

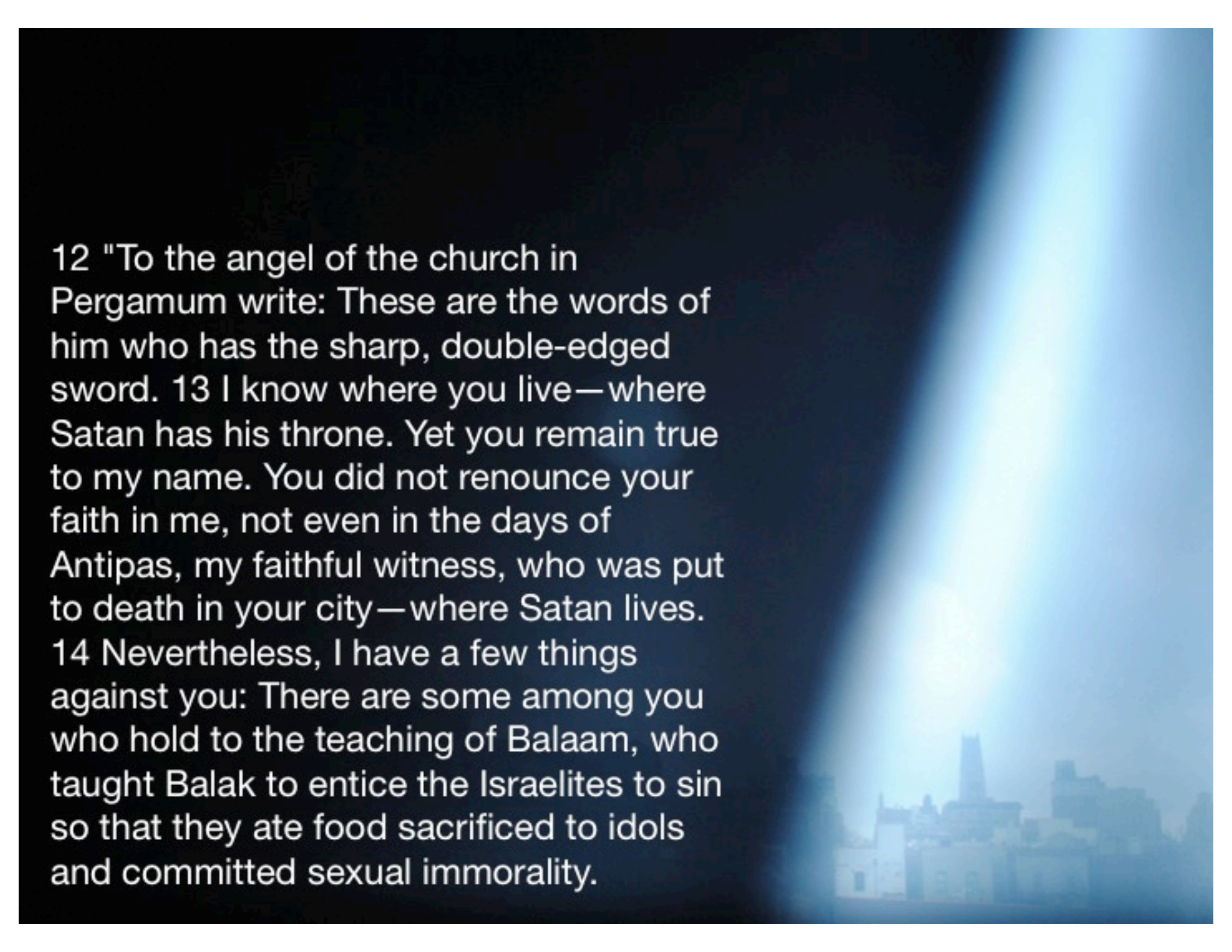


CITIES OF GOD

Walking with the 7 churches of Revelation for the season of Lent



CITIES OF GOD
Pergamum

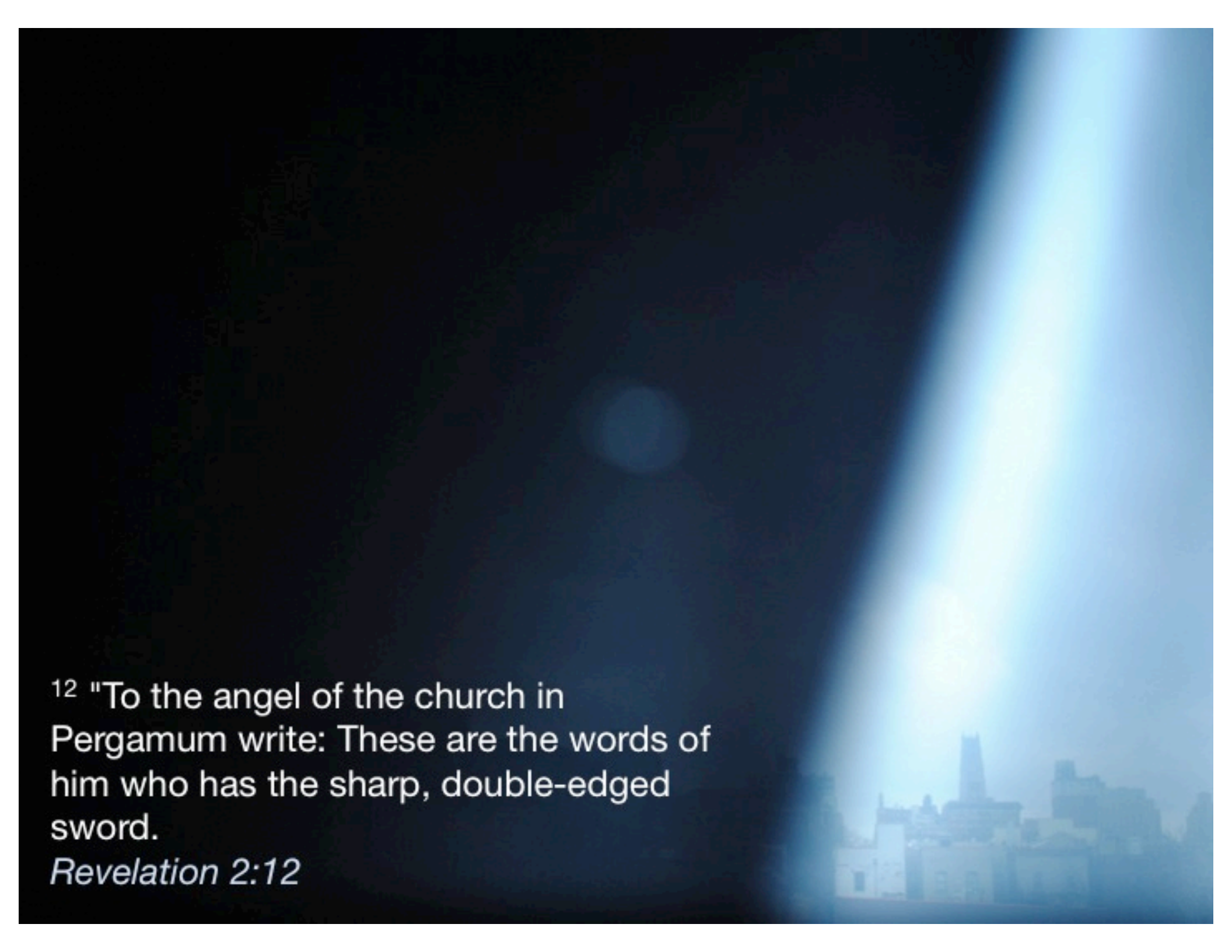


12 "To the angel of the church in Pergamum write: These are the words of him who has the sharp, double-edged sword. 13 I know where you live—where Satan has his throne. Yet you remain true to my name. You did not renounce your faith in me, not even in the days of Antipas, my faithful witness, who was put to death in your city—where Satan lives. 14 Nevertheless, I have a few things against you: There are some among you who hold to the teaching of Balaam, who taught Balak to entice the Israelites to sin so that they ate food sacrificed to idols and committed sexual immorality.

