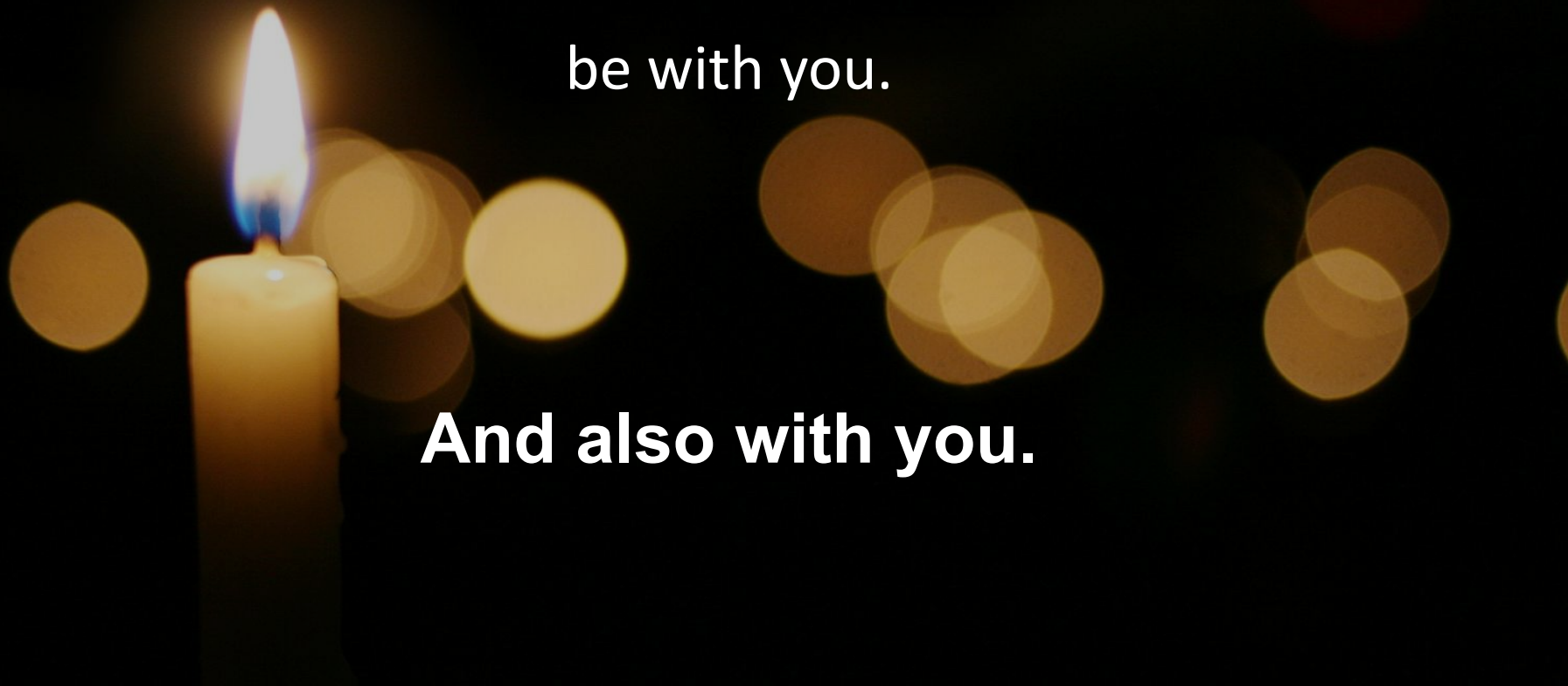


A surreal landscape with a tree stump and a small plant growing from it, set against a starry night sky and a bright star. The scene is bathed in a blue light. The tree stump is on the right, with a small plant growing from it. The background features a range of mountains and a bright star in the sky.

**The Second Sunday
of Advent**

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God
and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit
be with you.

And also with you.



M: We light two Advent candles remembering Jesus who came in history. He came into a world of sin and death.

C: We remember Jesus who came as the promised Messiah. John the Baptizer prepared the way of the Lord.



M: We hear his call to repent.

C: We light two Advent candles as a sign of our repentance and desire for renewal.

M: Jesus, our Savior, said: “Yes, I am coming soon.”

C: We, his people, say: “Amen. Come, Lord Jesus.”



**Oh, come, oh, come, Emmanuel,
And ransom captive Israel
That mourns in lonely exile here
Until the Son of God appear.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel
shall come to you, O Israel!**

