

## Teaching by Jack Hartman

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### EFFECTIVE SCRIPTURE MEDITATION

This month we will study what the Bible teaches about Scripture meditation. If I had to pick the most important topic in the Bible from my perspective after 42 years as a Christian, it would be Scripture meditation. I was on the verge of bankruptcy and a nervous breakdown when I was saved on July 20, 1974. I was a self-employed businessman. Our business was on the verge of failure. I had no idea what to do.

The man who led me to Christ said, “Jack, you will never get out of this mess unless you *immerse* yourself in the Bible. Meditate day and night on Scripture.” I started meditating on Scripture the next day. I took passages of Scripture from some Christian books that I had. I collected passages of Scripture from every possible source. The topics that I meditated on originally were financial prosperity and overcoming worry and fear. I saturated myself in the Bible day and night.

God honored my Scripture meditation. Just a few months after I began to meditate constantly on Scripture, our business began to turn around. All debts were paid in full.

As the years went by, I began to write Christian books. My Scripture meditation was focused on whatever book I was writing. However, in recent months I have gone back to what I used to do. At age 85 I now am back to meditating day and night on Scripture pertaining to needs in my life. (All of the following Scripture references are from *The Amplified Bible*.)

**WHAT DOES THE BIBLE TEACH ABOUT SCRIPTURE MEDITATION?** “This Book of the Law shall not depart out of your mouth, but you shall meditate on it day and night, that you may observe and do according to all that is written in it. For then you shall make your way prosperous, and then you shall deal wisely and have good success.” (Joshua 1:8)

These instructions that God gave to Joshua when he succeeded Moses as the leader of Israel also are God's instructions to *you* today. We will begin by studying the last part of this verse first. God promises that "*you shall make your way prosperous.*" He also promises that "*you shall deal wisely and have good success.*"

The word "prosperous" in this verse means more than just financial prosperity. The Hebrew word "tsalach" that is translated as prosperous here means "to press forward, break out and go over." In addition to financial prosperity, *you* will be able to push forward, break out and go over the problems you face if you obey the specific instructions in the first part of this verse. God promises that you will "deal wisely." If you meditate day and night on the holy Scriptures, you will receive wisdom from God (see Proverbs 2:6-7, 4:5-6, 9:10-11 and James 1:5-8.)

This verse also says that you will have "good success." The Bible contains more than 500,000 words. *Strong's Exhaustive Concordance*, which contains every word in the Bible, lists the word "success" *only one time* – in Joshua 1:8. If you want to succeed at overcoming any problem you face, you should obey the specific instructions that God gives in the first part of this verse.

### **WHAT SPECIFIC INSTRUCTIONS DOES GOD GIVE PERTAINING TO SCRIPTURE**

**MEDITATION?** First, God tells you that His Word "shall not depart out of your mouth." If you want to receive the blessings from God that are promised in the last part of this verse, you should *speak* God's Word consistently.

God instructs you to "meditate day and night" on His Word. The Hebrew word "hagah" that is translated as "meditate" in this verse means "to ponder and to speak." When you ponder on something, you turn whatever you are meditating on over and over in your mind. You open your mouth and *speak* whatever verse of Scripture you are meditating on.

You then are instructed to "observe and do according to all that is written in it." When you meditate on God's Word, you are instructed to carefully observe what God instructs you to *do*. No matter what problem you face, I urge you to find as many Scripture references pertaining to this problem as you can. Then meditate day and night on these Scripture references. I have always put the Scripture that I was meditating on on three inch by five inch cards.

Judy and I currently have written 32 Christian books. If you look on our web site at the list of all of the books we have written, we believe that you probably will find books that deal with the specific topic that you need to meditate on.

We also have written 10 sets of Scripture meditation cards that are listed on our web site. If you decide that you want to meditate on any of our Scripture meditation cards, you do not need to make up your own cards. We already have done the work for you.

