



Reflections & Scripture
For a Life Well-Lived





The moment of the physical transition of a child of God, and the season that follows, is a period laden with many emotions. Christians view death as another step in our lives as children of God. Christians also experience death as a time of loss when sorrow and grief are both natural and appropriate. These two truths inform the mission of Christian ministry in the face of death – affirming with both joy and tears the promise and hope of the Good News of Jesus. Seasons of grieving involve praising God through Christ who is our hope and our salvation, even as we remember the deceased and give thanks to God for the time shared with that person.

The gathering of family and friends, who form a community of hope for this process, is a rich opportunity to recall the promises of God through Christ. Because of His suffering, death, and resurrection to new life, each time we reflect upon the death of a loved one, we do so in the context of God's promise. We believe in Jesus Christ whose bodily death and resurrection made everlasting life possible. As we mourn the loss, remember the life, and reflect on the ministry of the Reverend Howard Marshall Haywood, let us do so in the assurance of God's love and salvation that he so aptly preached and taught during his tenure on Earth, and let us live on in the light of his enduring legacy of striving to create hope, peace and justice for all people.



Day 1

Nothing is impossible with God. Not even grief is unbearable through God's strength. The one who births salvation through virgin wombs and empty tombs can sustain you.

"For nothing will be impossible with God." Then Mary [mother of Jesus] said, "Here am I, the servant of the Lord; let it be with me according to your word." Then the angel departed from her."

Luke 1:37-38

Day 2

Remember the treasure. The minister is an earthen clay vessel that packages the precious gift of the gospel. The gift is so valuable that its packaging cannot be discarded; it actually appreciates in value and should be appreciated with the gift as a treasure itself.

"But we have this treasure in clay jars, so that it may be made clear that this extraordinary power belongs to God and does not come from us. We are afflicted in every way, but not crushed; perplexed, but not driven to despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed..."

2 Corinthians 4:7-9

Day 3

Moving is difficult for everyone, even if one moves to a better location. Families are disheveled, communities are disturbed, and life is different...for everyone. However, when one moves to a better home, it is incumbent on those left behind to celebrate the transition and prepare for their visit. This is especially true if the new neighborhood is heaven.

“For we know that if the earthly tent we live in is destroyed, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.”

2 Corinthians 5:1





Day 4

God's house has plenty of room. Jesus told his disciples to keep their hearts from troubling by holding this assurance. This is hope for those who have gone to God's house in the next world, and it is instructions for us whose hearts are God's home now.

"Do not let your hearts be troubled. Believe[a] in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house there are many dwelling places. If it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you?"

John 14: 1-2

Day 5

"I am with you always,"
Matthew 28:20

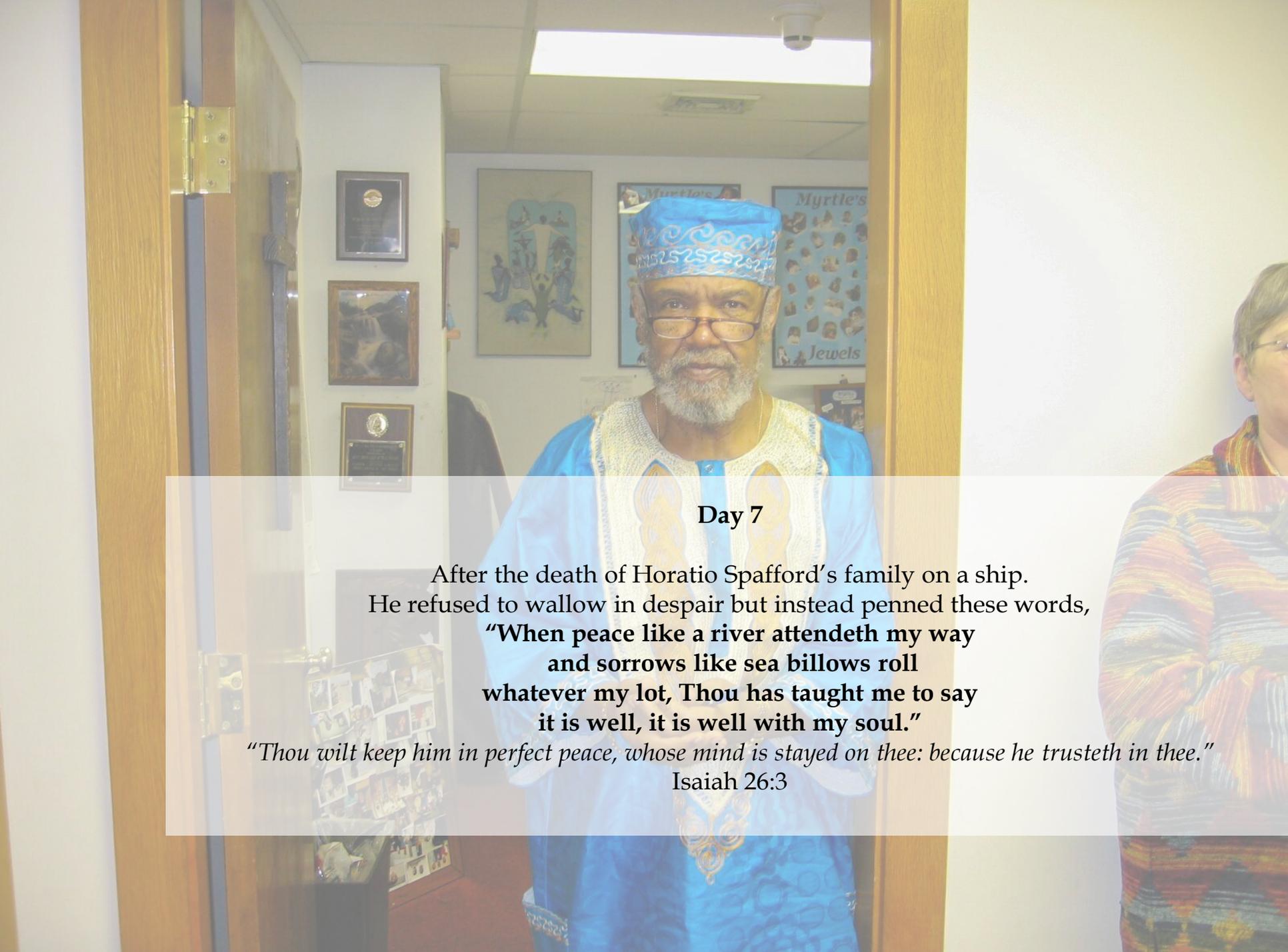
says Jesus to a group who had just experienced the simultaneous strains of death and confusion. Jesus still offers the same promise.

Day 6

"Give us this day our daily bread"
Luke 11:3

is what Jesus told us to pray. When sadness is what we eat and tears are what we drink, God can feed us with manna (bread from heaven) that can feed our weary souls until we want no more.





Day 7

After the death of Horatio Spafford's family on a ship.
He refused to wallow in despair but instead penned these words,
**"When peace like a river attendeth my way
and sorrows like sea billows roll
whatever my lot, Thou has taught me to say
it is well, it is well with my soul."**

"Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusteth in thee."

Isaiah 26:3



Day 8

"Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of His saints."

