

A painting depicting a large group of people, likely a biblical scene, with a city in the background. The scene is set in a desert-like environment with a large, multi-story building in the distance. The people are dressed in traditional, colorful clothing, and many are carrying bundles on their heads or backs, suggesting a journey or migration. The overall atmosphere is one of a significant event or a moment of transition.

The Curse of Doubt and Idolatry

Jeremiah 17:5-6

Jeremiah 17:5-6

Thus says the LORD,
“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.”

Jeremiah 17:7-8

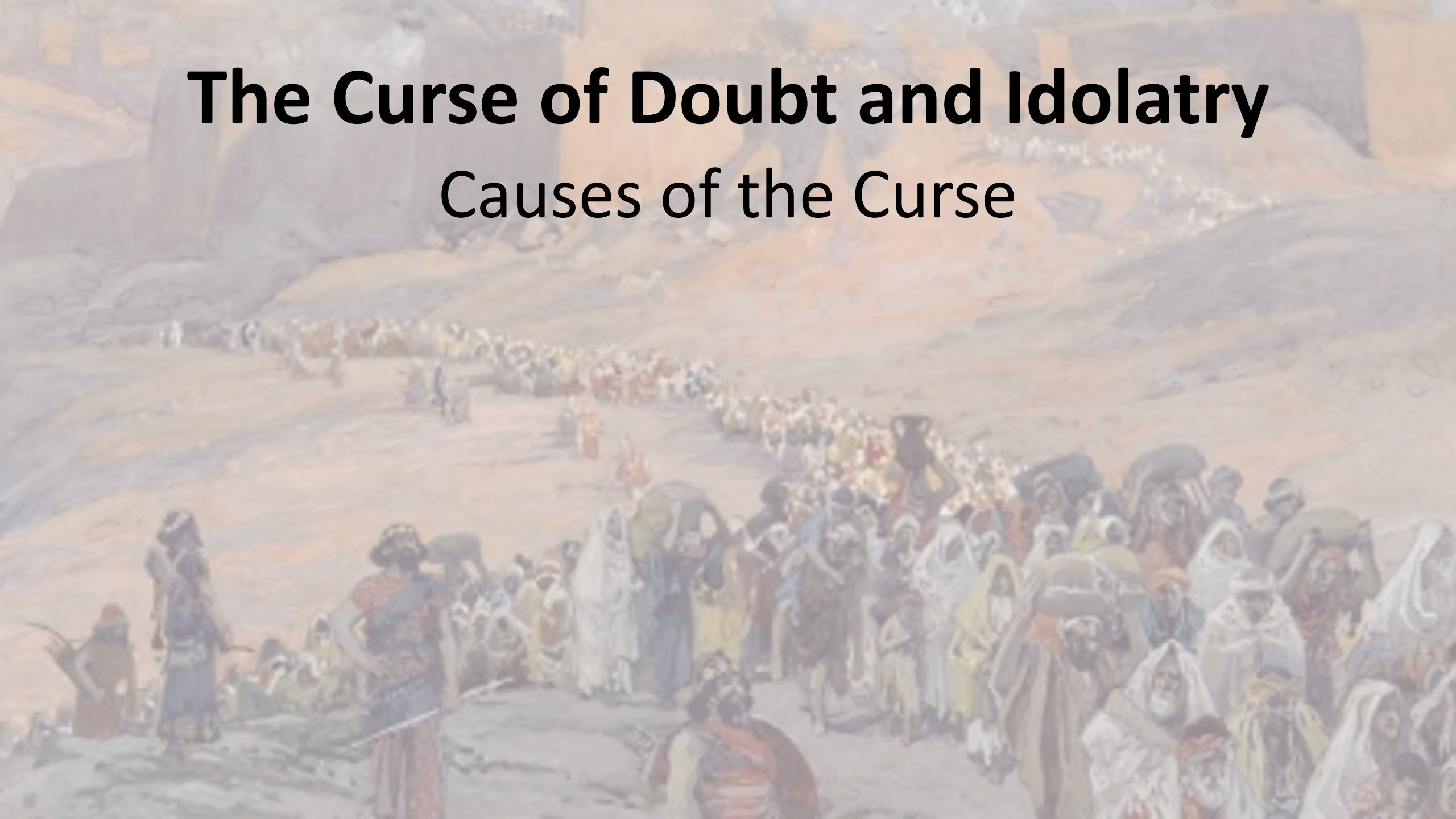
“Blessed is the man who trusts in the LORD
And whose trust is the LORD.
For he will be like a tree planted by the water,
That extends its roots by a stream
And will not fear when the heat comes;
But its leaves will be green,
And it will not be anxious in a year of drought
Nor cease to yield fruit.”

Main Point

Doubt and idolatry lead us away from the Lord into a desert of the soul, but the Lord uses the results of this curse to drive us back to Himself for even greater blessing.

The Curse of Doubt and Idolatry

Causes of the Curse



Jeremiah 17:5

Thus says the LORD,
“Cursed is the man who trusts in mankind
And makes flesh his strength,
And whose heart turns away from the LORD.

Jeremiah 17:5

Thus says the LORD,

Cursed is the man who trusts in mankind

And makes flesh his strength,

And whose heart turns away from the LORD.

To be under the bitter consequences of sin.

Causes of the Curse

Trusting in mankind.

Jeremiah 17:5

Thus says the LORD,

Cursed is the man who trusts in mankind
And makes flesh his strength,
And whose heart turns away from the LORD.

Jeremiah 17:5

Thus says the LORD,

“Cursed is the man **who trusts in mankind**

And makes flesh his strength,
And whose heart turns away from the LORD.

Jeremiah 17:5

Thus says the LORD,

“Cursed is the man **who trusts in *adam***

And makes flesh his strength,
And whose heart turns away from the LORD.

The term is meant to indicate humanity in general;
in other words, “who trusts in a person or people.”

Psalm 146:3

Do not trust in princes,
In mortal man, in whom there is no salvation.

Psalm 146:3

Do not trust **in princes**,
In mortal man, in whom there is no salvation.

Psalm 146:3

Do not trust in princes,

In mortal man, in whom there is no salvation.

