

Secure in Christ - Revelation 3:7- 13



Charles Schultz, creator of the comic strip “Peanuts” pictures one of his characters, Linus, tenaciously clinging to his security blanket. Wherever he goes or whatever he does, Linus must have his blanket. He feels insecure without it.



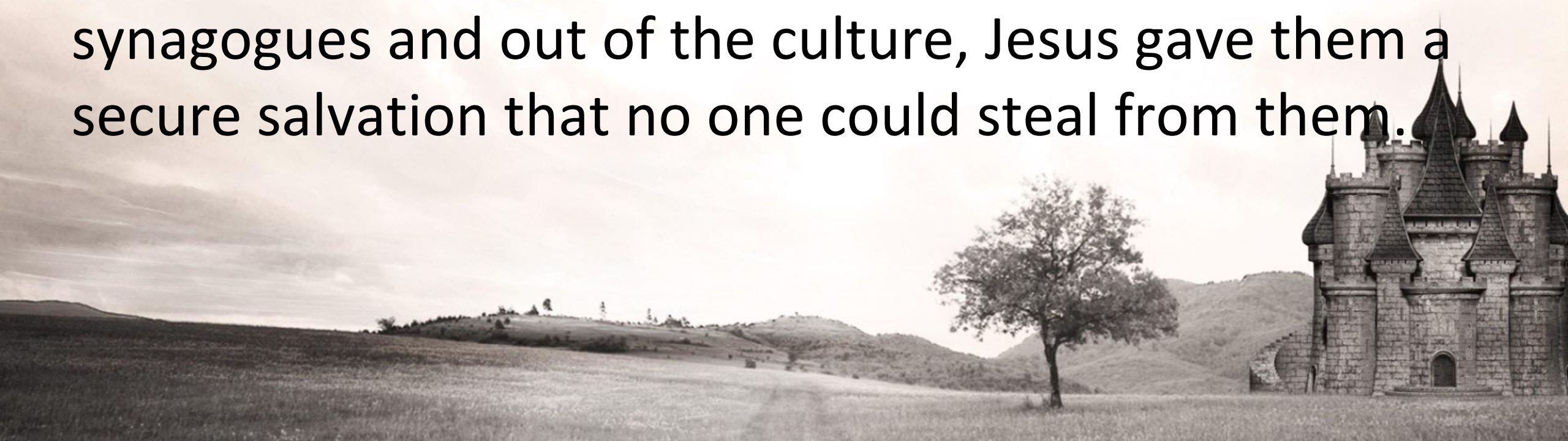
All people desire to have security - to have a safe place to belong to and a stable home to live in. True security in this world is impossible to find - but not for the follower of Jesus Christ.



John 10:27–30 (CSB) My sheep hear my voice, I know them, and they follow me. I give them eternal life, and they will never perish. No one will snatch them out of my hand. My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all. No one is able to snatch them out of the Father's hand. I and the Father are one.”



In our journey through the 7 Churches of Revelation, one church stands out as a strong enduring church that held faithful no matter what. Even though they had experienced the loss of homes through earthquakes and had been pushed out of the synagogues and out of the culture, Jesus gave them a secure salvation that no one could steal from them.



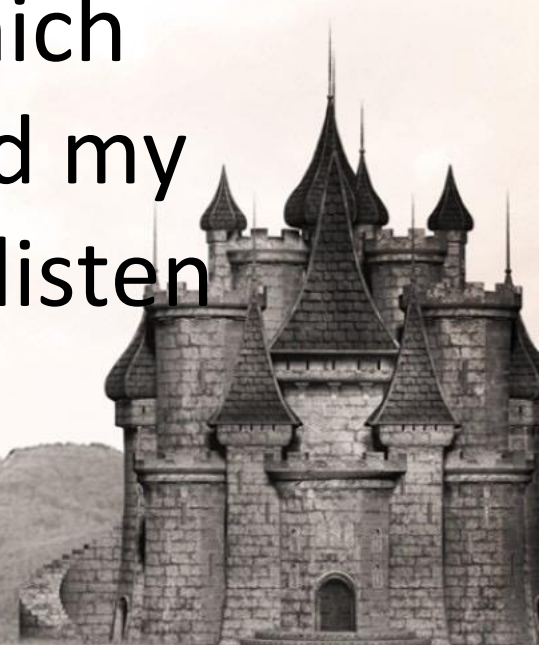
Revelation 3:7–8 (CSB) “Write to the angel of the church in Philadelphia: Thus says the Holy One, the true one, the one who has the key of David, who opens and no one will close, and who closes and no one opens: I know your works. Look, I have placed before you an open door that no one can close because you have but little power; yet you have kept my word and have not denied my name.



Revelation 3:9–10 (CSB) Note this: I will make those from the synagogue of Satan, who claim to be Jews and are not, but are lying—I will make them come and bow down at your feet, and they will know that I have loved you. Because you have kept my command to endure, I will also keep you from the hour of testing that is going to come on the whole world to test those who live on the earth.



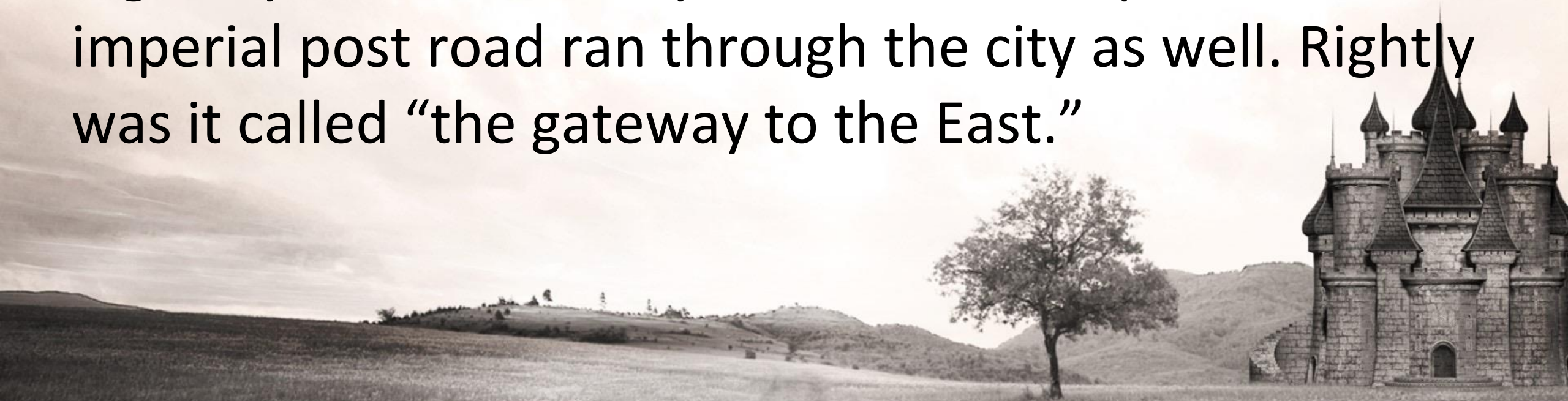
Revelation 3:11–13 (CSB) I am coming soon. Hold on to what you have, so that no one takes your crown. “The one who conquers I will make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he will never go out again. I will write on him the name of my God and the name of the city of my God—the new Jerusalem, which comes down out of heaven from my God—and my new name. “Let anyone who has ears to hear listen to what the Spirit says to the churches.



There was a church in the 1st century that learned this lesson very well. They might anger the devil and agitate the world, but they made it their consuming passion to please God. The church is the church at Philadelphia, and what an outstanding model for ministry she provides for us who want our church to please and honor Jesus.



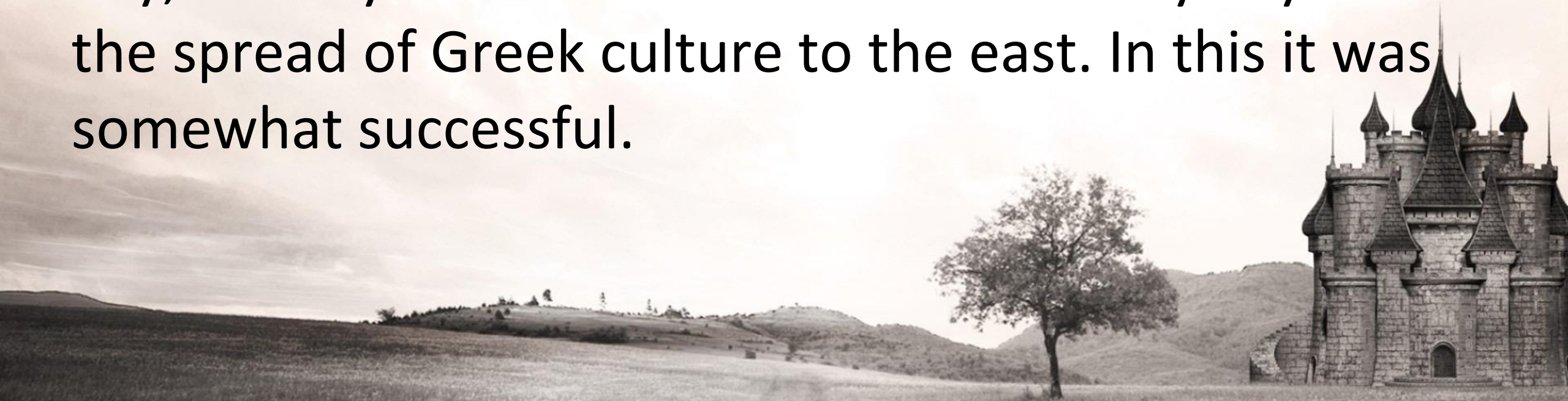
This church was located at a strategic cross-section of trade routes in the Hermus River Valley about 28 miles SE of Sardis and 100 miles due west of Smyrna. A main highway connected Smyrna and Philadelphia and the imperial post road ran through the city as well. Rightly was it called “the gateway to the East.”



