

MEDITATION IN THE WORD



I grew up in a rural area of upstate western New York State on a dairy farm. During the summertime, our father would take our whole family on a leisurely Sunday afternoon drive. We went down country roads and my Dad drove slow.....real slow. He was a God fearing man and honored the rest day that God had given us once a week. It was a time to slow down and appreciate God's creation. We also enjoyed looking at various farms along the way and chatting about what we saw. We were in no hurry on these Sunday drives, so we noticed many things that we would have overlooked during the rest of the week, when we traveled more quickly to reach our destination. The same thing is true

when one meditates on God's Word, instead of just hearing or reading it.

What is Biblical meditation?

Meditation in eastern religions is to 'empty your mind' in order to reach higher spiritual enlightenment, which can open one up to seducing and deceiving spirits. Biblical meditation is to 'fill the mind' with thoughts of God, his Word and his works, thus replacing the voices of this world. Meditate in the Hebrew language is: **to murmur (with pleasure), mutter, to make a sound with the mouth, ponder, muse.** To muse is to think. (Amusement is a place or experience where people go not to think). As we read God's Word, it is good to **pause and ponder** over specific verses or passages. This is what happened to me about 2010, when I could not get Matthew 3 out of my mind for several years. I meditated on that chapter very often, which finally led to the revelation of key kingdom truths (which is one of the sections in our website: jesusreigns.net).

God called David a man after his own heart because he was obedient to God - Acts 13:22. A key aspect of David's life was his meditation on God's Word as evidenced by all the Psalms he wrote and even sang unto the Lord.

*His delight is in the law of the Lord, and on his law he meditates day and night.
- Psalm 1:2*

Half the year I live on the outskirts of a small village of less than 700 people. When I walk its streets, I notice many things that I never would if I was driving my car. I see the details around people's houses and yards. It is much the same with meditation on scripture. God draws our attention to certain words and ideas. Meditation is like medication for the soul as we think God's thoughts about many things including his nature and works.

On my bed I remember you; I think of you through the watches of the night. Psalm 63:6

I will remember the deeds of the Lord; yes I will remember your miracles of long ago. I will meditate on all your works and consider all your mighty deeds. Psalm 77:11-12

When others slander us we need to remind ourselves of God's decrees. Psalm 119:23,24

We will know how to speak before kings of we meditate on God's Word. Psalm 119:46-48

*My eyes stay open through the watches of the night, that I may meditate on your promises.
Psalm 119:148*

God's Word can speak to us anytime and anywhere. I spent 3 months in India the winter of 1998. Out of 89 nights, I only slept through the whole night without waking only 3 times. I had to sleep at an angle on the bed as I am quite tall and their beds are shorter than ours. One chilly night I asked the Pastor if he had a blanket for me. What he gave me was more like a thin tablecloth which barely covered me. On that night of January 22, 1998, I awoke from sleep at 11:52 PM. I decided to look at my Bible and think about my next day teaching lessons for the Bible School. While doing so I ran across this verse.

*The bed is too short to stretch out on, the blanket too narrow to wrap around you.
Isaiah 28:20 NIV*

I was far away from home and feeling lonely at times. God had reminded me that he knew all about me and my situation. He did it by leading me to that obscure verse in the Old Testament. God speaks to us personally in many ways. Many times it comes directly from his written Word in the Bible in such a very providential way.

Nonetheless, it also is important to be intentional about meditating on scriptures that address issues you are dealing with. As you meditate on a verse, take time to think upon each word and phrase. Sometimes you may even want to speak these words out so that you can hear them, for faith comes by hearing.

If you are fearful, you might consider meditating on Psalms 23, 34 or 91. If you need healing, you might benefit from Psalm 101, Isaiah 53 and examples of Jesus healing in the gospel accounts. Proverbs has much good wisdom too. Before I entered full time missions, the Lord had me meditate on the book of Ephesians and the first chapters of Joshua. They rooted me in God's commitment and love towards me. God gave Joshua some special encouragement before he face the daunting task of leading Israel's conquest of the promised land. (Joshua 1)

This book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate in it day and night, that you may observe to do according to all that is written in it. For then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have good success.

- Joshua 1:8 NKJV