Psalm 146:3

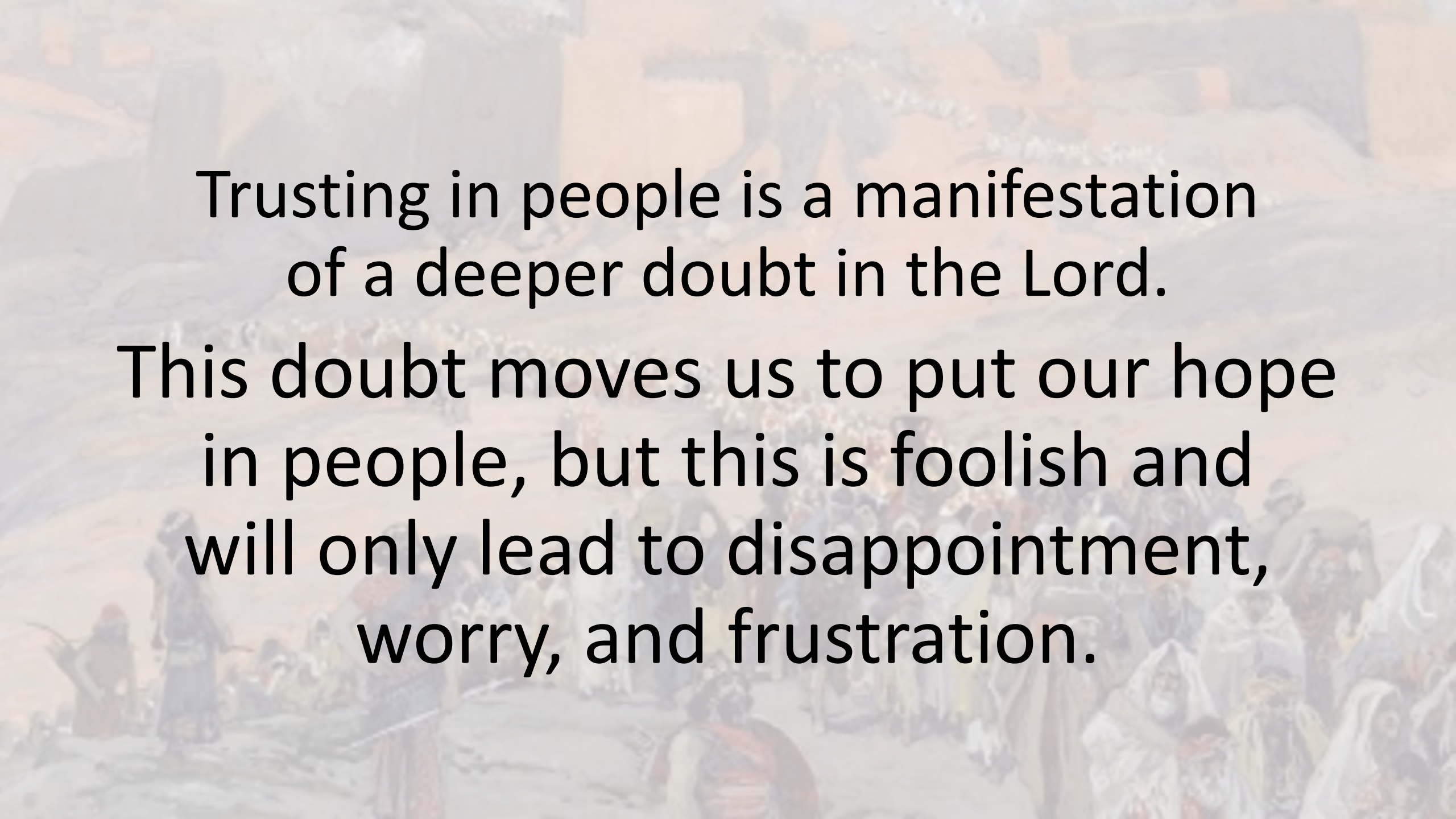
Do not trust in princes,

In the sons of Adam, in whom there is no salvation.

Psalm 146:3

Do not trust in princes,

In the sons of Adam, **in whom there is no salvation.**



Trusting in people is a manifestation
of a deeper doubt in the Lord.

This doubt moves us to put our hope
in people, but this is foolish and
will only lead to disappointment,
worry, and frustration.

Causes of the Curse

Trusting in mankind.

Making flesh our strength.

Jeremiah 17:5

Thus says the LORD,

Cursed is the man who trusts in mankind
And makes flesh his strength,
And whose heart turns away from the LORD.

Jeremiah 17:5

Thus says the LORD,

“Cursed is the man **who** trusts in mankind

And **makes flesh his strength,**

And whose heart turns away from the LORD.

Jeremiah 17:5

Thus says the LORD,
“Cursed is the man who trusts in mankind

And makes **flesh** his strength,
And whose heart turns away from the LORD.

The emphasis is upon the weakness and temporal nature of human strength and ability and the foolishness of trusting in such things.

2 Chronicles 32:7-8

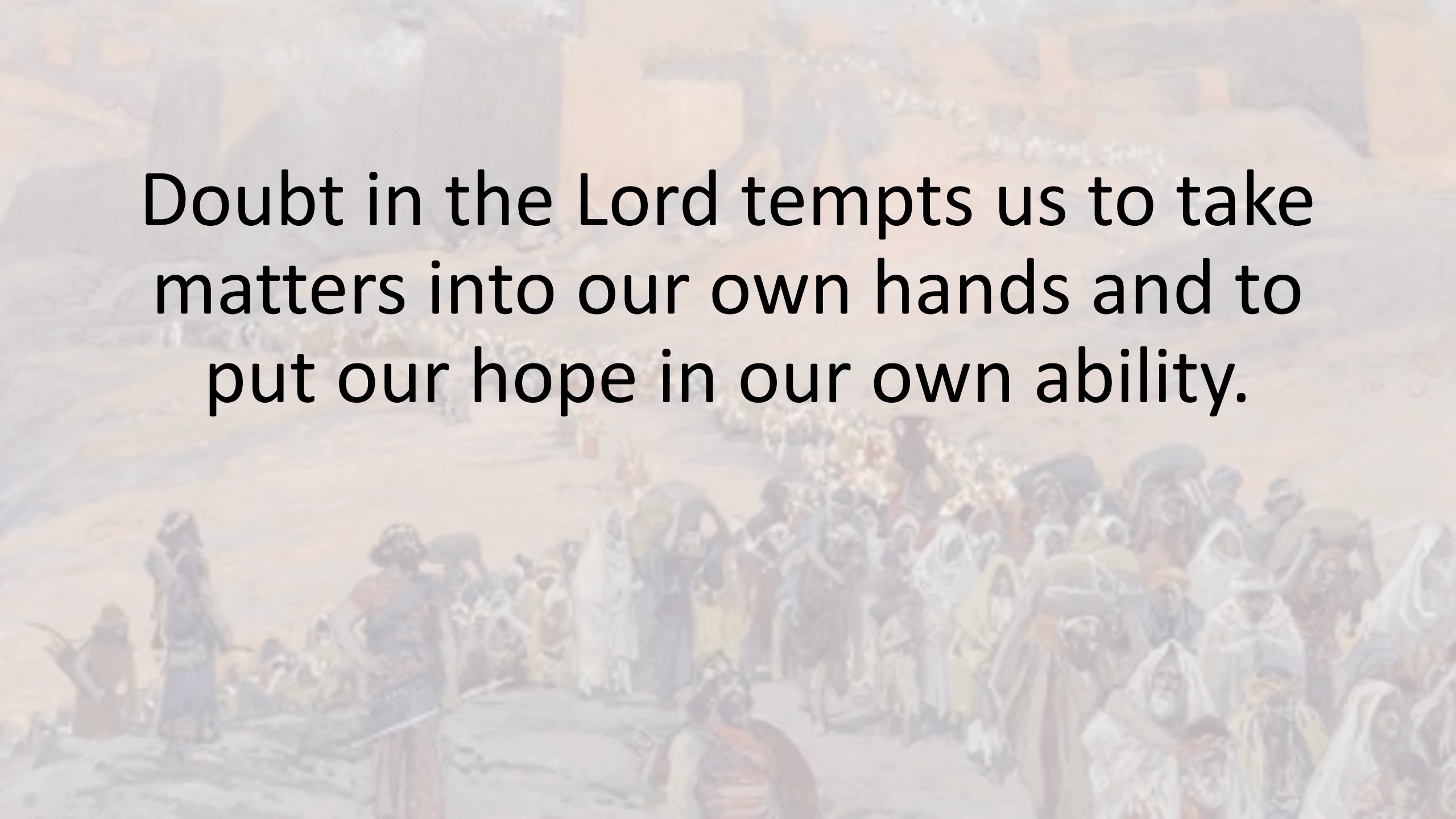
“Be strong and courageous, do not fear or be dismayed because of the king of Assyria nor because of all the horde that is with him; for the one with us is greater than the one with him. With him is only an arm of flesh, but with us is the LORD our God to help us and to fight our battles.”