Oh, come, O Root of Jesse,

Free

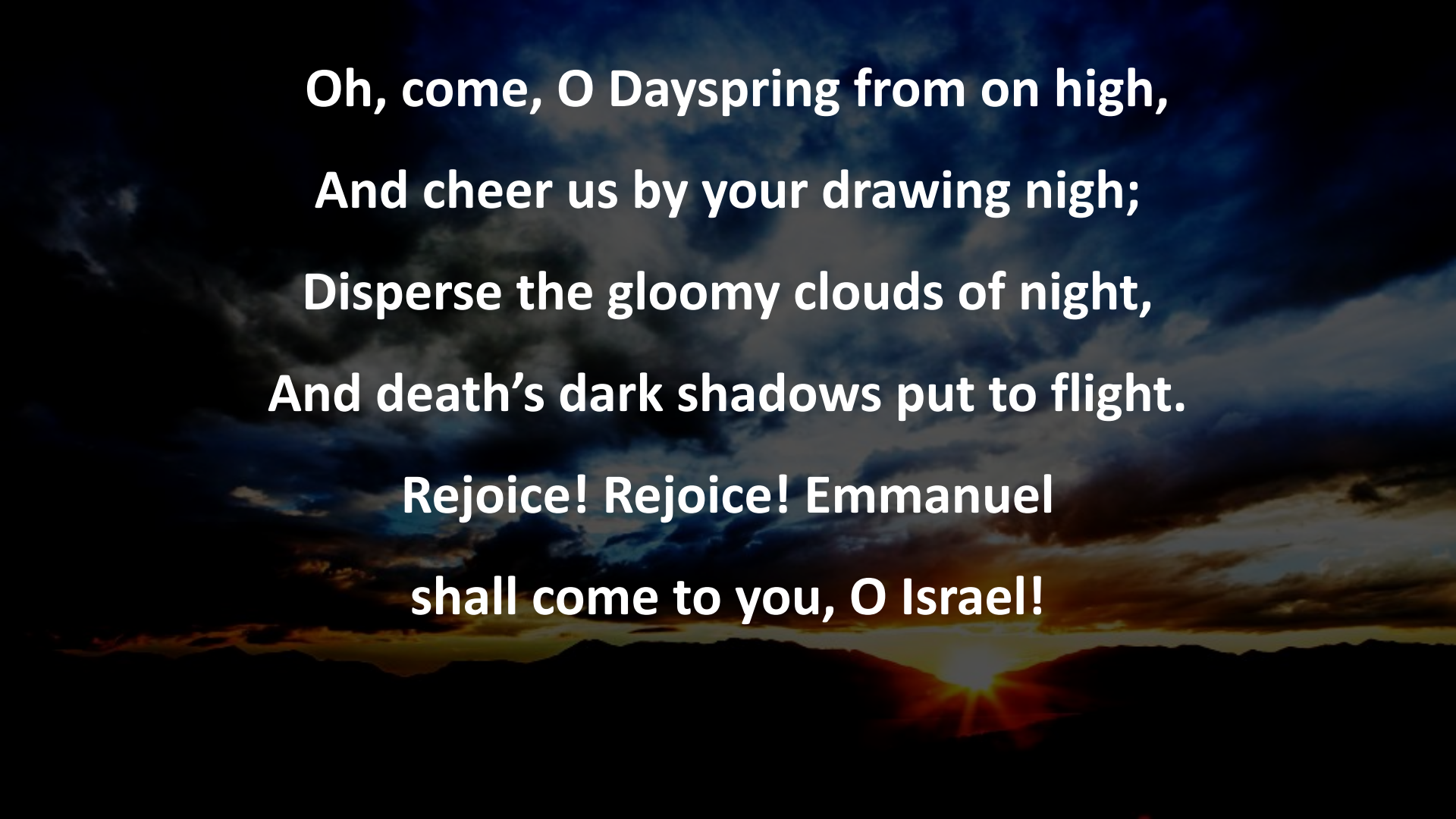
your own from Satan's tyranny

From depths of hell your people save

And bring them victory o'er the grave.

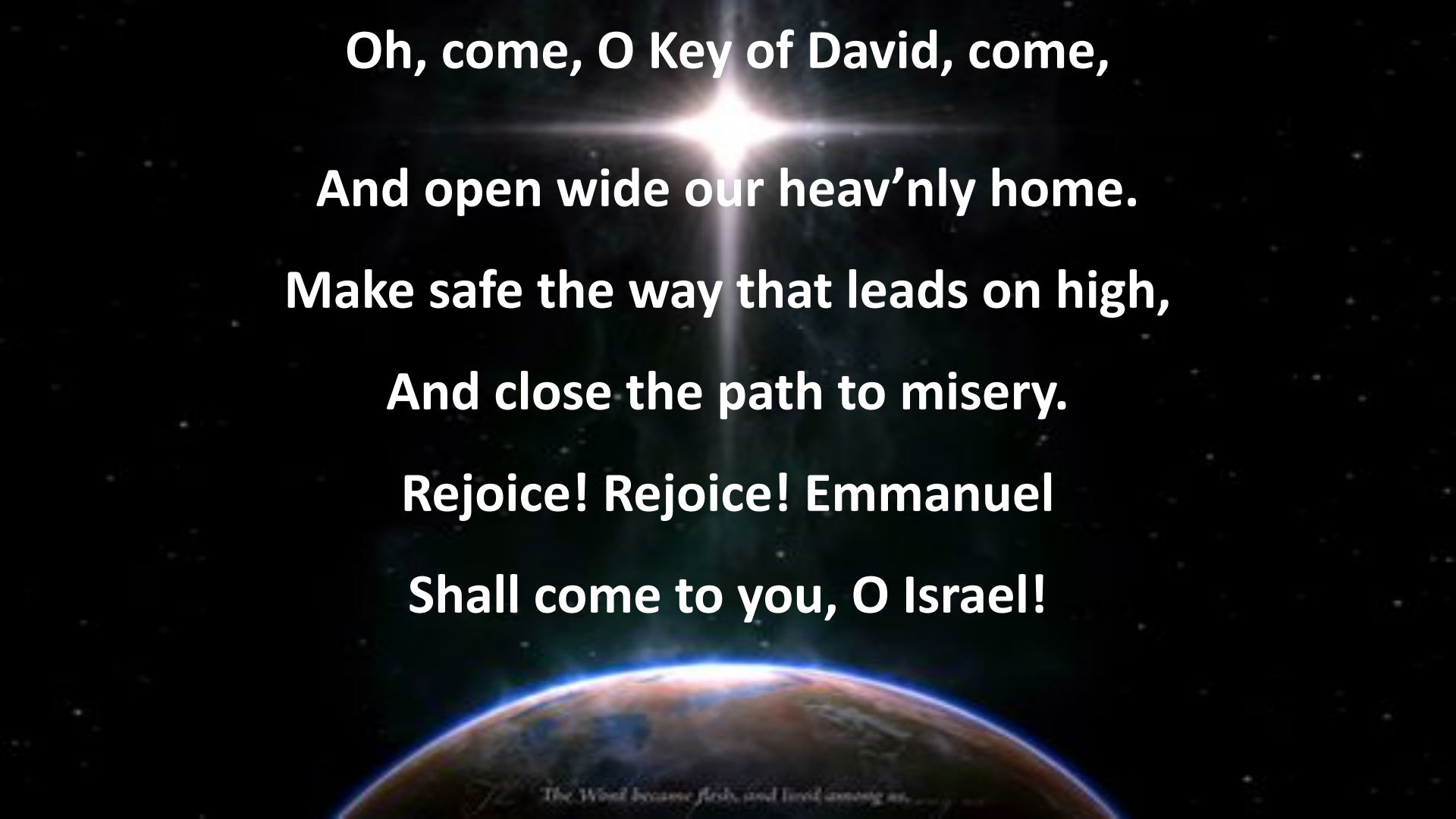
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel

shall come to you, O Israel!

The background of the image is a dramatic landscape at sunset or sunrise. The sky is filled with dark, heavy, blue and grey clouds, with a bright glow of light breaking through near the horizon. The sun is partially obscured by the silhouette of a mountain range in the foreground, creating a lens flare effect. The overall mood is one of hope and divine light breaking through darkness.

**Oh, come, O Dayspring from on high,
And cheer us by your drawing nigh;
Disperse the gloomy clouds of night,
And death's dark shadows put to flight.**

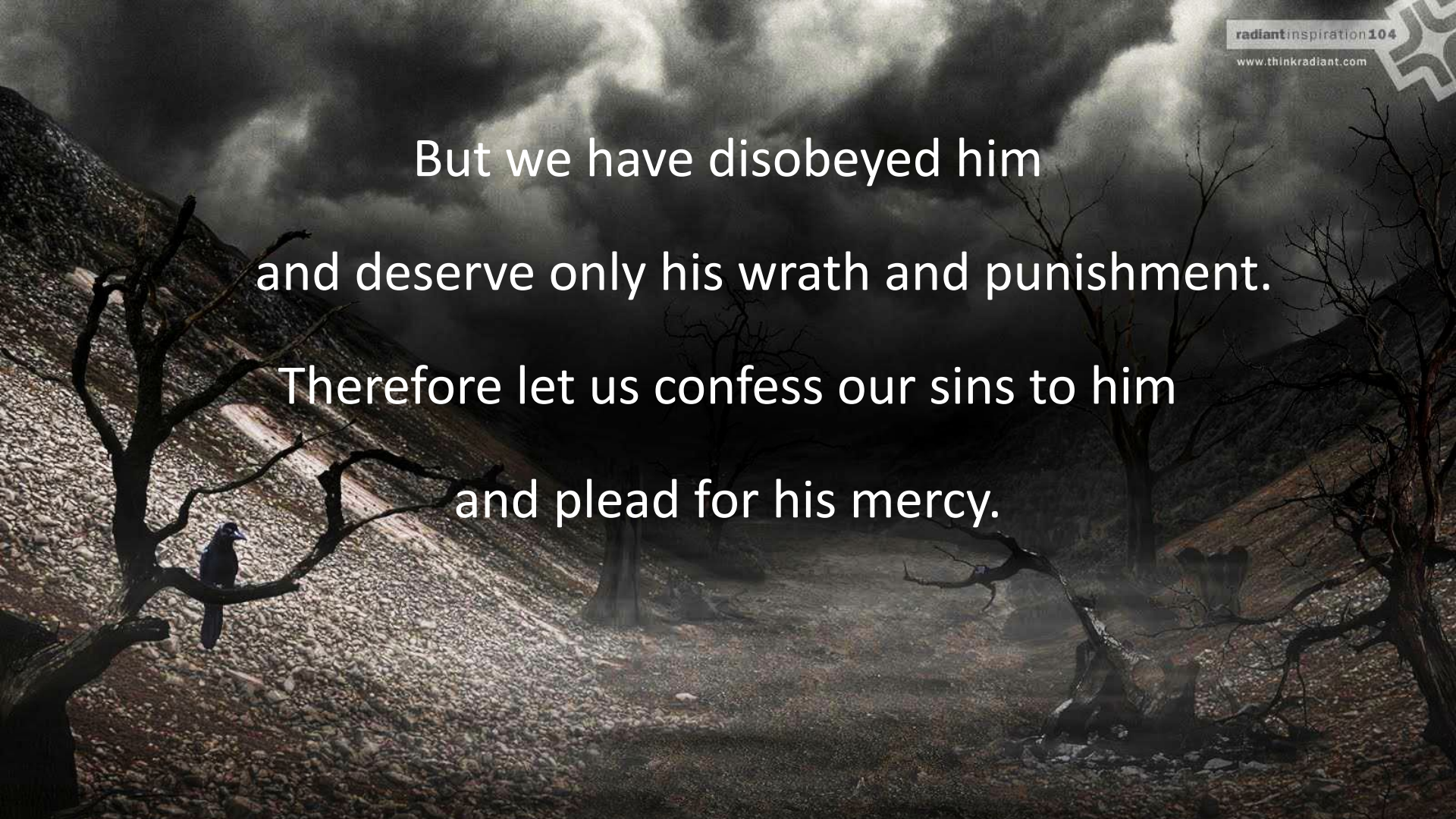
**Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel
shall come to you, O Israel!**

A bright starburst light shines down from the top center of the frame, illuminating the scene. Below it, the curved horizon of the Earth is visible, showing blue oceans and brown landmasses. The background is a dark, starry space.

