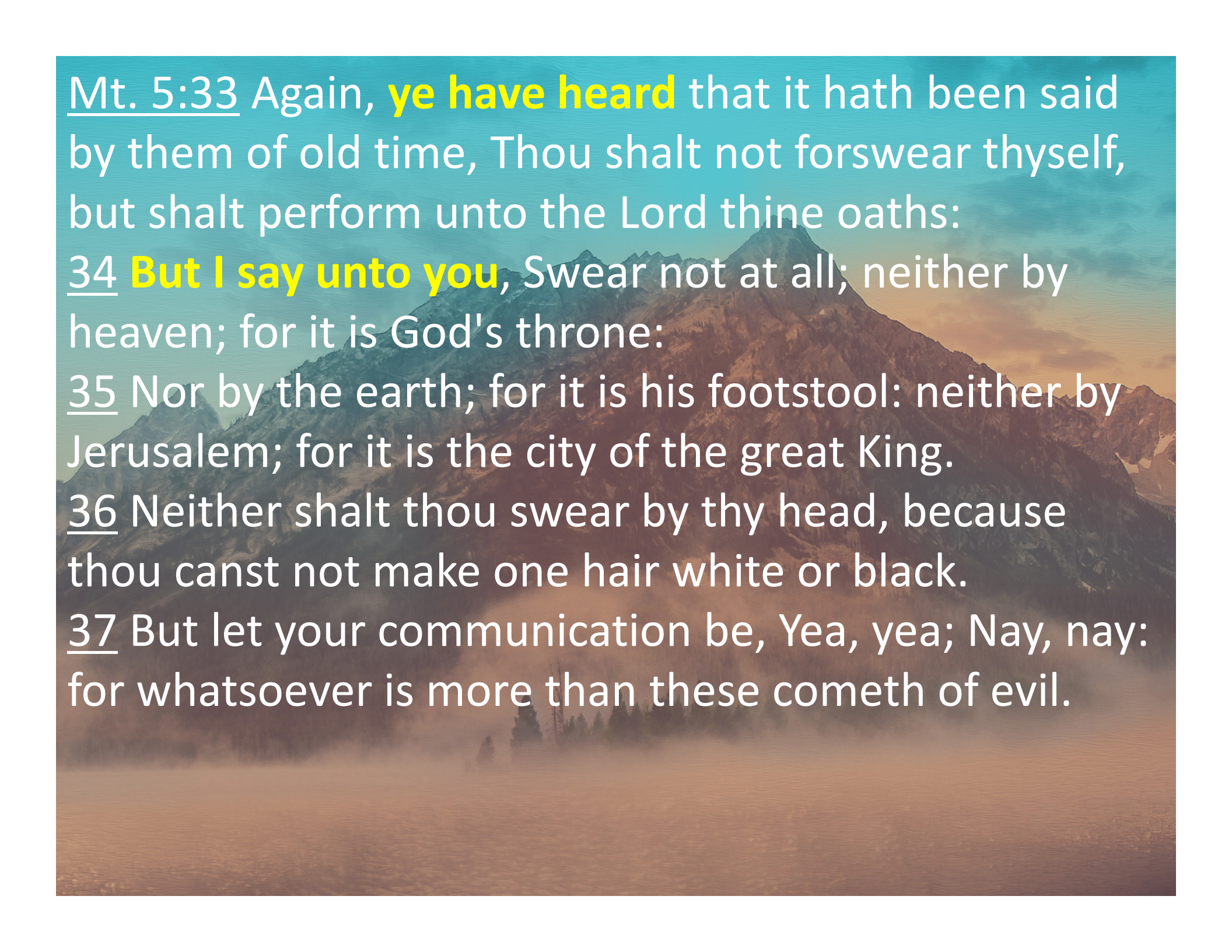




THE SERMON ON THE MOUNT

Mt. 5:33-37

“The Question of Indulging Lust”

A scenic landscape featuring a range of mountains in the background, with a lake in the foreground. The sky is a mix of blue and orange, suggesting a sunset or sunrise. The text is overlaid on this image.

Mt. 5:33 Again, **ye have heard** that it hath been said by them of old time, Thou shalt not forswear thyself, but shalt perform unto the Lord thine oaths:

34 **But I say unto you**, Swear not at all; neither by heaven; for it is God's throne:

35 Nor by the earth; for it is his footstool: neither by Jerusalem; for it is the city of the great King.

36 Neither shalt thou swear by thy head, because thou canst not make one hair white or black.

37 But let your communication be, Yea, yea; Nay, nay: for whatsoever is more than these cometh of evil.

Review

Back in December we began the exegesis of this great sermon preached by the Lord Jesus Christ.