2 Chronicles 32:7-8

“Be strong and courageous, do not fear or be dismayed because of the king of Assyria nor because of all the horde that is with him; for the one with us is greater than the one with him.

With him is only an arm of flesh, but with us is the LORD our God to help us and to fight our battles.”

Why would you choose to trust in human strength, your own or another's, when the One who is greater is with you?



Doubt in the Lord tempts us to take matters into our own hands and to put our hope in our own ability.

Causes of the Curse

Trusting in mankind.

Making flesh our strength.

Turning our hearts away from the Lord.

Jeremiah 17:5

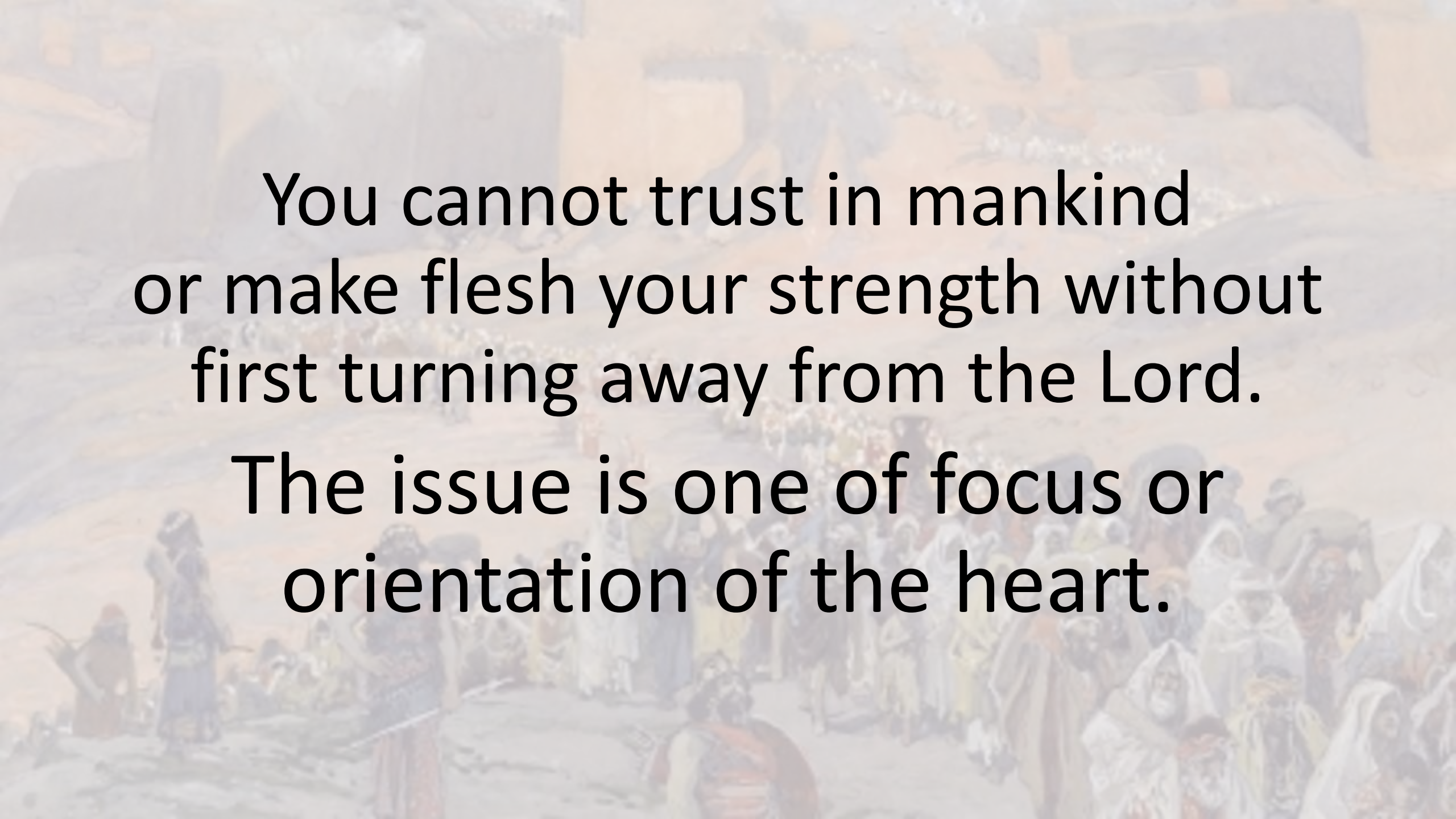
Thus says the LORD,

Cursed is the man who trusts in mankind
And makes flesh his strength,
And whose heart turns away from the LORD.

Jeremiah 17:5

Thus says the LORD,
“Cursed is the man who trusts in mankind
And makes flesh his strength,

And **whose heart turns away
from the LORD.**



You cannot trust in mankind
or make flesh your strength without
first turning away from the Lord.

The issue is one of focus or
orientation of the heart.

Hosea 7:13-14

Woe to them, for they have strayed from Me!
Destruction is theirs, for they have rebelled against Me!
I would redeem them, but they speak lies against Me.
And they do not cry to Me from their heart
When they wail on their beds;
For the sake of grain and new wine they gash themselves,
They turn away from Me.

Hosea 7:13-14

Woe to them, for they have strayed from Me!
Destruction is theirs, for they have rebelled against Me!
I would redeem them, but they speak lies against Me.

And **they do not cry to Me from their heart**

When they wail on their beds;
For the sake of grain and new wine they gash themselves,
They turn away from Me.

