

T H E ↵ Return

O F

# NOT OK

dealing with depression in the church

JANUARY 29–31

CORE  
CONFERENCE

'24



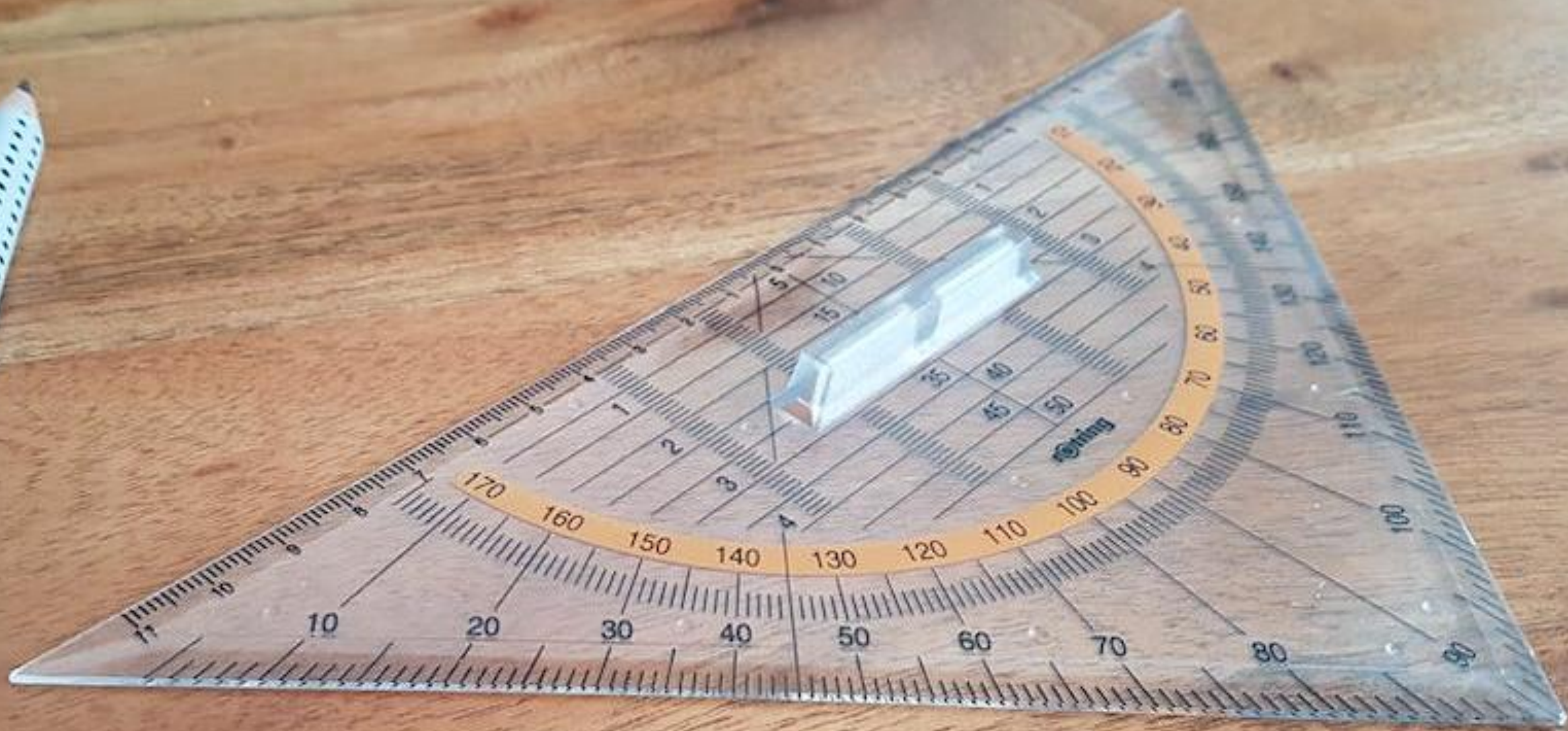
BJU SEMINARY  
PROCLAIM. SERVE. ADVANCE.



# How Dark the Night; How Bright the Hope

Despondency in the Life of Faith









Screenshot, accessed 23 January 2024,  
[https://www.reddit.com/r/AnimalCrossing/comments/uuxq93/princess\\_bride\\_lovers\\_i\\_need\\_some\\_help\\_please\\_i/?rdt=46734](https://www.reddit.com/r/AnimalCrossing/comments/uuxq93/princess_bride_lovers_i_need_some_help_please_i/?rdt=46734) from *The Princess Bride*, directed by Rob Reiner, 1987.