I. THE DISCIPLE AND HIS BLESSINGS, 5:1-16

A. The Setting, 5:1-2

B. The Sayings, 5:3-12

C. The Sequel, 5:13-16

II. THE DISCIPLE AND HIS BELIEFS, 5:17-20

A. A Personal Appreciation of God's Law, 5:17-18

B. A Personal Application of God's Law, 5:19-20

III. THE DISCIPLE AND HIS BIBLE, 5:21-48

A. The Question of Injuring Lives, 5:21-24

B. The Question of Invoking Law, 5:25-26

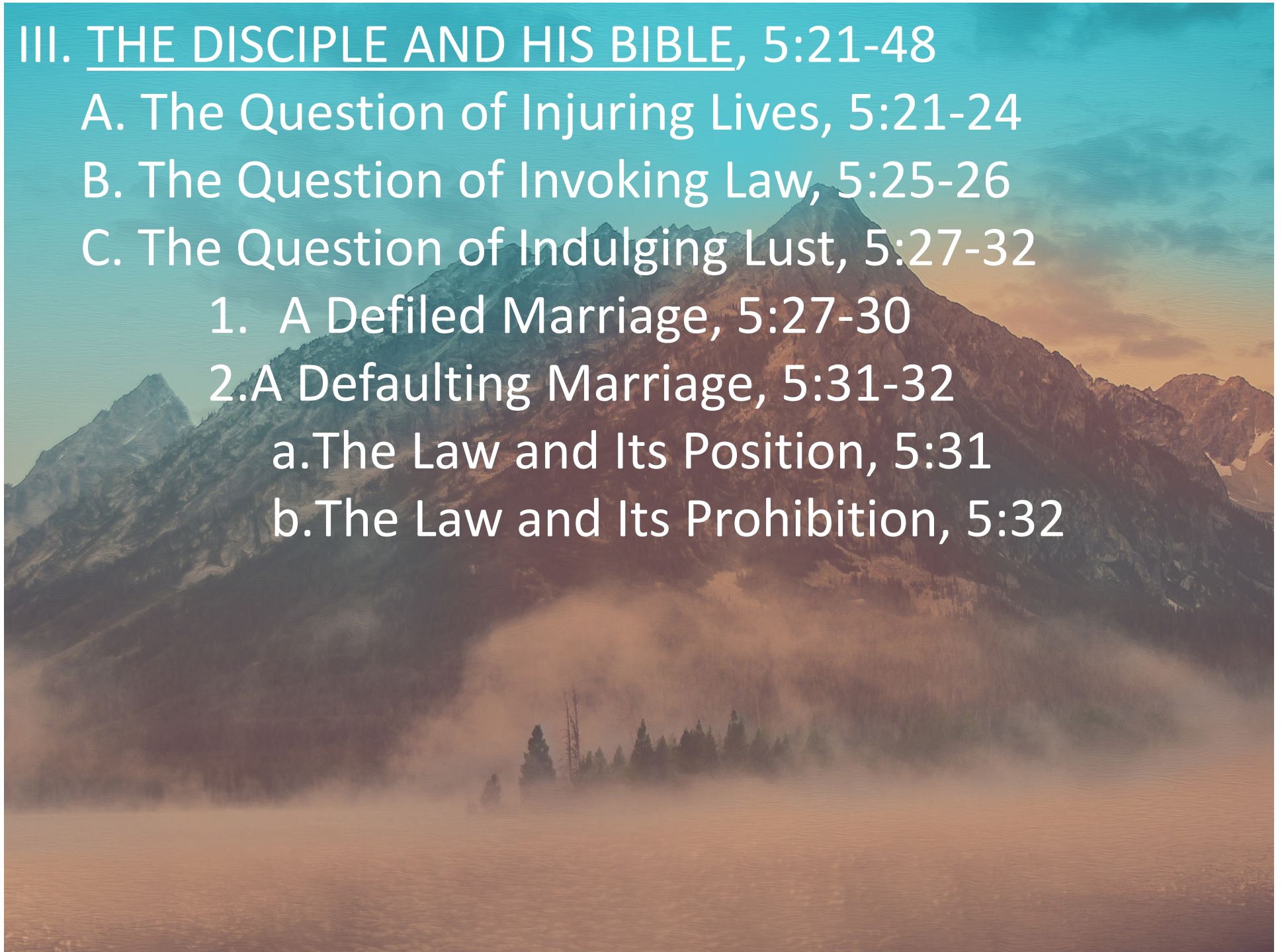
C. The Question of Indulging Lust, 5:27-32

