

THRU THE BIBLE EXPOSITION
Psalms: Living By Faith In God
LXIII. Handling Today's Crisis In Our Minds
(Psalm 63:1-11)

Introduction: (To show the need . . .)

According to two world-renowned scientists, many people today are facing a crisis in their minds:

(1) “Dr. Richard Davidson,” one of “Time Magazine’s ‘100 Most Influential People in the World,’” and “Dr. Adam Gazzaley . . . a professor of neurology, physiology, and psychiatry at the University of California San Francisco,” two “world-renowned scientists,” at a recent University of Connecticut function in Waterbury warned “that people’s well-being is in rapid decline with increases in those suffering from depression, anxiety and drug overdoses.” (Livi Stanford, “Experts warn of mental stresses,” Republican-American, April 19, 2023, p. 3A)

(2) The causes they cited for this crisis are a “pandemic that separated us for years, the soaring addiction epidemic in the United States, . . . conflicts around the world, . . . infectious diseases,” and “climate change,” Ibid. In reality, Marxists are the cause of much of today’s stress: Dennis Prager’s column, “It’s already happening here” (Ibid., April 12, 2023, p. 8A) noted how the appalling gender reeducation in public and medical schools and hospitals, the moral and intellectual decline in our universities, and the biased application of the law in the justice system are fueled by Marxists. It affects us locally, too: Brigitte Ruthman (“Bear attacks woman walking in Avon, euthanized by DEEP,” Ibid., April 22, 2023, p. 1A) told of “(a) 74-year-old Avon woman” who “suffered bite wounds when a 250-pound bear attacked her” though “(l)egislation to enact a bear hunt in the state has been nixed for years by animal rights advocates” of the Left. Paul Hughes (“Torrington food bank president reports astounding demand,” Ibid.) noted that a food bank that serves Torrington and five other northwestern Connecticut towns has seen the number “of people and families seeking help feeding themselves” grow “from 300 to 5,000 in three-and-a-half years” due to inflated food prices reportedly caused by excess government spending that has been driven by Marxist ideology.

(3) The human cost of these stresses is staggering: Dr. Davidson cited “an average of 22 military suicides a day and a major decline in life expectancy in the U. S.” Dr. Gazzaley added, “I believe we are in the midst of a crisis . . . I am not talking about an external crisis. I am talking about an internal crisis of our minds.” (Ibid., Stanford)

(4) In trying to give direction for solving this crisis, Dr. Davidson “cited four pillars of well-being that help us to cultivate a healthy mind: awareness, connection, insight and purpose,” Ibid. However, he was not reported as giving any instruction on how we can obtain these four qualities nor how we can cultivate a healthy mind with them.

Need: So we ask, “If notable scientists claim that the stresses we face are causing a rapid decline in the well-being of our minds, but they don’t explain how to gain a healthy mind, CAN we have a healthy mind, and IF so, HOW?”

- I. When David composed Psalm 63, he faced a lot of stressful issues that are similar to what we face today:**
- A. The psalm’s introduction, part of the Hebrew text (Kittel, Bib. Heb., p. 1028), state that David composed this psalm when he lived in the wilderness of Judah, what occurred when he was outlawed in Israel by king Saul.
 - B. Saul suffered from paranoia, believing that David would replace him as king, so David faced the stress of having the king of his nation repeatedly seek him to do him mortal harm, cf. 1 Samuel 16:14; 18:8-9; 24:1-2.
 - C. Saul influenced even some of David’s own tribal people in Judah to turn against him, 1 Sam. 16:1,13; 23:8-13.
 - D. Just before Saul’s era, Israel’s morals were so low that vile men in Benjamin just north of Judah abused a woman to death, leading to civil war and the ensuing abusive hardship of another 600 virgins, Jud. 19:1-21:25.
 - E. Israel also faced a growing international threat from the Philistines who eventually invaded Israel, killing Saul and his sons in battle and taking possession of much of northern Israel, 1 Samuel 28:1-31:7.
 - F. Locally, Israel’s people faced threatening encounters with lions and bears (1 Samuel 17:34-35), and David faced food insecurity when he suddenly had to flee from Saul’s court in 1 Samuel 20:27-21:6.
- II. Nevertheless, Psalm 63:1-11 reveals that David had a healthy mind with the awareness, connection, insight and purpose that the world-famous scientists we cited in our introduction claim we need today:**
- A. David’s words in Psalm 63:6-8 revealed that he possessed a vivid **awareness** of his relationship with God:
 - 1. Even when he lay in bed awake during the night watches, David remembered the Lord, Psalm 63:6.
 - 2. He acknowledged that God had been his Help, that he would sing in the shadow God’s protection, v. 7.
 - 3. David thus noted that his inner man stayed close to God, and God’s right hand of power upheld him, v. 8.
 - B. David’s words in Psalm 63:1-2 revealed that he had a strong personal **connection** with the Lord:
 - 1. David said that he earnestly sought the Lord as if thirsting for Him in a dry and weary land. (Psalm 63:1)

