

ADVENT



United Nations Rights of the Child: Article 14 – Every child has the right to think and believe what they want and to practise their religion. We have the responsibility to respect the beliefs of others.

So over the last few weeks, when thinking about Advent, we have thought about the idea of **hope** and **preparation**.

This week we think about **joy**, this is what the third candle on our Advent wreath represents.

What does the word **JOY** mean to you?

JOY

This week Christians think about John the Baptist and how he went out into the countryside to tell people that Jesus was coming to lead them in the way of peace and love.

There is a story in the Bible about a man called John, the son of Zechariah and Elizabeth. When John had grown up, he went to live in a desert place, wondering what special work God wanted him to do. One day, God told John to go and tell the people to get ready to welcome his Son, so John went to the river Jordan. Many came to stare at this wild-looking man with his long hair, beard and rough-haired coat. This is what he told them. 'You have not always obeyed God's instructions. He wants you to say that you are sorry. So come and be washed clean in the river.'

Many people asked John, 'Who are you?'

When John was asked this, he replied, 'I am only God's messenger. Someone much greater than me is coming soon. You must get ready to follow him.' When John said this, he was speaking about Jesus.

Today we are going to think about something that happened when Jesus mother, Mary, visited John the Baptist's mother Elizabeth.



This picture is an artists impression of how he imagined the scene in the story.

You may want to look carefully at the picture while I tell the story.



We are going to finish with our prayer , if you'd like to make it your prayer, you can say amen at the end.

Dear God

Help me to remember that Jesus came to earth to spread

A message of love for those who are most in need.

Give me the courage to show kindness to others

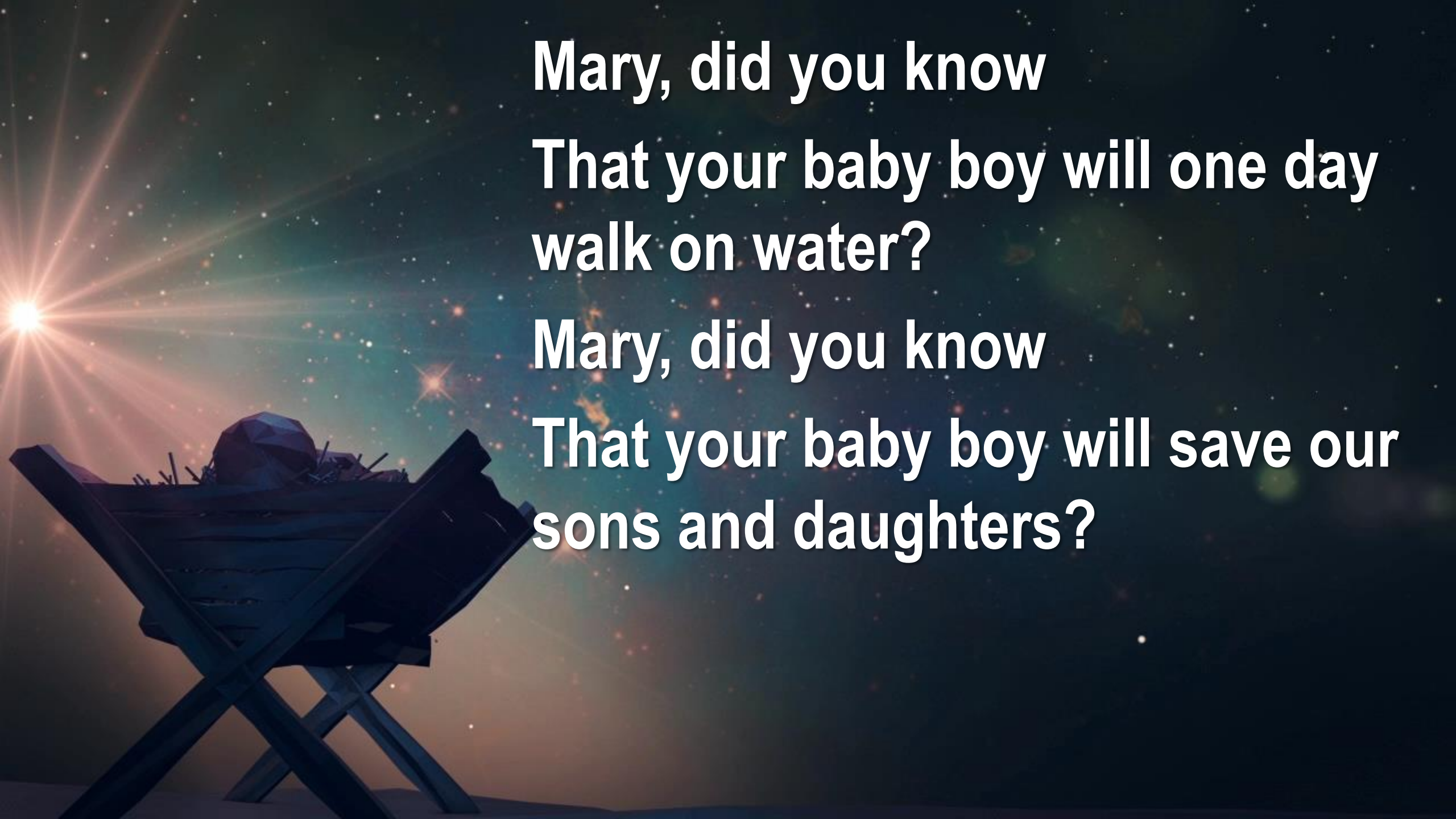
So that love may grow in my heart and in the world.

Amen



Mary did you know?

[YouTube link](#)

