

Journeys to Bethlehem

Wayne Braudrick

Life Change: We Travel to Bethlehem in our Hearts

Selected Scriptures

December 10, 2023

Holiday travel

The relocations of Mary and Joseph

They submit to a higher authority

Luke 2:1-7

Luke 1:36; Matt 1:24

They face loss

Matt 2:13-15

A pregnant sense of peace and power pervades

Luke 1:39-45

The relocations of Mary and Joseph

Relational joy lies ahead

Luke 2:39-41, 52

They receive eternal exaltation

Luke 1:46-49

The short but significant jaunt of the shepherds

Luke 2:8-20

The transformative journey of the magi

Matt 2:1-12

They found Christ because they heeded the sign and believed the scripture. Noticeably absent at the manger were the scholars of the Torah. They read the prophecy...but did not respond to it. The wise men earned their moniker because they did. Their hearts were open to God's gift. The men were never the same again. After worshipping the Christ, "they departed for their own country another way" (v 12 NKJV). Matthew uses the word way to suggest a direction of life...telling us the wise men went home as different men. – Max Lucado, *Because of Bethlehem*

My own advent journey

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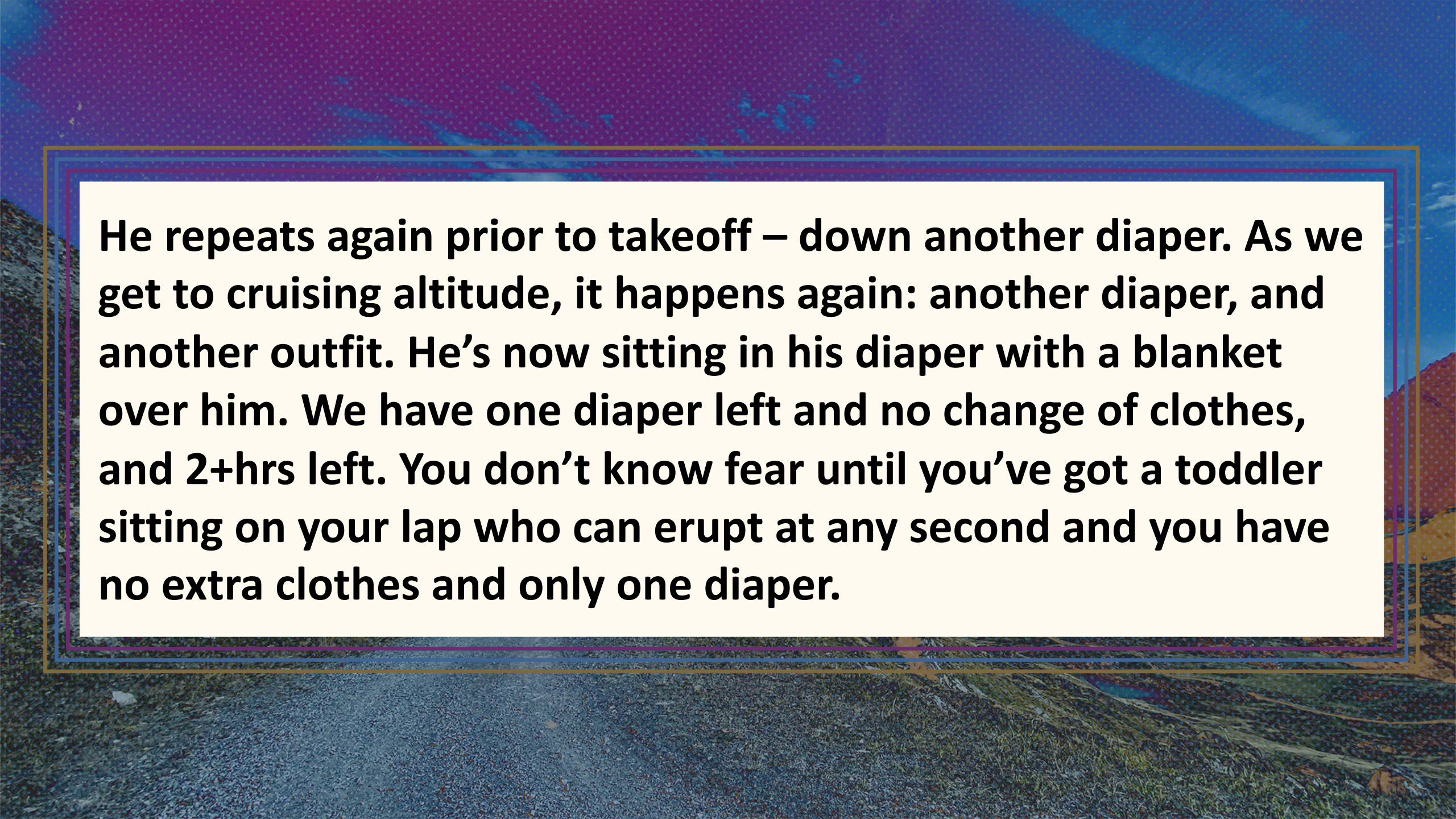
JOY IN THE JOURNEY

ADVENT 2023

PLEASE SILENCE YOUR PHONE



courtesy shebuysttravel



He repeats again prior to takeoff – down another diaper. As we get to cruising altitude, it happens again: another diaper, and another outfit. He’s now sitting in his diaper with a blanket over him. We have one diaper left and no change of clothes, and 2+hrs left. You don’t know fear until you’ve got a toddler sitting on your lap who can erupt at any second and you have no extra clothes and only one diaper.



By some miracle, he makes it without filling his pants to MSP. But now we have to do the walk of shame with our son in only a diaper and two bags of poo filled clothes (which we just threw away). I scour MSP looking for a change of clothes and diapers. I ended up buying a Minnesota sweatshirt and pants (\$25 each, but hey, no sales tax!) and found a package of 2 diapers (last ones available) in the little newsstand.

Of course, the grandparents didn't mind. They laughed hard and still brag about our bravery and sacrifice in bringing their grandson to them. – Brad Washburn



