



The story, power and purpose of the Church.

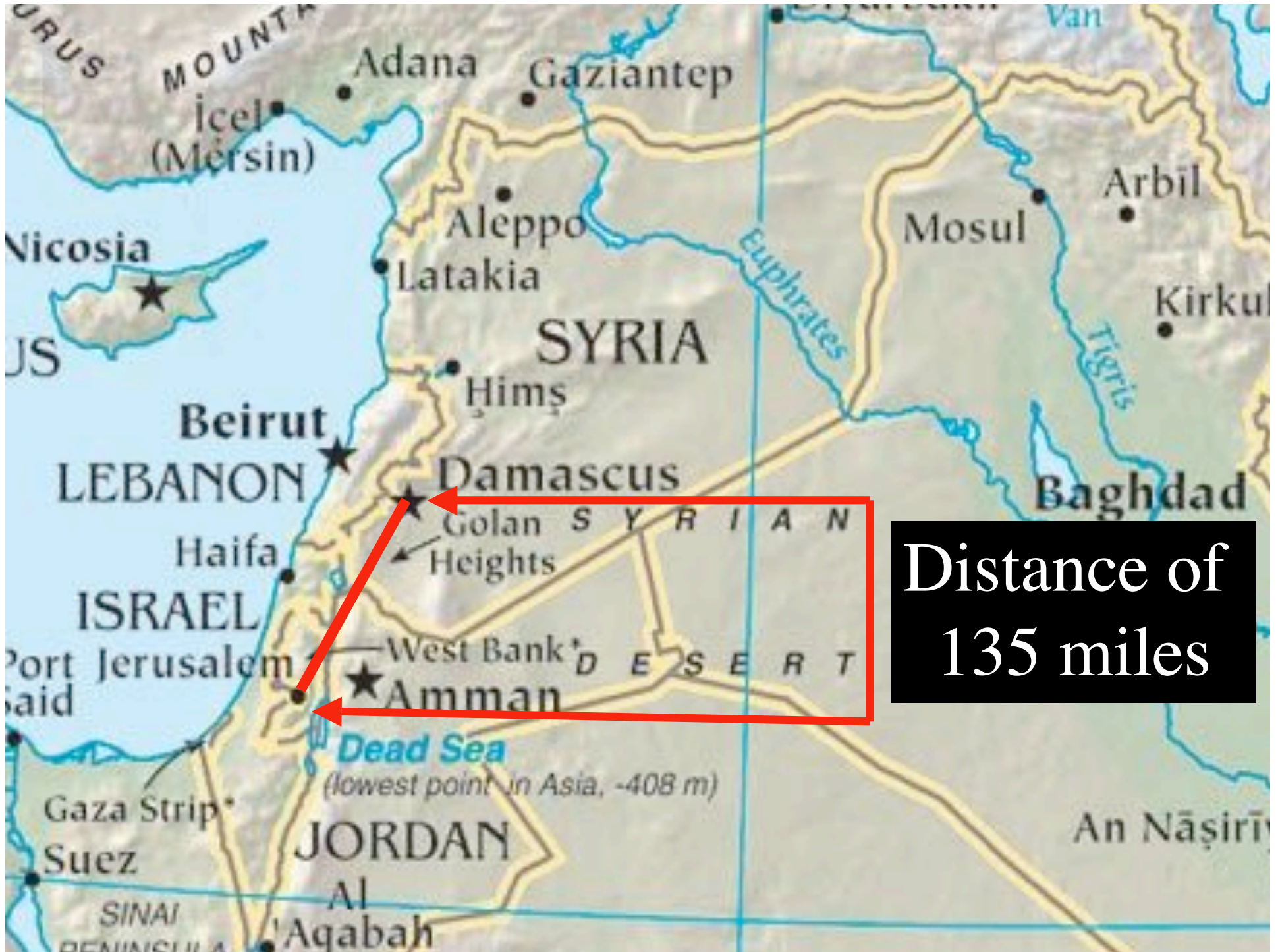


*...FROM EVERY TRIBE AND LANGUAGE
AND PEOPLE AND NATION. -REV. 5:9*

Indeed, if others have reason for confidence in their own efforts, I have even more! 5 I was circumcised when I was eight days old. I am a pure-blooded citizen of Israel and a member of the tribe of Benjamin—a real Hebrew if there ever was one! I was a member of the Pharisees, who demand the strictest obedience to the Jewish law. 6 I was so zealous that I harshly persecuted the church. And as for righteousness, I obeyed the law without fault.