1. A Defiled Marriage, 5:27-30

2. A Defaulting Marriage, 5:31-32

a. The Law and Its Position, 5:31

b. The Law and Its Prohibition, 5:32



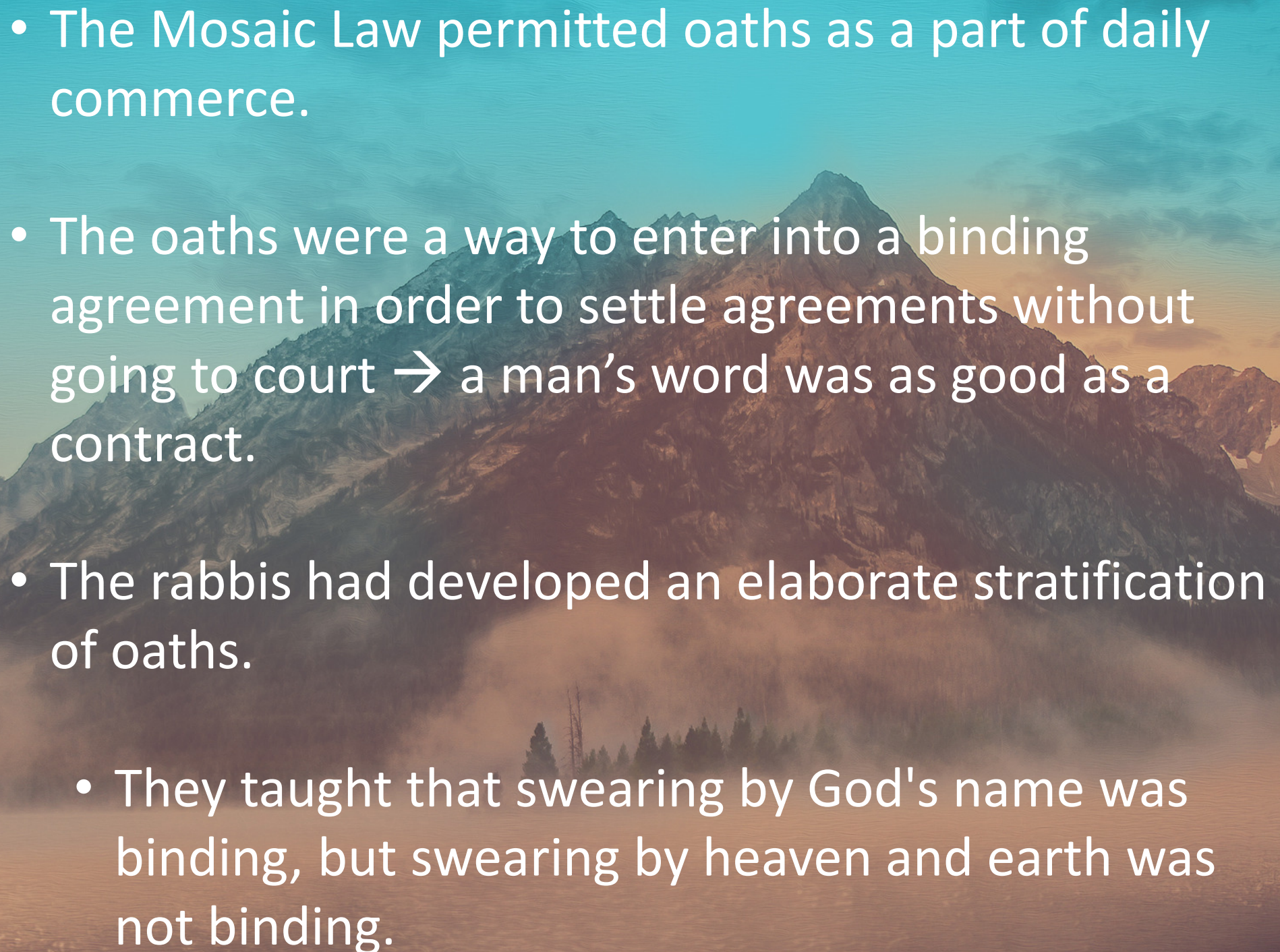
Early in the “Sermon on the Mount” the Lord Jesus emphasized His concern regarding “righteousness.”

