presence of the king.** 11 And it came about when the king heard the words of the book of the law, that he **tore his clothes.** 12 Then the king commanded Hilkiah the priest, Ahikam the son of Shaphan, Achbor the son of Micaiah, Shaphan the scribe, and Asaiah the king's servant saying, 13 "Go, inquire of the LORD for me and the people and all Judah concerning the words of this book that has been found, for great is the wrath of the LORD that burns against us, because our fathers have not listened to the words of this book, to do according to all that is written concerning us." 14 So Hilkiah the priest, Ahikam, Achbor, Shaphan, and Asaiah went to Huldah the prophetess, the wife of Shallum the son of Tikvah, the son of

Harhas, keeper of the wardrobe (now she lived in Jerusalem in the Second Quarter); and they spoke to her. 15 And she said to them, "Thus says the LORD God of Israel, 'Tell the man who sent you to me, 16 thus says the LORD, "Behold, I bring evil on this place and on its inhabitants, even all the words of the book which the king of Judah has read. 17 "Because they have forsaken Me and have burned incense to other gods that they might provoke Me to anger with all the work of their hands, therefore My wrath burns against this place, and it shall not be quenched.'" 18 "But to the king of Judah who sent you to inquire of the LORD thus shall you say to him, 'Thus says the LORD God of Israel, "Regarding the words which you have heard, 19 **because your heart was tender and you humbled yourself before the LORD when you heard what I spoke against this place and against its inhabitants that they should become a desolation and a curse, and you have torn your clothes and wept before Me, I truly have heard you," declares the LORD. 20 "Therefore, behold, I will gather you to your fathers, and you shall be gathered to your grave in peace, neither shall your eyes see all the evil which I will bring on this place."**" So they brought back word to the king. (2Ki 22:8-20, cp 2Ki 23:2)

**ILLUSTRATION** - A few years ago, the janitor of the old Township House at Steam Corners in Morrow County, Ohio, found three old ballots, two marked for U. S. Grant and one for Horace Greeley. This reminds us of King Josiah, when the book of the law was found in the dust and debris of the temple. He restored it to its proper place as the spiritual charter of the nation.

**ILLUSTRATION** - On May 8, 1961, newspapers carried the story of Rusty O'Malley, a sixteen-year-old high school senior who bought a priceless religious document for five dollars in a Chicago department store. The 350- year-old manuscript is the only known remaining fragment of two psalm books copied around a.d. 1600. By comparison, it is possible to purchase a complete Bible for only a few dollars, but even the cheapest edition of the Scriptures is priceless if we take it as the guide for daily life.

**Were found:** Solomon records "For they (Pr 4:20 = "my words" - God's inspired, inerrant Words) are life to those who find them, And health to all their whole body."

Jeremiah searched the Scripture, (cp Da 9:2-note) diligently studied the law, and found experienced its soul reviving power (Ps 119:25). The weeping prophet found his consolation and comfort in God's Word and so should we whether in times of distress or delight. Jeremiah ate it and he digested it and it became a part of him. (cp 1Pe 2:2-3-note Ps 19:10-note Job 23:12-note) Oh, how we need to get into the Word of God today so that it might get into us! We don't need just a little surface learning of a few rules, a few guidelines, or a few steps to take to clean up our acts (that's what the legalist does!). Instead we need to eat the pure Word, digest it and allow it to become part of our very being. In so doing the Spirit will birth joy and rejoicing to our heart just as He did for Jeremiah. Only the Word of God can do this.

**Jamieson** writes that what Jeremiah is saying is "As soon as Thy words were found by me, I eagerly laid hold of appropriated them." This is a good pattern - **May God's Spirit of Christ prompt all of us to eagerly lay hold of God's Word that it might securely lay hold of us!** Amen

**Spurgeon** - Do you understand what you are reading in Jer 15:16? That is the main point. The butterflies flit over the garden, and nothing comes of their flitting; but look at the bees, how they drive into the bells of the flowers and come forth with their thighs laden with the pollen and filled with the sweetest honey for their hives. This is the way to read your Bible: get into the flowers of Scriptures, plunge into the inward meaning, and suck out that secret sweetness which the Lord hath put there for your spiritual nourishment.

**Paul** describes the effect of us beholding the Word, especially the Gospel -

But we all, with unveiled face beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord (As revealed in His Word), are being transformed (present tense = a daily process = sanctification, verb = **metamorphoo**) into the same image from glory to glory, just as from the Lord, the Spirit." (2Cor 3:18-note) (**Comment** - But notice the divine-human synergism [the interaction or cooperation of two or more organizations, substances, or other agents to produce a combined effect greater than the sum of their separate effects.] The Spirit does the **work**, as we take in the **Word**! What's the *upshot* [the final or eventual outcome or conclusion of a discussion, action, or series of events]? Take in the Word daily [Mt 4:4, Lk 4:4, Dt 8:3] and with delight [Ps 1:2-3-note!])

**Luther** said that God feeds the birds, but He doesn't throw the food into their nests.

**Spurgeon** commenting on Jeremiah 15:16 said while Jeremiah's "prophesying brought him nothing but tears, yet he continued to prophesy; for God's Word came with such sweetness to his own soul, and filled his heart with such ravishing joy and delight, that he could not do otherwise than go and tell out among his fellow men what had been so delightful to himself (cp Jer 20:9). **I believe this to be the secret of every living ministry.** (**READ SPURGEON'S STATEMENT AGAIN. WHAT IS THE SECRET?**) The ministry that is fed upon flattery, and flatters those who flatter it, is a poor feeble counterfeit, and God will never bless it; but the ministry which under great difficulties and fierce opposition is still sustained because the preacher cannot help but continue in it, is that which

God will bless. It was good advice of a venerable divine to a young man who aspired to be a preacher, when he said to him, "*Don't become a minister if you can help it.*" The man who could very easily be a tradesman or a merchant had better not be a minister. A preacher of the Gospel should always be a volunteer, and yet he should always be a pressed man, who serves his King because he is omnipotently constrained to do so. Only he is fit to preach who cannot avoid preaching, who feels that woe is upon him unless he preach the Gospel, and that the very stones would cry out against him if he should hold his peace (Lk 19:40). **I have said that Jeremiah lets us into a secret. His outer life, consisting in his perpetual faithful ministry, was to be accounted for by his inward love of the word which he preached.** Depend upon it, this secret unriddles all true spiritual life. If ever you see any one who walks in holiness stand fast in temptation, and be upheld under affliction, you may rest assured there is something about him that is not perceived by every eye; there is a secret which the world does not know—a hidden fountain, which sustains the stream of his life—an invisible spring of vitality which keeps him vigorous even in the midst of surrounding death. Bunyan's metaphor was, that he saw a fire which was burning under singular circumstances, for one stood before it who continually threw water upon it to quench it, but though he did so, yet the fire was not put out. (In Pilgrim's Progress) Christian could not understand the marvel till the Interpreter took him behind the wall, and there he saw one that cast oil upon the fire as perseveringly as the enemy cast the water, so that the fire being secretly nourished could not be extinguished. Every Christian's life is of that sort: there is abundance to destroy it, but, if it be sustained, there is a secret something (God's Word) which keeps that soul alive unto God and persevering to the end." ([The Secret Food and the Public Name - Jeremiah 15:16](#)) (See also Spurgeon's other sermon on Jeremiah 15:16 - [Hidden Manna](#))

**Spurgeon** divides Jeremiah 15:16 into "**the secret life of the believer**," ("Thy words were found and I ate them and they became for me the joy and the delight of my life") and the "**public life**" ("for I have been called by Thy Name O Jehovah, God of hosts.")

**D A Carson** in his comments on Jesus' words in John 6:63 compares them with Jeremiah 15:16 writing that "It is hard not to see in the last clause (of Jn 6:63) an allusion to Jeremiah 15:16, where the prophet addresses God: 'When your words came, I ate them; they were my joy and my heart's delight' (cf. also Ezek. 2:8-3:3; Rev 10:9ff.). In short, Jeremiah's assessment of God's words is the same as Jesus' assessment of His own words. One cannot feed on Christ without feeding on Christ's words, for truly believing Jesus cannot be separated from truly believing Jesus' words (Jn 5:46-47). Human beings live by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God (Dt. 8:3, Mt 4:4, Lk 4:4). The identical claim is now made (in Jn 6:63) for the words of Jesus, precisely because He is the Word incarnate (Jn 1:1-18; especially Jn 1:14-note, cf. Jn 5:19-30). (Pillar New Testament Commentary – The Gospel According to John)

**Carson** also associates Jeremiah 15:16 with John's words in the Revelation 10:9-10 writing that "The precise reference for eating the scroll is clearly Ezek 2:8-3:3... Notable parallels are found in Jer 6:10-11a and, especially, Jer 15:16-17: "Your words were found, and I ate them, and your words became for me a joy and the delight of my heart... You filled me with anger." In context, the delight and anger of God's words that Jeremiah eats refer respectively to the prophet's own comfort and to the judgment of his enemies (the **Lxx** of Jeremiah has, instead of "anger," the word **pikría** ["bitterness"], which is the nominal form of the verb used in Rev. 10:9-10 [make... bitter = **pikraino**]). Like the prophets of old, John will preach a message that is **sweet** for those who heed God's word but carries **bitter** judgment for those who refuse it." (Commentary on the New Testament Use of the Old Testament)

**Pulpit Commentary** - Jeremiah here describes his first reception of a Divine revelation. Truth is like "treasure hid in a field;" he alone who seeks it with an unprejudiced mind can "find" it. But there are some things which no "searching" of the intellect can "find" (Job 11:7; Job 37:23; Ecclesiastes 3:11; Ecclesiastes 8:17); yet by a special revelation they may be "found" by God's "spokesmen," or prophets. This is the train of thought which underlies Jeremiah's expression here. The "words," or revelations, of Jehovah are regarded as having an objective existence in the ideal world of which God is the light, and as "descending" from thence (comp. Isaiah 9:8) into the consciousness of the prophet. So Ezekiel 3:1, "Eat that thou findest." I did eat them; I assimilated them, as it were (comp. Ezekiel 2:8; Ezekiel 3:3). I am called by thy name; literally, thy name hath been (or, had been) called upon me; i.e. I have (or, had) been specially dedicated to thy service. The phrase is often used of Israel (see on Jeremiah 14:9), and, as here applied, intimates that a faithful prophet was, as it were, the embodied ideal of an Israelite. ([Jeremiah 15 Commentary - The Pulpit Commentaries](#))

**Thomas Watson** on Jeremiah 15:16 - The Bible is a rock of diamonds, a chain of pearls, the sword of the Spirit; a chart by which the Christian sails to eternity; the map by which he daily walks; the sun-dial by which he sets his life; the balance in which he weighs his actions.

**Robert Hawker's** devotional thoughts on Jeremiah 15:16 (November 28) - Yea, Lord! I have indeed found thy words most precious, and, through thy grace, I have eaten them, and they are as honey and the honeycomb to my soul. In them I find my God and Father in his covenant-engagements, all pledged in faithfulness to his dear Son, to be the everlasting and unchanging portion of his redeemed. Oh! what unknown, what unspeakable blessedness do I find in that one promise: "I will be their God, and they shall be my people!" Here also I find Christ and his fulness; the Holy Ghost and his graces; the whole covenant and its rich promises: all secured, made over, and co-operating to the assurance of salvation! And how then can thy word, Lord, wherein thou hast caused

me to hope, be otherwise than “the joy and rejoicing of my heart?” I have Jesus in all, and his promises in all, and therefore can never fail of all that is here engaged, since all the promises of God in Christ “are yea and amen!” Oh! then, let thy word continue “as a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path,” which will shine all the way through, even to lighten up the dark valley of the shadow of death, until I come “to dwell in the house of my God for ever!” (The Poor Man’s Evening Portion).

God's Word provides the nourishment  
We need to have if we're to grow;  
But if we do not feast on it,  
Vitality we'll never know.  
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## **C H Spurgeon - Jeremiah 15:16 ([Hidden Manna](#))**

### **I. A MEMORABLE DISCOVERY.** What is meant by finding God's words?

1. A thing found has usually to be sought for. Happy is he who reads or hears the Scriptures, searching all the while for the hidden spiritual sense (Proverbs 2:4, 5).
2. To find God's Word means that we have been made to understand them (1 Corinthians 3:14). The Bible is a dull book till illuminated; a tantalising riddle till you get the key; but, the clue once found, it absorbs our attention, delights our intellect, and enriches our heart.
3. Means to appropriate it as belonging to yourself. Reading a will is not interesting till you find you have a part in it.

To read a will is not an interesting occupation—repetitions, legal phrases, tautologies multiplied to utter weariness; but if there be a legacy left to you in that will, no writing will be more fascinating; you will trip lightly over the lawyer’s fences and five-barred gates, and rejoice as one that findeth spoil when you reach those clauses which leave certain “messuages, tenements, and hereditaments” to yourself and heirs.

