Getting Our Own House in Order

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AMOS



Now these things occurred as examples to keep us from setting our hearts on evil things as they did.

These things happened to them as examples and were written down as warnings for us, on whom the culmination of the ages has come.

So, if you think you are standing firm, be careful that you don't fall!

No temptation has overtaken you except what is common to mankind. And God is faithful; He will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, He will also provide a way out so that you can endure it.

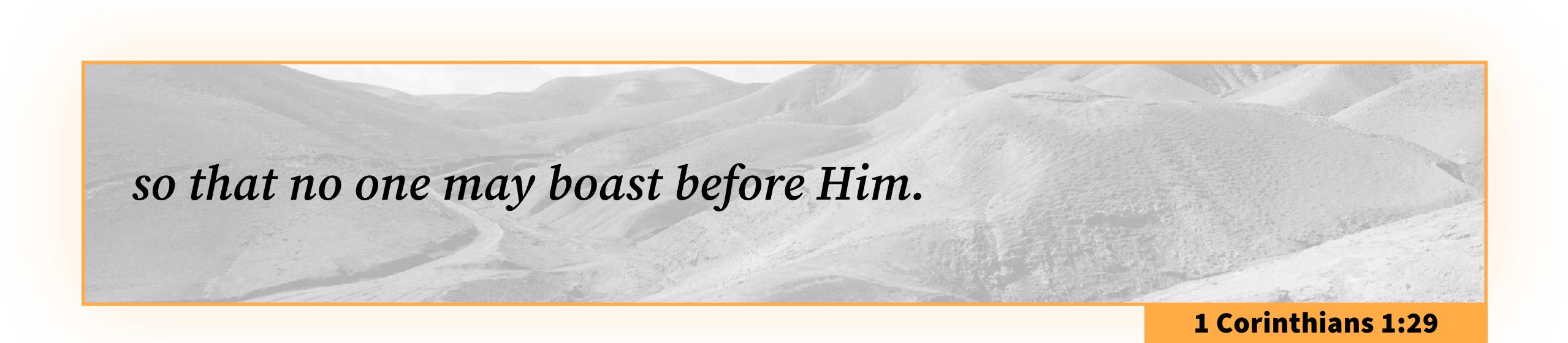
But let justice roll on like a river, righteousness like a never-failing stream!



Brothers and sisters, think of what you were when you were called. Not many of you were wise by human standards; not many were influential; not many were of noble birth.

But God chose the foolish things of the world to shame the wise; God chose the weak things of the world to shame the strong.

God chose the lowly things of this world and the despised things — and the things that are not — to nullify the things that are,



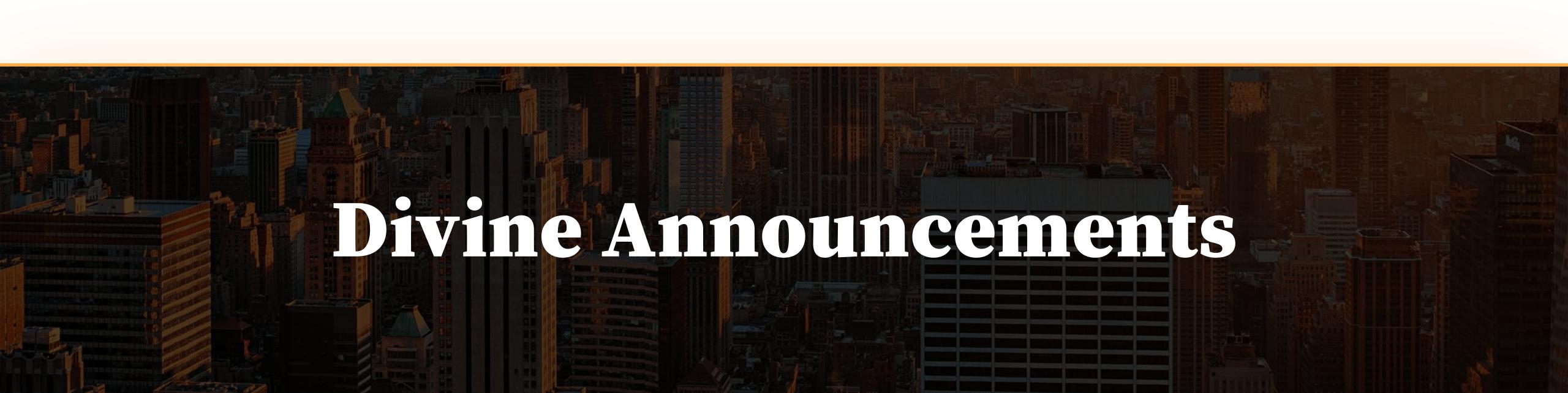
The Israelites took this wealth and prosperity to be unmistakable signs of the blessing of God. But in fact, their present wealth and power was not evidence of the blessing of God. They were actually under the curse of God...

