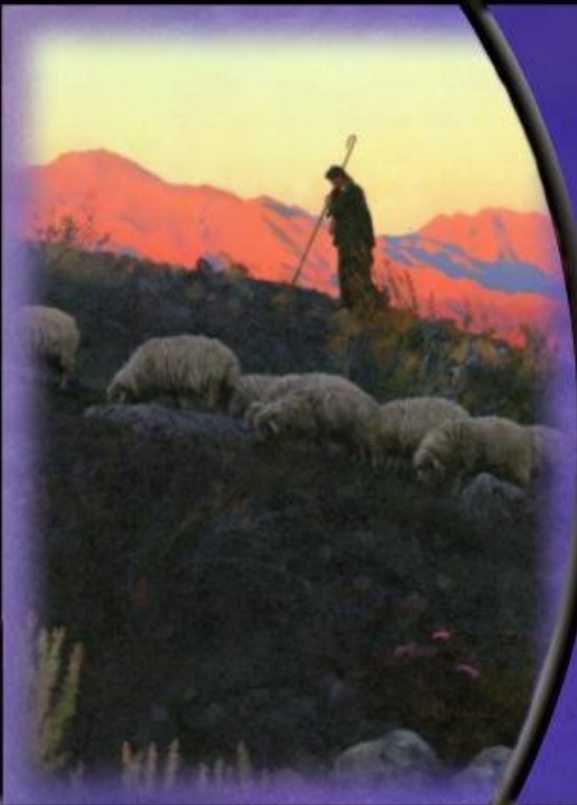
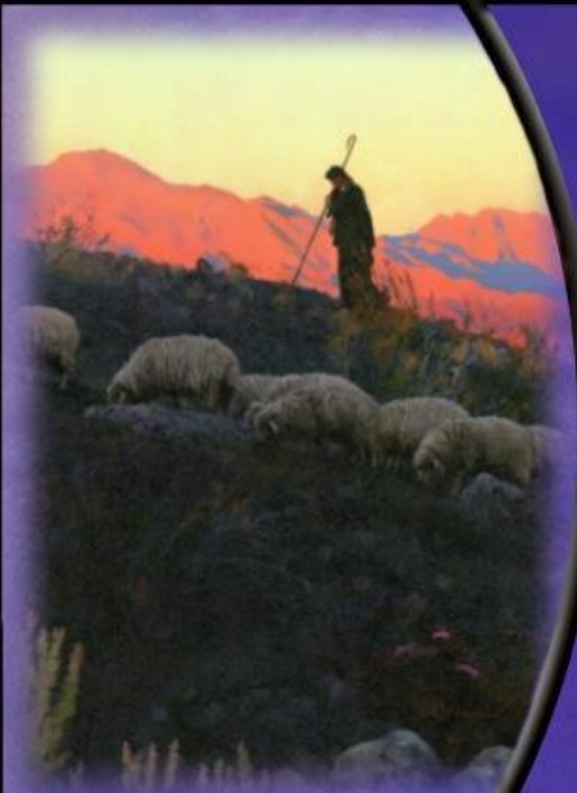


THEME

Psalms



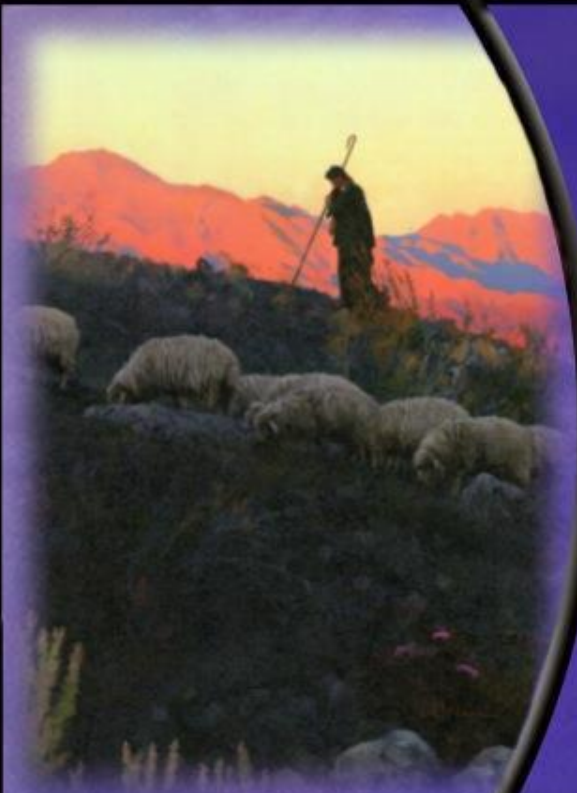


TODAY'S LESSON TOPIC

Lesson 11 Longing for God in Zion

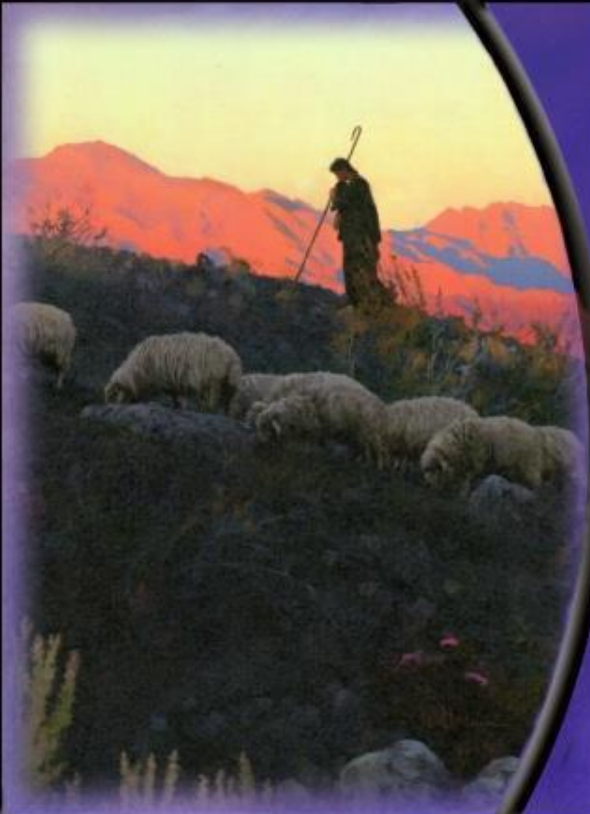
Today's Lesson Overview

- **The psalms in our lesson this week focus on Zion as the location of God's dwelling place and the hope of safety and security that we can find in a saving relationship with our Lord.**



TODAY'S LESSON TOPIC

Lesson 11 Longing for God in Zion



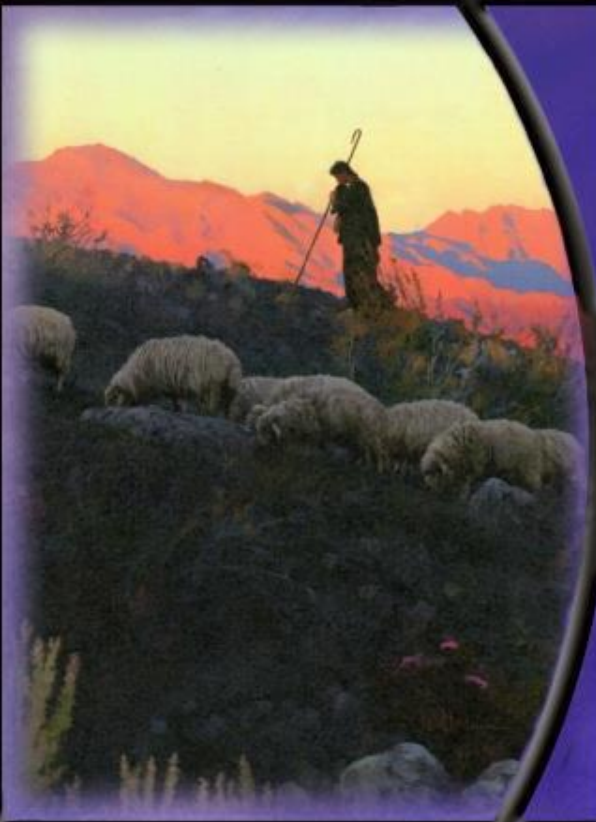
Today's Lesson outline

- Marching to Zion**
- Worshipping in Zion**
- Safety and Peace in Zion**
- Summary**



Memory Text
Psalm 84:2 NKJV

- **My soul longs, yes, even faints For the courts of the LORD; My heart and my flesh cry out for the living God.**



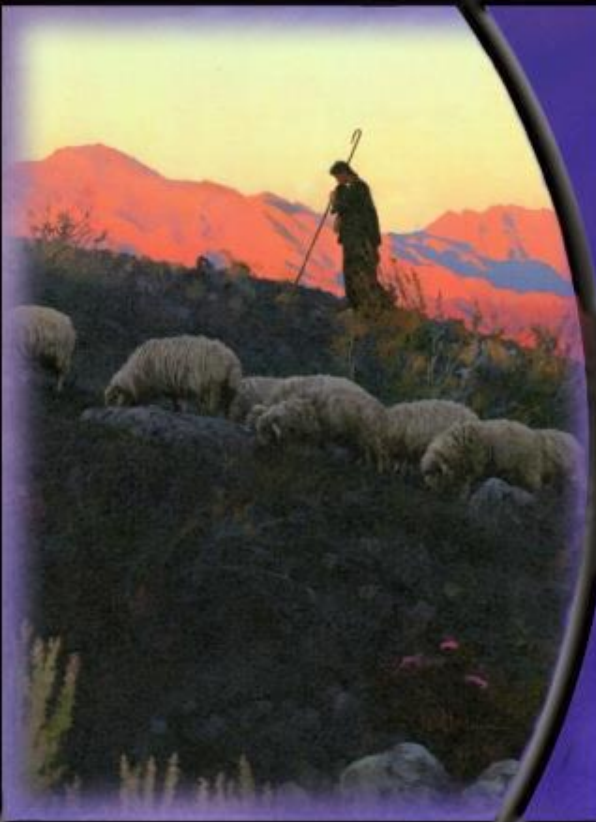
Memory Text
Psalm 84:2 NKJV

- **For what is the psalmist longing in this verse?**

- **Here the psalmist is longing for the courts of the Lord - the entrance to go into the temple to worship the Lord.**

What are the courts of the Lord?