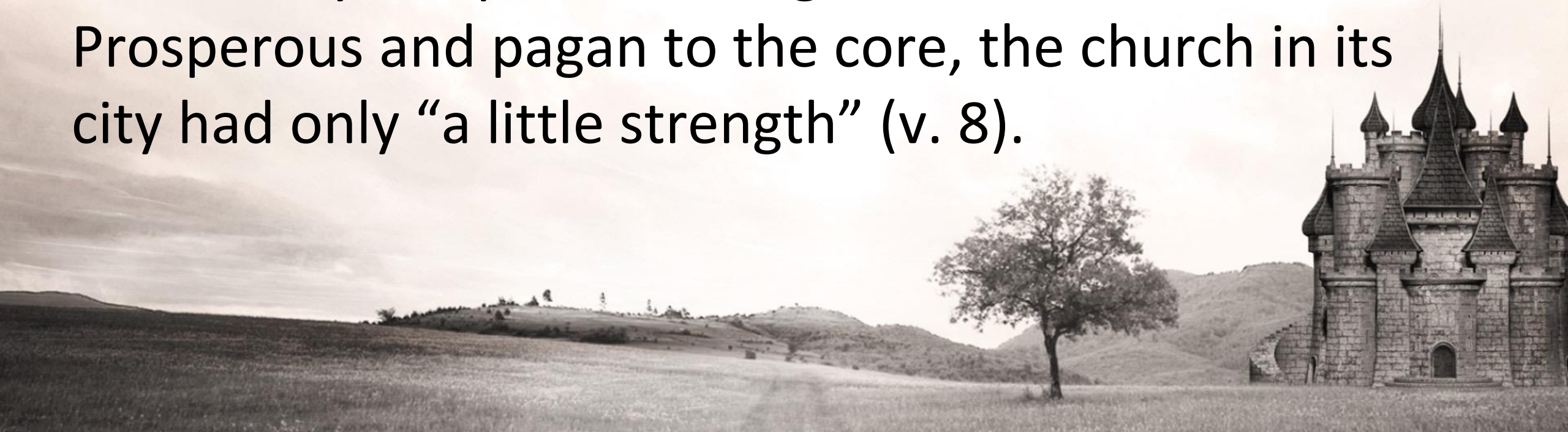
The city's name, meaning "brotherly love," honors and remembers the loyalty and love of Attalus II to his brother Eumenes II. When a false rumor got out that Eumenes had been assassinated, Attalus took his crown. When his brother returned alive from Greece, Attalus relinquished the crown without debate. Later Rome encouraged Attalus to overthrow his brother, but he again remained faithful to Eumenes.



Philadelphia was destroyed by earthquake in AD 17 but rebuilt with the help of Tiberius Caesar. Its loyalty to Rome was strong. A prosperous and strong fortress city, the city was meant to be a “missionary city” for the spread of Greek culture to the east. In this it was somewhat successful.



A thriving grape industry naturally led to the worship of Dionysus, the god of wine. By the 5th century AD Philadelphia would be called “Little Athens” because of its many temples and religious celebrations. Prosperous and pagan to the core, the church in its city had only “a little strength” (v. 8).



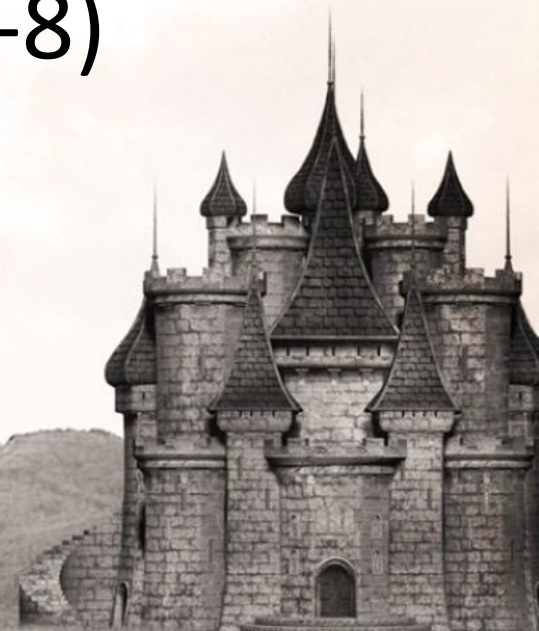






After coming to Jesus, the door of salvation and the keeper of the keys...

1. Enjoy the security of your salvation (vs. 7-8)



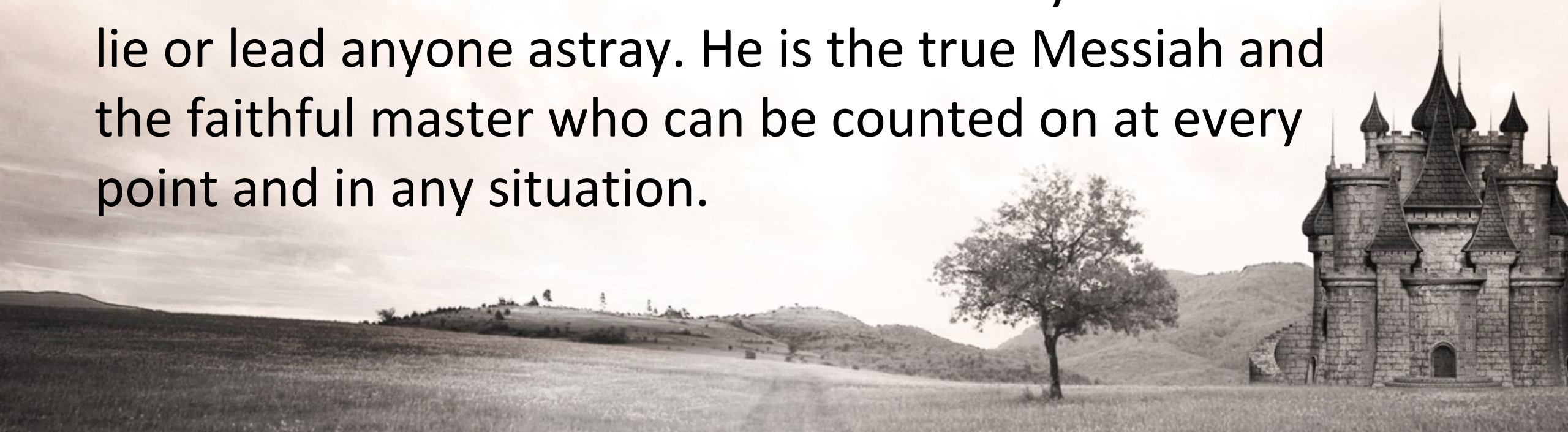
Revelation 3:7 (CSB) “Write to the angel of the church in Philadelphia:
Thus says **the Holy One**, the true one...

The Holy One – the pure, separated and utterly distinct one. He is separated from creation because He is the Creator. He is separated from sin because He is the Savior. In Acts 3:14 He is called the Holy One and the Just.” Holy One is a familiar and foundational title for God in the Old Testament (Isa. 40:25; Hab. 3:3) and demons apply it to Jesus in Mark 1:24. Jesus is pure and undefiled, majestically spotless and without stain or blemish.