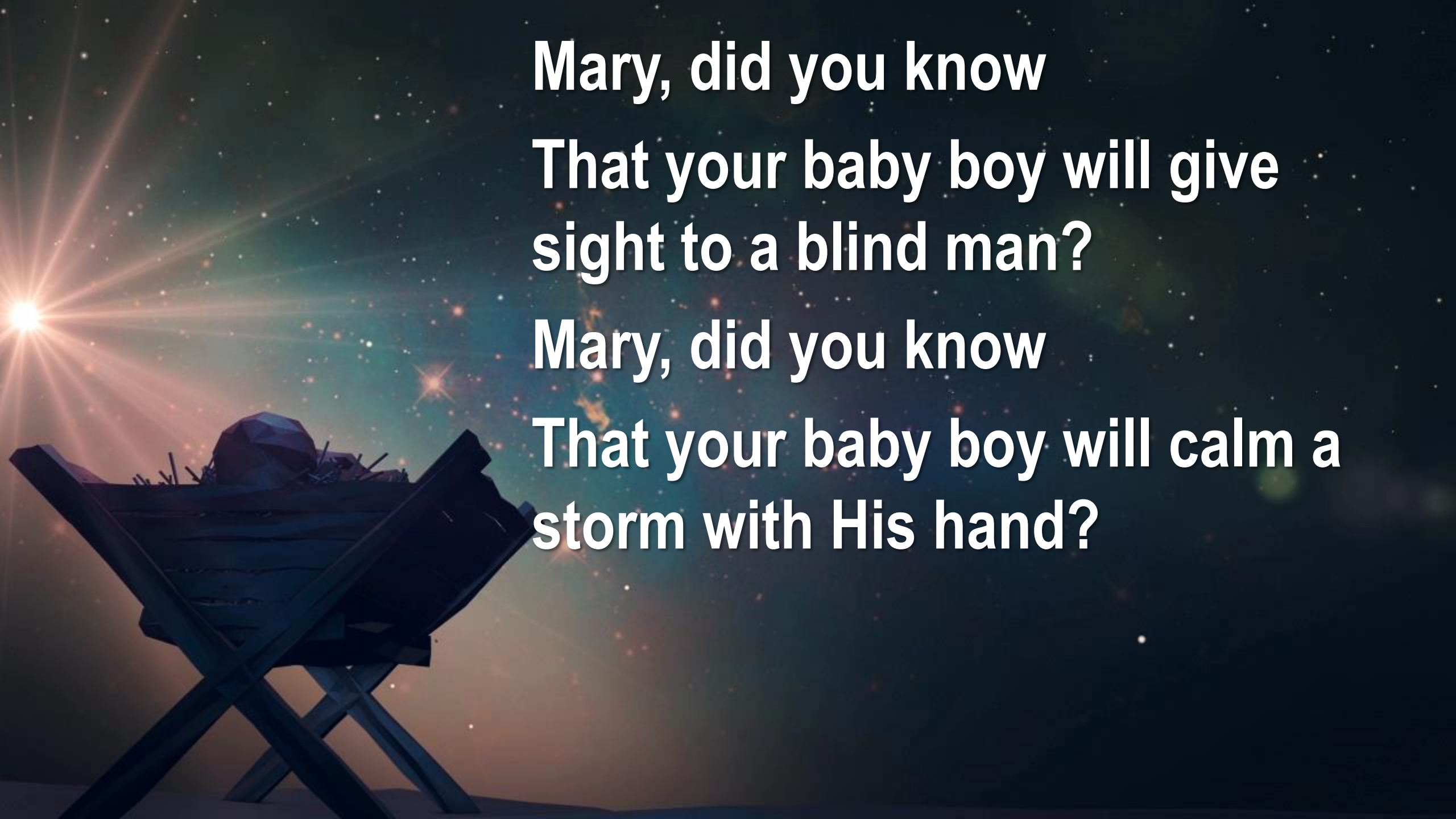
An illustration of a nativity scene. In the foreground, a wooden manger with a cross-shaped frame holds a baby wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying on a bed of straw. The background is a dark, starry night sky with a bright star on the left casting a warm glow. The text is overlaid on the right side of the image.

**Mary, did you know
That your baby boy will one day
walk on water?**

**Mary, did you know
That your baby boy will save our
sons and daughters?**

**Did you know
That your baby boy has come to
make you new?
This child that you've delivered
Will soon deliver you**



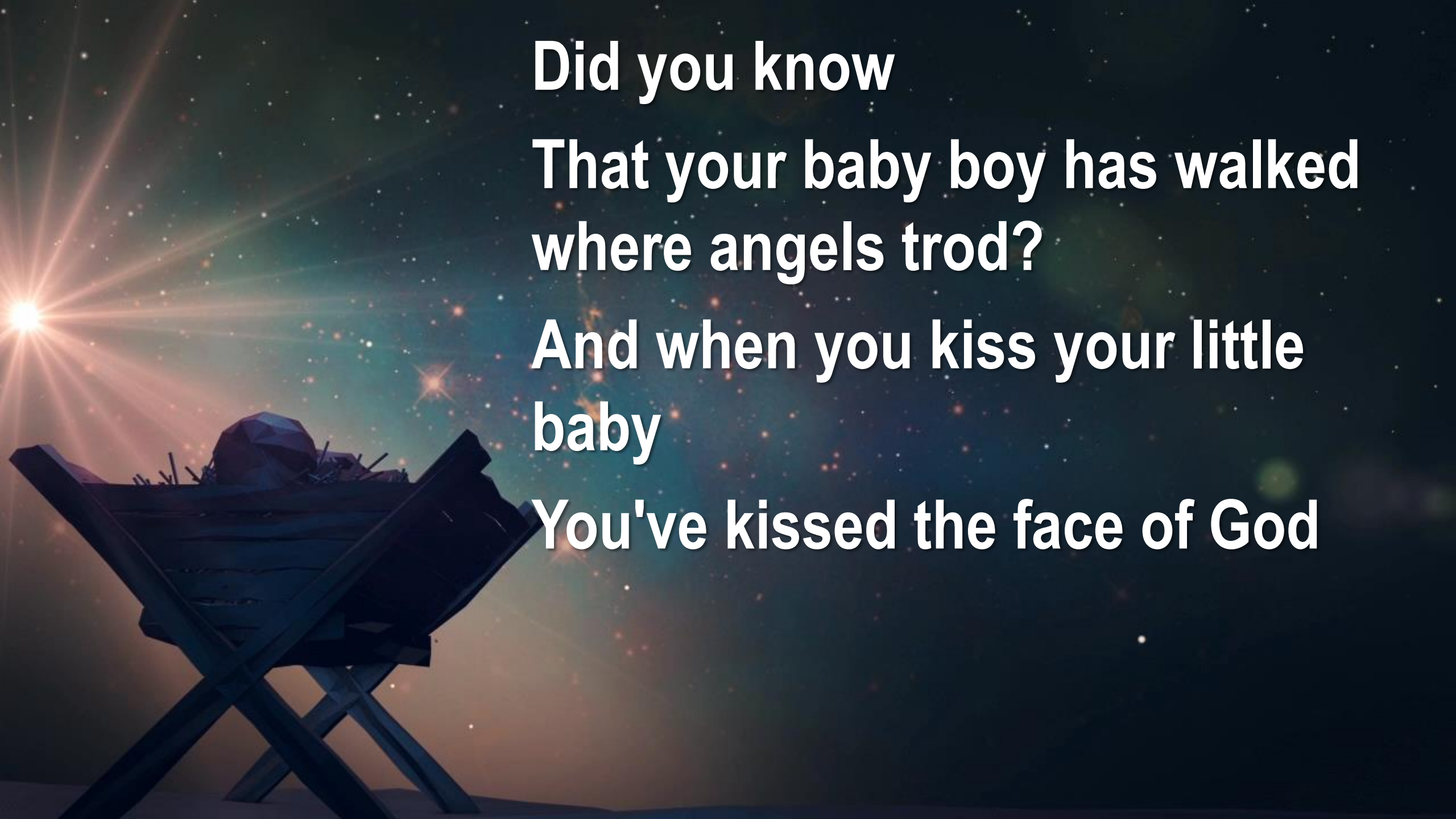
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Mary, did you know

