



welcome

thanks for coming



Christmas Offering

December 18, 2022



Join Us

CANDLELIGHT SERVICES

CHRISTMAS EVE
4PM & 6PM

CHRISTMAS DAY
10:45AM

FELLOWSHIP BIBLE CHURCH
1051 HOGAN LANE IN CONWAY
FELLOWSHIPCONWAY.ORG

JOIN US THIS •

New Year

One service • Jan 1 • 10:45 am



Advent 2022 Goals

Behold: *Pay attention to the centrality of Christ's coming in Scripture.*

Behold: *Prioritize Christ's coming during the season.*

Behold: *Pursue a deeper intimacy with Christ through personal engagement with Him and His story.*

Behold: *Put "advent" into your year-round vocabulary.*



Behold:

O Little Town of Bethlehem
(Matthew 2:1-18)

Bethlehem

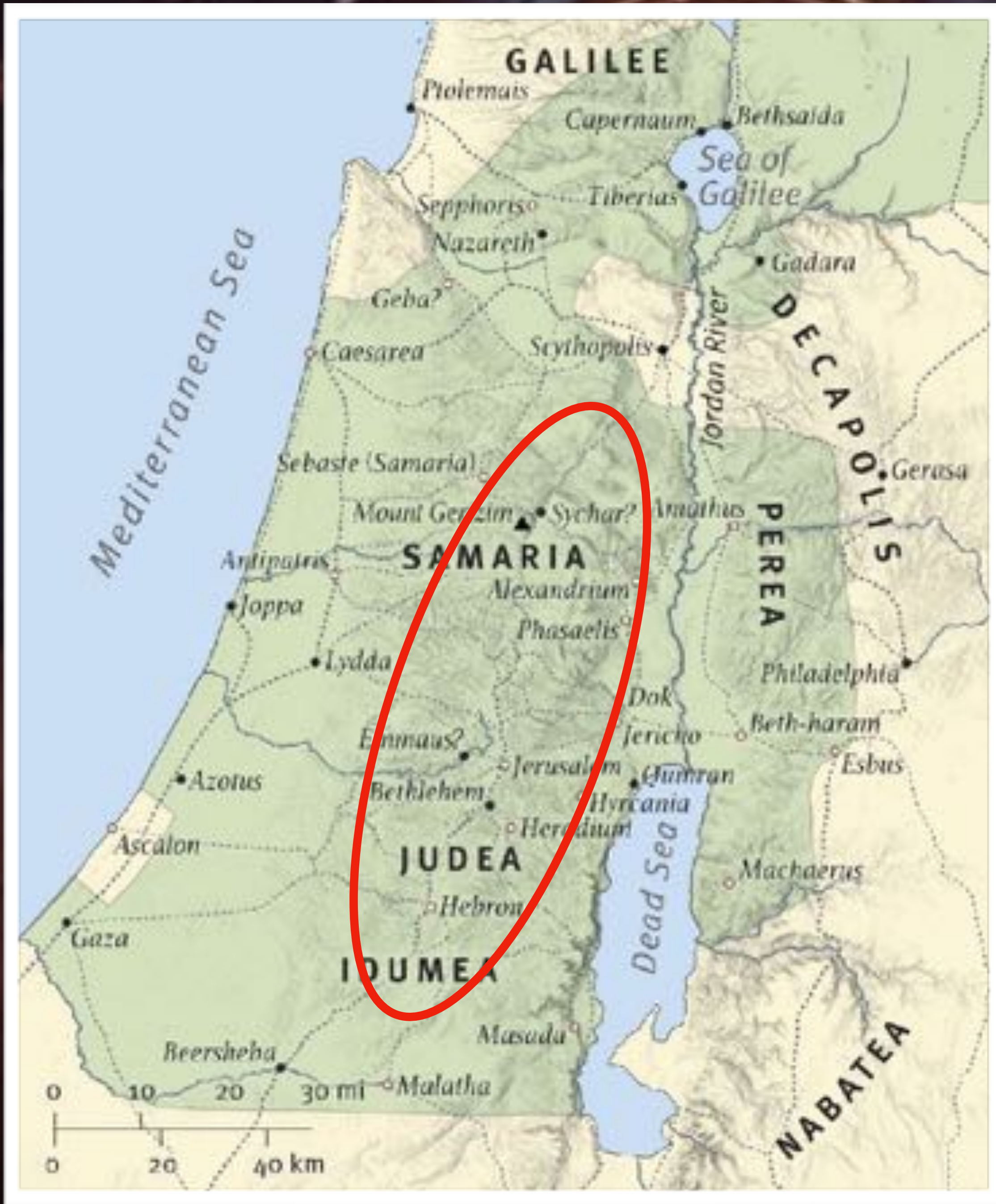
Now after Jesus was **born in Bethlehem** of Judea in the days of Herod the king, behold, wise men from the east came to Jerusalem, saying, “Where is the one who has been born king of the Jews? For we have seen his star at its rising and have come to worship him.”