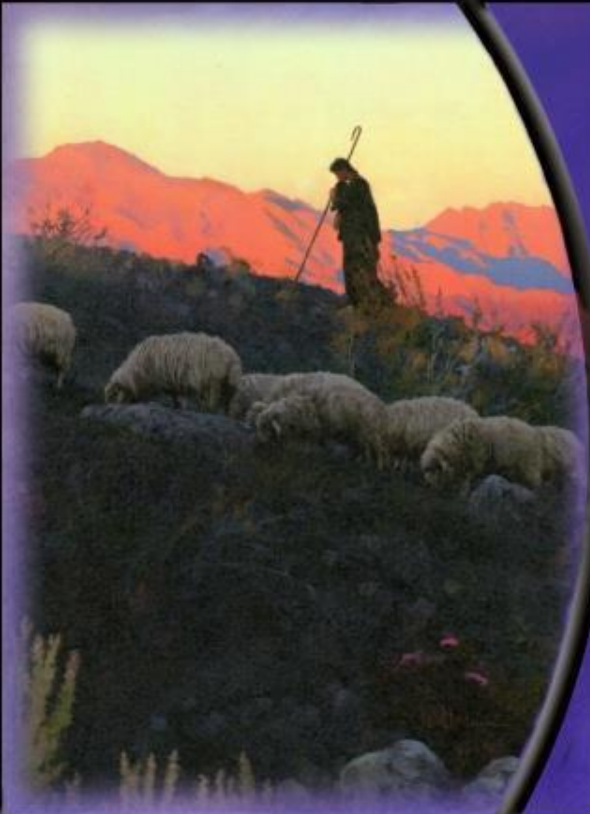
- **These would be the courts of the temple in Jerusalem “an enclosure before a building...especially before the holy tabernacle and temple.”**



Memory Text
Psalm 84:2 NKJV

**• How
intense is
that
longing?**

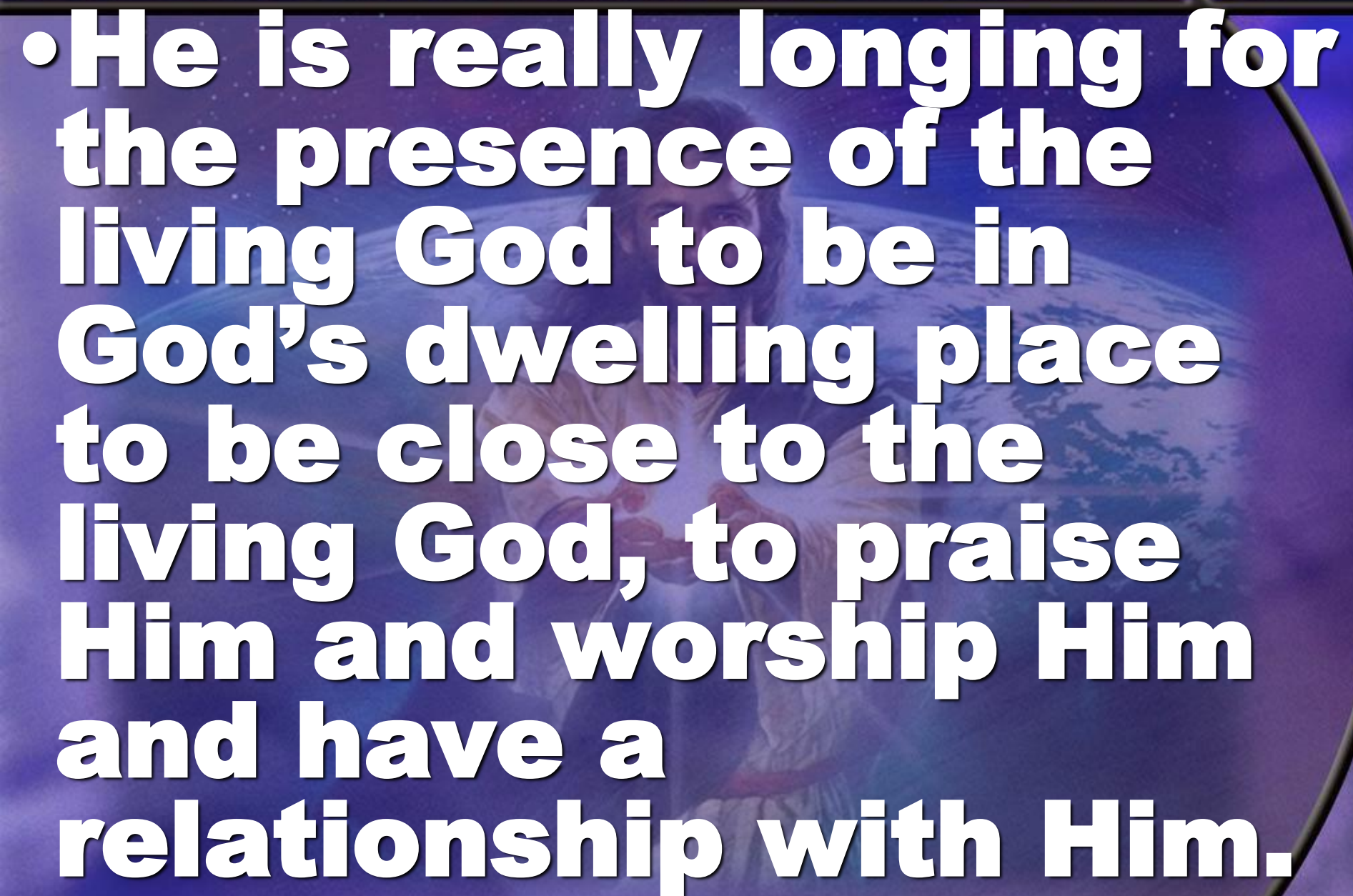
- **It is what we might call today an existential longing, one that threatens his very existence a longing of his soul, of his inner being that comes from the depth of who he is and the life that God has given him like fainting and losing conscientiousness if that longing goes unfulfilled.**



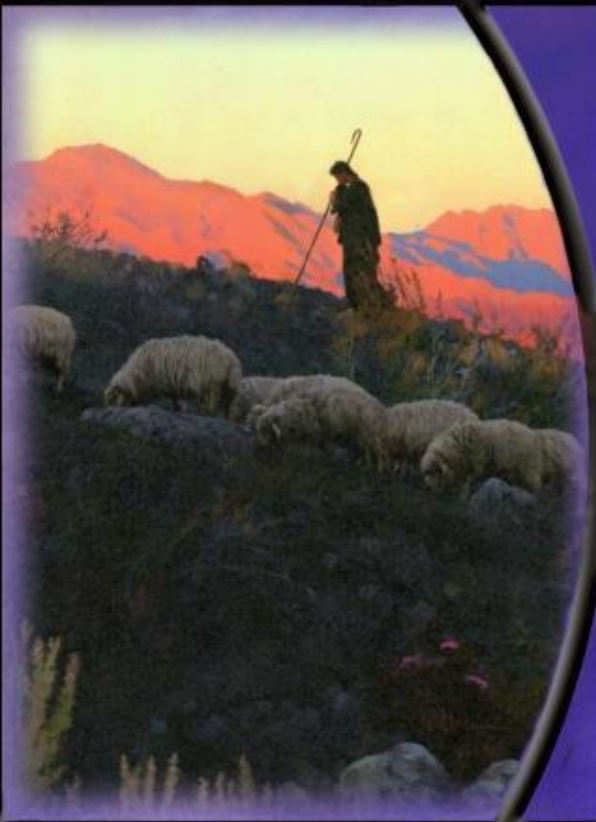
Memory Text
Psalm 84:2 NKJV

- **How does the second line of this synonymous parallelism help to clarify the first?**

- **“My heart and my flesh” in the second line are synonymous with “my soul” in the first.**
- **“Cry out for” in the second line is synonymous with “longs for and even faints for” in the first.**
- **And “the living God” in the second line is synonymous with “the court of the Lord” in the first.**
- **This second line helps to clarify what it is that the psalmist is really longing for.**



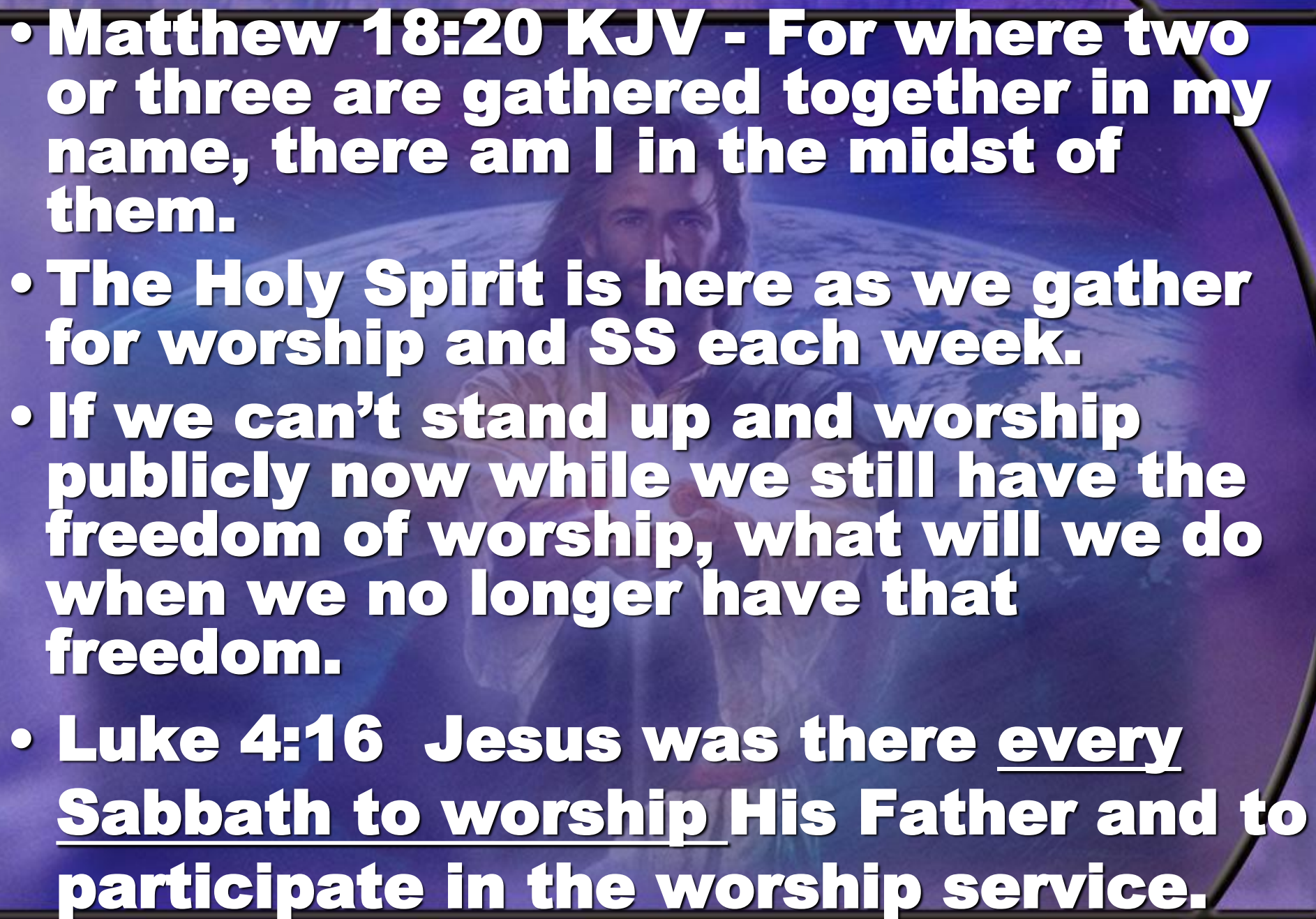
• He is really longing for the presence of the living God to be in God's dwelling place to be close to the living God, to praise Him and worship Him and have a relationship with Him.

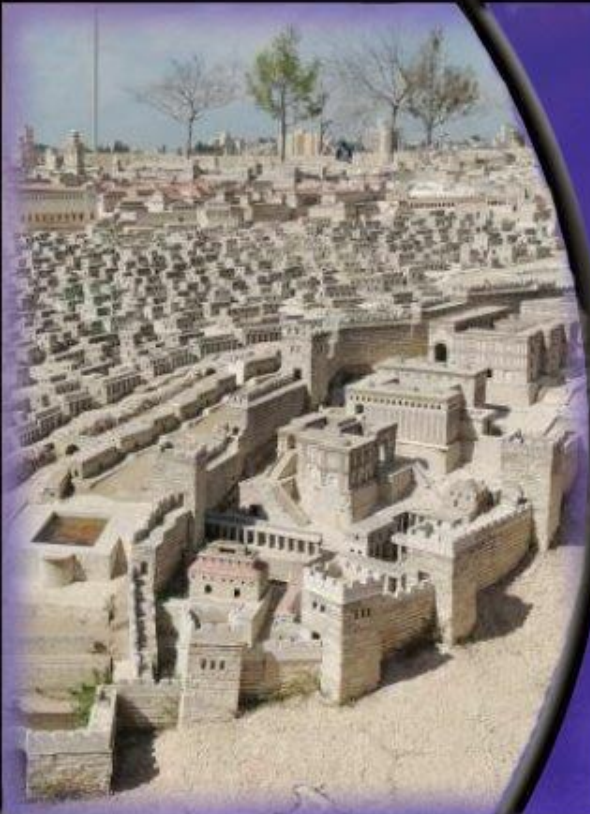


Memory Text
Psalm 84:2 NKJV

**What
application of
these words
can we make to
our own desire
for worship?**

- I look at all the empty pews and wonder: What happened to us?
- Do our souls long, yes, even faint, for the courts of the Lord?
 - Do our hearts cry out for the opportunity to worship the living God and bask in the sunshine of His presence?
- What would make sincere believers stay home Sabbath morning rather than being here in the presence of the Lord?