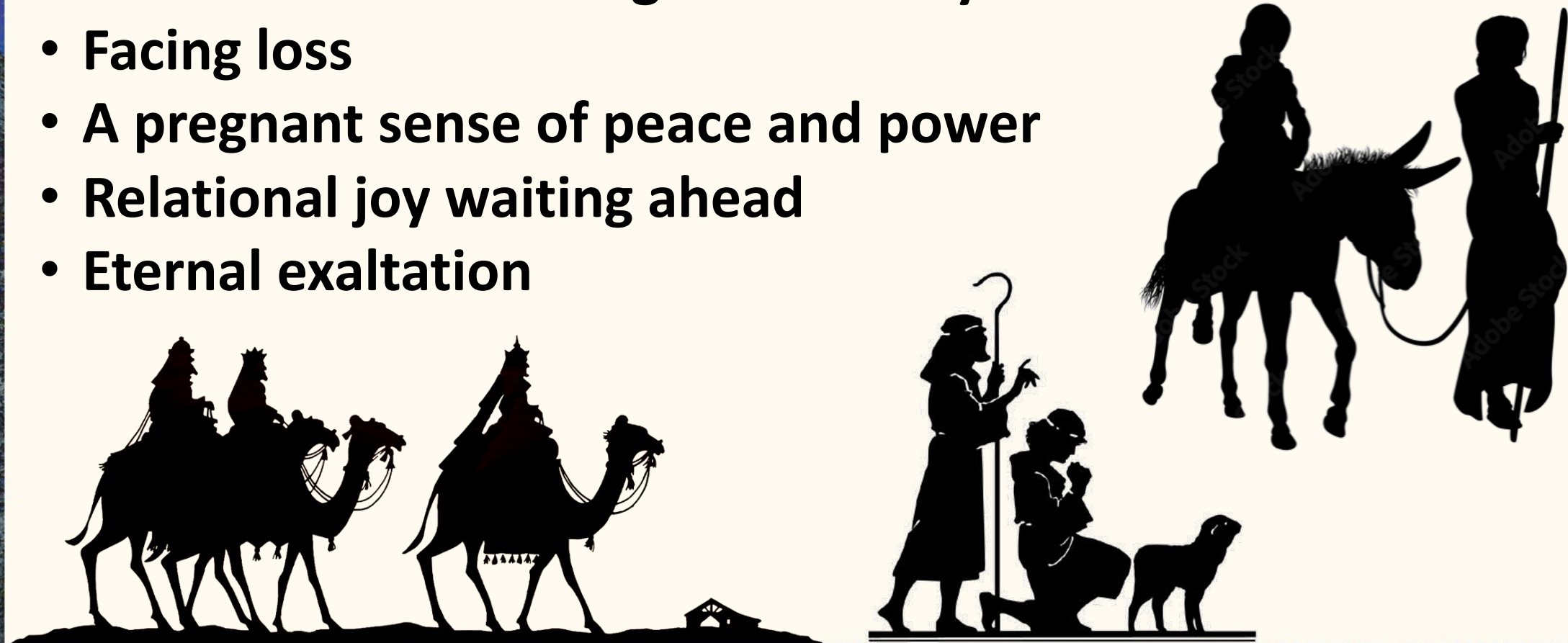


Common traits that run through holiday travel stories:

- **Submission to a calling or authority**
- **Facing loss**
- **A pregnant sense of peace and power**
- **Relational joy waiting ahead**
- **Eternal exaltation**

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¹ In those days a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that the whole empire should be registered. ² This first registration took place while Quirinius was governing Syria. ³ So everyone went to be registered, each to his own town. ⁴ Joseph also went up from the town of Nazareth in Galilee, to Judea, to the city of David, which is called Bethlehem, because he was of the house and family line of David, ⁵ to be registered along with Mary, who was engaged to him and was pregnant. ⁶ While they were there, the time came for her to give birth. ⁷ Then she gave birth to her firstborn son, and she wrapped him tightly in cloth and laid him in a manger, because there was no guest room available for them.