2. This was land was southern Judah where David lived. (Introductory notes; Z. P. E. B., v. Four, p. 402)
 3. “David’s longing for God came because of his vision of God’s power . . . and . . . glory” that he experienced in “seeing the evidence of God’s presence in the . . . tabernacle . . .” (B. K. C., O. T., p. 840)
- C. David’s words in Psalm 63:3a, 1, 5, and 9-11 with other Scriptures revealed that he had great spiritual *insight*:
1. He asserted that God’s “loyal love,” (*hesed*, Ibid., Kittel; H. A. W., Theol. Wrdbk. of the O. T., 1980, vol. I, p. 305-307), was more “valuable in estimation” (*tob*, Ibid., Kittel; B. D. B., A Heb. and Eng. Lex. of the O. T., p. 373-375) than even “physical life” (*hayyim*, Ibid., p. 313), Psalm 63:3a.
 2. Though figuratively stating in Psalm 63:1 that his flesh thirsted after God in dry, southern Judah, David said that his soul in contrast would be satisfied as with prized food (“marrow and fatness,” H. C. Leupold, The Psalms, 1974, p. 465-466) by his fellowship with God, so that David would praise Him, Psalm 63:5.
 3. In Psalm 63:9-11, David claimed that God would destroy those who sought his life while David would praise God since the mouths of those who lied in order to kill him would be stopped. This assurance was based on God’s promise through His prophet Samuel that David would be king in 1 Samuel 16:1, 11-13.
- D. David’s words in Psalm 63:3b-4 revealed that he possessed a clear *purpose* in his life: He claimed that his lips would praise the Lord as long as he lived, that he would lift up his hands in worship to the Lord.
- III. The way David attained a healthy mind was by being filled with the Holy Spirit and applying Scripture:**
- A. When God had His prophet Samuel anoint David as king, the Holy Spirit came on David from that time forward, 1 Samuel 16:1, 11-13. The “fruit” that the Holy Spirit produced in David or in any person is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control, Galatians 5:22-23 NIV.
 - B. In contrast to David’s experience, the Holy Spirit left king Saul, and a demon by God’s permissive will then “tormented” him, 1 Samuel 16:14 NIV. Consequently, Saul became so distrustful of David that he often tried to kill him, but in the end, Saul out of fear committed suicide in fighting the Philistines, 1 Samuel 16:15-31:4.
 - C. David’s many references to written Scripture in his psalms (for example, Psalm 19:1 with Genesis 1-2; Psalm 19:7-8 et al.) imply that he obeyed Moses’ Deuteronomy 17:18-20 directive that Israel’s kings saturate their minds with Scripture that God might bless them and their descendants after them with long reigns.
- IV. Similarly, we believers in Christ today can gain the awareness, connection, insight, and purpose that David possessed and be healthy in mind by the filling of the Holy Spirit and our exposure to Scripture:**
- A. All believers today are permanently indwelt by the Holy Spirit, John 14:16-17 with Acts 2:1-11; Romans 8:9.
 - B. When we confess the sins we commit after we trust in Christ so God can forgive and restore us to fellowship with Him (1 John 1:9), and we then rely on the Holy Spirit by faith, we are “filled,” better “controlled,” by the Holy Spirit as was David, Eph. 5:18; Ryrie St. Bible, KJV, 1978, fn. to Eph. 5:18. [The “filling” in Ephesians 5:18 is contrasted with being drunk, i. e., being controlled by wine, so we are to be controlled by the Spirit.]
 - C. If we are controlled by the Holy Spirit and regularly read Scripture (2 Timothy 3:14-4:2; Deuteronomy 17:18-20), we like David will possess awareness, connection, insight and purpose and function with a healthy mind.

Lesson: *To overcome the rapid decline in the well-being of the mind that many people suffer today, we believers in Christ need to relate properly to the Holy Spirit and saturate our minds with Scripture.*

Application: *(1) May we trust in Christ Who died as our Atoning Sacrifice for sin that we might receive God's gift of eternal life, John 3:16; 1 Corinthians 15:1-11. (2) To overcome the rapid decline in the well-being of the mind that many people in the world suffer, may we relate well to the Holy Spirit and saturate our minds with Scripture.*

Conclusion: (To illustrate the message and provide additional guidance . . .)

David’s insight in Psalm 63:3a and 63:5 is especially relatable to the crisis of the mind that we face: (a) If God’s “loyal love” for us as His people is more valuable than physical life, a claim David made when the leader of his nation was influencing even David’s fellow tribesmen in Judah to kill him, then a truly fulfilling life on earth is found only by relating to God in righteousness to enjoy the full benefits of His “loyal love”! (b) Also, if even in the barren land of dry, southern Judah, with not only its psychological dreariness, but also its lack of livelihood provisions, and that in an era of low national morals, low morale and international threats, threats of wild animals, food insecurity, etc., David found rich spiritual fulfillment in fellowship with God as if he had just eaten a gourmet dinner, then true fulfillment is not found by perfecting our external circumstances, but by communing with God! (c) In summary, true fulfillment is found by relating to the Lord in righteous fellowship with Him regardless what external trials we face!

May we trust in Christ Who died as our Atoning Sacrifice for sin that we might receive God’s gift of eternal life. May we overcome the crisis of our minds by relating well to the Lord and reading Scripture.