

THE IDOLATRY OF MERE FORMALISM

April 6, 2024

1 SAMUEL 4:1-11 ESV

1 And the word of Samuel came to all Israel. Now Israel went out to battle against the Philistines. They encamped at Ebenezer, and the Philistines encamped at Aphek.

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1 SAMUEL 3:21 ESV

And JEHOVAH appeared again at Shiloh, for JEHOVAH revealed himself to Samuel at Shiloh by the word of JEHOVAH. **And the word of Samuel came to all Israel.**

1 SAMUEL 4:1-11 ESV

1 ~~And the word of Samuel came to all Israel.~~ Now Israel went out to battle against the Philistines. They encamped at Ebenezer, and the Philistines encamped at Aphek.

JUDGES 13:1

And the people of Israel again did what was evil in the sight of the LORD, so the LORD gave them into the hand of the Philistines for **forty years**.

1 SAMUEL 4:1-11 ESV

2 The Philistines drew up in line against Israel, and when the battle spread, Israel was defeated by the Philistines, who killed about four thousand men on the field of battle.

1 SAMUEL 4:1-11 ESV

3 And when the troops came to the camp, the elders of Israel said, “Why has the LORD defeated us today before the Philistines? Let us bring the ark of the covenant of the LORD here from Shiloh, that it may come among us and save us from the power of our enemies.”

1 SAMUEL 4:1-11 ESV

4 So the people sent to Shiloh and brought from there the **ark of the covenant** of the LORD of hosts, who is enthroned on the cherubim. And the two sons of Eli, **Hophni** and **Phinehas**, were there with the ark of the covenant of God.

1 SAMUEL 2:12, 17 ESV

12 Now the sons of Eli were **worthless men**. They did **not know JEHOVAH**.

17 Thus the **sin** of the young men was **very great** in the sight of JEHOVAH, for the men treated the offering of JEHOVAH with **contempt**.

PATRIARCHS AND PROPHETS, P. 584

With this **sacred chest** were associated the most wonderful revelations of God's truth and power. In former days miraculous victories had been achieved whenever it appeared. It was shadowed by the wings of the golden cherubim, and the **unspeakable glory of the Shekinah**, the **visible symbol of the most high God**, had rested over it in the holy of holies.

1 SAMUEL 4:1-11 ESV

5 As soon as the ark of the covenant of the LORD came into the camp, all Israel gave a mighty shout, so that the earth resounded. 6 And when the Philistines heard the noise of the shouting, they said, “What does this great shouting in the camp of the Hebrews mean?”

1 SAMUEL 4:1-11 ESV

And when they learned that the ark of the LORD had come to the camp, 7 the Philistines were afraid, for they said, “A god has come into the camp.” And they said, “Woe to us! For nothing like this has happened before. 8 Woe to us! Who can deliver us from the power of these mighty gods? These are the gods who struck the Egyptians with every sort of plague in the wilderness.

1 SAMUEL 4:1-11 ESV

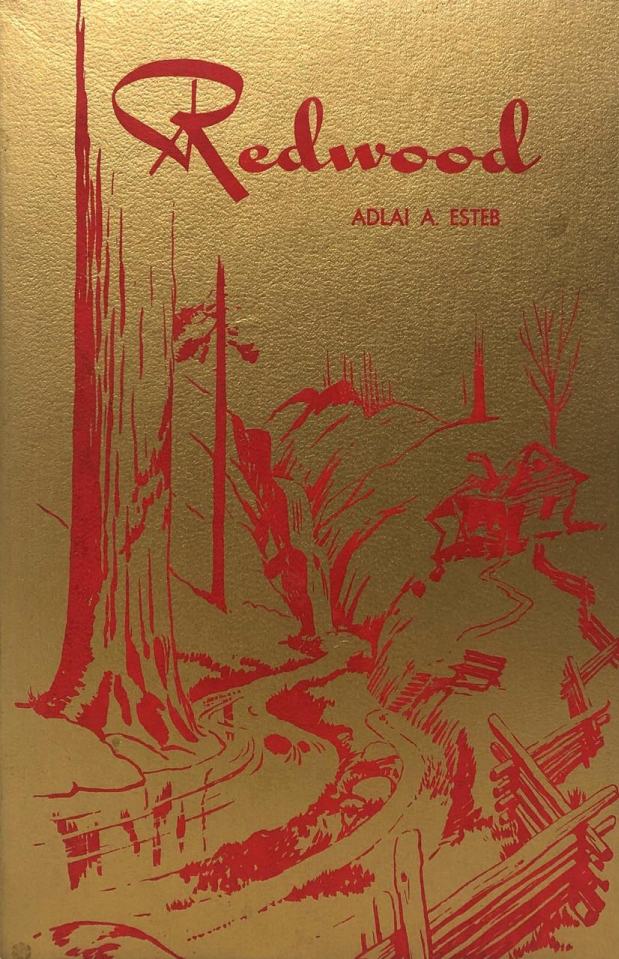
9 Take courage, and be men, O Philistines, lest you become slaves to the Hebrews as they have been to you; be men and fight.” 10 So the Philistines fought, and Israel was defeated, and they fled, every man to his home. And there was a very great slaughter, for there fell of Israel thirty thousand foot soldiers.

