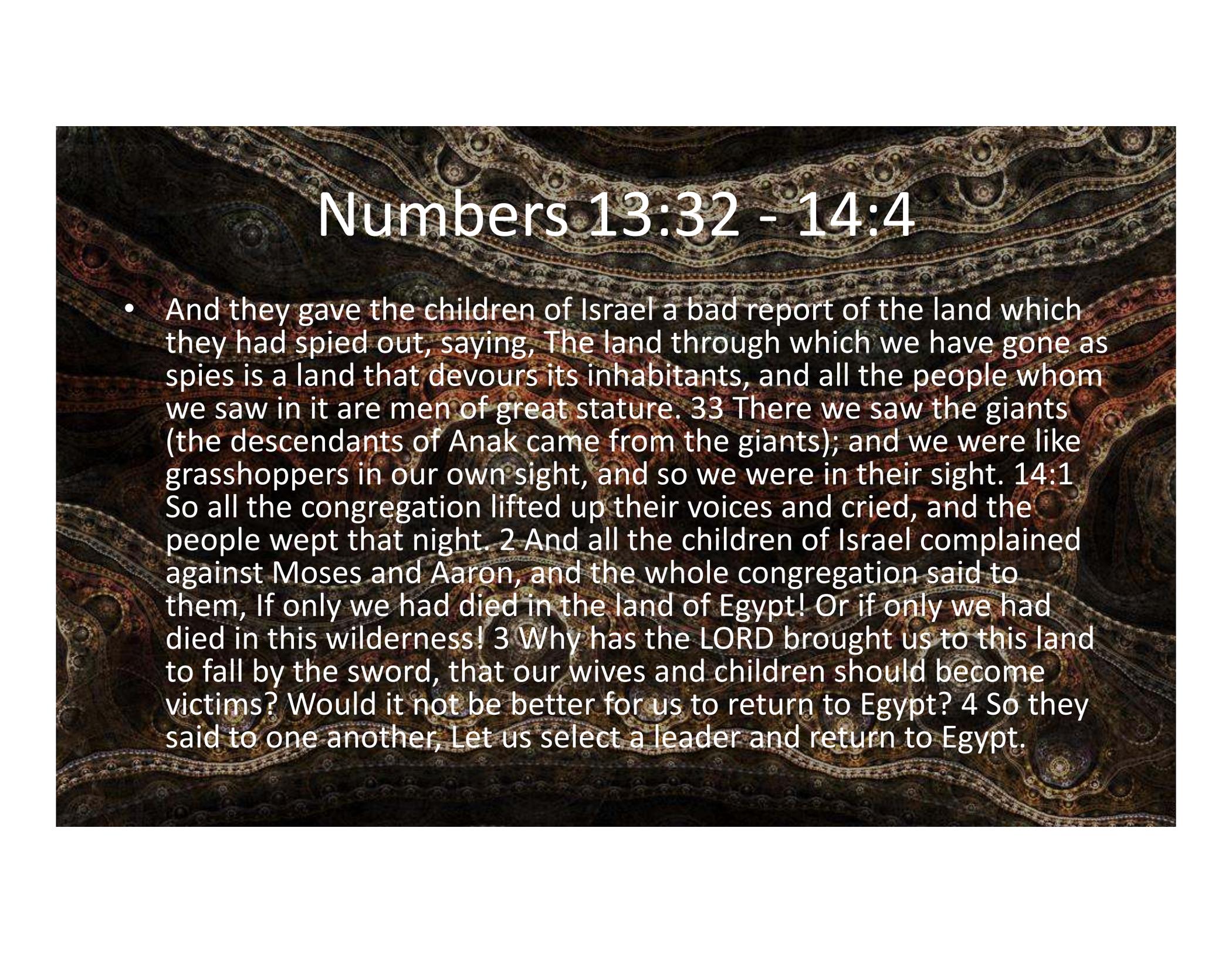


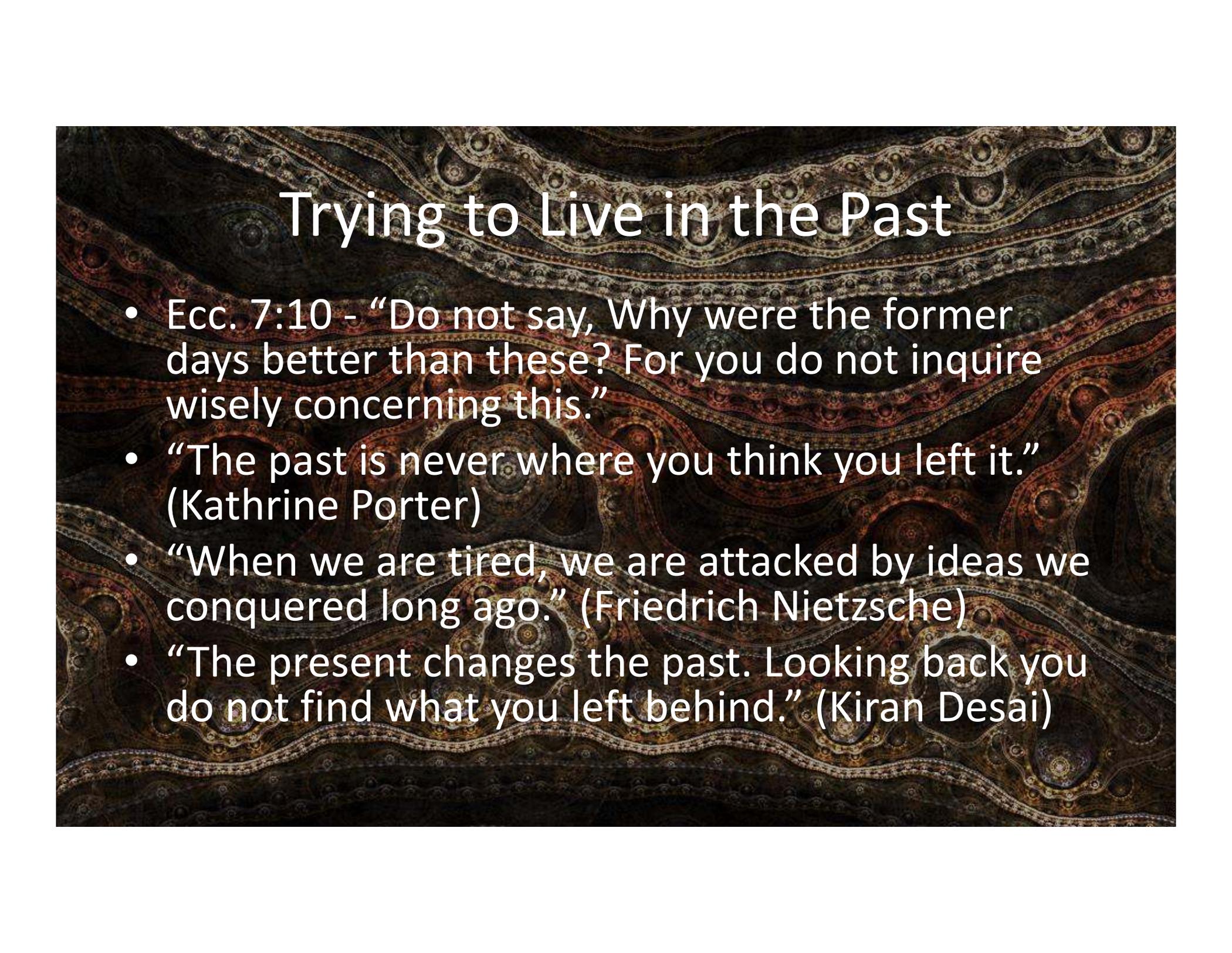
Trying to Live in the Past

Numbers 13:32 - 14:4



Numbers 13:32 - 14:4

- And they gave the children of Israel a bad report of the land which they had spied out, saying, The land through which we have gone as spies is a land that devours its inhabitants, and all the people whom we saw in it are men of great stature. 33 There we saw the giants (the descendants of Anak came from the giants); and we were like grasshoppers in our own sight, and so we were in their sight. 14:1 So all the congregation lifted up their voices and cried, and the people wept that night. 2 And all the children of Israel complained against Moses and Aaron, and the whole congregation said to them, If only we had died in the land of Egypt! Or if only we had died in this wilderness! 3 Why has the LORD brought us to this land to fall by the sword, that our wives and children should become victims? Would it not be better for us to return to Egypt? 4 So they said to one another, Let us select a leader and return to Egypt.