15 Likewise, you also have those who hold to the teaching of the Nicolaitans. 16 Repent therefore! Otherwise, I will soon come to you and will fight against them with the sword of my mouth. 17

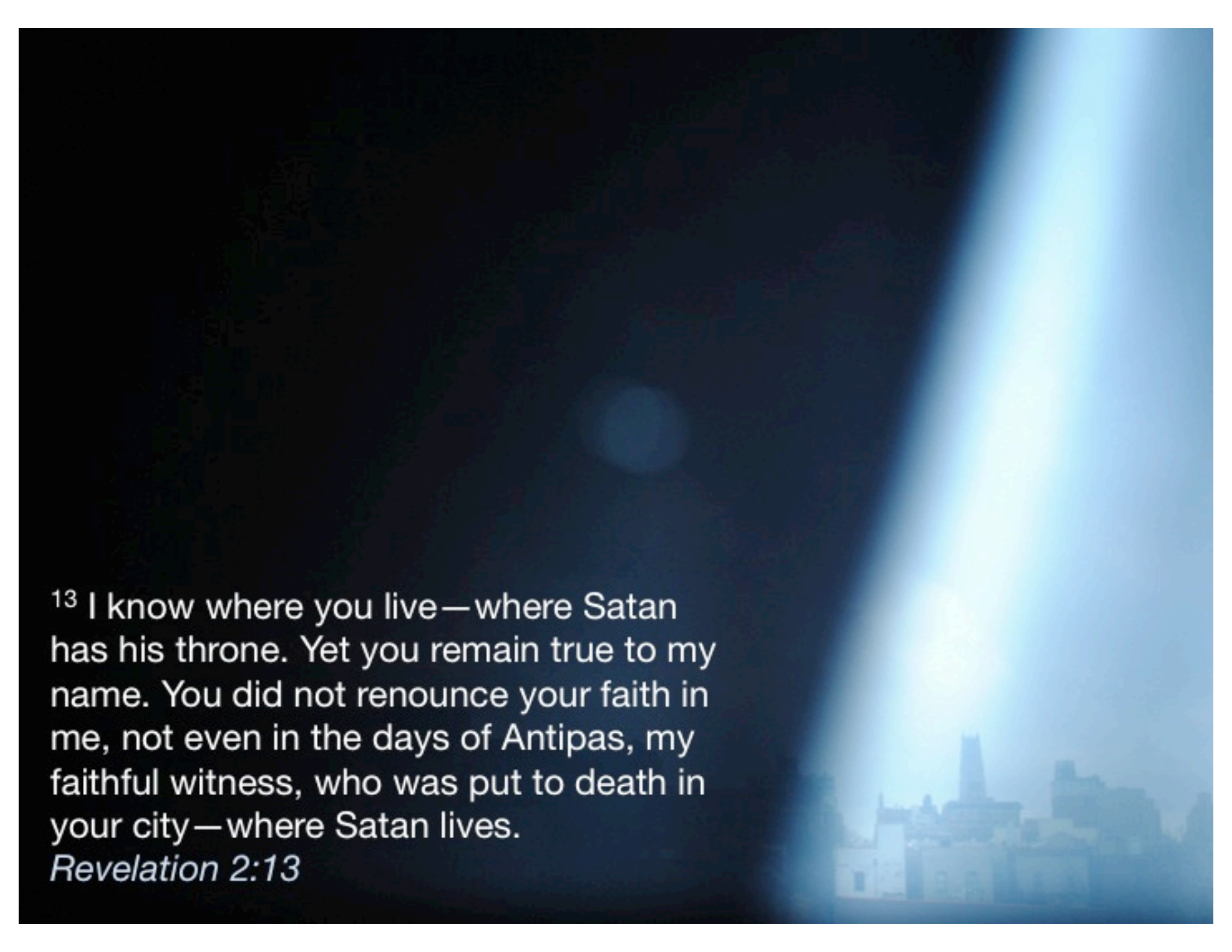
Whoever has ears, let them hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To those who are victorious, I will give some of the hidden manna. I will also give each of them a white stone with a new name written on it, known only to the one who receives it.

Revelation 2:12-17



¹² "To the angel of the church in Pergamum write: These are the words of him who has the sharp, double-edged sword.

Revelation 2:12



¹³ I know where you live—where Satan has his throne. Yet you remain true to my name. You did not renounce your faith in me, not even in the days of Antipas, my faithful witness, who was put to death in your city—where Satan lives.