- 
- **Matthew 18:20 KJV - For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them.**
 - **The Holy Spirit is here as we gather for worship and SS each week.**
 - **If we can't stand up and worship publicly now while we still have the freedom of worship, what will we do when we no longer have that freedom.**
 - **Luke 4:16 Jesus was there every Sabbath to worship His Father and to participate in the worship service.**



Marching to Zion

**What is
Zion and
where is it
located?**

[Map]

This is an aerial view of what is called today, the old city of Jerusalem.








The Muslim Dome of the Rock stands on the place where the old temple stood in Bible times. This Area G shown in yellow is the City of David

2 Samuel 5:7 NIV - 7

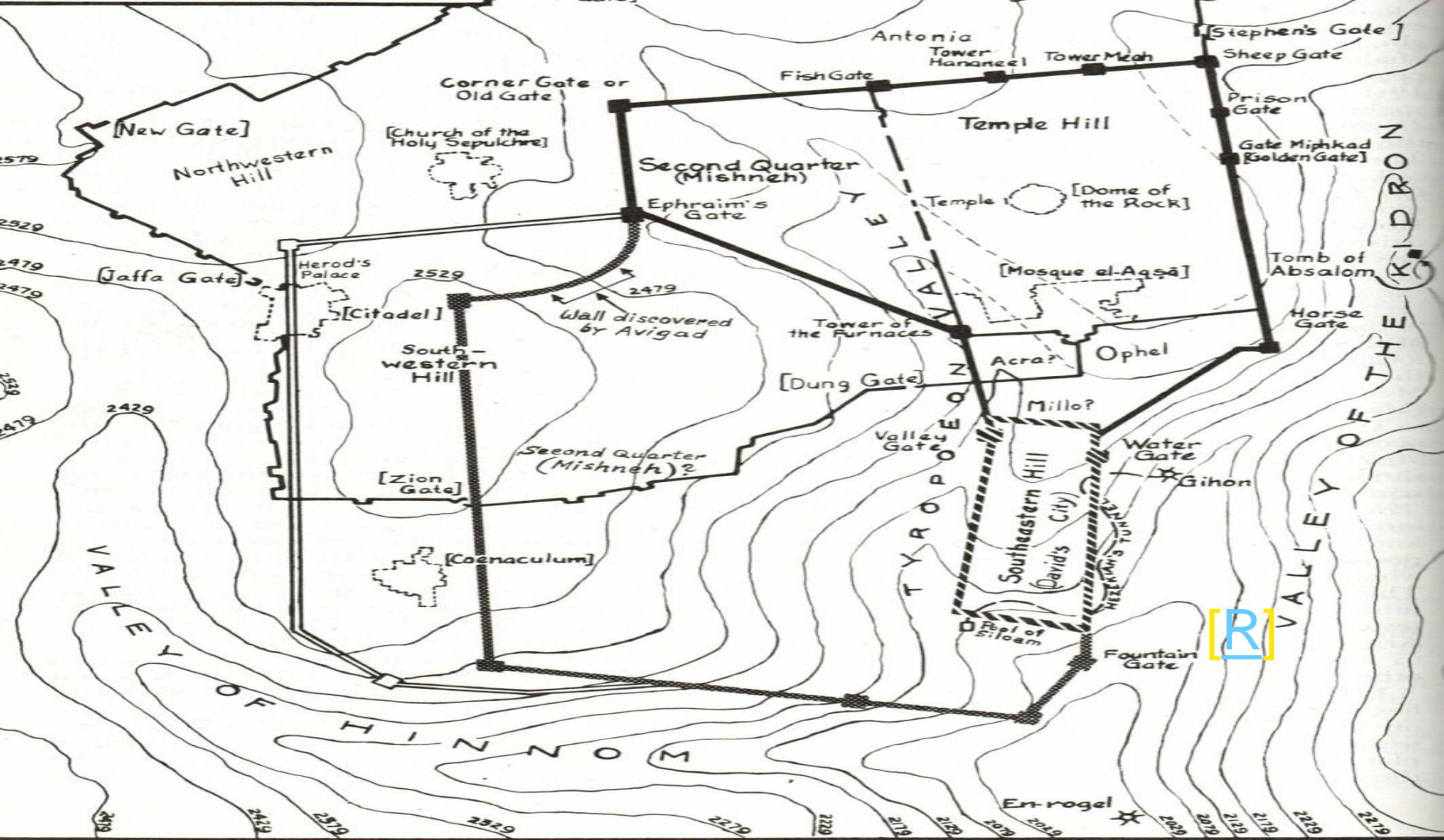
- **“Nevertheless, David captured the fortress of Zion--which is the City of David.”**
- **So Zion was originally a Jebusite fortress that David captured and called it the City of David.**
- **The city of Jerusalem in the days of David and Solomon included within its walls this City of David called Zion.**

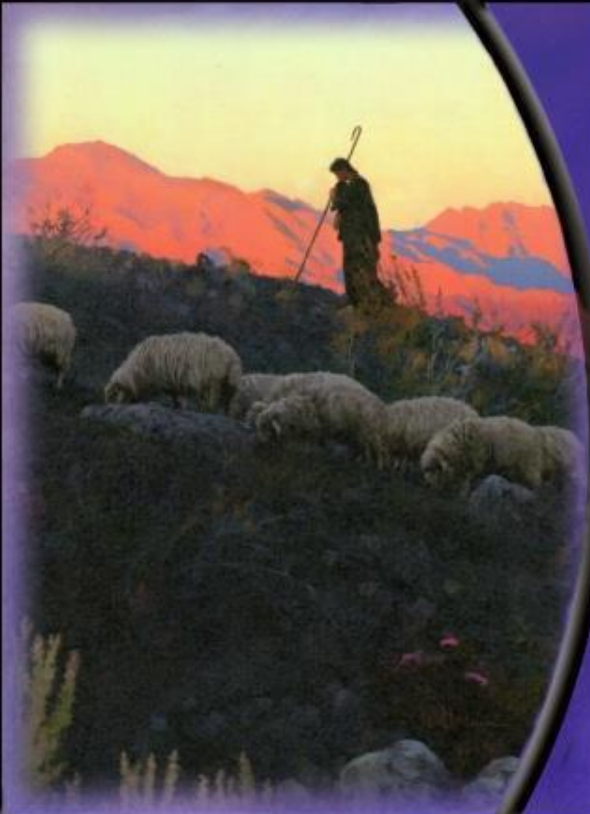
THE WALLS OF JERUSALEM IN ANCIENT AND MODERN TIMES

0 SCALE 1/8 IN ENGLISH 1/4 MILES 3/8
0 .2 KILOMETERS .4 .6

-  Walls, gates, and towers of the Jebusite city, which became David's city
-  Walls, gates, and towers of the extension of Solomon's time
-  Walls, gates, and towers of Hezekiah's 2d wall, south of David's city
-  Walls, gates, and towers of the extension during the Hellenistic period
-  Present wall of the so-called Old City

Contour lines show the original shape of the valleys and register elevations above sea level in feet. One foot equals approximately .3048 meters.





