

A scenic landscape at dawn or dusk. A paved road with white dashed lines curves through a lush green field. In the background, rolling hills are visible under a dramatic sky with soft, colorful clouds in shades of orange, pink, and blue. The overall mood is peaceful and serene.

A TER THE ALTAR





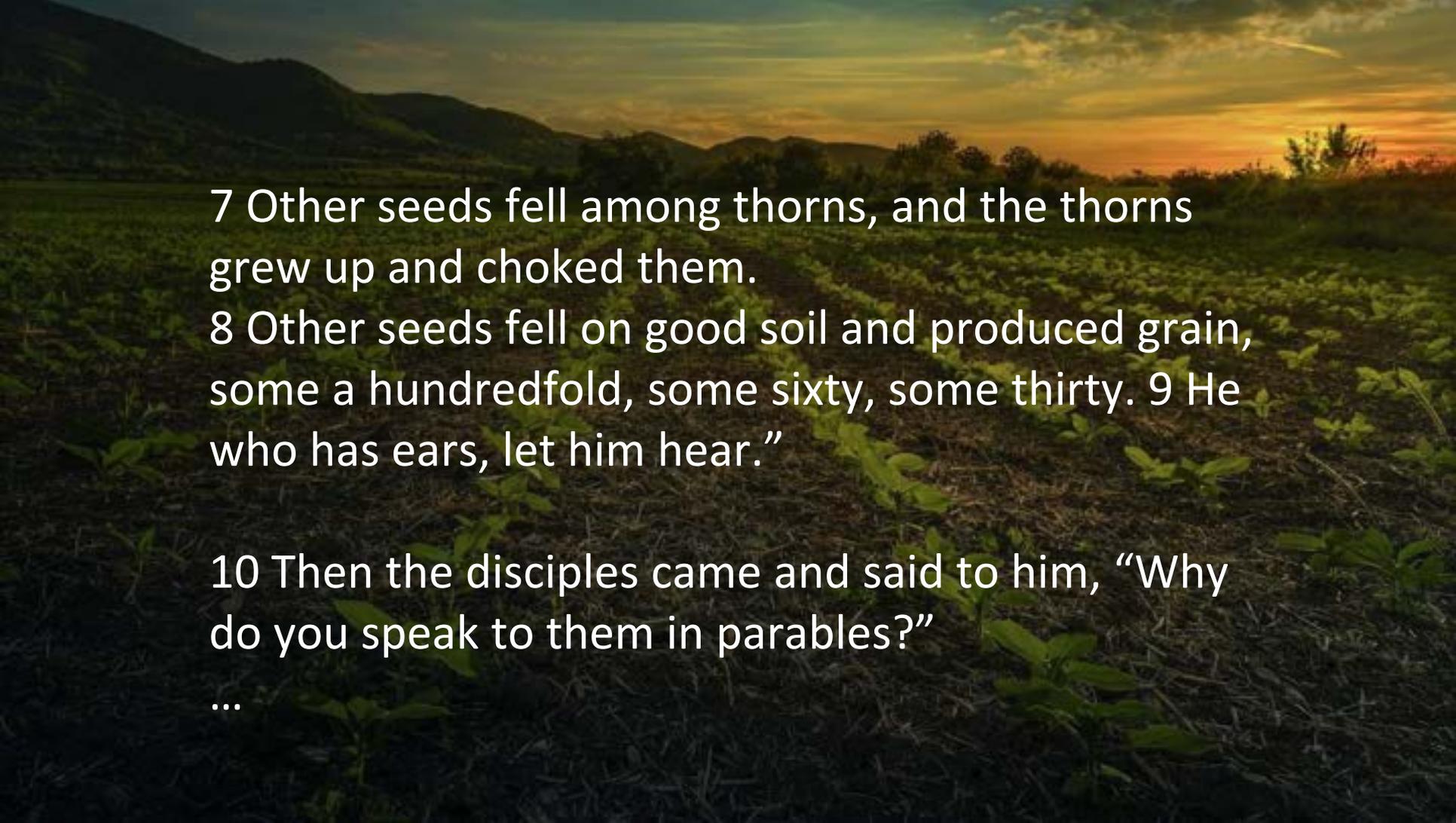


## Matthew 13

3 And he told them many things in parables, saying:  
“A sower went out to sow.

4 And as he sowed, some seeds fell along the path,  
and the birds came and devoured them.

5 Other seeds fell on rocky ground, where they did  
not have much soil, and immediately they sprang  
up, since they had no depth of soil, 6 but when the  
sun rose they were scorched. And since they had  
no root, they withered away.