**Oh, come, O Key of David, come,
And open wide our heav'nly home.
Make safe the way that leads on high,
And close the path to misery.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel
Shall come to you, O Israel!**

M: We have come into
the presence of God,
who created us to
love and serve him
as his dear children.





But we have disobeyed him
and deserve only his wrath and punishment.
Therefore let us confess our sins to him
and plead for his mercy.

C: Merciful Father in heaven, I am altogether sinful from birth. In countless ways I have sinned against you and do not deserve to be called your child. But trusting in Jesus, my Savior, I pray: Have mercy on me according to your unfailing love. Cleanse me from my sin and take away my guilt.

Silence for Reflection



M: God, our heavenly Father, has forgiven all your sins.
By the perfect life and innocent death of our Lord
Jesus Christ, he has removed your guilt forever.
You are his own dear child. May God give you strength to
live according to his will.

C: Amen.



Prayer of the Day

Malachi 3:1-7b

“I will send my messenger, who will prepare the way before me. Then suddenly the Lord you are seeking will come to his temple; the messenger of the covenant, whom you desire, will come,” says the LORD Almighty. **2** But who can endure the day of his coming? Who can stand when he appears? For he will be like a refiner’s fire or a launderer’s soap.



3 He will sit as a refiner and purifier of silver; he will purify the Levites and refine them like gold and silver. Then the LORD will have men who will bring offerings in righteousness, **4** and the offerings of Judah and Jerusalem will be acceptable to the LORD, as in days gone by, as in former years. **5** “So I will come to put you on trial. I will be quick to testify against sorcerers, adulterers and perjurers, against those who defraud laborers of their wages,



who oppress the widows and the fatherless, and deprive the foreigners among you of justice, but do not fear me,” says the LORD Almighty. **6** “I the LORD do not change. So you, the descendants of Jacob, are not destroyed. **7** Ever since the time of your ancestors you have turned away from my decrees and have not kept them. Return to me, and I will return to you,” says the LORD Almighty. “But you ask, ‘How are we to return?’



A night sky with a bright starburst in the upper left quadrant, casting a blue glow. Below the sky, a cityscape is visible with numerous small lights, and the foreground shows dark silhouettes of trees and hills.

M: The Word of the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God!

Psalm 66

sung:

*From Heav'n above to earth I come,
to bear good news to every home;
glad tidings of great joy I bring,
whereof I now will say and sing:*

Sung:

**“This is the Christ, our God most high,
who hears your sad and bitter cry;
He will himself your Savior be
from all your sins to set you free.**



M: Shout with joy to God, all the earth!

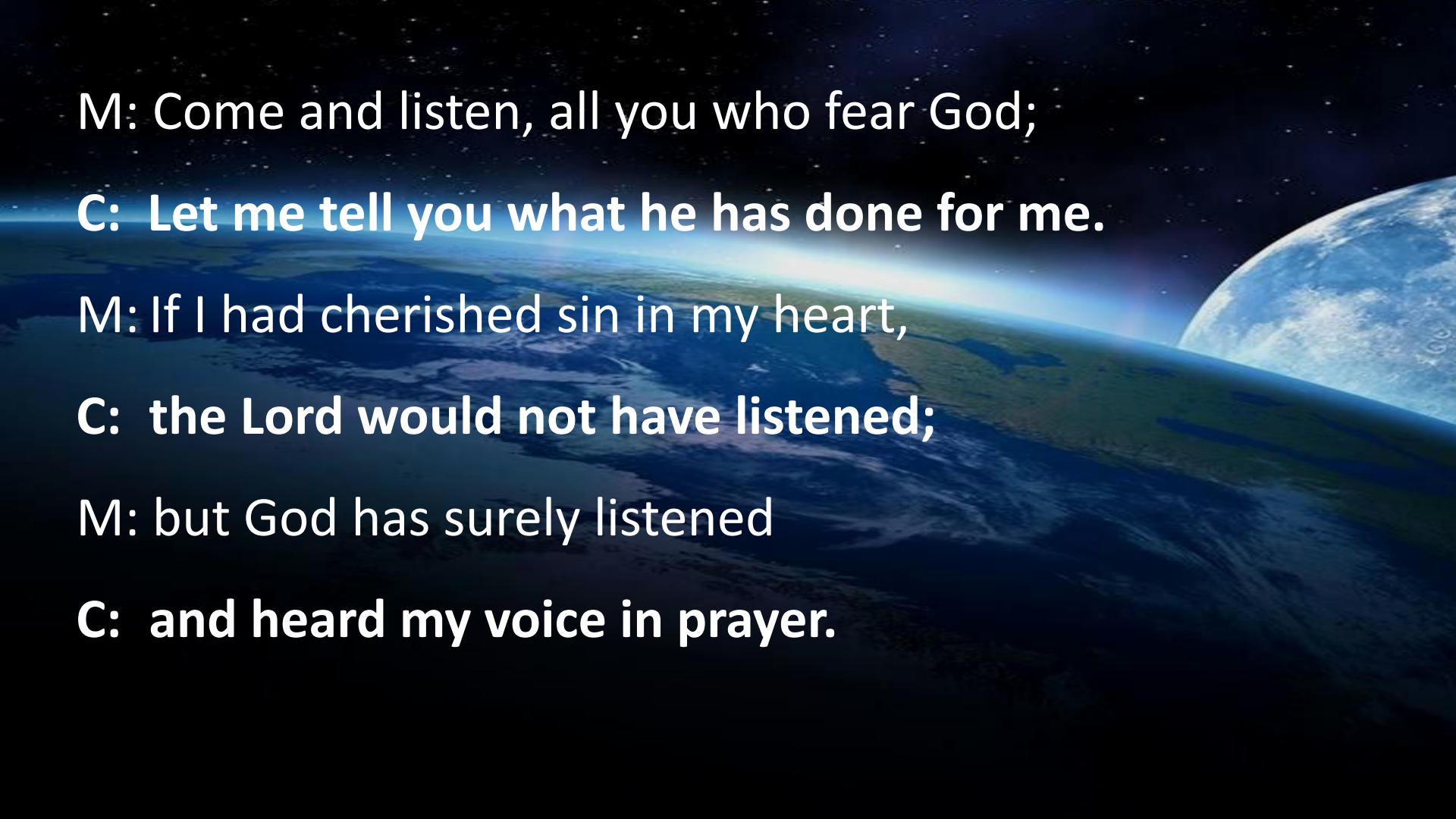
C: Sing the glory of his name; make his praise glorious!

