



# ECCELESIASTES

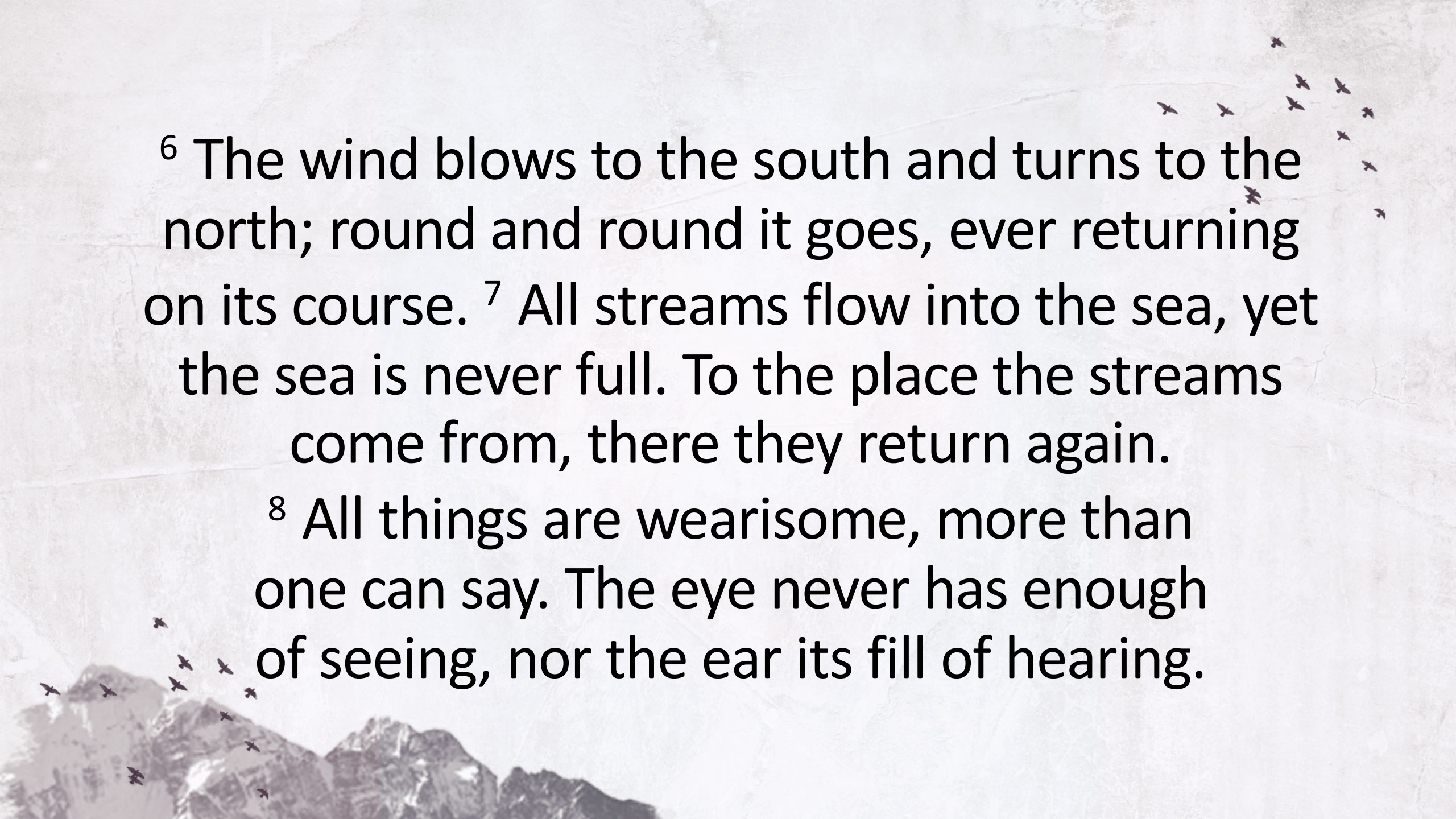
---

MEANINGLESS OR MISSIONAL?

# Ecclesiastes 1:1-11

The words of the Teacher, son of David, king in Jerusalem: <sup>2</sup> “Meaningless! Meaningless!” says the Teacher. “Utterly meaningless! Everything is meaningless.” <sup>3</sup> What do people gain from all their labors at which they toil under the sun? <sup>4</sup> Generations come and generations go, but the earth remains forever. <sup>5</sup> The sun rises and the sun sets, and hurries back to where it rises.

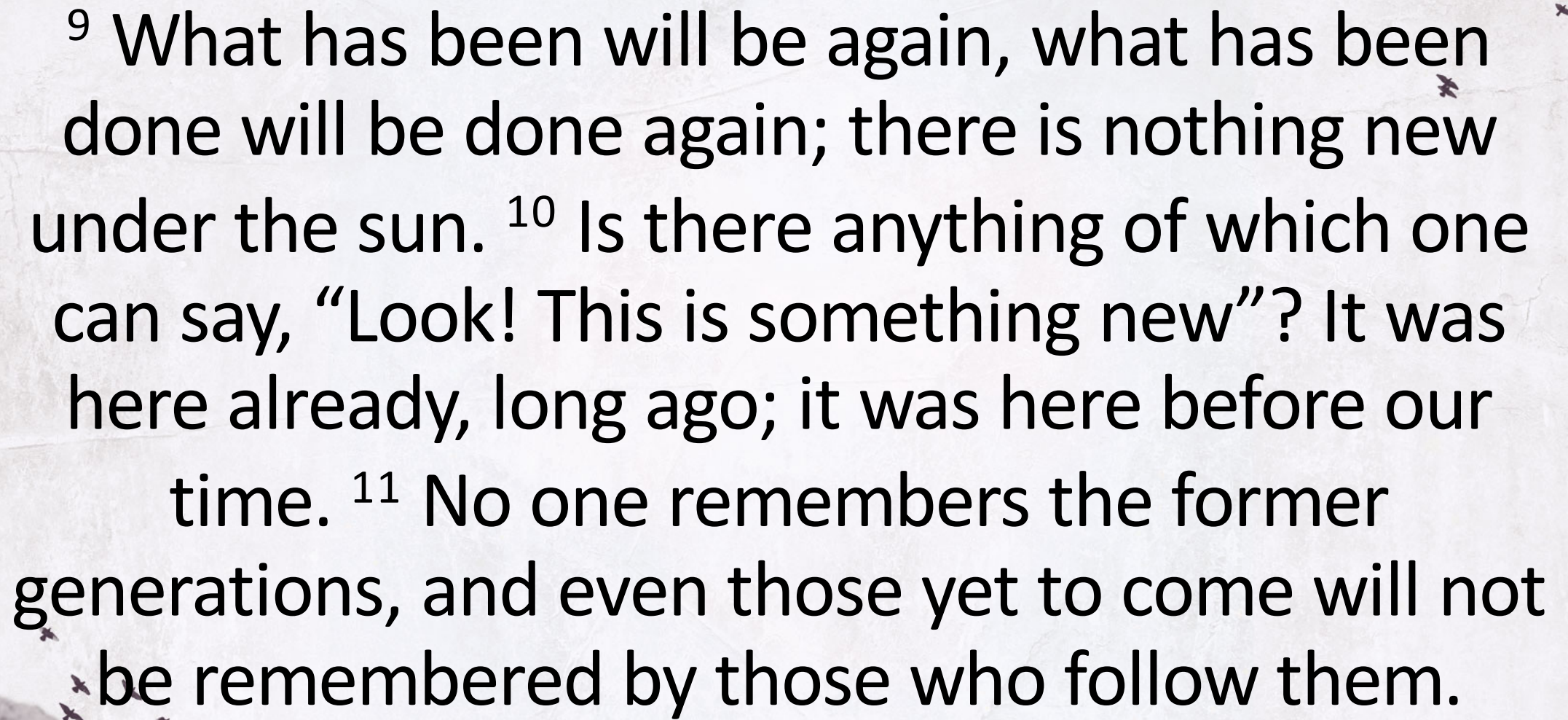




<sup>6</sup> The wind blows to the south and turns to the north; round and round it goes, ever returning on its course. <sup>7</sup> All streams flow into the sea, yet the sea is never full. To the place the streams come from, there they return again.

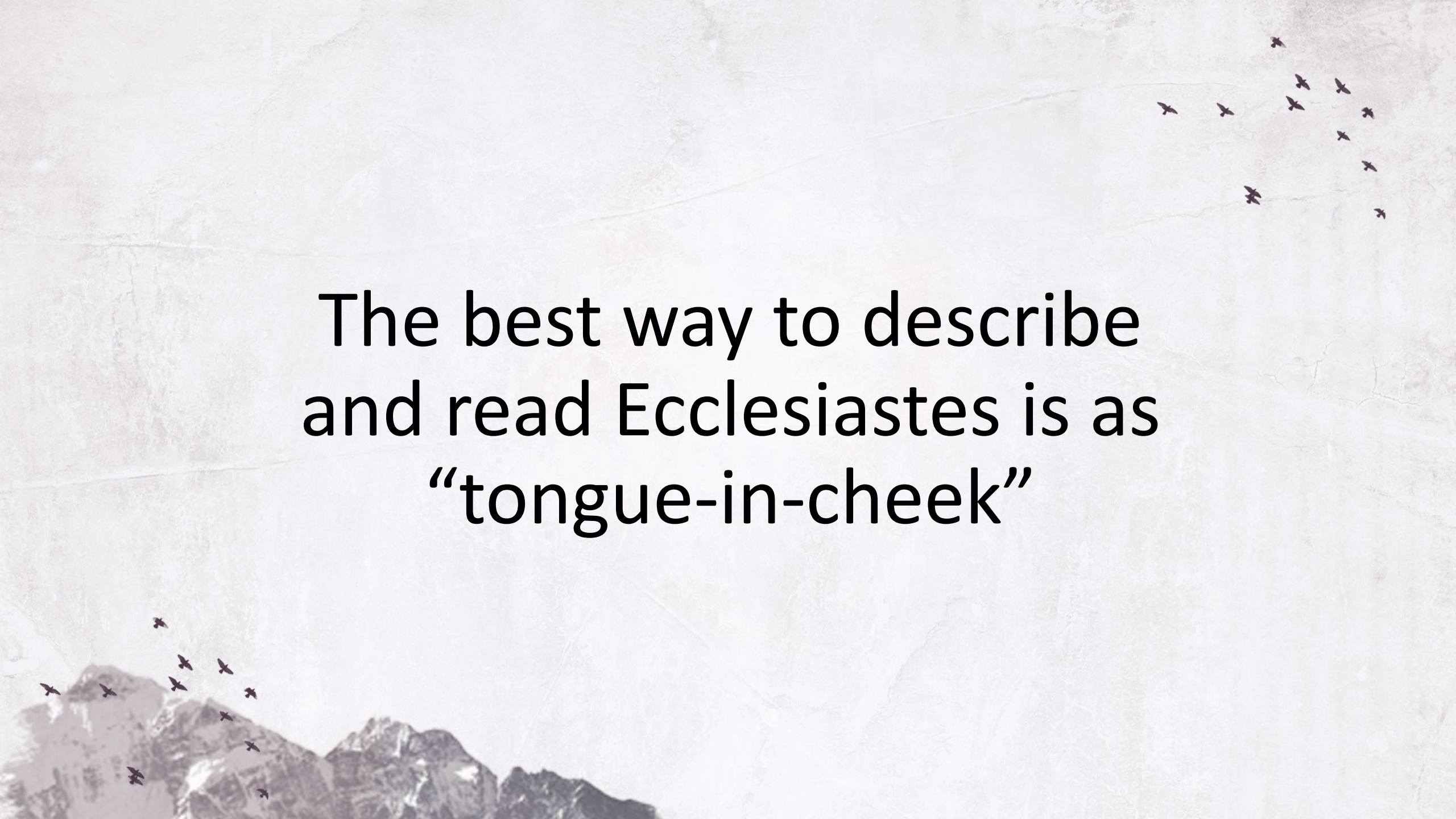
<sup>8</sup> All things are wearisome, more than one can say. The eye never has enough of seeing, nor the ear its fill of hearing.