Psalm 116:15

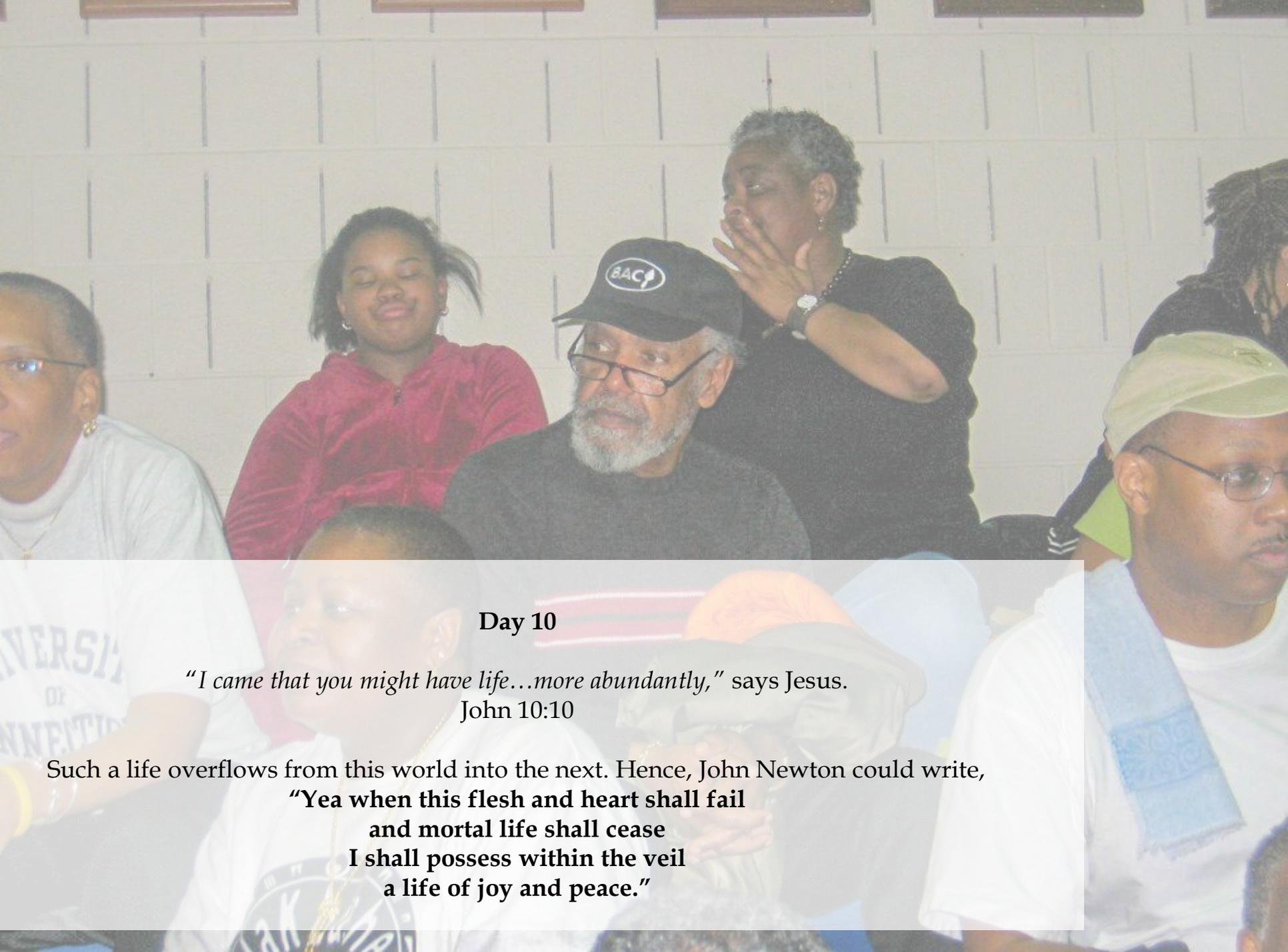
May we learn to train our eyes to see as God does and view what God values. Let us recognize that although one is no longer in our presence, precious memories linger and fill our souls.

Day 9

The year that King Uzziah died became an occasion for Isaiah to see the Lord. He certainly experienced the pain that rocked the entire community, and his feeling low created the opportunity to see the Lord high and lifted up.

"In the year that king Uzziah died I saw also the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up, and his train filled the temple."

Isaiah 6:1



Day 10

"I came that you might have life...more abundantly," says Jesus.
John 10:10

Such a life overflows from this world into the next. Hence, John Newton could write,
**"Yea when this flesh and heart shall fail
and mortal life shall cease
I shall possess within the veil
a life of joy and peace."**

Day 11

God's city is not like our city. Our city has hospitals, drug stores, and doctors' offices. However in God's city, "there (is) a tree whose leaves (are) good for the healing of the nations." Revelation 22:2

Reconciling
Difficulty
Believe & Confess
Reconciling
Discerning (Perceptions, interpret.)
"High, Holy"

Ourselves
up our cross:
Solutions
Self-D

- ### 2 Scenario
1. what are the potential pitfalls
 1. Adulting relationships
 2. Ziggle teachings
Permission from father/Relatives
 3. Sensitive information
 4. Inquisitive taken out of context
 5. How the people see it
 6. Just get caught up

Day 12

In our city, grief, tears, and therapy are useful. In God's city, Kleenex has been put out of business. Grief has been abolished. Therapy is irrelevant. For there in that city, God Godself will wipe away every tear from our eyes.

Revelation 21:4



Day 13

One day death will be vanquished. One day human frailness will no longer be the abode of our soul.

For **"I've heard of a land on a far away strand
'tis a beautiful home for the soul built by Jesus on high
there we shall never die**

'tis a land where we'll never grow old."

(James C. Moore, 1914)

"And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away"