M: Praise our God, O peoples,

C: Let the sound of his praise be heard.

M: He has preserved our lives

C: and kept our feet from slipping.



M: Come and listen, all you who fear God;

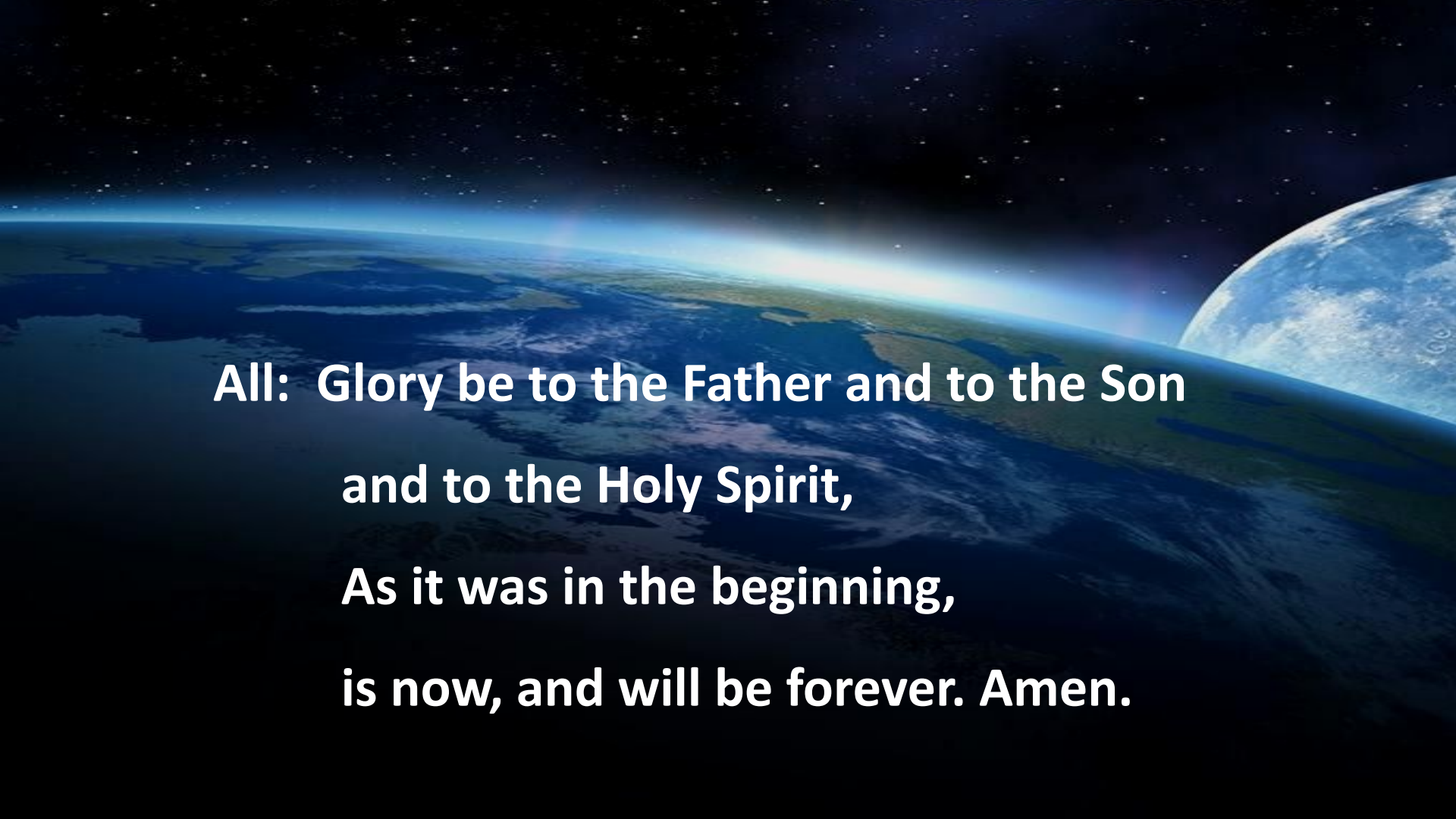
C: Let me tell you what he has done for me.

M: If I had cherished sin in my heart,

C: the Lord would not have listened;

M: but God has surely listened

C: and heard my voice in prayer.

A composite image showing a view of Earth from space on the left, with a bright blue horizon and a dark blue ocean. On the right, the Moon is visible, showing its characteristic grey and white surface. The background is a deep black space filled with numerous small white stars.