Luke 2 CSB

ZECH

MAL

MATT

MARK

LUKE

JOHN

ACTS

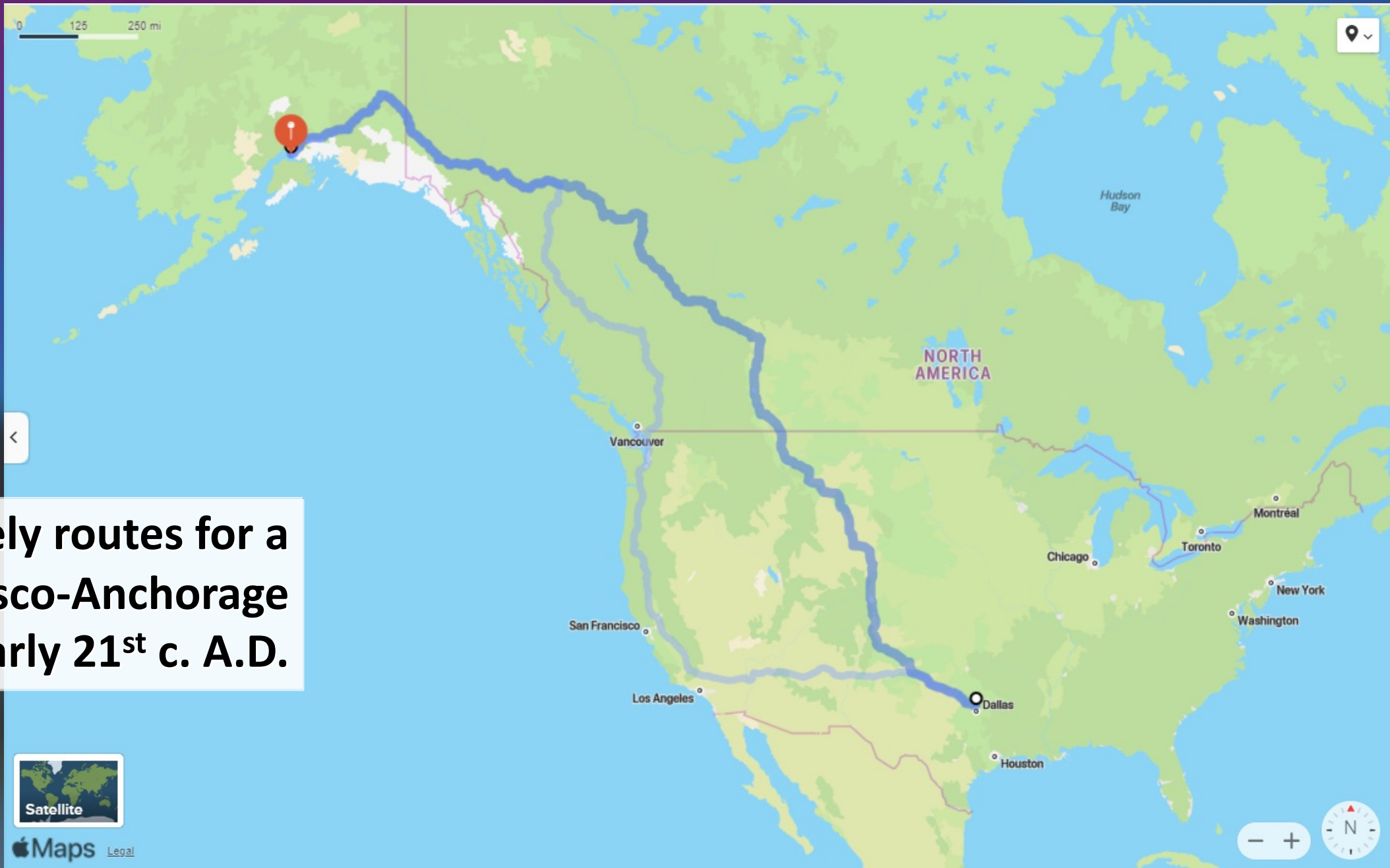
ROM

1 COR

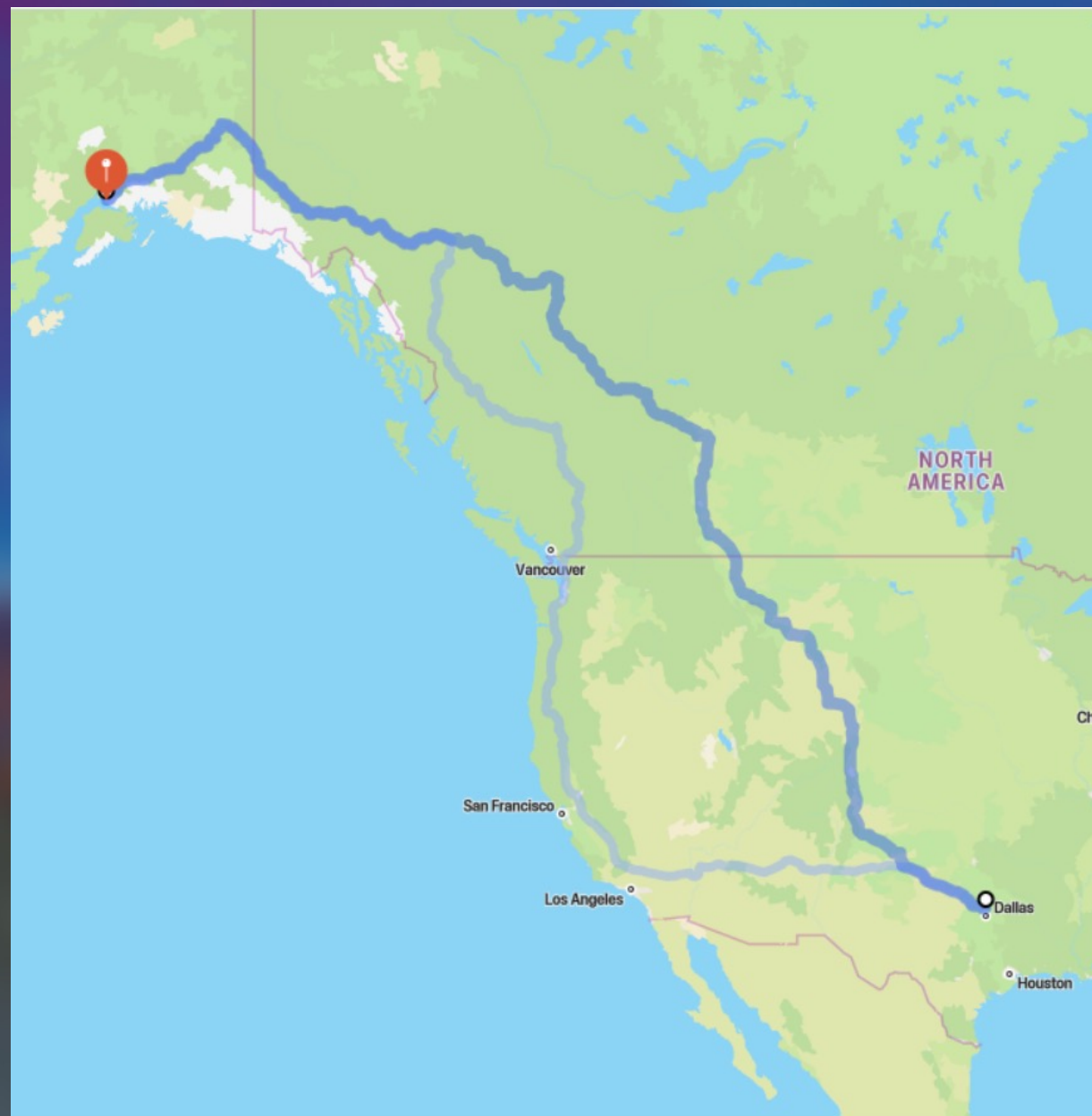


**Likely routes for a
Nazareth-Bethlehem
journey late 1st c. B.C.**

**Likely routes for a
Frisco-Anchorage
journey early 21st c. A.D.**



courtesy Apple



courtesy biblemap; Apple

²⁶ In the sixth month, the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, ²⁷ to a virgin engaged to a man named Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary...³⁵ The angel [spoke] to her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. Therefore, the holy one to be born will be called the Son of God...³⁷ For nothing will be impossible with God." ³⁸ "See, I am the Lord's servant," said Mary. "May it happen to me as you have said." Then the angel left her.

Luke 1 CSB

38 And Mary said, “Behold, the bonds slave of the Lord; may it be done to me according to your word.” And the angel departed from her.

Luke 1 NASB

Pieta
Michelangelo
1498



38 And Mary said, “Behold, the bondslave of the Lord; may it be done to me according to your word.” And the angel departed from her.

Luke 1 NASB

Greek: δοῦλος doulos = one voluntarily dedicated to the service of another; one who willingly harnesses his freedom to an overlord

²⁰ But after he had considered these things, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, “Joseph, son of David, don’t be afraid to take Mary as your wife, because what has been conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. ²¹ She will give birth to a son, and you are to name him Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins.” ²² Now all this took place to fulfill what was spoken by the Lord through the prophet:

Matthew 1 CSB



23 See, the virgin will become pregnant and give birth to a son, and they will name him Immanuel, [Isaiah 7] which is translated “God is with us.” 24 When Joseph woke up, he did as the Lord’s angel had commanded him. He married her 25 but did not have sexual relations with her until she gave birth to a son. And he named him Jesus.

Matthew 1 CSB

St. Joseph
Vincenzo de Rossi
1548

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Luke 1 NASB

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Matthew 1 CSB

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Luke 2 CSB

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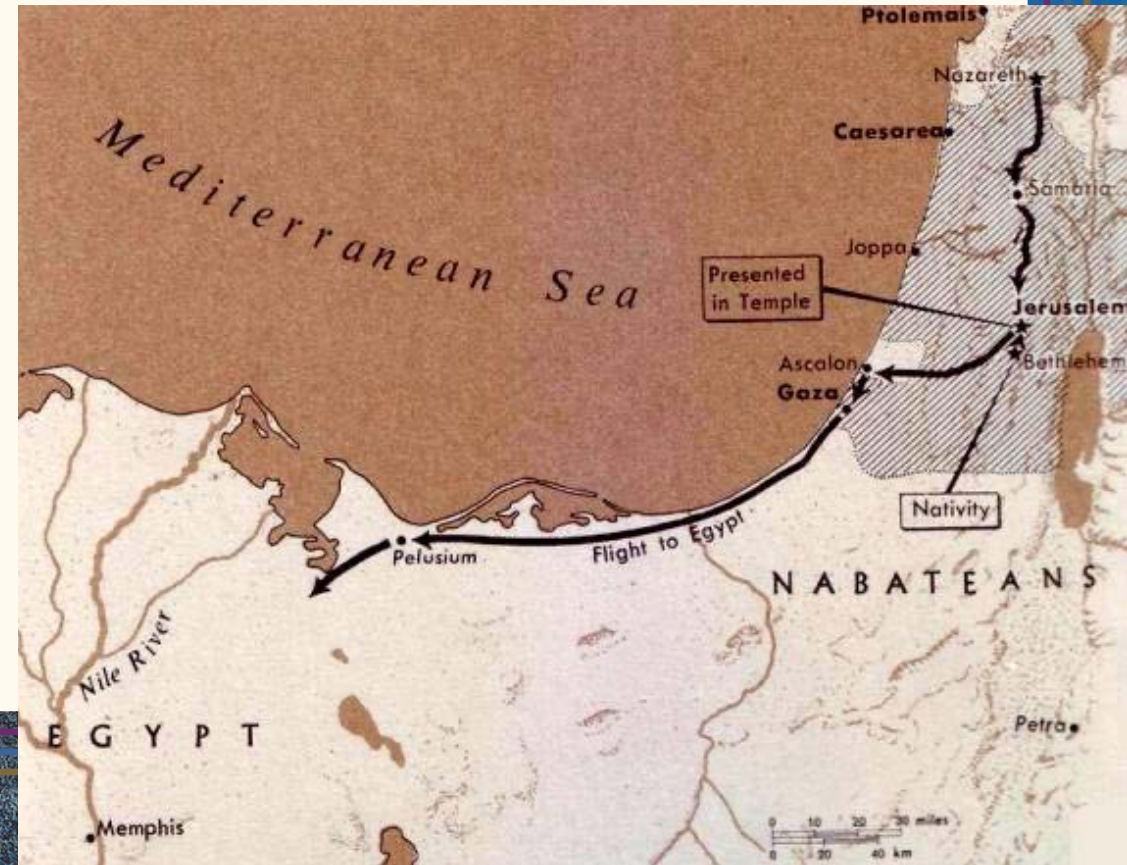


**Model of 1st c.
Scythopolis, work
site for many
tekton in Galilee**

13 After they were gone, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream, saying, “Get up! Take the child and his mother, flee to Egypt, and stay there until I tell you. For Herod is about to search for the child to kill him.” **14** So he got up, took the child and his mother during the night, and escaped to Egypt.

15 He stayed there until Herod’s death, so that what was spoken by the Lord through the prophet might be fulfilled: *Out of Egypt I called my Son. [Hosea 11]*

Matthew 2 CSB





Mary must leave her mother and family before birth. This was surely devastating, as it was unthinkable in that culture for one to give birth without female family companionship.

When a person obeys God and submits to Him, it will almost always involve some kind of earthly loss or at least a sense of loss.

