

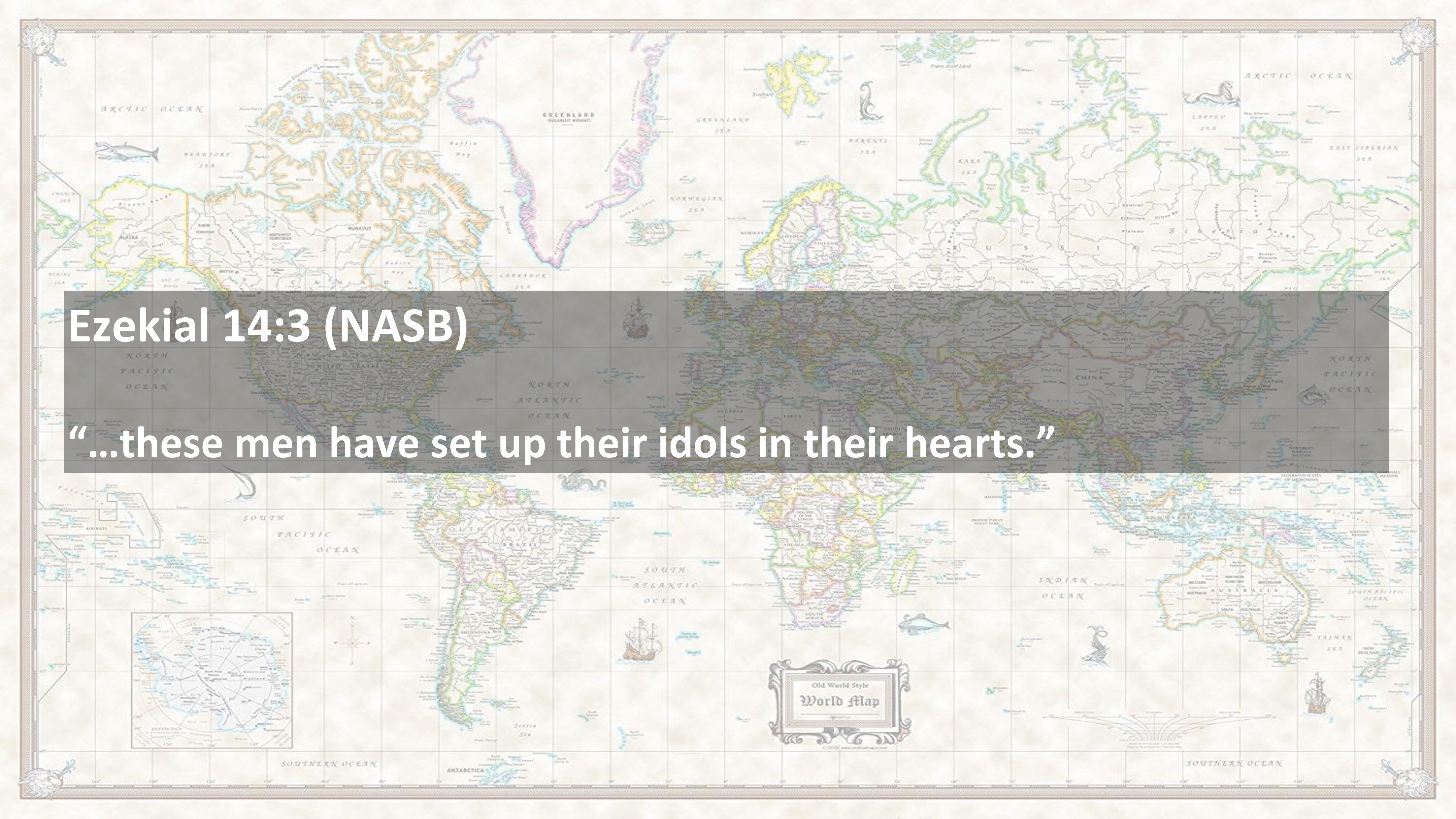
Idols, Idols All Around

Acts 17:16-34

2 Timothy 3:1-5

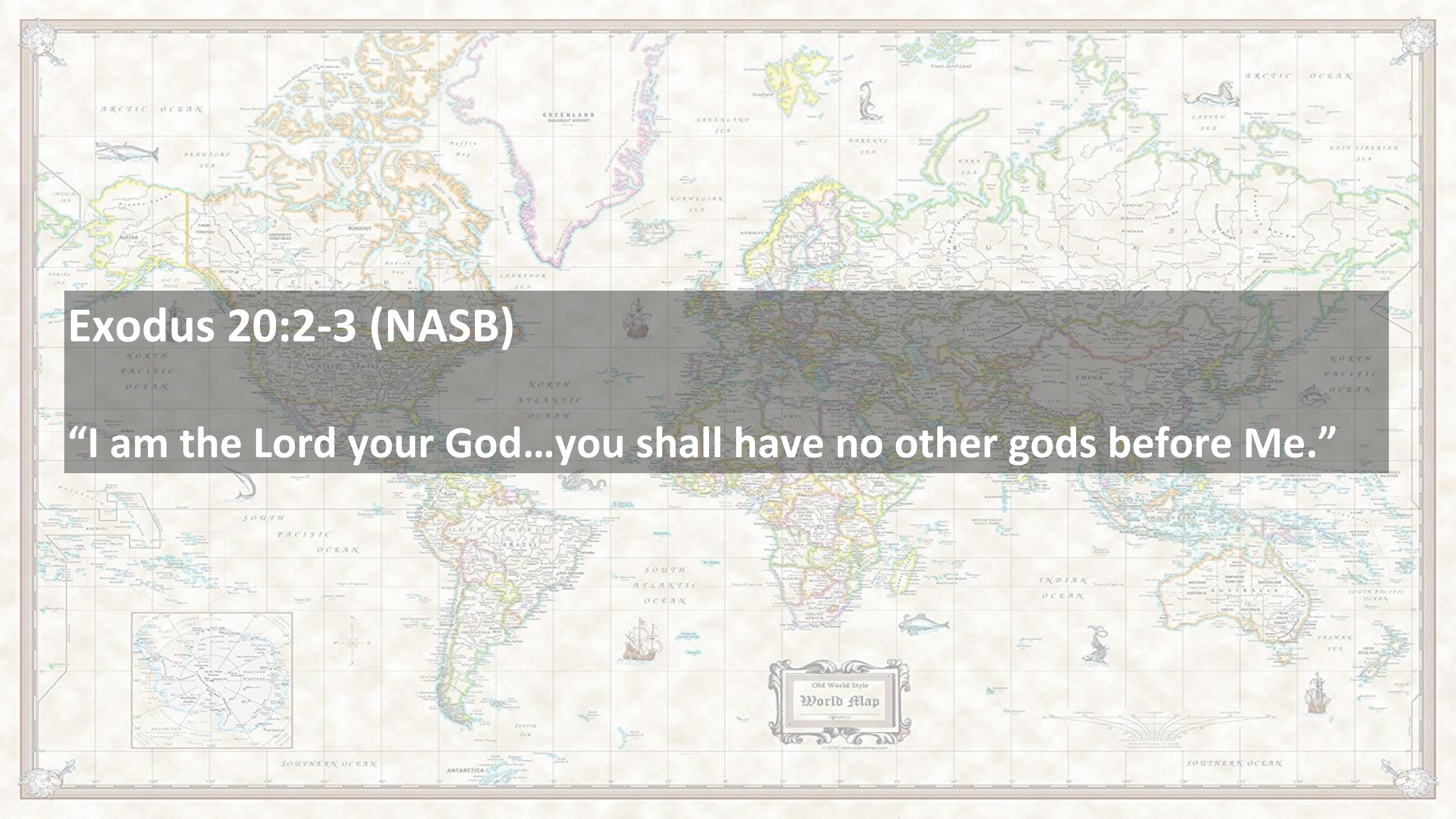
“¹ But mark this: There will be terrible times in the last days. ² People will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boastful, proud, abusive, disobedient to their parents, ungrateful, unholy, ³ without love, unforgiving, slanderous, without self-control, brutal, not lovers of the good, ⁴ treacherous, rash, conceited, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God— ⁵ having a form of godliness but denying its power. Have nothing to do with such people.”





