

PRAYING THE PSALMS

Bridging Intimacy With God

Study 8

Praying our Doubts Part 2
Psalm 73



PRAYING OUR DOUBTS

PART 1 ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF OUR DOUBTS

1. Admission of doubt
2. Reason for doubt
3. Wrestling with our doubt

THE DOUBT

Psalms 73:1-2 (ESV) 1 Truly God is good
to Israel,
to those who are pure in heart.

2 But as for me, my feet had almost
stumbled,
my steps had nearly slipped.

1979 RECEIVING THE NOBLE PRIZE AND 11 WEEKS LATER



"[But] that is for me the silence and the emptiness is so great, because Christ is that I look and do not see,-- everywhere-- "Christ in our Listen and do not hear--the hearts. Christ in the poor tongue moves [in prayer] but we meet Christ in the smile we do not speak in the smile we give and in that I let Him have [a] free hand."

WRITING TO



So many unanswered questions live within me afraid to uncover them-- because of the blasphemy--If there be God --please forgive me--When I try to raise my thoughts to Heaven--there is such convicting emptiness that those very thoughts return like sharp knives & hurt my very soul.--I am told God loves me--and yet the reality of darkness & nothing touches my soul. Did I make a mistake in surrendering blindly to the Call of the Sacred Heart?



ST AUGUSTINE

Christians are those who think in believing and believe in thinking

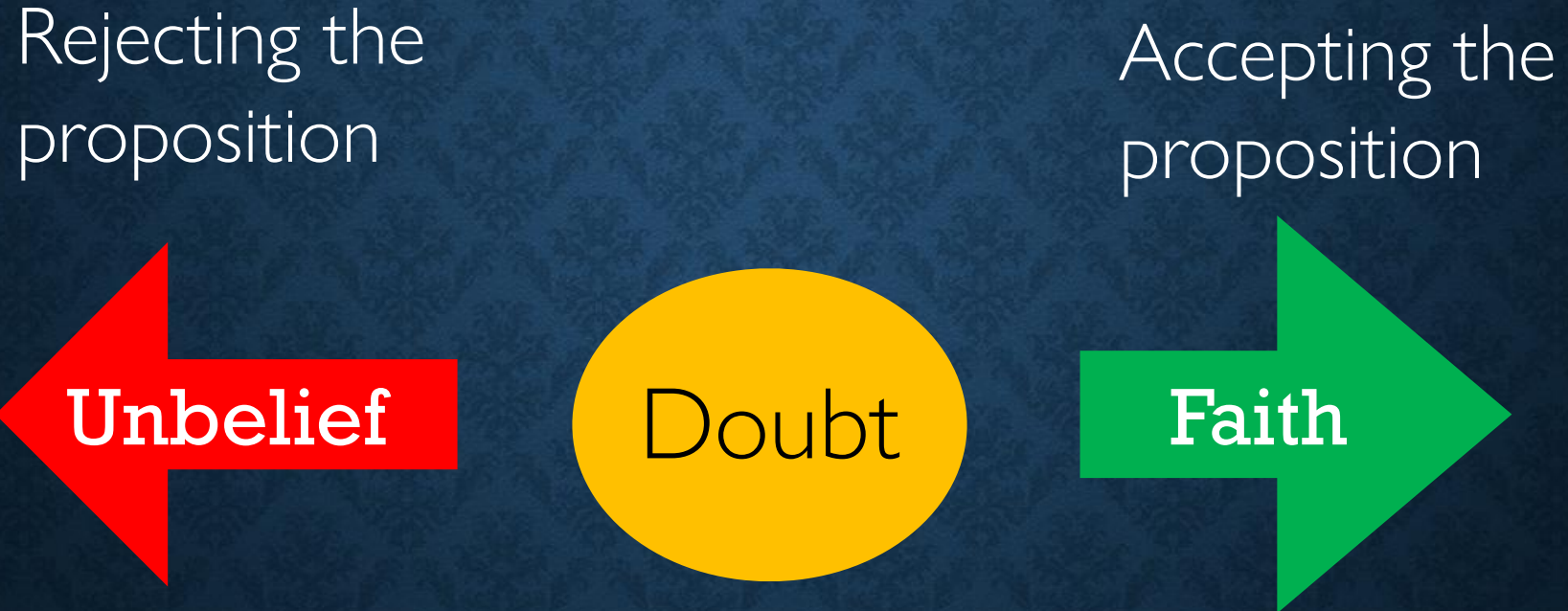
The world of the Christian faith is not a fairy tale ,make believe world, question free and problem proof, but a world where doubt is never far from faith's shoulder

FAITH

DOUBT



DOUBT IS NOT UNBELIEF



Two minds
Two minds
Foot in each boat
Foot in each boat

Two minds
Foot in each boat



MARTIN LUTHER

*Unless I am convinced
by Scripture and plain
reason, my
conscience is captive
to the Word of God*

PRAYING OUR DOUBTS

PART 2 DEALING WITH OUR DOUBTS

1. We re-examine the motives behind our doubts
2. We deliberately engage in worship with others and regain insight
3. We compare footholds
4. We feel for His hand
5. We make God our refuge