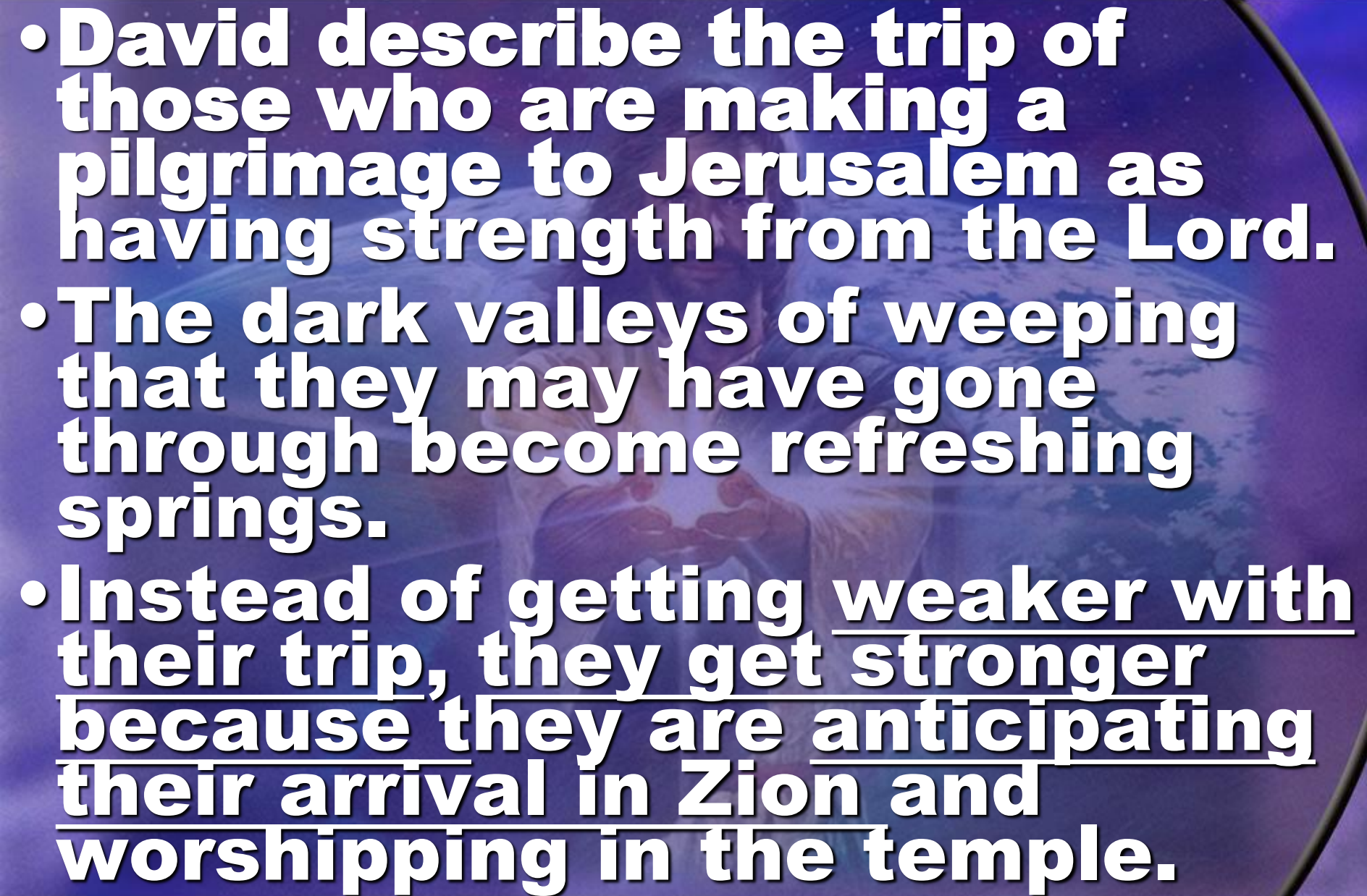
Marching to Zion

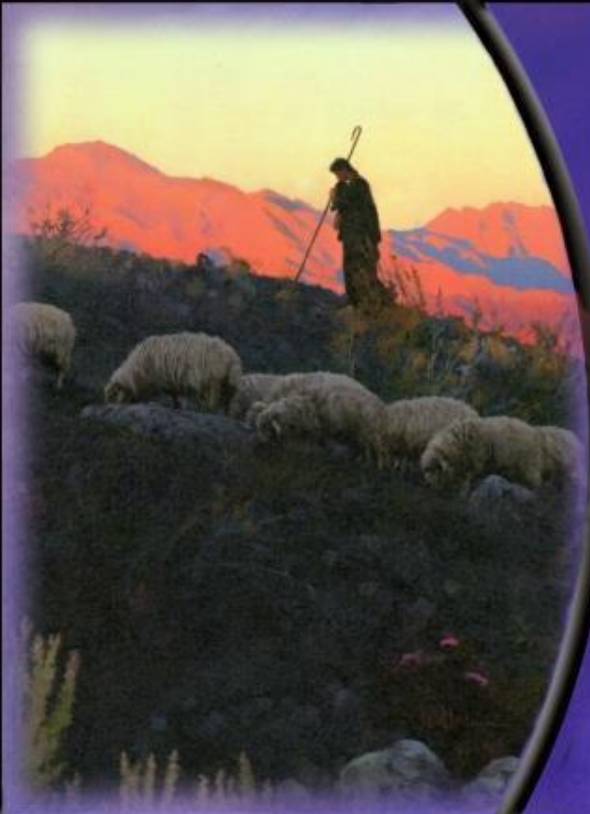
- How does the psalmist describe those who come to Zion to worship God there? (Ps 84:5-7)

Psalm 84:5-7 NLT

- **What joy for those whose strength comes from the LORD, who have set their minds on a pilgrimage to Jerusalem.**
- **⁶ When they walk through the Valley of Weeping, it will become a place of refreshing springs. The autumn rains will clothe it with blessings.**
- **⁷ They will continue to grow stronger, and each of them will appear before God in Zion. [\[R\]](#)**

- **Psalm 84:5-7** is the same psalm as Psalm 84:2 where the psalmist longed and fainted for the courts of the Lord and his heart cried out for the living God.
- Now we find out that he is on a pilgrimage to Jerusalem. For those Jews who lived far away, this happened only three times in the year, at Passover, at Pentecost, and at Tabernacles.
- No wonder he was starved for worship in the presence of God.

- 
- **David describe the trip of those who are making a pilgrimage to Jerusalem as having strength from the Lord.**
 - **The dark valleys of weeping that they may have gone through become refreshing springs.**
 - **Instead of getting weaker with their trip, they get stronger because they are anticipating their arrival in Zion and worshipping in the temple.**



Marching to Zion

- **What priority does the psalmist place on the time he can spend in the presence of the Lord?**
(Ps 84:10)

Psalm 84:10 ESV

For a day in your courts is better than a thousand elsewhere. I would rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God than dwell in the tents of wickedness.

1000 to 1.

- **A day with the Lord is better than 1000 days without Him.**
- **Doing the most menial task in the service of God is better than a life of wickedness serving the devil.**



What priority do we place on time spent with God?

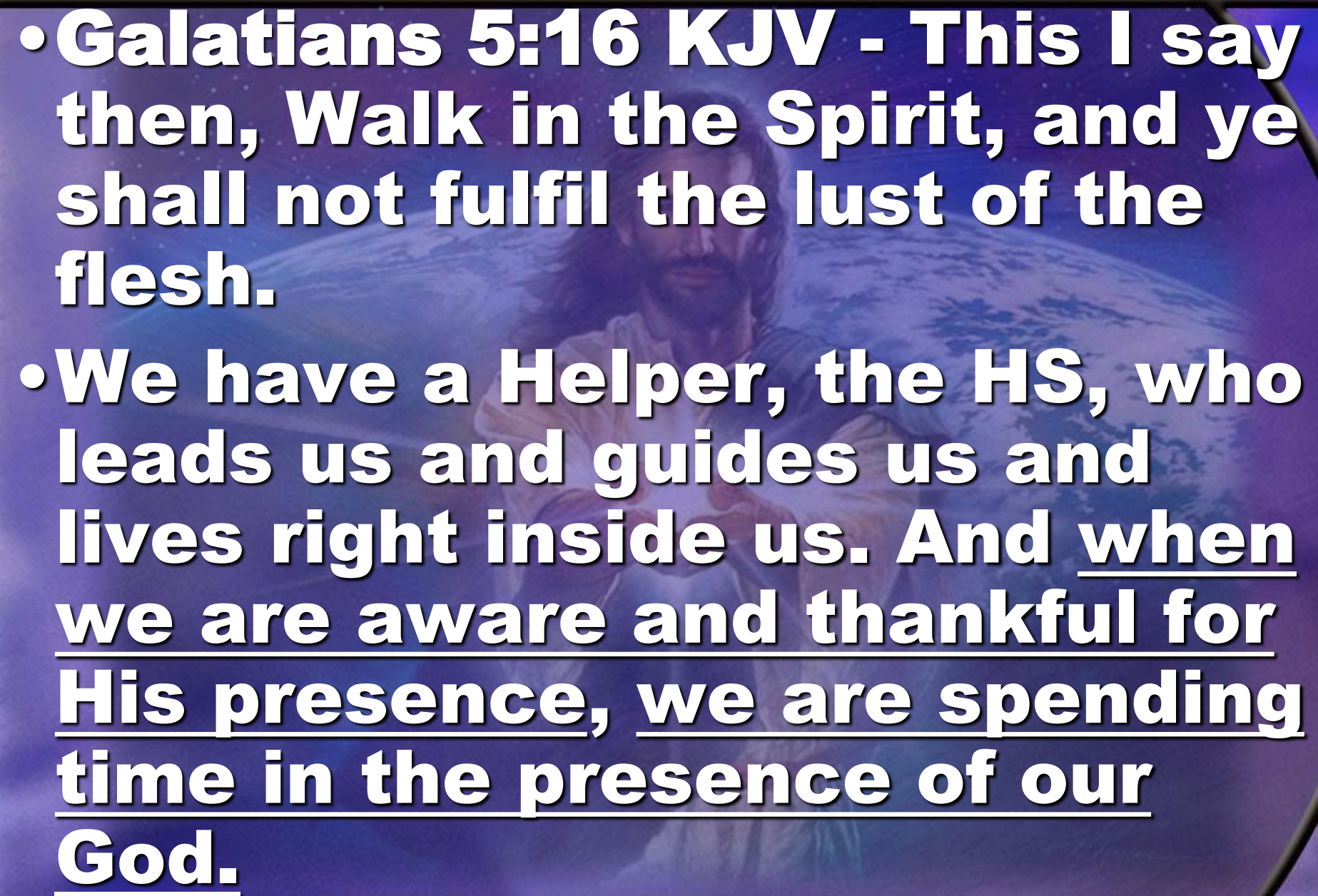
Even if not 1000 to 1, how about 2 to 1?

**Maybe we need to reevaluate our
devotional life in the light of this psalm.**

**Do we devote our first hours to prayer
and meditation on the word of God?**

There is no better way to start the day.

**And how often during the day do we
stop and reconnect with God?**

- 
- **Galatians 5:16 KJV - This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh.**
 - **We have a Helper, the HS, who leads us and guides us and lives right inside us. And when we are aware and thankful for His presence, we are spending time in the presence of our God.**



Worshipping in Zion

- **How did David feel and react about the call to worship in Zion?**

(Ps 122:1-4)

Psalm 122:1-4 ESV

- **I was glad when they said to me, "Let us go to the house of the LORD!"**
- **2 Our feet have been standing within your gates, O Jerusalem!**
- **3 Jerusalem--built as a city that is bound firmly together,**
- **4 to which the tribes go up, the tribes of the LORD, as was decreed for Israel, to give thanks to the name of the LORD. [R]**

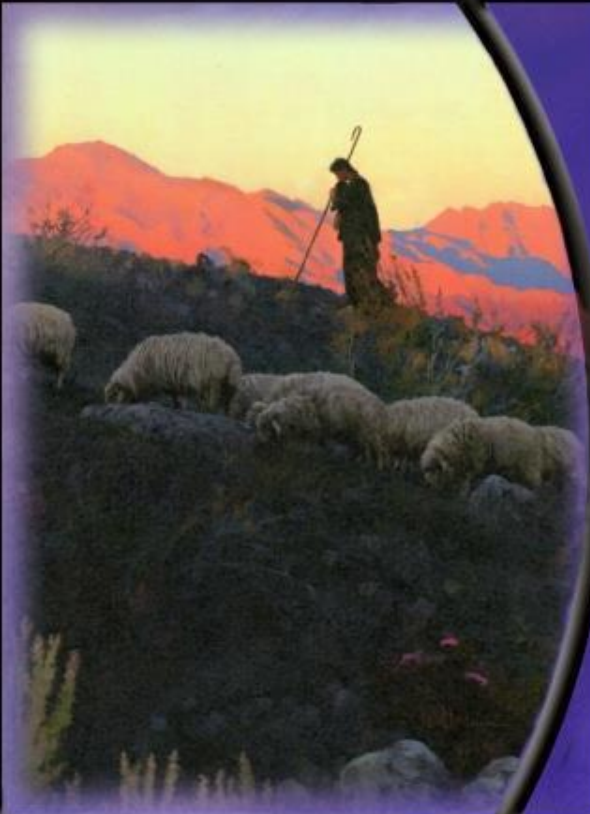
- **David was glad, happy, filled with joy at the prospect of worshipping in the temple Jerusalem, the city of peace, Mt. Zion, where the worship is to take place.**

What specific thing does David mention in Psalms 122 that would be included in the temple worship service?

- **Giving “thanks to the name of the Lord.”**

• is that a valid reason for our worship service as well?

- YES! Our worship service provides us the opportunity to give thanks to the Lord.**
- In prayer, in praise, in the proclamation of the word, in testimonies, in giving of tithes and offerings, we give thanks to our Lord and praise His name.**



Worshipping in Zion

- **What did David use repeatedly in Ps 122:6-9 encourage the worshippers to pray for as they worshipped? (Ps 122:6-9)**

Psalm 122:6-9 ESV

Pray for the peace of Jerusalem!

"May they be secure who love you!

