

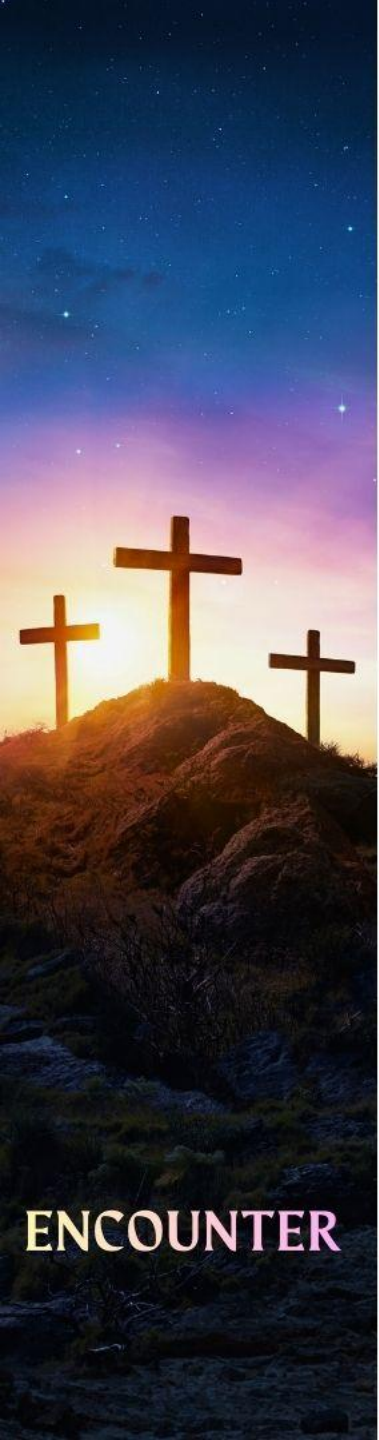
GOOD FRIDAY

A landscape photograph featuring three wooden crosses on a rocky hill. The sun is setting behind the crosses, creating a warm, golden glow. The sky is a mix of blue, purple, and orange, with stars visible in the upper portion. The foreground shows dark, rocky terrain.

ENCOUNTER THE CROSS

MICHAEL CHRISTIE





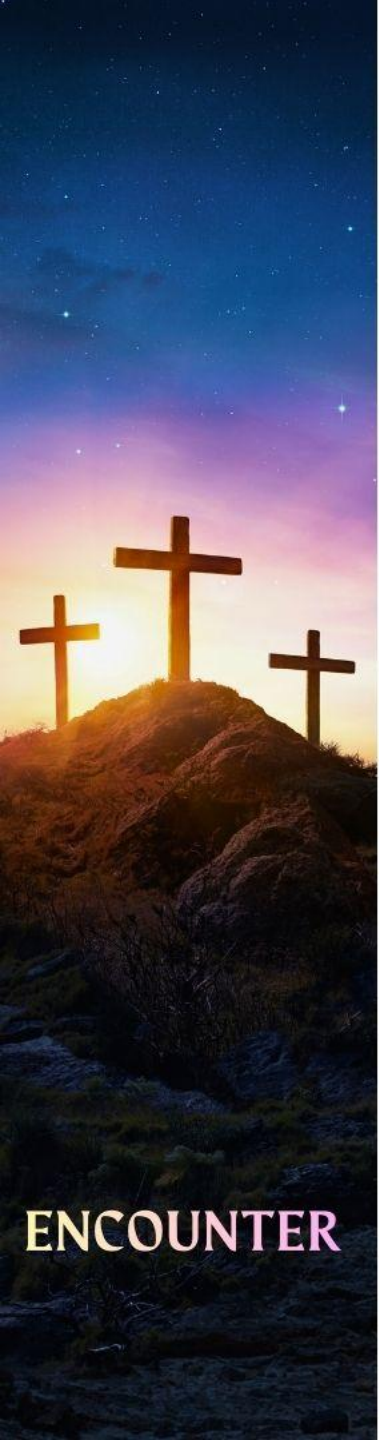
I could never believe in God were it not for the cross. I could never believe in a God who was removed from the pain and overwhelming distress of human suffering.

- JOHN STOTT

PSALM 22:1-18

¹ My God, my God, why have you forsaken me? Why are you so far from saving me, so far from my cries of anguish?

² My God, I cry out by day, but you do not answer, by night, but I find no rest.

