

The background of the entire image is a sepia-toned photograph of a mountain range. The mountains are layered, with some peaks in the foreground and others receding into the distance. The overall tone is warm and historical.

THE REAL ENEMY OF PROGRESS

CHICAGO TABERNACLE

TAKING NEW GROUND

¹But the Israelites were unfaithful in regard to the devoted things; Achan son of Karmi, the son of Zimri, the son of Zerah, of the tribe of Judah, took some of them. So the Lord's anger burned against Israel. ²Now Joshua sent men from Jericho to Ai, which is near Beth Aven to the east of Bethel, and told them, "Go up and spy out the region." So the men went up and spied out Ai. ³When they returned to Joshua, they said, "Not all the army will have to go up against Ai. Send two or three thousand men to take it and do not weary the whole army, for only a few people live there."

Joshua 7:1-26

TAKING NEW GROUND

⁴So about three thousand went up; but they were routed by the men of Ai,⁵who killed about thirty-six of them. They chased the Israelites from the city gate as far as the stone quarries and struck them down on the slopes. At this the hearts of the people melted in fear and became like water. ⁶Then Joshua tore his clothes and fell facedown to the ground before the ark of the Lord, remaining there till evening. The elders of Israel did the same, and sprinkled dust on their heads.

Joshua 7:1-26

TAKING NEW GROUND

⁷And Joshua said, “Alas, Sovereign Lord, why did you ever bring this people across the Jordan to deliver us into the hands of the Amorites to destroy us? If only we had been content to stay on the other side of the Jordan!

⁸Pardon your servant, Lord. What can I say, now that Israel has been routed by its enemies? ⁹The Canaanites and the other people of the country will hear about this and they will surround us and wipe out our name from the earth. What then will you do for your own great name?”

Joshua 7:1-26

TAKING NEW GROUND

¹⁰The Lord said to Joshua, “Stand up! What are you doing down on your face? ¹¹Israel has sinned; they have violated my covenant, which I commanded them to keep. They have taken some of the devoted things; they have stolen, they have lied, they have put them with their own possessions. ¹² That is why the Israelites cannot stand against their enemies; they turn their backs and run because they have been made liable to destruction. I will not be with you anymore unless you destroy whatever among you is devoted to destruction.

Joshua 7:1-26

TAKING NEW GROUND

¹³“Go, consecrate the people. Tell them, ‘Consecrate yourselves in preparation for tomorrow; for this is what the Lord, the God of Israel, says: There are devoted things among you, Israel. You cannot stand against your enemies until you remove them.’¹⁴“In the morning, present yourselves tribe by tribe. The tribe the Lord chooses shall come forward clan by clan; the clan the Lord chooses shall come forward family by family; and the family the Lord chooses shall come forward man by man.

Joshua 7:1-26

TAKING NEW GROUND

¹⁵Whoever is caught with the devoted things shall be destroyed by fire, along with all that belongs to him. He has violated the covenant of the Lord and has done an outrageous thing in Israel!’”¹⁶Early the next morning Joshua had Israel come forward by tribes, and Judah was chosen.¹⁷The clans of Judah came forward, and the Zerahites were chosen. He had the clan of the Zerahites come forward by families, and Zimri was chosen.

Joshua 7:1-26

TAKING NEW GROUND

¹⁸Joshua had his family come forward man by man, and Achan son of Karmi, the son of Zimri, the son of Zerah, of the tribe of Judah, was chosen.¹⁹Then Joshua said to Achan, “My son, give glory to the Lord, the God of Israel, and honor him. Tell me what you have done; do not hide it from me.” ²⁰Achan replied, “It is true! I have sinned against the Lord, the God of Israel. This is what I have done:

Joshua 7:1-26

TAKING NEW GROUND

²¹When I saw in the plunder a beautiful robe from Babylonia, two hundred shekels of silver and a bar of gold weighing fifty shekels, I coveted them and took them. They are hidden in the ground inside my tent, with the silver underneath.” ²²So Joshua sent messengers, and they ran to the tent, and there it was, hidden in his tent, with the silver underneath. ²³They took the things from the tent, brought them to Joshua and all the Israelites and spread them out before the Lord.

