

Deuteronomy

A Call to Covenant Renewal

Why is the Law a Lamp?

Proverbs 6:23

**For the commandment is a lamp,
and the teaching is light.**

Psalms 119:105

**Your word is a lamp to my feet,
And a light to my path.**

Is the Law a set of rules lining the runway
of life in order to guide you home?

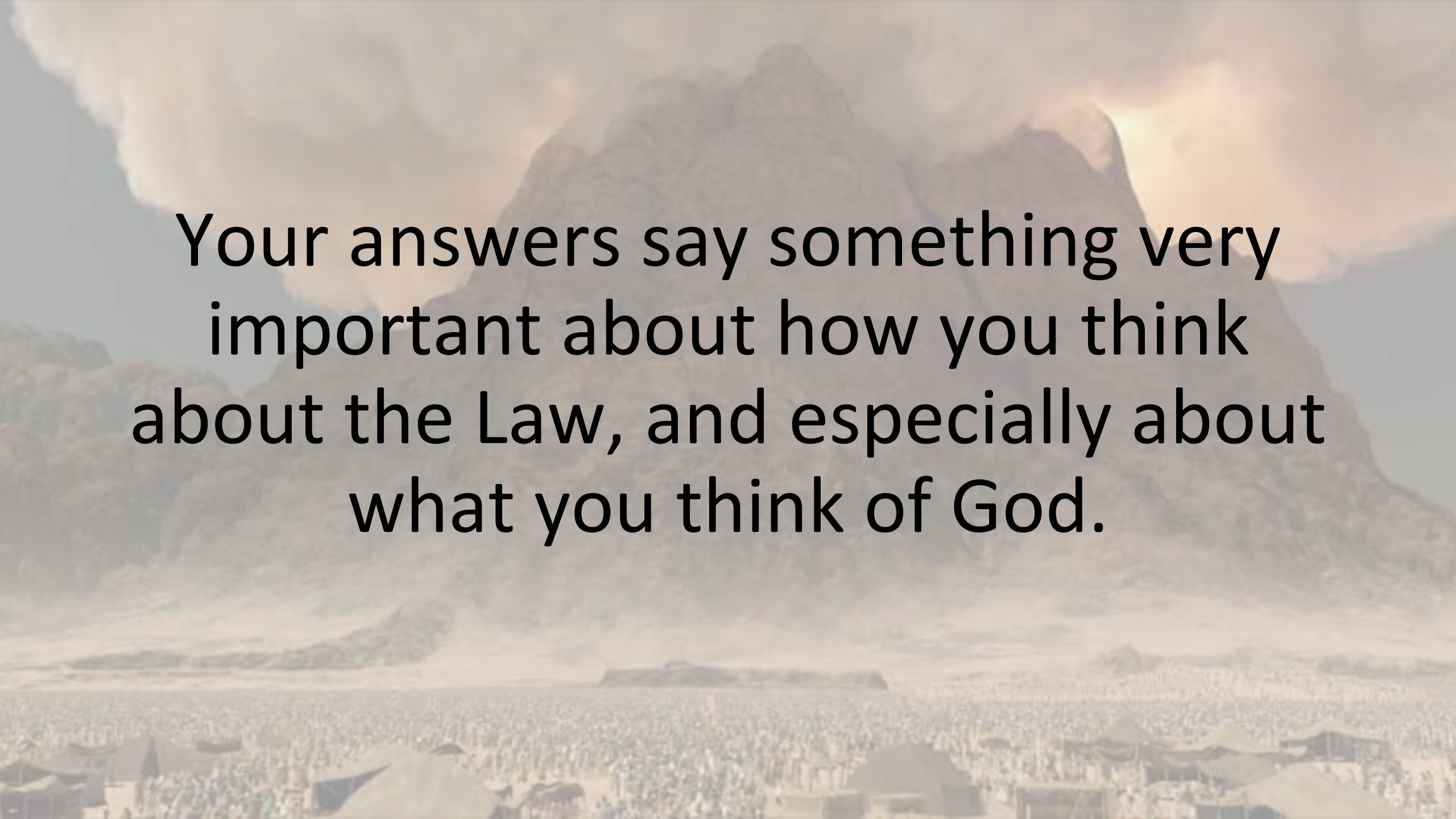
Why should you obey the Law?

Because God said so?

Because God will punish you if you don't?

Because you want to go to heaven, and that means you need to keep the commandments?

Because God knows what's best for you and wants you to live a good life and be happy?

A large crowd of people is gathered in a desert landscape, with mountains in the background. The scene is hazy, suggesting a hot or dusty environment. The text is overlaid on the image.

Your answers say something very important about how you think about the Law, and especially about what you think of God.

Why is the Law a Lamp?

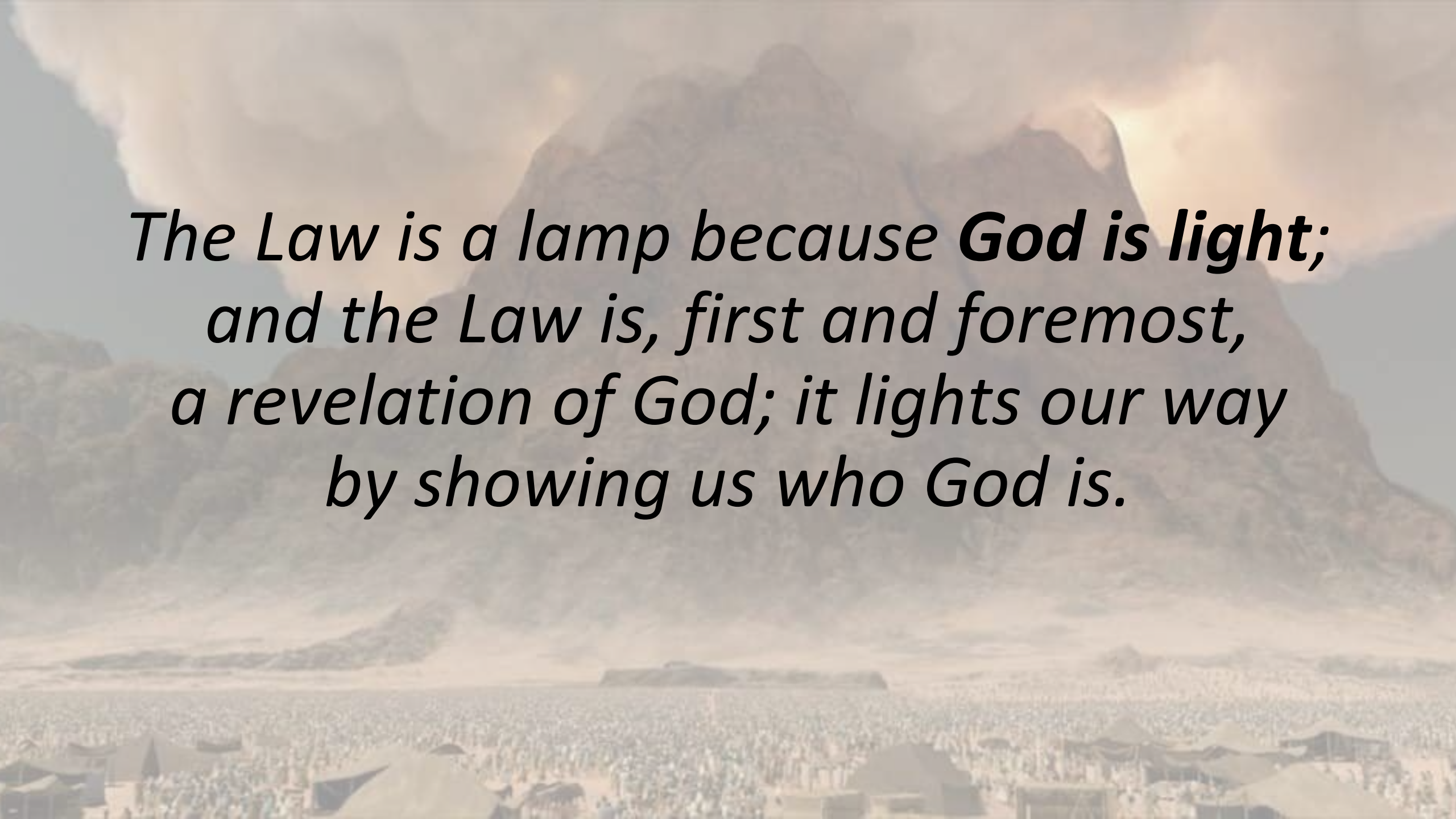
Because...

“God is light.” 1 John 1:5

“The LORD is my light and my salvation...” Psalm 27:1

“How blessed are the people who know the joyful sound!
O LORD, they walk **in the light of Your countenance.**” Ps. 89:15

“Their own arm did not save them; But Your right hand,
and Your arm, and **the light of Your presence...**” Ps. 44:3

A landscape featuring a large crowd of people in the foreground, possibly a religious gathering, with a mountain range in the background under a bright sky. The text is overlaid on the image.

*The Law is a lamp because **God is light**;
and the Law is, first and foremost,
a revelation of God; it lights our way
by showing us who God is.*


Why should you obey the Law?

The LORD is beautiful, delightful, lovely,
majestic, glorious...

Obeying the Law makes you a beautiful,
delightful, lovely, reflection of Him,
that magnifies Him to others.

So, what are the Ten Words?

