

# Deuteronomy

## A Call to Covenant Renewal



Word #3  
**Don't Take the  
LORD's Name in Vain**

**Deuteronomy 5:11**

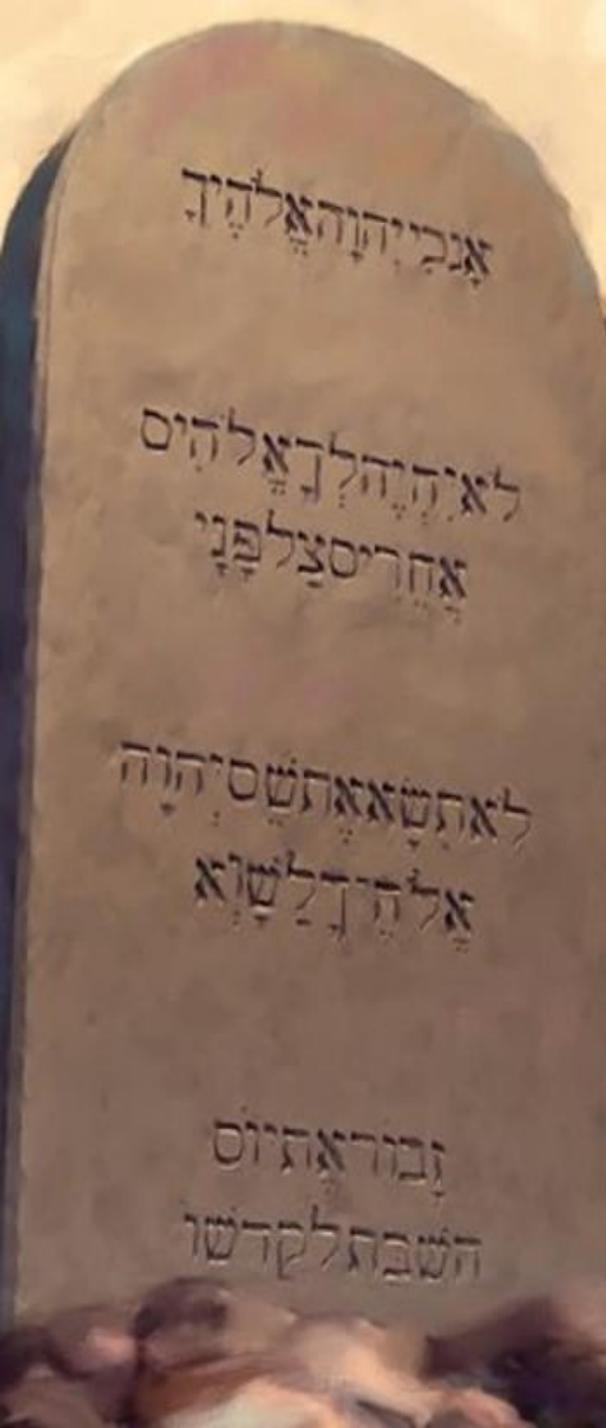
**Deuteronomy 5:11**

You shall not take the name  
of the LORD your God in vain,  
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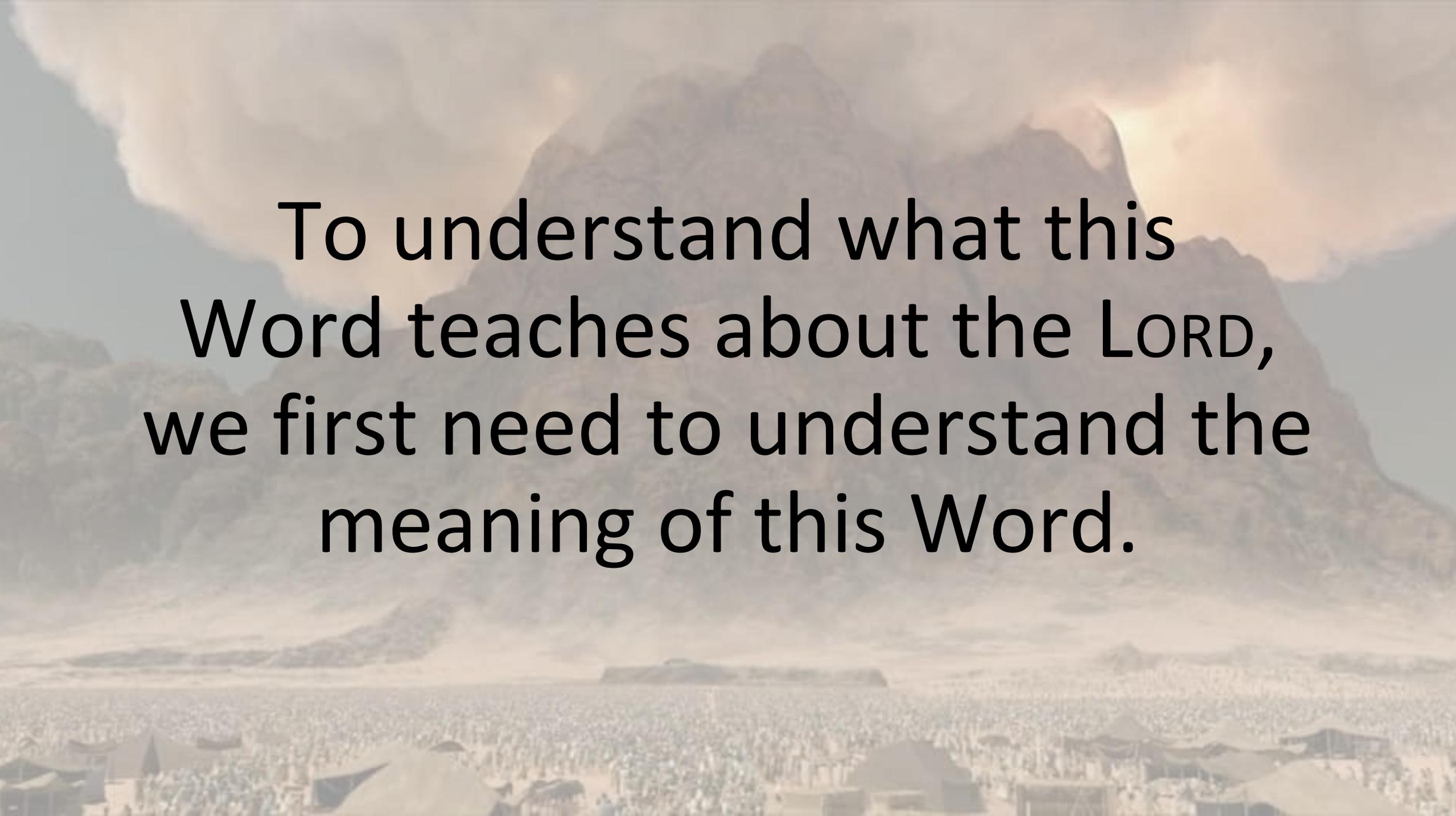
This is arguably the most  
“flattened”, monochromatic  
command of all ten!

# Main Idea

The 3<sup>rd</sup> Word shows us that God is true to Himself and acts with perfect purpose and result, and that we ought to be true to Him and careful in our worship.



**Honor the LORD's Name**  
**What does the 3<sup>rd</sup> Word**  
**teach about the LORD?**



To understand what this  
Word teaches about the LORD,  
we first need to understand the  
meaning of this Word.

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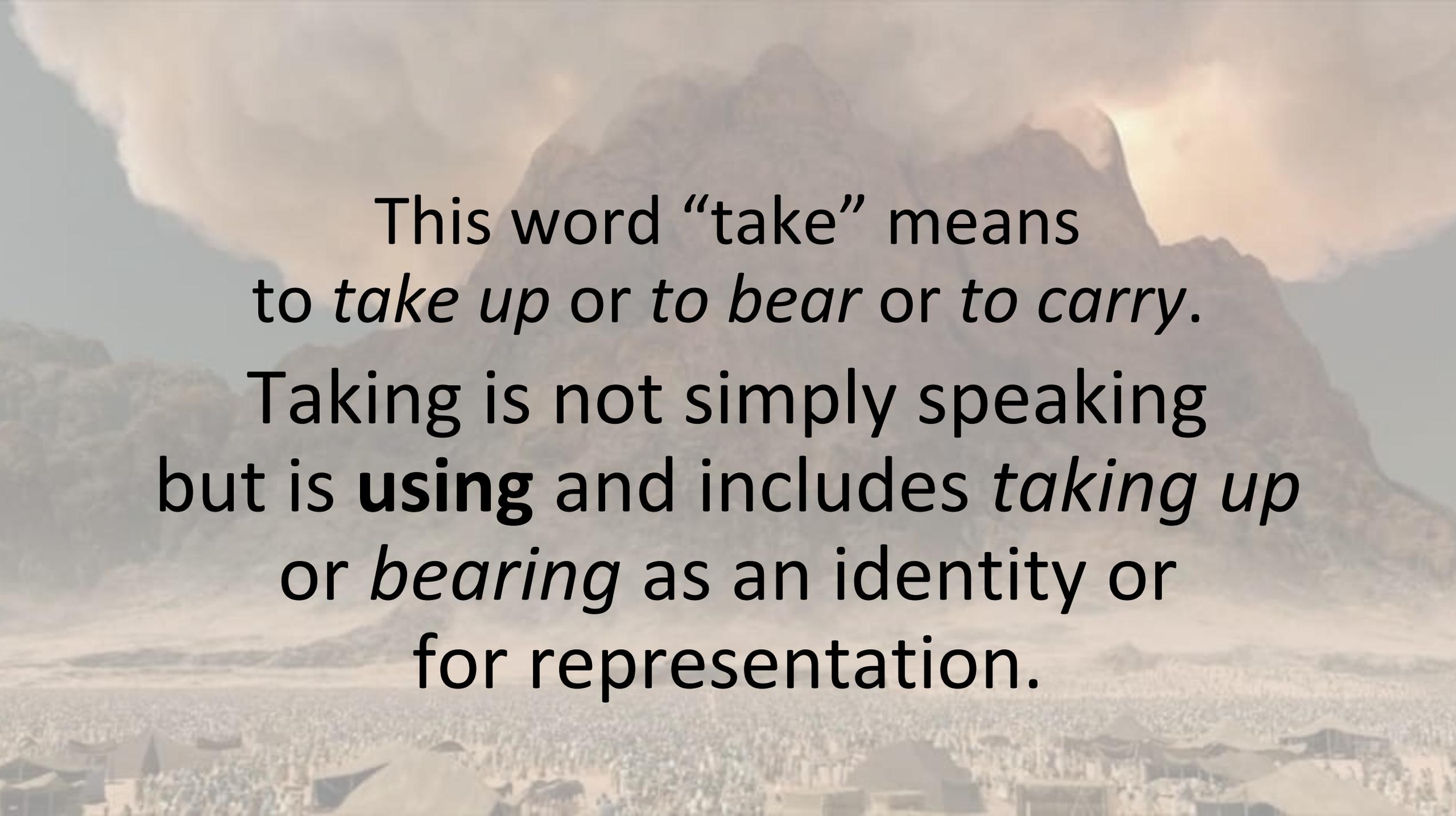
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who takes his name in vain.