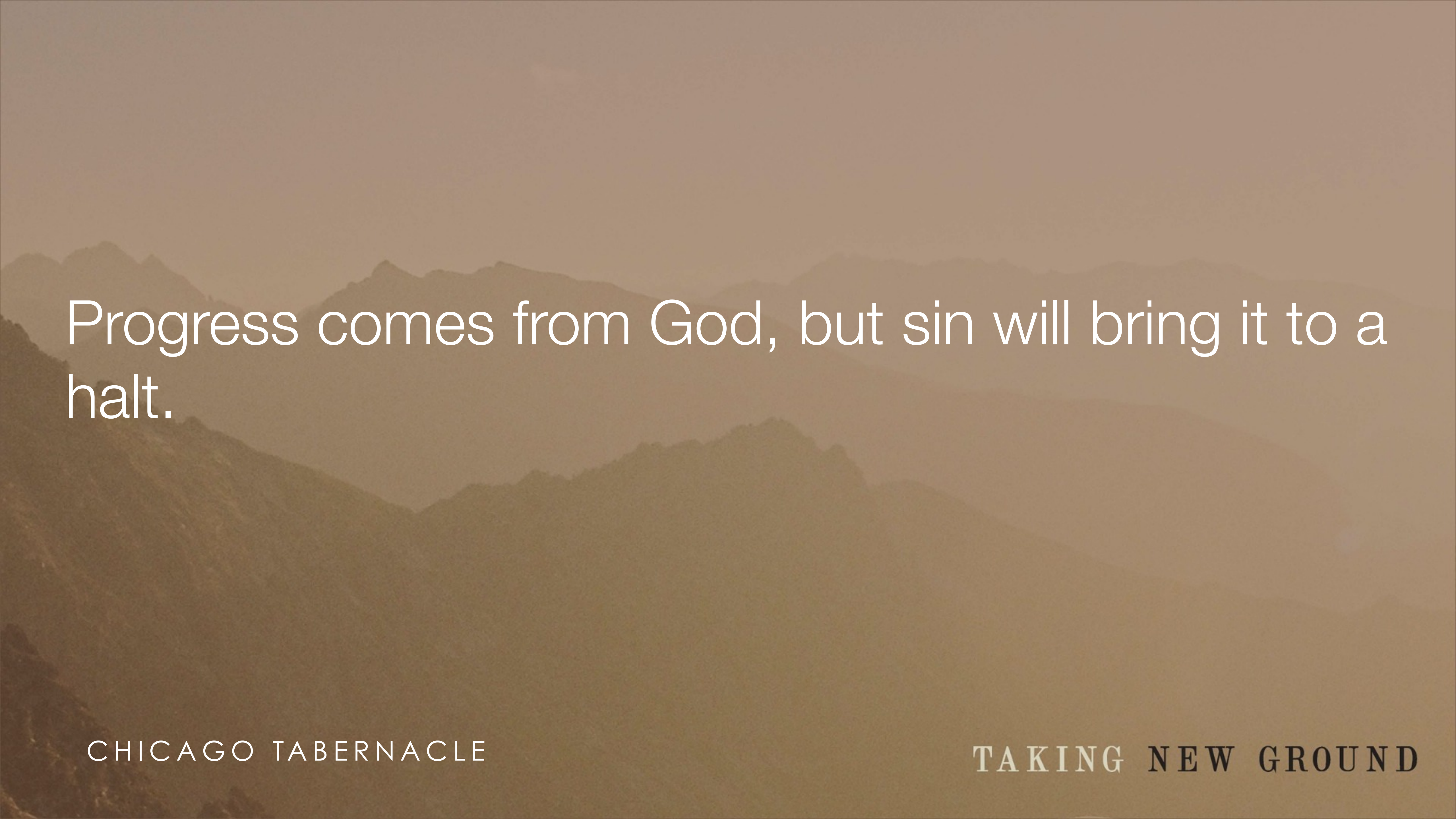
Joshua 7:1-26

TAKING NEW GROUND

²⁴Then Joshua, together with all Israel, took Achan son of Zerah, the silver, the robe, the gold bar, his sons and daughters, his cattle, donkeys and sheep, his tent and all that he had, to the Valley of Achor. ²⁵Joshua said, “Why have you brought this trouble on us? The Lord will bring trouble on you today.” Then all Israel stoned him, and after they had stoned the rest, they burned them. ²⁶Over Achan they heaped up a large pile of rocks, which remains to this day. Then the Lord turned from his fierce anger. Therefore that place has been called the Valley of Achor ever since.

Joshua 7:1-26

TAKING NEW GROUND

A sepia-toned photograph of a mountain range, with the peaks and ridges receding into the distance. The image has a warm, brownish-orange hue. Overlaid on the middle of the image is the text "Progress comes from God, but sin will bring it to a halt." in a white, serif font.

Progress comes from God, but sin will bring it to a halt.

CHICAGO TABERNACLE

TAKING NEW GROUND

Sin is the Real Enemy of Progress

¹⁰The Lord said to Joshua, “Stand up! What are you doing down on your face? ¹¹Israel has sinned; they have violated my covenant, which I commanded them to keep. **They have taken some of the devoted things; they have stolen, they have lied, they have put them with their own possessions.**

Joshua 7:10-12

Sin is the Real Enemy of Progress

¹²That is why the Israelites cannot stand against their enemies; they turn their backs and run because they have been made liable to destruction. I will not be with you anymore unless you destroy whatever among you is devoted to destruction.

Joshua 7:10-12



Definition of Sin:

Belittling what is sacred to God

What is Sacred to God (Exodus 20)

“...no other Gods before me...”

“...do not create or bow to any image”

- Worship is sacred.

“...do not take God’s name in vain...”

- God’s name is sacred.

“Remember the Sabbath...”

- Honoring God once a week is sacred.



What is Sacred to God (Exodus 20)

“Honor your father and mother...”

- **Parents and Authority are sacred.**

“Do not murder.”

- **Life is sacred.**

“Do not commit adultery.”

- **Marriage and Sex is sacred.**

What is Sacred to God (Exodus 20)

“Do not steal.”

- **Property is sacred.**

“Do not lie.”

- **Truth is sacred.**

“Do not covet.”

