

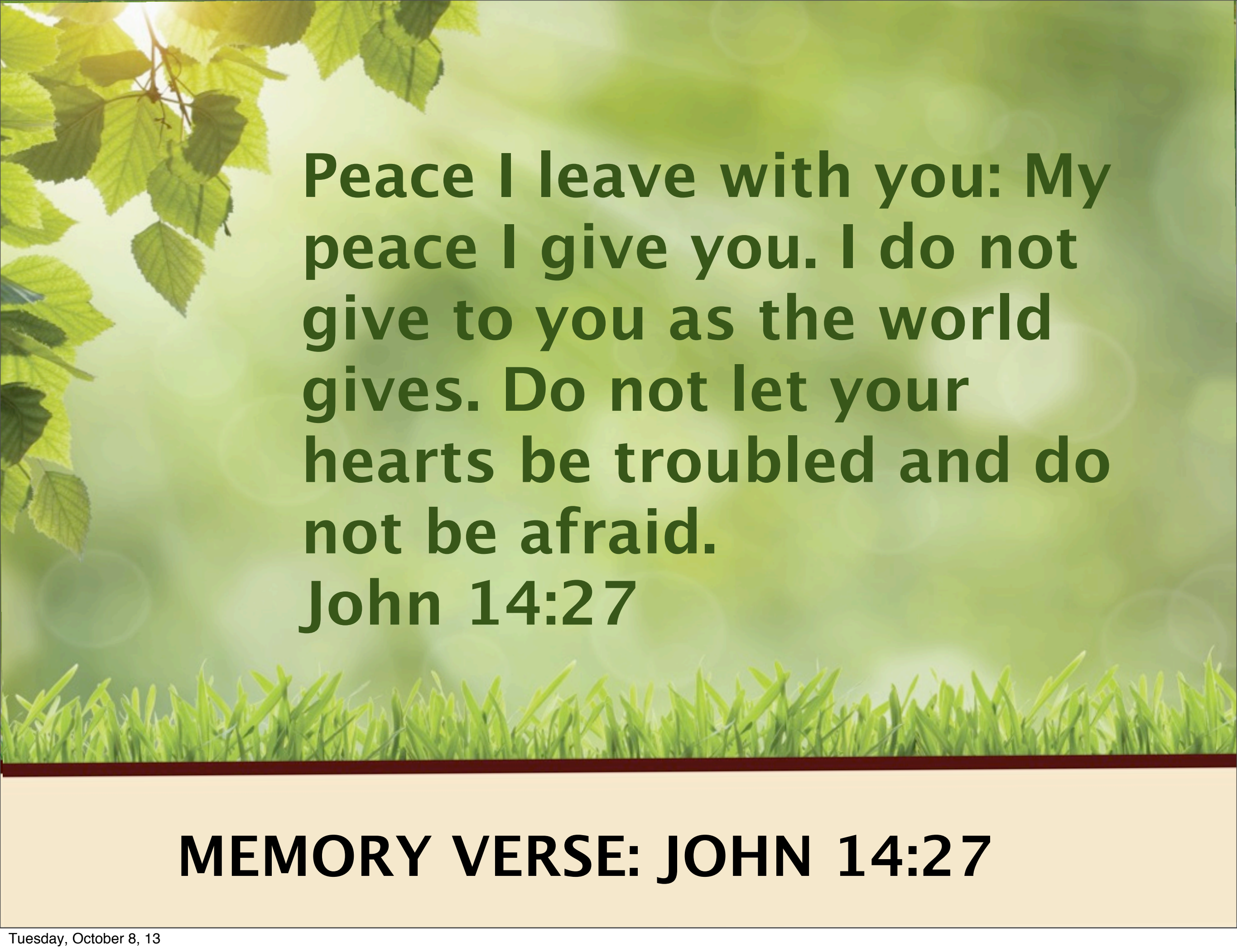
Receiving
God's
Abundant
Gifts



THE GIFT OF PEACE: LESSON 4

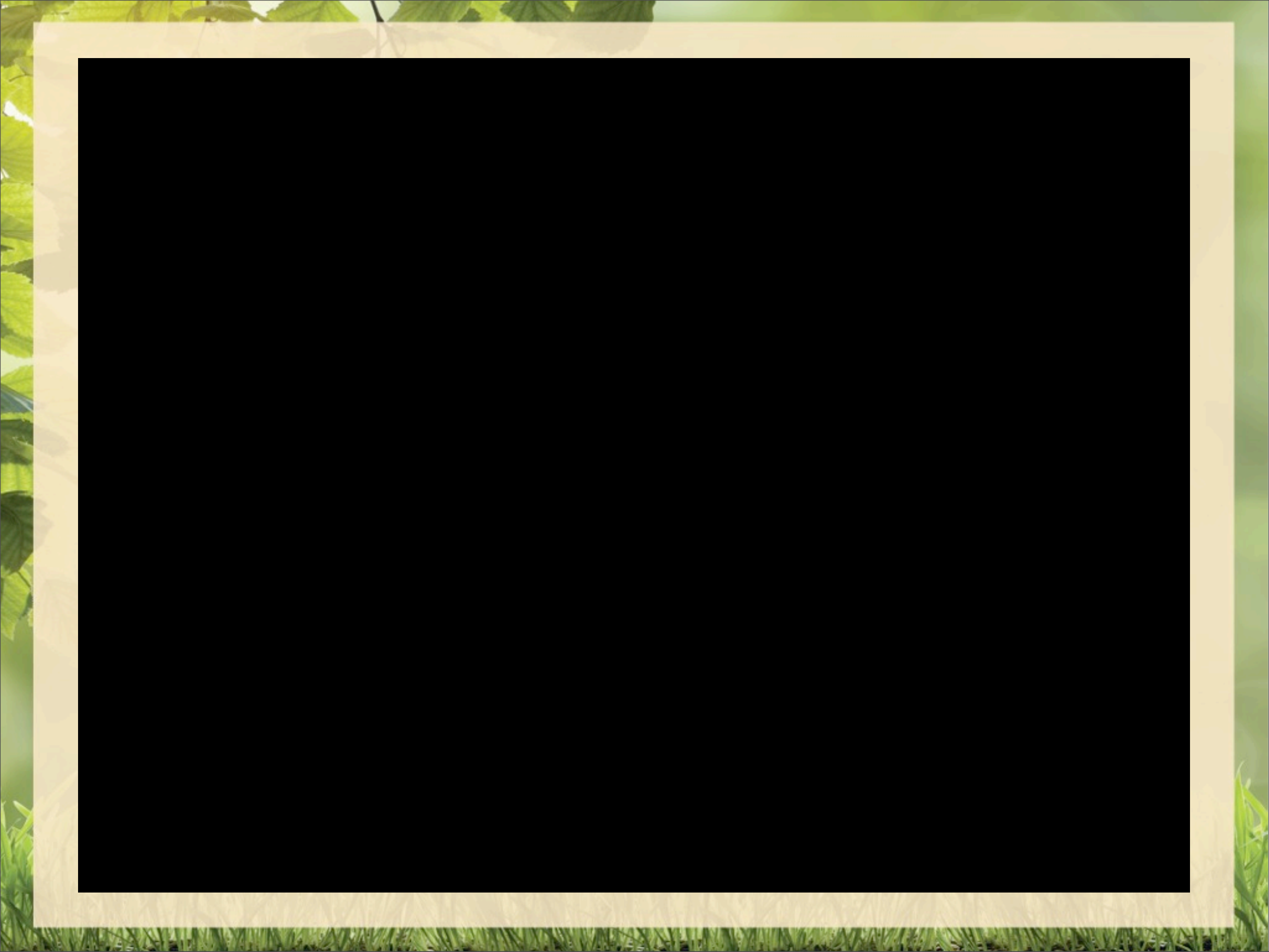
GATHERING SONG: IT IS WELL WITH MY SOUL





**Peace I leave with you: My
peace I give you. I do not
give to you as the world
gives. Do not let your
hearts be troubled and do
not be afraid.
John 14:27**

MEMORY VERSE: JOHN 14:27



THE GIFT OF PEACE: EPHESIANS 2:11–3:6

What does Jesus mean by “peace”?