This word “take” means  
*to take up or to bear or to carry.*  
Taking is not simply speaking  
but is **using** and includes *taking up*  
*or bearing* as an identity or  
for representation.

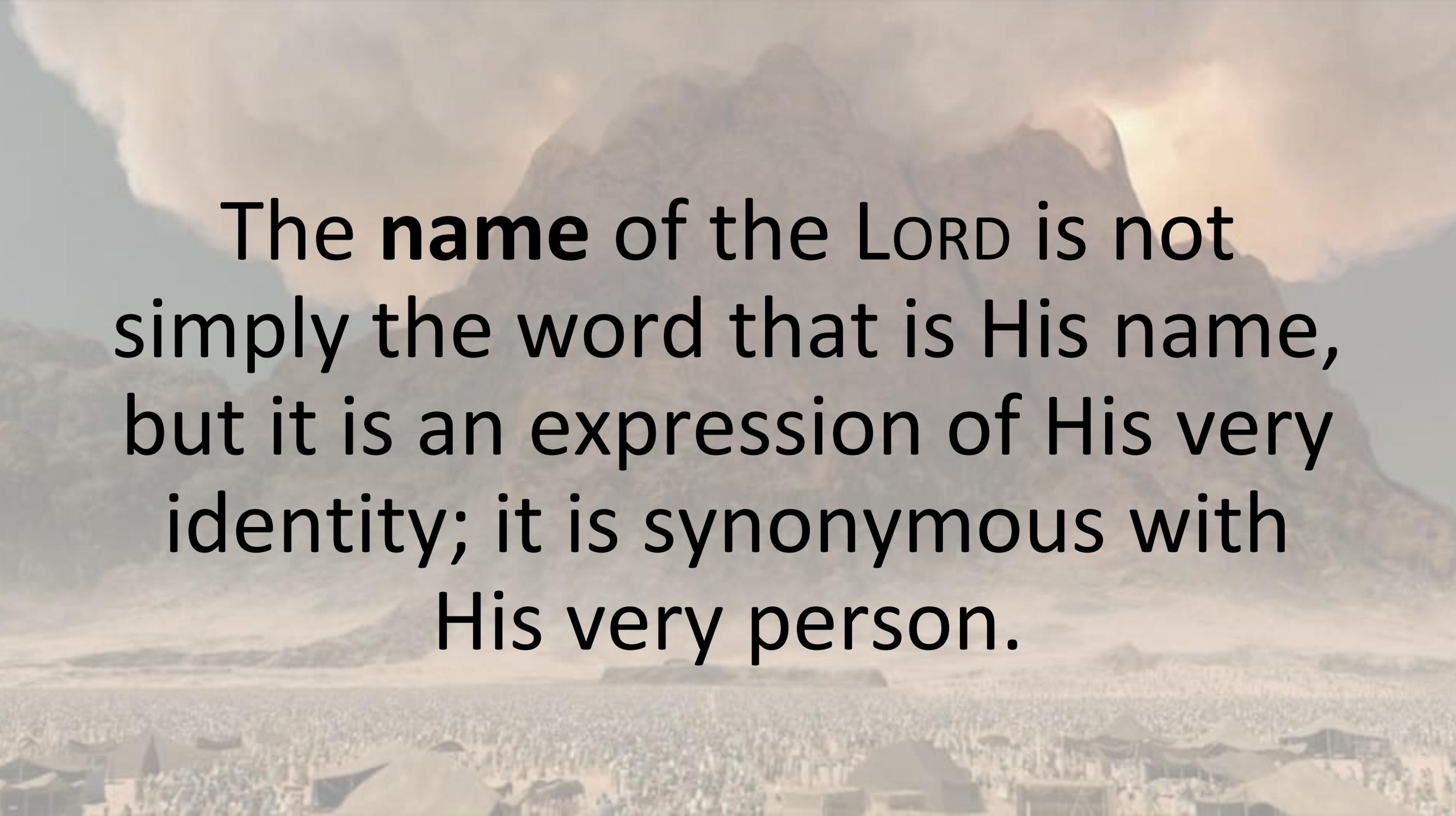
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The background of the image is a soft-focus, hazy landscape. In the foreground, there is a large, dense crowd of people, possibly a religious gathering or a festival, with many individuals wearing dark clothing. The middle ground shows a wide, flat expanse, likely a plain or a valley. In the background, there are several prominent, jagged mountain peaks under a bright, overcast sky. The overall color palette is muted, with a lot of greys, browns, and soft whites, giving it a historical or biblical feel.

The **name** of the LORD is not simply the word that is His name, but it is an expression of His very identity; it is synonymous with His very person.

### **Exodus 3:13-14**

Then Moses said to God, “Behold, I am going to the sons of Israel, and I shall say to them, ‘The God of your fathers has sent me to you.’ Now they may say to me, ‘What is His name?’ What shall I say to them?”

And God said to Moses, “I AM WHO I AM”; and He said, “Thus you shall say to the sons of Israel, ‘I AM has sent me to you.’”

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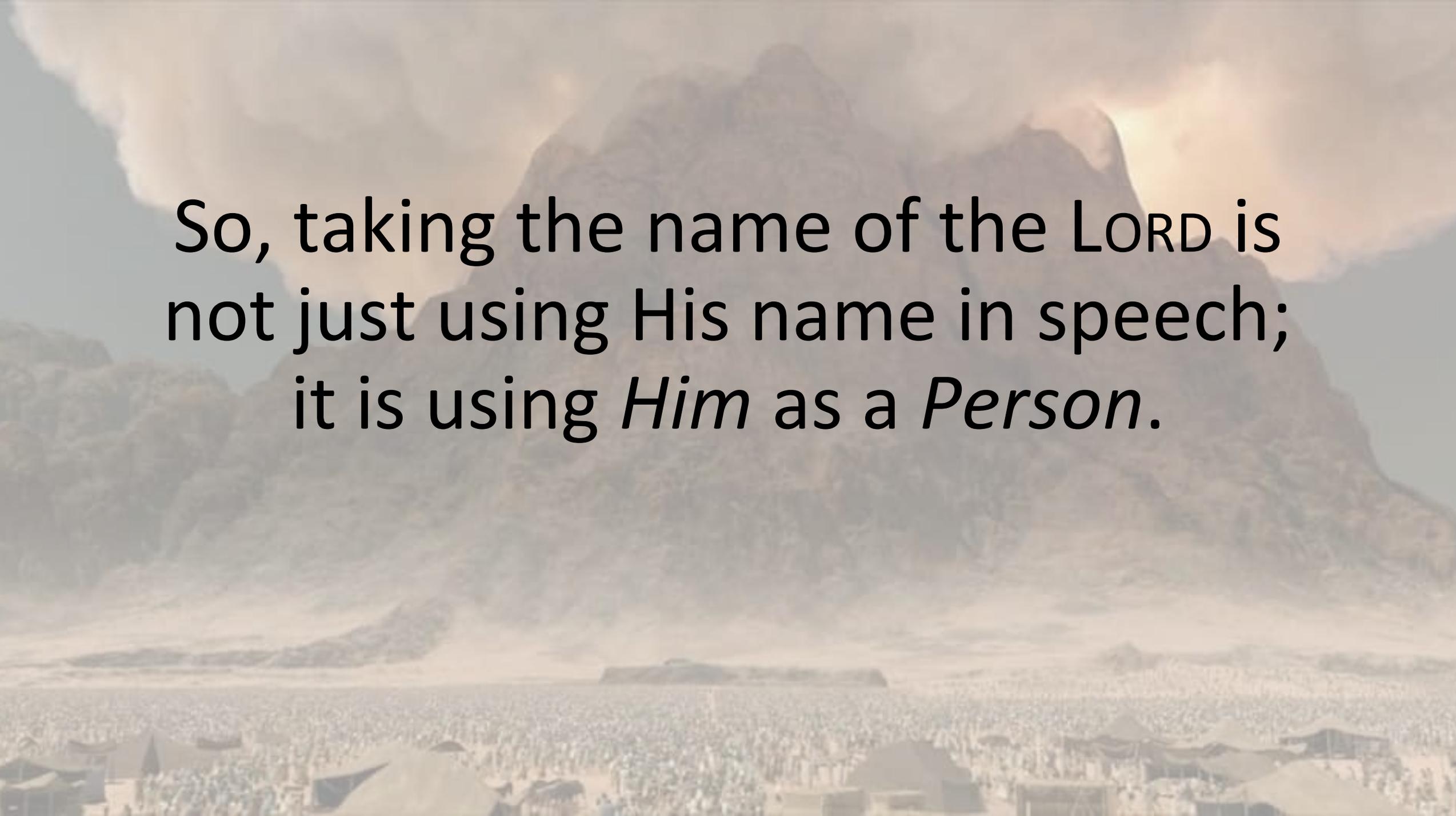
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And God said to Moses, "I AM WHO I AM"; and He said, "Thus you shall say to the sons

of Israel, '**I AM has sent me to you.**'"

A large crowd of people is gathered in a desert landscape, with a prominent mountain range in the background. The scene is set during sunset or sunrise, with a warm, golden light illuminating the scene. The crowd is dense and extends across the foreground, with many people wearing traditional head coverings. The mountains in the background are rugged and have a reddish-brown hue. The overall atmosphere is one of a significant event or gathering in a vast, open landscape.

So, taking the name of the LORD is  
not just using His name in speech;  
it is using *Him as a Person*.