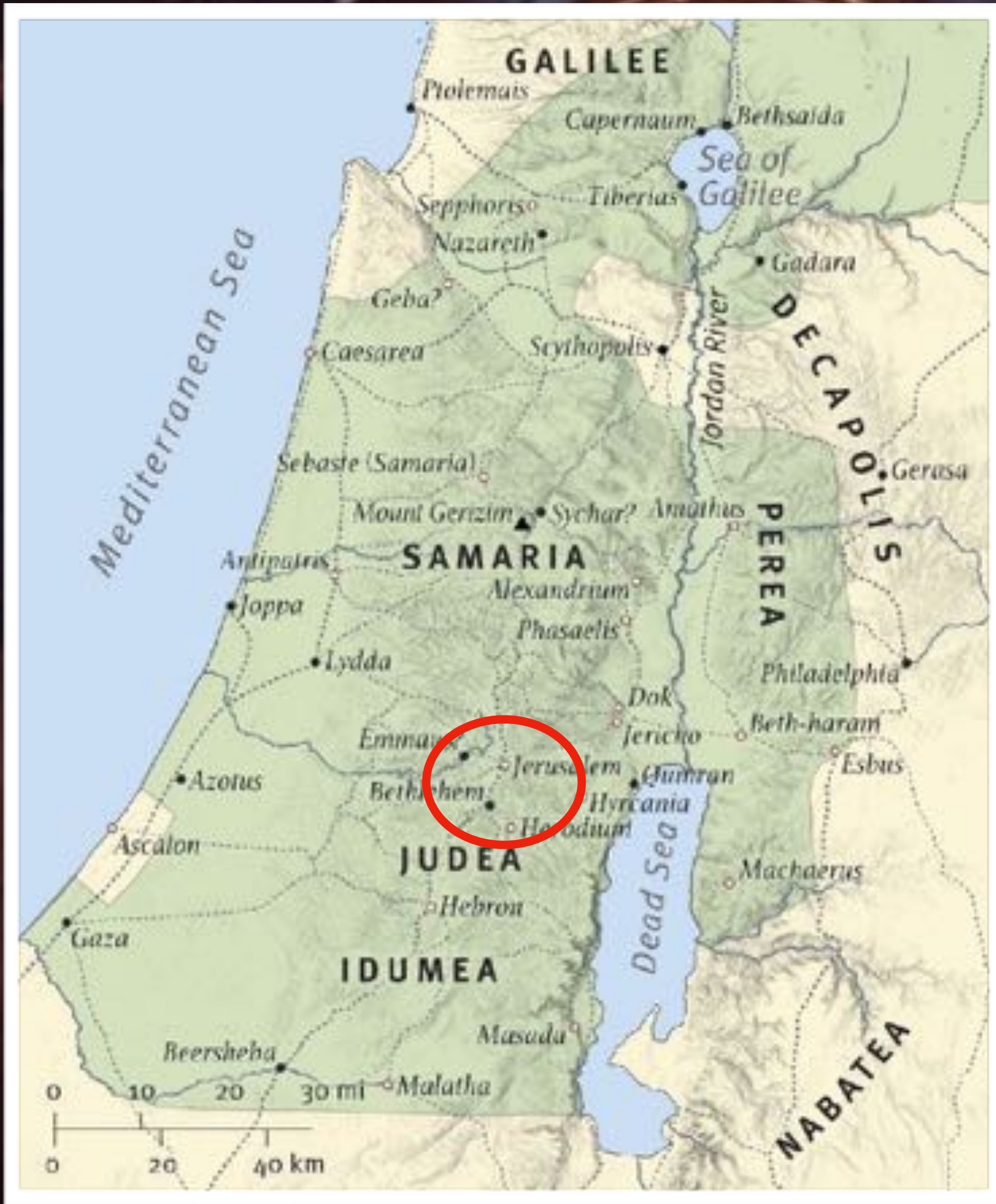
Matthew 2:1-2

Bethlehem

So Joseph also went up from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, **to Bethlehem** the town of David, because he belonged to the house and line of David. He went there to register with Mary, who was pledged to be married to him and was expecting a child. While they were there, the time came for the baby to be born, and she gave birth to her firstborn, a son. She wrapped him in cloths and placed him in a manger, because there was no guest room available for them.

Luke 2:4-7















Modern Archaeology



The Ottoman tax record and census from 1596 indicates that Bethlehem had a population of 1,435.