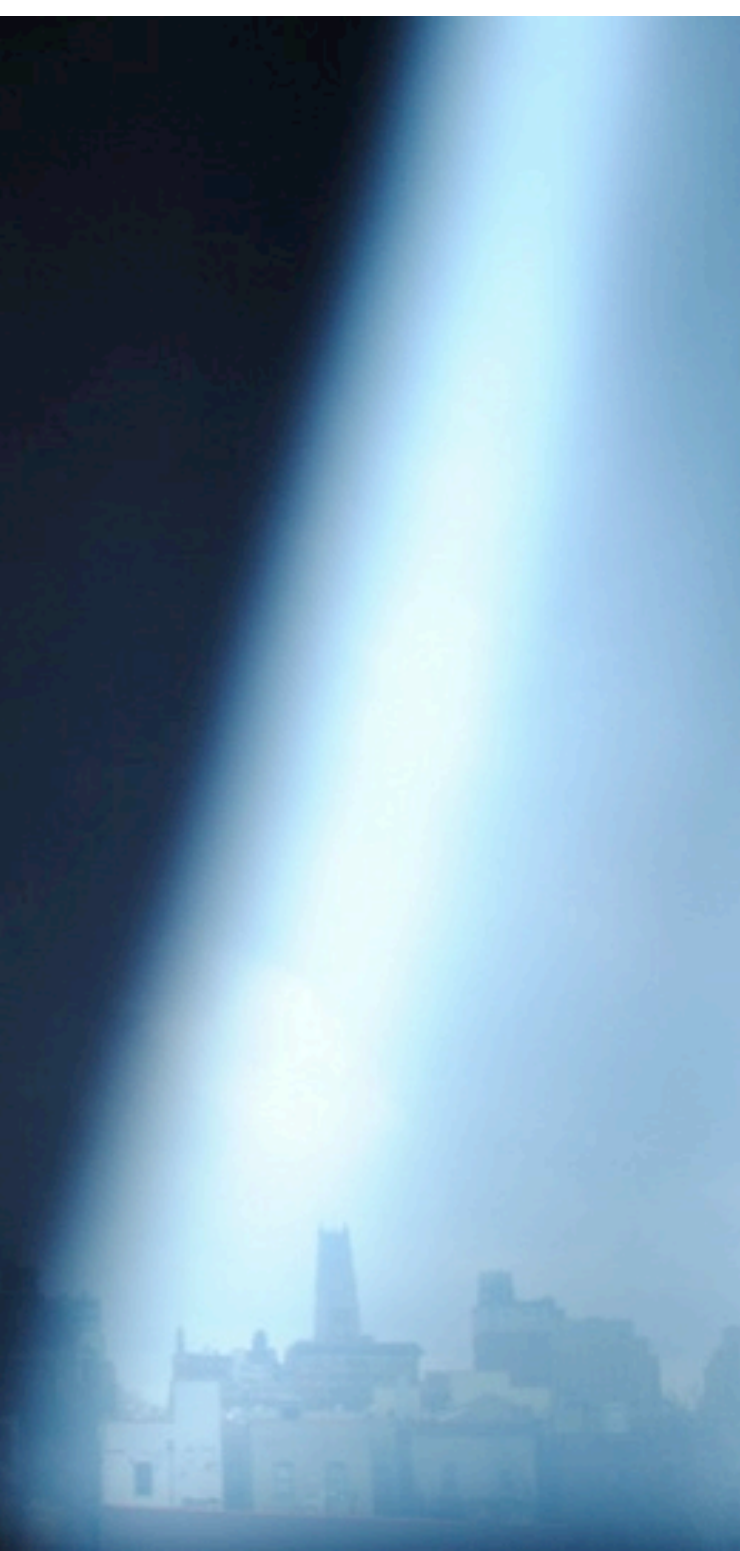
Revelation 2:13



PERGAMUM

The Commendation

¹³ I know where you live—where Satan has his throne. Yet you remain true to my name. You did not renounce your faith in me, not even in the days of Antipas, my faithful witness, who was put to death in your city—where Satan lives.





ALTAR OF ZEUS



ZEPPELIN TRIBUNE (Nuremberg, Germany)

The Condemnation

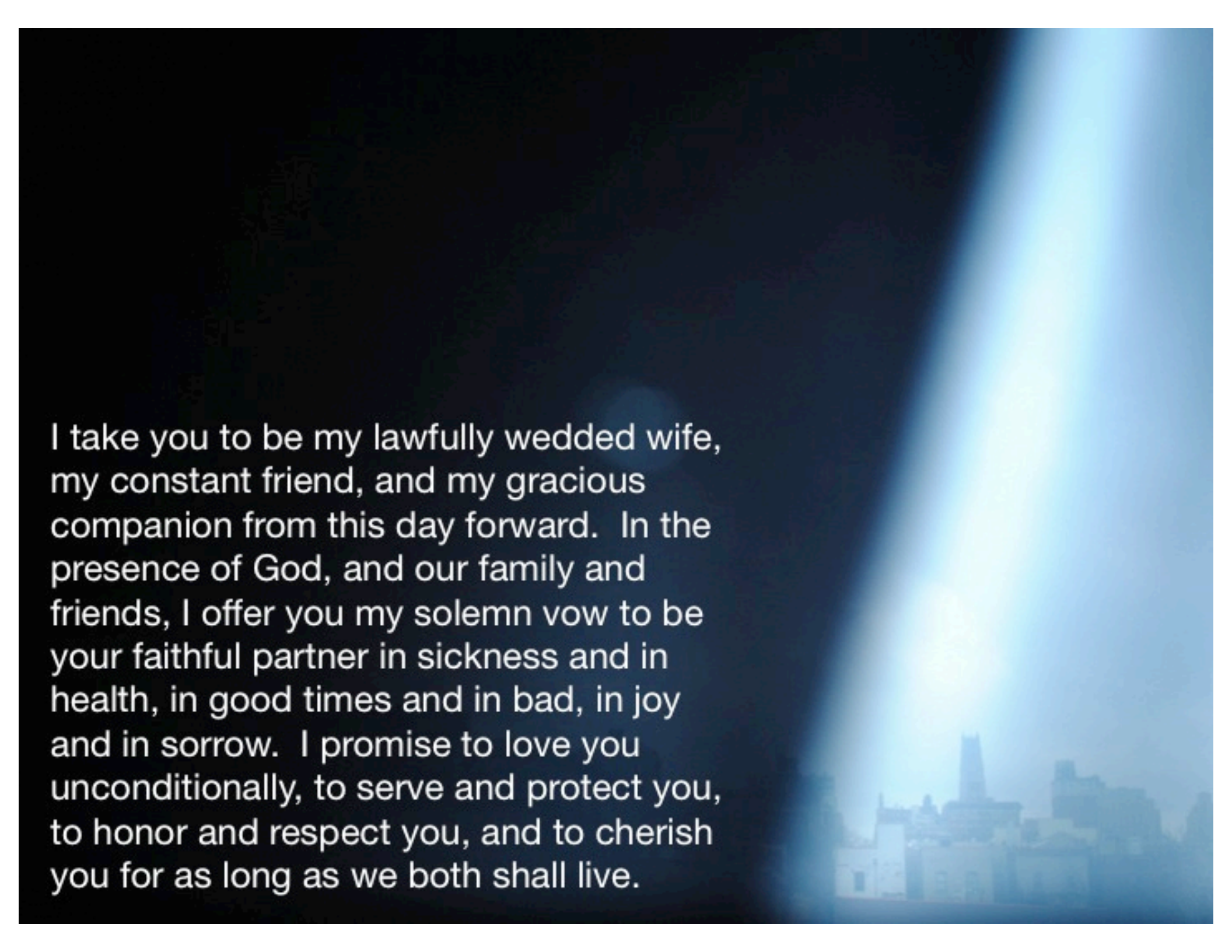
¹⁴ Nevertheless, I have a few things against you: There are some among you who hold to the teaching of Balaam, who taught Balak to entice the Israelites to sin so that they ate food sacrificed to idols and committed sexual immorality. ¹⁵

Likewise, you also have those who hold to the teaching of the Nicolaitans.