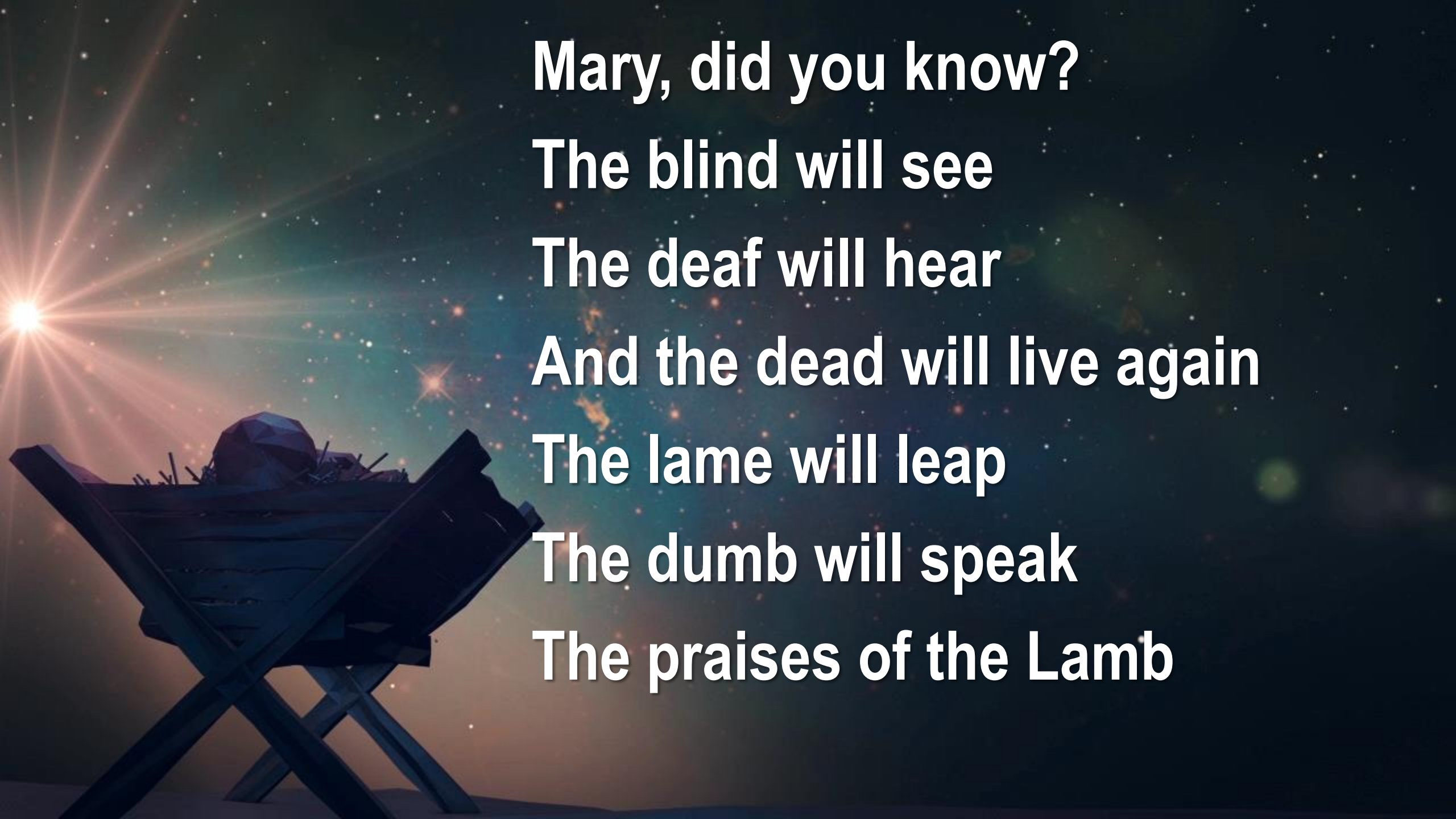
**That your baby boy will give
sight to a blind man?**

Mary, did you know

**That your baby boy will calm a
storm with His hand?**

A stylized illustration of a nativity scene. In the lower-left foreground, a wooden manger is filled with straw and a large, dark, angular rock. The background is a deep blue night sky filled with numerous small, glowing stars. A bright, multi-pointed starburst emanates from the left side, casting a warm, golden glow across the scene. The overall style is soft and artistic, typical of a children's book illustration or a religious poster.

**Did you know
That your baby boy has walked
where angels trod?
And when you kiss your little
baby
You've kissed the face of God**



Mary, did you know?