*Depression.* A simultaneously **acute** (in terms of severity) and **chronic** (in terms of duration) despondency that **interferes with a normal operation of other, positive emotions, with a normal pursuit of biological, social, and even spiritual needs, and with a normal self-view or self-interest.**



# How Dark the Night: Patterns of Despondency/Depression in Scripture



# Six Domains of Shared Emotional Experience

## Distress

**anxiety**  
**affliction**  
**vexation**  
**sadness**  
**bitterness**  
**groaning**  
**sighing**





# Six Domains of Shared Emotional Experience

## Dearth

**barrenness**  
**emptiness**  
**futility**  
**weakness**  
**leanness**  
**withering**  
**parched**



Johannes Plenio, accessed 19 January 2024, <https://www.pexels.com/photo/black-bird-perched-on-bare-tree-2496572/>



# Six Domains of Shared Emotional Experience

## Darkness

**clouds**  
**blackness**  
**fading**  
**shadow**  
**gloom**  
**brooding**  
**night**





# Six Domains of Shared Emotional Experience

## Depth

**pit**

**no return**

**no release**

**descending**

**falling**

**floods**

**drowning**



Linda Heyworth, accessed 19 January 2024, <https://www.pexels.com/photo/water-bubbles-2234858/>



# Six Domains of Shared Emotional Experience

## Dread

**terror**

**fear**

**hunted**

**hated**

**destroyed**

**attacked**

**doomed**



Cottonbro studio, accessed 19 January 2024,  
<https://www.pexels.com/photo/photograph-of-a-woman-looking-up-while-sitting-on-the-floor-6951518/>



# Six Domains of Shared Emotional Experience

## Death

perishing  
loathing life  
Sheol  
graveyard  
days broken  
drowning



Kool Shooters, accessed 19 January 2024, <https://www.pexels.com/photo/flowers-and-candles-over-the-tombs-6495747/>



# Six Domains of Shared Emotional Experience

- **Distress**
- **Dearth**
- **Darkness**
- **Depth**
- **Dread**
- **Death**





# Defining Depression from Scripture



# Job—Biblical Definition, Ch. 3

perish, darkness, nor light  
shine, gloom, **deep** darkness,  
clouds, blackness, **terrify**, not  
rejoice, barren, **no** joyful cry,  
curse, trouble, die, expire,  
misery, **bitter** in soul, long for  
death, grave, sighing, no bread,  
groanings, fear, **dread**, not at  
ease, no rest

**Acute**

Chronic

Emotional

interference

Bio-/socio/-

spiritual

interference

Perspective

interference



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**Perspective**  
**interference**



# Depicting Depression in Scripture



# Job—Biblical Depiction, Ch. 3

**perish**, darkness, nor light  
shine, gloom, deep darkness,  
clouds, blackness, terrify, not  
rejoice, barren, no joyful cry,  
curse, trouble, **die**, **expire**,  
misery, bitter in soul, **long for**  
**death**, **grave**, sighing, no bread,  
groanings, fear, dread, not at  
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**Death**

**Darkness**

**Dread**

**Dearth**

**Distress**



# Job—Biblical Depiction, Ch. 3

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Dread  
Dearth  
Distress



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ease, no rest

Death  
Darkness  
Dread  
Dearth  
**Distress**



# Job—Biblical Depiction, Ch. 6

vexation, calamity, heavier,  
rash, poison, terrors, tasteless,  
crush, cut off, exult in pain, no  
strength, driven from me,  
despairing, wind

**Distress**

**Darkness**

**Dread**

**Dearth**

**Depth**

**Death**



# Job—Biblical Depiction, Ch. 7

hard service, shadow, emptiness,  
misery, night is long, tossing,  
worms and dirt, hardens, breaks  
out, without hope, breath, never  
again see good, gone, fades,  
vanishes, Sheol, returns no more,  
anguish, bitterness, scare, terrify,  
choose strangling, death, loathe  
life, leave me alone, made me  
your mark, burden, lie in earth

**Distress**  
**Darkness**  
**Dread**  
**Dearth**  
**Depth**  
**Death**



# Job—Biblical Depiction, Ch. 10

loathe life, complaint,  
bitterness, why contend,  
oppress, despise, destroyed me,  
clay, return to dust, disgrace,  
hunt like a lion, work wonders  
against me, vexation toward  
me, died, grave, darkness, deep  
shadow, gloom

**Distress**  
**Darkness**  
**Dread**  
**Dearth**  
**Depth**  
**Death**



# Job—Biblical Depiction, Ch. 16

pain, worn out, desolate, shriveled up, witness against me, leanness, torn, hated, gnashed at, struck, broken, seized, dashed, set up as a target, slashes open, pours out gall, breach upon breach, sackcloth, strength in the dust, red with weeping, deep darkness, scorn, tears, no return

