



I AM HE



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Introduction

Do you sometimes wish, when watching TV or a movie in the cinema, that you could be one of those talented actors or sportsmen you see on the screen? Sometimes you fantasise that you are the hero in the story being played out in front of you. You are the one who shoots the robbers and rescues the hostages; it is you whom the women admire; it is your autograph and email address that everyone asks for. You watch a late night TV talk show where a well-known person is being interviewed. And then you wish the country could hang on your lips also, and ask for your opinions on current matters. Or early in the morning you page through the business section of the newspaper, and read a column about a successful young entrepreneur who has made an international breakthrough with his IT program. And involuntarily you think: That must be really grand! I want to be like him.

In the following pages, you are invited to page through the Bible and discover the stories it tells about special men. Men play an important role throughout the Bible. Some lived in close relationship with God, while others turned their backs on Him. Sometimes they wrestled with God. They were men of differing dimensions, multi-faceted and unique, men in varying circumstances of life. And God was at work in each of their lives. Between the pages of God's wonderful Word, you will discover: That is me! I am he! And God works in my life, too!

Come along and meet the men in the Bible.

He Lives in Relationship with God

The most important dimension of true manhood is to live in relationship with God. He is not afraid to admit that he needs his Creator. As a man of God, he deeply loves God who is at the very centre of his life.

And you discover: I am he!

His life changes radically after meeting Jesus

Jesus went on into Jericho and was passing through. There was a chief tax collector there named Zacchaeus, who was rich. He was trying to see who Jesus was, but he was a little man and could not see Jesus because of the crowd. So he ran ahead of the crowd and climbed a sycamore tree to see Jesus, who was going to pass that way. When Jesus came to that place, he looked up and said to Zacchaeus, "Hurry down, Zacchaeus, because I must stay in your house today."

Zacchaeus hurried down and welcomed him with great joy. All the people who saw it started grumbling, "This man has gone as a guest to the home of a sinner!"

Zacchaeus stood up and said to the Lord, "Listen, sir! I will give half my belongings to the poor, and if I have cheated anyone, I will pay back four times as much."

Jesus said to him, "Salvation has come to this house today, for this man, also, is a descendant of Abraham. The Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost."

Luke 19:1-10

He grows spiritually as he studies the Word

The psalmist sings of his love for the Word of God.

How I love your law!

I think about it all day long.

Your commandment is with me all the time
and makes me wiser than my enemies.

I understand more than all my teachers,
because I meditate on your instructions.

I have greater wisdom than those who are old,

because I obey your commands.

I have avoided all evil conduct,
because I want to obey your word.

I have not neglected your instructions,
for you yourself are my teacher.

How sweet is the taste of your instructions —
sweeter even than honey!

I gain wisdom from your laws,
and so I hate all bad conduct.

Your word is a lamp to guide me
and a light for my path.
I will keep my solemn promise
to obey your just instructions.
My sufferings, LORD, are terrible
indeed;
keep me alive, as you have
promised.

Accept my prayer of thanks, O LORD,
and teach me your commands.
I am always ready to risk my life;
I have not forgotten your law.

The wicked lay a trap for me,
but I have not disobeyed your
commands.
Your commandments are my eternal
possession;
they are the joy of my heart.
I have decided to obey your laws
until the day I die.

I hate those who are not completely
loyal to you,
but I love your law.

Psalm 119:97-113

He prays with unconditional surrender

Daniel continued to pray regularly, despite the proclamation of a law which prohibited worship of anyone other than the king.

When Daniel learnt that the order had been signed, he went home. In an upstairs room of his house there

were windows that faced towards Jerusalem. There, just as he had always done, he knelt down at the open windows and prayed to God three times a day.

When Daniel's enemies observed him praying to God, all of them went together to the king to accuse Daniel.

Daniel 6:10-12a

He submits to God's will for his life

This was how the birth of Jesus Christ took place. His mother Mary was engaged to Joseph, but before they were married, she found out that she was going to have a baby by the Holy Spirit. Joseph was a man who always did what was right, but he did not want to disgrace Mary publicly; so he made plans to break the engagement privately. While he was thinking about this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, "Joseph, descendant of David,

do not be afraid to take Mary to be your wife. For it is by the Holy Spirit that she has conceived. She will have a son, and you will name him Jesus — because he will save his people from their sins."

So when Joseph woke up, he married Mary, as the angel of the Lord had told him to do. But he had no sexual relations with her before she gave birth to her son. And Joseph named him Jesus.

Matthew 1:18-21,24-25

He dedicates his life to the Lord

(Enoch) spent his life in fellowship with God, and then he disappeared, because God took him away.

Genesis 5:24

It was faith that kept Enoch from dying. Instead, he was taken up to God, and nobody could find him, because God had taken him up. The scripture says that before Enoch was taken up, he had pleased God.

Hebrews 11:5

He doesn't always understand God's ways

Such a man in the Bible was Gideon:

The LORD's angel appeared to him there and said, "The LORD is with you, brave and mighty man!"

Gideon said to him, "If I may ask, sir, why has all this happened to us if

the LORD is with us? What about all the wonderful things that our fathers told us the LORD used to do — how he brought them out of Egypt? The LORD has abandoned us and left us to the mercy of the Midianites."

Judges 6:12-13

In spite of struggles in his life, he always looks to God for strength

Even though the fig trees have no fruit
and no grapes grow on the vines,
even though the olive crop fails
and the fields produce no corn,
even though the sheep all die
and the cattle stalls are empty,
I will still be joyful and glad,

because the LORD God is my saviour.
The Sovereign LORD gives me strength.
He makes me sure-footed as a deer,
and keeps me safe on the mountains.

Habakkuk 3:17-19

Sometimes he doubts

Sometimes he lacks faith, like the disciple Thomas, who had trouble believing that Jesus had really been raised from the dead.

One of the twelve disciples, Thomas (called the Twin), was not with them when Jesus came. So the other disciples told him, "We have seen the Lord!"

Thomas said to them, "Unless I see the scars of the nails in his hands and put my finger on those scars and my hand in his side, I will not believe."

A week later the disciples were together again indoors, and Thomas was with them. The doors were locked, but Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you." Then he said to Thomas, "Put your finger here, and look at my hands; then stretch out your hand and put it in my side. Stop your doubting, and believe!"

Thomas answered him, "My Lord and my God!"

Jesus said to him, "Do you believe because you see me? How happy are those who believe without seeing me!"

