

## 2011 Week Two Offerings for Quiet Time Study

### 1. MEDITATE on the WORD

*James 1:22 Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says.*

- *Suggestion: Start off by making a list of 5-10 more things, different from last week's, that you can thank God for*
- *Suggestion: Sing some praise to God!*

*One of the things that is changing for me in the New Year is taking the Biblical command "to meditate" more seriously, i.e., doing what the Bible says by learning what God means by "meditating" in my times with him.*

*There are two main Hebrew words in the Bible that are translated "to meditate." They're very similar in meaning and they occur in these verses:*

#### **Joshua 1:8; Psalm 1: 1-3; Psalm 77:12**

*One of the words is SIYACH (Strongs H7878). It is in the AV translation 20 times. It's translated 5x as talk, 5x as meditate, 4x as speak, 2x as complain, 1x as pray, 1x as commune, 1x as muse, 1x as declare. The Bible dictionary defines it this way: to produce, to put forth, to bring forth, to germinate, to flourish, to dare, to lift oneself up. In ancient Hebrew usage, the word **always** meant to speak, to utter with the mouth, to sing, to lament or complain, to talk to oneself, to meditate, especially on divine things.*

*Another Hebrew word often translated "meditate" is HAGAH (Strongs H1897). It is in the AV translation 25 times. It's translated 6x as meditate, 4x as mourn, 4x as speak, 2x as imagine, 2x as study, 2x as mutter, 2x as utter, 1x as roaring, 1x as sore, 1x as talk. The Bible dictionary defines it this way:*

- 1) to moan, growl, utter, muse, mutter, meditate, devise, plot, speak to roar, growl, groan
- 2) to utter, speak
- 3) to meditate, devise, muse, imagine

*To paraphrase the entry from Gesenius' Lexicon about this word (an online Bible study help), HAGAH, or "to meditate," means to murmur, to mutter, to growl (used of the growl of a lion over its prey); of the muttering of enchanters; of the sound of a harp when struck; of the cooing of doves; of the groaning and sighing of men; it means "to speak," to utter sound; To meditate means to speak with oneself, murmuring and in a low voice, as is often done by those who are "musing" ...to read syllable by syllable, used for soothsayers murmuring their songs, or those groaning, sighing.*

*BOTH these words seem to clearly indicate that we have a command from God to be making an audible sound, or speaking out loud before God in our times with him, and speaking out loud about or "meditating" on some specific things. What are they?*

- *Make a note of what we are supposed to be meditating on from the verses from Joshua and Psalms, above (in bold). Can you begin to make a list of some things to speak before God and to meditate upon in your times with him?*

### 2. CONTINUING TO MEDITATE

#### **Psalm 119:15; 119:23; 119:27; 119:48**

- *These verses mention three specific things we should be "meditating" on (literally, talking out loud to God about in our quiet times, mulling over with God out loud, if we understand the meaning of the Hebrew words SIYACH and HAGAH correctly!). Do I understand what these words mean? Look them*

up in a dictionary and begin to live out these verses possibly in a deeper way than ever before!

*I was surprised to discover that one of the meanings of the word "precept" is "limit." Since discovering this, I have been talking to God out loud about the limits he has set for me in my life, which I have most often resented. Some examples for me are: the limit in the amount of time I have available to accomplish certain things; the limit in how much I need to sleep and therefore the time I need to go to bed in order to remain healthy; the limits and boundaries imposed on my schedule because of my duties as a wife, the limits to my energy and strength because of my age...Meditating on these "precepts" from God has revealed a level of pride I hadn't seen in my heart. I'm enjoying a greater contentment and peace, as I learn to embrace God's trustworthy precepts in a new way and repent of my newly-uncovered lack of submission!*

### **3. MORE MEDITATION**

#### **Psalm 143:5; Ps 145:5**

These verses teach us to meditate on God's works, his wonderful works. Interestingly, this word, *ma'aseh*, in Hebrew, translated works, is translated in Genesis 46:33 and Genesis 47:3 as "occupation," as in, a person's vocation. The word also carries the sense of things done that only God could do – "God-things" that are divinely supernatural, done by God's hand and his intervention in our lives.

