**Thursday 25th June**

Psalm 18:28-30

You, LORD, keep my lamp burning; my God turns my darkness into light. With your help I can advance against a troop ; with my God I can scale a wall. As for God, his way is perfect: The LORD ’s word is flawless; he shields all who take refuge in him.

These verses bring two things to my mind: first, the song Give me Oil in my Lamp, remembered from school days, and secondly the image of paratroopers training on an obstacle course where they have to climb a wall that is at least twice their height. Jesus told a parable about bridesmaids who needed oil for their lamps to welcome the wedding party. Some had plenty of oil, and others ran out and missed the party. Oil in the Bible represents the Holy Spirit, and this parable encourages to make sure that the lamp of our heart is burning brightly - that we are a welcoming place for the Presence of God and that we are tending that lamp, pursuing Him. How is your lamp today? It can be particularly to continue walking with God in faith when we can’t gather in the ways that we are used to. But the Lord is with you, and He can turn darkness to light, causing the most dimly flickering embers to burst into new life. It is out of this place of relationship with Him that all things become possible, and the insurmountable walls that we face can be scaled.

*Father, we thank you that because of Jesus we can know you and live in the light of your Presence. Would you help me today to come to you for oil, to set my heart ablaze with love for you. Help me to make space for you, to take refuge in you, to wait on you. I bring you the obstacles that confront me today - all those things that seem impossible to overcome. Thank you that there is nothing that together we cannot face.*

*We continue to pray for our nation at a time of great uncertainty. We ask for your help and wisdom for our leaders - for all those making decisions. We pray for those that are sick, those that have been bereaved, those that have lost jobs or businesses, those that are struggling with depression. We ask that each would find hope, help and comfort in you. In Jesus Name. Amen*