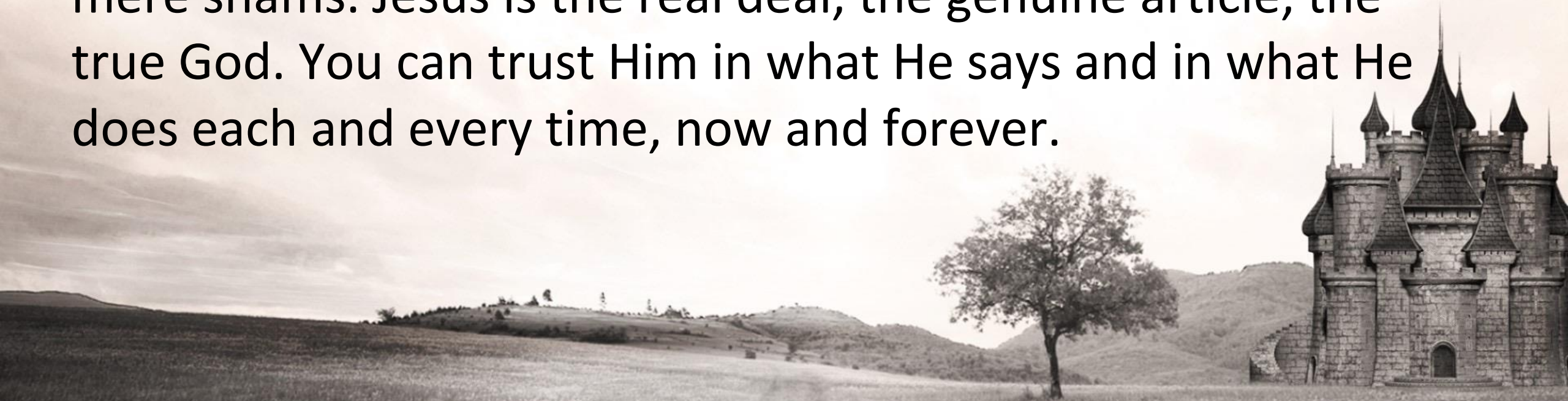
Revelation 3:7 (CSB) “Write to the angel of the church in Philadelphia: Thus says the Holy One, **the true one...**

The true one (alethinos) – real, genuine, the opposite of that which is false. Jesus is trustworthy. He cannot lie or lead anyone astray. He is the true Messiah and the faithful master who can be counted on at every point and in any situation.



Revelation 3:7 (CSB) “Write to the angel of the church in Philadelphia: Thus says the Holy One, **the true one**...

John 14:6 – “the way, the truth and the life...” 1 John 5:20 – “the true God and eternal life.” - All other gods are idols and mere shams. Jesus is the real deal, the genuine article, the true God. You can trust Him in what He says and in what He does each and every time, now and forever.



Revelation 3:7 (CSB) ...**the one who has the key of David**, who opens and no one will close, and who closes and no one opens:

the one who has the key of David – implicitly this phrase looks to 1:18 (keys of Hades and Death), but explicitly it looks back to the Old Testament and Isaiah 22:22. There King Hezekiah appoints Eliakim as “prime minister” and chief steward of his kingdom. Having the key speaks of his authority and control to admit or exclude who will come into the presence of the King. He alone has the key.



Revelation 3:7 (CSB) ...**the one who has the key of David**, who opens and no one will close, and who closes and no one opens:

the one who has the key of David – Jesus is the Davidic Messiah, the Savior of the world. He and He alone possesses absolute authority and control as to who will enter God's kingdom and have access to him. He alone has the key.



“Jesus is the Keeper of the keys, and He has the key to every circumstance in your life. And, you don’t have to know key men, if you know the Keeper of the keys.” -
Adrian Rogers



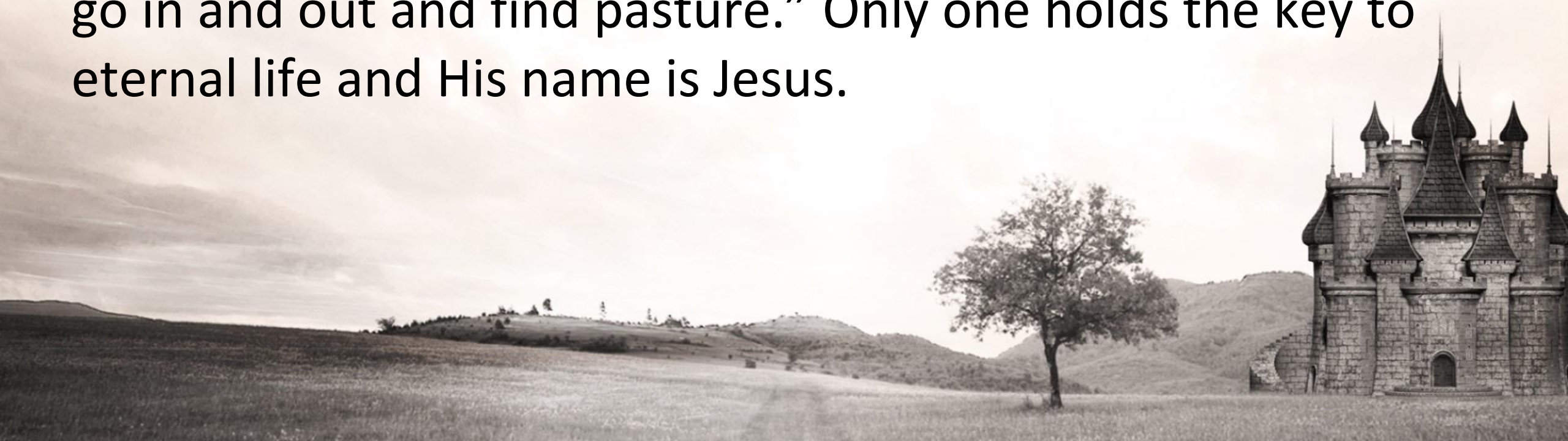
Revelation 3:7 (CSB) ...who opens and no one will close, and who closes and no one opens...

Jesus, rather than the local synagogue rulers, has sovereign control over who gets into God's kingdom and its eternal city, the new Jerusalem (cf. 3:12). For believers who have been expelled from the local synagogue, the knowledge that Christ alone holds the power to grant entrance into God's kingdom is deeply reassuring. Interestingly, in Matthew 16:18–19 Jesus passes this privilege of keeping the keys to Peter and the other apostles.



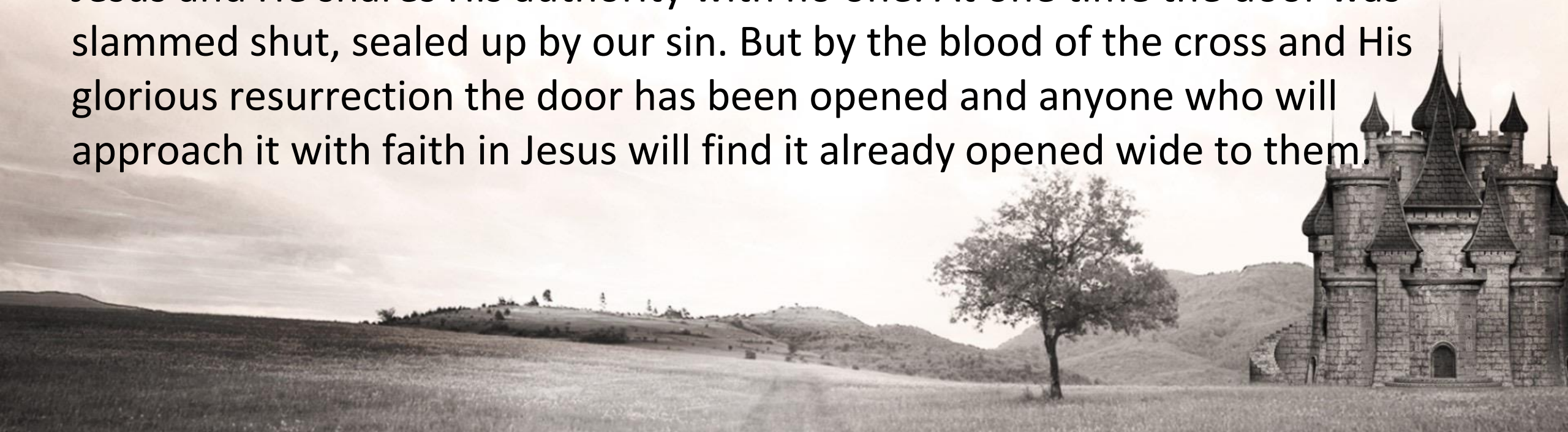
Revelation 3:7 (CSB) **who opens and no one will close, and who closes and no one opens:**

1 Timothy 2:5, “There is one mediator ...” John 10:9, “I am the door. If anyone enters by Me, he will be saved, and will go in and out and find pasture.” Only one holds the key to eternal life and His name is Jesus.



Revelation 3:7 (CSB) **who opens and no one will close, and who closes and no one opens:**

The door to salvation swings open and closes at the discretion of Jesus and Jesus alone. Mohammed has no control over this door. Buddha has no control over this door. No pope, priest, guru or self-appointed cultist determines who walks through salvation's door. This door belongs only to Jesus and He shares His authority with no one. At one time the door was slammed shut, sealed up by our sin. But by the blood of the cross and His glorious resurrection the door has been opened and anyone who will approach it with faith in Jesus will find it already opened wide to them.



Jesus is the door and Jesus has the key. Our Lord is a God of sovereignty.



Revelation 3:8 (CSB) **I know your works.**

Rick Warren, of Saddleback Community Church in California, says a healthy church will exhibit 5 basic characteristics: 1) It will grow warmer through fellowship. 2) It will grow deeper through discipleship. 3) It will grow stronger through worship. 4) It will grow broader through ministry. 5) It will grow larger through evangelism.