1. You shall have no other gods before me.
2. You shall not make for yourself a carved image.
3. You shall not take the LORD's name in vain.
4. Observe the Sabbath to keep it holy.
5. Honor your father and mother.
6. You shall not murder.
7. You shall not commit adultery.
8. You shall not steal.
9. You shall not bear false witness.
10. You shall not covet.



Word #1
No Other Gods
Before Me
Deuteronomy 5:6-7

Deuteronomy 5:4-6

He said: ⁶ “I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery.
⁷ You shall have no other gods before Me.”

Main Idea

The first Word requires that we *know* the LORD and that we make Him (as He truly is) the exclusive object of our undivided worship.



No Other gods Before Me
What does the 1st Word
teach about the LORD?

What does the 1st Word teach about God?

**That He is beautifully
simple in His being.**

The First Word (Commandment)

“You shall have no other gods before Me.”

But why?

Because “I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery.”

The First Word (Commandment)

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The First Word (Commandment)

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Because “**I am the LORD** your God, who brought you
out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery.”

Who is He? What is He like?

Exodus 3:13-14

Then Moses said to God, "If I come to the people of Israel and say to them, 'The God of your fathers has sent me to you,' and they ask me, 'What is his name?' what shall I say to them?"

God said to Moses, "**I AM WHO I AM.**"
And he said, "Say this to the people of Israel, '**I AM** has sent me to you.'"

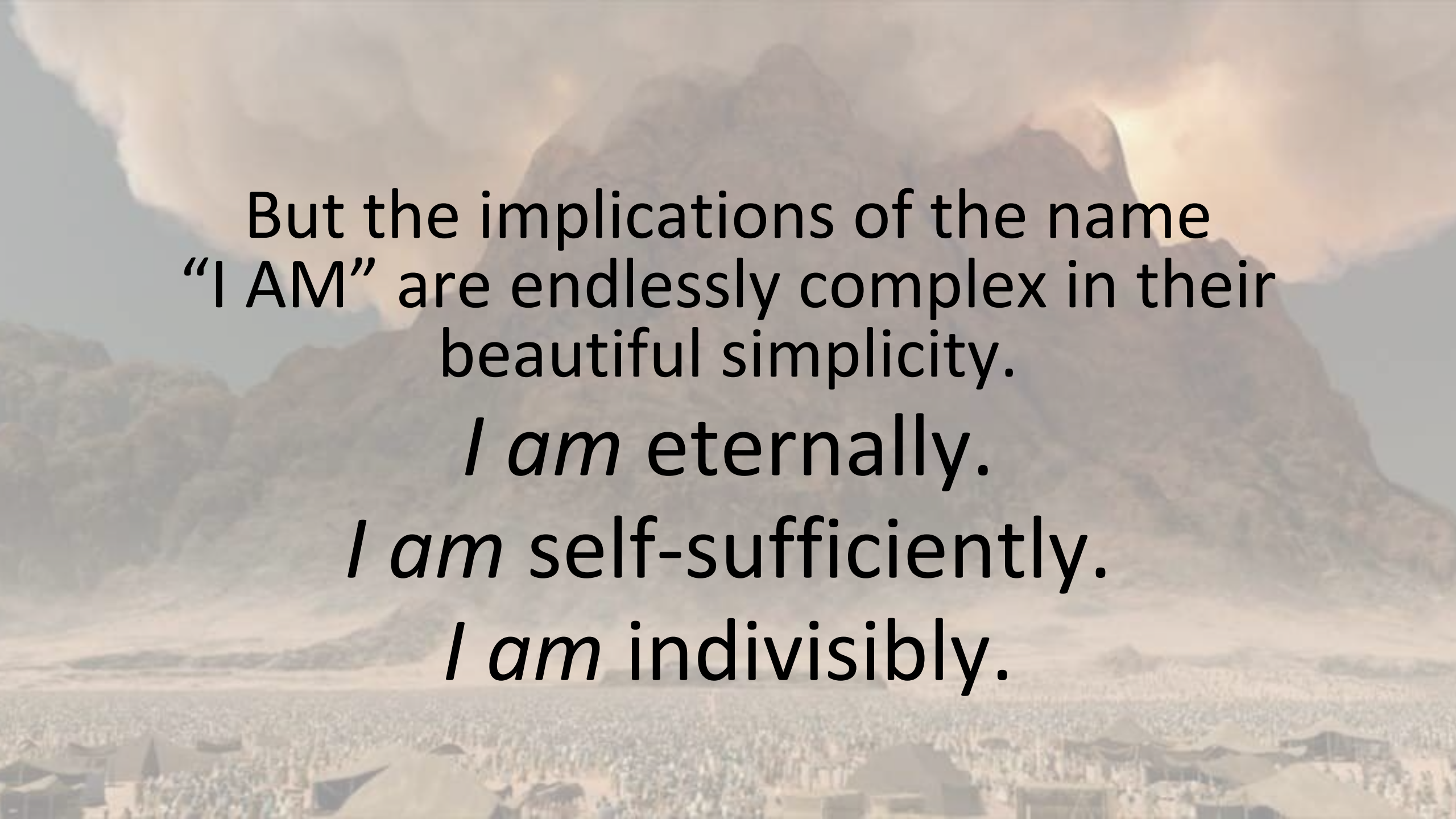


His name communicates His nature.

“I AM” communicates *Simple Being*.

God simply IS!

It is as if to say, there is nothing more to say than simply, “I AM”.



But the implications of the name
“I AM” are endlessly complex in their
beautiful simplicity.

I am eternally.

I am self-sufficiently.

I am indivisibly.

Eternal

Isaiah 44:6

“I am the first and I am the last,
And there is no god besides me.”

Isaiah 41:4

“I, the LORD, am the first, and with the last. I am He.”

1 Chronicles 16:36

Blessed be the LORD, the God of Israel,
From everlasting even to everlasting.
Then all the people said,
“Amen,” and praised the LORD.

The Only Right Response!

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Self-sufficient

Acts 17:24-25

The God who made the world and all things in it, since He is Lord of heaven and earth, does not dwell in temples made with hands; neither is He served by human hands, **as though He needed anything...**

Romans 11:34-36

For who has known the mind of the Lord, or who became His counselor? Or who has first given to Him that it might be paid back to him again? For from Him and through Him and to Him are all things. To Him be the glory forever. Amen.

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To Him be the glory forever. Amen.

Indivisible

Deuteronomy 6:4

Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one.

John 4:24

“God is spirit.”

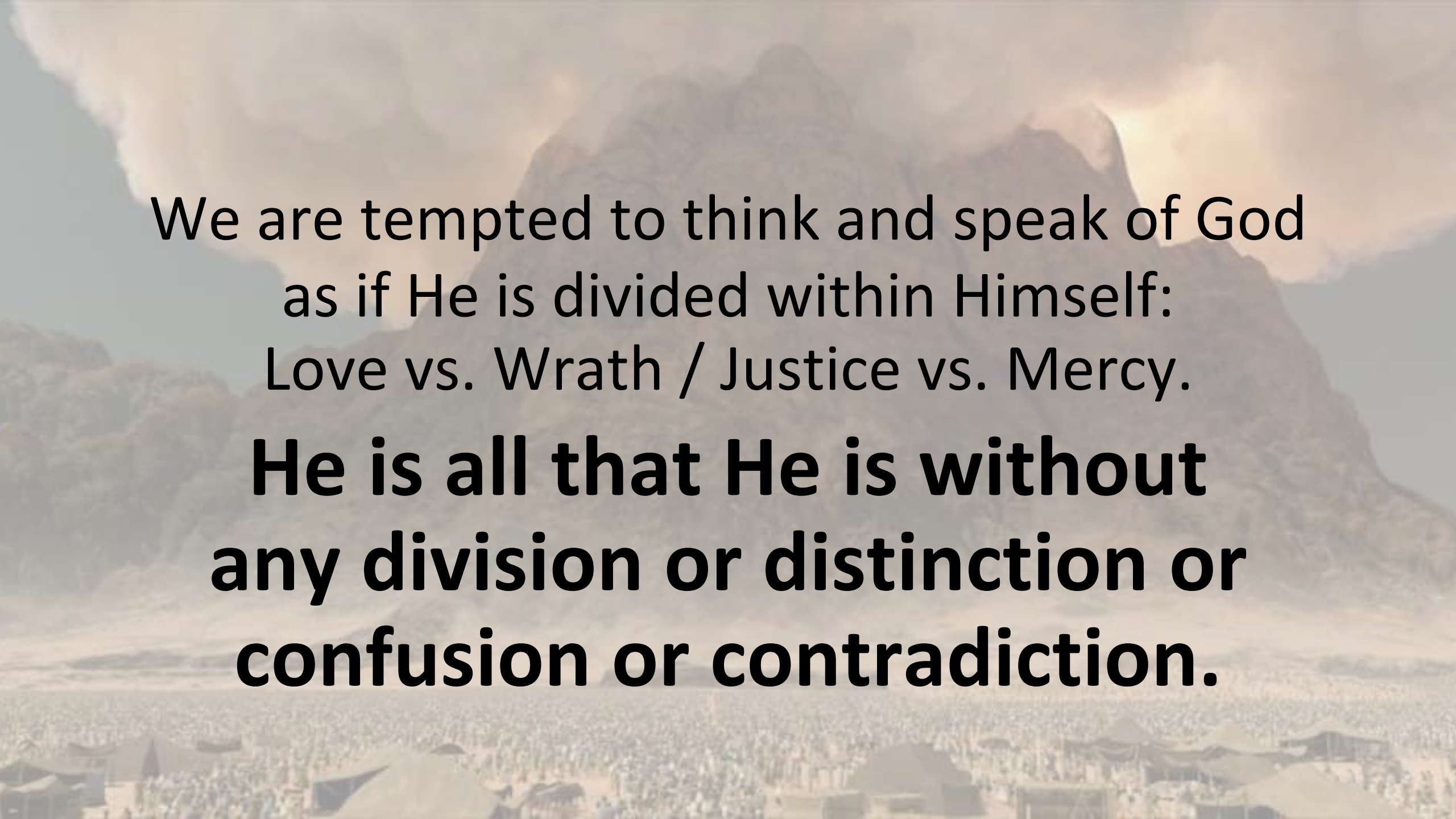
1 John 1:5

“God is light.”