Andrew Peterson



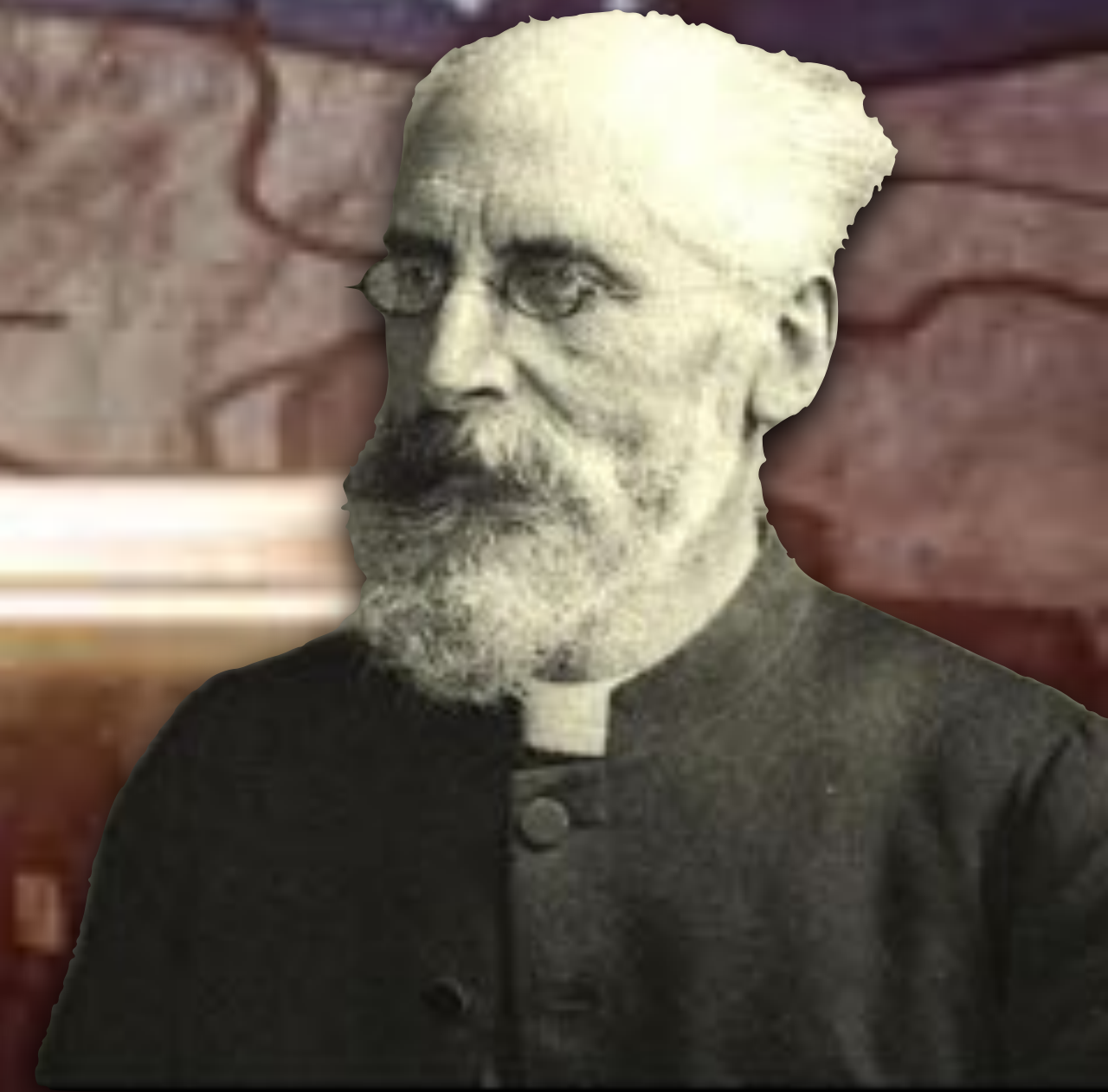
Professor William F. Albright, the dean of American archaeology in the Holy Land, estimates that the population of Bethlehem at the time of Jesus birth to be about 300 people.

William Foxwell Albright



The Christian heart and imagination, indeed, long to be able to localize the scene of such surpassing importance, and linger with fond reverence over that Cave, which is now covered by 'the Church of the Nativity.' It may be, nay, it seems likely, that this, to which the most venerable tradition points, was the sacred spot of the world's greatest event.

Alfred Edersheim



Birth and Death in Bethlehem

But as for you, **Bethlehem** Ephrathah, Too little to be among the clans of Judah, from you One will go forth for Me to be ruler in Israel. His goings forth are from long ago, From the days of eternity.

Micah 5:1-2

Birth and Death in Bethlehem

Now after Jesus was **born in Bethlehem** of Judea in the days of Herod the king, behold, wise men from the east came to Jerusalem, saying, “Where is the one who has been born king of the Jews? For we have seen his star at its rising and have come to worship him.”

Matthew 2:1-2

Birth and Death in Bethlehem

“A voice is heard in **Ramah**, weeping and great mourning, **Rachael** weeping for her children and refusing to be comforted, because they are no more.”

Matthew 2:18

(Jeremiah 31:18)

This is Mathew's way of reminding us of what God is doing throughout prophecy with regard to Bethlehem and the suffering that goes on there. For one reason or another, Bethlehem and its births and deaths are singled out because they are more significant to God's program.