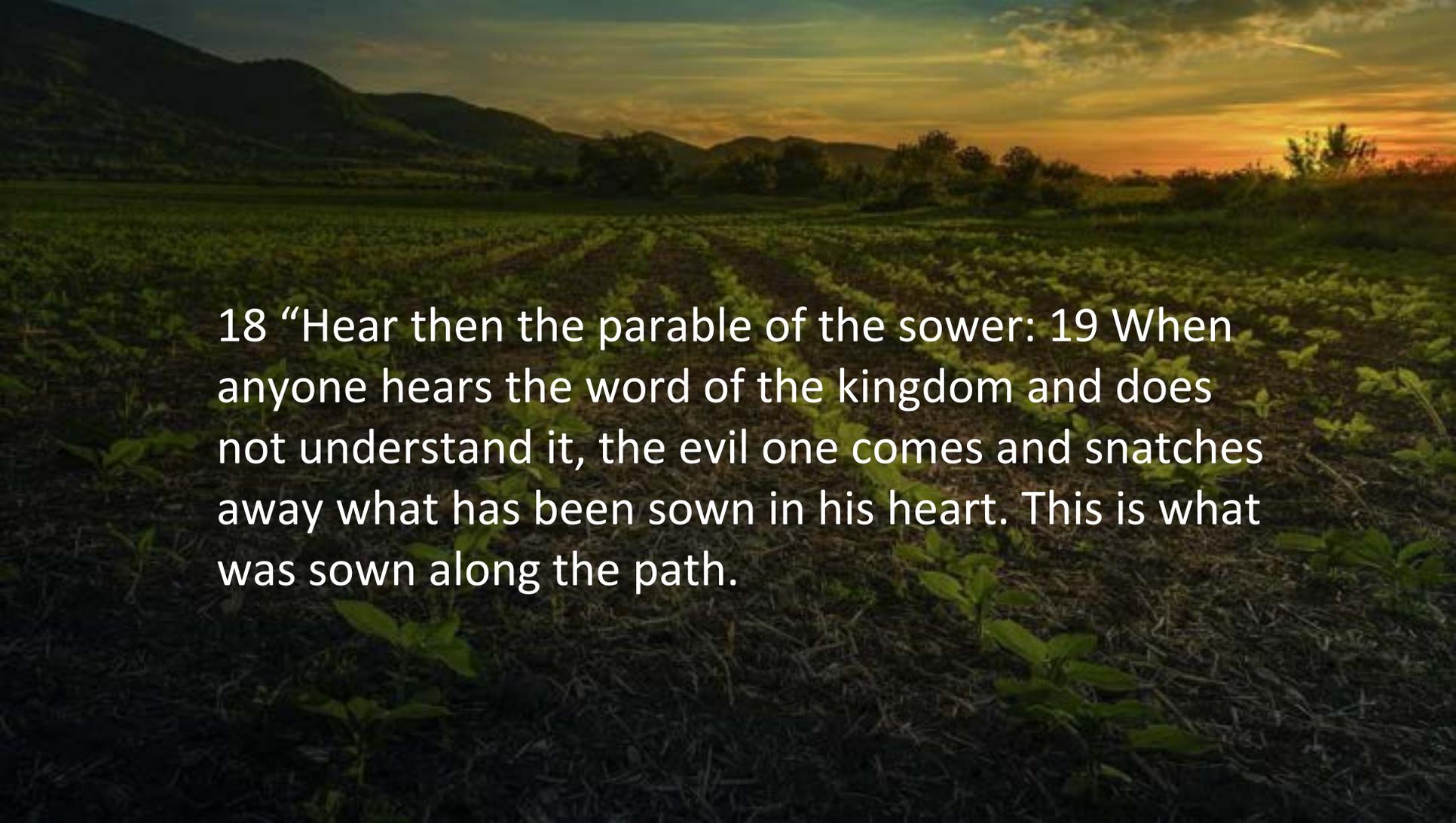


7 Other seeds fell among thorns, and the thorns grew up and choked them.

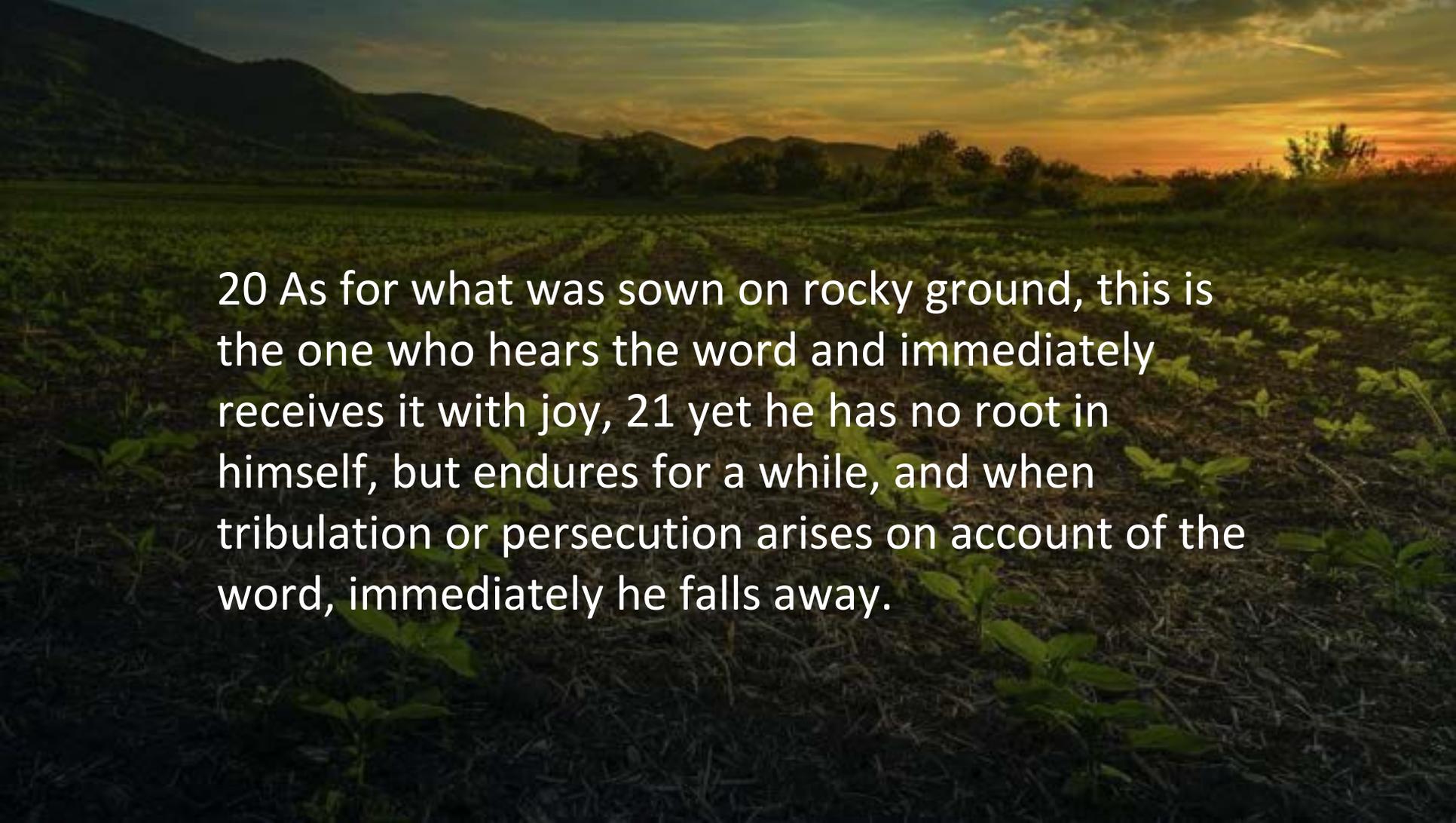
8 Other seeds fell on good soil and produced grain, some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty. 9 He who has ears, let him hear.”

10 Then the disciples came and said to him, “Why do you speak to them in parables?”

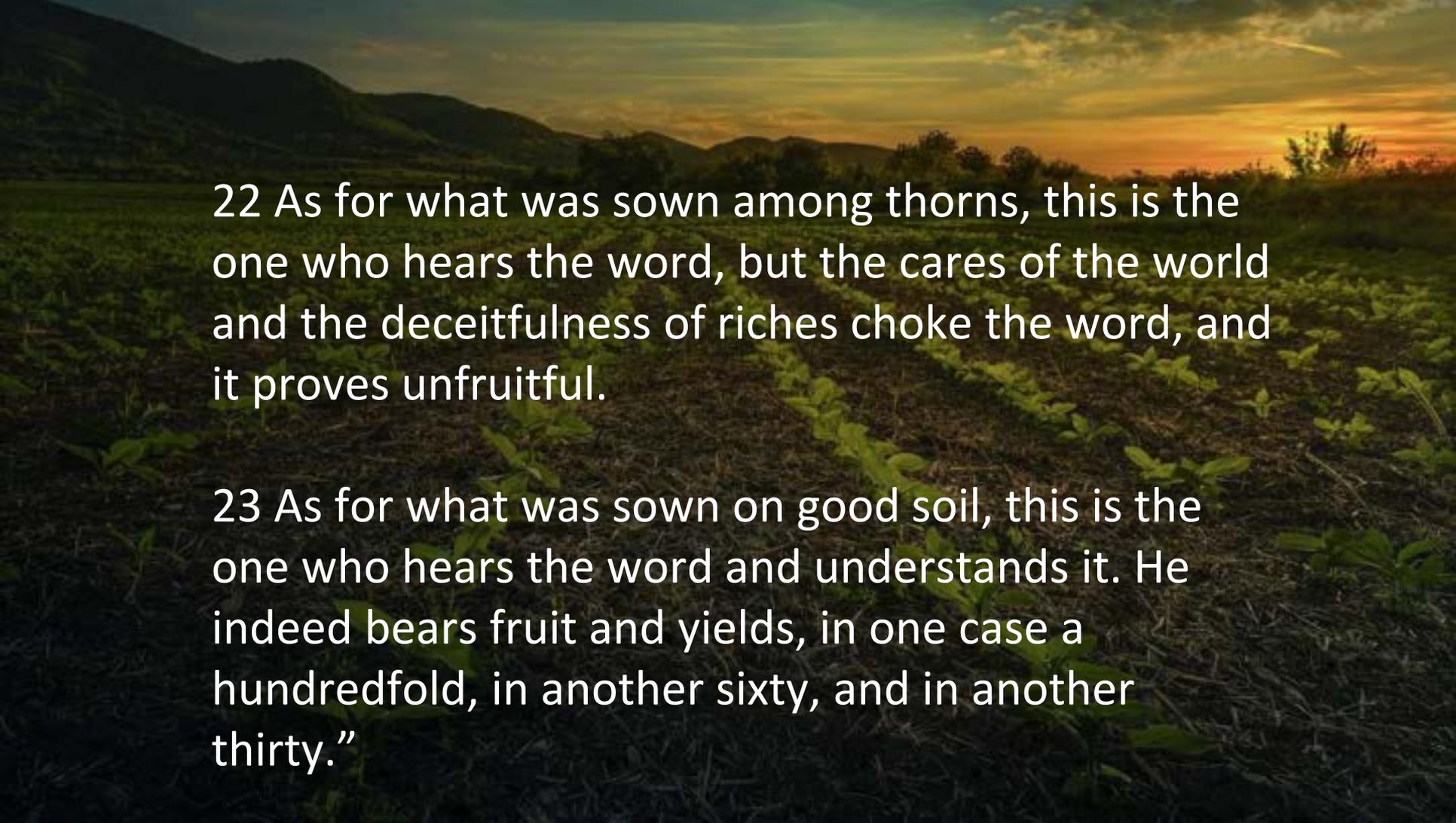
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A landscape photograph showing a field of young green plants in the foreground, with a path or furrow running through them. In the background, there are rolling hills or mountains under a sunset sky with orange and yellow light. The text is overlaid on the lower half of the image.