### **II. AN EAGER RECEPTION.** What is meant by eating them?

1. An eager study. Greedy for the truth. My soul hungered even to ravenousness to be fed upon the bread of heaven.

It is not “I did hear them,” for that he might have done, and yet have perished. Herod heard John gladly, and yet became his murderer. He does not say, “I did learn them by heart”—hundreds have committed chapters to memory, and were rather wearied than benefited thereby. The Scribes fought over the jots and titles of the law, but were blind leaders of the blind notwithstanding. It is not “Thy words were found, and I did repeat them,” for that he might have done as a parrot repeats language it is taught: nor is it even, “Thy words were found, and I remembered them;” for though it is an excellent thing to store truth in the memory, yet the blessed effect of the divine words comes rather to those who ponder them in their hearts.

2. Cheerful reception. My soul was in love with the Word.

I was so in love with thy word that I not merely held it, rejoiced in it, and embraced it, but I received it into my inner man.

3. An intense belief. Not questioning it, but living upon it.
4. The language means, besides, both the diligent treasuring up of the truth, and the inward digestion of the same.

### **III. THE HAPPY CONSEQUENCES.**

1. Hold the truth in its entirety and harmony, and then it will be joy to your heart.
2. The Word of God would have given no joy had he not been obedient to it.
3. Yet there are certain choice truths in God's Word, especially joy giving: the doctrine of election, to know that you are called and predestinated; and of the immutability of Divine love.

### **IV. A DISTINGUISHING TITLE.**

1. The name of the Lord of hosts was reviled in Jeremiah's day, yet he felt it an honour to be associated with the Lord in this contempt. Oh ye who love the Lord Jesus, never shun the scandal of the Cross!
2. Some do not count it a fair thing to bear the name of the Most High. It is a disgrace to any man that his Lord should die for his soul on Calvary and yet he be afraid to wear His livery.

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## THE WORD OF GOD

### RECEIVED AND INTERNALIZED

**And I ate them** - To internalize means to make part of one's nature by learning or unconscious assimilation. Jeremiah did not just taste the Word, but he **ate** the Word, which suggests he chewed it or **meditated** on the Word ("chewed the cud"). Thus he digested the Living Word and experienced a change in his heart as a result. He "internalized" God's Words and allowed their meaning to become a reality in his life, to renew his mind (Eph 4:23) and order his steps. God's Word won't force its way into our heart, but when it finds a **willing heart**, it can radically impact the way that heart sees the world, including (and especially) the adverse circumstances that we all experience. When trials and afflictions come too many people (even believers) seek answers every place EXCEPT in the Word of God, which alone provides "everything pertaining to life and godliness, through the true knowledge of Him who called us by His own glory and excellence." (2Pe 1:3-note). Jeremiah sought the Word, found the Word, ate the Word and experienced soul renewal from the Word. The Word Jeremiah ate is the same soul "food" to which every saint has access today. The question is will we seek answers and the "balm of Gilead" (Jer 8:22) in His Word? We will find answers and/or balm (a fragrant preparation used to heal or soothe) (because we will not always receive a specific answer to every question we have in this life but will always find comfort and consolation) in His Word unless we seek it. The only way to understand the Bible is to read it prayerfully in dependence on our Teacher, the Holy Spirit. God says clearly (in another context but applicable in principle) "you will seek Me and find Me, when you search for Me with all your heart." (Jeremiah 29:13) This principle is immutable because God is faithful to His Word. When we seek Him in His Word, we will find Him. And when we find Him, we will discover that He is all we need! Jesus is always enough!

Jeremiah knew that what makes the difference is not how many times he had been *through the Word*, but how many times (and/or how thoroughly) the Word had been *through him*. We can *read* the Word every day, but if we don't really *eat* it, the impact will be much less than it could be. This is why the Bible makes it so clear that "*chewing on the Word*" (**Meditation**) is a discipline God so richly blesses (Ps 1:2-note, Ps 1:3-note, Joshua 1:8-note). In **meditation** the Word becomes part of our innermost being and that's where the Spirit does His wonderful transforming work (cp 2Cor 3:18-note).

The weeping prophet's response of **relishing** God's Word stands in stark contrast with the people of Judah who were **rejecting** God's Word!

"The wise men are put to shame, They are dismayed and caught; Behold, **they have rejected** (can be translated "despised, loathed, spurned, disdained") the word of the LORD, And what kind of wisdom do they have? (Jer 8:9)

"Hear, O earth: behold, I am bringing disaster on this people, The fruit of their plans, Because they have not listened to My words, And as for My law, **they have rejected** it also. (Jer 6:19)

**Comment:** The refrain of rejecting or despising the Word of God is sadly seen repeatedly in the OT - Read 1Sa 15:23, 26; Isa 30:12, Ezek 20:24, Amos 2:4; Isa 5:24; Hosea 4:6, cp the warning in Lev 26:15-18ff Ultimately their worst rejection was of the incarnate Word - Ps 118:22! God's reaction to men's rejection is predictable (based on His righteousness) = Hos 9:17, Amos 5:21,

Jeremiah is saying in essence that God's Word was his life (Dt 32:47) and was made welcome (James 1:21-note = "in humility receive" where *receive* = **dechomai** = "*put out the welcome mat*" as for an honored guest!) just as literal food is (Dt 8:3, Mt 4:4) very welcome when our stomachs are growling! **God grant that Your Spirit make our (spiritual) stomachs groan and growl for Your precious Word of Life! Amen**

**Constable** makes a good point writing that "Jeremiah's love for the Word was a result of God's initiative-because Almighty Yahweh had called him to Himself (cf. Jeremiah 1:4-10). One of the greatest blessings God can give His servants is a hunger for His Word. If you do not have it, ask Him to give it to you. Then cultivate a taste for it (cf. 1 Peter 2:2-note)." ([Jeremiah 15 Expository Notes](#))

**R A Torrey** - We must study His words, fairly devour His words, let them sink into our thought and into our heart, keep them in our memory, obey them constantly in our life, let them shape and mold our daily life and our every act. This is really the method of **abiding in Christ**. It is through His words that Jesus imparts Himself to us.

"The Word of God will stand a thousand readings," it's been said, "and he who has gone over it most frequently is the surest of finding new wonders there."

**J Vernon McGee** says "He found his consolation in it. He ate it and he digested it and it became a part of him. Oh, how we need to get into the Word of God today. We don't need just a little surface learning of a few rules, or just a little guideline of a few steps to take. We need to digest it so that it becomes part of our being. It will bring joy and rejoicing to the heart just as it did for Jeremiah.

Only the Word of God can do this. I received a letter from a man who heard our broadcast when I was in Galatians. He heard one word: *Father*. (cp Gal 4:6) That arrested his attention. May I say to you that God is still using His Word today. Oh, how important the Word of God is! Jeremiah is in real difficulty. Remember that his hometown rejected him and got rid of him. His own family rejected him. His life is actually in danger. (Listen to Dr McGee - [Jeremiah 15 - 'Thru the Bible'](#))

Other prophets were told to eat God's Word...

Ezekiel 2:8-3:3, Now you, son of man, listen to what I am speaking to you; do not be rebellious like that rebellious house. Open your mouth and eat what I am giving you." 9 Then I looked, behold, a hand was extended to me; and lo, a scroll was in it. 10 When He spread it out before me, it was written on the front and back; and written on it were lamentations, mourning and woe. Ezek 3:1 Then He said to me, "Son of man, eat what you find; eat this scroll, and go, speak to the house of Israel." 2 So I opened my mouth, and He fed me this scroll. 3 And He said to me, "Son of man, feed your stomach, and fill your body with this scroll which I am giving you." Then I ate it, and it was sweet as honey in my mouth. (See **Ezekiel 2:8-10 Commentary**, **Ezekiel 3:1-3 Commentary**)

**Comment** - Ezekiel was to be a prophet to a rebellious people who refused to obey God, and so the first thing he was asked to do was obey. In obeying the command to eat, he immediately distinguished himself from the disobedient people to whom he was sent. And in his act of obedience, he discovered the taste of the scroll to be "sweet as honey". The same scroll that would taste so bitter to the house of Israel, tasted sweet on the prophet's tongue. There is in every act of obedience a sweet taste. Obedience as such guarantees no freedom from pain, but it does bring the satisfaction of a life fulfilled, a life pleasing to our Father (1Sa 15:22-23).

**Application** - Ezekiel came to know the "will of God" because of his willingness to humble himself to "eat" the Word of God. Are you wrestling with God's will for your life? Ezekiel's submission and reception of the LORD's word gives us a pattern by which we too can know His "good and acceptable and perfect" will in our life. Are you *in* the Word so that His Word can get *in* "your stomach and fill your soul" and by it your mind can be renewed and you will be enabled by the Spirit and the Word to "prove what the will of God" in your life? (Romans 12:2-note)

Whenever we "eat" God's word, we experience a sweetness, for God's words always contain hope. Yes, God's judgment will come upon the rebellious, but in the midst of wrath He remembers mercy and so His judgment also holds promise for those who repent and return.

Food that truly sustains in a time of trial or temptation is the "bread of life". It is often (probably usually!) in the humbling circumstances of the trials that we come to understand that man does not live by bread alone, but man lives by everything that proceeds out of the mouth of the LORD." (Dt 8:3, read Dt 8:1-5)

Let me ask you a practical question? How do you best assimilate God's Word so that it fills your body (cp Ezek 3:3 "fill your body"? Is not the most practical way to realize this objective memorization of His precious sweet truth?

## Related Resources:

### Memorizing His Word

### Meditate

### Primer on Biblical Meditation

Rev 10:9 And I went to the angel, telling him to give me the little book. And he \*said to me, "Take it, and eat it; and it will make your stomach bitter, but in your mouth it will be sweet as honey."

**Tony Garland** comments - **Take** and **eat** [labe kai kataphage], two verbs in the imperative mood: You take and you eat! The response of the mighty angel to John indicates his superior power and is intended to overcome John's reluctance to touch, much less take, this important book held in the hands of such a mighty being.

**Eat** is from *katesthiō* meaning: "Consume, devour, swallow." The emphasis is upon John completely consuming what he is given to eat. Eating God's Word is a frequent theme of Scripture and indicates the acceptance, digesting of, meditating upon, and sustenance derived from that which is eaten (Jer 15:16). Job declared, "I have not departed from the commandment of His lips; I have treasured the words of His mouth more than my necessary food" (Job 23:12). Jesus, the Word of God, referred to Himself as the Bread of Life (John 6:27-35, 48). In the same way that God made Israel dependent upon manna, so too are His servants to be dependent upon his Word. John was told to eat prophetic revelation much like that of Ezekiel.

**it will make your stomach bitter-** Bitter is **pikraino**, used "Of honey when wormwood is mixed." How well this describes God's prophetic Word! It is honey for the *obedient*, but mixed with wormwood (Rev. 8:11) in the face of *disobedience*. This is the very essence of the Word of God. For those who follow it, it is the **Word of Life** (Phil 2:15, 1Jn 1:1). For those who reject it, it is the **Word of Death**. This dual nature of God's Word was understood by Paul (2Cor. 2:14-16) The **bitterness** would develop after John had tasted its sweetness, when its contents were fully digested. "*There was sweetness in the assurance that the prayers of God's Israel, Who had 'cried day and night unto Him,' were about to be answered.*" But the mature student of God's prophetic Word will come to appreciate its **bitterness**. The new believer, excited by the prospect of God's intervention into history, readily exults in God's prophetic program, but often fails to appreciate the alternate aspect of the fulfillment of God's promises—the eternal damnation of those who have not yet trusted in Christ. The **bitterness** which John will experience is an appreciation of God's grace and mercy and the realization that in the completion of the mystery of God, judgment will have overcome the current age of mercy resulting in the eternal loss of countless persons who continue in their rejection of God. For undoubtedly the book contains "lamentations and mourning and woe" (Ezekiel 2:10). ([A Testimony of Jesus Christ - Revelation 10 Commentary](#) = **best commentary on Revelation available anywhere in my humble opinion!**)

Think of your Bible as like a table, spilling over with nourishing "soul" food, spiritual nutrition we desperately need to devour and digest daily. And this rich fare is not boring for it includes promises, instruction, wisdom, comfort, and encouragement. Like any good host, God tells us, "Come and get it!" Yet sadly, we often fail to heed His Spirit's urging. We depend on everything but Him and wonder why our faith is feeble and our steadfastness unsteady! We need to remember that...