1 SAMUEL 4:1-11 ESV

11 And the **ark of God was captured**,
and the two sons of Eli,
Hophni and Phinehas, died.

Redwood

ADLAI A. ESTEB



Driftwood

ADLAI ALBERT ESTEB



Sandalwood

ADLAI A. ESTEB



MORNING
MANNA



ADLAI A. ESTEB

MORNING MANNA, P. 78.

How prone is man to trust for salvation in forms or rites or material symbols. ... They thought that if only the ark of God were brought to the battlefield, they would have victory. They forgot that the ark alone could not save them. It was only a symbol of a spiritual relationship. It was not the ark but God Himself who could save them.

MORNING MANNA, P. 78.

There was no more power in the ark itself than in the idols of the heathen. Having the ark was useless unless the relationship with God which it symbolized, was what it should have been. Wearing a cross externally does not indicate that the meaning or message of the cross has transformed the life of the inner man.

MORNING MANNA, P. 78.

As Billy Sunday used to say, “Going into a church does not make you a Christian any more than going into a garage makes you an automobile.” Merely going through the forms of religious service is not enough. God looks into the heart. It is the motive that counts. Saying prayers cannot take the place of praying.

PATRIARCHS AND PROPHETS, P. 584

They had not realized that their faith was only a nominal faith, and had lost its power to prevail with God. The law of God, contained in the ark, was also a symbol of His presence; but they had cast contempt upon the commandments, had despised their requirements, and had grieved the Spirit of the Lord from among them.

PATRIARCHS AND PROPHETS, P. 584

When the people obeyed the holy precepts, the Lord was with them to work for them by His infinite power; but when they looked upon the ark, and did not associate it with God, nor honor His revealed will by obedience to His law, it could avail them little more than a common box.

PATRIARCHS AND PROPHETS, P. 584

They looked to the ark as the idolatrous nations looked to their gods, as if it possessed in itself the elements of power and salvation. They transgressed the law it contained; for their very worship of the ark led to formalism, hypocrisy, and idolatry.





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An open Bible is shown from a high angle, slightly tilted. The pages are filled with text, and the binding is visible in the center. The overall image has a dark, monochromatic aesthetic with a slight vignette effect. The text is overlaid in white, making it stand out against the darker background of the Bible pages.

GENESIS 1:1-2A NKJV

In the beginning God created
the heavens and the earth. The earth was
without form, and void...

GENESIS 1:1-2A NKJV

In the beginning God created
the heavens and the earth. The earth was
without form, and void...

THE EARTH WAS...

- Without form
 - “Formless”
- Void
 - “Empty”



6 DAYS OF CREATION

Light



6 DAYS OF CREATION



Light



Atmosphere

6 DAYS OF CREATION

Light



Atmosphere



Land



6 DAYS OF CREATION

Light

Heavenly
Bodies

Atmosphere

Land

6 DAYS OF CREATION

Light

Heavenly
Bodies

Atmosphere

Birds
Fishes

Land

6 DAYS OF CREATION

Light

Heavenly
Bodies

Atmosphere

Birds
Fishes

Land

Animals
Humans

THE EARTH WAS...