Philippians 3:4b-6

Meanwhile, Saul was still breathing out murderous threats against the Lord's disciples. He went to the high priest **2** and asked him for letters to the synagogues in Damascus, so that if he found any there who belonged to the Way, whether men or women, he might take them as prisoners to Jerusalem. Acts 9:1-2



Distance of
135 miles

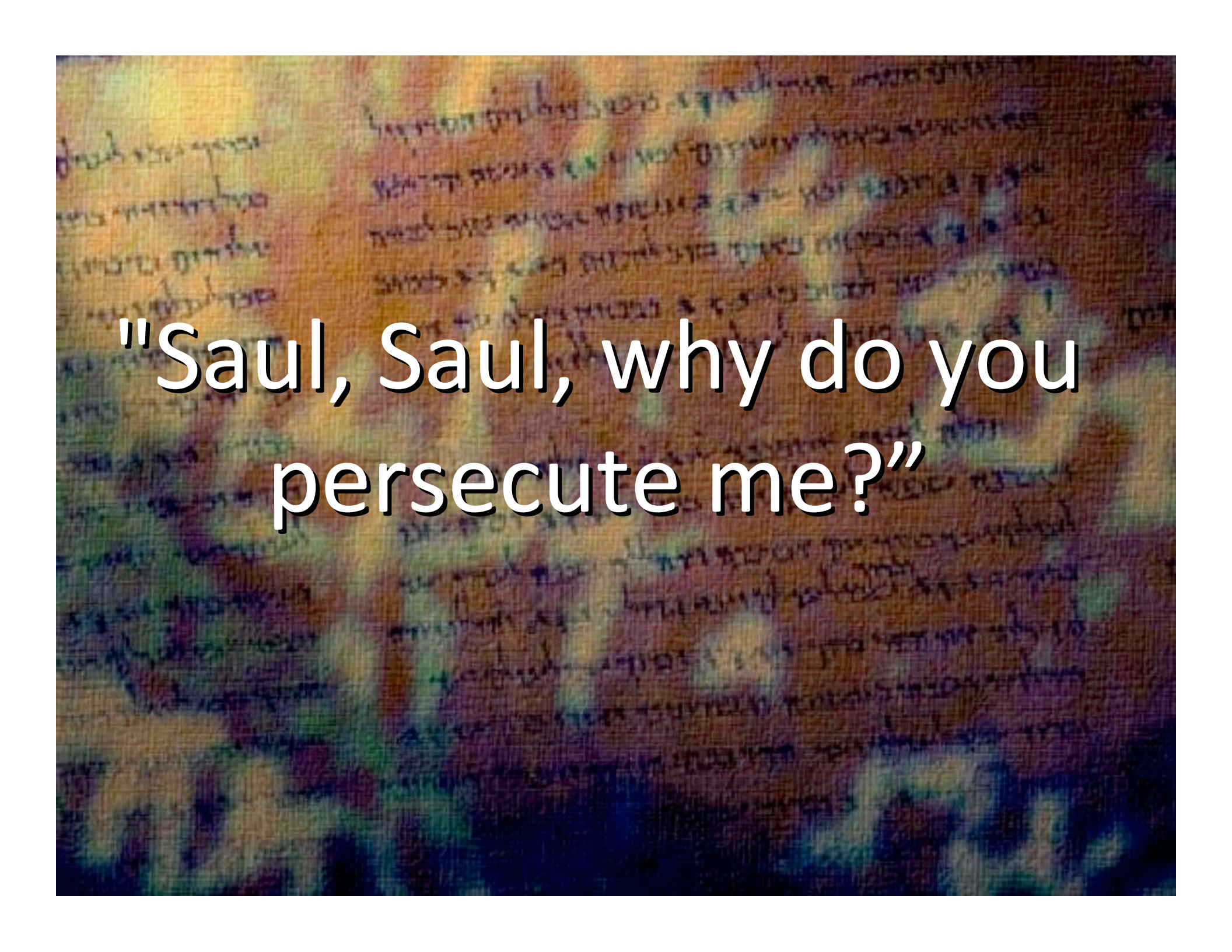
For you have heard of my previous way of life in Judaism, how intensely I persecuted the church of God and tried to destroy it. 14 I was advancing in Judaism beyond many Jews of my own age and was extremely zealous for the traditions of my fathers.