The blind will see

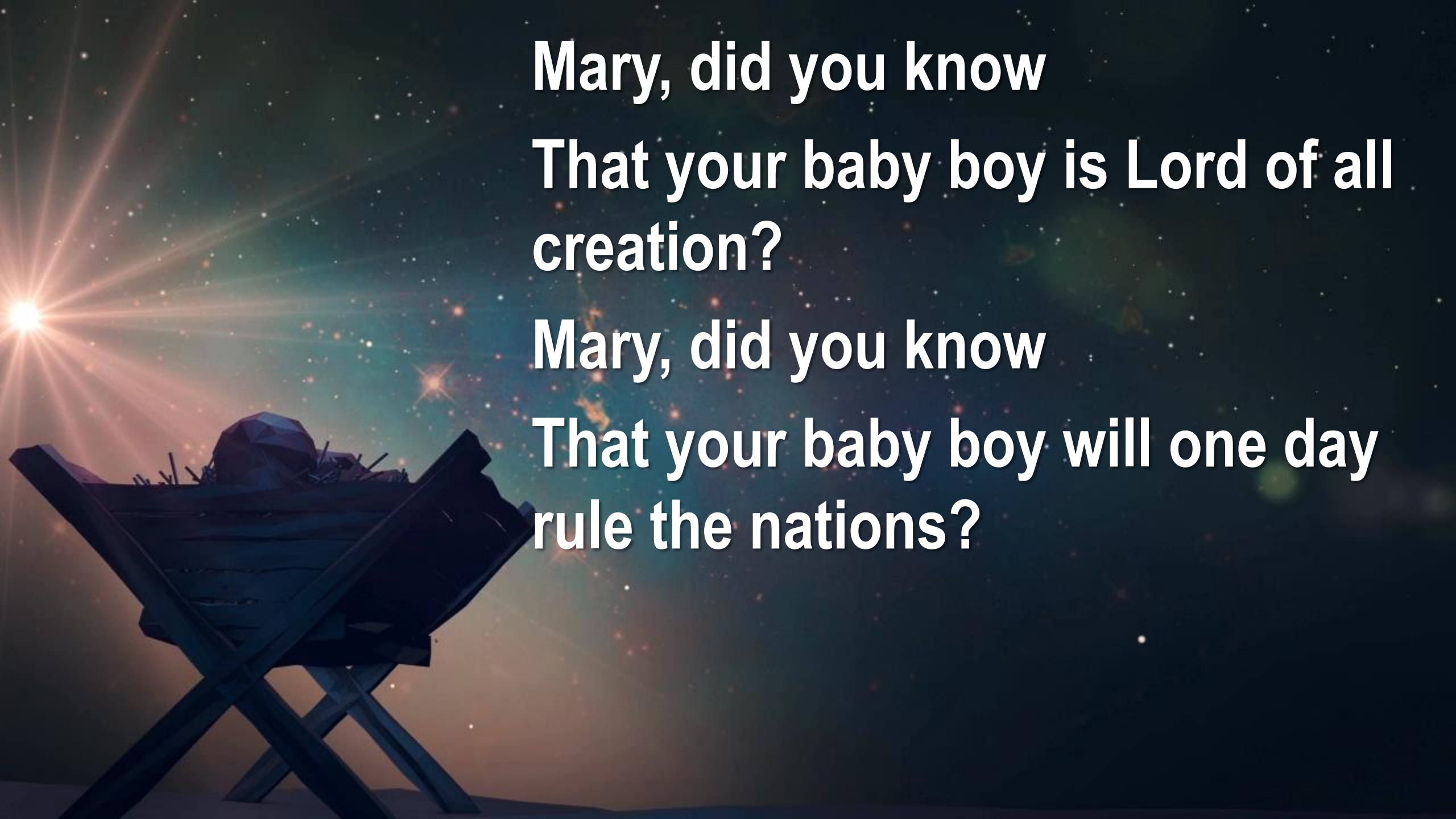
The deaf will hear

And the dead will live again

The lame will leap

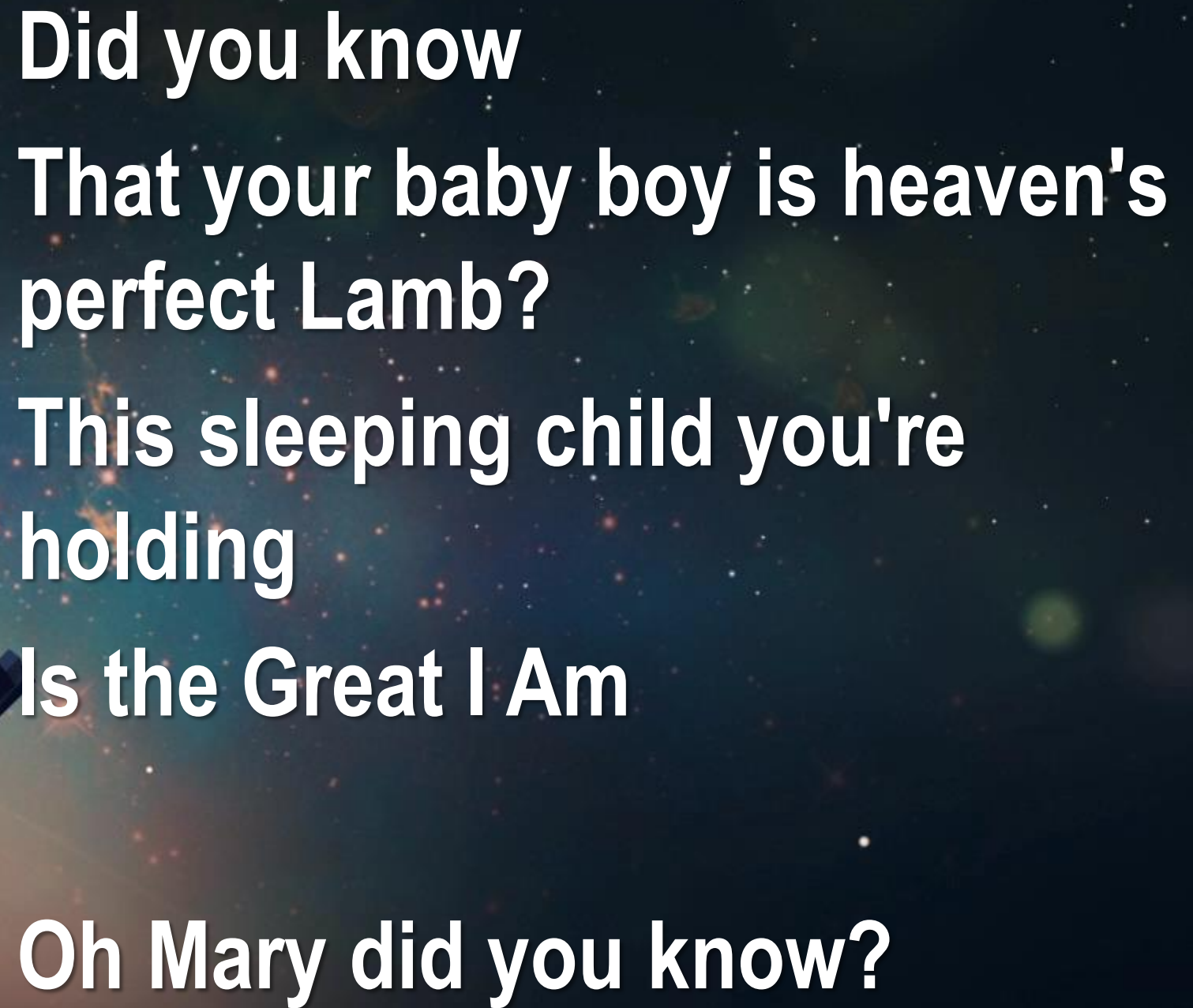
The dumb will speak

The praises of the Lamb

A stylized illustration of a nativity scene. In the foreground, a wooden manger with a cross-shaped frame holds a baby wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying on a bed of straw. A large, dark, rounded stone is positioned at the head of the manger. The background is a deep blue night sky filled with stars and a soft, glowing light emanating from the left, suggesting the birth of Jesus. The overall mood is serene and celestial.

**Mary, did you know
That your baby boy is Lord of all
creation?**

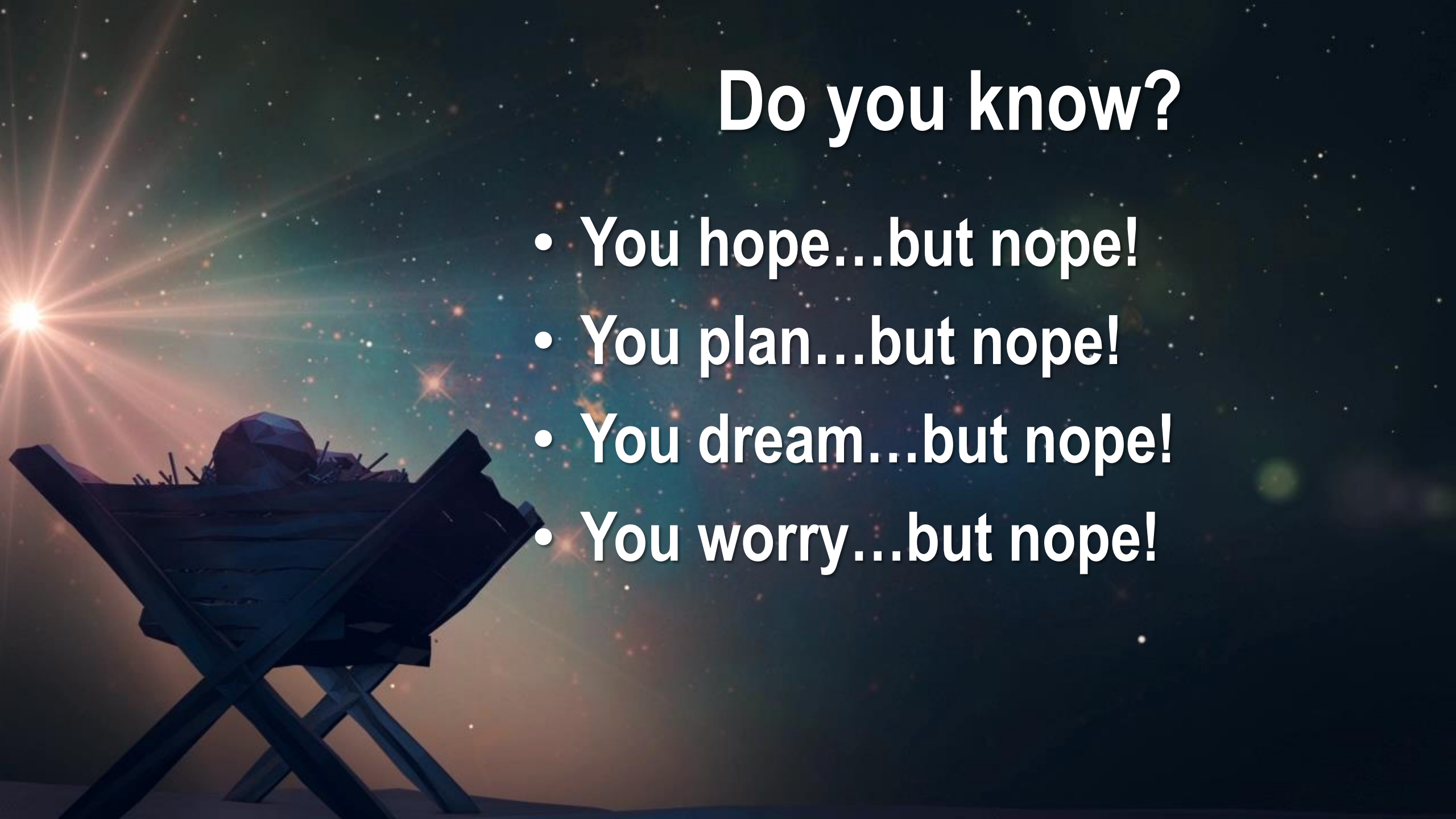
**Mary, did you know
That your baby boy will one day
rule the nations?**

A stylized illustration of a nativity scene. In the foreground, a wooden manger with a cross-shaped frame holds a baby wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying on a bed of straw. A large, dark, rounded stone is positioned at the head of the manger. The background is a deep blue night sky filled with numerous small, twinkling stars. A bright, glowing star is visible on the left side, casting a warm, golden light across the scene. The overall atmosphere is peaceful and celestial.