**All: Glory be to the Father and to the Son
and to the Holy Spirit,
As it was in the beginning,
is now, and will be forever. Amen.**

Sung:

**Glory to God in highest heaven,
who unto us his Son has given,
while angels sing with pious mirth
a glad new year to all the earth!**

Philippians 1:3-11

I thank my God every time I remember you. **4** In all my prayers for all of you, I always pray with joy **5** because of your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now, **6** being confident of this, that he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus.



7 It is right for me to feel this way about all of you, since I have you in my heart and, whether I am in chains or defending and confirming the gospel, all of you share in God's grace with me.

8 God can testify how I long for all of you with the affection of Christ Jesus. **9** And this is my prayer:



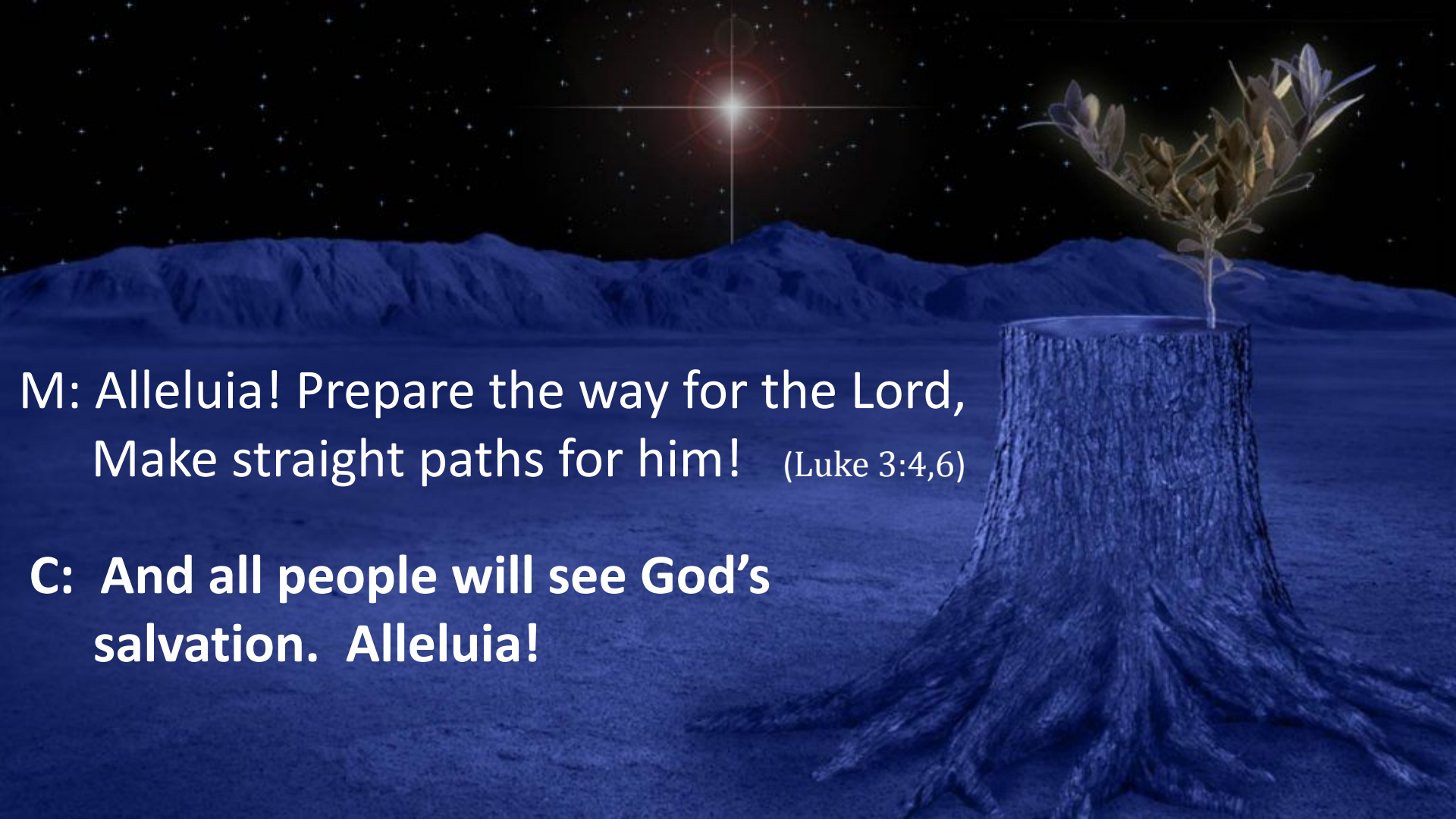
that your love may abound more and more in knowledge and depth of insight, **10** so that you may be able to discern what is best and may be pure and blameless for the day of Christ, **11** filled with the fruit of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ—to the glory and praise of God.



A night sky with a bright starburst in the upper left quadrant. Below the sky, a cityscape is visible with numerous small lights. The overall color palette is dark blue and black.

M: The Word of the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God!