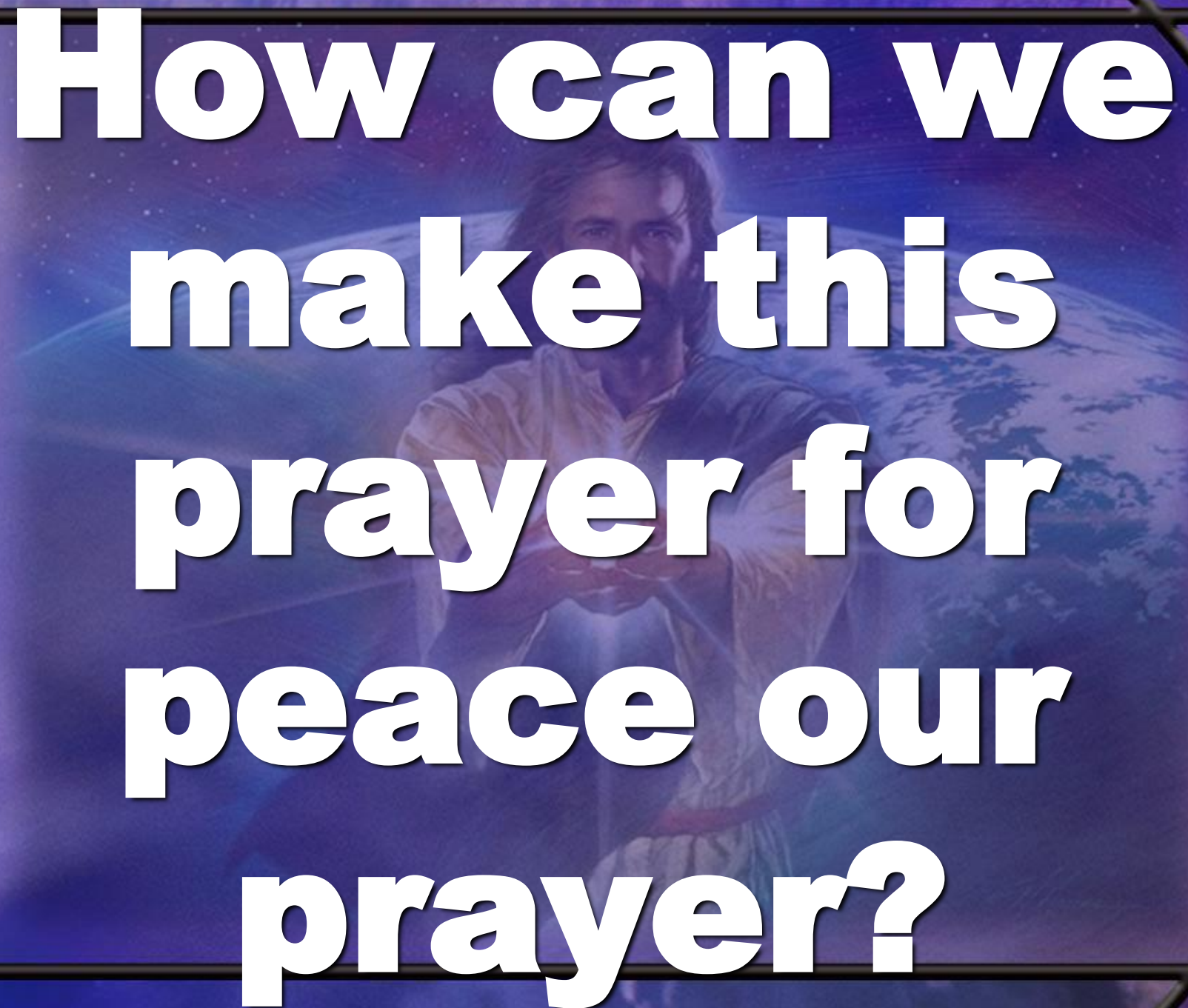
7 Peace be within your walls and security within your towers!"

8 For my brothers and companions' sake I will say, "Peace be within you!"

9 For the sake of the house of the LORD our God, I will seek your good

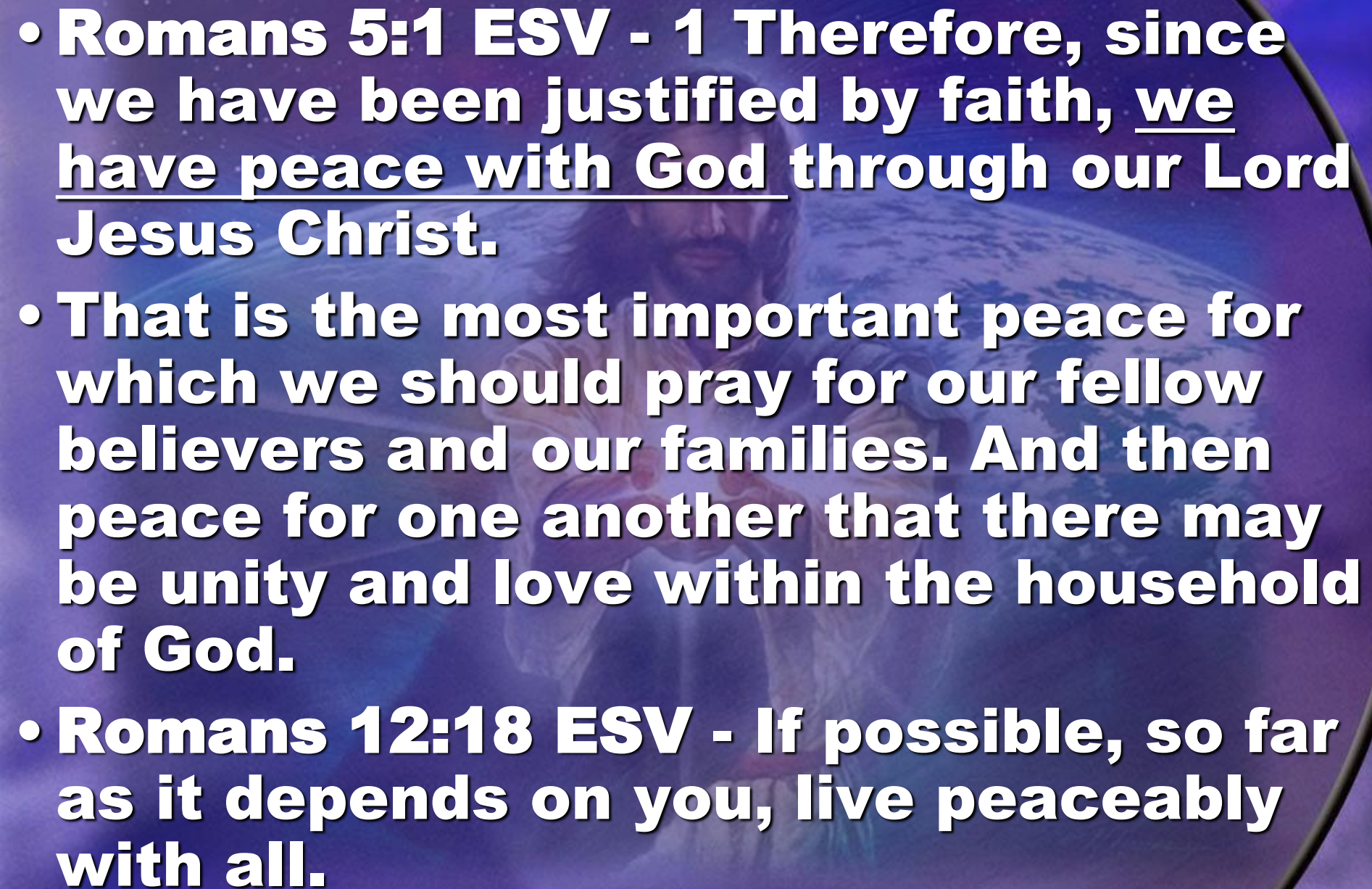
How would you describe the peace of Shalom.

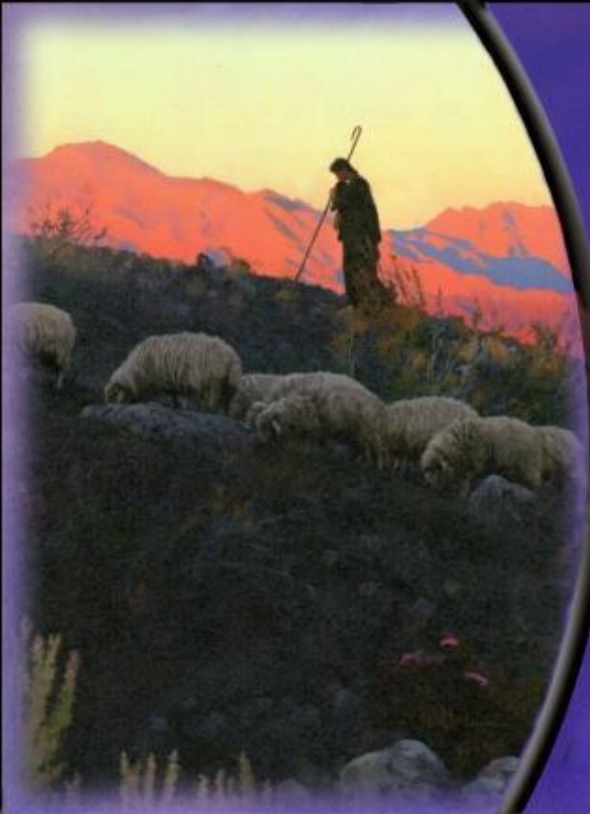
- Shalom a contentment and blessedness in life a healthy and sound, safe and secure, tranquil, content, prosperous, and the absence of conflict in human relationships, in war, and with God.



**How can we
make this
prayer for
peace our
prayer?**

- **Hebrews 12:22 ESV - 22 But you have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to innumerable angels in festal gathering,**
- **So, when we, as Christians, pray for the peace of Jerusalem, we should pray for our fellow believers in the Lord Jesus, who are headed for the heavenly Mt. Zion.**
- **We worship the Prince of peace who brings to us the peace of justification by His shed blood.**

- 
- **Romans 5:1 ESV - 1 Therefore, since we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.**
 - **That is the most important peace for which we should pray for our fellow believers and our families. And then peace for one another that there may be unity and love within the household of God.**
 - **Romans 12:18 ESV - If possible, so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all.**

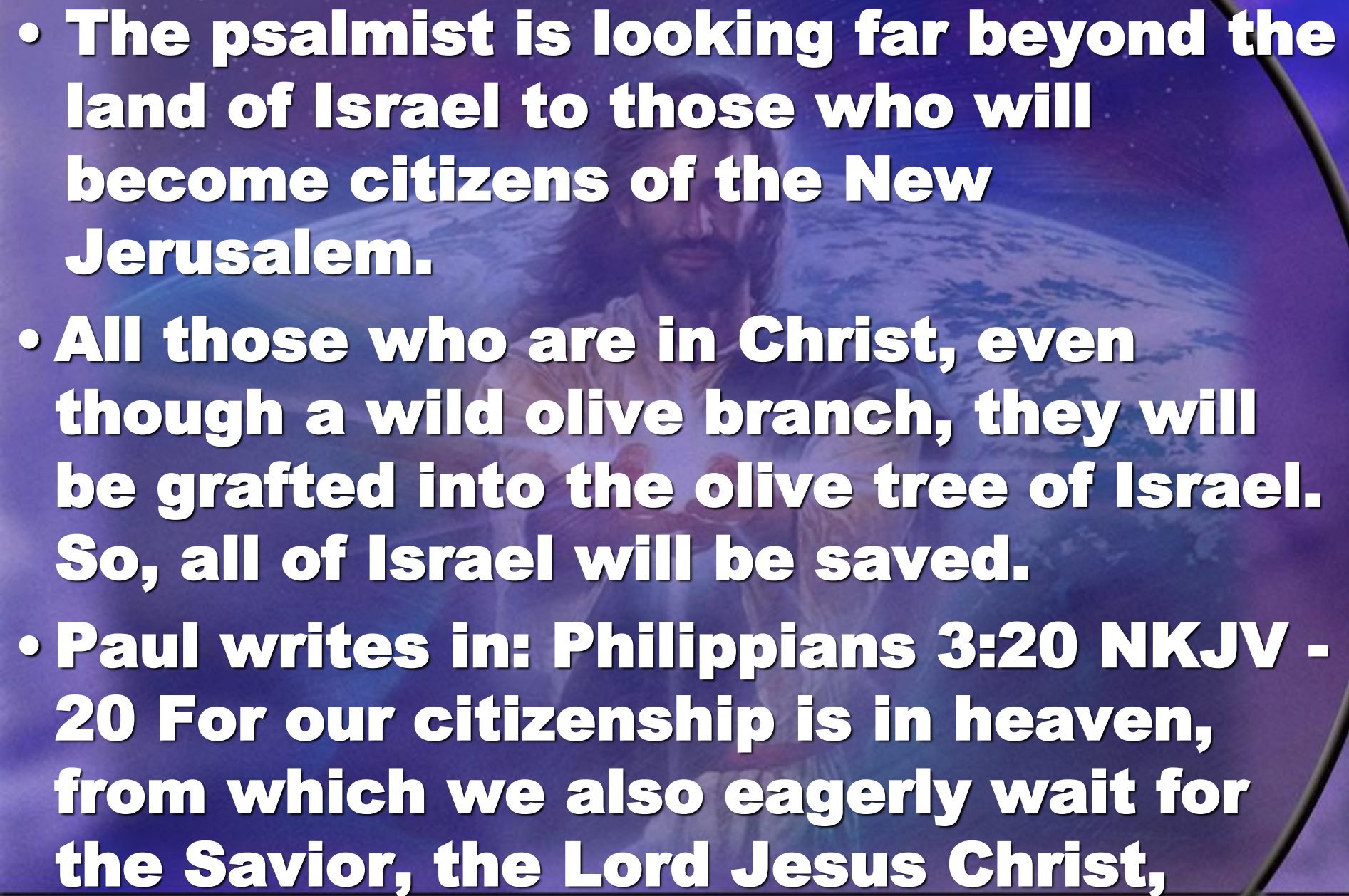


Worshipping in Zion

- **What makes Zion attractive to more than just the Israelite people?
(Ps 87:3-6)**