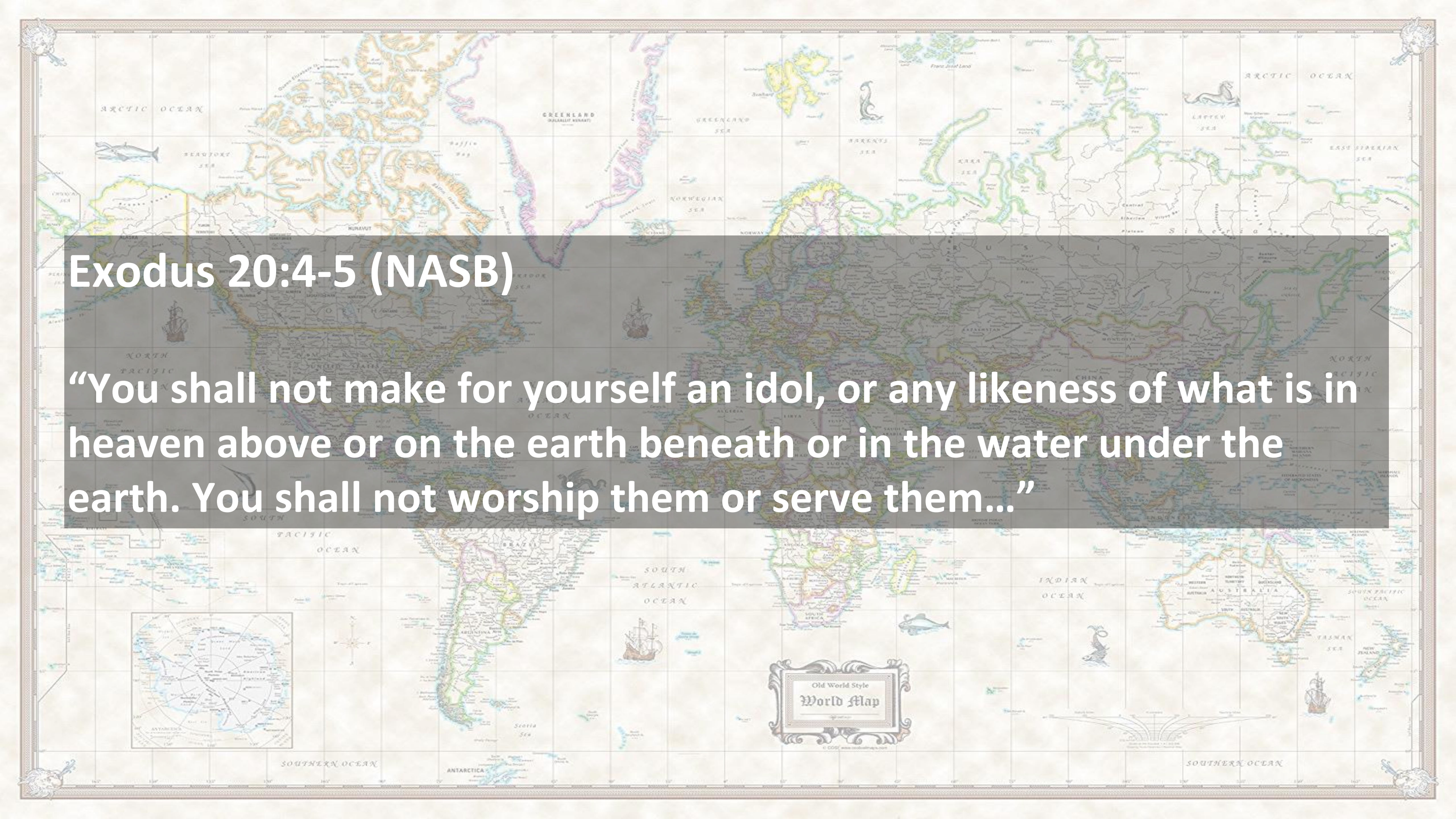
Ezekial 14:3 (NASB)

“...these men have set up their idols in their hearts.”



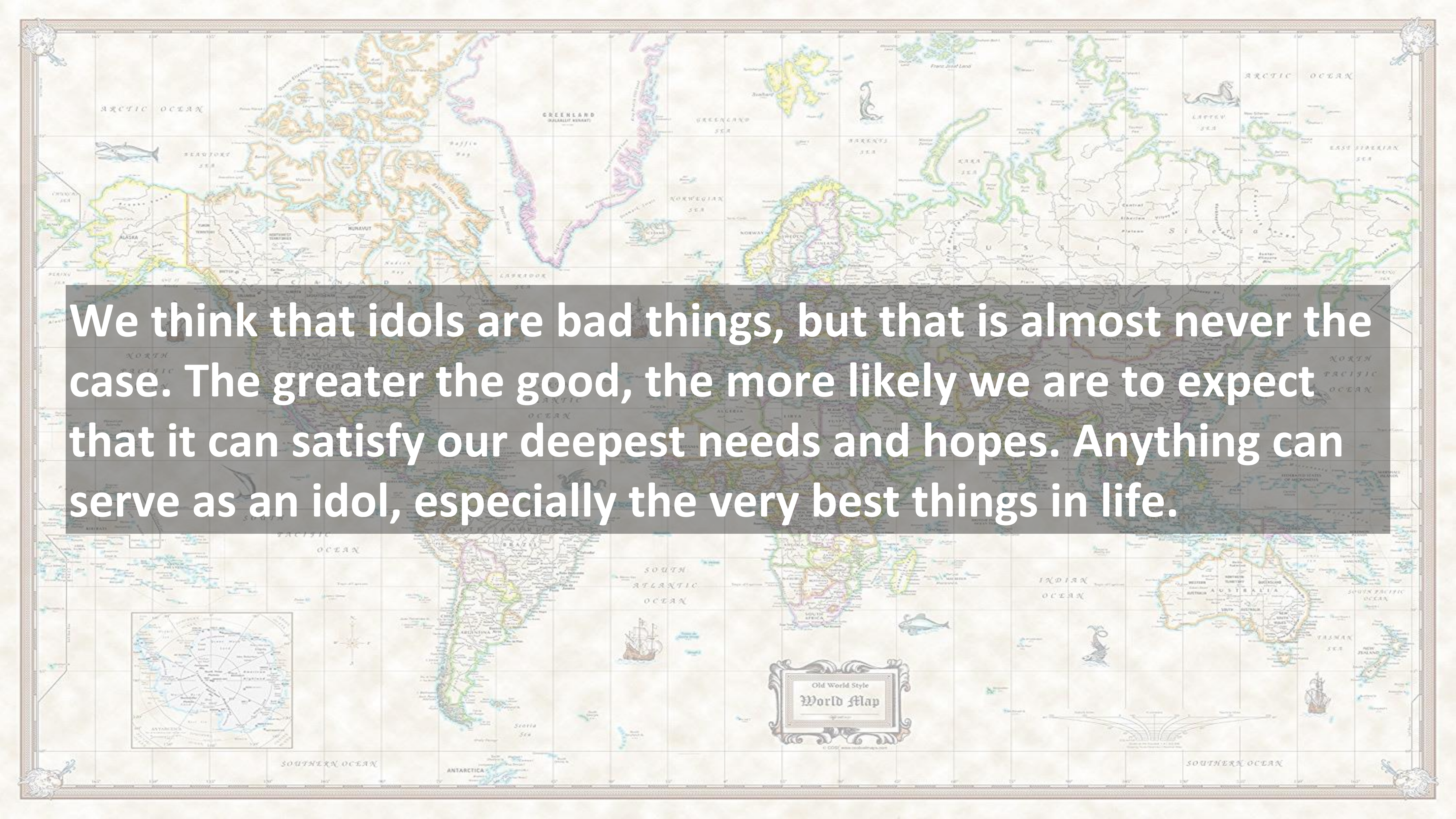
Exodus 20:2-3 (NASB)

“I am the Lord your God...you shall have no other gods before Me.”



