



TODAY'S CHALLENGE:

**ENCOURAGE  
YOURSELF IN THE  
LORD**

# 1. LIFE IS FULL OF CHALLENGES

- ▶ **LIFE IS FULL OF CHALLENGES** no matter how rich, how intelligent or how successful you are. Life is not a bed of roses. There are thorns because we live in a broken world. We can get discouraged over so many things today: pay rise, being overlooked for job promotion, job loss, relationship issues (husband and wife), family issues, health issues, financial issues – make us feel so lousy, disappointed, disheartened, hopeless as the future looks so dim.
- ▶ **DEPRESSION** (mood) state of low mood and aversion to activity, which can affect a person's thoughts, behavior, motivation, feelings, and sense of well-being.



# 1. LIFE IS FULL OF CHALLENGES

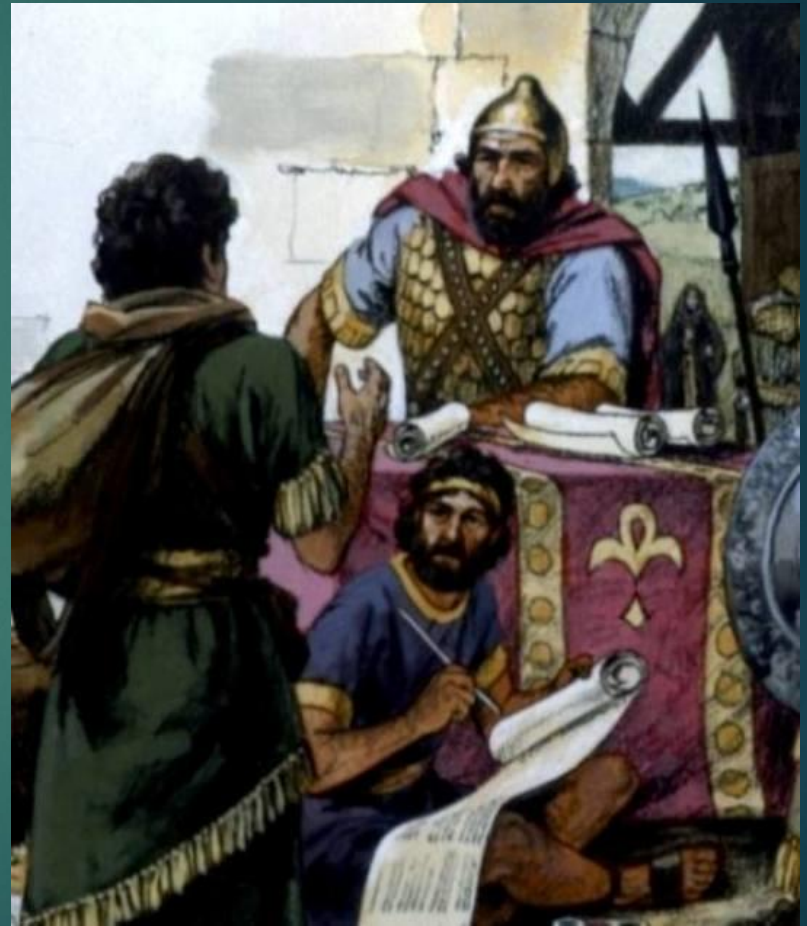
- ▶ Christians are not exempted. So many people committed suicide due to depression. They felt hopeless and helpless. According to WHO, nearly 800,000 people die by suicide every year, which is one person every 40 seconds.
- ▶ What about you? Are you feeling down today? Are you feeling discouraged over things in your personal life, family life, career or spiritual life? How do we get up and get out from this feeling of despair, distress, hopelessness?





## 2. DAVID HAS BEEN FACING MANY CHALLENGES

▶ David was actually running away from King Saul who was bent on killing him. Then he escaped to the land of the Philistines. There he was given a place called Ziklag to stay. One day he was supposed to join the Philistines to attack the Israelites but the Lords of the Philistines didn't trust him as during the battle, David might become their adversary. Good thing he returned to Ziklag or he would have been away for many months.



## 2. DAVID HAS BEEN FACING MANY CHALLENGES

- ▶ So he returned home to Ziklag with his fighting men and discovered that his town had been attacked by the Amalekites while he was away. The town had been burned, and all the women and children had been taken, including David's two wives. There was a lot of crying and weeping. Then the mood changed from grief to bitterness. Anger flowed towards the leader – David. Plans were made to stone him to death. David was greatly distressed .