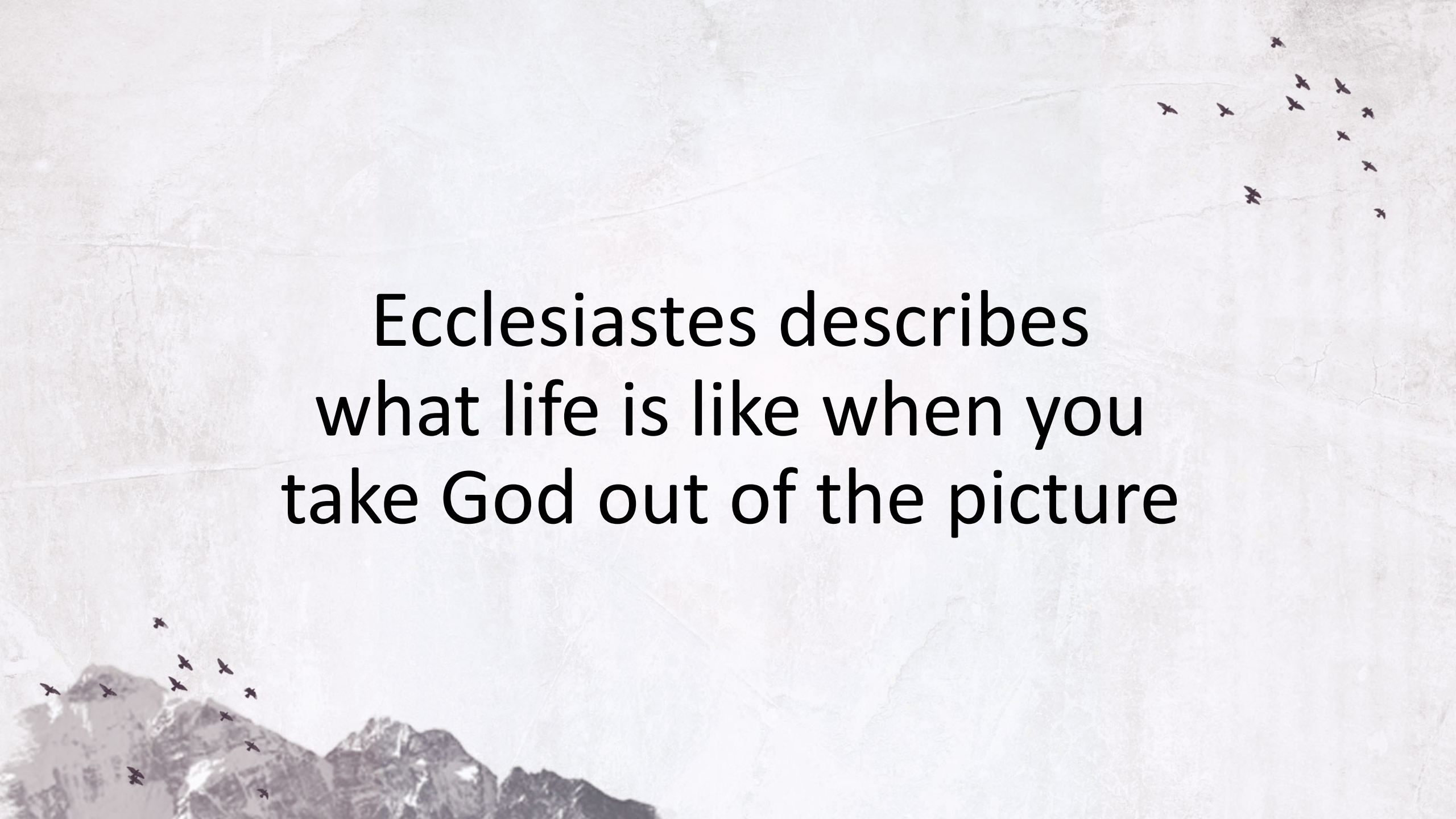


<sup>9</sup> What has been will be again, what has been done will be done again; there is nothing new under the sun. <sup>10</sup> Is there anything of which one can say, “Look! This is something new”? It was here already, long ago; it was here before our time. <sup>11</sup> No one remembers the former generations, and even those yet to come will not be remembered by those who follow them.



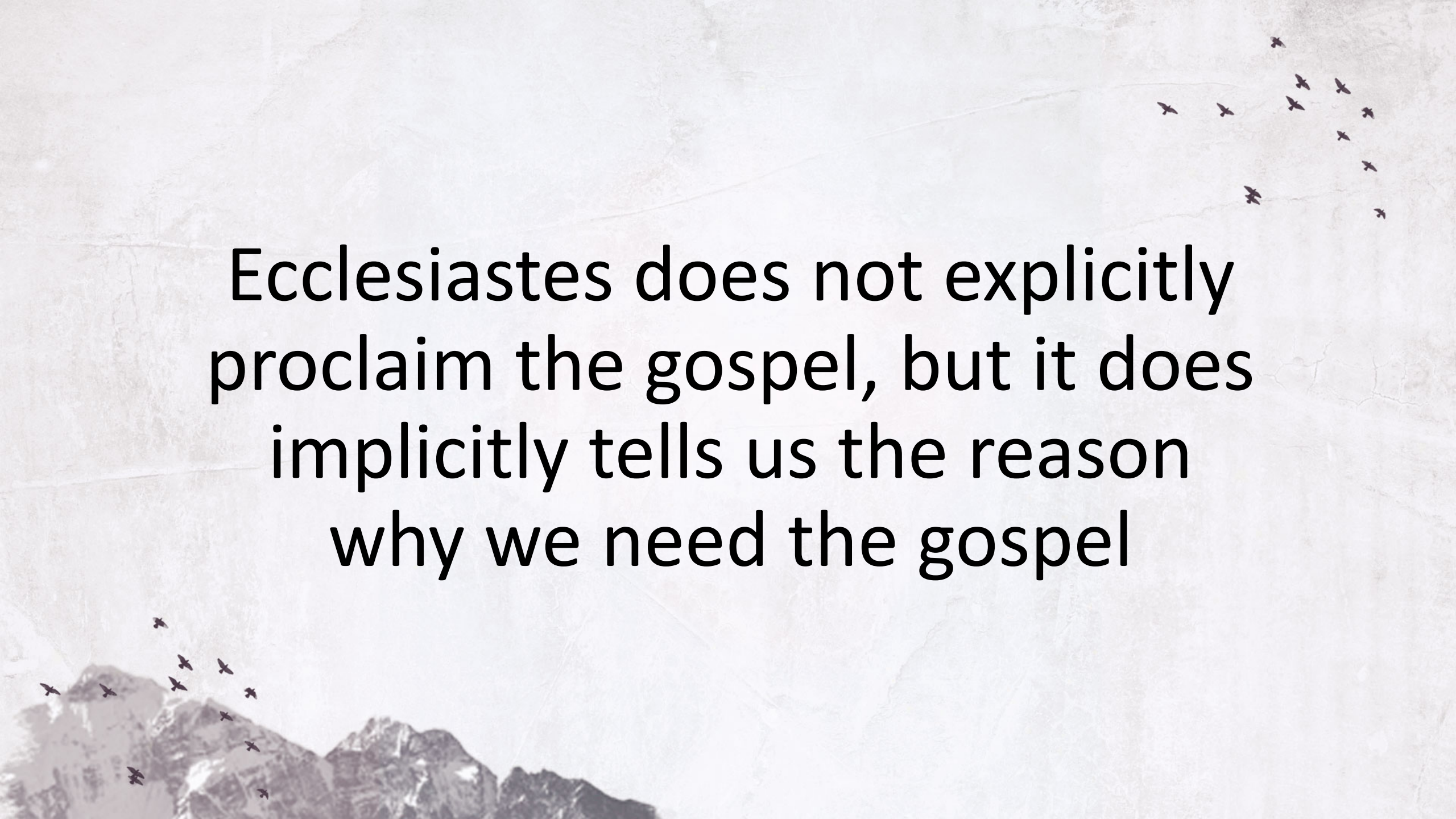


The best way to describe  
and read Ecclesiastes is as  
“tongue-in-cheek”

The background of the slide features a soft-focus image of a mountain range. The mountains are covered in green vegetation and some snow, with a few peaks visible in the distance. The sky is a pale, hazy blue. Numerous small, dark silhouettes of birds are scattered across the sky, some in small groups and others alone, giving the impression of a flock in flight. The overall aesthetic is serene and naturalistic.

Ecclesiastes describes  
what life is like when you  
take God out of the picture



The background of the slide features a soft-focus image of a mountain range with snow-capped peaks. In the sky, numerous small, dark silhouettes of birds are scattered, some appearing to fly in a loose formation. The overall color palette is muted, with greys, whites, and soft purples.

Ecclesiastes does not explicitly  
proclaim the gospel, but it does  
implicitly tells us the reason  
why we need the gospel



# **Ecclesiastes also deconstructs the prevalent philosophies of our world:**

Existentialism: freedom to decide our own purpose in a purposeless world

Hedonism: the pursuit of pleasure and happiness as the purpose of life

Nihilism: the rejection of all truths resulting in the belief that life is meaningless

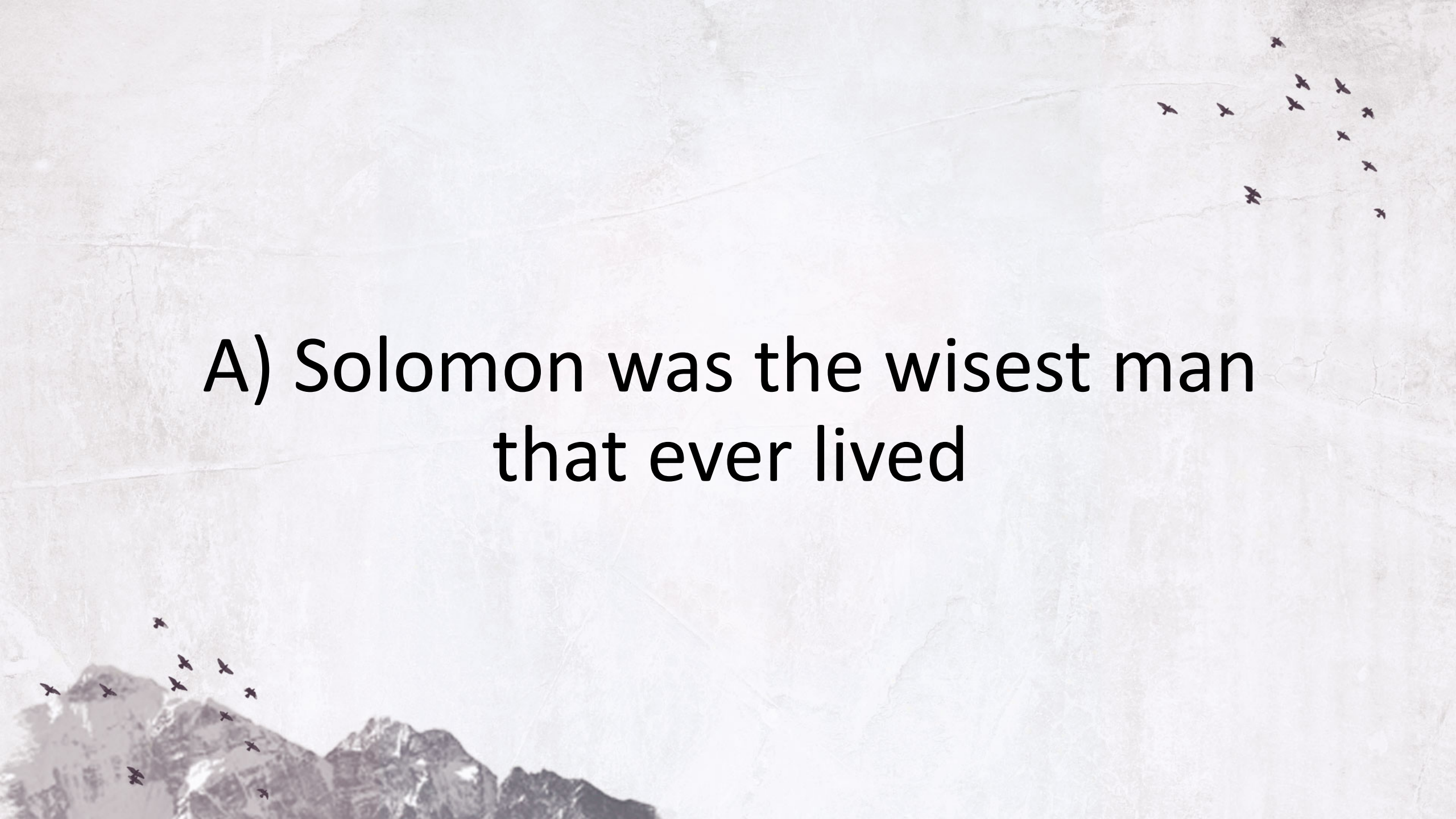
Fatalism: the powerless to do anything other than what we were fixed to do



The background of the slide features a soft, painterly illustration of a mountain range. The mountains are rendered in muted, earthy tones of beige, tan, and light brown, with some peaks appearing more rugged and detailed than others. In the upper right and lower left corners, there are clusters of small, dark silhouettes of birds in flight, scattered across the sky. The overall aesthetic is serene and contemplative, with a focus on natural elements.