**The Bible is bread for daily use,  
Not cake for special occasions.**

Chew on the following passages which metaphorically allude to God's Word as food or nourishment for our souls - Deut 8:3 Job 23:12-note Ps 119:103 Ezek 2:8-note Ezek 3:1-note Mt 4:4 1Pe 2:2-note, Ps 19:10, 11-note, Heb 5:14-note) What wisdom, consolation, encouragement, etc, do we even have to speak to any person, unless we eat God's Holy Word and He speaks to us and through us?

Jeremiah was like the man who wrote "When I get a little money I buy books; and if any is left I buy food and clothes."

Henry Morris - To the believing remnant in time of suffering, God's Word is "my necessary food" (Job 23:12-note), for there is no nourishment in the "wisdom of the world" which shall "come to nought" (1 Corinthians 2:6).

Do you just nibble at the Word? Is it just "snack" food? Digest, Assimilate and make the Word part of your very being.

**Adrian Rogers** - Oh, how sweet are the promises and the truths of God's Word.

Oh, how bitter when we see the great judgments that are coming.

The Gospel indeed is a two-edged sword. It speaks of glory and grief.

**James Smith** - Observe that in this verse we have both "words" and "Word." In words most certainly we have the written Word, which we now know as the Bible; but surely in Word we have the Living Word, the Lord Jesus. The Living Word, the Lord Jesus, is found in the Written Word, the Bible. Note what we find in this verse:

- I. Inspiration—"Thy Words."
- II. Searching—"Found."
- III. Satisfaction—"Eat them."
- IV. Rejoicing—"The Joy."
- V. Privilege—"I am called."
- VI. Separation—"I sat not" (Jer 15:17).
- VII. Testimony—"I sat alone" (Jer 15:17).

The Word of God is always sweet to the taste of faith. While we feed on the Word of God faith itself will be fed, for faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God (Rom. 10:17).

**Warren Wiersbe** - How well I remember the day my doctor looked at me and said, "Reverend, you will not eat any more sweets." I've learned to do without desserts, but there's one sweet I cannot do without--God's Word: "How sweet are Your words to my taste, sweeter than honey to my mouth!" (Psalm 119:103). Is the Word of God like honey or medicine to you? The way some people treat

it, you'd think it is castor oil. True, there are times when we need the healing medicine of the Scripture. But the Bible is much more than medicine. It also is honey. Having an appetite for God's Word is one sign that a person is truly born again, for the Bible is food for the soul. Job said, "I have treasured the words of His mouth more than my necessary food" (Job 23:12). Jeremiah said, "Your words were found, and I ate them, and Your word was to me the joy and rejoicing of my heart" (Jer. 15:16). Jesus said, "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God" (Matt. 4:4). And Peter urges us to "desire the pure milk of the word" (1 Pet. 2:2). When people are sick, their appetites change—in fact, they often lose their appetites completely. Likewise, sin in our lives robs our spiritual appetite, and we lose our desire for the Word. May we always have an appetite for the sweetness of the Word of God, even when we have to read things that convict us. That first bite of Scripture may taste sour sometimes, but it will turn sweet. It's important to feed your soul a proper diet. Do you feed and nourish on God's Word? The Bible is sweet to those who love it. Learn it and live it. (Prayer, Praises and Promises)

**A W Pink on eating the Word** - Meditation stands to reading—as digestion does to eating. It is as God's Word is pondered by the mind, turned over and over in the thoughts, and mixed with faith—that we assimilate it. That which most occupies the mind and most constantly engages our thoughts—is what we most "delight" in. ([The Counsel of the Wicked](#))

**Warren Wiersbe** - Meditation. Meditation is to the inner person what digestion is to the outer person: it makes the truth a part of our very being. We must welcome the Scriptures joyfully as a gift from God and not treat the Bible like any other book (1Th. 2:13). Other books can instruct the mind, but the Bible also nurtures and strengthens the heart (Matt. 4:4; Jer. 15:16). To meditate means to think over the passage, to relate it to other passages, and to apply it to our own lives. I enjoy tracing the cross-references and seeing how Scripture explains Scripture. Since the Word of the Lord is our spiritual food, we must have a balanced diet and not linger only in the books and passages we love the most. Adoration. When we are blessed by the Scriptures, we must lift our hearts and worship the Lord. "I will praise You with uprightness of heart, when I learn Your righteous judgments" (Ps. 119:7). The Bible and worship go together (Col. 3:16–17), and as we are filled with the Word of God, we grow in our worship of God. We don't worship the Bible; we worship the God who gave us the Bible. Application. "Be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves" (James 1:22). The only Scripture that really goes to work in our lives and helps us grow is that which we obey. We can sit at the dinner table and admire the various foods, but if we don't eat what is set before us, we will never benefit from the meal. It isn't enough to read the recipe. We must chew, swallow, and digest the food, which means reading the Scriptures, meditating on them, and obeying what God tells us to do. (OT Words for Today)

**Beth Moore** - Try Jeremiah's approach while you're at it. Don't just read God's Words. Receive them like a famished man at a feast. Whether we imagine inhaling it or devouring it, "let the word of Christ dwell in [us] richly" (Col. 3:16). Ask God to cause it to abide in you and bring its properties of effervescent life, power, and effectiveness with it. How about something moving into your life with some positive baggage for a change? Believe God to accomplish and achieve something eternal and intentional through your Scripture meditation every single day. Grow in confidence that every word abiding in you is having powerful effects. The primary reason God's Word can have such an effect on a believer's daily life is its vital association with the Holy Spirit. When we receive Christ as our Savior, the actual Spirit of Christ or the One we call the Holy Spirit takes up residency in us. In the same way that sin quenches the Holy Spirit within us, Scripture quickens the Holy Spirit within us. In fact, when we are filled with the Holy Spirit by yielding to His lordship and we read and receive God's Word, something virtually supernatural takes place. You might think of it as internal combustion. Let me explain: In Jeremiah 23:29, God said, "Is not my word like fire...?" As we draw from this parallel, relating something we can't quite understand to something we can, picture the Holy Spirit like a flammable substance within us. Because oil was often associated with anointing in the Word, many scholars believe oil symbolized the Holy Spirit. For the sake of our analogy, let's imagine the Holy Spirit as flammable oil within us. Now, imagine this oil flooding us completely as we seek and receive by faith the filling of God's Holy Spirit. Next, imagine taking the torch of God's Word and combining it with the oil of the Holy Spirit. What is the result? The consuming fire of our God blazes within us, bringing supernatural energy, glorious activity, and pure, unadulterated power. If you like formulas, this is one I believe you can count on: The Spirit of truth + the Word of truth = internal combustion. Sometimes I actually feel the Holy Spirit within me quickening to the Word of God as I study it, mix it with faith, and pray to absorb it. Even when I don't feel a thing, I count on super-natural fireworks within. God says His Word is alive and powerful, and I believe Him. He also says His Word is alive and powerful when it's in me. Me: a bundle of faults, fears, and insecurities. Just think! My weakness is not strong enough to wound God's Word. Neither is yours. God does His job. He speaks to accomplish. We don't have to make Him. We just need to let Him. (Believing God)

**Ivan Steeds** - Jeremiah speaks to God about the sustenance he finds in His word, 15:16. God's words—the plural form suggests the value of the smallest detail—are his source of edification (for he ate them), his enjoyment, and his encouragement, confirming the deep assurance that he belonged to Jehovah. When the ministry to which God calls us seems painful and apparently fruitless, let us turn to Him and find succour in His unfailing words of truth. As the word calls us to prayer, so prayer will drive us back to the word. (Day by Day in Prayer)

**Stewart Custer** - EAT - "Thy words were found, and I did eat them; and thy word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of mine heart: for

I am called by thy name, O Lord God of hosts" (Jer. 15:16). Eating and digesting God's Word are one of the believer's great joys. Concerning physical food the Lord Jesus said, "Therefore take no thought, saying, What shall we eat?" (Matt. 6:31). "But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you" (Matt. 6:33). But He also said, "Blessed is he that shall eat bread in the kingdom of God" (Luke 14:15). He also said to the church of Ephesus, "To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life which is in the midst of the paradise of God" (Rev. 2:7). (Wonderful Words)

**Cyril Hocking** - In spite of the prophet's sorrow and sadness, his appreciation of God's Word became a source of strength, Jer 15:16. We can link Jeremiah's joy in the Word of the Lord with the experience of the blessed man of Psalm 1:1–2. In God's Word the prophet found an oasis of delight in a desert of despair. Notice his sense of acquisition: "Thy words were found". Jeremiah was a seeker—he sought for appropriate consolation in his sadness. By seeking, he found. It is noticeable that the Word of God furnished, not only the burden of judgment, but the basis of joy. He assimilated that which he found; the Word became his food and sustenance, sweet to his soul. His appreciation developed, and he was satisfied deeply in his heart. Spiritual growth and prosperity are always the outcome of the appropriation of the Word of God to our own circumstances. (Day by Day Through the OT)

**J C Philpot - October 16 - Jeremiah 15:16** - There is a sweetness in the promises which captivates the heart; a beauty in Christ which wins the soul; a saving unction and power in the word of God, when applied, which draws forth toward it every secret and sacred affection. Can you not sometimes look up and say, "Blessed Jesus, I do love you?" And when the word of God is opened up, applied, and made sweet and precious, have you not felt sometimes as if you could kiss the sacred page, as conveying such sweetness into your soul? This is embracing a promise in love--throwing our arms round it, drawing it near to our breast, kissing it again and again with kisses of love and affection, and taking that sweet delight in it with which the bridegroom rejoices over the bride, as now all his own--at times almost lost, but now wooed and won, no more to be parted. This is rejoicing in the word of God, delighting in a blessed Jesus and in the promises which testify of, and center in him. Have you not felt these sweet embracements in your soul of the truth as it is in Jesus as so precious, so suitable, so encouraging, and so adapted to every need and woe? Then you are a believer; then you are a child of God; then there is a work of grace upon your heart; then you know the truth for yourself by divine teaching and divine testimony. You may still not have had that full deliverance, that blessed revelation, that overpowering manifestation whereby all your doubts and fears have been swept away, and your soul settled in a firm enjoyment of the liberty of the gospel. You may have had it or may have had it not. But if you have this character stamped upon you that you have seen the promises afar off and been persuaded of them, and embraced them in faith, hope, and love, you have a mark of being a partaker of the faith of God's elect. ([October 1](#))

**C H Spurgeon** - Eat into the very soul of the Bible - Jeremiah 15:16 - Oh, that you and I might get into the very heart of the Word of God — and get that Word into ourselves! As I have seen the silkworm eat into the leaf, and consume it — so ought we to do with the Word of the Lord — not crawl over its surface, but eat right into it until we have taken it into our inmost parts! It is idle merely to let the eye glance over the words, or to recollect the poetic expressions, or the historic facts; but it is blessed to eat into the very soul of the Bible until, at last ... you come to talk in Scriptural language, your very life is fashioned upon Scripture models, and, what is better still, your mind is flavored with the words of the Lord.

**Thomas Watson** - The Scripture is a golden love-letter, written by the Holy Spirit — and sent to us from Heaven!

The Scripture is a spiritual looking-glass, to dress our souls by. It shows us heart-sins, vain thoughts, unbelief, etc. It not only shows us our spots — but washes them away!

The Scripture is an armory, out of which we may fetch spiritual artillery to fight against Satan. When our Savior was tempted by the devil, He fetched armor and weapons from Scripture: "It is written!"

The Scripture is a panacea, or universal remedy for the soul. It can cure ...

deadness of heart, Psalm 119:50;

pride, 1 Peter 5:5; and

infidelity, John 3:36.

It is a garden of remedies, where we may gather an herb or antidote, to expel the poison of sin!

The Scripture is "the only standard of conduct." It is the only rule by which we are to square our lives. It contains in it:

all things needful to salvation;

what duties we are to do;

what sins we are to avoid.

"When your Words came, I ate them; they were my joy and my heart's delight!" Jeremiah 15:16. All true solid comfort is fetched out

of the Word. The Word is a spiritual garden, and the promises are the fragrant flowers or spices in this garden. How should we delight to walk among these beds of spices!

The Scripture is a sovereign elixir, or comfort, in an hour of distress. "Your promise revives me — it comforts me in all my troubles!" Psalm 119:50

If we would have the Scripture effectual, let us labor not only to have the light of it in our heads, but its power in our hearts!

"I have hidden your Word in my heart, that I might not sin against you." Psalm 119:11. The Word, locked up in the heart — is a preservative against sin. As one would carry an antidote with him when he comes near an infected place — so David carried the Word in his heart as a sacred antidote to preserve him from the infection of sin.

When we read the holy Scriptures — let us look up to God for a blessing. Let us pray that God would not only give us His Word as a rule of holiness — but His grace as a principle of holiness! It is said, that the alchemist can draw oil out of iron. Truly, God's Spirit can produce grace in the most obdurate heart! ([A panacea!](#))

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**M R De Haan II - TAKING TIME TO DIGEST YOUR MEAL** - "Your words were found, and I ate them, and Your word was to me the joy and rejoicing of my heart; for I am called by Your name, O Lord God of hosts" (Jer. 15:16).