**Distress**  
**Darkness**  
**Dread**  
**Dearth**  
**Depth**  
**Death**



# Job—Biblical Depiction, Ch. 17

spirit is broken, days are extinct,  
graveyard, mockers, byword, men  
spit, eye dim, vexation, shadow,  
appalled, days are past, plans  
broken off, night, darkness, Sheol,  
pit, worm, descend, dust

**Distress**  
**Darkness**  
**Dread**  
**Dearth**  
**Depth**  
**Death**



# Job—Biblical Depiction, Ch. 19

violence, no justice, walled up,  
darkness, stripped, broken down,  
hope pulled up, wrath, adversary,  
put far, estranged, stranger,  
foreigner, breath is strange,  
stench, despise, abhor, turned  
against, bones stick, destroyed,  
heart faints

**Distress**  
**Darkness**  
**Dread**  
**Dearth**  
Depth  
Death



# Job—Biblical Depiction, Ch. 30

byword, humbled, calamity, terrors,  
passed away, poured out, affliction,  
night, racks my bones, pain, no rest,  
disfigured, mire, dust, ashes, cry, no  
answer, cruel, toss about, death,  
ruins, disaster, evil came, darkness,  
turmoil, never still, affliction, skin  
turns black, bones burn, mourning,  
weep

**Distress**  
**Darkness**  
**Dread**  
**Dearth**  
**Depth**  
**Death**



# Job—Biblical Depiction, Ch. 31

pain, continual strife in bones,  
loathes bread, flesh wasted away,  
bones stick out, soul draws near  
the pit, death

**Distress**

**Darkness**

**Dread**

**Dearth**

**Depth**

**Death**



# David—Biblical Depiction, Psalm 6

languishing, bones troubled, soul troubled, how long, no remembrance, Sheol, weary, moaning, flood my bed with tears, weeping, eye wastes away, grief, weak

**Distress**

**Darkness**

**Dread**

**Dearth**

**Depth**

**Death**



# David—Biblical Depiction, Psalm 38

no soundness, no health, heavy burden, too heavy, stink and fester, bowed down, prostrate, all the day, mourning, burning, feeble, crushed, groan, tumult of heart, sighing, throbs, strength fails, light of my eyes has gone, stand aloof, deaf, mute, ready to fall, pain is ever before me

**Distress**  
**Darkness**  
**Dread**  
**Dearth**  
**Depth**  
**Death**



# David—Biblical Depiction, Psalm 69

waters to my neck, sink in deep mire,  
no foothold, deep waters, flood  
sweeps over me, weary with crying,  
throat is parched, eyes grow dim,  
hate me without cause, destroy me,  
attack me with lies, reproach,  
stranger, alien, humbled, fasting,  
sackcloth, byword, pit, distress,  
shame, dishonor, despair, no pity, no  
comforter, poison for food, sour wine,  
afflicted, in pain

**Distress**  
**Darkness**  
**Dread**  
**Dearth**  
**Depth**  
**Death**



# Asaph—Biblical Depiction, Psalm 77

cry, trouble, refuses to be comforted, moan, spirit faints, hold my eyelids open, cannot speak, spurn, never favorable, love forever ceased, promises at an end, forgotten, shut up compassion

**Distress**

**Darkness**

**Dread**

**Dearth**

**Depth**

**Death**



# Heman—Biblical Depiction, Psalm 88

cry, troubles, Sheol, pit, no strength, dead, slain, grave, remembered no more, cut off, depths, dark and deep, heavy, overwhelm, shun, horror, shut in, cannot escape, dim, sorrow, Abaddon, darkness, forgetfulness, cast away, hide your face, afflicted, terrors, helpless, swept over, dreadful assaults, destroy me, surround me, flood

**Distress**

Death

Depth

Dearth

Darkness

Dread



# Heman—Biblical Depiction, Psalm 88

cry, troubles, **Sheol**, **pit**, no strength, **dead**, **slain**, **grave**, **remembered no more**, **cut off**, depths, dark and deep, heavy, overwhelm, shun, horror, shut in, cannot escape, dim, sorrow, **Abaddon**, darkness, forgetfulness, cast away, hide your face, afflicted, terrors, helpless, swept over, dreadful assaults, destroy me, surround me, **flood**

Distress

**Death**

Depth

Dearth

Darkness

Dread



# Heman—Biblical Depiction, Psalm 88

cry, troubles, Sheol, **pit**, no strength, dead, slain, grave, remembered no more, cut off, **depths**, dark and **deep**, **heavy**, **overwhelm**, shun, horror, **shut in**, **cannot escape**, dim, sorrow, Abaddon, darkness, forgetfulness, cast away, hide your face, afflicted, terrors, helpless, swept over, dreadful assaults, destroy me, surround me, **flood**

Distress

Death

**Depth**

Dearth

Darkness

Dread



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Dread



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Distress

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Darkness

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# Summary

- **Despondency is common in the life of faith of many believers.**
- **Despondency is often not easily resolved with rebuke or encouragement.**
- **Despondency may endure or recur.**
- **± Five common domains of despondency exist.**