Revelation 21:4

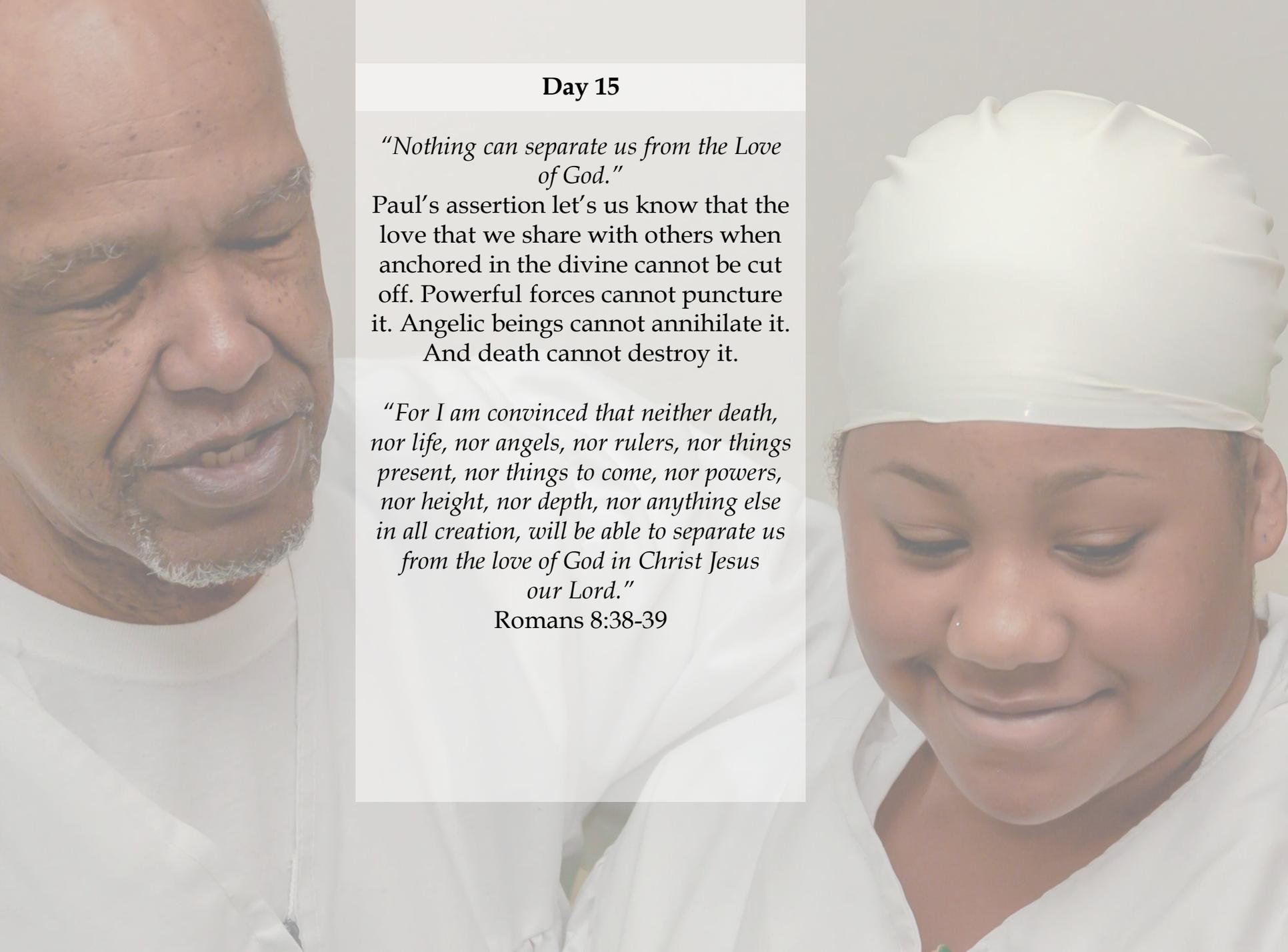


Day 14

Love remains. Great works and wondrous deeds are important, but other works erase them and larger deeds eclipse them. Even faith sometimes fails and hope dissipates. But love. Love lasts. Love exists beyond its human source, because it is of divine origin. True love that we experience from any person has its root in God, and it will not wither and cannot fade.

"And now faith, hope, and love abide, these three; and the greatest of these is love."

1 Corinthians 13:13



Day 15

“Nothing can separate us from the Love of God.”

Paul’s assertion let’s us know that the love that we share with others when anchored in the divine cannot be cut off. Powerful forces cannot puncture it. Angelic beings cannot annihilate it. And death cannot destroy it.

“For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.”

Romans 8:38-39



Day 16

Jesus is Lord. That declaration saves. Not because it expresses how one is controlled by God, rather it communicates how we belong to Him. When we don't fit in anywhere, when others discount us, and when life distresses us, we can find comfort in the lordship of Jesus. He provides us a place to belong.

Those who experience the salvation of belonging to God create space for others to belong to this loving and gracious God by preaching (proclaiming),

"Jesus is Lord." "...b] 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."