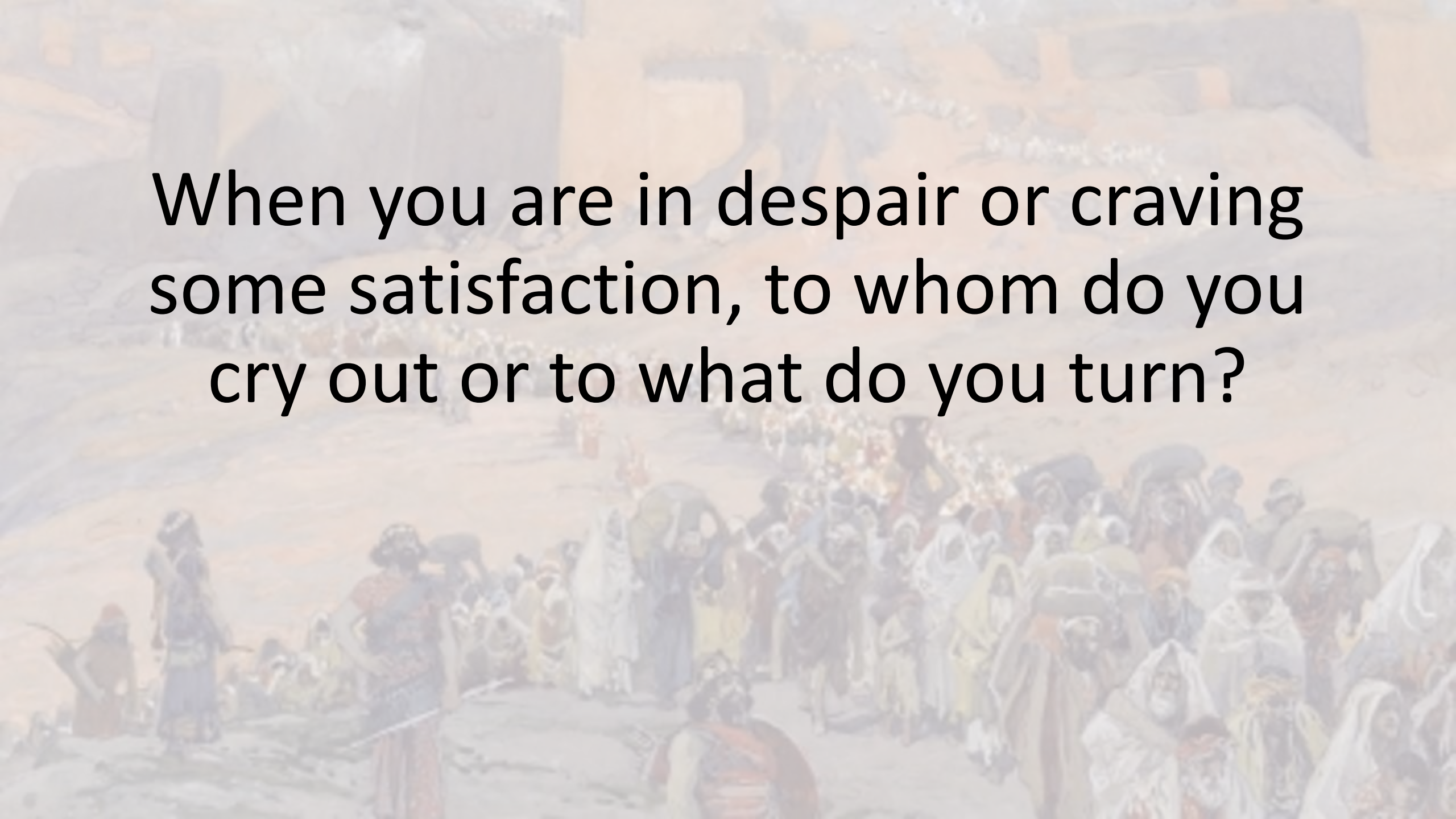
Hosea 7:13-14

Woe to them, for they have strayed from Me!
Destruction is theirs, for they have rebelled against Me!
I would redeem them, but they speak lies against Me.

And **they do not cry to Me from their heart**

When they wail on their beds;
For the sake of grain and new wine they gash themselves,

They turn away from Me.

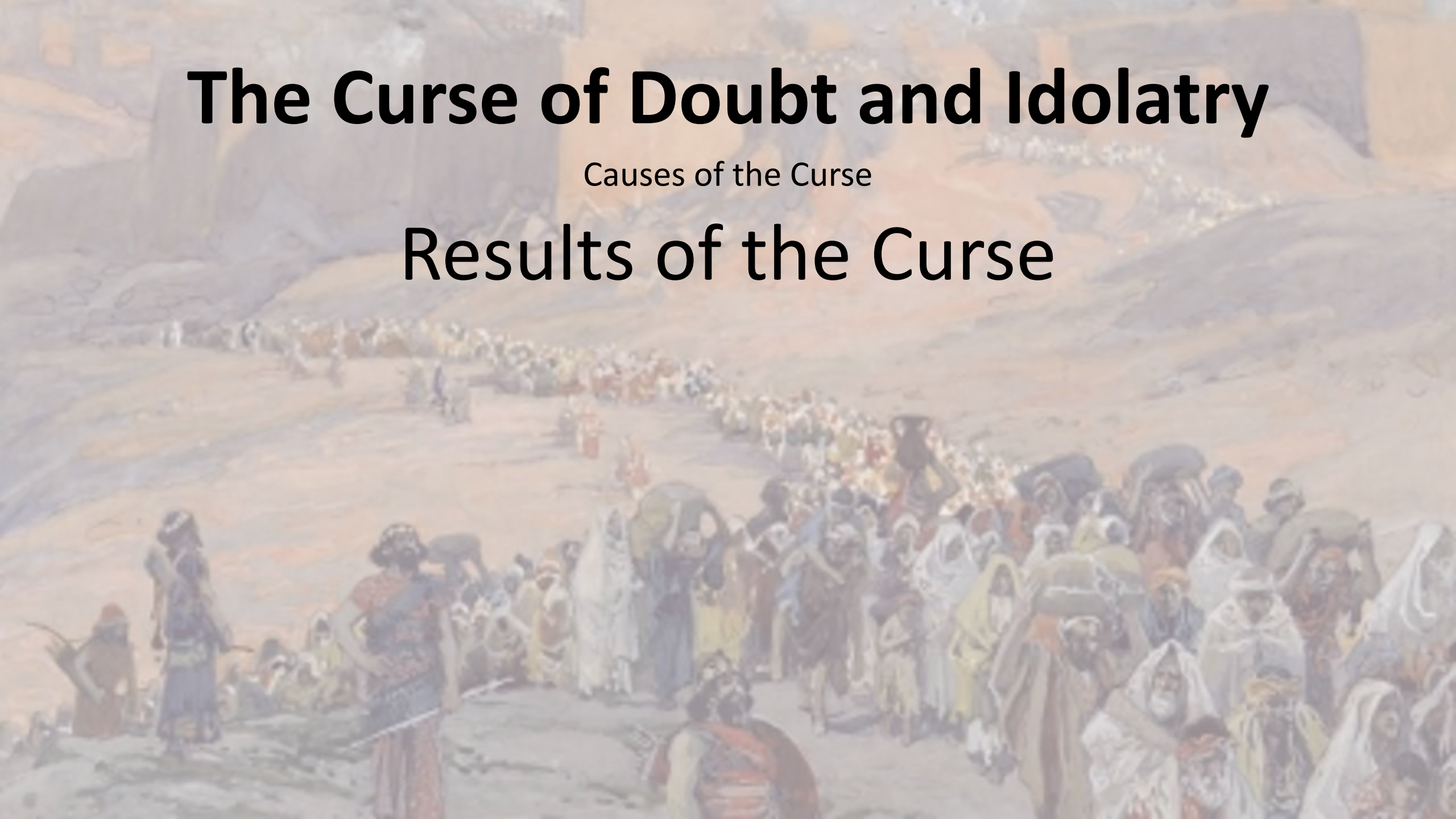
A faded, sepia-toned illustration of a large crowd of people in a desert setting. The scene depicts a group of individuals, many wearing head coverings and carrying items, suggesting a journey or a moment of distress. The background shows a hazy, arid landscape with some structures in the distance. The overall tone is somber and historical.

When you are in despair or craving
some satisfaction, to whom do you
cry out or to what do you turn?

The Curse of Doubt and Idolatry

Causes of the Curse

Results of the Curse



Jeremiah 17:6

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.

Jeremiah 17:6

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.