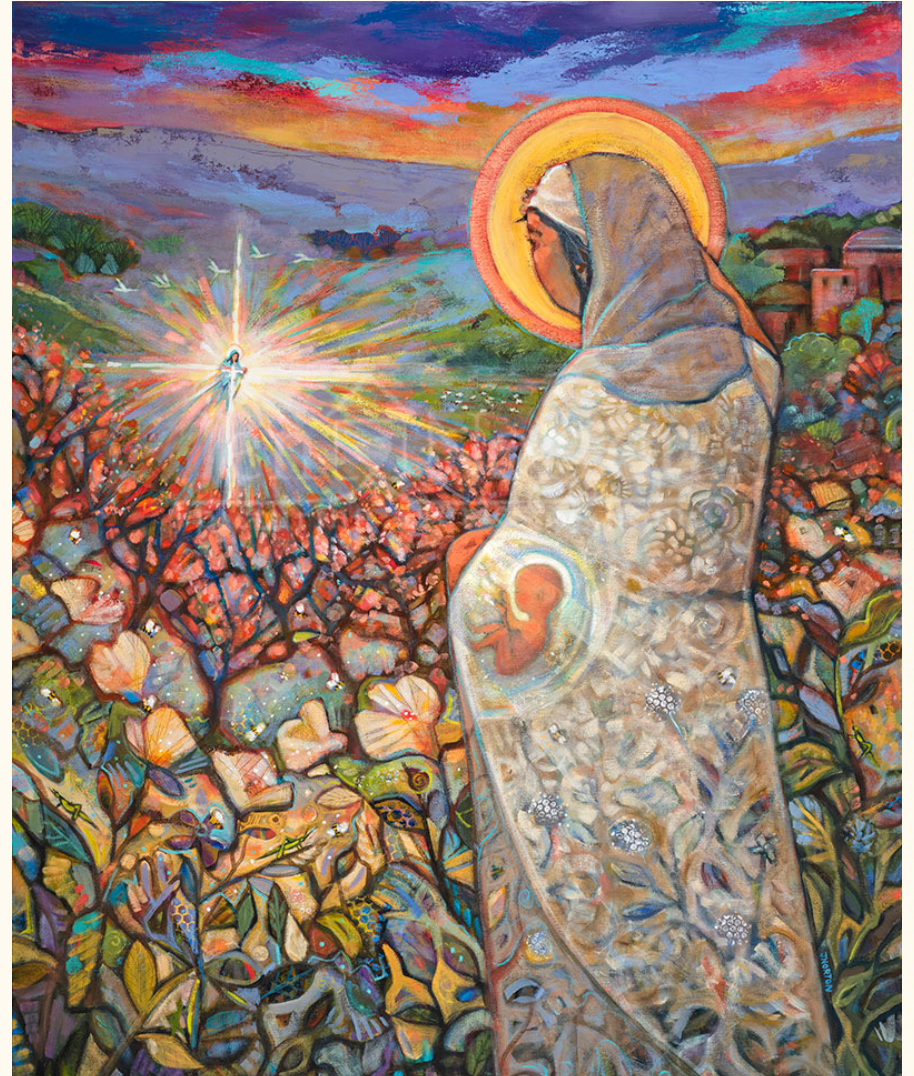
Elizabeth welcomes Mary
Jen Norton
2021



39 In those days Mary set out and hurried to a town in the hill country of Judah 40 where she entered Zechariah's house and greeted Elizabeth. 41 When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the baby leaped inside her, and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit. 42 Then she exclaimed with a loud cry, "Blessed are you among women, and your child will be blessed! 43 How could this happen to me, that the mother of my Lord should come to me? 44 For you see, when the sound of your greeting reached my ears, the baby leaped for joy inside me. 45 Blessed is she who has believed that the Lord would fulfill what he has spoken to her!"

Luke 1 CSB

- **The baby John leaped inside Elizabeth. The first recognition of Messiah came from a fetus.**
- **Elizabeth was granted the Holy Spirit's control – something that was very rare before Jesus' ascension.**
- **Elizabeth recognizes Jesus' Messianic identity. He is Lord, fully God.**
- **Elizabeth knows that Mary believed and submitted to the Lord immediately (unlike Elizabeth's husband, Zechariah, but that's another story.)**