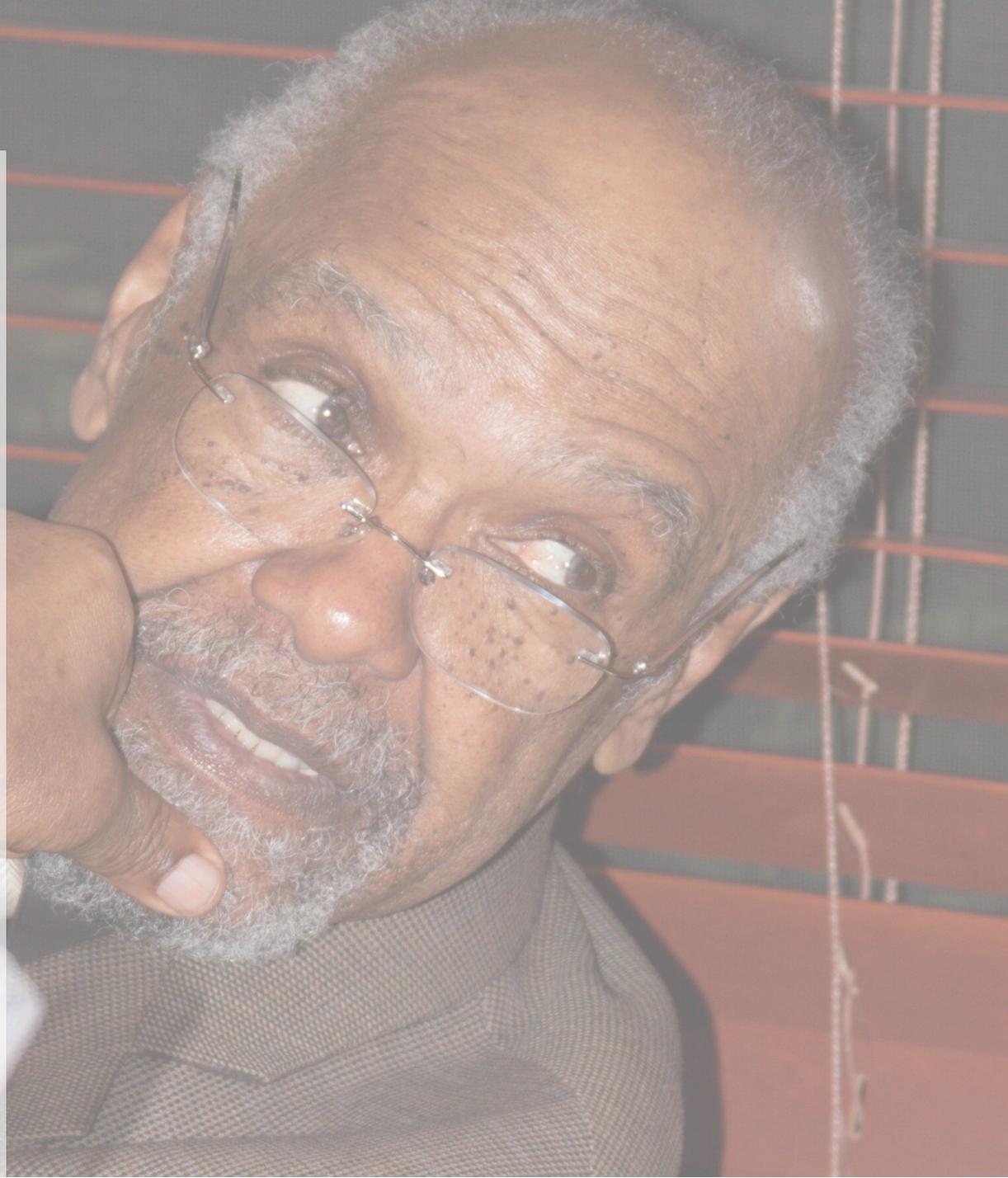
Romans 10:10

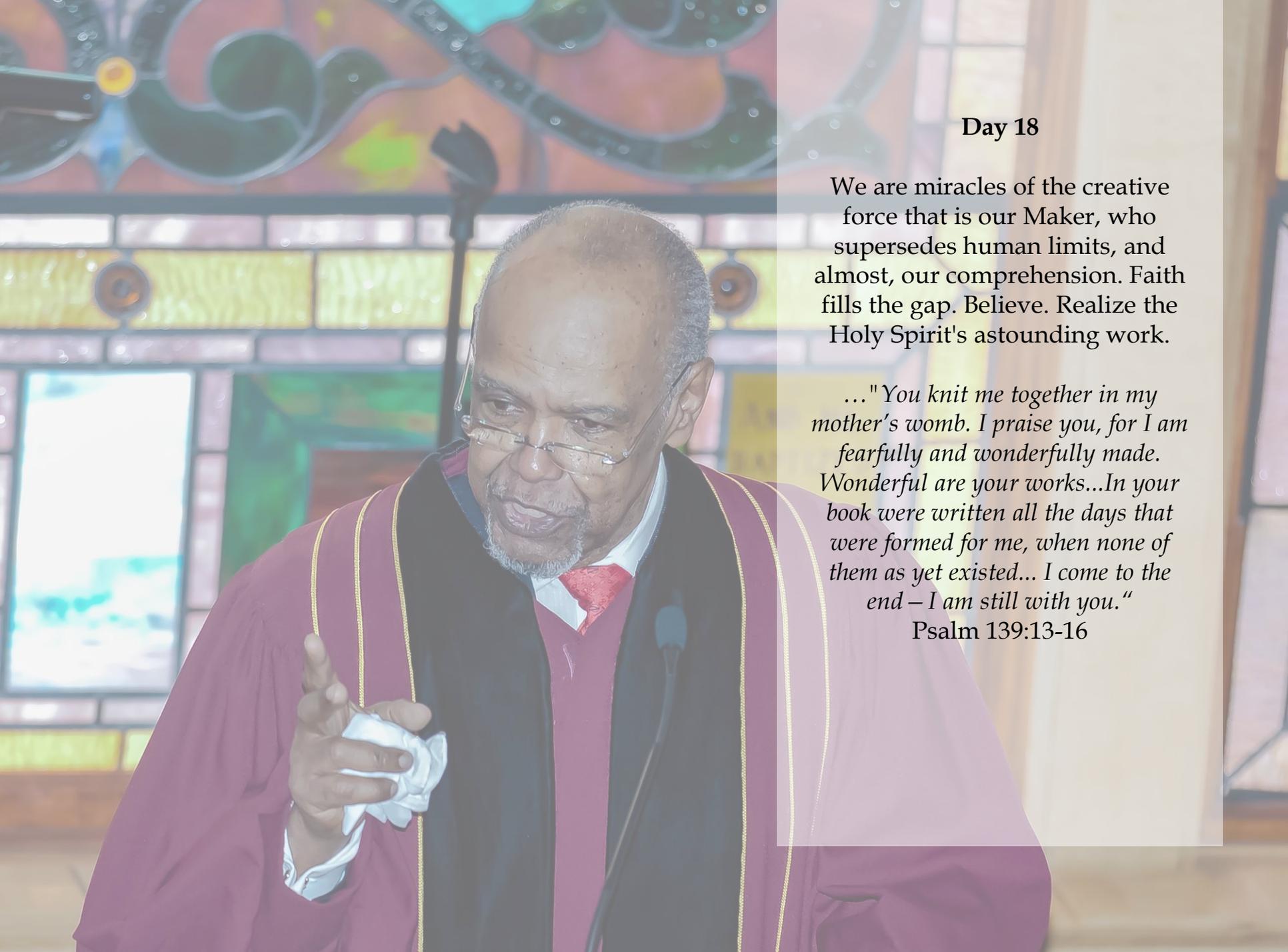
Day 17

Hope beyond hope is a feast for the weary. If we can keep vigil for the Holy Spirit, waiting for relief itself becomes a prayer sure to be answered. Faith prepares us for such a night watch. Even in a season of grief, we are unyielding, constant and sure.

"Woe is me! For I have become like one who, after the summer fruit has been gathered... finds no cluster to eat; there is no first-ripe fig for which I hunger. The faithful have disappeared from the land, and there is no one left who is upright;.... But as for me, I will look to the Lord, I will wait for the God of my salvation; my God will hear me."

Micah 7:1-2,7





Day 18

We are miracles of the creative force that is our Maker, who supersedes human limits, and almost, our comprehension. Faith fills the gap. Believe. Realize the Holy Spirit's astounding work.

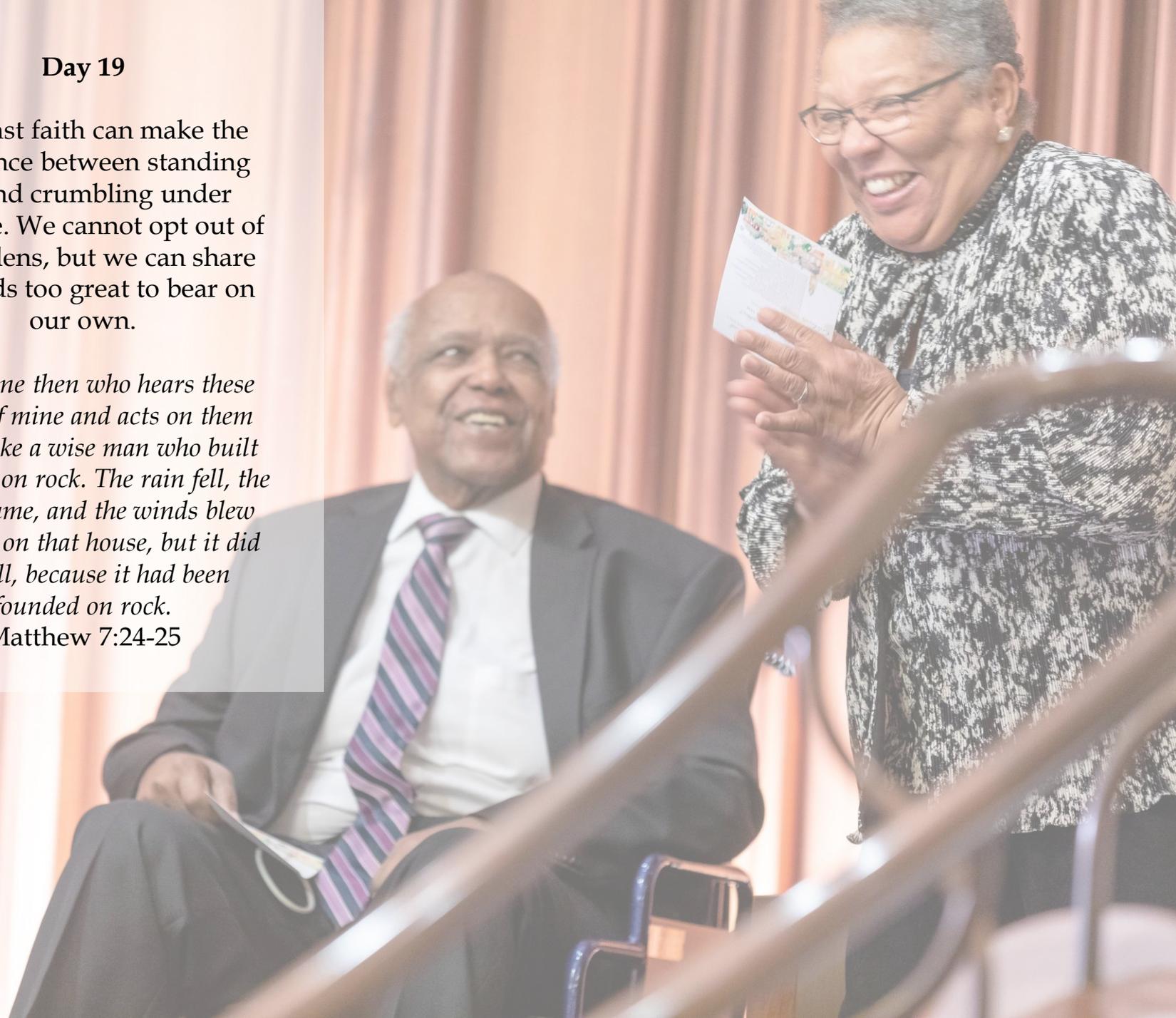
... "You knit me together in my mother's womb. I praise you, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made. Wonderful are your works... In your book were written all the days that were formed for me, when none of them as yet existed... I come to the end – I am still with you."

