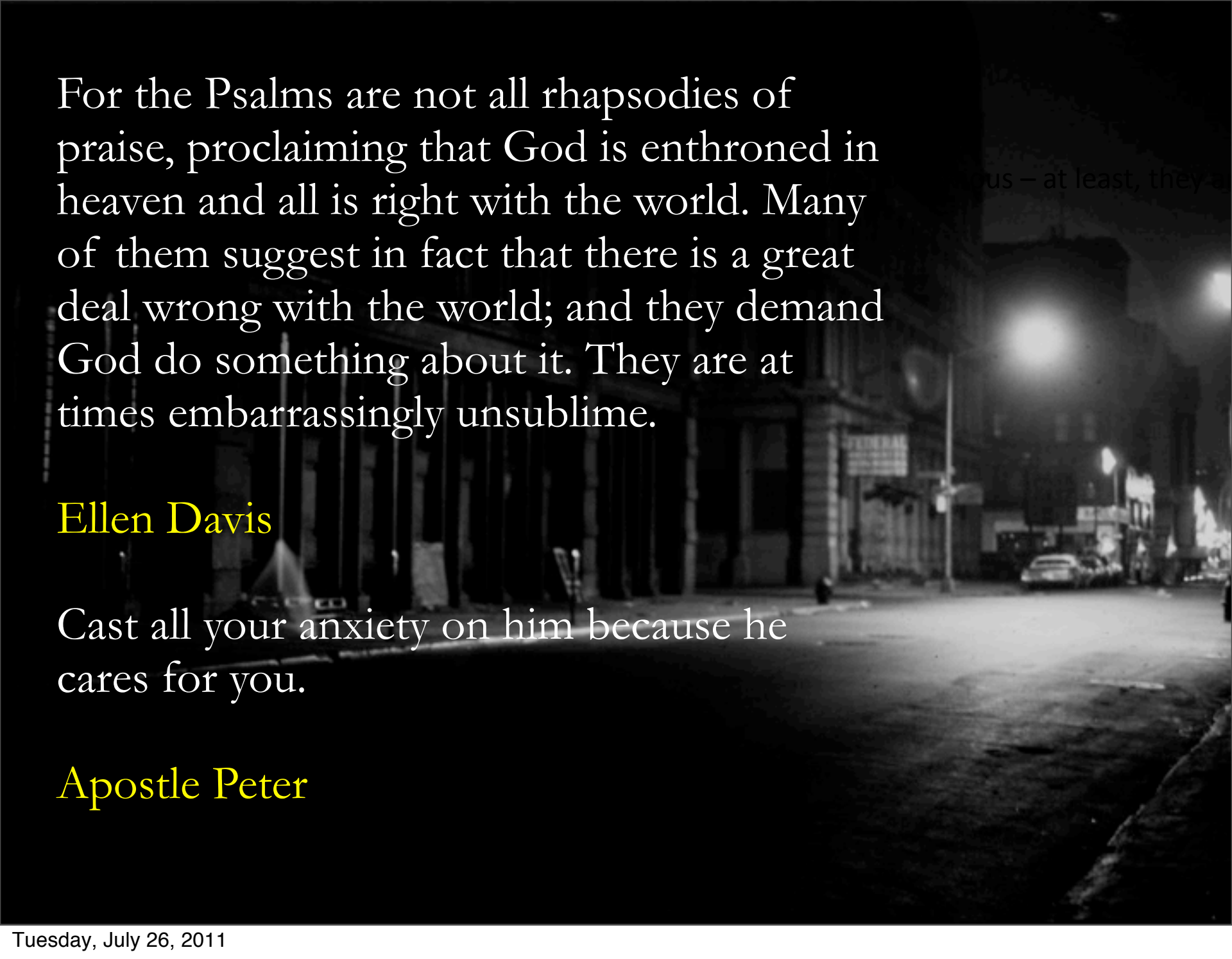




# CRIES OF THE HEART

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*WRESTLING WITH GOD  
THROUGH THE PSALMS*