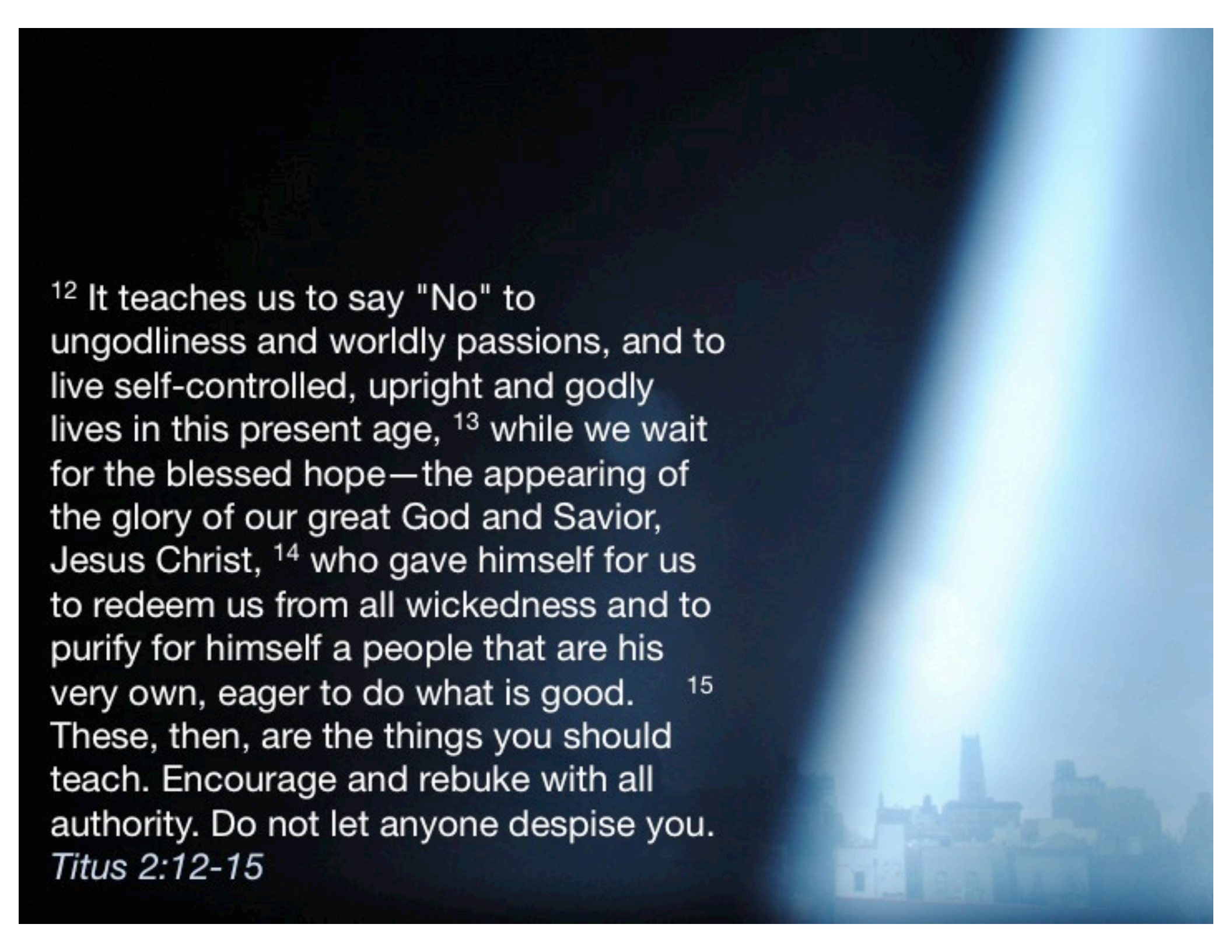
Revelation 2:14-15

BALAAM & BALAK





I take you to be my lawfully wedded wife, my constant friend, and my gracious companion from this day forward. In the presence of God, and our family and friends, I offer you my solemn vow to be your faithful partner in sickness and in health, in good times and in bad, in joy and in sorrow. I promise to love you unconditionally, to serve and protect you, to honor and respect you, and to cherish you for as long as we both shall live.



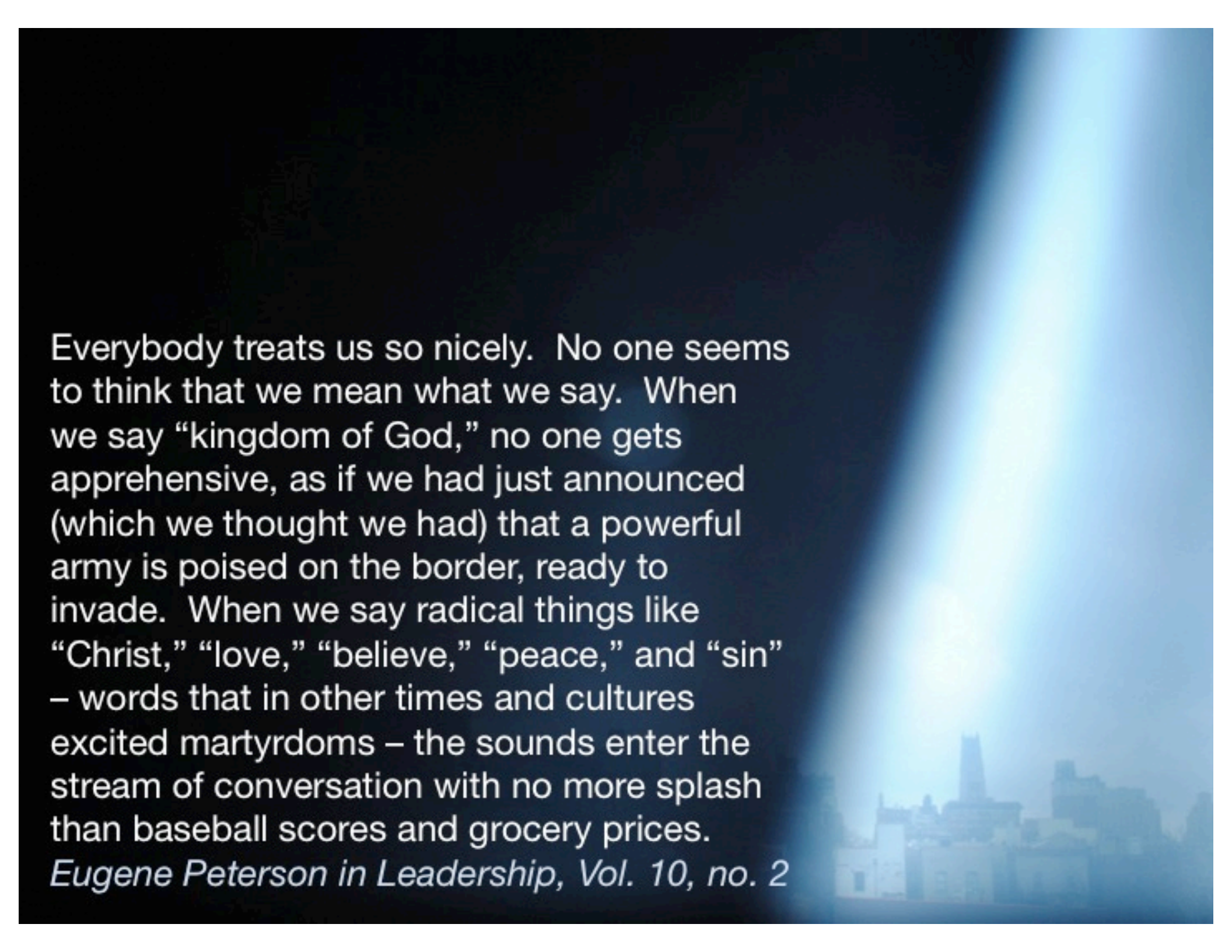
¹² It teaches us to say "No" to ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright and godly lives in this present age, ¹³ while we wait for the blessed hope—the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ, ¹⁴ who gave himself for us to redeem us from all wickedness and to purify for himself a people that are his very own, eager to do what is good. ¹⁵

These, then, are the things you should teach. Encourage and rebuke with all authority. Do not let anyone despise you.