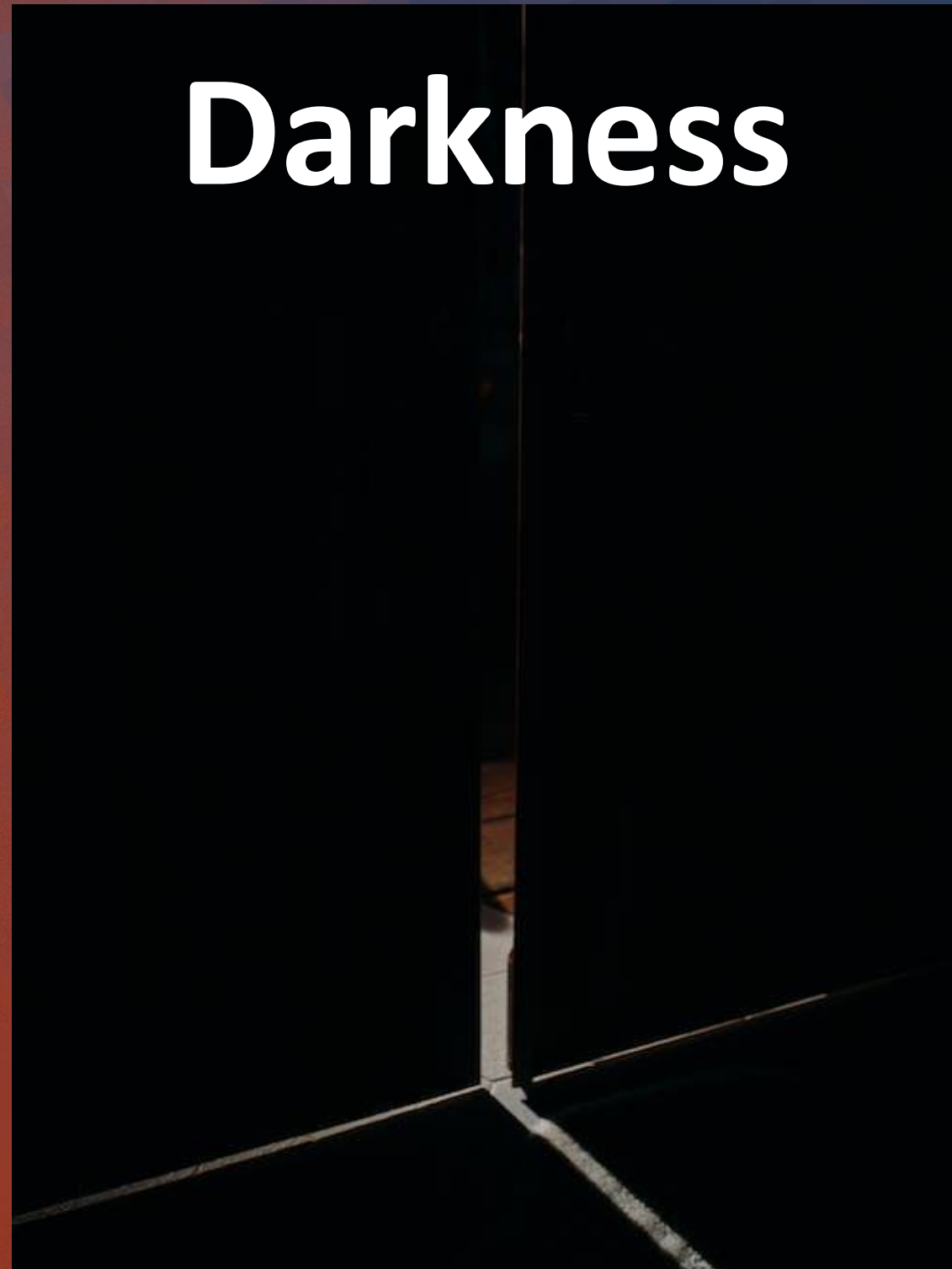
The background of the slide features a sunset over snow-covered mountains. The sky transitions from a deep teal at the top to a bright orange and yellow near the horizon. The mountains in the foreground are dark and silhouetted against the bright light of the setting sun. The text is centered and overlaid on this background.