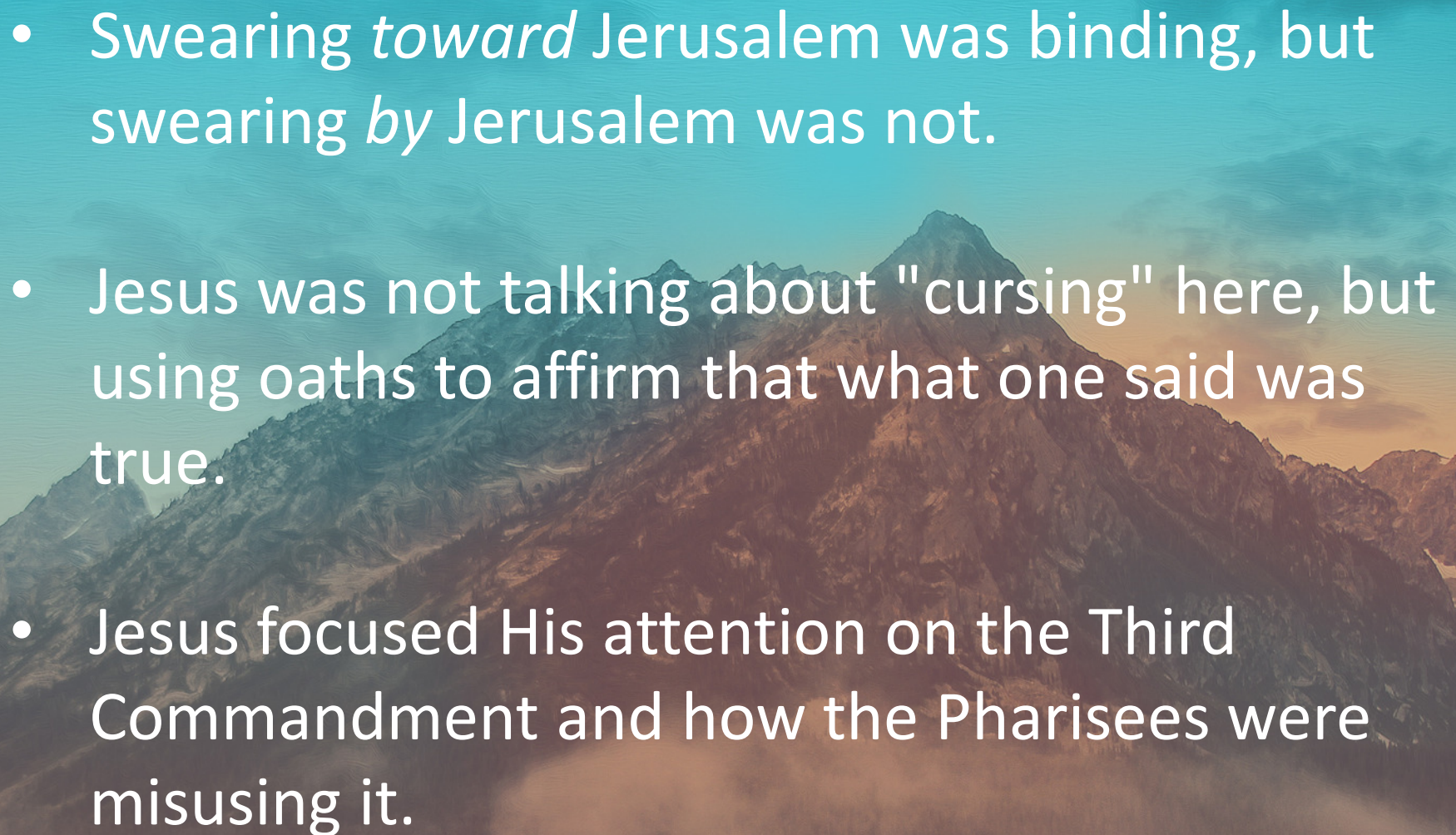
Mt. 5:20 For I say unto you, That **except your righteousness shall exceed *the righteousness* of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven.**

