A person is walking away from the viewer down a path in a forest. The sun is shining brightly through the trees in the distance, creating a strong backlight effect and illuminating the scene with a warm, golden light. The trees are tall and thin, and their trunks are silhouetted against the bright light. The overall mood is one of hope and spiritual journey.

2022 THEME

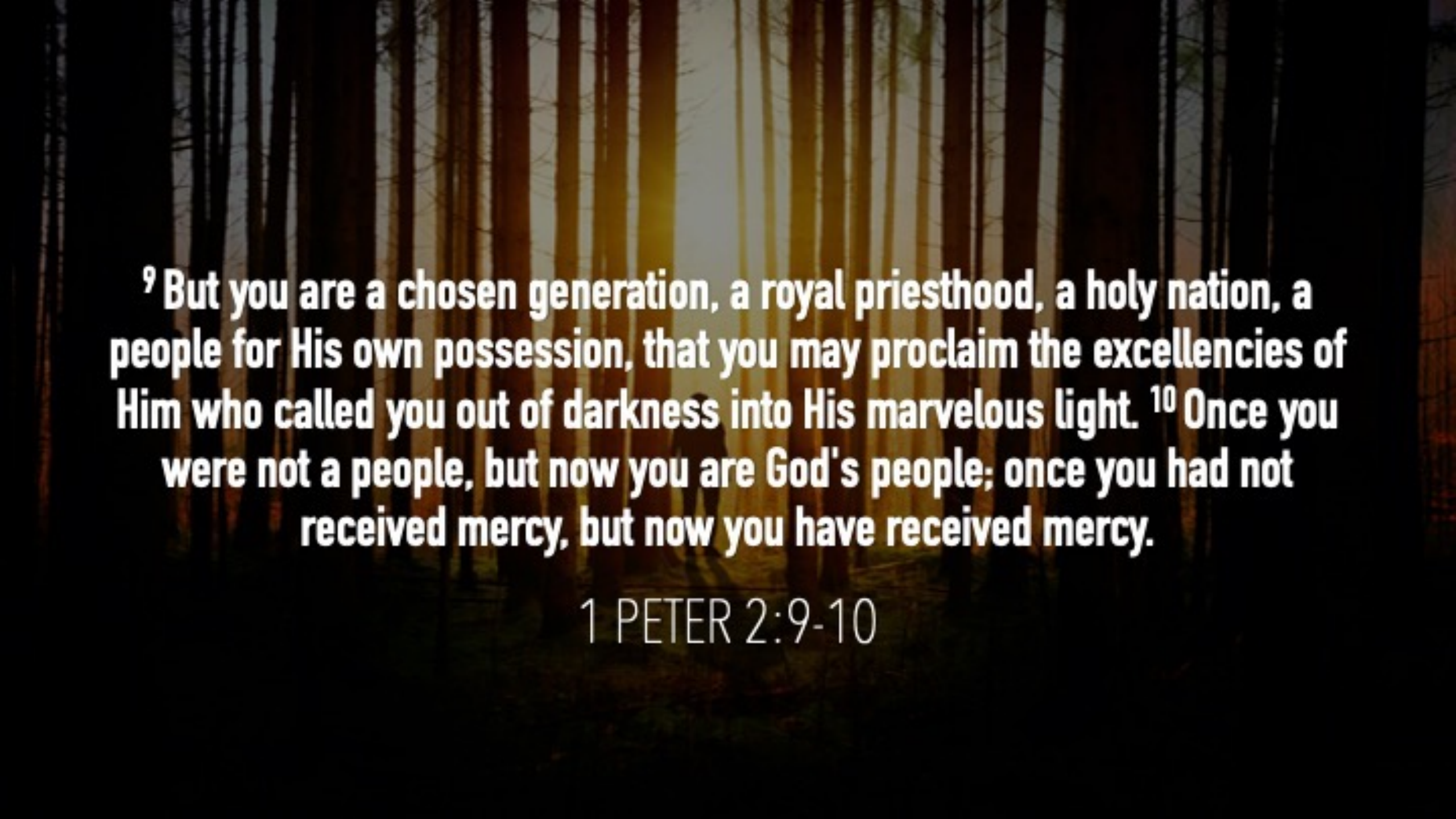
OUT OF DARKNESS

INTO HIS MARVELOUS LIGHT

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1 PETER 2:9-10

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**<sup>9</sup> But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for His own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light. <sup>10</sup> Once you were not a people, but now you are God's people; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy.**

1 PETER 2:9-10



# — TRAIL MARKERS —

# T.R.A.I.L.

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- **Talking** – The things you want to tell others; what you're excited to share
- **Reading** – What occupies your attention; the media you're consuming
- **And** – And
- **Inevitably** – The choices we make lead to consequences
- **Leading** – Your life's course is determined, in large part, by your priorities