Revelation 3:8 (CSB) **I know your works.**

“In the past, when we heard the word ‘church,’ we always thought first of a building, an address, and a time: ‘We meet in the XYZ Church on Smith Street at 10:00 a.m. every Sunday.’ This ‘come’ mentality must be changed, and we must return to the dynamism of the early church, which was a ‘go’ church. It didn’t bring people to church but took the church to the people.” (quoted in PrayerNet Newsletter, Sep 20, 1999, page 1)



Revelation 3:8 (CSB) **I know your works.**

Both definitions point to a church on mission, a church of action. They are not passive but active. They are not stagnant but moving, and moving in the right way and for the right reasons. The church at Philadelphia was a church on the go and one that was going in the right way.



Revelation 3:8 (CSB) ...**Look, I have placed before you an open door that no one can close...**

What is the open door: 1) the open door into the eternal kingdom; 2) Christ; 3) prayer; 4) immediate access to God by martyrdom; or 5) a great opportunity for evangelism and missionary activity (cf. 1 Cor. 16:9; 2 Cor. 2:12; Col. 4:3).



Revelation 3:8 (CSB) ...**Look, I have placed before you an open door that no one can close...**

For Paul, open doors were opportunities for ministry (1 Cor. 16:9; 2 Cor. 2:12; Col. 4:3). That sense is possible here; but since these Christians, excluded by the synagogue, would become pillars in God's temple (Rev. 3:12), probably Jesus sets before them the "door standing open" into God's heavenly sanctuary (4:1). little power. As Christians in Smyrna were physically poor yet spiritually rich, so those in Philadelphia were weak yet holding fast to Jesus' word (3:10–11). (ESV Study Bible)



Revelation 3:8 (CSB) ...**Look, I have placed before you an open door that no one can close...**

Jesus now assures the believers in Philadelphia that he has opened the door of the kingdom to them, and no one—not even the local synagogue rulers or the Roman emperor himself—will be able to keep them from entering.



Revelation 3:9 (CSB) Note this: I will make those from the synagogue of Satan, who claim to be Jews and are not, but are lying—I will make them come and bow down at your feet, and they will know that I have loved you.

Jesus now challenges the hypocrisy of those who claim to be God's holy people but are in fact "liars" and members of the "synagogue of Satan". In the end, Jesus will reverse the suffering and make the pretenders worship at the feet of the true people of God.



Isaiah 49:23 (CSB) Kings will be your guardians and their queens your nursing mothers. They will bow down to you with their faces to the ground and lick the dust at your feet. Then you will know that I am the Lord; those who put their hope in me will not be put to shame.



Isaiah 60:14 (CSB) The sons of your oppressors will come and bow down to you; all who reviled you will fall facedown at your feet. They will call you the City of the Lord, Zion of the Holy One of Israel.



After coming to Jesus, the door of salvation and the keeper of the keys...

1. Enjoy the security of your salvation (vs. 7-8)
2. Endure through persecution (vs. 9-10)



Revelation 3:9 (CSB) I will make them come and bow down at your feet, and they will know that I have loved you.

Christ says I, not you, will humble your enemies. The opposition you face now is limited and will not last. There is coming a day of justice and vindication. You leave all of it in my hands.



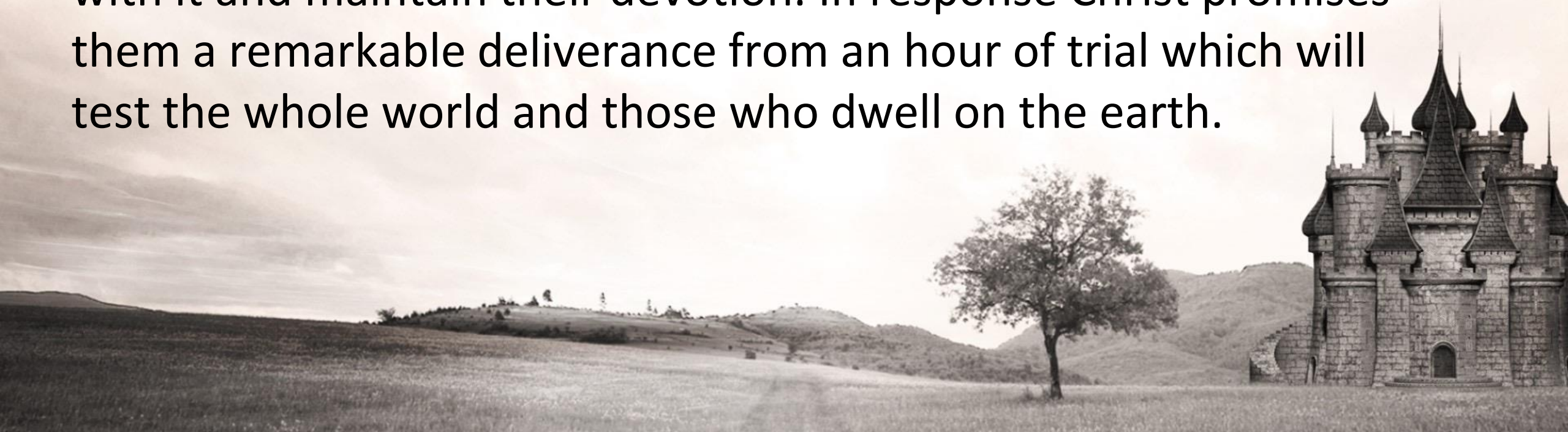
Revelation 3:9 (CSB) **I will make them come and bow down at your feet, and they will know that I have loved you.**

As Phil. 2:10-11 teaches: “that at the name of Jesus **EVERY KNEE SHOULD BOW**, of those who are in heaven, and on earth, and under the earth, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.”



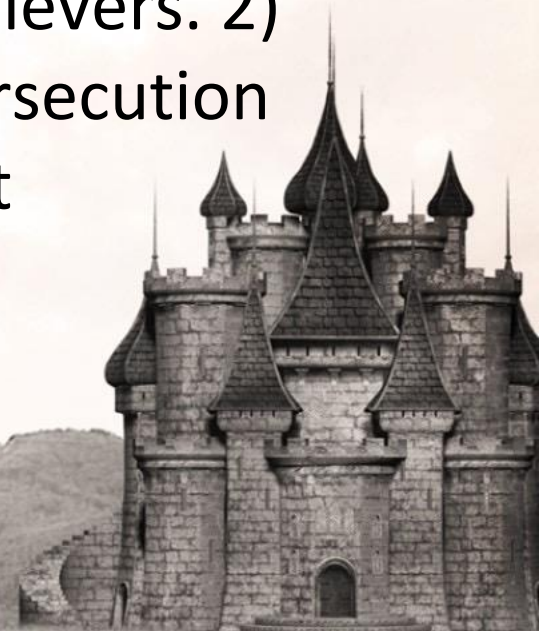
Revelation 3:10 (CSB) Because you have kept my command to endure, I will also keep you from the hour of testing that is going to come on the whole world to test those who live on the earth.

They have kept Christ's command to persevere, endure, stay with it and maintain their devotion. In response Christ promises them a remarkable deliverance from an hour of trial which will test the whole world and those who dwell on the earth.



Revelation 3:10 (CSB) ... I will also keep you from the hour of testing that is going to come on the whole world to test those who live on the earth.

This last phrase is significant and is repeated several times in Revelation. In every instance it refers to unbelievers exclusively as the objects of God's wrath (cf. 6:10; 8:13; 11:10; 12:12; 13:8,12,14). Therefore several truths should be noted: 1) The hour of trial is focused on unbelievers. 2) Christ promises deliverance to his children not from trial or persecution in general, but from a specific and definite trial that is aimed at rebellious humanity.



Revelation 3:10 (CSB) ... I will also keep you from the hour of testing that is going to come on the whole world to test those who live on the earth.

Dr. John MacArthur summarizes well the thrust of this text when he writes, “Because the believers in Philadelphia had successfully passed so many tests, Jesus promised to spare them from the ultimate test. The sweeping nature of that promise extends far beyond the Philadelphia congregation to encompass all faithful churches throughout history. This verse promises that the church will be delivered from the Tribulation, thus supporting a pretribulation Rapture.