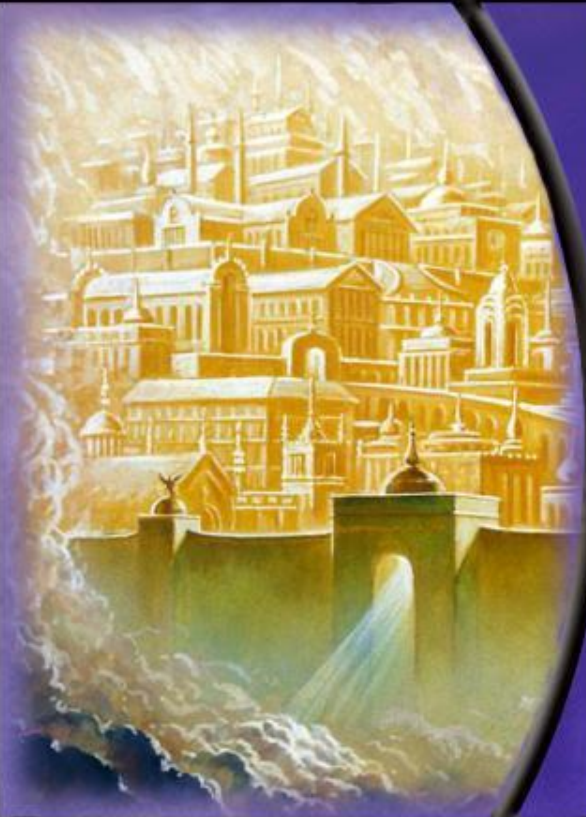
Psalm 87:3-6 NLT

- **O city of God, what glorious things are said of you! ⁴ I will count Egypt and Babylon among those who know me-- also Philistia and Tyre, and even distant Ethiopia. They have all become citizens of Jerusalem! ⁵ Regarding Zion it will be said, "Everyone enjoys the rights of citizenship there." And the Most High will personally bless this city. ⁶ When the LORD registers the nations, he will say, "They have all become citizens of Jerusalem." [R]**

- 
- **The psalmist is looking far beyond the land of Israel to those who will become citizens of the New Jerusalem.**
 - **All those who are in Christ, even though a wild olive branch, they will be grafted into the olive tree of Israel. So, all of Israel will be saved.**
 - **Paul writes in: Philippians 3:20 NKJV - 20 For our citizenship is in heaven, from which we also eagerly wait for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ,**

Safety and Peace in Zion

- **How does the psalmist describe the uncertainty and turmoil possible in our fallen world?
(Ps 46:1-3,6)**



Psalm 46:1-3, 6 ESV

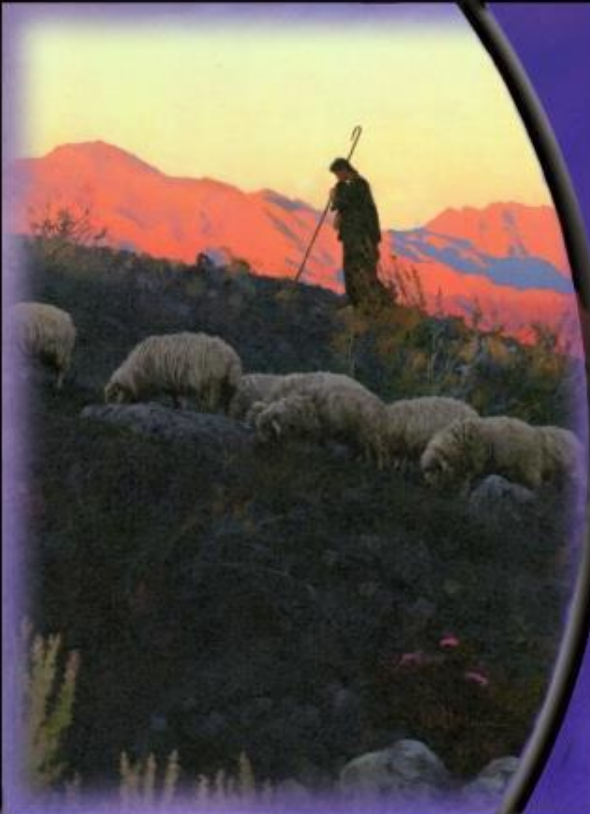
- God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. ² Therefore we will not fear though the earth gives way, though the mountains be moved into the heart of the sea, ³ though its waters roar and foam, though the mountains tremble at its swelling. ... ⁶ The nations rage, the kingdoms totter; he utters his voice, the earth melts.**

What kinds of turmoil and disasters may face us in this fallen world?

- **John 16:33 KJV - In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world.**
- **natural disasters that are far beyond our control. mountains are cast into the sea, the tornadoes and hurricanes roar, the earthquakes break the mountains, the nations rage, the kingdoms fall, and the earth melts**

Where can we find refuge from such troublous times?

- **Romans 8:38-39 KJV - For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.**



Safety and Peace in Zion

- **How does the psalmist describe the peace and safety that comes from a relationship with the Lord?
(**Ps 46:7-11**)**

Psalm 46:7-11 ESV

- **The LORD of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our fortress. ⁸ Come, behold the works of the LORD, how he has brought desolations on the earth. ⁹ He makes wars cease to the end of the earth; he breaks the bow and shatters the spear; he burns the chariots with fire. ¹⁰ "Be still, and know that I am God. I will be exalted among the nations, I will be exalted in the earth!" ¹¹ The LORD of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our fortress. [R]**

What is God's objective in intervening in the affairs of mankind

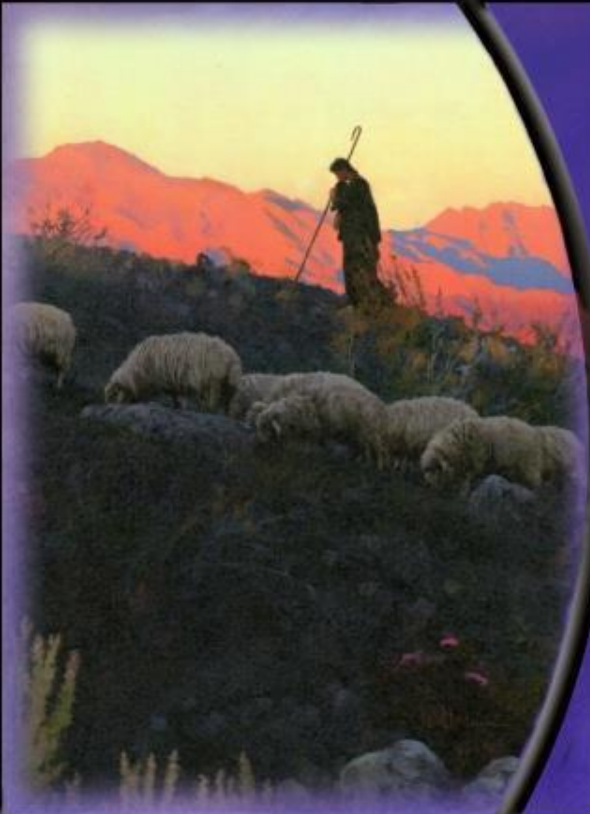
- In the end of the earth, he will make wars cease. The implements of war will be destroyed. Jesus will come... 2 Thessalonians 1:8-9 KJV - In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: ⁹ Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power;**

What is God's council to us here in verse 10 as we face the trials of life?

• **“Be still and know that I am God.”**

What do you think that means?

• **Don't worry. Be calm. Trust in Me. Be confident that I will win in the end the great controversy and will be exalted in the earth.**



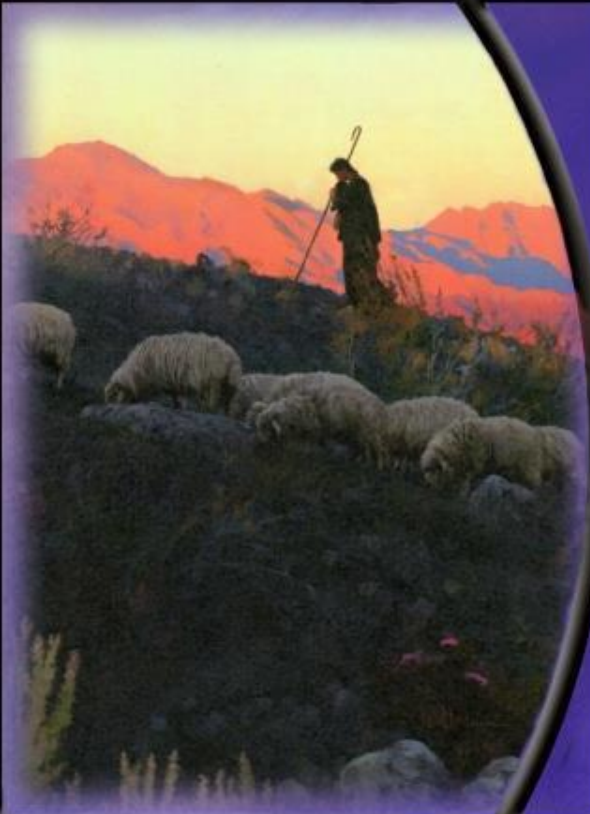
Safety and Peace in Zion

- **How long
does the
psalmist see
Mt. Zion
enduring?
(Ps 125:1-2)**

Psalm 125:1-2 NIV

- **Those who trust in the LORD are like Mount Zion, which cannot be shaken but endures forever.**
- **² As the mountains surround Jerusalem, so the LORD surrounds his people both now and forevermore.**

- **Mt. Zion will endure Forever.**
- **The city of David will pass away, Physical Jerusalem will pass away, but Mt. Zion is the dwelling place of God, and the dwelling place of God will endure forever since God endures forever and the New Jerusalem will be our city home for eternity.**