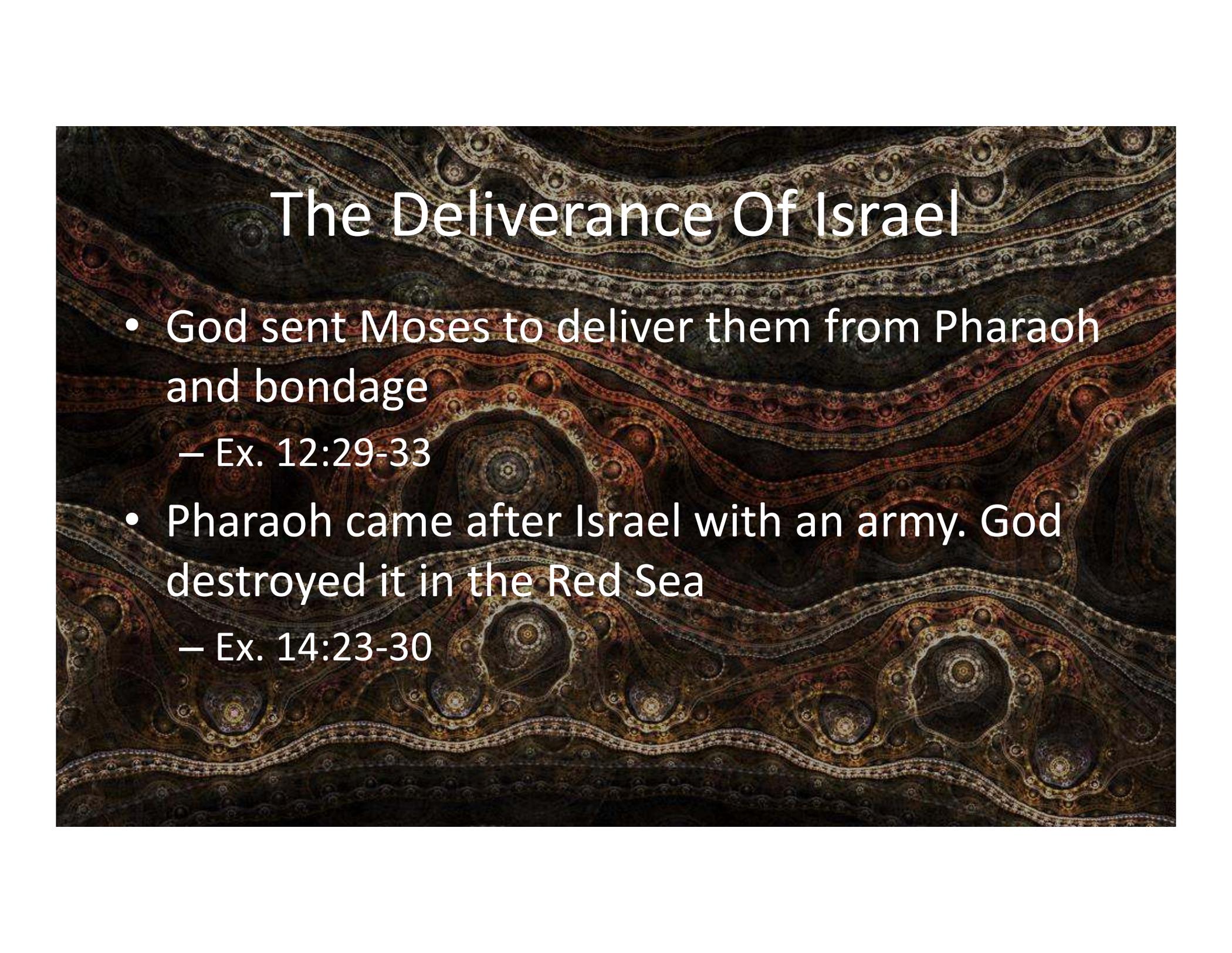
Trying to Live in the Past

- Ecc. 7:10 - “Do not say, Why were the former days better than these? For you do not inquire wisely concerning this.”
- “The past is never where you think you left it.” (Kathrine Porter)
- “When we are tired, we are attacked by ideas we conquered long ago.” (Friedrich Nietzsche)
- “The present changes the past. Looking back you do not find what you left behind.” (Kiran Desai)



The Deliverance Of Israel

- Jacob's family moved to Egypt to escape a famine, but they stayed for years afterwards
 - Ex. 1:8-14
- Eventually Egyptian oppression became so severe that Israel cried to God for deliverance
 - Ex. 2:23-25



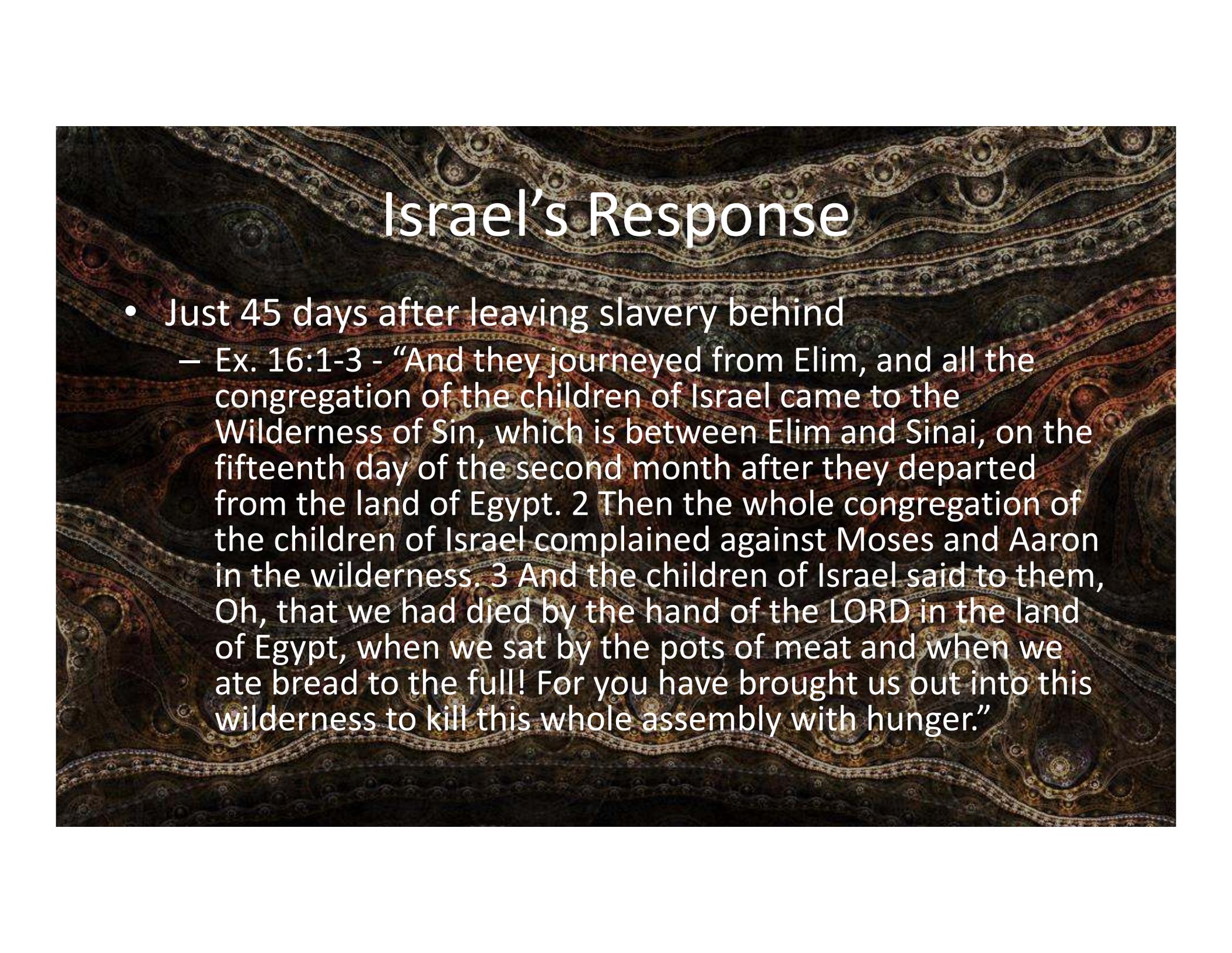
The Deliverance Of Israel

- God sent Moses to deliver them from Pharaoh and bondage
 - Ex. 12:29-33
- Pharaoh came after Israel with an army. God destroyed it in the Red Sea
 - Ex. 14:23-30