John 20:24-29

Sometimes he is embarrassed to acknowledge that he knows Jesus

Peter was sitting outside in the courtyard when one of the High Priest's servant women came to him and said, "You, too, were with Jesus of Galilee."

But he denied it in front of them all. "I don't know what you are talking about," he answered, and went on out to the entrance of the courtyard. Another servant woman saw him and said to the men there, "He was with Jesus of Nazareth."

Again Peter denied it and answered, "I swear that I don't know that man!"

After a little while the men standing there came to Peter. "Of course you are one of them," they said. "After all, the way you speak gives you away!"

Then Peter said, "I swear that I am telling the truth! May God punish me if I am not! I do not know that man!"

Just then a cock crowed, and Peter remembered what Jesus had told him: "Before the cock crows, you will say three times that you do not know me." He went out and wept bitterly.

Matthew 26:69-75

Sometimes he stumbles ...

The following spring, at the time of the year when kings usually go to war, David sent out Joab with his officers and the Israelite army; they defeated the Ammonites and besieged the city of Rabbah. But David himself stayed in Jerusalem.

One day, late in the afternoon, David got up from his nap and went to the palace roof. As he walked about up there, he saw a woman having a bath. She was very beautiful.

So he sent a messenger to find out who she was, and learnt that she was Bathsheba, the daughter of Eliam and the wife of Uriah the Hittite. David sent messengers to fetch her; they brought her to him and he made love to her. (She had just finished her monthly ritual of purification.) Then she went back home. Afterwards she discovered that she was pregnant and sent a message to David to tell him.

2 Samuel 11:1-5

He comes to the Lord and receives forgiveness

God gives him the chance of a new beginning, and he experiences joy once again.

Be merciful to me, O God,
because of your constant love.
Because of your great mercy
wipe away my sins!

Wash away all my evil
and make me clean from my sin!

I recognise my faults;
I am always conscious of my sins.
I have sinned against you — only
against you —
and done what you consider evil.

So you are right in judging me;
you are justified in
condemning me.
I have been evil from the day
I was born;
from the time I was conceived,
I have been sinful.

Sincerity and truth are what you
require;
fill my mind with your wisdom.
Remove my sin, and I will be clean;
wash me, and I will be whiter
than snow.

Let me hear the sounds of joy and
gladness;
and though you have crushed
me and broken me,
I will be happy once again.
Close your eyes to my sins
and wipe out all my evil.

Create a pure heart in me, O God,
and put a new and loyal spirit
in me.
Do not banish me from your
presence;
do not take your holy spirit away
from me.

Give me again the joy that comes
from your salvation,
and make me willing to
obey you.
Then I will teach sinners your
commands,
and they will turn back to you.

Spare my life, O God, and save me,
and I will gladly proclaim your
righteousness.
Help me to speak, Lord,
and I will praise you.

You do not want sacrifices,
or I would offer them;
you are not pleased with burnt
offerings.
My sacrifice is a humble spirit, O God;
you will not reject a humble and
repentant heart.

O God, be kind to Zion and help her;
rebuild the walls of Jerusalem.
Then you will be pleased with proper
sacrifices
and with our burnt offerings;
and bulls will be sacrificed on
your altar.

Psalm 51:1-19

He Lives in Relationship with Others

He does not live in isolation. He lives in community with others. Each of the relationships which he has is unique and makes specific demands on him.

And you discover: I am he!

He is a husband

He and his wife are companions

Then the LORD God said, "It is not good for the man to live alone. I will make a suitable companion to help him." So he took some soil from the ground and formed all the animals and all the birds. Then he brought them to the man to see what he would name them; and that is how they all got their names. So the man named all the birds and all the animals; but not one of them was a suitable companion to help him.

Then the LORD God made the man fall into a deep sleep, and while he was sleeping, he took out one

of the man's ribs and closed up the flesh. He formed a woman out of the rib and brought her to him. Then the man said,

"At last, here is one of my
own kind —

Bone taken from my bone, and
flesh from my flesh.

'Woman' is her name because she
was taken out of man."

That is why a man leaves his father and mother and is united with his wife, and they become one.

Genesis 2:18-24

He loves her dearly

Then Isaac brought Rebecca into the tent that his mother Sarah had lived in, and she became his wife. Isaac loved Rebecca, and so he was comforted for the loss of his mother.

Genesis 24:67

Jacob loved Rachel so much that he was prepared to work seven years for his father-in-law Laban in order that he might marry her.

Jacob worked seven years so that he could have Rachel, and the time seemed like only a few days to him, because he loved her.

Genesis 29:20

She is the most beautiful woman to him

Like a lily among thorns
is my darling among women.

Song of Songs 2:2

He admires and compliments her

How beautiful you are, my love;
how your eyes shine with love!

Song of Songs 1:15

What a wonderful woman you are!
How beautiful are your feet in
sandals.

The curve of your thighs
is like the work of an artist.

A bowl is there,
that never runs out of spiced
wine.

A sheaf of wheat is there,
surrounded by lilies.

Your breasts are like twin deer,
like two gazelles.

Your neck is like a tower of ivory.
Your eyes are like the pools in the city
of Heshbon,

near the gate of that great city.

Your nose is as lovely as the tower of
Lebanon

that stands guard at Damascus.

Your head is held high like Mount
Carmel.

Your braided hair shines like the finest
satin;

its beauty could hold a king captive.

Song of Songs 7:1-5

He enjoys intimacy with his wife

How pretty you are, how beautiful;
how complete the delights of
your love.

You are as graceful as a palm tree,

and your breasts are clusters of
dates.

I will climb the palm tree
and pick its fruit.

Song of Songs 7:6-8a

Together, they fulfil each other's sexual needs

But because there is so much
immorality, every man should have his
own wife, and every woman should
have her own husband. A man should
fulfil his duty as a husband, and a
woman should fulfil her duty as a wife,
and each should satisfy the other's
needs. A wife is not the master of her
own body, but her husband is; in the

same way a husband is not the master
of his own body, but his wife is. Do not
deny yourselves to each other, unless
you first agree to do so for a while in
order to spend your time in prayer;
but then resume normal marital
relations. In this way you will be kept
from giving in to Satan's temptation
because of your lack of self-control.

1 Corinthians 7:2-5

He is faithful to her

Christ's sacrificial love and faithfulness
towards his church is an example that
he follows in his marriage.

Husbands, love your wives just as
Christ loved the church and gave his
life for it.

Men ought to love their wives just as
they love their own bodies. A man
who loves his wife loves himself.
(People never hate their own bodies.