- Without form
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FORMED & FILLED

FORMED & FILLED

Light



FORMED & FILLED

Light



Heavenly
Bodies

FORMED & FILLED

Light

Heavenly
Bodies

Atmosphere

FORMED & FILLED

Light



Heavenly
Bodies



Atmosphere



Birds
Fishes

FORMED & FILLED

Light

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Birds
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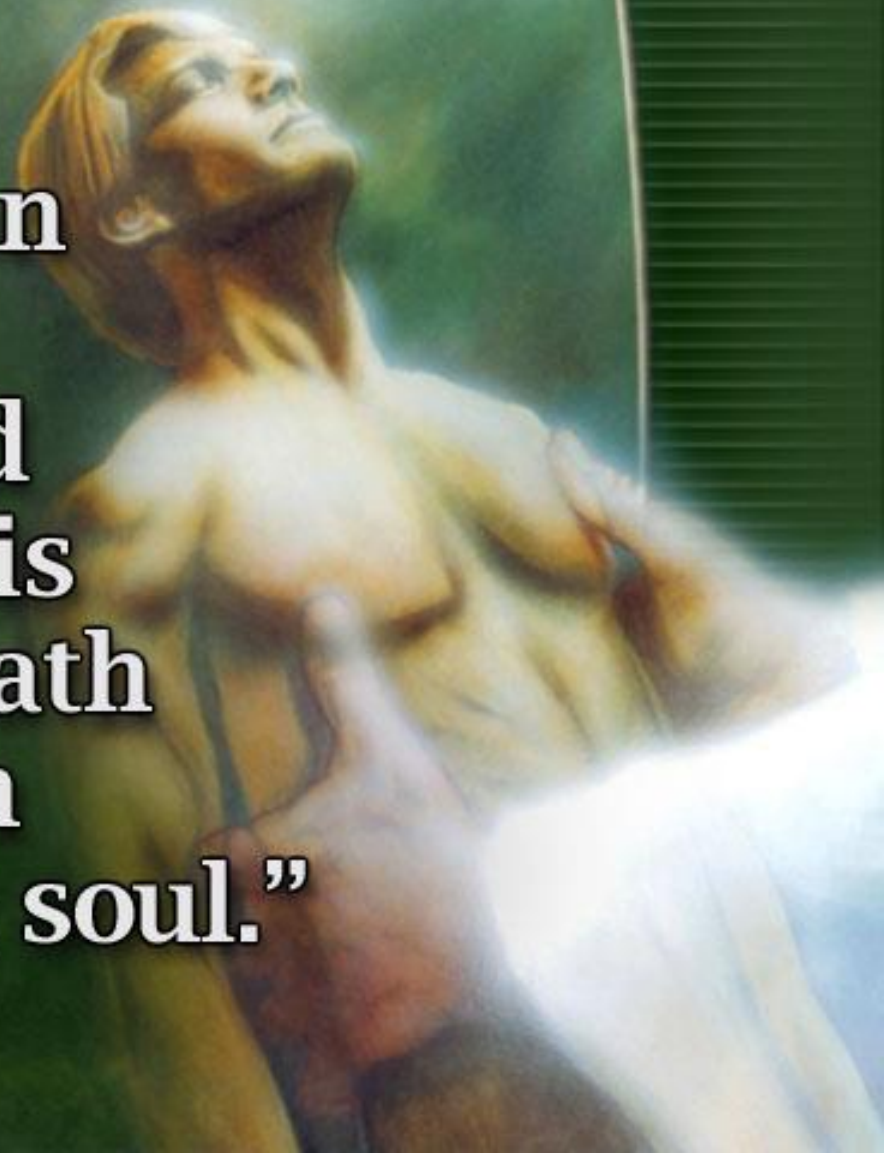
FORMED & FILLED