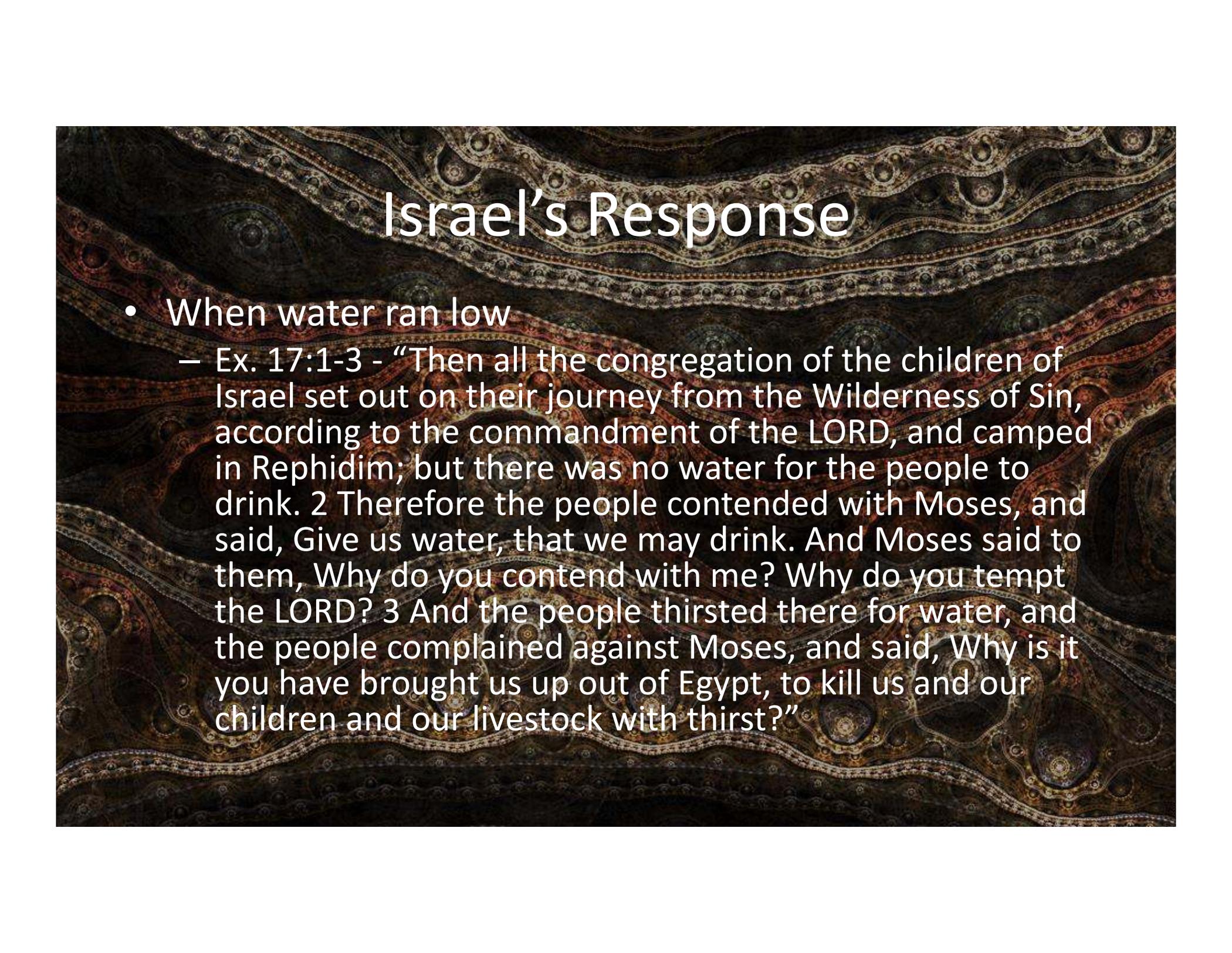
The Deliverance Of Israel

- God provided for Israel's every need during their journey
 - Guided by day with a pillar of cloud and by night with a pillar of fire.
 - He gave them water in a desiccated desert
 - He gave them uniquely special food each day
 - When they were attacked, God gave them victory



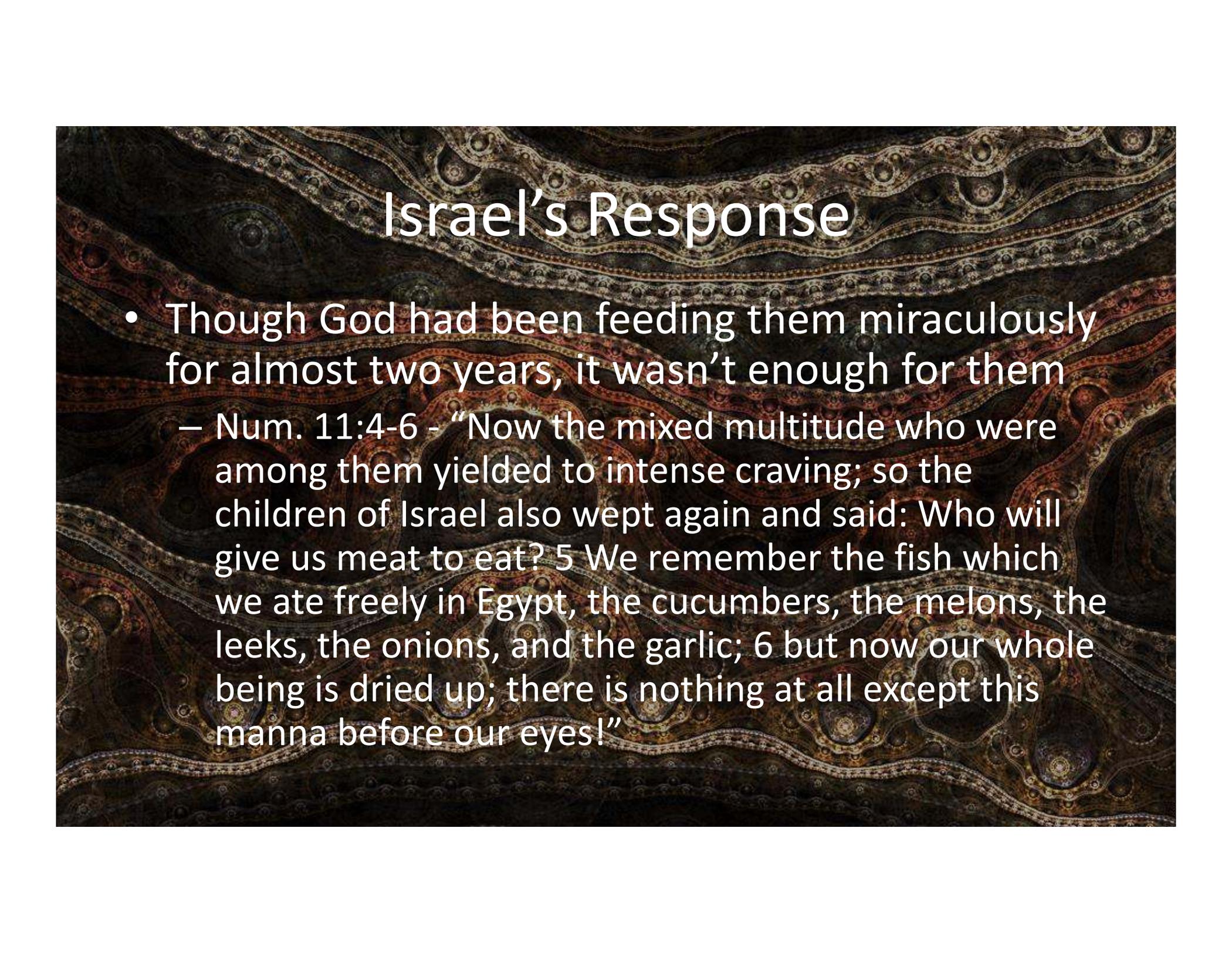
Israel's Response

- Just 45 days after leaving slavery behind
 - Ex. 16:1-3 - “And they journeyed from Elim, and all the congregation of the children of Israel came to the Wilderness of Sin, which is between Elim and Sinai, on the fifteenth day of the second month after they departed from the land of Egypt. 2 Then the whole congregation of the children of Israel complained against Moses and Aaron in the wilderness. 3 And the children of Israel said to them, Oh, that we had died by the hand of the LORD in the land of Egypt, when we sat by the pots of meat and when we ate bread to the full! For you have brought us out into this wilderness to kill this whole assembly with hunger.”



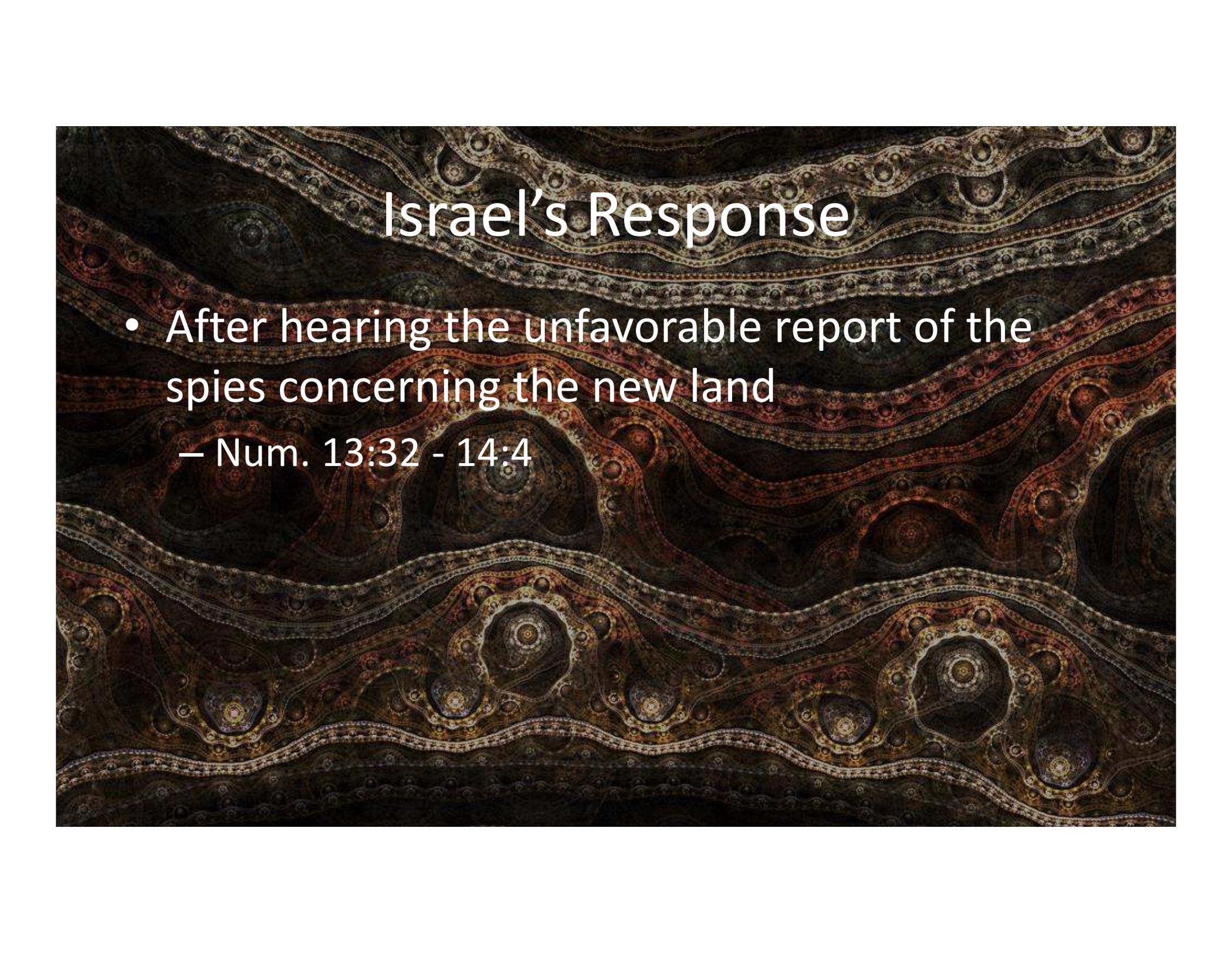
Israel's Response

- When water ran low
 - Ex. 17:1-3 - “Then all the congregation of the children of Israel set out on their journey from the Wilderness of Sin, according to the commandment of the LORD, and camped in Rephidim; but there was no water for the people to drink. 2 Therefore the people contended with Moses, and said, Give us water, that we may drink. And Moses said to them, Why do you contend with me? Why do you tempt the LORD? 3 And the people thirsted there for water, and the people complained against Moses, and said, Why is it you have brought us up out of Egypt, to kill us and our children and our livestock with thirst?”