Exodus 20:4-5 (NASB)

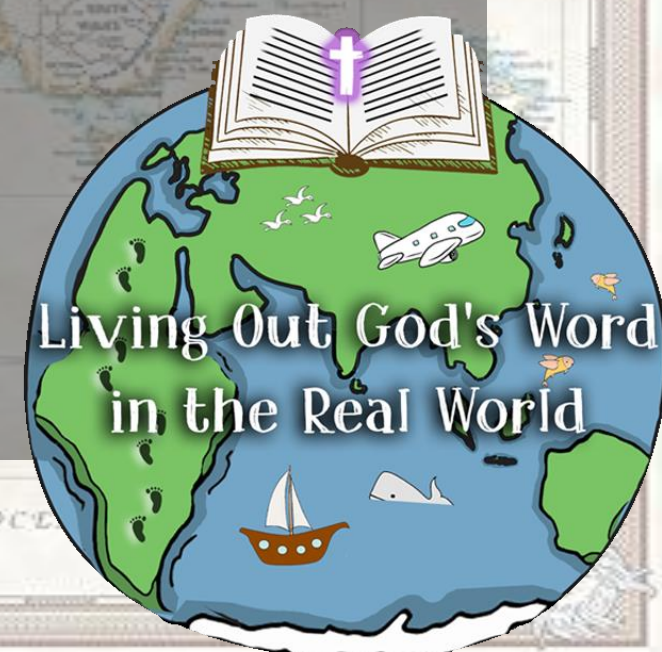
“You shall not make for yourself an idol, or any likeness of what is in heaven above or on the earth beneath or in the water under the earth. You shall not worship them or serve them...”



We think that idols are bad things, but that is almost never the case. The greater the good, the more likely we are to expect that it can satisfy our deepest needs and hopes. Anything can serve as an idol, especially the very best things in life.

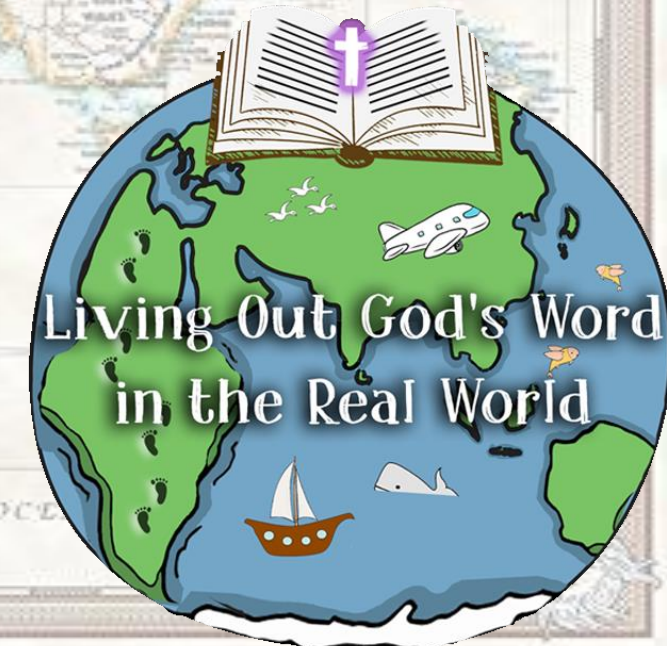
Consider your own life...

- Family & children,
- Career & making money
- Achievement
- Saving “face”
- Social standing
- Romantic relationship
- Peer approval
- Secure & comfortable circumstances
- Morality & virtue
- Success in Christian ministry



Daydreams

- What do you enjoy imagining about?
- What are our fondest dreams?

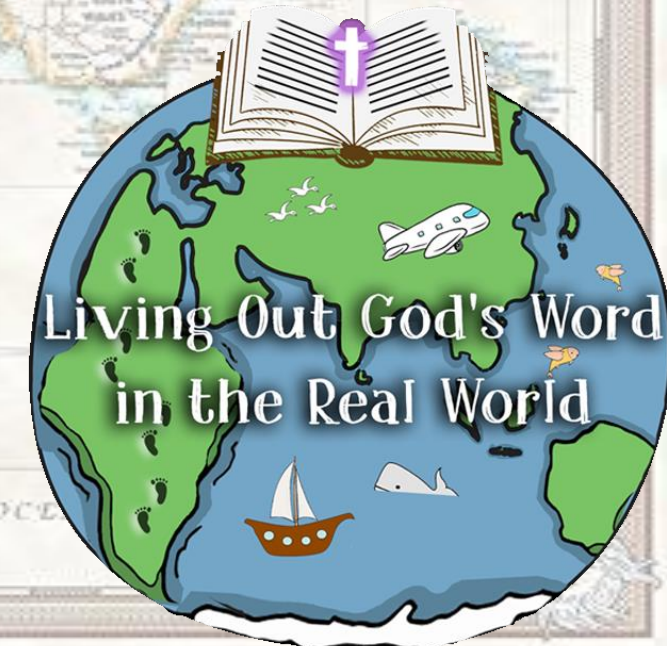




God should be our personal Saviour, but we can look to personal achievement or financial prosperity to give us the peace and security we need.

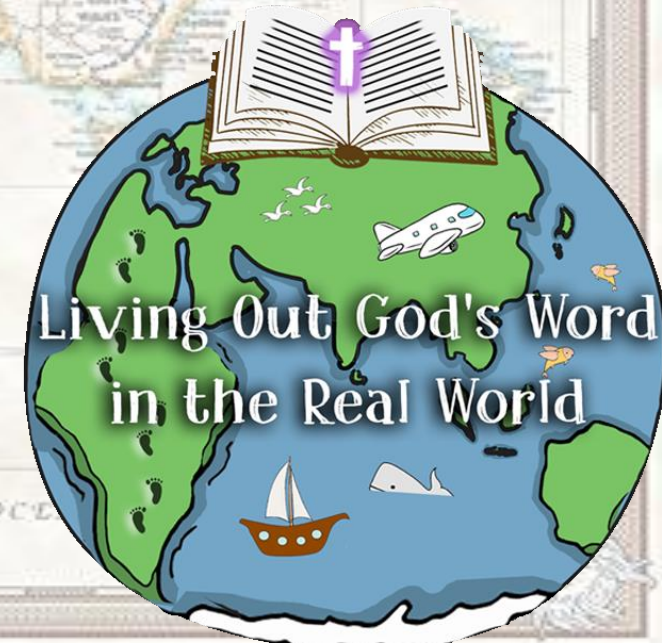
Nightmares

- What do you fear the most?
- What, if you lost it, would make life not worth living?



Unyielding Emotions

- What makes us uncontrollably angry, anxious, or despondent?
- What racks us with a guilt we can't shake?





Whatever controls us is our lord



The only way to free ourselves from the destructive influence of counterfeit gods is to turn back to the one true God



Acts 17:16 (NASB)

“Now while Paul was waiting for them at Athens, his spirit was being provoked within him as he was observing the city full of idols.”



Acts 17:16 (NASB)

“Now while Paul was waiting for them at Athens, his spirit was being provoked within him as he was **observing** the city full of idols.”