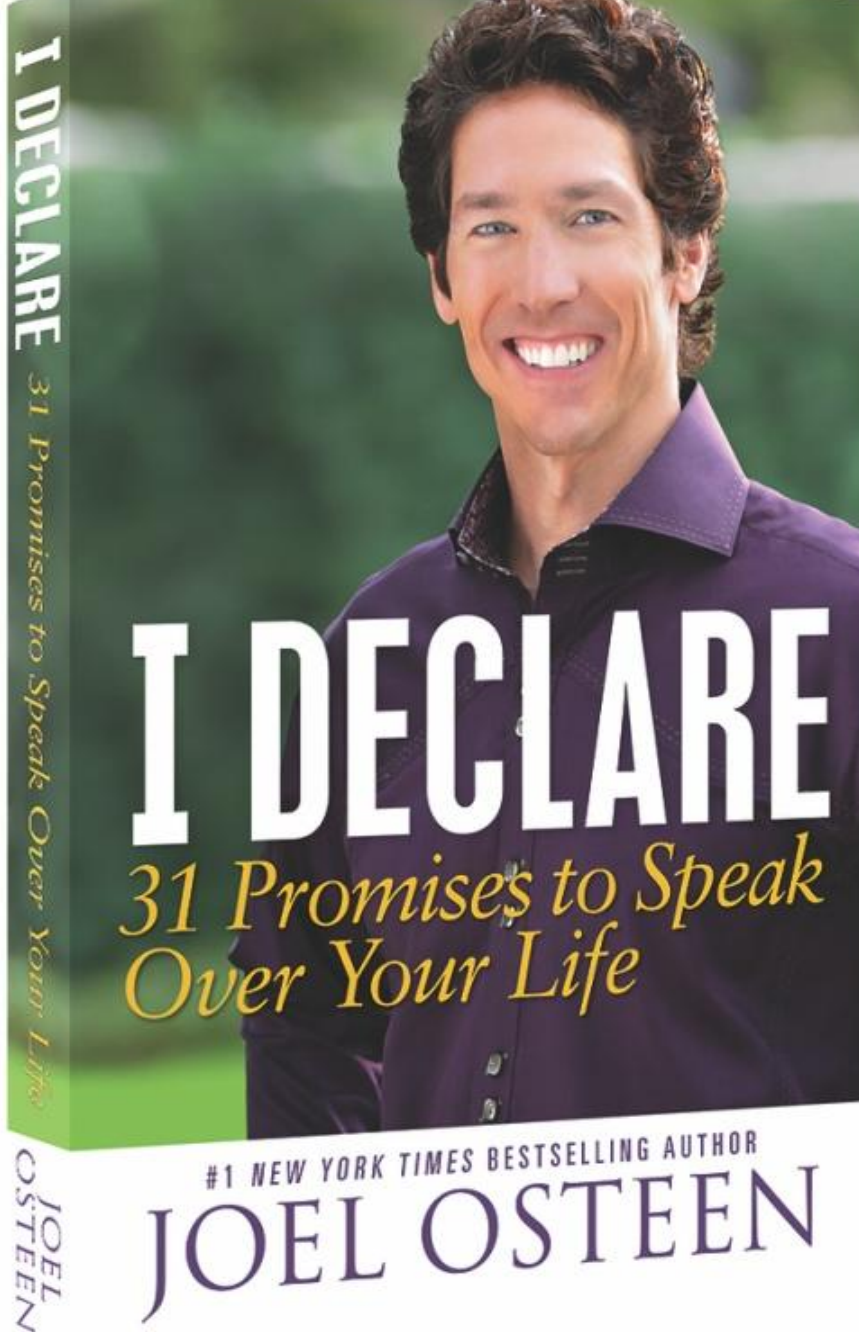
A. RE-EXAMINE OUR DOUBTS-MOTIVES

Psalms 73:3 (ESV) For I was envious of the arrogant
when I saw the prosperity of the wicked.

9 They set their mouths against the heavens, and their
tongue struts through the earth.

10 Therefore his people turn back to them, and find no fault
in them. 11 And they say, "How can God know? Is there
knowledge in the Most High?"

12 Behold, these are the wicked; always at ease, they
increase in riches



**MOTIVE:
PERSONAL
SUCCESS**

Roy Clemens

MOTIVE: SEXUAL DESIRE



In short I do not believe I can be "cured" by behavioural therapy. I am gay and will always be so.

MOTIVE: UNMET DESIRES



CONFESSIONS OF AN ATHEIST: WHY I LEFT THE FAITH

MALAYSIAN CHRONICLE

FRIDAY, 07 NOVEMBER 2014 15:08

I don't think that truth can be subjective. Truth doesn't depend on what you like or on what you believe. I don't think that truth is what makes most sense to you personally. Rights and the sexist notions in Christianity and other major religions. If other women are happy being submissive to their husbands because the bible tells them to do so, that's up to them. But at least now, I can choose not to and I'm free to seek a more egalitarian relationship outside the misogynistic boundaries of religion.