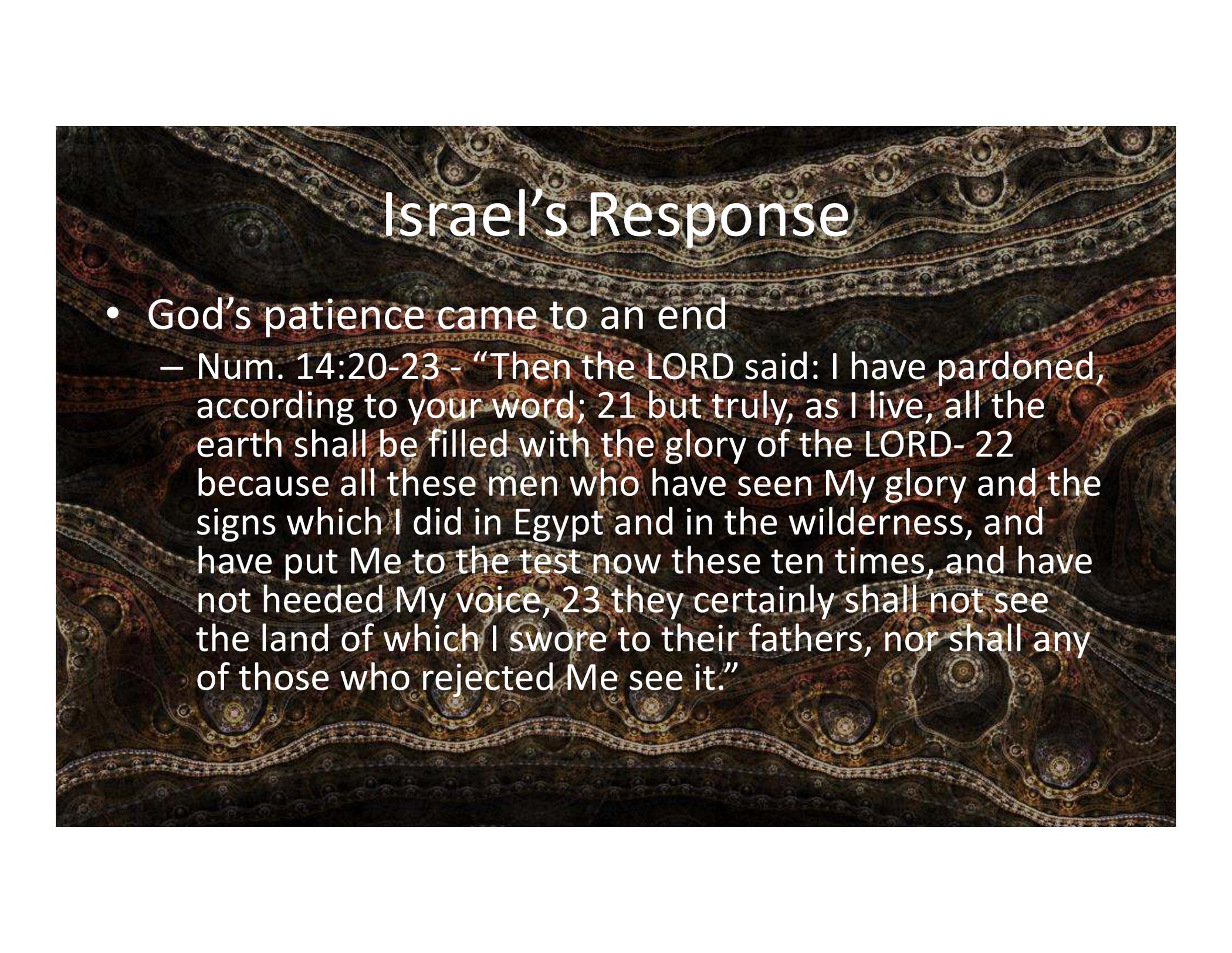
Israel's Response

- Though God had been feeding them miraculously for almost two years, it wasn't enough for them
 - Num. 11:4-6 - “Now the mixed multitude who were among them yielded to intense craving; so the children of Israel also wept again and said: Who will give us meat to eat? 5 We remember the fish which we ate freely in Egypt, the cucumbers, the melons, the leeks, the onions, and the garlic; 6 but now our whole being is dried up; there is nothing at all except this manna before our eyes!”



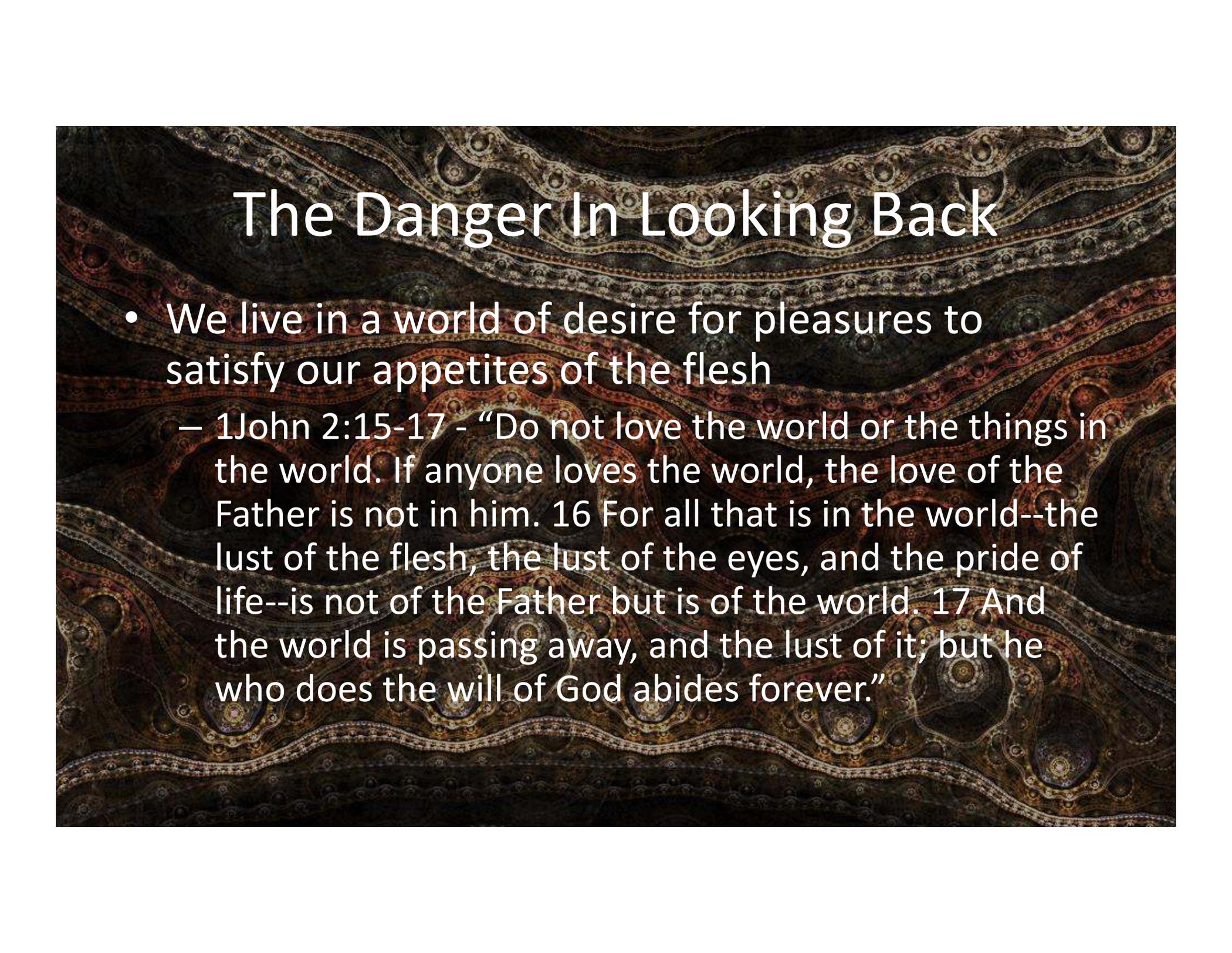
Israel's Response

- After hearing the unfavorable report of the spies concerning the new land
 - Num. 13:32 - 14:4