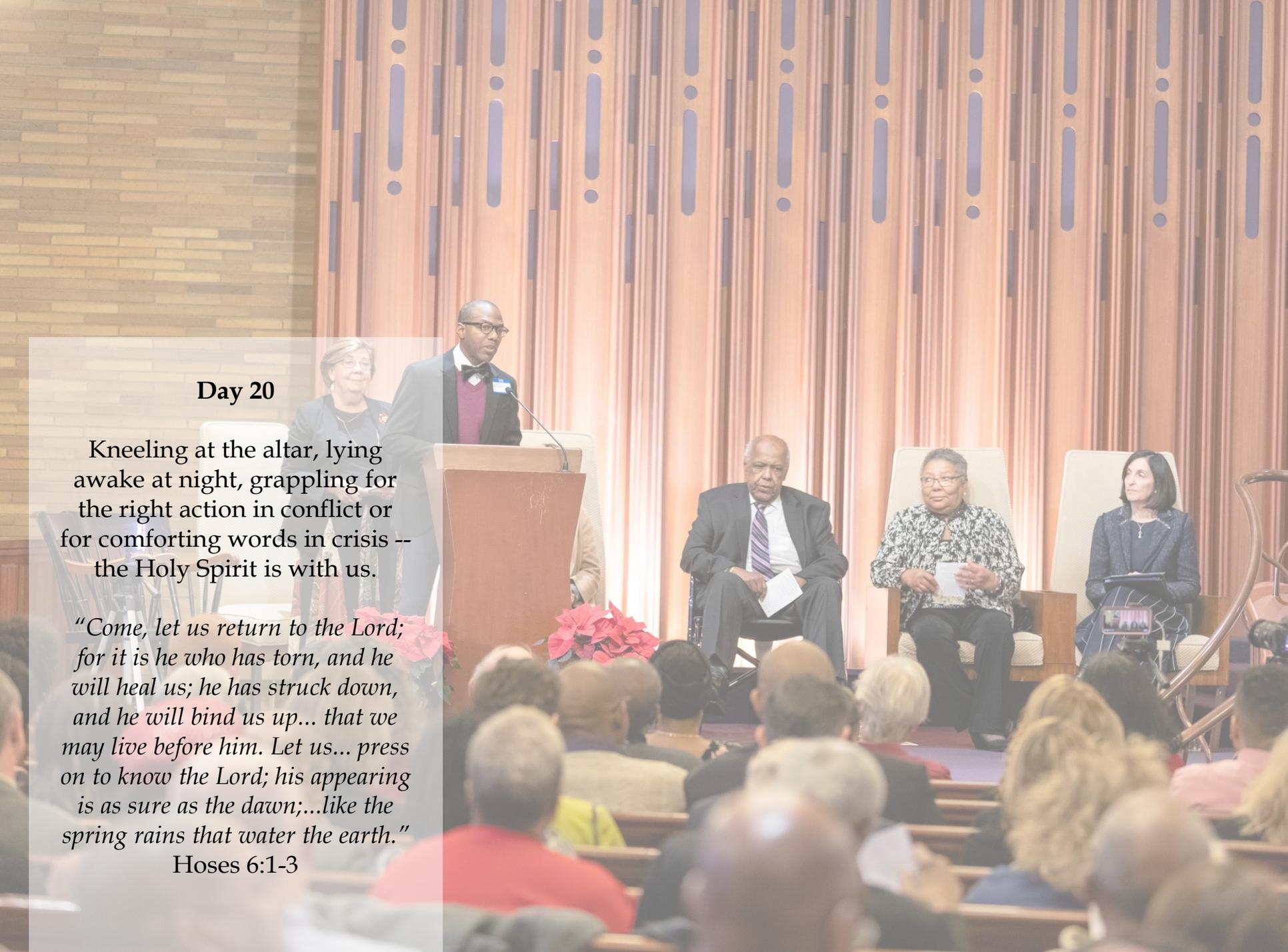
Psalm 139:13-16

Day 19

Steadfast faith can make the difference between standing tall and crumbling under pressure. We cannot opt out of all burdens, but we can share the loads too great to bear on our own.

*“Everyone then who hears these words of mine and acts on them will be like a wise man who built his house on rock. The rain fell, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house, but it did not fall, because it had been founded on rock.
Matthew 7:24-25*



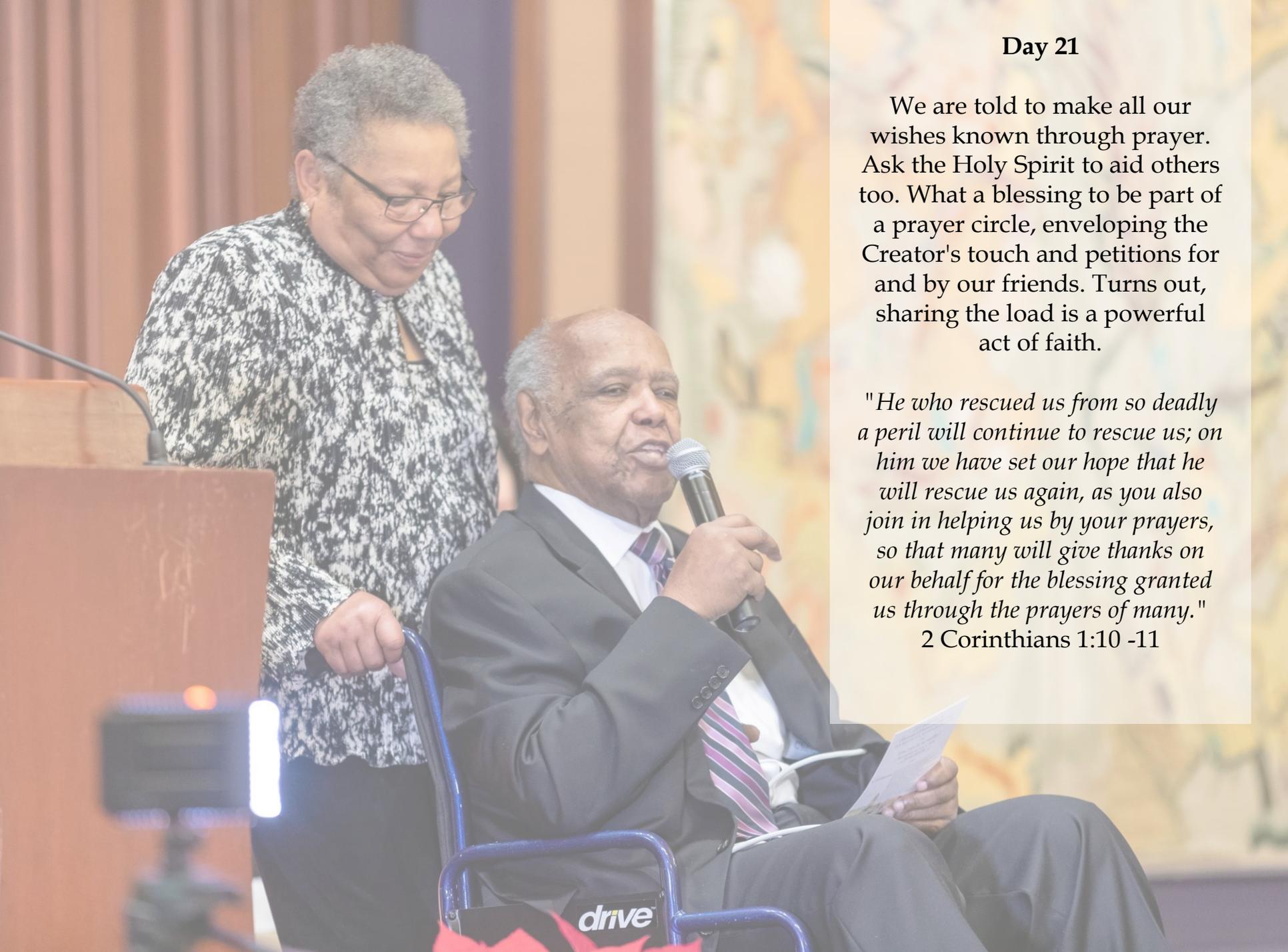


Day 20

Kneeling at the altar, lying awake at night, grappling for the right action in conflict or for comforting words in crisis -- the Holy Spirit is with us.

"Come, let us return to the Lord; for it is he who has torn, and he will heal us; he has struck down, and he will bind us up... that we may live before him. Let us... press on to know the Lord; his appearing is as sure as the dawn;...like the spring rains that water the earth."

Hoses 6:1-3



Day 21

We are told to make all our wishes known through prayer. Ask the Holy Spirit to aid others too. What a blessing to be part of a prayer circle, enveloping the Creator's touch and petitions for and by our friends. Turns out, sharing the load is a powerful act of faith.