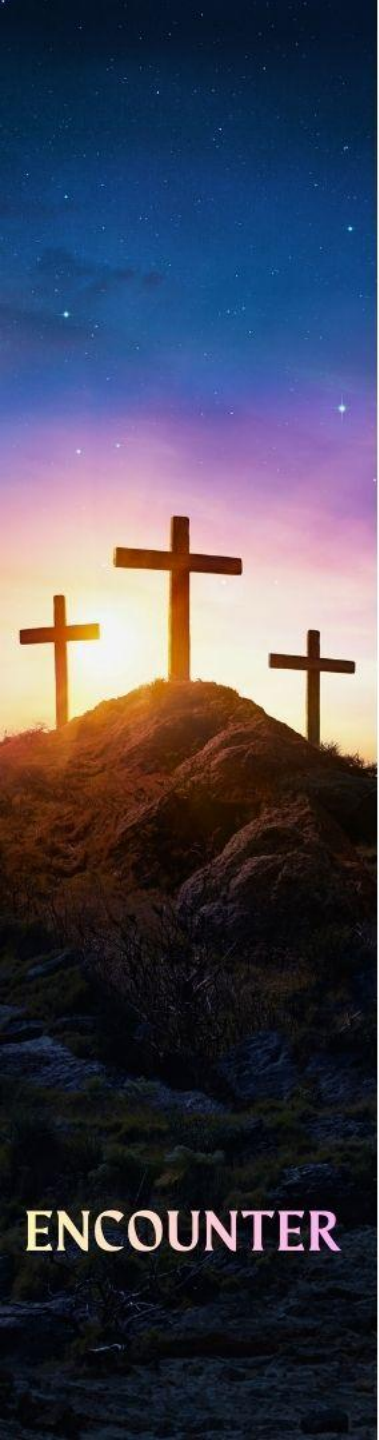


³ Yet you are enthroned as the Holy One; you are the one Israel praises.

⁴ In you our ancestors put their trust; they trusted and you delivered them.

⁵ To you they cried out and were saved; in you they trusted and were not put to shame.

⁶ But I am a worm and not a man, scorned by everyone, despised by the people.



⁷ All who see me mock me; they hurl insults, shaking their heads.

⁸ “He trusts in the LORD,” they say, “let the LORD rescue him. Let him deliver him, since he delights in him.”

⁹ Yet you brought me out of the womb; you made me trust in you, even at my mother’s breast.

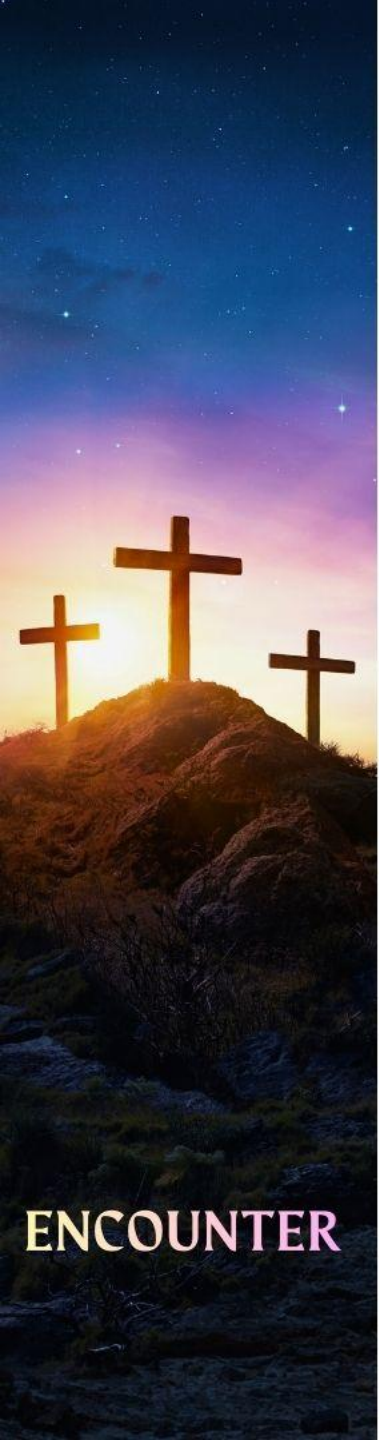
¹⁰ From birth I was cast on you; from my mother’s womb you have been my God.