D. The Question of Inappropriate Language, 5:33-37

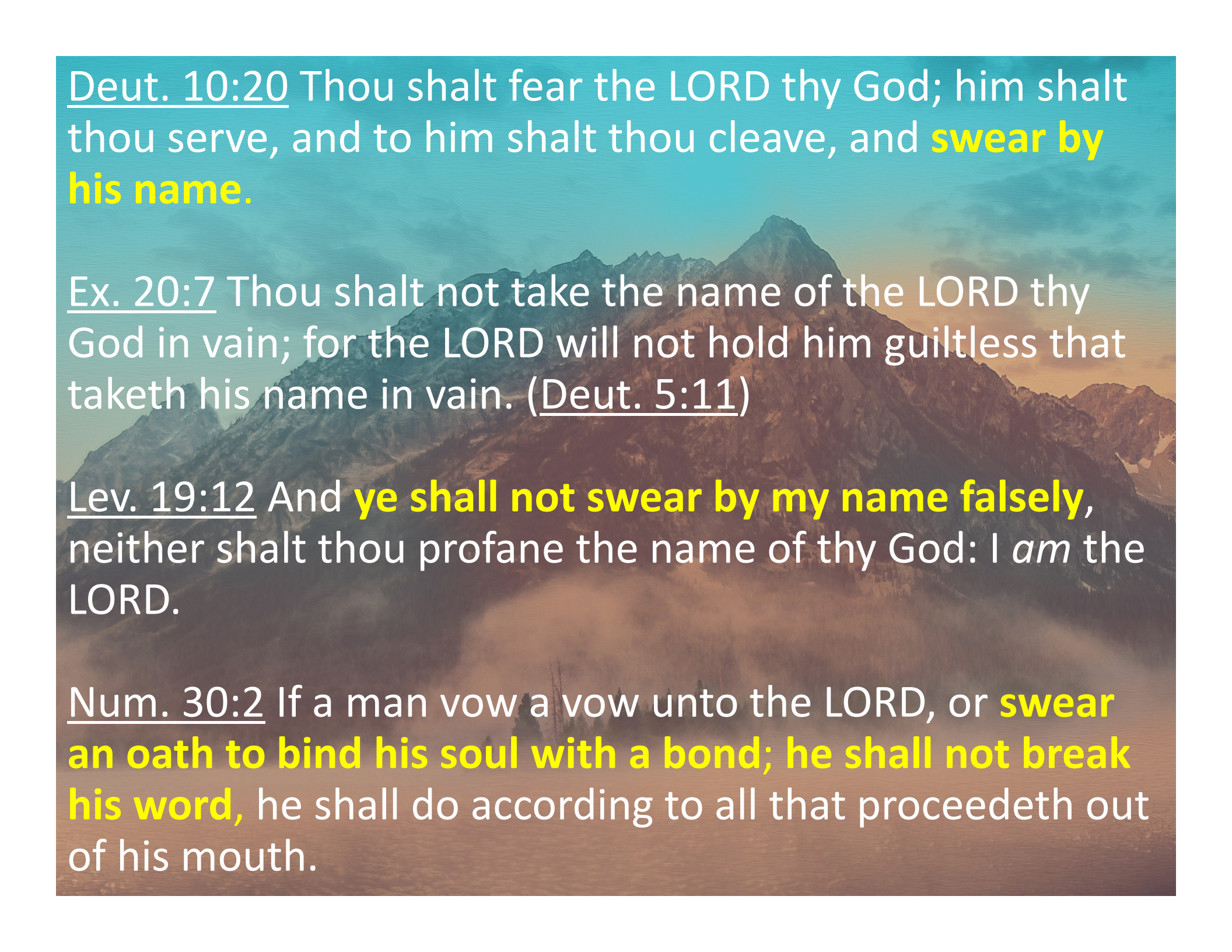
1. The Danger of a Broken Word, 5:33

Mt. 5:33 Again, **ye have heard** that it hath been said by them of old time, Thou shalt not forswear thyself, but shalt perform unto the Lord thine oaths:

- 
- The Mosaic Law permitted oaths as a part of daily commerce.
 - The oaths were a way to enter into a binding agreement in order to settle agreements without going to court → a man's word was as good as a contract.
 - The rabbis had developed an elaborate stratification of oaths.
 - They taught that swearing by God's name was binding, but swearing by heaven and earth was not binding.

- 
- Swearing *toward* Jerusalem was binding, but swearing *by* Jerusalem was not.
 - Jesus was not talking about "cursing" here, but using oaths to affirm that what one said was true.
 - Jesus focused His attention on the Third Commandment and how the Pharisees were misusing it.

Deut. 6:13 Thou shalt fear the LORD thy God, and serve him, and shalt **swear by his name.**