Deuteronomy 5:11

**You shall not take the name  
of the LORD** your God in vain,

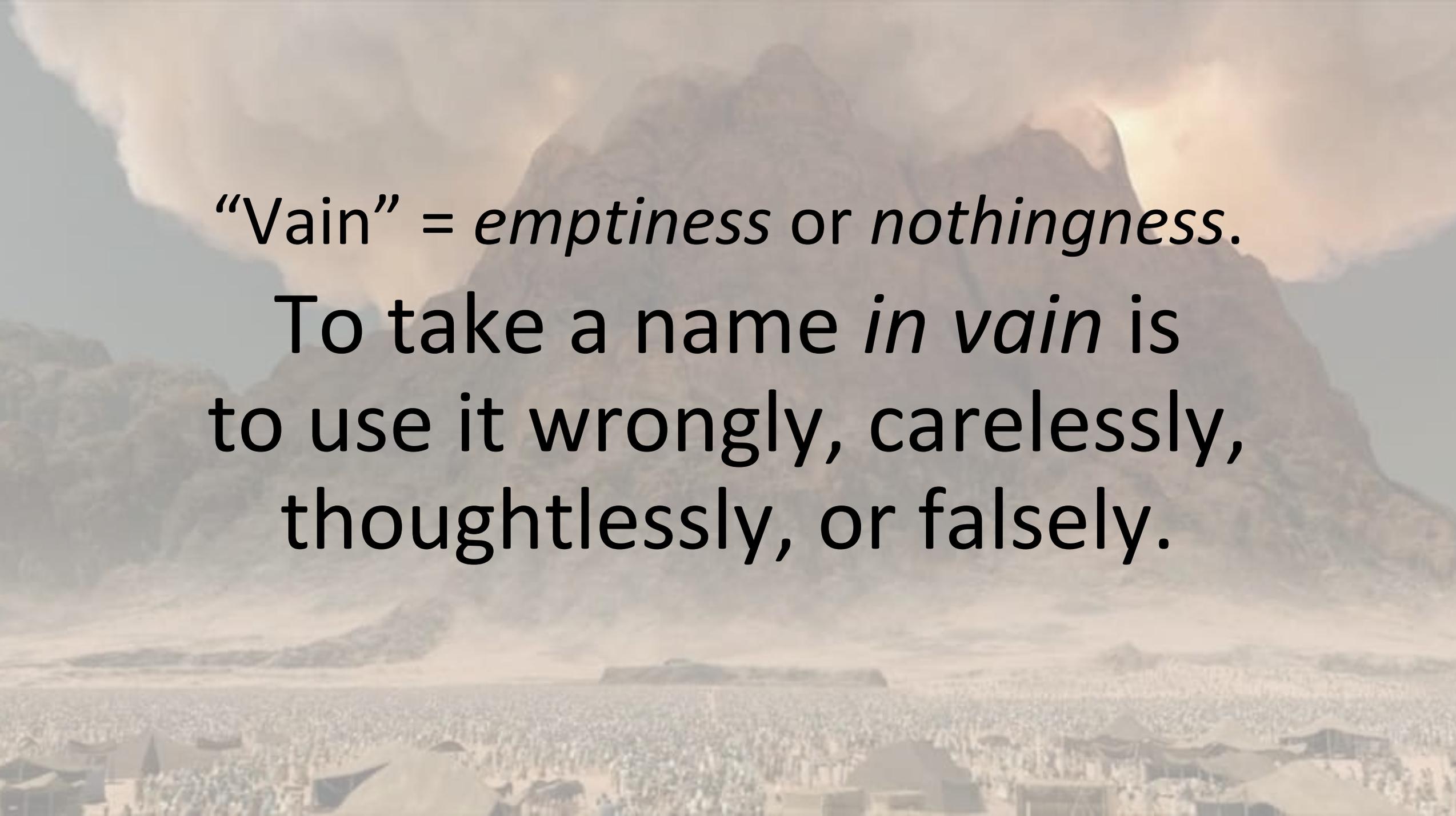
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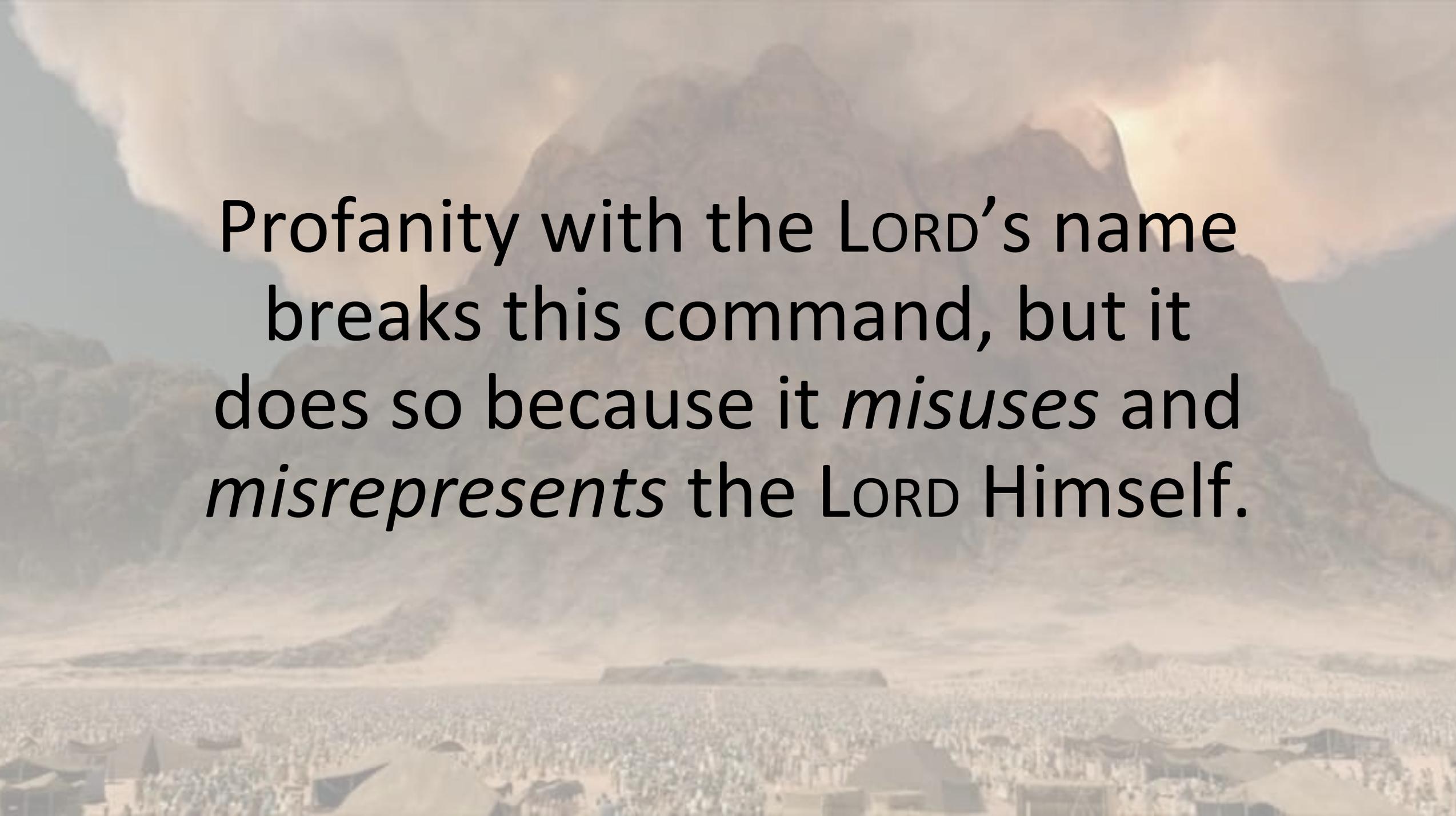
of the LORD your God **in vain,**

for the LORD will not hold him guiltless  
who takes his name in vain.



“Vain” = *emptiness* or *nothingness*.

To take a name *in vain* is to use it wrongly, carelessly, thoughtlessly, or falsely.



Profanity with the LORD's name  
breaks this command, but it  
does so because it *misuses* and  
*misrepresents* the LORD Himself.

**What does the 3<sup>rd</sup> Word teach about God?**

**The LORD is always perfectly  
true to Himself.**

He would never say or do anything  
that would profane, dishonor, or  
misrepresent His own name.

**Exodus 33:19**

And He said, “I Myself will make  
all My goodness pass before you, and  
will proclaim the name of the LORD  
before you...”