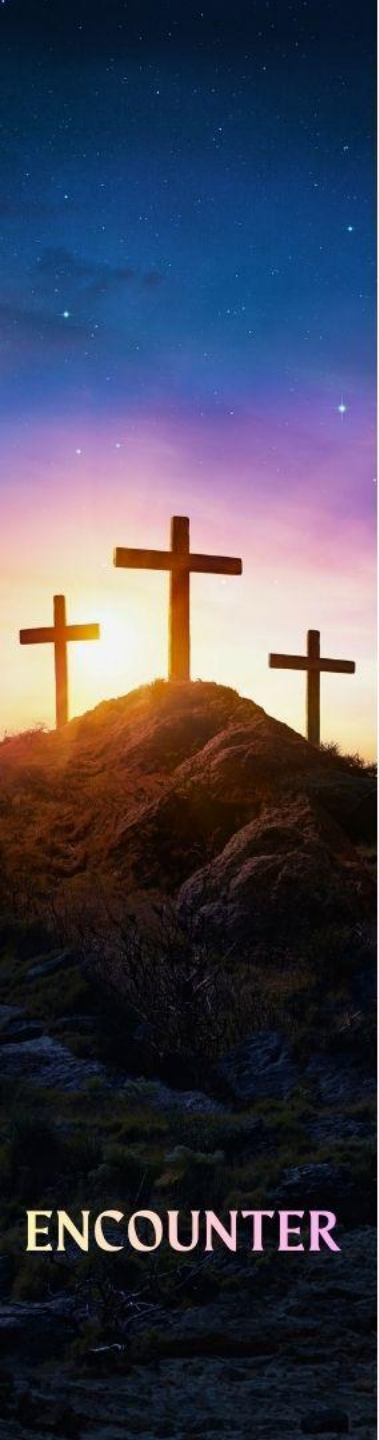
¹¹ Do not be far from me, for trouble is near and there is no one to help.

¹² Many bulls surround me; strong bulls of Bashan encircle me.

¹³ Roaring lions that tear their prey open their mouths wide against me.

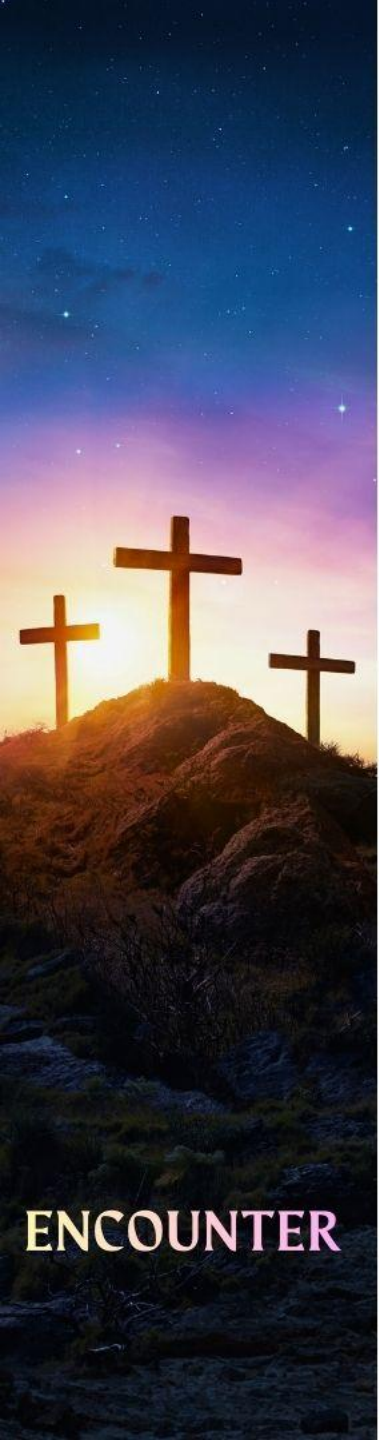
¹⁴ I am poured out like water, and all my bones are out of joint. My heart has turned to wax; it has melted within me.



A vertical image on the left side of the slide shows three wooden crosses on a hill. The scene is set at sunset or sunrise, with a warm orange and yellow glow behind the crosses, transitioning to a dark blue sky with stars. The foreground is dark and rocky.

¹⁵ My mouth is dried up like a potsherd, and my tongue sticks to the roof of my mouth; you lay me in the dust of death.

¹⁶ Dogs surround me, a pack of villains encircles me; they pierce my hands and my feet. ¹⁷ All my bones are on display; people stare and gloat over me. ¹⁸ They divide my clothes among them and cast lots for my garment.