### 3. DAVID IN DISTRESS. ZIKLAG IS PLUNDERED BY THE AMALEKITES.

▶ **1 Samuel 30:1-3** Now it happened, when David and his men came to Ziklag, on the third day, that the Amalekites had invaded the South and Ziklag, attacked Ziklag and burned it with fire, <sup>2</sup> and had taken captive the women and those who were there, from small to great; they did not kill anyone, but carried them away and went their way. <sup>3</sup> So David and his men came to the city, and there it was, burned with fire; and their wives, their sons, and their daughters had been taken captive.





### 3. DAVID IN DISTRESS. ZIKLAG IS PLUNDERED BY THE AMALEKITES.

- ▶ **1 Samuel 30:4-6** <sup>4</sup> Then David and the people who were with him lifted up their voices and wept, until they had no more power to weep. <sup>5</sup> And David's two wives, Ahinoam the Jezreelitess, and Abigail the widow of Nabal the Carmelite, had been taken captive. <sup>6</sup> Now David was greatly distressed, for the people spoke of stoning him, because the soul of all the people was grieved, every man for his sons and his daughters.



### 3. DAVID IN DISTRESS. ZIKLAG IS PLUNDERED BY THE AMALEKITES.

- ▶ David did not weep only because everything and everyone was lost. He also wept because he knew that he was responsible for it. He was about as low in his backslidden state as a man can be; David is like the prodigal son who now sits in the pigpen.





## 4. DAVID ENCOURAGES HIMSELF

▶ **1 Samuel 30:6-8** *But David strengthened himself in the LORD his God.<sup>7</sup> Then David said to Abiathar the priest, Ahimelech's son, "Please bring the ephod here to me." And Abiathar brought the ephod to David. <sup>8</sup> So David inquired of the LORD, saying, "Shall I pursue this troop? Shall I overtake them?" And He answered him, "Pursue, for you shall surely overtake them and without fail recover all."*

▶ **THE FIRST THING THAT DAVID DID WAS TO SEEK GOD. THAT IS WHAT WE MUST DO WHEN WE FACE A BIG CHALLENGE.**

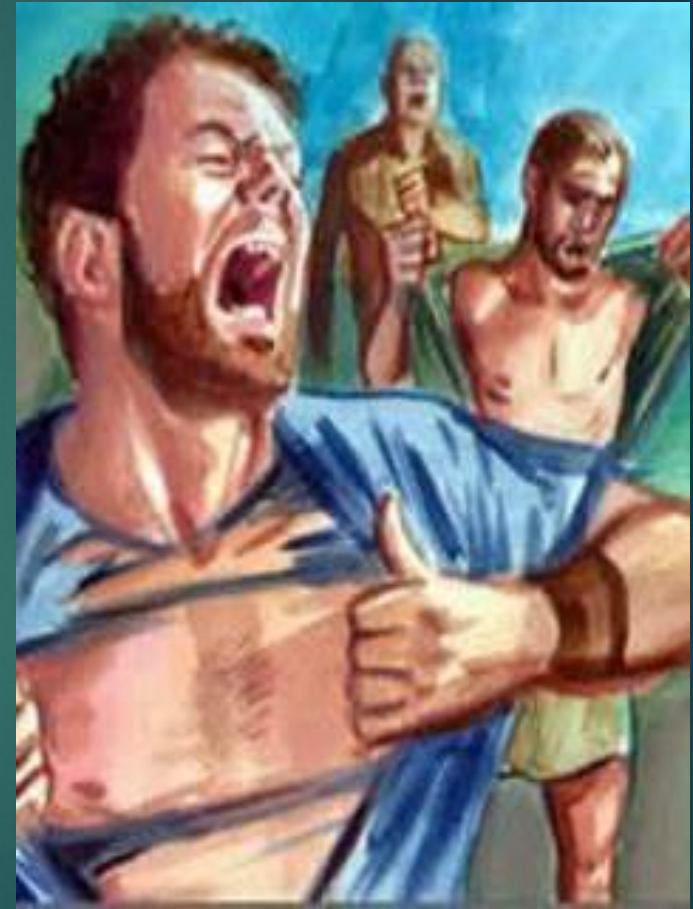


## 4. DAVID ENCOURAGES HIMSELF

### ▶ DAVID STRENGTHENED HIMSELF IN THE LORD HIS GOD.

This was backslidden and wayward David. Why would God strengthen him? Because God is rich in mercy and grace, and because David was now completely broken, ready to be filled. Sometimes we think we have to *achieve* God's blessing or strength, but David shows us another way. David strengthened himself in the Lord his God