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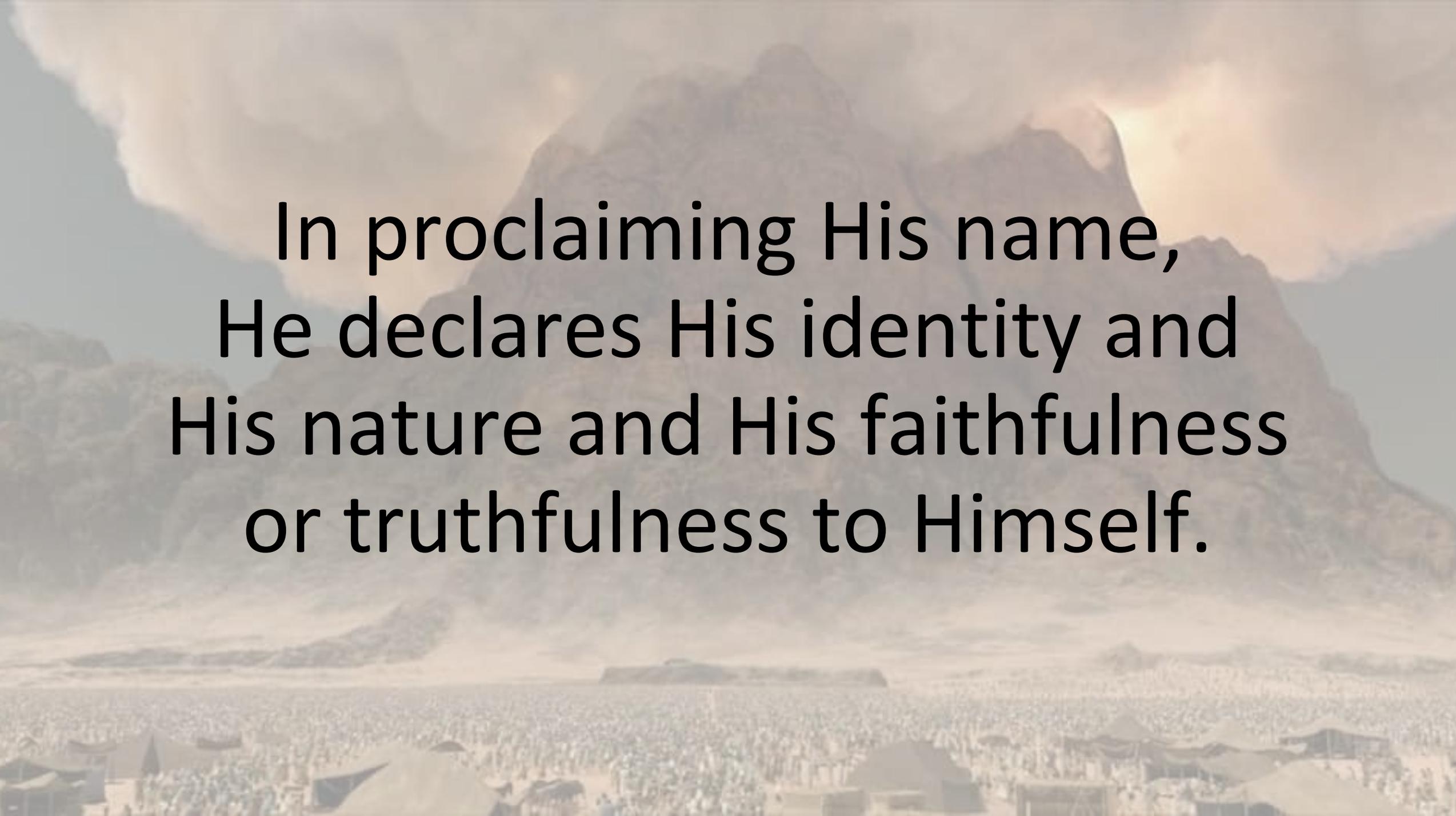
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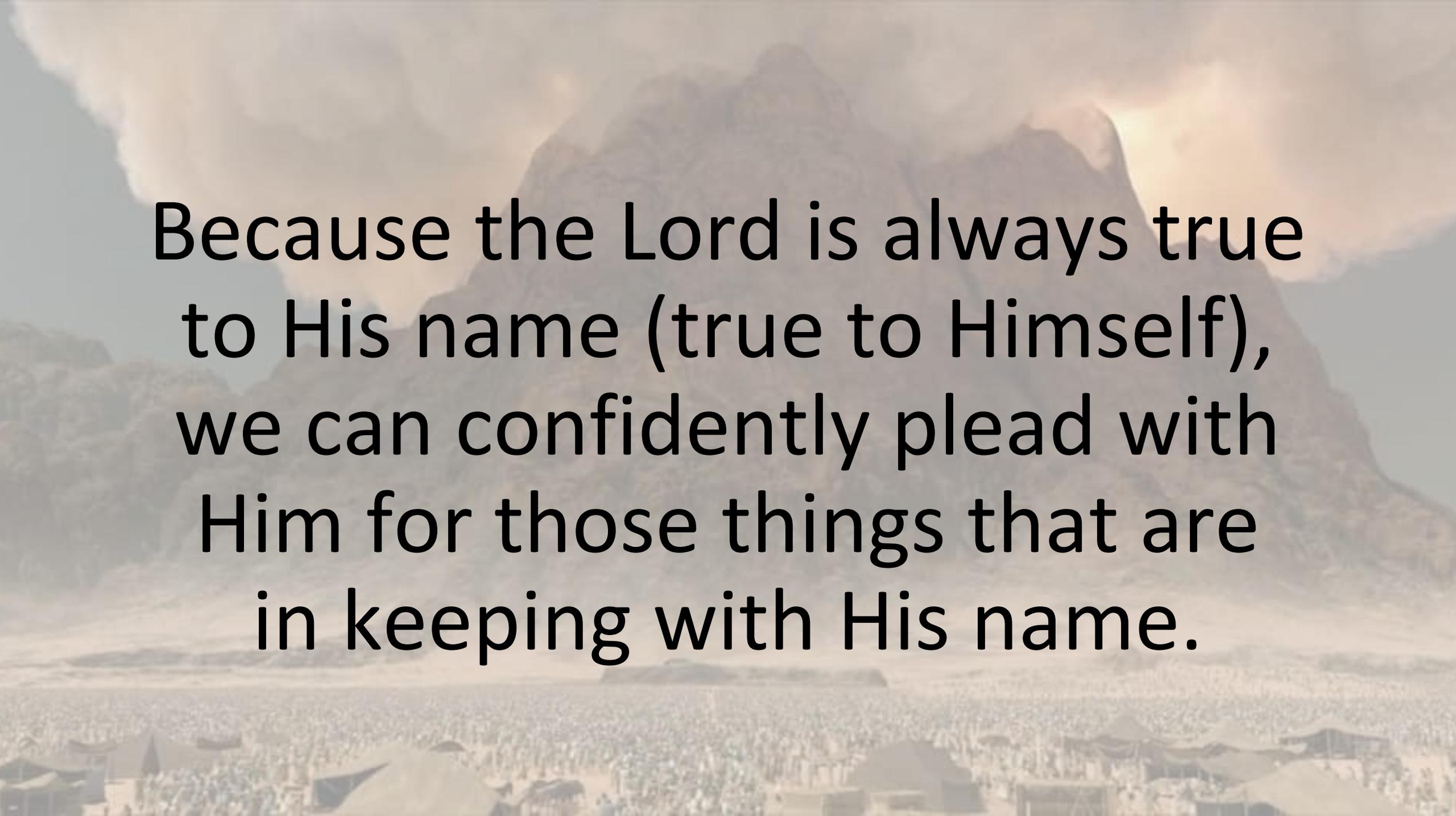
before you..."

## **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; who keeps lovingkindness for thousands,  
who forgives iniquity, transgression and sin;  
yet He will by no means leave the guilty unpunished,  
visiting the iniquity of fathers on the children and on  
the grandchildren to the third and fourth generations.”

A large crowd of people is gathered in a valley, with mountains in the background. The scene is hazy, suggesting a sunrise or sunset. The text is overlaid on the image.

In proclaiming His name,  
He declares His identity and  
His nature and His faithfulness  
or truthfulness to Himself.

The background of the image is a soft-focus, hazy landscape. In the foreground, there is a large, dense crowd of people, possibly a religious gathering or a festival, with many people wearing head coverings. The middle ground shows a wide, flat expanse, likely a plain or a valley. In the background, there are several prominent, jagged mountain peaks under a bright, hazy sky. The overall color palette is muted and warm, with shades of beige, light brown, and pale yellow, suggesting a sunrise or sunset setting.

Because the Lord is always true  
to His name (true to Himself),  
we can confidently plead with  
Him for those things that are  
in keeping with His name.

**Jeremiah 12:1**

Righteous are You, O LORD, that I would plead  
my case with You; Indeed I would discuss  
matters of justice with You:

Why has the way of the wicked prospered?  
Why are all those who deal in treachery at ease?

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# What does the 3<sup>rd</sup> Word teach about God?

The LORD is always perfectly true to Himself.

**The LORD will make Himself  
known with perfect reliability.**

**Ezekiel 39:7**

And My holy name I shall make known  
in the midst of My people Israel;  
and I shall not let My holy name be profaned anymore.  
And the nations will know that I am the LORD,  
the Holy One in Israel.

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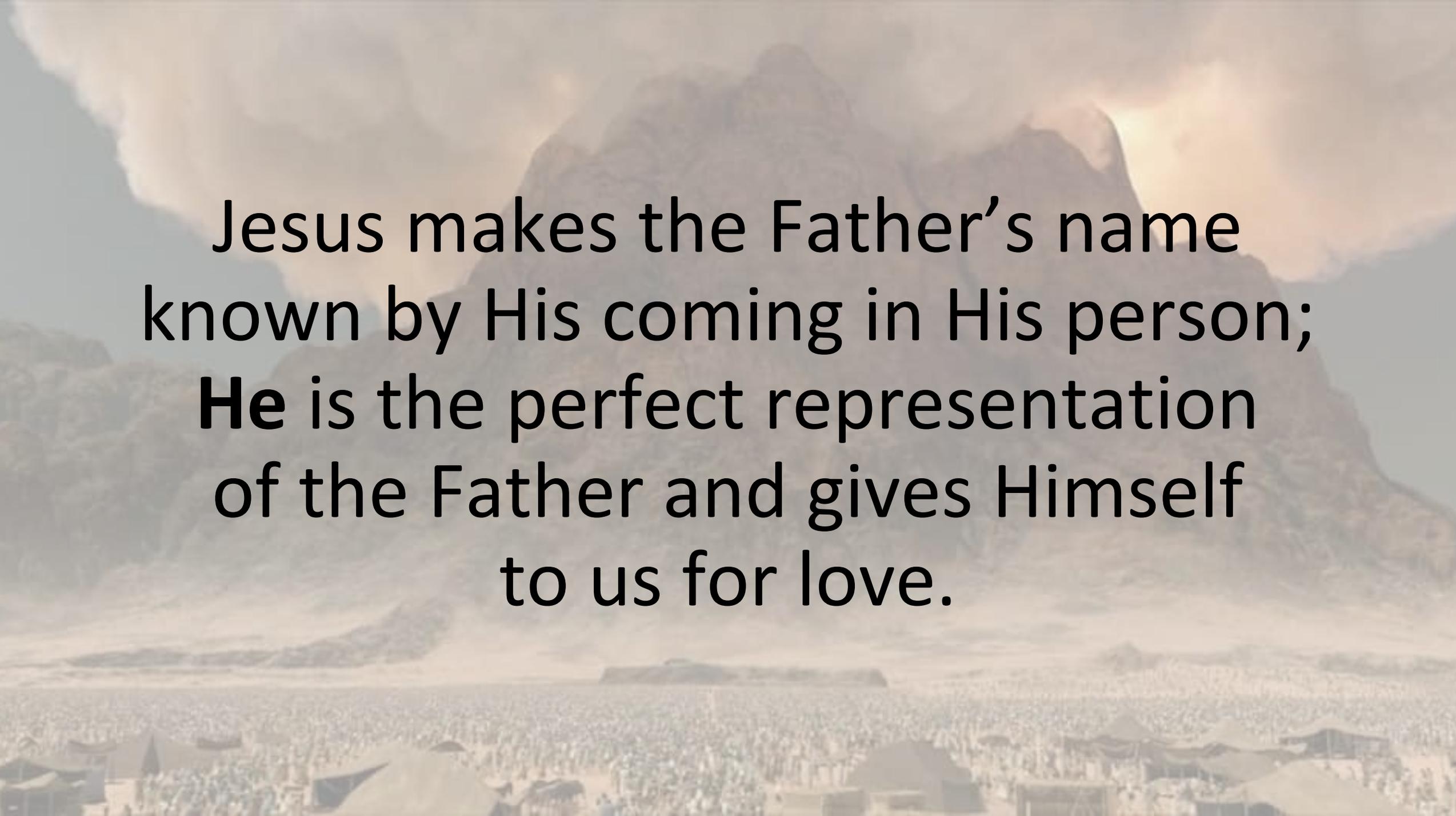
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the Holy One in Israel.**

## John 17:25-26

“O righteous Father, although the world has not known You, yet I have known You; and these have known that You sent Me; and **I have made Your name known to them**, and will make it known, so that the love with which You loved Me may be in them, and I in them.”



Jesus makes the Father's name  
known by His coming in His person;  
**He** is the perfect representation  
of the Father and gives Himself  
to us for love.

**John 14:6**

Jesus said to him, “I am the way, and the truth,  
and the life; no one comes to the Father,  
but through Me.”

**God's Word is reliable because  
He is truth!**

# What does the 3<sup>rd</sup> Word teach about God?

The LORD is always perfectly true to Himself.

The LORD will make Himself known with perfect reliability.

**The LORD will defend His  
name keeping it holy.**

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# What does the 3<sup>rd</sup> Word teach about God?

The LORD is always perfectly true to Himself.

The LORD will make Himself known with perfect reliability.

The LORD will defend His name keeping it holy.