Galatians 1:13,14

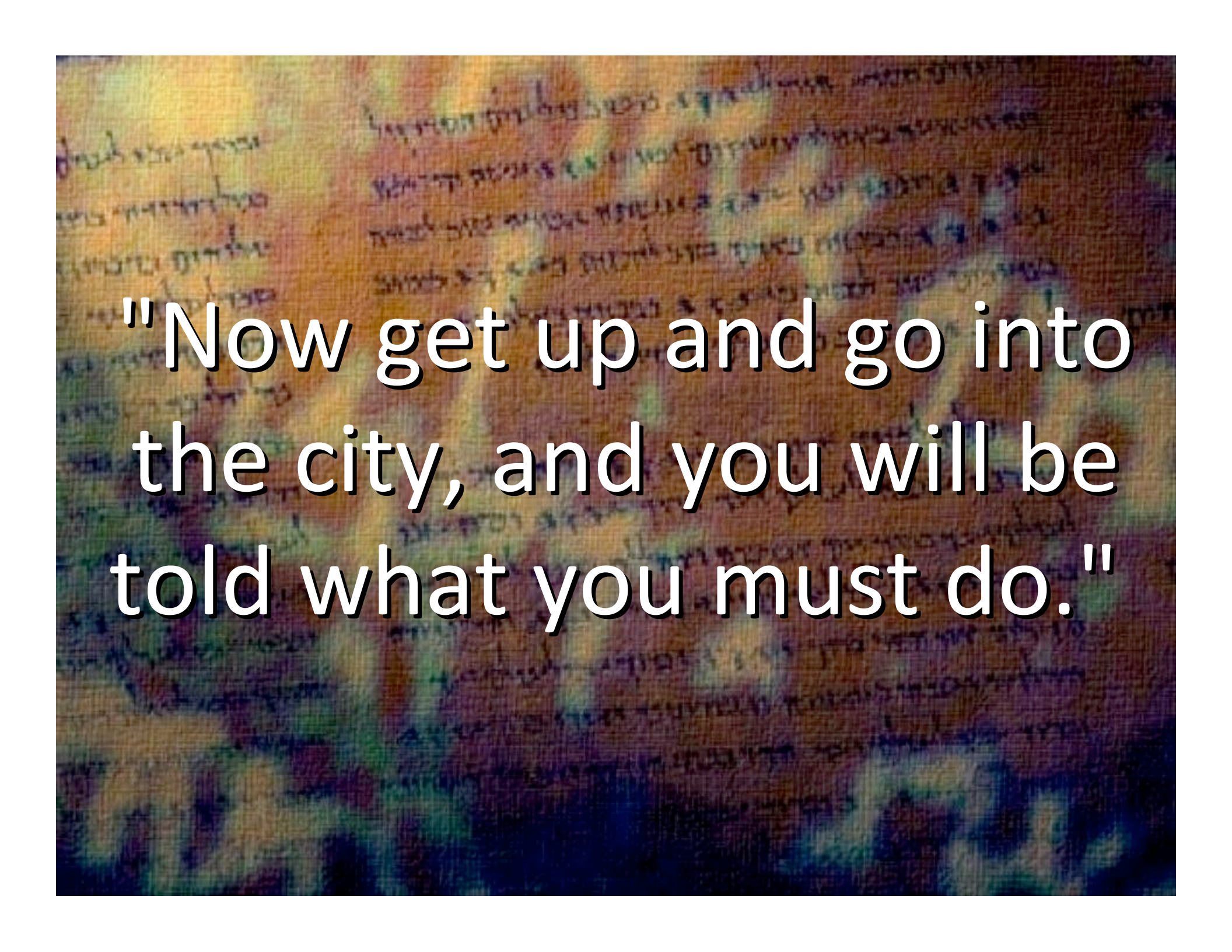
*"I too was convinced that I ought to do all that was possible to oppose the name of Jesus of Nazareth. **10**And that is just what I did in Jerusalem. On the authority of the chief priests I put many of the saints in prison, and when they were put to death, I cast my vote against them. **11**Many a time I went from one synagogue to another to have them punished, and I tried to force them to blaspheme. In my obsession against them, I even went to foreign cities to persecute them. Acts 26:9-11*

As he neared Damascus on his journey, suddenly a light from heaven flashed around him. 4He fell to the ground and heard a voice say to him, "Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me?" 5"Who are you, Lord?" Saul asked. "I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting," he replied. 6"Now get up and go into the city, and you will be told what you must do."

