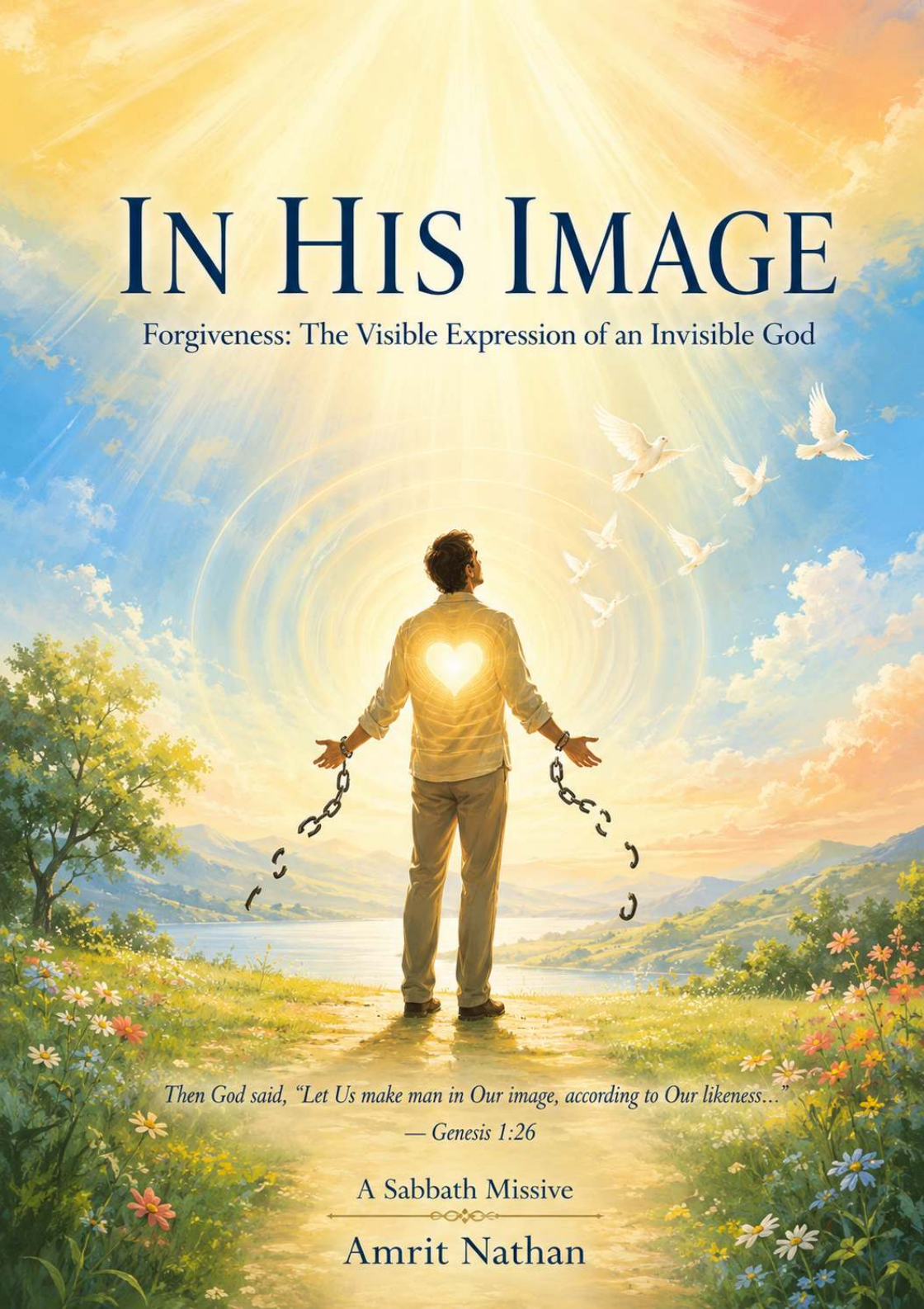


The background of the entire page is a vibrant, painterly illustration. A man stands with his back to the viewer on a path of flowers. He has a bright, glowing heart shape on his back, surrounded by concentric golden circles. He is holding broken chains in both hands, which are falling away. The sky is a mix of blue and orange, with white doves flying. In the distance, there is a calm lake and rolling green hills under a bright sun with rays of light.