# How Bright the Hope: Solutions for Despondency/Depression in Scripture



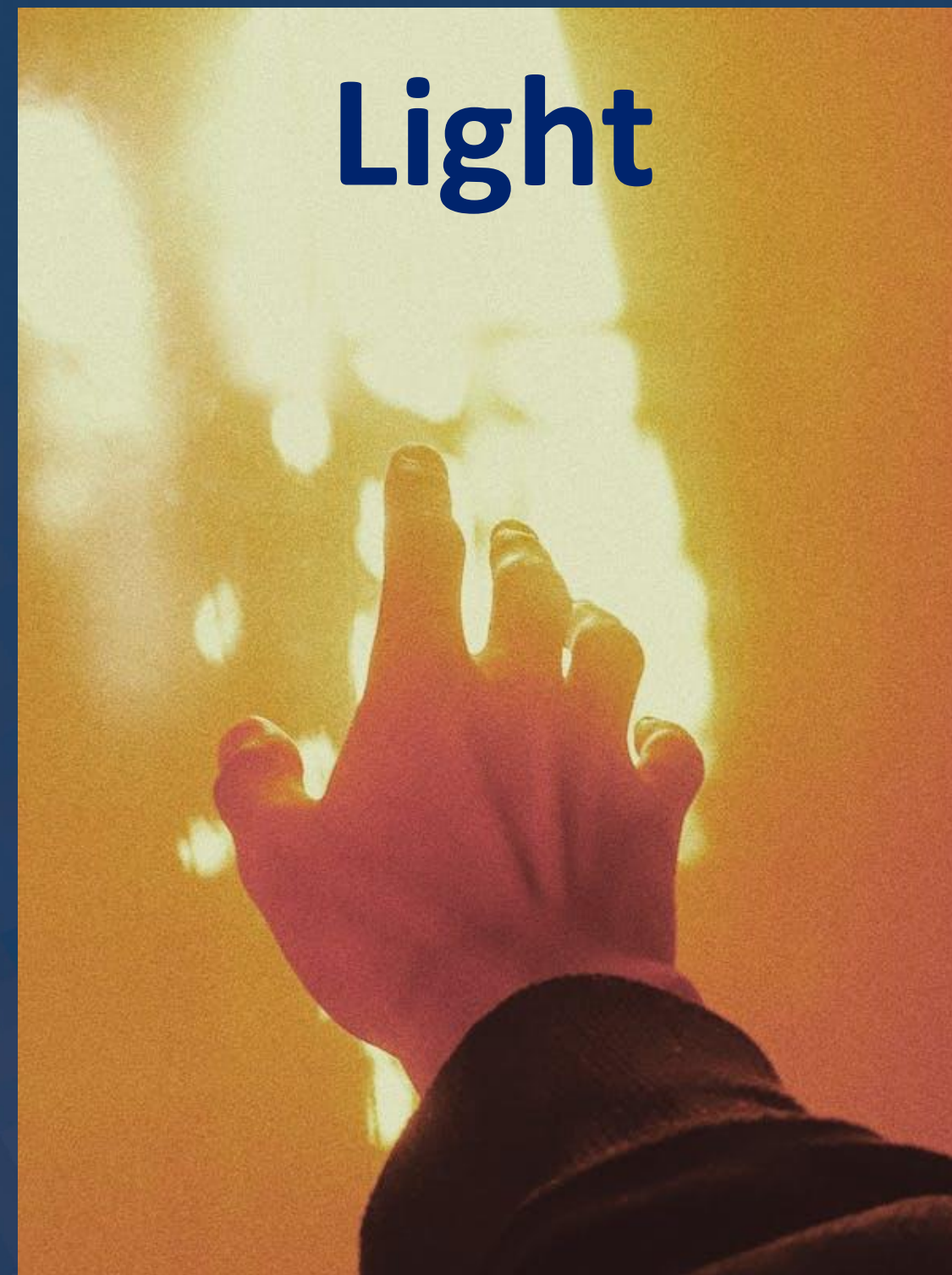
If the problem is . . . , we need . . .

**Darkness**



Kool Shooters, accessed 19 January 2024,  
<https://www.pexels.com/photo/opened-door-in-darkness-6621854/>

**Light**



Raphael Brasileiro, accessed 19 January 2024,  
<https://www.pexels.com/photo/sunset-hands-hand-sun-4586258/>

**CōRE**  
CONFERENCE



**The LORD my God will enlighten my  
darkness (Ps 18:28)**

**The LORD is my light and my salvation  
(Ps 27:1)**

**I am the light of the world (Jn 8:12)**



If the problem is . . . , we need . . .