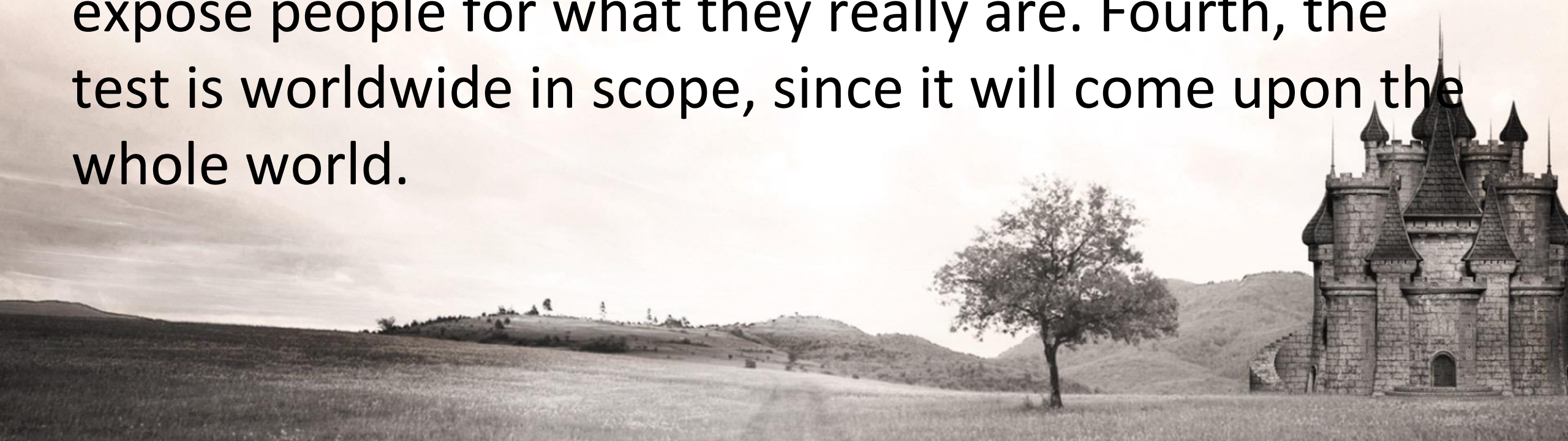
The Rapture is the subject of three passages in the New Testament (John 14:1-4; 1 Cor. 15:51-54; 1 Thess. 4:13-17), none of which speak of judgment, but rather of the church being taken up to heaven.



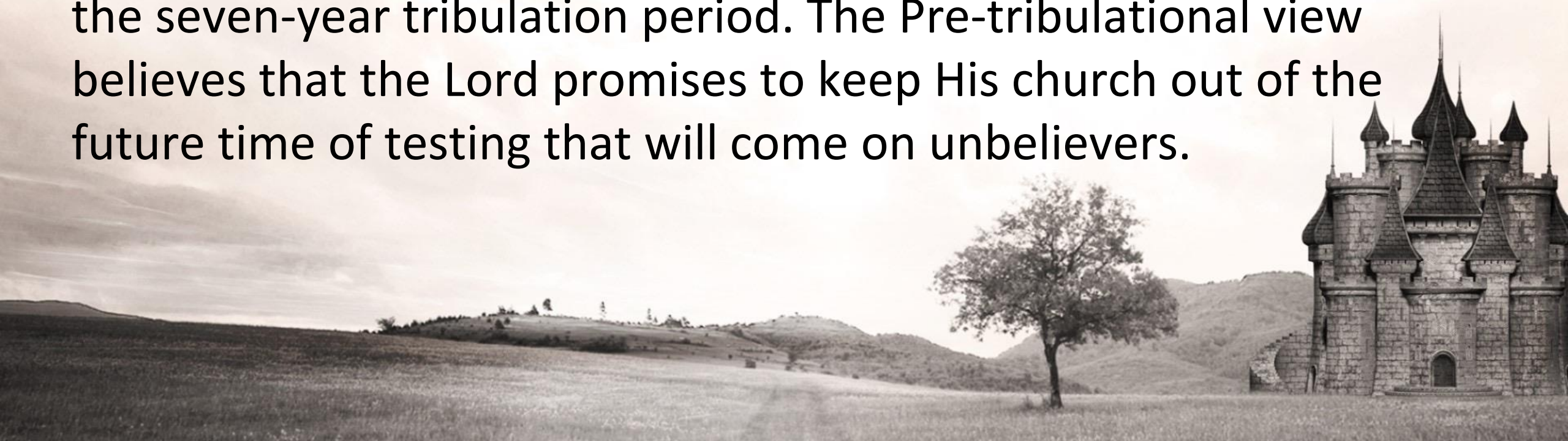
There are three views of the timing of the Rapture in relation to the Tribulation: that it comes at the end of the Tribulation (posttribulationism), in the middle of the Tribulation (midtribulationism), and the view that seems to be supported by this text, that the Rapture takes place before the tribulation (pretribulationism).



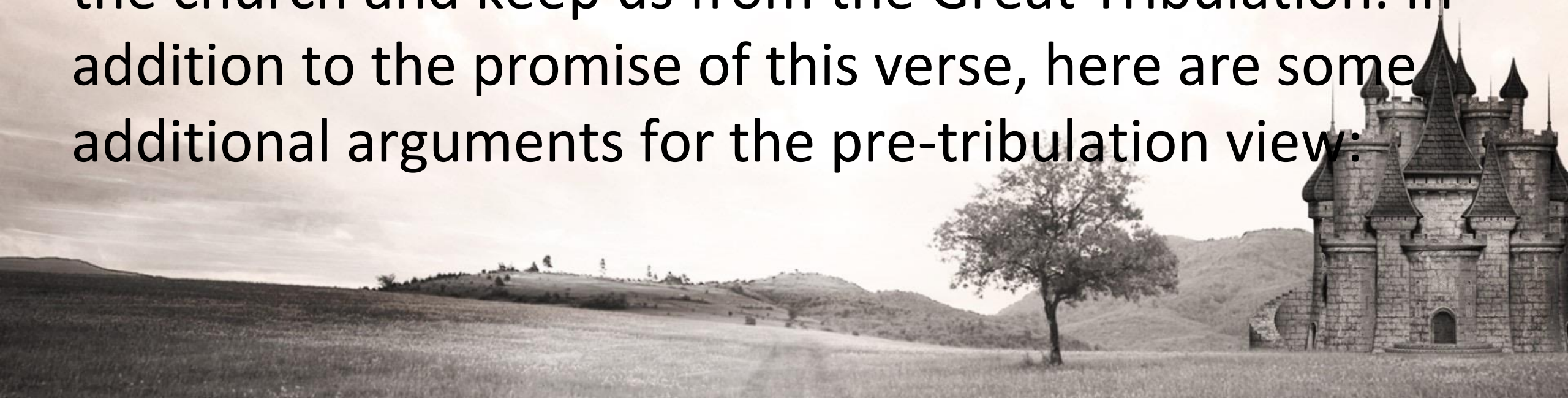
Several aspects of this wonderful promise may be noted. First, the test is yet future. Second, the test is for a definite, limited time; Jesus described it as the hour of testing. Third, it is a test or trial that will expose people for what they really are. Fourth, the test is worldwide in scope, since it will come upon the whole world.



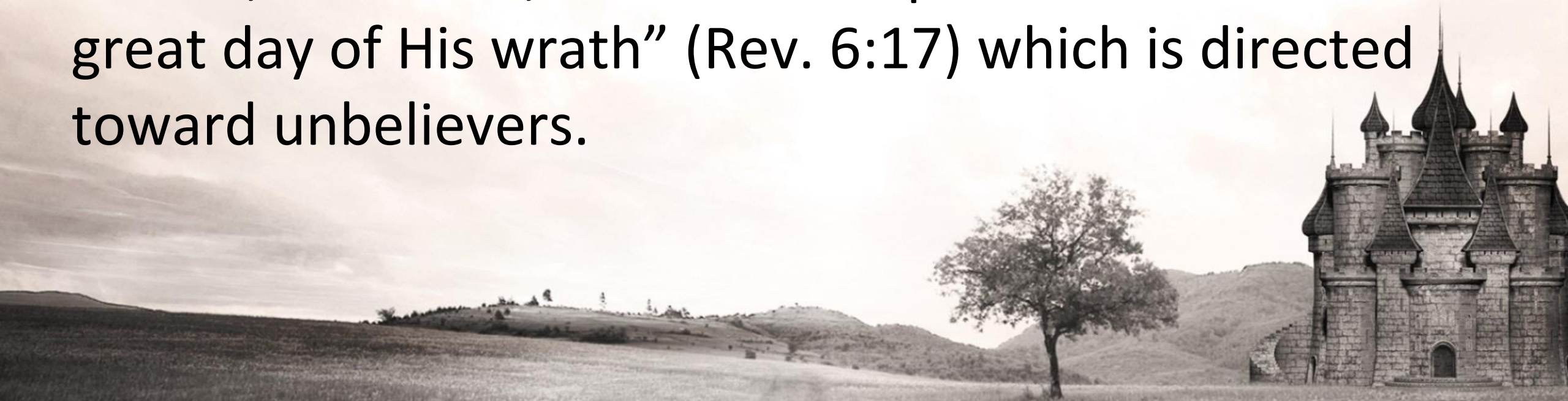
Finally, and most significantly, its purpose is to test those who dwell on the earth – a phrase used as a technical term in the book of Revelation for unbelievers (cf. 6:10; 8:13; 11:10; 13:8, 12, 14; 14:6; 17:2,8). The hour of testing is Daniel's Seventieth Week (Dan. 9:25-27), the time of Jacob's trouble (Jer. 30:7), the seven-year tribulation period. The Pre-tribulation view believes that the Lord promises to keep His church out of the future time of testing that will come on unbelievers.