GENESIS 2:7 KJV

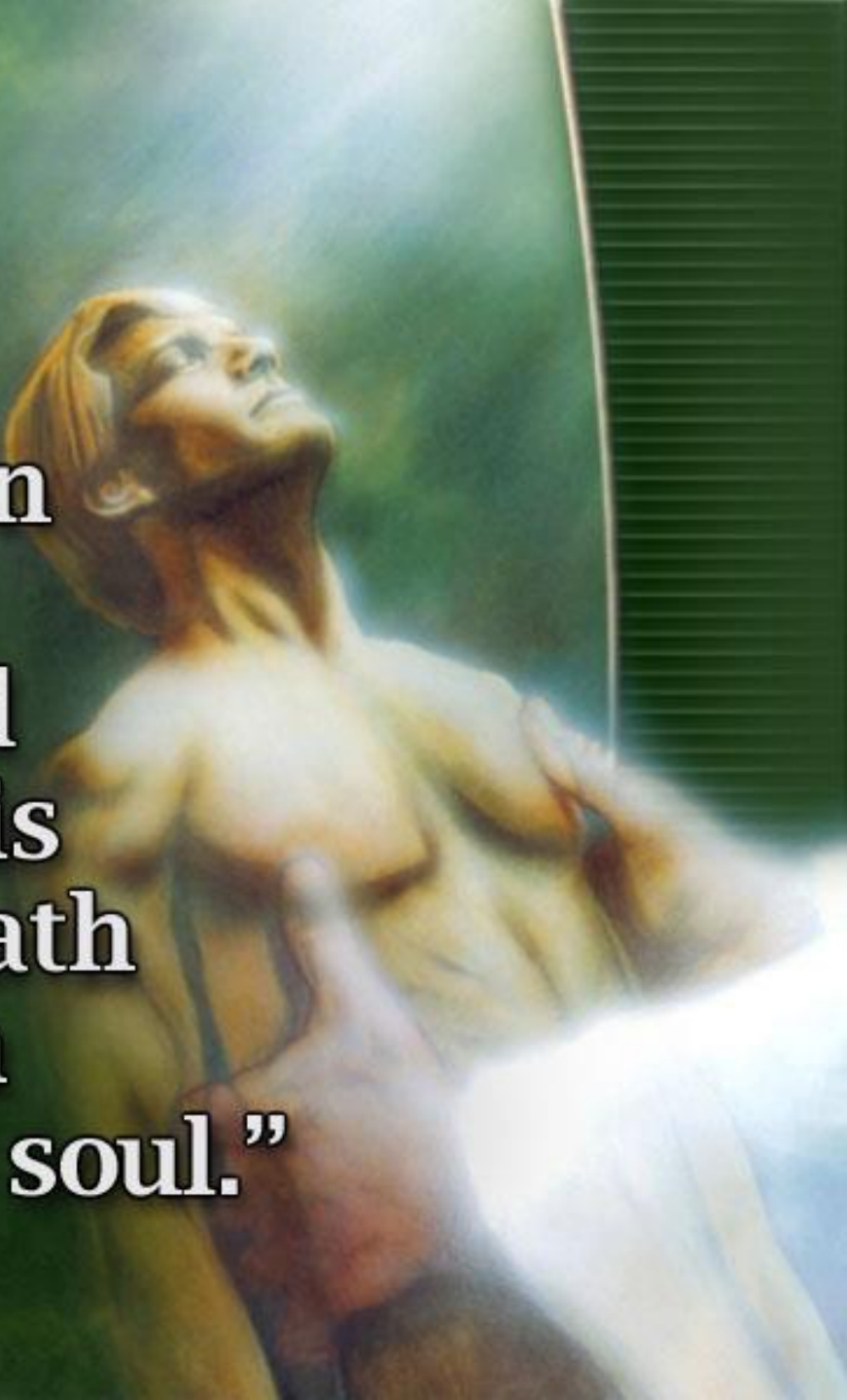
**“And the LORD
God formed man
of the dust of
the ground, and
breathed into his
nostrils the breath
of life; and man
became a living soul.”**