Results of the Curse

Discontent

Jeremiah 17:6

For he will be like a bush in the desert

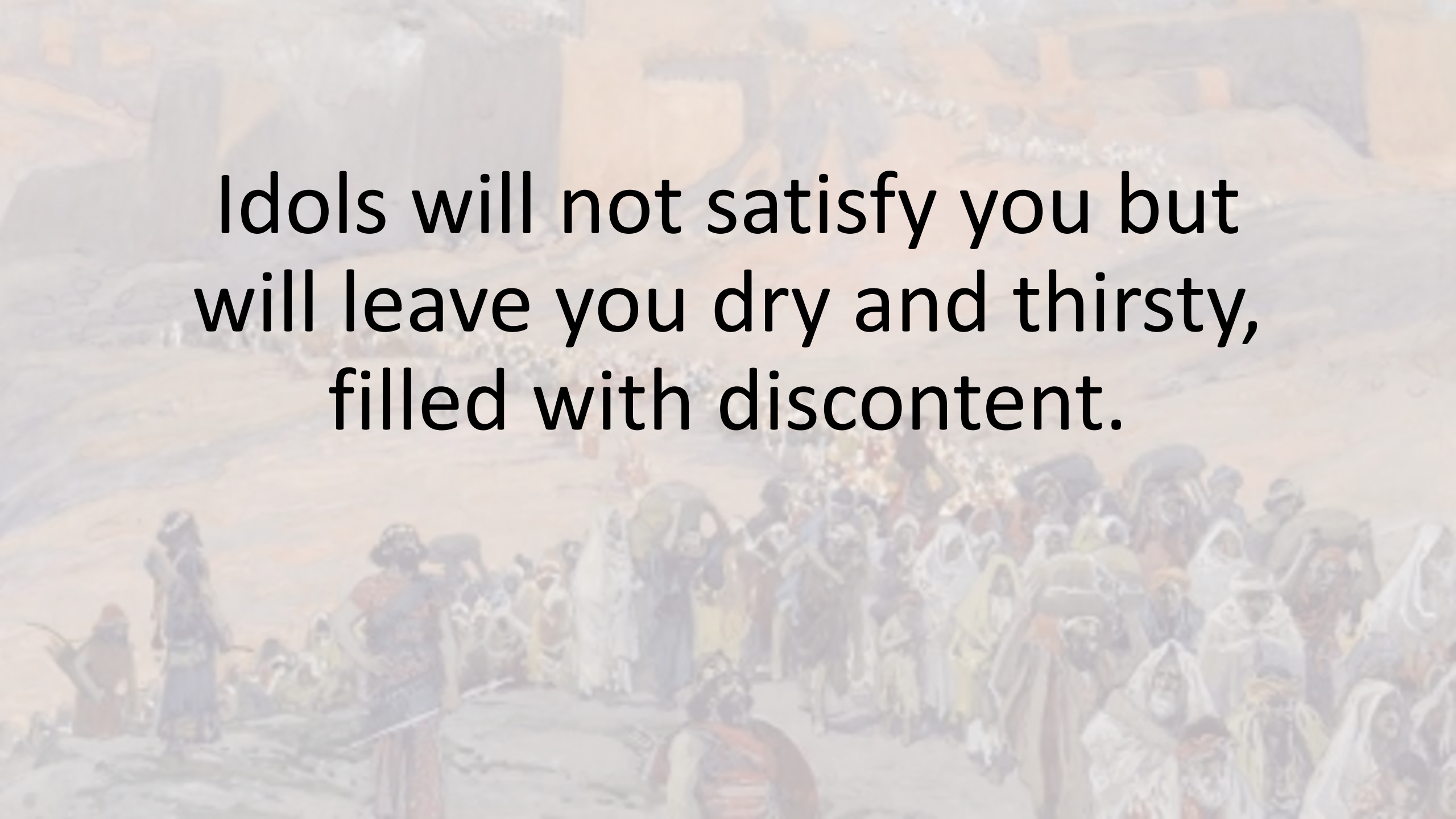
And will not see when prosperity comes,
But will live in stony wastes in the wilderness,
A land of salt without inhabitant.

Jeremiah 17:6

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.

The picture is of a perpetually thirsty
shrub in a dry and parched land.



Idols will not satisfy you but
will leave you dry and thirsty,
filled with discontent.

Jeremiah 17:6

For he will be like a bush in the desert

And **will not see when prosperity comes,**

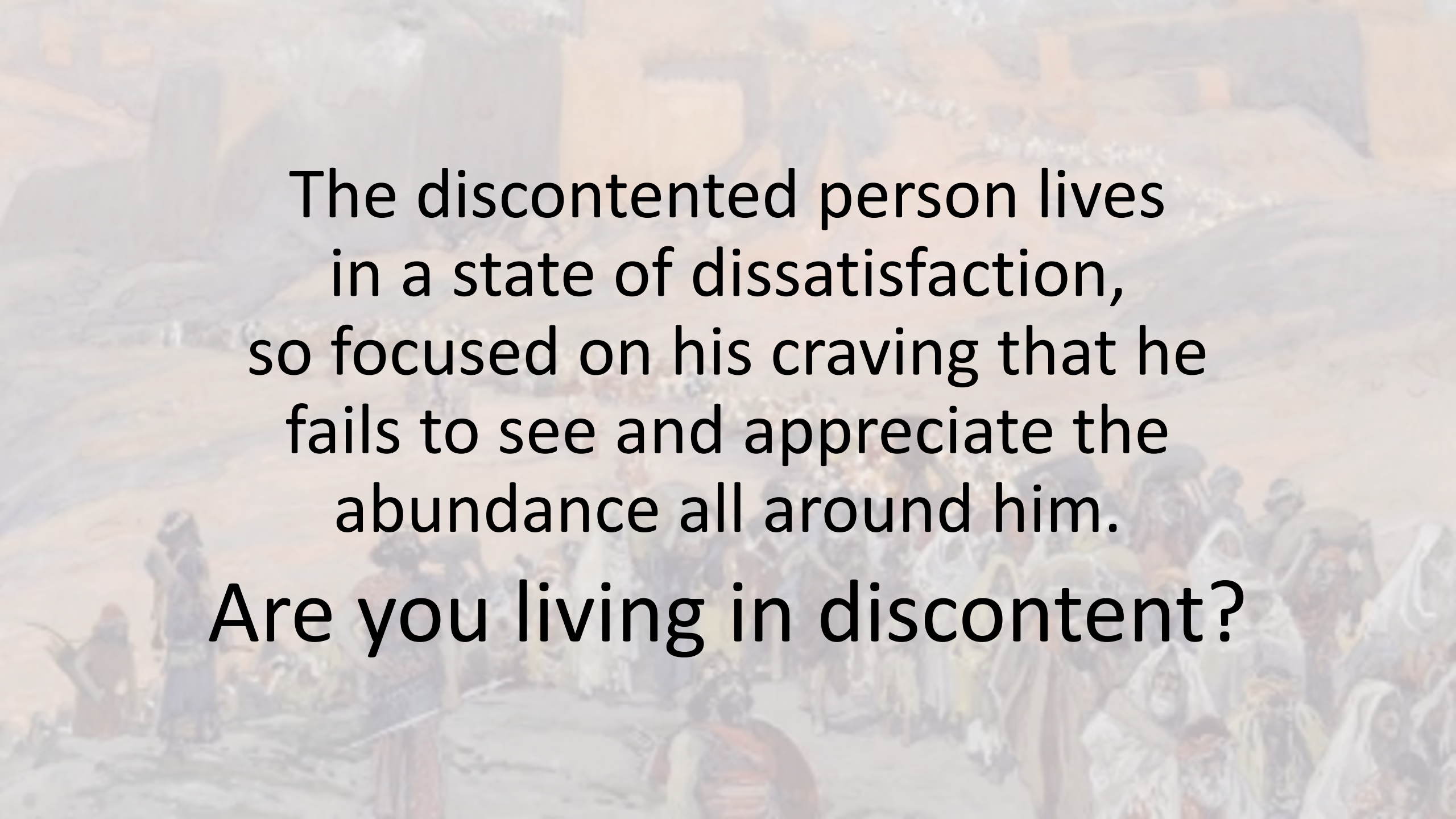
But will live in stony wastes in the wilderness,
A land of salt without inhabitant.

Jeremiah 17:6

For he will be like a bush in the desert

And **will not see when *good* comes,**

But will live in stony wastes in the wilderness,
A land of salt without inhabitant.



The discontented person lives
in a state of dissatisfaction,
so focused on his craving that he
fails to see and appreciate the
abundance all around him.