Titus 2:12-15

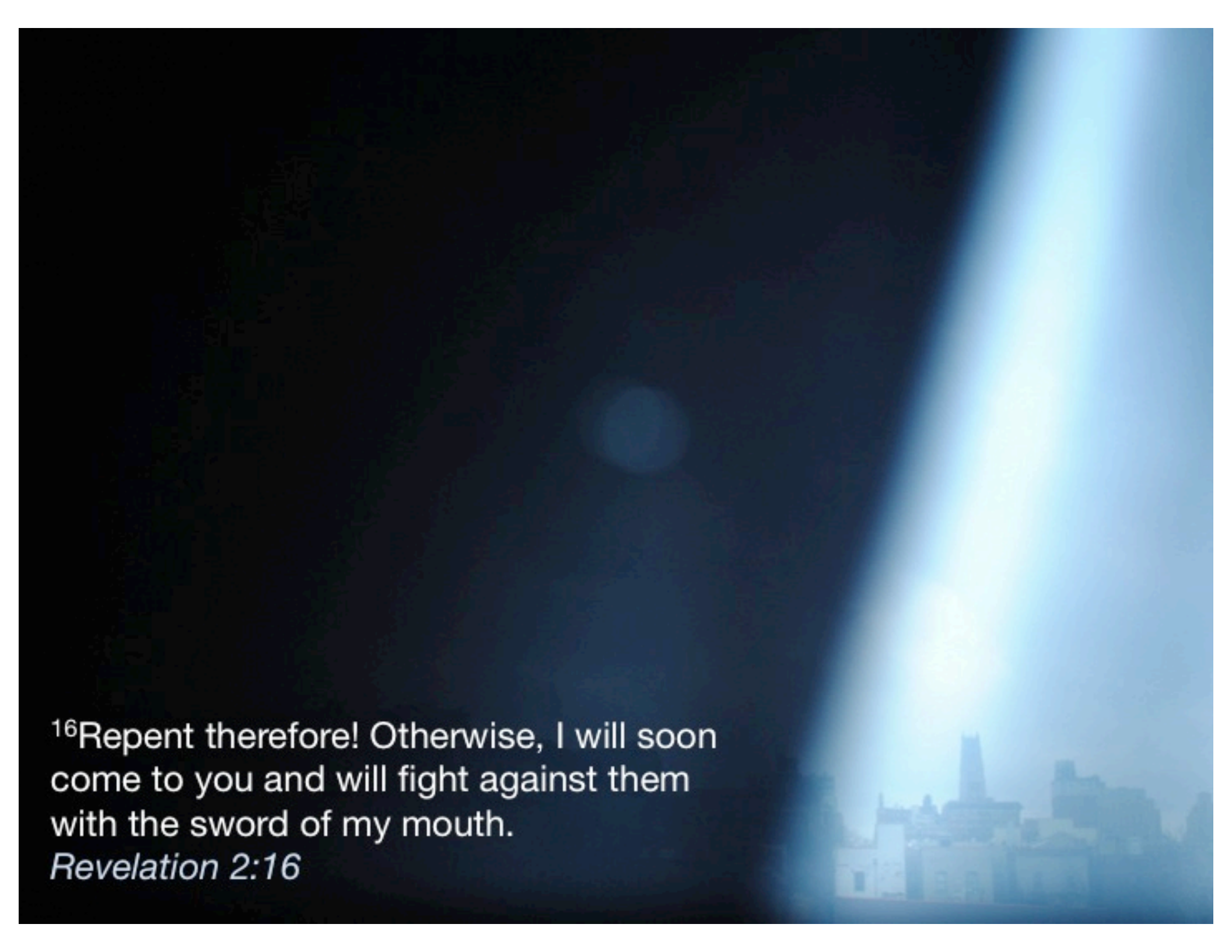
The image features a dark blue background with a bright blue light beam shining down from the top right corner. The light beam illuminates a silhouette of a city skyline at the bottom right. The text "THE TEACHING OF THE NICOLAITANS" is written in white, uppercase letters on the left side of the image.

THE TEACHING OF THE NICOLAITANS



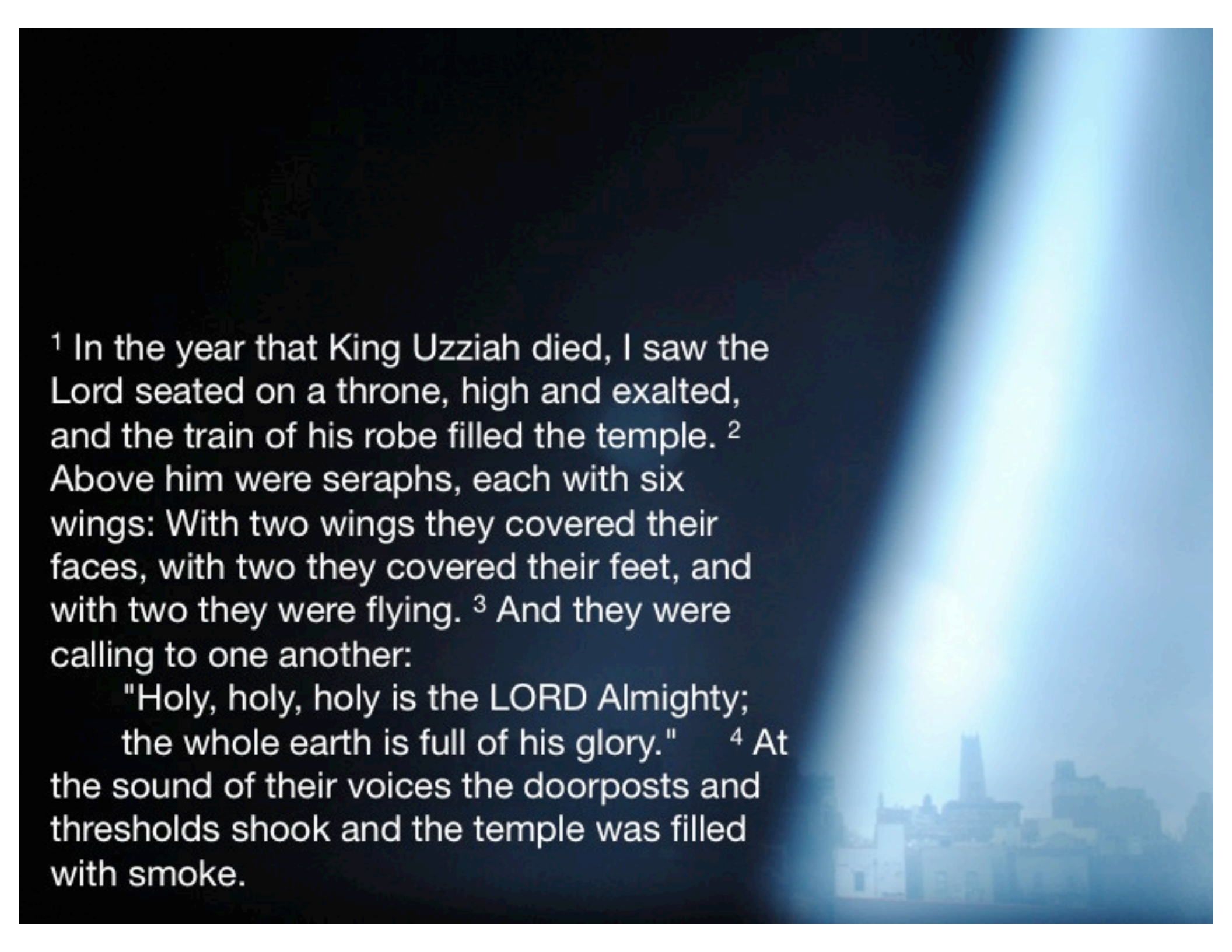
Everybody treats us so nicely. No one seems to think that we mean what we say. When we say “kingdom of God,” no one gets apprehensive, as if we had just announced (which we thought we had) that a powerful army is poised on the border, ready to invade. When we say radical things like “Christ,” “love,” “believe,” “peace,” and “sin” – words that in other times and cultures excited martyrdoms – the sounds enter the stream of conversation with no more splash than baseball scores and grocery prices.