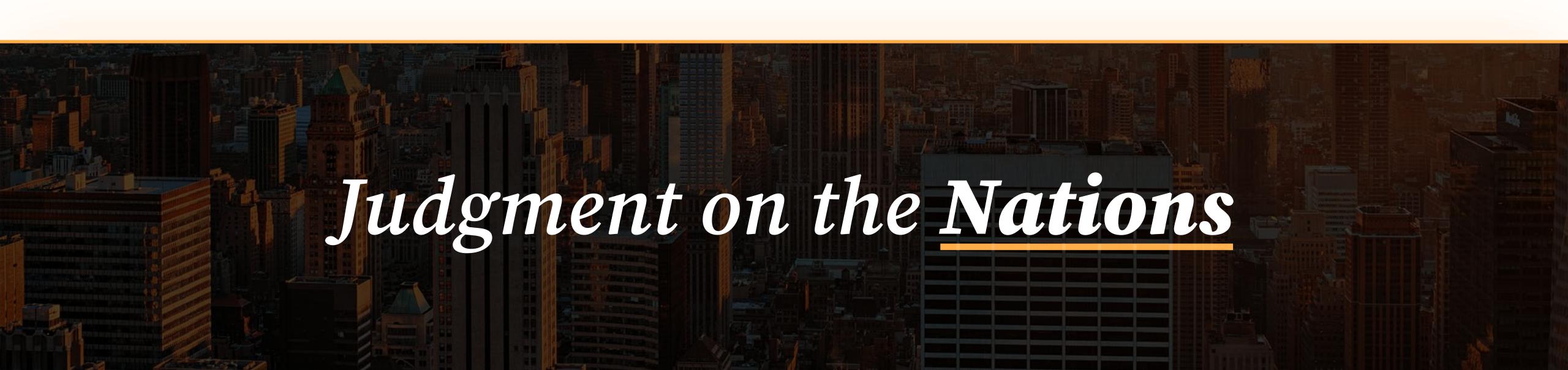
...because of their egregious breaches of their covenant with Him. Their worship of God was little more than attempts at magical manipulation of Him, much like the religion of their pagan neighbors.

The Israelites thought their background meant they were immune from God's judgment. They did not realize that great privilege meant great accountability.

"The day of the Lord," far from being a day of light, was going to be a day of darkness.

ESV Study Bible





Amos began his sermon with a clever strategy. He told Israel what they wanted to hear. He began by denouncing the sins of Israel's enemies. That is always a popular theme. People love to hear preachers attack ideas and folks they do not like.