John MacArthur, Chuck Swindoll, David Jeremiah, Tim LaHaye, Danny Akin, Al Mohler, Charles Stanley, Adrian Rogers, Jerry Vines, and Billy Graham: these christian leaders are convinced the Lord will deliver the church and keep us from the Great Tribulation. In addition to the promise of this verse, here are some additional arguments for the pre-tribulation view:



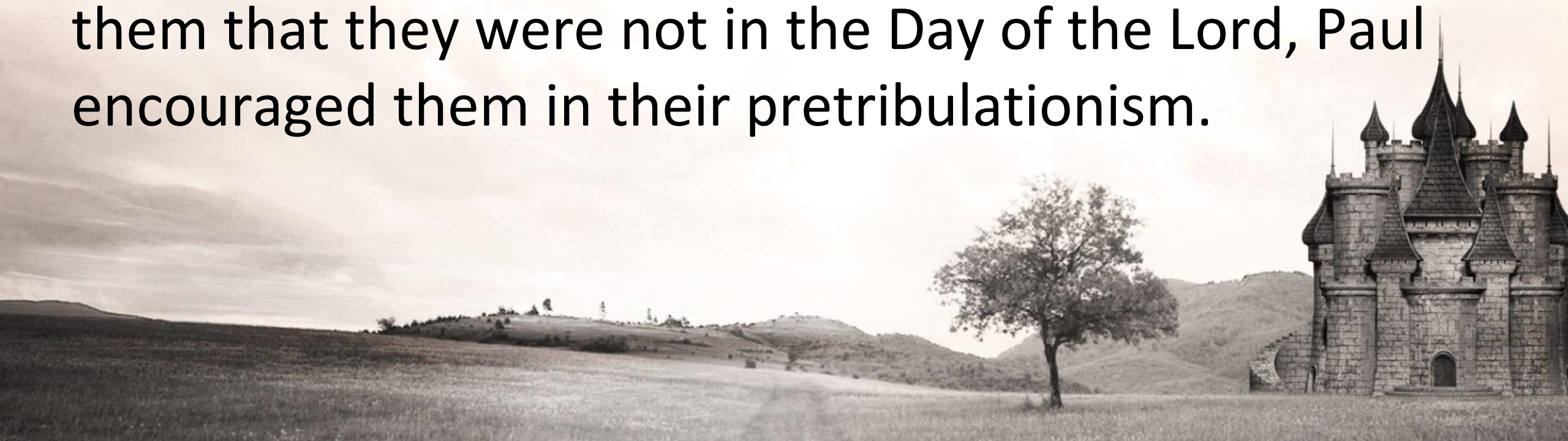
1. The church is not appointed to wrath (Rom. 8:9; 1 Thess. 1:9-10; 5:9). The context of this promise, especially in 1 Thess. 5:9, is the Great Tribulation. The church, therefore, should not expect to enter “The great day of His wrath” (Rev. 6:17) which is directed toward unbelievers.



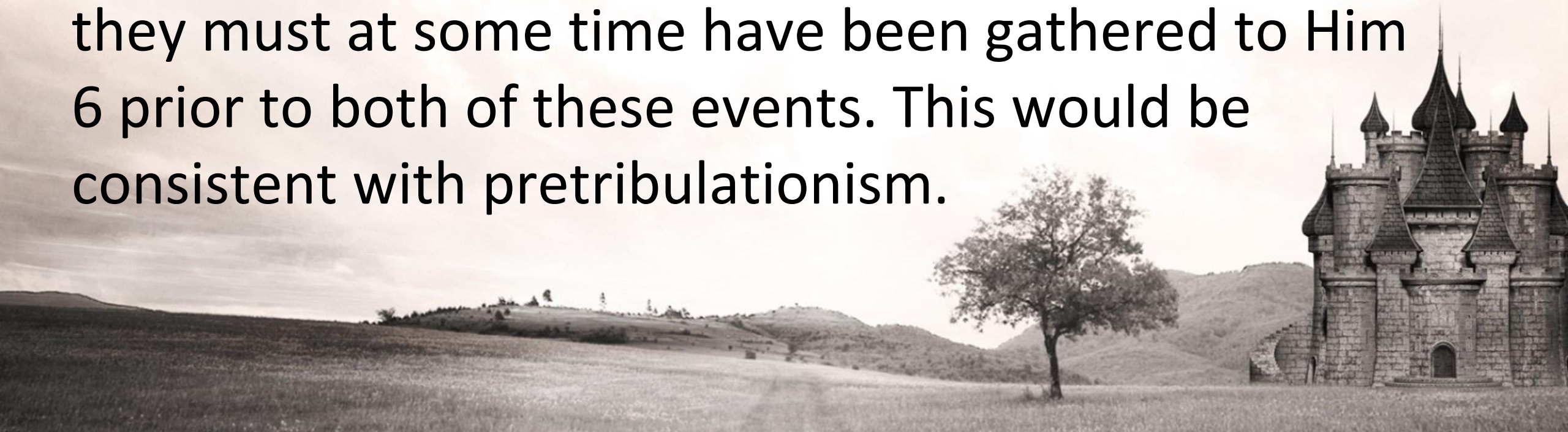
2. The chronology of the discussion in 1 Thess. 4:13-5:11 argues for a pretribulation rapture. The rapture discussion in chapter 4 precedes the Day of the Lord discussion in chapter 5. This would indicate that the rapture takes place before the Day of the Lord.



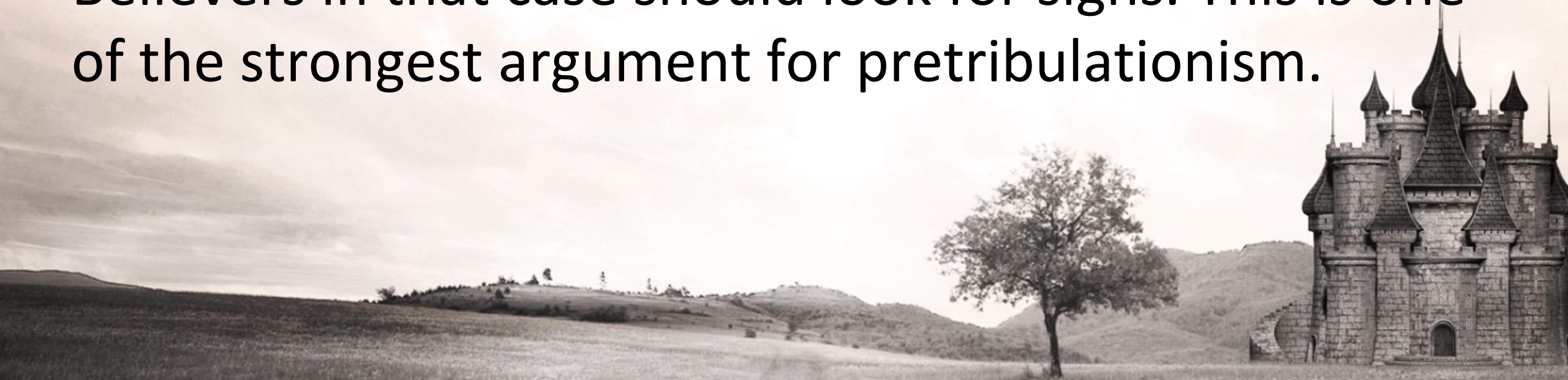
3. In 2 Thessalonians 2, the believers were alarmed that the Day of the Lord was upon them, which does not appear to be consistent with the belief that they would not go through the Tribulation. By assuring them that they were not in the Day of the Lord, Paul encouraged them in their pretribulationism.



4. In Rev. 19:11-21, the saints are viewed as “coming with” Christ at His Second Coming, not “waiting for” Him. Furthermore, the Church is in heaven prior to the Second Coming for the Marriage Supper of the Lamb (Rev. 19:1-10). Thus they must at some time have been gathered to Him prior to both of these events. This would be consistent with pretribulationism.



5. The New Testament emphasizes the imminent return of Christ. The exhortation to look for “the glorious appearing” of Christ to His own (Titus 2:13) loses its significance if the tribulation must come first. Believers in that case should look for signs. This is one of the strongest arguments for pretribulationism.



After coming to Jesus, the door of salvation and the keeper of the keys...

1. Enjoy the security of your salvation (vs. 7-8)
2. Endure through persecution (vs. 9-10)
3. Expect His imminent return (vs. 11-13)



Revelation 3:11 (CSB) **I am coming soon.** Hold on to what you have, so that no one takes your crown.

I am coming soon (see also. 22:7, 12, 20) is not a threat of judgment but a promise of deliverance fast on the heels of v. 10. Because His coming is imminent, any day, any time, they should hold on to what they have, His Word, His name, His promise of deliverance, that no one may take their crown.



Revelation 3:11 (CSB) I am coming soon. Hold on to what you have, **so that no one takes your crown.**

Loss of salvation is nowhere in view for that could never be taken, but Satan or evil men could rob them of future reward if they were to get their eyes off Jesus or be tempted to deny His name or disobey His Word. Stay with it Jesus says; there is a crown waiting at the finish line.