1 John 4:16

“God is love.”

**And all of this at once, without partition or
division or confusion or contradiction.**



We are tempted to think and speak of God
as if He is divided within Himself:
Love vs. Wrath / Justice vs. Mercy.

**He is all that He is without
any division or distinction or
confusion or contradiction.**

Exodus 34:6-7

Then the LORD passed by in front of him and proclaimed,
“The LORD, the LORD God, compassionate and gracious,
slow to anger, and abounding in lovingkindness
and truth...”

“I AM compassionate!”

I AM gracious!”

I AM patient!”

What does the 1st Word teach?

That God is beautifully simple in His being.

**That God is absolutely
solitary in His existence.**

“You shall have no other gods before Me.”

Why?

Deuteronomy 4:35

To you it was shown, that you might know that the LORD is God; **there is no other besides him.**

Isaiah 45:5

“I am the LORD, and **there is no other;**
Besides Me there is no God.”

Consider:

If the LORD alone is God;
if He is eternally self-sufficient...

Then nothing else is necessary to Him;
He was and is entirely satisfied in
Himself.

**He is in Himself unchanging,
uninfluenced and immovable.**

Malachi 3:6

“For I, the LORD, do not change.”

Job 35:7-8

If you are righteous, what do you give to Him?
Or what does He receive from your hand?

1 Timothy 6:15-16

He who is the blessed and **only** Sovereign, the King of kings and Lord of lords; **who alone possesses** immortality and dwells in unapproachable light; whom no man has seen or can see.
To Him be honor and eternal dominion!
Amen.

The Only Right Response!

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“For I, the LORD, do not change.”

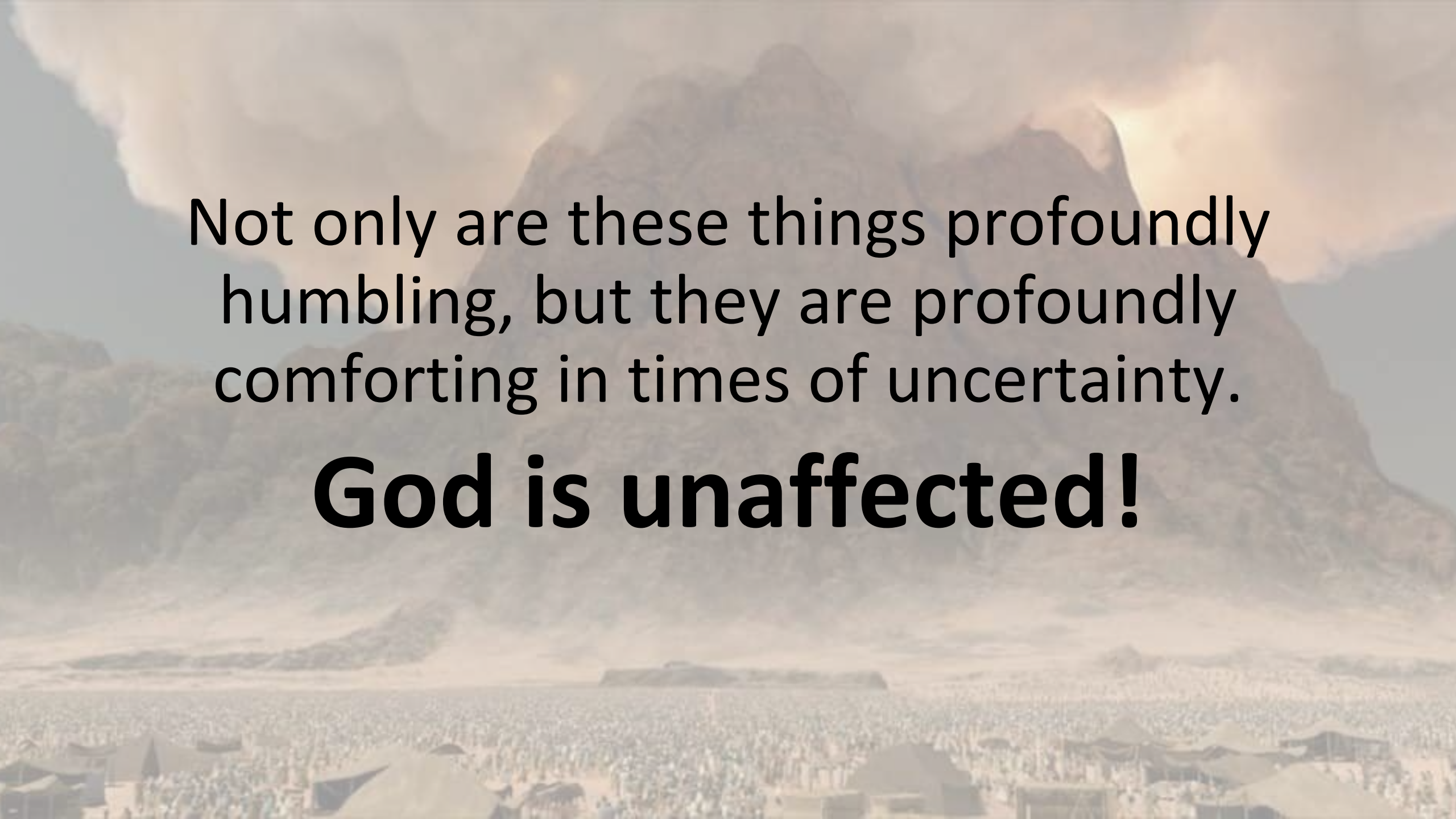
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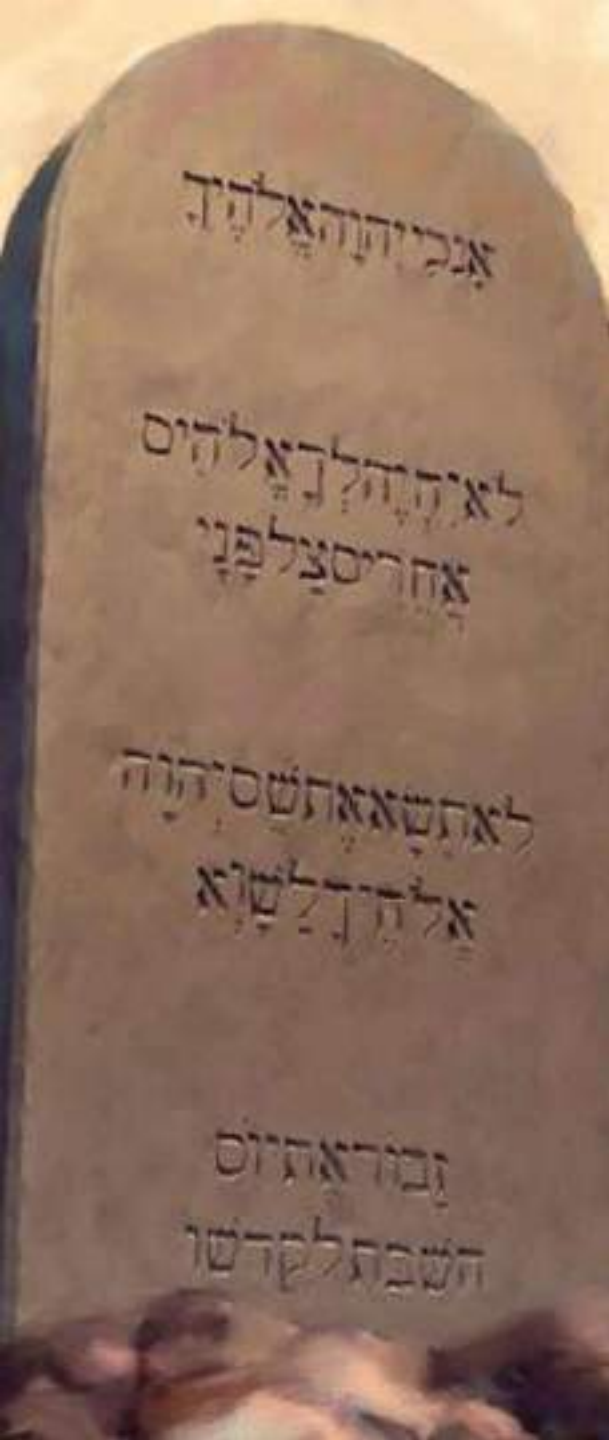
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of kings and Lord of lords; **who alone possesses**
immortality and dwells in unapproachable light;
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A large crowd of people is gathered in a desert landscape, with mountains in the background. The scene is hazy, suggesting a dusty or smoky atmosphere. The text is overlaid on the image.