18 “Hear then the parable of the sower: 19 When anyone hears the word of the kingdom and does not understand it, the evil one comes and snatches away what has been sown in his heart. This is what was sown along the path.

A landscape photograph showing a field of young green plants in the foreground, with a line of trees and rolling mountains in the background under a sunset sky. The text is overlaid on the left side of the image.

20 As for what was sown on rocky ground, this is the one who hears the word and immediately receives it with joy, 21 yet he has no root in himself, but endures for a while, and when tribulation or persecution arises on account of the word, immediately he falls away.

A photograph of a field of young green plants, likely corn, growing in rows. The background shows rolling hills or mountains under a sunset sky with warm orange and yellow tones. The text is overlaid on the left side of the image.

22 As for what was sown among thorns, this is the one who hears the word, but the cares of the world and the deceitfulness of riches choke the word, and it proves unfruitful.

23 As for what was sown on good soil, this is the one who hears the word and understands it. He indeed bears fruit and yields, in one case a hundredfold, in another sixty, and in another thirty.”



Overview

# What prevents fruitfulness in our lives?

Hard Soil

Rocky Soil

Thorny Soil



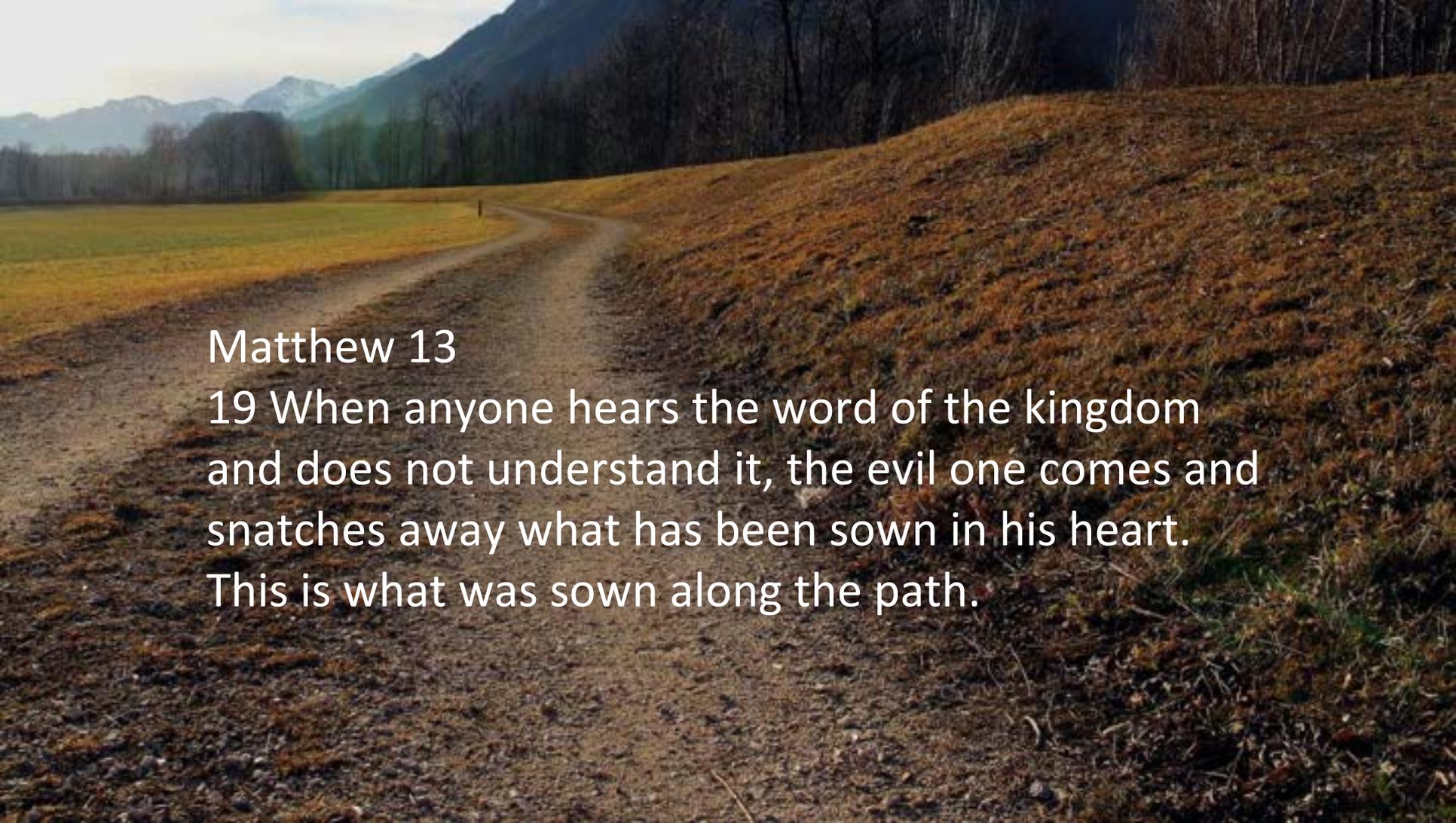
**Fruitfulness**

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**Our Being & Our Doing**

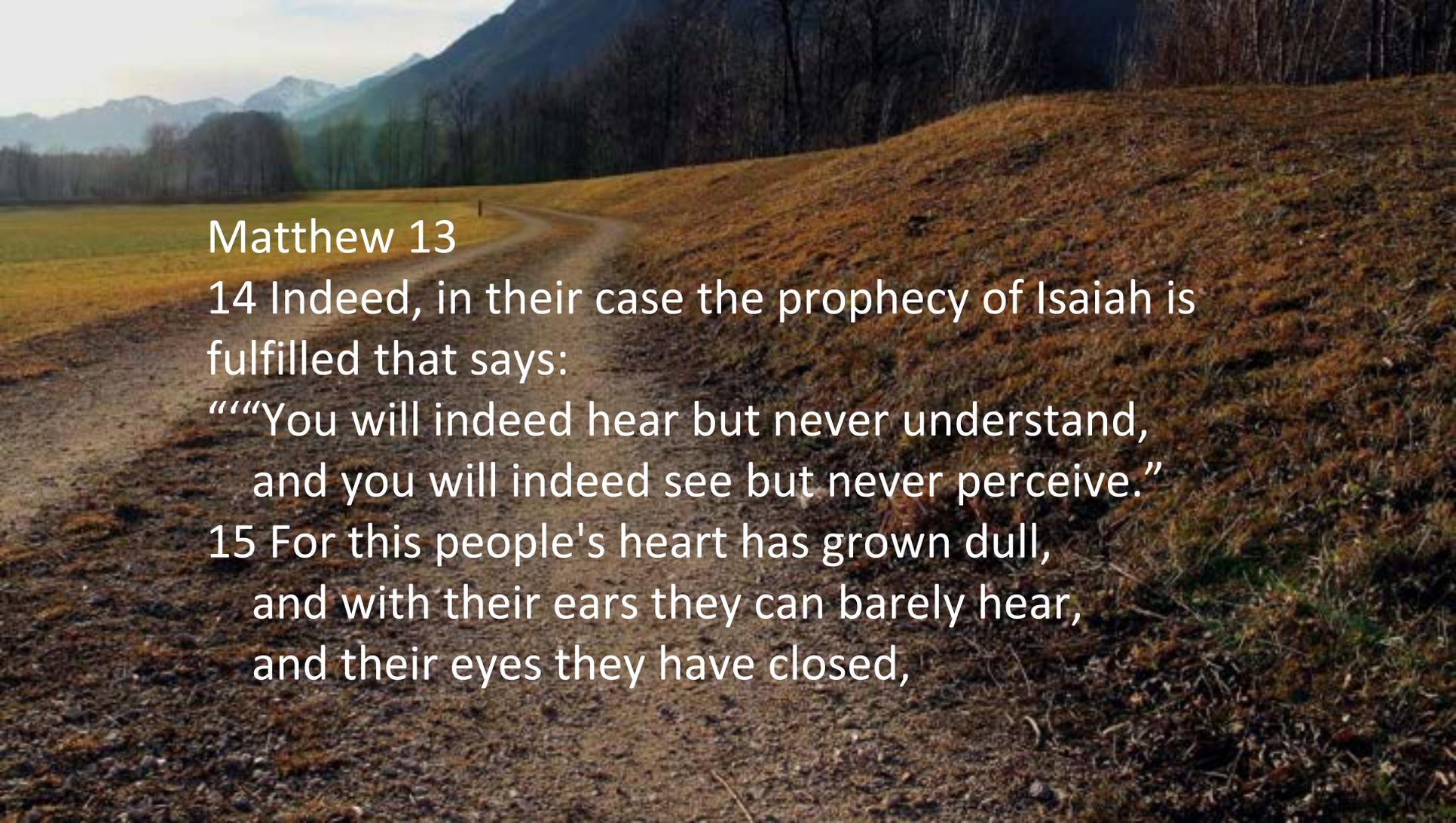


# Hard Soil

A dirt path winds through a field of dry, brown grass. In the background, there are mountains and a line of trees. The sky is overcast.

