

HOW DO I DEEPEN MY RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD?



HOW DO I DEEPEN MY RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD? (PART THREE)

Meditation refers to our devotional time with God.

In our time of meditating on the Word, we need an “inner room or chamber.”

MATTHEW 6:6 (NIV)

But when you pray, go into your room, close the door and pray to your Father, who is unseen. Then your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you.

The Greek used here for “room” is *tameion*, which means “an inner storage chamber or a secret room.” It is a place where one goes alone, a place where no one else would see you but you would be engaging in important work.

Jesus often separated Himself to have time alone with God.

LUKE 5:15-16 (NIV)

Yet the news about him spread all the more, so that crowds of people came to hear him and to be healed of their sicknesses. But Jesus often withdrew to lonely places and prayed.

MARK 6:30-32 (NIV)

30 The apostles gathered around Jesus and reported to him all they had done and taught. **31** Then, because so many people were coming and going that they did not even have a chance to eat, he said to them, “Come with me by yourselves to a quiet place and get some rest.” **32** So they went away by themselves in a boat to a solitary place.

In the Old Testament, two Hebrew words are translated as “meditate.”

1. SIACH (see'-akh) :

to ponder, converse (with oneself), declare, muse, pray, speak, talk (with)

Siach means to lovingly rehearse or go over in one's mind.

To meditate (siach) is to ruminate. It is like how cows swallow their food. They first chew the grass, swallow it in the first chamber of their stomach, bring it back up to their mouth to chew on it some more, and then push the food back down to the second chamber. Each time they bring their food back to their mouth, they get something more out of it until they finally swallow it down to the end chamber.

PSALM 119:13-16 (LB)

13 I have recited your laws

14 and rejoiced in them more than in riches.

15 I will meditate upon them and give them my full respect.

16 I will delight in them and not forget them.

PSALM 119:99 (NIV)

I have more insight than all my teachers, for I meditate on your statutes.

Contemplative reading of Scripture is structured so that instead of gaining mastery of the text we are mastered.

Instead of increasing our competency we are encouraged to surrender in humility. Instead of reading the text, we hope to be read by the text. It is the journey of placing our story into God's story. The goal of meditation is not the amassing of knowledge but the reinterpretation of our story so that it is congruent with the truth of God's story.

(Richard Plass)



2. HAGAH :

to murmur; to ponder:—imagine, meditate, to mutter, growl, speak, talk, utter.

“Hagah” points us to the verbalizing of our thoughts before God. It means to articulate in a focused way, thoughts of worship, wonder, prayer, and praise triggered by the Scriptures.

“The Hebrew word translated ‘meditates’ (hâgâh) implies something more than silent reflection. It means ‘to whisper or murmur’—this points to the fact that reading was not done quietly but usually done aloud in biblical times.” -Allan Harmon

If you pause frequently to meditate on the meaning of what you are reading, dwelling on it, pondering it, going over it again and again in your mind, and considering it from many different angles, you will absorb the Word into your system. It will become ingrained in your soul and will become an integral part of you.

PSALM 19:14 (NIV)

May these words of my mouth and this meditation of my heart be pleasing in your sight, Lord, my Rock and my Redeemer.

JOSHUA 1:8 (NIV)

This book of the law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do according to all that is written in it; for then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have success.

Studying of the Word apart from meditation can be dangerous. We balance the study of apologetics and doctrine with meditation of the Word, lest we become a “know-it-all” when it comes to spiritual truths.

It is possible to study the Bible without ever encountering the living God.

This is what happened to the Pharisees.

(Richard Plass)

1 CORINTHIANS 8:1 (NKJV)

Knowledge puffs up, but love edifies.

QUESTIONS FOR HUDDLE DISCUSSION:

1. Why are the two Hebrew words “siach” and “hagah” important in deepening our understanding of what it means to meditate on God’s Word?
2. Share an insight, realization, or lesson learned from your time of meditating on the Word this past week.