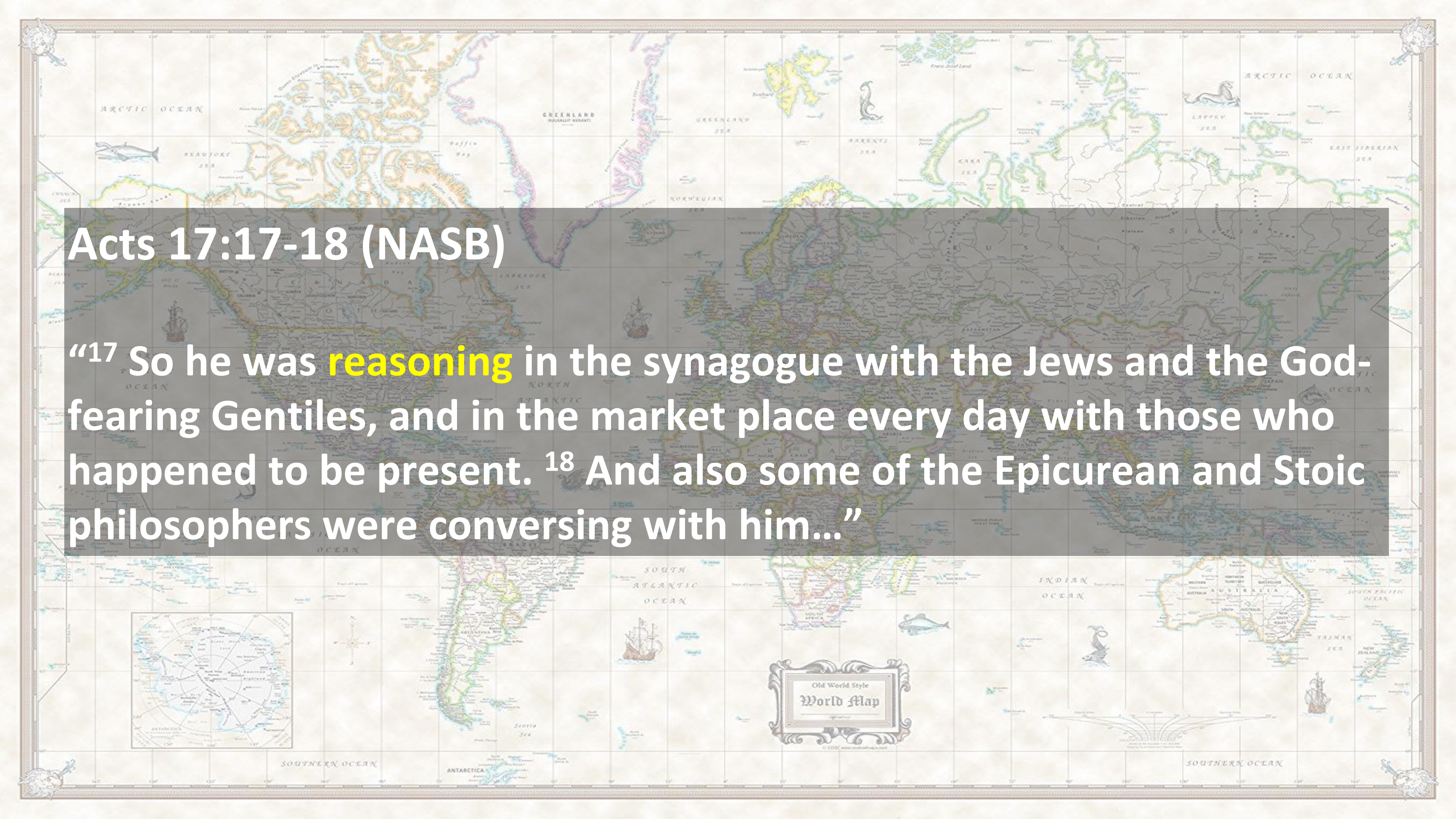
- Choosing not to be an invisible bystander



Acts 17:16 (NASB)

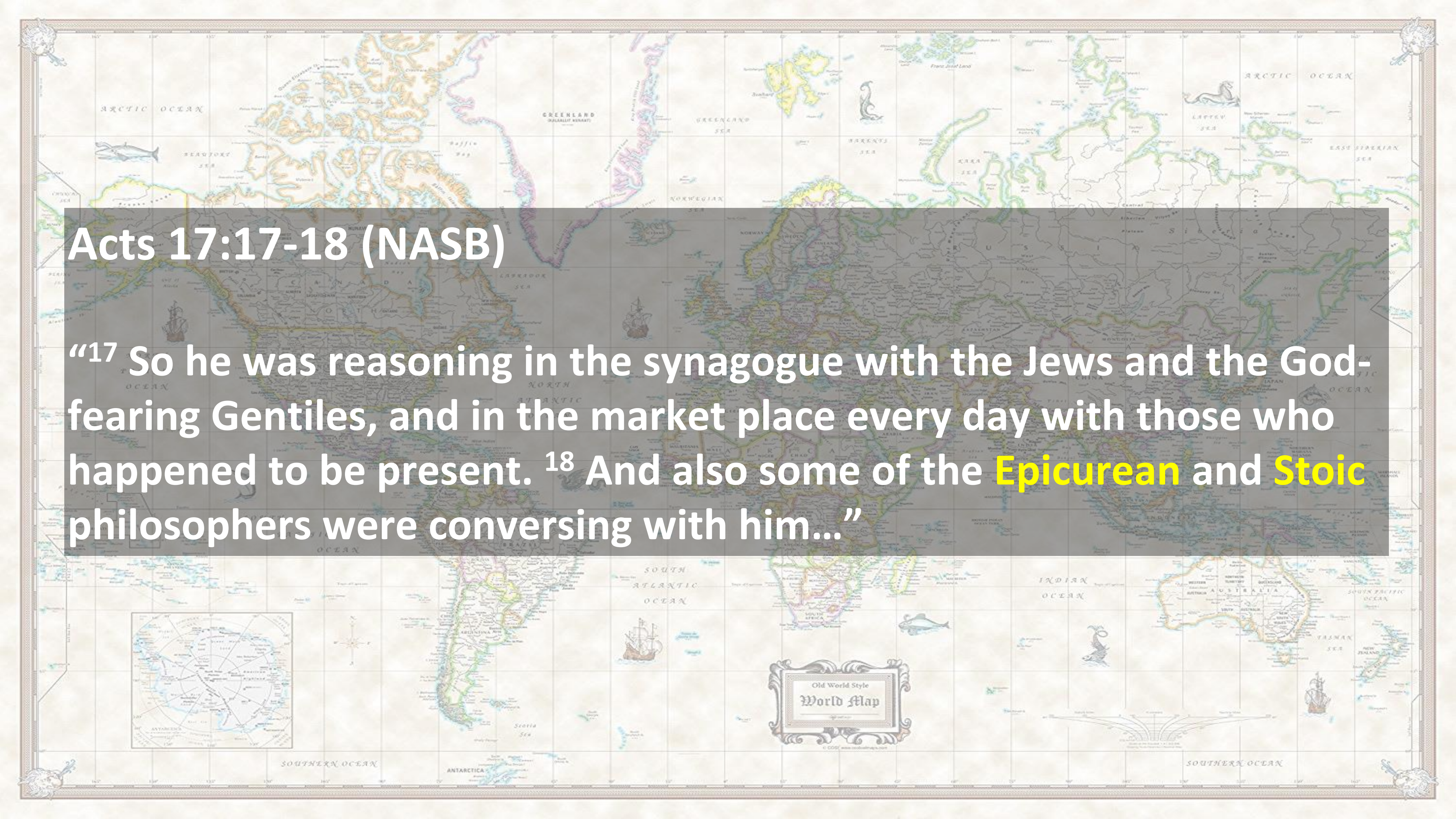
“Now while Paul was waiting for them at Athens, his spirit was being **provoked** within him as he was observing the city full of idols.”

- Paroxysm - a sudden, violent outburst; a fit of violent action or emotion.



Acts 17:17-18 (NASB)

“¹⁷ So he was **reasoning** in the synagogue with the Jews and the God-fearing Gentiles, and in the market place every day with those who happened to be present. ¹⁸ And also some of the Epicurean and Stoic philosophers were conversing with him...”



Acts 17:17-18 (NASB)

“¹⁷ So he was reasoning in the synagogue with the Jews and the God-fearing Gentiles, and in the market place every day with those who happened to be present. ¹⁸ And also some of the **Epicurean** and **Stoic** philosophers were conversing with him...”



Epicureans

- Atheists
- Denied a life after death
- Materialists
- Pleasure was the highest virtue, and that pain was the opposite
- "Eat, drink, and be merry, for tomorrow we die."



Stoics

- Pantheists
- Everything is God
- Live in harmony with nature and put great emphasis on man's rational ability
- Emphasis on their own ability filled them with pride



Acts 17:18 (NASB)

“...Some were saying, “What would this idle babbler wish to say?”
Others, “He seems to be a proclaimer of strange deities,”—because
he was preaching Jesus and the resurrection.”