Are you living in discontent?

Results of the Curse

Discontent

Desolation

Jeremiah 17:6

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.

Jeremiah 17:6

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.

Jeremiah 17:6

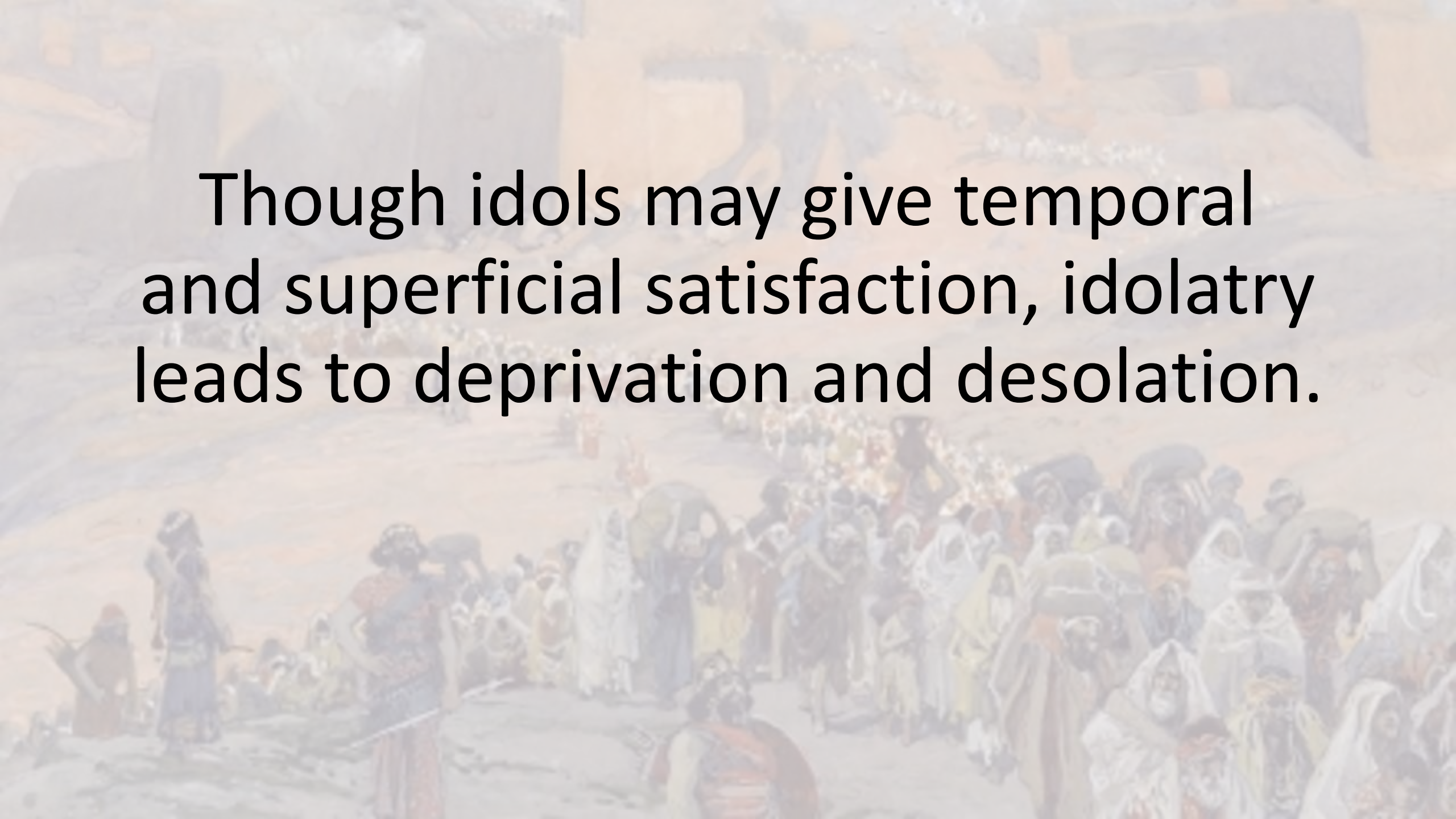
For he will be like a bush in the desert

And will not see when prosperity comes,

But **will live in stony wastes in the wilderness,**

A land of salt without inhabitant.

The picture is of a land that is
dry, rocky, and desolate.

The background is a faded, sepia-toned illustration of a large crowd of people in a desert setting. The figures are dressed in traditional, simple clothing, and the scene suggests a significant gathering or event. The overall tone is somber and historical.

Though idols may give temporal and superficial satisfaction, idolatry leads to deprivation and desolation.

Isaiah 1:7

Your land is desolate,
Your cities are burned with fire,
Your fields — strangers are devouring them in your presence;
It is desolation, as overthrown by strangers.

Results of the Curse

Discontent

Desolation

Despair

Jeremiah 17:6

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.

Jeremiah 17:6

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.

Jeremiah 17:6

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.

This is a picture of bitter loneliness
and deep despair.

Deuteronomy 28:64-65

Moreover, the LORD will scatter you among all peoples, from one end of the earth to the other end of the earth; and there you shall serve other gods, wood and stone, which you or your fathers have not known.

Among those nations you shall find no rest, and there will be no resting place for the sole of your foot; but there the LORD will give you a trembling heart, failing of eyes, and despair of soul.

Deuteronomy 28:64-65

Moreover, the LORD will scatter you among all peoples,
from one end of the earth to the other end of the earth;

and **there** you shall serve other gods, wood and stone,
which you or your fathers have not known.

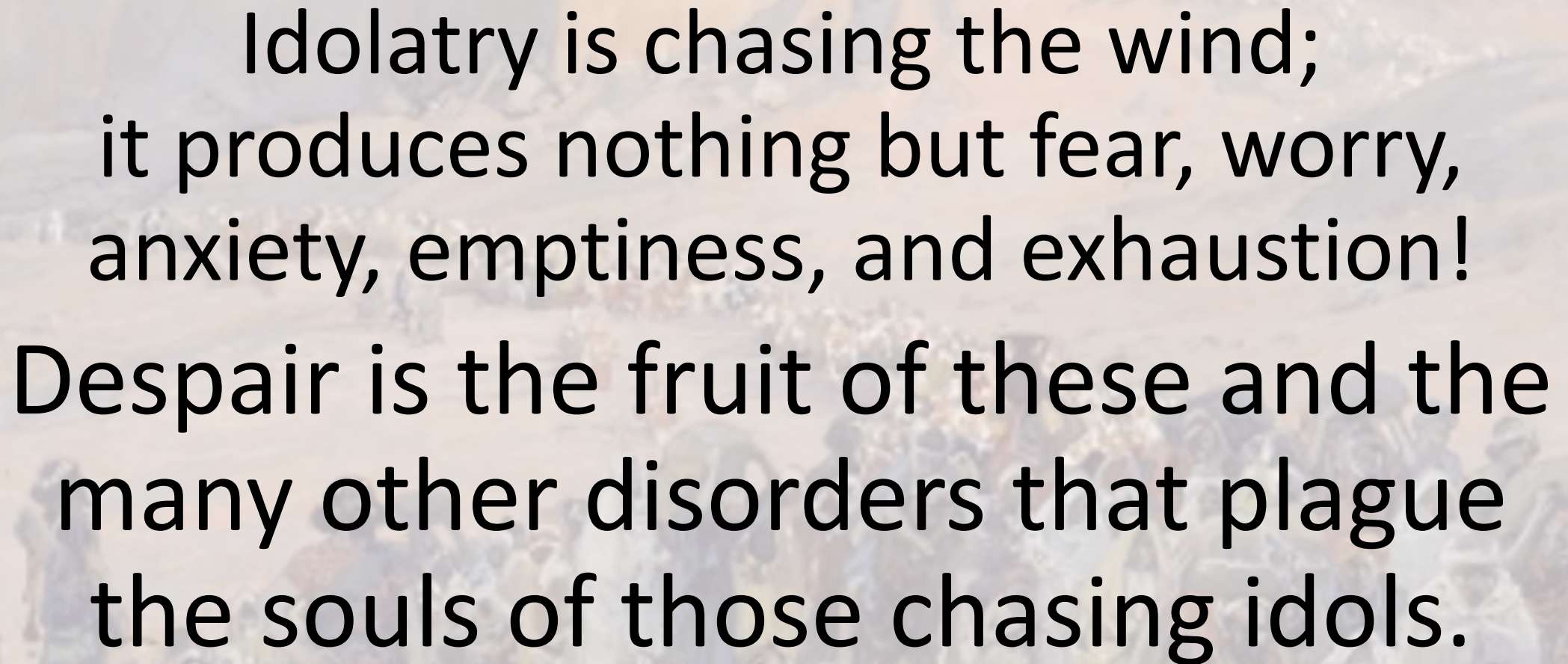
Among those nations **you shall find no rest,**
and there will be no resting place for the sole of your foot;
but there the LORD will give you a trembling heart,
failing of eyes, and despair of soul.