Not only are these things profoundly humbling, but they are profoundly comforting in times of uncertainty.

God is unaffected!



No Other gods Before Me

What does the 1st Word teach about the LORD?

What does the 1st Word require of you?

What does the 1st Word require?

That you love the LORD your God
with all your heart, with all
your soul, with all your mind,
and with all your strength.

Deuteronomy 6:4-5

Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one.
You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart
and with all your soul and with all your might.

But what does this mean?
What are the implications?

What does the 1st Word require?

That you love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul,
with all your mind, and with all your strength.

That you pursue a right
knowledge of God *incessantly*
and with pure *impartiality*.

Deuteronomy 4:39

Know therefore today, and lay it to your heart,
that the LORD is God in heaven above
and on the earth beneath; there is no other.

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Know therefore today, and **lay it to your heart**,
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Deuteronomy 6:6-7

And these words that I command you today shall be on your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise.

Are you doing this?

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Are you doing this?

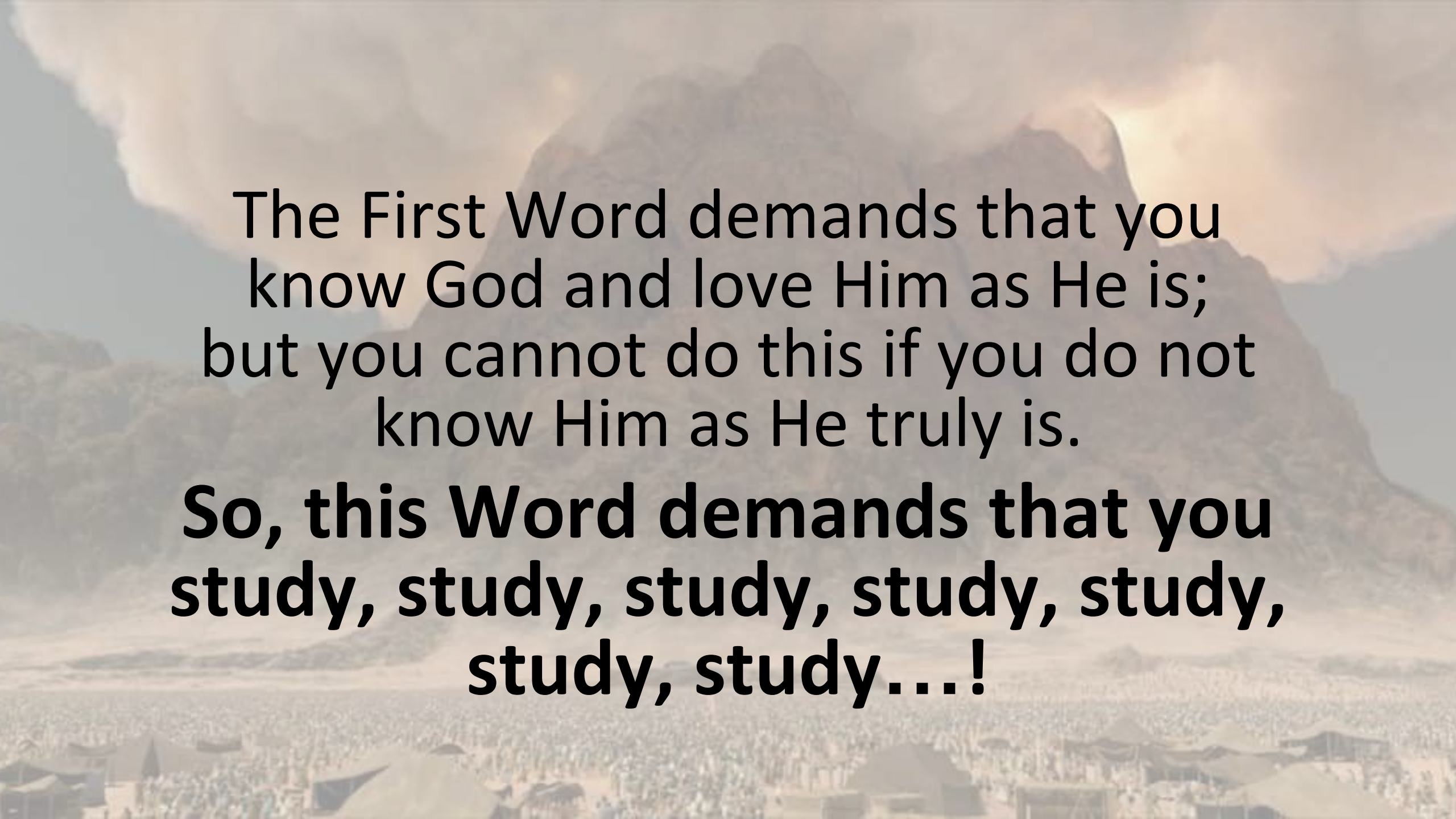
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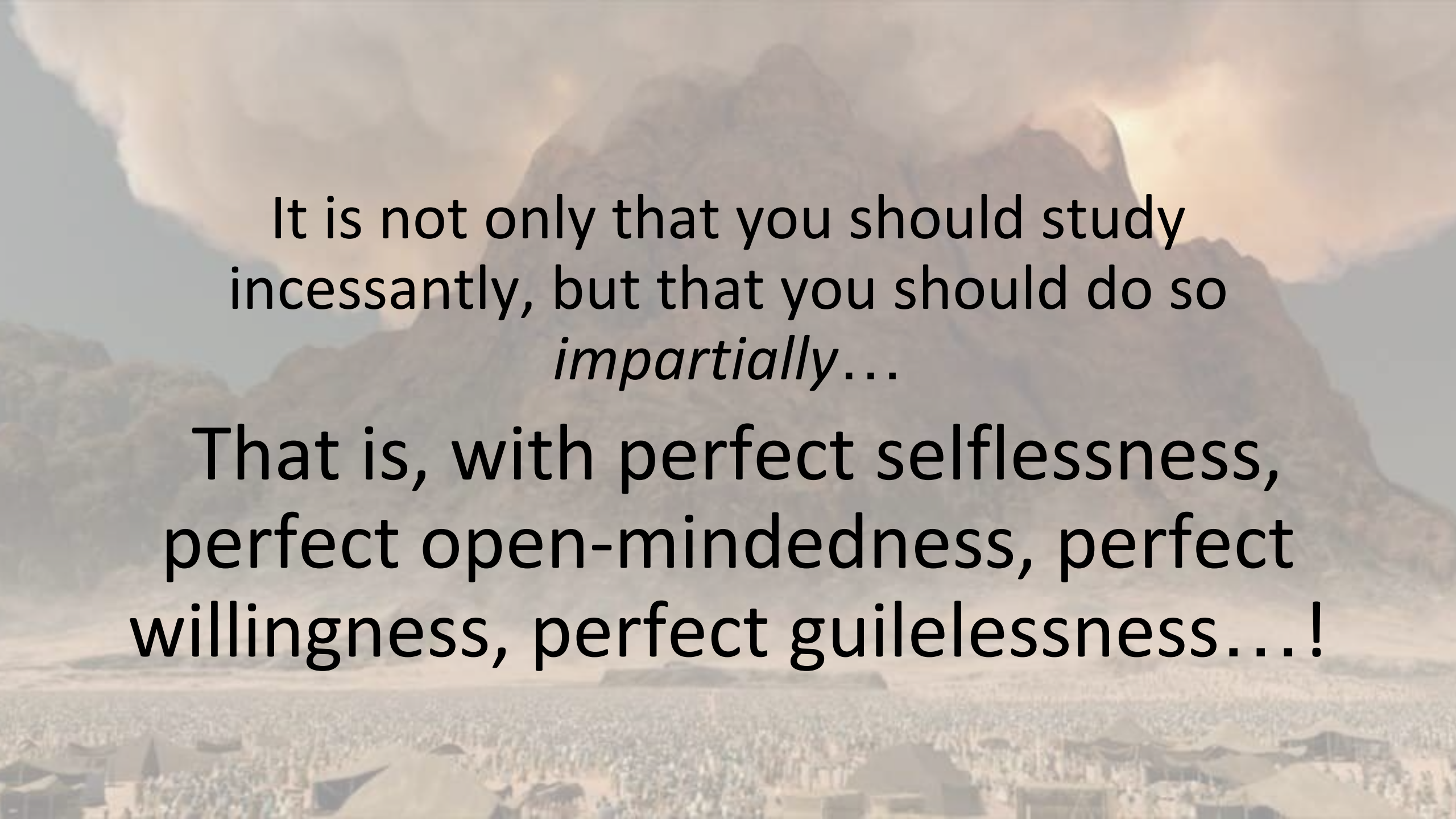
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shall be on your heart. You shall teach them diligently
to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit
in your house, and when you walk by the way,

and when you lie down, and **when you rise.**



The First Word demands that you know God and love Him as He is; but you cannot do this if you do not know Him as He truly is.

So, this Word demands that you study, study, study, study, study, study, study...!



It is not only that you should study incessantly, but that you should do so *impartially*...

That is, with perfect selflessness, perfect open-mindedness, perfect willingness, perfect guilelessness...!

Deuteronomy 4:39

Know therefore today, **and lay it to your heart,**
that **the LORD is God** in heaven above
and on the earth beneath; there is no other.