Instead, they feed them and take
care of them, just as Christ does the
church; for we are members of his
body.) As the scripture says, "For this
reason a man will leave his father
and mother and unite with his wife,
and the two will become one." There
is a deep secret truth revealed in
this scripture, which I understand as
applying to Christ and the church. But
it also applies to you: every husband
must love his wife as himself.

Ephesians 5:25,28-33a

He is a father to his children

He and his family serve the Lord

The time came again for Elkanah and his family to go to Shiloh and offer to the LORD the yearly sacrifice and the special sacrifice he had promised. But

this time Hannah did not go. She told her husband, "As soon as the child is weaned, I will take him to the house of the LORD, where he will stay all his life."

1 Samuel 1:21-22

He speaks to his children every day about the Lord

"Israel, remember this! The LORD — and the LORD alone — is our God. Love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your strength. Never forget these commands that I am giving you today. Teach them to your children. Repeat

them when you are at home and when you are away, when you are resting and when you are working. Tie them on your arms and wear them on your foreheads as a reminder. Write them on the doorposts of your houses and on your gates."

Deuteronomy 6:4-9

He desires that his children should remain faithful to God

Job was very concerned about his children's relationship with God.

Job's sons used to take it in turns to give a feast, to which all the others would come, and they always invited their three sisters to join them. The

morning after each feast, Job would get up early and offer sacrifices for each of his children in order to purify them. He always did this because he thought that one of them might have sinned by insulting God unintentionally.

Job 1:4-5

He teaches his children to trust God

It is the living who praise you,
As I praise you now.
Parents tell their children how faithful you are.

Isaiah 38:19

He treats his children wisely

Parents, do not treat your children in such a way as to make them angry. Instead, bring them up with Christian discipline and instruction.

Ephesians 6:4

He teaches his children to be obedient

Pay attention to what your father and mother tell you, my son. Their teaching will improve your character as a handsome turban or a necklace improves your appearance.

Proverbs 1:8-9

He accepts his children for who they are

Parents, do not irritate your children, or they will become discouraged.

Colossians 3:21

He keeps on loving his children although they may do wrong and hurt him deeply

Absalom murdered his half brother Amnon in order to take revenge on him. Their father, King David, was devastated when he heard it.

While they were on their way home, David was told: "Absalom has killed all your sons — not one of them is left!" The king stood up, tore his clothes in sorrow, and threw himself to the ground. The servants who were there

with him tore their clothes also. But Jonadab, the son of David's brother Shammah, said, "Your Majesty, they haven't killed all your sons. Only Amnon is dead. You could tell by looking at Absalom that he had made up his mind to do this from the time that Amnon raped his sister Tamar. So don't believe the news that all your sons are dead; only Amnon was killed." In the meantime Absalom had fled.

2 Samuel 13:30-34a

Despite the heartache that his son Absalom had brought upon him, David still loved him.

Joab knew that King David missed Absalom very much.

2 Samuel 14:1

He gave orders to Joab, Abishai, and Ittai: "For my sake don't harm the young man Absalom." And all the troops heard David give this command to his officers.

2 Samuel 18:5

Sometimes he fails in the upbringing of his children

The sons of Eli the priest took advantage of their position as priests, which they misused in different ways. All their father's warnings fell on deaf ears.

Eli was now very old. He kept hearing about everything his sons were doing to the Israelites and that they were even sleeping with the women who worked at the entrance to the Tent

of the LORD's presence. So he said to them, "Why are you doing these things? Everybody tells me about the evil you are doing. Stop it, my sons! This is an awful thing the people of the LORD are talking about! If anyone sins against someone else, God can defend him; but who can defend someone who sins against the LORD?"

But they would not listen to their father.

1 Samuel 2:22-25a

He is a father-in-law

He takes an interest in the life of his son-in-law and gives good advice.

Moses told Jethro everything that the LORD had done to the king and the people of Egypt in order to rescue the Israelites. He also told him about the

hardships the people had faced on the way and how the LORD had saved them. When Jethro heard all this, he was happy and said, "Praise the LORD, who saved you from the king and the people of Egypt! Praise the LORD, who saved his people from slavery!"

Exodus 18:8-10

"Now let me give you some good advice, and God will be with you. It is right for you to represent the people before God and bring their disputes to him."

Exodus 18:19

Nevertheless, he allows his son-in-law to lead his own life and has a good relationship with him.

Then Moses went back to Jethro, his father-in-law, and said to him, "Please let me go back to my relatives in Egypt to see if they are still alive." Jethro agreed and said goodbye to him.

Exodus 4:18

He is a son-in-law

He respects his father-in-law and has a good relationship with him.

Jethro came with Moses' wife and her two sons into the desert where Moses was camped at the holy mountain. He had sent word to Moses that they were coming, so Moses went out to meet him, bowed before him, and kissed him. They asked about each other's health and then went into Moses' tent. Moses told Jethro everything that the LORD had done to the king and the

people of Egypt in order to rescue the Israelites. He also told him about the hardships the people had faced on the way and how the LORD had saved them. When Jethro heard all this, he was happy and said, "Praise the LORD, who saved you from the king and the people of Egypt! Praise the LORD, who saved his people from slavery! Now I know that the LORD is greater than all the gods, because he did this when the Egyptians treated the Israelites with such contempt."

Exodus 18:5-11

He is a loyal friend

Friends always show their love. What are relatives for if not to share trouble?

Proverbs 17:17

He prays for his friends

After the LORD had finished speaking to Job, he said to Eliphaz, "I am angry with you and your two friends, because you did not speak the truth about me, as my servant Job did. Now take seven bulls and seven rams to Job and offer them as a sacrifice for yourselves. Job will pray for you, and I will answer his prayer and not disgrace

you as you deserve. You did not speak the truth about me as he did."

Eliphaz, Bildad, and Zophar did what the LORD had told them to do, and the LORD answered Job's prayer.

Then, after Job had prayed for his three friends, the LORD made him prosperous again and gave him twice as much as he had had before.

Job 42:7-10

He has a positive influence on his friends

People learn from one another, just as iron sharpens iron.

Proverbs 27:17

He is divorced

Although many different things separate people from one another, there is nothing that can separate us from God's love:

Who will accuse God's chosen people? God himself declares them not guilty! Who, then, will condemn them? Not Christ Jesus, who died, or rather, who was raised to life and is at the right-hand side of God, pleading with him for us! Who, then,

can separate us from the love of Christ?