**The LORD will always speak  
and act with perfect purpose  
and certain result.**

**Deuteronomy 5:11**

You shall not take the name  
of the LORD your God **in vain...**

**...because the LORD never wastes  
anything, not even a word!**

**Isaiah 55:11**

So shall My word be which goes forth from My mouth;  
It shall not return to Me empty,  
without accomplishing what I desire,  
and without succeeding in the matter  
for which I sent it.

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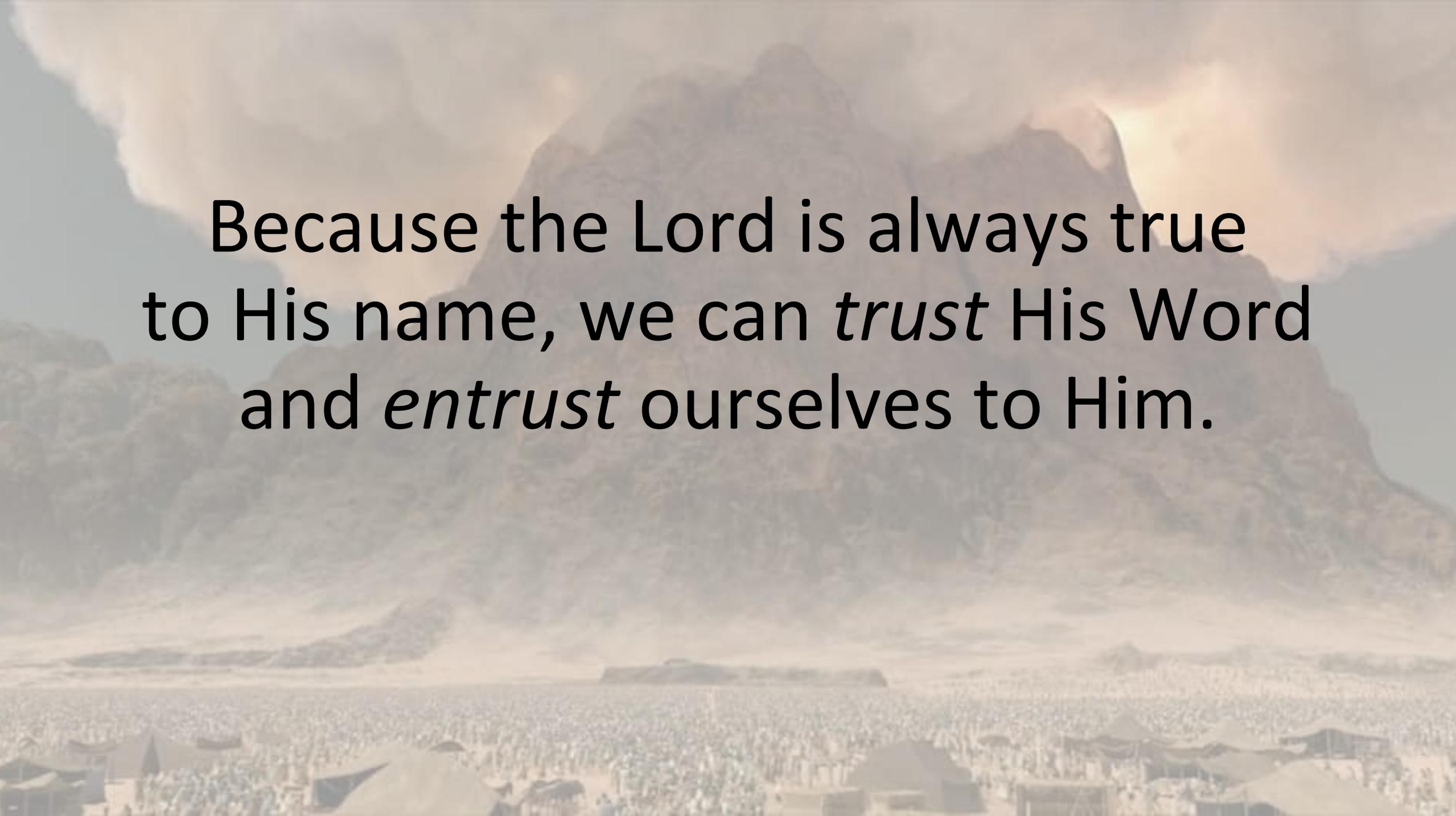
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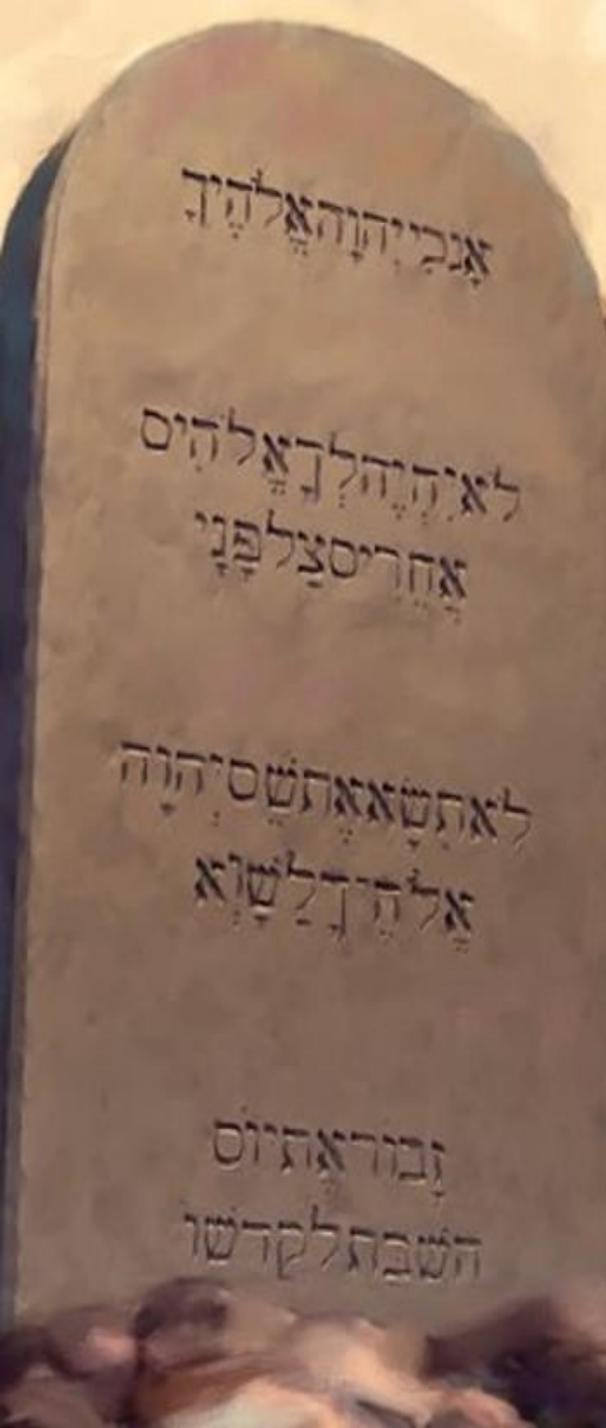
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A large crowd of people is gathered in a desert landscape, with a prominent mountain range in the background. The scene is set during a sunset or sunrise, with a warm, golden light illuminating the sky and the mountains. The crowd is dense, and many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

Because the Lord is always true  
to His name, we can *trust* His Word  
and *entrust* ourselves to Him.



# Honor the LORD's Name

What does the 3<sup>rd</sup> Word teach about the LORD?

## How do we break the 3<sup>rd</sup> Word?

**How do we break the 3<sup>rd</sup> Word?**

**By speaking the LORD's name in any way that is profane or unholy.**

**Deuteronomy 5:11**

You shall not take the name  
of the LORD your God in vain,  
for the LORD will not hold him guiltless  
who takes his name in vain.

Taking the LORD's name in vain  
is much more than just profanity,  
**but it is not less!**

# How do we break the 3<sup>rd</sup> Word?

By speaking the LORD's name in any way that is profane or unholy.

**By speaking the LORD's name in any way that is needlessly repetitious, meaningless, or thoughtless.**

**Deuteronomy 5:11**

You shall not take the name  
of the LORD your God **in an empty manner**,  
for the LORD will not hold him guiltless  
who takes his name in vain.

**Don't use the LORD's  
name as filler!**

**Matthew 6:7**

And when you are praying,  
do not use **meaningless** repetition.

# How do we break the 3<sup>rd</sup> Word?

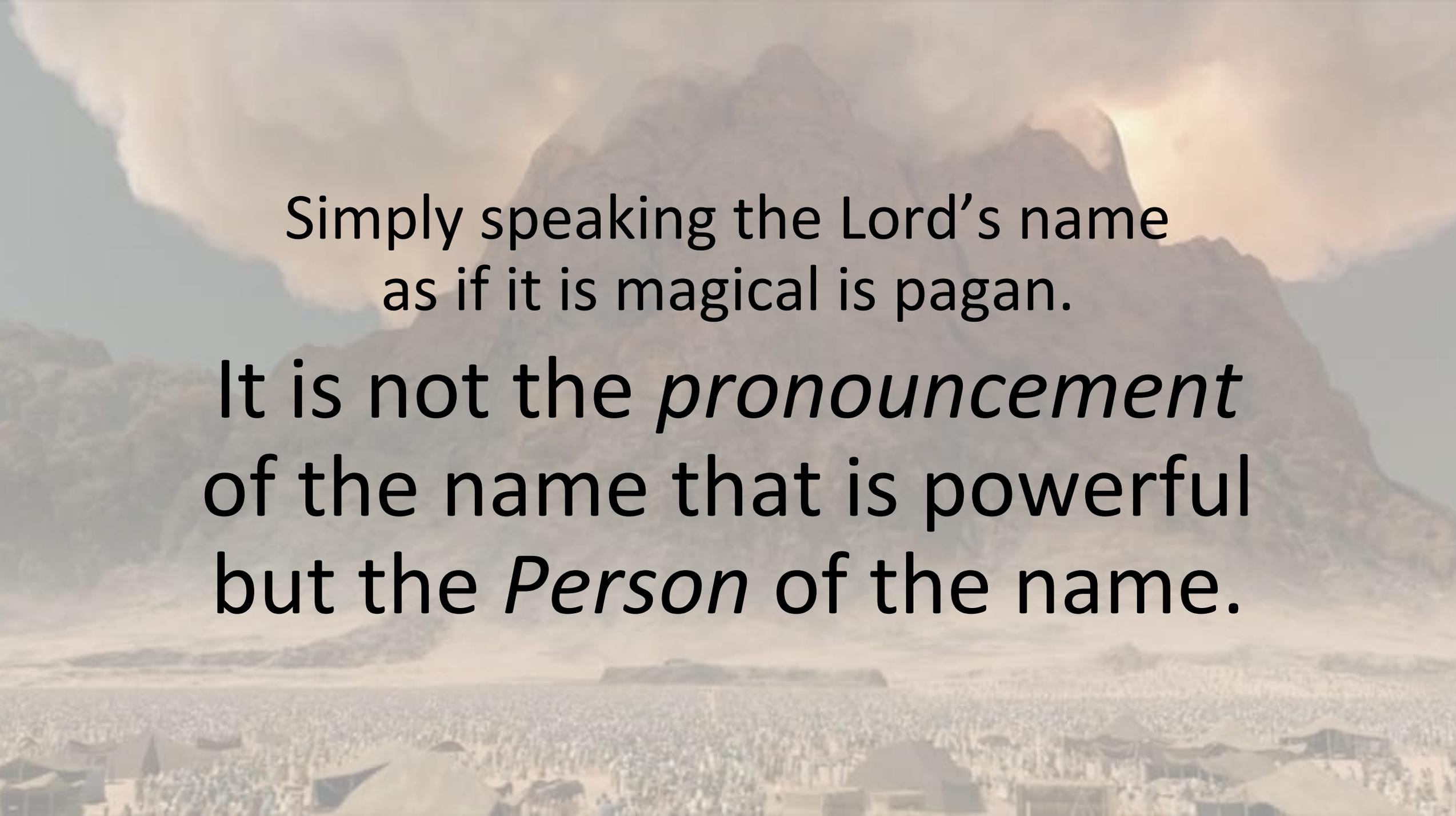
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By speaking the LORD's name in any way that is needlessly repetitious, meaningless, or thoughtless.