Allen Ross

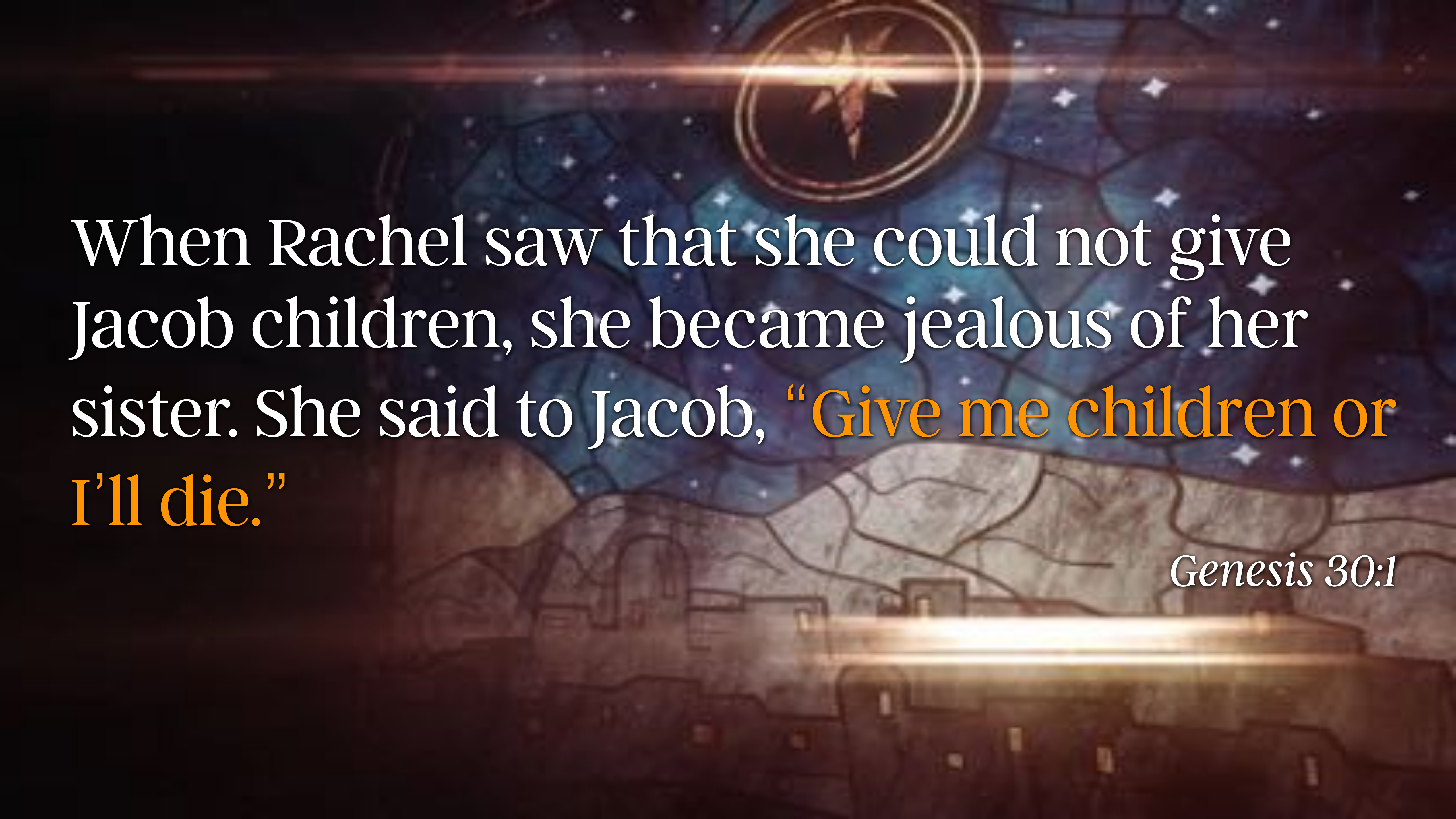


Rachel:

The Birth of a Nation
and the Death of the One Loved
(Genesis 35:16-20)

Then they moved on from Bethel. While they were still some distance from Ephrath, **Rachel began to give birth** and had great difficulty. And as she was having great difficulty in childbirth, the midwife said to her, “Don’t be afraid, for you have another son.” As she breathed her last—for she was dying—she named her son Ben—Oni (“son of my suffering”). But his father named him Benjamin (“son of my right hand”). **So Rachel died and was buried on the way to Ephrath, that is, Bethlehem.** Over her tomb Jacob set up a pillar, and to this day that pillar marks Rachel’s tomb.

Genesis 35:16-20



When Rachel saw that she could not give Jacob children, she became jealous of her sister. She said to Jacob, **“Give me children or I’ll die.”**

Genesis 30:1

Application

Bethlehem was a place
where God's Promise was fulfilled
and a "Loved One" Died.

Ruth:

The Death of a Family
and the Birth of a King

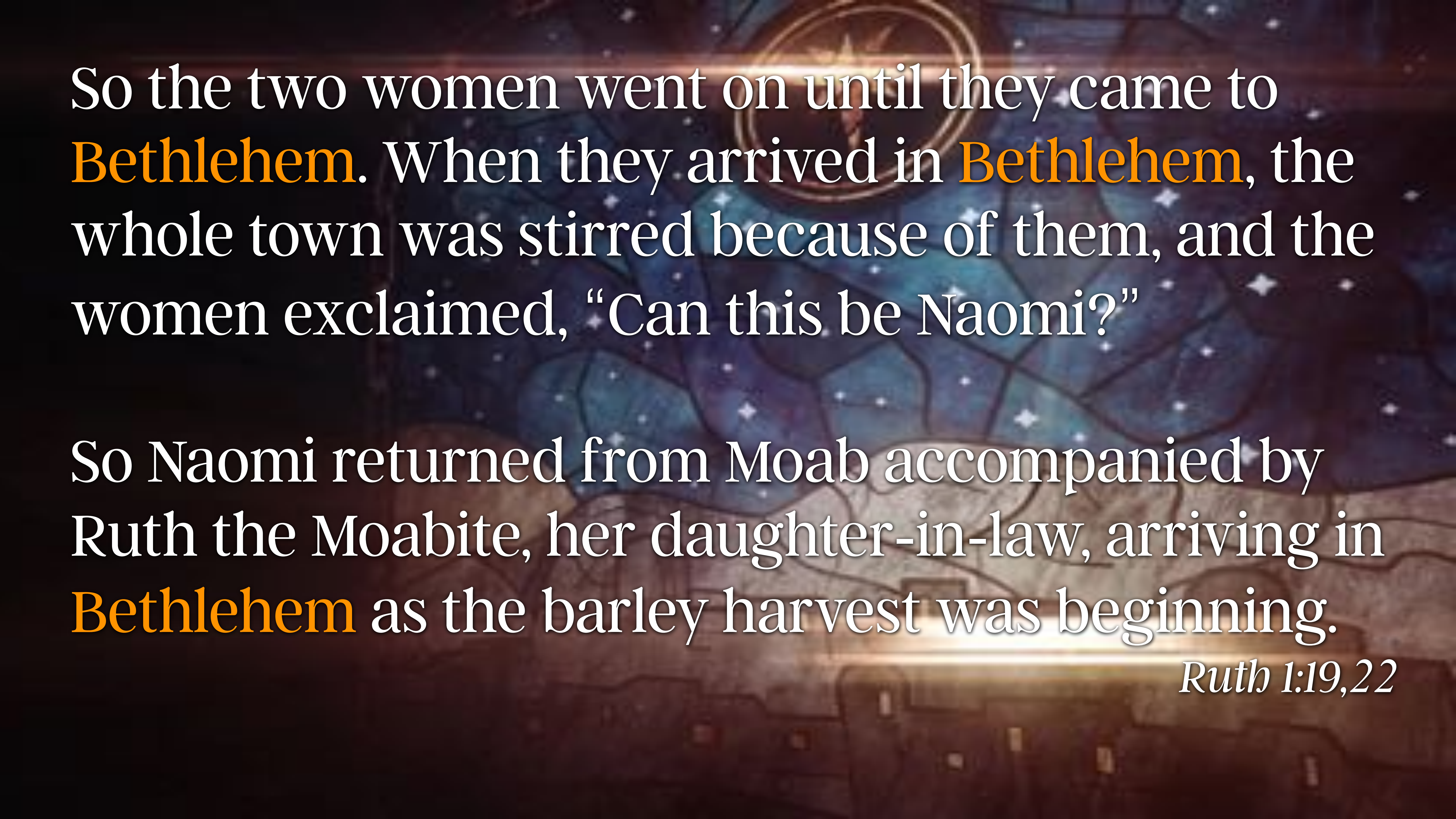
(Ruth 1-4)