- **Contentment is sacred.**

It Was a Three Step Fall

I saw
I coveted
I took

CHICAGO TABERNACLE

TAKING NEW GROUND

You Can Hide Sin from Everyone But God

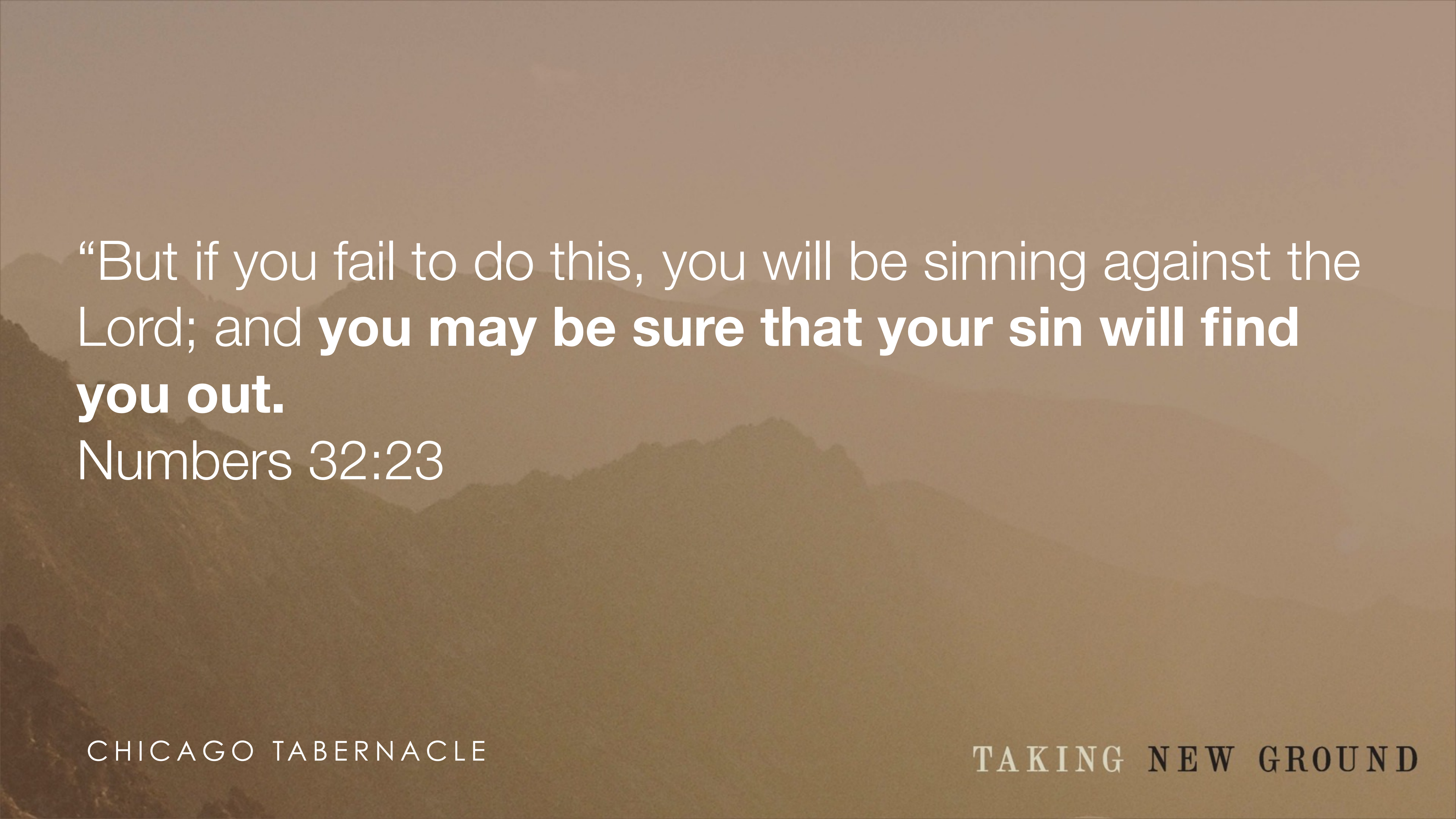
“Go, consecrate the people. Tell them, ‘Consecrate yourselves in preparation for tomorrow; for this is what the Lord, the God of Israel, says: **There are devoted things among you, Israel.** You cannot stand against your enemies until you remove them.’”