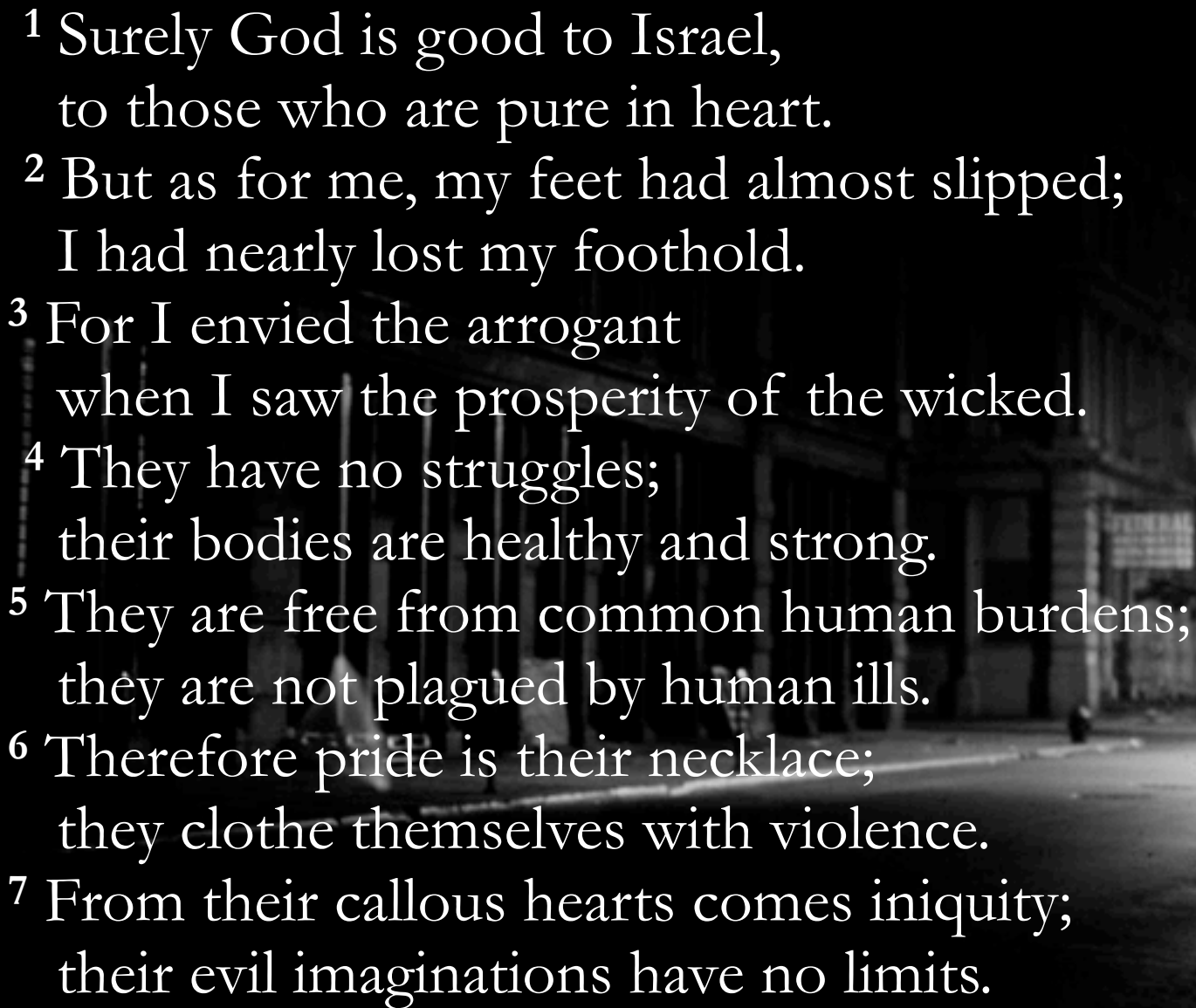


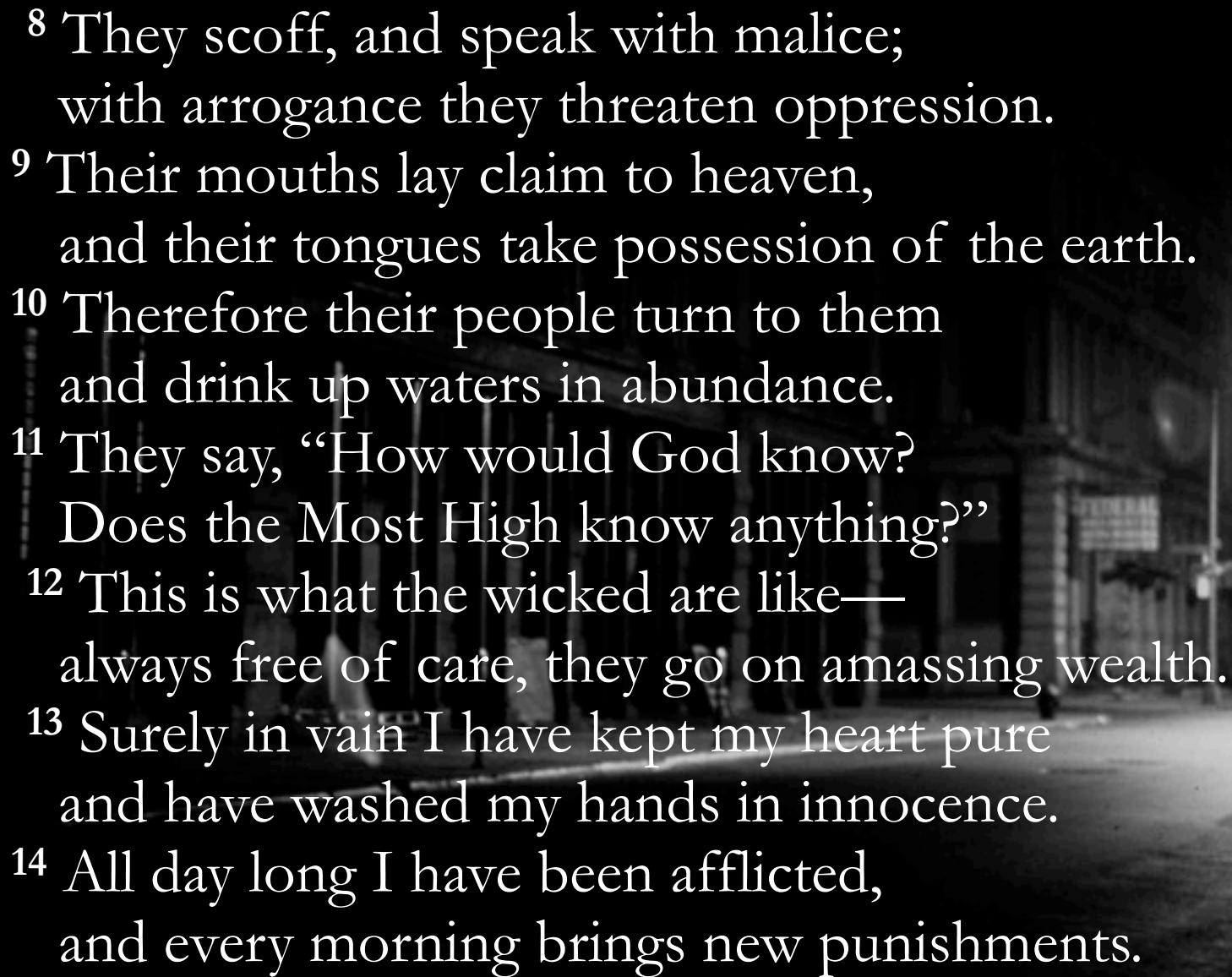
For the Psalms are not all rhapsodies of praise, proclaiming that God is enthroned in heaven and all is right with the world. Many of them suggest in fact that there is a great deal wrong with the world; and they demand God do something about it. They are at times embarrassingly unsublime.