### ▶ DAVID KNEW THAT BY HIS OWN STRENGTH HE COULD NOT DO MUCH ESPECIALLY SINCE HIS MEN WERE READY TO STONE HIM.



## 5. HOW TO ENCOURAGE YOURSELF?

▶ THERE ARE **8 THINGS** WE CAN LEARN FROM THIS INCIDENT FROM DAVID ABOUT HOW TO ENCOURAGE YOURSELF WHEN YOU FACE BIG CHALLENGES

▶ **(1) DAVID RECOGNIZED HIS OWN DEPRESSED STATE.**

▶ Often, in a crisis, we don't realize the doubts, the despair, the sadness that we're trapped in. The first thing that happened was that David realized the terrible state of his mind and heart. He realized he was leaving God out of his equation. **APPLICATION: RECOGNIZE YOU HAVE A CHALLENGE & TURN TO GOD.**



WITHOUT GOD  
WE ARE  
NOTHING!



## 5. HOW TO ENCOURAGE YOURSELF?

- ▶ **(2) DAVID STRENGTHENED HIMSELF BY LOOKING TO GOD:** David could have drawn encouragement from a group of seven valiant men who'd joined him from Manasseh. 1 Chron. 12:19-20 says, "...Adnah, and Jozabad, and Jedaiel, and Michael, and Jozabad, and Elihu, and Zilthai, captains of the thousands." These newcomers hadn't lost their wives and children, for they hadn't been in Ziklag. **BUT DAVID DIDN'T LOOK TO ANY MAN – BUT "TO THE LORD"**



# 5. HOW TO ENCOURAGE YOURSELF?

- ▶ **BUT DAVID DIDN'T LOOK TO ANY MAN – BUT “TO THE LORD.”** No, he encouraged himself in the Lord, his God! **DAVID CASTS HIMSELF AWAY FROM ALL EARTHLY TRUSTS AND WENT STRAIGHT TO HIS GOD!**
- ▶ **ISAIAH 43:2** <sup>2</sup> *When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; And through the rivers, they shall not overflow you. When you walk through the fire, you shall not be burned, Nor shall the flame scorch you.*
- ▶ **APPLICATION: LIKEWISE, WHEN WE FACE CHALLENGES, TAKE IT TO THE LORD IN PRAYER**

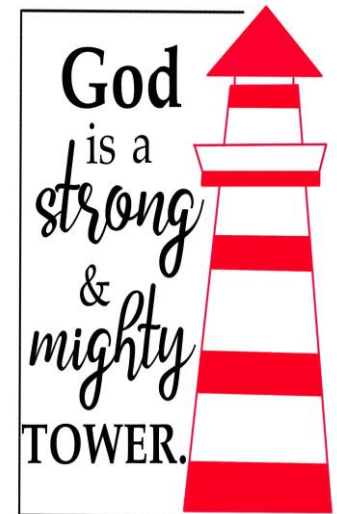


## 5. HOW TO ENCOURAGE YOURSELF?

### ▶ (3) DAVID STRENGTHENED HIMSELF KNOWING THAT THE LORD IS

**STRONG.** This wasn't some kind of rah-rah cheerleader kind of positive thinking mumbo jumbo. This was the strength of the living God making himself real in the life and heart of a hurting man. This was strength for recognition, strength for brokenness, strength for repentance, strength for determination to win back what the enemy has stolen. This is the same strength that would raise Jesus from the dead! ***Ephesians 6:10*** Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of His might,