Have you done all that you can
do in your quest to know God
as He truly is?

What does the 1st Word require?

That you love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul,
with all your mind, and with all your strength.

That you pursue a right knowledge of God incessantly and with pure impartiality.

That you worship God *exclusively*,
finding your satisfaction,
meaning, comfort, and hope *only*
in Him.

Deuteronomy 6:4-5

Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one.
You shall **love the LORD your God with ALL your heart**
and with all your soul and with all your might.

Psalm 119:57

The LORD is my portion;
I have promised to keep Your words.

Psalm 71:5

For You are my hope; O Lord God,
You are my confidence from my youth.

Psalm 37:4

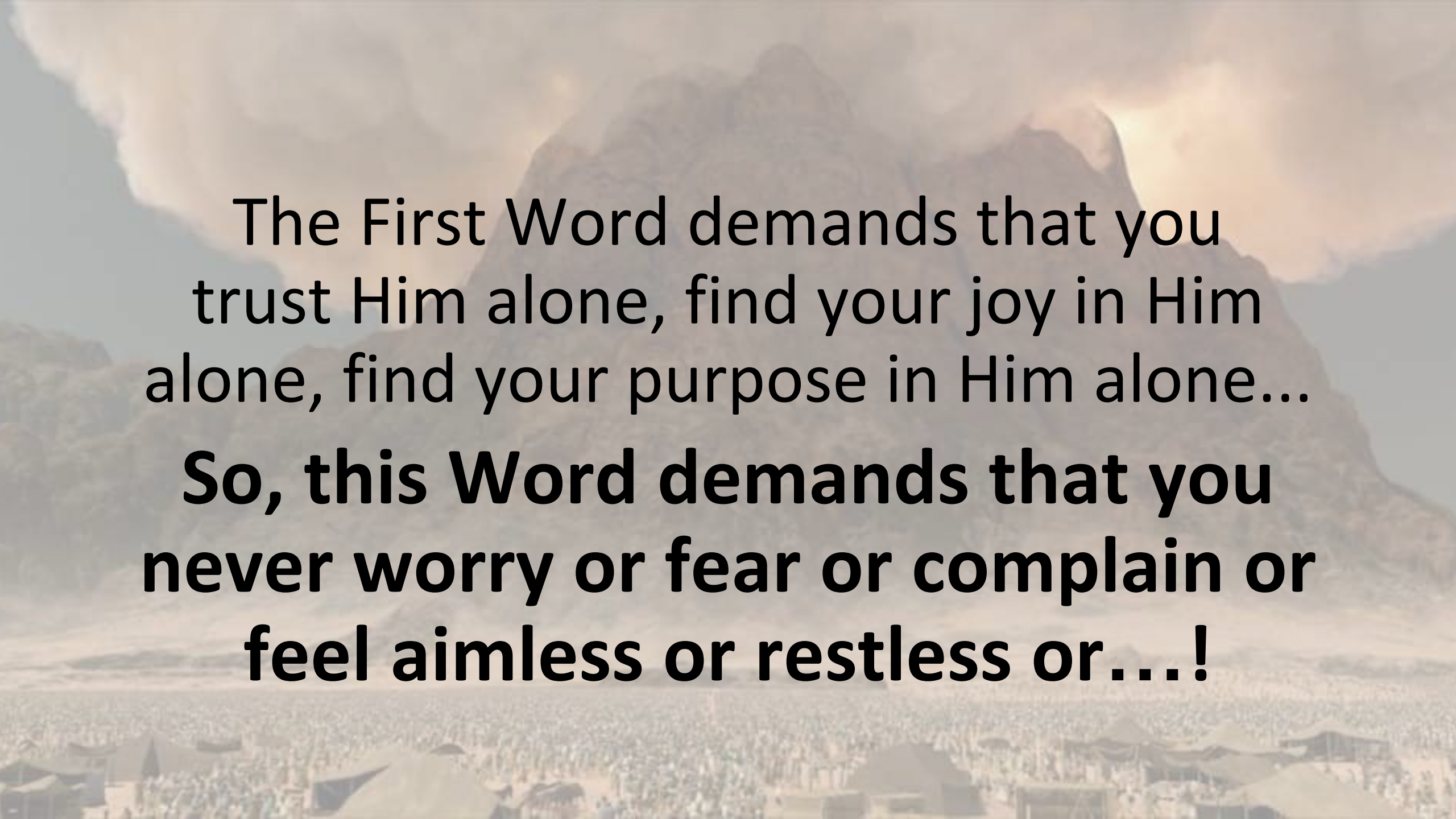
Delight yourself in the LORD.

Psalm 36:7-8

How precious is Your lovingkindness, O God!

And the children of men take refuge
in the shadow of Your wings.

They drink their fill of the abundance of Your house;
And You give them to drink of the river of Your delights.



The First Word demands that you trust Him alone, find your joy in Him alone, find your purpose in Him alone...

So, this Word demands that you never worry or fear or complain or feel aimless or restless or...!

What does the 1st Word require?

That you love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul,
with all your mind, and with all your strength.

That you pursue a right knowledge of God incessantly and with pure impartiality.

That you worship God exclusively, finding your satisfaction, meaning, comfort, and hope only in Him.

That you worship God *simply* and
sincerely, without any division
of soul or distraction of mind
or reduction of energy or
redirection of passion.

Luke 10:25-28

“Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?”
And He said to him, “What is written in the Law?
How does it read to you?” And he answered and said,
“You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart,
and with all your soul, and with all your strength,
and with all your mind...”

And He said to him,
“You have answered correctly!”

No Division of Soul

Luke 10:25-28

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And He said to him, “What is written in the Law?
How does it read to you?” And he answered and said,
“You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart,

and **with all your soul**, and with all your strength,
and with all your mind...”

And He said to him,
“You have answered correctly!”

No Distraction of Mind

Luke 10:25-28

“Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?”
And He said to him, “What is written in the Law?
How does it read to you?” And he answered and said,
“You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart,
and with all your soul, and with all your strength,

and **with all your mind...**”

And He said to him,
“You have answered correctly!”

No Reduction of Energy

Luke 10:25-28

“Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?”

And He said to him, “What is written in the Law?
How does it read to you?” And he answered and said,
“You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart,

and with all your soul, and **with all your strength,**
and with all your mind...”

And He said to him,
“You have answered correctly!”

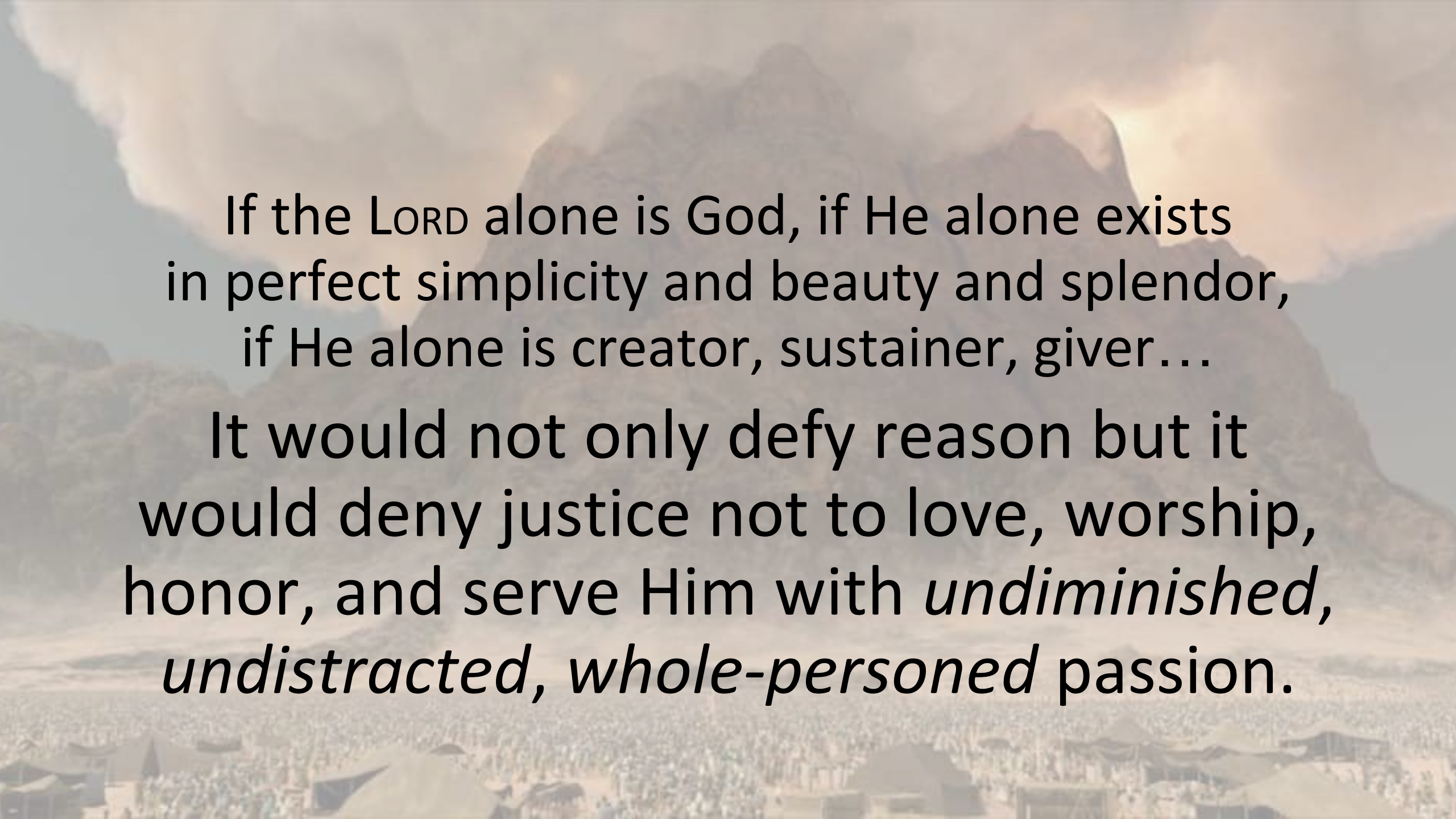
No Redirection of Passion

Luke 10:25-28

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How does it read to you?” And he answered and said,

“You shall love the Lord your God **with all your heart,**
and with all your soul, and with all your strength,
and with all your mind...”