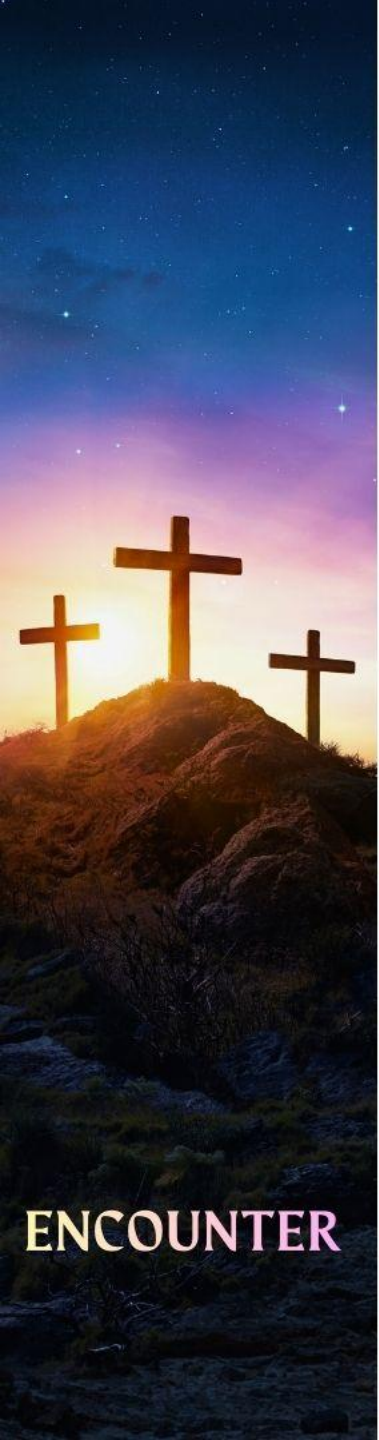
ENCOUNTER



His Spiritual Suffering

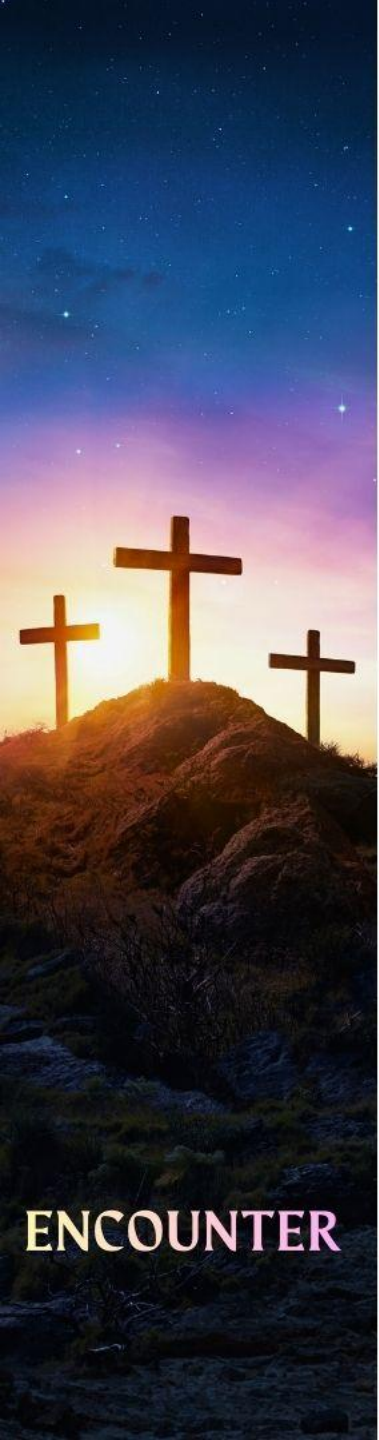
My God, my God, why have you forsaken me? Why are you so far from saving me, so far from my cries of anguish? My God, I cry out by day, but you do not answer, by night, but I find no rest.