Joshua 7:13

You Can Hide Sin from Everyone But God

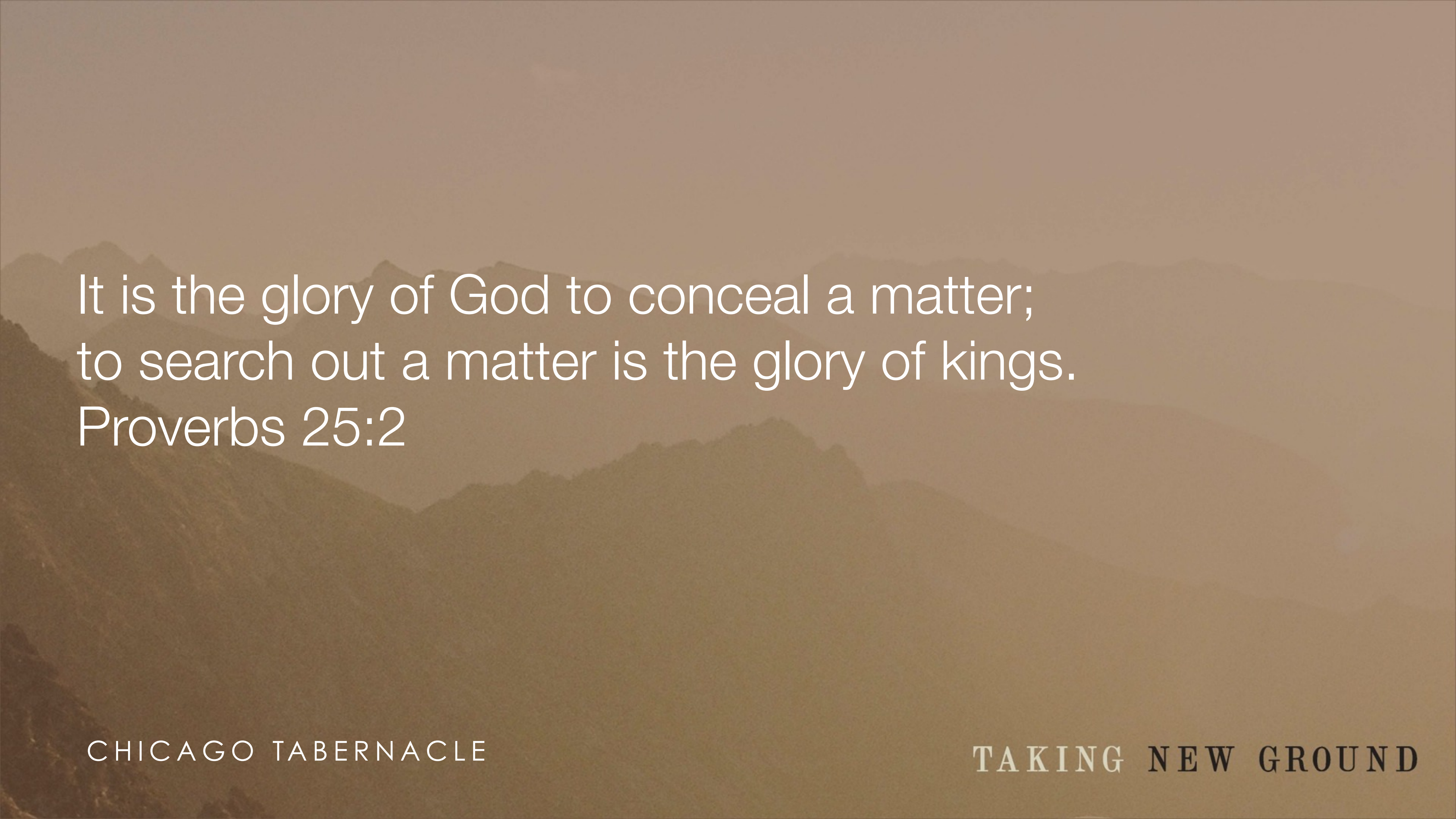
“Go, consecrate the people. Tell them, ‘Consecrate yourselves in preparation for tomorrow; for this is what the Lord, the God of Israel, says: **There are devoted things among you, Israel.** You cannot stand against your enemies until you remove them.’”

Joshua 7:13



“But if you fail to do this, you will be sinning against the Lord; and **you may be sure that your sin will find you out.**

Numbers 32:23



It is the glory of God to conceal a matter;
to search out a matter is the glory of kings.
Proverbs 25:2

So then, confess your sins to one another and pray for one another, so that you will be healed. The prayer of a good person has a powerful effect.