TALKING

# TALKING

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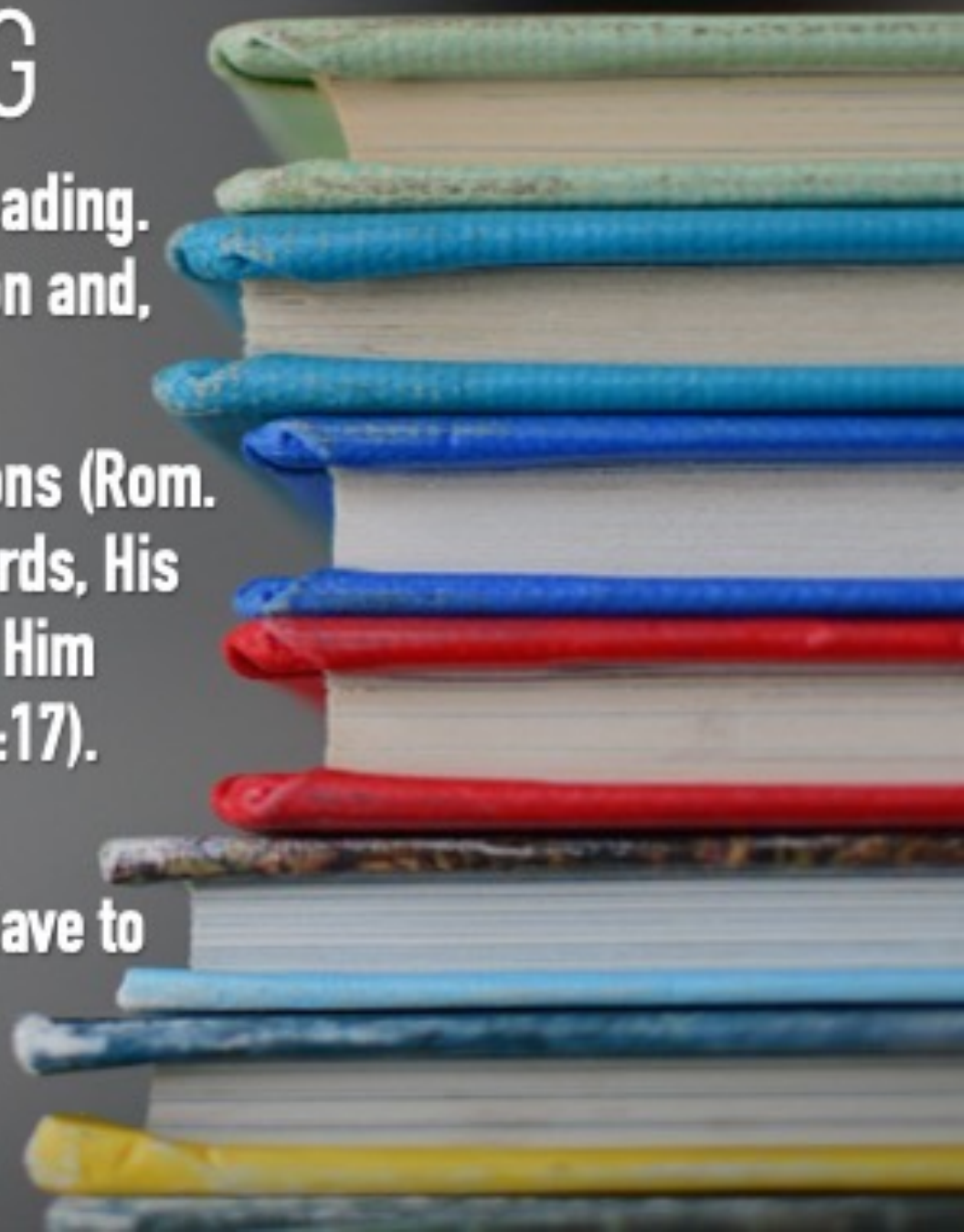
- **Our speech is an indicator of what's going on inside. Bad speech, like bad fruit from a tree, shows how deeply sin is ingrained in our thinking (Luke 6:43–45). Be sure that God takes our language seriously (Matt. 5:22, 12:36–37, Ecc. 5:6, James 1:26, 3:6).**
- **The apostle Paul addresses some very specific “trail markers” in our language (Ephesians 4:29–5:12).**
- **The positive side is that speech can also be good and uplifting. It can be useful, not detrimental. It can be a big part of the fruit we produce for God (1 Pet. 3:9–11, Col. 3:8–10, 4:6, Prov. 19:20, 18:21).**

A person is walking away from the viewer down a path in a forest. The sun is low on the horizon, creating a strong backlight effect and long shadows. The trees are tall and thin, their trunks forming a rhythmic pattern. The overall mood is peaceful and contemplative.