ENGLISH DEFINITION

- Freedom from disturbance; quiet and tranquility
- Freedom from or the cessation of war or violence
- A ceremonial handshake or kiss exchanged during a service in some churches symbolizing Christian love and unity.

Oxford Online Dictionary



ANCIENT HEBREW MEANING

Salom means to be complete, or to be sound.

- Wholeness of life or body (health)
- Right relationship, harmony between two people, often established by a covenant
- Prosperity, success or fulfillment
- Victory over one's enemies or absence of war

Baker's Evangelical Dictionary of Bible Theology



NEW TESTAMENT GREEK MEANING

Eirene (i-ray-nay)

- Includes absence of war
- Harmony, concord, security, safety, prosperity, felicity
- The tranquil state of a soul assured of its salvation through Christ, and so fearing nothing from God and content with its earthly lot, the blessed state of the devout and upright after death

NAS New Testament Greek Lexicon



Ephesians 2: 14–18

For he himself is our **peace**, who has made the two groups one and destroyed the barrier, the dividing wall of hostility, by setting aside in his flesh the law with its commands and regulations. His purpose was to create in himself one new humanity out of the two, thus making **peace**, and in one body to reconcile both of them to God through the cross, by which he put to death their hostility. He came and preached **peace** to you who were far away and **peace** to those who were near. For through him we both have access to the Father by one Spirit.



Paul is speaking of two kinds of alienation:

- ❖ The rift between Jews and Gentiles

- ❖ The hostility between BOTH of them and God

Unity Among Believers



Near and Far

Being “brought near” was a term used by the Rabbis to mean that a Gentile had been accepted as a convert.

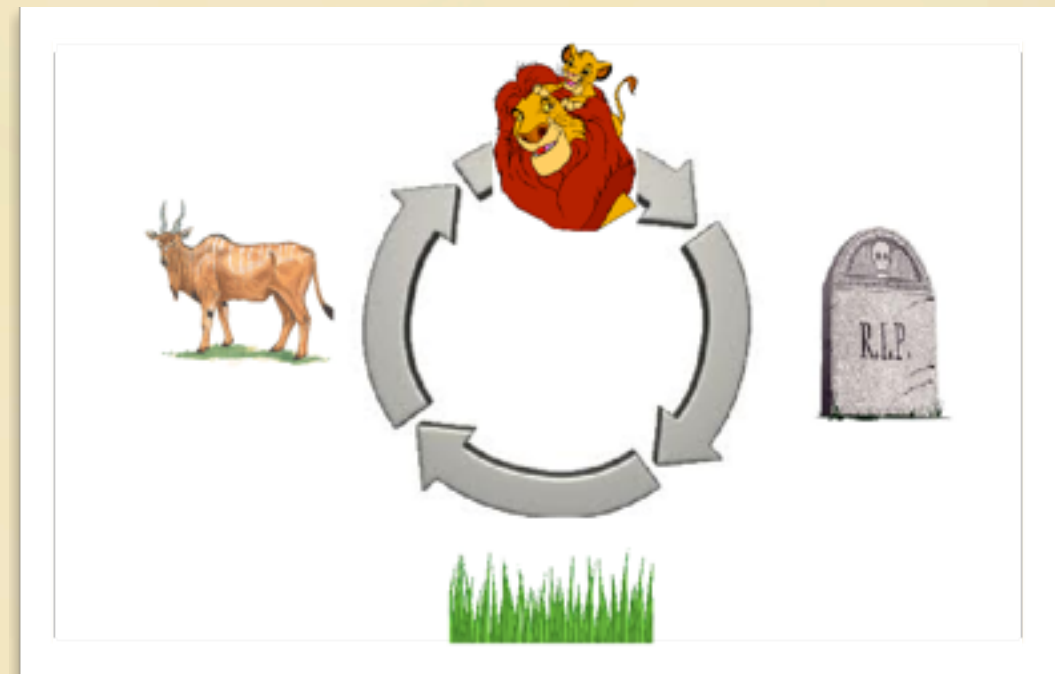
Gentiles were considered “far” from God and without hope.