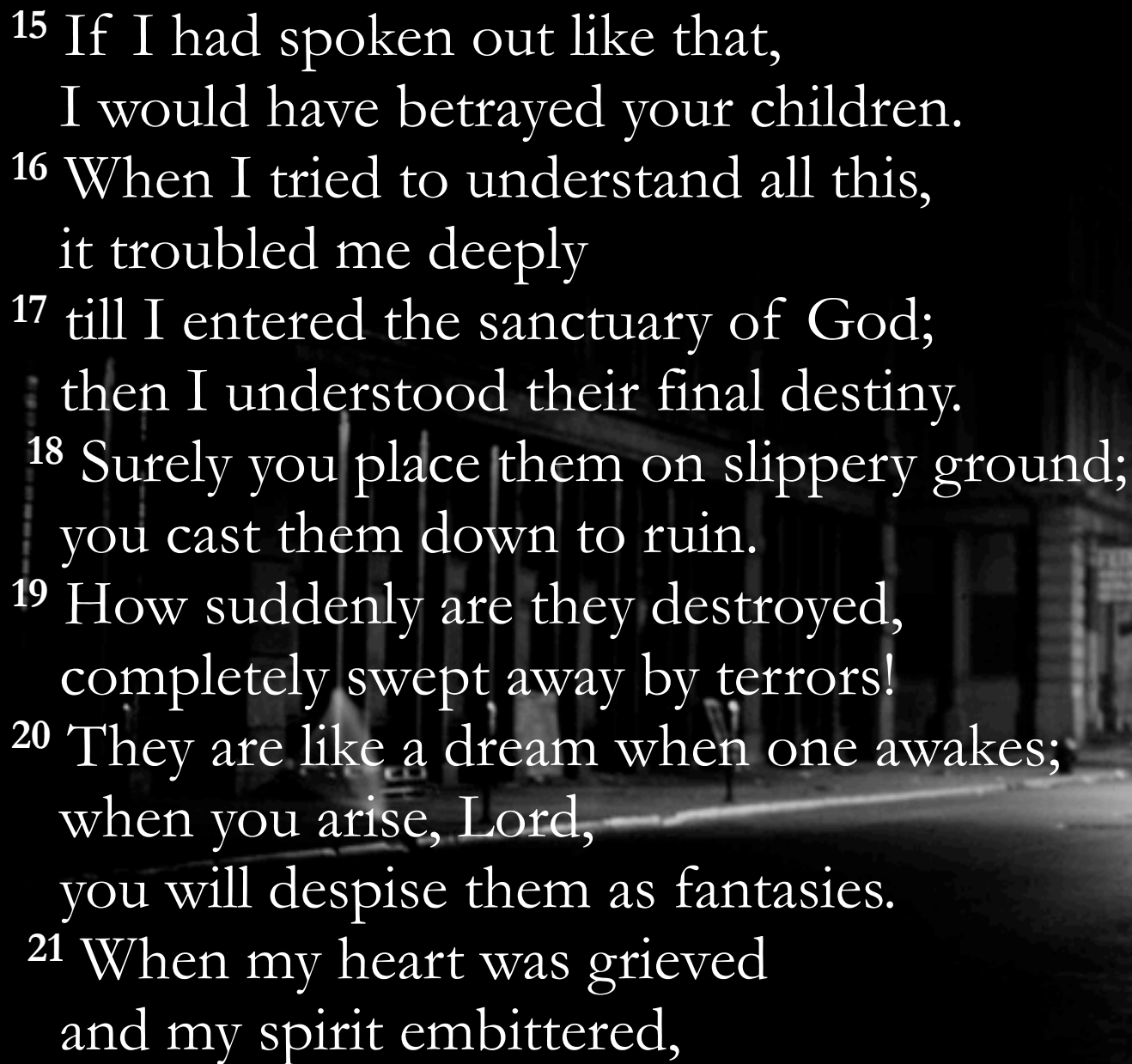
**Ellen Davis**

Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you.