A delicious meal is not very appealing if you experience indigestion afterward. Slowing the intake of the Word through careful reflection is also essential.

When encountering the pages of the Bible, it is so easy to skim over a given passage without seeing its significance. But the prophet Jeremiah, with his deep love for the Word of God, made it his first priority. The Hebrew word translated "were found" means both "to acquire and secure" and "to encounter and meet." When looking at a passage, we should slow down and acquaint ourselves with the text until it becomes secured in our soul.

The passage then refers to one of the most enjoyable aspects of the culinary experience actually eating the food. The word eat can mean "devouring, consuming food" as well as "burning fuel like a fire." When we begin to "chew" on a passage we begin to taste the wonderful spiritual flavors it contains.

Have you ever been hungry and found yourself sitting down to a wide range of entrees with distinctive flavors? As your stomach begins to fill with protein, fat, and carbohydrates, you actually begin to feel a lifting of your mood emotionally. Jeremiah felt a rush of "joy and rejoicing" as he ingested God's Word into his heart. The word the prophet used for "heart" means "the inner man, thinking, reflection at the seat of appetites." The Word of God nourishes our thoughts and emotions, and brings joy.

The foundation for delighting in feeding on God's Word can be seen in the concluding section of this small but meaningful verse: "I am called by Your name, O Lord God of hosts." To Jeremiah, meaningful time in God's Word is always tied to our relationship with Him. In our devotional time, we become aware once again that we are called by the eternally existing Lord of heaven and earth. And this realization transforms our spiritual dryness into a dynamic encounter with the One who created us for fellowship with Him.

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### **James MacDonald - Eat the Word**

Your words were found, and I ate them, and your words became to me a joy and the delight of my heart, for I am called by your name, O Lord, God of hosts. —Jeremiah 15:16

The last time you had a Bible in your hands, how did you handle it? Did you casually flip it open to a suggested passage or quickly fan the pages using the headings as your guide? Maybe you had to check the table of contents—or perhaps the truth is, you held the Bible but didn't open it.

Whatever your story, do you know how to find the joy and delight promised us in Scripture? Jeremiah's testimony can help you move from treating the Bible as just another book, to treasuring it for what it is—God's Word. What was his approach to the Scriptures? Jeremiah said, "I ate them."

In Jeremiah's day, God's Word was handwritten on leather scrolls and painstakingly copied. In times of spiritual decline these scrolls were sometimes misplaced. When Jeremiah wrote, "Your words were found," he was probably remembering the incident during King Josiah's reign when the lost books of Moses were discovered in the neglected Temple in Jerusalem (2 Kings 22). It's easy to wonder, How could people actually misplace the Scriptures? The more important question is, Where is your Bible right now?

An open Bible is a meal spread before you. On every page there is nourishment prepared and provided by God for you. Do you want God's Word to become a joy and delight in your heart? Have you discovered for yourself how it can satisfy your deepest hunger? Here are some steps that will help you get increasingly more from Scripture.

Discipline yourself to get into God's Word. It may feel like you're working out on a treadmill. In the beginning, it will take getting up earlier or altering your schedule in some way. You will have to consciously decide to open and read God's Word attentively. Stay at it for at least thirty days. At this point, the benefits won't always be obvious. You will mostly be aware that you are making a deliberate effort.

You will know discipline is working when it gives way to desire. God is honoring your willingness to get into His Word daily. You will find yourself increasingly longing for Scripture (Psalm 42:1). If you miss a day, you will notice and wonder how you lived without it. Expect at least another thirty days in this phase. You will discover firsthand the impact of regular time in God's Word.

Beyond discipline and desire you will find delight. Jeremiah 15:16 will become your own experience. When you begin to delight in God's Word, the time spent in Scripture will be the best part of your days. And the effects will seep into every part of your life as you find His truth running continually in the background of your thoughts.

Discipline, desire, and delight could be less than 60 days away for you. These are choices you can make and steps you can take that God will use to change your life. And they never need to end—the longer you walk with Jesus Christ, the more you will find Him leading you through these stages in your lifetime, as He takes you deeper into His Word and all He has for you.

Journal - What do you need to change in order to commit to the discipline of daily Bible reading for the next month, perhaps reading one of the 31 chapters of Proverbs each day?

How do you think the rest of your life would be affected if you were discovering joy and delight in God's Word?

Pray - Lord, I want my experience to echo Jeremiah's testimony. I know that joy, delight, and much more are waiting for me in Your Word. But I also recognize a pattern of inconsistency and even resistance to regular times in Scripture. Help me remember what You have promised to those who will read and apply what You have written. Remind me that the meal is before me, but I must choose to eat Your words. Give me a hunger for what You want to say to me. In Jesus' name, amen. ([Eat the Word - Devotional - James MacDonald Bible Teaching - Walk in the Word](#))

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**Pastor Ed Rea** - Jeremiah is saying, 'I read your word LORD, believed You and it changed my heart.' Several have suggested that the slang phrase, 'soul food' is a great picture of what God's word really is to the believer. We recognize that God's word provides the nourishment that disciples of Jesus need if we're to grow. As we slowly digest and absorb the word of God through quiet reflection in our hearts, we receive needed nutrition to face the new day. Wise believers down through the ages have prayed and asked God to continually give them an increasing desire, hunger, and taste for His word. In the New Testament the Apostle Peter tells us to, 'Therefore, laying aside all malice, all deceit, hypocrisy, envy, and all evil speaking, as newborn babes, desire the pure milk of the word, that you may grow thereby,' (1 Peter 2:1-2) We read an old story of a Scottish pastor in a mining area, who called on a believer who was a miner. It was late in the afternoon, and the miner, having returned from the pit, bathed and changed his clothes, was busy poring over his well-worn Bible. 'Well, John, where are you gleaning today?' asked his visitor. 'In Romans 8,' was John's reply. Several weeks later the pastor again called at the miner's cottage and found him, as usual, studying his Bible, and still at Romans 8. 'Why, John, you were digging into that chapter when I came to see you some weeks ago,' he said. The miner's reply was, 'Aye, sir, I'm sinking a shaft here.' Reformer Martin Luther said, "The Bible is alive, it speaks to me, it has feet, it runs after me; it has hands, it lays hold of me." "LORD, please give us a greater hunger for Your word this day and in the days ahead we ask in Jesus' name." ([Pastor Ed's Devotional -- Jeremiah 15-16](#))

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**Cecil Thompson** - Is there a solution to overcome the problem of our heartache and despair? Well, according to today's Scripture, joy and delight come from devouring God's Word. That means more than simply reading His Word---we need to memorize it and meditate on it as well. Back in 1910 an evangelist by the name of Luther Bridgers was traveling to preach the Word. His wife and three boys stayed with her parents while he was away. One night while she was there, the house caught on fire and Bridger's wife and three sons died in the flames. When word of the tragedy reached Rev. Bridgers he was crushed. He immediately went to the Lord in prayer and allowed Him to do what no human counselor could do. After a time, he felt the joy that only the Lord can give. He knew that he would see his family again when he went to be with the Lord. As he felt the healing strength of the Lord pour over him and fill him with a joy that the world can never know, he penned the words to a song that has filled many of us with hope across the years.

"THERE'S WITHIN MY HEART A MELODY"

There's within my heart a melody

Jesus whispers sweet and low,

"Fear not I am with thee, Peace, be still

in all of life's ebb and flow."

(Refrain) Jesus, Jesus, Jesus, Sweetest name I know.

Fills my every longing, Keeps me singing as I go.

Though sometimes he leads through waters deep,

trials fall across the way,

though sometimes the path seems rough and steep,

see his footprints all the way.

(Refrain)

Soon he's coming back to welcome me

far beyond the starry sky;

I shall wing my flight to worlds unknown;

I shall reign with him on high.

(Refrain)

Is there a melody in your heart today? Are you fractured, broken, full of suffering and pain? In the midst of the stormy seas of life there comes One who is able to give joy and peace in the midst of our turmoil. ([Where's My Joy- - Jeremiah 15:16](#))

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**Vance Havner** - Wine or Vinegar? Thy word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of mine heart. Jeremiah 15:16. Maclaren speaks of the "perverse ingenuity... of that state of mind in which some manage to distil for themselves a bitter vinegar of self-accusation out of grand words in the Bible that were meant to afford them but the wine of gladness and of consolation." The Spirit does indeed use the Word to convict the guilty and uneasy conscience, but, on the other hand, the Accuser may so beset us that Scriptures meant to give us assurance may but make us miserable. The devil is the author of a false confidence but he also generates a false diffidence, so that we get vinegar out of what should be wine to our souls. If you have definitely committed all you are and have to God, do not be afraid to enjoy the wine of the Word. Do not cultivate a perverted taste that distills vinegar instead.

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**Henry Blackaby** - Rejoicing in God's Word - Jer 15:16 - If you were to receive a note from the leader of your country or someone famous, you would probably save it as a keepsake. How much more precious is a message from almighty God!

Sometimes we find ourselves in circumstances that are beyond our control. This was the case for Mary and Martha as they were grieving the death of their brother Lazarus. At these times a word from Jesus can bring much rejoicing (John 11:41–45). Other times when Jesus speaks, His words bring correction. "Get behind Me, Satan!" (Matt. 16:23) and "O you of little faith" (Matt. 14:31) do not seem to bring joy. Yet Jeremiah said that God's word brought him joy.

It is overwhelming to consider that holy, almighty God would speak directly to us! What a privilege that He would care enough to challenge our destructive thoughts or practices. No matter whether His words are praising us or chastising us, we ought to consider it joy to receive life-changing words from our Master!

Every time we prepare to worship the Lord, we ought to do so with anticipation that almighty God may have something to say to us. Whenever we open our Bibles, we should expect that God has something to tell us in our time with Him. We ought to be far more concerned with what God will say to us during our prayer times than with what we intend to tell Him.

When you receive a word from your Lord, whether it be of praise or of correction, consider it joy that almighty God would speak to you. (Experiencing God Day by Day)

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### **Rob Morgan - Joy Increases as We Grasp God's Word**

So God breathes the air of joy, He created the universe with an atmosphere of joy, He shares with us the oxygen of joy, and He expects us to worship Him with joy. We should be breathing it in every day. Perhaps you're saying, "Well, I need some breathing lessons." One of the ways we learn to breathe the oxygen of joy is by studying and grasping the truths of God's Word. Over and over again in the Bible, a life of joy is linked to a life of Bible study. It's the truth of God's Word and the power of His Promises that opens the windows and freshens the air of the soul.

- The prophet Jeremiah, who was melancholy by nature and who lived in truly tragic times said: Your words were found, and I ate

them, and Your Word was to me the joy and rejoicing of my heart—Jeremiah 15:16 (NKJV).

- In John 15:11 (NKJV), Jesus told His disciples: These things I have spoken to you, that My joy may remain in you, and that your joy may be full.
- Nehemiah 8:12 says: Then all the people went away to eat and drink, to send portions of food and to celebrate with great joy, because they now understood the words that had been made known to them, referring to Ezra's teaching of the Law and of the Word of God.
- Psalm 19:8 says: The precepts of the Lord are right, giving joy to the heart.
- And Psalm 119:111-112 says: Your statutes are my heritage forever; they are the joy of my heart. My heart is set on keeping Your decrees to the very end.

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**Eating Words** - I read about an Australian woman who developed a craving for paper. She began her unusual diet as a child, and as she grew older she ate as many as 10 tissues and a half page of the newspaper every day. The woman had also consumed small quantities of blotting paper, sheets from exercise books, and petty cash vouchers.

Of course, there's no relationship between that woman's strange habit and the symbolic actions of the prophet Ezekiel. His eating of a scroll was meant to illustrate a spiritual exercise that all of us should engage in. If we are to declare God's truth with meaning and power, we must take time to let it fill our hearts. We need to feel the implications of what God has said. We are to let His Word become a vital part of us so that we can't talk about it glibly as uninvolved, detached students, but as those who have personally "tasted" it.

The actual words and thoughts of God are revealed in the Bible. Don't just read them and repeat them. Think them. Feel them. Ask the Lord to clarify them, to make them a part of your experience, and to teach you.

Yes, today's Bible reading contains a profound principle: We must "eat" the Word before we speak it. Maybe then we won't have to eat our own words later on. —Mart De Haan (Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries)

Lord, teach us from Your holy Word  
The truth that we must know;  
And help us share the joyous news  
Of blessings You bestow.  
—D. De Haan

**Let God's Word fill your mind,  
rule your heart,  
and guide your steps.**

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**DIGESTING THE WORD** - King James is famous for the Bible translation that bears his name. Around the same time as the printing of the Bible, he also made revisions to The Book of Common Prayer. Still used today, this guide to intercession and worship contains a marvelous prayer for internalizing the Bible: "Blessed Lord, who hast caused all holy Scriptures to be written for our learning; grant that we may ... hear them, read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest them, that by patience, and comfort of [Your] holy Word, we may embrace and ever hold fast the blessed hope of everlasting life."

