

Calgary L'chaim Bible Fellowship

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A study series with Saskatchewan & Bontoc Ekklesia group

Text: Genesis 4:7; James 1:22

Date: _____

Biblical Perspective on Depression

God's Word not only helps us face depression but also shows us to be an overwhelming conqueror even in the midst of feeling depressed (read Psalm 19:7-14, 119:165, proverbs 16:25, 1 Cor 1:25, 3:18-20, 10:13, 2 Tim 3:16-17, 2 Pet 1:2-10, 1 Jn 5:4-5)

Biblical Description of Depression

In Scripture feelings associated with being depressed are described to be as having a:

1. Fallen countenance (Genesis 4:7)
2. Having a broken spirit (Prov 17:22, 18:14)
3. Being sad (Prov 15:13)
4. Experiencing despair (Psalm 38:4)
5. Brokenhearted (Psalm 147:3)
6. Burdened by weight of sin (Ps 38:4)
7. Mourning (Psalm 38:6)
8. Being bowed down (Psalm 38:6)
9. Having grief (Psalm 119:28)
10. Losing heart (fainting /weary) (Eph 3:13, Heb 12:3)

Many of the symptoms and feelings are described by King David in Psalm 38:3-17.

Modern psychologists define "depression" as a condition marked by feelings of dejection or guilt. The result is hopelessness and cessation of activity. Some in the medical profession classify it as a "disease", currently statistical data shows that it is the most prominent disorder presently observed in general medical practice today. However in spite of its prevalence, medical science admits that the causes of depression are still largely unknown.

Examples of depression in Scripture

1. Elijah in 1 Kings 19:1-4
2. David in Psalms 38
3. Jonah in Jonah 4:1-11
4. Peter in Matthew 26:69-75

No one is completely immune to feelings of depression (1 Cor 10:12-13).

Contributory Factors that lead to "depression"?

This list is not exhaustive, it mainly indicates the importance of a careful and biblical self-awareness and examination to determine what biblical changes the Lord wants us to make in our life (Pro 11:14, 18:13, Is 55:8-11, matt 7:1-5, I Cor 11:31, Philipians 4:6-7, James 1:5, 22-25)

1. Physical- sickness, childbirth, surgery and recovery, hormonal or chemical imbalances, organic dysfunctions, sleep loss, unhealthy diet, fatigue, menstrual cycle, physical maladies (hypoglycemia, diabetes, glandular dysfunctions etc)- It is important to make biblical changes in our life so we learn to live biblically in the midst of physical need and or medical treatment.
2. Unbiblical responses to life situations- physical handicaps, job loss, divorce, death of a loved one, relationship break up, financial difficulties, accidents, interpersonal conflicts, persecution, trauma, medical treatments.
3. Lack of obedience to the Word of God- overwork, eating dis-orders, substance abuse, failing to complete responsibilities, prayer life, forgiveness of other people, failure to confess sin etc
4. Unbiblical thoughts and thought patterns- bitterness, worry, anxiety, envy, jealousy, impatience, lustful thouts,anger, prideful thinking, esteeming oneself above others etc

Biblical responses and perspective

1. You are fearfully and wonderfully made (Psalm 139:14), redeemed with a price and are to glorify God in our body (1 Cor 6:20, Philipians 1:20) – proper body care is essential (Romans 12:1)
2. Medical diagnosis be made and proper care be maintained. However we are still responsible to respond biblically in any difficulty regardless of feelings (ex Jeremiah in Lamentations 3:31-32 or with Paul in 2 Cor 12:7-10).
3. Practicing biblical love in all relationships, in this we please God and will receive strength and loving care (James 1:25, Phillipians 2:3-8, 2 Cor 12:9-10).
4. Remember who you are in the Messiah ! (Romans 8:14-17, Ephesians 1:3-140. You are a child of God! (1 Pet 2:9-10) and God has chosen you to be a testimony of His power in the world (1 Cor 1:26-31) and conforms you to the image of our Messiah our Lord and Saviour, Yeshua ! (Romans 8:28-29, 2 Cor 3:18)
5. No matter what occurs in life, our obedience to His Torah (God's Word) gives us opportunity to live for Him!
6. And remember God is always on the throne!