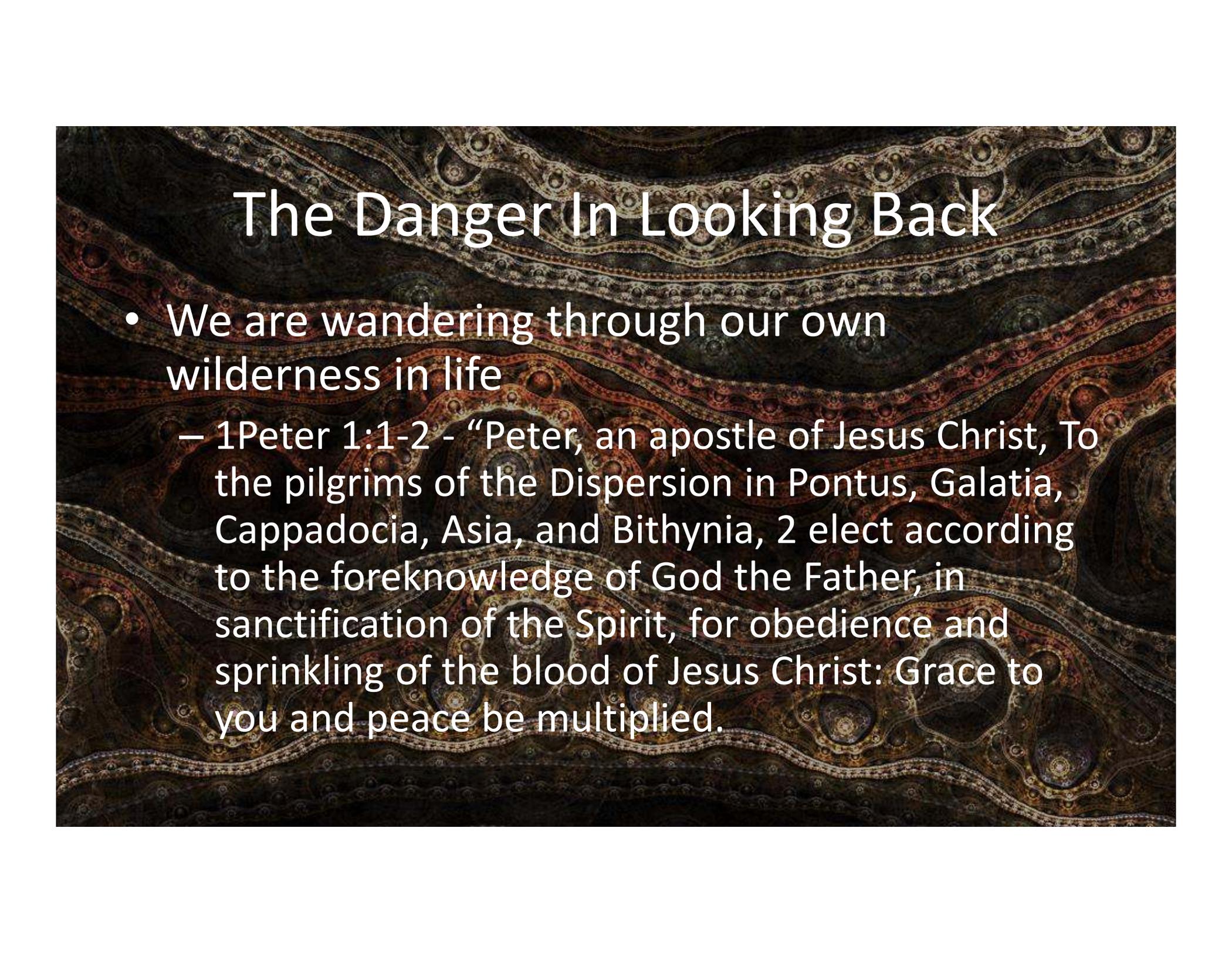
Israel's Response

- God's patience came to an end
 - Num. 14:20-23 - “Then the LORD said: I have pardoned, according to your word; 21 but truly, as I live, all the earth shall be filled with the glory of the LORD- 22 because all these men who have seen My glory and the signs which I did in Egypt and in the wilderness, and have put Me to the test now these ten times, and have not heeded My voice, 23 they certainly shall not see the land of which I swore to their fathers, nor shall any of those who rejected Me see it.”



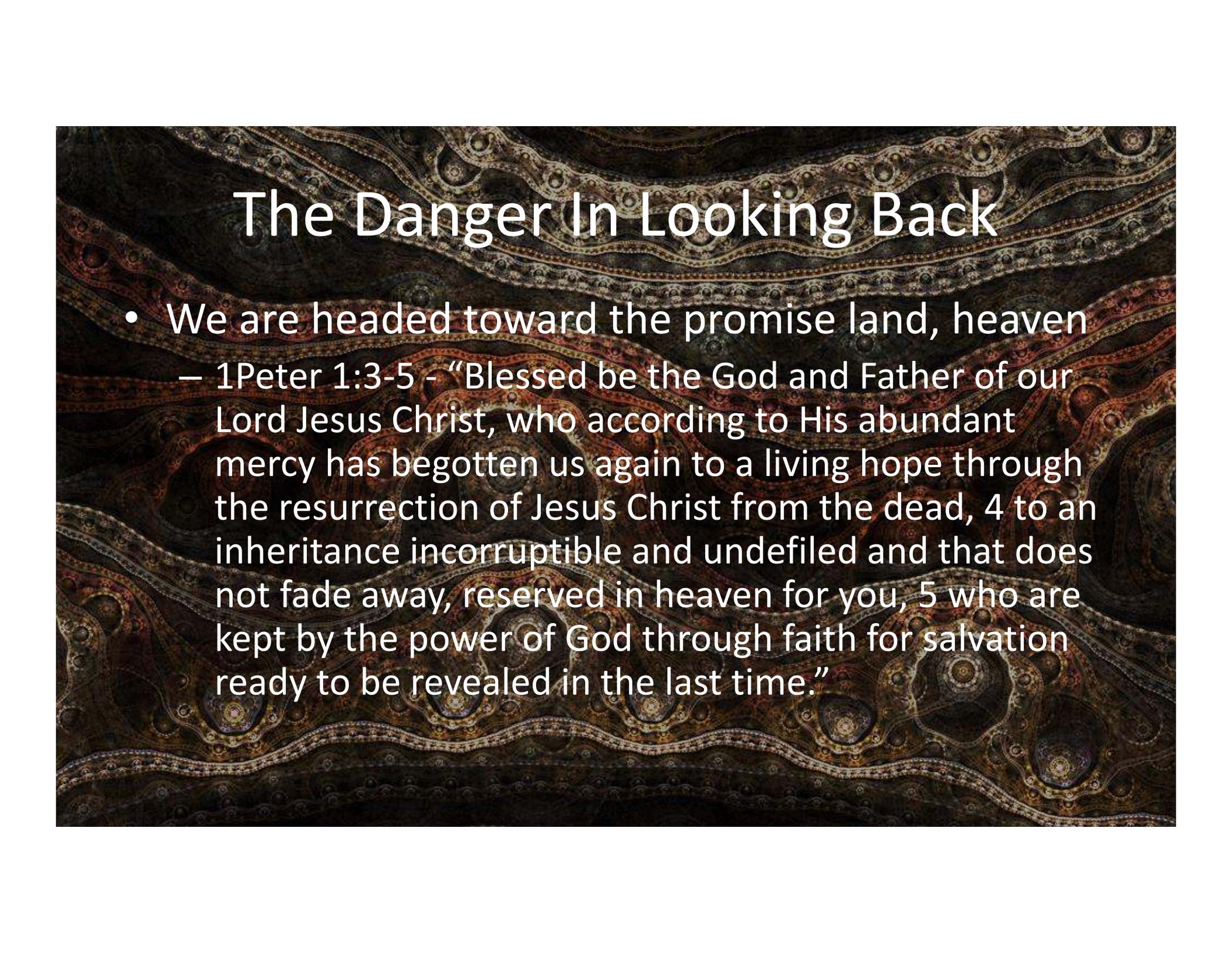
The Danger In Looking Back

- We live in a world of desire for pleasures to satisfy our appetites of the flesh
 - 1John 2:15-17 - “Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. 16 For all that is in the world--the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life--is not of the Father but is of the world. 17 And the world is passing away, and the lust of it; but he who does the will of God abides forever.”



The Danger In Looking Back

- We are wandering through our own wilderness in life
 - 1Peter 1:1-2 - “Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, To the pilgrims of the Dispersion in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia, 2 elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, in sanctification of the Spirit, for obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ: Grace to you and peace be multiplied.