Many centuries earlier, Jeremiah the prophet expressed a similar way of letting the Scriptures nourish our hearts: "Your words were found, and I ate them; and Your Word was to me the joy and rejoicing of my heart: for I am called by Your name, O Lord God of hosts" (Jer. 15:16). We internalize the Word as we "read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest" a passage of Scripture through prayerful meditation.

Ask the Lord to help you apply the Bible to your heart today. Take time to ponder the meat and milk of the Word (Heb. 5:12). As you quiet your heart, God will teach you about Himself through His Book.

Lord, I meditate on Your precepts and contemplate  
Your ways. I delight myself in Your statutes;  
I will not forget Your Word. Open my eyes that  
I may see wondrous things from Your law.

Some books are to be tasted, others to be swallowed,  
and some few to be chewed and digested.

—Bacon

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**WHAT DID HE SAY?** - Because our son Steve spent most of his teen years connected to a cell phone, it was a bit of a shock for us when we couldn't talk with him for long periods of time after he joined the US Navy. First at boot camp and later while he trained as a hospital corpsman, we endured long periods of time without any communication. So it was a treat whenever we finally did hear from him.

After one of us would get his call, the first question from the other was always, "What did he say?" We hung on every word to hear how he was doing, what he was thinking, and what the Navy was planning for him.

It's natural to respond like this to the words of those who are important to us. We eagerly anticipate hearing from them.

Are we like that with the Word of God? Are we eager to communicate with Him—to look carefully into His Book to ask, "What did He say?" Unlike the infrequent calls from a son in the military, God's words of encouragement and guidance are always available to us. We just have to listen.

The prophet Jeremiah prayed, "Your words were found, and I ate them, and Your word was to me the joy and rejoicing of my heart" (Jer. 15:16). Do you have that same longing to hear God speak to you through His Word?

Thy Word is a lamp to my feet,  
A light to my path alway  
To guide and to save me from sin  
And show me the heavenly way.  
—Anon.

**We cannot know the heart of God  
unless we have a heart for God.**

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**HEART FOOD** - I love food! I love to see it beautifully presented, and I love to savor the taste. If it were up to me, I would eat more often than I should—although it wouldn't help my waistline! So, it's a good thing my wife, Martie, knows when to lovingly remind me to eat healthful foods in the right amount.

Reading Jeremiah's interesting thought—that when he found the words of God (even the words of God's judgment) he "ate them" (Jer. 15:16)—makes me wonder if I ingest God's Word as eagerly, as lovingly, and as often.

Clearly, Jeremiah did not actually eat God's Word. It was his way of saying that he read and savored it in his innermost being. And that's exactly where God's Word is intended to go. The Word is heart food! When we ingest it, the Holy Spirit provides the power to help us grow to be more like Jesus. His Word transforms how we think about God, money, enemies, careers, and family. In other words, it's really good for us.

So, "eat" God's Word to your heart's content! No doubt you will find yourself agreeing with the prophet Jeremiah when he said: "Your word was to me the joy and rejoicing of my heart" (Jer 15:16).

Lord, cultivate in me an appetite for Your Word.  
Thank You that the Bible is food for my soul. Lead  
me to read it, to savor it, to ingest it, and to know  
the strength that Your words can give to my often-failing heart.

**The more you feast on God's Word,  
the healthier you will become.**

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**Social Stomachs** - Honey ants survive in difficult times by depending on certain members of their group, known as "honey pots." They take in so much nectar that they swell into "little round berries" hardly able to move. When food and water become scarce, they act as "social stomachs" and sustain the entire ant colony by dispensing what they have stored in their own bodies.

Similarly, the messenger of God must fill his heart and mind with the truths of Scripture. Only as he is faithful to apply the Word of God to his own life can he honestly give its nourishing encouragement and exhortation to help others.

The Lord told the prophet Ezekiel to eat a scroll that contained a message full of "lamentations and mourning and woe" (Ezek. 2:10). Because he was submissive to the Lord and applied the lesson to his own heart first, he could boldly present the life-giving message to all who would listen.

As believers, we too must develop a "social stomach" by digesting the truths of the Bible and allowing the Spirit of God to make them a part of our lives. Then, filled with God's Word, we can speak effectively to others in need. --M R De Haan II (Our Daily Bread)

After I have eaten, Lord,  
And on Your Word have fed,  
Help me share with others from  
Your precious, living bread.  
--DJD

**Before we can serve the Bread of Life to others,  
We must feast on it ourselves.**

## **THE WORD OF GOD: A JOY PRODUCER!**

**And Thy Words became for me a joy** - Beloved, don't miss this! While the Holy Spirit is not mentioned, rest assured Jeremiah is describing fruit that could only be borne as the Spirit takes the Word and brings forth life (Jn 6:63), in this case manifest as supernatural joy, a sense of exultation, rejoicing, gladness. It has to be supernatural because Jeremiah's circumstances were anything but joy filled! (see Gal 5:22-**note**)

**Joy** ([08342](#))(**sason**) means joy, gladness, rejoicing, mirth. In the OT it almost universally speaks of human happiness and abounding delight. The Lxx translates it here with the noun **euphrosune** (from **eu** = well, + **phren** = mind) which literally is "well minded" and then of good cheer, mirth, merriment. Euphrosune is used in Acts 2:28 in the sentence "Thou wilt make me full of **gladness** with Thy presence." Here in Jeremiah the gladness is the result of being in the "presence" of "Thy Word." It follows that if we would have joy like Jeremiah, we would seek His presence in and through His Word. Yes, His Word is for our transformation, but it is also for our joy and gladness. If your "joy quotient" is low, run to His Word, asking His Spirit to unveil the presence of the Lord in His Word. You will experience a renewal of supernatural joy in the presence of Jesus (cp Ps 16:11).

David makes a statement similar to Jeremiah in Ps 19:8 = The precepts of the LORD are right, **rejoicing** the heart.

**The Living Bible** (TLB) paraphrases Jeremiah 15:16 - "Your words are what sustain me; they are food to my hungry soul. They bring joy to my sorrowing heart and delight me. How proud I am to bear Your Name, O Lord."

**Chuck Smith** - Can you say that of God's Word? To me it is the joy and rejoicing. How I love the Word of God! How I enjoy finding beautiful truths in God's Word that minister to my spirit and my soul. It's the joy and rejoicing of my heart. Just to get into the Word and to read and study it, sort of devour it. And here's Jeremiah saying, "I found Your Word and I devoured it and it was the joy and the rejoicing of my heart."

**Dictionary of Bible Imagery** - In summary, joy is experienced through God's means of grace in the midst of life. Knowledge of God's Word produces joy (Ps 19:8; 119:16, 111, 162, 165; Jer 15:16), worship evokes it (Ps 42:4; 43:4; 46:4; 71:23; 100:1; Lk 24:52; Jas 5:13), obedience discovers it (Ps 32:11; 64:10; 68:3; 69:32; 87:1-5; 97:11; 119:1; Prov 10:28; 13:9; 29:6) and work fosters it (Deut 12:18; Ezra 6:22; Eccles 2:24, 25). The Bible describes the "deep power of joy" by demonstrating it to be more powerful, more constant and more enduring than adverse circumstances (Jn 16:20-32; Acts 16:25, 34; Rom 14:17; 2 Cor 6:10; 7:4; 8:2; 12:10; Phil 4:4). In fact the Bible urges Christians to be joyful when suffering persecution for the faith, (Lk 6:22, 23) because in it they identify with their Savior (1 Pet 4:13). Every trial is an opportunity for joy, because it furthers the Christian's sanctification (Jas 1:2; 1 Pet 1:8). The Bible not only exhorts people of faith to find joy in suffering, it says that God will give joy at the end of difficulty as a foretaste of the final redemption (Ps 30:5, 11, 12; 51:8; 53:6; 85:6; 126:5, 6; Is 35:1, 2, 10). Joy is the believer's strength in the midst of affliction (Neh 8:10-12; Ps 28:7).

Let the words of the great saint Isaac Watts be the prayer of our heart ([Read his full poem "The Excellency of the Bible](#)

[Demonstrated"\)...](#)

Then let me love my Bible more  
And take a fresh delight  
By day to read these wonders o'er  
And meditate by night.  
--Isaac Watts

**And the delight** (KJV = rejoicing) (Ps 1:2-note Ps 19:10 Ps 119:16, 24, 35, 47,48, 72, 92, 97,103, 111, 113, 127, 159,167,174): nothing could be more agreeable. Describes David coming into the city dancing with "simchah" 1Sa 18:6, 1Ki 1:40 When Solomon appointed king over Israel and the festive "simchah" that accompanied.

**Is God's Word really your delight? How much time do you spend with God in His Word?** What you choose to delight in is that which gives you great pleasure and soul satisfaction. **O God grant us a genuine delight for the things that last forever (God's Word - Mt 24:35, human souls) so that enabled by Thy Spirit we might "look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen; for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal."** (2Cor 4:18)

**Holman Bible Dictionary** - The happy state that results from knowing and serving God. A number of Greek and Hebrew words are used in the Bible to convey the ideas of joy and rejoicing. We have the same situation in English with such nearly synonymous words as joy, happiness, pleasure, delight, gladness, merriment, felicity, and enjoyment. The words joy and rejoice are the words used most often to translate the Hebrew and Greek words into English. Joy is found over 150 times in the Bible. If such words as "joyous" and "joyful" are included, the number comes to over 200. The verb rejoice appears well over 200 times. Joy is the fruit of a right relation with God. It is not something people can create by their own efforts. The Bible distinguishes joy from pleasure. The Greek word for pleasure is the word from which we get our word hedonism, the philosophy of self-centered pleasure-seeking. Paul referred to false teachers as "lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God" (2 Timothy 3:4). ([Joy - Holman Bible Dictionary](#))

- [Joy - Baker's Evangelical Dictionary of Biblical Theology](#)
- [Joy - International Standard Bible Encyclopedia](#)

**Delight** (08057) (**simchah** from **samach** = to rejoice, be glad) is a feminine noun which means joy, gladness (with one's entire being as indicated by its association with the heart cf. Ex 4:14; Ps 19:8; 104:15; 105:3, soul Ps 86:4, cp verb samach in Pr 15:30 = "bright eyes gladden the heart") and refers to both the emotion and the manifestation of the emotion (Ezra 3:12, 13). Simchah refers to the reality, the experience and manifestation of joy and gladness. Joy is happiness over an unanticipated or present good. Delight or gladness in our heart comes from God (Psalm 4:7, cp 2Chr 20:27, 30:21). David prays "make me know joy and gladness (simchah)." (Ps 51:8) God desires that we serve Him with joy (Dt 28:47). Jdg 16:23 describes pagan (Philistines) rejoicing upon conquering their enemy (Israel). We see joy associated with music and/or singing (1Sa 18:6, 1Ki 1:40, 1Chr 15:16, 2Chr 23:18, 29:30). We see joy associated with willing offering from a whole heart (1Chr 29:9, 17). Joy was associated with celebration of the feast (2Chr 30:21, 23, 26, Ezra 6:22) In God's "presence is fullness of joy" (Ps 16:11). God gives a person "gladness of heart" in the labor and toil of this earthly life (Eccl. 5:20). One's wedding day is a day of rejoicing (Song 3:11). The "joy of the godless" is momentary (Job 20:5) because it depends on joy producing circumstances. Even as God can give joy, He can also take it away (Isa 16:10, Jer 7:34, Joel 1:16).

One source says simchah has as its root meaning "to shine, to be bright."

The Septuagint translates **simchah** with **chara** in Jer 15:16.

**HCSB** - Simchah, derived from samach (rejoice, be glad), reflects several of the verb's meanings, occurring 10x with it. Simchah signifies joy (Gen 31:27), rejoicing (Neh 12:43), or shout of joy (1Sam 18:6). It connotes happiness (Job 20:5), pleasure (Pr 21:17), enjoyment (Ec 8:15), celebration (Neh 8:12), and gratitude (Neh 12:44). Simchah appears 13x with sason ("joy, delight"), usually as gladness (Ps 51:8), and several times each with giyl ("rejoicing"; Isa 16:10) and rinnah ("shout of joy, singing"; Zeph 3:17). Simchah accompanied feasting (Est 9:17-19), harvest (Isa 9:3), and especially music (21 vv.). It could arise from folly or wisdom (Pr 15:21,23). The adjective sameach (21x) describes people rejoicing (1Ki 1:40). It appears as joy (Dt 16:15) and joyful (Ps 113:9). It implies enjoying (oneself) (Est 5:14; Pr 2:14), taking pleasure (Ec 2:10), and being full of joy (Est 5:9). Carouser translates "sameach of heart" (Isa 24:7).

