

# Biblical Meditation

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A few years ago I talked with a Hindu swami about how Hinduism helps one to overcome life's trials and to grow spiritually as compared with Christianity. The swami told me that the Hindu cleanses himself and overcomes life's negative effects through the practice of meditation. The goal is to completely empty the mind of all thoughts. When this occurs (how I don't know, because when you finally realize that your mind is free of all thoughts, you have just had one!) you have overcome negative forces in your life. In response I said that Christians are called to meditation too. But we are not to empty our minds of all thought, rather we are to fill our minds with the living and powerful Word of God.

The art and practice of biblical meditation plays a very important part in our being transformed by the renewing of our minds (Romans 12:2). Before Joshua led the people of Israel into the Promised Land, God instructed him on how to insure his success saying:

*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)*

Meditating on the Scriptures would instruct Joshua in the will of God and help him to prosper and succeed in achieving God's purpose for his life. Meditation is presented in the Bible as an act of worship where we honor God by thinking carefully on His Word in order to live it out fully in our lives. Rather than being some kind of mystical escape mechanism where we pretend to empty our minds and free ourselves of life's negative forces, Christian meditation brings about spiritual renewal and

encouragement so that we can serve God, as well as deal with all the demands of life.

Biblical meditation is where we think about God and Christ giving them honor and glory. It is also carefully and diligently thinking through biblical commands and instructions that we may do them.

The focus or object of our meditation is made clear by looking at several sections of Scripture. Most references to meditating, center on the Word of God, as these two examples show.

*Blessed is the man...[whose] delight is in the law of the Lord, and in His law he meditates day and night. He shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that brings forth its fruit in its season, whose leaf also shall not wither; and whatever he does shall prosper. (Psalm 1:1-3)*

*Oh, how I love Your law! It is my meditation all the day. You, through Your commandments, make me wiser than my enemies (Psalm 119:97, 98)*

These Scriptures show us that our minds are not to be blank slates, they are to be filled with the Word of God. The result will be great spiritual fruit and godly wisdom. Scripture also calls us to ponder the great works of our God. Again the Psalms proclaim:

*I will remember the works of the Lord; surely I will remember Your wonders of old. I will also meditate on all Your work, and talk of all your deeds. (Psalm 77:11, 12)*

*I will meditate on the glorious splendor of Your majesty, and on Your wondrous works. (Psalm 145:5)*

As we think about the great works of God our hearts will automatically fill with awe and wonder at the wisdom and power of our God. The result will be worship. Psalm 8 declares:

*When I consider Your heavens, the work of Your fingers, the moon and the stars,*

*which You have ordained. What is man that You are mindful of him, and the son of man that You visit him?*

*O Lord, our Lord, how excellent is Your name in all the earth! (Psalm 8:3,4,9)*

But not only are the works of God in nature to be thought about, we need to meditate on His great miracles and works of spiritual deliverance. In Romans 8:31 and 32 the apostle Paul wrote:

*What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us? He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?*

As our minds focus on the greatest work of God, our deliverance from the power and penalty of sin through the sacrifice of Christ, we strengthen our hearts to believe in God for further blessings of His grace. Rehearsing the records of God's power in behalf of His people will cause our confidence and trust in God to grow. The loftiest objects of our meditation however is God Himself and His Son, Jesus Christ. David, in Psalm 63 wrote:

*When I remember You on my bed, I meditate on You in the night watches. Because You have been my help; therefore in the shadow of Your wings I will rejoice. (vss. 6,7)*

After Israel was redeemed from slavery in Egypt, Moses sang:

*Who is like You, O LORD among the gods? Who is like You, glorious in holiness, fearful in praises, doing wonders?*

When we take time to think about God Himself, His holiness, His power, His righteousness, mercy, wisdom, knowledge and love, these awe inspiring truths will inspire us to greater faith, worship and service. In Colossians

3, the apostle Paul encourages us to greater spiritual growth by saying:

*If then you were raised with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ is sitting at the right hand of God. Set your mind on things above, not on things on the earth. For you died and your life is hidden with Christ in God. When Christ who is our life appears, then you also will appear with Him in glory. (vss. 1-4)*

To set our minds on things above means to think about the blessings and privilege we have because of our union with Jesus Christ. Therefore we are to focus on him as our righteousness, our wisdom, our justification, our strength and our sure and certain hope of glory! How wonderfully our lives would be enhanced if we practiced the principle of biblical meditation.

Let me encourage you to make time every day to meditate on the things of God. Read the Bible and when you come to a section that brings you comfort and hope or challenges you to change your attitudes and actions, take the time to think through what you are reading. Let it digest in the depth of your soul. Jeremiah 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)*

Ask God to show you how you can apply what you have learned, and then do so as soon as possible to reinforce the truth you have learned.

*Finally, brethren, whatever things are true, whatever things are noble, whatever things are just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of a good report, if there is any virtue and if there is anything praiseworthy – meditate on these things. The things which you have learned and received and heard and saw*

*in me, these do, and the God of peace*

*will be with you. (Philippians 4:8, 9)*