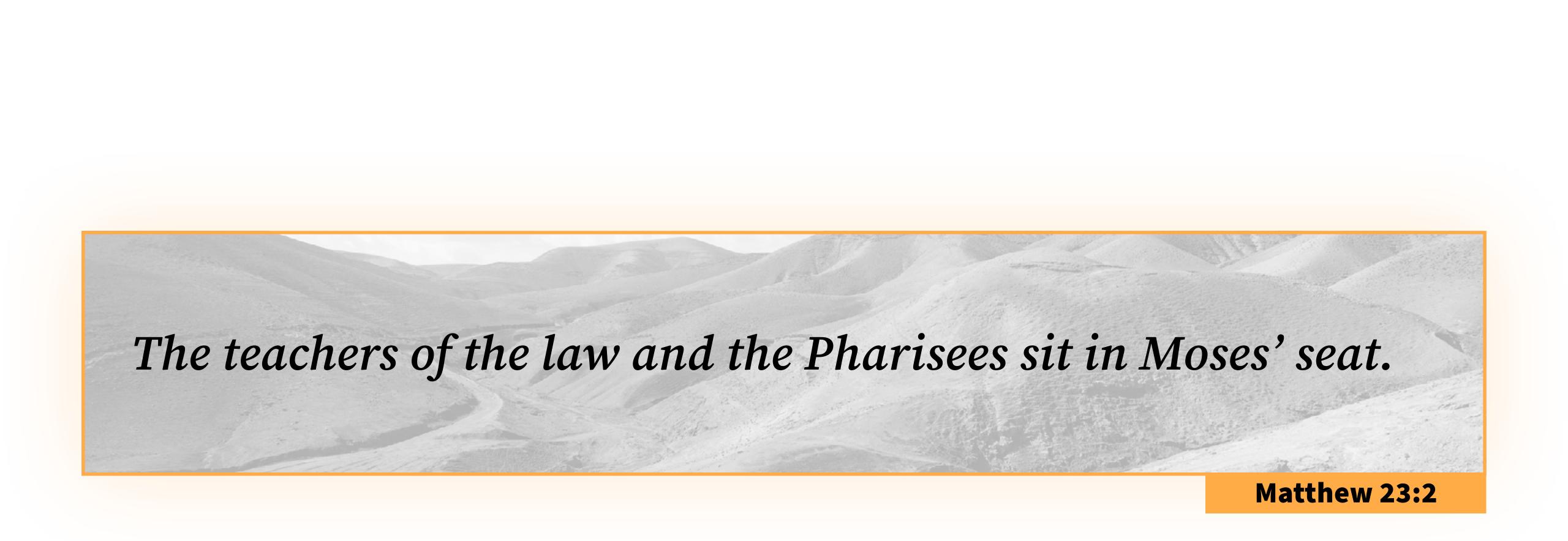


Nothing would make the Jews happier than to see the Lord judge the surrounding nations. But when Amos denounced Judah and Israel, that was a different story.

Warren Wiersbe

You only have I chosen of all the families of the earth; therefore I will punish you for all your sins."





So you must be careful to do everything they tell you. But do not do what they do, for they do not practice what they preach.

They tie up heavy, cumbersome loads and put them on other people's shoulders, but they themselves are not willing to lift a finger to move them.

Everything they do is done for people to see: They make their phylacteries wide and the tassels on their garments long;

they love the place of honor at banquets and the most important seats in the synagogues;

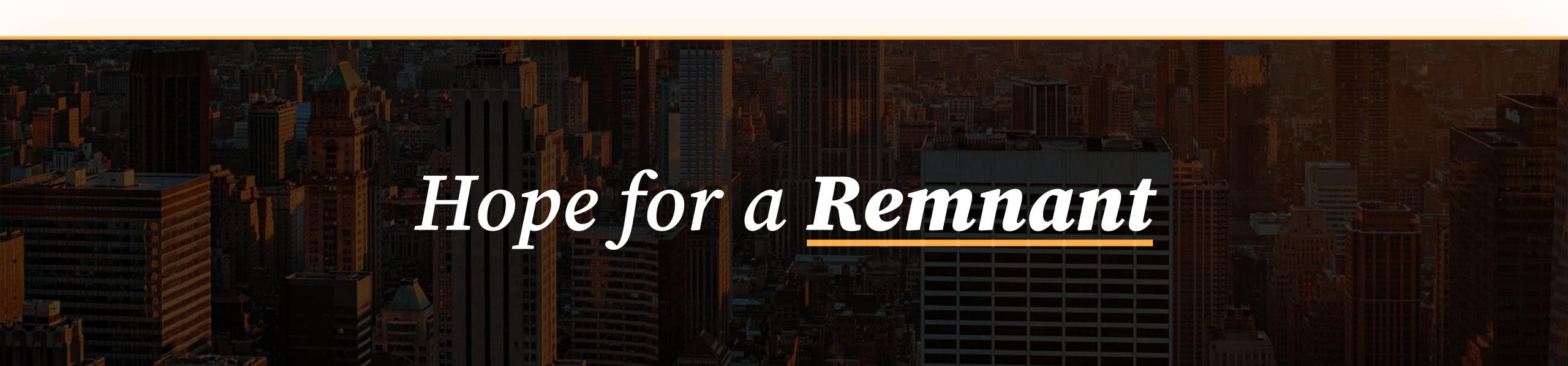
they love to be greeted with respect in the marketplaces and to be called 'Rabbi' by others.