**Enhanced Brown-Driver-Briggs** - . joy, gladness, mirth;—abs. שׂ Gn 31:37 +, cstr. שִׂמְחָה Is 9:2 +; sf. שִׂמְחָתִי Ps 137:6, etc.; pl. שִׂמְחֹת Ps 16:11, -1—;45:16 ת. mirth, gladness, e.g. in festivity, Gn 31:27 (E), Ps 137:3, 6, 1 K 1:40; 1 S 18:6; Is 9:2(); 16:10 Ps 45:16; שִׂמְחָה יוֹם מְשִׁנָּה Est 9:17, 18, 22 cf. (יום om.) v 19 ( + יוֹם טוֹב ), v 22 (|| 5 + , יוֹם טוֹב), times, + קוֹל שִׂ Je 7:34 = 16:9 = 25:10 = 33:11; joy of heart Pr 14:10, 13; Ec 5:19; Ct 3:11, cf. (of inward joy) Jon 4:6; Pr 15:23; 21:15; = gaiety, pleasure Is 22:13; Ec 2:1, 2,

10; 8:15; 9:7; שִׁי חֲנֹךְ; 7:4; Jb 20:5, of foolish Pr 15:21; 21:17; malicious joy Ez 35:15 (לֵי re), so 46.2.36:5 שִׁי כִלְכִּיב (especially Ps Ps Chr) religious: 2 S 6:12 || 1 Ch 15:16, 25; Jo 1:16 +; שִׁי יוֹם Nu 10:10 (P); עָשָׂה i.e. make a (sacred) festivity 2 Ch 30:23; Ne 8:12; 12:27; שִׁמְחַת עוֹלָם Is 35:10 = 51:11; 61:7; שִׁי c. pers. Ne 12:44; joy of heart Is 30:29; Je 15:16; as gift of יֵי Ps 4:8; 21:7 + 7 times + (in mockery) Is 66:5. †3. joy of יֵי Zp 3:17. †4. glad result, happy issue Ps 106:5 (|| טוֹבָה), Pr 10:28; 12:20 (Gr. ἀγαθή, Toy מִשְׁפָּט; opp. מַרְמָה).

**Gesenius** - joy, gladness, Ps. 4:8; 45:16, etc. שִׁמְחָה גְּדוֹלָה to be very joyful, 1 Ki. 1:40; Jonah 4:6. Specially—(a) joyful voices, joyful cries, Ge 31:27; Neh 12:43; 2Chr 23:18; 29:30.—(b) joyful banquets, pleasures. Pr. 21:17, שִׁמְחָה אֱהִיב loving pleasures. עָשָׂה שִׁמְחָה Neh. 8:12; 12:27; 2Chr 30:23.

**James Swanson** - 1. **joy, gladness, delight**, i.e., a feeling or attitude of joyful happiness and cheerfulness (Ps 51:8), note: in some contexts this is a response to, or manifestation of, worship to God and so transcendent even of unfavorable circumstances; 2. **pleasure**, i.e., a state of happiness, with a focus on sensory input to the body which gives entertainment to the senses (Pr 21:17; Ecc 2:1; 2:2, 10; 7:4) (Dictionary of Biblical Languages with Semantic Domains)

**Simchah** - 87v in the OT. **NAS Usage:** delight(1), exceeding joy(1), extremely\*(1), festival(1), gladness(34), happiness(1), joy(38), mirth(1), pleasure(6), rejoice(1), rejoiced(1), rejoicing(6).

Genesis 31:27 "Why did you flee secretly and deceive me, and did not tell me so that I might have sent you away with joy and with songs, with timbrel and with lyre;

Numbers 10:10 "Also in the day of your gladness and in your appointed feasts, and on the first days of your months, you shall blow the trumpets over your burnt offerings, and over the sacrifices of your peace offerings; and they shall be as a reminder of you before your God. I am the LORD your God."

Deuteronomy 28:47 "Because you did not serve the LORD your God with joy and a glad heart, for the abundance of all things;

Judges 16:23 Now the lords of the Philistines assembled to offer a great sacrifice to Dagon their god, and to rejoice, for they said, "Our god has given Samson our enemy into our hands."

1 Samuel 18:6 It happened as they were coming, when David returned from killing the Philistine, that the women came out of all the cities of Israel, singing and dancing, to meet King Saul, with tambourines, with joy and with musical instruments.

2 Samuel 6:12 Now it was told King David, saying, "The LORD has blessed the house of Obed-edom and all that belongs to him, on account of the ark of God." David went and brought up the ark of God from the house of Obed-edom into the city of David with gladness.

1 Kings 1:40 All the people went up after him, and the people were playing on flutes and rejoicing with great joy, so that the earth shook at their noise.

1 Chronicles 12:40 Moreover those who were near to them, even as far as Issachar and Zebulun and Naphtali, brought food on donkeys, camels, mules and on oxen, great quantities of flour cakes, fig cakes and bunches of raisins, wine, oil, oxen and sheep. There was joy indeed in Israel.

1 Chronicles 15:16 Then David spoke to the chiefs of the Levites to appoint their relatives the singers, with instruments of music, harps, lyres, loud-sounding cymbals, to raise sounds of joy.

25 So it was David, with the elders of Israel and the captains over thousands, who went to bring up the ark of the covenant of the LORD from the house of Obed-edom with joy.

1 Chronicles 29:17 "Since I know, O my God, that You try the heart and delight in uprightness, I, in the integrity of my heart, have willingly offered all these things; so now with joy I have seen Your people, who are present here, make their offerings willingly to You.

22 So they ate and drank that day before the LORD with great gladness. And they made Solomon the son of David king a second time, and they anointed him as ruler for the LORD and Zadok as priest.

2 Chronicles 20:27 Every man of Judah and Jerusalem returned with Jehoshaphat at their head, returning to Jerusalem with joy, for the LORD had made them to rejoice over their enemies.

2 Chronicles 23:18 Moreover, Jehoiada placed the offices of the house of the LORD under the authority of the Levitical priests, whom David had assigned over the house of the LORD, to offer the burnt offerings of the LORD, as it is written in the law of Moses-- with rejoicing and singing according to the order of David.

2 Chronicles 29:30 Moreover, King Hezekiah and the officials ordered the Levites to sing praises to the LORD with the words of David and Asaph the seer. So they sang praises with joy, and bowed down and worshiped.

2 Chronicles 30:21 The sons of Israel present in Jerusalem celebrated the Feast of Unleavened Bread for seven days with great joy, and the Levites and the priests praised the LORD day after day with loud instruments to the LORD.

23 Then the whole assembly decided to celebrate the feast another seven days, so they celebrated the seven days with joy.

26 So there was great joy in Jerusalem, because there was nothing like this in Jerusalem since the days of Solomon the son of David, king of Israel.

Ezra 3:12 Yet many of the priests and Levites and heads of fathers' households, the old men who had seen the first temple, wept with a loud voice when the foundation of this house was laid before their eyes, while many shouted aloud for joy,

13 so that the people could not distinguish the sound of the shout of joy from the sound of the weeping of the people, for the people shouted with a loud shout, and the sound was heard far away.

Ezra 6:22 And they observed the Feast of Unleavened Bread seven days with joy, for the LORD had caused them to rejoice, and had turned the heart of the king of Assyria toward them to encourage them in the work of the house of God, the God of Israel.

Nehemiah 8:12 All the people went away to eat, to drink, to send portions and to celebrate a great festival, because they understood the words which had been made known to them.

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.

Nehemiah 12:27 Now at the dedication of the wall of Jerusalem they sought out the Levites from all their places, to bring them to Jerusalem so that they might celebrate the dedication with gladness, with hymns of thanksgiving and with songs to the accompaniment of cymbals, harps and lyres.

43 and on that day they offered great sacrifices and rejoiced because God had given them great joy, even the women and children rejoiced, so that the joy of Jerusalem was heard from afar.

44 On that day men were also appointed over the chambers for the stores, the contributions, the first fruits and the tithes, to gather into them from the fields of the cities the portions required by the law for the priests and Levites; for Judah rejoiced over the priests and Levites who served.

Esther 8:16 For the Jews there was light and gladness and joy and honor.

17 In each and every province and in each and every city, wherever the king's commandment and his decree arrived, there was gladness and joy for the Jews, a feast and a holiday. And many among the peoples of the land became Jews, for the dread of the Jews had fallen on them.

Esther 9:17 This was done on the thirteenth day of the month Adar, and on the fourteenth day they rested and made it a day of feasting and rejoicing.

18 But the Jews who were in Susa assembled on the thirteenth and the fourteenth of the same month, and they rested on the fifteenth day and made it a day of feasting and rejoicing.

19 Therefore the Jews of the rural areas, who live in the rural towns, make the fourteenth day of the month Adar a holiday for rejoicing and feasting and sending portions of food to one another.

22 because on those days the Jews rid themselves of their enemies, and it was a month which was turned for them from sorrow into gladness and from mourning into a holiday; that they should make them days of feasting and rejoicing and sending portions of food to one another and gifts to the poor.

Job 20:5 That the triumphing of the wicked is short, And the joy of the godless momentary?

Psalms 4:7 You have put gladness in my heart, More than when their grain and new wine abound.

Psalms 16:11 You will make known to me the path of life; In Your presence is fullness of joy; In Your right hand there are pleasures forever.

**Comment: euphrosune** (from **eu** = well, + **phren** = mind) which literally is "well minded" and then of good cheer. See discussion of joy (sassion).

Psalm 21:6 For You make him most blessed forever; You make him joyful with gladness in Your presence.

Psalm 30:11 You have turned for me my mourning into dancing; You have loosed my sackcloth and girded me with gladness,

Psalm 43:4 Then I will go to the altar of God, To God my exceeding joy; And upon the lyre I shall praise You, O God, my God.

Psalm 45:15 They will be led forth with gladness and rejoicing; They will enter into the King's palace.

Psalm 51:8 Make me to hear joy and gladness, Let the bones which You have broken rejoice.

Psalm 68:3 But let the righteous be glad; let them exult before God; Yes, let them rejoice with gladness.

Psalm 97:11 Light is sown like seed for the righteous And gladness for the upright in heart.

Psalm 100:2 Serve the LORD with gladness; Come before Him with joyful singing.

Psalm 106:5 That I may see the prosperity of Your chosen ones, That I may rejoice in the gladness of Your nation, That I may glory with Your inheritance.

Psalm 137:3 For there our captors demanded of us songs, And our tormentors mirth, saying, "Sing us one of the songs of Zion."

6 May my tongue cling to the roof of my mouth If I do not remember you, If I do not exalt Jerusalem Above my chief joy.

Proverbs 10:28 The hope of the righteous is gladness, But the expectation of the wicked perishes.

Proverbs 12:20 Deceit is in the heart of those who devise evil, But counselors of peace have joy.

Proverbs 14:10 The heart knows its own bitterness, And a stranger does not share its joy.

13 Even in laughter the heart may be in pain, And the end of joy may be grief.

Proverbs 15:21 Folly is joy to him who lacks sense, But a man of understanding walks straight.

23 A man has joy in an apt answer, And how delightful is a timely word!

Proverbs 21:15 The exercise of justice is joy for the righteous, But is terror to the workers of iniquity.

17 He who loves pleasure will become a poor man; He who loves wine and oil will not become rich.

Ecclesiastes 2:1 I said to myself, "Come now, I will test you with pleasure. So enjoy yourself." And behold, it too was futility.

2 I said of laughter, "It is madness," and of pleasure, "What does it accomplish?"

10 All that my eyes desired I did not refuse them. I did not withhold my heart from any pleasure, for my heart was pleased because of all my labor and this was my reward for all my labor.

26 For to a person who is good in His sight He has given wisdom and knowledge and joy, while to the sinner He has given the task of gathering and collecting so that he may give to one who is good in God's sight. This too is vanity and striving after wind.

Ecclesiastes 5:20 For he will not often consider the years of his life, because God keeps him occupied with the gladness of his heart.

Ecclesiastes 7:4 The mind of the wise is in the house of mourning, While the mind of fools is in the house of pleasure.

Ecclesiastes 8:15 So I commended pleasure, for there is nothing good for a man under the sun except to eat and to drink and to be merry, and this will stand by him in his toils throughout the days of his life which God has given him under the sun.

Ecclesiastes 9:7 Go then, eat your bread in happiness and drink your wine with a cheerful heart; for God has already approved your works.