Deuteronomy 28:64-65

Moreover, the LORD will scatter you among all peoples,
from one end of the earth to the other end of the earth;
and there you shall serve other gods, wood and stone,
which you or your fathers have not known.

Among those nations you shall find no rest,
and there will be no resting place for the sole of your foot;

but **there the LORD will give you** a trembling heart,
failing of eyes, and **despair of soul.**



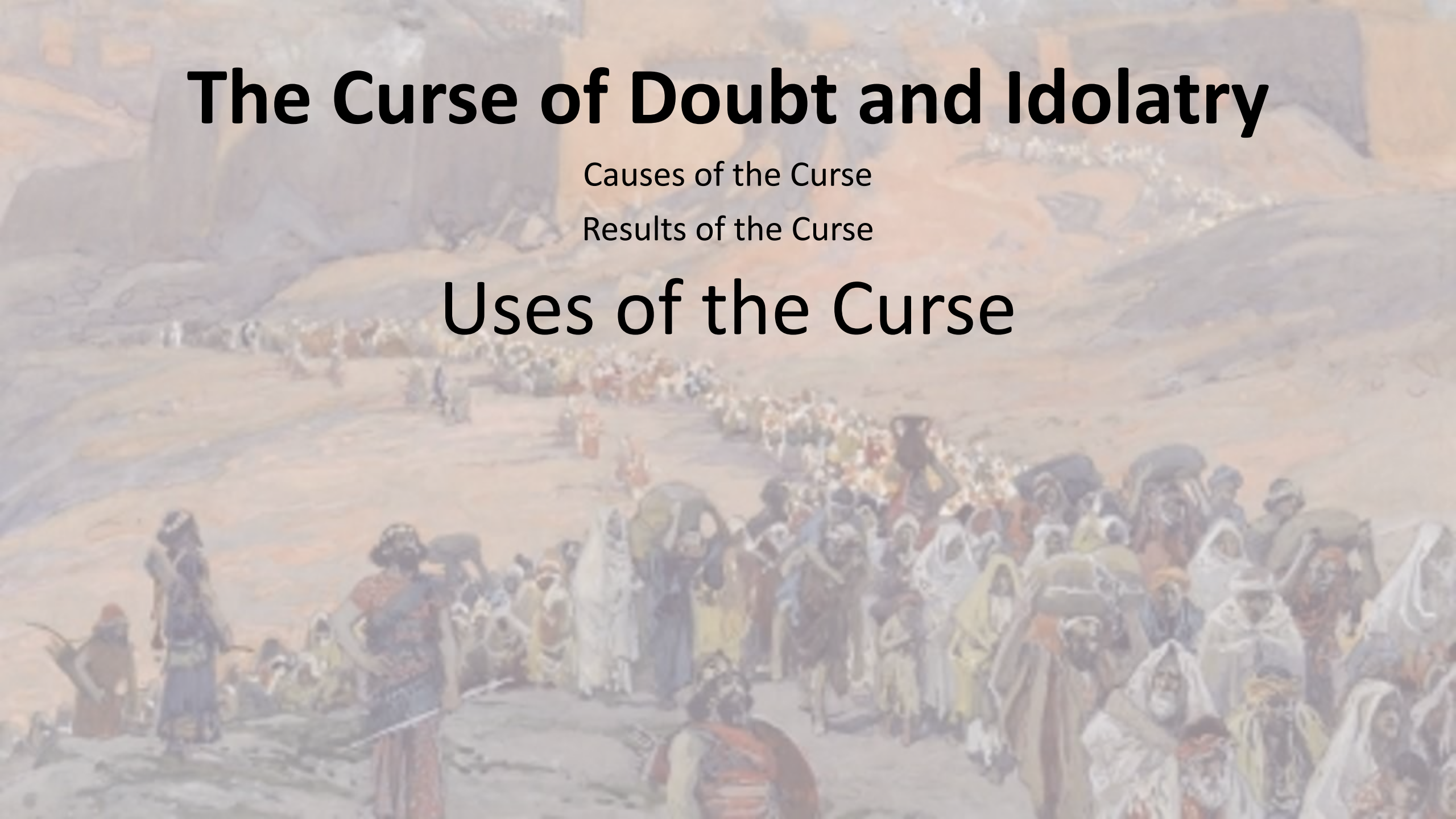
Idolatry is chasing the wind;
it produces nothing but fear, worry,
anxiety, emptiness, and exhaustion!
Despair is the fruit of these and the
many other disorders that plague
the souls of those chasing idols.

The Curse of Doubt and Idolatry

Causes of the Curse

Results of the Curse

Uses of the Curse



Uses of the Curse

As a diagnostic for our heart condition.