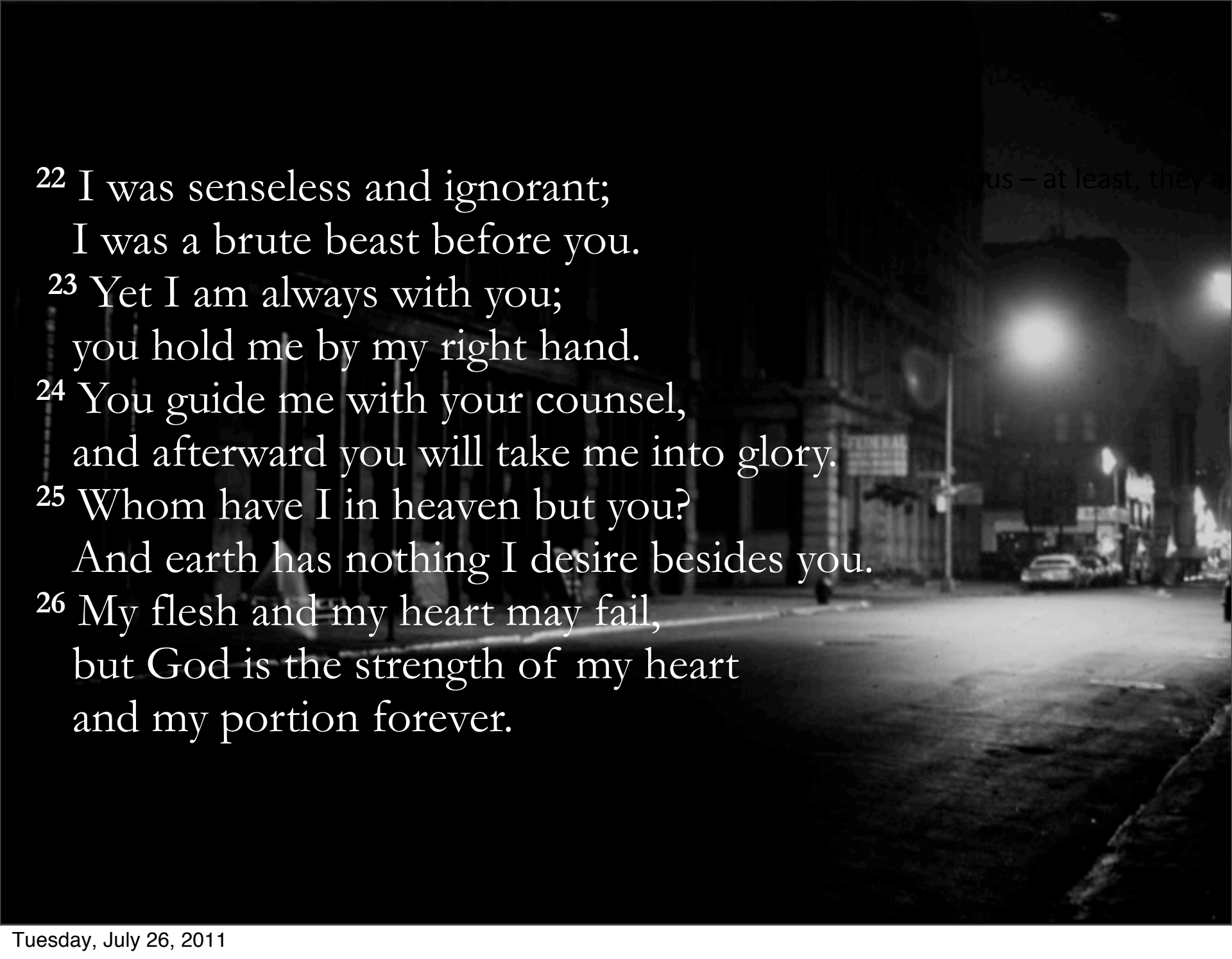
**Apostle Peter**

- 
- <sup>1</sup> Surely God is good to Israel,  
to those who are pure in heart.
- <sup>2</sup> But as for me, my feet had almost slipped;  
I had nearly lost my foothold.
- <sup>3</sup> For I envied the arrogant  
when I saw the prosperity of the wicked.
- <sup>4</sup> They have no struggles;  
their bodies are healthy and strong.
- <sup>5</sup> They are free from common human burdens;  
they are not plagued by human ills.
- <sup>6</sup> Therefore pride is their necklace;  
they clothe themselves with violence.
- <sup>7</sup> From their callous hearts comes iniquity;  
their evil imaginations have no limits.

- 
- 8 They scoff, and speak with malice;  
with arrogance they threaten oppression.
- 9 Their mouths lay claim to heaven,  
and their tongues take possession of the earth.
- 10 Therefore their people turn to them  
and drink up waters in abundance.
- 11 They say, “How would God know?  
Does the Most High know anything?”
- 12 This is what the wicked are like—  
always free of care, they go on amassing wealth.
- 13 Surely in vain I have kept my heart pure  
and have washed my hands in innocence.
- 14 All day long I have been afflicted,  
and every morning brings new punishments.



15 If I had spoken out like that,  
I would have betrayed your children.  
16 When I tried to understand all this,  
it troubled me deeply  
17 till I entered the sanctuary of God;  
then I understood their final destiny.  
18 Surely you place them on slippery ground;  
you cast them down to ruin.  
19 How suddenly are they destroyed,  
completely swept away by terrors!  
20 They are like a dream when one awakes;  
when you arise, Lord,  
you will despise them as fantasies.  
21 When my heart was grieved  
and my spirit embittered,