**By using the LORD's name as a formula or incantation to get what we want or ward off what we fear.**

### **Acts 19:13**

But also some of the Jewish exorcists,  
who went from place to place, attempted to name  
over those who had the evil spirits  
the name of the Lord Jesus, saying,  
“I adjure you by Jesus whom Paul preaches.”



Simply speaking the Lord's name  
as if it is magical is pagan.

It is not the *pronouncement*  
of the name that is powerful  
but the *Person* of the name.

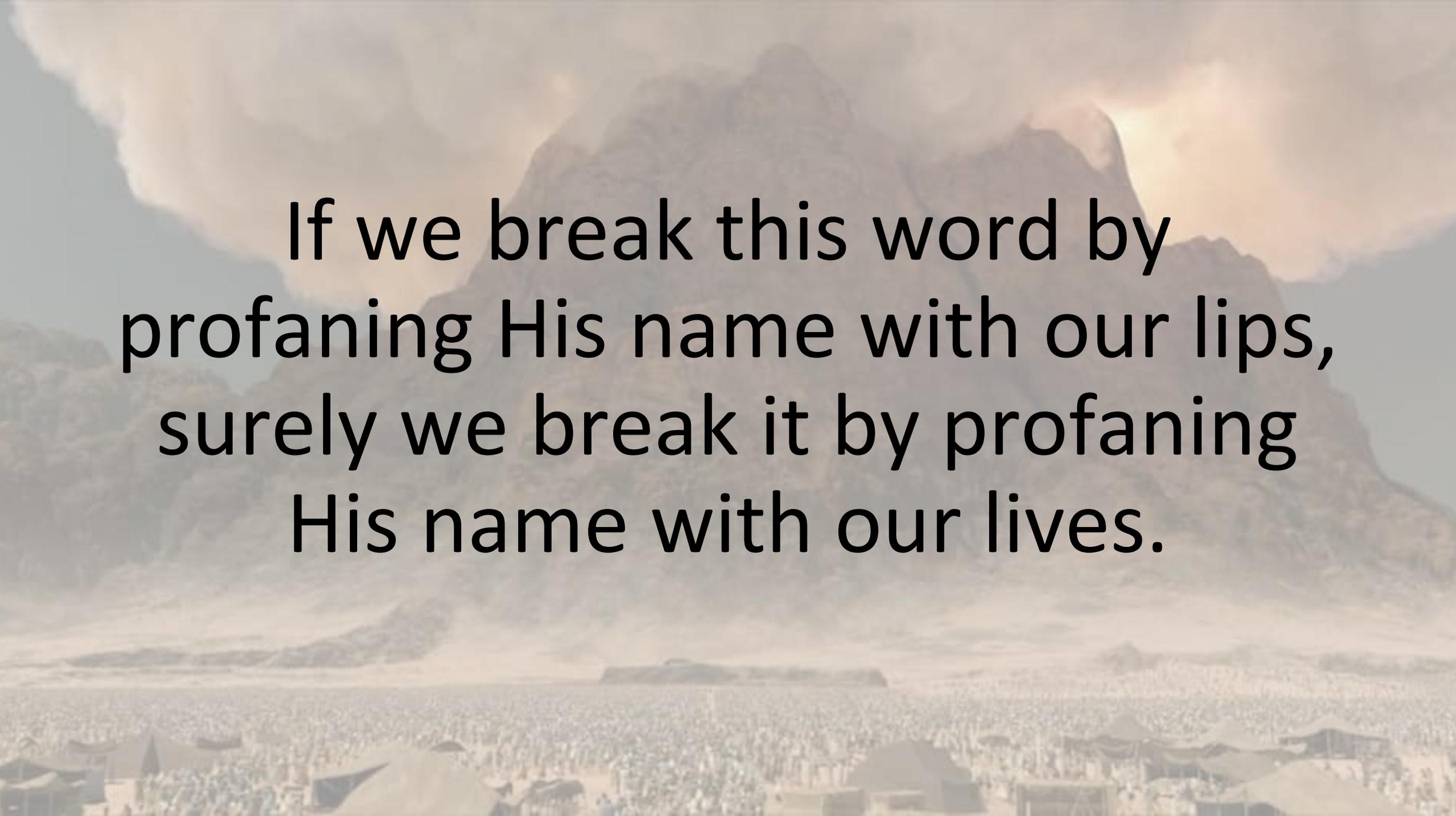
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**By bearing His name as a label but  
profaning His name by a lifestyle.**

The background image shows a vast, hazy landscape. In the foreground, there is a large, dense crowd of people, possibly a religious gathering or a festival, with many people wearing head coverings. The middle ground features a wide, flat expanse, likely a plain or a valley, leading up to a range of mountains in the distance. The mountains are rugged and appear to be covered in snow or are very high, with some peaks partially obscured by a thick layer of mist or low clouds. The sky is overcast, with a soft, diffused light, suggesting an early morning or late afternoon setting. The overall color palette is muted, with a lot of greys, browns, and soft blues, giving the scene a somber and atmospheric quality.

If we break this word by  
profaning His name with our lips,  
surely we break it by profaning  
His name with our lives.

### **Jeremiah 7:9-10**

Will you steal, murder, and commit adultery,  
and swear falsely, and offer sacrifices to Baal,  
and walk after other gods that you have not known,  
then come and stand before Me in this house,  
which is called by My name, and say, 'We are delivered!'  
-- that you may do all these abominations?

# How do we break the 3<sup>rd</sup> Word?

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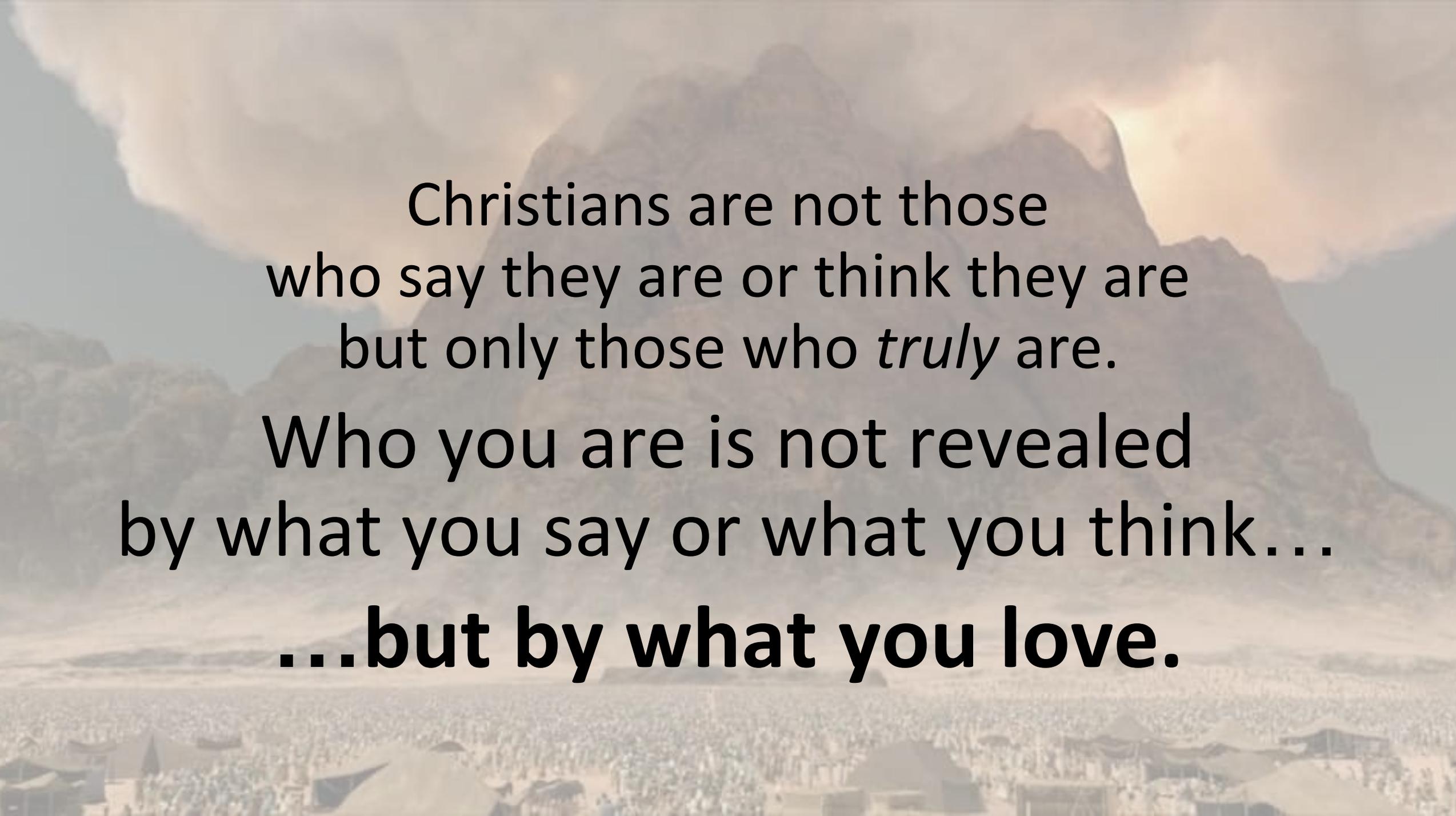
By using the LORD's name as a formula or incantation to get what we want or ward off what we fear.