And He said to him,
“You have answered correctly!”



If the LORD alone is God, if He alone exists
in perfect simplicity and beauty and splendor,
if He alone is creator, sustainer, giver...

It would not only defy reason but it
would deny justice not to love, worship,
honor, and serve Him with *undiminished,*
undistracted, whole-personed passion.

Psalm 29:2

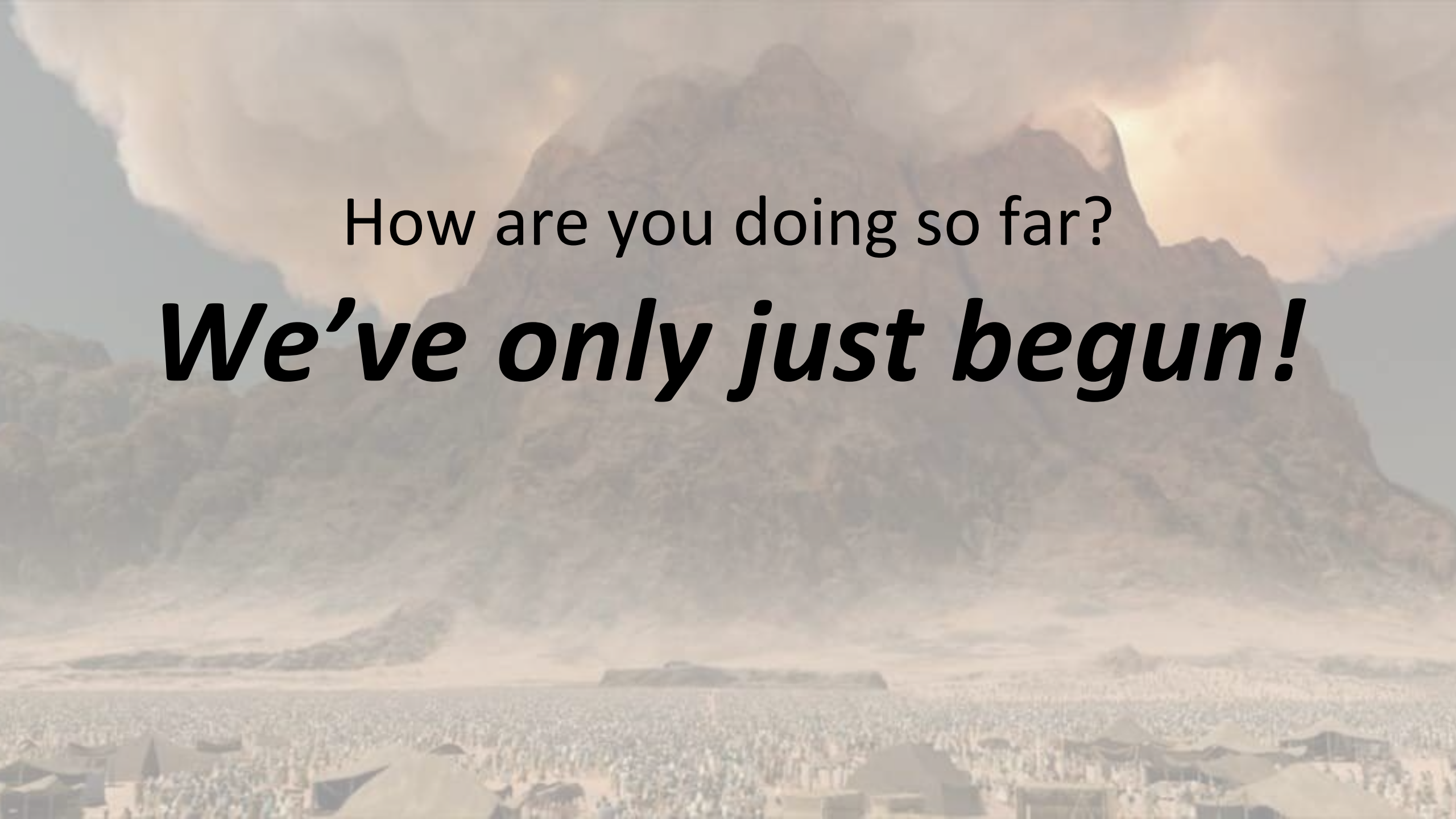
Ascribe to the LORD the glory **due to His name;**
Worship the LORD in holy array.

Isaiah 29:13

Then the Lord said, “Because this people draw near with their words and honor Me with their lip service, But they remove their hearts far from Me, and their reverence for Me consists of tradition learned by rote.”

John 4:24

“God is spirit, and those who worship Him must worship **in spirit and truth.**”

A large crowd of people is gathered in a desert landscape, with a large mountain range in the background. The scene is set during sunset or sunrise, with a warm, golden light. The crowd is dense and extends across the foreground and middle ground. The mountains are rugged and have a reddish-brown hue. The sky is filled with soft, golden clouds.

How are you doing so far?

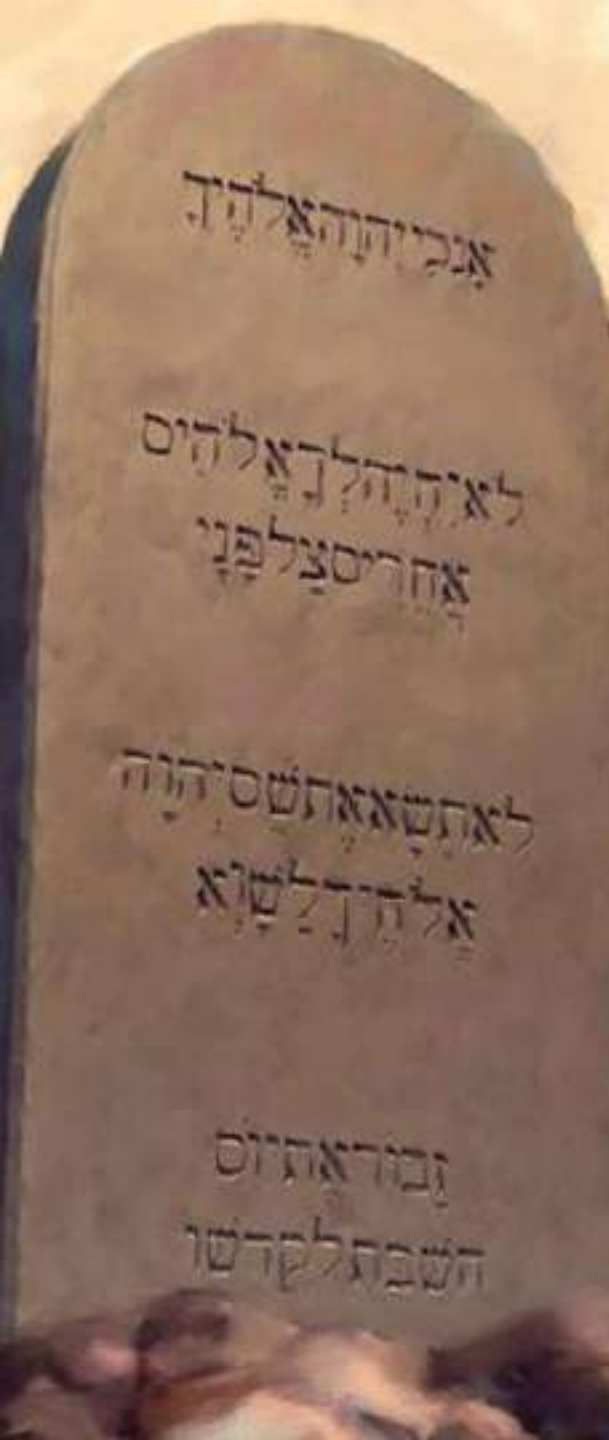
We've only just begun!

No Other gods Before Me

What does the 1st Word teach about the LORD?

What does the 1st Word require of you?

**How then is the 1st Word
a means of grace
to believers?**



How is the 1st Word grace to you?

**It reveals your God to you
and leads you into genuine
and sublime worship!**

Romans 11:33

Oh, the depth of the riches both of the wisdom
and knowledge of God! How unsearchable
are His judgments and unfathomable His ways!

