

Learning to Meditate on God

Psalm 63

Is. 5:12-13: "They have lyre and harp, tambourine and flute and wine at their feasts, but they do not regard the deeds of the Lord, or see the work of his hands. Therefore my people go into exile for lack of knowledge; their honored men go hungry, and their multitude is parched with thirst."

Is. 26:3 "You keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on you, because he trusts in you."

"Meditation ...is a holy exercise of the mind whereby we bring the truth of God to remembrance, and do seriously ponder upon them and apply them to ourselves"¹

"Meditation is the serious exercise of the understanding, whereby our thoughts are fixed on the observation of spiritual things in order to practice"²

Ps. 63:1-4: "O God, you are my God; earnestly I seek you; my soul thirsts for you; my flesh faints for you, as in a dry and weary land where there is no water. So I have looked upon you in the sanctuary, beholding your power and glory. Because your steadfast love is better than life, my lips will praise you. So I will bless you as long as I live; in your name I will lift up my hands."

Ps. 63:5-8: "My soul will be satisfied as with fat and rich food, and my mouth will praise you with joyful lips, when I remember you upon my bed, and meditate on you in the watches of the night; for you have been my help, and in the shadow of your wings I will sing for joy."

Ps. 63:9-11: "But those who seek to destroy my life shall go down into the depths of the earth; they shall be given over to the power of the sword; they shall be a portion for jackals. But the king shall rejoice in God; all who swear by him shall exult, for the mouths of liars will be stopped."

I. The Content of Meditations on God

1 Pet. 3:18: "For Christ also suffered once for sins, the righteous for the unrighteous, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh but made alive in the spirit."

1 John 1:2-3: "The life was made manifest, and we have seen it, and testify to it and proclaim to you the eternal life, which was with the Father and was made manifest to us—that which we have seen and heard we proclaim also to you, so that you too may have fellowship with us; and indeed our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ."

¹ Thomas Whatson, *Heaven Taken by Storm*, ed. By Joel Beeke (1810; repr., Morgan, Pa.: Soli Deo Gloria, 1992), 23.

² William Bates, "On Divine Meditation", in *The Whole Works of the Rev. William Bates*, ed. W. Farmer (1815; repr., Harrisonburg, Va.: Sprinkle Publications, 1990), 3:115

A. Meditate on God through His Word

Ps. 1:2-3: "But his delight is in the law of the Lord, and on his law he meditates day and night. He is like a tree planted by streams of water that yields its fruit in its season, and its leaf does not wither. In all that he does, he prospers."

Ps. 119:97-99: "Oh how I love your law! It is my meditation all the day. Your commandment makes me wiser than my enemies, for it is ever with me. I have more understanding than all my teachers, for your testimonies are my meditation."

John 17:8: "For I have given them the words that you gave me, and they have received them and have come to know in truth that I came from you; and they have believed that you sent me."

- **God as the Creator**

Gen. 1:1: "In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth."

- **The greatness of God**

Ps. 8:1: "O Lord, our Lord, how majestic is your name in all the earth! You have set your glory above the heavens."

- **The holiness of God**

Is. 6:1-3 "In the year that King Uzziah died I saw the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up; and the train of his robe filled the temple. Above him stood the seraphim. Each had six wings: with two he covered his face, and with two he covered his feet, and with two he flew. And one called to another and said: 'Holy, holy, holy is the LORD of hosts; the whole earth is full of his glory!'"

- **The infinity of God**

Ps. 90:2 "Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever you had formed the earth and the world, from everlasting to everlasting you are God."

- **The omnipresence of God**

Ps. 139:7-8: "Where shall I go from your Spirit? Or where shall I flee from your presence? If I ascend to heaven, you are there! If I make my bed in Sheol, you are there!"

- **The omniscience of God.**

Ps. 139:3-4: "You search out my path and my lying down and are acquainted with all my ways. Even before a word is on my tongue, behold, O LORD, you know it altogether."