In the days when the judges ruled, there was a famine in the land. So **a man from Bethlehem** in Judah, together with his wife and two sons, went to live for a while in the country of Moab. The man's name was Elimelek, his wife's name was Naomi, and the names of his two sons were Mahlon and Kilion. **They were Ephrathites from Bethlehem, Judah.** And they went to Moab and lived there.

Ruth 1:1-2

Now Elimelek, Naomi's husband, **died**, and she was left with her two sons. They married Moabite women, one named Orpah and the other Ruth. After they had lived there about ten years, both Mahlon and Kilion also **died**, and Naomi was left without her two sons and her husband.

Ruth 1:3-5



So the two women went on until they came to **Bethlehem**. When they arrived in **Bethlehem**, the whole town was stirred because of them, and the women exclaimed, “Can this be Naomi?”

So Naomi returned from Moab accompanied by Ruth the Moabite, her daughter-in-law, arriving in **Bethlehem** as the barley harvest was beginning.

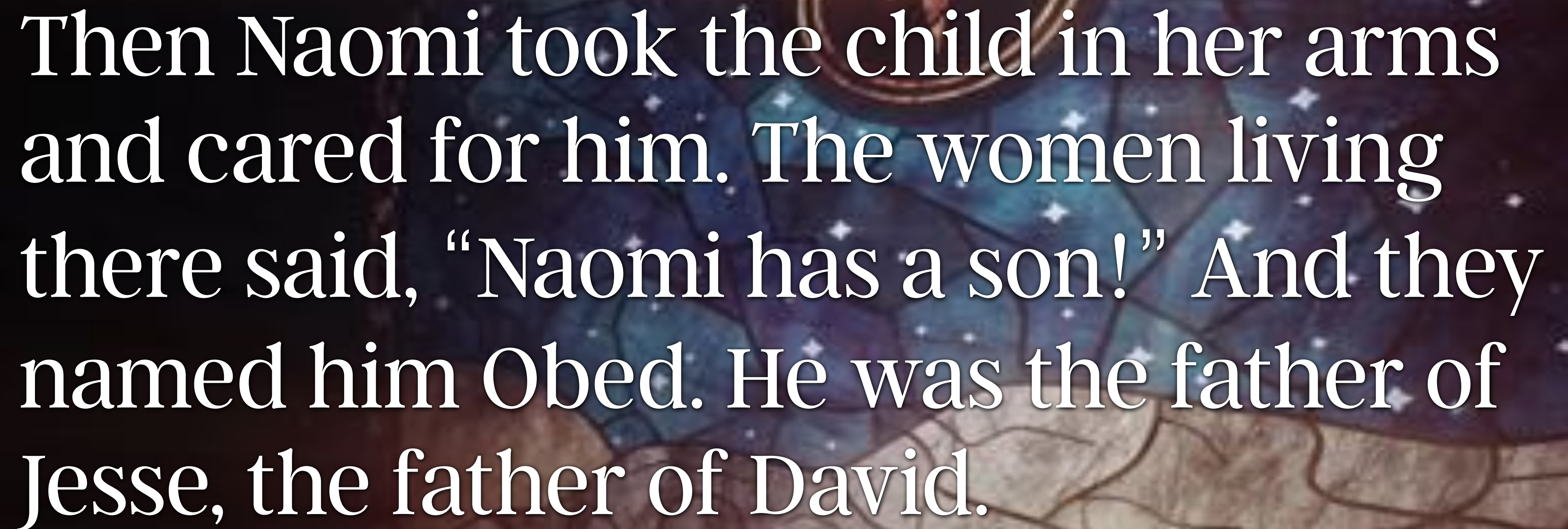
Ruth 1:19,22

A night sky with a starburst in a circle and a cityscape below. The starburst is a bright, multi-pointed star with a glowing aura, set within a circular frame. The sky is dark blue and purple, with numerous small white stars. Below the sky, a cityscape is visible, with buildings and a street. The overall scene is illuminated by a warm, golden light, possibly from a setting or rising sun, creating a soft glow and long shadows.