The Cyclical Worldview:

No beginning, no end with Death at its Center

It's the Circle of Life
And it moves us all
Through despair and hope
Through faith and love
Till we find our place
On the path unwinding
In the Circle
The Circle of Life

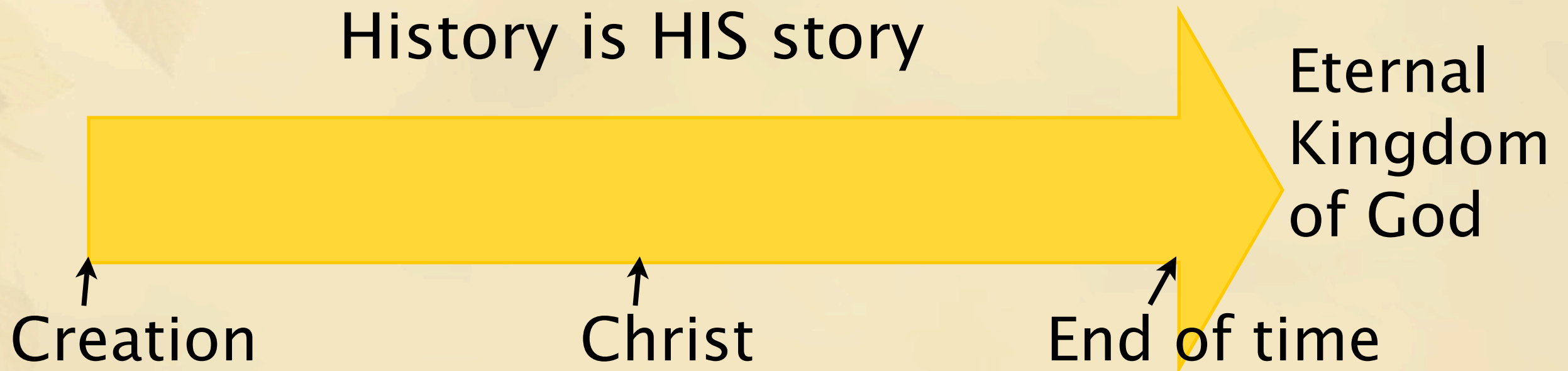
from The Lion King



The Processive Worldview of the Jews

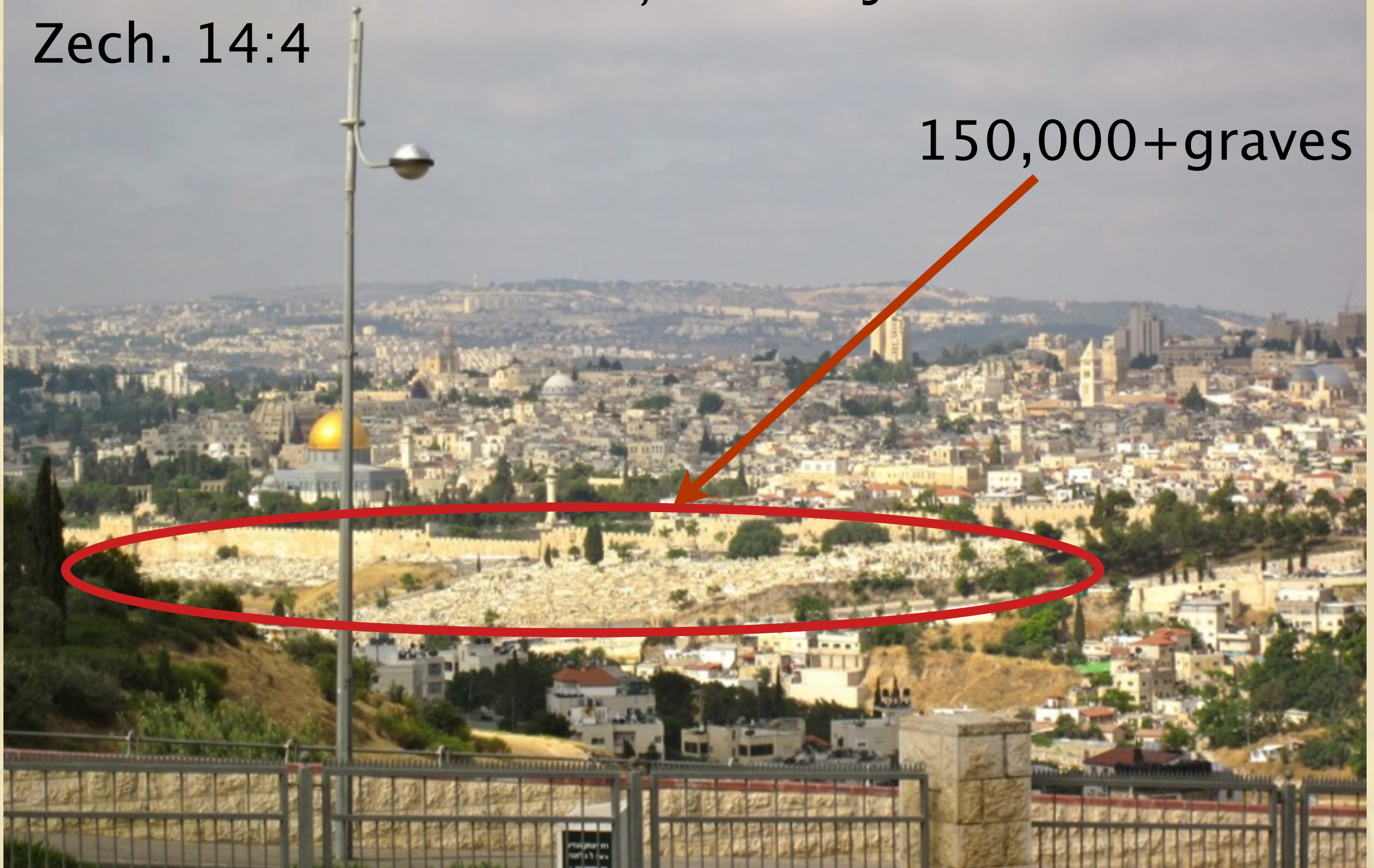
Time had a beginning and will have an end
God is working His purposes in history

History is HIS story



On that day his feet will stand
on the Mount of Olives, east of Jerusalem
Zech. 14:4

150,000+ graves





THE CONTRASTING WORLD VIEWS

For the Jews, history was always going somewhere: no matter what the present was like, the future was glorious.

For the Gentiles, history was going nowhere.

For the Gentiles, history was a progress to nowhere.

For the Jews, history was a march to God.

