

(a.) By neglecting to read and meditate upon revealed truth. The Sacred Scriptures are a rich mine, abounding in diamond treasures, but it is a mine that must be worked. If men read the Word of God to advantage, it must be in meditation and prayer. "My son," says the wise man, "if thou incline thine ear unto wisdom, and apply thy heart to understanding, yes, if thou criest after knowledge, and liftest up thy voice for understanding, if thou seekest as for silver, and searchest for her as for hid treasures, then shalt thou understand the fear of the Lord, and find the knowledge of God."

The truths of salvation are in God's Book, and by study and meditation we can receive them into our minds. If close application is required, close application and sincere thoughtfulness can be given. Among insects that subsist on the sap of flowers, there are two very different classes. One is remarkable for its breadth of wing and beautiful plumage, and as it circles from flower to flower gracefully, you admire it; but in the same field is another worker, whose brown vest, and straightforward, business-like habits may not be as pleasing to the eye. His graceful neighbor lights here and there, feeding upon sap nearest the surface, but the dingy plodder makes it a point to light upon every flower, and wheresoever he finds more or less of honey. If the flower-cup is deep, he goes to the bottom. If the dragon's mouth is closed, he forces its lids asunder; if the passage is concealed, he explores until he discovers, and entering finds his way to the sweetness. His rival with larger wing and a covering that sparkles like gem dust in the sun, has not patience for such work. But what is the end? The one will die next October with the flower it feeds on, but the other will be found in the hive with the cells packed full of rich food that will prepare him for another summer's work. A blessing is pronounced upon the man who meditates upon the Law of the Lord: "He shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither, and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper." "O how I love thy law; it is my meditation all the day. Thou, through thy commandments, hast made me wiser than mine enemies, for they are ever with me. I have more understanding than all my teachers, for thy testimonies are my meditation."

(b.) By not reading the Scriptures for the purpose and end for which they were given. We are told that all Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness. To study the Scriptures for doctrine is to have a creed resting upon the authority of God's Word. To study the Scriptures for reproof, is to have sin rebuked in the soul. To study the Scriptures for correction, is to expel all the theories and practices of men; and to study the Scriptures for instruction