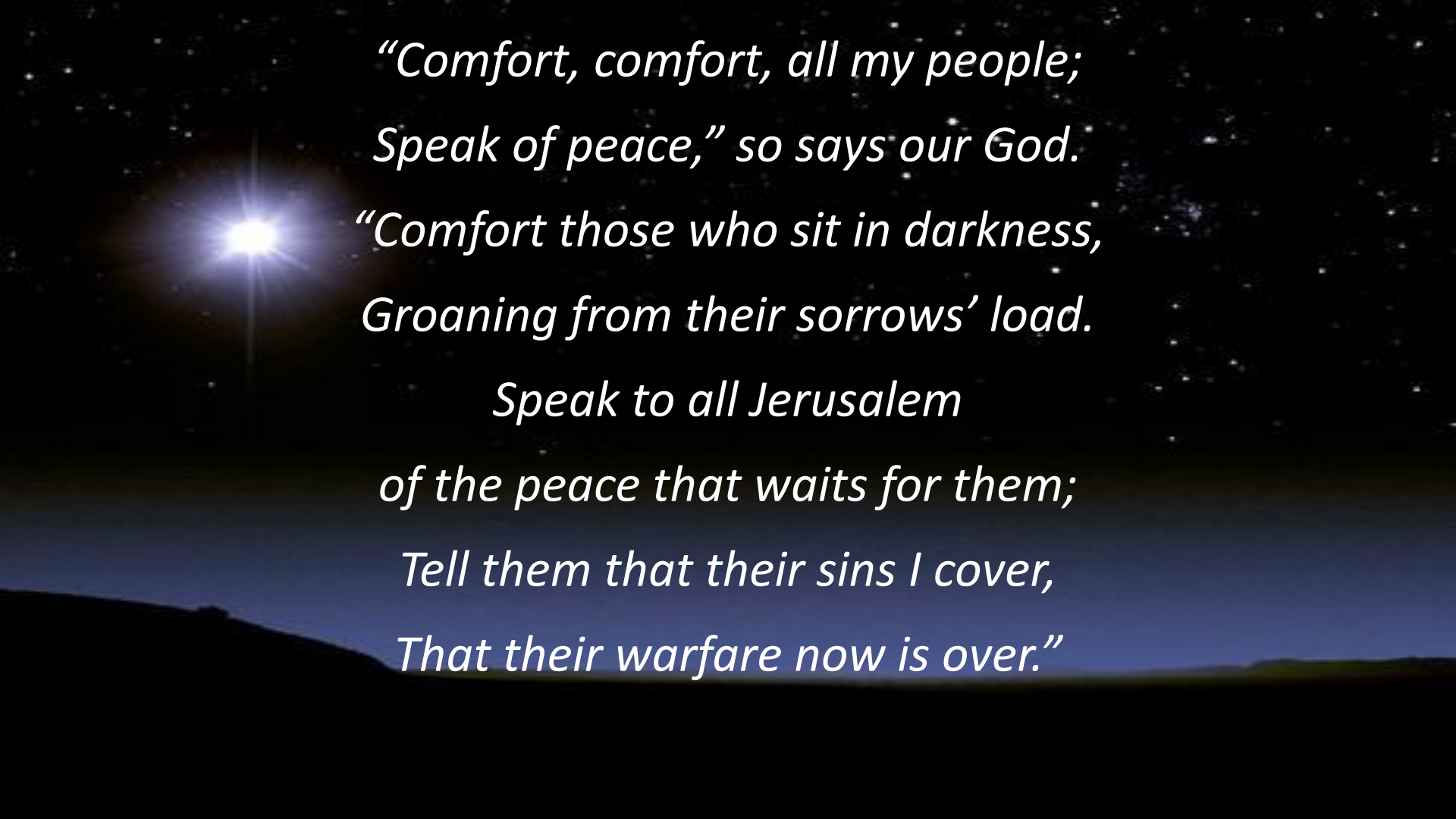
**M: Alleluia! Prepare the way for the Lord,
Make straight paths for him! (Luke 3:4,6)**

**C: And all people will see God's
salvation. Alleluia!**

Luke 3:1-6

In the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar—when Pontius Pilate was governor of Judea, Herod tetrarch of Galilee, his brother Philip tetrarch of Iturea and Traconitis, and Lysanias tetrarch of Abilene— **2** during the high-priesthood of Annas and Caiaphas, the Word of God came to John son of Zechariah in the wilderness.