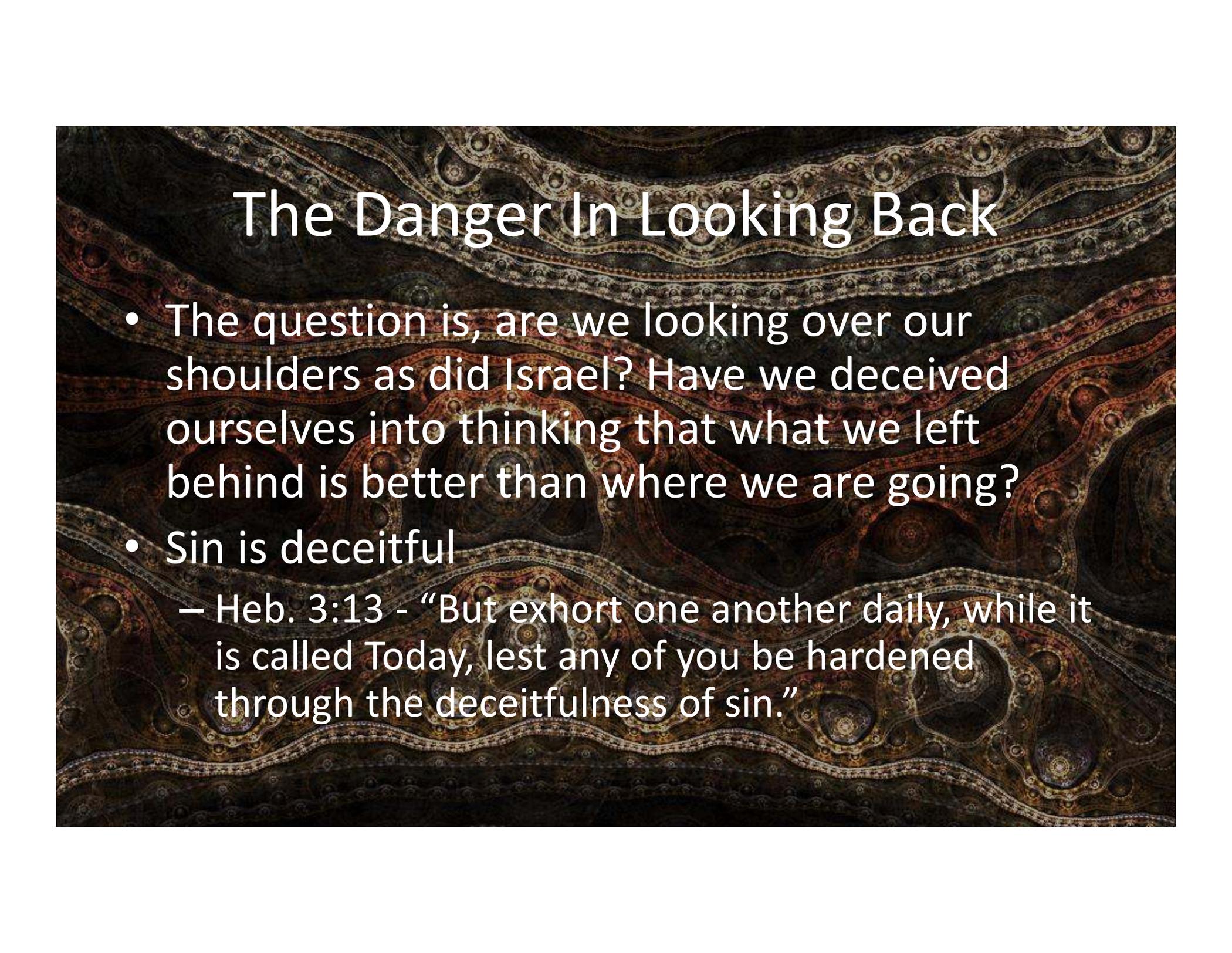


The Danger In Looking Back

- We are headed toward the promise land, heaven
 - 1Peter 1:3-5 - “Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His abundant mercy has begotten us again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, 4 to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled and that does not fade away, reserved in heaven for you, 5 who are kept by the power of God through faith for salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.”

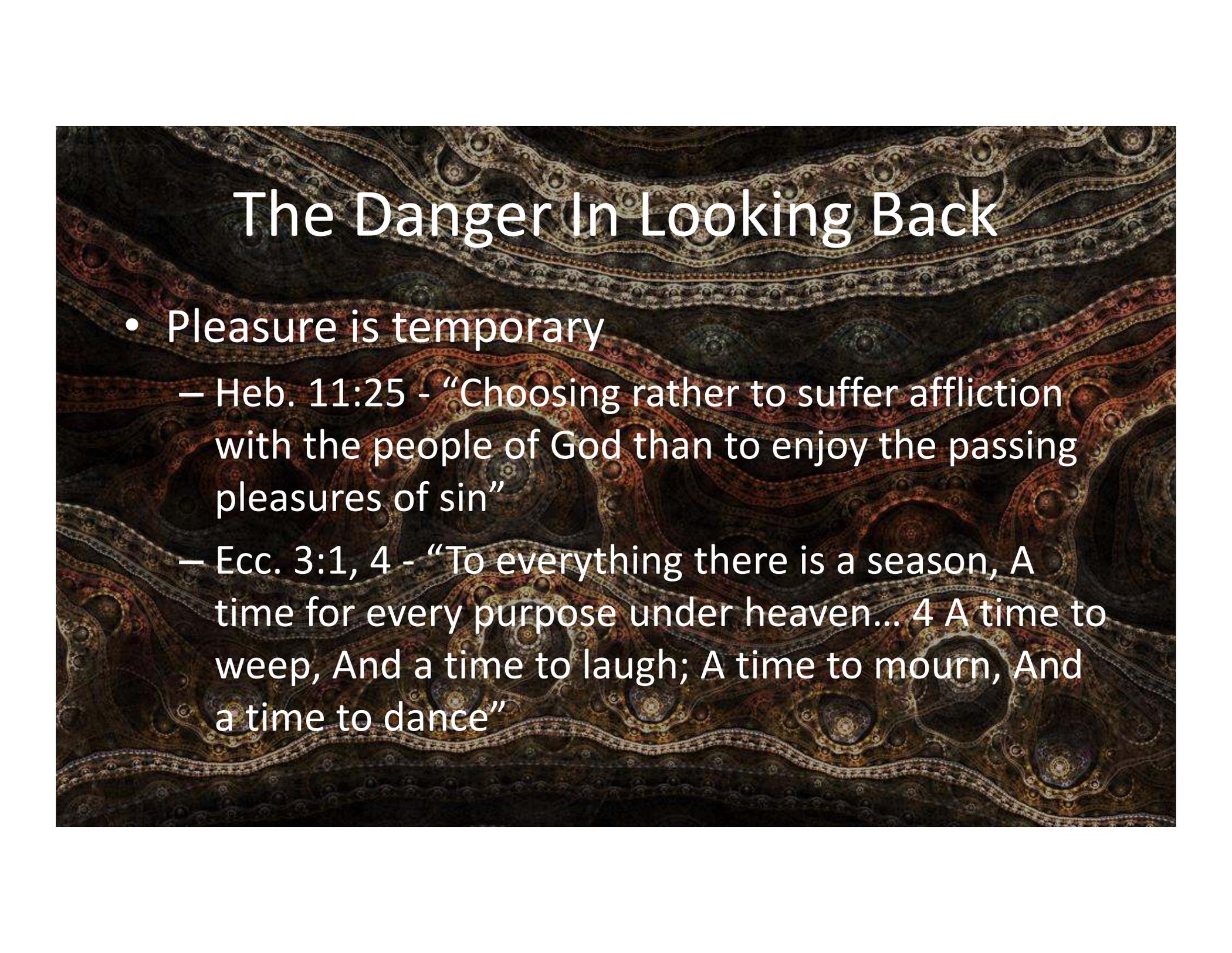
The Danger In Looking Back

- When we obeyed the Gospel, we left the bondage of sin behind
 - Col. 1:13 - “He has delivered us from the power of darkness and conveyed us into the kingdom of the Son of His love”
- We are seeking the land of eternal rest
 - Heb. 4:1, 11 - “Therefore, since a promise remains of entering His rest, let us fear lest any of you seem to have come short of it... 11 Let us therefore be diligent to enter that rest, lest anyone fall according to the same example of disobedience.”



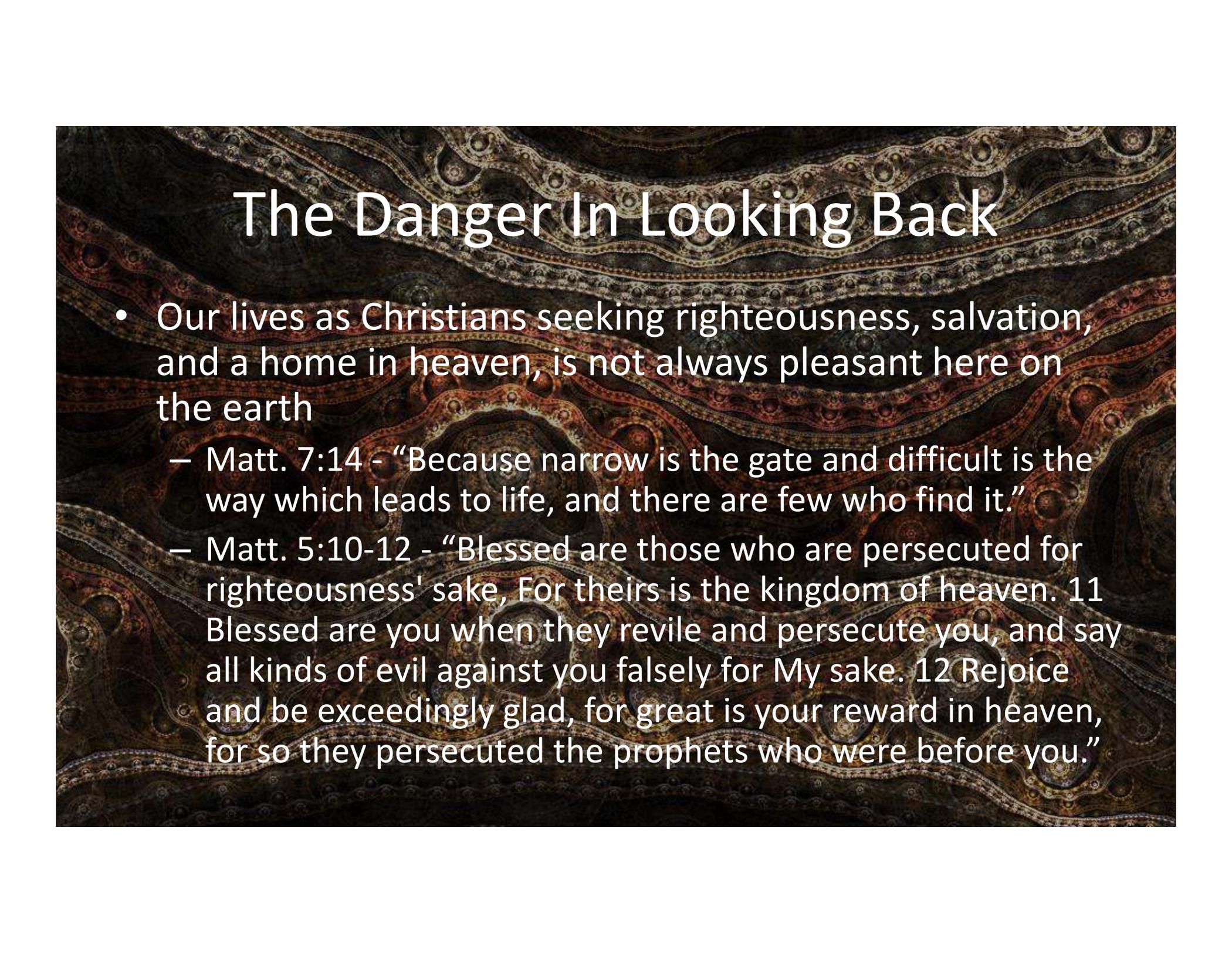
The Danger In Looking Back

- The question is, are we looking over our shoulders as did Israel? Have we deceived ourselves into thinking that what we left behind is better than where we are going?
- Sin is deceitful
 - Heb. 3:13 - “But exhort one another daily, while it is called Today, lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin.”