Barclay, New Daily Study Bible, Ephesians

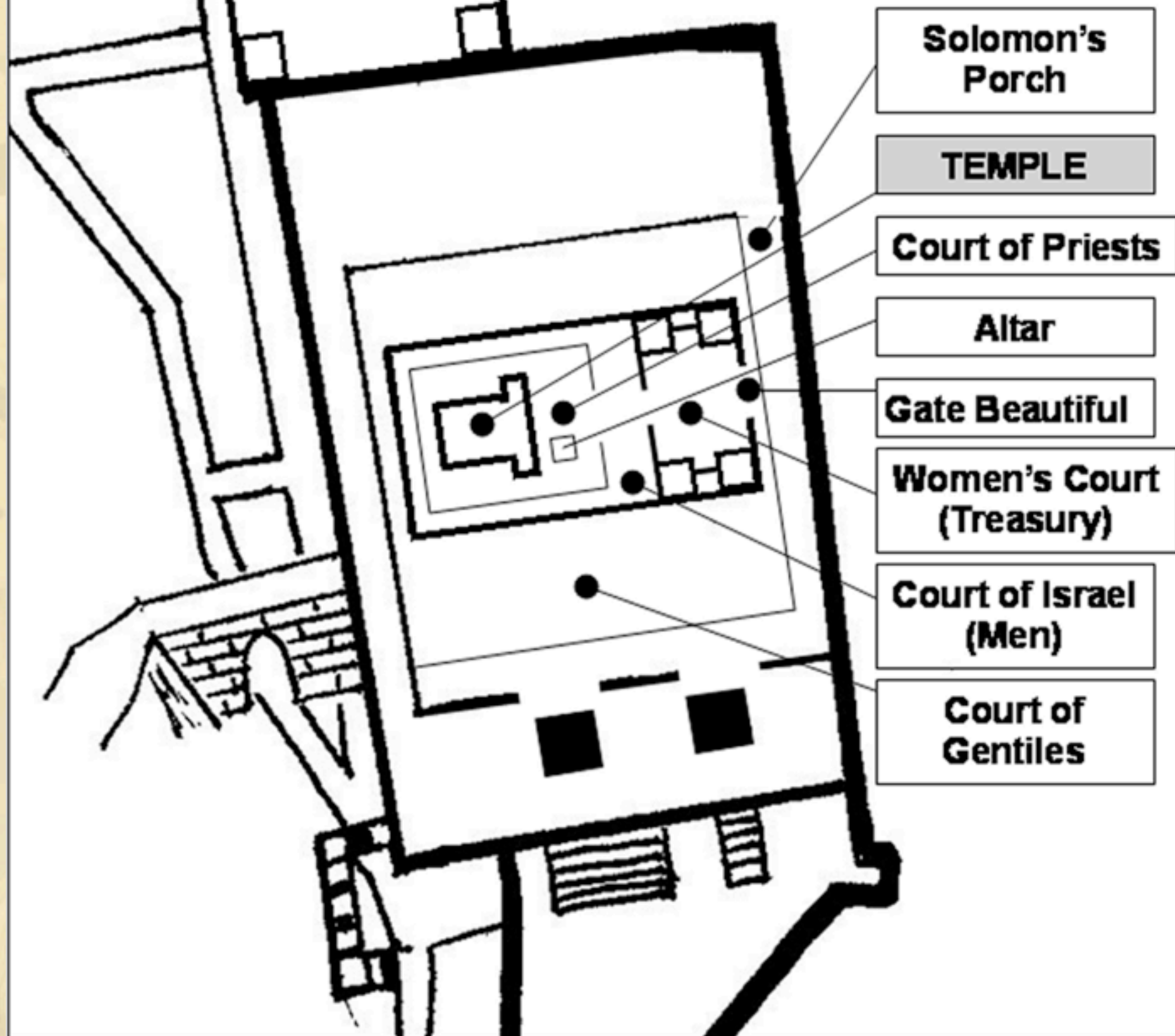


Addressing the Gentiles

Therefore, remember that formerly you who are Gentiles by birth...remember that at that time you were separate from Christ, excluded from citizenship in Israel and foreigners to the covenants of promise, without hope and without God in the world. But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far away have been brought near by the blood of Christ.

Ephesians 2: 11–13

HEROD'S TEMPLE on Temple Mount in Jerusalem



Temple Barriers to Gentiles



Social Barriers Between Jews and Gentiles

The Mosaic law with its holiness code, separated Jews and Gentiles both sociologically and religiously, creating a deep-seated enmity between them.