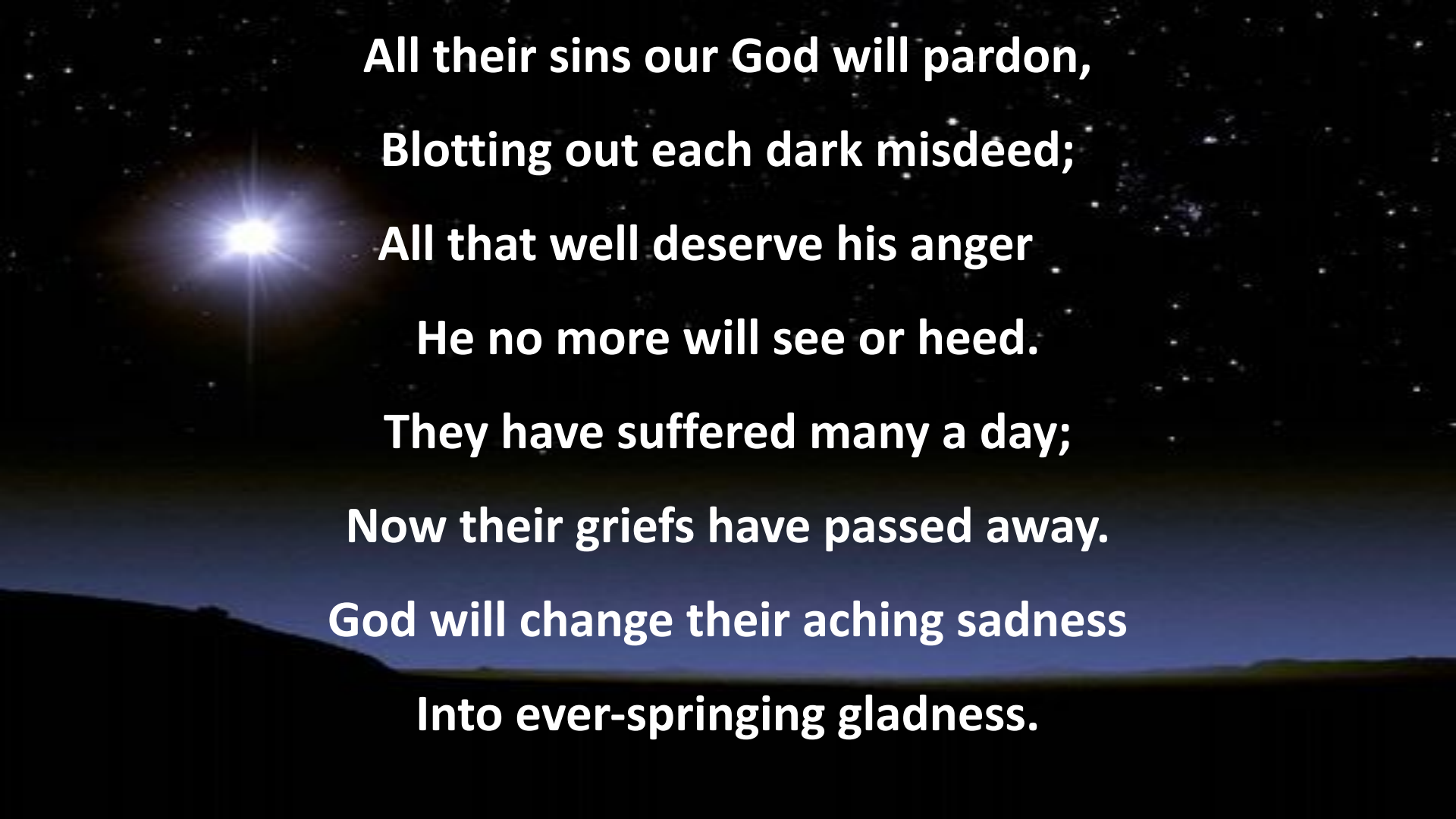
3 He went into all the country around the Jordan, preaching a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. **4** As it is written in the book of the words of Isaiah the prophet: “A voice of one calling in the wilderness, ‘Prepare the way for the Lord, make straight paths for him. **5** Every valley shall be filled in, every mountain and hill made low. The crooked roads shall become straight, the rough ways smooth. **6** And all people will see God’s salvation.’”

A night sky with a bright star on the left and a silhouette of a landscape at the bottom. The text is overlaid on the sky.

*“Comfort, comfort, all my people;
Speak of peace,” so says our God.*

*“Comfort those who sit in darkness,
Groaning from their sorrows’ load.*

*Speak to all Jerusalem
of the peace that waits for them;
Tell them that their sins I cover,
That their warfare now is over.”*

A night sky with a bright star on the left and a silhouette of a landscape at the bottom. The text is centered in white.

**All their sins our God will pardon,
Blotting out each dark misdeed;
All that well deserve his anger
He no more will see or heed.
They have suffered many a day;
Now their griefs have passed away.
God will change their aching sadness
Into ever-springing gladness.**

**John the Baptist's voice is crying
in the desert far and near,
Calling people to repentance
for the kingdom now is here.
Oh, that warning cry obey!
Now prepare for God a way;
Let the valleys rise to meet him
And the hills bow down to greet him.**

A night sky with a bright star on the left and a silhouette of a landscape at the bottom. The text is centered in white.

Straighten out the crooked highway;

Make the rougher places plain.

Let your hearts be true and humble,

Ready for his holy reign.

For the glory of the Lord

Now o'er earth is spread abroad,

And all flesh shall see the token


That his Word is never broken.

Sermon



**I believe in God,
the Father Almighty,
Maker of heaven and earth.**



I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord,  who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried. He descended into hell.

The third day he rose again from the dead. He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of God the Father Almighty.

From there he will come to judge the living and the dead.

**I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy Christian Church,
The communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins,
The resurrection of the body,
And the life everlasting.**

Amen.



**Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name, your kingdom come,
your will be done on earth as in heaven.**

Give us today our daily bread.

Forgive us our sins, as we forgive those who sin against us.

**Lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.**

**For the kingdom, the power, and the glory
are yours now and forever. Amen.**

M:

Brothers and sisters, go in peace,
Live in harmony with one another.

Serve the Lord with gladness.

The Lord bless you and keep you.

The Lord make his face shine on you and be gracious to you.

The Lord look on you with favor and + give you peace.

(Numbers 6:24-27)

C: Amen.

Long in darkness Israel wandered;

Long in mortal shadows we

Walked in bondage and self-pity,


trod in paths of sin and grief.

In the prophets' words he told us,

long the God of Israel spoke;

He alone in strength would save us

from the hands of all our foes!



Every valley be exalted!
Every mountain be made plain!
Crooked ways repent and straighten;
All creation bend in praise!

He shall raise a mighty Savior;

born of David's lineage, He

comes in cov'nant love to claim us,


from our sins to set us free.

Light to those who dwell in darkness,

life to those from death who flee,

Joy unto the earth, and gladness,

To your pathways dawning peace!



Every valley be exalted!
Every mountain be made plain!
Crooked ways repent and straighten;
All creation bend in praise!

Jesus, Lord, and mighty Savior,

David's son and yet his King,


Dawning light of our salvation, of your saving pow'r we sing!

Stand, O lame, and dance, ye broken;

Known the Savior's healing grace.

Come, O deaf, and hear him singing;

Turn, O blind, behold his face!

A night sky with the Milky Way galaxy visible, set against a dark background with numerous stars. The bottom of the image shows a silhouette of a mountain range with a valley in the center. The sky is a mix of dark blue and black, with the Milky Way appearing as a bright, hazy band of light.

Every valley be exalted!
Every mountain be made plain!
Crooked ways repent and straighten;
All creation bend in praise!