- **God is a refuge for His children**

Ps. 18:2: "The Lord is my rock and my fortress and my deliverer, my God, my rock, in whom I take refuge, my shield, and the horn of my salvation, my stronghold."

- **God is the good Shepherd**

Ps. 23:1-3: "The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want. He makes me lie down in green pastures. He leads me beside still waters. He restores my soul. He leads me in paths of righteousness for his name's sake."

- **The righteousness of God**

Ps. 11:5-7: "The LORD tests the righteous, but his soul hates the wicked and the one who loves violence. Let him rain coals on the wicked; fire and sulfur and a scorching wind shall be the portion of their cup. **For the LORD is righteous;** he loves righteous deeds; the upright shall behold his face."

- **The wrath of God**

Ps. 76:7: "But you, you are to be feared! Who can stand before you when once your anger is roused?"

- **The mercy of God**

Ps. 117:1-2: "Praise the LORD, all nations! Extol him, all peoples! For great is his steadfast love toward us, and the faithfulness of the LORD endures forever. Praise the LORD!"

- **The longsuffering of God**

Ps. 145:8-9: "The LORD is gracious and merciful, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love. The LORD is good to all, and his mercy is over all that he has made."

- **The presence of God**

Ps. 145:18: "The LORD is near to all who call on him, to all who call on him in truth."

Ps. 46:10: "Be still, and know that I am God. I will be exalted among the nations, I will be exalted in the earth!"

B. Meditate on God through His Son

Heb. 1:1-2: "Long ago, at many times and in many ways, God spoke to our fathers by the prophets, but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed the heir of all things, through whom also he created the world."

NAS John 1:18 No man has seen God at any time; the only begotten God, who is in the bosom of the Father, He has explained *Him*.

- **The Son demonstrated to us the love of God**

John 3:16: "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life"

Rom. 8:31-32: "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 gave him up for us all, how will he not also with him graciously give us all things?"

- **The Son demonstrated to us God's holiness and righteousness**

Rom. 3:23-26: "for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, and are justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, whom God put forward as a propitiation by his blood, to be received by faith. This was to show God's righteousness, because in his divine forbearance he had passed over former sins. It was to show his righteousness at the present time, **so that he might be just and the justifier** of the one who has faith in Jesus."

- **The Son demonstrated to us God's wrath and judgment**

Is. 53:4-5: "Surely he has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows; yet we esteemed him stricken, smitten by God, and afflicted. But he was pierced for our transgressions; he was crushed for our iniquities; upon him was the chastisement that brought us peace, and with his wounds we are healed."

- **The Son demonstrated to us God's mercy**

Mat. 20:28: "even as the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many."

- **The Son demonstrated to us God's faithfulness**

Phil. 2:6-10: "who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. Therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth,"

C. Meditate on God through His works

Rom. 1:19-20: "For what can be known about God is plain to them, because God has shown it to them. For his invisible attributes, namely, his eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly perceived, ever since the creation of the world, in the things that have been made. So they are without excuse."

Ps. 19:1: "The heavens declare the glory of God, and the sky above proclaims his handiwork."

Is. 40:12-15: "Who has measured the waters in the hollow of his hand and marked off the heavens with a span, enclosed the dust of the earth in a measure and weighed the mountains in scales and the hills in a balance? Who has measured the Spirit of the Lord, or what man shows him his counsel? Whom did he consult, and who made him understand? Who taught him the path of justice, and taught him knowledge, and showed him the way of understanding? Behold, the nations are like a drop from a bucket, and are accounted as the dust on the scales; behold, he takes up the coastlands like fine dust."

Is. 40:22-23: "It is he who sits above the circle of the earth, and its inhabitants are like grasshoppers; who stretches out the heavens like a curtain, and spreads them like a tent to dwell in; who brings princes to nothing, and makes the rulers of the earth as emptiness."

II. The Format of Spiritual Meditation

Ps. 1:1-3 "Blessed is the man who walks not in the counsel of the wicked, nor stands in the way of sinners, nor sits in the seat of scoffers; but his delight is in the law of the LORD, and on his law **he meditates day and night**. He is like a tree planted by streams of water that yields its fruit in its season, and its leaf does not wither. In all that he does, he prospers."