22 I was senseless and ignorant;  
I was a brute beast before you.

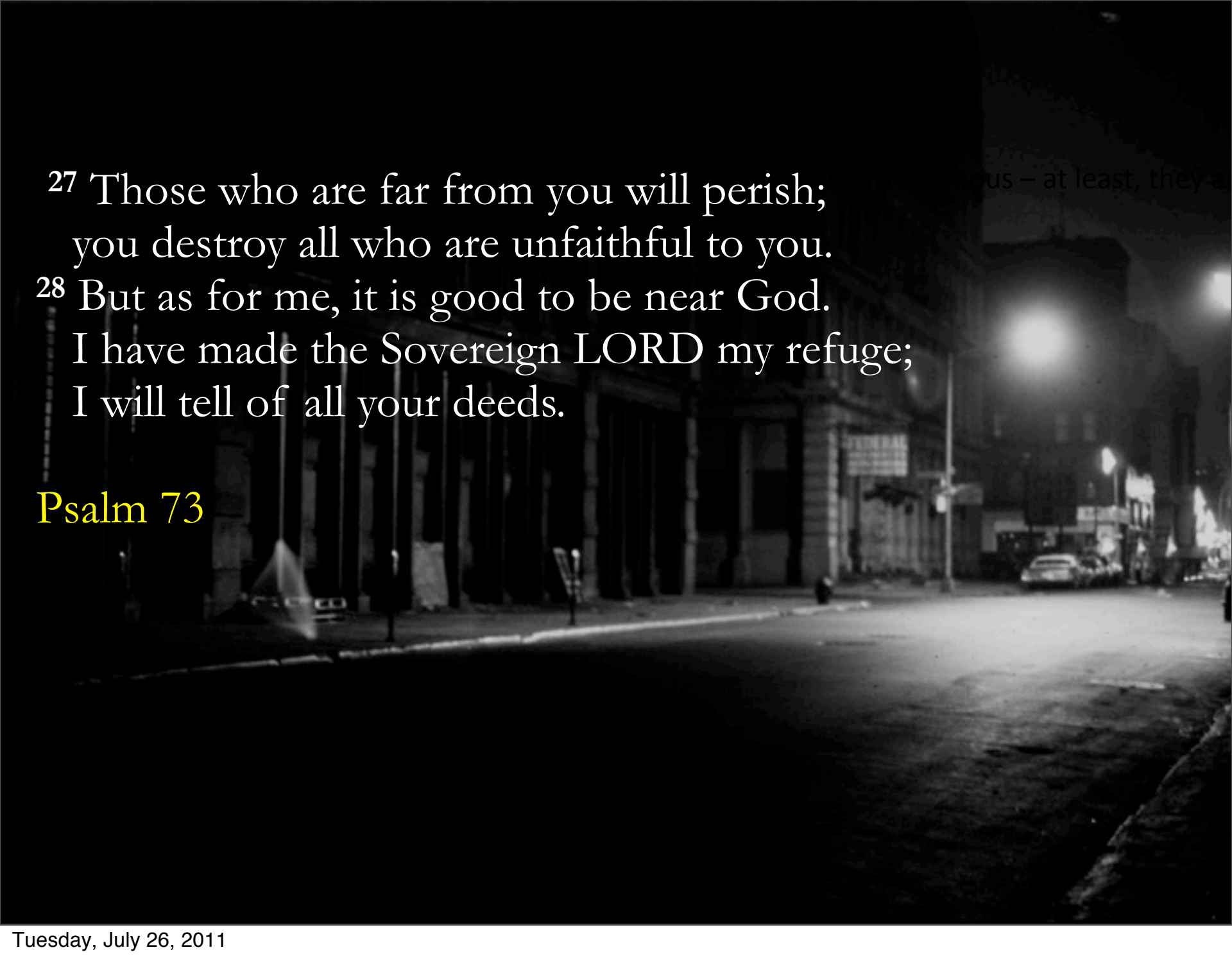
23 Yet I am always with you;  
you hold me by my right hand.

24 You guide me with your counsel,  
and afterward you will take me into glory.

25 Whom have I in heaven but you?  
And earth has nothing I desire besides you.

26 My flesh and my heart may fail,  
but God is the strength of my heart  
and my portion forever.

us – at least, they



<sup>27</sup> Those who are far from you will perish;  
you destroy all who are unfaithful to you.  
<sup>28</sup> But as for me, it is good to be near God.  
I have made the Sovereign LORD my refuge;  
I will tell of all your deeds.