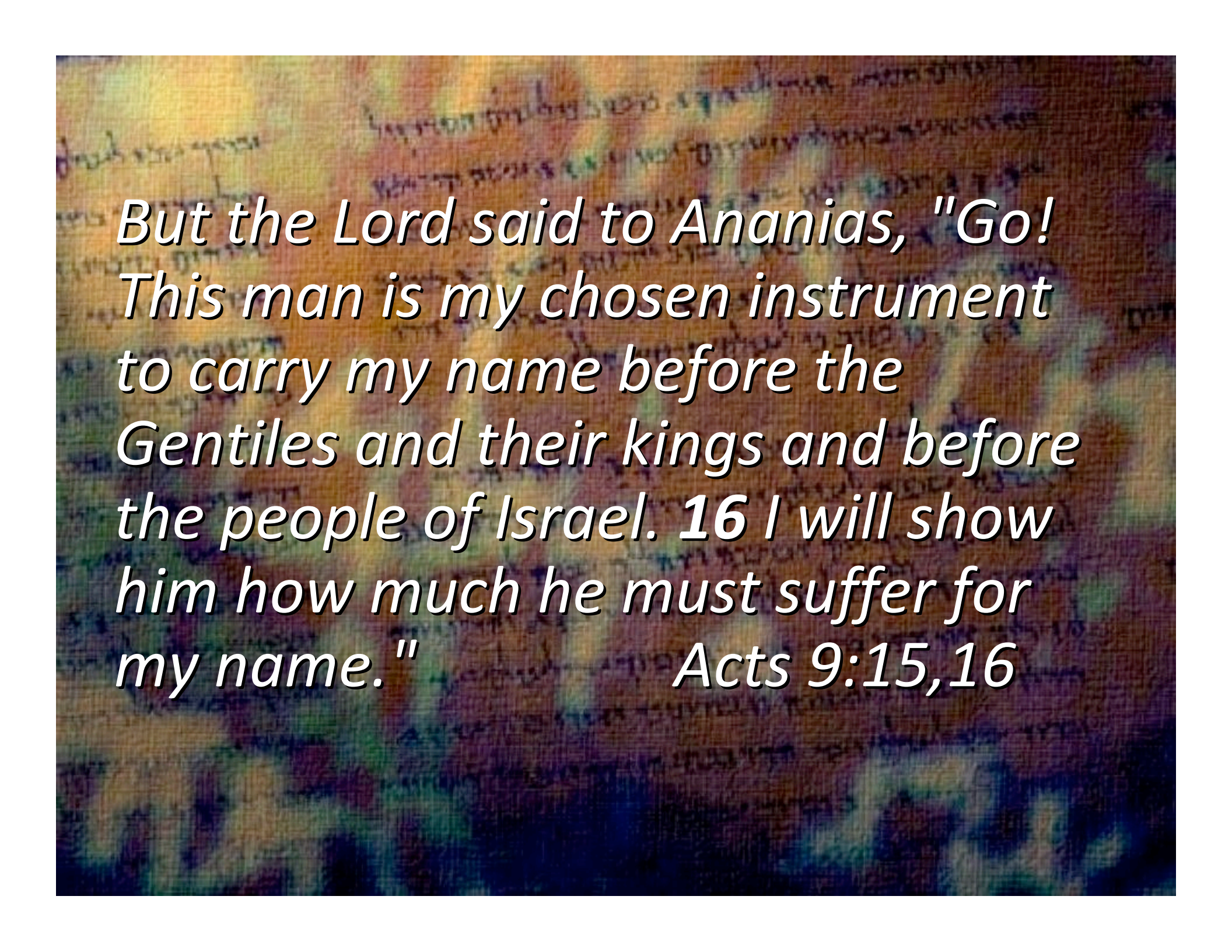
The men traveling with Saul stood there speechless; they heard the sound but did not see anyone. 8Saul got up from the ground, but when he opened his eyes he could see nothing. So they led him by the hand into Damascus. 9For three days he was blind, and did not eat or drink anything. Acts 9:7-9



"Saul, Saul, why do you
persecute me?"



"Now get up and go into the city, and you will be told what you must do."



But the Lord said to Ananias, "Go! This man is my chosen instrument to carry my name before the Gentiles and their kings and before the people of Israel. 16 I will show him how much he must suffer for my name."

Acts 9:15,16

Saul spent several days with the disciples in Damascus. **20**At once he began to preach in the synagogues that Jesus is the Son of God. **21**All those who heard him were astonished and asked, "Isn't he the man who raised havoc in Jerusalem among those who call on this name? And hasn't he come here to take them as prisoners to the chief priests?" Acts 9:19b-21