# Distress



Alex Green, accessed 19 January 2024,  
<https://www.pexels.com/photo/regretful-black-woman-crying-on-floor-5700190/>

# Rescue



Roman Apaza, accessed 19 January 2024,  
<https://www.pexels.com/photo/men-in-visibility-vests-pulling-a-rope-9369622/>



**Have mercy upon me, O LORD (Ps 6:2)**

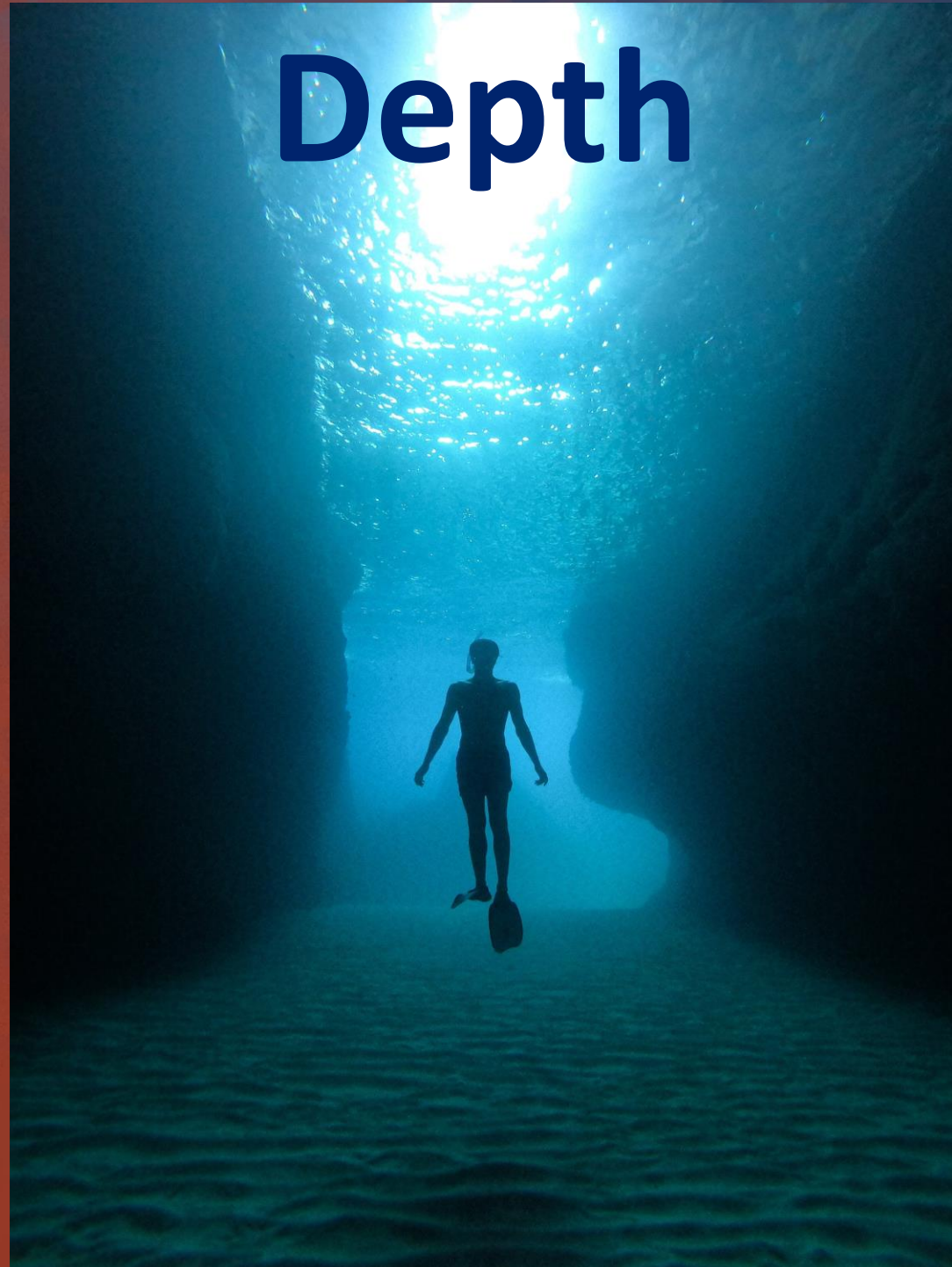
**Save me for thy mercies' sake (Ps 6:4)**