## Psalm 73

us – at least, they

*emotional resonance*

us – at least, they

*ASAPH*

Tuesday, July 26, 2011

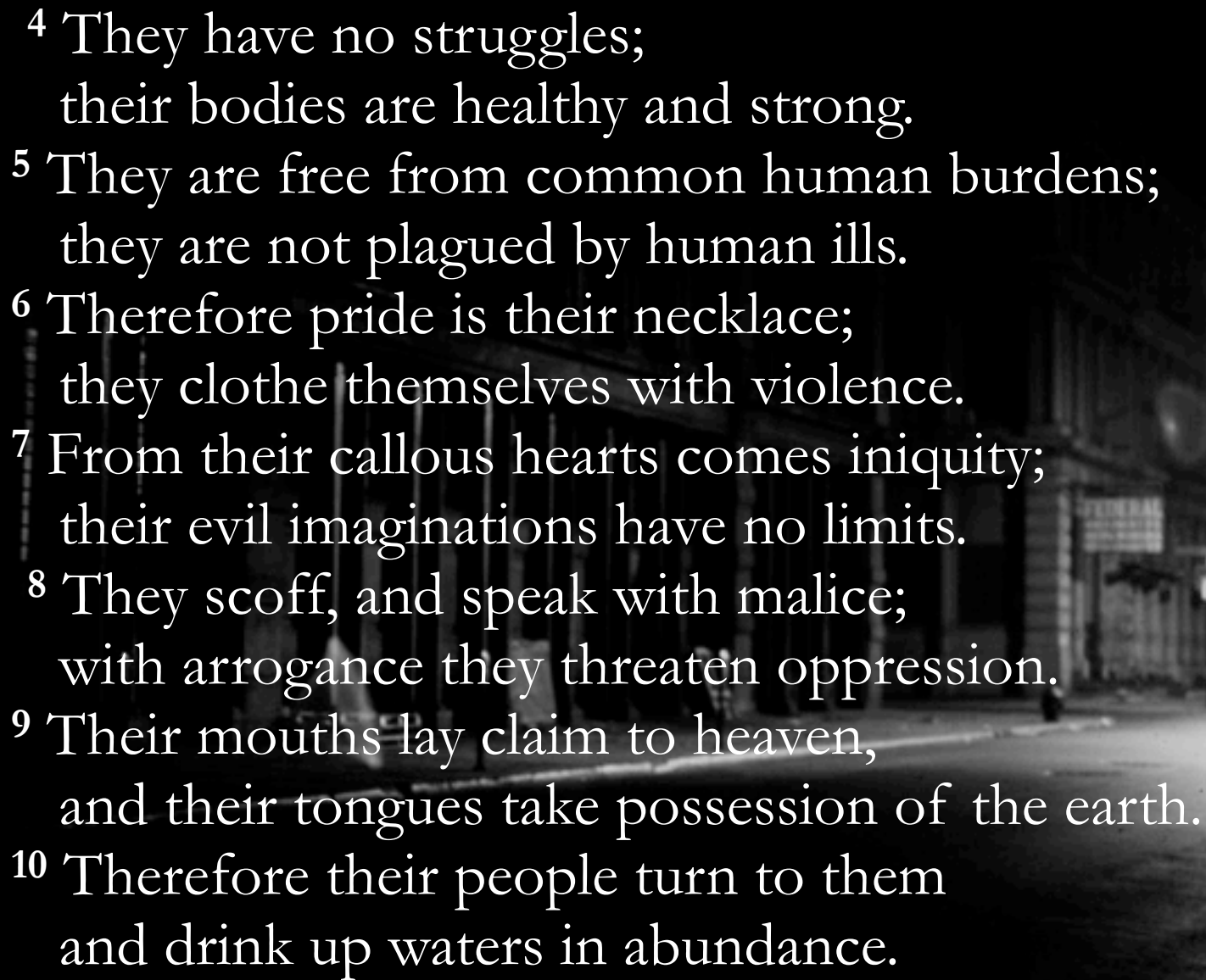
us – at least, they

- <sup>1</sup> Surely God is good to Israel,  
to those who are pure in heart.
- <sup>2</sup> But as for me, my feet had almost slipped;  
I had nearly lost my foothold.
- <sup>3</sup> For I envied the arrogant  
when I saw the prosperity of the wicked.

us – at least, they

*BEFORE*

Tuesday, July 26, 2011

- 
- 4 They have no struggles;  
their bodies are healthy and strong.
- 5 They are free from common human burdens;  
they are not plagued by human ills.
- 6 Therefore pride is their necklace;  
they clothe themselves with violence.
- 7 From their callous hearts comes iniquity;  
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- 8 They scoff, and speak with malice;  
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16 When I tried to understand all this,  
it troubled me deeply