GENESIS 2:7 KJV

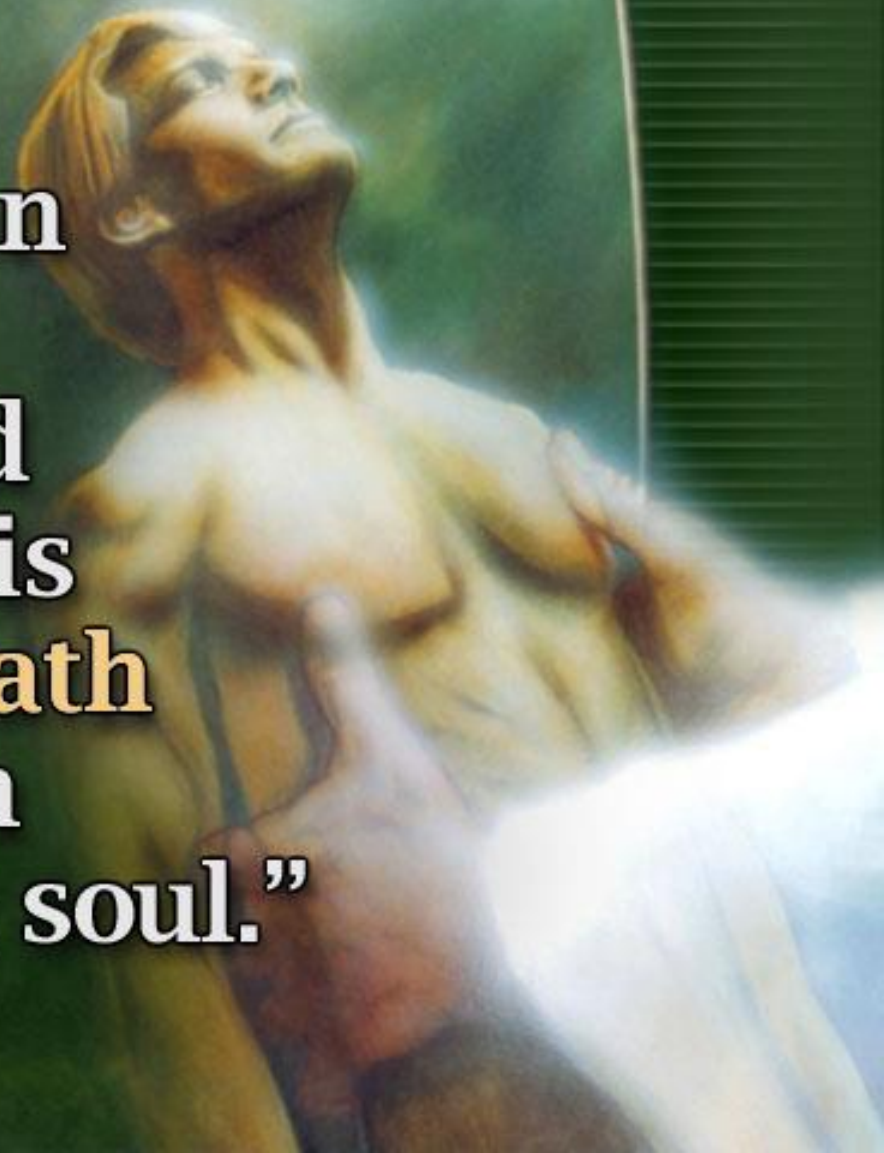
“And the LORD
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A man with a muscular physique is shown from the waist up, looking upwards with a reverent expression. He is positioned on the right side of the frame, with his arms slightly raised. The background is a soft, glowing light, suggesting a divine presence or a bright sky. The overall tone is inspirational and spiritual.