**Make haste to help me, O Lord my  
salvation (Ps 38:22)**



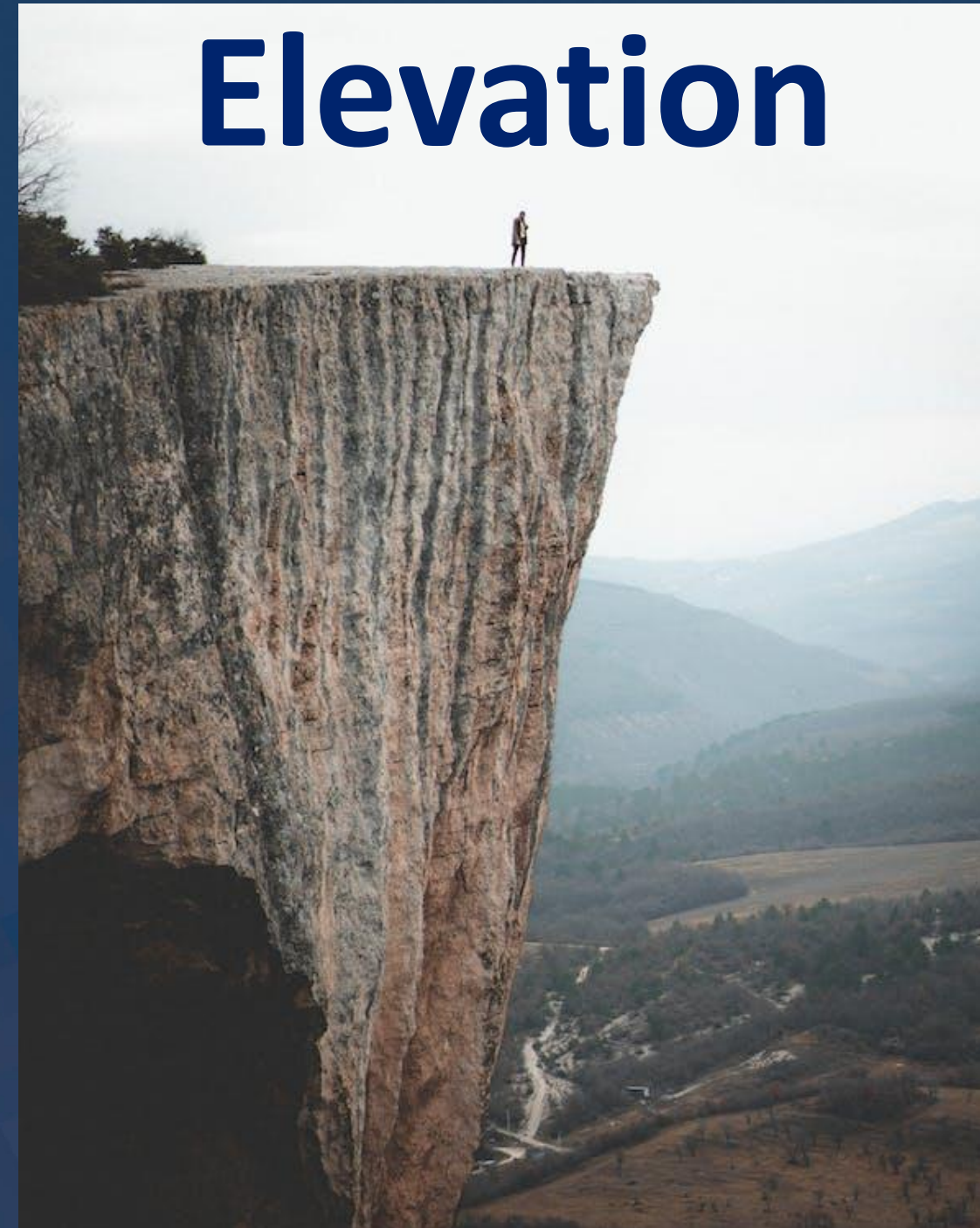
If the problem is . . . , we need . . .

**Depth**



Jordi MB, accessed 19 January 2024,  
<https://www.pexels.com/photo/underwater-picture-of-man-diving-15048061/>

**Elevation**



Philipp Aleev, accessed 19 January 2024,  
<https://www.pexels.com/photo/person-standing-on-cliff-8970342/>