us – at least, they

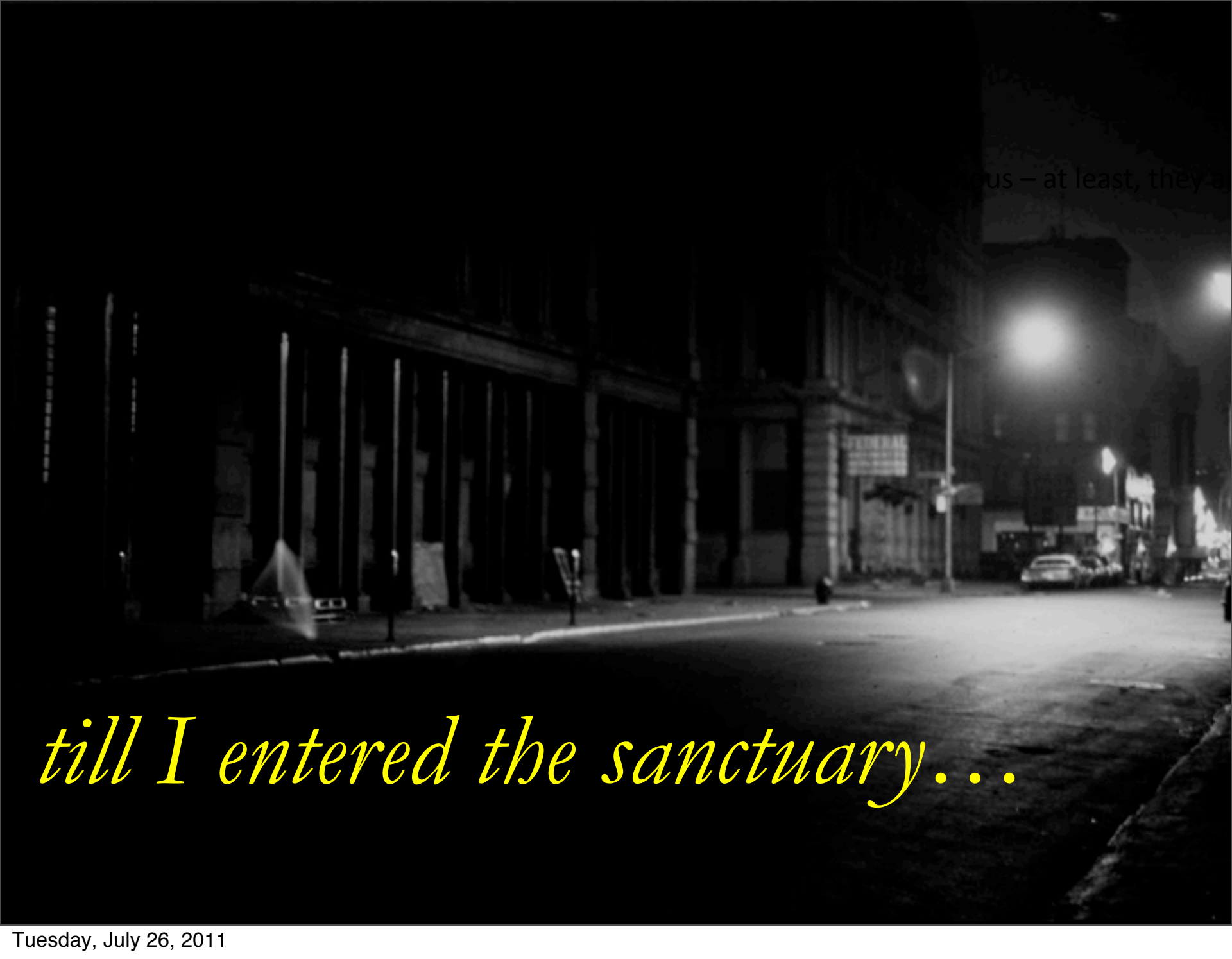
*struggling to believe*

us – at least, they

*angry at condition of the world*

us – at least, they

*deeply troubled*



...us – at least, they

*till I entered the sanctuary...*

us – at least, they

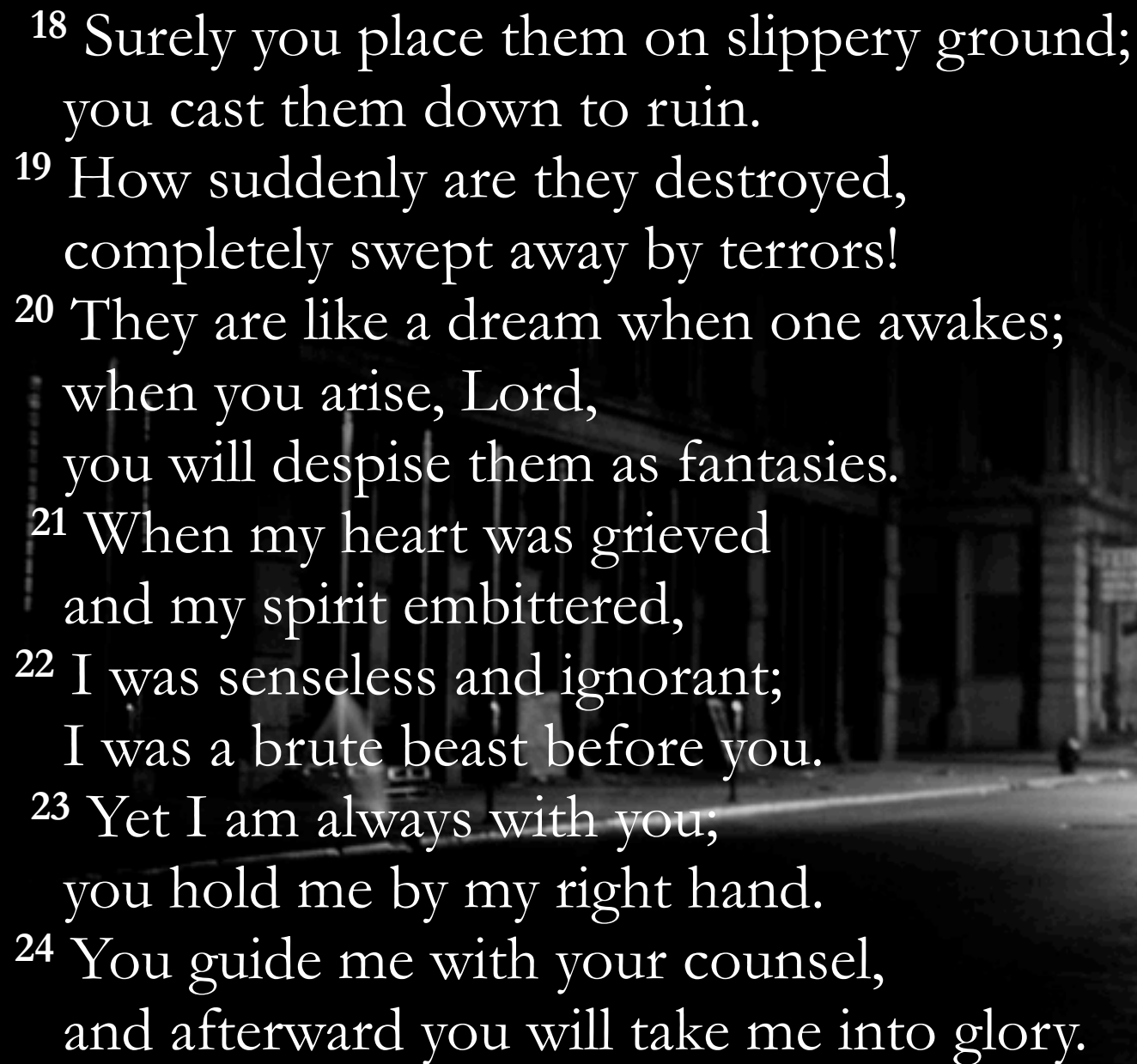


*POWER TO CHANGE  
PERSPECTIVE*

us – at least, they

*AFTER*

Tuesday, July 26, 2011

- 
- 18 Surely you place them on slippery ground;  
you cast them down to ruin.
- 19 How suddenly are they destroyed,  
completely swept away by terrors!
- 20 They are like a dream when one awakes;  
when you arise, Lord,  
you will despise them as fantasies.
- 21 When my heart was grieved  
and my spirit embittered,
- 22 I was senseless and ignorant;  
I was a brute beast before you.
- 23 Yet I am always with you;  
you hold me by my right hand.
- 24 You guide me with your counsel,  
and afterward you will take me into glory.