Living Out God's Word in the Real World

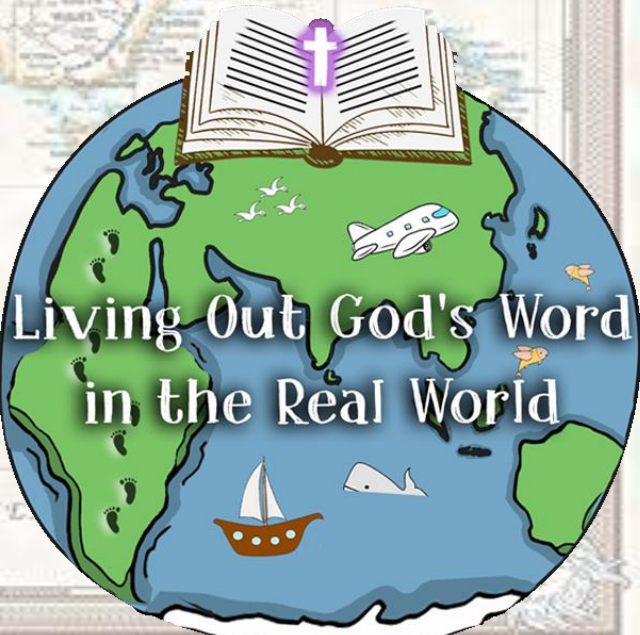


Acts 17:22-23 (NASB)

“²² So Paul stood in the midst of the Areopagus and said, “Men of Athens, I observe that you are very religious in all respects. ²³ For while I was passing through and examining the objects of your worship, I also found an altar with this inscription, ‘TO AN UNKNOWN GOD.’ Therefore what you worship in ignorance, this I proclaim to you.”

1

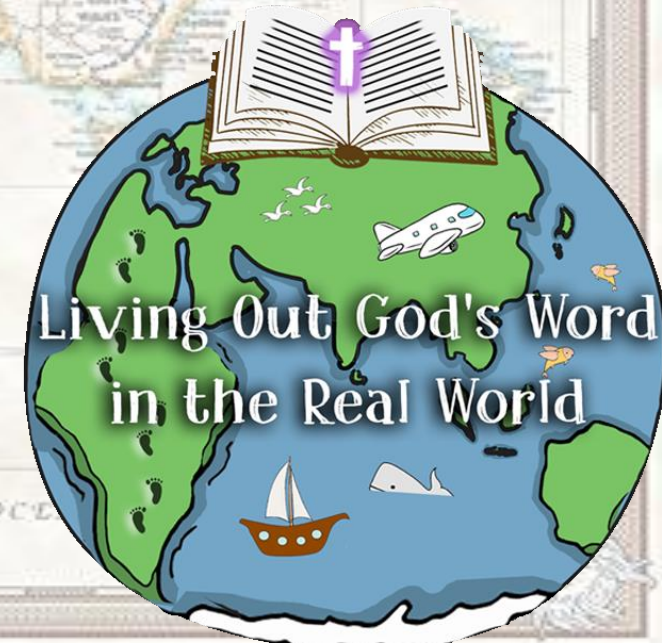
To reach the people around us who are worshipping entirely different gods or idols, we must begin on common ground and from where they are



Old World Style
World Map

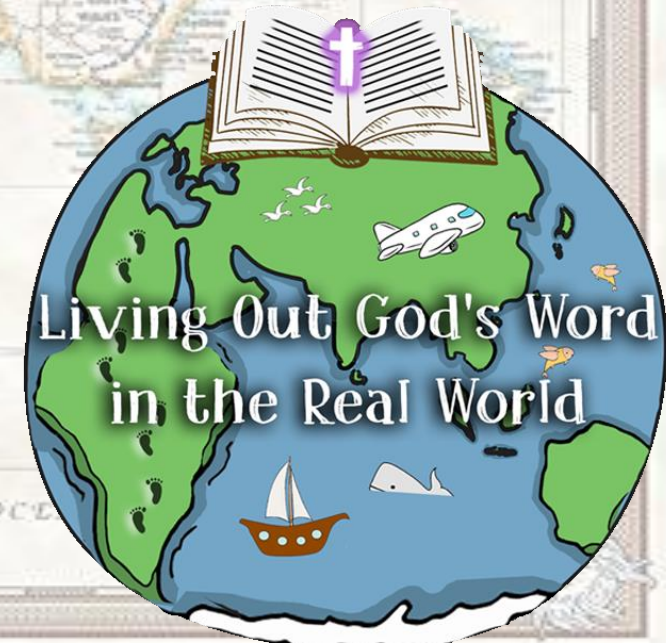
Observing the people around us...

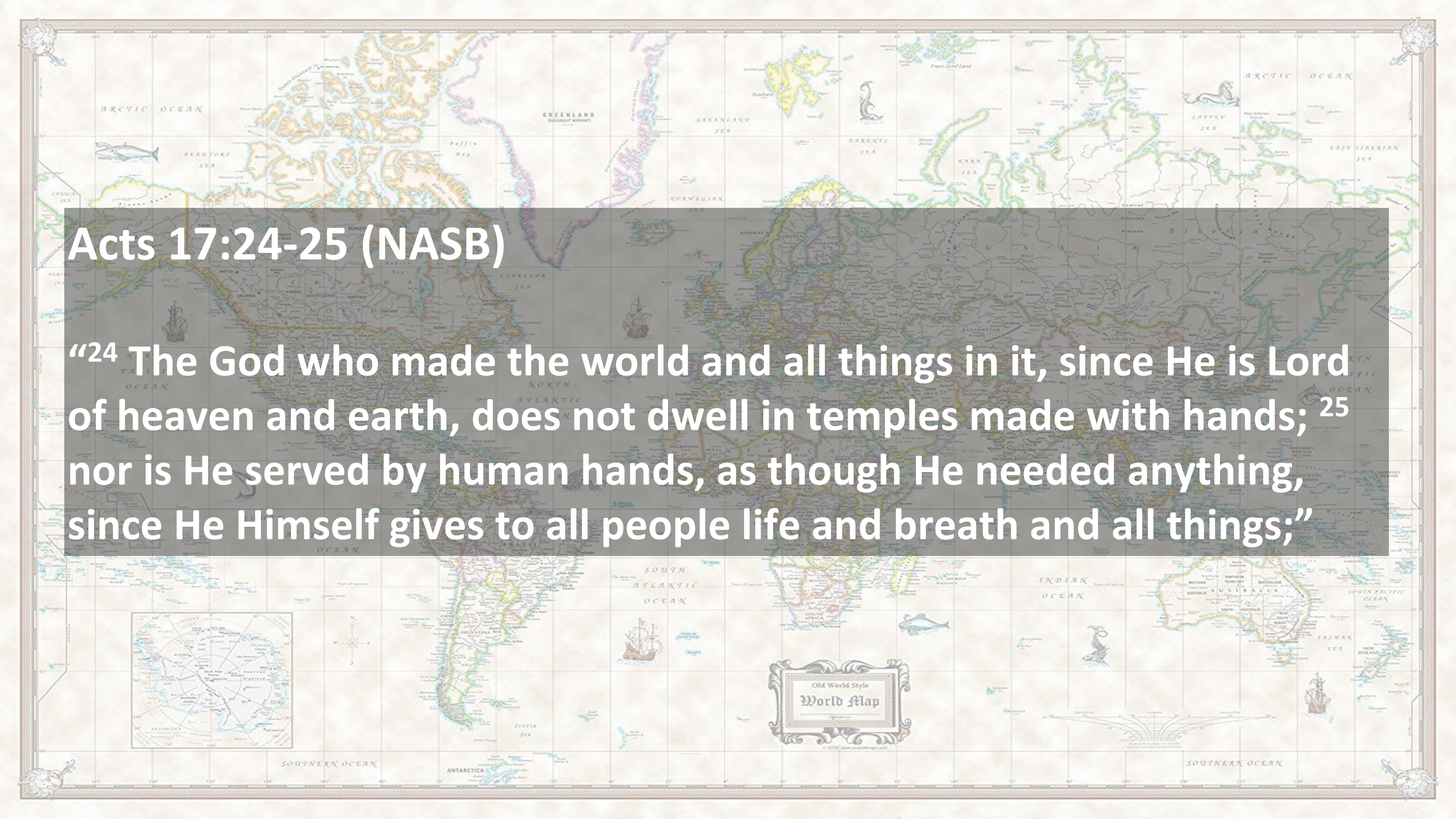
- What are they chasing after?
- What is consuming their time, energy or money?
- How tired or disillusioned are they from chasing both physical or non-physical things that never seem to satisfy?