Jeremiah 17:5-6

Thus says the LORD,

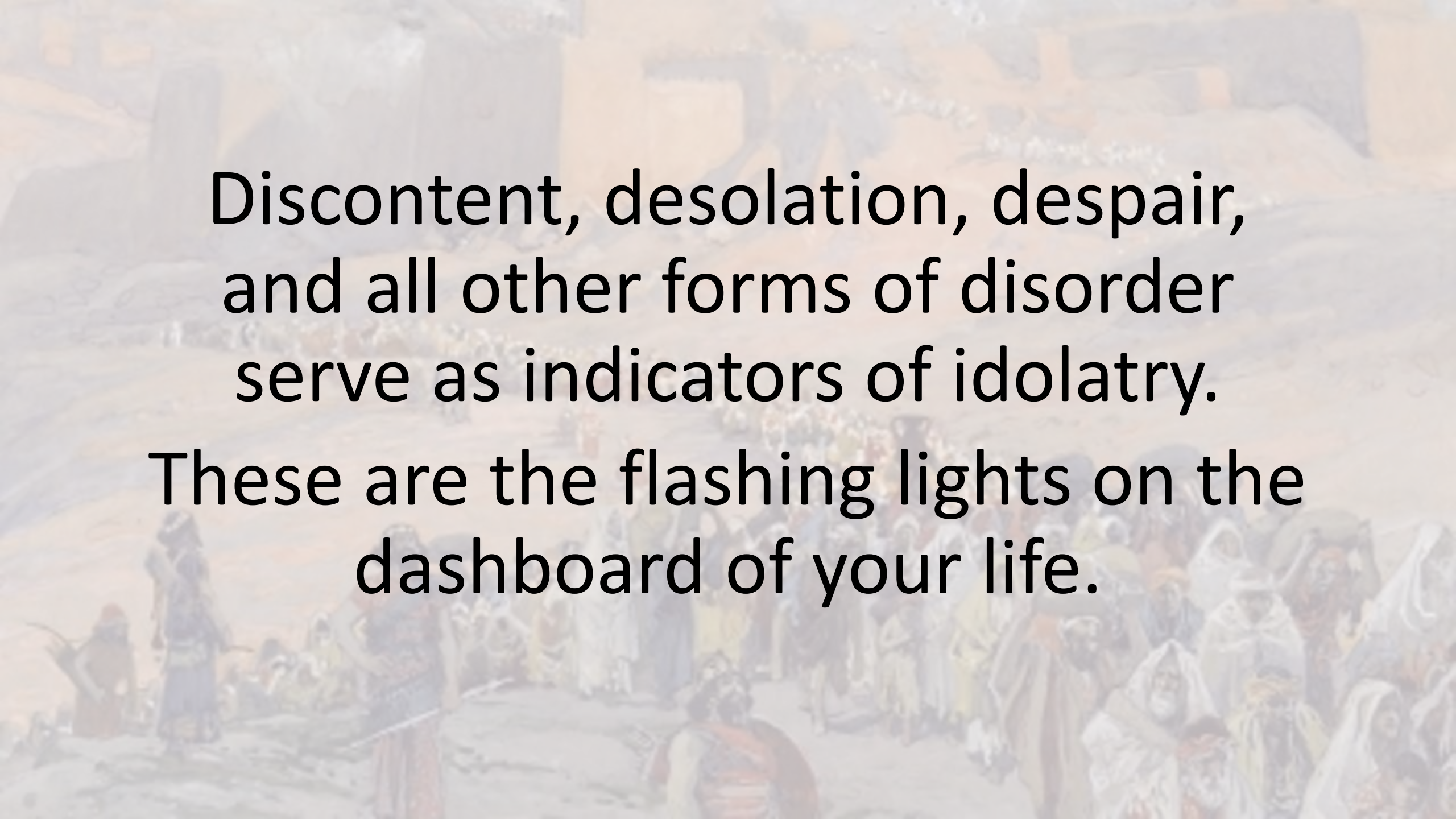
“Cursed is the man who...

For he will be like...”

What follows is a diagnostic description
of the effects of idolatry.

Jeremiah 17:6

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.



Discontent, desolation, despair,
and all other forms of disorder
serve as indicators of idolatry.

These are the flashing lights on the
dashboard of your life.

Uses of the Curse

As a diagnostic for our heart condition.

As a driver for our heart orientation.

Jeremiah 17:5-8

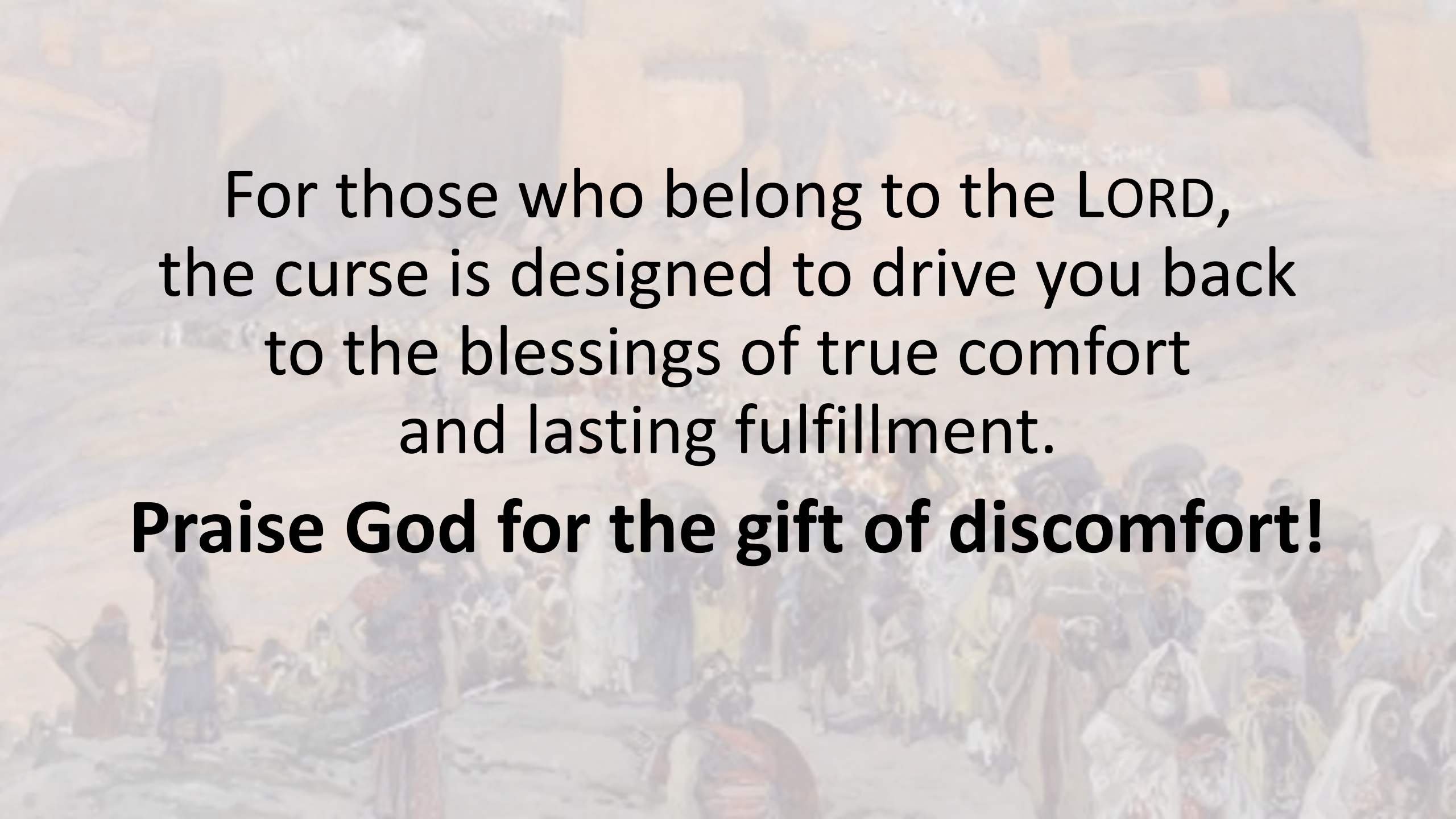
“Cursed is the man who trusts in mankind...”

“Blessed is the man who trusts in the LORD...”

Jeremiah 17:5-8

“***Cursed*** is the man who trusts in mankind...”

“***Blessed*** is the man who trusts in the LORD...”



For those who belong to the LORD,
the curse is designed to drive you back
to the blessings of true comfort
and lasting fulfillment.

Praise God for the gift of discomfort!

Hosea 6:1-2

“Come, let us return to the LORD.
For He has torn us, but He will heal us;
He has wounded us, but He will bandage us.
He will revive us after two days;
He will raise us up on the third day,
That we may live before Him.”

Concluding Questions

Are you living in the desert,
in a land of discontent and despair?

Are you willing to exam
the orientation of your heart?

Will you learn how to turn to Christ
for the fulfillment that only He can give?