To maintain their separateness, Jews were not to:

- Eat with Gentiles
- Enter the home of a Gentile
- Marry a Gentile

I am the Lord your God, who has set you apart from the nations. Leviticus 20: 24b



**Gentile
Believers**

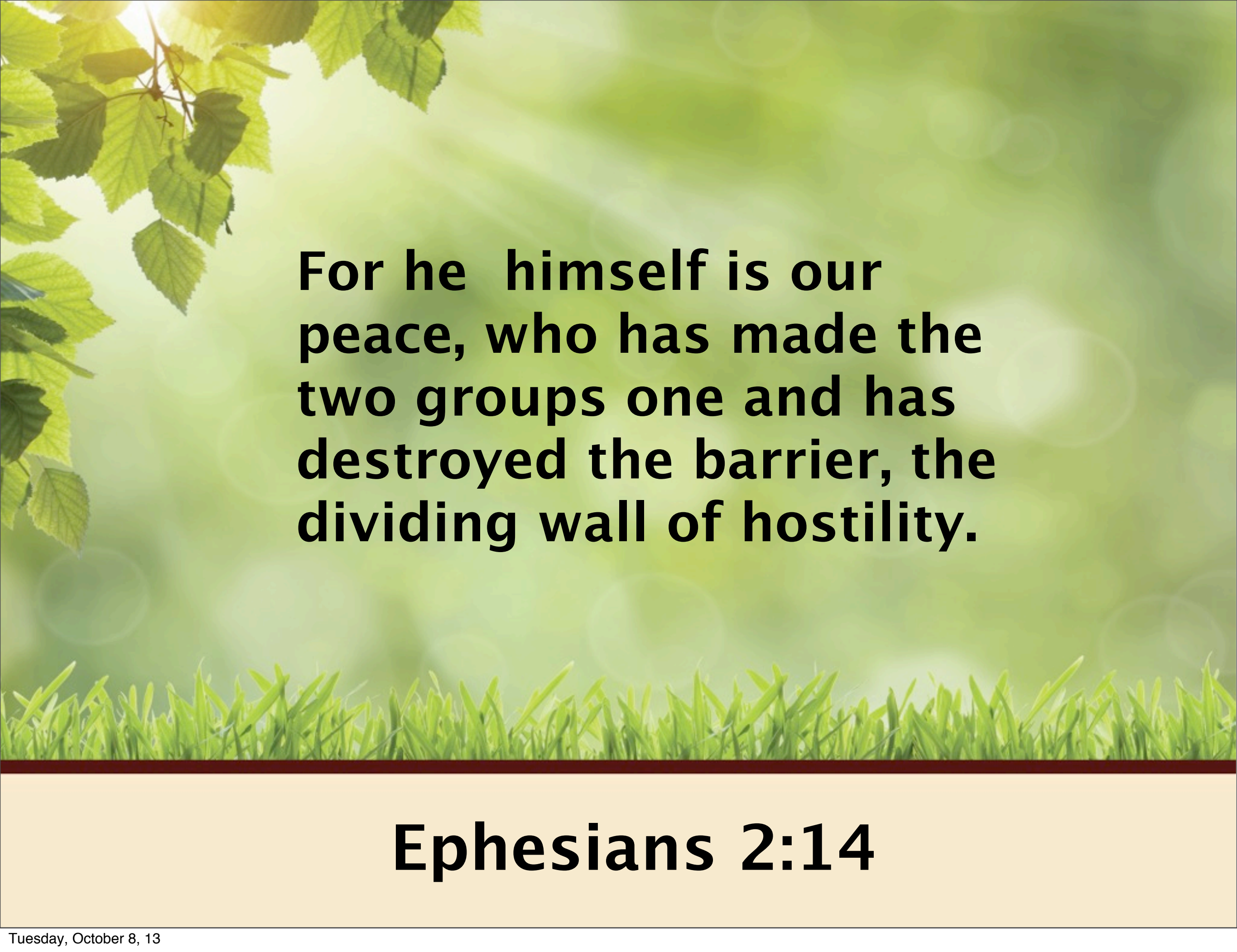
**Sharers in the promise in
Jesus Christ through the
gospel.
Ephesians. 3:6**

**Jewish
Believers**



The New Unity in Christ

- Both Jew and Gentile become new beings
- Jesus reconciled both to God
- Through Jesus both Jew and Gentile have access to God