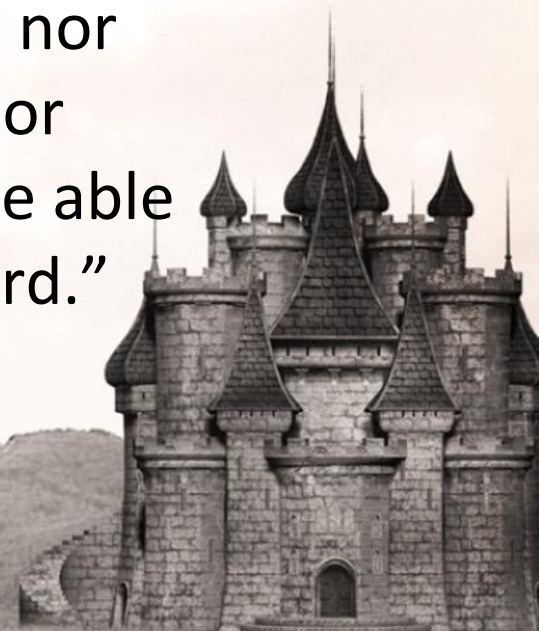
Revelation 3:12 (CSB) “The one who conquers I will make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he will never go out again...

These Christians had been forced out of the synagogues but were promised by Jesus to never be forced out of heaven. Also, to a people continually threatened by earthquakes and the need to flee the city when they come, this word would speak powerfully to their hearts. Alan Johnson notes, “Often the only parts of a city left standing after a severe quake were the huge stone temple columns [pillars]”



Revelation 3:12 (CSB) “The one who conquers **I will make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he will never go out again.**

Rev. 21:22 tells us in the New Jerusalem “the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are its temple.” To be a pillar of Christ puts the believer in a position of absolute and complete security. No disruption, disturbance or disaster will ever separate us from our Savior. As Romans 8:38-39 beautifully testify, “For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.”



Revelation 3:12 (CSB) ...I will write on him the name of my God and the name of the city of my God—the new Jerusalem, which comes down out of heaven from my God—and my new name.

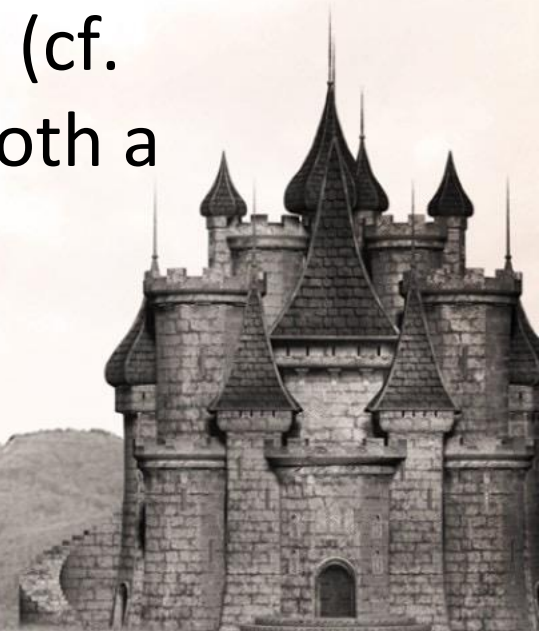
The church at Philadelphia had a good name, a wonderful reputation in heaven. Jesus promises them, “it will only get better.” Because they had not been ashamed to identify themselves with Jesus, our Lord is not ashamed to identify Himself with them. Three times Jesus promises them a new name of blessing and honor from His God.



Revelation 3:12 (CSB) I will write on him the name of my God and the name of the city of my God—the new Jerusalem, which comes down out of heaven from my God—and my new name.

1) They receive the name of God, the God of Jesus, the one true God.

2) They receive the name of God's city, the New Jerusalem (cf. 21:2; Heb. 12:22). We will discover the New Jerusalem is both a place and a people.



Revelation 3:12 (CSB)... I will write on him the name of my God and the name of the city of my God—the new Jerusalem, which comes down out of heaven from my God—**and my new name.**

3. They receive the new name of Jesus (cf. 19:12; 22:4; 2:17). *The names signify identification, character, ownership, and recognition. The names signify who my God is, where my home is and who my Lord is! I belong to the Father, heaven is my home and Jesus is my Lord. I bear the signature of my God!



“Onward to the prize before us! Soon His beauty we’ll behold; Soon the pearly gates will open; We shall tread the streets of gold. When we all get to heaven, what a day of rejoicing that will be! When we all see Jesus, we’ll sing and shout the victory ...”



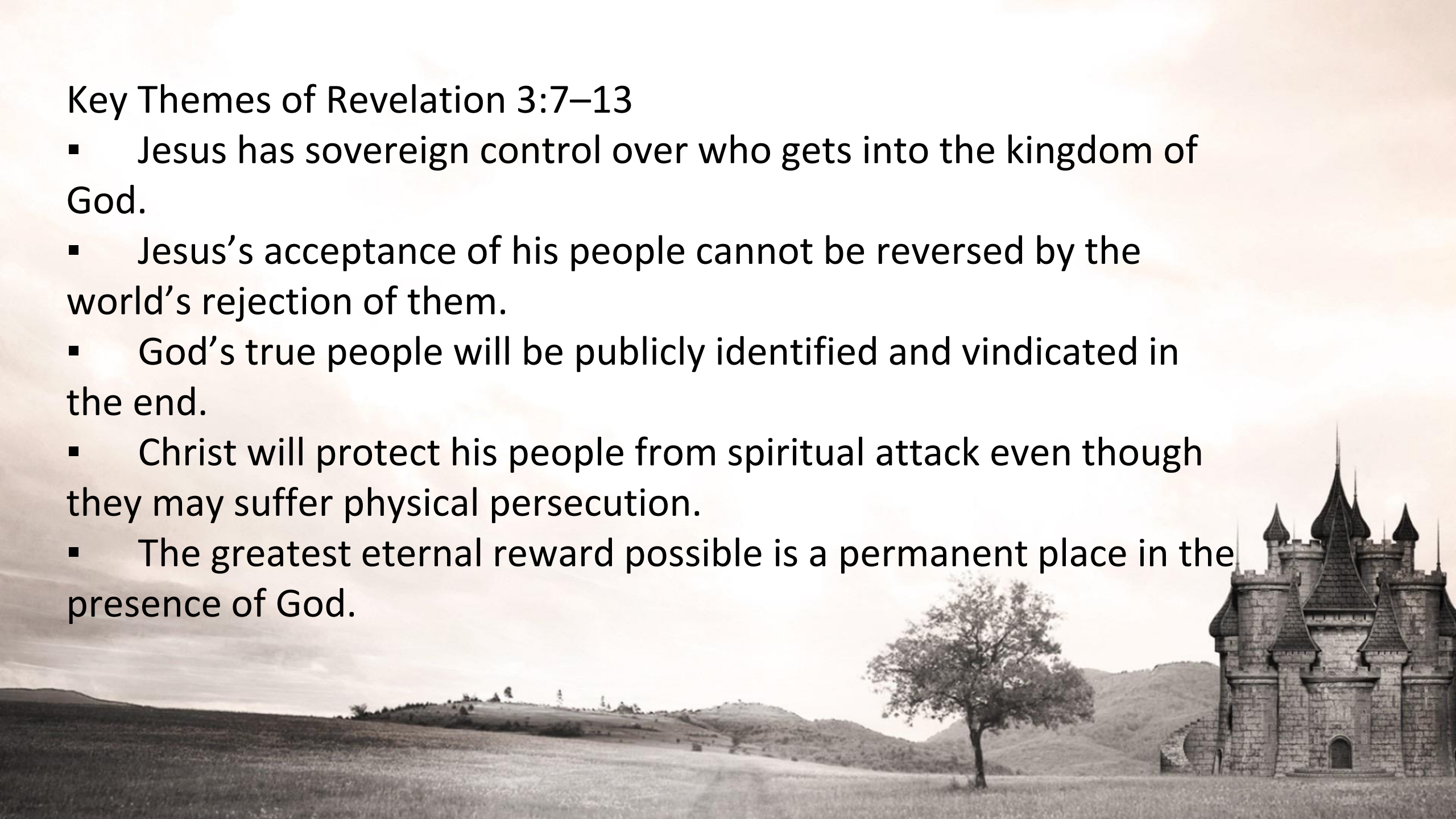
Revelation 3:13 (CSB) “Let anyone who has ears to hear listen to what the Spirit says to the churches.”

He has an ear – are you listening, paying attention? Let him hear (imp) a word of command What the Spirit says – the word is a word from God Churches (pl.) the word was for Philadelphia then, the word is for us today!