# Ecclesiastes 1:1

<sup>1</sup> The words of the Teacher, son of David, king  
in Jerusalem

The background of the slide features a light, textured, off-white surface. In the bottom left corner, there is a dark, stylized illustration of a mountain range. Scattered across the sky are numerous small, dark, stylized birds in flight, some appearing in small groups and others individually.

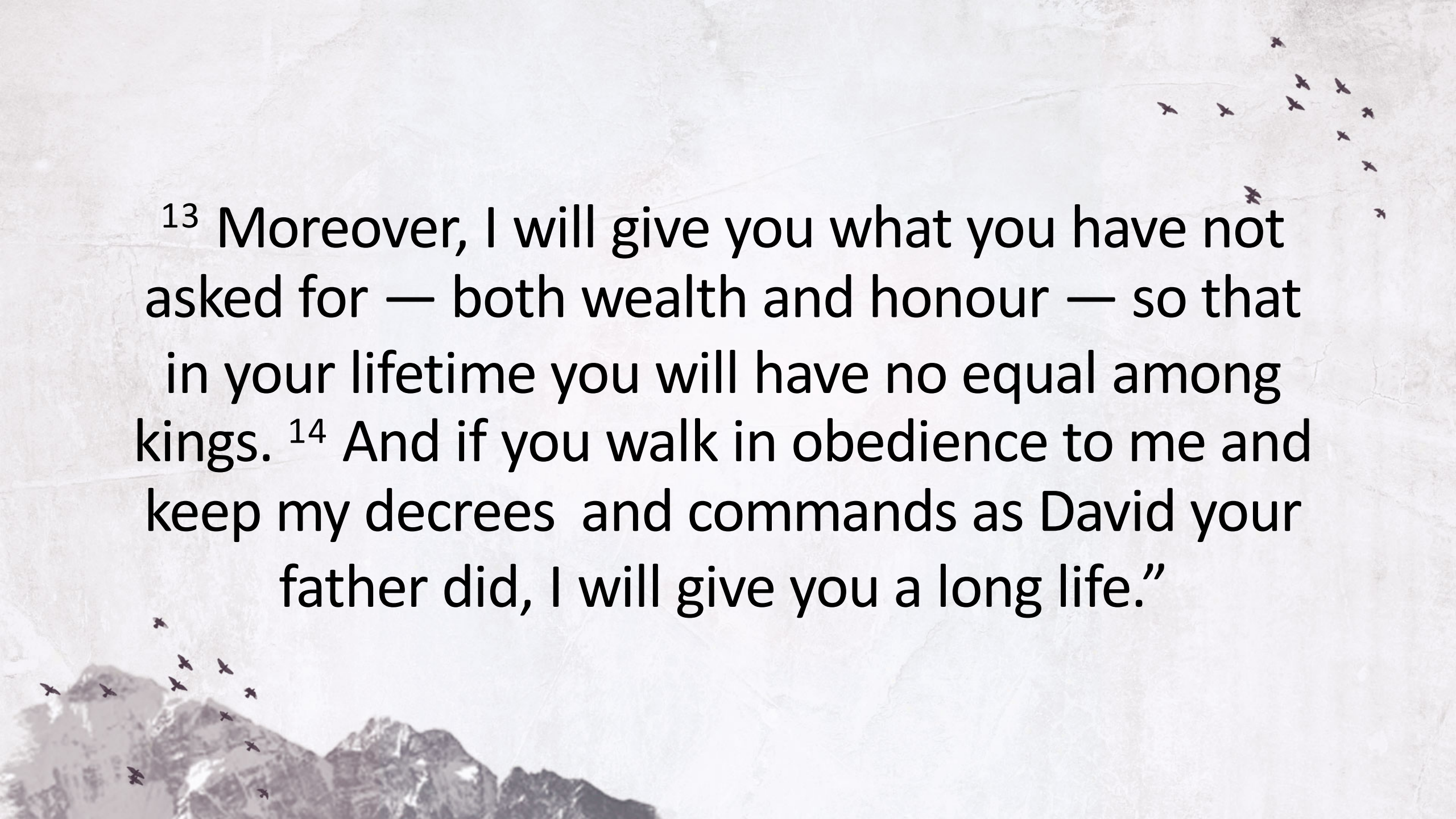
A) Solomon was the wisest man  
that ever lived



# 1 Kings 3:11-14

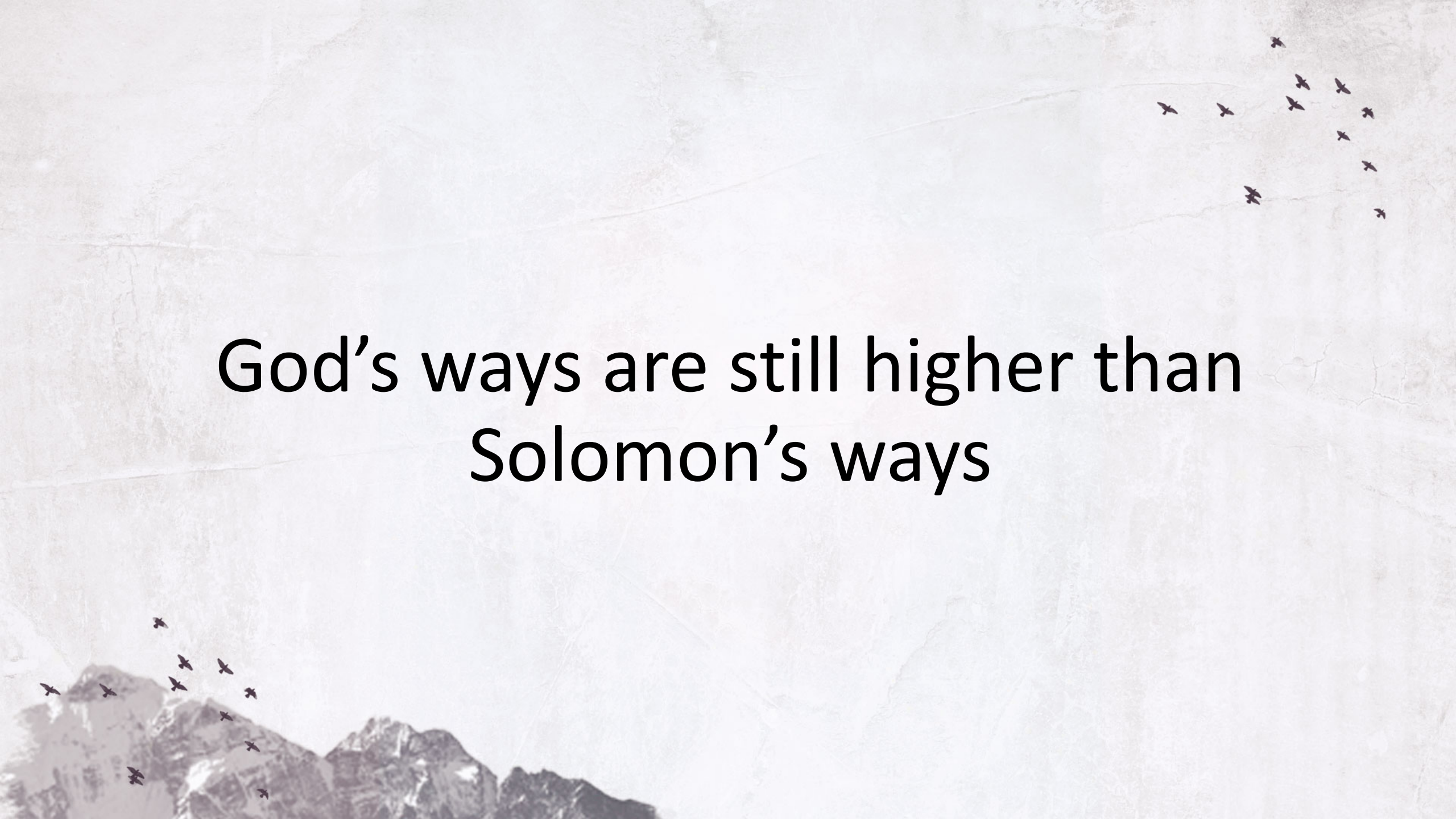
<sup>11</sup> So God said to him, “Since you have asked for this and not for long life or wealth for yourself, nor have asked for the death of your enemies but for discernment in administering justice,

<sup>12</sup> I will do what you have asked. I will give you a wise and discerning heart, so that there will never have been anyone like you, nor will there ever be.



<sup>13</sup> Moreover, I will give you what you have not asked for — both wealth and honour — so that in your lifetime you will have no equal among kings. <sup>14</sup> And if you walk in obedience to me and keep my decrees and commands as David your father did, I will give you a long life.”



The background of the image is a light, textured surface, possibly a piece of aged paper or a soft-focus landscape. In the bottom left corner, there is a dark, silhouetted mountain range. Scattered across the sky are numerous small, dark bird silhouettes, some appearing to fly in a loose formation towards the top right.

God's ways are still higher than  
Solomon's ways

The background of the slide features a light, textured surface, possibly representing a sky or a wall. In the upper right corner, a group of small, dark birds is flying in a loose formation. In the lower left corner, there is a dark, silhouetted mountain range with several birds flying around it.