By bearing His name as a label but profaning His name by a lifestyle.

**By professing His name with our lips  
or even in our minds but by not  
delighting in Him with our hearts.**

### **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.



Christians are not those  
who say they are or think they are  
but only those who *truly* are.

Who you are is not revealed  
by what you say or what you think...

**...but by what you love.**

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By speaking the LORD's name in any way that is profane or unholy.

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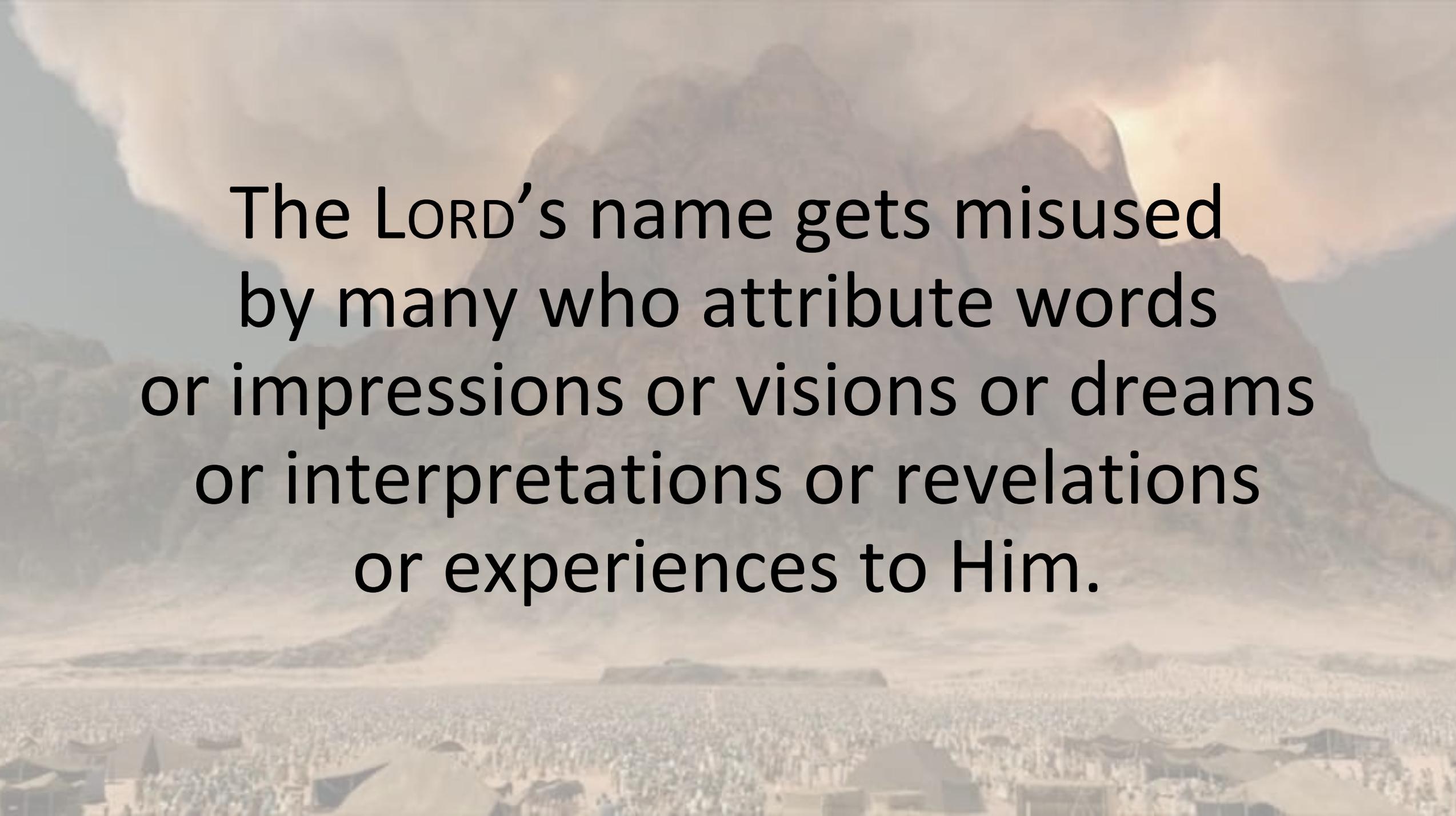
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By professing His name with our lips or even in our minds but by not delighting in Him with our hearts.

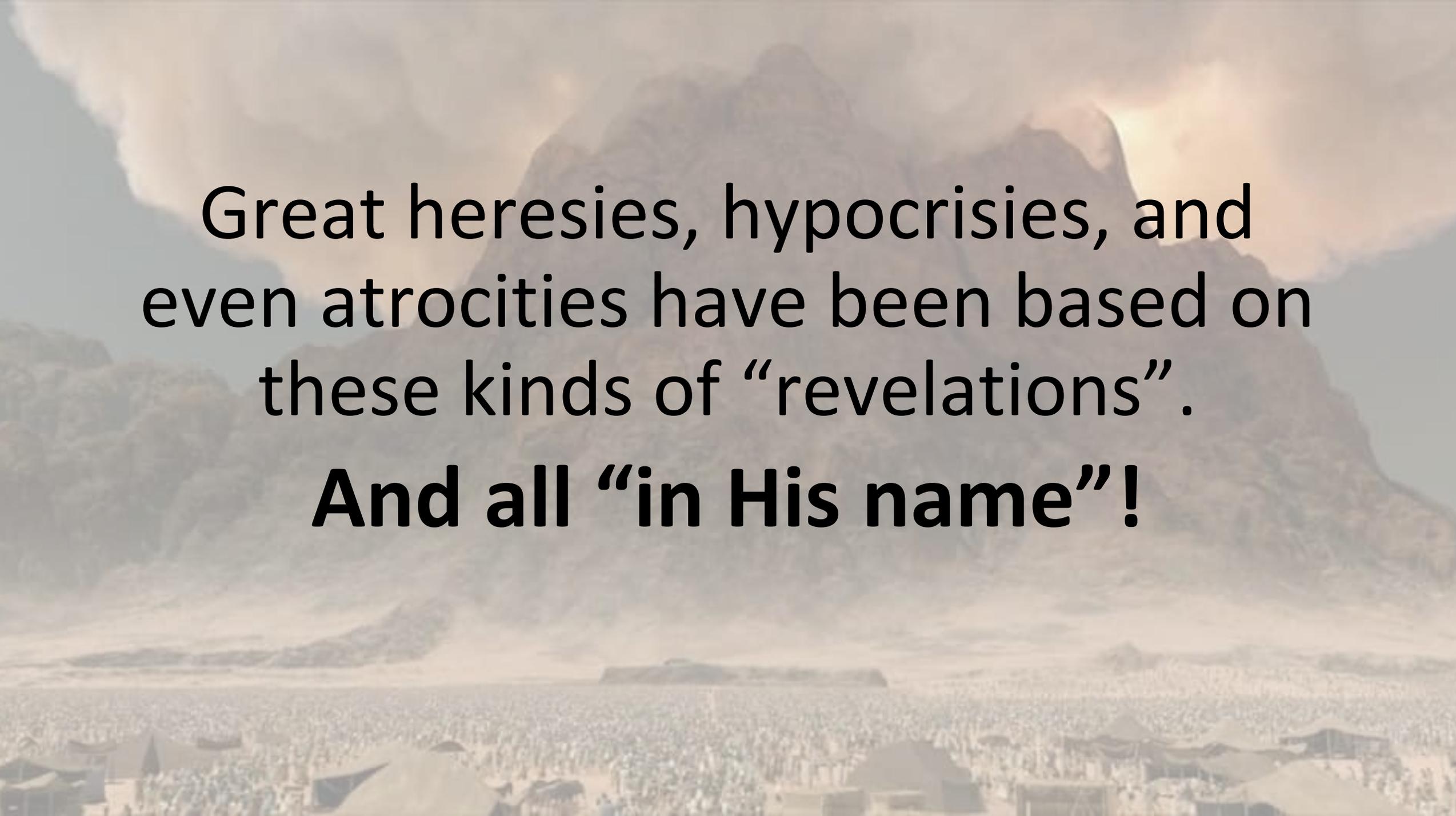
**By attributing things to the Lord that  
He did not do or say.**

## **Deuteronomy 18:20**

But the prophet who presumes to speak a word  
**in my name** that I have not commanded him to speak...  
that same prophet shall die.

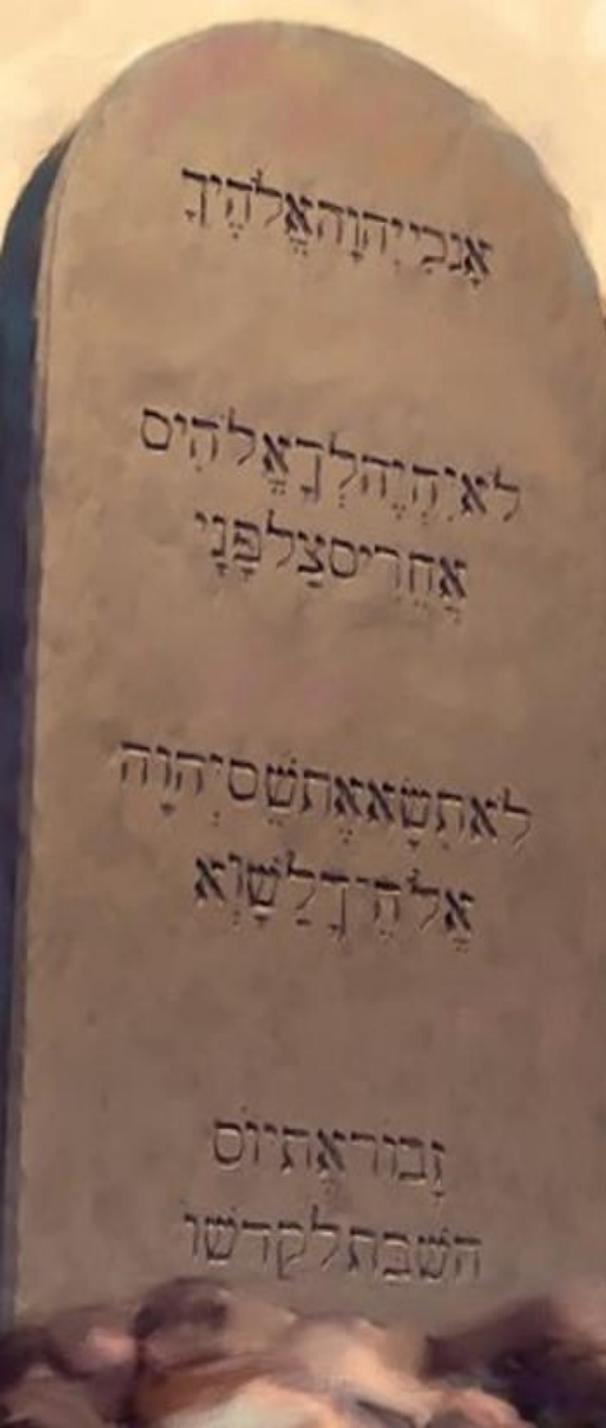


The LORD's name gets misused  
by many who attribute words  
or impressions or visions or dreams  
or interpretations or revelations  
or experiences to Him.