2

We need to show the people around us that God is the giver and creator of all things



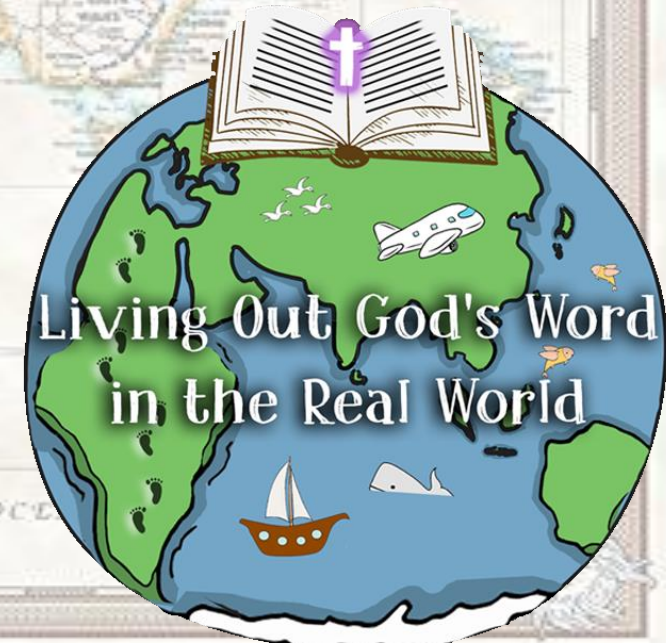


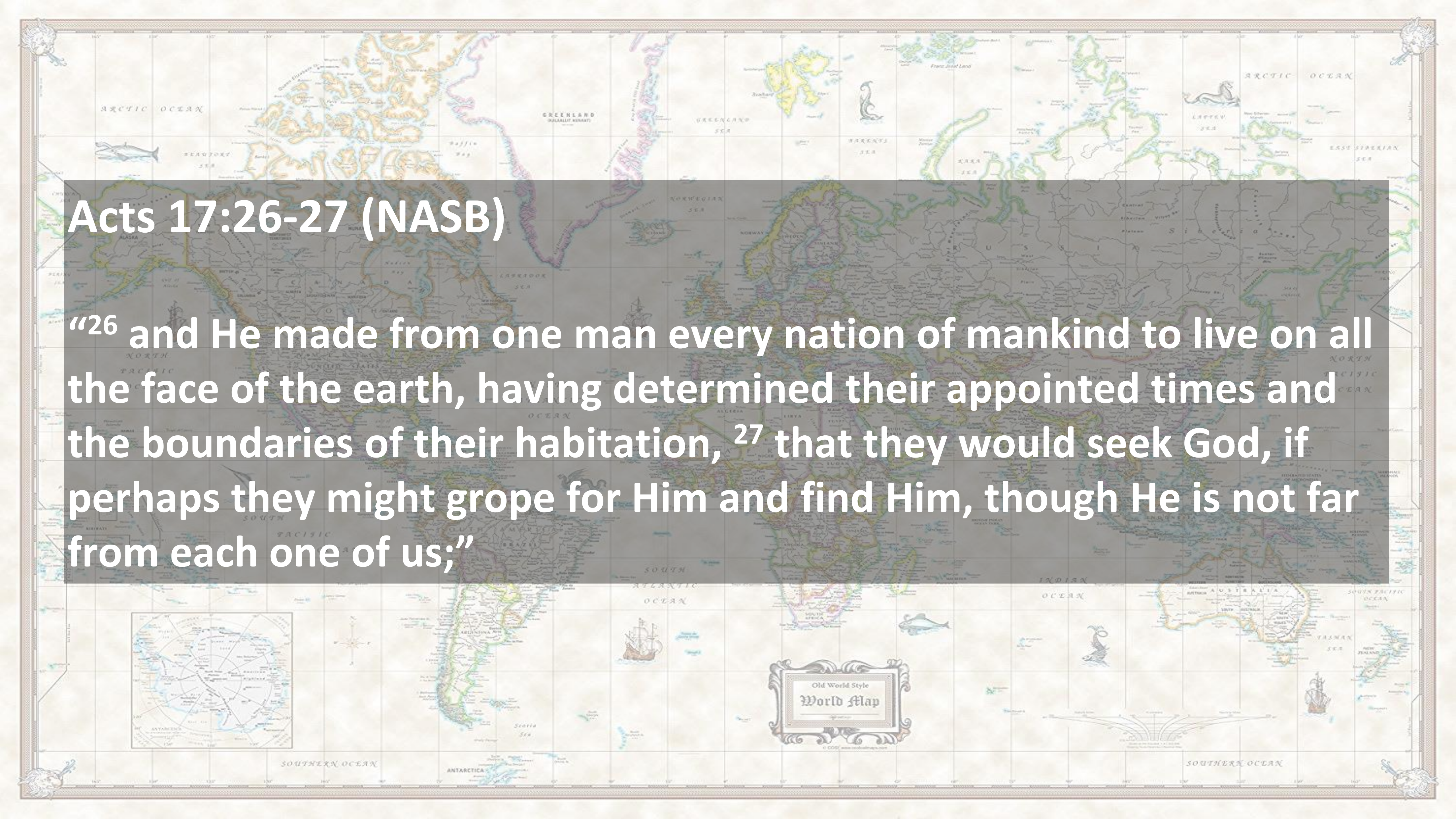
Acts 17:24-25 (NASB)

“²⁴ The God who made the world and all things in it, since He is Lord of heaven and earth, does not dwell in temples made with hands; ²⁵ nor is He served by human hands, as though He needed anything, since He Himself gives to all people life and breath and all things;”

3

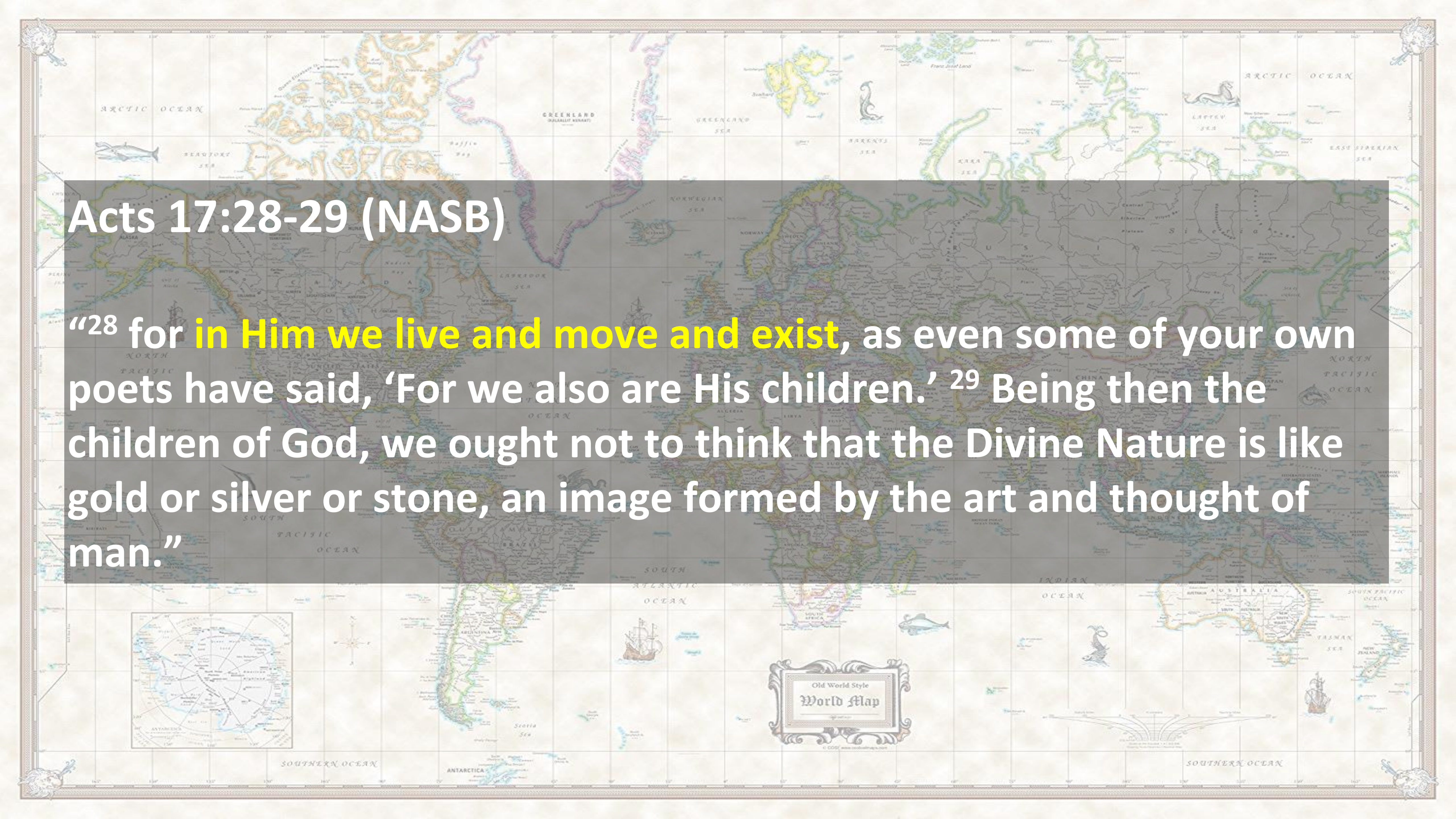
Proclaim how God seeks out all men and does not seek to evade them