GENESIS 2:7 KJV

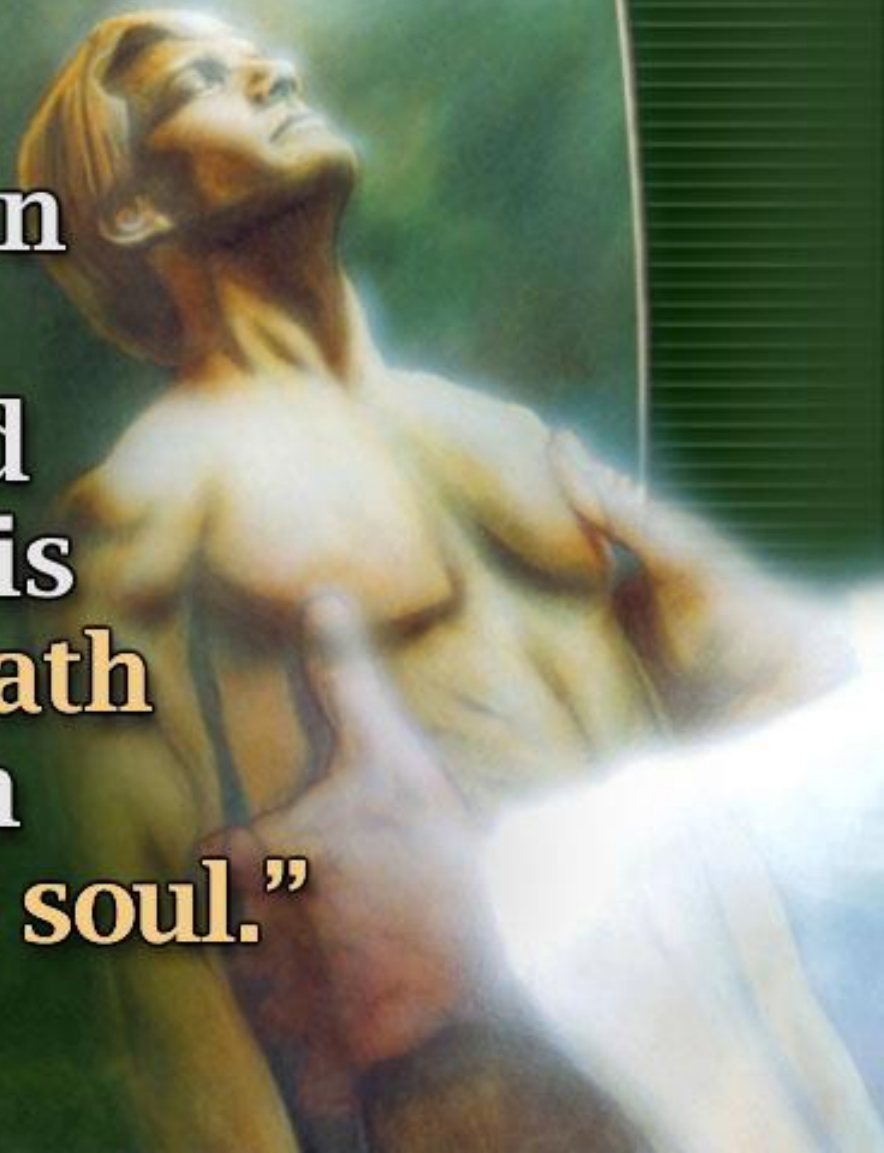
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GENESIS 2:7 KJV