## Matthew 13

19 When anyone hears the word of the kingdom and does not understand it, the evil one comes and snatches away what has been sown in his heart. This is what was sown along the path.

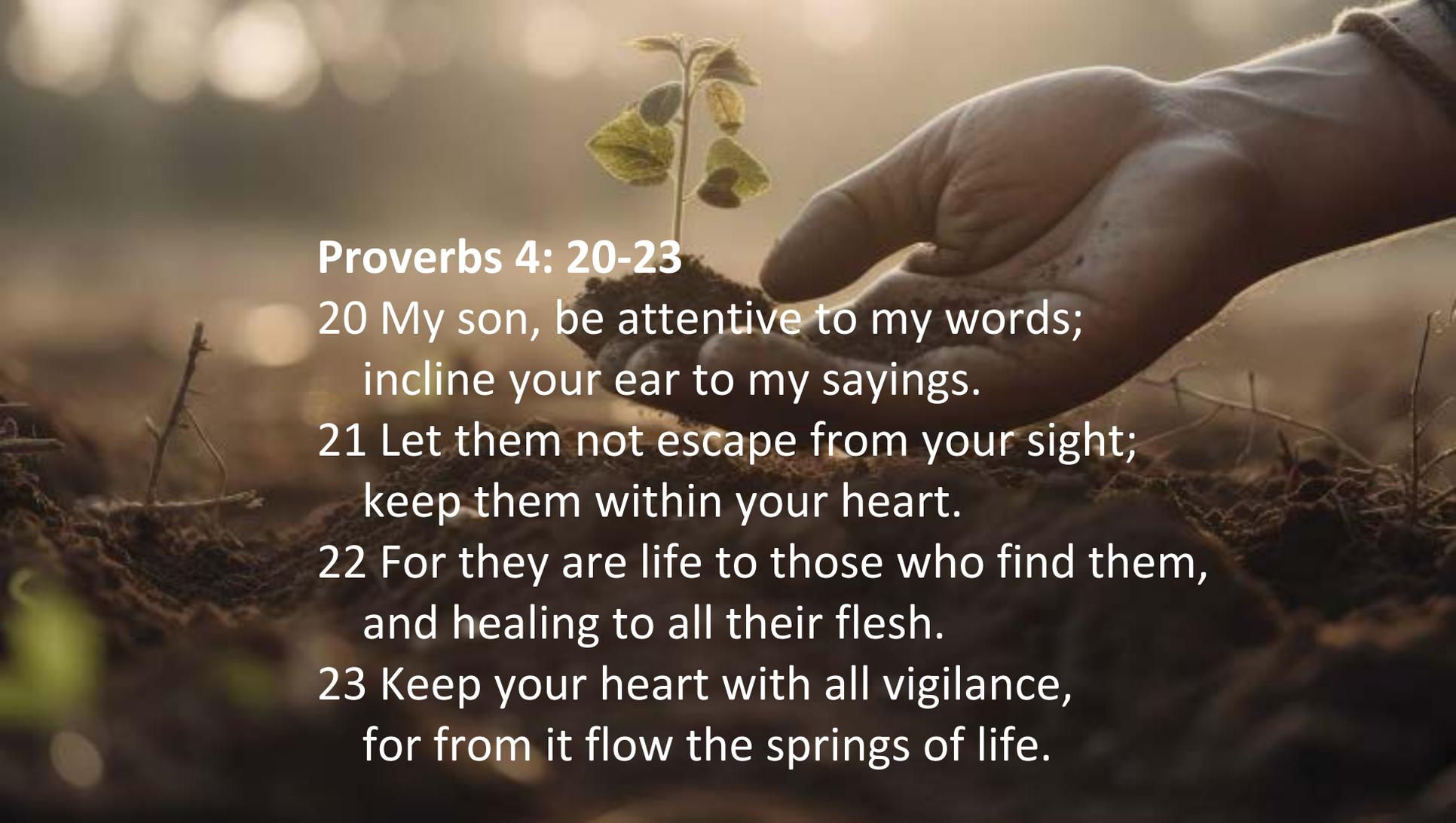
A dirt road winds through a field of dry, brown grass. In the background, there are dark, leafless trees and a range of mountains under a hazy sky.

## Matthew 13

14 Indeed, in their case the prophecy of Isaiah is fulfilled that says:

““You will indeed hear but never understand,  
and you will indeed see but never perceive.”

15 For this people's heart has grown dull,  
and with their ears they can barely hear,  
and their eyes they have closed,

A close-up photograph of a person's hand holding a small, vibrant green seedling with several leaves, growing out of a mound of dark soil. The background is a soft, out-of-focus landscape with warm, golden light, creating a bokeh effect. The overall mood is one of care, growth, and hope.

**Proverbs 4: 20-23**

20 My son, be attentive to my words;  
incline your ear to my sayings.

21 Let them not escape from your sight;  
keep them within your heart.

22 For they are life to those who find them,  
and healing to all their flesh.

23 Keep your heart with all vigilance,  
for from it flow the springs of life.

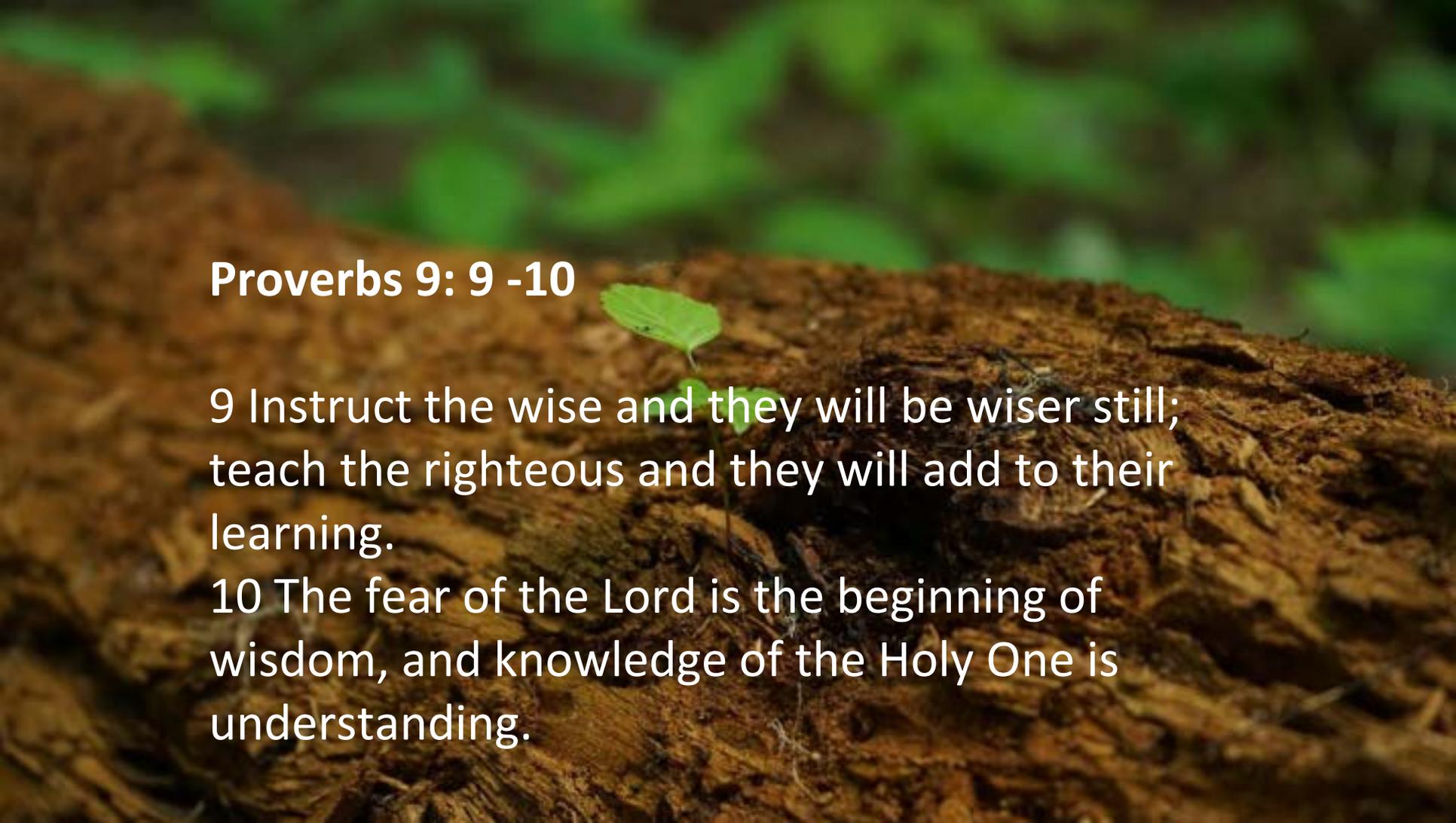
A close-up photograph of a person's hand holding a small, vibrant green seedling with a few leaves and a clump of dark soil. The hand is positioned in the upper right quadrant of the frame. The background is a soft, out-of-focus landscape with warm, golden light, suggesting a sunrise or sunset. The overall mood is one of care and growth.