**APPLICATION: IF GOD CAN RAISE JESUS FROM THE DEAD , GOD HAS THE POWER TO OVERCOME EVERY CHALLENGE.**

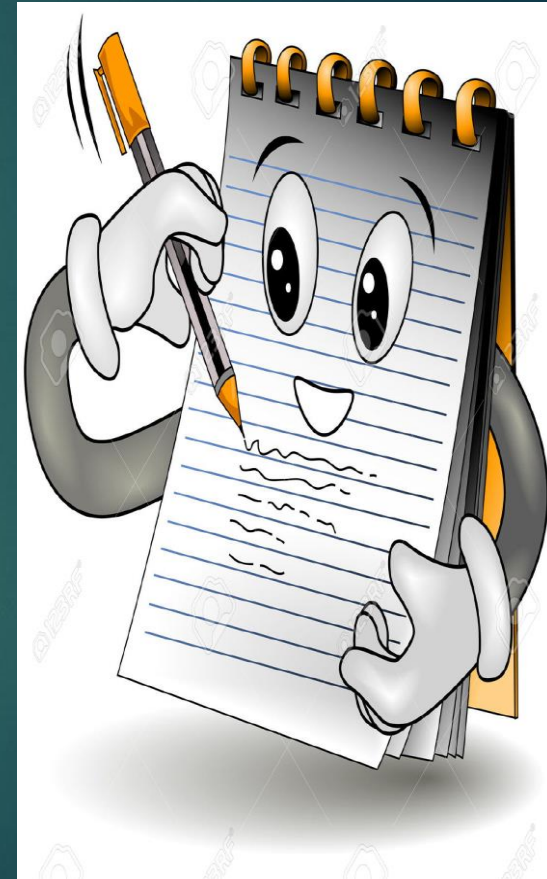




## 5. HOW TO ENCOURAGE YOURSELF?

### ▶ (4) DAVID REMEMBERED GOD'S LOVE

▶ David could remember God's love. At this point of total loss, David now saw the love of the LORD in the rejection of the Philistine leaders. If God had not sent him back home through the rejection of the Philistines, it would have been months and months until he returned, and the situation would have been far worse. **Romans 5:8** *But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.* **APPLICATION:** When you face challenges, pause for a moment and make a list of how God has loved you in the past.



# 5. HOW TO ENCOURAGE YOURSELF?

- ▶ **(5) DAVID REMEMBERED GOD'S PROMISES & CALLING.**
- ▶ David could remember God's promises "I am a man anointed by God, called by God, and promised by God to be the next king of Israel. I have a high calling and promise from God, and He hasn't taken it away. I need to start living according to that destiny."
- ▶ **Numbers 23:19**<sup>19</sup> *"God is not a man, that He should lie, Nor a son of man, that He should repent. Has He said, and will He not do? Or has He spoken, and will He not make it good?"*