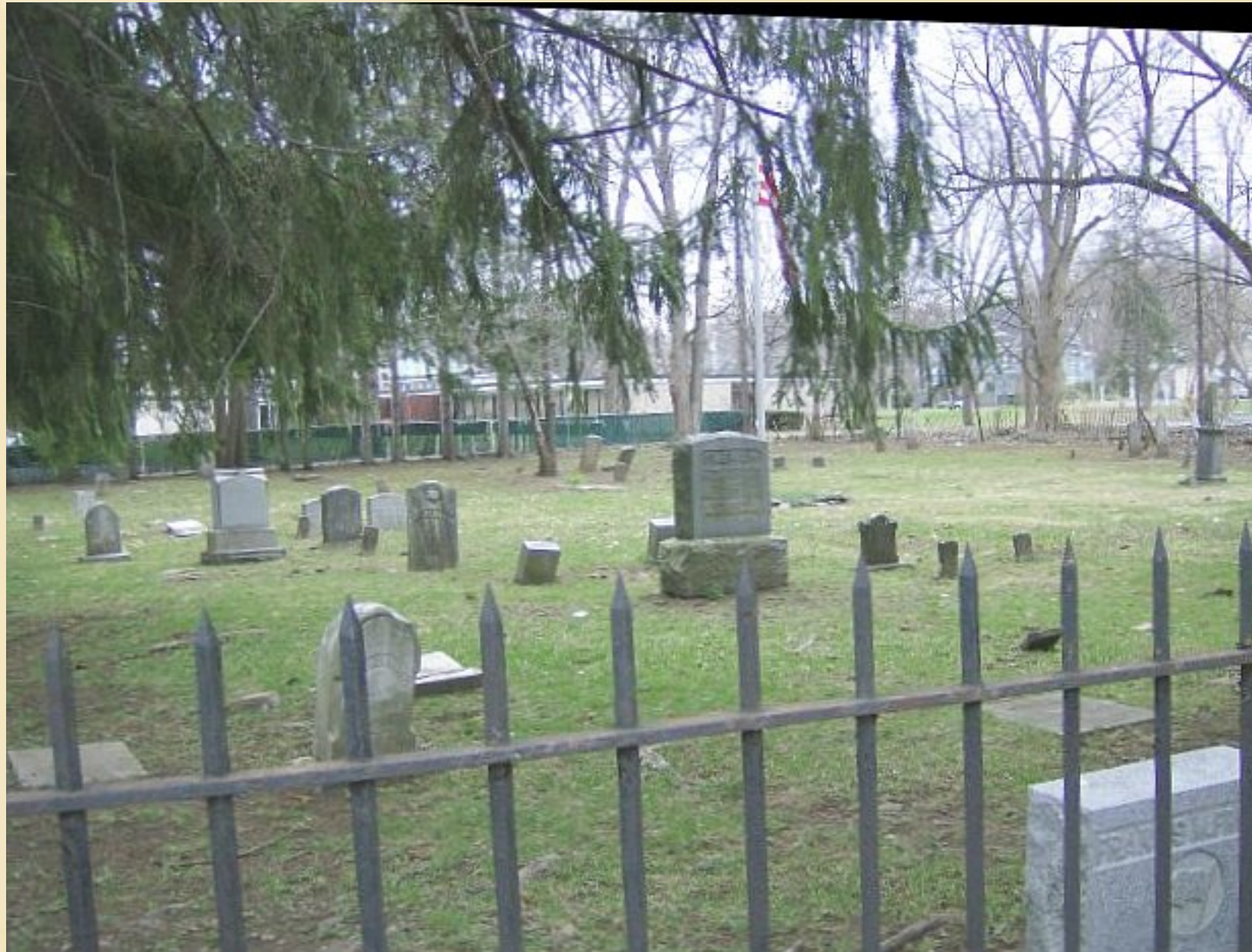


**For he himself is our
peace, who has made the
two groups one and has
destroyed the barrier, the
dividing wall of hostility.**

Ephesians 2:14



MOVING THE FENCE





Applying the Lesson In Your Life

What fence divides you from someone in your life: a family member, a neighbor, a colleague at work, a casual acquaintance?

Identify one thing you could do to begin moving that fence.

Do it.