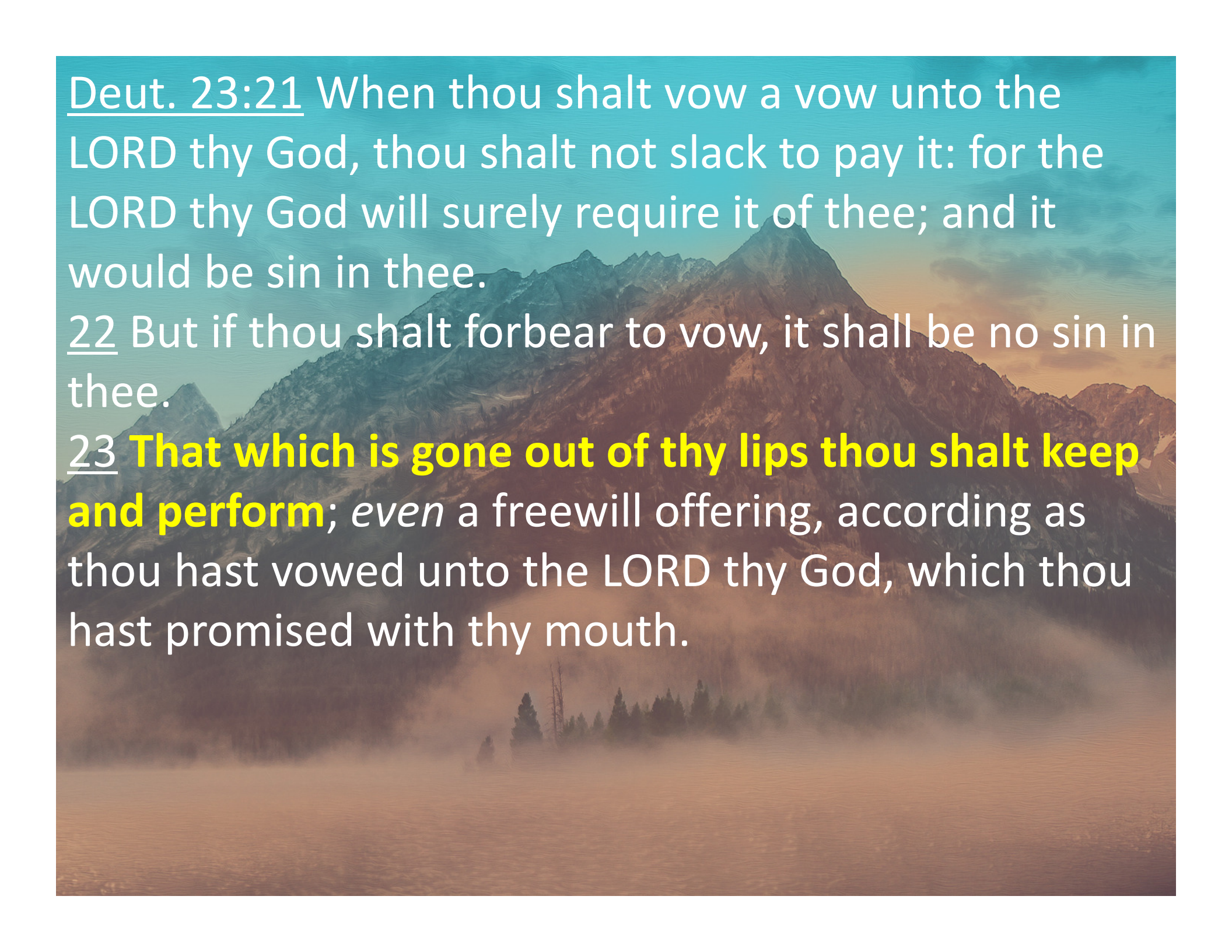


Deut. 10:20 Thou shalt fear the LORD thy God; him shalt thou serve, and to him shalt thou cleave, and **swear by his name.**

Ex. 20:7 Thou shalt not take the name of the LORD thy God in vain; for the LORD will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain. (Deut. 5:11)

Lev. 19:12 And **ye shall not swear by my name falsely,** neither shalt thou profane the name of thy God: I *am* the LORD.

Num. 30:2 If a man vow a vow unto the LORD, or **swear an oath to bind his soul with a bond; he shall not break his word,** he shall do according to all that proceedeth out of his mouth.

A scenic landscape featuring a range of mountains in the background, some with patches of snow or light-colored rock. In the foreground, there is a calm body of water, possibly a lake or a wide river, reflecting the sky. The sky is a mix of light blue and soft orange, suggesting a sunrise or sunset. The overall atmosphere is peaceful and majestic.

Deut. 23:21 When thou shalt vow a vow unto the LORD thy God, thou shalt not slack to pay it: for the LORD thy God will surely require it of thee; and it would be sin in thee.

22 But if thou shalt forbear to vow, it shall be no sin in thee.

23 **That which is gone out of thy lips thou shalt keep and perform;** *even* a freewill offering, according as thou hast vowed unto the LORD thy God, which thou hast promised with thy mouth.

- A good example of an oath is found in Gen. 24:2-4:

Gen. 24:2 And Abraham said unto his eldest servant of his house, that ruled over all that he had, Put, I pray thee, thy hand under my thigh:

3 And I will make thee **swear by the LORD, the God of heaven, and the God of the earth, that thou shalt not take a wife unto my son of the daughters of the Canaanites, among whom I dwell:**

4 But thou shalt go unto my country, and to my kindred, and take a wife unto my son Isaac.

2. The Demand for a Better Way, 5:34-37

a. Swearing Flippantly, 5:34-36

Mt. 5:34 But I say unto you, **Swear not at all**; neither by heaven; for it is God's throne:

35 Nor by the earth; for it is his footstool: neither by Jerusalem; for it is the city of the great King.

36 Neither shalt thou swear by thy head, because thou canst not make one hair white or black.

- Jesus went beyond **the external act** to the real issue at stake, that had been God's concern from the beginning. His point was that **people should not lie under *any* circumstances.**

- Jesus explained that whatever a person may appeal to in an oath has some connection with God.
- Therefore any oath is an appeal to God indirectly if not directly.

Mt. 23:16 Woe unto you, ye blind guides, which say, Whosoever shall swear by the temple, it is nothing; but whosoever shall swear by the gold of the temple, he is a debtor!

17 Ye fools and blind: for whether is greater, the gold, or the temple that sanctifieth the gold?

18 And, Whosoever shall swear by the altar, it is nothing; but whosoever sweareth by the gift that is upon it, he is guilty.