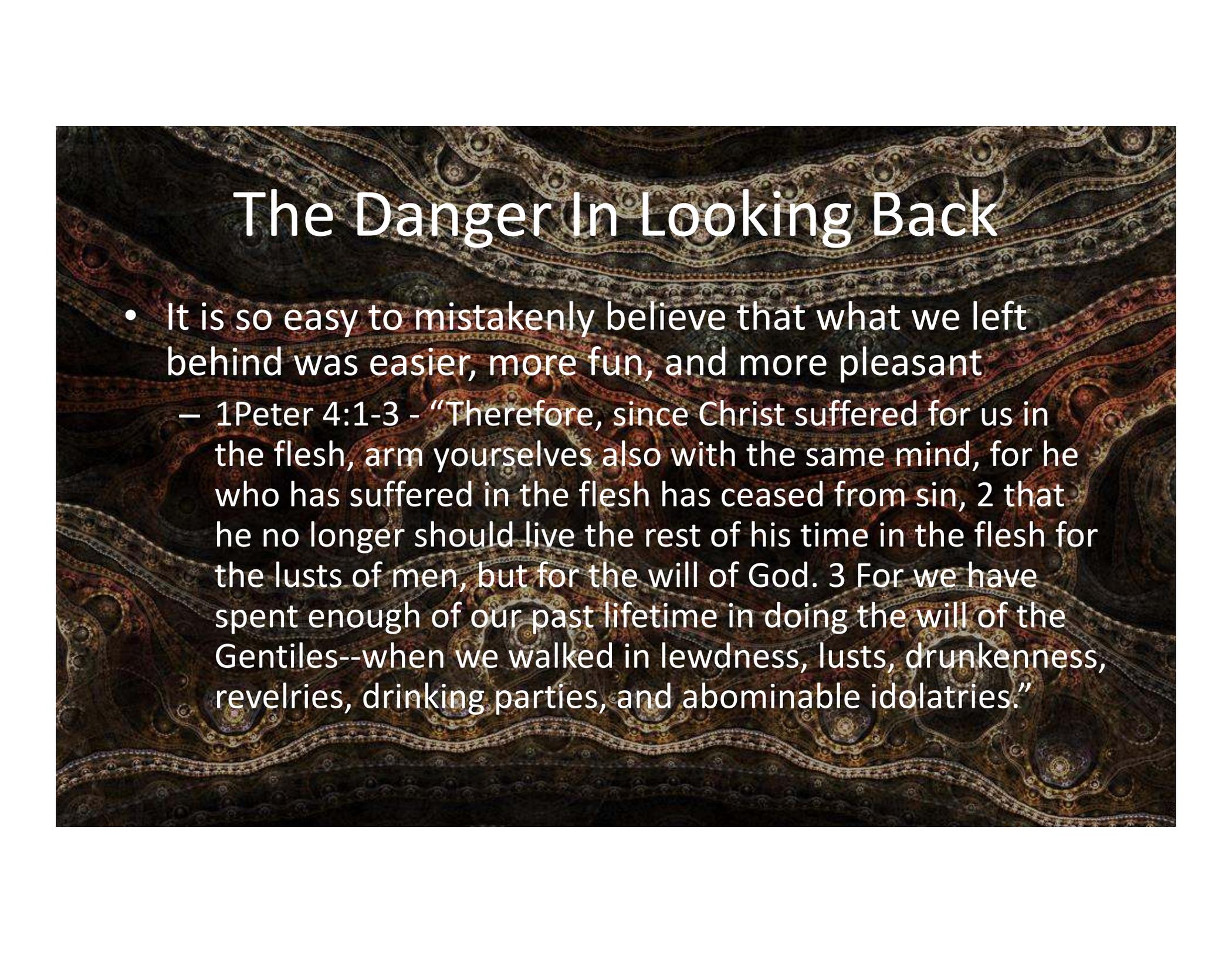
The Danger In Looking Back

- Pleasure is temporary
 - Heb. 11:25 - “Choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God than to enjoy the passing pleasures of sin”
 - Ecc. 3:1, 4 - “To everything there is a season, A time for every purpose under heaven... 4 A time to weep, And a time to laugh; A time to mourn, And a time to dance”



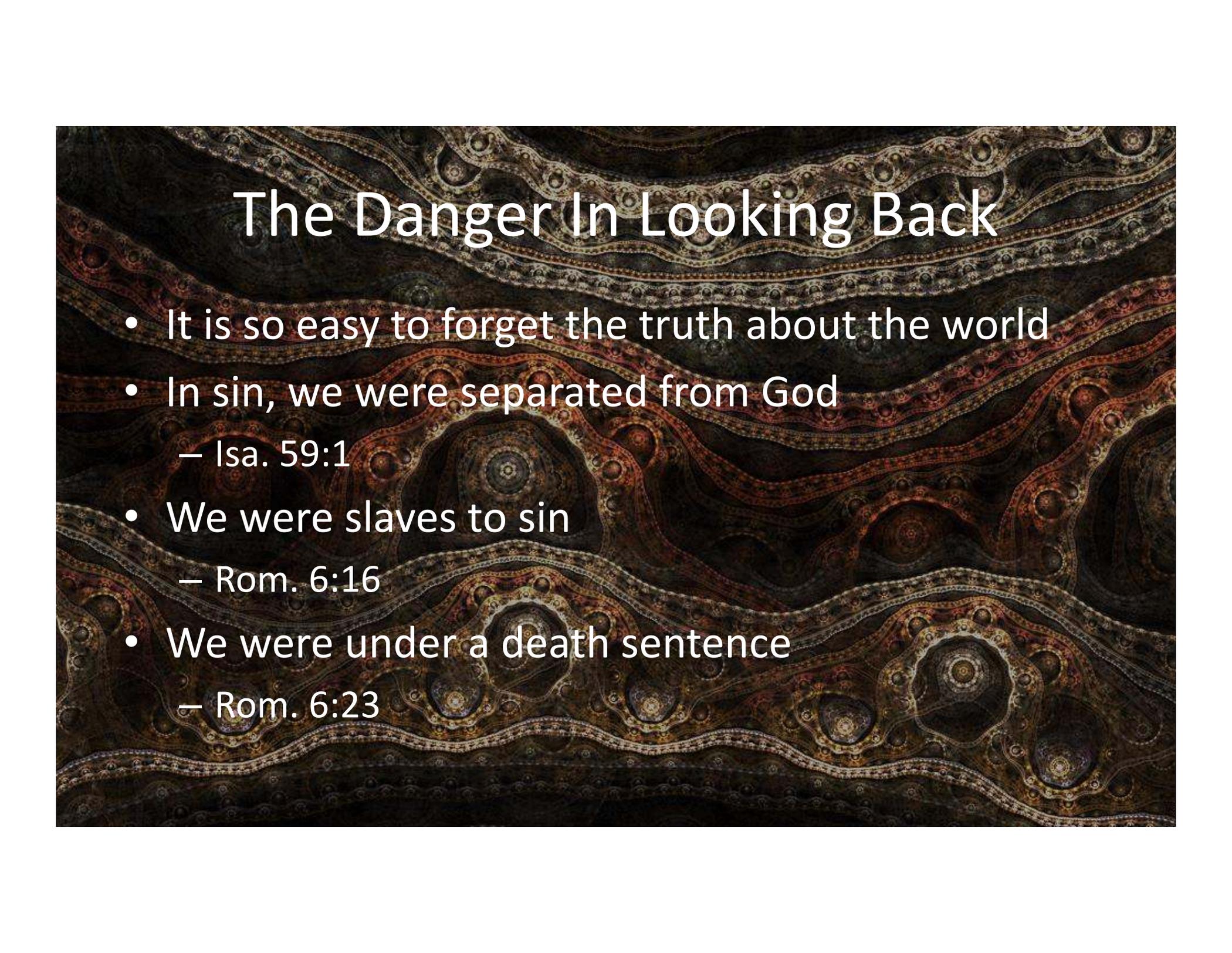
The Danger In Looking Back

- Our lives as Christians seeking righteousness, salvation, and a home in heaven, is not always pleasant here on the earth
 - Matt. 7:14 - “Because narrow is the gate and difficult is the way which leads to life, and there are few who find it.”
 - Matt. 5:10-12 - “Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, For theirs is the kingdom of heaven. 11 Blessed are you when they revile and persecute you, and say all kinds of evil against you falsely for My sake. 12 Rejoice and be exceedingly glad, for great is your reward in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you.”