- PSALM 22:1-2



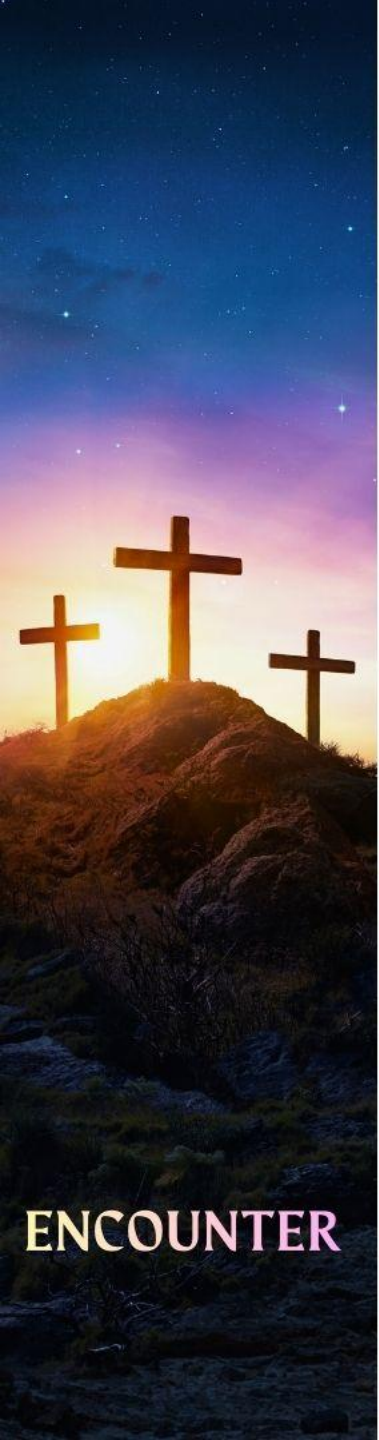
To be forsaken means to have the light of God's countenance and the sense of his presence eclipsed.

- JAMES MONTGOMERY BOICE



God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

- 2 CORINTHIANS 5:21



Go to him when your need is desperate, when all other help is vain, and what do you find? A door slammed in your face, and a sound of bolting and double bolting on the inside. After that, silence. You may as well turn away. The longer you wait, the more emphatic the silence will become. There are no lights in the windows. It might be an empty house. Was it ever inhabited? It seemed so once.

- CS LEWIS
A Grief Observed



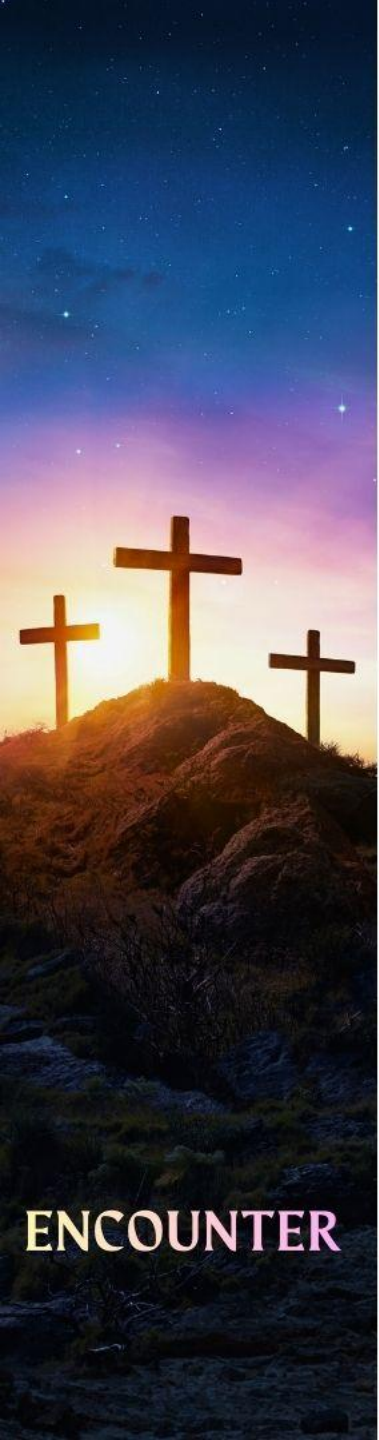
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His Soul Suffering

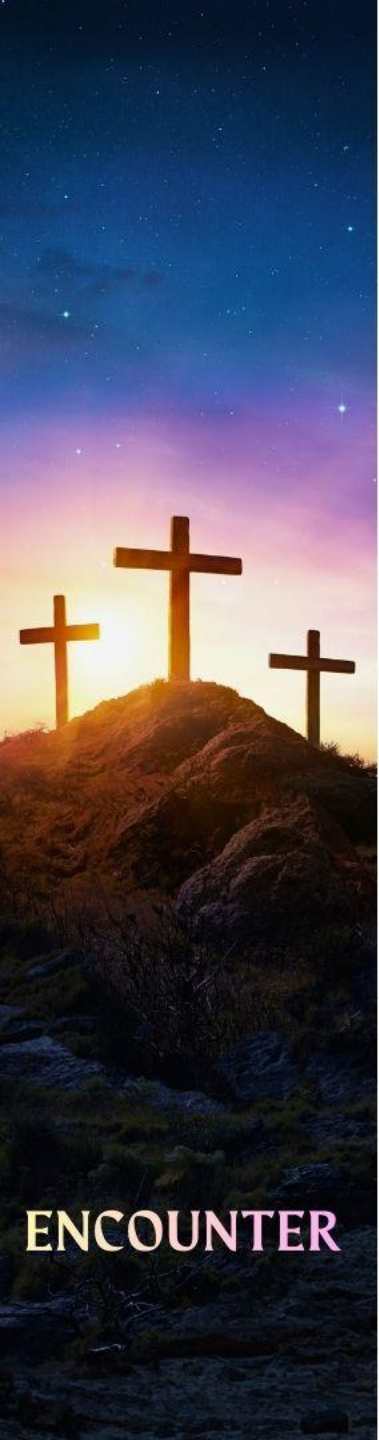
But I am a worm and not a man, scorned by everyone, despised by the people. All who see me mock me; they hurl insults, shaking their heads. "He trusts in the LORD," they say, "let the LORD rescue him. Let him deliver him, since he delights in him."