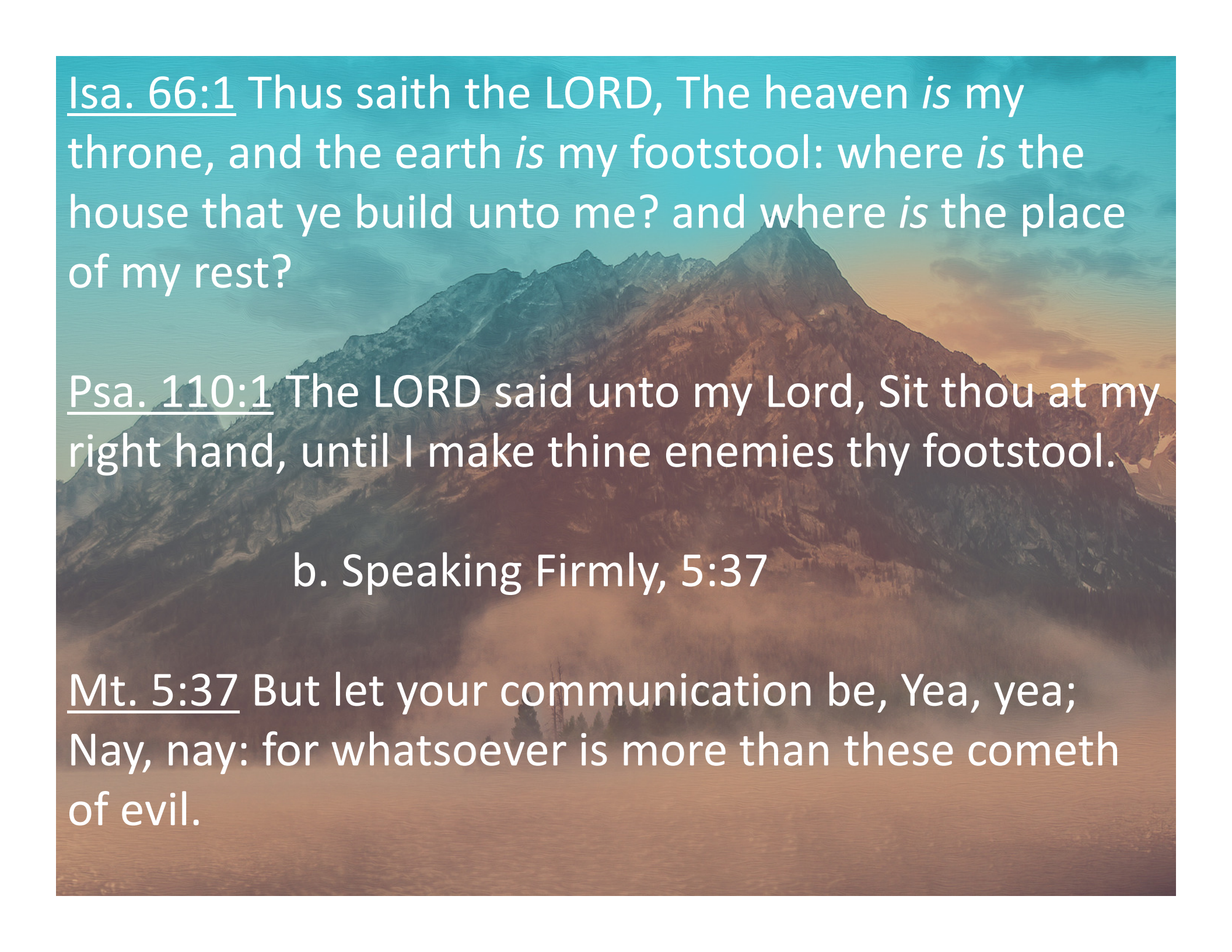
19 Ye fools and blind: for whether *is* greater, the gift, or the altar that sanctifieth the gift?

20 Whoso therefore shall swear by the altar, sweareth by it, and by all things thereon.

21 And whoso shall swear by the temple, sweareth by it, and by him that dwelleth therein.

22 And he that shall swear by heaven, sweareth by the throne of God, and by him that sitteth thereon.

- It was wrong to swear falsely by (to "profane") His name (Lev. 19:12), to use His name in true but needless oaths, and to substitute God's servants in place of Him, thus transferring His glory to them (Exod. 23:13).