**How do we gain understanding?**

A close-up photograph of a person's hand holding a small green seedling with soil. The background is a soft, out-of-focus landscape with warm, golden light, suggesting a sunrise or sunset. The hand is positioned in the upper right, and the seedling is the central focus. The overall mood is one of care and growth.

**How do we gain understanding?**

Have the fear of the Lord



**Proverbs 9: 9 -10**

9 Instruct the wise and they will be wiser still; teach the righteous and they will add to their learning.

10 The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom, and knowledge of the Holy One is understanding.

A close-up photograph of a person's hand holding a small, vibrant green seedling with several leaves and a mound of dark soil. The background is a soft, out-of-focus landscape with warm, golden light, creating a bokeh effect. The overall mood is one of care, growth, and hope.

**How do we gain understanding?**

Have the fear of the Lord  
Remove Preconceived Prejudices

A close-up photograph of a person's hand holding a small, vibrant green seedling with several leaves and a mound of dark soil. The background is a soft, out-of-focus landscape with warm, golden light, creating a bokeh effect. The overall mood is one of care, growth, and hope.

**How do we gain understanding?**

Have the fear of the Lord  
Remove Preconceived Prejudices  
Meditate on the Word





salt&light



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Reflection

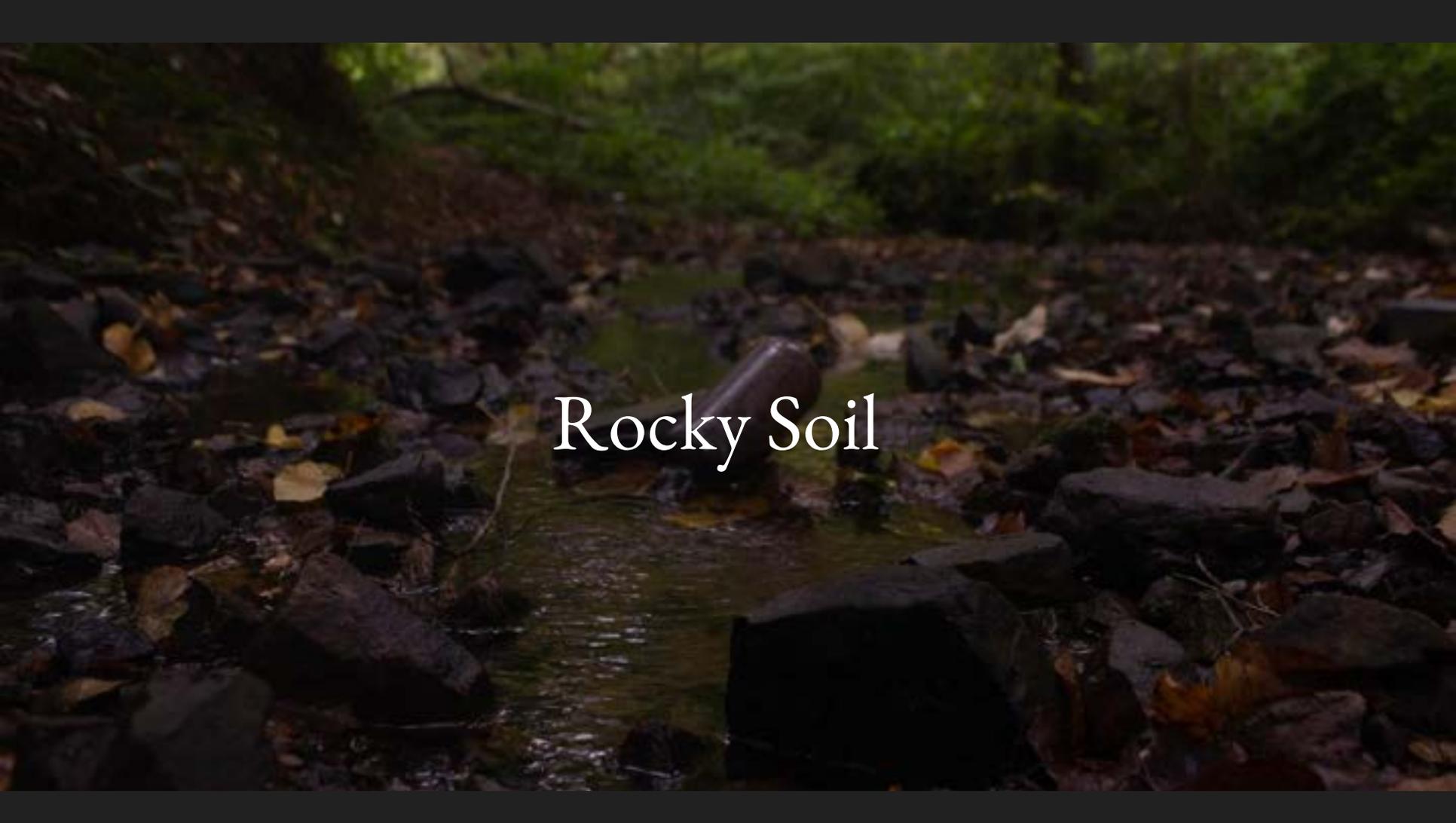
**What prevents fruitfulness in our lives?**

Hard Soil

Rocky Soil

Thorny Soil

Issue of Posture

A photograph of a stream flowing through a rocky forest floor. The water is clear and reflects the surrounding greenery. The rocks are dark and jagged, scattered along the banks. A purple water bottle is floating in the stream. The background is a dense forest with green foliage. The text "Rocky Soil" is overlaid in the center of the image.

# Rocky Soil

## **Matthew 13**

20 As for what was sown on rocky ground, this is the one who hears the word and immediately receives it with joy, 21 yet he has no root in himself, but endures for a while, and when tribulation or persecution arises on account of the word, immediately he falls away.