IN HIS IMAGE

Forgiveness: The Visible Expression of an Invisible God

Then God said, "Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness..."

— Genesis 1:26

A Sabbath Missive

— — — — —
Amrit Nathan

WHAT IS THE IMAGE OF GOD?

Sabbath greetings, family.

When we read, “Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness,” we may imagine that God must physically resemble us, but remains invisible to our sight. Yet Moses reminded Israel:

“You saw no form when the LORD spoke to you at Horeb out of the midst of the fire.”

— Deuteronomy 4:15

Yahshua also declared:

“God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth.”

— John 4:24

At Yahshua’s baptism, the Holy Spirit descended “in bodily form like a dove” (Luke 3:22). The dove was the visible form in which the Spirit descended; it does not mean that the Holy Spirit is literally a dove.

Yahshua came among us in human flesh and perfectly revealed the Father’s character:

“He who has seen Me has seen the Father.”

— John 14:9

Scripture therefore calls Yahshua “the image of the invisible God” (Colossians 1:15). Through Him, God’s mercy, righteousness, compassion, patience, faithfulness and forgiveness were made visible.

Genesis 1:26 must therefore mean something far greater than physical resemblance. Humanity was created to represent God and reveal His character within the earth.

“He who does not love does not know God, for God is love.”

— 1 John 4:8

GOD IS LOVE.

If we were created in His image, then we were created to become the visible expression of His love.



WHEN LOVE BECOMES FORGIVENESS

Yahshua revealed the two great commandments:

*“You shall love the LORD your God
with all your heart, with all your soul,
with all your mind, and with all your strength.”*

— Mark 12:30

“You shall love your neighbour as yourself.”

— Mark 12:31

No other earthly creature made during the six days is described as being created in the image and likeness of God. This privilege—and responsibility—was entrusted to humanity. We were designed to express agape: the self-giving love of God.

In a world filled with offence, betrayal and suffering, love must take another form.

FORGIVENESS IS AGAPE LOVE RESPONDING TO INJURY.

It is easy to love those who love us. But when we forgive someone who has wronged us, we begin to reveal the character of our heavenly Father.

“And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors.”

— Matthew 6:12

*“For if you forgive men their trespasses,
your heavenly Father will also forgive you.”*

— Matthew 6:14

Forgiveness is not an optional decoration added to the Christian life. It is evidence that the nature of God is being formed within us.

Peter asked how often he should forgive. Yahshua answered:

*“I do not say to you, up to seven times,
but up to seventy times seven.”*

— Matthew 18:22

“Even as Christ forgave you, so you also must do.”

— Colossians 3:13

The clearest demonstration came from the cross. While Yahshua was being mocked and crucified, He prayed:

*“Father, forgive them, for they do not know
what they do.”*

— Luke 23:34

At Calvary, the image of God was displayed through sacrificial love and unconditional forgiveness.



ARE WE BEARING HIS IMAGE?

TRANSFORMATION INTO GOD'S IMAGE

God is ready to forgive us:

"If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."

— 1 John 1:9

But the forgiveness we receive must also flow through us towards others.

We were designed in God's image, but His character must be formed within us. The fallen mind desires retaliation and keeps a record of injuries. The renewed mind learns to respond as Yahshua responded.

"Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind."

— Romans 12:2

Paul acknowledged that he had not yet reached perfection:

"Not that I have already attained, or am already perfected; but I press on..."

— Philippians 3:12

Each offence presents us with a choice:

- Will we preserve the injury—or reveal the Father?
- Will we demand repayment—or cancel the debt?
- Will we conform to the spirit of this world—or respond in the Spirit of Yahshua?

Forgiveness does not declare that the offence was right. It does not always remove earthly consequences or immediately restore broken trust. Forgiveness means surrendering personal vengeance and refusing to allow another person's sin to reproduce bitterness within us.

GOD IS LOVE.

FORGIVENESS IS THE VISIBLE MANIFESTATION OF THAT LOVE.

When we forgive as Yahshua forgave us, the image of the invisible God begins to appear within us.

THE SABBATH QUESTION

*Whose offence are you still carrying—
and what would the image of God
look like in your response?*