- PSALM 22:6-8



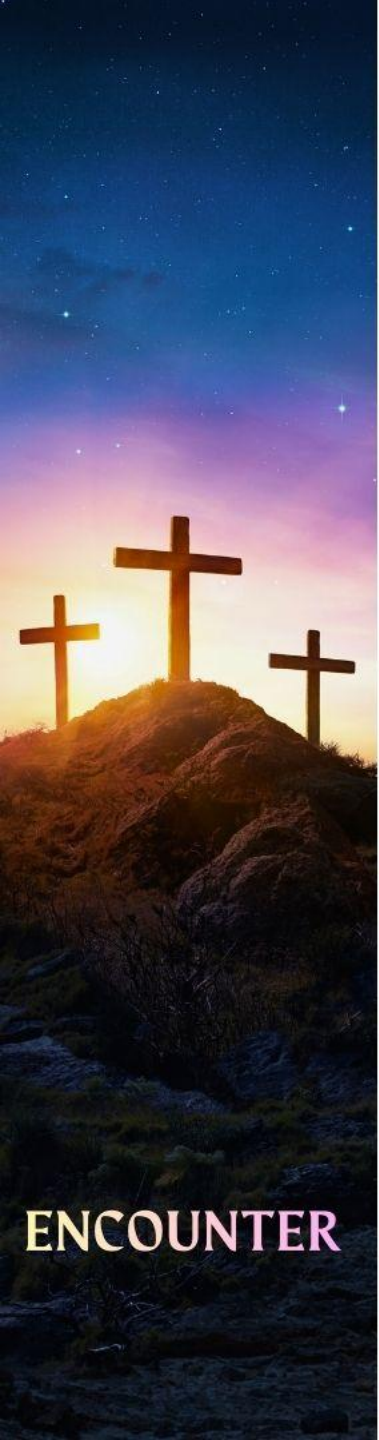
He was despised and rejected by mankind, a man of suffering, and familiar with pain. Like one from whom people hide their faces he was despised, and we held him in low esteem.

- ISAIAH 53:3



ENCOUNTER





Though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they are red as crimson, they shall be like wool.

- ISAIAH 1:18



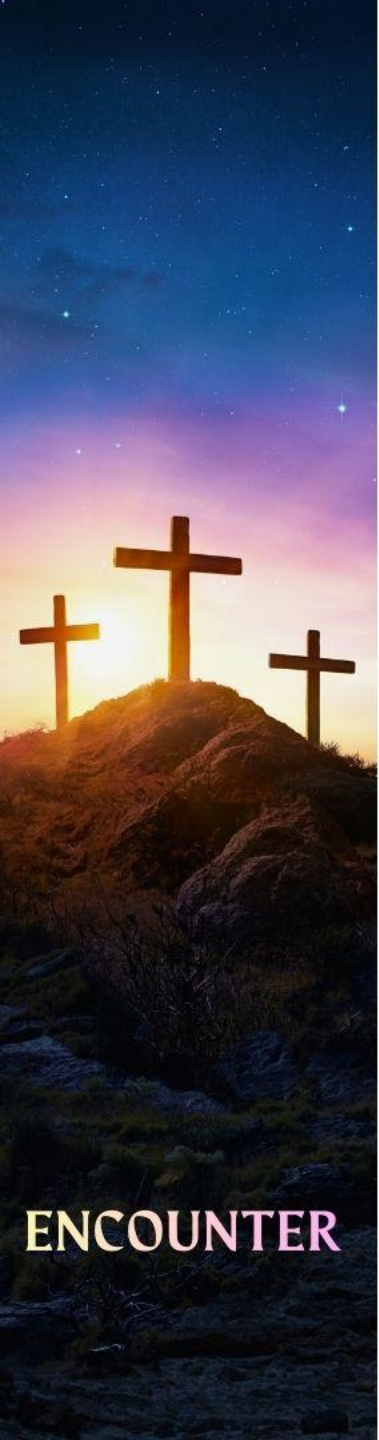
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His Physical Suffering