Song of Solomon 3:11 "Go forth, O daughters of Zion, And gaze on King Solomon with the crown With which

his mother has crowned him On the day of his wedding, And on the day of his gladness of heart."

Isaiah 9:3 You shall multiply the nation, You shall increase their gladness; They will be glad in Your presence As with the gladness of harvest, As men rejoice when they divide the spoil.

Isaiah 16:10 Gladness and joy are taken away from the fruitful field; In the vineyards also there will be no cries of joy or jubilant shouting, No treader treads out wine in the presses, For I have made the shouting to cease.

Isaiah 22:13 Instead, there is gaiety and gladness, Killing of cattle and slaughtering of sheep, Eating of meat and drinking of wine: "Let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we may die."

Isaiah 24:11 There is an outcry in the streets concerning the wine; All joy turns to gloom. The gaiety of the earth is banished.

Isaiah 29:19 The afflicted also will increase their gladness in the LORD, And the needy of mankind will rejoice in the Holy One of Israel.

Isaiah 30:29 You will have songs as in the night when you keep the festival, And gladness of heart as when one marches to the sound of the flute, To go to the mountain of the LORD, to the Rock of Israel.

Isaiah 35:10 And the ransomed of the LORD will return And come with joyful shouting to Zion, With everlasting joy upon their heads. They will find gladness and joy, And sorrow and sighing will flee away.

Isaiah 51:3 Indeed, the LORD will comfort Zion; He will comfort all her waste places. And her wilderness He will make like Eden, And her desert like the garden of the LORD; Joy and gladness will be found in her, Thanksgiving and sound of a melody.

11 So the ransomed of the LORD will return And come with joyful shouting to Zion, And everlasting joy will be on their heads. They will obtain gladness and joy, And sorrow and sighing will flee away.

Isaiah 55:12 "For you will go out with joy And be led forth with peace; The mountains and the hills will break forth into shouts of joy before you, And all the trees of the field will clap their hands.

Isaiah 61:7 Instead of your shame you will have a double portion, And instead of humiliation they will shout for joy over their portion. Therefore they will possess a double portion in their land, Everlasting joy will be theirs.

Isaiah 66:5 Hear the word of the LORD, you who tremble at His word: "Your brothers who hate you, who exclude you for My name's sake, Have said, 'Let the LORD be glorified, that we may see your joy.' But they will be put to shame.

Jeremiah 7:34 "Then I will make to cease from the cities of Judah and from the streets of Jerusalem the voice of joy and the voice of gladness, the voice of the bridegroom and the voice of the bride; for the land will become a ruin.

Jeremiah 15:16 Your words were found and I ate them, And Your words became for me a joy and the delight of my heart; For I have been called by Your name, O LORD God of hosts.

Jeremiah 16:9 For thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel: "Behold, I am going to eliminate from this place, before your eyes and in your time, the voice of rejoicing and the voice of gladness, the voice of the groom and the voice of the bride.

Jeremiah 25:10 'Moreover, I will take from them the voice of joy and the voice of gladness, the voice of the bridegroom and the voice of the bride, the sound of the millstones and the light of the lamp.

Jeremiah 31:7 For thus says the LORD, "Sing aloud with gladness for Jacob, And shout among the chief of the nations; Proclaim, give praise and say, 'O LORD, save Your people, The remnant of Israel.'

Jeremiah 33:11 the voice of joy and the voice of gladness, the voice of the bridegroom and the voice of the bride, the voice of those who say, "Give thanks to the LORD of hosts, For the LORD is good, For His lovingkindness is everlasting"; and of those who bring a thank offering into the house of the LORD. For I will restore the fortunes of the land as they were at first,' says the LORD.

Jeremiah 48:33 "So gladness and joy are taken away From the fruitful field, even from the land of Moab. And I have made the wine to cease from the wine presses; No one will tread them with shouting, The shouting will not be shouts of joy.

Ezekiel 36:5 therefore thus says the Lord GOD, "Surely in the fire of My jealousy I have spoken against the rest of the nations, and against all Edom, who appropriated My land for themselves as a possession with

wholehearted joy and with scorn of soul, to drive it out for a prey."

Joel 1:16 Has not food been cut off before our eyes, Gladness and joy from the house of our God?

Jonah 4:6 So the LORD God appointed a plant and it grew up over Jonah to be a shade over his head to deliver him from his discomfort. And Jonah was extremely happy about the plant.

Zephaniah 3:17 "The LORD your God is in your midst, A victorious warrior. He will exult over you with joy, He will be quiet in His love, He will rejoice over you with shouts of joy.

Zechariah 8:19 "Thus says the LORD of hosts, 'The fast of the fourth, the fast of the fifth, the fast of the seventh and the fast of the tenth months will become joy, gladness, and cheerful feasts for the house of Judah; so love truth and peace.'

## THE WORD OF GOD IN THE PSALMS AND THE DELIGHT IN OUR SOULS

The psalms repeatedly allude to the delighting power of the Word...

Ps 1:2-note; But his delight is in the law of the LORD, And in His law he meditates day and night.

Ps 19:10-note They are more desirable than gold, yes, than much fine gold; Sweeter also than honey and the drippings of the honeycomb.

Ps 119:16 I shall delight in Thy statutes; I shall not forget Thy word.

**Comment:** How would he not forget? My memorizing God's Word which he would do because it was not drudgery but delight! Is memorization drudgery for you? It does take "work," but the payoff is eternal, so ask God's Spirit to create in you a heart that supernaturally desires God's Word, and this is a prayer you can be 100% sure He will answer (1Jn 5:14-15-note explains why we can be so confident in His answer!)

Ps 119:24 Thy testimonies also are my delight; They are my counselors.

Ps 119:35 Make me walk in the path of Thy commandments, For I delight in it.

Ps 119:47 And I shall delight in Thy commandments, Which I love.

Ps 119:48 And I shall lift up my hands to Thy commandments, Which I love; And I will meditate on Thy statutes.

Ps 119:72 The law of Thy mouth is better to me Than thousands of gold and silver pieces.

Ps 119:92 If Thy law had not been my delight, Then I would have perished in my affliction.

Ps 119:97 Mem. O how I love Thy law! It is my meditation all the day.

Ps 119:103 How sweet are Thy words to my taste! Yes, sweeter than honey to my mouth!

Ps 119:111 I have inherited Thy testimonies forever, For they are the joy of my heart.

Ps 119:113 Samekh. I hate those who are double-minded, But I love Thy law.

Ps 119:127 Therefore I love Thy commandments Above gold, yes, above fine gold.

Ps 119:159 Consider how I love Thy precepts; Revive me, O LORD, according to Thy lovingkindness.

Ps 119:167 My soul keeps Thy testimonies, And I love them exceedingly.

Ps 119:174 I long for Thy salvation, O LORD, And Thy law is my delight.

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**Of my heart** - Not my head, but the "control center" of my very being. If we read the Word for information without desiring transformation, we come prideful like the Pharisees! Beware of this subtle trap!

**H A Ironside** - Job and David in their times could speak in similar terms. The former is heard crying out, "I have esteemed the words of His mouth more than my necessary food" (Job 23:12), and this at a time when the ways of GOD with His dear servant seemed quite inexplicable, and he floundered in the vain effort to find Him out. Still "the words of His mouth" he loved to dwell upon, and, relying on them, dared to say, "When He hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold" (Job 23:10). The exalted shepherd, in the "Psalm of the Laver" (119), sweetly celebrates the preciousness and cleansing efficacy of the Word, and in Psalms 119:111 joins with "the weeping prophet" in declaring, "Thy testimonies have I taken as an heritage forever; for they are the rejoicing of my heart." And again, he says, "I esteem all Thy precepts concerning all things to be right; and I hate every false way" (Psalms 119:128). See also

Psalms 119:97, Psalms 119:113, Psalms 119:119, Psalms 119:163. Thus we have patriarch, ruler, and prophet, alike testifying to the fulness and richness of the testimonies of the Lord. And that Word - fuller and richer now because of added treasures, making known the hitherto secret things - shall Christians now treat it with indifference? Many, it is to be feared, find little to interest them in its sacred pages. And the reason is not far to seek - there is so little practical separation from evil, and so little cleaving to the Lord with purpose of heart. Of one thing we can rest assured. Those who really enter into what is involved in being gathered in truth to the Name of the Rejected One, will invariably find His Word an unfailing source of delight. Heart-identification with CHRIST results in heart-appreciation of His Word. The great desideratum is to go on quietly and humbly with the Lord JESUS CHRIST, and to walk apart from the abounding iniquity (both in its gross and its pleasing forms) of these last days. Then let the Word of GOD be the man of your counsel. Make it your daily companion. Search its precious pages prayerfully and perseveringly. Soon you will learn to feast upon it with ever-increasing delight. An aged Christian once said, "When first converted, I commenced reading the Bible. I read it for ten years, and I thought it a very nice book. I enjoyed it greatly. I read it for ten years more, and I thought it a wonderful book - it thrilled my soul. I read it for ten years more, and I thought it the most surpassingly precious book in the world. It was as food and drink to me. Now I have been reading it for forty years, and I am filled with delight and amazement at its beauties and depth every time I open it." May the reader and the writer know more of this increasing love for its "sure testimonies." (Psalms 93:5) Thus we shall find our delight in walking with Him, even though, as in Enoch's day, all the world should take another course. ([Jeremiah 15 Commentary - Ironside's Notes on Selected Books](#))

**Heart** ([03824](#))(**leb**, **lebab**) sometimes refers to a literal heart (Ex 28:29, 1Sa 25:37, 2Ki 9:24), but most often is used figurative to refer to what I term the "control center" of our being. Think of an Air Traffic Controller and how dysfunctional, even destructive it is when the controllers fail to function as they should.

**John MacArthur** - The "heart" commonly refers to the mind as the center of thinking and reason (Pr 3:3; 6:21; 7:3), but also includes the emotions (Pr 15:15, 30), the will (Pr 11:20; 14:14), and thus, the whole inner being (Pr 3:5). The heart is the depository of all wisdom and the source of whatever affects speech (Pr 4:24), sight (Pr 4:25), and conduct (Pr 4:26, 27). ([MacArthur, J.: The MacArthur Study Bible](#))

**The Dictionary of Biblical Imagery** writes that "In the Bible heart encompasses more than what we mean by mind (for which there is no word in biblical Hebrew). The heart is the center of the being, where the will, affections, thoughts, purposes and imagination reside. Human emotions are more frequently associated with the lower organs."

#### Related Resources:

- New Testament word study on Heart = kardia
- [Heart - International Standard Bible Encyclopedia - Good Summary](#)
- [Heart - Baker's Evangelical Dictionary of Biblical Theology](#)
- [Heart - Holman Bible Dictionary](#)
- [Heart \(includes OT allusions\) - Hastings' Dictionary of the Bible](#)
- [Heart \(primarily discusses "kardia"\) - Hastings' Dictionary of the New Testament](#)

**For I have been called by Thy Name** - What is Jeremiah saying? Is this not another way of saying "I am Yours Lord God of hosts"? **Let us all seek diligently to echo Jeremiah and say "I have been called by Thy Name. I am Your bondservant. Use me for Your glory as You will dear Lord."** Amen

Remember that **for** is a **term of explanation** which should always prompt the question "What is the author explaining?"

It is interesting that this same idiom (*Thy Name is called on*) is applied to the Temple - Jer 7:10, 11, 14, 30, 32:34, 34:15). Refers to the city (Jerusalem) in Jer 25:29.

Jeremiah's words remind me of Jude's opening words "Jude, a bond-servant of Jesus Christ, and brother of James, to those who are **the called**, beloved in God the Father, and kept for Jesus Christ." (Jude 1:1) Every born again believer has been called by Thy Name, for in Antioch "the disciples were first called **Christians** (= "adherent of Christ")!" (Acts 11:26, cp "Called by My Name" in Acts 15:17, cp Ex 23:21, 2Chr 7:14, Isa 43:7, Jer 14:9)

**O Lord God of Hosts** - See study of **Jehovah Sabaoth, LORD of hosts (of armies)**

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**OUR DAILY BREAD DEVOTIONAL** - The first morning I heard the mockingbird practicing his bagful of imitations outside my window, I was thrilled by the beauty of his songs. Gradually, however, I began to take this early morning songster for granted. One day as I awoke, it dawned on me that I no longer appreciated my regular visitor. It wasn't the mockingbird's fault. He was still there. His beautiful song hadn't changed, but I was no longer listening for it.

As believers in Christ, we may have a similar experience hearing God speak to us in His Word. When we are first saved, the Scriptures, with their soul-stirring instruction and vital spiritual food, are deeply satisfying. As time goes on, however, we routinely read those same portions over and over in a manner that no longer speaks to us. Our spiritual senses grow dull and lethargic, and God's exhilarating Word becomes commonplace to us. But then, what joy we feel when a passage reveals an exciting truth, and once again we "hear" the Lord!

