



Thirsty?

Psalm 63



Desire

□ Psalm 63 is attributed to David “when he was in the Desert of Judah.” Having fled his enemies,¹ David is isolated in the dry and weary desert. Under these conditions, David likely experiences physical thirst; but he also experiences a much deeper desire. Read Psalm 63:1.

1. In what ways do our circumstances and physical conditions affect our feelings and deep desires? How do David’s difficult circumstances affect *his* desires, and why?²

📖 “As the deer pants for streams of water,
So my soul pants for you, O God.
My soul thirsts for God, for the living God.
When can I go and meet with God?” (*Psalm 42:1-2, NIV*)

2. Do you think it is possible to desperately need something without desiring it? If the answer is “yes,” why is this so?³

□ David begins, “O God, you are my God” (*v. 1*). His seeking is based on his relationship with God. (*The water/thirst metaphor is used elsewhere for nonbelievers’ seeking. See the next page under Reflection/Application.*)

Delight

□ Read Psalm 63:1-11. David’s desire is satisfied as he reflects on his previous experience with God (*v. 2*), and as he draws close to God in whole-hearted praise (*vv. 3-5*). As he commits to keep on praising God, he knows that his “soul will be satisfied with the richest of foods.”

¹ He may have been fleeing either Absalom (2 Samuel 15:13-30) or Saul (e.g., 1 Samuel 23).

² This varies among people, and is affected by one’s worldview, beliefs, faith, and personality. For some, difficulties result in confusion, frustration, discouragement or despair. For others, difficulties result in greater focus and resolve to overcome. For most, difficult circumstances (especially tragedies) cause us to think about “the more important things in life” (though many fail to grasp the *most* important “thing” in life). For many of us, our physical needs make us more sensitive to our spiritual needs. Such is David’s case. Of course, David already has faith in God, and is in a covenant relationship with Him (*vv. 1, 4*). He knows that God is only one who can meet the deepest needs of human beings; for God is the Creator, Deliverer and Source of life and blessing. David’s desire is to draw close to God and experience His liberating presence.

³ I ask this question because Christians claim that every person’s greatest need is a good relationship with God. Yet many do not consciously desire a relationship with God. Why? Because many people are not in touch with their true need (which necessarily involves belief in God). They may experience the symptoms of a broken relationship with God, but a wrong diagnosis of the problem results in ineffective solutions and desires. Using the water metaphor, thirst is not always a reliable indicator of the body’s need for water. A person may suffer dehydration (a dangerous lack of fluids in the body) without experiencing desire for fluids. However, other symptoms point to the true need.

- ❑ As David reflects on God and praises him, he realizes that God’s power and glory are constant even when David feels dry, weak and isolated (v. 2). He also realizes that “[God’s] love is better than life” (v. 3).

3. How can David say, “[God’s] love is better than life”? How can this be true?⁴

📖 *Jesus said, “For whoever wants to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for me will find it” (Matthew 16:15).*

- ❑ As David lies restless on his bed “through the watches of the night” (when he is most vulnerable to anxiety and attack), he directs his thoughts toward God (v. 6). He is comforted by God’s protective care, which brings peace and joy to his heart (v. 7).
- ❑ David clings to God, knowing that God’s “right hand” upholds him (v. 8). He is encouraged, knowing that God has the stronger grip!

Personal Reflection

- Do you sometimes lie restless in your bed at night thinking about the challenges, difficulties, uncertainties or failures in your life? How do you find comfort, peace and rest? Do you pray to the Deliverer, and trust in Him?



Deliverance

- ❑ David concludes his psalm with confidence in God’s deliverance (vv. 9-11). He knows that God’s enemies will ultimately be defeated, and justice will prevail.

Reflection/Application

- What are your deepest desires? What are you seeking? How will you be satisfied? The water metaphor is a powerful metaphor because water is essential for life and health. As physical water is essential for physical life, “spiritual water” is essential for spiritual life. Only “spiritual water” can truly meet our deepest needs and satisfy our deepest desires.

📖 *Jesus said, “Everyone who drinks [physical] water will be thirsty again, but whoever drinks the water I give him will never thirst. Indeed, the water I give him will become in him a spring of water welling up to eternal life” (John 4:13-14, NIV).*

📖 *Jesus said, “If anyone is thirsty, let him come to me and drink. Whoever believes in me, as the Scripture has said, streams of living water will flow from within him” (7:37-38).*

What do you think about these claims of Jesus? What questions do you have? Do you need to come to Jesus? He is the Savior, who died for your sins and was raised from the dead.

- As a Christian, do you agree that God’s love is better than life? What things in your life (possessions, positions, dreams, ambitions, comforts, pleasures, etc.) are you holding on to most tightly? Would you be willing to let go of these things if you knew it was God’s will? Think and pray about this, and ask God to change your heart to seek Him above all things.

⁴ David hopes for deliverance (v. 9-11), but he takes comfort in God’s covenant loving-kindness whatever happens, even death. Life (and every other blessing) is a gift of God. David properly values the Giver more than the gifts.