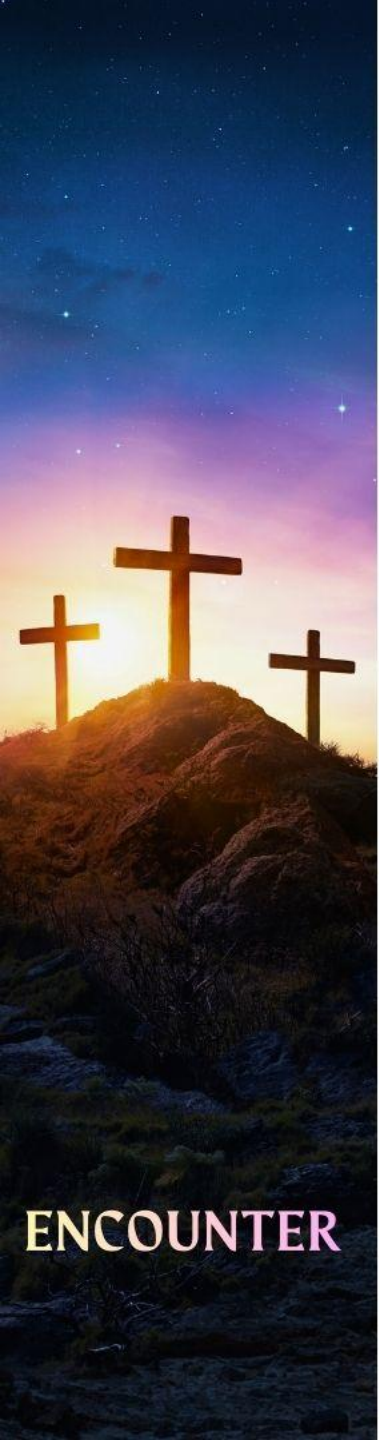
I am poured out like water, and all my bones are out of joint. My heart has turned to wax; it has melted within me. My mouth is dried up like a potsherd, and my tongue sticks to the roof of my mouth; you lay me in the dust of death. Dogs surround me, a pack of villains encircles me; they pierce my hands and my feet. All my bones are on display; people stare and gloat over me. They divide my clothes among them and cast lots for my garment.