READING

# READING

- Of course we're talking about much more than just reading. It's about input — the media that occupies our attention and, if allowed, will dominate us.
- God wants your mind on His side, not just empty actions (Rom. 12:2, Psalm 40:6-10). He wants us to consider His words, His laws, His written will, and direct our thoughts toward Him (Psalm 119). Reading and belief (1 Jn. 1:1-4, Rom. 10:17).
- This is why prayer and meditation are so important. When worldly noise is silenced, God's voice doesn't have to compete for your attention (Hab. 2:20, Ps. 62:5-6, Zeph. 1:7, Luke 10:39, Mark 1:35, Ps. 37:7)





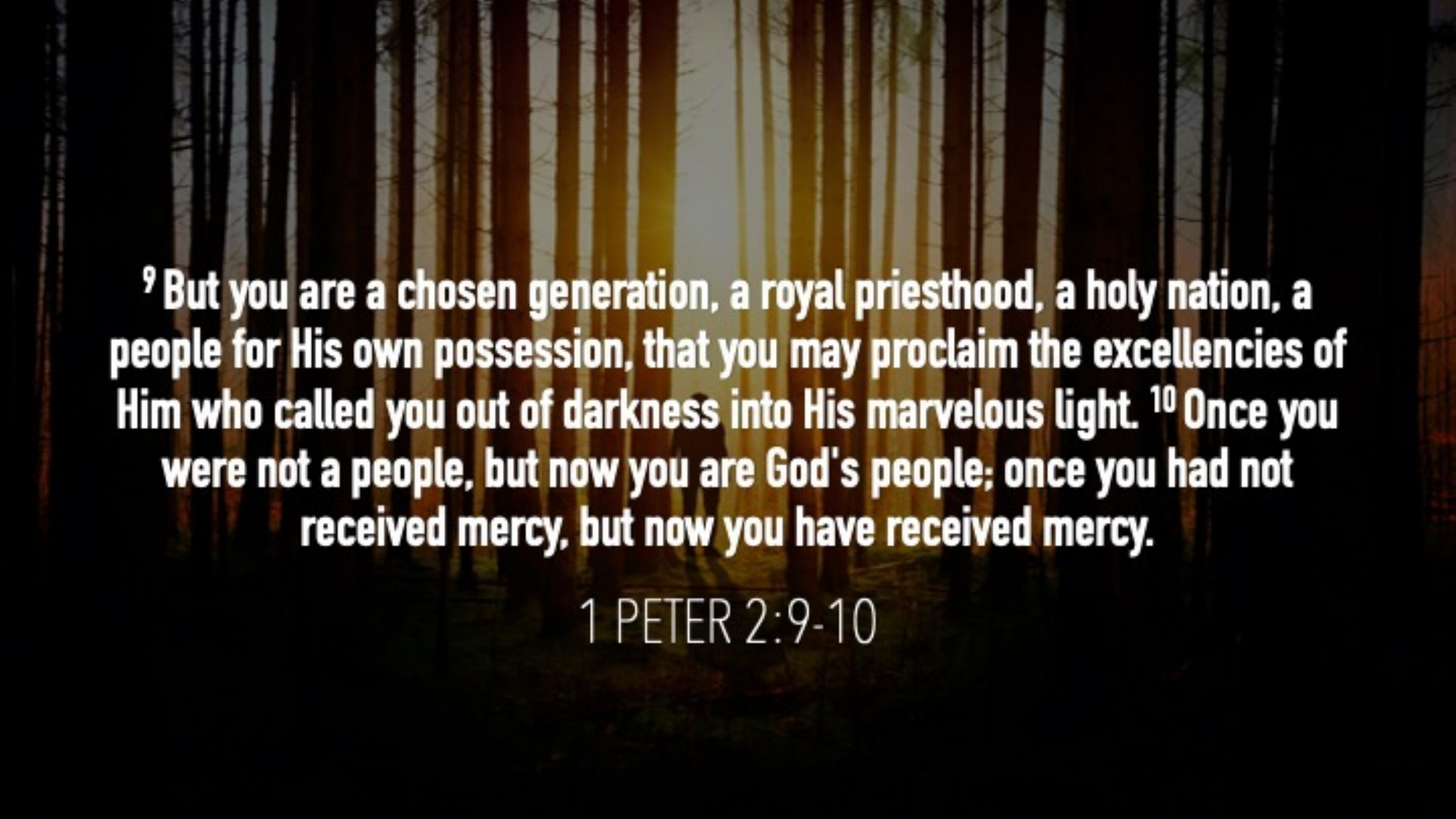
A person is walking away from the viewer down a path in a forest. The sun is low on the horizon, creating a strong backlight effect and long shadows. The trees are tall and thin, and the overall atmosphere is serene and contemplative.

**AND INEVITABLY LEADING**

# CONSEQUENCES

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- We are all walking down one trail or another. Life is going somewhere. Either we are living worldly lives, dominated by worldly things, with worldly goals. What we talk about and what we consume is a reflection of this priority. Or we are heavenward people, and every part of life is subject to that priority (Romans 8:5-14).
- Remember that you essentially become what you prioritize (Psalm 115:4-8). It is as inevitable as following a trail and arriving at the destination that was indicated by markers the entire way!
- Psalm 119:36-37, 2 Corinthians 3:18



**<sup>9</sup> But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for His own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light. <sup>10</sup> Once you were not a people, but now you are God's people; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy.**

1 PETER 2:9-10