**HOW I MEDITATE ON SCRIPTURE.** The following verse of Scripture is one of the first verses that I meditated on immediately after I was saved. This verse will help *you*, no matter what challenge you face. “I have strength for all things in Christ Who empowers me [I am ready for anything and equal to anything through Him Who infuses inner strength into me; I am self-sufficient in Christ's sufficiency].” (Philippians 4:13)

**JESUS CHRIST LIVES IN YOUR HEART.** Please note that this verse promises to give you strength “for all things.” These words include *every* problem you will ever face. The amplification in this verse says that you will be “ready for anything and equal to anything through Jesus Christ.” Jesus is omnipresent. He is in heaven with God. He also lives in the heart of every person who has received Him as his or her Savior (see II Corinthians 13:5.)

You are promised that Jesus will “infuse inner strength” into you. Jesus will strengthen you supernaturally from the inside out. He always will give you the strength that you have to have to overcome any problem.

**FILL YOUR MIND AND YOUR HEART WITH THE WORD OF GOD.** *Immerse yourself* in the passages of Scripture you have chosen. God said, “...you shall lay up these My words in your [minds and] hearts and in your [entire] being...” (Deuteronomy 11:18)

When you meditate on the Word of God, you will fill your heart with God’s Word. Your mouth will speak God’s Word continually. Store up as much of God’s Word in your heart as you possibly can.

**BUILD YOURSELF UP SPIRITUALLY.** “Receive, I pray you, the law and instruction from His mouth and lay up His words in your heart. If you return to the Almighty [and submit and humble yourself before Him], you will be built up...” (Job 22:22-23)

There is no question that your Father wants you to *store up* His Word in your mind and in your heart. If you faithfully obey this instruction from God, “you will be built up.” Your faith in God will increase steadily, if you meditate on whatever verses of Scripture you have chosen.

**THE WORD OF GOD IS THE TRUTH.** Jesus Christ said, “...Your Word is Truth.” (John 17:17) If you continually fill your mind and your heart with the Word of God, the following words that Jesus spoke to His disciples many years ago will apply to your life today. Jesus said, “...You will know the Truth, and the Truth will set you free.” (John 8:32)

If your eyes, your ears, your mind, your heart and your mouth are filled to overflowing with the Truth of God’s Word, you will be “set free” from whatever problem you face. Trust God completely. He will bring you through.

**NOTHING IS IMPOSSIBLE FOR GOD.** “...with God nothing is ever impossible and no word from God shall be without power or impossible of fulfillment.” (Luke 1:37)

No matter how difficult any problem you face may be, you can be certain that “nothing is ever impossible” for God. Trust God completely to do what His Word says He will do (see NU 23:19 and I Corinthians 1:9).

**GOD WILL BRING YOU SAFELY THROUGH EVERY PROBLEM YOU FACE.** “...when you received the message of God [which you heard] from us, you welcomed it not as the word of [mere] men, but as it truly is, the Word of God, which is effectually at work in you who believe [ exercising its superhuman power in those who adhere to and trust in and rely on it].” (I Thessalonians 2:13)

These words that the apostle Paul wrote to Christians in the city of Thessalonica many years ago also are God’s words to *you* today. The Bible is “*not* the word of mere men.” The Bible is “the Word of God.” Every word in the Bible is inspired by

God. (see II Timothy 3:16-17) You will receive the “superhuman power” that is contained in the Bible to the degree that you “adhere to, trust in and rely on it.

**HOW I MEDITATE ON THE WORD OF GOD.** There is no one way to meditate on the holy Scriptures. I will tell you how I have meditated on the Word of God since I started in 1974.

First of all, *boldly speak* the words in whatever passage of Scripture you are meditating on. Then open your mouth and personalize the words you have just spoken. Apply these words to the specific area of need that you have. God *always* does what He says He will do (see Numbers 23:19, Joshua 23:14 and I Corinthians 1:9.)

I can tell you from many years of experience that consistent Scripture meditation works beautifully. When I meditate on Scripture, my ears, hear my voice continually saying what God says. I cannot emphasize too strongly how much Scripture meditation has helped me.