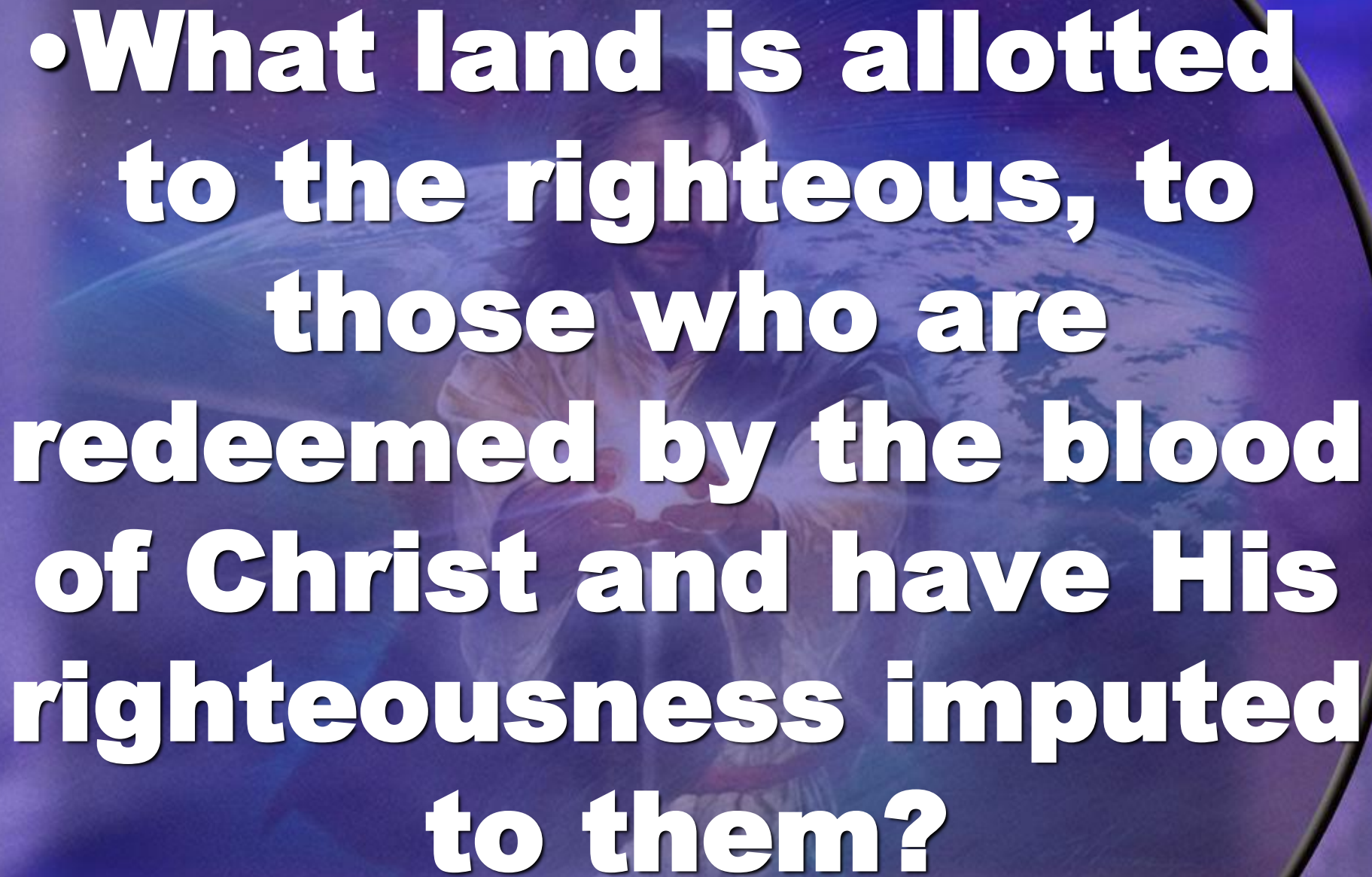


Safety and Peace in Zion

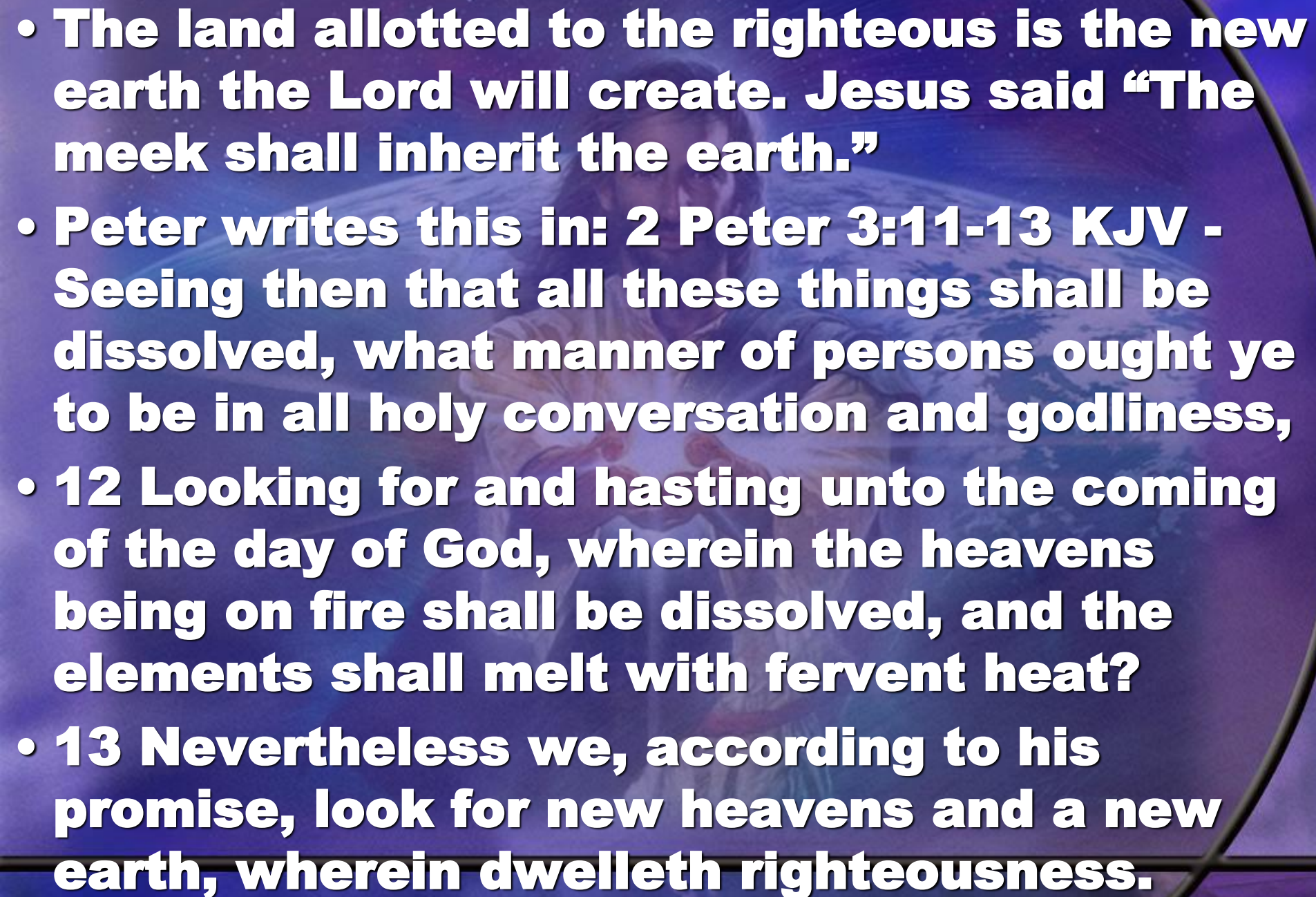
- **What does the ending of Ps 125 look forward to in the heavenly kingdom?**
(Ps 125:3-5)

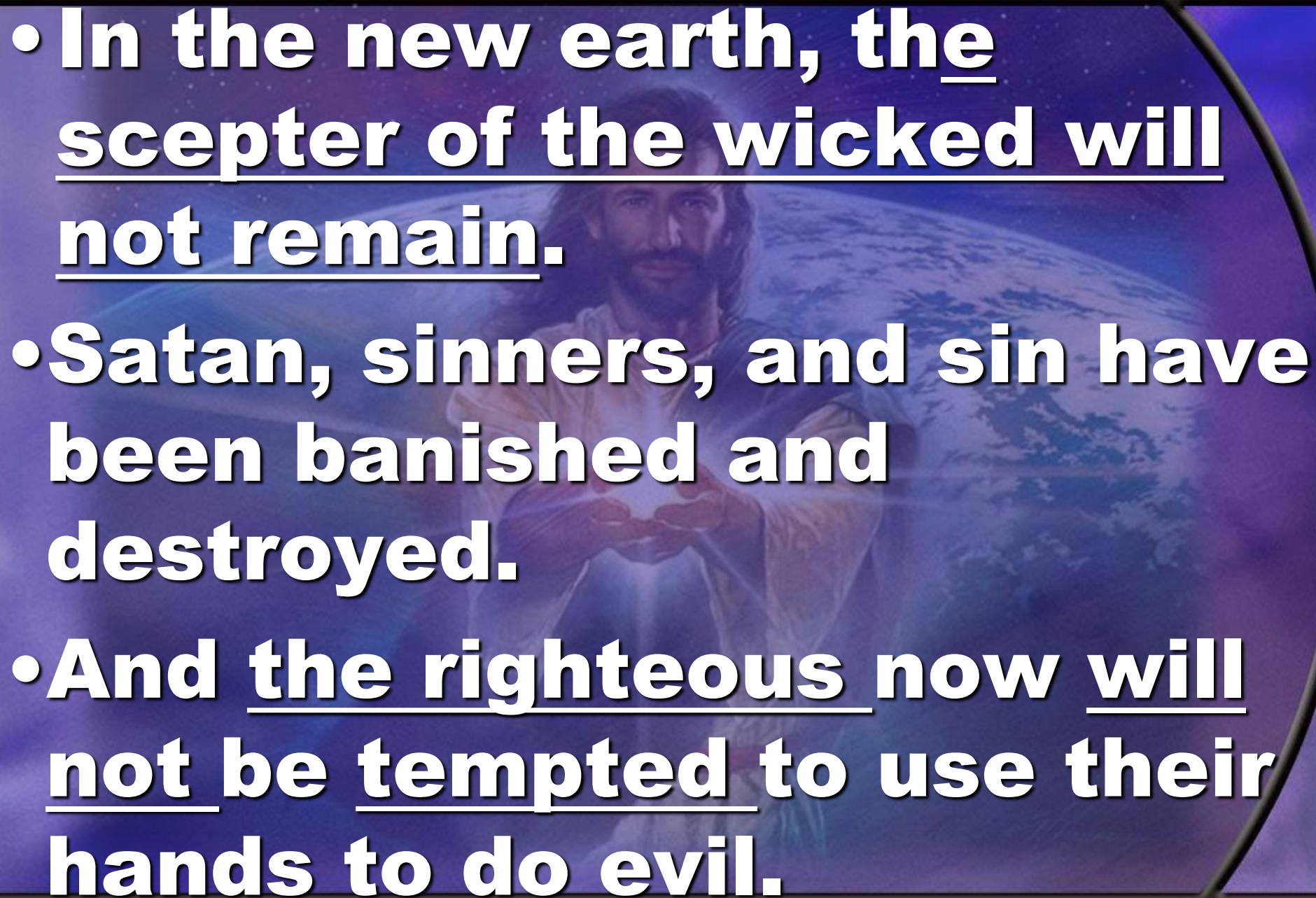
Psalm 125:3-5 NIV

- **The scepter of the wicked will not remain over the land allotted to the righteous, for then the righteous might use their hands to do evil.**
- **4 LORD, do good to those who are good, to those who are upright in heart.**
- **5 But those who turn to crooked ways the LORD will banish with the evildoers. Peace be on Israel.**