For I am certain that nothing can separate us from his love: neither death nor life, neither angels nor other heavenly rulers or powers, neither the present nor the future, neither the world above nor the world below — there is nothing in all creation that will ever be able to separate us from the love of God which is ours through Christ Jesus our Lord.

Romans 8:33-35a,38-39

He Lives in Relationship with Himself

Every day, he is aware of both his physical and spiritual needs. He realises that God is concerned about his total manhood.

And you discover: I am he!

He realises that he is created in the image of God

So God created human beings, making them to be like himself. He created them male and female.

Genesis 1:27

He strives to demonstrate the image of God through the way he lives

At one time you yourselves used to live according to such desires, when your life was dominated by them.

But now you must get rid of all these things: anger, passion, and hateful feelings. No insults or obscene talk must ever come from your lips.

Do not lie to one another, for you have taken off the old self with its habits and have put on the new self. This is the new being which God, its Creator, is constantly renewing in his own image, in order to bring you to a full knowledge of himself.

Colossians 3:7-10

He looks after his body

He realises that his body is the temple of the Holy Spirit and uses it to the glory of God.

Avoid immorality. Any other sin a man commits does not affect his body; but the man who is guilty of sexual

immorality sins against his own body. Don't you know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit, who lives in you and who was given to you by God? You do not belong to yourselves but to God; he bought you for a price. So use your bodies for God's glory.

1 Corinthians 6:18-20

He knows that he is special to God

Israel, the LORD who created you says, "Do not be afraid — I will save you.

I have called you by name — you are mine.

When you pass through deep waters, I will be with you; your troubles will not overwhelm you.

When you pass through fire, you will not be burnt; the hard trials that come will not hurt you.

For I am the LORD your God, the holy God of Israel, who saves you."

Isaiah 43:1-3a

He knows that God has a special purpose for him

God assured the prophet Jeremiah of the unique purpose of his life:

The LORD said to me, "I chose you before I gave you life, and before you were born I selected you to be a prophet to the nations."

I answered, "Sovereign LORD, I don't know how to speak; I am too young."

But the LORD said to me, "Do not say that you are too young, but go to the people I send you to, and tell them everything I command you to say. Do not be afraid of them, for I will be with you to protect you. I, the LORD, have spoken!"

Jeremiah 1:4-8

He is certain of his purpose

His purpose is to glorify God with his whole life.

Surely you know that many runners take part in a race, but only one of them wins the prize. Run, then, in such a way as to win the prize. Every athlete in training submits to strict discipline, in order to be crowned with

a wreath that will not last; but we do it for one that will last for ever. That is why I run straight for the finishing line; that is why I am like a boxer who does not waste his punches. I harden my body with blows and bring it under complete control, to keep myself from being disqualified after having called others to the contest.

1 Corinthians 9:24-27

He Has Feelings

Being a man does not mean that he has no emotions. His emotions are an inseparable part of his manhood. He experiences the joys of life intensely. At times, he also experiences negative emotions such as sadness, despondency or inferiority.

And you discover: I am he!

God's Word touches him

When the people heard what the Law required, they were so moved that they began to cry. So Nehemiah, who was the governor, Ezra, the priest and scholar of the Law, and the Levites who were explaining the Law told all the people, "This day is holy to the LORD your God, so you are not to mourn or cry."

Nehemiah 8:9

His heart overflows with praise

After the wonderful events surrounding the birth of John the Baptist, his father Zechariah praised God and said:

"Let us praise the Lord, the God of Israel!

He has come to the help of his people and has set them free.

He has provided for us a mighty Saviour,

a descendant of his servant David.

He promised through his holy prophets long ago

that he would save us from our enemies,

from the power of all those who hate us.

He said he would show mercy to our ancestors

and remember his sacred covenant.

With a solemn oath to our ancestor Abraham

he promised to rescue us from our enemies

and allow us to serve him without fear,

so that we might be holy and righteous before him all the days of our life."

Luke 1:68-75

He feels bitterly disappointed in himself

During Jesus' trial, Peter was afraid and pretended that he did not know Jesus. When confronted with his betrayal, he was bitterly disappointed in himself.

Just then a cock crowed, and Peter remembered what Jesus had told him: "Before the cock crows, you will say three times that you do not know me." He went out and wept bitterly.

Matthew 26:74b-75

Sometimes he feels inferior

At times, it feels as if he is good for nothing and deserves nothing in life. Mephibosheth, who was crippled as the result of an accident when he was a small child, felt this way.

When Mephibosheth, the son of Jonathan and grandson of Saul, arrived, he bowed down before David in respect. David said, "Mephibosheth," and he answered, "At your service, sir."

"Don't be afraid," David replied. "I will be kind to you for the sake of your father Jonathan. I will give you back all the land that belonged to your grandfather Saul, and you will always be welcome at my table."

Mephibosheth bowed again and said, "I am no better than a dead dog, sir! Why should you be so good to me?"

2 Samuel 9:6-8

Yet he realises that he need not feel inferior.

You created every part of me;
you put me together in my
mother's womb.
I praise you because you are to be
feared;
all you do is strange and wonderful.
I know it with all my heart.
When my bones were being formed,

carefully put together in my
mother's womb,
when I was growing there in secret,
you knew that I was there —
you saw me before I was born.
The days allotted to me
had all been recorded in your book,
before any of them ever began.
O God, how difficult I find your thoughts;
how many of them there are!

Psalms 139:13-17

He feels helpless

Sometimes things happen that he cannot change, such as the death of a loved one. King David was overwhelmed with sorrow when he received the news of his rebellious son Absalom's death.

"Is the young man Absalom safe?" the king asked.

The slave answered, "I wish that what has happened to him would happen to all your enemies, sir, and to all who rebel against you."

The king was overcome with grief. He went up to the room over the gateway and wept. As he went, he cried, "O my son! My son Absalom!"

Absalom, my son! If only I had died in your place, my son! Absalom, my son!”

Joab was told that King David was weeping and mourning for Absalom. And so the joy of victory was turned into sadness for all David’s troops that day, because they heard that the

king was mourning for his son. They went back into the city quietly, like soldiers who are ashamed because they are running away from battle. The king covered his face and cried loudly, “O my son! My son Absalom! Absalom, my son!”

2 Samuel 18:32-19:4

He experiences the pain of suffering

About this time King Hezekiah fell ill and almost died. The prophet Isaiah son of Amoz went to see him and said to him, “The LORD tells you that you are to put everything in order because you will not recover. Get ready to die.”