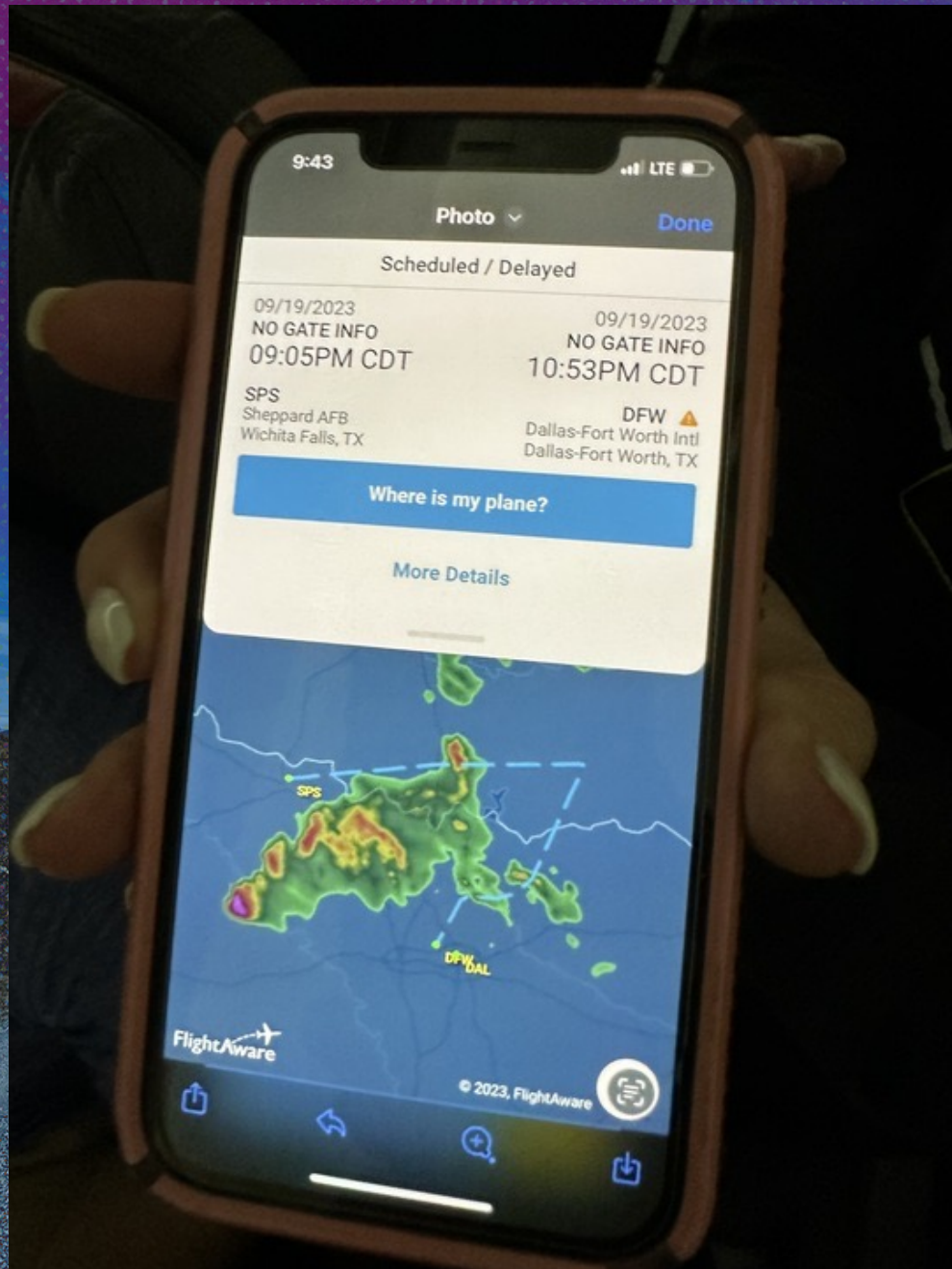


courtesy Times of India





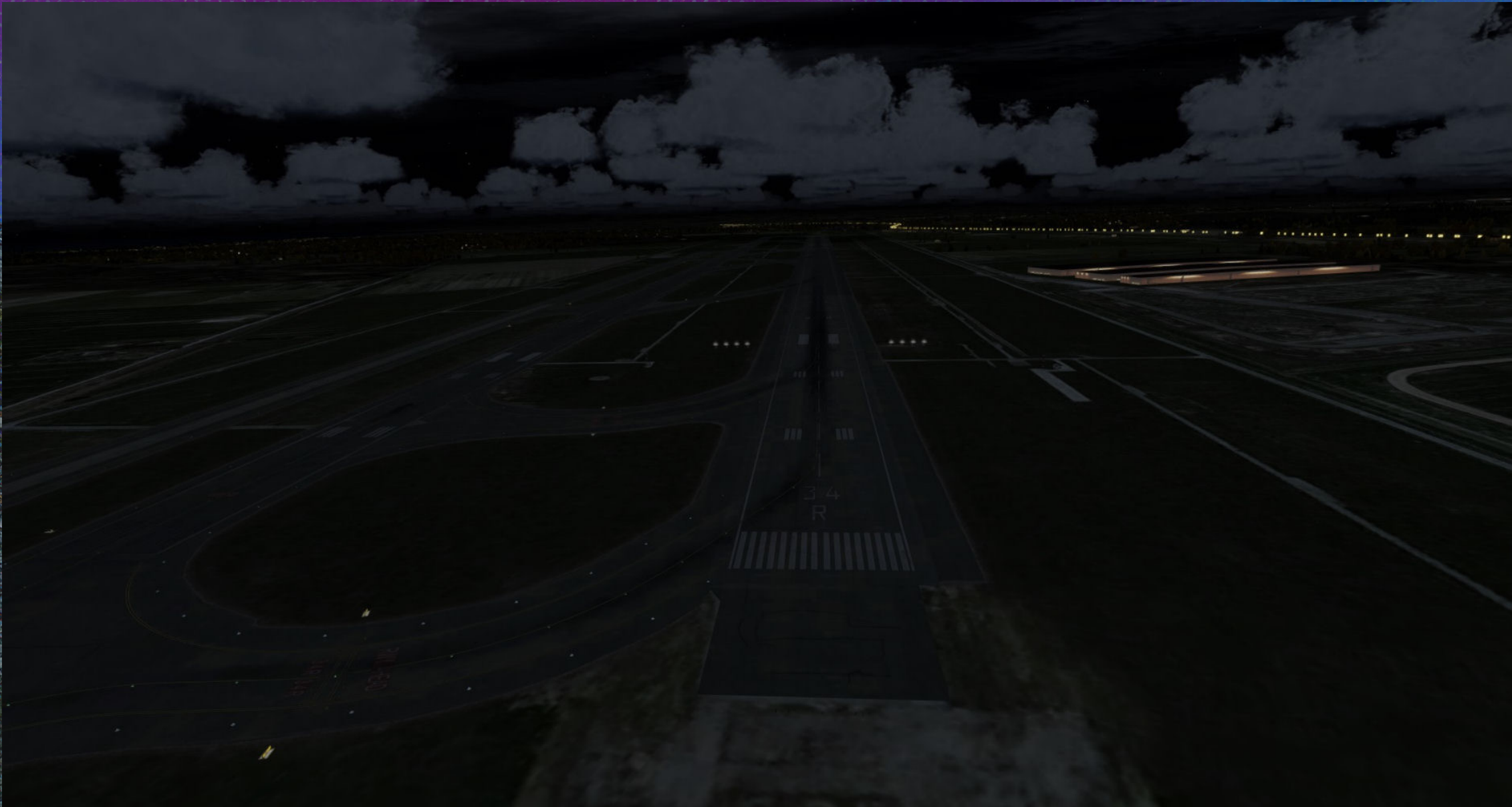
courtesy AA/jetphotos



courtesy Vince Conley/NYPost



It was a [completely] unexpected response. I didn't hear anyone being negative or crabby, I'm sure it happened here or there but everyone made the best of a really crappy moment. – Vince Conley



courtesy aerosoft; Yes, it's a given that all of the amazing pilots in this church could easily have taken off anyway.

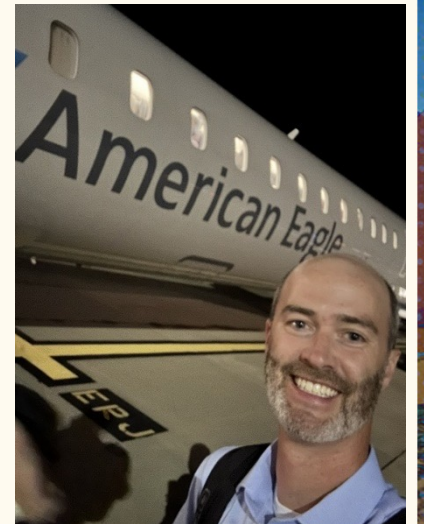


courtesy freepik



courtesy Vince Conley/NYPost

It was a very long day, but it was good. So good, it made me choke up. It takes a lot for me to get, like, that emotional; my wife thought I had a few drinks. It was just like the happiness of this really crappy situation, and people making a conscious effort to want to make the best out of it and help each other out and be supportive.
– Vince Conley



³⁹ When they had completed everything according to the law of the Lord, they returned to Galilee, to their own town of Nazareth. ⁴⁰ The boy grew up and became strong, filled with wisdom, and God's grace was on him. ⁴¹ Every year his parents traveled to Jerusalem for the Passover Festival.

Luke 2 CSB

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⁵¹ Then he went down with them and came to Nazareth and was obedient to them. His mother kept all these things in her heart. ⁵² And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and with people.

Luke 2 CSB





If you were busy complaining and blaming, your relationships would only grow sourer under the pressure.



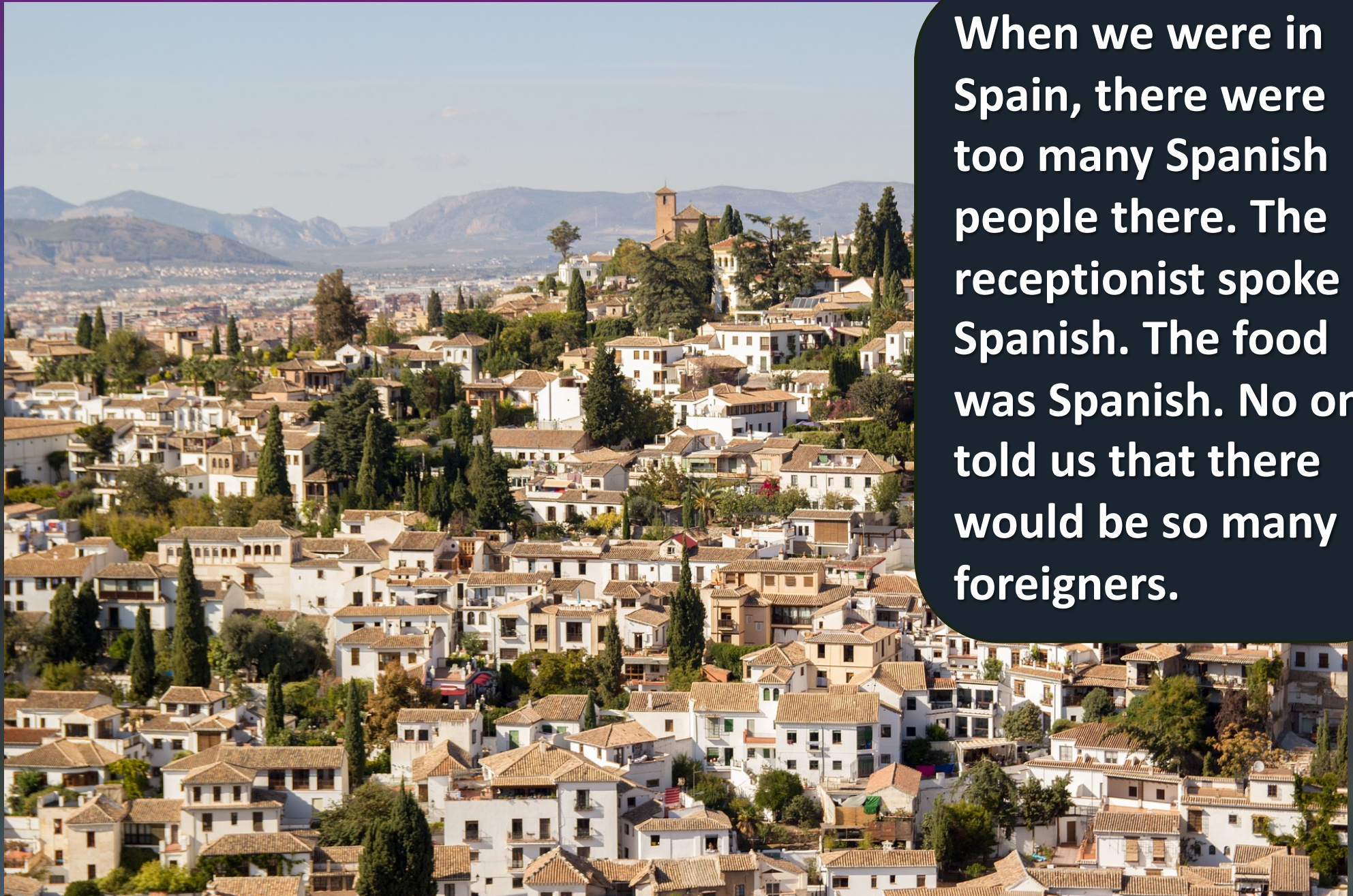
There is a power and peace from God that pervades your lives, and your relationships actually improve through the crucible.