James 5:16 GNT

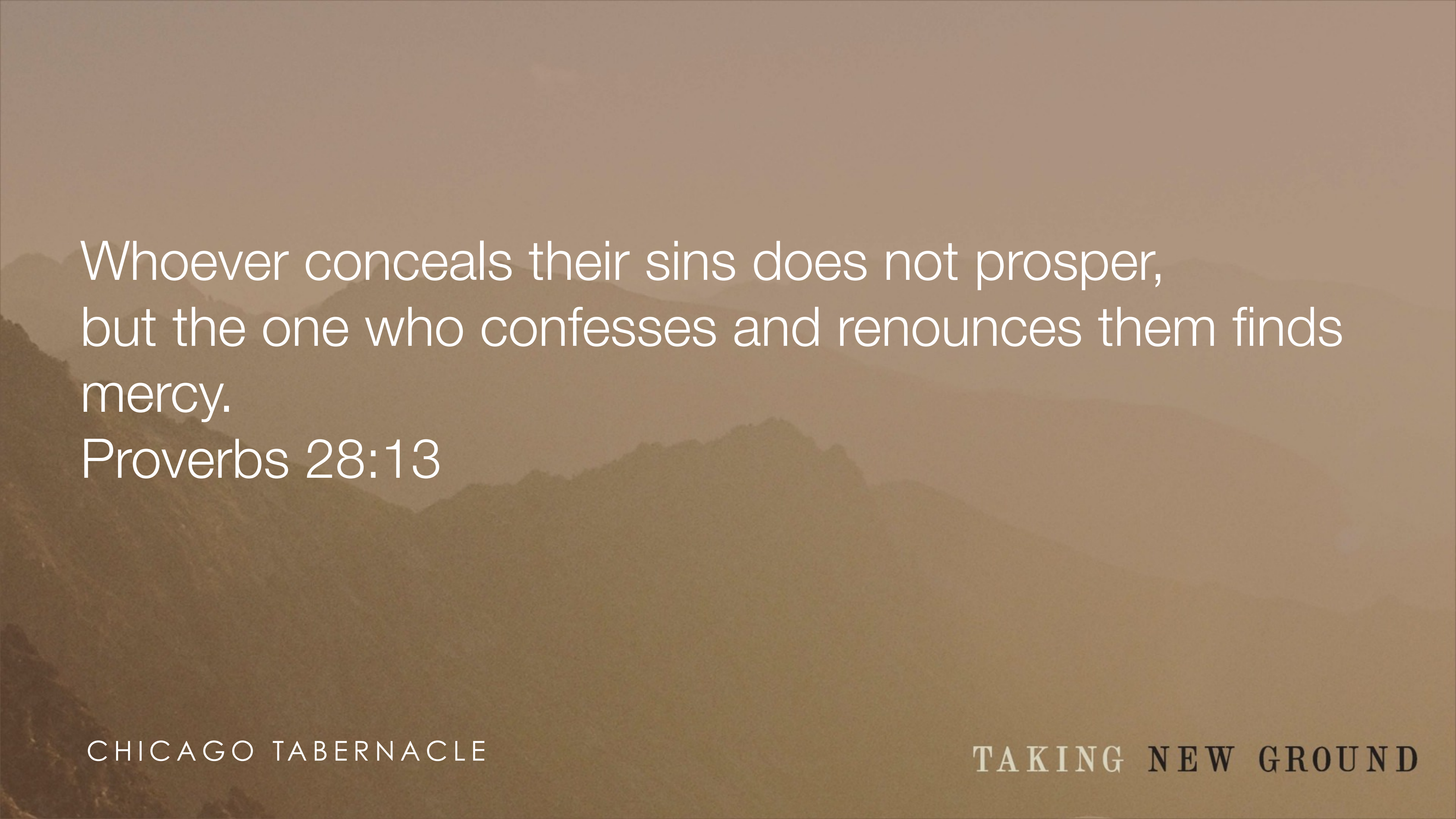
As Soon as They Dealt with the Sin, God Was With Them Again

Then the Lord said to Joshua, “Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged. Take the whole army with you, and go up and attack Ai. **For I have delivered into your hands the king of Ai, his people, his city and his land.**

Joshua 8:1

⁴But because of his great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy, ⁵made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions-it is by grace you have been saved.

Ephesians 2:4-5



Whoever conceals their sins does not prosper,
but the one who confesses and renounces them finds
mercy.

Proverbs 28:13



...because judgment without mercy will be shown to anyone who has not been merciful. **Mercy triumphs over judgment.**

James 2:13