Hezekiah turned his face to the wall and prayed: “Remember, LORD, that I have served you faithfully and loyally, and that I have always tried to

do what you wanted me to.” And he began to cry bitterly.

Then the LORD commanded Isaiah to go back to Hezekiah and say to him, “I, the LORD, the God of your ancestor David, have heard your prayer and seen your tears; I will let you live fifteen years longer. I will rescue you and this city of Jerusalem from the emperor of Assyria, and I will continue to protect the city.”

Isaiah 38:1-6

He feels bitter because of the things that happen to him

When David and his men arrived, they found that the town had been burnt down and that their wives, sons, and daughters had been carried away. David and his men started crying and did not stop until they were completely exhausted. Even

David’s two wives, Ahinoam and Abigail, had been taken away.

David was now in great trouble, because his men were all very bitter about losing their children, and they were threatening to stone him; but the LORD his God gave him courage.

1 Samuel 30:3-6

He Works

He is a man who bears many responsibilities. He has commitments at work and at home: He spends much time and energy in building up his career, and then he also lends a hand in and around the house.

And you discover: I am he!

He realises that God has given him the command to work

Then the LORD God planted a garden in Eden, in the East, and there he put the man he had formed. He made all kinds of beautiful trees grow there and produce good fruit. In the middle of the garden stood the tree that gives

life and the tree that gives knowledge of what is good and what is bad.

Then the LORD God placed the man in the Garden of Eden to cultivate it and guard it.

Genesis 2:8-9,15

God also orders him to take care of creation.

(God) blessed them, and said, "Have many children, so that your descendants will live all over the earth and bring it under their control. I am putting you in charge of the fish, the birds, and all the wild animals."

Genesis 1:28

He acknowledges that work is a privilege

The best thing anyone can do is to eat and drink and enjoy what he has earned. And yet, I realized that even

this comes from God. How else could you have anything to eat or enjoy yourself at all?

Ecclesiastes 2:24-25

He knows that God expects him to work hard

Our brothers and sisters, we command you in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to keep away from all believers who are living a lazy life and who do not follow the instructions that we gave them. You yourselves know very well that you should do just what we did. We were not lazy when we were with you. We did not accept anyone's support without paying for it. Instead, we worked and toiled; we kept working day and night so as not to be an expense to any of you. We did this, not because we have no right

to demand our support; we did it to be an example for you to follow. While we were with you, we used to say to you, "Whoever refuses to work is not allowed to eat."

We say this because we hear that there are some people among you who live lazy lives and who do nothing except meddle in other people's business. In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ we command these people and warn them to lead orderly lives and work to earn their own living.

2 Thessalonians 3:6-12

He is extremely busy, and he must learn to delegate

The next day Moses was settling disputes among the people, and he was kept busy from morning till night. When Jethro saw everything that Moses had to do, he asked, "What is all this that you are doing for the people? Why are you doing this all alone, with people standing here from morning till night to consult you?"

Moses answered, "I must do this because the people come to me to learn God's will. When two people have a dispute, they come to me, and I decide which one of them is right, and I tell them God's commands and laws."

Then Jethro said, "You are not doing it the right way. You will wear yourself out and these people as well. This is too much for you to do alone. Now let me give you some good advice, and God will be with you. It is right for you to represent the people before God and bring their disputes to him. You should teach them God's commands and explain

to them how they should live and what they should do. But in addition, you should choose some capable men and appoint them as leaders of the people: leaders of thousands, hundreds, fifties, and tens. They must be God-fearing men who can be trusted and who cannot be bribed. Let them serve as judges for the people on a permanent basis. They can bring all the difficult cases to you, but they themselves can decide all the smaller disputes. That will make it easier for you, as they share your burden. If you do this, as God commands, you will not wear yourself out, and all these people can go home with their disputes settled."

Moses took Jethro's advice and chose capable men from among all the Israelites. He appointed them as leaders of thousands, hundreds, fifties, and tens. They served as judges for the people on a permanent basis, bringing the difficult cases to Moses but deciding the smaller disputes themselves.

Exodus 18:13-26

Sometimes he experiences tension at work

Some time later Paul said to Barnabas, "Let us go back and visit our brothers and sisters in every town where we preached the word of the Lord, and let us find out how they are getting on." Barnabas wanted to take John Mark with them, but Paul did not think it was right to take him, because he had

not stayed with them to the end of their mission, but had turned back and left them in Pamphylia. There was a sharp argument, and they separated: Barnabas took Mark and sailed off for Cyprus, while Paul chose Silas and left, commended by the believers to the care of the Lord's grace.

Acts 15:36-40

He gives God all the honour for his success

After God led the Israelites through the Red Sea on dry ground and destroyed the Egyptian army in the sea, the Israelites praised God.

Then Moses and the Israelites sang this song to the LORD:

“I will sing to the LORD,
because he has won
a glorious victory;

he has thrown the horses and
their riders into the sea.
The LORD is my strong defender;
he is the one who has
saved me.
He is my God, and I will
praise him,
my father’s God, and I will
sing about his greatness.
The LORD is a warrior;
the LORD is his name.”

Exodus 15:1-3

He remains faithful to God’s principles

He doesn’t allow success to go to his head. When temptation comes knocking on his door, he does not waver over which course to take. He stands his ground, remaining faithful to what God expects of him.

(Potiphar) saw that the LORD was with Joseph and had made him successful in everything he did. Potiphar was pleased with him and made him his personal servant; so he put him in charge of his house and everything he owned. From then on, because of Joseph the LORD blessed the household of the Egyptian and everything that he had in his house and in his fields. Potiphar handed over everything he had to the care

of Joseph and did not concern himself with anything except the food he ate.

Joseph was well-built and good-looking, and after a while his master’s wife began to desire Joseph and asked him to go to bed with her. He refused and said to her, “Look, my master does not have to concern himself with anything in the house, because I am here. He has put me in charge of everything he has. I have as much authority in this house as he has, and he has not kept back anything from me except you. How then could I do such an immoral thing and sin against God?” Although she asked Joseph day after day, he would not go to bed with her.

Genesis 39:3-10

He Makes a Difference

He is a man who wants to make a contribution to society. He is not afraid to take risks. He lets his voice be heard and, in doing so, makes the world a better place. He has discovered his calling from God, and he pursues it with all his heart.

And you discover: I am he!

He has the courage to do something for the benefit of his community

One day four months later, when Emperor Artaxerxes was dining, I took the wine to him. He had never seen me look sad before, so he asked, "Why are you looking so sad? You aren't ill, so it must be that you're unhappy."