On my holiday to Goa in India, I was disgusted to find that almost every restaurant served curry. I don't like spicy food.



The beach was too sandy. We had to clean everything when we returned to our room.





When we were in Spain, there were too many Spanish people there. The receptionist spoke Spanish. The food was Spanish. No one told us that there would be so many foreigners.

courtesy robotrotting; Of course, they should have known that no expects the Spanish Inquisition!

It took us nine hours to fly home from Jamaica to England. It took the Americans only three hours. This seems unfair.



courtesy Gatwick Airport

No one told us there would be fish in the water. The children were scared.



We had to line up outside to catch the boat and there was no air conditioning.





My fiancé and I requested twin beds when we booked, but instead we were placed in a room with a king bed. We now hold you responsible for the fact that I became pregnant.



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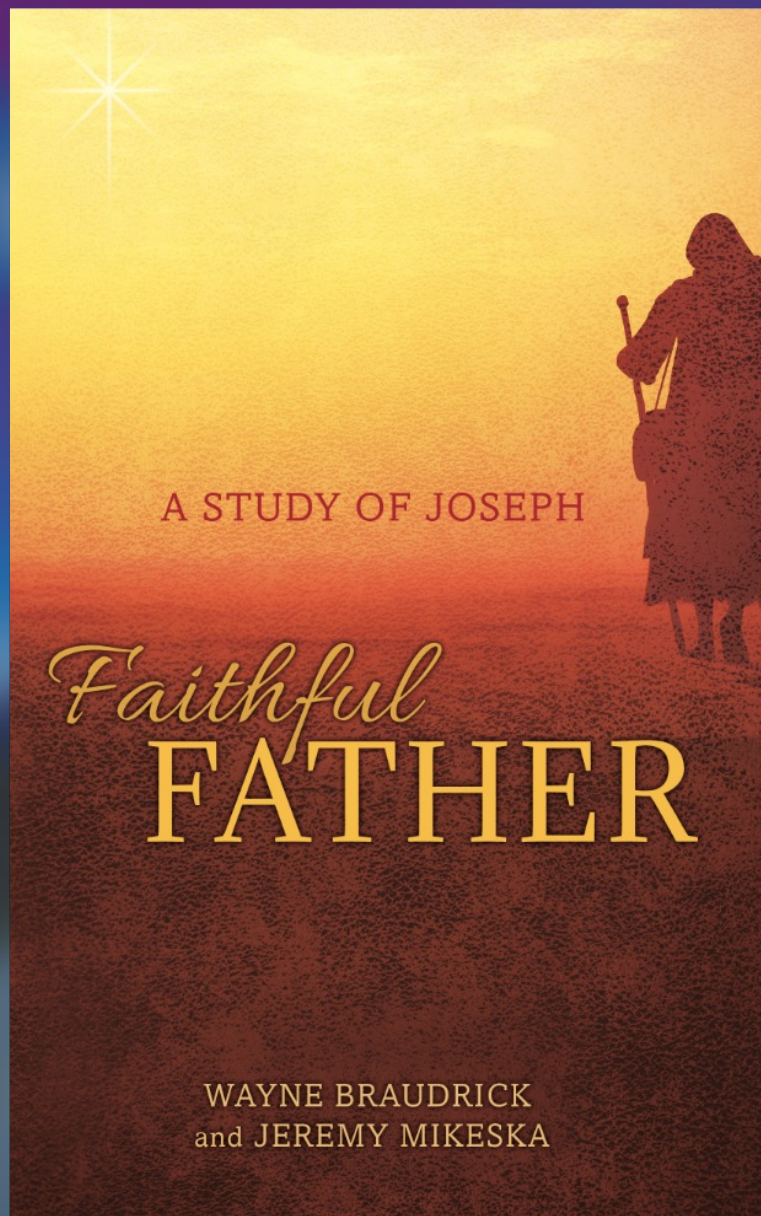


**46 And Mary said:
My soul magnifies the Lord,
47 and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior,
48 because he has looked with favor
on the humble condition of his servant.
Surely, from now on all generations
will call me blessed,
49 because the Mighty One
has done great things for me,
and his name is holy.**

Luke 1 CSB



Old woman reading Luke
Rembrandt van Rijn
1631



A STUDY OF JOSEPH

Faithful
FATHER

WAYNE BRAUDRICK
and JEREMY MIKESKA

courtesy Stone Tower Press



BETHLEHEM

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Luke 2:8-20





Adoration of the Shepherds
Pupil of Rembrandt
1646

The Shepherds
Gerard van Honthorst
1622



courtesy Pomeranian State Museum

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Matthew 2:1-12





courtesy freepik

2:11 Entering the house, they saw the child with Mary his mother, and falling to their knees, they worshiped him. Then they opened their treasures and presented him with gifts: gold, frankincense, and myrrh.
12 And being warned in a dream not to go back to Herod, they returned to their own country by another route.

Greek: ὁδός *hodos* = way; often as a way of life

21:32 For John came to you in the way of righteousness, and you didn't believe him. Tax collectors and prostitutes did believe him; but you, when you saw it, didn't even change your minds then and believe him.

They found Christ because they heeded the sign and believed the scripture. Noticeably absent at the manger were the scholars of the Torah. They read the prophecy...but did not respond to it. The wise men earned their moniker because they did. Their hearts were open to God's gift. The men were never the same again. After worshipping the Christ, "they departed for their own country another way" (v 12 NKJV).