Just then **Boaz** arrived from Bethlehem and greeted the harvesters, “The Lord be with you!”

“The Lord bless you!” they answered.

Ruth 2:4



Then Naomi took the child in her arms and cared for him. The women living there said, “Naomi has a son!” And they named him Obed. He was the father of Jesse, the father of David.

Ruth 4:16-17

Application

Bethlehem was a place
where a king was born
in difficult times.

Jeremiah:

The Death of a Nation
and the Birth of a Covenant
(Jeremiah 31)

This is what the Lord says:

“Restrain your voice from weeping and your eyes from tears, for your work will be rewarded,” declares the Lord. **“They will return from the land of the enemy. So there is hope for your descendants, declares the Lord. Your children will return to their own land.”**

Jeremiah 31:15-17

The background features a dark blue night sky with a prominent starburst in a circular frame at the top center. Below the sky, a cityscape is visible, with a bright light source on the horizon creating a lens flare effect. The text is overlaid on this scene.

“A voice is heard in **Ramah**, weeping and great mourning, **Rachael** weeping for her children and refusing to be comforted, because they are no more.”

Matthew 2:18
(Jeremiah 31:18)

“The days are coming,” declares the Lord
“when **I will make a new covenant** with the
people of Israel and with the people of Judah.
It will not be like the covenant I made with their
ancestors when I took them by the hand to lead
them out of Egypt, because they broke my
covenant, though I was a husband to them,”
declares the Lord.

Jeremiah 31:31-34

“This is the covenant I will make with the people of Israel after that time,” declares the Lord.

“I will put my law in their minds and write it on their hearts. I will be their God, and they will be my people. No longer will they teach their neighbor, or say to one another, ‘Know the Lord,’ because they will all know me, from the least of them to the greatest,” declares the Lord. “For I will forgive their wickedness and will remember their sins no more.”

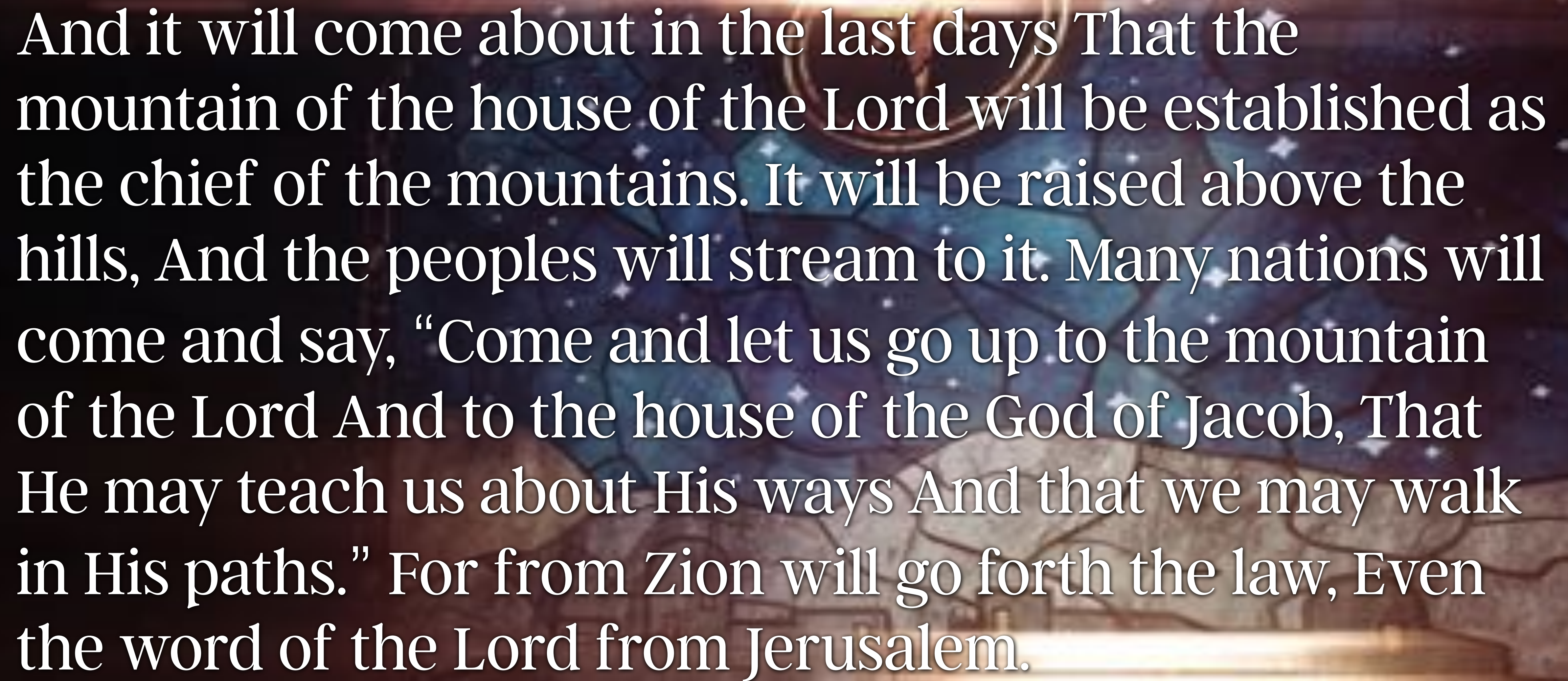
Jeremiah 31:31-34

Application

Bethlehem was a place remembered when death was coming and hope was born.