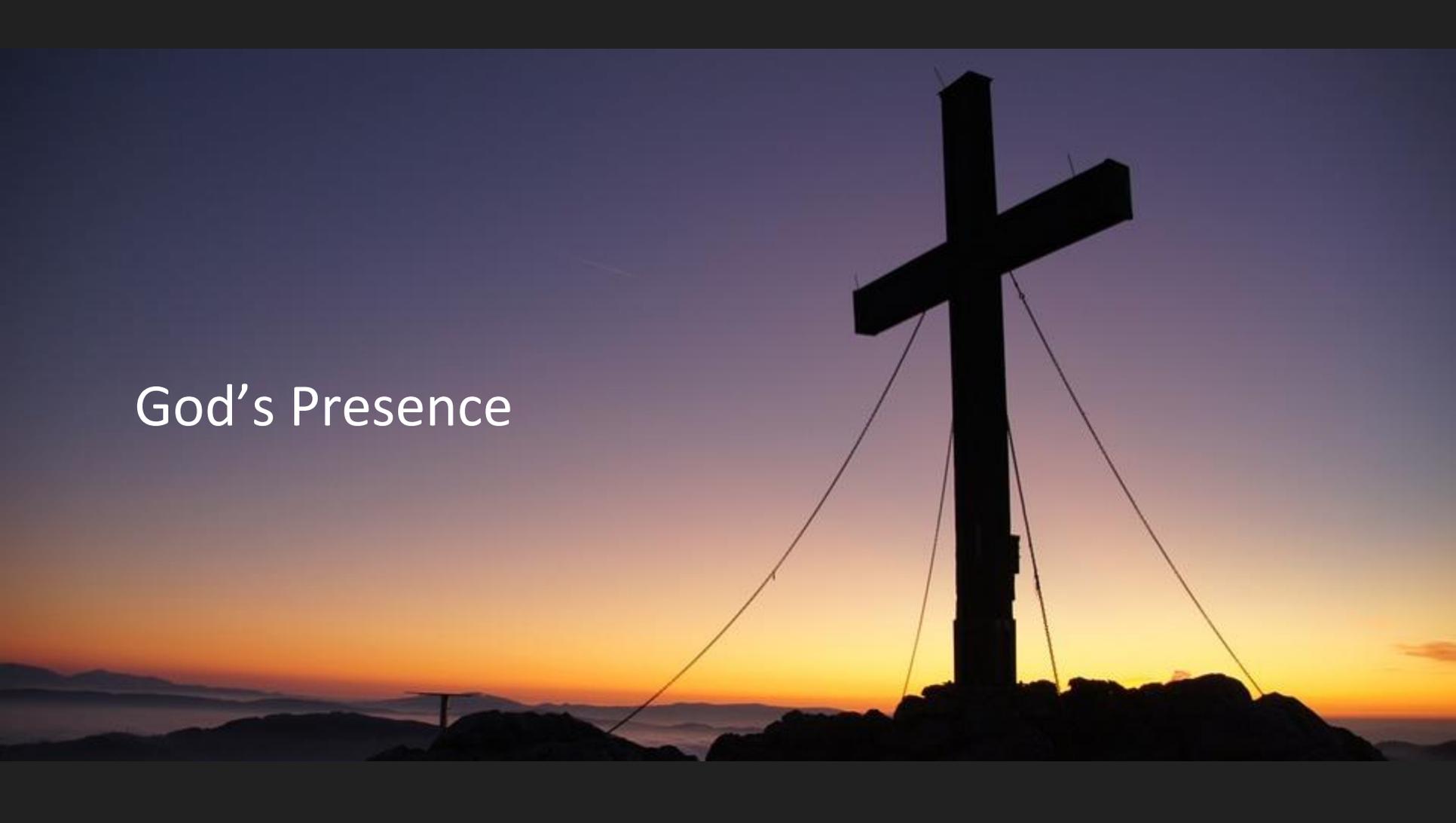
## James 1

2 Count it all joy, my brothers, when you meet trials of various kinds, 3 for you know that the testing of your faith produces steadfastness.

4 And let steadfastness have its full effect, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing.



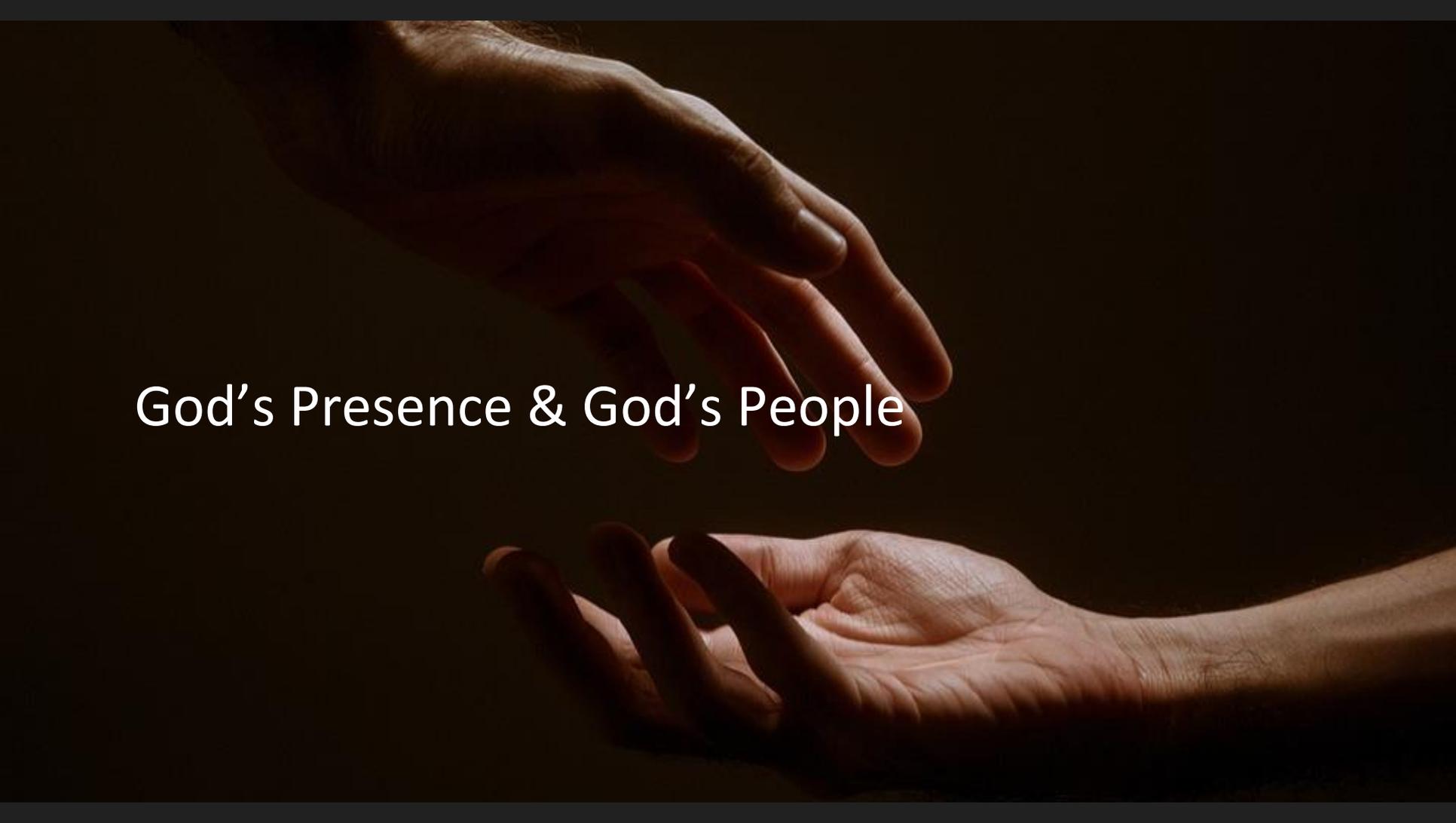
God's Presence



Philippians 4:7

And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.



A dramatic, low-key photograph of two hands reaching towards each other against a dark background. The hands are illuminated from the side, highlighting their skin texture and the tension of the fingers. The top hand is slightly higher and more open, while the bottom hand is lower and more cupped. The overall mood is one of yearning, connection, or divine presence.

God's Presence & God's People



Samuel Morse

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Reflection

**What prevents fruitfulness in our lives?**

Hard Soil

Rocky Soil

Thorny Soil

Issue of **Posture**

Issue of **Perseverance**

A close-up photograph of dark, thorny branches, likely from a rose bush, set against a warm, golden bokeh background. The branches are dark and have several sharp thorns. The background is filled with soft, out-of-focus light spots, creating a dreamy and atmospheric scene. The text "Thorny Soil" is centered in a white, serif font.