Matthew uses the word *way* to suggest a direction of life...telling us the wise men went home as different men. – Max Lucado, *Because of Bethlehem*



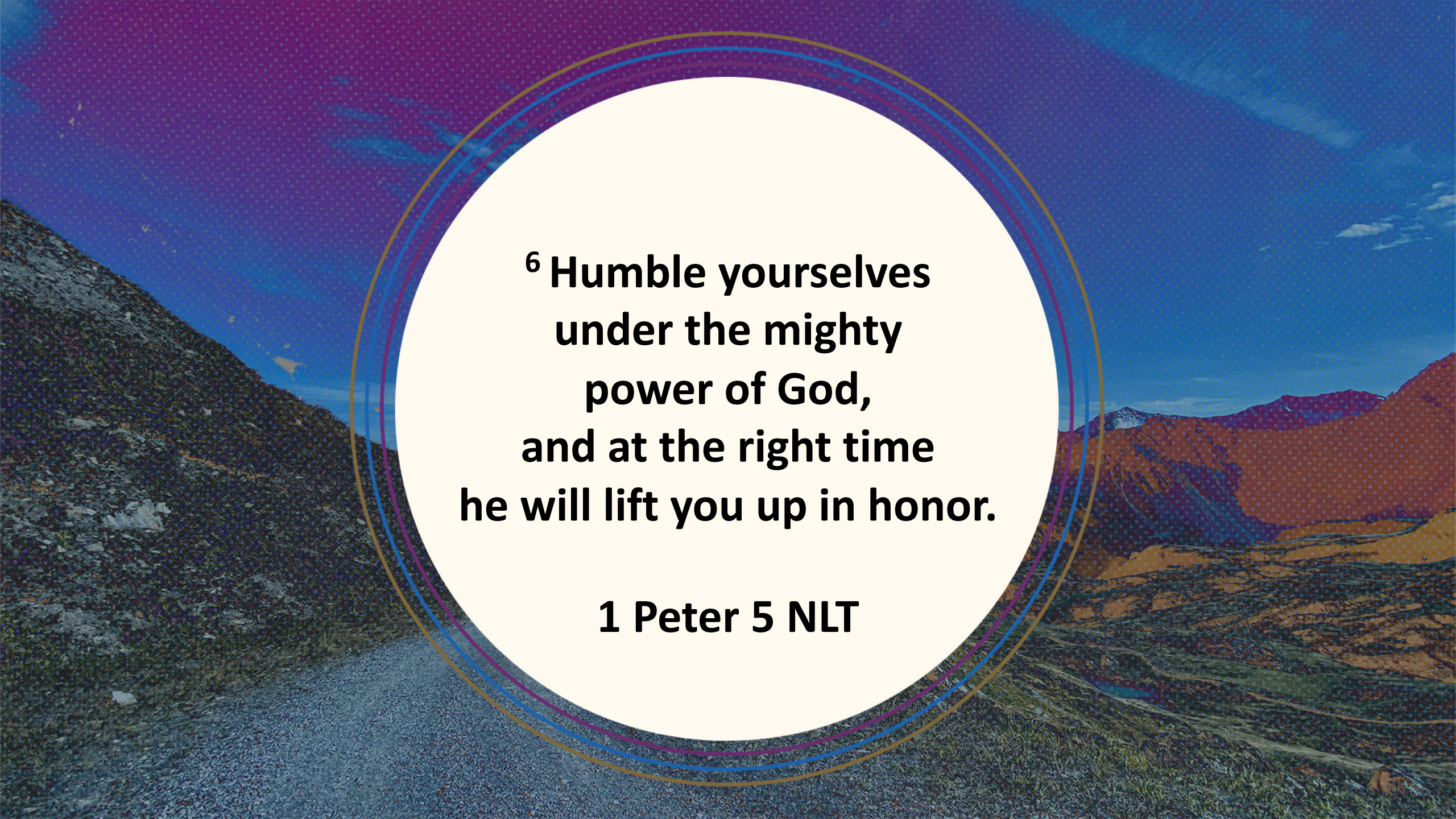
Adoration of the Magi
Rembrandt van Rijn
1632-3



courtesy Villa Medici



courtesy Emily Weaver Brown

A scenic landscape featuring a dirt road winding through a valley. In the background, there are mountains under a clear blue sky. A large white circle is superimposed over the center of the image, containing text. The circle is bordered by several concentric lines in various colors (blue, purple, yellow).

**⁶ Humble yourselves
under the mighty
power of God,
and at the right time
he will lift you up in honor.**

1 Peter 5 NLT

⁸ Everything else is worthless when compared with the infinite value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. For his sake I have discarded everything else, counting it all as garbage