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6 DAYS OF CREATION

Light

Heavenly
Bodies

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Birds
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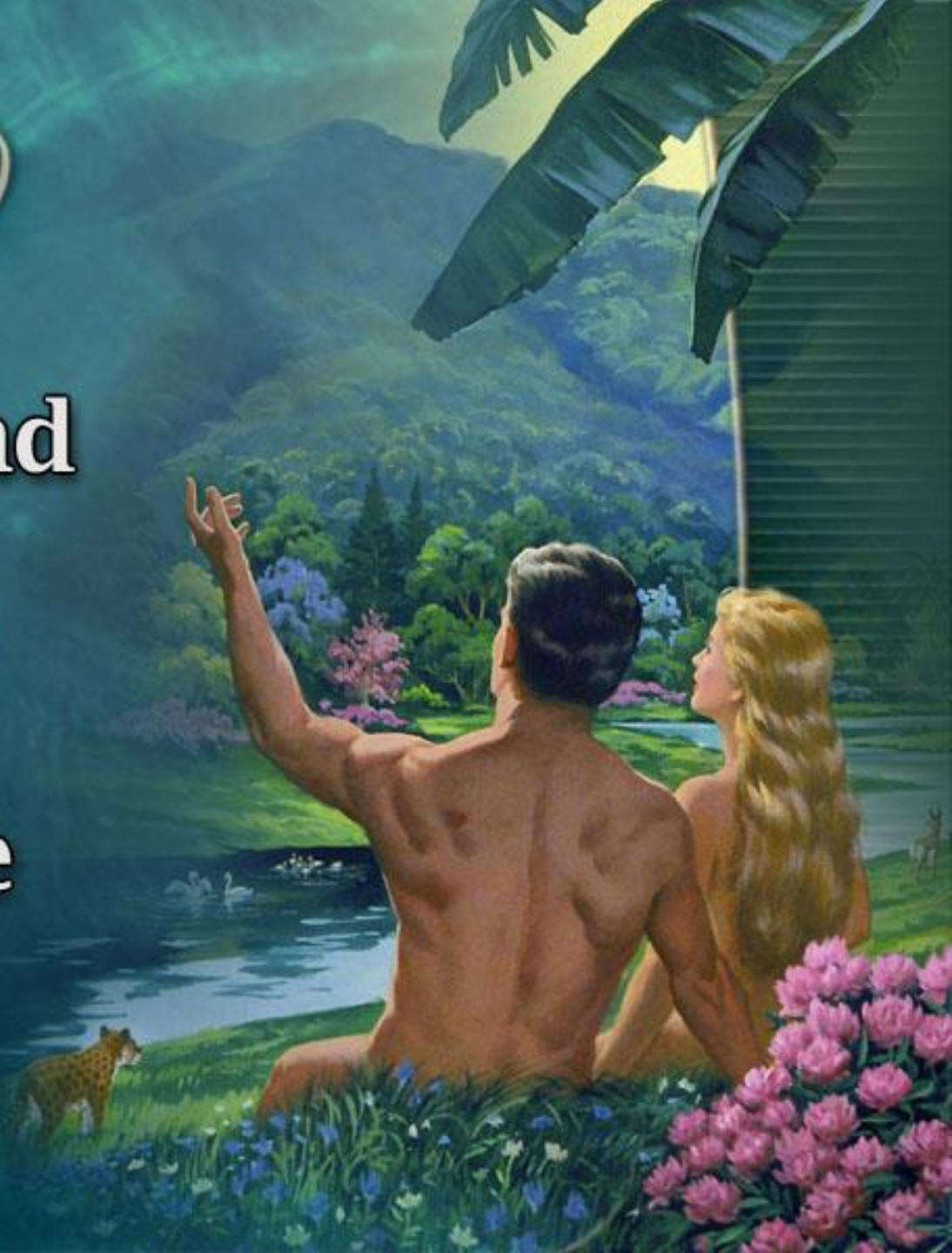
Land

Animals
Humans



GENESIS 2:1

“Thus the heavens and the earth, and all the host of them, were finished.”





GENESIS 2:2

**“And on the
seventh day
God ended
His work
which He
had done,**



GENESIS 2:2

and He rested
on the seventh
day from all
His work which
He had done.”