Meditating on God day and night means spending enough time thinking about God that it would make you able to see all things in life in the light of God all the rest of the time.

A. Meditating on God in a dedicated time

1. Do it purposefully

Mark 1:35: "And **rising very early in the morning**, while it was still dark, he departed and went out to a desolate place, and there he prayed."

Ps. 119:147-148: "I rise before dawn and cry for help; I hope in your words. My eyes are awake before the watches of the night, that I may meditate on your promise."

Ps. 17:15: "As for me, I shall behold your face in righteousness; when I awake, I shall be satisfied with your likeness."

2. Do this in solitude

Mark 1:35: "And rising very early in the morning, while it was still dark, he departed and **went out to a desolate place**, and there he prayed."

Luke 22:40-41: "And when he came to the place, he said to them, 'Pray that you may not enter into temptation.' And **he withdrew from them about a stone's throw**, and knelt down and prayed."

3. Do this regularly

Luke 22:39-41: "And he came out and went, **as was his custom**, to the Mount of Olives, and the disciples followed him. And when he came to the place, he said to them, "Pray that you may not enter into temptation." And he withdrew from them about a stone's throw, and knelt down and prayed,"

B. Spontaneous meditation on God

Deut. 6:6-9: "And these words that I command you today shall be on your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise. You shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes. You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates."

Job 38:4-5: "Where were you when I laid the foundation of the earth? Tell me, if you have understanding. Who determined its measurements—surely you know! Or who stretched the line upon it?"

Is. 40:26: "Lift up your eyes on high and see: who created these? He who brings out their host by number, calling them all by name; by the greatness of his might, and because he is strong in power, not one is missing."

"Occasional meditation uses any experience in life to glean spiritual fruit – converting the mundane activities of life into jewels of divine thoughts.³"

C. Approach to meditating on God

1. Seek the Lord

Ps. 63:1-3: "O God, you are my God; **earnestly I seek you**; my soul thirsts for you; my flesh faints for you, as in a dry and weary land where there is no water. So I have looked upon you in the sanctuary, beholding your power and glory."

2. Enjoy the greatness of the Lord

Ps. 63:5-8: "My soul will be satisfied as with fat and rich food, and my mouth will praise you with joyful lips, when I remember you upon my bed, and meditate on you in the watches of the night; for you have been my help, and in the shadow of your wings I will sing for joy."

Ps. 63:11: "But the king shall rejoice in God; all who swear by him shall exult, for the mouths of liars will be stopped."

3. Grow in your confidence in the Lord

Ps. 63:7-8: "for you have been my help, and in the shadow of your wings I will sing for joy. My soul clings to you; **your right hand upholds me.**"

³ Dadid W. Saxton, *God's Battle Plan for the Mind*, p 36

Ps. 73:28: "But for me it is good to be near God; I have made the Lord GOD my refuge, that I may tell of all your works."

How do you begin to meditate on God?

- Set a time to meditate on God.
- Prayerfully focus your mind on God
- Prepare Scripture passages that speak of God.
- Focus your attention on specific qualities of God:
 - meditate on God's greatness,
 - meditate on God's infinity,
 - meditate on God's creative power,
 - meditate on God's might,,
 - meditate on God's holiness,
 - meditate on God's perfection,
 - meditate on God's justice,
 - meditate on God's power,
 - meditate on God's providence,
 - meditate on God's wisdom,
 - meditate on God's glory,
 - meditate on God's beauty,
 - meditate on God's love,
 - meditate on God's goodness,
 - meditate on God's faithfulness,
 - meditate on God's salvation in Jesus Christ,
 - meditate on the fact that in Jesus Christ, God became your Father,
 - meditate on God's care for you,
 - meditate on the inheritance God has prepared for you.
- Think about God throughout the day when you encounter different things in life.
- Rejoice in the Lord.
- Find comfort in God.
- Find confidence in God.