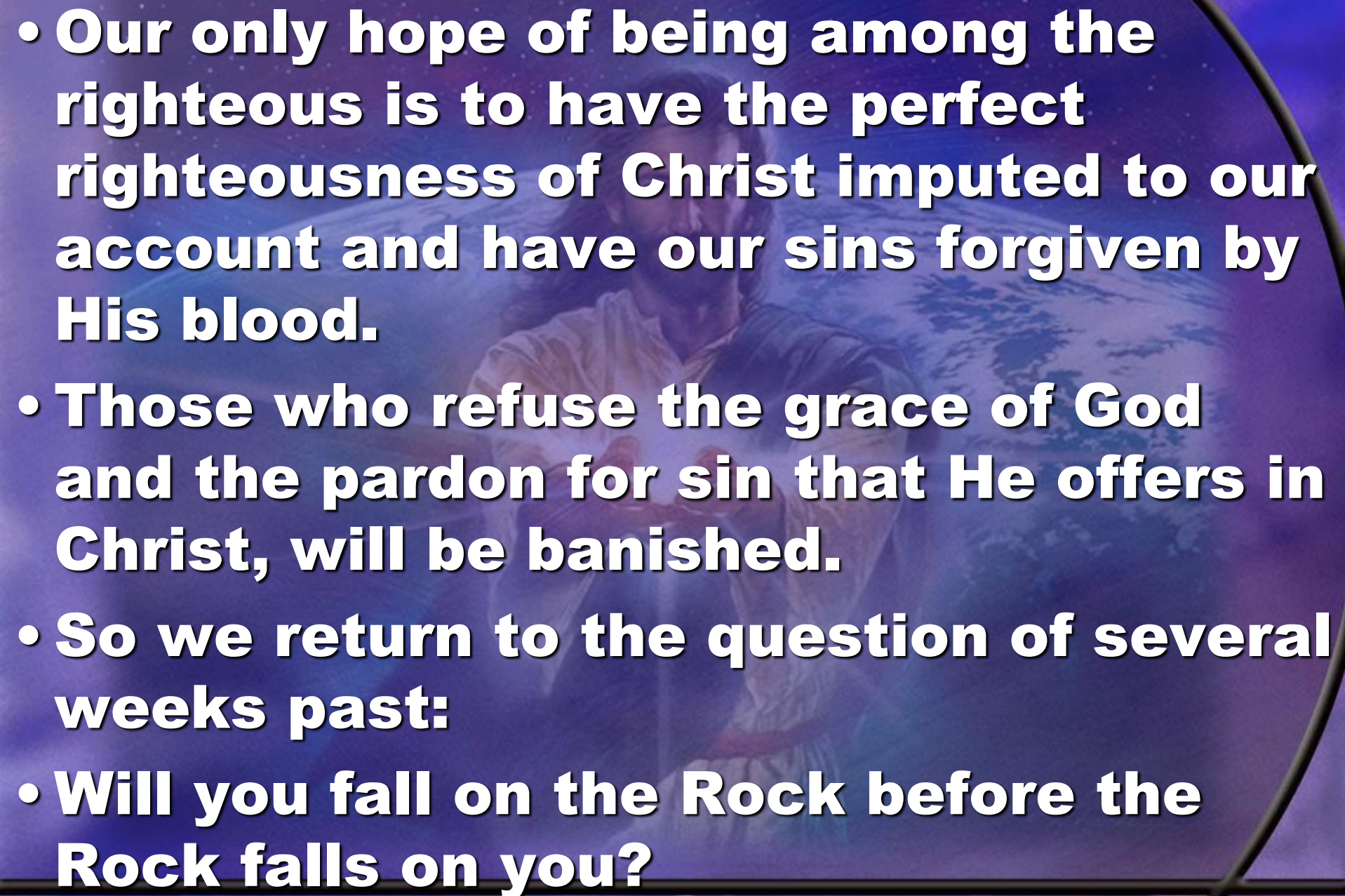
• What land is allotted to the righteous, to those who are redeemed by the blood of Christ and have His righteousness imputed to them?

- 
- A man in a white shirt is shown from the chest up, holding a glowing, translucent orb in his hands. He is positioned in the center of the frame. The background is a deep blue with a faint, glowing globe of the Earth. A large, dark, curved line, possibly a window frame or a decorative element, arches over the right side of the image. The overall lighting is soft and ethereal, highlighting the man and the orb.
- **The land allotted to the righteous is the new earth the Lord will create. Jesus said “The meek shall inherit the earth.”**
 - **Peter writes this in: 2 Peter 3:11-13 KJV - Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness,**
 - **12 Looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat?**
 - **13 Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness.**

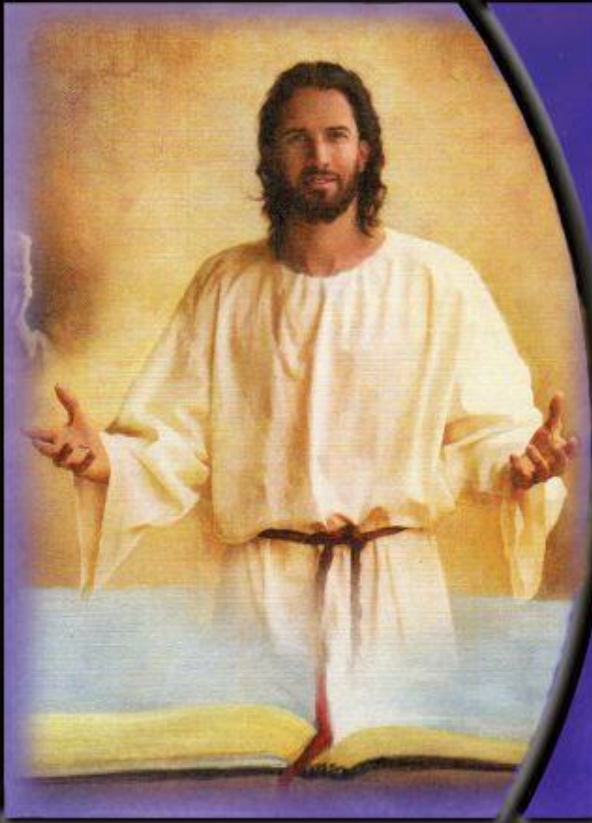
- 
- **In the new earth, the scepter of the wicked will not remain.**
 - **Satan, sinners, and sin have been banished and destroyed.**
 - **And the righteous now will not be tempted to use their hands to do evil.**

• How does the psalmist describe those who remain and those who are banished?

- Those that remain in the land allotted to the righteous are the good and upright in heart.**
- Those with crooked ways are banished with the evildoers.**
- In the judgment, God separates the good from the evil, the righteous from the unrighteous.**

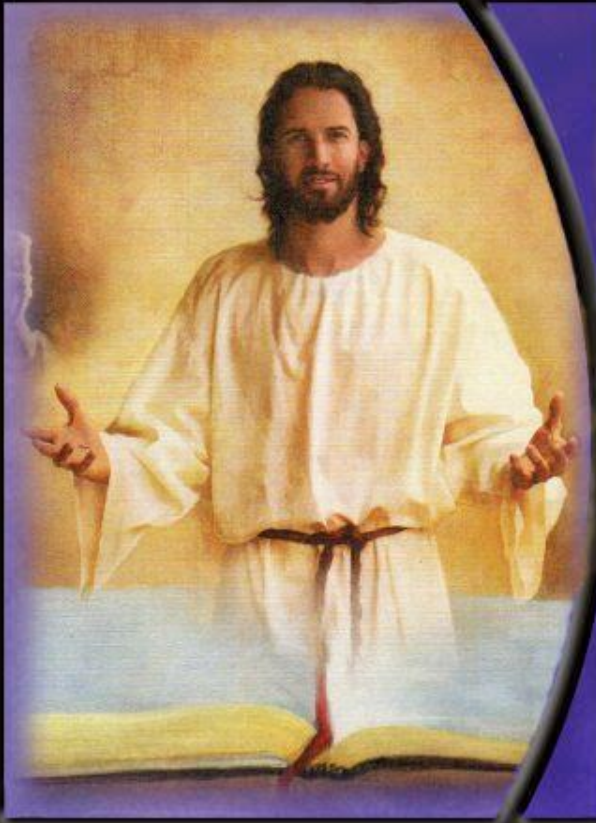
- 
- **Our only hope of being among the righteous is to have the perfect righteousness of Christ imputed to our account and have our sins forgiven by His blood.**
 - **Those who refuse the grace of God and the pardon for sin that He offers in Christ, will be banished.**
 - **So we return to the question of several weeks past:**
 - **Will you fall on the Rock before the Rock falls on you?**

Summary



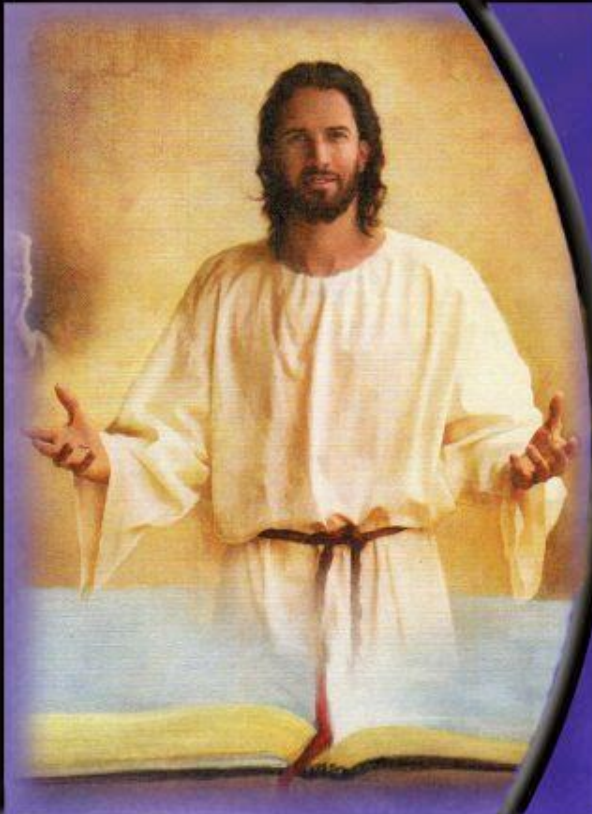
- **Zion was originally the Jebusite fortress on a hilltop near Jerusalem that David captured and called the City of David.**
- **The name Zion has been used in various ways in Scripture to refer just to the original City of David, to all of Jerusalem, to all of Israel, to the temple mount, as a symbol of God's kingdom on earth, to the heavenly New Jerusalem, and to the assembly of believers in Christ.**
- **Zion is God's city, representing His dwelling place.**
- **As Christians, we are marching to Zion, the beautiful city of God, the New Jerusalem.**
- **Ps 84 expresses an existential longing for God in Zion, to be close to the living God, to praise Him and worship Him.**

Summary



- **This longing of the soul challenges us to look forward with the same anticipation to our devotional time and corporate worship.**
- **The psalmist sets a 1000 to 1 priority on time spent with the Lord.**
- **This challenges us to question our own priorities and move in the direction of seeking God's presence moment by moment.**
- **In psalm 122, David was glad to be invited into the house of the Lord because it was there he could give thanks.**
- **Our worship as well should express our thanksgiving and praise to God and include prayers for peace, with God and others as we march toward our heavenly Mt. Zion.**

Summary



- **Ps 87 is a reminder that, regardless of our country or origin, if we are the Lord's we have dual citizenship, and our most important citizenship is in heaven.**
- **In Ps 46 God reminds us "to be still and know that I am God." He is our mighty fortress and there is nothing that can separate us from His love.**
- **Ps 125 begins with a promise that those who trust in the Lord are like Mt. Zion which endures forever. As Mt. Zion endures forever as the New Jerusalem, so will those who trust in the Lord and live there in His presence.**
- **Knowing that Jesus is preparing a place for us in the New Jerusalem, will you trust in the Lord to give you strength to keep marching to Zion, the beautiful city of God.**