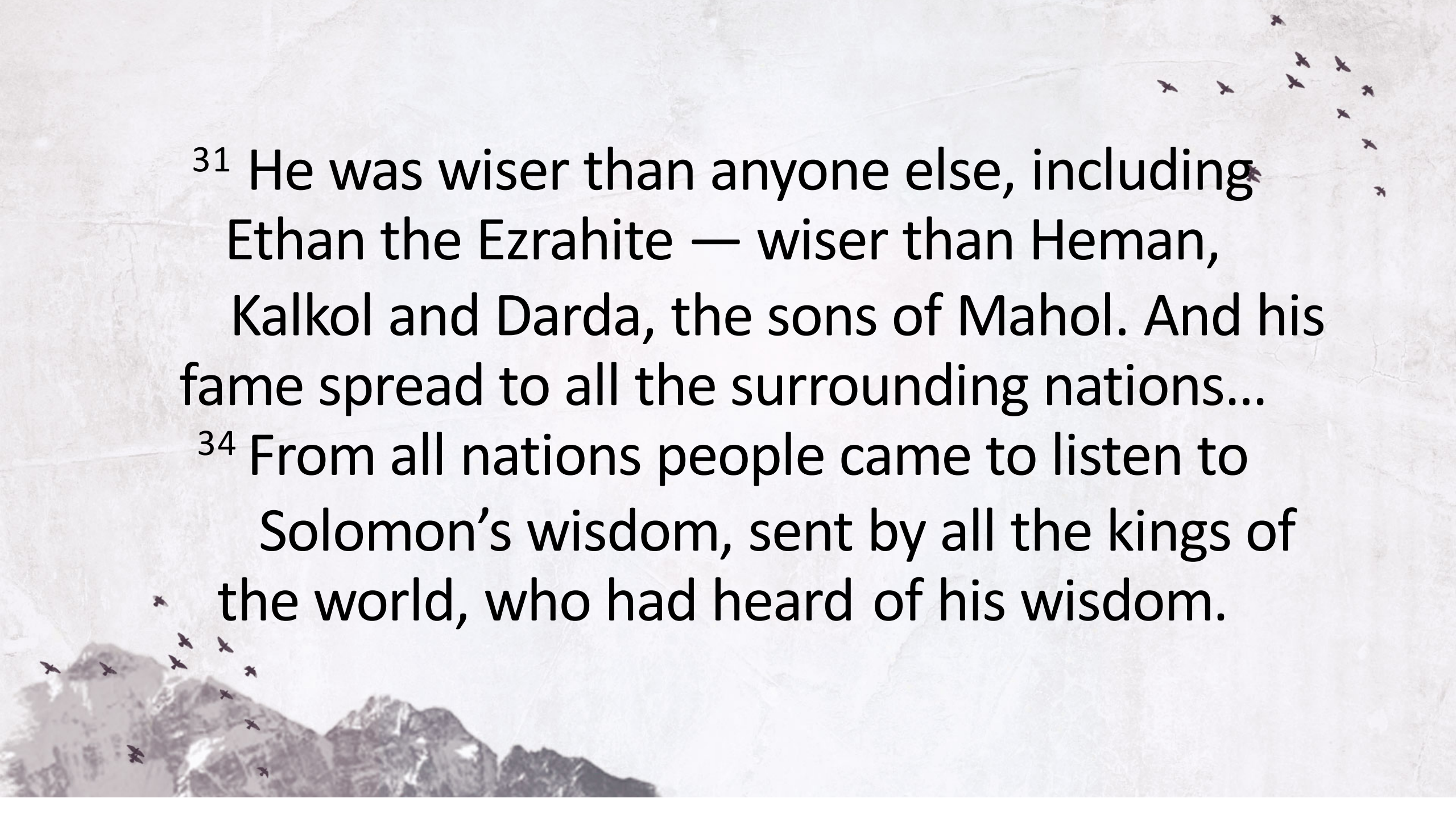
B) Solomon was more popular than  
we will ever know



# 1 Kings 4:29-31, 34

<sup>29</sup> God gave Solomon wisdom and very great insight, and a breadth of understanding as measureless as the sand on the seashore.

<sup>30</sup> Solomon's wisdom was greater than the wisdom of all the people of the East, and greater than all the wisdom of Egypt.



<sup>31</sup> He was wiser than anyone else, including Ethan the Ezrahite — wiser than Heman, Kalkol and Darda, the sons of Mahol. And his fame spread to all the surrounding nations...

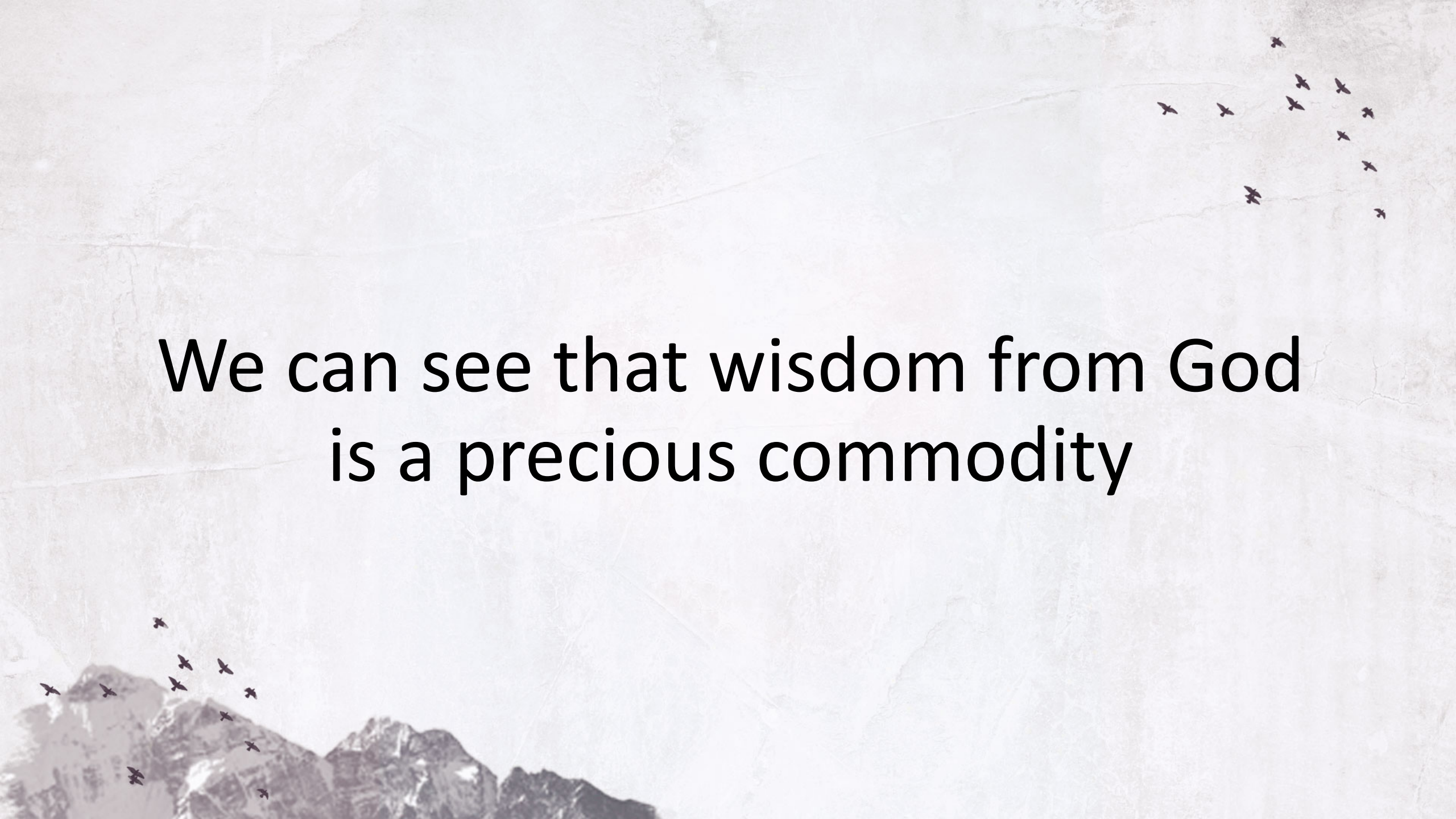
<sup>34</sup> From all nations people came to listen to Solomon's wisdom, sent by all the kings of the world, who had heard of his wisdom.



# 1 Kings 10:23-25

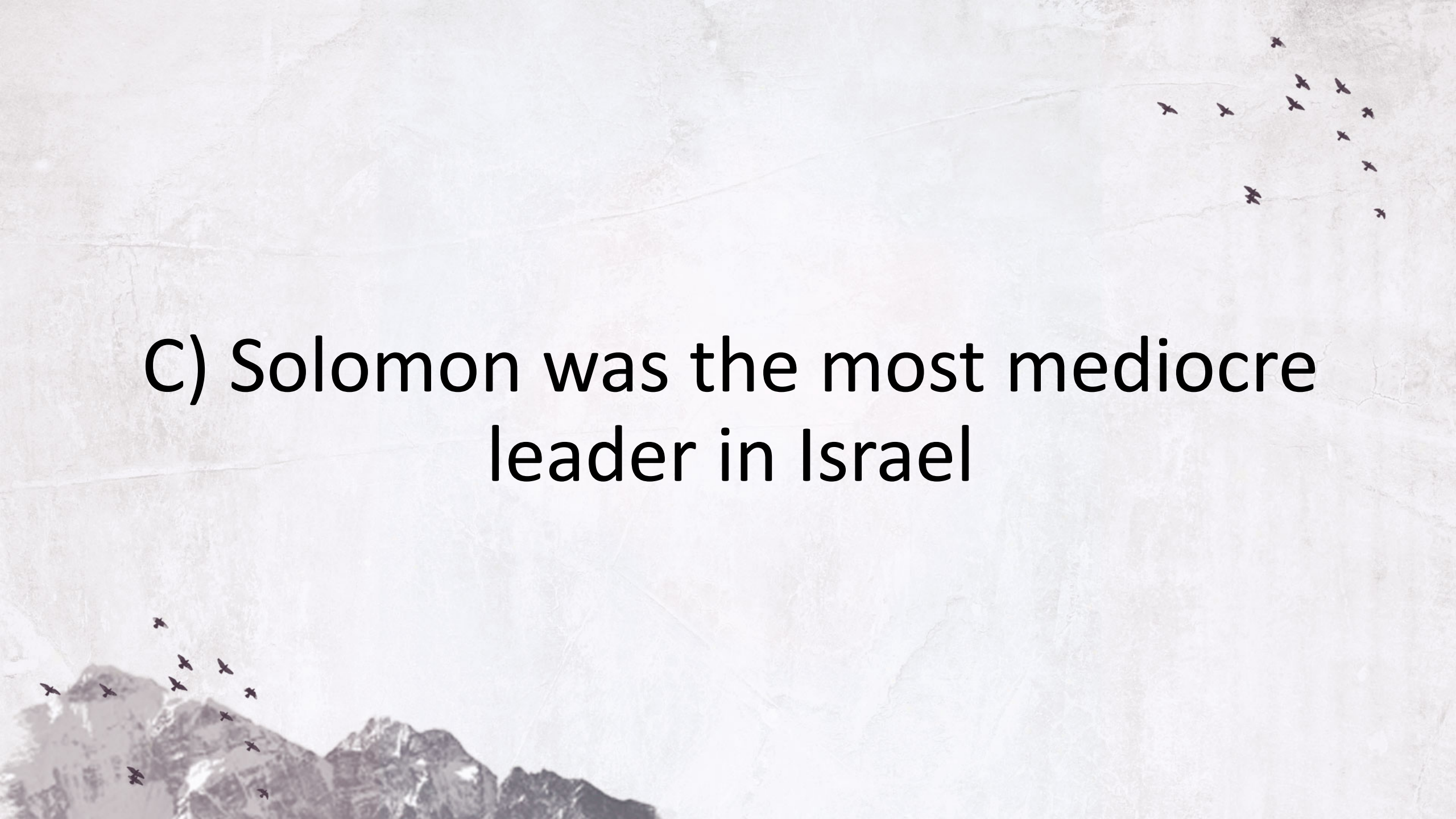
<sup>23</sup> King Solomon was greater in riches and wisdom than all the other kings of the earth.

<sup>24</sup> The whole world sought audience with Solomon to hear the wisdom God had put in his heart. <sup>25</sup> Year after year, everyone who came brought a gift — articles of silver and gold, robes, weapons and spices, and horses and mules.



We can see that wisdom from God  
is a precious commodity



The background of the slide features a light, textured surface, possibly representing a sky or a wall. In the upper right corner, a group of small, dark birds is flying in a loose formation. In the lower left corner, there is a dark, silhouetted mountain range with several birds flying around it.

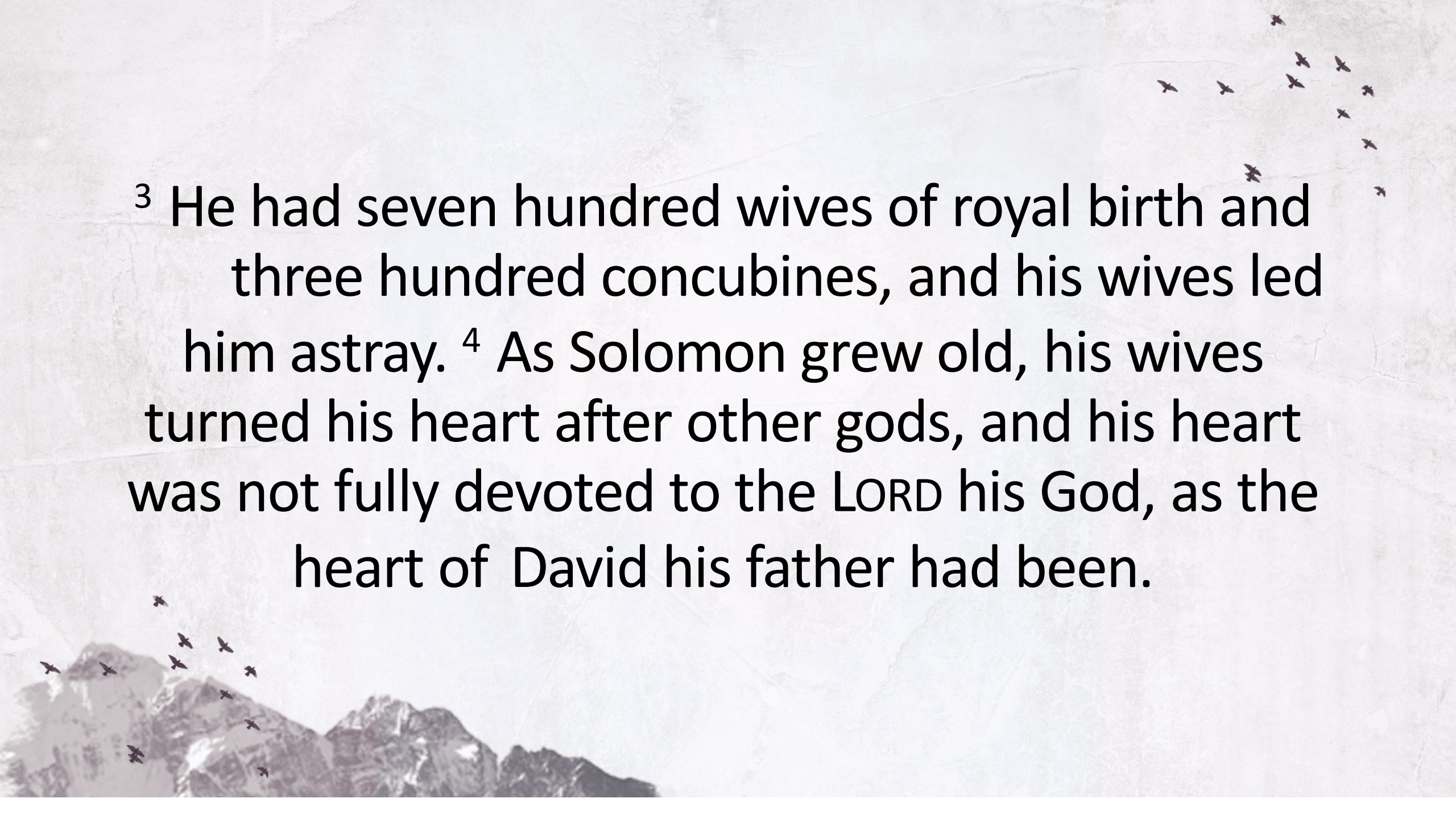
C) Solomon was the most mediocre  
leader in Israel

# 1 Kings 11:1-6

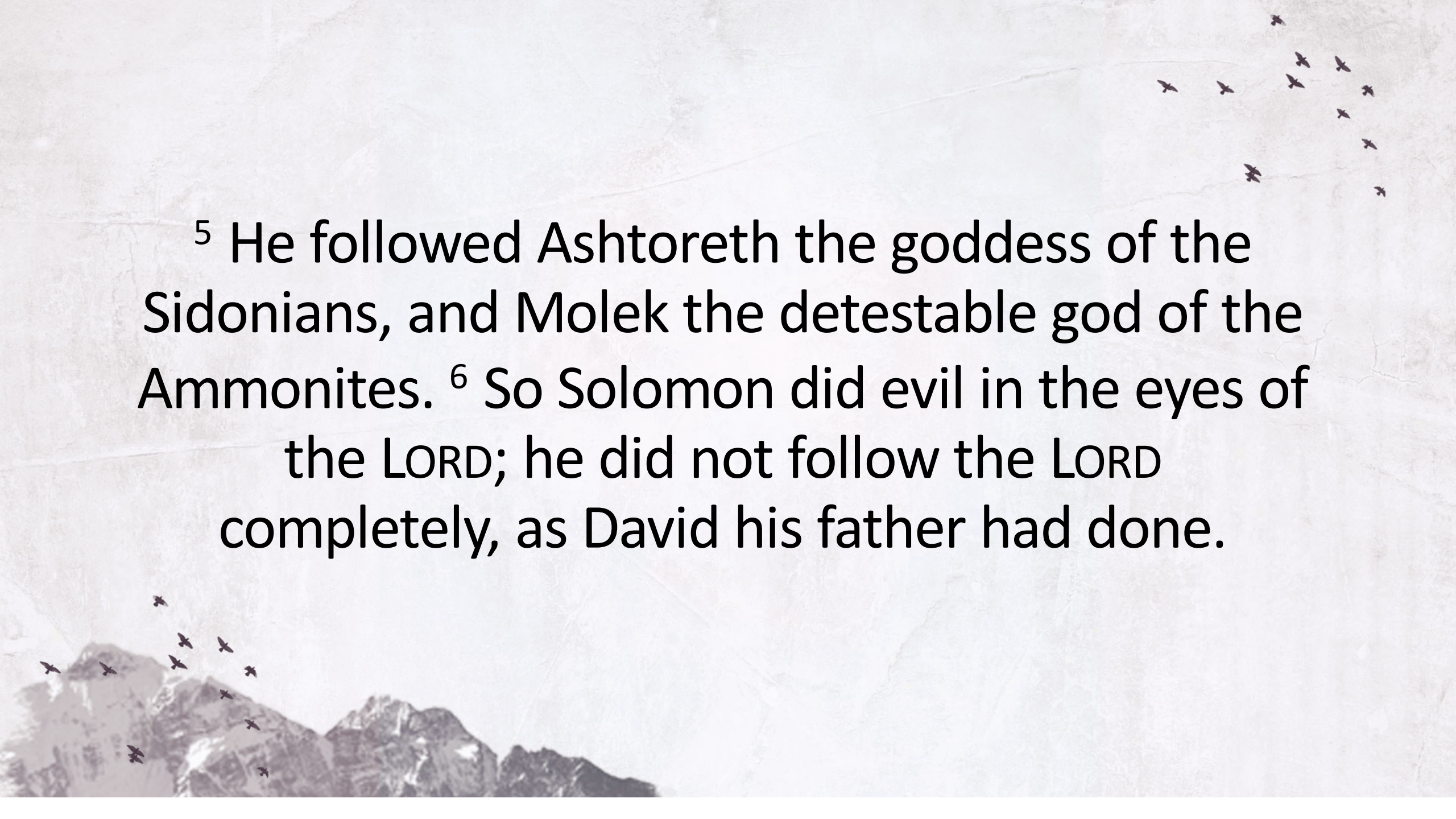
King Solomon, however, loved many foreign women besides Pharaoh's daughter — Moabites, Ammonites, Edomites, Sidonians and Hittites.

<sup>2</sup> They were from nations about which the LORD had told the Israelites, "You must not intermarry with them, because they will surely turn your hearts after their gods." Nevertheless, Solomon held fast to them in love.





<sup>3</sup> He had seven hundred wives of royal birth and three hundred concubines, and his wives led him astray. <sup>4</sup> As Solomon grew old, his wives turned his heart after other gods, and his heart was not fully devoted to the LORD his God, as the heart of David his father had been.



<sup>5</sup> He followed Ashtoreth the goddess of the Sidonians, and Molek the detestable god of the Ammonites. <sup>6</sup> So Solomon did evil in the eyes of the LORD; he did not follow the LORD completely, as David his father had done.





Life without God is not  
a viable option

The background of the slide features a light-colored, textured surface resembling aged paper or parchment. In the upper right corner, a flock of small, dark birds is flying in a loose formation. In the lower left corner, there is a silhouette of a mountain range with several peaks, and more birds are shown flying around and above the mountains.

# Mark 8:36

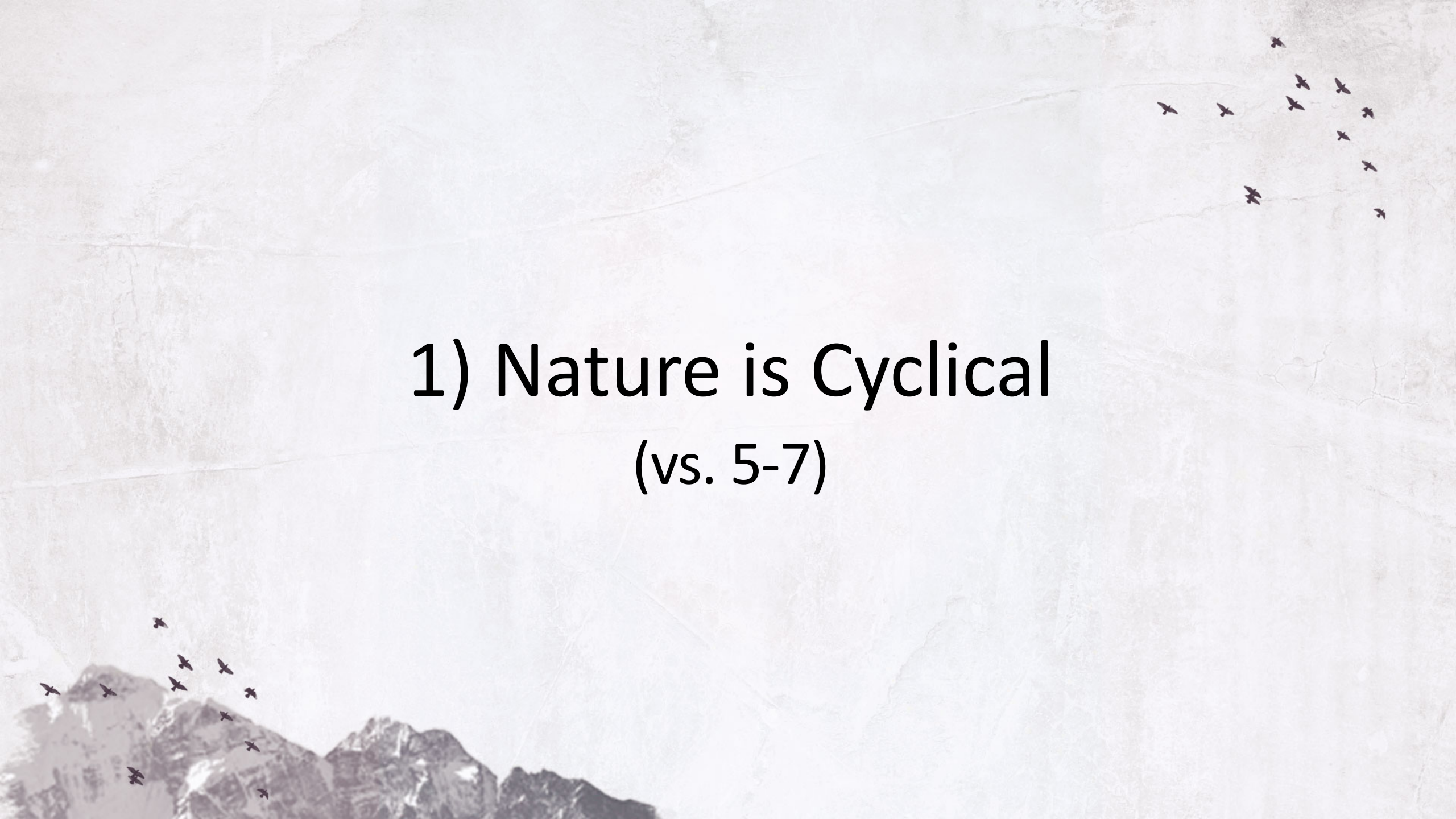
What good is it for someone to gain the whole world, yet forfeit their soul?



The background of the slide features a light-colored, textured surface resembling aged paper or parchment. In the upper right corner, a flock of small, dark birds is flying in a loose formation. In the lower left corner, there is a silhouette of a mountain range with several birds flying around it.

# Ecclesiastes 1:2

<sup>2</sup> “Meaningless! Meaningless!”  
says the Teacher. “Utterly meaningless!  
Everything is meaningless.”

The background of the slide features a soft-focus photograph of a mountain range. The mountains are covered in snow and have some rocky peaks visible. In the sky above the mountains, there are several small, dark silhouettes of birds in flight, scattered across the upper and lower portions of the frame. The overall color palette is muted, with whites, greys, and soft blues.

# 1) Nature is Cyclical

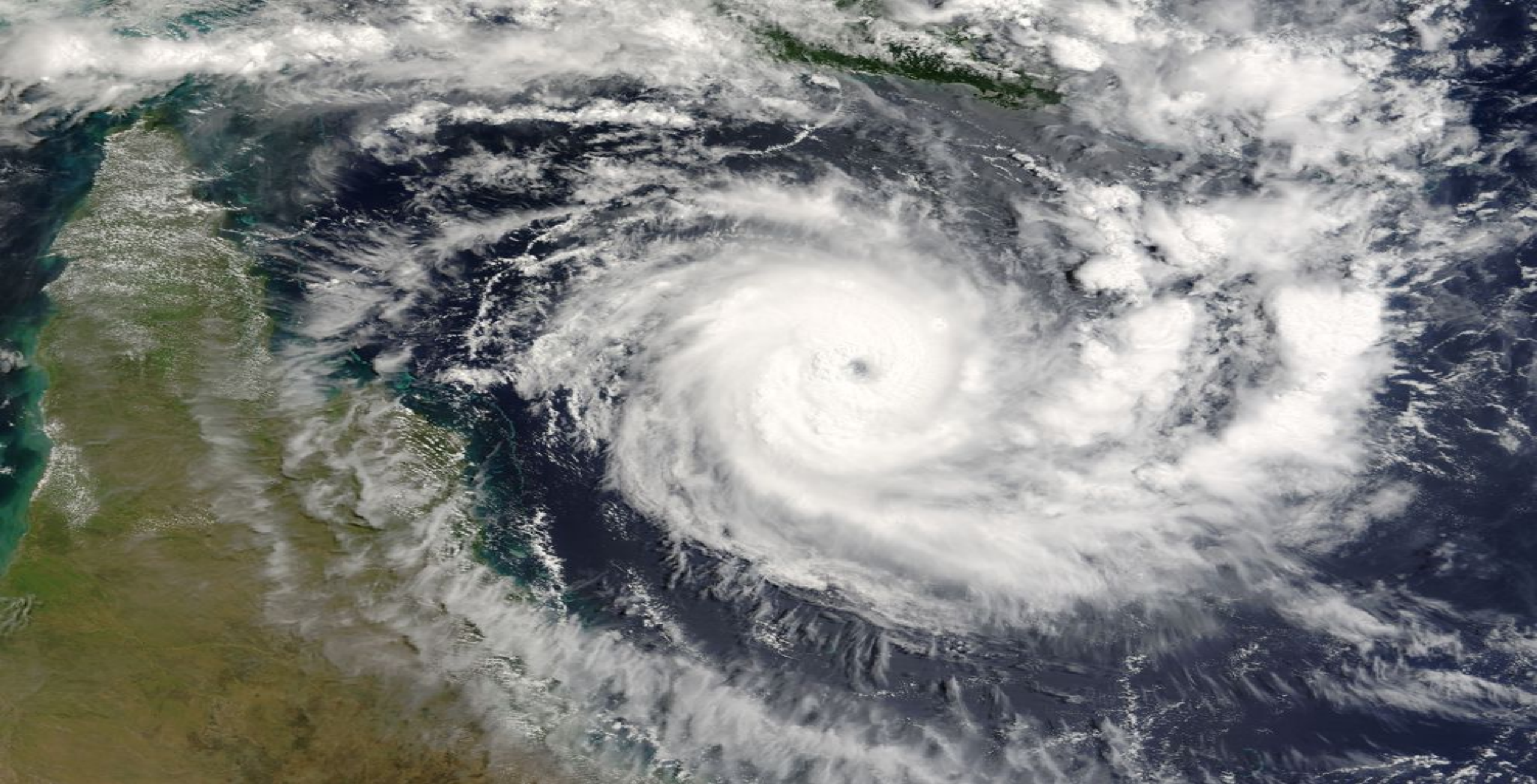
(vs. 5-7)



# Ecclesiastes 1:5-7

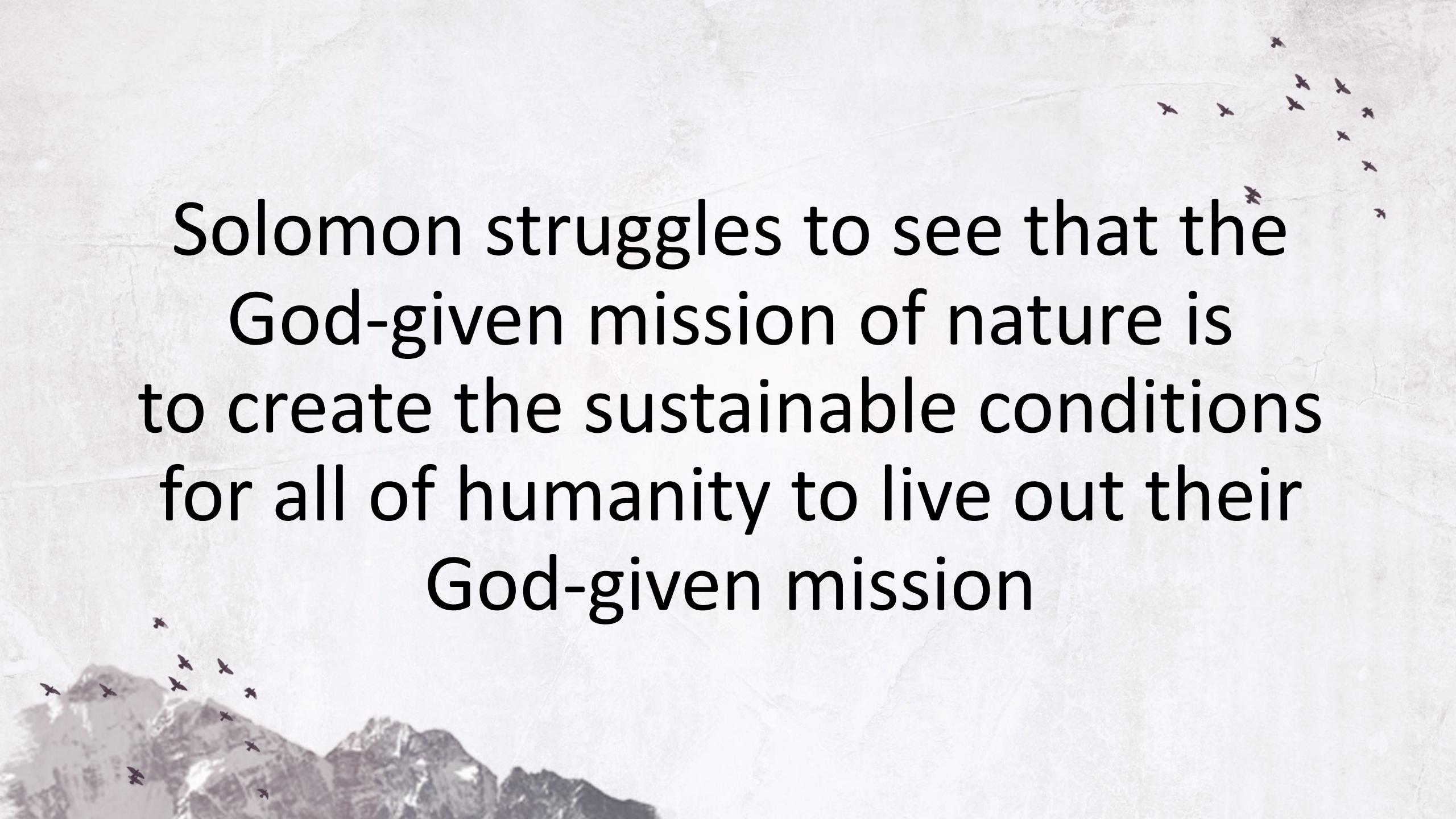
<sup>5</sup> The sun rises and the sun sets, and hurries back to where it rises. <sup>6</sup> The wind blows to the south and turns to the north; round and round it goes, ever returning on its course. <sup>7</sup> All streams flow into the sea, yet the sea is never full. To the place the streams come from, there they return again.





The Coriolis Effect





Solomon struggles to see that the  
God-given mission of nature is  
to create the sustainable conditions  
for all of humanity to live out their  
God-given mission