PRAYING OUR DOUBTS

PART 2 DEALING WITH OUR DOUBTS

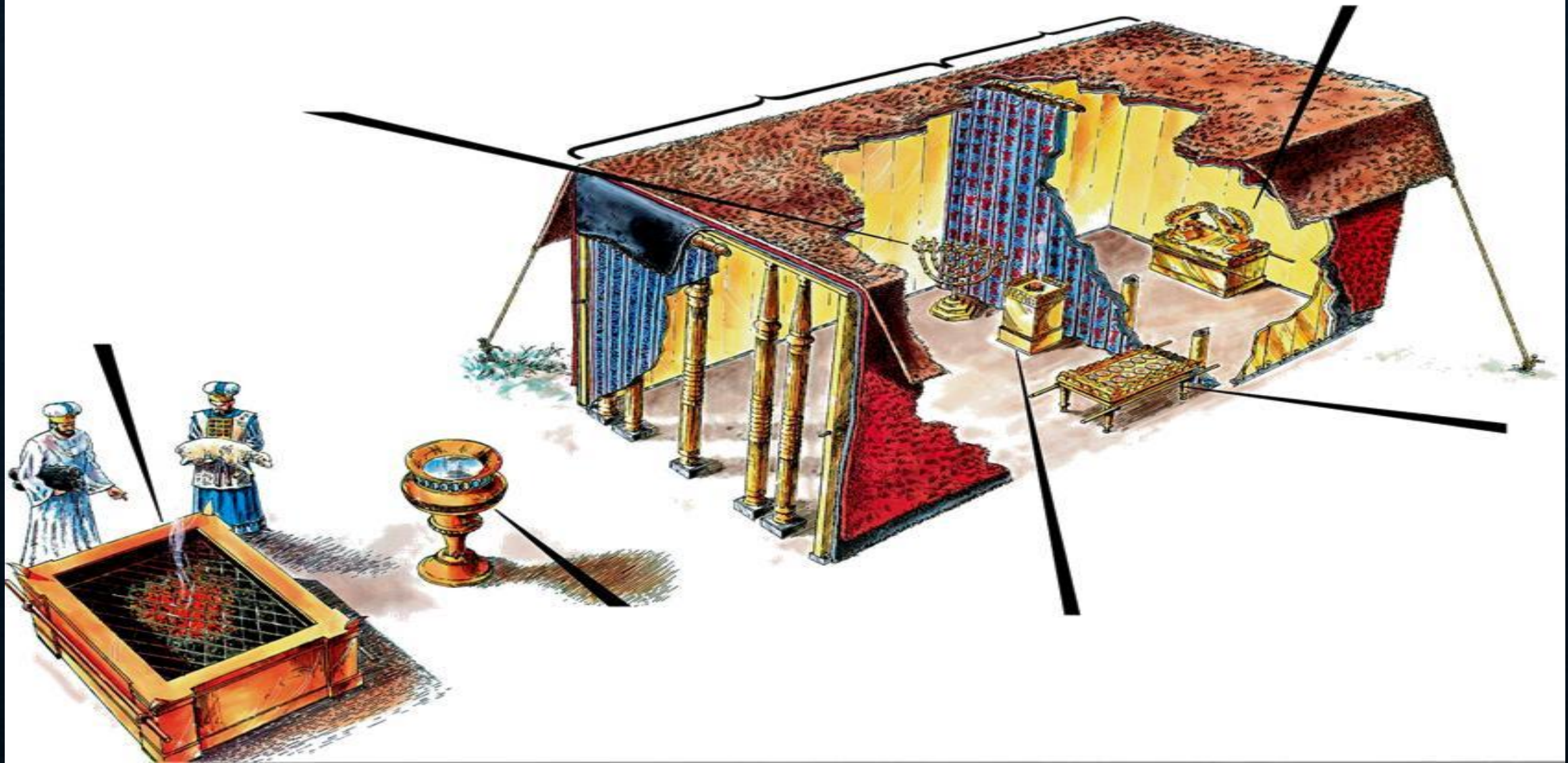
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B. RE-ENGAGE IN WORSHIP AND REGAIN INSIGHT

Psalms 73:16-17 (ESV) But when I thought how
to understand this, it seemed to me a
wearisome task,

17 until I went into the sanctuary of God;
then I discerned their end.

The Tabernacle of Witness



THE INCENTIVE TO WORSHIP

Deut 5:15 You shall remember that you were a slave in the land of Egypt, and the Lord your God brought you out from there with a mighty hand and an outstretched arm. Therefore the Lord your God commanded you to keep the Sabbath day.



Numbers 15:38-39

and to put a cord of blue on the tassel of each corner. And it shall be a tassel for you to look at and remember all the commandments of the Lord, to do them, not to follow after your own heart and your own eyes, which you are inclined to whore after.



LORDS SUPPER



DIVINE TEMPORAL JUDGMENT

Psalms 73:18-20 (ESV) Truly you set them in
slippery places;

you make them fall to ruin.

19 How they are destroyed in a moment,
swept away utterly by terrors!

20 Like a dream when one awakes,

O Lord, when you rouse yourself, you despise
them as phantoms.