Eugene Peterson in Leadership, Vol. 10, no. 2



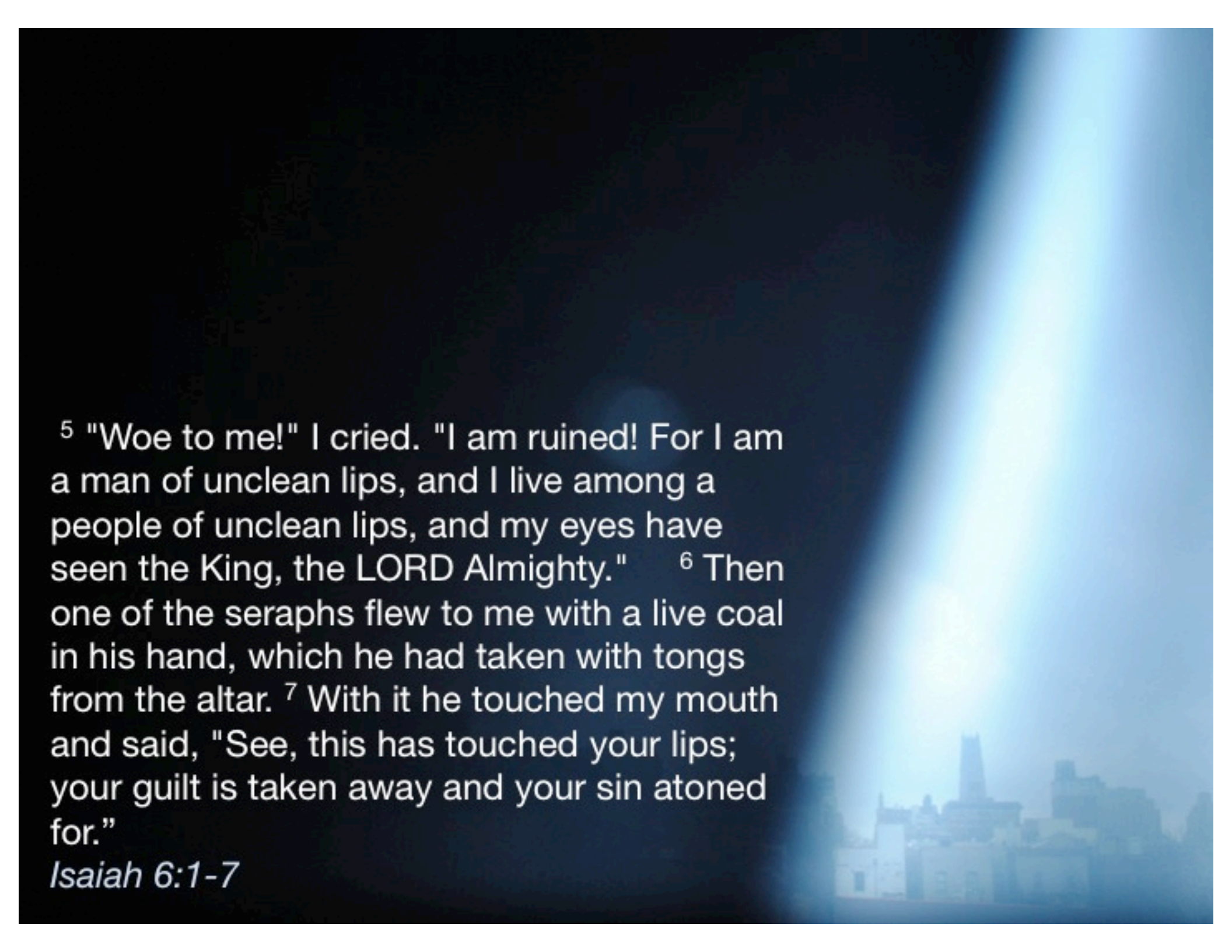
¹⁶Repent therefore! Otherwise, I will soon
come to you and will fight against them
with the sword of my mouth.

Revelation 2:16

A bright blue beam of light shines down from the top right corner of the image, illuminating a city skyline at night. The skyline includes several buildings, with a prominent one having a tall, thin spire. The background is dark, and the light creates a strong contrast and a hazy glow over the city.

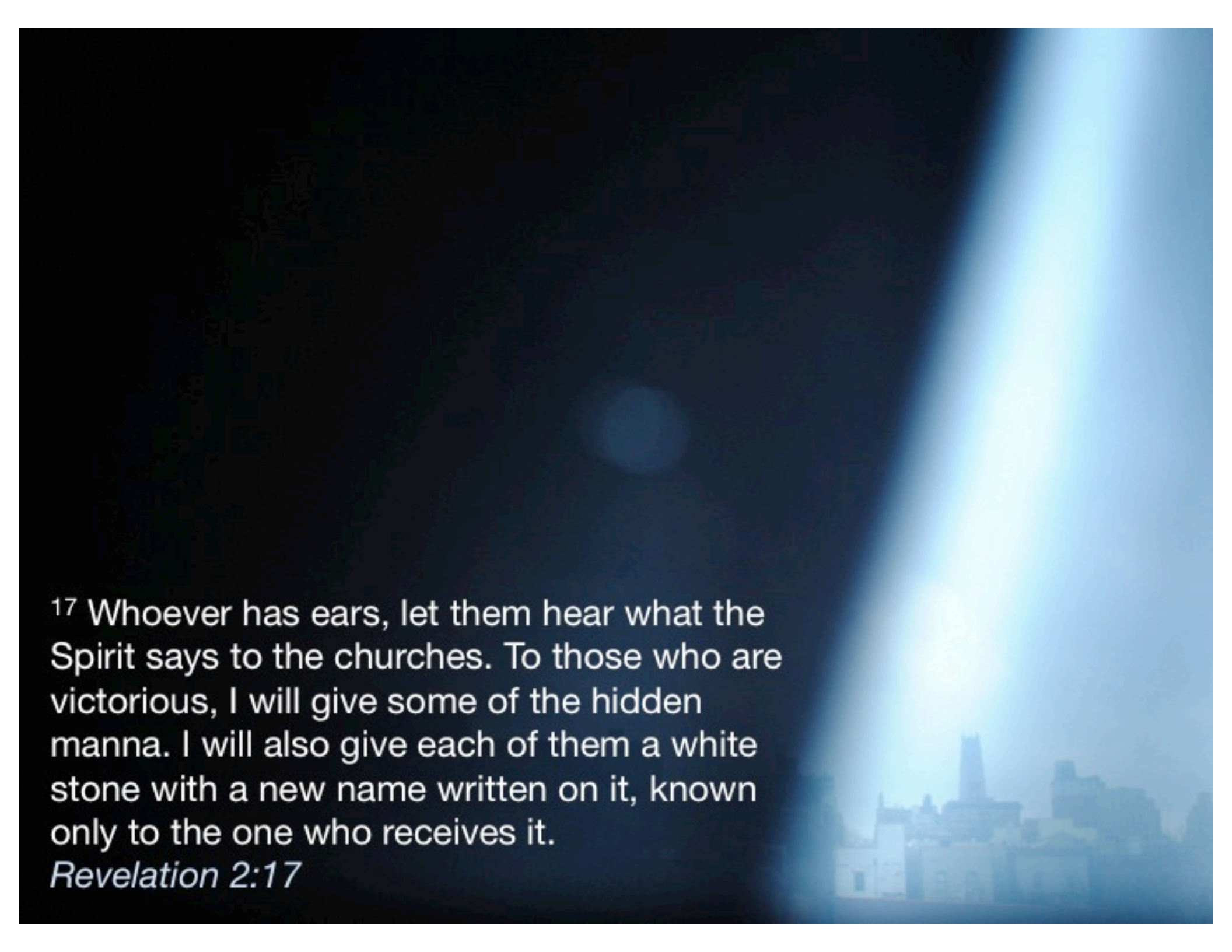
¹ In the year that King Uzziah died, I saw the Lord seated on a throne, high and exalted, and the train of his robe filled the temple. ² Above him were seraphs, each with six wings: With two wings they covered their faces, with two they covered their feet, and with two they were flying. ³ And they were calling to one another:

"Holy, holy, holy is the LORD Almighty; the whole earth is full of his glory." ⁴ At the sound of their voices the doorposts and thresholds shook and the temple was filled with smoke.



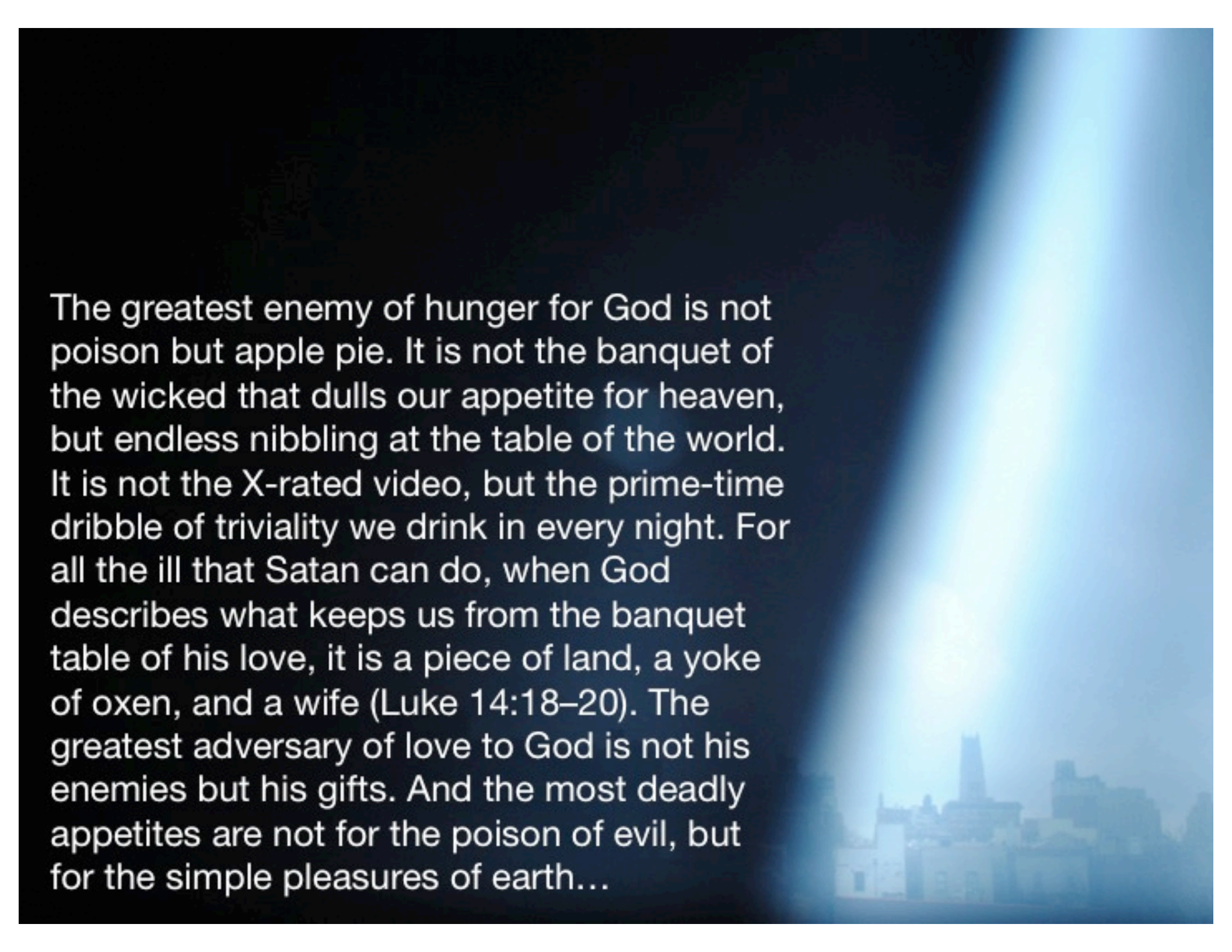
⁵ "Woe to me!" I cried. "I am ruined! For I am a man of unclean lips, and I live among a people of unclean lips, and my eyes have seen the King, the LORD Almighty." ⁶ Then one of the seraphs flew to me with a live coal in his hand, which he had taken with tongs from the altar. ⁷ With it he touched my mouth and said, "See, this has touched your lips; your guilt is taken away and your sin atoned for."