**Did you know
That your baby boy is heaven's
perfect Lamb?
This sleeping child you're
holding
Is the Great I Am
Oh Mary did you know?**

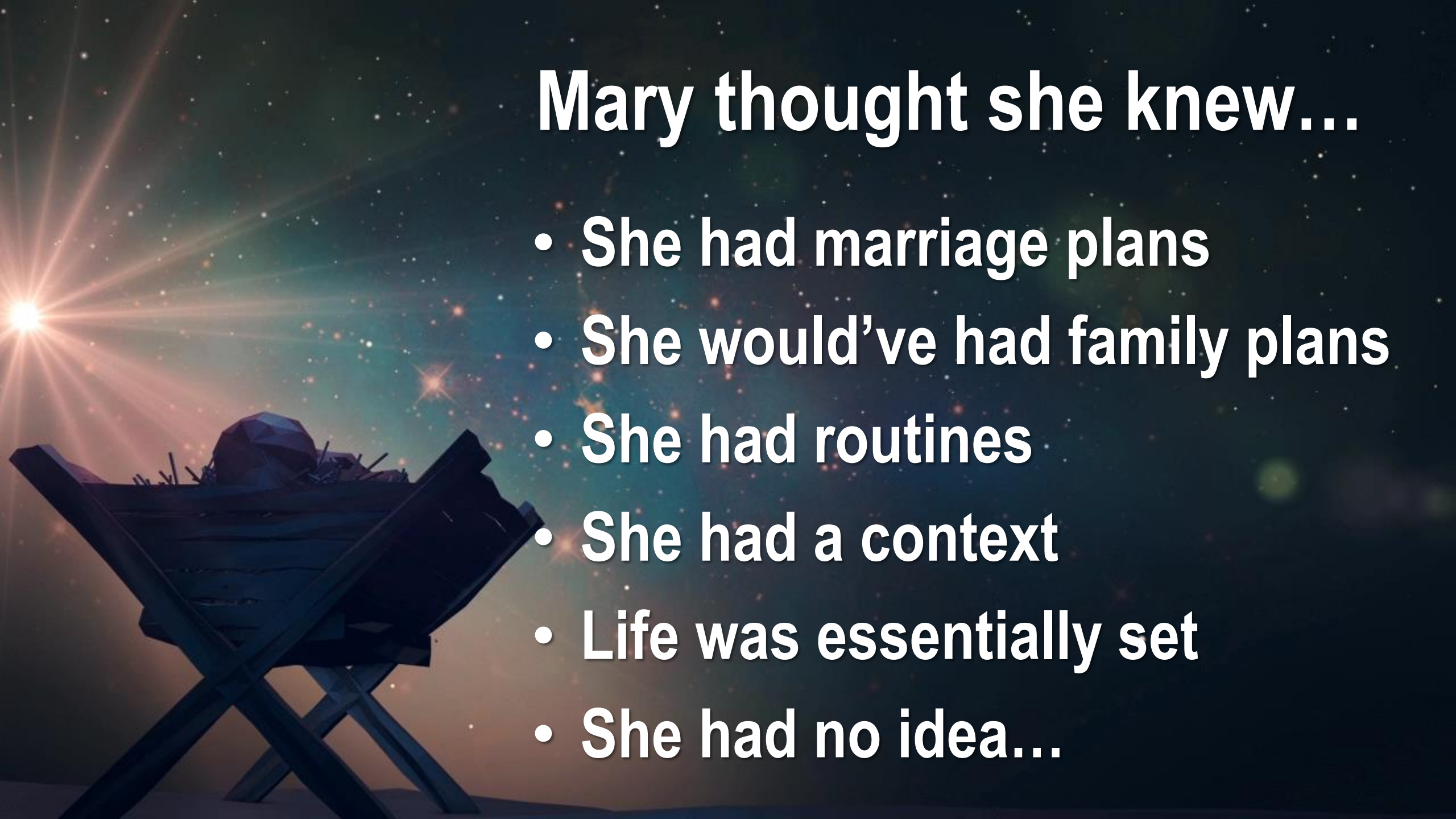
Do you know?

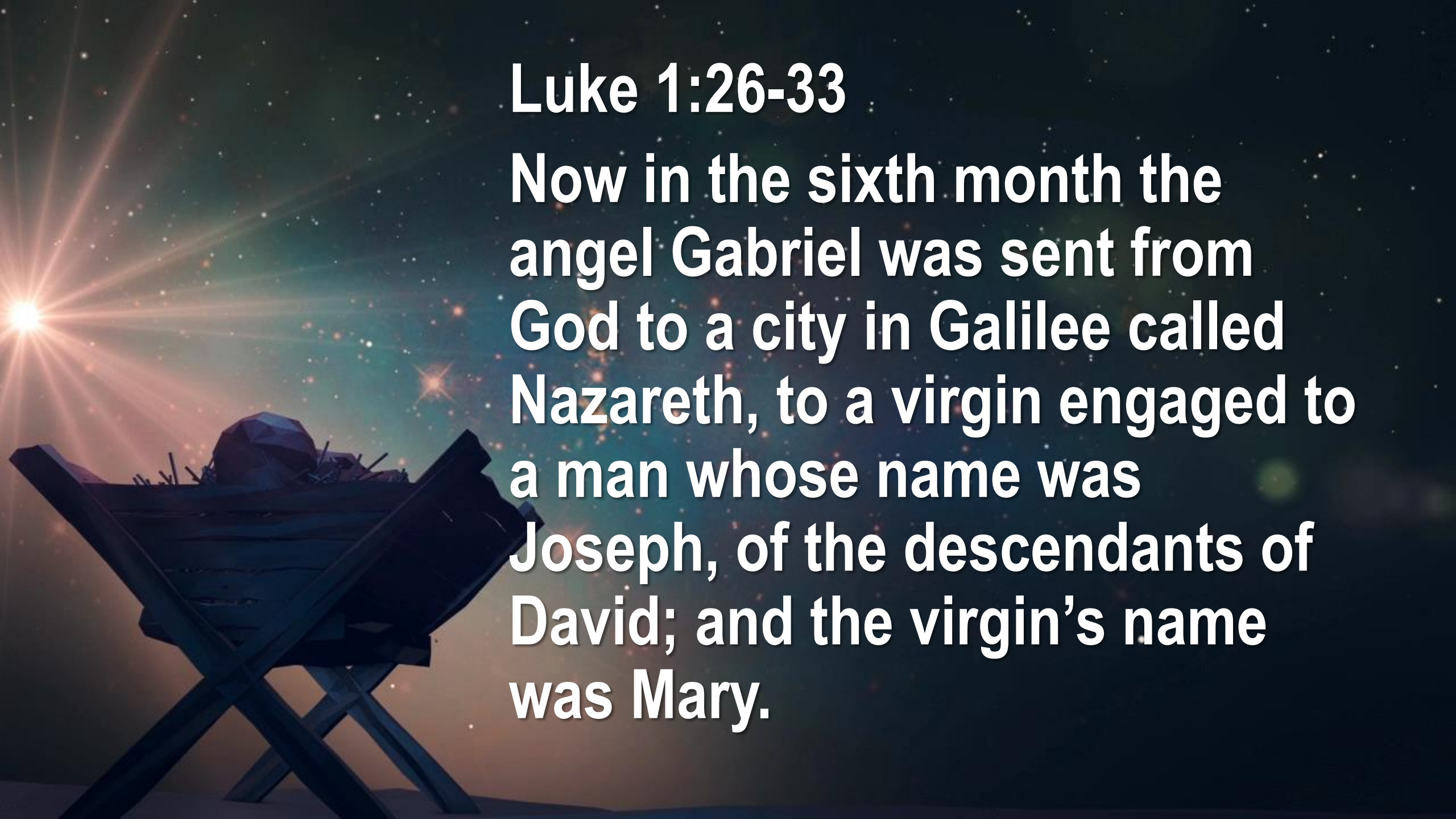
- You hope...but nope!
- You plan...but nope!
- You dream...but nope!
- You worry...but nope!