I was startled and answered, "May Your Majesty live for ever! How can I help looking sad when the city where my ancestors are buried is in ruins and its gates have been destroyed by fire?"

The emperor asked, "What is it that you want?"

I prayed to the God of Heaven, and then I said to the emperor, "If Your Majesty is pleased with me and is willing to grant my request, let me go to the land of Judah, to the city where my ancestors are buried, so that I can rebuild the city."

The emperor, with the empress sitting at his side, approved my request.

Nehemiah 2:1-6a

He stands up for what is right

He has backbone and is not afraid to take a stand, even against his superiors. Even when opposing the opinions of others, he remains polite. Daniel, an exile at the court of the Babylonian king, stood by God's laws against the orders of the king himself.

The king ordered Ashpenaz, his chief official, to select from among the Israelite exiles some young men of the royal family and of the noble families. They had to be handsome, intelligent, well trained, quick to learn, and free from physical defects, so that they would be qualified to serve in the royal court. Ashpenaz was to teach them to read and write

the Babylonian language. The king also gave orders that every day they were to be given the same food and wine as the members of the royal court. After three years of this training they were to appear before the king. Among those chosen were Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah, all of whom were from the tribe of Judah. The chief official gave them new names: Belteshazzar, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego.

Daniel made up his mind not to let himself become ritually unclean by eating the food and drinking the wine of the royal court, so he asked Ashpenaz to help him.

Daniel 1:3-8

He rises above injustice

He is forgiving. Stephen, the first Christian martyr, was stoned to death by the Jews because he fearlessly proclaimed the Gospel. With his last words, he pleaded with God to forgive his murderers.

As the members of the Council listened to Stephen, they became furious and ground their teeth at him in anger. But Stephen, full of the Holy Spirit, looked up to heaven and saw God's glory and Jesus standing at the right-hand side of God. "Look!" he said. "I see heaven opened and the

Son of Man standing at the right-hand side of God!"

With a loud cry the members of the Council covered their ears with their hands. Then they all rushed at him at once, threw him out of the city, and stoned him. The witnesses left their cloaks in the care of a young man named Saul. They kept on stoning Stephen as he called out to the Lord, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit!" He knelt down and cried out in a loud voice, "Lord! Do not remember this sin against them!" He said this and died.

Acts 7:54-60

He does not take revenge. Without reason, King Saul wanted to kill young David. One day, David had a golden opportunity to get rid of Saul. Saul had gone into a cave on his own. From his hiding place at the back of the dark cave, David could have easily ended the life of the unsuspecting Saul. However, he refused to take revenge on his enemy. Unnoticed, he cut off a piece of Saul's robe and, in doing so, proved his own innocence. Later, he confronted Saul about what he had done:

"Why do you listen to people who say that I am trying to harm you? You can see for yourself that just now in the cave the LORD put you in my power. Some of my men told me to kill you, but I felt sorry for you and said that I would not harm you in the

least, because you are the one whom the LORD chose to be king. Look, my father, look at the piece of your robe I am holding! I could have killed you, but instead I only cut this off. This should convince you that I have no thought of rebelling against you or of harming you. You are hunting me down to kill me, even though I have not done you any wrong. May the LORD judge which one of us is wrong! May he punish you for your action against me, for I will not harm you in the least. You know the old saying, 'Evil is done only by evil people.' And so I will not harm you. Look at what the king of Israel is trying to kill! Look at what he is chasing! A dead dog, a flea! The LORD will judge, and he will decide which one of us is wrong. May he look into the matter, defend me, and save me from you."

1 Samuel 24:9b-15

He is a Spiritual Leader

He is willing to take the spiritual lead when required to do so. He is not necessarily a minister, but he listens when God calls him to testify, to help those in spiritual need, and to lead people back to Him. He listens to God and he does his part for the church.

And you discover: I am he!

He is willing to step forward when the Lord calls him

God looked at the world and saw that it was evil, for the people were all living evil lives.

God said to Noah, "I have decided to put an end to the whole human race. I will destroy them completely, because the world is full of their

violent deeds. Build a boat for yourself out of good timber; make rooms in it and cover it with tar inside and out."

Noah did everything that God commanded.

Genesis 6:12-14,22

He encourages young people to keep their faith

From Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by order of God our Saviour and Christ Jesus our hope —

To Timothy, my true son in the faith:

May God the Father and Christ Jesus our Lord give you grace, mercy, and peace.

Timothy, my child, I entrust to you this command, which is in accordance

with the words of prophecy spoken in the past about you. Use those words as weapons in order to fight well, and keep your faith and a clear conscience. Some people have not listened to their conscience and have made a ruin of their faith. Among them are Hymenaeus and Alexander, whom I have punished by handing them over to the power of Satan; this will teach them to stop their blasphemy.

1 Timothy 1:1-2,18-20

He takes a stand regarding spiritual matters

The apostle Paul spoke out strongly against the hypocrisy of some believers, who had started to stray away from the truth of the Gospel.

But when Peter came to Antioch, I opposed him in public, because he was clearly wrong. Before some men who had been sent by James arrived

there, Peter had been eating with the Gentile brothers and sisters. But after these men arrived, he drew back and would not eat with the Gentiles, because he was afraid of those who were in favour of circumcising them. The other Jewish brothers and sisters also started acting like cowards along with Peter; and even Barnabas was

swept along by their cowardly action. When I saw that they were not walking a straight path in line with the truth of the gospel, I said to Peter in

front of them all, “You are a Jew, yet you have been living like a Gentile, not like a Jew. How, then, can you try to force Gentiles to live like Jews?”

Galatians 2:11-14

He equips others with the truth of the Gospel

At that time a Jew named Apollos, who had been born in Alexandria, came to Ephesus. He was an eloquent speaker and had a thorough knowledge of the Scriptures. He had been instructed in the Way of the Lord, and with great enthusiasm he proclaimed and

taught correctly the facts about Jesus. However, he knew only the baptism of John. He began to speak boldly in the synagogue. When Priscilla and Aquila heard him, they took him home with them and explained to him more correctly the Way of God.

Acts 18:24-26

He and his family set a good example of devotion to God

“Now then,” Joshua continued, “honour the LORD and serve him sincerely and faithfully. Get rid of the gods which your ancestors used to worship in Mesopotamia and in Egypt, and serve only the LORD. If you are not willing to serve him,

decide today whom you will serve, the gods your ancestors worshipped in Mesopotamia or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land you are now living. As for my family and me, we will serve the LORD.”