GENESIS 2:3

**“Then God
blessed the
seventh
day and
sanctified it,**





GENESIS 2:3

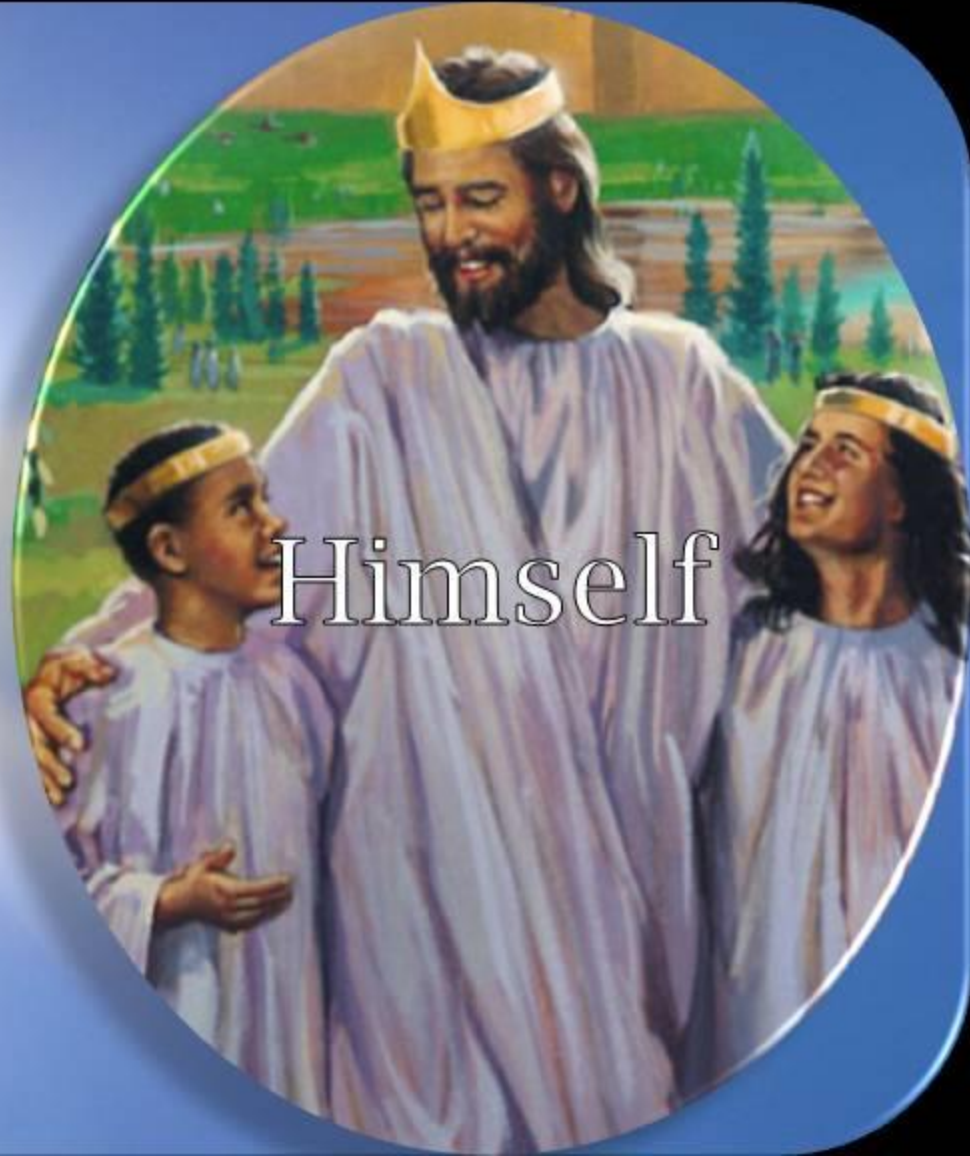
because in
it He rested
from all His
work which
God had
created
and made.”

7TH DAY OF CREATION

Sabbath

7TH DAY OF CREATION

Sabbath



Himself

Sabbath

Sabbath

FORMED & FILLED

MATTHEW 5:20 NKJV

For I say to you, that unless your righteousness exceeds the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, you will by no means enter the kingdom of heaven.

2 TIMOTHY 3:1-5 NKJV

But know this, that in the **last days** perilous times will come: 2 For **men will be** lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, 3 unloving, unforgiving, slanderers, without self-control, brutal, despisers of good, 4 traitors, headstrong, haughty, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God, 5 **having a form of godliness but denying its power.** And from such people turn away!



ROMANS 1:16 ESV

For I am not ashamed of the **gospel**, for it is the **power of God for salvation** to everyone who believes.

2 CORINTHIANS 13:4 ESV

For he was crucified in weakness, but **lives** by the **power of God**. For we also are weak in him, but in dealing with you we will **live with him** by the **power of God**.

EPHESIANS 3:20 ESV

Now to him who is able to do far more abundantly than all that we ask or think, according to the **power** at work within us.

STEPS TO CHRIST, P. 69

Do you ask, “How am I to abide in Christ?” In the same way as you received Him at first. “As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in Him.” “The just shall live by faith.” Colossians 2:6; Hebrews 10:38. You gave yourself to God, to be His wholly, to serve and obey Him, and you took Christ as your Saviour.

STEPS TO CHRIST, P. 69

You could not yourself atone for your sins or change your heart; but having given yourself to God, you believe that He for Christ's sake did all this for you. By faith you became Christ's, and by faith you are to grow up in Him—by giving and taking.

STEPS TO CHRIST, P. 69

You are to give all,—your heart, your will,
your service,—give yourself to Him to
obey all His requirements; and you must
take all,—Christ, the fullness of all
blessing, to abide in your heart, to be
your strength, your righteousness, your
everlasting helper,—to give
you power to obey.