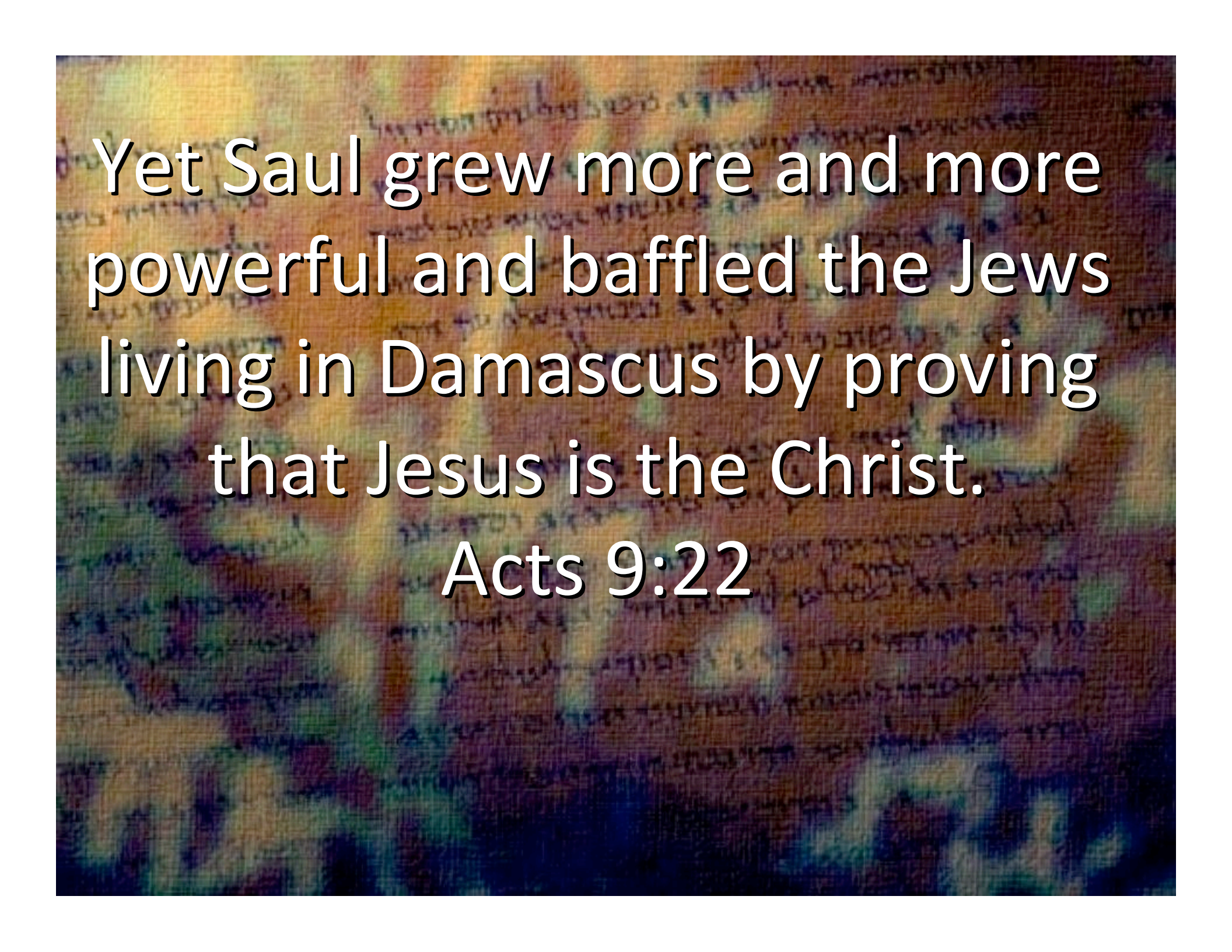
“if you confess with your lips that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead you will be saved”

Romans 10:9

Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to men by which we must be saved."

Acts 4:12



The background of the slide is an abstract, textured image. It features a grid of squares in various shades of brown, orange, yellow, and purple, creating a mosaic-like effect. The colors are somewhat blurred and blended, giving it a painterly or digital-art appearance.

Yet Saul grew more and more powerful and baffled the Jews living in Damascus by proving that Jesus is the Christ.