Joshua 24:14-15

He follows the Lord to the end

As he neared the end of his life, the apostle Paul was able to write:

As for me, the hour has come for me to be sacrificed; the time is here for me to leave this life. I have done my best in the race, I have run the full

distance, and I have kept the faith. And now there is waiting for me the victory prize of being put right with God, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give me on that Day — and not only to me, but to all those who wait with love for him to appear.

2 Timothy 4:6-8

He leaves behind a spiritual legacy

But you (Timothy) have followed my (Paul) teaching, my conduct, and my purpose in life; you have observed my faith, my patience, my love, my endurance, my persecutions, and my sufferings. You know all that happened to me in Antioch, Iconium,

and Lystra, the terrible persecutions I endured! But the Lord rescued me from them all. Everyone who wants to live a godly life in union with Christ Jesus will be persecuted; and evil persons and impostors will keep on going from bad to

worse, deceiving others and being deceived themselves. But as for you, continue in the truths that you were taught and firmly believe. You know who your teachers were, and you

remember that ever since you were a child, you have known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to give you the wisdom that leads to salvation through faith in Christ Jesus.

2 Timothy 3:10-15

Sometimes He Suffers

He notices that everything in his life does not always run smoothly. He gets hurt when unpleasant things happen to him, sometimes as a result of his own wrong choices. But there are also situations that hurt him over which he has no control. Sometimes he battles to free himself of his past, but at other times he manages to talk to God about his suffering and to confront the pain. Then he realises that he can start anew, in spite of all that might have happened before.

And you discover: I am he!

*Although he serves God,
unpleasant things still sometimes happen to him*

One day when Job's children were having a feast at the home of their eldest brother, a messenger came running to Job. "We were ploughing the fields with the oxen," he said, "and the donkeys were in a nearby pasture. Suddenly the Sabians attacked and stole them all. They killed every one of your servants except me. I am the only one who escaped to tell you."

Before he had finished speaking, another servant came and said, "Lightning struck the sheep and the shepherds and killed them all. I am the only one who escaped to tell you."

Before he had finished speaking, another servant came and said, "Three bands of Chaldean raiders attacked us, took away the camels,

and killed all your servants except me. I am the only one who escaped to tell you."

Before he had finished speaking, another servant came and said, "Your children were having a feast at the home of your eldest son, when a storm swept in from the desert. It blew the house down and killed them all. I am the only one who escaped to tell you."

Then Job stood up and tore his clothes in grief. He shaved his head and threw himself face downwards on the ground. He said, "I was born with nothing, and I will die with nothing. The LORD gave, and now he has taken away. May his name be praised!"

In spite of everything that had happened, Job did not sin by blaming God.

Job 1:13-22

He suffers from an incurable disease

About this time King Hezekiah fell ill and almost died. The prophet Isaiah son of Amoz went to see him and said

to him, "The LORD tells you that you are to put everything in order, because you will not recover. Get ready to die."

2 Kings 20:1

He takes his pain to the Lord.

Hezekiah turned his face to the wall and prayed: "Remember, LORD, that I

have served you faithfully and loyally, and that I have always tried to do what you wanted me to." And he began to cry bitterly.

2 Kings 20:2-3

He suffers because of his child's wrong choices

Isaac and Rebecca were very unhappy about the two wives their son Esau had married.

When Esau was 40 years old, he married two Hittite women, Judith the daughter of Beeri, and Basemath the daughter of Elon. They made life miserable for Isaac and Rebecca.

Genesis 26:34-35

His past haunts him

Moses left the palace and saw how his people were suffering under the Egyptians. One day he came across an Egyptian mistreating one of them. In a fit of rage, Moses killed the Egyptian and hid his body in the sand.

The man answered, "Who made you our ruler and judge? Are you going to kill me just as you killed that Egyptian?" Then Moses was afraid and said to himself, "People have found out what I have done." When the king heard about what had happened, he tried to have Moses killed, but Moses fled and went to live in the land of Midian.

The next day he went back and saw two Hebrew men fighting. He said to the one who was in the wrong, "Why are you beating up a fellow Hebrew?"

Exodus 2:13-16

There are weaknesses in his life

These weaknesses bring him pain, but he fights them with the grace of God.

I was given a painful physical ailment, which acts as Satan's messenger to beat me and keep me from being proud. Three times I prayed to the Lord about this and asked him to take it away. But his answer was:

"My grace is all you need, for my power is greatest when you are weak." I am most happy, then, to be proud of my weaknesses, in order to feel the protection of Christ's power over me. I am content with weaknesses, insults, hardships, persecutions, and difficulties for Christ's sake. For when I am weak, then I am strong.

2 Corinthians 12:7b-10

Sometimes he feels lonely and vulnerable

My God, my God, why have you
abandoned me?
I have cried desperately for help,
but still it does not come.
During the day I call you, my God,
but you do not answer;
I call at night,
but get no rest.
But you are enthroned as the
Holy One,
the one whom Israel praises.

Do not stay away from me!
Trouble is near,
and there is no one to help.

Many enemies surround me like bulls;
they are all round me,
like fierce bulls from the land of
Bashan.
They open their mouths like lions,
roaring and tearing at me.

My strength is gone,
gone like water spilt on the ground.
All my bones are out of joint;
my heart is like melted wax.
My throat is as dry as dust,
and my tongue sticks to the roof
of my mouth.
You have left me for dead in the dust.

Psalm 22:1-3,11-15

Yet he realises that God will help him once again

I look to the mountains;
where will my help come from?
My help will come from the LORD,
who made heaven and earth.

he is by your side to protect you.
The sun will not hurt you during
the day,
nor the moon during the night.

He will not let you fall;
your protector is always awake.

The LORD will protect you from all
danger;
he will keep you safe.

The protector of Israel
never dozes or sleeps.
The LORD will guard you;

He will protect you as you come
and go
now and for ever.

Psalm 121:1-8

He knows he can start anew, in spite of his past

The Lord called Paul to a new life, in spite of the fact that he had violently persecuted the Church of Jesus Christ. Paul testified openly about this to King Agrippa:

“It was for this purpose that I went to Damascus with authority and orders from the chief priests. It was on the road at midday, Your Majesty, that I

saw a light much brighter than the sun, coming from the sky and shining round me and the men travelling with me. All of us fell to the ground, and I heard a voice say to me in Hebrew, ‘Saul, Saul! Why are you persecuting me? You are hurting yourself by hitting back, like an ox kicking against its owner’s stick.’ ‘Who are you, Lord?’ I asked. And the Lord answered, ‘I

am Jesus, whom you persecute. But get up and stand on your feet. I have appeared to you to appoint you as my servant. You are to tell others what you have seen of me today and what I will show you in the future. I will rescue you from the people of Israel and from the Gentiles to whom I will send you. You are to open their eyes

and turn them from the darkness to the light and from the power of Satan to God, so that through their faith in me they will have their sins forgiven and receive their place among God's chosen people.'

