

GOD'S INSTRUCTIONS TO EZEKIEL

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In Ezekiel 2:2-3, the prophet describes how God called him to be a prophet to the Israelites who were now in captivity in Babylon: “*And the spirit entered into me when he spake unto me, and set me upon my feet, that I heard him that spake unto me. And he said unto me, Son of man, I send thee to the children of Israel.*” God said Israel was “a rebellious nation that has rebelled against me: they and their fathers have transgressed against me, even unto this very day. For they are impudent children and stiffhearted” (Ezek 2:3-4). Ezekiel was sent to speak the very words of God to these people. “*I do send thee unto them; and thou shalt say unto them, Thus saith the Lord God*” (Ezek 2:4). The second chapter of the Book of Ezekiel is instructive in both *what* a godly teacher will use to teach others (i.e. only the scriptures), and *how* he will teach them.

Every word that proceeds from the mouth of God

God told Ezekiel, “*Open thy mouth, and eat that I give thee*” (Ezek 2:8). God gave Ezekiel a book to eat. “*And when I looked, behold, a hand was sent unto me; and, lo, a roll of a book was therein*” (Ezek 2:9). “*Moreover he said unto me, Son of man, eat that thou findest; eat this roll, and go speak unto the house of Israel. So I opened my mouth, and he caused me to eat that roll. And he said unto me, Son of man, cause thy belly to eat, and fill thy bowels with this roll that I give thee. Then did I eat it; and it was in my mouth as honey for sweetness*” (Ezek 3:1-3). Significantly, God told Ezekiel to eat what he found in the book. What Ezekiel found were words *already written*. Speaking of the book, Ezekiel said, “And he (the Lord) spread it before me; and it was written within and without: and there was written therein lamentations, and mourning, and woe” (Ezek 2:10). And then Ezekiel went and spoke exactly what had been written in the book. This clearly and powerfully teaches us the fact that God inspired every single word, jot, and tittle in His prophets. Ezekiel did not have the opportunity to alter, or influence any changes in the message He was given to speak. This is absolutely not a “thought” method of inspiration, whereby God allegedly inspired thoughts within the prophets, who then gave form and expression to those thoughts by selecting the actual words. Though God doubtless had preselected words in accordance with

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Ezekiel's vocabulary, personality, feelings, experiences, etc., it is clear and beyond dispute that Ezekiel's book was "pre-written." God had determined precisely which words were to be spoken. Ezekiel was given those very words and then spoke them to the people. So it is with all the scriptures (2 Tim 3:16-17; 2 Pet 1:20-21). And this is the word that we must live by (Matt 4:4), and the only word that we should teach others (1 Pet 4:11; 1 Cor 2:4-5,13).

Preach the word in season and out of season

God also told Ezekiel to speak His word to the people of Israel, whether or not they listened to it. Either way, they needed to know that God's prophet was among them. "And they, whether they will hear, or whether they will forbear, (for they are a rebellious house,) yet shall know that there has been a prophet among them. And thou, son of man, be not afraid of them, neither be afraid of their words, though briars and thorns be with thee, and thou dost dwell among scorpions: be not afraid of their words, nor be dismayed at their looks, though they be a rebellious house. *And thou shalt speak my words unto them, whether they will hear, or whether they will forbear: for they are most rebellious.* But thou, son of man, hear what I say unto thee; Be not thou rebellious like that rebellious house: open thy mouth, and eat that I give thee" (Ezek 2:5-8). Just as God told Ezekiel to "speak my words unto them, whether they will hear, or whether they will forbear" (Ezek 2:7), Timothy was told to preach God's word both in season and out of season. The Lord told Timothy through the apostle Paul, "*I charge thee therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom; preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine. For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; and they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables. But watch thou in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry*" (2 Tim 4:1-5). These instructions apply to Christians today. Like Ezekiel and Timothy, we must preach the pure word of God, and preach it whether it is in season or out of season.