Mary thought she knew...

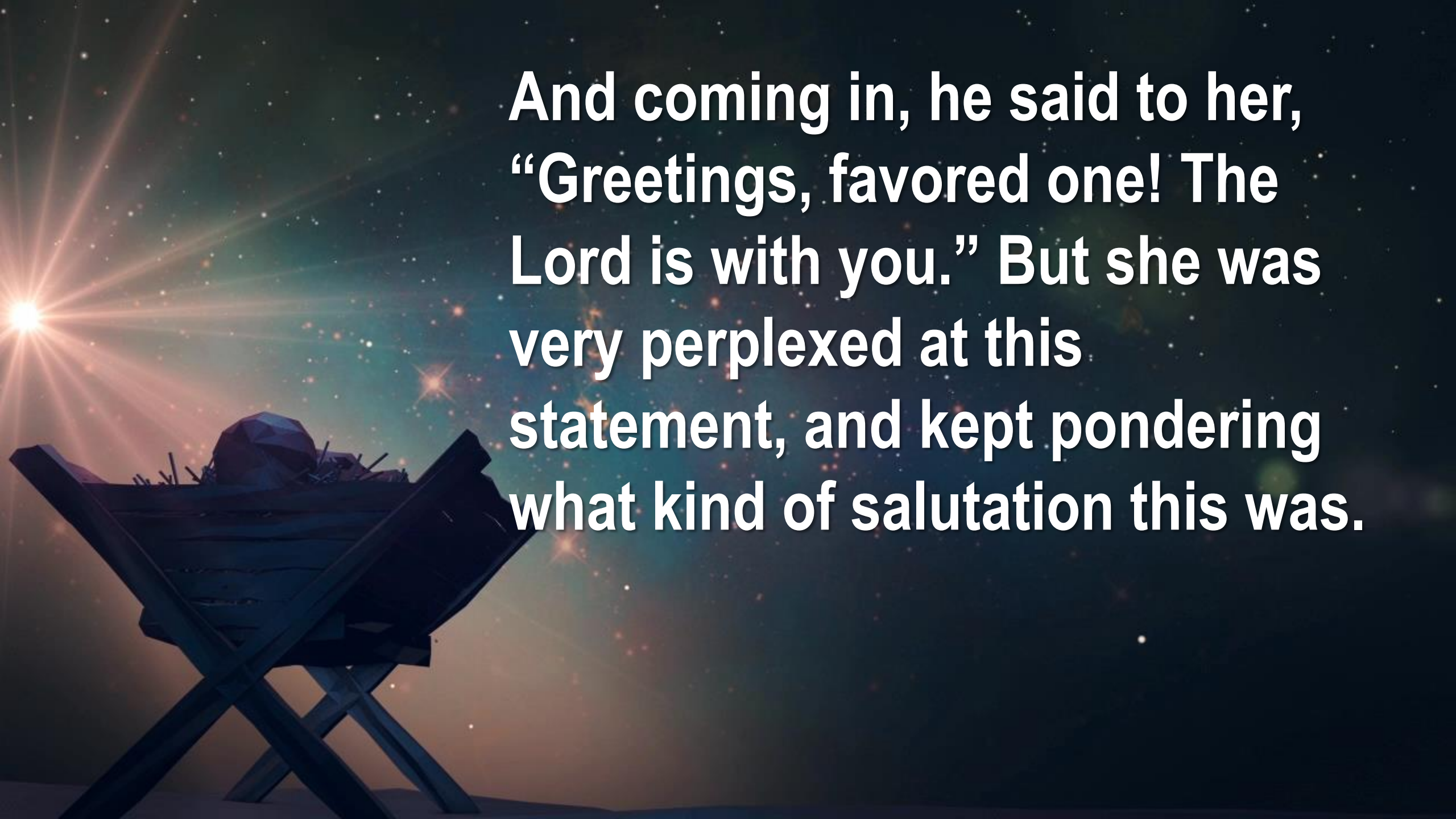
- She had marriage plans
- She would've had family plans
- She had routines
- She had a context
- Life was essentially set
- She had no idea...