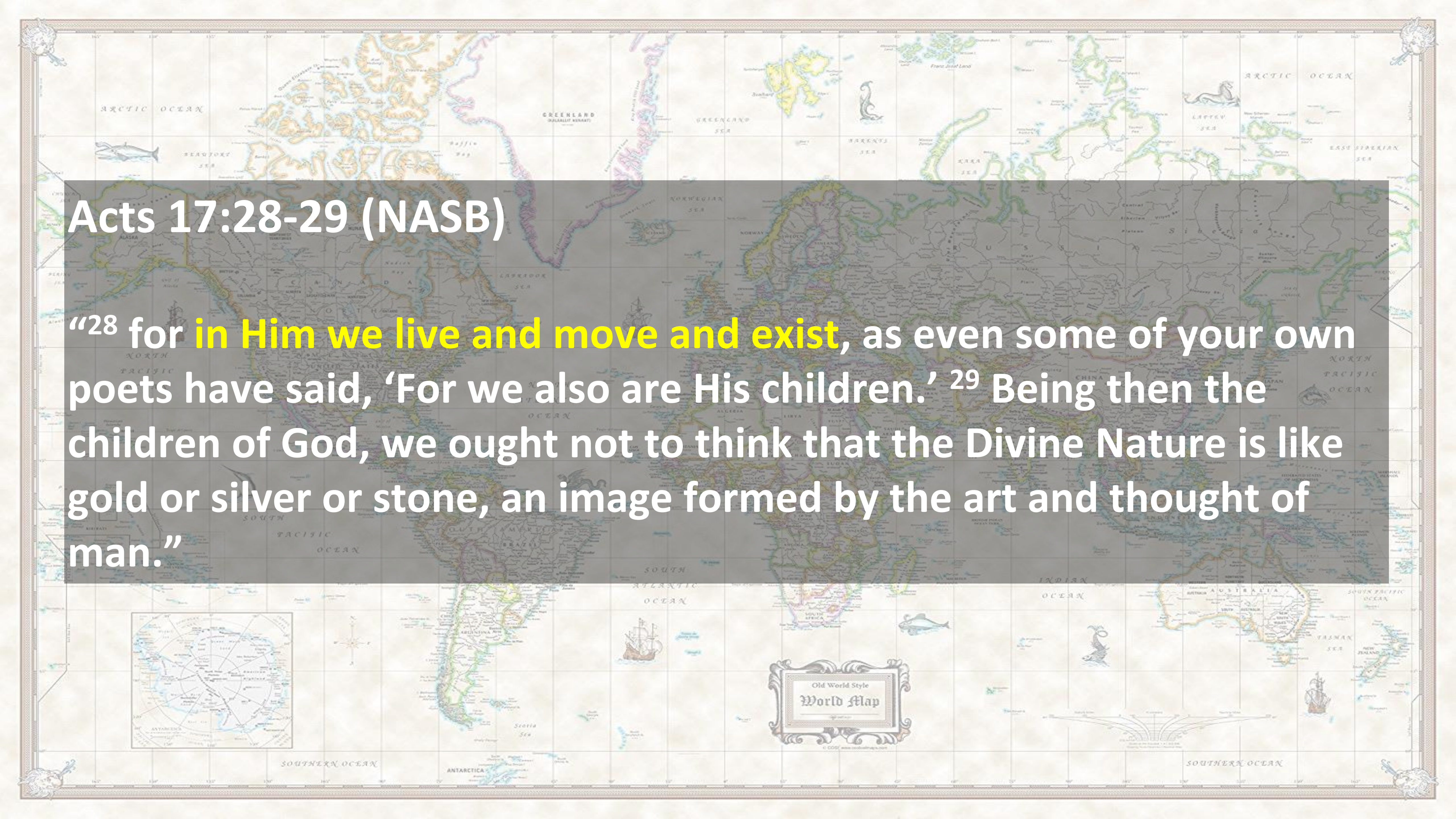
Acts 17:26-27 (NASB)

“²⁶ and He made from one man every nation of mankind to live on all the face of the earth, having determined their appointed times and the boundaries of their habitation, ²⁷ that they would seek God, if perhaps they might grope for Him and find Him, though He is not far from each one of us;”



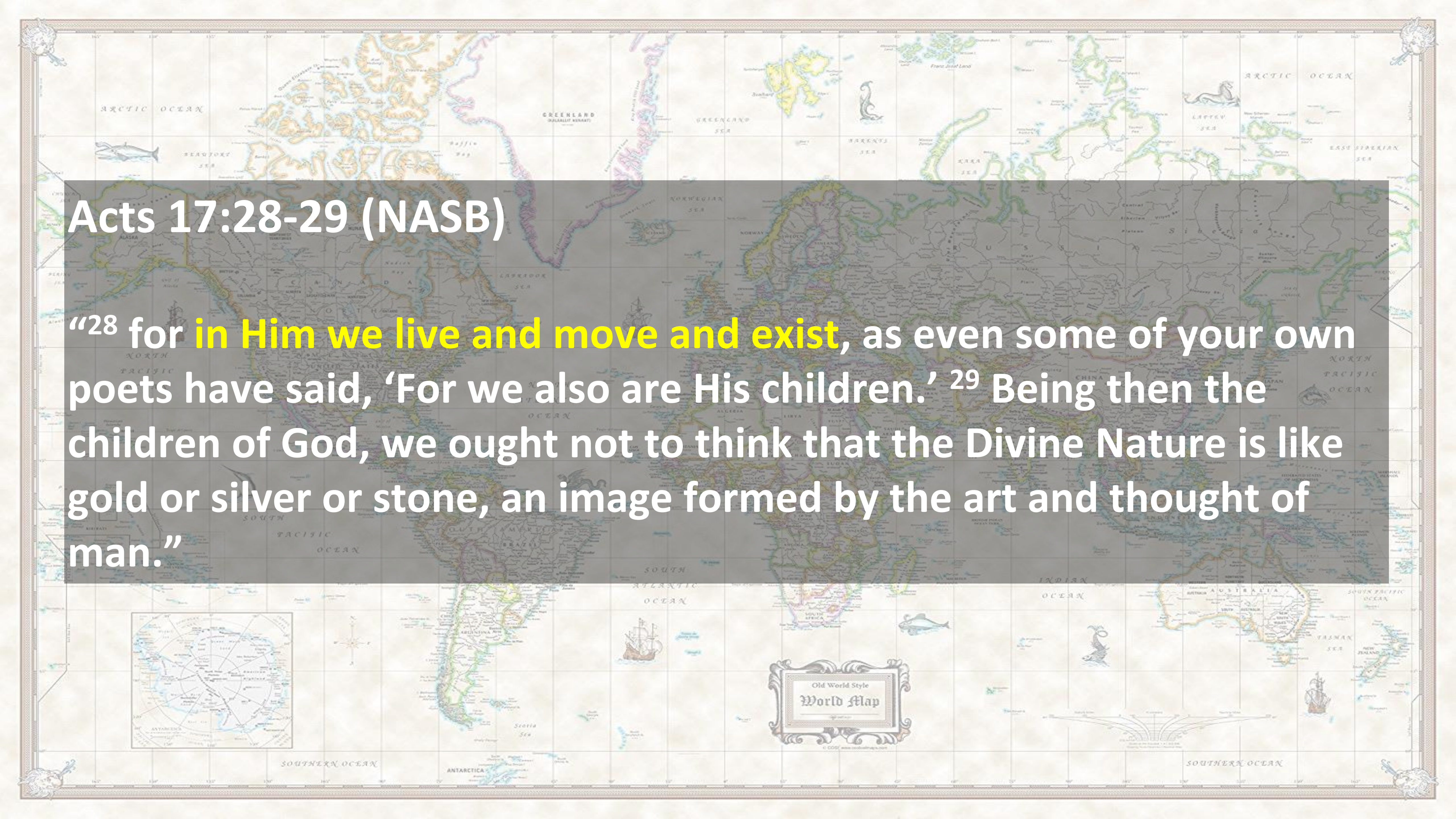
Acts 17:28-29 (NASB)