Isaiah 6:1-7

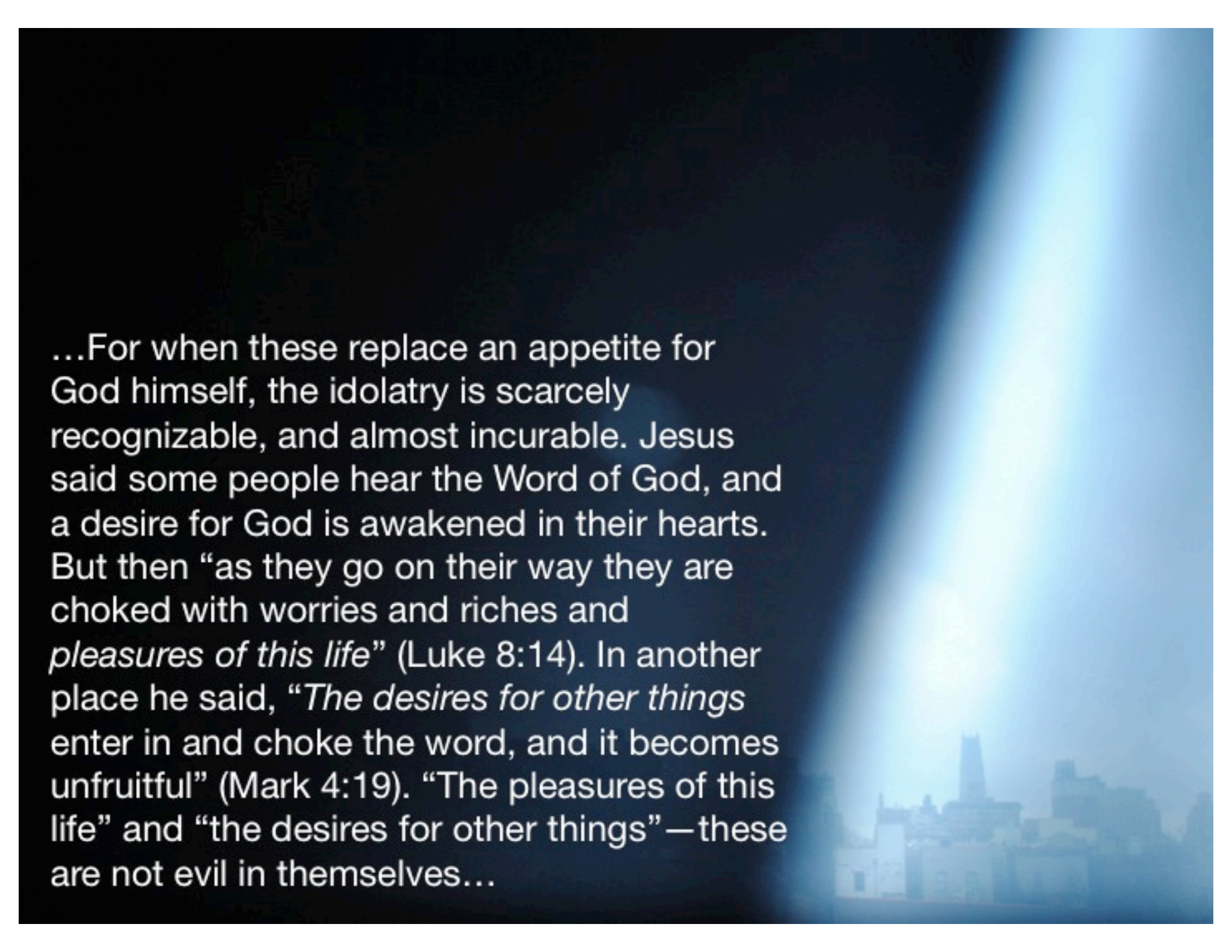


¹⁷ Whoever has ears, let them hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To those who are victorious, I will give some of the hidden manna. I will also give each of them a white stone with a new name written on it, known only to the one who receives it.

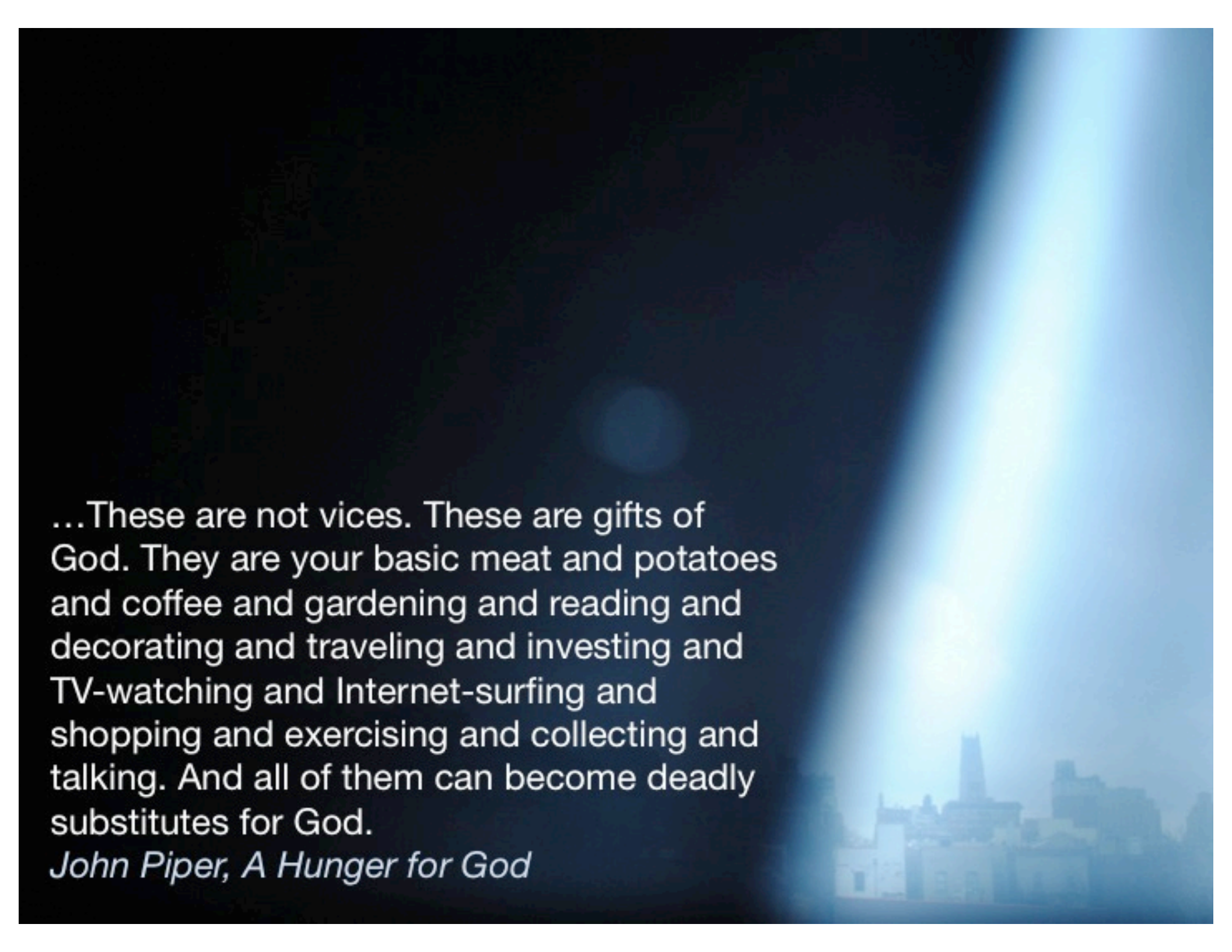
Revelation 2:17



The greatest enemy of hunger for God is not poison but apple pie. It is not the banquet of the wicked that dulls our appetite for heaven, but endless nibbling at the table of the world. It is not the X-rated video, but the prime-time dribble of triviality we drink in every night. For all the ill that Satan can do, when God describes what keeps us from the banquet table of his love, it is a piece of land, a yoke of oxen, and a wife (Luke 14:18–20). The greatest adversary of love to God is not his enemies but his gifts. And the most deadly appetites are not for the poison of evil, but for the simple pleasures of earth...



...For when these replace an appetite for God himself, the idolatry is scarcely recognizable, and almost incurable. Jesus said some people hear the Word of God, and a desire for God is awakened in their hearts. But then “as they go on their way they are choked with worries and riches and *pleasures of this life*” (Luke 8:14). In another place he said, “*The desires for other things* enter in and choke the word, and it becomes unfruitful” (Mark 4:19). “The pleasures of this life” and “the desires for other things” — these are not evil in themselves...



...These are not vices. These are gifts of God. They are your basic meat and potatoes and coffee and gardening and reading and decorating and traveling and investing and TV-watching and Internet-surfing and shopping and exercising and collecting and talking. And all of them can become deadly substitutes for God.

John Piper, A Hunger for God

HIDDEN MANNA



WHITE STONE WITH A
NEW NAME WRITTEN
ON IT





CITIES OF GOD
Pergamum