us – at least, they

*Wisdom: sensing what is shallow*

us – at least, they

*Humility: understanding our heart*

us – at least, they

*Comfort: knowing God is near*

us – at least, they

*sustainment, guidance, hope*

us – at least, they

# *FROM DESPAIR TO JOY*

Tuesday, July 26, 2011

us – at least, they

<sup>25</sup> Whom have I in heaven but you?  
And earth has nothing I desire besides you.  
<sup>26</sup> My flesh and my heart may fail,  
but God is the strength of my heart  
and my portion forever.

The fact that the Psalms never clearly report a change in external circumstance is one mark of the Bible's persistent realism. Prayer is not always answered in the terms we expect and long for; the answer may be given in a way that is not even perceptible to someone looking at the situation from the outside.

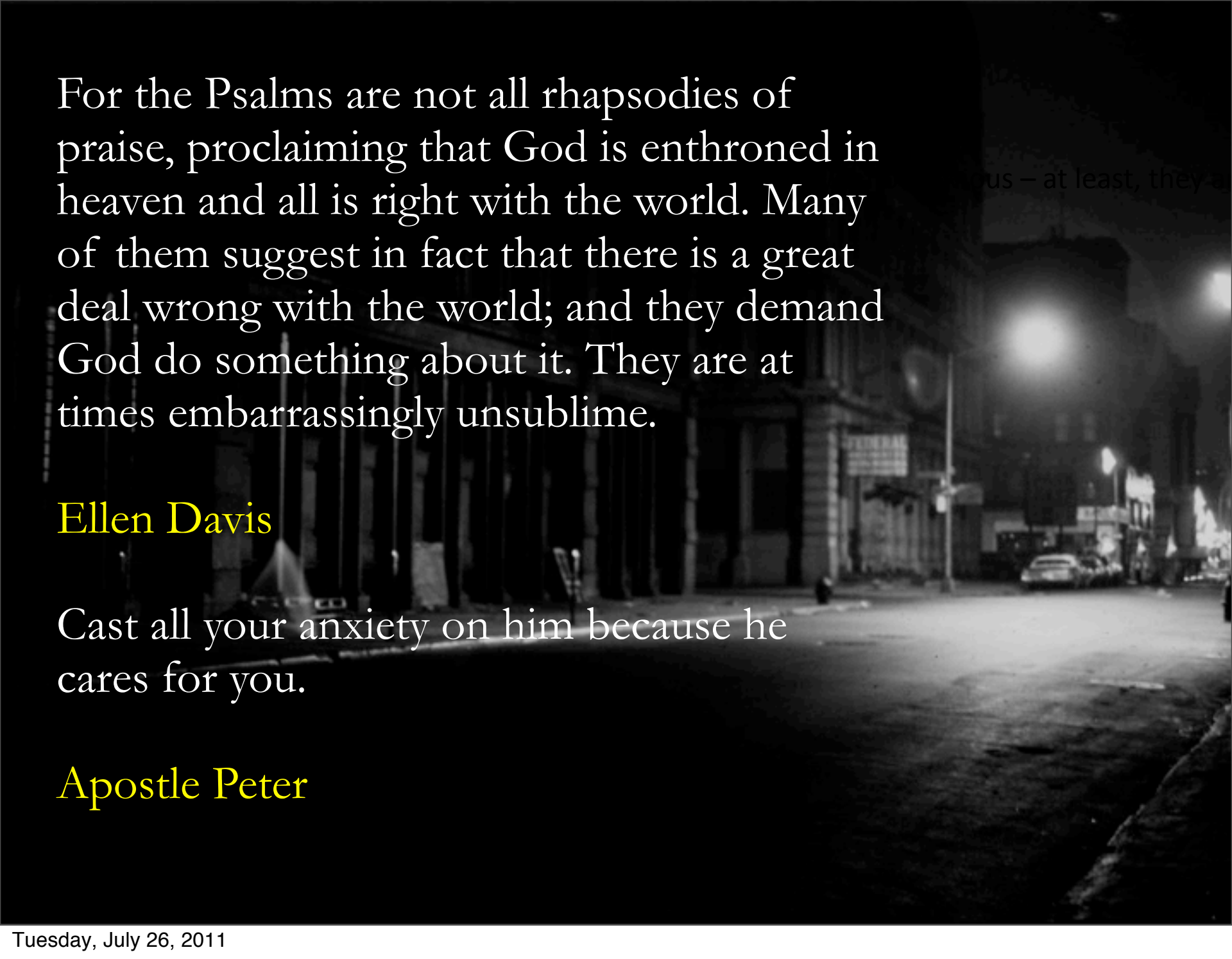
Ellen Davis



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