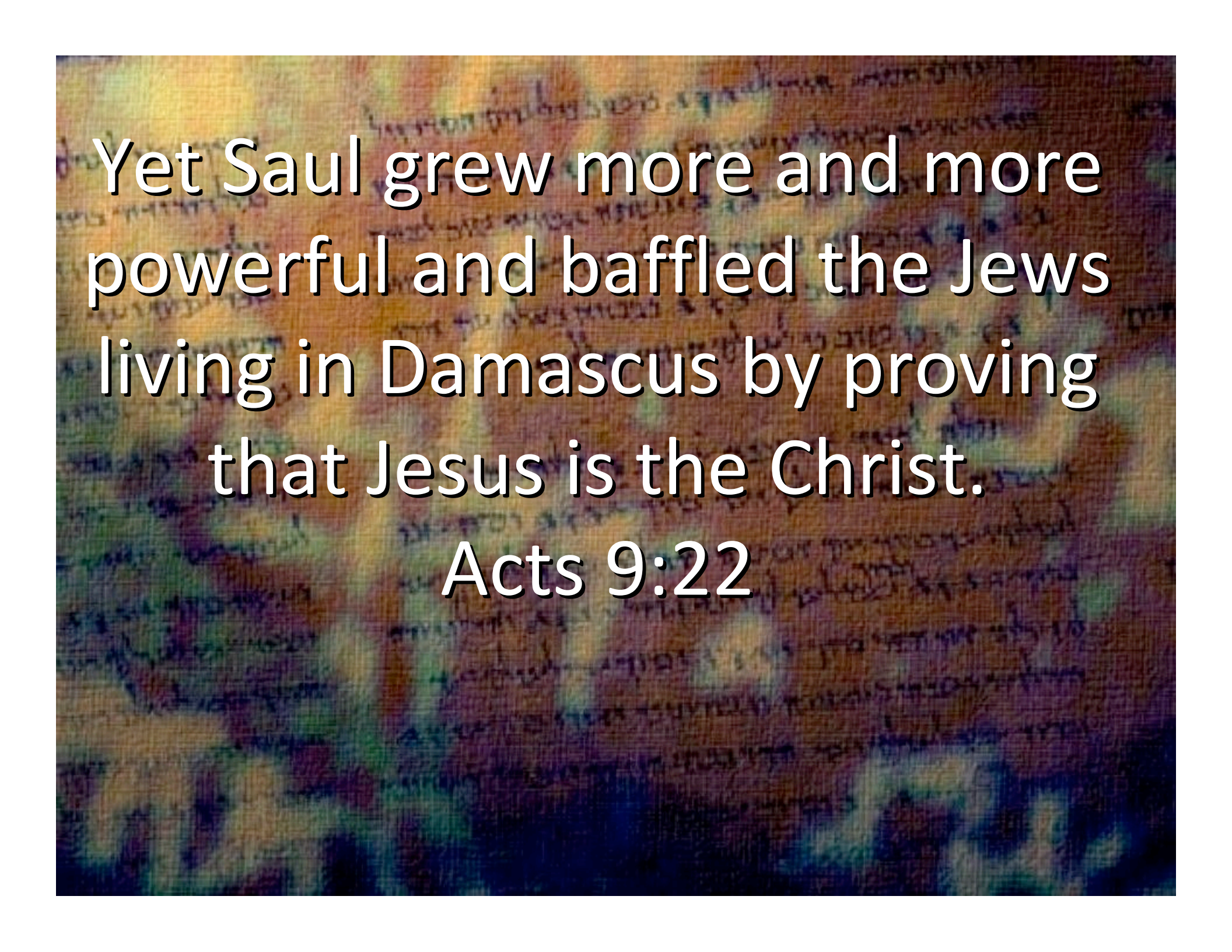
Acts 9:22

God... was pleased 16 to reveal his
Son in me so that I might preach
him among the Gentiles, I did not
consult any man, 17 nor did I go
up to Jerusalem to see those who
were apostles before I was, but I
went immediately into Arabia and
later returned to Damascus.

Galatians 1:15b-17

I want you to know, brothers,
that the gospel I preached is
not something that man made
up. **12** I did not receive it from
any man, nor was I taught it;
rather, I received it by
revelation from Jesus Christ.

Galatians 1:11,12

The background of the slide is an abstract, textured image. It features a grid of squares in various shades of brown, orange, yellow, and purple, creating a mosaic-like effect. The colors are somewhat blurred and blended, giving it a painterly or digital-art appearance. The text is overlaid on this background in a white, sans-serif font with a thin black outline.

Yet Saul grew more and more powerful and baffled the Jews living in Damascus by proving that Jesus is the Christ.

Acts 9:22

After many days had gone by, the Jews conspired to kill him, 24but Saul learned of their plan. Day and night they kept close watch on the city gates in order to kill him.

25But his followers took him by night and lowered him in a basket through an opening in the wall.

Acts 9:23-25

If I must boast, I would
rather boast about the
things that show how
weak I am. ...