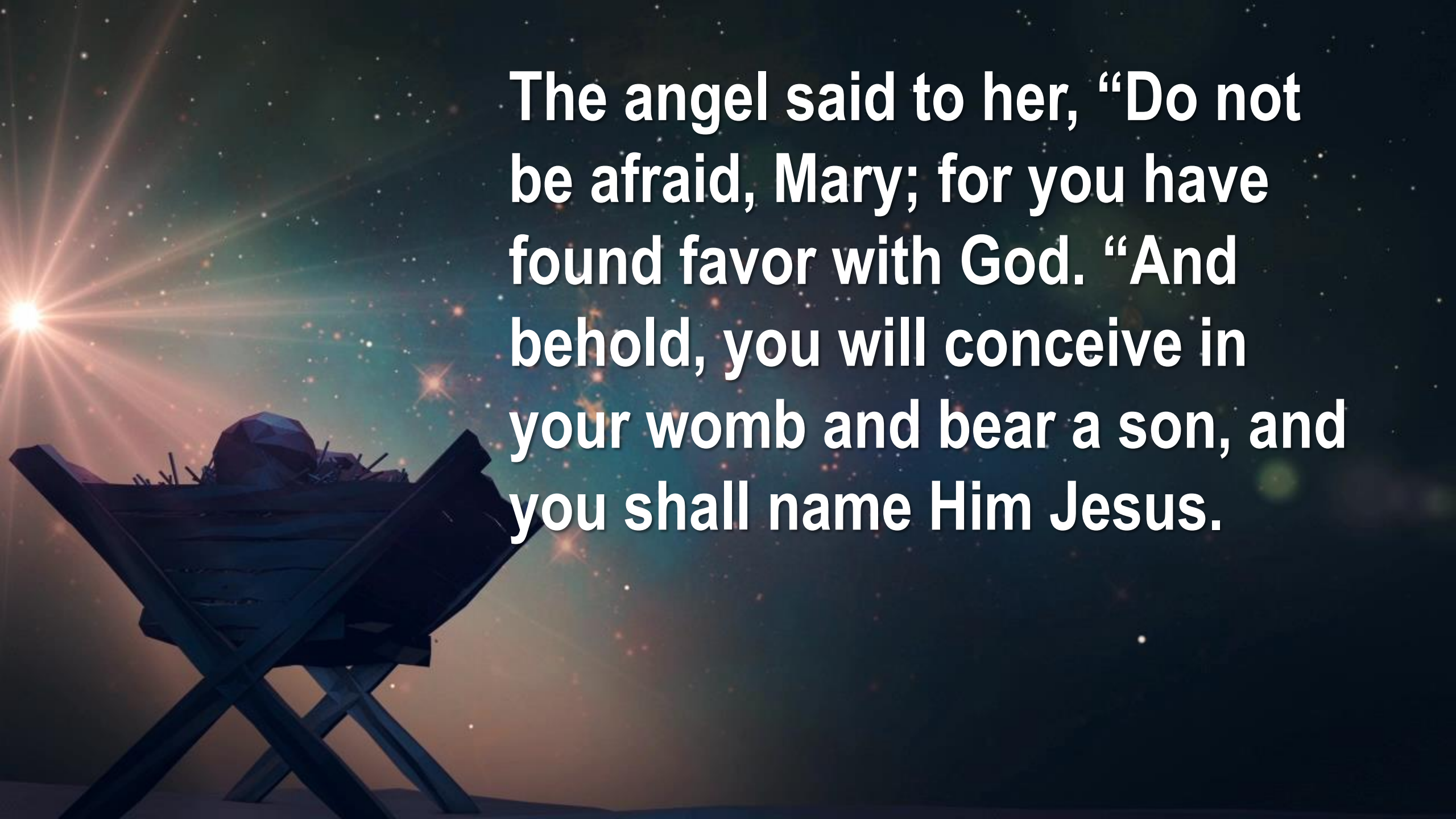


Luke 1:26-33


Now in the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God to a city in Galilee called Nazareth, to a virgin engaged to a man whose name was Joseph, of the descendants of David; and the virgin's name was Mary.

A night scene with a starry sky. A bright star on the left creates a lens flare. In the foreground, a wooden manger with a rock inside sits on a dark surface. The text is overlaid on the right side of the image.

**And coming in, he said to her,
“Greetings, favored one! The
Lord is with you.” But she was
very perplexed at this
statement, and kept pondering
what kind of salutation this was.**

The background of the image is a dark, starry night sky. On the left side, there is a bright, glowing star or light source that creates a lens flare effect, with rays of light extending across the sky. The sky is filled with numerous small, distant stars. In the lower-left foreground, there is a wooden manger, a simple structure made of dark wood, containing a large, smooth, light-colored rock. The manger is positioned on a dark, flat surface. The overall atmosphere is serene and celestial.

The angel said to her, “Do not be afraid, Mary; for you have found favor with God. “And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall name Him Jesus.

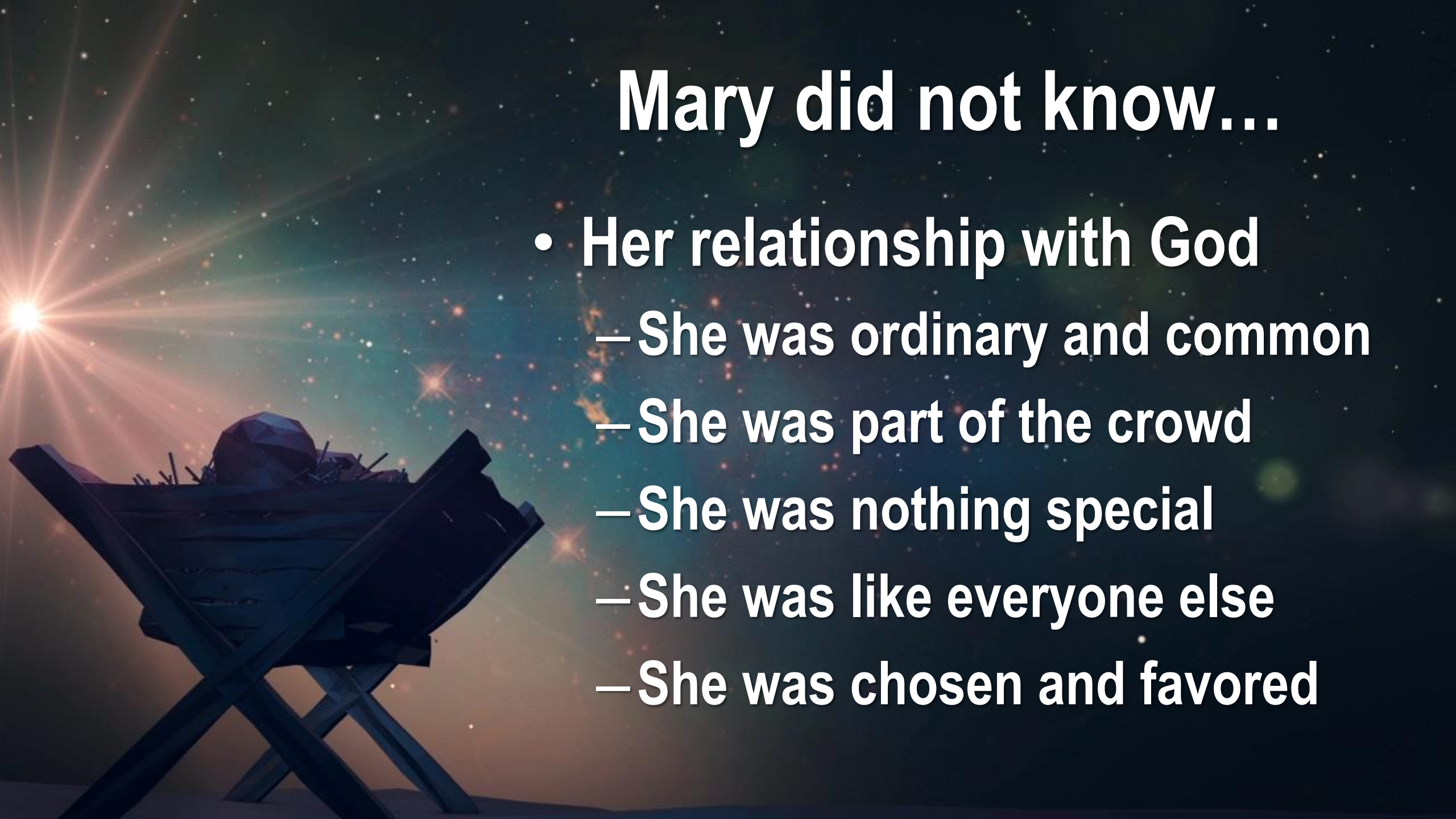


“He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High; and the Lord God will give Him the throne of His father David; and He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and His kingdom will have no end.”