Thorny Soil

## Matthew 13

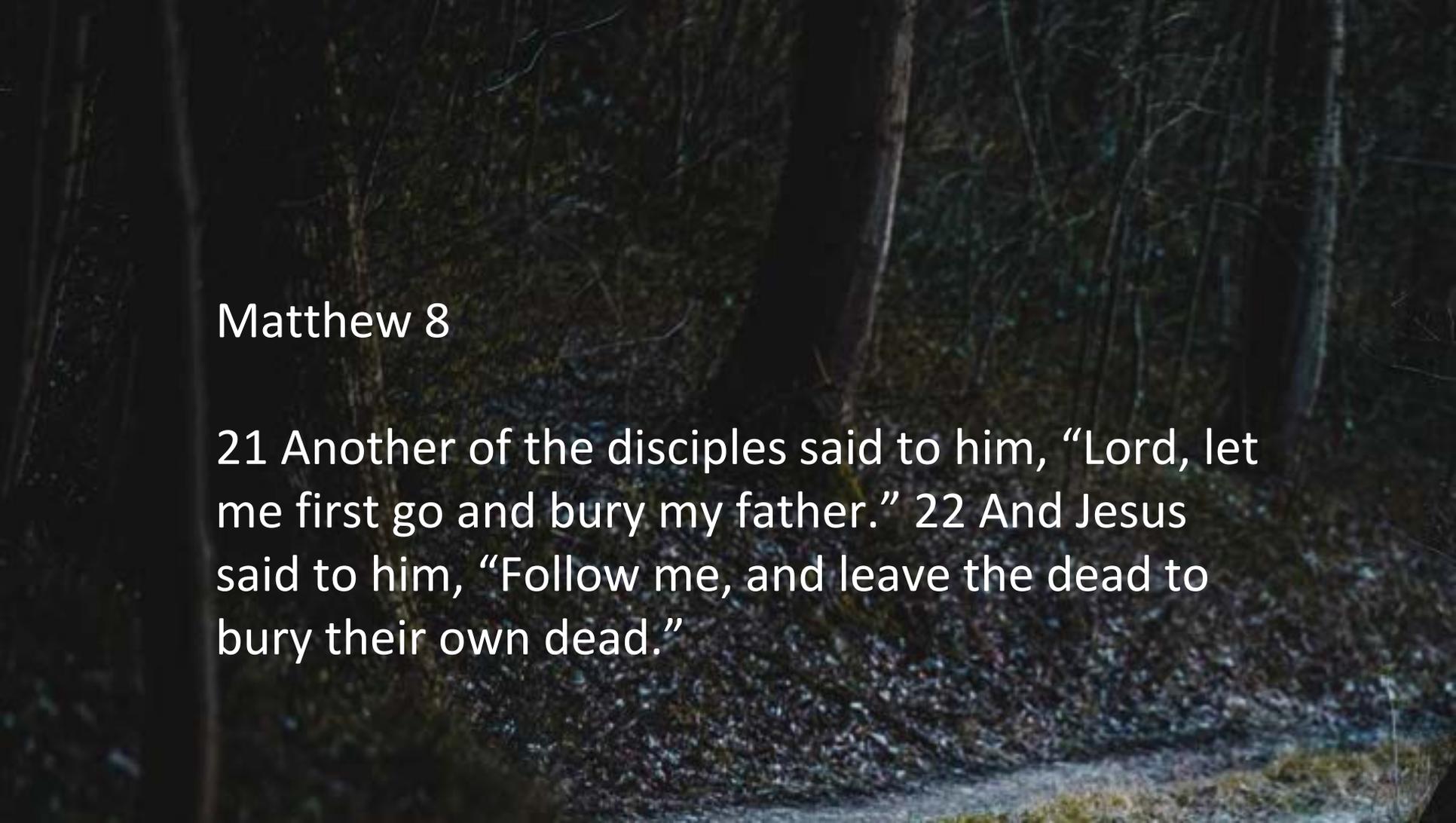
22 As for what was sown among thorns, this is the one who hears the word, but the cares of the world and the deceitfulness of riches choke the word, and it proves unfruitful.

## Mark 4

19 but the cares of the world and the deceitfulness of riches and the desires for other things enter in and choke the word, and it proves unfruitful.

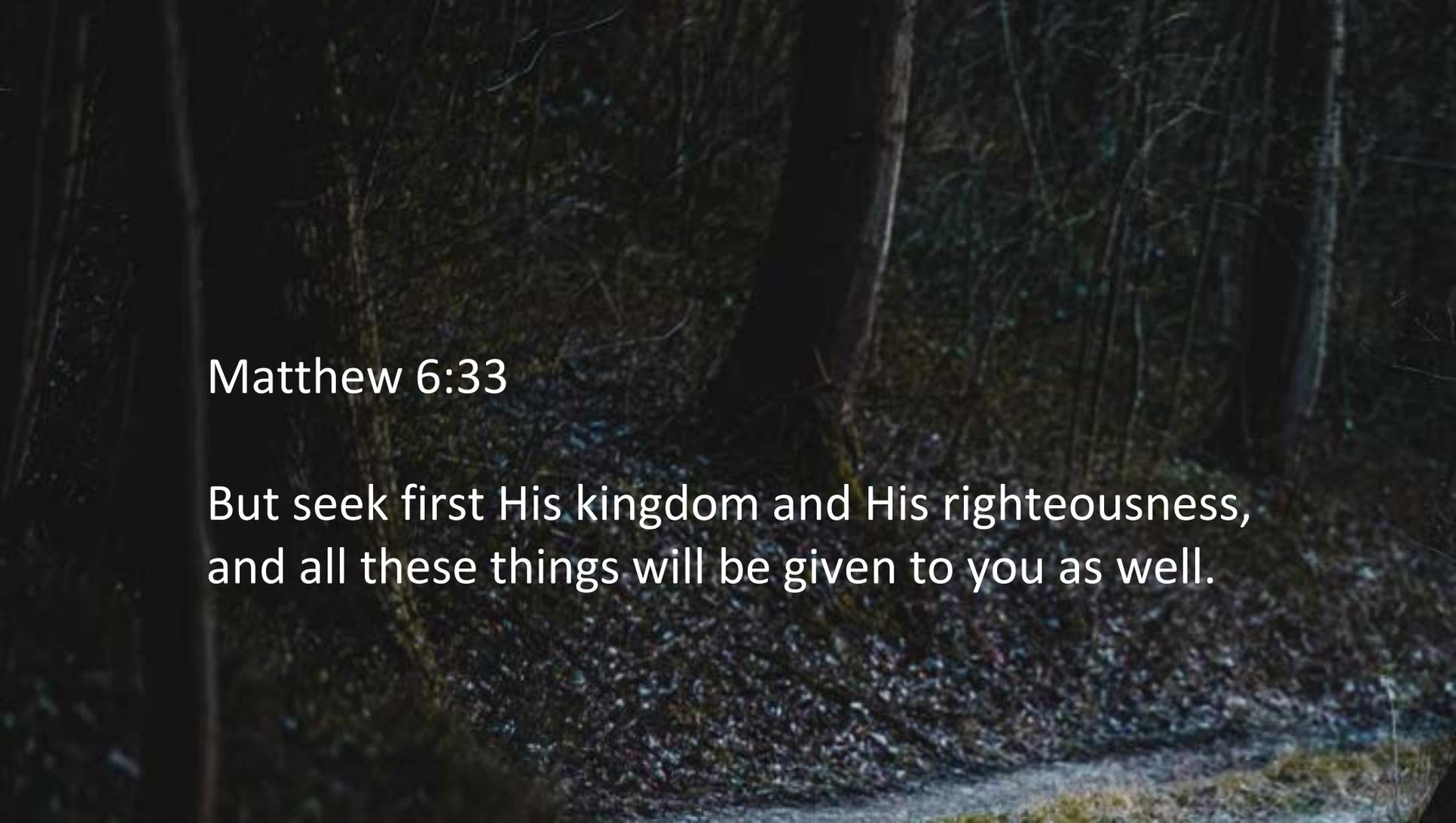
## Matthew 8

18 Now when Jesus saw a crowd around him, he gave orders to go over to the other side. 19 And a scribe came up and said to him, "Teacher, I will follow you wherever you go." 20 And Jesus said to him, "Foxes have holes, and birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay his head."