"And so, King Agrippa, I did not disobey the vision I had from heaven."

Acts 26:12-19

He knows that God is always with him, even when he suffers

Joseph experienced God's presence, even when he was falsely accused and thrown into prison.

Joseph's master was furious and had Joseph arrested and put in the prison where the king's prisoners were kept, and there he stayed. But the LORD was with Joseph and blessed him,

so that the jailer was pleased with him. He put Joseph in charge of all the other prisoners and made him responsible for everything that was done in the prison. The jailer did not have to look after anything for which Joseph was responsible, because the LORD was with Joseph and made him succeed in everything he did.

Genesis 39:19-23

Even though he suffers,

he knows that God has a greater plan for his life

Despite the injustice that Joseph's brothers had done to him, he could look back and see God's hand on his life.

Joseph said to his brothers, "I am Joseph. Is my father still alive?" But when his brothers heard this, they were so terrified that they could not answer. Then Joseph said to them, "Please come closer." They did, and he said, "I am your brother Joseph, whom you sold into Egypt. Now do not be upset or blame yourselves

because you sold me here. It was really God who sent me ahead of you to save people's lives. This is only the second year of famine in the land; there will be five more years in which there will be neither ploughing nor reaping. God sent me ahead of you to rescue you in this amazing way and to make sure that you and your descendants survive. So it was not really you who sent me here, but God. He has made me the king's highest official. I am in charge of his whole country; I am the ruler of all Egypt."

Genesis 45:3-8

He praises God in spite of his suffering

Paul and Silas suffered because they proclaimed the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

And the crowd joined in the attack against Paul and Silas.

Then the officials tore the clothes off Paul and Silas and ordered them to be whipped. After a severe beating, they were thrown into jail,

and the jailer was ordered to lock them up tight. Upon receiving this order, the jailer threw them into the inner cell and fastened their feet between heavy blocks of wood.

About midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God, and the other prisoners were listening to them.

Acts 16:22-25

He Lives in Hope

In the midst of uncertainty and the struggles of life, he holds on to the hope that God provides. He can look past his circumstances and remain positive because he knows that he belongs to Christ, in life and death, and therefore he has a future.

And you discover: I am he!

He knows that, with God, he can face the future

Although the future is unknown and sometimes even intimidating, he knows the God who holds the future in his hands. Wherever life's road leads him, he knows that God will be there beside him.

Then Moses called Joshua and said to him in the presence of all the

people of Israel, "Be determined and confident; you are the one who will lead these people to occupy the land that the Lord promised to their ancestors. The LORD himself will lead you and be with you. He will not fail you or abandon you, so do not lose courage or be afraid."

Deuteronomy 31:7-8

It was faith that made Abraham obey when God called him to go out to a country which God had promised to give him. He left his own country without knowing where he was going. By faith he lived as a foreigner in the country that God had promised

him. He lived in tents, as did Isaac and Jacob, who received the same promise from God. For Abraham was waiting for the city which God has designed and built, the city with permanent foundations.

Hebrews 11:8-10

He notices God in the most unexpected places in his life

Uncertain of what the future held, Jacob travelled to his mother's relatives who lived in a strange land. One night, God appeared to him along the roadside where he slept.

And there was the LORD standing beside him. "I am the LORD, the God of Abraham and Isaac," he said. "I will give to you and to your descendants this land on which you are lying. They will be as numerous as the specks of dust on the earth. They will extend their

territory in all directions, and through you and your descendants I will bless all the nations. Remember, I will be with you and protect you wherever you go, and I will bring you back to this land. I will not leave you until I have done all that I have promised you."

Jacob woke up and said, "The LORD is here! He is in this place, and I didn't know it!" He was afraid and said, "What a terrifying place this is! It must be the house of God; it must be the gate that opens into heaven."

Genesis 28:13-17

He knows that there is life awaiting him after death

Although the apostle Paul had a meaningful ministry on earth, it was his great desire to leave behind the imperfections of this world and be united with Christ in glory for eternity.

My deep desire and hope is that I shall never fail in my duty, but that at all times, and especially just now, I shall be full of courage, so that with my whole being I shall bring honour

to Christ, whether I live or die. For what is life? To me, it is Christ. Death, then, will bring more. But if by continuing to live I can do more worthwhile work, then I am not sure which I should choose. I am pulled in two directions. I want very much to leave this life and be with Christ, which is a far better thing; but for your sake it is much more important that I remain alive.

Philippians 1:20-24

He looks forward to Christ's return

Paul also encouraged the believers to live in anticipation of Jesus' return.

There is no need to write to you, brothers and sisters, about the times and occasions when these things will happen. For you yourselves know very well that the Day of the Lord will come as a thief comes at night. When people say, "Everything is quiet and safe," then suddenly destruction will hit them! It will come as suddenly as

the pains that come upon a woman in labour, and people will not escape. But you, brothers and sisters, are not in the darkness, and the Day should not take you by surprise like a thief. All of you are people who belong to the light, who belong to the day. We do not belong to the night or to the darkness. So then, we should not be sleeping like the others; we should be awake and sober. It is at night that people sleep; it is at night that they

get drunk. But we belong to the day, and we should be sober. We must wear faith and love as a breastplate, and our hope of salvation as a helmet. God did not choose us to suffer his anger, but to possess salvation

through our Lord Jesus Christ, who died for us in order that we might live together with him, whether we are alive or dead when he comes. And so encourage one another and help one another, just as you are now doing.

1 Thessalonians 5:1-11

Conclusion

The Scripture portions in this booklet highlight various dimensions of being a man which still apply to men today. Our prayers are that it will help you to understand the reality faced by men of today more fully. The Bible does not hide the fact that the world is negative at times and that the men in the Bible often have feet of clay. You can be sure however, that you will find hope in the Scriptures to overcome any circumstances in which you may find yourself. You will find your way when you've lost it. You will be raised up and comforted when you've fallen and have been hurt. The Scriptures challenge you anew to fulfil the task and expectations incumbent on you as a man of faith. May the Scripture portions in this booklet inspire and challenge you in your unique circumstances.