



And they that shall be of thee shall build the old waste places: thou shalt raise up the foundations of many generations; and thou shalt be called, The repairer of the breach, The restorer of paths to dwell in.

Isaiah 58:12

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Depression (part 2)

What is depression? The criteria for this discussion on depression are truths contained in the Word of God. All references are from the King James Authorized Version.

In order to successfully study this topic, it is important to know the Biblical terms associated with what is known today as depression. The various Biblical terms are afflicted, humble, lowly, needy and poor, but it is important to remember that each of these words can have a double meaning. Each can be related to a person's physical condition as well as their emotional state.

In the beginning, God planned for man to know God and to enjoy him. However, because of Adam's sin, he lost that opportunity and received the curse of hard unfruitful labor and sorrow (Gen. 3:17).

There are several times in the Scriptures that King David, a wealthy man, declared himself to be poor (Psalm 34:6; 40:1,17; 86:1). Because of this, the word "poor" must have a greater meaning than the absence of wealth. The term poor (H6035, H6041) is defined as depressed in mind or circumstances and carries with it the idea of looking down or brow beating. That is why David (Psalm 86:4) asks the Lord to bring rejoicing into his soul.

This definition clearly defines the state of someone who is without money because he may be depressed in mind and have his financial circumstances looking down upon and brow beating him. However, many other circumstances in life can have this same effect. It is this type of mental and emotional state that the Lord defines the problem that we face called depression.

Many circumstances in life can cause depression. When a person sins, he loses his joy and falls into depression. Psalm 31:9-10 declares that the sin or iniquity of David brought about consuming grief in his soul. The previous study on Cain revealed the same consequence.

This condition in the soul can also come from people who are in opposition to us (Psalm 57:6; Psalm 70:5; Psalm 120:2; Psalm 143:3-4) or have abandoned us (Psalm 142.4). David refers to his soul as bowed down, poor and needy, and persecuted.

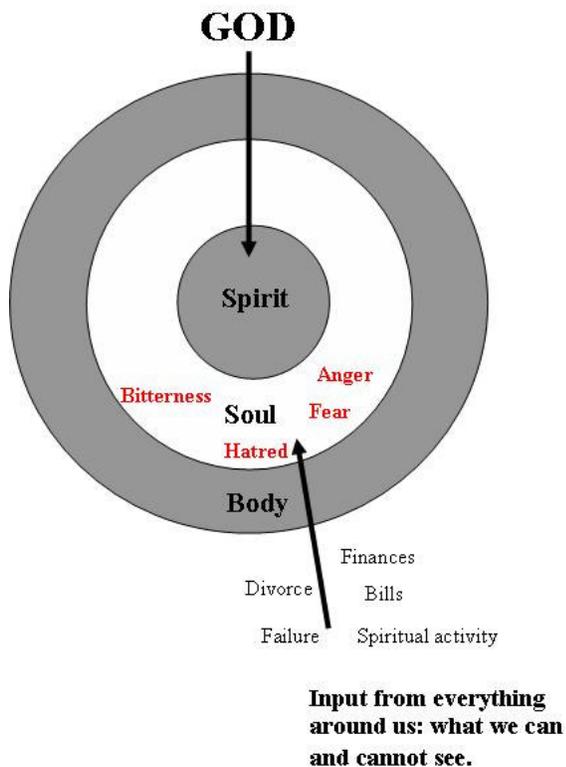


Fig. 1

What actually takes place in the heart or soul of man is best illustrated in Fig. 1. Man is made of three parts: the body, soul and spirit. Each of these parts has a distinct function. The spirit is that by which we can receive communication and spiritual abilities from God. The soul of man is that part which involves our mind will and emotion and of course the body is the aspect of man by which he interacts with the world around him. Fig. 1 illustrates how man, through his

body, can experience emotions that result from input received from the world. Finances, domestic situations, failure, abuse, and spiritual activity all have a bearing on us. We see, hear and experiences these events through our senses or through our body. The natural man, which is without God, may react to these situations with many different emotions such as fear, anger, hatred, bitterness, wrath, etc. What he feels effects how he thinks. Instead of experiencing troublesome events, he now continually begins to think about them. The more man focuses on the negative aspect of his experiences, the greater will be the emotions in his soul. Soon, these thoughts will depress, look down upon or brow beat the soul of man. It is not his mind that is troubled, but his heart. Man, who is designed to live a life dependent on God, is unable to handle any of life's circumstance without experiencing the consequences. Without spiritual intervention, man will become imprisoned in this situation (Psalm 69:33).

Some important questions to consider are:

1. What situations in my life are causing a brow beating depression upon my soul?
2. What emotions do I experience because of these events?

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