New American Standard Bible : 1995 Update. LaHabra, CA : The Lockman Foundation, 1995

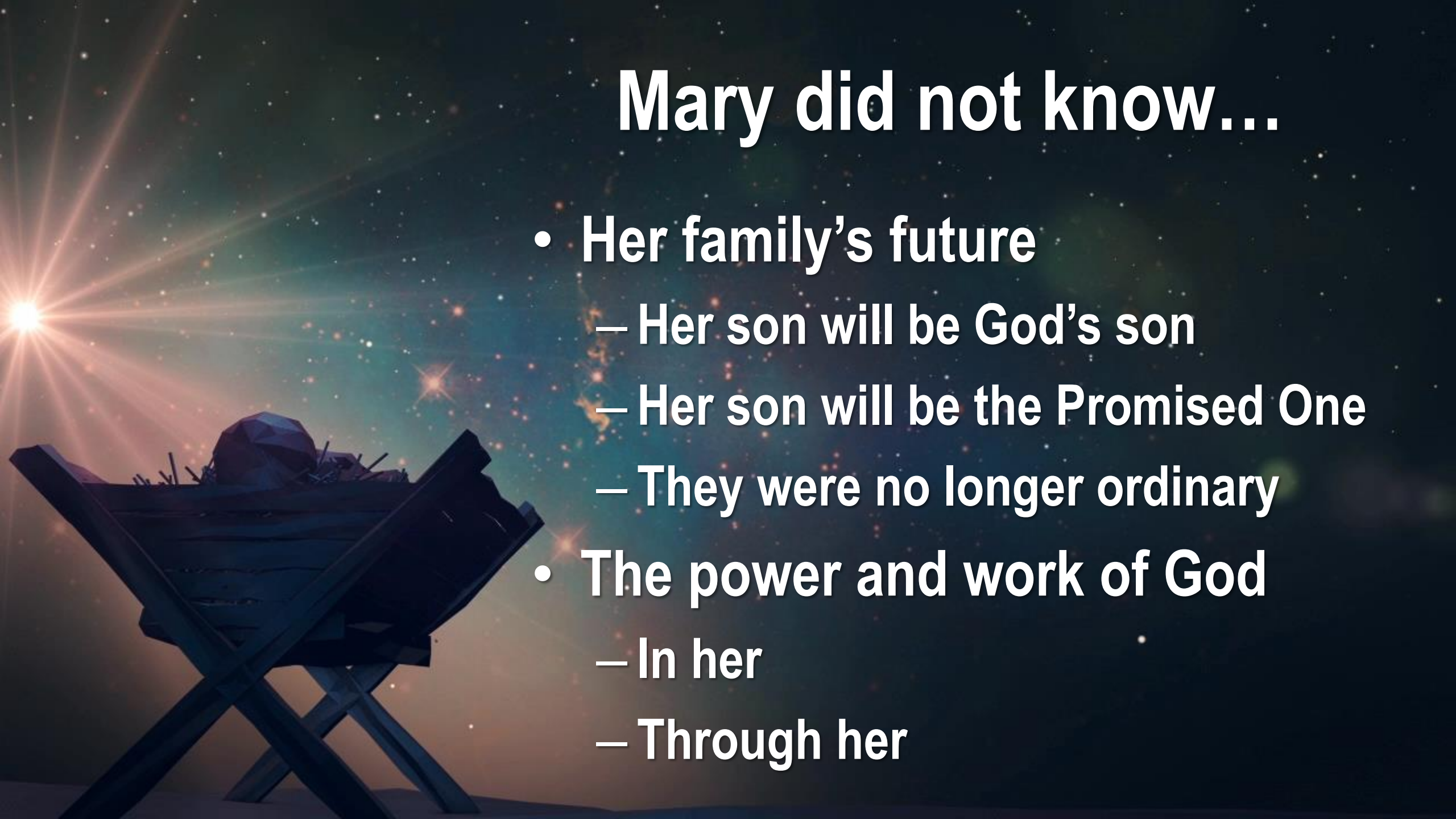
Mary did not know...

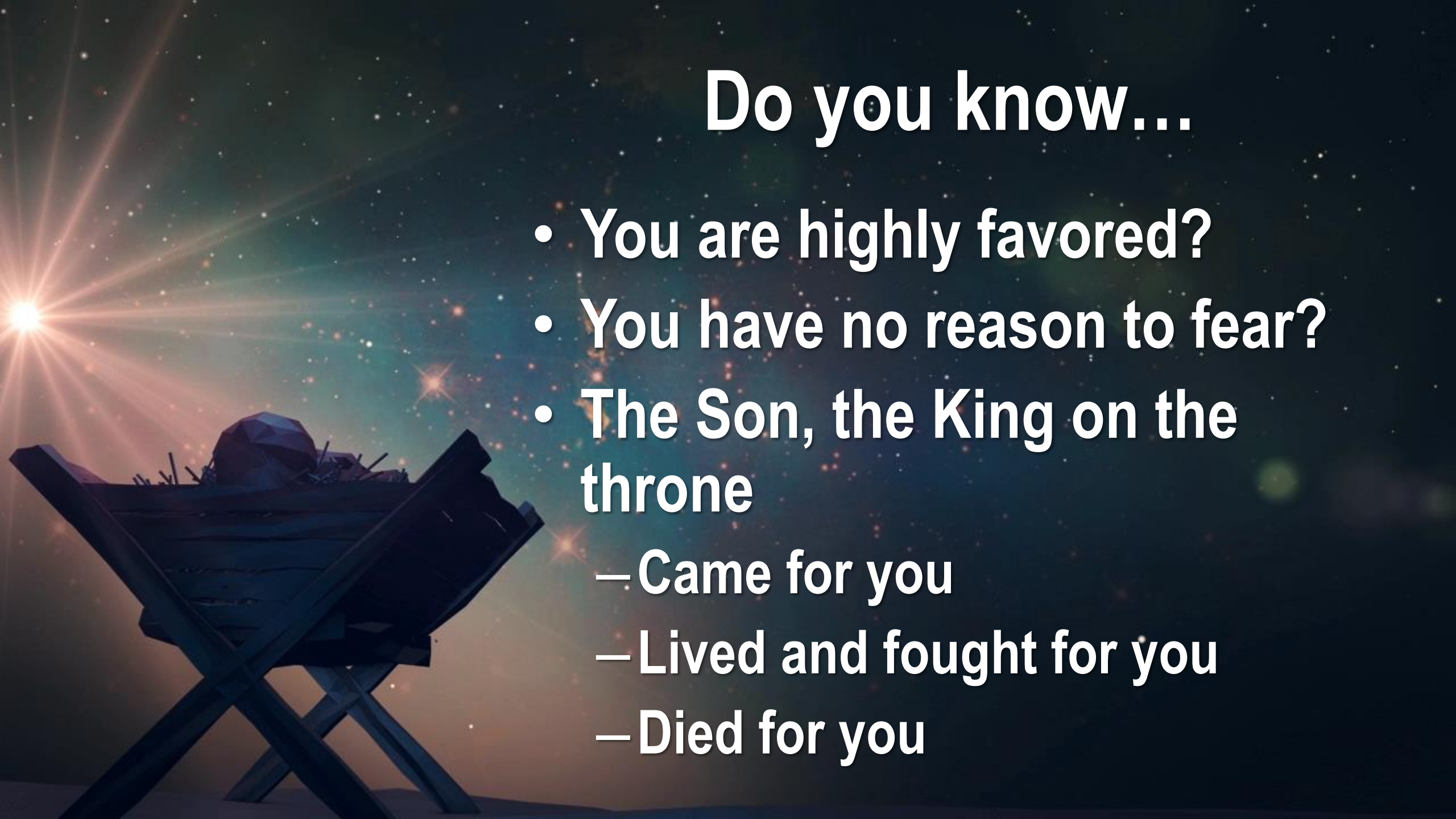
- Her relationship with God
 - She was ordinary and common
 - She was part of the crowd
 - She was nothing special
 - She was like everyone else
 - She was chosen and favored



Mary did not know...

- Her family's future
 - Her son will be God's son
 - Her son will be the Promised One
 - They were no longer ordinary
- The power and work of God
 - In her
 - Through her





Do you know...

- You are highly favored?
- You have no reason to fear?
- The Son, the King on the throne
 - Came for you
 - Lived and fought for you
 - Died for you