"He who rescued us from so deadly a peril will continue to rescue us; on him we have set our hope that he will rescue us again, as you also join in helping us by your prayers, so that many will give thanks on our behalf for the blessing granted us through the prayers of many."

2 Corinthians 1:10 -11



Day 22

How can we be strong at a time of great vulnerability? Pray, in earnest. Surrender alone, over and over again.

"(Jesus)... went, as was his custom, to the Mount of Olives;...Then he withdrew from (the disciples) about a stone's throw, knelt down, and prayed. "Father, if you are willing, remove this cup from me; yet, not my will but yours be done." Then an angel from heaven appeared to him and gave him strength. In his anguish he prayed more earnestly,"

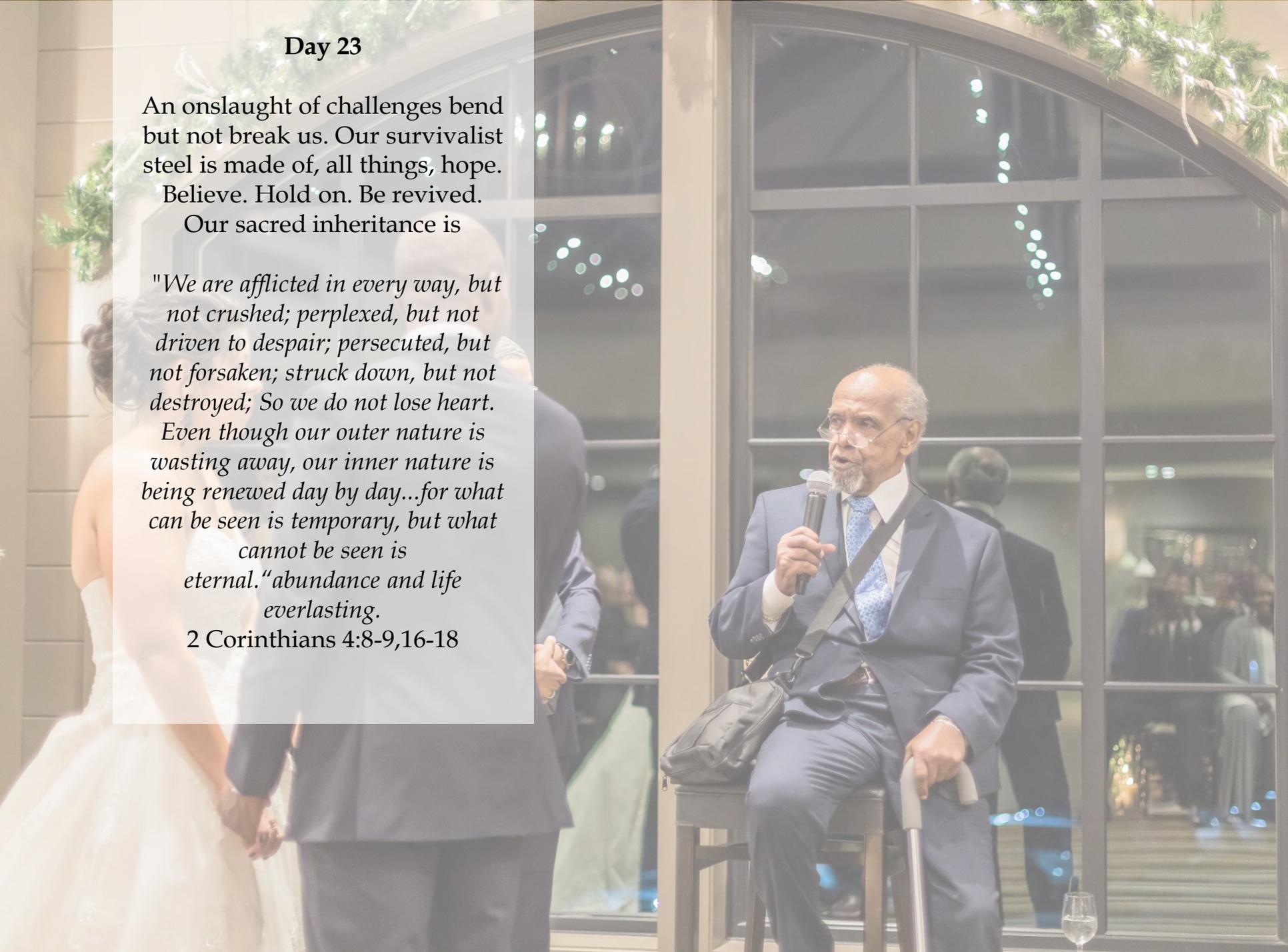
Luke 22:38-43

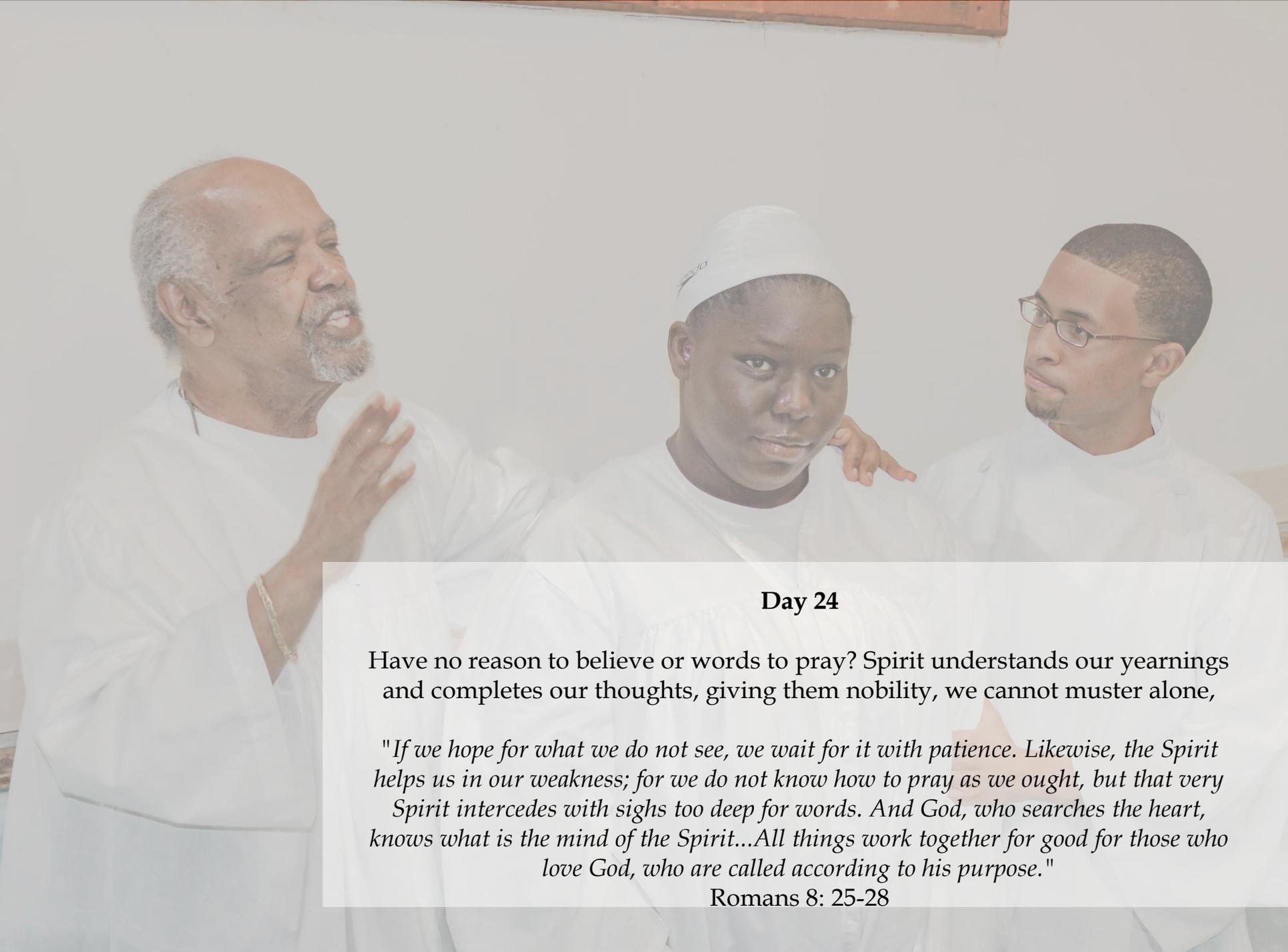
Day 23

An onslaught of challenges bend
but not break us. Our survivalist
steel is made of, all things, hope.
Believe. Hold on. Be revived.
Our sacred inheritance is