Micah:

The Birth of a Divine Ruler
in the Context of Judgment
(Micah 5:2)

The background features a dark, starry night sky. A prominent, glowing golden cross is centered in the upper half, with a bright star at its intersection. Below the cross, a faint silhouette of a city with a central tower is visible against a lighter, hazy horizon. The overall atmosphere is spiritual and celestial.

And it will come about in the last days That the mountain of the house of the Lord will be established as the chief of the mountains. It will be raised above the hills, And the peoples will stream to it. Many nations will come and say, "Come and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord And to the house of the God of Jacob, That He may teach us about His ways And that we may walk in His paths." For from Zion will go forth the law, Even the word of the Lord from Jerusalem.

Micah 4:1-2

“Now muster yourselves in troops, daughter of troops; **They have laid siege against us; with a rod they will smite the judge of Israel on the cheek.**

“But as for you, **Bethlehem** Ephrathah, too little to be among the clans of Judah, from you One will go forth for Me to be ruler in Israel. His goings forth are from long ago, from the days of eternity.”

Micah 5:1-2

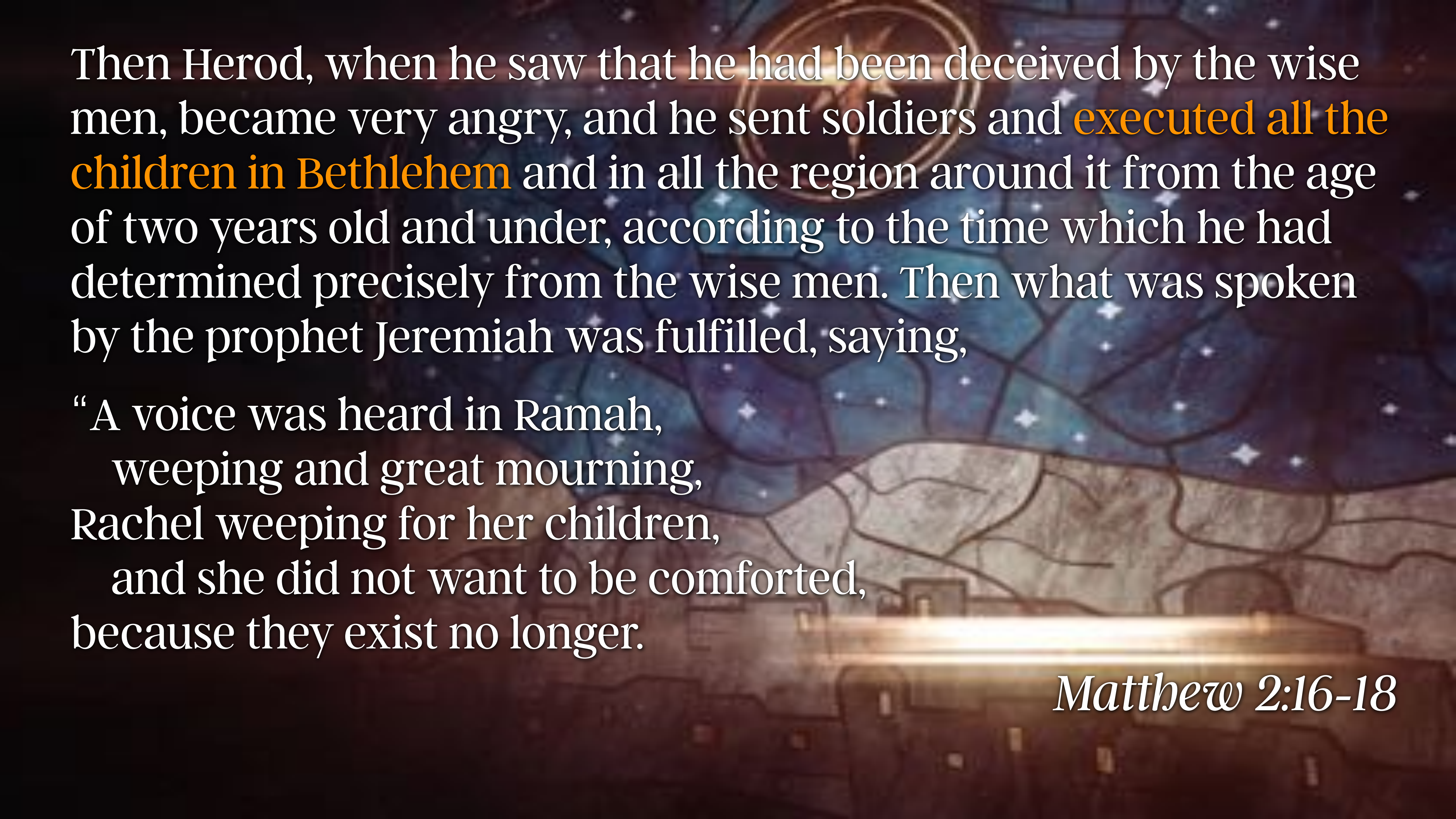
Application

Bethlehem was a place where Messiah would be born and He would be divine.