2 Corinthians 11:30

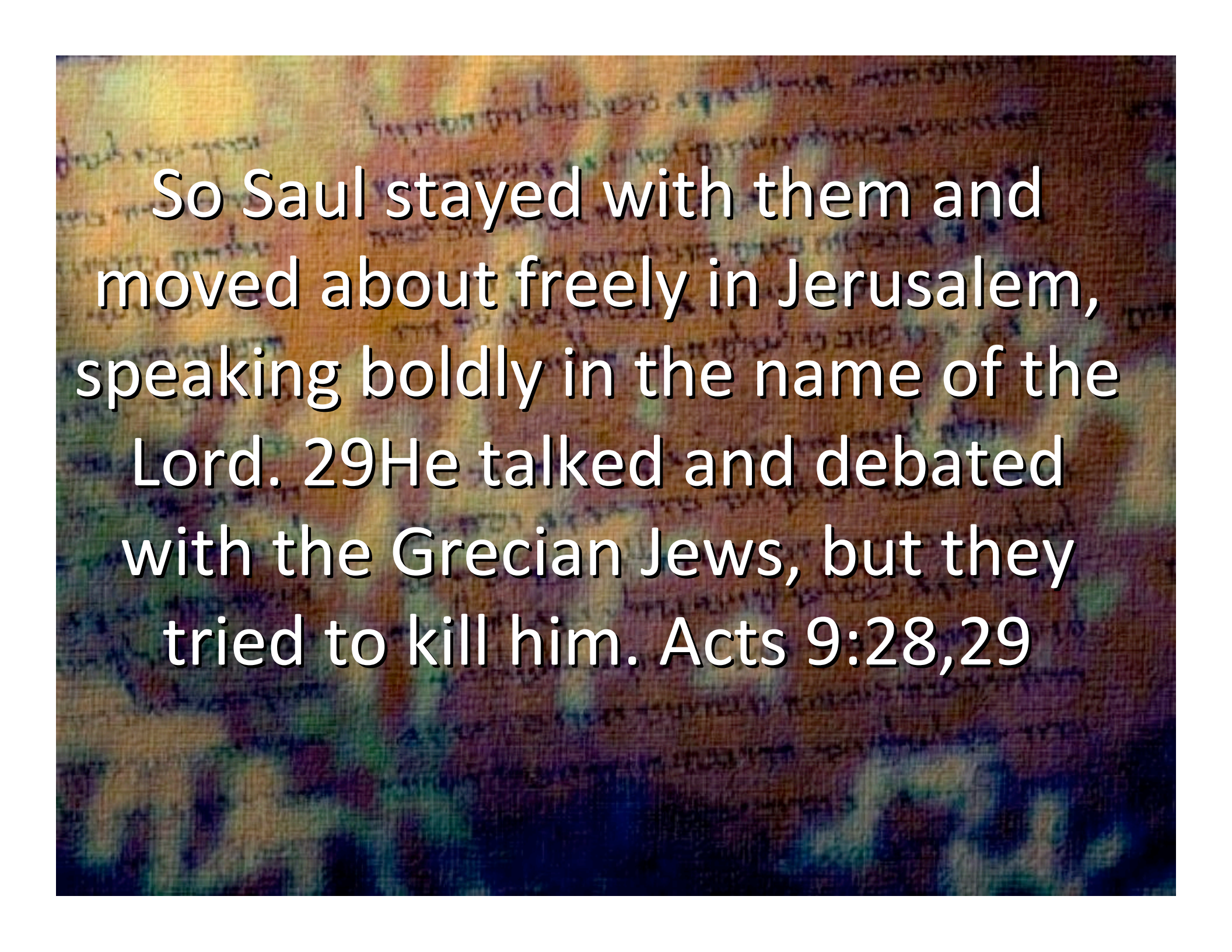
I had to be lowered in a basket through a window in the city wall to escape from him.

2 Corinthians 11:33

When he came to Jerusalem, he tried to join the disciples, but they were all afraid of him, not believing that he really was a disciple. 27 But Barnabas took him and brought him to the apostles. He told them how Saul on his journey had seen the Lord and that the Lord had spoken to him, and how in Damascus he had preached fearlessly in the name of Jesus. Acts 9:26b-27

...after three years, (in Damascus)
I went up to Jerusalem to get
acquainted with Peter and
stayed with him fifteen days.