ARRESTED

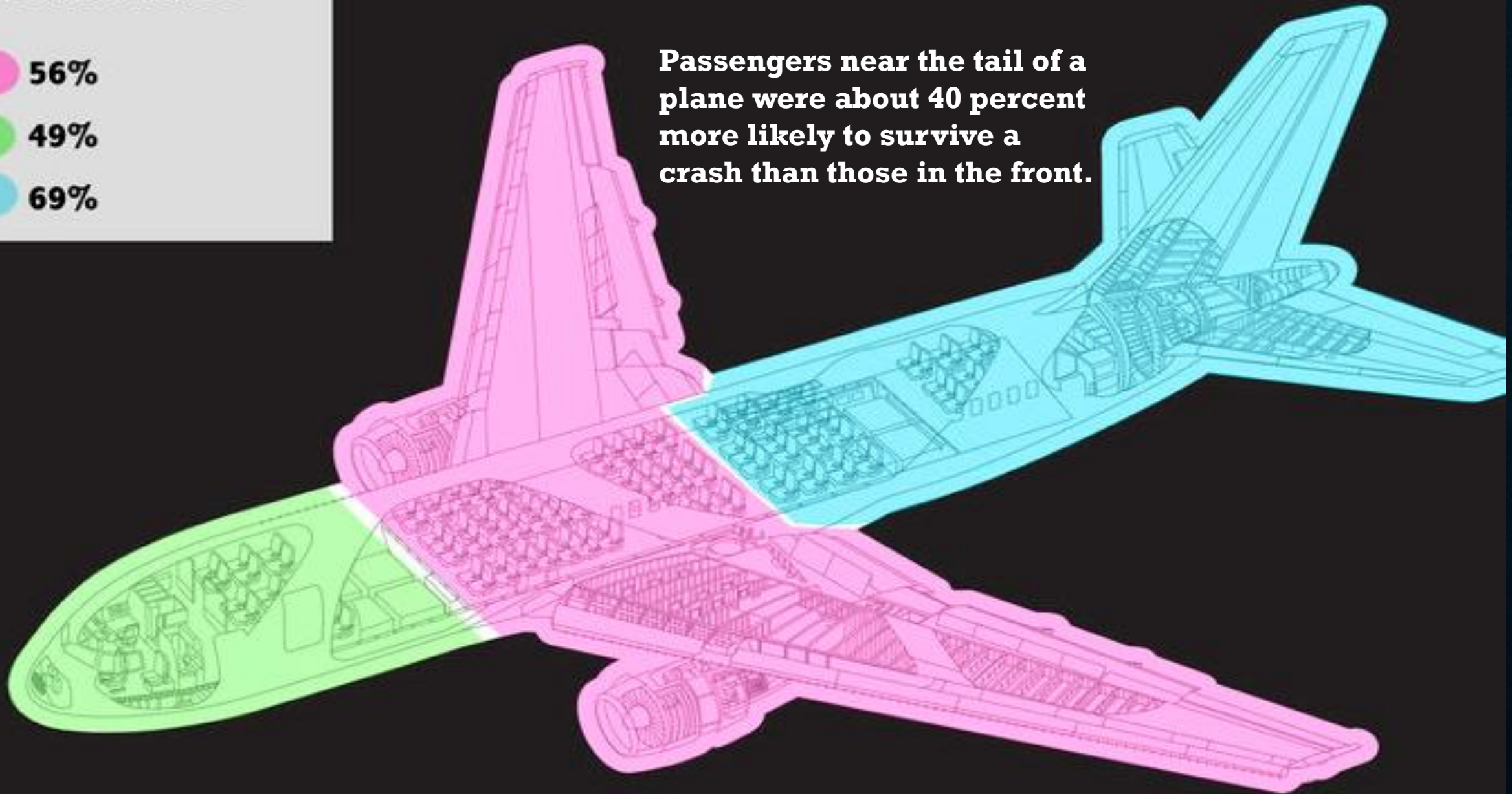
Survival Rates

56%

49%

69%

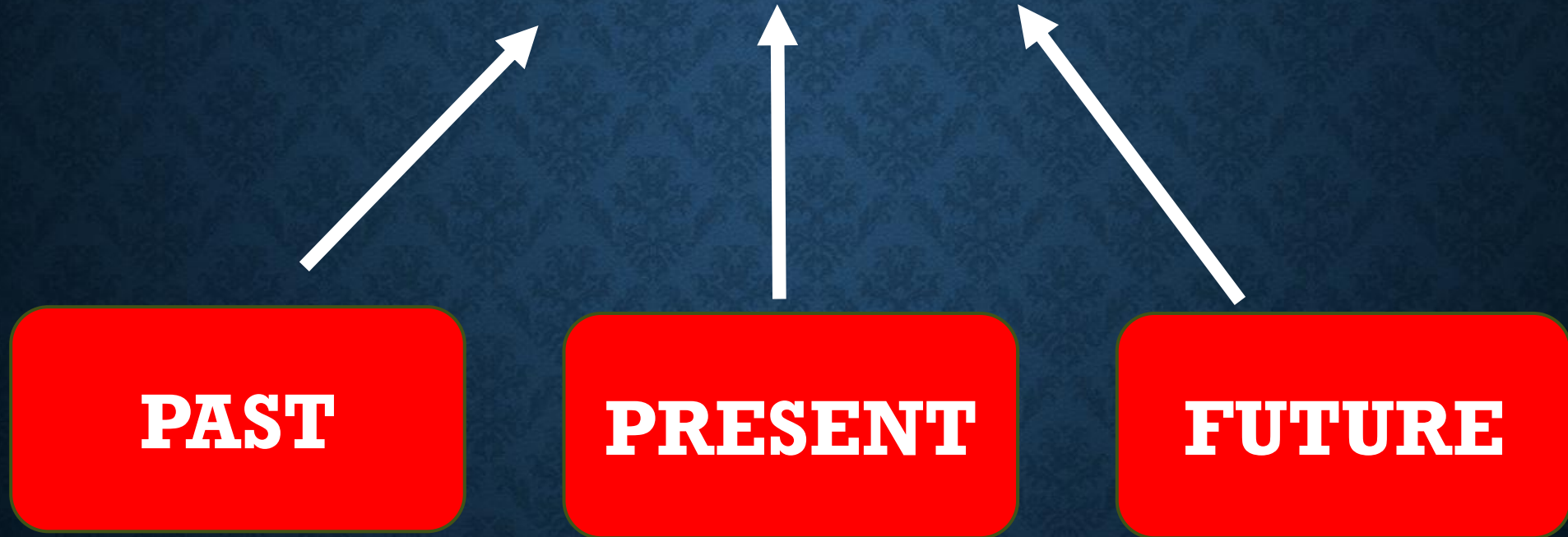
Passengers near the tail of a plane were about 40 percent more likely to survive a crash than those in the front.



UNDERSTAND WHAT EMOTIONS CAN DO TO YOU

Psalms 73:21-22 (ESV) When my
soul was embittered,
when I was pricked in heart,
22 I was brutish and ignorant;
I was like a beast toward you.