Israel's brand of religion allowed them to sin and to maintain a sense of God's favor at the same time. They loved their sin and they loved their religion. So they constructed a religion that let them have both.

It's very easy for us to have the exterior of our lives "look good" and yet be empty and rebellious in God's sight. God wants the interior part of us to be righteous and just. He doesn't want just lip service. He wants the whole heart.

"The days are coming," declares the Sovereign LORD, "when I will send a famine through the land — not a famine of food or a thirst for water, but a famine of hearing the words of the LORD.

People will stagger from sea to sea and wander from north to east, searching for the word of the LORD, but they will not find it."

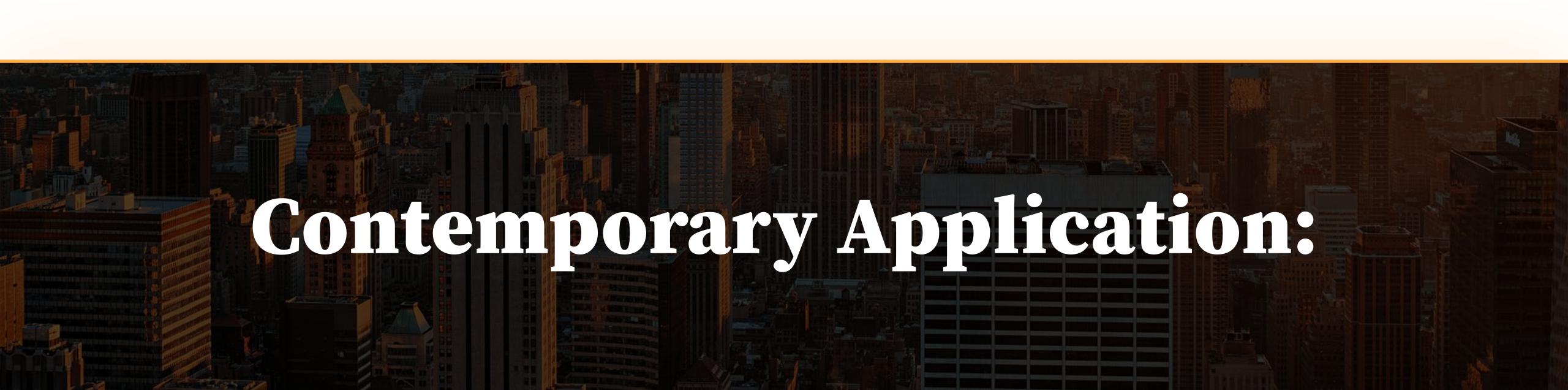


After this I heard what sounded like the roar of a great multitude in heaven shouting: "Hallelujah! Salvation and glory and power belong to our God,

for true and just are His judgments. He has condemned the great prostitute who corrupted the earth by her adulteries."

Then I heard what sounded like a great multitude, like the roar of rushing waters and like loud peals of thunder, shouting: "Hallelujah! For our Lord God Almighty reigns.

Let us rejoice and be glad and give Him glory! For the wedding of the Lamb has come, and His bride has made herself ready."







Seek good, not evil, that you may live. Then the LORD God Almighty will be with you, just as you say He is.

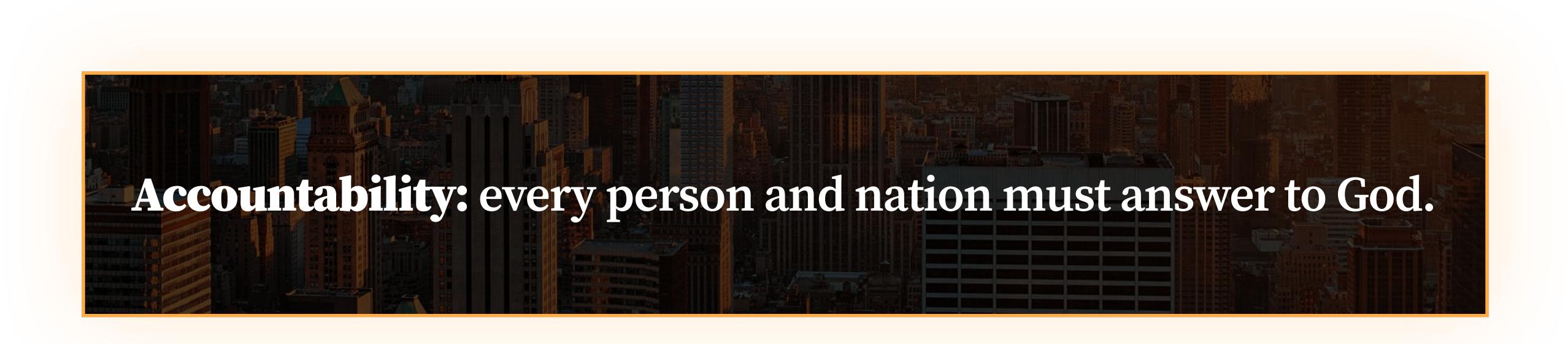
Hate evil, love good; maintain justice in the courts. Perhaps the LORD God Almighty will have mercy on the remnant of Joseph.