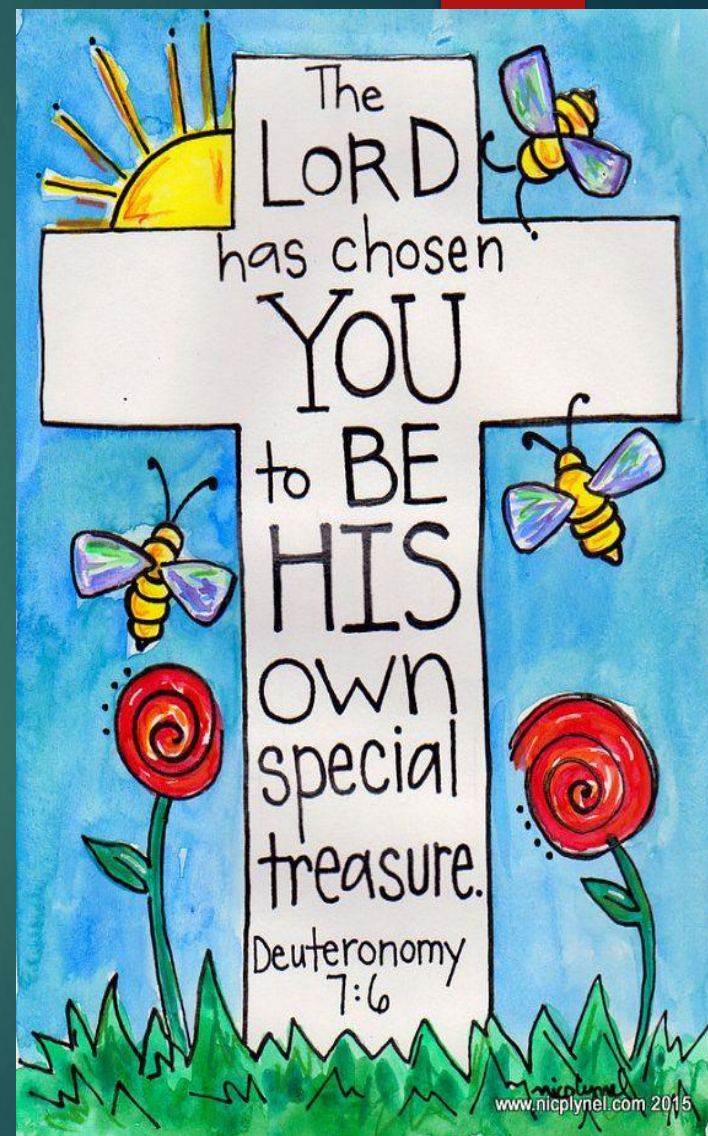


## 5. HOW TO ENCOURAGE YOURSELF?

▶ (5) DAVID REMEMBERED GOD'S PROMISES & CALLING.

▶ **Romans 8:32** <sup>32</sup> *He who did not spare his own Son, but gave him up for us all—how will he not also, along with him, graciously give us all things?*

▶ **APPLICATION: GOD HAS A DESTINY FOR YOU.** When there's no way, God will make a way. Nothing is too difficult for God. With him all things are possible. God has been faithful in providing for my needs. He is able to provide for me again.





## 5. HOW TO ENCOURAGE YOURSELF?

### ▶ (6) DAVID REMEMBERED GOD'S PAST DELIVERANCES:

Standing among those ruins of Ziglak, David remembered the early days of his life and how God had delivered him. **(i)** He looked back on the happy days when he kept his father's sheep and sang songs to God out on the hills of Bethlehem. **(ii)** He remembered fighting the lion and the bear **(iii)** He remembered how he came to fight Goliath in the name of the Lord & killed Goliath. **APPLICATION:** When we face challenges, remember how God, in the past, blessed you & delivered you from your enemies & from harm.



## 5. HOW TO ENCOURAGE YOURSELF?

- ▶ **(7) DAVID ENQUIRES OF THE LORD**
- ▶ **(i) "SHALL I PURSUE THIS TROOP"** At one time David would not bother to even ask these questions. He would simply do it because when a soldier is attacked he attacks back. But in returning from his backsliding, David brings everything to the LORD. Nothing is done just because it was done before. He asks God about everything.



## 5. HOW TO ENCOURAGE YOURSELF?

- ▶ (7) DAVID ENQUIRES OF THE LORD
- ▶ (ii) GOD REPLIES & DAVID & HIS MEN KNEW THAT GOD WAS WITH THEM & THAT THEY WILL RECOVER ALL. **1 Samuel 30:8** <sup>8</sup> So David inquired of the LORD, saying, “Shall I pursue this troop? Shall I overtake them?” And He answered him, “Pursue, for you shall surely overtake them and without fail recover all”
- ▶ **APPLICATION: LIKE DAVID , WE NEED TO BRING EVERYTHING TO GOD ESPECIALLY WHEN WE FACE CHALLENGES**