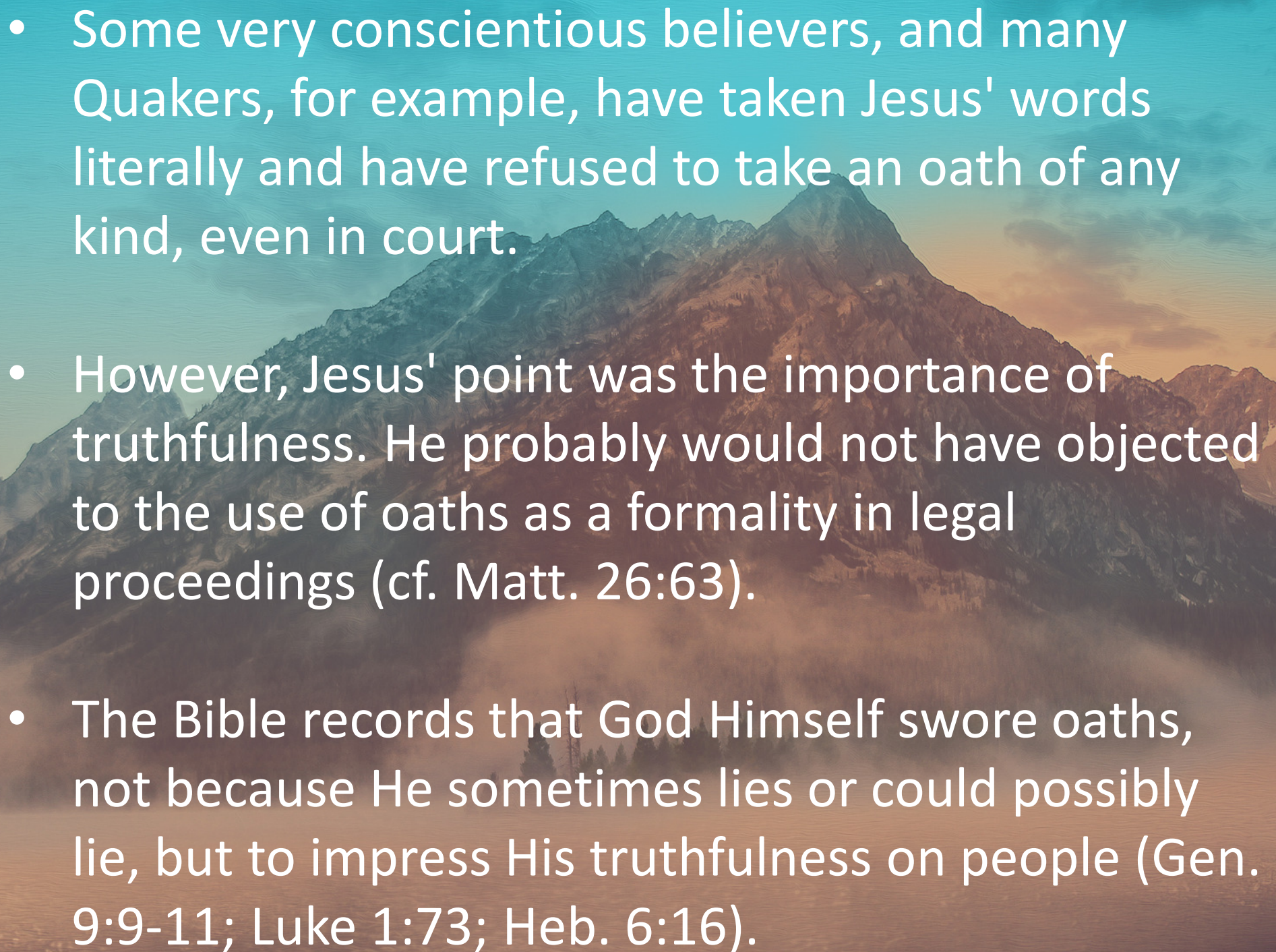


Isa. 66:1 Thus saith the LORD, The heaven *is* my throne, and the earth *is* my footstool: where *is* the house that ye build unto me? and where *is* the place of my rest?

Psa. 110:1 The LORD said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool.

b. Speaking Firmly, 5:37

Mt. 5:37 But let your communication be, Yea, yea; Nay, nay: for whatsoever is more than these cometh of evil.

- 
- Some very conscientious believers, and many Quakers, for example, have taken Jesus' words literally and have refused to take an oath of any kind, even in court.
 - However, Jesus' point was the importance of truthfulness. He probably would not have objected to the use of oaths as a formality in legal proceedings (cf. Matt. 26:63).
 - The Bible records that God Himself swore oaths, not because He sometimes lies or could possibly lie, but to impress His truthfulness on people (Gen. 9:9-11; Luke 1:73; Heb. 6:16).

Summary

- Jesus pointed out and reprovved the Pharisees' distortion of the intent of the Law.
- The intent of the Law was to keep men honest, and the Third Commandment as a deterrent to dishonesty.
- The Pharisees stated that some oaths were binding and others were not.
- Keep oath-taking to serious matters, intending to maintain honesty.
- If you mean what you say, you don't need an oath to reinforce it.

Conclusion

Psa. 15:1 LORD, who shall abide in thy tabernacle?
who shall dwell in thy holy hill? ...

4 In whose eyes a vile person is contemned; but he
honoureth them that fear the LORD. **He that
swaureth to his own hurt, and changeth not.**

Jer. 4:1 If thou wilt return, O Israel, saith the LORD,
return unto me: and if thou wilt put away thine
abominations out of my sight, then shalt thou not
remove.

2 And **thou shalt swear, The LORD liveth, in truth, in
judgment, and in righteousness;** and the nations shall
bless themselves in him, and in him shall they glory.

Isa. 45:22 Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth: for **I am God, and there is none else.**

23 **I have sworn by myself**, the word is gone out of my mouth *in* righteousness, and shall not return, That unto me every knee shall bow, **every tongue shall swear.**

Heb. 6:13 For when God made promise to Abraham, because **he could swear by no greater, he sware by himself,**

16 For **men verily swear by the greater:** and **an oath for confirmation is to them an end of all strife.**

17 Wherein God, willing more abundantly to shew unto the heirs of promise the **immutability** of his counsel, confirmed *it* by an oath:

18 That by two immutable things, **in which *it was impossible for God to lie***, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us:

