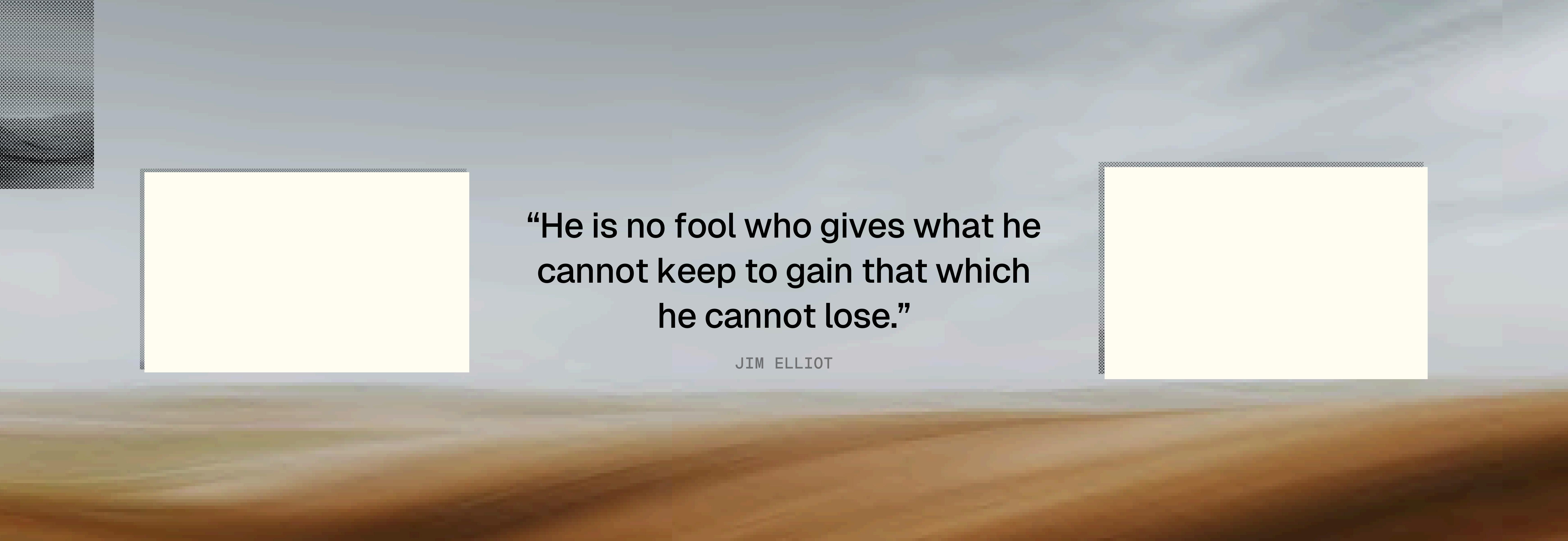
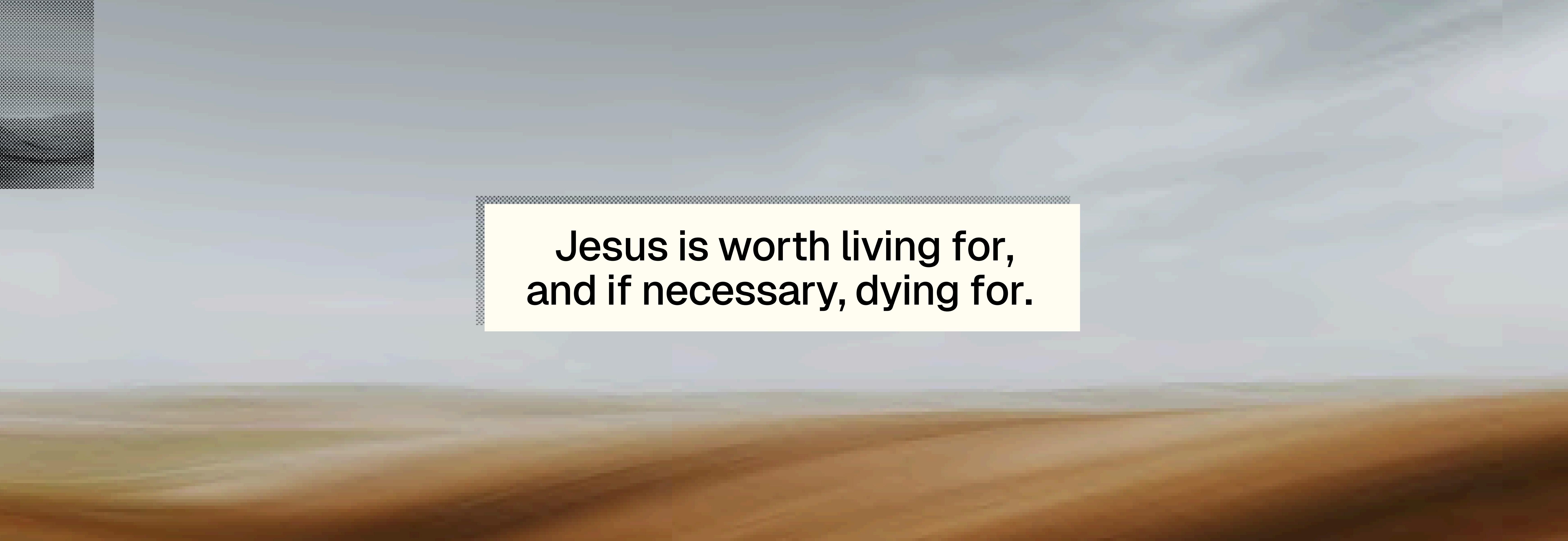


Acts.



“He is no fool who gives what he
cannot keep to gain that which
he cannot lose.”

JIM ELLIOT



Jesus is worth living for,
and if necessary, dying for.

Acts.

Now Stephen, a man **full of God's grace and power,** performed great wonders and signs among the people. ⁹Opposition arose, however, from members of the Synagogue of the Freedmen (as it was called)—Jews of Cyrene and Alexandria as well as the provinces of Cilicia and Asia—who began to argue with Stephen. ¹⁰But they could not stand up against the wisdom the Spirit gave him as he spoke.

ACTS 6:8-10 NIV

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ACTS 6:8-10 NIV

Brothers and sisters, choose seven men from among you who are known to be **full of the Spirit and wisdom.** We will turn this responsibility over to them⁴ and will give our attention to prayer and the ministry of the word.”⁵ This proposal pleased the whole group. They chose **Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Spirit**

ACTS 6:3-5A NIV

STEPHEN'S CHARACTER:

He was full of...

+ **Spirit and wisdom**

ACTS 6:3

+ **Faith**

ACTS 6:5

+ **Grace and power**

ACTS 6:8

STEPHEN'S RESUME:

Ministered to widows

ACTS 6:3-5

Performed signs and wonders

ACTS 6:8

Argued for the faith

ACTS 6:10

Endured persecution

ACTS 6:11-14

Proclaimed God's message

ACTS 7:2-53

Martyred for his faith

ACTS 7:57-59

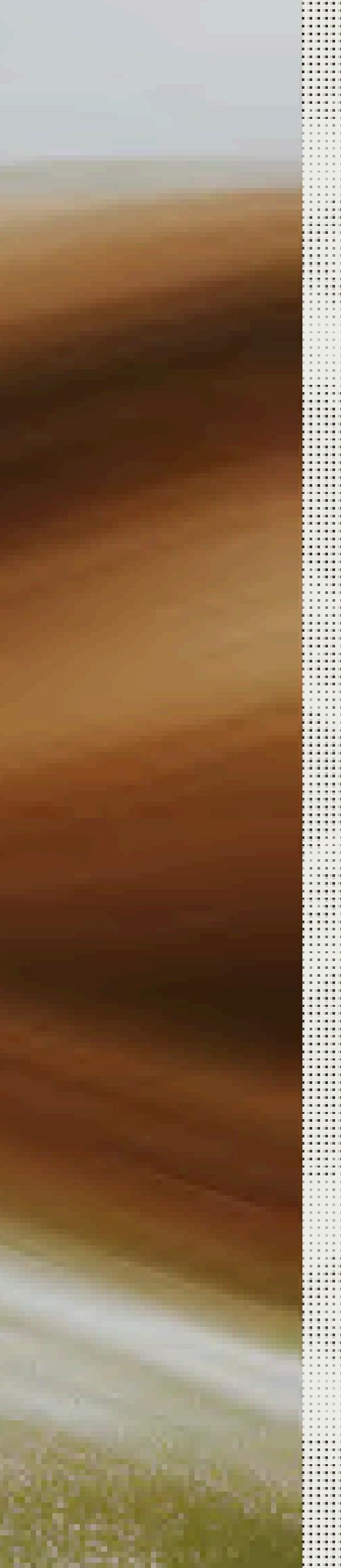


Then they secretly persuaded some men to say, “We have heard Stephen speak blasphemous words against Moses and against God.”¹² So they stirred up the people and the elders and the teachers of the law. They seized Stephen and brought him before the Sanhedrin.¹³ They produced false witnesses, who testified, “This fellow never stops speaking against this holy place and against the law.¹⁴ For we have heard him say that this Jesus of Nazareth will destroy this place and change the customs Moses handed down to us.”

ACTS 6:11-14 NIV

Attempts to Silence Stephen

1. **Argument**
ACTS 6:9-10
2. **Accusation**
ACTS 6:11-14
3. **Arrest**
ACTS 6:12
4. **Assassination**
ACTS 7:57-60



All who were sitting in the Sanhedrin looked intently at Stephen,
and they saw that his face was like the face of an angel.

ACTS 6:15 NIV



Then the high priest asked Stephen, “Are these charges true?”

² To this he replied: “Brothers and fathers, listen to me!”

ACTS 7:1-2A NIV

Stephen's Sermon

52 VERSES | 1200 WORDS

Featuring Four Major Characters:

ABRAHAM | JOSEPH | MOSES | DAVID

Featuring Six Minor Characters:

ISAAC | JACOB | PHARAOH | AARON | JOSHUA | SOLOMON

Undermining Three False Hopes:

THE LAND | THE LAW | THE TEMPLE



Abraham

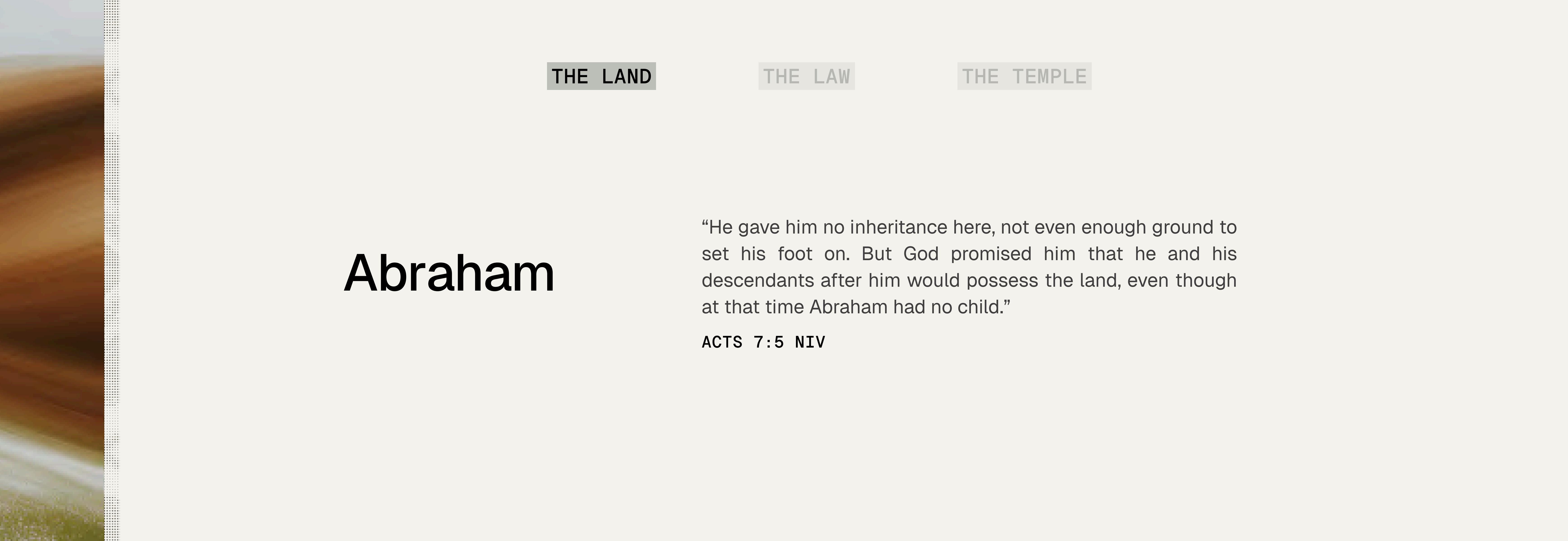
THE LAND

THE LAW

THE TEMPLE

“The God of glory appeared to our father Abraham while he was still in **Mesopotamia**, before he lived in Harran. ³ ‘Leave your country and your people,’ God said, ‘and go to the land I will show you.’

ACTS 7:2B-3 NIV



THE LAND

THE LAW

THE TEMPLE

Abraham

“He gave him no inheritance here, not even enough ground to set his foot on. But God promised him that he and his descendants after him would possess the land, even though at that time Abraham had no child.”

ACTS 7:5 NIV

Joseph

THE LAND

THE LAW

THE TEMPLE

“Because the patriarchs were jealous of Joseph, they sold him as a slave into **Egypt.** But God was with him ¹⁰ and rescued him from all his troubles. He gave Joseph wisdom and enabled him to gain the goodwill of Pharaoh king of **Egypt.** So Pharaoh made him ruler over **Egypt** and all his palace.¹¹ Then a famine struck all **Egypt** and Canaan, bringing great suffering, and our ancestors could not find food. ¹² When Jacob heard that there was grain in **Egypt**, he sent our forefathers on their first visit.”

ACTS 7:9-12 NIV



Moses

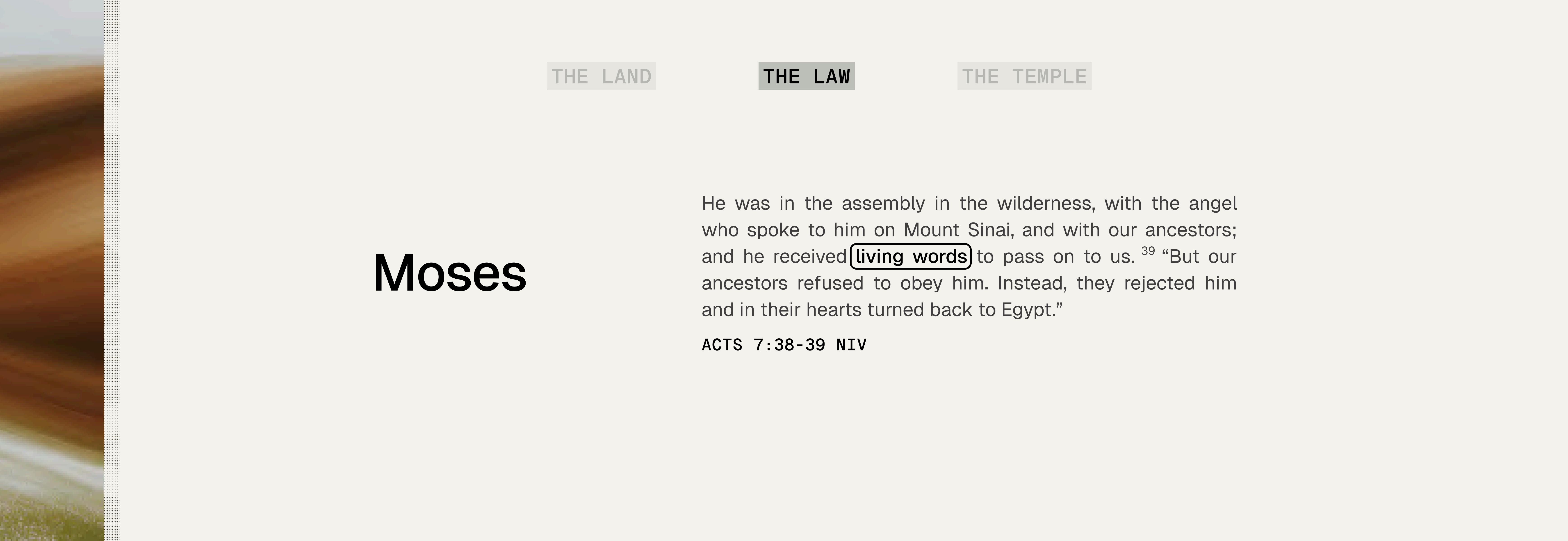
THE LAND

THE LAW

THE TEMPLE

“After forty years had passed, an angel appeared to Moses in the flames of a burning bush in the desert near **Mount Sinai.**³¹ When he saw this, he was amazed at the sight. As he went over to get a closer look, he heard the Lord say: ³² ‘I am the God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.’ Moses trembled with fear and did not dare to look. ³³ “Then the Lord said to him, ‘Take off your sandals, for the place where you are standing is holy ground. ³⁴ I have indeed seen the oppression of my people in **Egypt.** I have heard their groaning and have come down to set them free. Now come, I will send you back to **Egypt.**”

ACTS 7:30-34 NIV



THE LAND

THE LAW

THE TEMPLE

Moses

He was in the assembly in the wilderness, with the angel who spoke to him on Mount Sinai, and with our ancestors; and he received **living words** to pass on to us.³⁹ “But our ancestors refused to obey him. Instead, they rejected him and in their hearts turned back to Egypt.”

ACTS 7:38-39 NIV

David

THE LAND

THE LAW

THE TEMPLE

“After receiving the **tabernacle**, our ancestors under Joshua brought it with them when they took the land from the nations God drove out before them. It remained in the land until the time of David,⁴⁶ who enjoyed God’s favor and asked that he might provide a **dwelling place** for the God of Jacob.⁴⁷ But it was Solomon who built a **house** for him.
⁴⁸ “However, the Most High does not live in **houses** made by human hands.”

ACTS 7:45-49 NIV

“You stiff-necked people! Your hearts and ears are still uncircumcised. **You are just like your ancestors: You always resist the Holy Spirit!**⁵² Was there ever a prophet your ancestors did not persecute? They even killed those who predicted the coming of the Righteous One. And now you have betrayed and murdered him—⁵³ you who have received the law that was given through angels but have not obeyed it.”

ACTS 7:51-53 NIV



When the members of the Sanhedrin heard this, they were furious and gnashed their teeth at him.⁵⁵ But Stephen, full of the Holy Spirit, looked up to heaven and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing at the right hand of God.⁵⁶ “Look,” he said, “I see heaven open and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God.”⁵⁷ At this they covered their ears and, yelling at the top of their voices, they all rushed at him,⁵⁸ dragged him out of the city and began to stone him. Meanwhile, the witnesses laid their coats at the feet of a young man named Saul.

ACTS 7:54-58 NIV

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of their voices, they all rushed at him,⁵⁸ dragged him out of the city and began to stone him. Meanwhile, the witnesses laid their coats at the feet of a young man named Saul.

ACTS 7:54-58 NIV



“The scriptures uniformly picture Jesus as seated, but on this occasion he was ‘standing at the right hand of God.’ Christ came to his feet with arms open to welcome the first martyr home. Beautiful!”

KENT HUGHES, ACTS: THE CHURCH AFIRE

Christian Martyr

A Christian martyr is someone who is killed solely because of their witness for Christ and proclamation of the Gospel. Under the threat of violence and persecution, they choose to remain faithful, refusing to deny Christ, and ultimately die as a result of that faithful witness.

They did not love their lives so much as to shrink from death.

REVELATION 12:11B NIV

SOURCE: VOICE OF THE MARTYRS
PERSECUTION.COM

Christian Martyr

“A Christian martyr is someone who chooses to suffer death rather than deny Christ or His work. A martyr willingly suffers persecution and death for refusing to renounce their faith.”

They did not love their lives so much as to shrink from death.

REVELATION 12:11B NIV

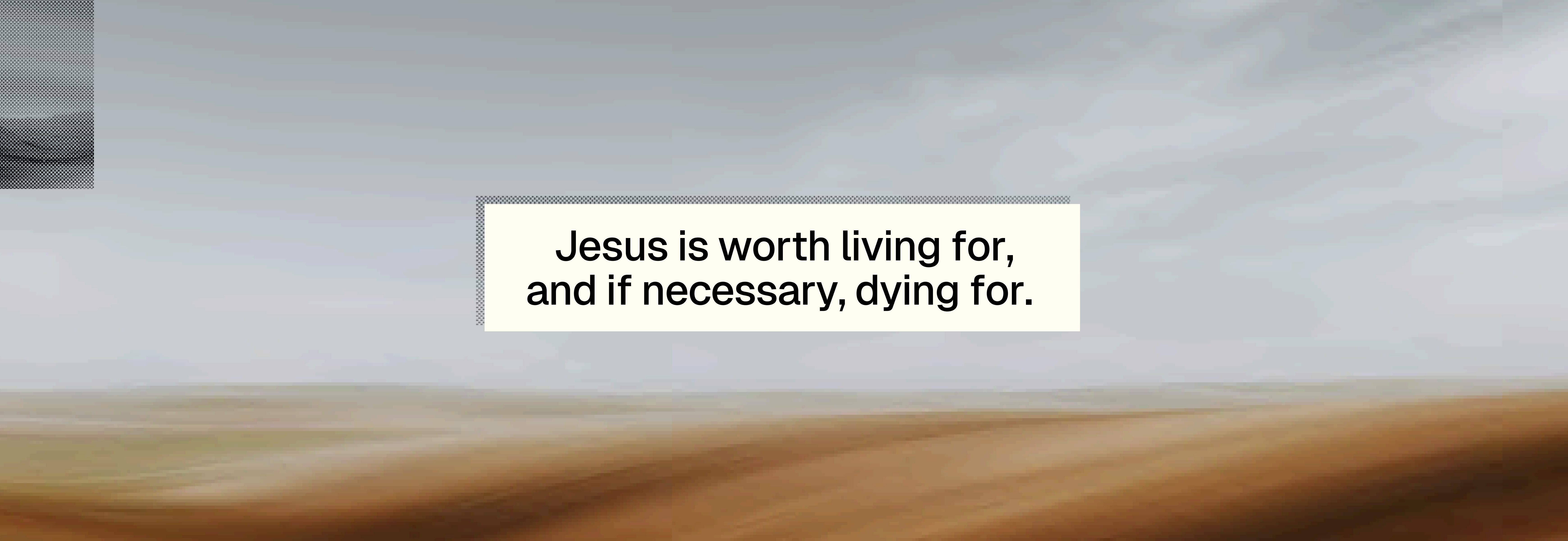
SOURCE: BILLY GRAHAM EVANGELISTIC ASSOCIATION



While they were stoning him, Stephen prayed, “Lord Jesus, receive my spirit.”⁶⁰ Then he fell on his knees and cried out, “Lord, do not hold this sin against them.” When he had said this, he fell asleep.

¹ And Saul approved of their killing him.

ACTS 7:59-8:1A NIV



Jesus is worth living for,
and if necessary, dying for.

Persecution of the Global Church

2024



4,476

CHRISTIANS MURDERED



7,769

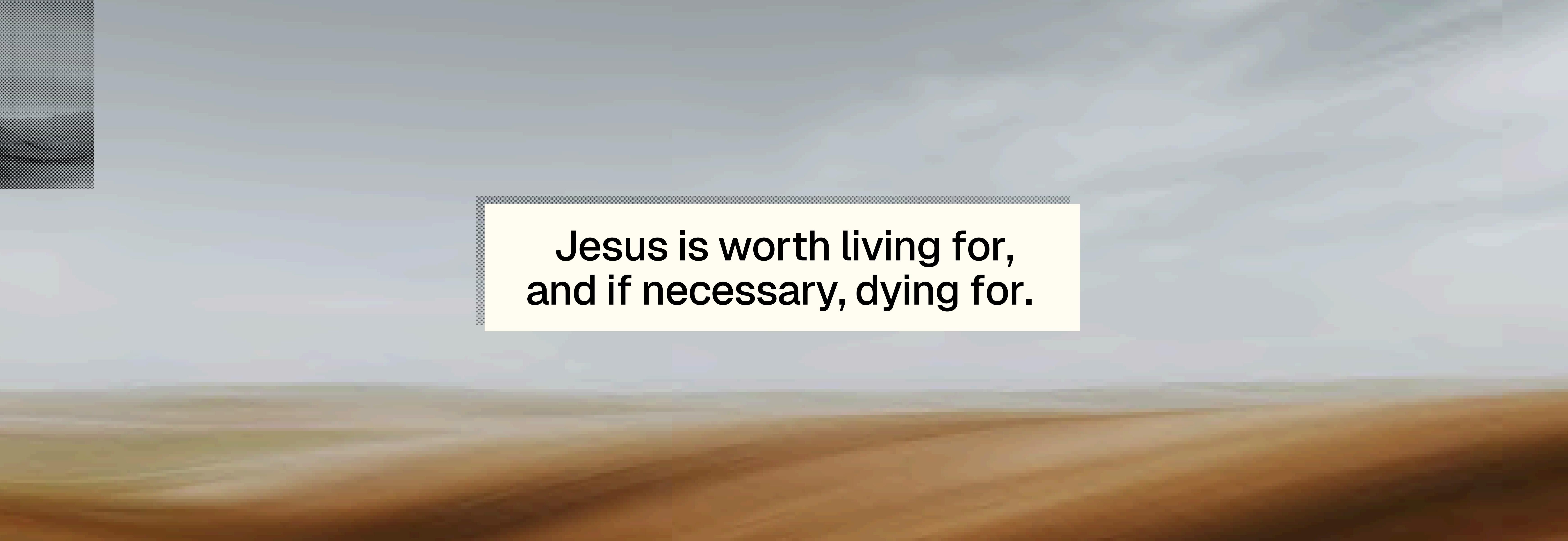
CHURCHES AND CHRISTIAN
PROPERTIES ATTACKED



4,744

CHRISTIANS IMPRISONED

SOURCE: OPENDOORS.ORG



Jesus is worth living for,
and if necessary, dying for.



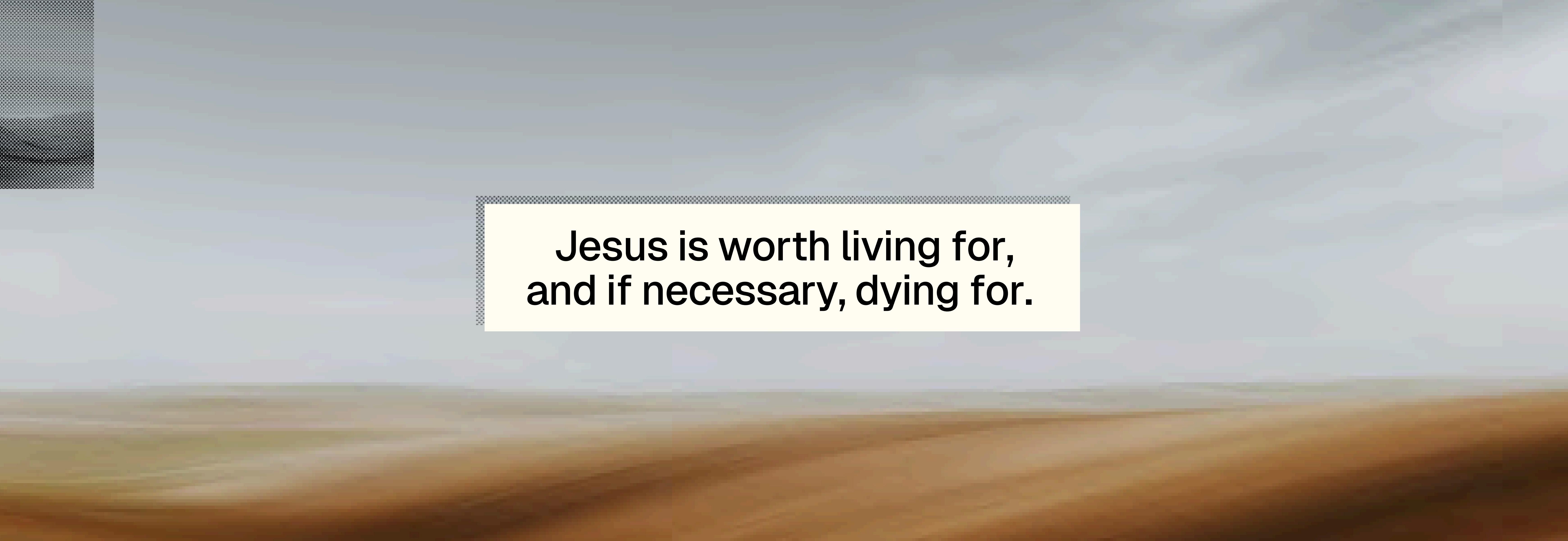
On that day a great persecution broke out against the church in Jerusalem, and all except the apostles were scattered throughout Judea and Samaria.² Godly men buried Stephen and mourned deeply for him.³ But Saul began to destroy the church. Going from house to house, he dragged off both men and women and put them in prison.

ACTS 8:1B-3 NIV



Those who had been scattered preached the word wherever they went.⁵ Philip went down to a city in Samaria and proclaimed the Messiah there.⁶ When the crowds heard Philip and saw the signs he performed, they all paid close attention to what he said.⁷ For with shrieks, impure spirits came out of many, and many who were paralyzed or lame were healed.⁸ So there was great joy in that city.

ACTS 8:4-8 NIV



Jesus is worth living for,
and if necessary, dying for.



And he died for all, that those who live should no longer live for themselves but for him who died for them and was raised again.

2 CORINTHIANS 5:15 NIV



And he died for all, that those who live
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him who died for them and was raised again.

2 CORINTHIANS 5:15 NIV

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2 CORINTHIANS 5:15 NIV