- Try meditating on God's vocation, occupation today!
- What are some "God-things" you can meditate on from your own life and experience already in 2011 or last year in 2010? Or go back further and keep adding to this meditation list, to use in quiet times.

### **4. AND MORE MEDITATION!**

#### **Psalm 8; Acts 17:24-28**

Psalm 8:4 what is man that you are mindful of him,  
the son of man that you care for him?

How can we turn our knowledge *about* God into knowledge *of* God? The rule for doing this is demanding, but simple. It is that we turn each truth that we learn *about* God into a matter of meditation *before* God, leading to prayer and praise *to* God.

We have some idea, perhaps, what prayer is, but what is meditation? Well may we ask; for meditation is a lost art today, and Christian people suffer grievously from their ignorance of the practice. Meditation is the activity of calling to mind, and thinking over, and dwelling on, and applying to oneself, the various things that one knows about the works and ways and purposes and promises of God. It is an activity of holy thought, consciously performed in the presence of God, under the eye of God, by the help of God, as a means of communion with God. Its purpose is to clear one's mental and spiritual vision of God, and let his truth make its full and proper impact on one's mind and heart. It is a matter of talking to oneself about God and oneself; it is, indeed, often a matter of arguing with oneself, reasoning oneself out of moods of doubt and unbelief into a clear apprehension of God's power and grace. Its effect is ever to humble us, as we contemplate God's greatness and glory, and our own littleness and sinfulness, and to encourage and reassure us – 'comfort' us, in the old, strong, Bible sense of the word – as we contemplate the unsearchable riches of divine mercy displayed in the Lord Jesus Christ. .... God help us, then, to put our knowledge about God to this use, that we all may in truth 'know the Lord.'

J.I Packer *Knowing God*. Hodder & Stoughton, 1973

"Christ says 'Give me all. I don't want so much of your time and so much of your money and so much of your work: I want You. I have not come to torment your natural self, but to kill it. No

half-measures are any good. I don't want to cut off a branch here and a branch there, I want to have the whole tree down. I don't want to drill the tooth, or crown it, or stop it, but to have it out. Hand over the whole natural self, all the desires which you think innocent as well as the ones you think wicked – the whole outfit. I will give you a new self instead. In fact I will give you myself: my own will shall become yours.”

C.S. Lewis. *Mere Christianity*. Harper 1952 (still in print in 2001)

## 5. ALPHA AND OMEGA

Read Matthew chapter 22

**Key verses** 37-40 ‘ “Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.” This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: “Love your neighbour as yourself.” All the law and the prophets hang on these commandments’

### Alpha and Omega

Our relationship with God has to be the first priority in our lives in order to achieve balance of any kind. It is an all-encompassing relationship, as we can see from the first commandment above. Our schedules must reflect the importance of this relationship ...

In Luke 10:27 Jesus refers to the same two commandments when a lawyer asks him how to have eternal life. Jesus tells the man, “Do this and you will live.” The lawyer required more explanation about who his neighbour was, and thus followed the Parable of the Good Samaritan. I think it is interesting to note that immediately following this lesson, Jesus had his now famous visit with Mary and her sister, Martha. Mary chose what was “better” yet the guests were still hungry. Certainly Jesus would not have had Mary ignore her visitors and not see to their needs. His teaching that day spoke more to getting our basic priority straight before we attempt to do right things for people. So, after we emerge from our time with God, it is time to then pour that love into the people surrounding us.

As disciples, we have numerous relationships, and we must prioritize them. We are all different and have different talents, personalities, intellect, background, roles and the list goes on. But there is one thing in which we are all equal. We have 24 hours a day. Rich people cannot buy more; artistic people cannot create more; persuasive people cannot coax more. How we choose to use our time makes all the difference in the quality of our lives. While we live out our priorities, we make choices that affect us and affect those close to us.

Terrie Fontenot in Jones, Sheila ed. *Finding balance from inside out*. Dpi., 2002

\*\*\*\*\*

*Thanks to Marilyn Dean for quiet times 4 and 5; and Strongs' references to Hebrew words and the Gesenius'lexicon can be found at <http://www.blueletterbible.org>. If you go looking and have trouble finding the exact spot on the website I used, feel free to ask me about it. Love, Tammy*