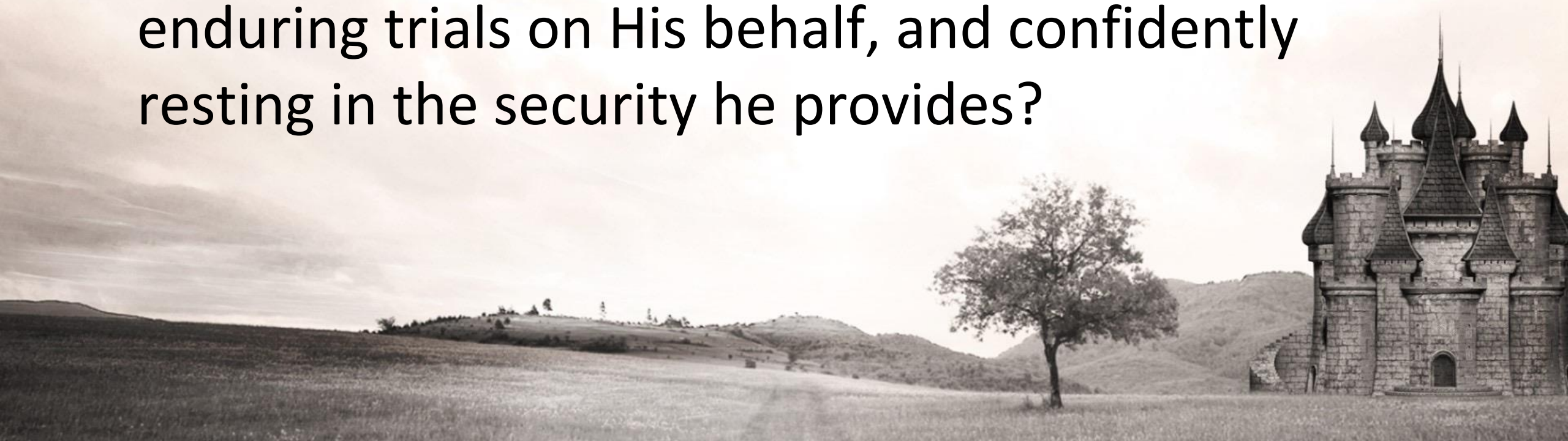


Key Themes of Revelation 3:7–13

- Jesus has sovereign control over who gets into the kingdom of God.
- Jesus's acceptance of his people cannot be reversed by the world's rejection of them.
- God's true people will be publicly identified and vindicated in the end.
- Christ will protect his people from spiritual attack even though they may suffer physical persecution.
- The greatest eternal reward possible is a permanent place in the presence of God.



There are churches that honor Jesus. There are Christians that honor Jesus. Are your ears open to what the Spirit is saying to you? Are you keeping God's word, taking a daily stand for Jesus, enduring trials on His behalf, and confidently resting in the security he provides?



Never forget, He took a stand for you, and He walked through the door of suffering up to a hill with a cross that had your name on it.



Aristotle said, “the gods feel no love for humans.” The Spirit says, “God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son ...”



Old Testament Connections

Revelation 3:7 “Write to the angel of the church in Philadelphia: Thus says the Holy One, the true one, the one who has the key of David, who opens and no one will close, and who closes and no one opens:

Job 12:14 Whatever he tears down cannot be rebuilt; whoever he imprisons cannot be released.

Isaiah 22:22 I will place the key of the house of David on his shoulder; what he opens, no one can close; what he closes, no one can open.



Old Testament Connections

Revelation 3:9 Note this: I will make those from the synagogue of Satan, who claim to be Jews and are not, but are lying—I will make them come and bow down at your feet, and they will know that I have loved you.

Isaiah 43:4 Because you are precious in my sight and honored, and I love you, I will give people in exchange for you and nations instead of your life.

Isaiah 45:14 This is what the Lord says: “The products of Egypt and the merchandise of Cush and the Sabeans, men of stature, will come over to you and will be yours; they will follow you, they will come over in chains and bow down to you. They will confess to you, ‘God is indeed with you, and there is no other; there is no other God.’ ”

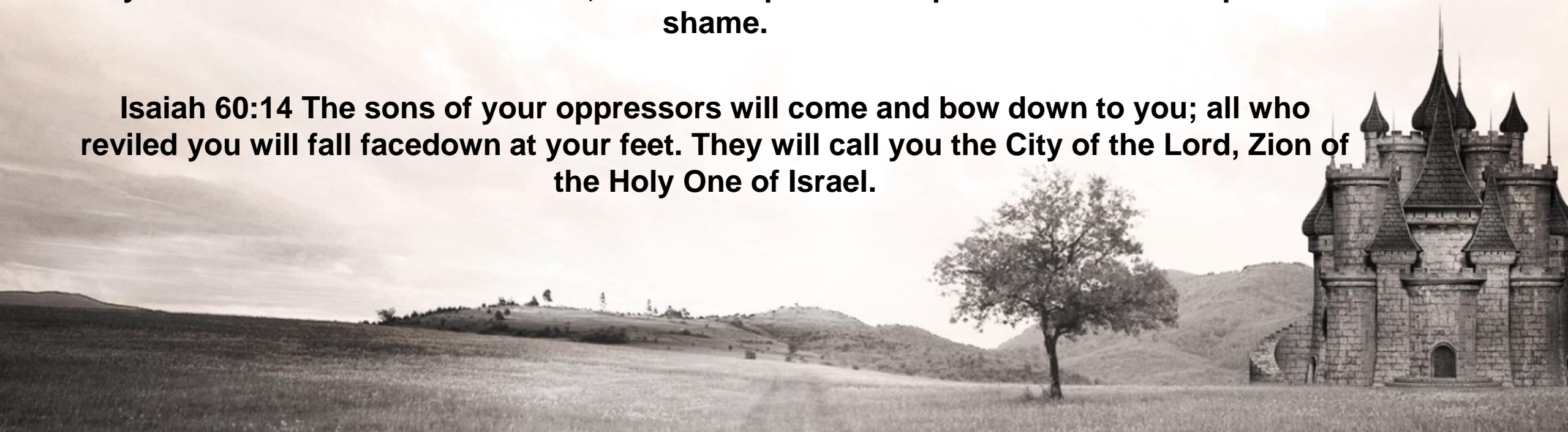


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Isaiah 49:23 Kings will be your guardians and their queens your nursing mothers. They will bow down to you with their faces to the ground and lick the dust at your feet. Then you will know that I am the Lord; those who put their hope in me will not be put to shame.

Isaiah 60:14 The sons of your oppressors will come and bow down to you; all who reviled you will fall facedown at your feet. They will call you the City of the Lord, Zion of the Holy One of Israel.

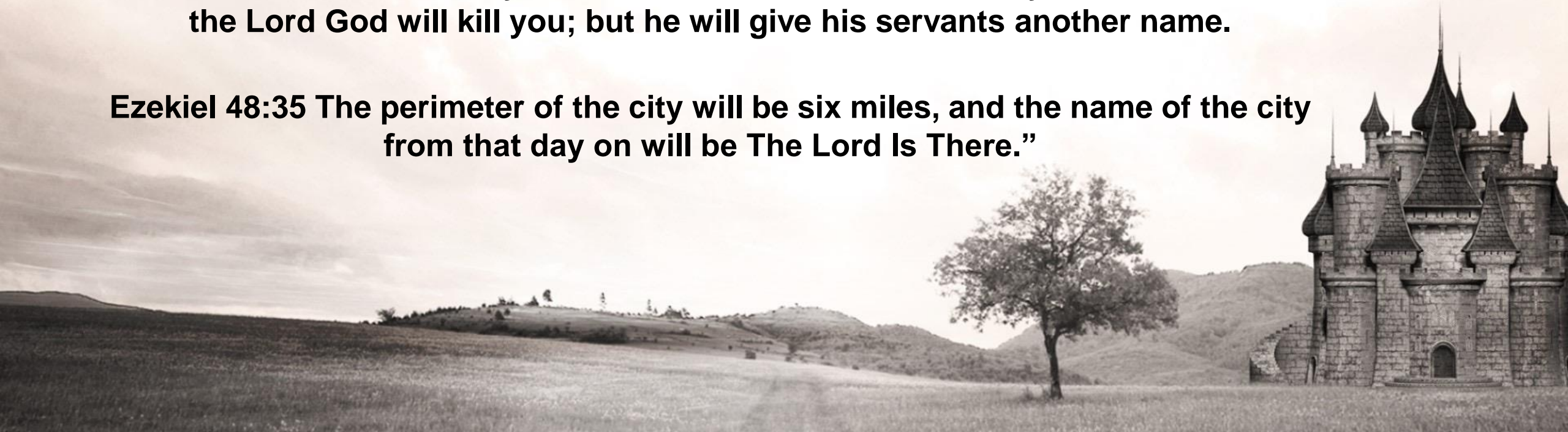


Old Testament Connections

Revelation 3:12 “The one who conquers I will make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he will never go out again. I will write on him the name of my God and the name of the city of my God—the new Jerusalem, which comes down out of heaven from my God—and my new name.

Isaiah 65:15 You will leave your name behind as a curse for my chosen ones, and the Lord God will kill you; but he will give his servants another name.

Ezekiel 48:35 The perimeter of the city will be six miles, and the name of the city from that day on will be The Lord Is There.”



Secure in Christ - Revelation 3:7- 13