## 5. HOW TO ENCOURAGE YOURSELF?

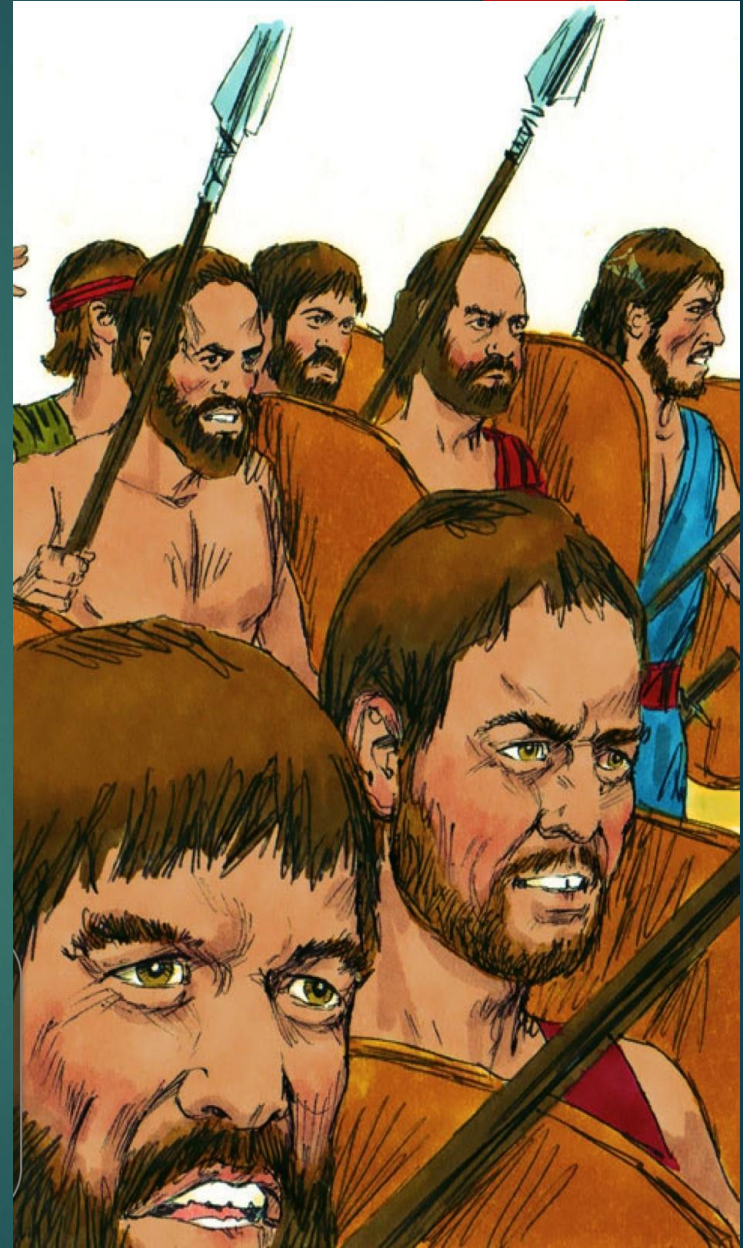
- ▶ **8) DAVID DID NOT DEPEND UPON MAN. HE DEPENDED UPON GOD**
- ▶ David and the six hundred men on the march again, off again on a mission from God. There wasn't an army on earth that could beat David and his six hundred men when they walked in God's will. David found that one-third of his men couldn't continue. But David didn't let this trial stop him. He set the one-third to work guarding the supplies, lightening the load of the 400 who continued, and he set out again, full of faith.



▶ 8) DAVID DID NOT DEPEND UPON MAN. HE DEPENDED UPON GOD

▶ DAVID FOUGHT THE AMELIKITES & RECOVERED EVERYTHING & TOOK ALL THEIR FLOCKS: 1

**Samuel 30:17-18** <sup>17</sup> David fought them from dusk until the evening of the next day, and none of them got away, except four hundred young men who rode off on camels and fled. <sup>18</sup> David recovered everything the Amalekites had taken, including his two wives.



## ▶ 8) DAVID DID NOT DEPEND UPON MAN. HE DEPENDED UPON GOD

▶ **1 Samuel 30:19-20** <sup>19</sup> *And nothing of theirs was lacking, either small or great, sons or daughters, spoil or anything which they had taken from them; David recovered all. <sup>20</sup> Then David took all the flocks and herds they had driven before those other livestock, and said, "This is David's spoil."*

▶ **APPLICATION:** When we face challenges, turn to God & trust Him to take you through to a full recovery like what God said to David.





# CONCLUSION

- ▶ **DAVID.** When he faced the big challenge:
- ▶ **1. RECOGNIZED HE WAS DEPRESSED**
- ▶ **2. LOOKED TO GOD**
- ▶ **3. KNEW THAT GOD IS STRONG**
- ▶ **4. REMEMBERED GOD'S LOVE**
- ▶ **5. REMEMBERED GOD'S PROMISES**
- ▶ **6. REMEMBERED PAST DELIVERENCES**
- ▶ **7. ENQUIRED FROM GOD**
- ▶ **8. DEPENDED ON GOD, NOT MAN**
- ▶ **LIKEWISE,** we should encourage ourselves & reach out to God when we face challenges.



## LET US PRAY

- ▶ O Lord my God, your power endures throughout all generations. In the difficulties that I face, may I know that you go before me and fight for me. Let me rest in you while you fight my battles. Like David conquered Goliath and overcame the deep shock and sorrow of finding Ziklag burnt to the ground by the Amalekites.
- ▶ I call on you to defeat the giant obstacles in my life. You are the solid foundation on which I build my life, make me secure through the storms that will come. Now to you who are able to do far more abundantly than all that I ask, be glorified throughout every generation. Through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.