Philippians 3 CSB

The Shepherds
Gerard van Honthorst
1622



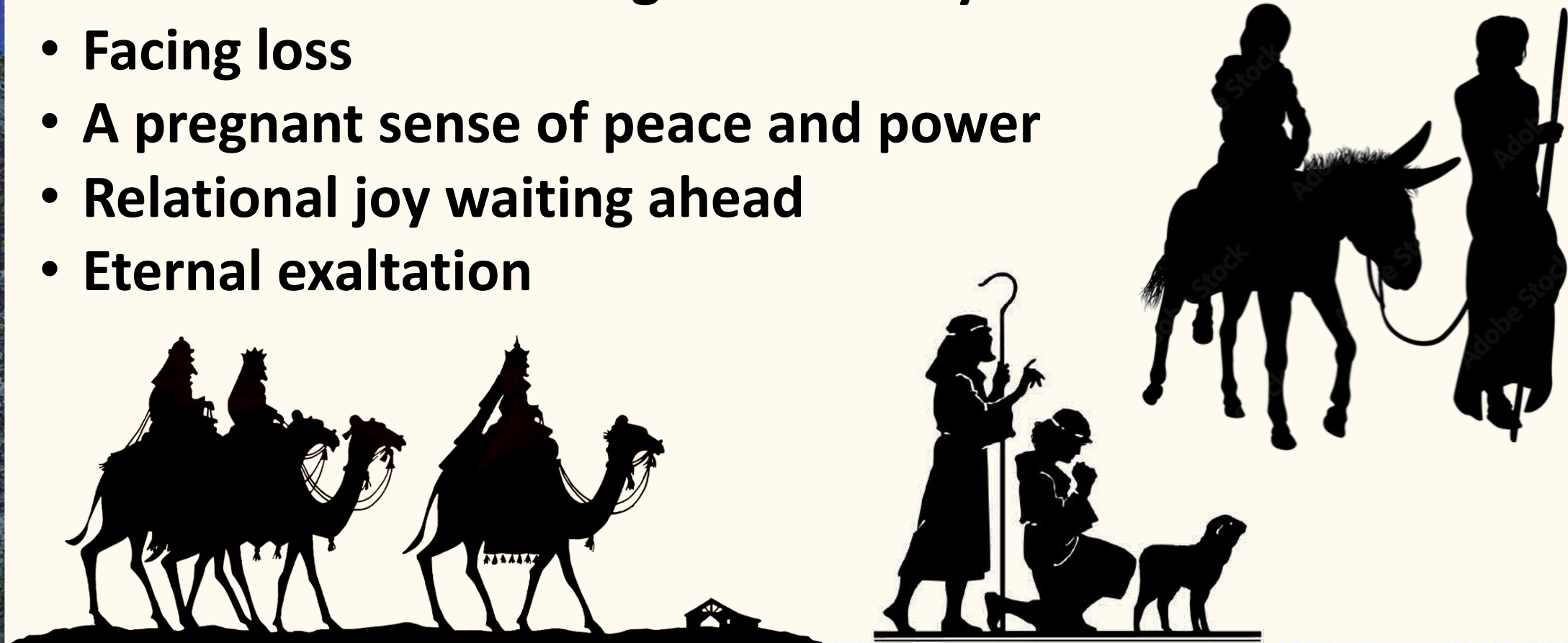
courtesy Pomeranian State Museum

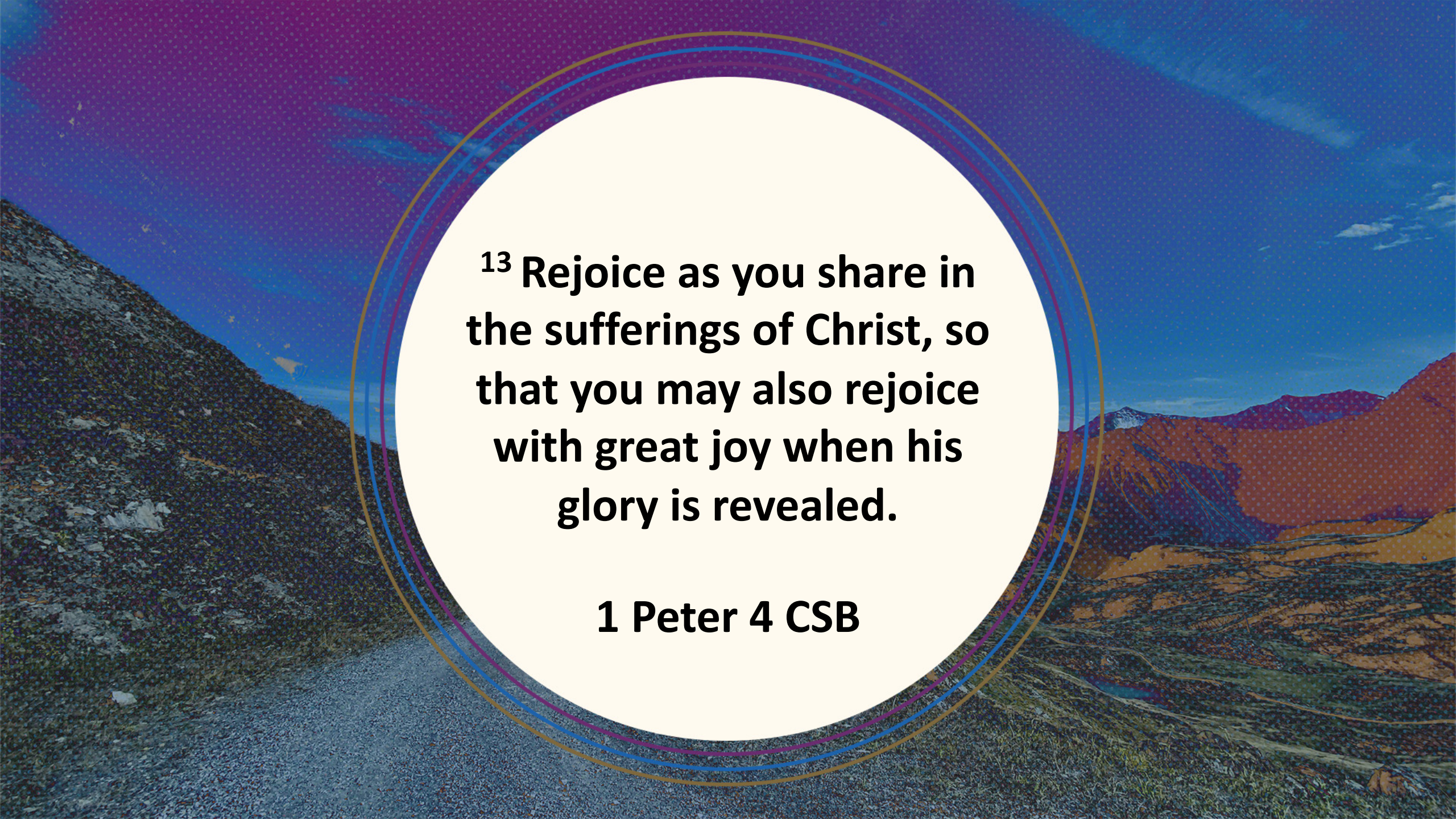
⁹ He [God] said to me, “My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is perfected in weakness.” Therefore, I will most gladly boast all the more about my weaknesses, so that Christ’s power may reside in me. ¹⁰ So I take pleasure in weaknesses, insults, hardships, persecutions, and in difficulties, for the sake of Christ. For when I am weak, then I am strong.

2 Corinthians 12 CSB

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**¹³ Rejoice as you share in
the sufferings of Christ, so
that you may also rejoice
with great joy when his
glory is revealed.**

1 Peter 4 CSB

Live your best life NOW! Stop horizon living. – Mastin Kipp

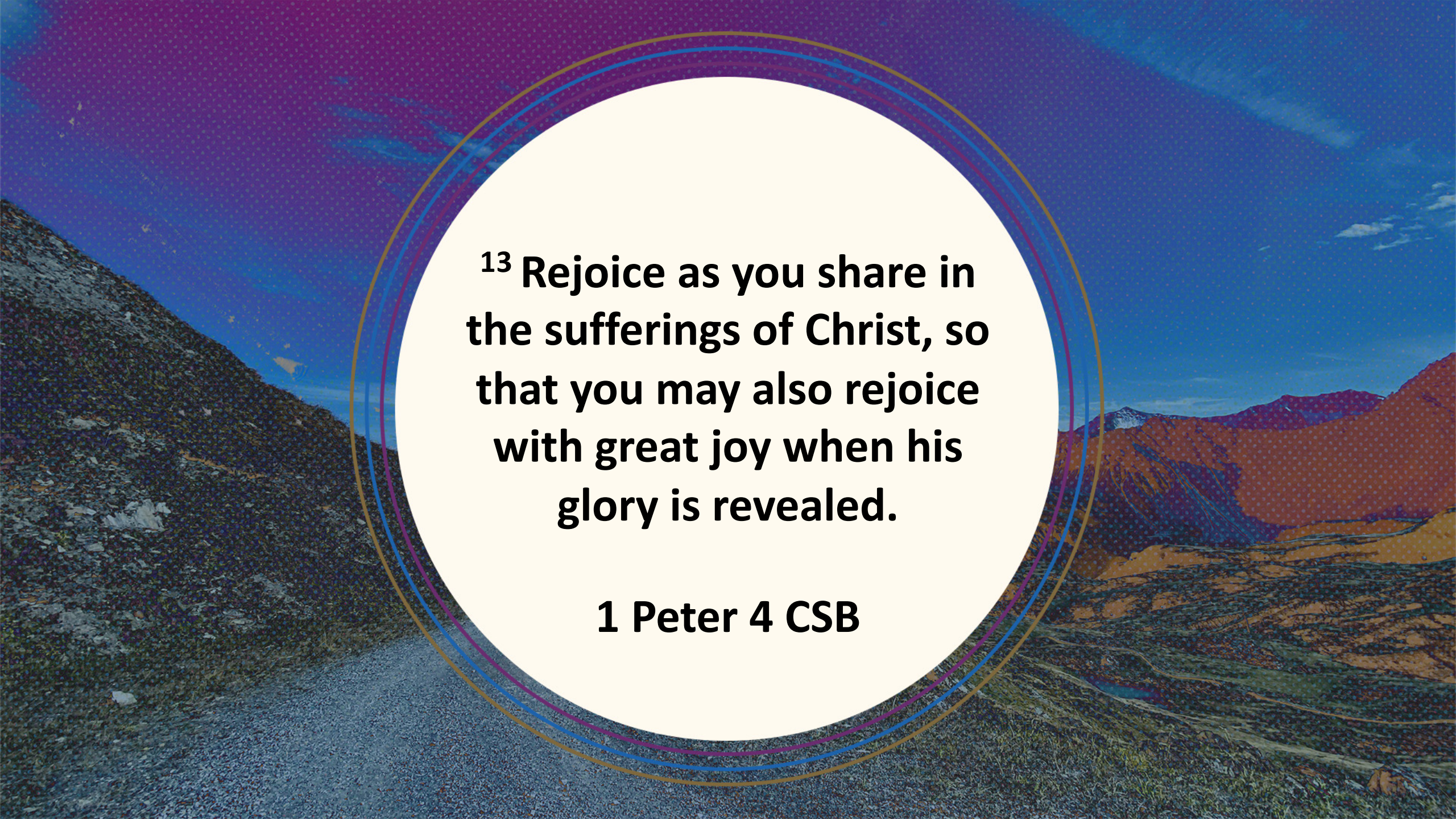


1 Peter 4:13 Rejoice as you share in the sufferings of Christ, so that you may also rejoice with great joy when his glory is revealed.



[This] doesn't give suffering the solemn respect it deserves. It sounds as though someone didn't want to take the elevator down through all five stages of grief and got off on the bargaining floor. – Andrew Mayne, *Night Owl*





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1 Peter 4 CSB



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