“²⁸ for in Him we live and move and exist, as even some of your own poets have said, ‘For we also are His children.’ ²⁹ Being then the children of God, we ought not to think that the Divine Nature is like gold or silver or stone, an image formed by the art and thought of man.”



Acts 17:28-29 (NASB)

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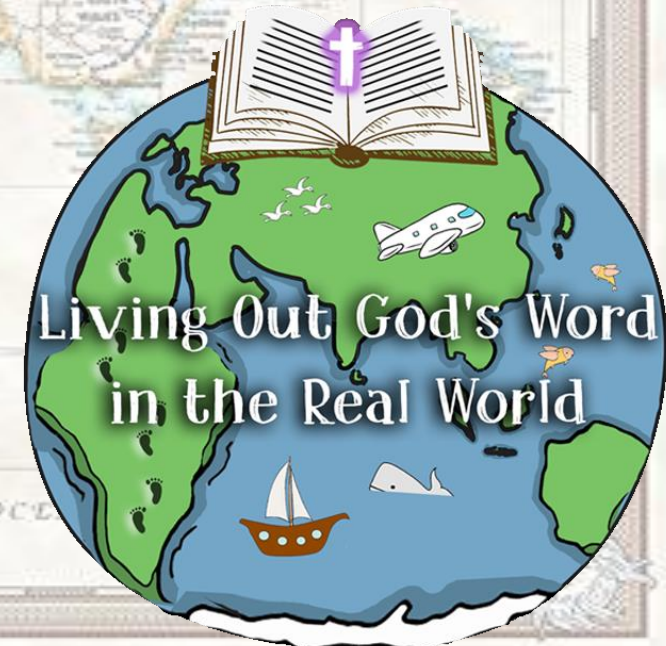


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4

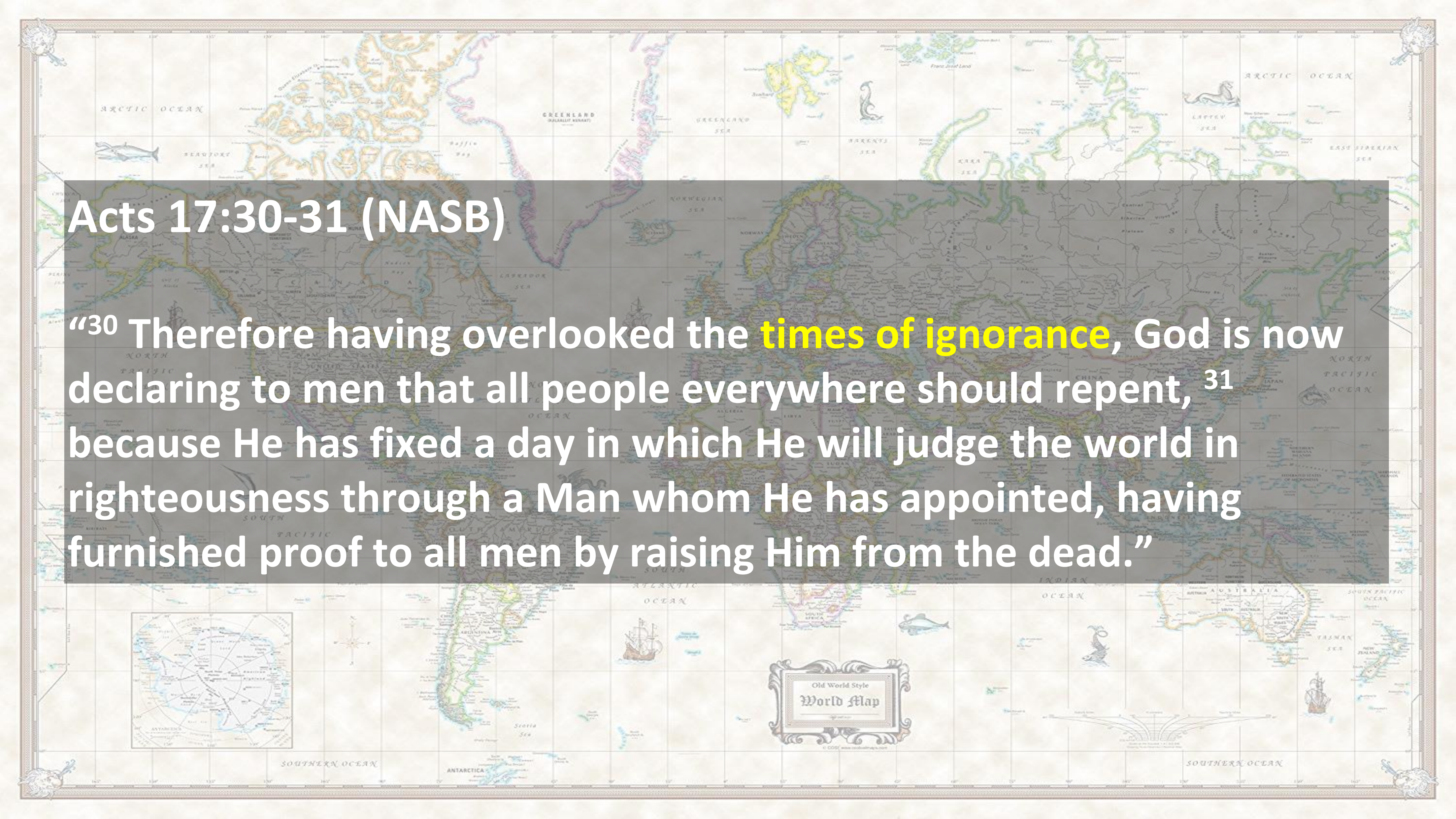
Point them to Jesus





Acts 17:30-31 (NASB)

“³⁰ Therefore having overlooked the times of ignorance, God is now declaring to men that all people everywhere should repent, ³¹ because He has fixed a day in which He will judge the world in righteousness through a Man whom He has appointed, having furnished proof to all men by raising Him from the dead.”



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1. There is an inescapable day coming
2. There is an unchallengeable Judge
3. He raised that Man from the dead



The Athens of two thousand years ago is no different from the Singapore of today with idols, idols all around.

2 Timothy 3:1-5

“¹ But mark this: There will be terrible times in the last days. ² People will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boastful, proud, abusive, disobedient to their parents, ungrateful, unholy, ³ without love, unforgiving, slanderous, without self-control, brutal, not lovers of the good, ⁴ treacherous, rash, conceited, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God— ⁵ **having a form of godliness but denying its power.** Have nothing to do with such people.”

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