But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's special possession, that you may declare the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His wonderful light.

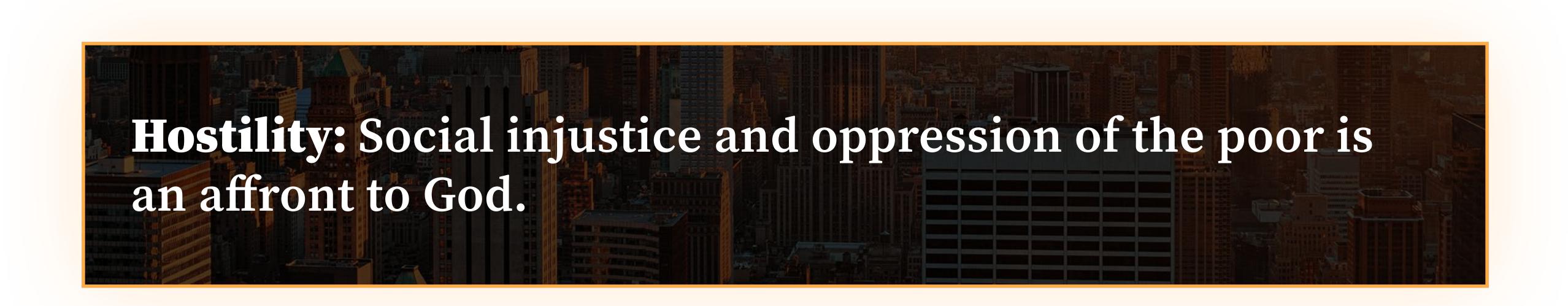
Once you were not a people, but now you are the people of God; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy.

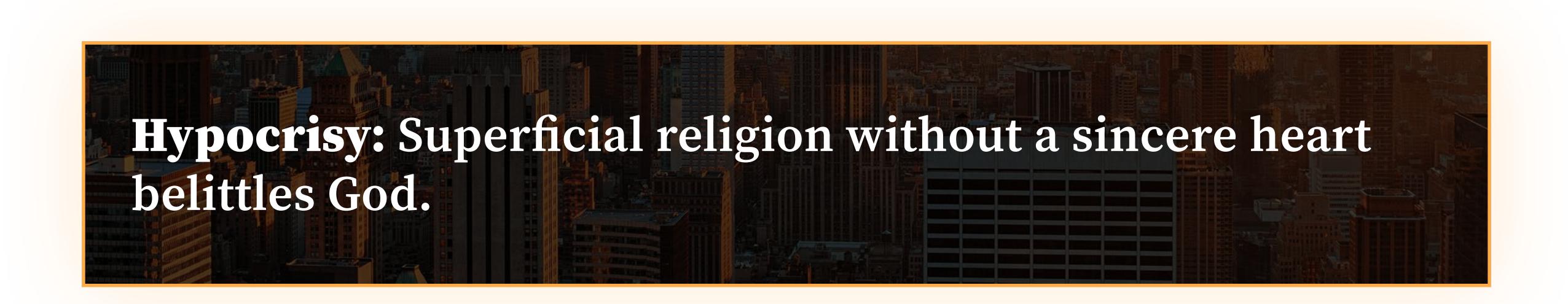
Dear friends, I urge you, as foreigners and exiles, to abstain from sinful desires, which wage war against your soul.

Live such good lives among the pagans that, though they accuse you of doing wrong, they may see your good deeds and glorify God on the day He visits us.









Commit to live as God's chosen people and to prioritize our conduct over that of the culture.