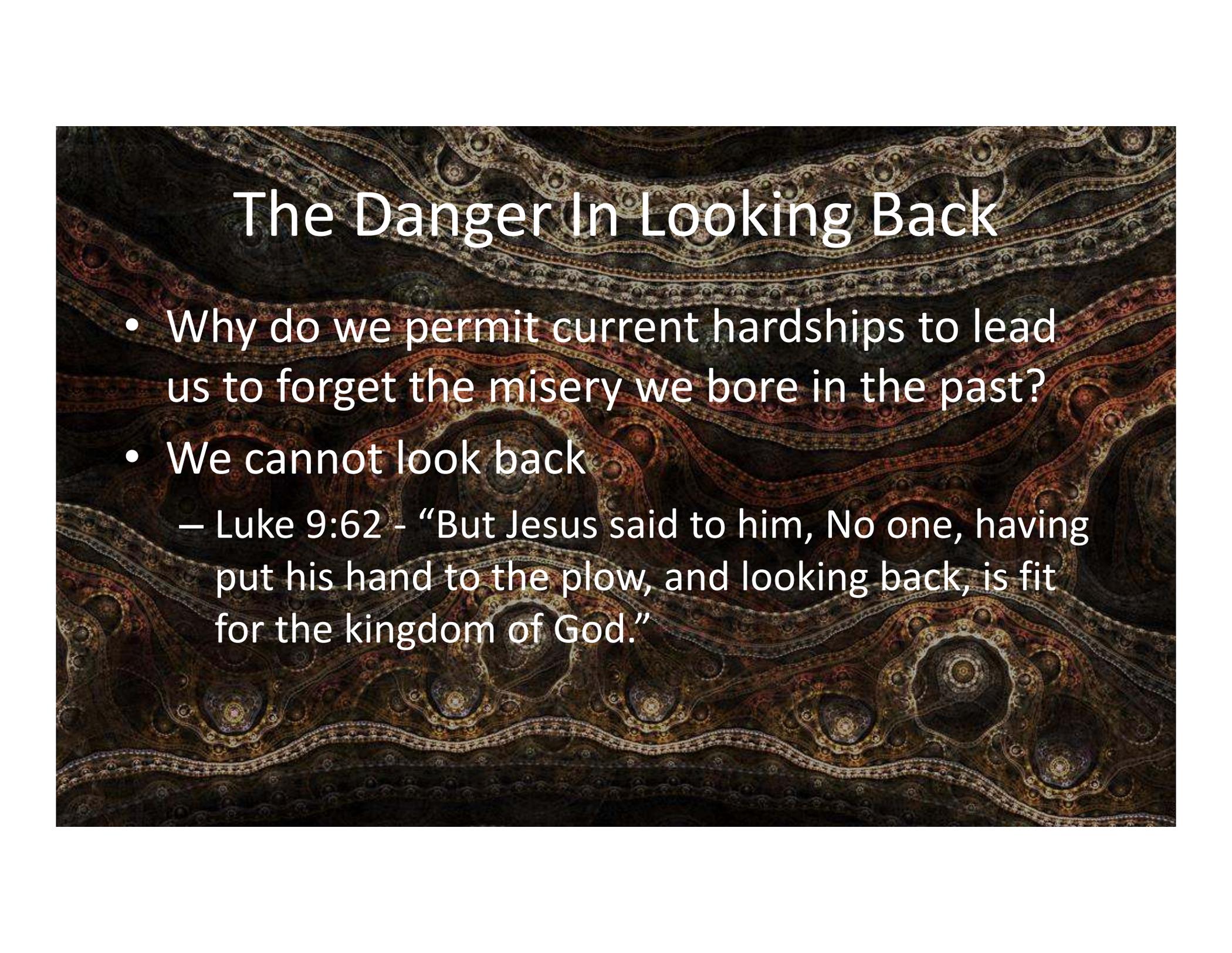
The Danger In Looking Back

- It is so easy to mistakenly believe that what we left behind was easier, more fun, and more pleasant
 - 1Peter 4:1-3 - “Therefore, since Christ suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves also with the same mind, for he who has suffered in the flesh has ceased from sin, 2 that he no longer should live the rest of his time in the flesh for the lusts of men, but for the will of God. 3 For we have spent enough of our past lifetime in doing the will of the Gentiles--when we walked in lewdness, lusts, drunkenness, revelries, drinking parties, and abominable idolatries.”



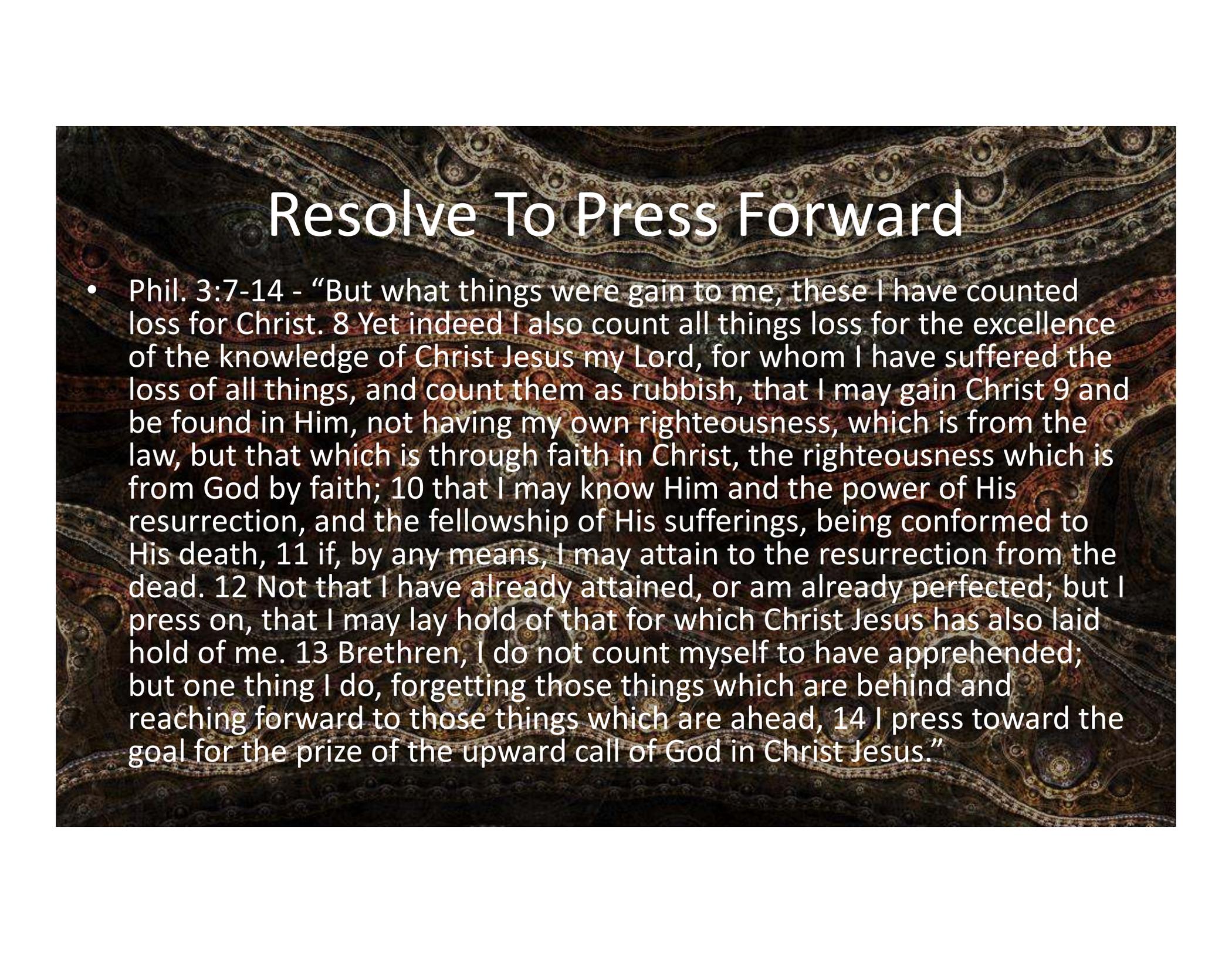
The Danger In Looking Back

- It is so easy to forget the truth about the world
- In sin, we were separated from God
 - Isa. 59:1
- We were slaves to sin
 - Rom. 6:16
- We were under a death sentence
 - Rom. 6:23



The Danger In Looking Back

- Why do we permit current hardships to lead us to forget the misery we bore in the past?
- We cannot look back
 - Luke 9:62 - “But Jesus said to him, No one, having put his hand to the plow, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God.”



Resolve To Press Forward

- Phil. 3:7-14 - “But what things were gain to me, these I have counted loss for Christ. 8 Yet indeed I also count all things loss for the excellence of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them as rubbish, that I may gain Christ 9 and be found in Him, not having my own righteousness, which is from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which is from God by faith; 10 that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death, 11 if, by any means, I may attain to the resurrection from the dead. 12 Not that I have already attained, or am already perfected; but I press on, that I may lay hold of that for which Christ Jesus has also laid hold of me. 13 Brethren, I do not count myself to have apprehended; but one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forward to those things which are ahead, 14 I press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.”



Resolve To Press Forward

- Are you pining for the Egypt of sin you left behind, or are you facing forward, longing for your home in heaven?
 - Rev. 2:10 - “Do not fear any of those things which you are about to suffer. Indeed, the devil is about to throw some of you into prison, that you may be tested, and you will have tribulation ten days. Be faithful until death, and I will give you the crown of life.”