## 2) Life is Wearisome

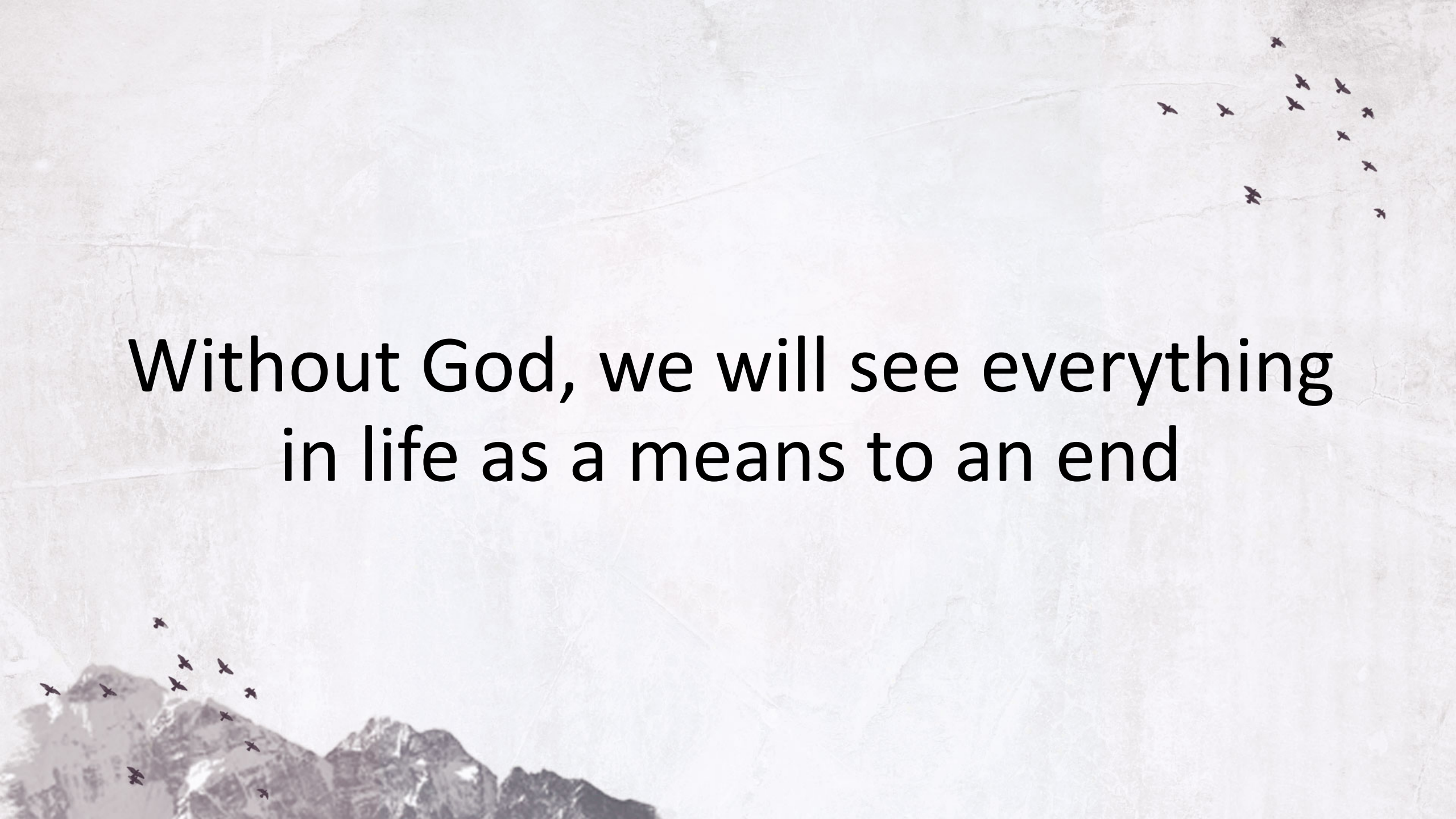




The background of the slide features a soft, painterly illustration of a mountain range. The mountains are rendered in muted, earthy tones of brown, tan, and grey, with some peaks appearing more rugged than others. In the upper right and lower left corners, there are clusters of small, dark silhouettes of birds in flight, scattered across the sky. The overall aesthetic is serene and contemplative, with a focus on natural elements.

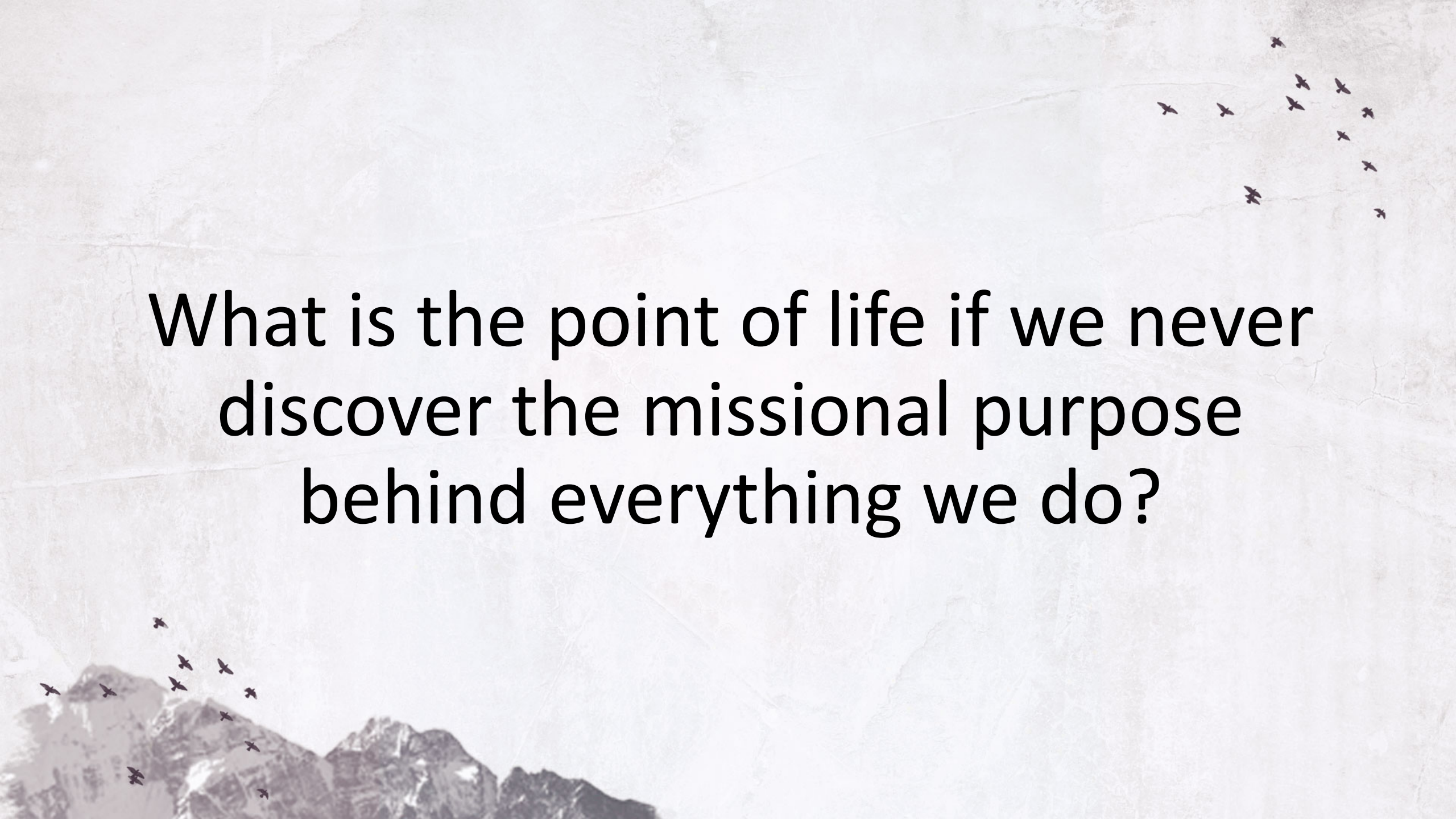
# Ecclesiastes 1:8

All things are wearisome, more than one can say. The eye never has enough of seeing, nor the ear its fill of hearing.



Without God, we will see everything  
in life as a means to an end





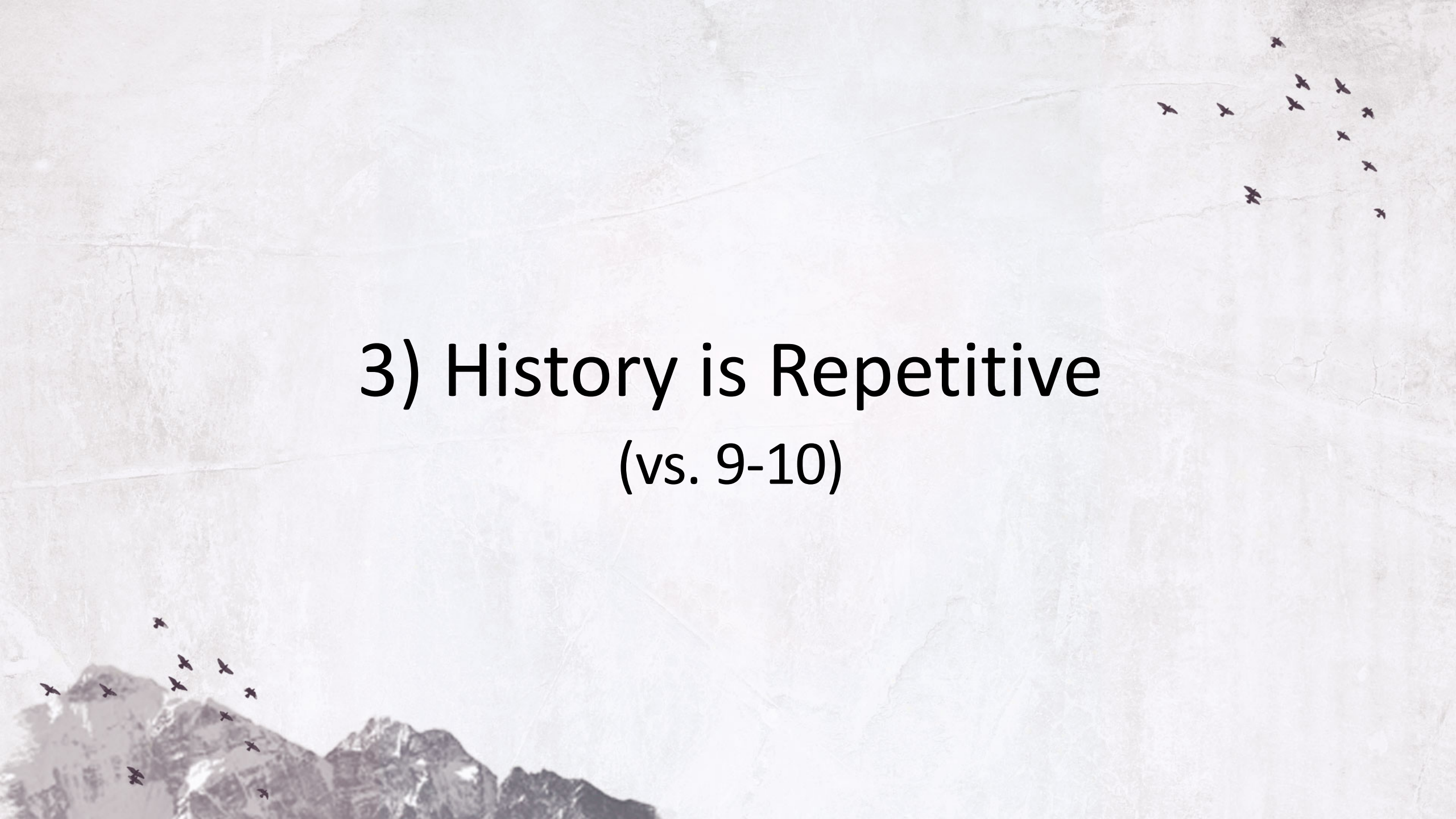
What is the point of life if we never  
discover the missional purpose  
behind everything we do?

# Romans 10:14-15

<sup>14</sup> How, then, can they call on the one they have not believed in? And how can they believe in the one of whom they have not heard? And how can they hear without someone preaching to them?

<sup>15</sup> And how can anyone preach unless they are sent? As it is written: “How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news!”



The background of the slide features a light-colored, textured surface resembling aged paper or parchment. In the upper right and lower left corners, there are faint, stylized illustrations of birds in flight. The lower left corner also shows a dark, jagged silhouette of a mountain range. The text is centered in the middle of the slide.