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 crowd is dense, and the mountains are rugged and rocky. The overall tone is somber and dramatic.

Great heresies, hypocrisies, and even atrocities have been based on these kinds of “revelations”.

**And all “in His name”!**



# Honor the LORD's Name

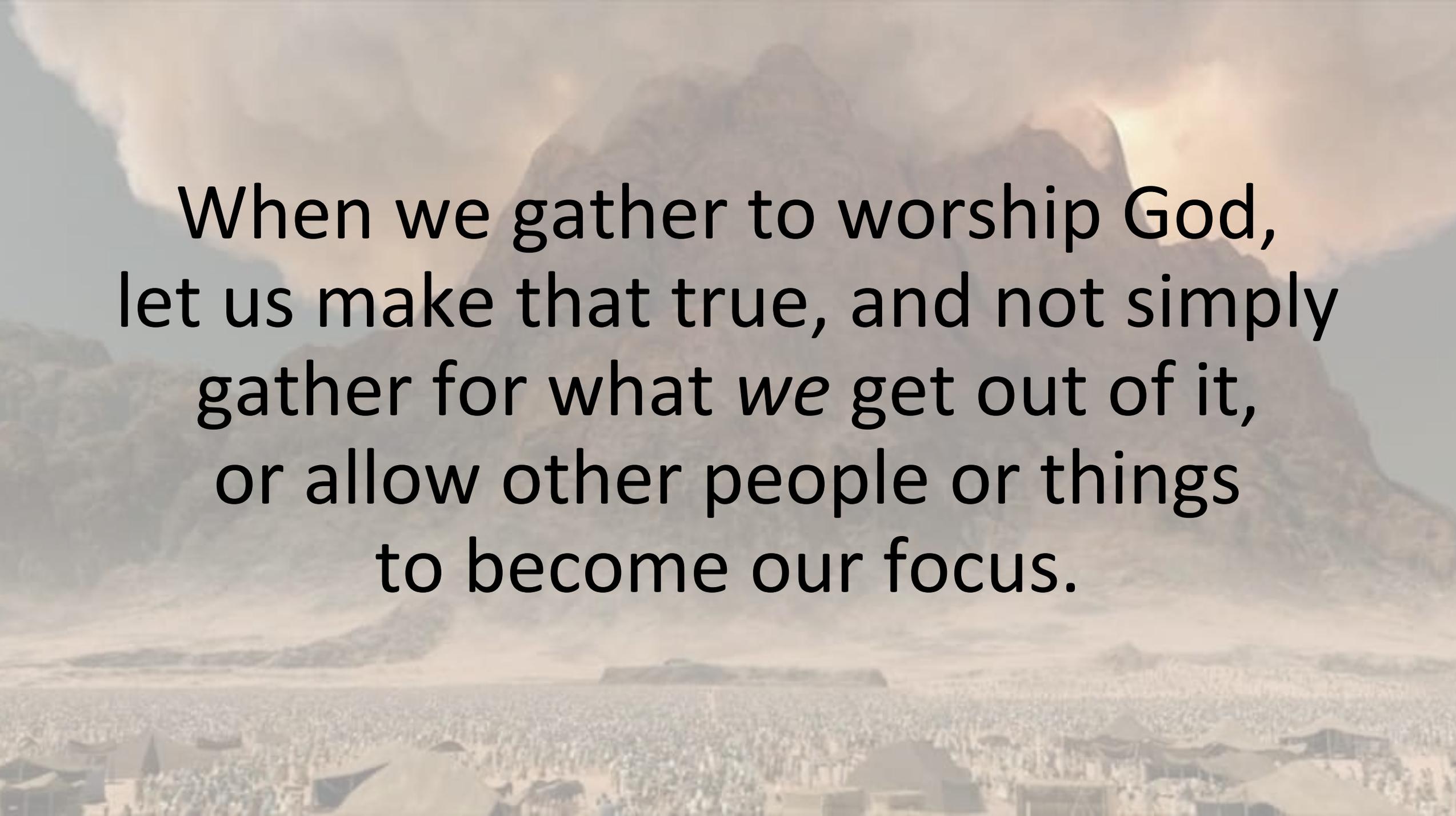
What does the 3<sup>rd</sup> Word teach about the LORD?

How do we break the 3<sup>rd</sup> Word?

## How does the 3<sup>rd</sup> Word inform our worship?

**How does the 3<sup>rd</sup> Word teach us to worship?**

**It instructs us to make God  
the focus of our worship in truth  
not just in word.**

A large crowd of people is gathered in a desert valley, with mountains in the background. The scene is hazy and appears to be from a historical or biblical setting. The text is overlaid on the image.

When we gather to worship God,  
let us make that true, and not simply  
gather for what *we* get out of it,  
or allow other people or things  
to become our focus.

# How does the 3<sup>rd</sup> Word teach us to worship?

It instructs us to make God the focus of our worship in truth not just in word.

**It instructs us to proclaim His name  
rightly and vigilantly.**

**Psalm 145:21**

My mouth will speak the praise of the LORD;  
And all flesh will bless His holy name forever and ever.

Are we proclaiming His name?

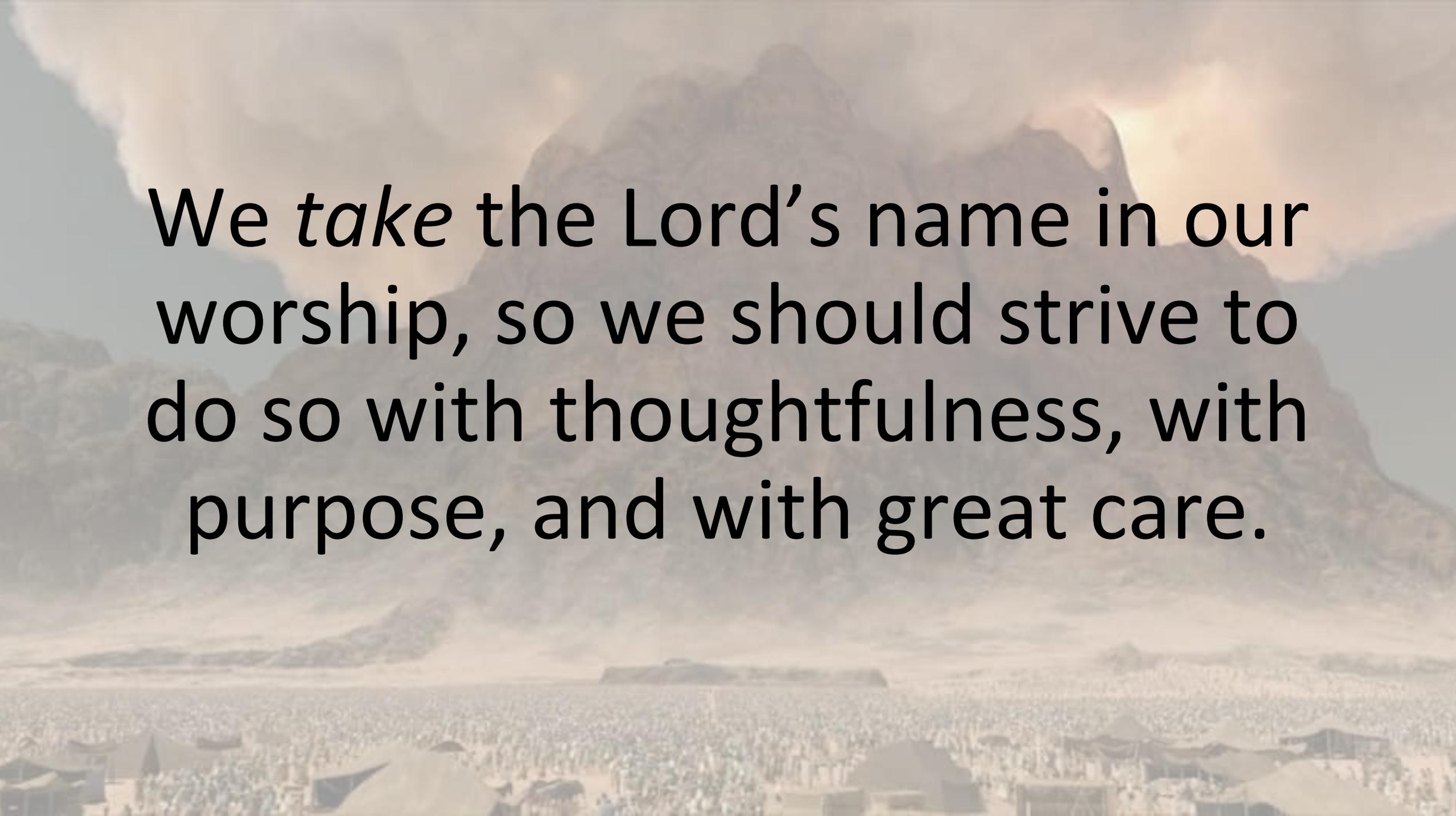
Are proclaiming it accurately and rightly?

# How does the 3<sup>rd</sup> Word teach us to worship?

It instructs us to make God the focus of our worship in truth not just in word.

It instructs us to proclaim His name rightly and vigilantly.

**It instructs us to order our worship  
carefully, purposefully, thoughtfully.**

A large crowd of people is gathered in a desert landscape, with mountains in the background. The scene is hazy and appears to be from a historical or biblical setting. The text is overlaid on the image.

*We take* the Lord's name in our worship, so we should strive to do so with thoughtfulness, with purpose, and with great care.

# How does the 3<sup>rd</sup> Word teach us to worship?

It instructs us to make God the focus of our worship in truth not just in word.

It instructs us to proclaim His name rightly and vigilantly.

It instructs us to order our worship carefully, purposefully, thoughtfully.

**It instructs us to engage in worship  
fully and sincerely.**

**John 4:24**

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

“Love the Lord your God with all your heart,  
with all your mind, with all your soul,  
with all your strength.”

Let us make this the desire  
of our souls!

# Concluding Thoughts:

Let's not flatten or dull the Word of God by carelessness or complacency, but let us strive to study so that we may love the Word Himself.

Let's not misuse the Lord's name as individuals or as a church by living in a manner inconsistent with the person of that name, our Lord Jesus.

Let's honor the Lord's name by gathering to worship our Lord in spirit and in truth and by proclaiming His name accurately and boldly.