

Five Smooth Stones

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The images of the October 7 Hamas terror attack on Israel are so gruesome that parents are being warned to keep their children off TikTok and Facebook to protect them from traumatic repercussions of seeing such savage brutality. The nation of Israel—and the world—is reeling from its collective trauma. In his October 9 TIME magazine column, Israeli President Isaac Herzog wrote, “Not since the Holocaust have more Jews been murdered in one day...Not since the Holocaust have we seen such images of innocent Jewish mothers and children, teenagers and old women loaded into trucks and taken away into captivity.”

Throughout its history, Israel has been threatened with annihilation. At one point, a Philistine giant known as Goliath jeered at Israeli troops for 40 relentless days: *Why bother using your whole army? Am I not Philistine enough for you...pick your best fighter and pit him against me. If he gets the upper hand and kills me, the Philistines will all become your slaves. But if I get the upper hand and kill*

him, you'll all become our slaves and serve us (1 Samuel 17:8-10, MSG). *When Saul and his troops heard the Philistine's challenge, they were terrified and lost all hope* (17:11).

Everything changed when David, a lowly shepherd boy, was sent by his father to see how his brothers were doing in the battle against the Philistines. Bewildered, David watched while the entire Israeli army cowered in fear as Goliath restated his challenge to make them Philistine slaves. David's response was swift and decisive, *Who does he think he is...taunting the armies of God-Alive?* (1 Samuel 17:26, MSG).

Because our God is still alive, we can manage challenging emotions such as anxiety, fear, or depression. Instead of being engulfed in panic, each of us can **choose five smooth stones**. Like David, we can confidently, boldly face our giants: *You come against me with sword and spear and javelin, but I come against you in the name of the LORD Almighty, the God of the armies of Israel, whom you have defied* (1 Samuel 17:45, NIV).

We can defeat **giants** in our world with **stones God provides in His Word**:

1. The **Giant of Fear** is defeated when we believe the One who says, *Do not tremble nor be afraid [of the violent upheavals to come]; have I not long ago proclaimed it to you and declared it? And you are My witnesses. Is there a God besides Me? There is no other rock; I know of none* (Isaiah 44:8, AMP).
2. The **Giant of Worry and Anxiety** is defeated when we rely on our Redeemer. *And they remembered that God was their rock, and the Most High God their Redeemer* (Psalm 78:35, NASB). *The LORD brings the counsel of the nations to nothing; He makes the plans of the peoples of no effect. The counsel of the LORD stands forever, the plans of His heart to all generations. Blessed is the nation whose God is the LORD, the people He has chosen as His own inheritance* (Psalm 33:10-12, NKJV).
3. The **Giant of Hopelessness** is overpowered by Jesus, our rock and fortress. *Be to me a rock of refuge and a sheltering stronghold to which I may continually come; You have given the commandment to save me, for You are my rock and my fortress* (Psalm 71:3, AMP).
4. The **Giant of Depression** is overcome by the Rock of our salvation! *Come, let us sing to the LORD, let us shout aloud to the Rock of our salvation* (Psalm 95:1, NIV).
5. The **Giant of Doubt** can be vanquished by stones of remembrance. In Joshua 4:1-9, God told Israel to choose twelve stones out of the Jordan River to remind them of His miraculous work cutting off the flow of a raging river so His people—carrying the ark of the covenant of the LORD—could safely walk on dry land *so that all the peoples of the earth may know that the hand of the LORD is mighty* (Joshua 4:24, ESV). For your own *stone of remembrance*, you can choose something tangible (a stone, pine cone, picture, or something else) to help you recall specific instances of God's goodness, power, and love. Put it where you'll see it often—reminding you to doubt your doubts!

For Israel, we can pray God's Word:

He found him in a desert land, in the howling wasteland of a wilderness; He kept circling him, He took care of him, He protected him as the apple of His eye (Deuteronomy 32:10, AMP).

I have chosen Jerusalem that My Name might be there, and I have chosen David to be over My people Israel (2 Chronicles 6:6, AMP).

Pray for the peace of Jerusalem: 'may they prosper who love you.' (Psalm 122:6, NASB).

For thus says the Lord of hosts, 'after glory He has sent Me against the nations which plunder you—for he who touches you, touches the apple of His eye' (Zechariah 2:8, AMP).

Contact people you know with family or friends in Israel; ask for specific prayer requests.

Focus, focus, focus—on God and not on the problems! (Whatever has your mind has you!) Jesus said, *I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world (John 16:33, NIV).*

For our children, we can “Keep calm and carry on.” In 1939, the British government chose that theme for a motivational poster to raise morale when mass air attacks were predicted on major United Kingdom cities. Today we'll keep calm when we repeatedly fix our eyes on the LORD rather than circumstances, problems, or concerns. In Isaiah 41:10, God tells us, ***Do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you; I will uphold you with my righteous right hand.***

For the world, we can pray God's Word: Matthew 24:6-8 says, *You will hear of wars and rumors of wars, but see to it that you are not alarmed. Such things must happen, but the end is still to come. Nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. There will be famines and earthquakes in various places. All these are the beginning of birth pains.*

For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life (John 3:16, NKJV).

As news reports expose traumatic events throughout the world, it's vital you know how to cope with a world in chaos. ***Core Healing from Trauma*** by author and speaker Marti Wibbels offers proven strategies for facing life's concerns and challenges from a biblical and mental health perspective. ***Core Healing from Trauma*** is available on Amazon — <https://cutt.ly/occdejH>.