



# THE BIBLE AS JEWISH MEDITATION LITERATURE

## OPENING QUESTION

What do you think of when someone talks about meditation?

LEVEL 1

VIDEO

HOW TO READ THE BIBLE

### THE BIBLE AS JEWISH MEDITATION LITERATURE

EPISODE 4



### The Bible as Jewish Meditation Literature

by The Bible Project

#### Question:

The Bible is designed as a multi-layered work, offering new levels of insight as you re-read it and allow each part to help you understand every other part. What benefits do you think this has over normal literature?

LEVEL 2

BIBLE

### Psalm 1 (NRSVCE) The Two Ways

**1** Happy are those who do not follow the advice of the wicked, or take the path that sinners tread, or sit in the seat of scoffers; **2** but their delight is in the law of the Lord, and on his law they meditate day and night. **3** They are like trees planted by streams of water, which yield their fruit in its season, and their leaves do not wither. In all that they do, they prosper.

**4** The wicked are not so, but are like chaff that the wind drives away. **5** Therefore the wicked will not stand in the judgment, nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous; **6** for the Lord watches over the way of the righteous, but the way of the wicked will perish.

## Question:

The meditation style described in the psalm and video is known as 'Lectio Divina'. It is practiced still to this day and is many peoples favourite type of prayer. Do you find that there is anywhere or anything you do that makes you feel particularly close to God?

LEVEL 3

CATECHISM

## What is the right way to read the Bible?

The right way to read the Sacred Scripture is to read it prayerfully. In other words, with the help of the Holy Spirit, under whose influence it came into being. As you read Sacred Scripture focus on these four things; the literal, allegorical, moral and anagogical 'senses' of the text.

The **literal sense** is the meaning conveyed by the words of Scripture and discovered by exegesis (Study), following the rules of sound interpretation. All other senses of Sacred Scripture are based on the literal.

The **allegorical sense**: We can acquire a more profound understanding of events by recognizing their significance in Christ; thus the crossing of the Red Sea is a sign or type of Christ's victory and also of Christian Baptism.

The **moral sense**: The events reported in Scripture ought to lead us to act justly. As St. Paul says, they were written "for our instruction".

The **anagogical sense** (Greek: anagoge, "leading"): We can view realities and events in terms of their eternal significance, leading us toward our true homeland: thus the Church on earth is a sign of the heavenly Jerusalem.

## Question:

With these four senses in mind, have a look at the passage below and discuss what you think the four senses are within it:

### John 21:15-17 (NRSVCE) Jesus and Peter

**15** When they had finished breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, "Simon son of John, do you love me more than these?" He said to him, "Yes, Lord; you know that I love you." Jesus said to him, "Feed my lambs." **16** A second time he said to him, "Simon son of John, do you love me?" He said to him, "Yes, Lord; you know that I love you." Jesus said to him, "Tend my sheep." **17** He said to him the third time, "Simon son of John, do you love me?" Peter felt hurt because he said to him the third time, "Do you love me?" And he said to him, "Lord, you know everything; you know that I love you." Jesus said to him, "Feed my sheep."