- PSALM 22:14-18



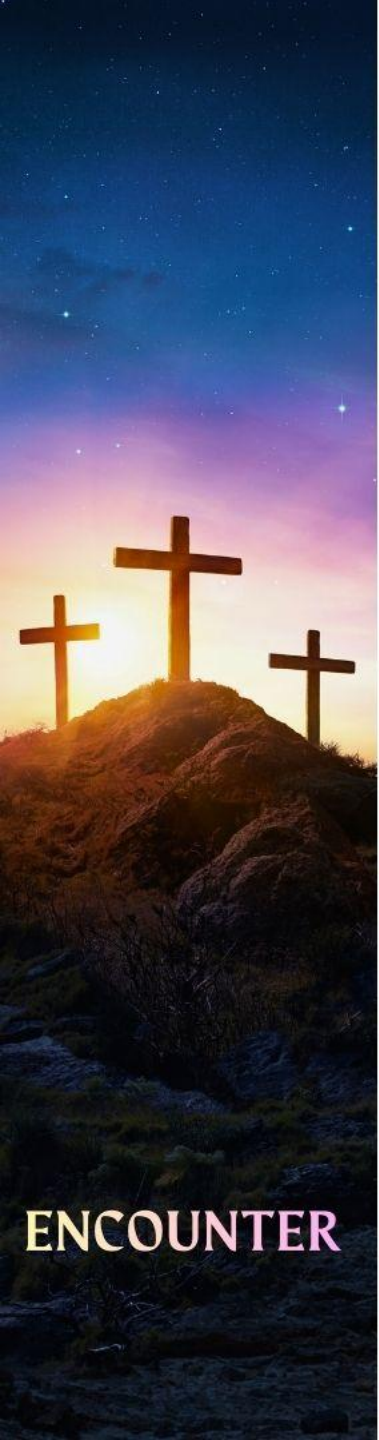
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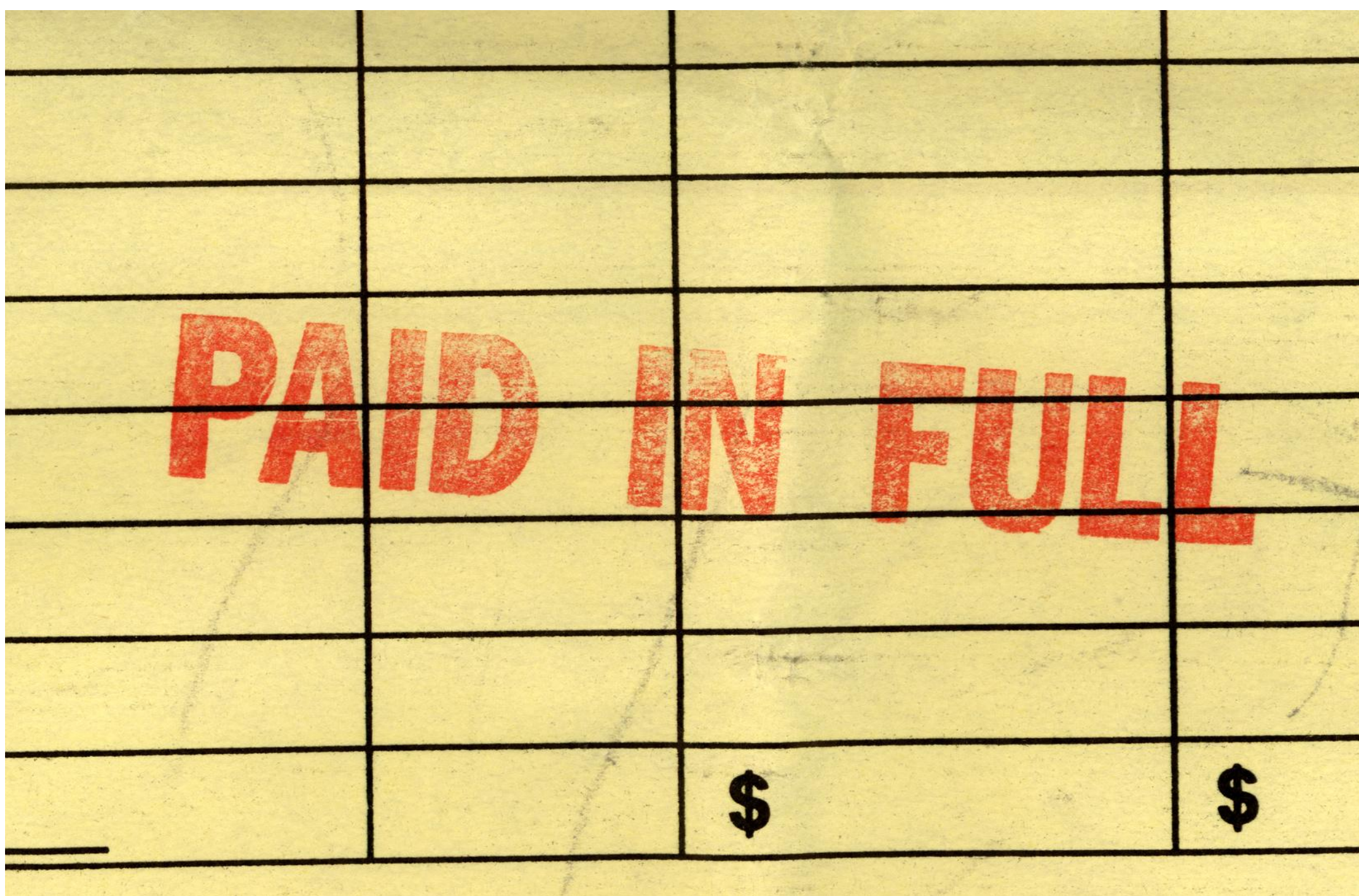
The punishment that brought us peace was on him, and by his wounds we are healed.

- ISAIAH 53:5



For he has not despised or scorned the suffering of the afflicted one; he has not hidden his face from him but has listened to his cry for help... The poor will eat and be satisfied; those who seek the LORD will praise him - may your hearts live forever! All the ends of the earth will remember and turn to the LORD, and all the families of the nations will bow down before him, for dominion belongs to the LORD and he rules over the nations... future generations will be told about the Lord. They will proclaim his righteousness, declaring to a people yet unborn: **He has done it!**

- PSALM 22:22-31



ENCOUNTER

Pierre-Auguste Renoir -