*"We are afflicted in every way, but
not crushed; perplexed, but not
driven to despair; persecuted, but
not forsaken; struck down, but not
destroyed; So we do not lose heart.
Even though our outer nature is
wasting away, our inner nature is
being renewed day by day...for what
can be seen is temporary, but what
cannot be seen is
eternal." abundance and life
everlasting.*

2 Corinthians 4:8-9,16-18





Day 24

Have no reason to believe or words to pray? Spirit understands our yearnings and completes our thoughts, giving them nobility, we cannot muster alone,

"If we hope for what we do not see, we wait for it with patience. Likewise, the Spirit helps us in our weakness; for we do not know how to pray as we ought, but that very Spirit intercedes with sighs too deep for words. And God, who searches the heart, knows what is the mind of the Spirit...All things work together for good for those who love God, who are called according to his purpose."

Romans 8: 25-28

Day 25

It would be nice to pray like the old church mothers and fathers; to perfectly express gratitude for the many blessings the Holy Spirit has bestowed upon us; to give proper honor and praise. Scripture takes care of this. We can recite time-tested verses, not like a rote performance, but with great sincerity over and over again.

"Now to him who is able to keep you from falling, and to make you stand without blemish in the presence of his glory with rejoicing, to the only God our Savior, through Jesus Christ our Lord, be glory, majesty, power, and authority, before all time and now and forever. Amen."

Jude 24-25





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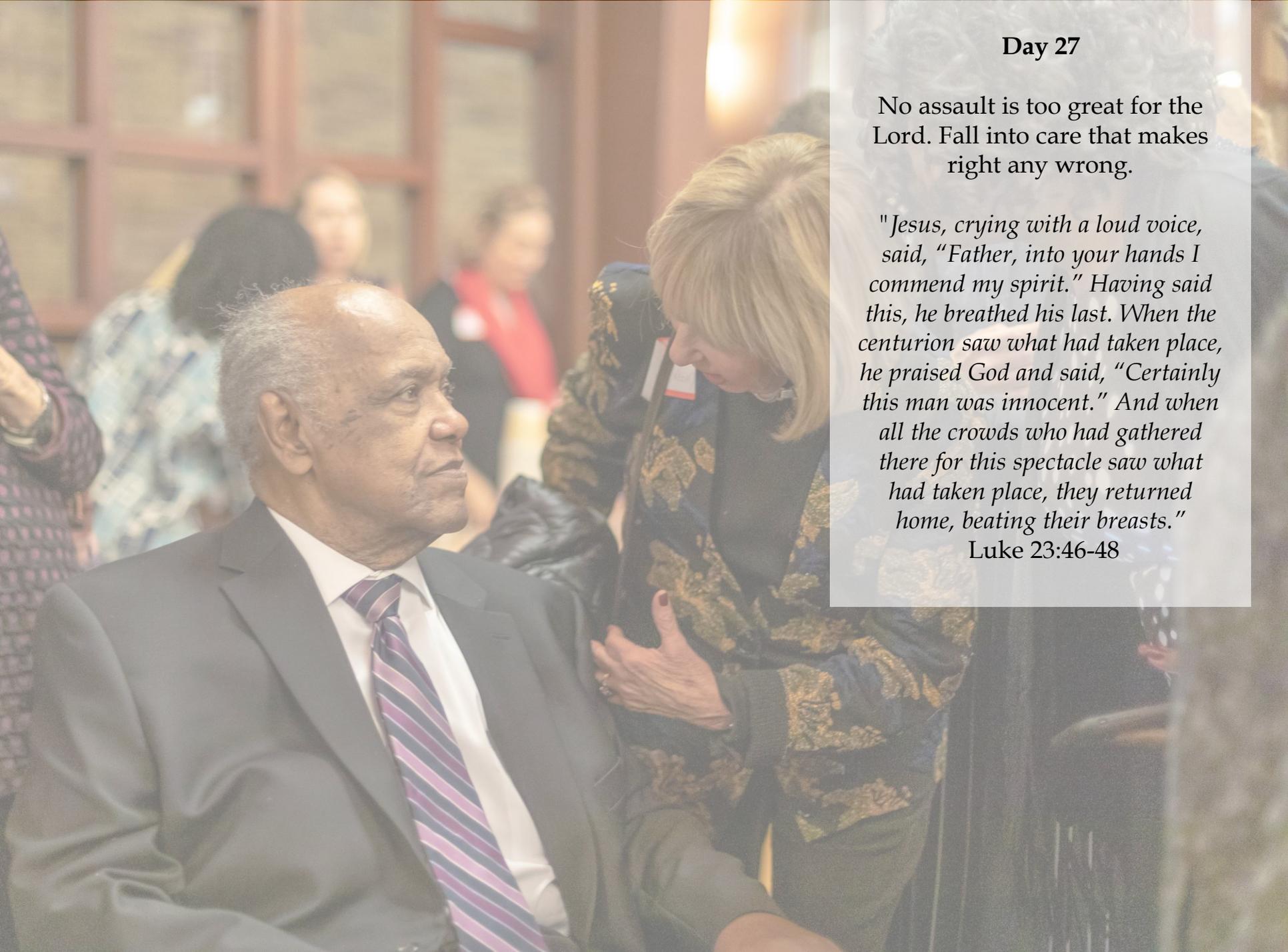
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Day 26

We ought not fret about the future. All is well. This very moment, all is well. Stay here, in sweet communion with the Holy Spirit. All is well.

"If God so clothes the grass of the field...will he not much more clothe you – you of little faith?...Do not worry, saying, 'What will we eat?' or 'What will we drink?' or 'What will we wear?'...Strive first for the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well."

Matthew 6:30-33



Day 27

No assault is too great for the Lord. Fall into care that makes right any wrong.

"Jesus, crying with a loud voice, said, "Father, into your hands I commend my spirit." Having said this, he breathed his last. When the centurion saw what had taken place, he praised God and said, "Certainly this man was innocent." And when all the crowds who had gathered there for this spectacle saw what had taken place, they returned home, beating their breasts."