# 3) History is Repetitive

(vs. 9-10)

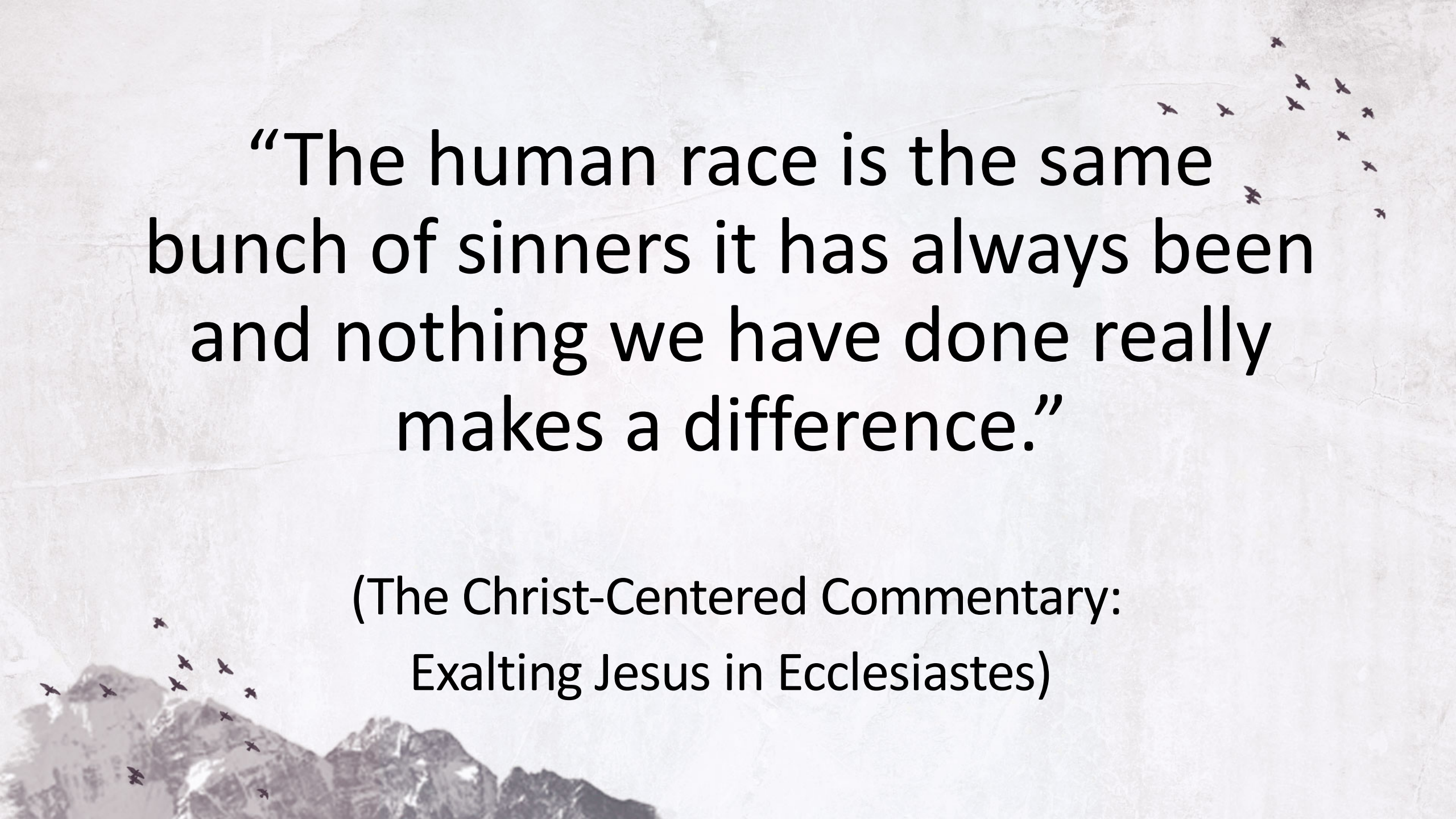
# Ecclesiastes 1:9-10

<sup>9</sup> What has been will be again, what has been done will be done again; there is nothing new under the sun. <sup>10</sup> Is there anything of which one can say, “Look! This is something new”? It was here already, long ago; it was here before our time.



The background of the image is a textured, light-colored surface, possibly a piece of aged paper or a wall, with subtle variations in tone and some faint, darker spots. In the bottom left corner, there is a dark, silhouetted mountain range. Above the mountains, several small, dark birds are depicted in flight, scattered across the upper left and right portions of the image. The text "Walking with God changes history" is centered in the middle of the image in a large, black, sans-serif font.

Walking with God changes history



“The human race is the same  
bunch of sinners it has always been  
and nothing we have done really  
makes a difference.”

(The Christ-Centered Commentary:  
Exalting Jesus in Ecclesiastes)





# Isaiah 43:18-19

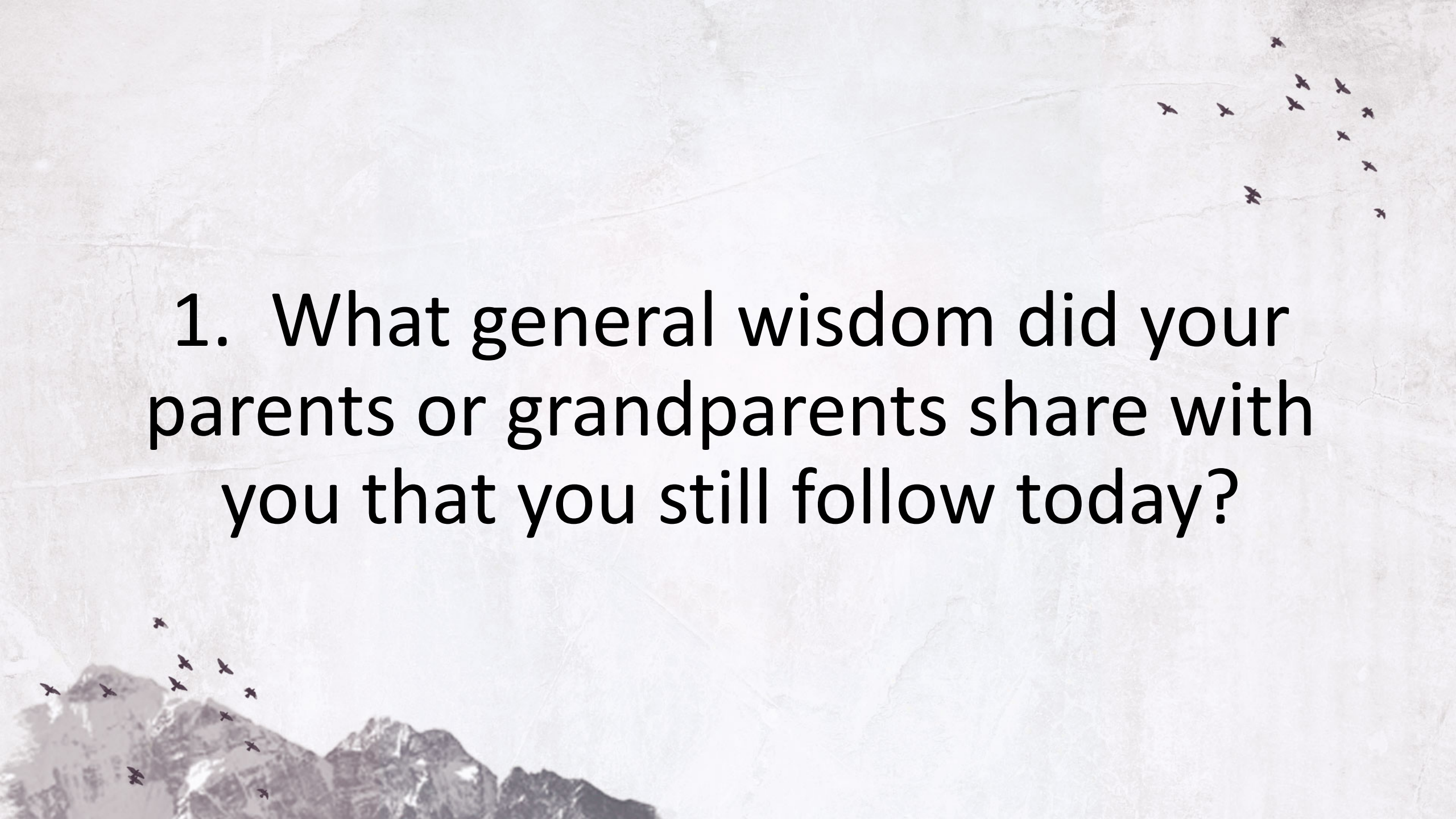
<sup>18</sup> “Forget the former things; do not dwell on the past. <sup>19</sup> See I am doing a new thing! Now it springs up; do you not perceive it?”

The background of the slide features a light, textured surface resembling aged paper or parchment. In the upper right corner, a flock of small, dark birds is shown in flight, moving towards the right. In the lower left corner, there is a silhouette of a rugged mountain range with several peaks. Another small group of birds is visible flying near these mountains.

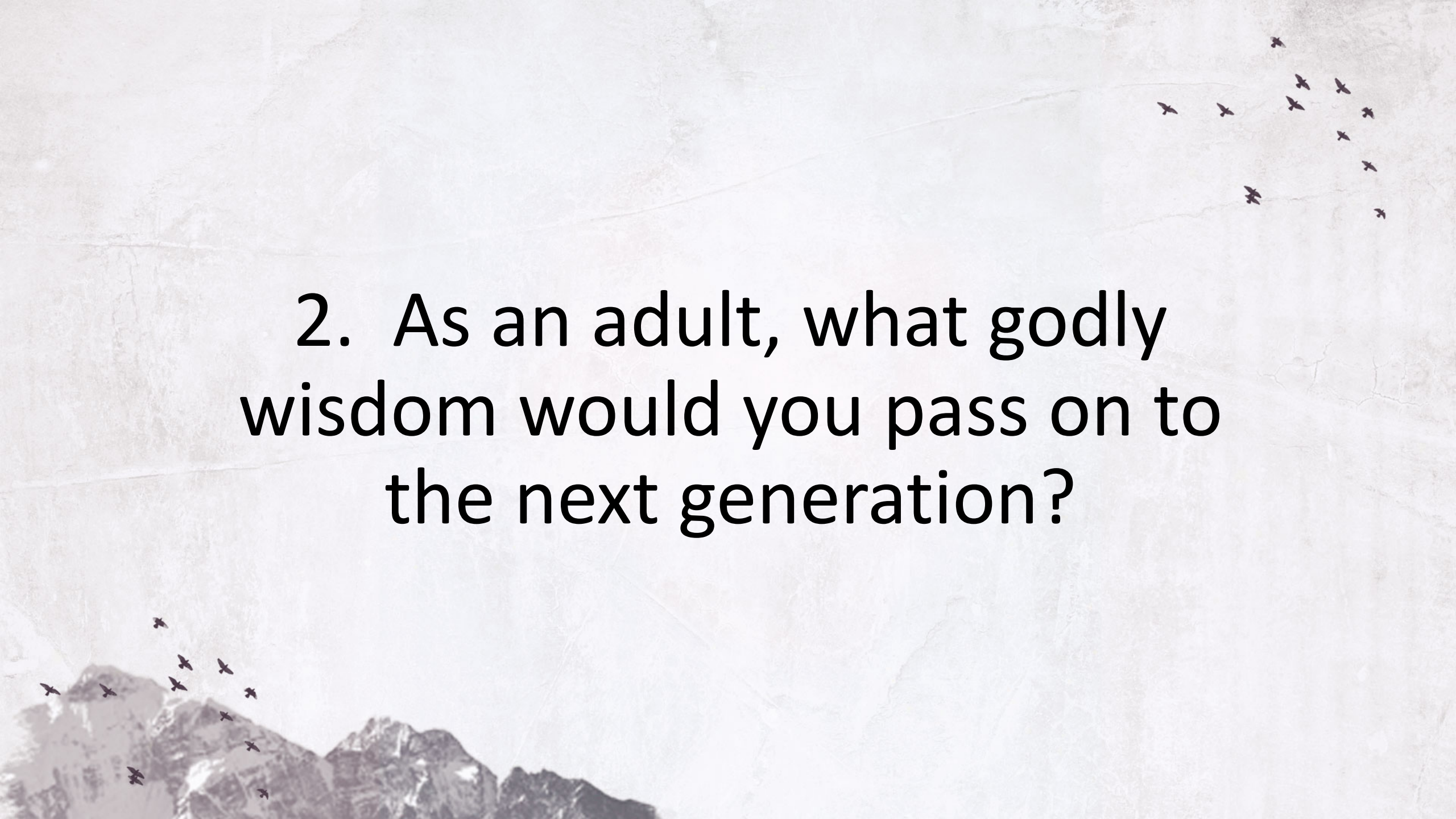
# Ecclesiastes 1:11

No one remembers the former generations,  
and even those yet to come will not be  
remembered by those who follow them.






1. What general wisdom did your parents or grandparents share with you that you still follow today?



2. As an adult, what godly wisdom would you pass on to the next generation?





Everything is not meaningless,  
everything is missional



# ECCELESIASTES

---

MEANINGLESS OR MISSIONAL?