EMOTIONS



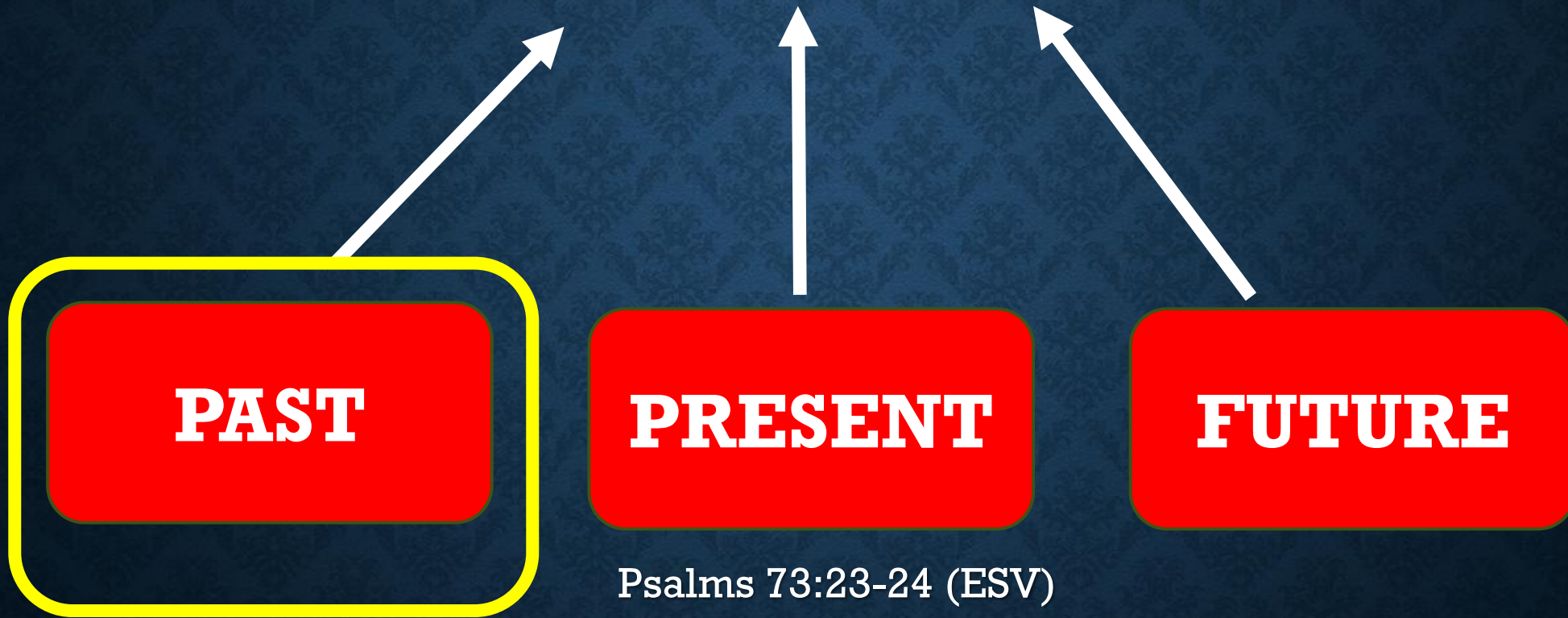
Unfair situation

A man in a white head covering and a woman in a purple dress are shown in an Egyptian setting. The man is looking up and to the right. The woman is wearing a large, ornate headdress with a cobra. In the background, there are Egyptian murals and a green lotus flower. A basket of fruit is visible in the foreground.

JOSEPH

Genesis 39:9-10 (ESV) How then can I do this great wickedness and sin against God?" 10 And as she spoke to Joseph day after day, he would not listen to her, to lie beside her or to be with her.

EMOTIONS



Psalms 73:23-24 (ESV)

Nevertheless, I am
continually with you; you
hold my right hand.

Israel's story has become our story.
Thus, we no longer see the past,
present, and future the same way as
the world



Psalms 103:2-5 (ESV) Bless the LORD, O my
soul, and forget not all his benefits,

3 who forgives all your iniquity, who heals all
your diseases,

4 who redeems your life from the pit,
who crowns you with steadfast love and mercy,

5 who satisfies you with good
so that your youth is renewed like the eagle's.

EMOTIONS

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graph BT; P[PAST] --> E[EMOTIONS]; PR[PRESENT] --> E; F[FUTURE] --> E;
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The diagram illustrates the concept of emotions as a central theme influenced by three temporal dimensions: Past, Present, and Future. At the top, the word 'EMOTIONS' is written in large, bold, white capital letters. Below it, three red rounded rectangular boxes are arranged horizontally, each containing a temporal word in bold white capital letters: 'PAST' on the left, 'PRESENT' in the center, and 'FUTURE' on the right. Three white arrows point upwards from each of these boxes towards the 'EMOTIONS' header, indicating that emotions are shaped by or arise from these three time periods.

PAST

PRESENT

FUTURE

Psalms 73:23-24 (ESV)
Nevertheless, I am
continually with you; you
hold my right hand.

Psalms 73: 24 You guide me
with your counsel,
and afterward you will
receive me to glory.



PRAYING OUR DOUBTS

PART 2 DEALING WITH OUR DOUBTS

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C: WE COMPARE FOOTHOLDS

Psalms 73:18 Truly you set them in slippery places; you make them fall to ruin. 19 How they are destroyed in a moment, swept away utterly by terrors!

Psalms 73:23-24 (ESV)
Nevertheless, I am continually with you; you hold my right hand.
24 You guide me with your counsel, and afterward you will receive me to glory.

INCLUDES 18 LETTERS FROM
C. S. LEWIS

A SEVERE MERCY

*A Story of Faith, Tragedy,
and Triumph*

National
Book
Award
Winner



"No brief review
can do justice
to the human
depth of
this book."

—THE
WASHINGTON
POST

SHELDON
VANAUKEN

*Then I realized that was a gap
behind me as well. If I had to
believe in Christ there would have
been a leap of faith as there is no
certainty. But to even go back is
also a leap of faith*

*It would take enormous faith to
reject Jesus. Once I saw the gap
behind me I leap forward*

Difference between faith and knowledge

Doubt



Unknown

Known

God

A silhouette of a person is shown in mid-air, jumping from a dark, jagged cliff on the left towards the right. The person's arms are outstretched, and their legs are in a jumping position. Below the person, the ground is a bright, hazy orange-yellow, suggesting a sunset or sunrise. In the distance, there are dark, silhouetted hills or mountains under a sky filled with soft, white and grey clouds. A large, red arrow points from the right towards the left, with the text "Can you go back?" written inside it in white. The cliff on the left is labeled "No God" in white text. The chasm between the cliffs is labeled "Unknown" in black text. The cliff on the right is labeled "Known" in white text.

Can you go
back?

No God

Unknown

Known



If you cannot
go back

Forward

Known

God

Blaise Pascal



Pascal's wager



Unbelief

finite losses, potentially
sacrificing certain pleasures

Immeasurable glory and
eternal life

Belief in God

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D. WE FEEL FOR HIS HAND

Psalms 73:23-26 (ESV) Nevertheless, I am continually with you; you hold my right hand.