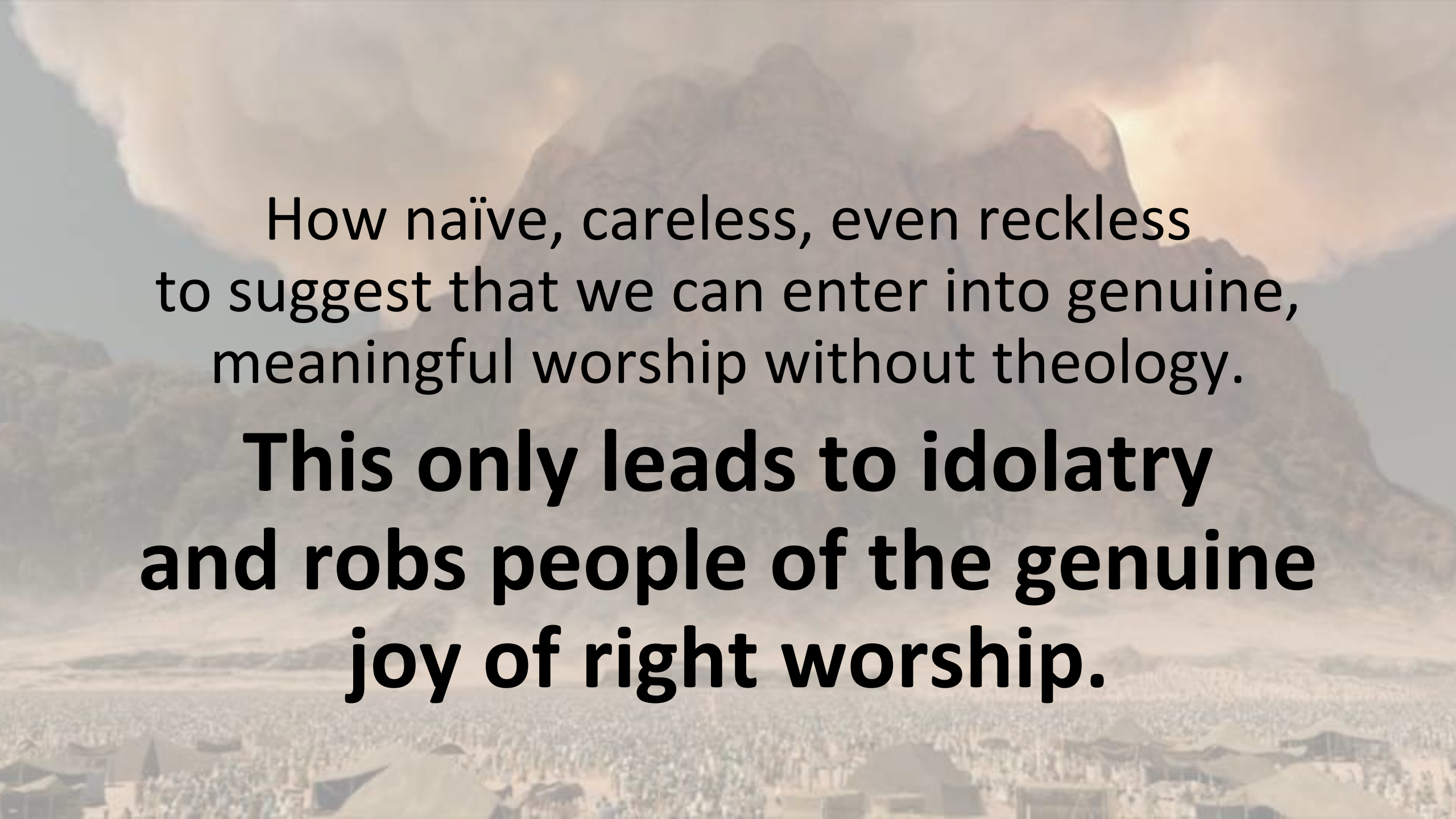
Psalms 2:11

Worship the LORD with reverence,
And rejoice with trembling.

Psalms 35:9-10

And my soul shall rejoice in the LORD;
It shall exult in His salvation.

All my bones will say, "LORD, who is like You.



How naïve, careless, even reckless
to suggest that we can enter into genuine,
meaningful worship without theology.

**This only leads to idolatry
and robs people of the genuine
joy of right worship.**

How is the 1st Word grace to you?

It reveals your God to you and leads you into genuine and sublime worship!

It shows you how far you fall short and reminds you of the glorious grace of Christ.

Romans 3:23-24

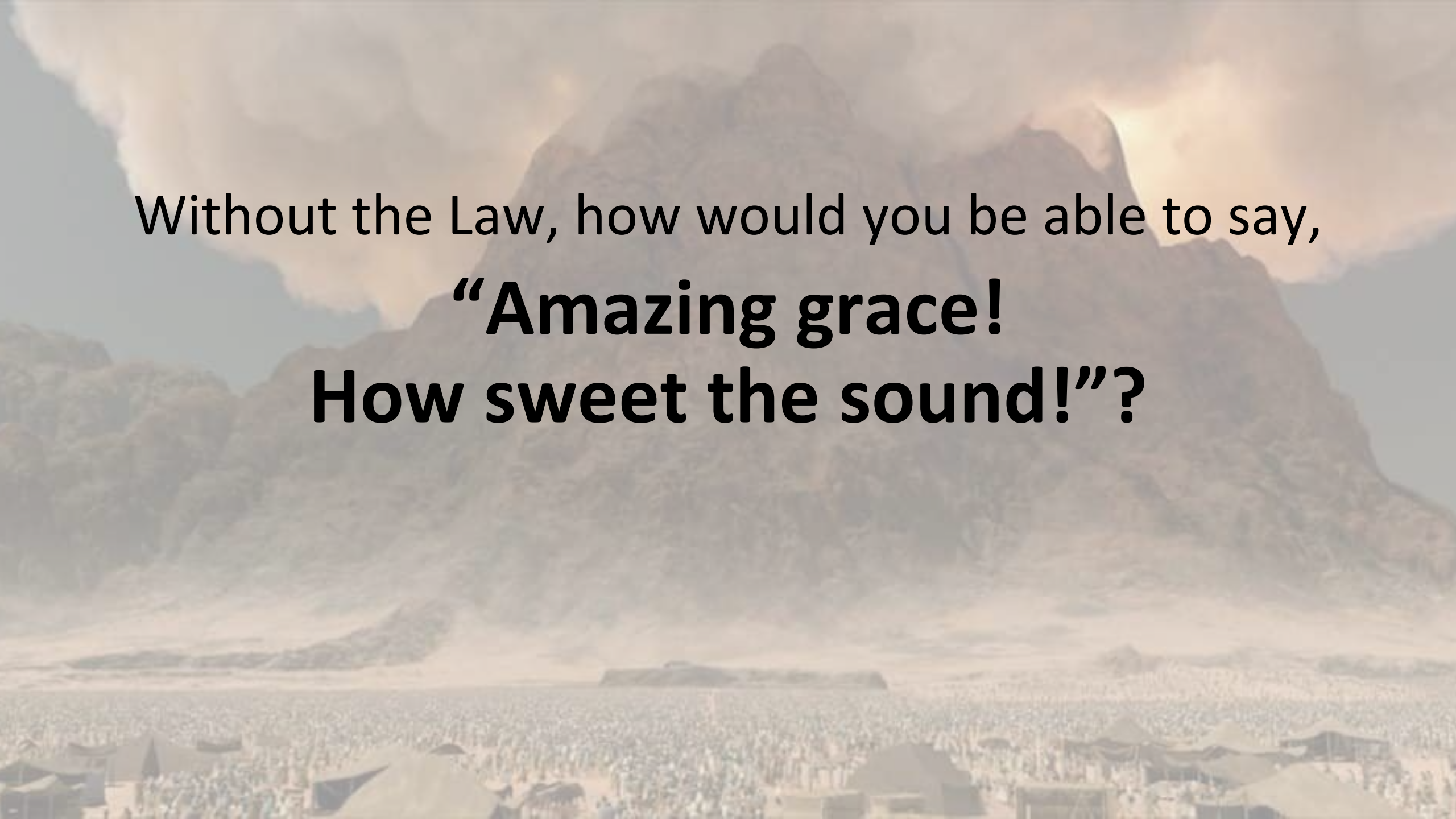
For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God...

...being justified **as a gift by His grace** through
the redemption which is in Christ Jesus.