**CōRE**  
CONFERENCE



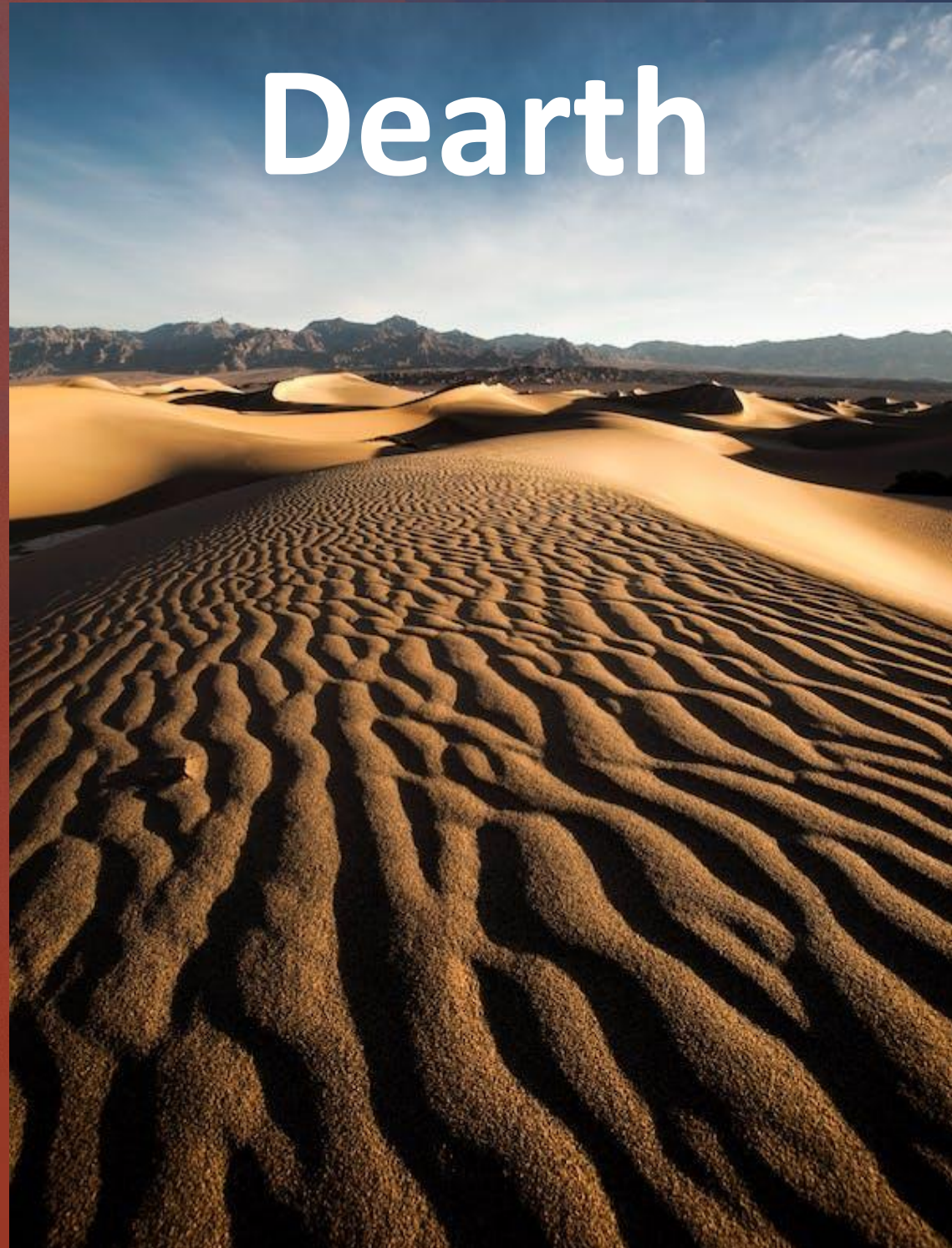
**He maketh my feet like hinds'  
feet, and setteth me upon my  
high places (Ps 18:33)**

**He set me up on high (Ps 69:29)**



If the problem is . . . , we need . . .

**Dearth**



Trace Hudson, accessed 19 January 2024,  
<https://www.pexels.com/photo/brown-dessert-2471261/>

**Supply**



Deneen LT, accessed 19 January 2024,  
<https://www.pexels.com/photo/closeup-photography-of-rice-grains-1058401/>



**The LORD will give strength unto his  
people (Ps 29:11)**

**No good thing will he withhold from  
them that walk uprightly (Ps 84:11)**

**My God shall supply all your need  
. . . by Christ Jesus (Phil 4:19)**



If the problem is . . . , we need . . .

**Dread**



Ketut Subiyanto, accessed 19 January 2024,  
<https://www.pexels.com/photo/close-up-of-scared-young-woman-cover-mouth-4584059/>

**Joy**



Abi Greer, accessed 19 January 2024,  
<https://www.pexels.com/photo/young-women-playing-with-autumn-leaves-5662749/>



**In thy presence is fulness of joy (Ps 16:11)**

**I will praise the name of God with a song  
(Ps 69:30)**

**These things have I spoken unto you, that  
my joy might remain in you, and that your  
joy might be full (Jn 15:11)**



If the problem is . . . , we need . . .



Death

Cottonbro studio, accessed 19 January 2024,  
<https://www.pexels.com/photo/white-and-black-skull-figurine-on-brown-wooden-table-5095884/>



Life

Pixabay, accessed 19 January 2024,  
<https://www.pexels.com/photo/red-pink-and-white-petaled-tree-during-daytime-87815/>



**For with thee is the fountain of  
life (Ps 36:9)**

**I am the resurrection, and the  
life: he that believeth in me,  
though he were dead, yet shall  
he live (Jn 11:25)**



# Conclusion

- Every domain of depression has an *ultimate* answer in God.
- The Psalmists retain and confess *faith* when they do not have the strength to articulate more.



# Personal Testimony



# Personal Testimony





# Conclusion

- **Find strength in Job and the Psalms to maintain faith and obedience.**
- **Endure present sorrows when you cannot remove or replace them.**
- **Help the hurting by knowing what Scripture says about sorrow and by supporting them with spiritual care.**