24 You guide me with your counsel,
and afterward you will receive me to glory.

25 Whom have I in heaven but you?

And there is nothing on earth that I desire besides you. 26

My flesh and my heart may fail,

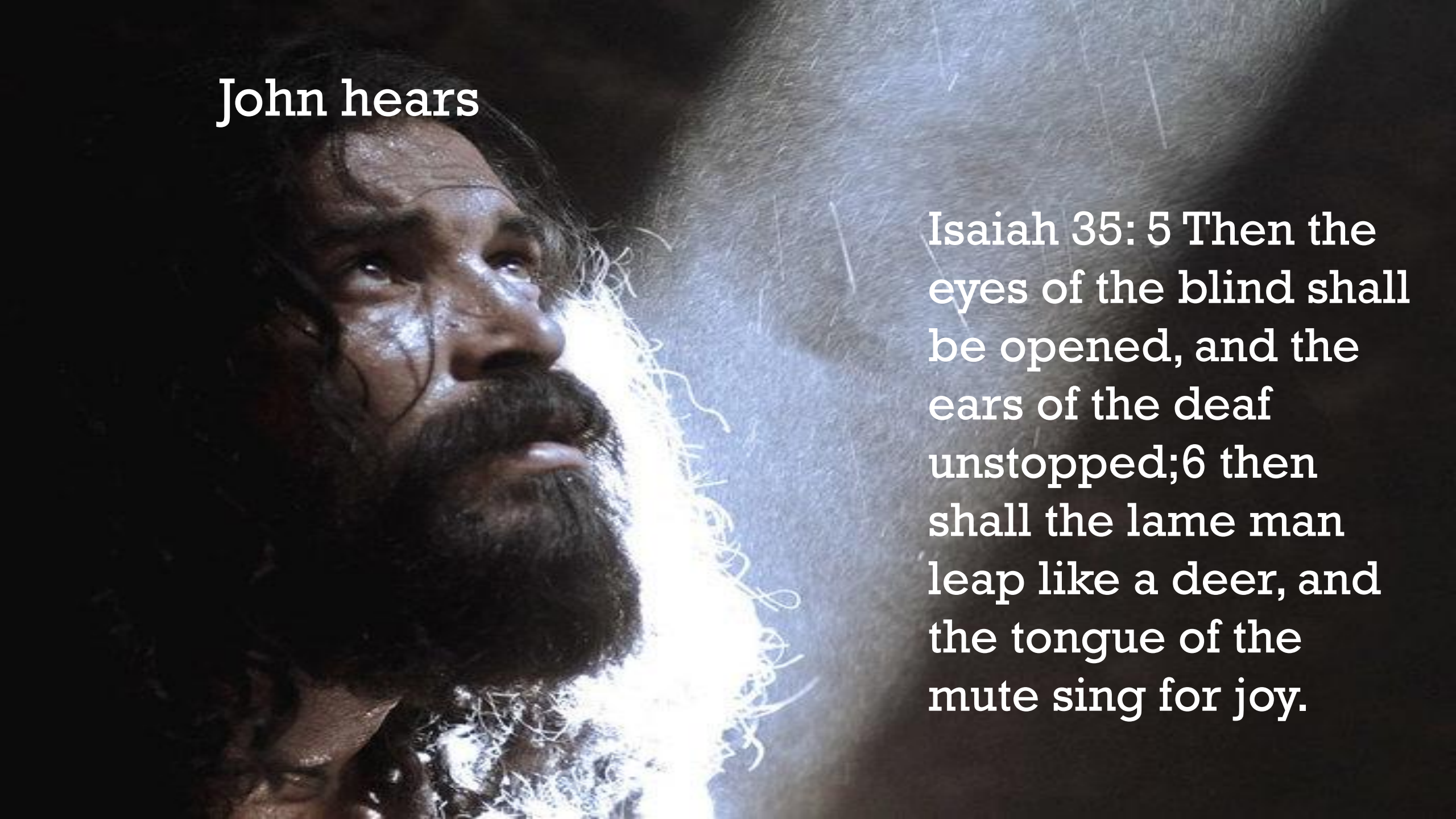
but God is the strength of my heart and my portion forever.



Doubt

Matt 11:3 Are
you the one
who is to come,
or shall we look
for another?"

Matt 11:4 And Jesus answered them, “Go and tell John what you hear and see: 5 the blind receive their sight and the lame walk, lepers are cleansed and the deaf hear, and the dead are raised up, and the poor have good news preached to them.



John hears

Isaiah 35: 5 Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf unstopped; 6 then shall the lame man leap like a deer, and the tongue of the mute sing for joy.