Are you reading the Scriptures out of a tired sense of duty? Or do you still possess the fresh expectancy you had when you first believed? Today, when you read God's Word, listen closely for His voice. --R W De Haan

I scanned the Scriptures thoughtlessly--  
My haste had closed my ear;  
Then prayerfully I read once more--  
This time my heart could hear.

--Gustafson

Without a heart for God,  
We cannot hear his word.

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**C H Spurgeon** - GOD'S WORD THE JOY OF THE GODLY = JER. 15:16: "Thy words were found, and I did eat them; and thy word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of my heart."

BREAD is sweet to the hungry, water is sweet to the thirsty, and the words of God are sweet to the child of God. Wherever they are found, whether in history, narrating the great events of time; or in prophecy, foretelling the glorious unfoldings of the future; or in law, pointing out the great duties of life; or in the Gospel, declaring the way of salvation by Jesus Christ; or in biography, in which the real character of good men is faithfully delineated, they are appreciated and enjoyed, they are the very aliment of the inner or spiritual life. Man, when quickened and made alive, does "not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God."

One of the children of God could say: "I have esteemed the words of His mouth more than my necessary food." Another could say: "The law of Thy mouth is better unto me than thousands of gold and silver;" "Sweeter, also, than honey and the honeycomb." And the prophet Jeremiah, who speaks of Divine truths under the figure of food, says: "Thy words were found, and I did eat them; and Thy word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of my heart."

In the pages of sacred history we have a development of the principles of God's moral government. We learn that "righteousness and judgment are the habitation of His throne"—that "He loves righteousness, and hates iniquity;" that He is the friend of the oppressed, and the enemy of the oppressor; that His resources are boundless; that He can do whatsoever He pleaseth, despite the mighty obstacles that may stand in His way. Before Him, obstacles vanish, be they mighty as the Red Sea, or formidable as a waste, howling wilderness, in which to feed and keep alive for forty years more than half a million of men. With God, obstacles are only as straws on some great railroad, which cannot for a moment obstruct the progress of the train in its onward speed. "Is anything too hard for the Lord?" What is there that He cannot do? He can suspend the laws of nature, and for them can substitute the supernatural. He can bring about supernatural results by reason of His own supernatural power; He can open rivers in the desert, and springs in high places; He can make the rock to pour forth water, and the clouds to rain down bread. Thus it is that Biblical history, in its development of the principles of the Divine government, becomes to a man of God deeply interesting and instructive, "the joy and rejoicing of his heart."

Prophecy teaches us that with God the future is no sealed book—that He knows the future as well, or even better than we know the past. We have now the history of the world, but He had it before the world was; we have the history of good men, but He had it before good men were born; we have the history of wicked men, but He had it before they came into the world to perform their wicked deeds. By reason of His omniscience, the history of nations and empires was written upon the vellum of His infinite mind, and was then transmitted to the minds of His servants the prophets. What is prophecy but forewritten history and biography? Hence, ages before Judas was born his biography was written, and placed among the records of inspiration; and centuries before Christ came into the world the principal features of His life and death, and the conduct of the Jews in their rejection of Him as the Messiah, were all portrayed, with all the correctness and fidelity of a faithful historian.

But while God knew, and in some cases wrote by means of prophets, the history of nations, and the biographies of individuals, His foreknowledge had no influence in forming the character and in shaping the lives of men. Had God no foreknowledge of Adam's fall, Abel's murder, Pharaoh's despotism, Absalom's conspiracy, Herod's infanticide, Judas' treachery, and the rejection of the Lord Jesus by the Jews, these men had been the same, and their deeds the same. God's foreknowledge of them and their wicked deeds had no more influence upon them than our foreknowledge of the rising and setting of the sun has upon that bright orb of day. But as

we, foreknowing that the sun will rise at one hour and set at another, make our foreknowledge subservient to our plans and purposes, so God made His foreknowledge subservient to the plans and purposes of His own infinite mind. The wrath of man and the wickedness of man He overruled and made tributary to the accomplishment of His holiest and grandest design of love and mercy: prophecy thus teaching us that the future is known to the Lord—the future of the Church, the world, and of every child of man; that He knows what to-morrow and every day will bring forth; and that nothing unforeseen by us can arise to thwart His plans, frustrate His designs, and defeat His purposes. Now we may rest assured that as He knows our time future and our eternal future, He has made ample provision for our every want and absolute necessity, as well as for our ultimate and everlasting well-being. Thus it is that prophecy, when rightly viewed, becomes a very fountain of delight, and the prophetic words of the Lord are to every good man “the joy and rejoicing of his heart.”

Leaving prophecy, we pass on to the consideration of the words of the Lord as embodied in law. By the lawless and disobedient the law is hated; by the righteous and obedient the law is loved. The language of the lawless is, O, how I hate thy law! The language of the righteous is, “O, how I love thy law!” The law of God prohibits nothing but what the enlightened conscience condemns, and commands nothing but what the same conscience approves. The law of God, when carried out in its letter and spirit as in the life of Christ, makes a character truly lovely, “the perfection of beauty.” For these reasons the words of the Lord, as we read them in the law of the Lord, are sweet to the soul, and are “the joy and rejoicing of the heart.” Conformity to the law is an object of the soul’s earnest desire and prayerful solicitude, and when love is perfected this desire will be realised, for “Love is the fulfilling of the law.”

But if the words of the Lord in history, prophecy, and the law are sweet, sweeter still are His words as they sound forth in the Gospel of His Son. But they are only sweet to those who are in bitterness through manifold sins and multiplied transgressions. To others they have no charm, and are as unheeded as if they were a cunningly devised fable or an idle tale. Under deep conviction of sin, when the prayer goes up, “God be merciful to me a sinner;” or when the momentous question is asked, “What must I do to be saved?” no sound can be so welcome as the sound of the Gospel, which proclaims a pardon full and free, and a righteousness perfect and complete. As further light breaks in upon the darkened soul, all the great doctrines of the Gospel are seen in all their adaptation to the soul’s moral and spiritual needs, and then it is that the soul, in grateful acknowledgment, speaks to the Lord, and says, “Thy words were found, and I did eat them; and thy word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of my heart.”

Faith is a living upon the truths of the Gospel. Faith makes both the truth, and Christ the substance of the truth, precious. “Unto you which believe He is precious.” “Believing, we rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory.” “Full of glory!” What but faith in Christ and the verities of His Gospel can so lift the soul up to the third heavens as to fill it with glory? The pleasures of sense cannot do this. Sense may travel, but sense cannot fly. It may rove and range all the world around, but it cannot rise from its dust. It has no wings with which it can mount and rise “up where eternal ages roll.” It is earthbound, and beyond the bounds of earth it cannot go. See, then, the superiority of faith over sense. If, as a great poet says—

“All on earth is shadow,

All beyond is substance,”

Sense lives upon shadows—faith upon substance. Sense feeds upon things seen and temporal, faith on things unseen and eternal. We do not undervalue sense and its pleasures—they are the gifts of God, but they are not worthy to be compared with faith. Faith soars into the celestial, lives upon the imperishable, and receives as its end the salvation of the soul. O the preciousness of faith! By it the truth is made precious, the joy and rejoicing of the heart. By it Christ is made precious, “the chief among ten thousand.” By it heaven is reached, and the glories of the place unveiled. It is the substance of all we hope for—the earnest of a glorious future:—

“Faith, ’tis a precious gift.”

Next to the gift of Christ to the world, is the gift of faith to the soul. Both are unspeakable. Words cannot express their true value, and while eternity will be for ever telling their worth, their real worth will be for ever untold. The benefits of faith are everlasting, but faith itself is a grace which belongs only to time. Soon we shall pass from time into eternity, where—

“—— Faith is sweetly lost in sight,

And hope in full supreme delight,

And everlasting love.”

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**John Butler** puts Jeremiah 15:16 in perspective - THE CRY IN THE JUDGMENT - Jeremiah 15:10, 11, 15–18

Jeremiah’s response to the message on judgment was one of dislike. Jeremiah did not like to see the land or people of Judah so destroyed as judgment would destroy it. But neither did Jeremiah like the wickedness that was going on in the land.

## 1. His Perspective (Jeremiah 15:10)

"Woe is me, my mother, that thou has borne me a man of strife and a man of contention to the whole earth" (Jeremiah 15:10). The minister of the Lord sometimes has a hard time perceiving himself as anything but a troubler, for his message of judgment upsets people, and they do not hesitate to call him a troubler. Jeremiah's perspective of himself is that of a failure.

## 2. His Purity (Jeremiah 15:10)

"I have neither lent on usury, nor men have lent to me on usury" (Jeremiah 15:10). "Proverbial for 'I have given no cause for strife against me'" (Fausset). This is a proverbial statement to show there was no just cause for accusing him of evil.

## 3. His persecution (Jeremiah 15:10, 15)

"Yet every one of them doth curse me ... my persecutors" (Jeremiah 15:10, 15). Jeremiah did not win any popularity awards among the ministers. The historical books of the Bible as well as this book reveal much mistreatment of the prophet Jeremiah because he dared to proclaim God's message. Times have not changed. All who would declare God's message can expect mistreatment from the world.

## 4. His Passion (Jeremiah 15:16, 17)

In a grand statement, Jeremiah shows his passion for the Word of God. All ministers need this passion.

- The pursuit in the passion. "Thy words were found" (Jeremiah 15:16). You will not find the Word unless you are looking for it. The pursuit of the Word today will involve a study of the Word and a regular attendance of a church that faithfully preaches the Word.
- The partaking in the passion. "I did eat them" (Jeremiah 15:16). After the finding comes the feeding. Feeding on the Word of God indicates a passion for the Word. Preaching the Word today is often like feeding a child vegetables—people do not want the Word.
- The pleasure in the passion. "Thy Word was ... the joy and rejoicing of mine heart" (Jeremiah 15:16). Not many are in that category today. Most are in "the word of the LORD is unto them a reproach; they have no delight in it" (Jeremiah 6:10) category. The Psalmist said, "Oh how love I thy law, it is my meditation all the day long" (Psalm 119:97). If you love the Word of God you will want to read it, study it, hear it etc.
- The placement from the passion. "I am called by thy name O LORD God of hosts" (Jeremiah 15:16). This speaks of service as well as identification. If you have a passion for the Word, God will have a place for you in His service. Also if you have a passion for the Word, you will be identified as one of God's people. (Analytical Bible Expositors - Isaiah to Ezekiel)

**John Butler - Sermon Starters** - Devoted to the Word = Jeremiah 15:16 "Thy words were found, and I did eat them, and thy word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of mine heart; for I am called by thy name, O Lord God of hosts" (Jeremiah 15:16).

Devotion to the Word of God and its consequences is the theme of our text. We need more of Jeremiah's consecration to the Word of God. The Word is de-emphasized at church and very few read it, let alone study the Word. Yet it is God's book and nothing is more valuable for our soul's nourishment than the Word.

### FIRST—THE DESIRE FOR THE WORD

"Thy words were found, and I did eat them." The desire to find the Word of God is twofold.

- The finding. "Thy words were found." Jeremiah sought the Word. Jesus said to "Search the Scriptures" (John 5:39). Not many do, not many folk are like the Bereans to whom Paul took the Gospel, they "were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so" (Acts 17:11). Many churches have called themselves 'Berean' (and the denomination) church but are anything but Bereans. Few in at church spend much time looking into the Word of God, let alone reading the Bible through in a year's time.
- The feeding. "I did eat them." Feeding comes after the finding. Some get new Bibles but never read them. That is like filling your cupboard with food but not eating it. Many folk have poor appetites for the Word. They are not interested in hearing sermons from the Word at church. Their appetite for the Word is like children's appetites for vegetables.

### SECOND—THE DIVIDENDS FROM THE WORD

"Thy word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of mine heart; for I am called by thy name, O Lord God of hosts." The dividends of the Word are at least threefold here.

- Felicity. "Joy and rejoicing of mine heart." Few know this experience. Instead of delight to most people "The word of the Lord is

unto them a reproach, they have no delight in it" (Jeremiah 6:10). The joy the Word can be to the soul exceeds all the joys of the world.

- Family. "I am called by thy name." If you love the Word, you will be known as one of God's people. Some may pronounce it fanatic but to have the name of God upon you says that God is not ashamed to own you and claim you as part of His family.

- Footmen. "I am called by thy name." According to some Hebrew scholars the words here indicate a calling into the service of the Lord. If you are interested in the Word, God has a place of service for you. Being devoted to the Word of God is absolutely essential if you want to truly serve God. Unfortunately, few churches and mission boards pay attention to this fact when they call a pastor or appoint a missionary. So we have many in the Lord's service without a message. ([Sermon Starters Volume 5- John G. Butler](#))

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