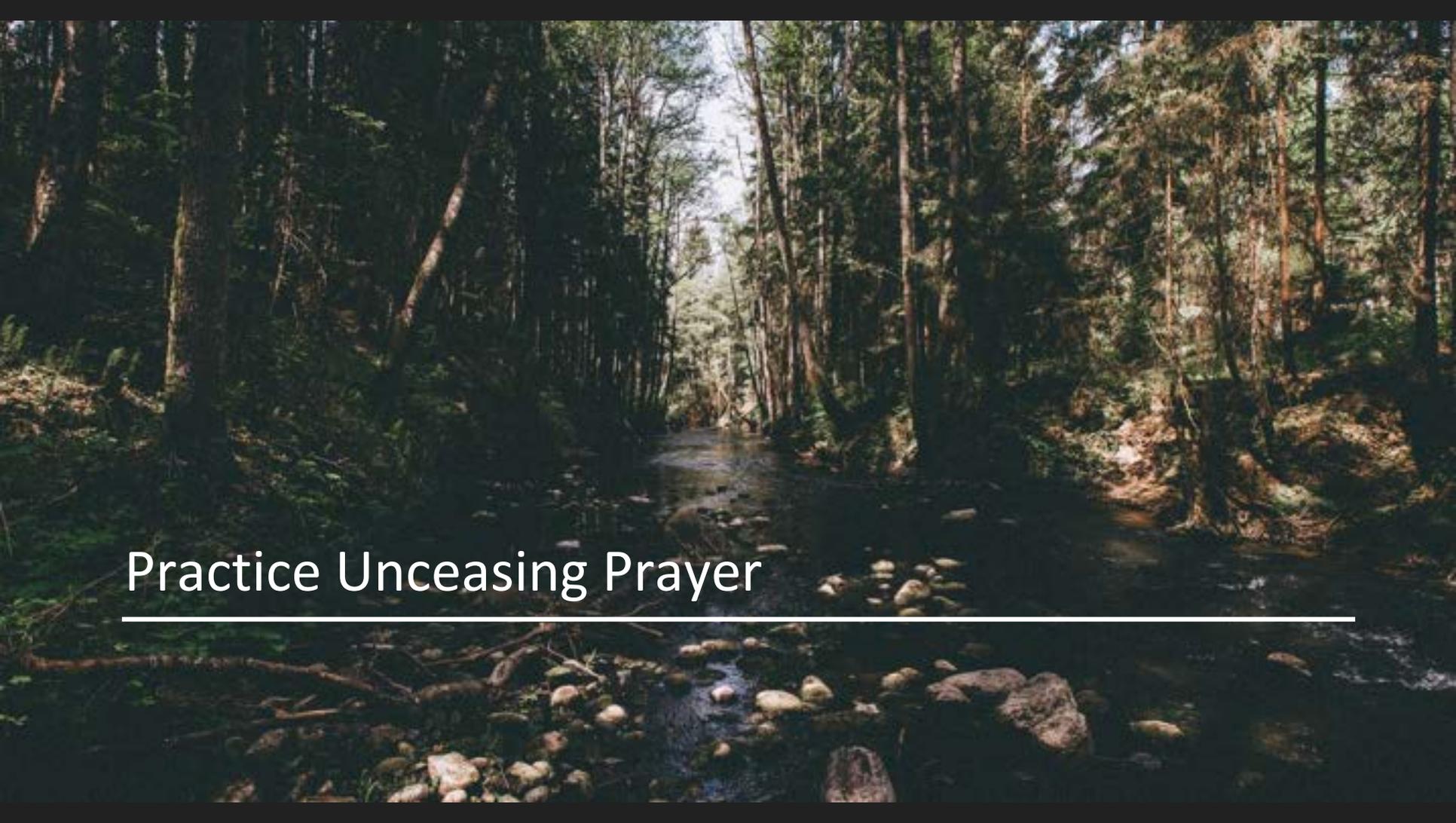
## Matthew 8

21 Another of the disciples said to him, “Lord, let me first go and bury my father.” 22 And Jesus said to him, “Follow me, and leave the dead to bury their own dead.”



Matthew 6:33

But seek first His kingdom and His righteousness,  
and all these things will be given to you as well.



Practice Unceasing Prayer

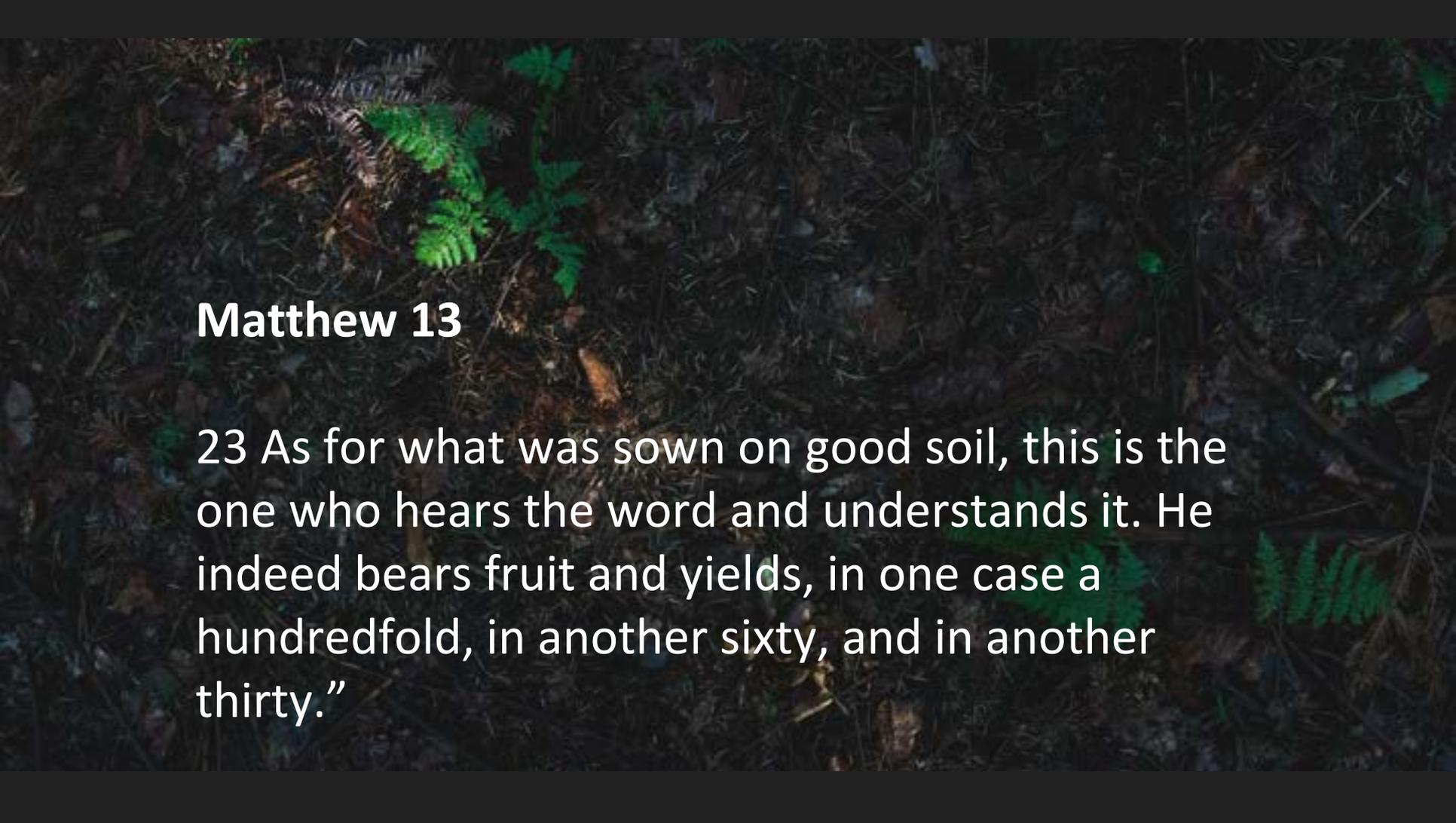
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What we do after the altar matters



## Matthew 13

23 As for what was sown on good soil, this is the one who hears the word and understands it. He indeed bears fruit and yields, in one case a hundredfold, in another sixty, and in another thirty.”



Reflection

**What prevents fruitfulness in our lives?**

Hard Soil

Rocky Soil

Thorny Soil

Issue of **Posture**

Issue of **Perseverance**

Issue of **Priority**