Galatians 1:18



So Saul stayed with them and moved about freely in Jerusalem, speaking boldly in the name of the Lord. 29 He talked and debated with the Grecian Jews, but they tried to kill him. Acts 9:28,29

"When I returned to Jerusalem and was praying at the temple, I fell into a trance and saw the Lord speaking. 'Quick!' he said to me. 'Leave Jerusalem immediately, because they will not accept your testimony about me.' Acts 22:17-18

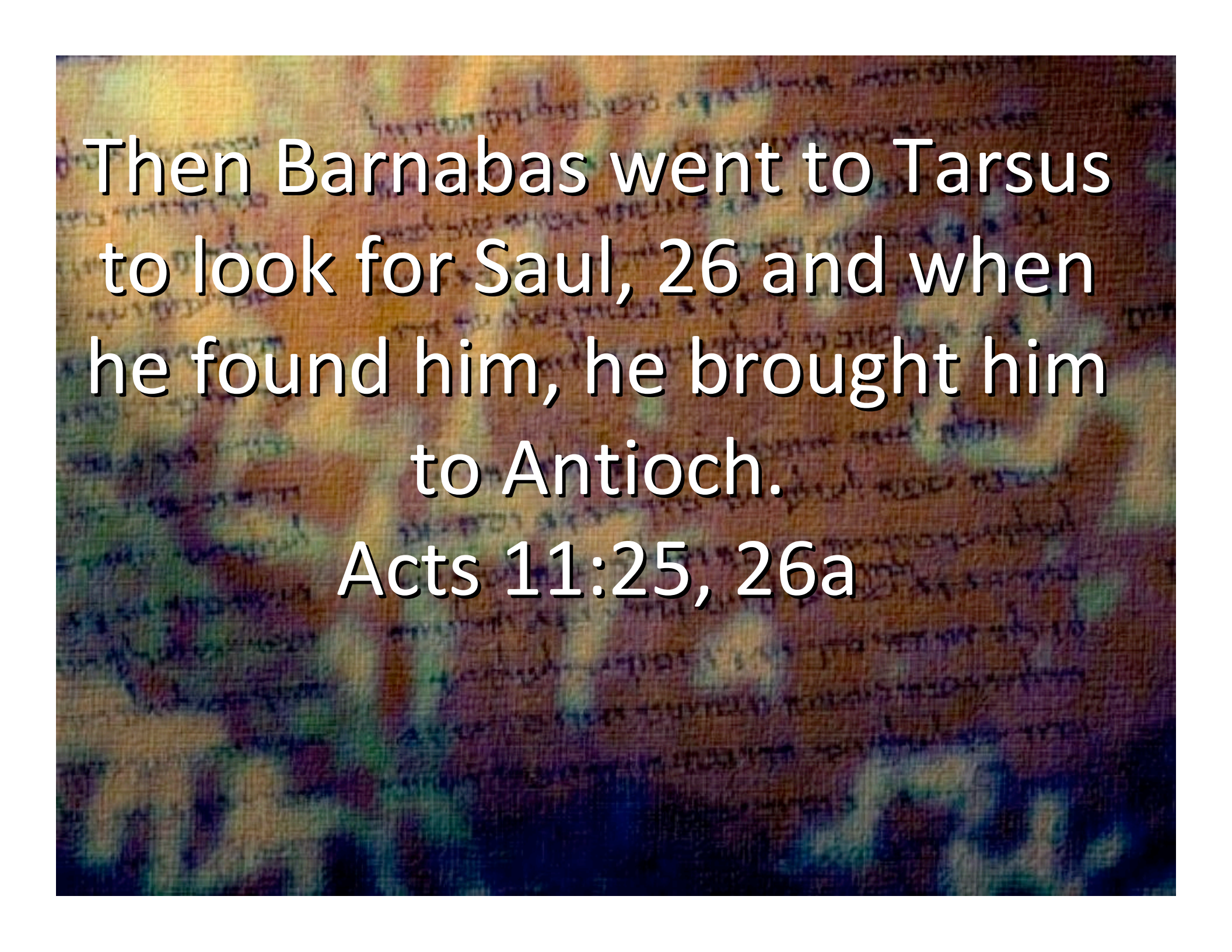
‘But Lord,’ I argued, ‘they certainly know that in every synagogues I imprisoned and beat those who believed in you. 20 And I was in complete agreement when your witness Stephen was killed. I stood by and kept the coats they took off when they stoned him.’

Acts 22:19,20

'Go! For I will send
you far away to
the Gentiles.'"

Acts 22:21


**God looks first to our
availability
not to our
ability.**



Then Barnabas went to Tarsus
to look for Saul, 26 and when
he found him, he brought him
to Antioch.

Acts 11:25, 26a

So the believers in Antioch decided to send relief to the brothers and sisters in Judea, everyone giving as much as they could. 30 This they did, entrusting their gifts to Barnabas and Saul to take to the elders of the church in Jerusalem. Acts 11:29,30



“Come to me, all of you who are weary and carry heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. 29 Take my yoke upon you. Let me teach you, because I am humble and gentle at heart, and you will find rest for your souls.
Matthew 11:28,29