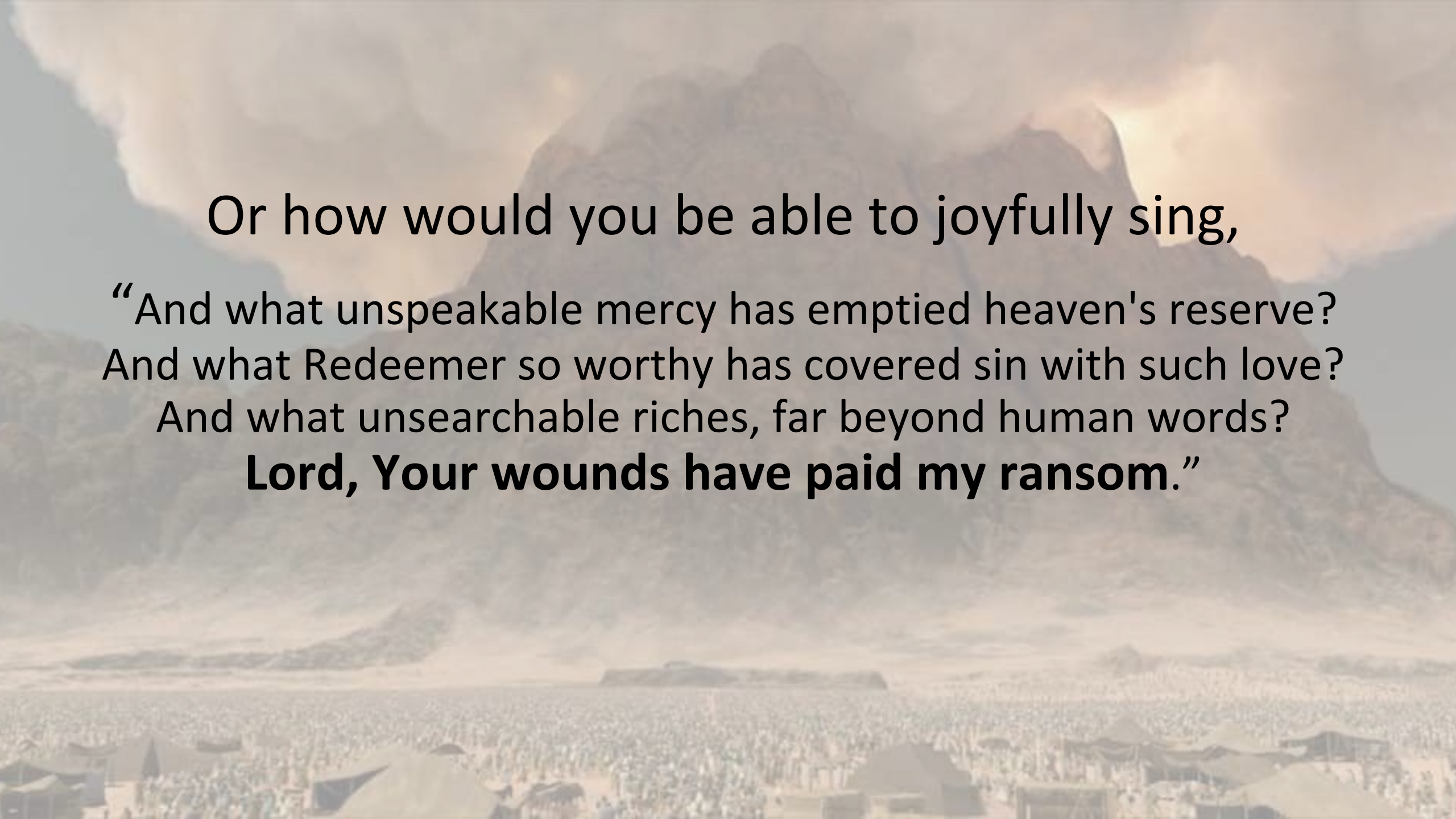
Ephesians 2:3-5

Among them we too all formerly lived in the lusts of our flesh, indulging the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, even as the rest.

But God, being rich in mercy,
because of His great love with which He loved us,
even when we were dead in our transgressions,
made us alive together with Christ
(by grace you have been saved).

A large crowd of people is gathered in a desert landscape, with a prominent mountain range in the background. The scene is set during a sunset or sunrise, with a warm, golden light illuminating the sky and the mountains. The crowd is dense, and many people are wearing traditional head coverings. The overall atmosphere is one of a significant event or gathering.

Without the Law, how would you be able to say,
**“Amazing grace!
How sweet the sound!”?**

The background of the image is a soft-focus, hazy landscape. In the foreground, there is a large, dense crowd of people, possibly a church service or a large gathering, with many people wearing dark clothing. The middle ground shows a wide, flat expanse, likely a valley or a plain, leading up to a range of mountains in the distance. The sky is filled with soft, golden light, suggesting a sunrise or sunset, with a bright glow on the right side. The overall atmosphere is serene and majestic.

Or how would you be able to joyfully sing,
“And what unspeakable mercy has emptied heaven's reserve?
And what Redeemer so worthy has covered sin with such love?
And what unsearchable riches, far beyond human words?
Lord, Your wounds have paid my ransom.””

How is the 1st Word grace to you?

It reveals your God to you and leads you into genuine and sublime worship!

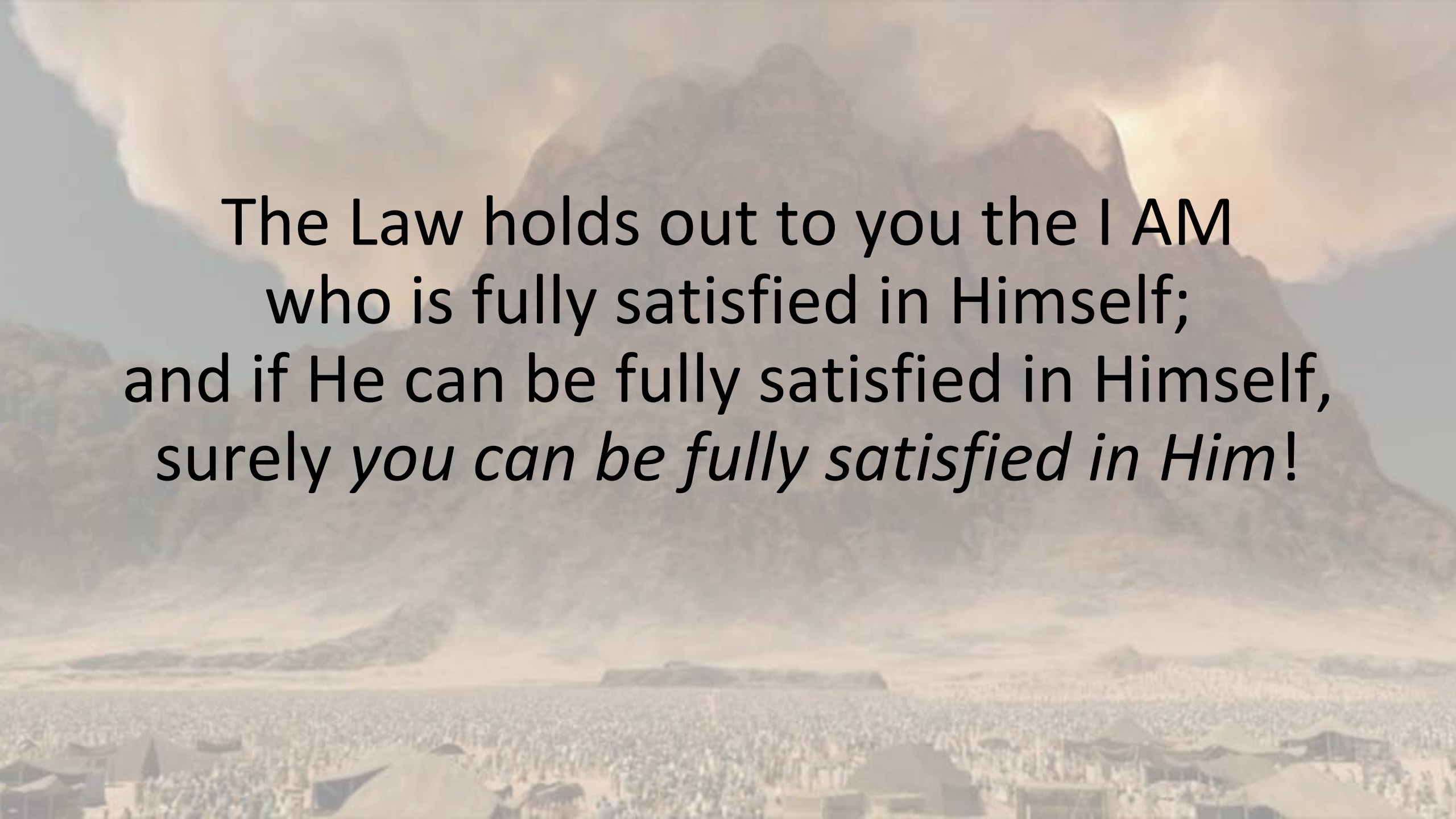
It shows you how far you fall short and reminds you of the glorious grace of Christ.

It redirects your soul to the
source of all satisfaction.

Jeremiah 17:5-8

Cursed is the man who trusts in mankind and makes flesh his strength, and whose heart turns away from the LORD. For he will be like a bush in the desert and will not see when prosperity comes, but will live in stony wastes in the wilderness, a land of salt without inhabitant.

Blessed is the man who trusts in the LORD and whose trust is the LORD. For he will be like a tree planted by the water, that extends its roots by a stream and will not fear when the heat comes; but its leaves will be green, and it will not be anxious in a year of drought nor cease to yield fruit.



The Law holds out to you the I AM
who is fully satisfied in Himself;
and if He can be fully satisfied in Himself,
surely you can be fully satisfied in Him!

Psalm 17:13-15

Deliver my soul...from men of the world, whose portion is in this life; and whose belly You fill with Your treasure;

They are satisfied with children,
And leave their abundance to their babes.

As for me, I shall behold Your face in righteousness;
I will be satisfied with Your likeness when I awake.

This is the believer's satisfaction!

Concluding Thoughts:

If you believe for a moment that you can keep the Law, you are deceived and are violating this first Word even in that belief!

Your only hope and joy in life is Christ who kept the Law for you and who forgives unrighteous sinners!

Striving to make the LORD the only object of your worship will be for you an ever increasing fountain of great joy and hope no what matter your circumstance.