Luke 23:46-48

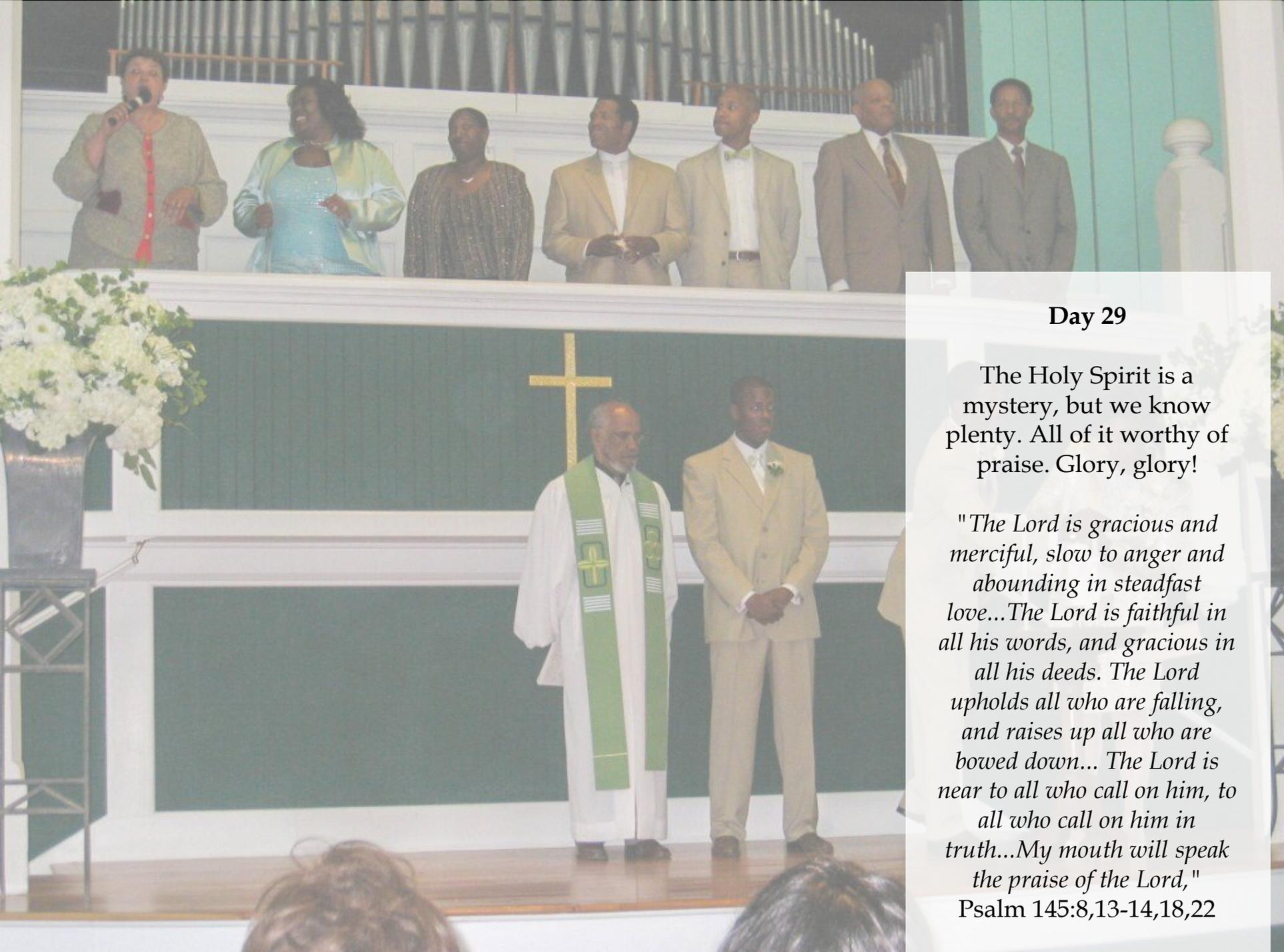
Day 28

In a storm, it's natural to panic.
Remember, we have
supernatural company. A
watchful Savior is always there.

*"Immediately he made the disciples
get into the boat and go on ahead to
the other side, while he dismissed
the crowds...He went up the
mountain by himself to pray. When
evening came, he was there alone,
but by this time the boat, battered
by the waves, was far from the
land... And early in the morning he
came walking toward them on
the sea."*

Matthew 14:22-35

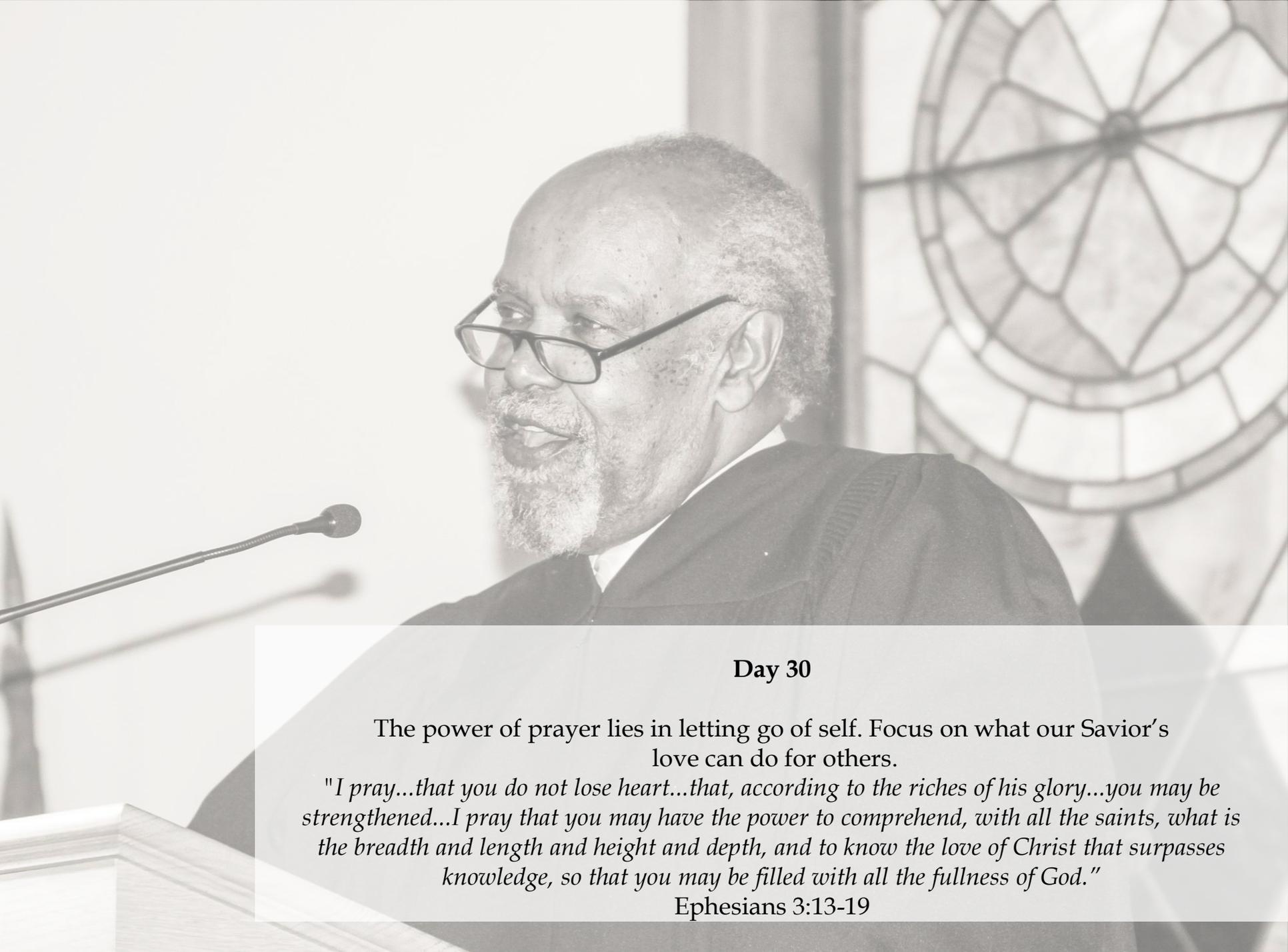




Day 29

The Holy Spirit is a mystery, but we know plenty. All of it worthy of praise. Glory, glory!

"The Lord is gracious and merciful, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love...The Lord is faithful in all his words, and gracious in all his deeds. The Lord upholds all who are falling, and raises up all who are bowed down... The Lord is near to all who call on him, to all who call on him in truth...My mouth will speak the praise of the Lord,"
Psalm 145:8,13-14,18,22



Day 30

The power of prayer lies in letting go of self. Focus on what our Savior's love can do for others.

"I pray...that you do not lose heart...that, according to the riches of his glory...you may be strengthened...I pray that you may have the power to comprehend, with all the saints, what is the breadth and length and height and depth, and to know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge, so that you may be filled with all the fullness of God."

Ephesians 3:13-19