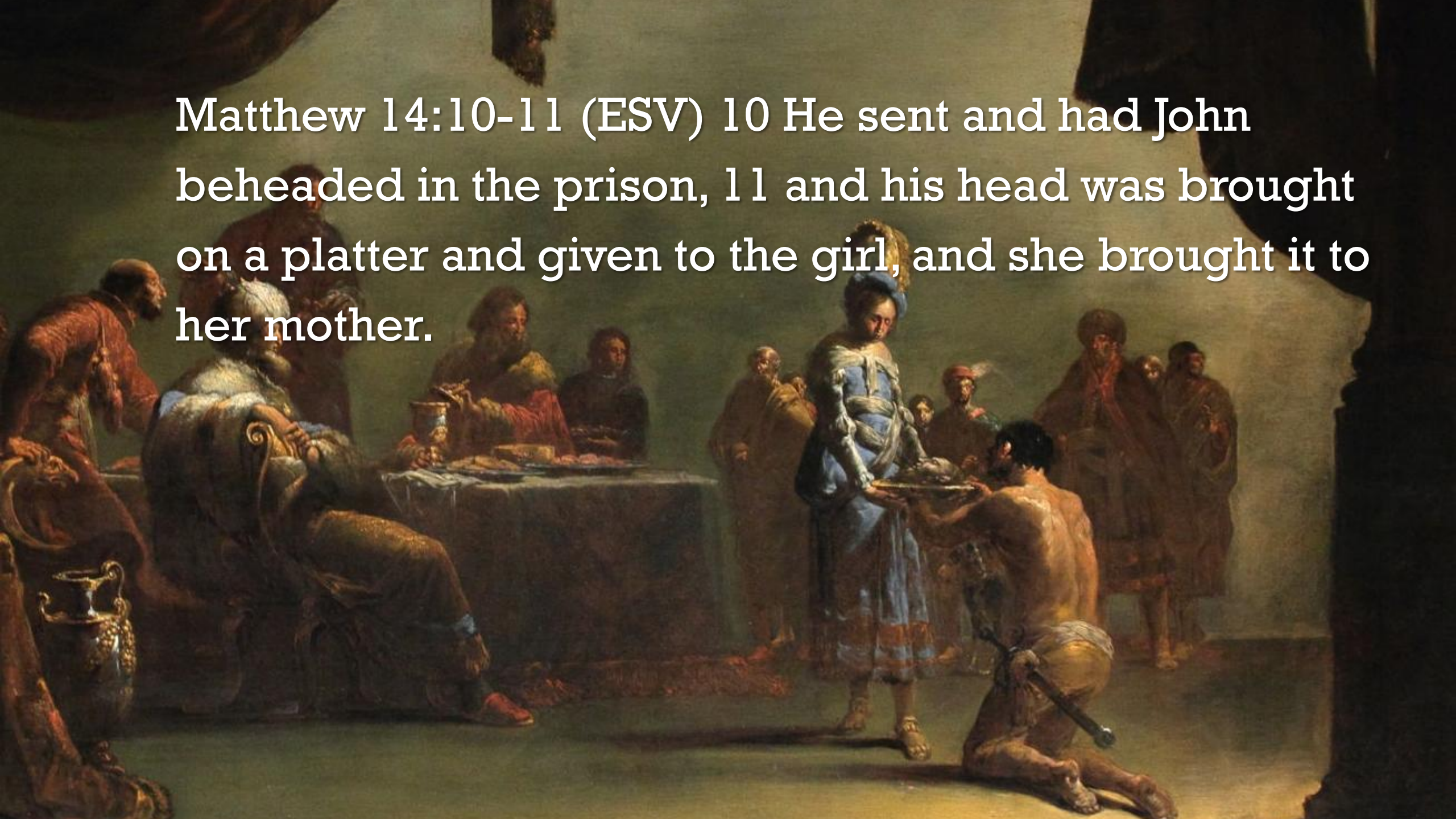
Isaiah 35:4 (ESV) 4 Say to those who have an
anxious heart,

“Be strong; fear not! Behold, your God will
come with vengeance,

with the recompense of God.

He will come and save you.”

Matthew 14:10-11 (ESV) 10 He sent and had John beheaded in the prison, 11 and his head was brought on a platter and given to the girl, and she brought it to her mother.



Hebrews 11:36-37 (ESV) 36 Others suffered mocking and flogging, and even chains and imprisonment. 37 They were stoned, they were sawn in two, they were killed with the sword.

PHILIP YANCEY

We may
question His
wisdom but
never his love

DISAPPOINTMENT WITH GOD

Three Questions No One Asks ALOUD

OVER 300,000 SOLD
NOW INCLUDES QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

THE ISSUE

“No matter how we rationalize, God will sometimes seem unfair from the perspective of a person trapped in time. Only at the end of time, after we have attained God’s level of viewing, after every evil has been punished or forgiven, every illness healed, and the entire universe restored—only then will fairness reign

THE NATURE OF FAITH

Hebrews 11:39-40 (ESV) And all these, though commended through their faith, did not receive what was promised, 40 since God had provided something better for us, that apart from us they should not be made perfect.

MOTHER TERESA



. "The more I want him--the less I am wanted," "Such deep longing for God--and ... repulsed--empty--no faith--no love--no zeal.--[The saving of] Souls holds no attraction--Heaven means nothing--pray for me please that I keep smiling at Him in spite of everything."

REV JOSEPH NEUNER



1. There was no human remedy for it (that is, she should not feel responsible for affecting it);
2. Feeling Jesus is not the only proof of his being there, and her very craving for God was a "sure sign" of his "hidden presence" in her life;
3. The absence was in fact part of the "spiritual side" of her work for Jesus.



MOTHER TERESA

I can't express in words--the gratitude I owe you for your kindness to me--for the first time in ... years--I have come to love the darkness--for I believe now that it is part of a very, very small part of Jesus' darkness & pain on earth. You have taught me to accept it [as] a 'spiritual side of your work' as you wrote--Today really I felt a deep joy--that Jesus can't go anymore through the agony--but that He wants to go through it in me.

PRAYING OUR DOUBTS

PART 2 DEALING WITH OUR DOUBTS

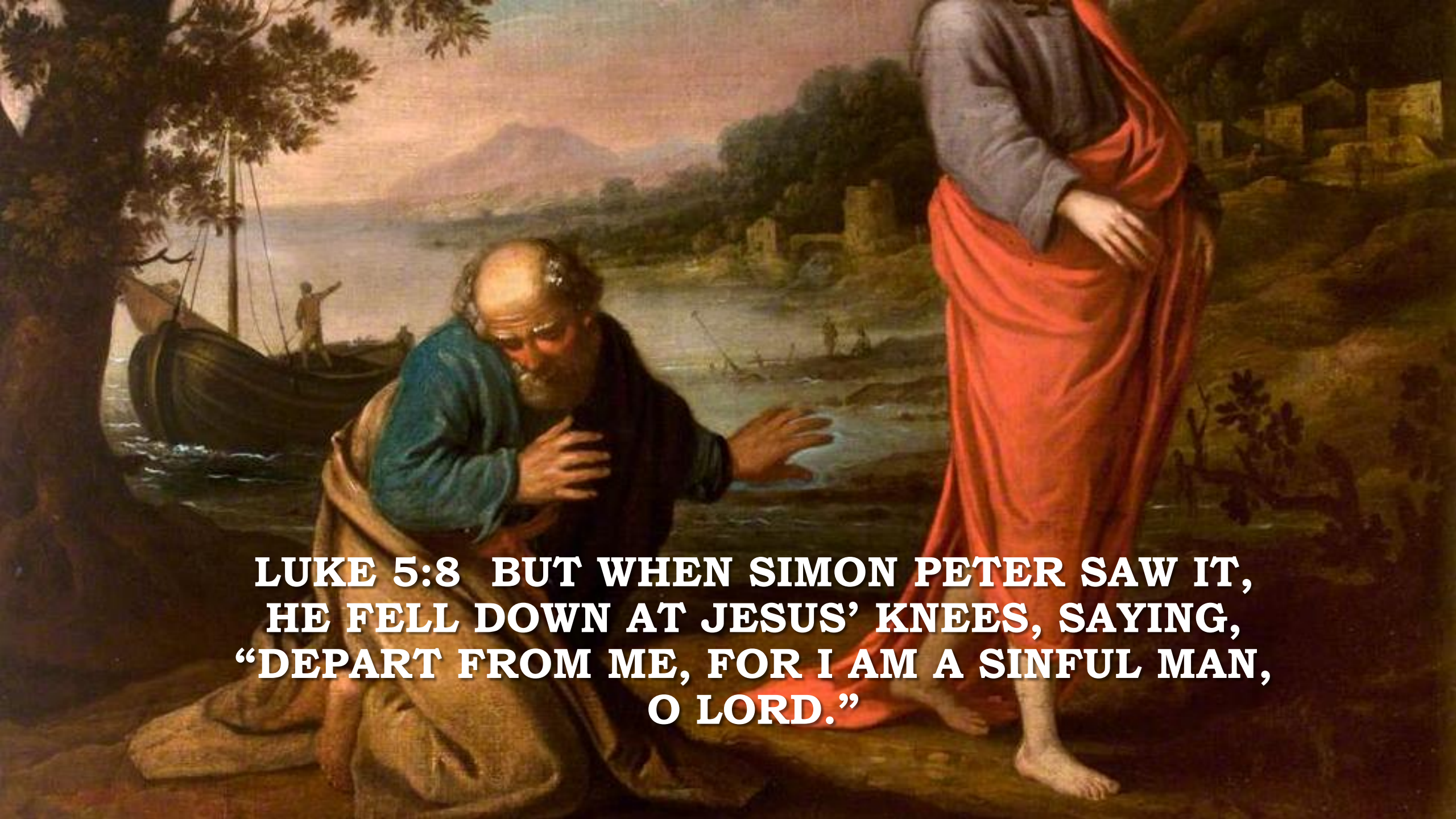
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E. WE MAKE GOD OUR REFUGE

Envy because my treasure is on earth

Psalms 73:25-26 (ESV) Whom have I in heaven but you? And there is nothing on earth that I desire besides you.

26 My flesh and my heart may fail,
but God is the strength of my heart
and my portion forever.



**LUKE 5:8 BUT WHEN SIMON PETER SAW IT,
HE FELL DOWN AT JESUS' KNEES, SAYING,
"DEPART FROM ME, FOR I AM A SINFUL MAN,
O LORD."**





John 21:7 (ESV) 7 That disciple whom Jesus loved therefore said to Peter, “It is the Lord!” When Simon Peter heard that it was the Lord, he put on his outer garment, for he was stripped for work, and threw himself into the sea

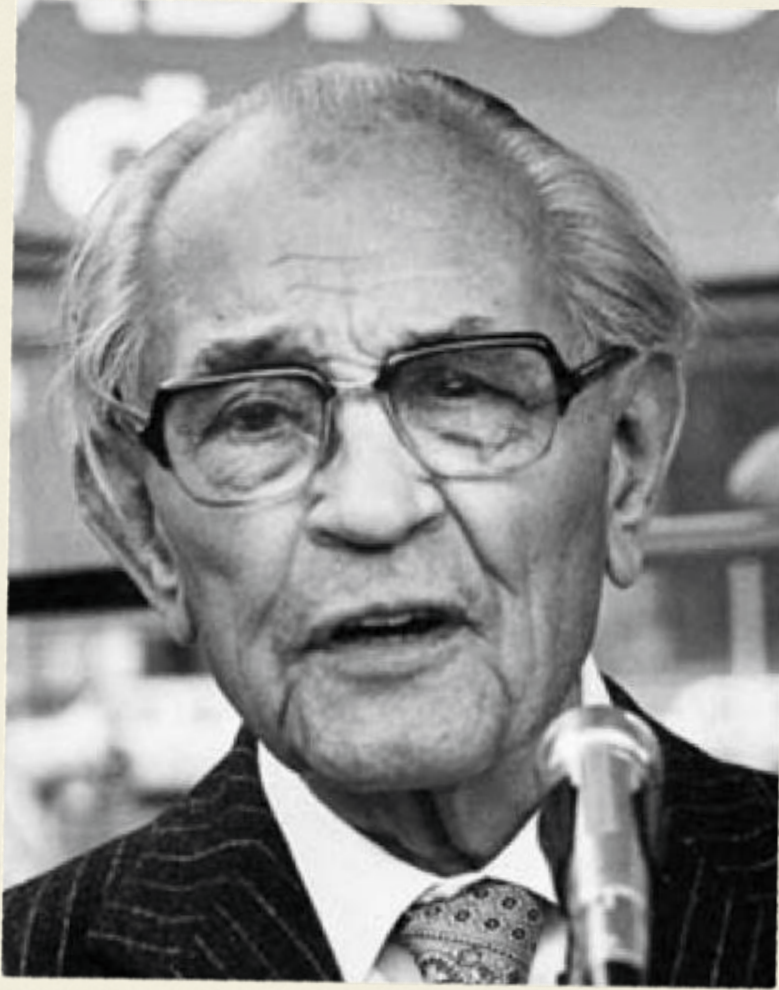
HIS WORK IN US

Hebrews 13:21 (ESV) 21... equip you with everything good that you may do his will, working in us that which is pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory forever and ever. Amen.



I believe but help my
unbelief

MARTIN NIEMOLLER



Prov 18:10 The name of the Lord is a strong tower; the righteous man runs into it and is safe.

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