Bethlehem

Now after Jesus was born in **Bethlehem** of Judea in the days of Herod the king, behold, wise men from the east came to Jerusalem, saying, “Where is the one who has been born king of the Jews? For we have seen his star at its rising and have come to worship him.”

Matthew 2:1-2

The background of the slide features a night sky with a prominent starburst in a circle at the top center. Below the sky, there is a stylized landscape with rolling hills and a small town or village. The overall color palette is dark with blues, purples, and browns, accented by the bright starburst and the white text.

Then Herod, when he saw that he had been deceived by the wise men, became very angry, and he sent soldiers and **executed all the children in Bethlehem** and in all the region around it from the age of two years old and under, according to the time which he had determined precisely from the wise men. Then what was spoken by the prophet Jeremiah was fulfilled, saying,

“A voice was heard in Ramah,
weeping and great mourning,
Rachel weeping for her children,
and she did not want to be comforted,
because they exist no longer.

Matthew 2:16-18

Herod the Great

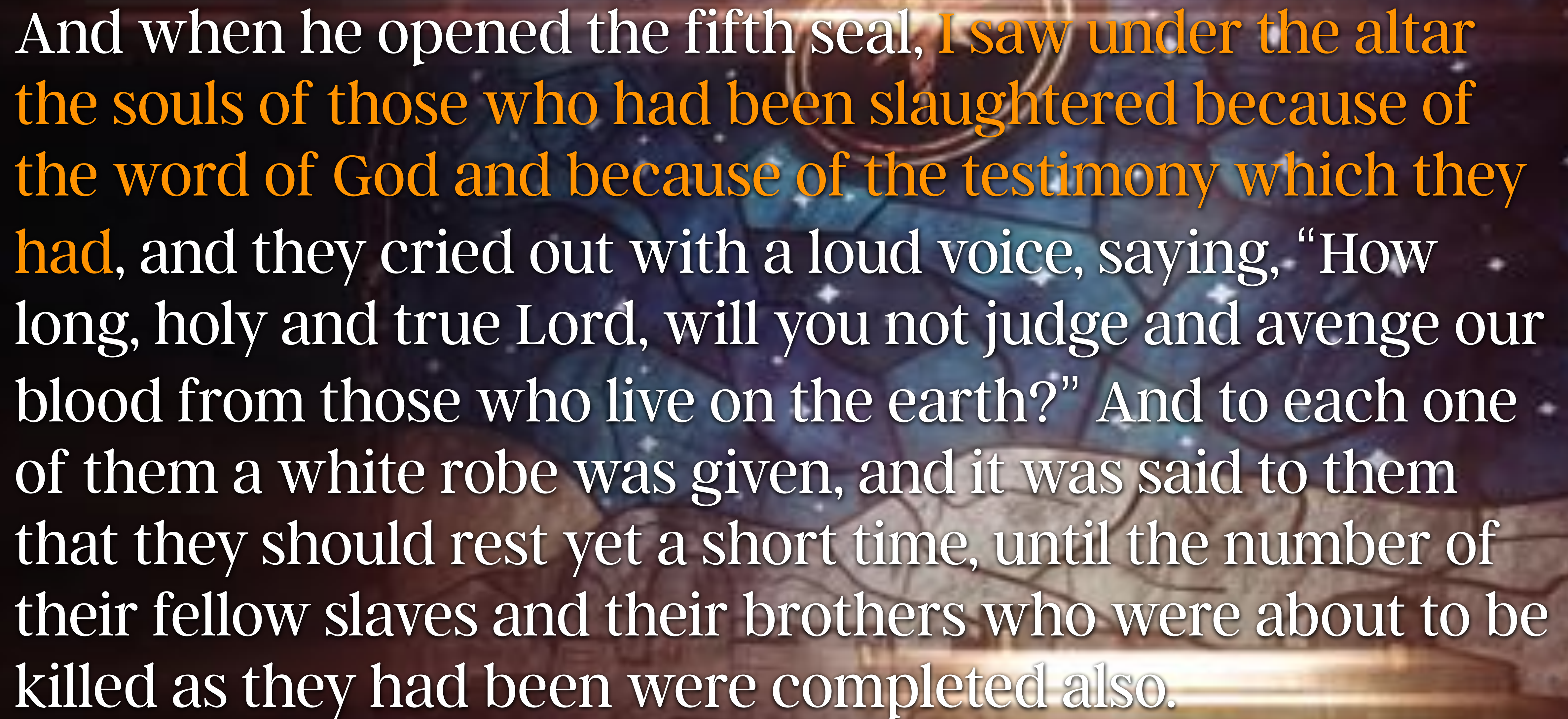
Herod the great, who was the king of all the land of Israel from 37-4 B.C. was a man of powerful body and by nature wild, passionate, harsh, arrogant, calculating, and ruthless. The suspicion, scheming, and cruelty implied in Matthews accounts of his dealing with the Magi and the slaughter of the babies in Bethlehem are in complete harmony with what is known of his character from other sources.

J. Julius Scott



Application

Bethlehem was a place where Messiah would be born and innocent people would be martyred for Him.



And when he opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of those who had been slaughtered because of the word of God and because of the testimony which they had, and they cried out with a loud voice, saying, “How long, holy and true Lord, will you not judge and avenge our blood from those who live on the earth?” And to each one of them a white robe was given, and it was said to them that they should rest yet a short time, until the number of their fellow slaves and their brothers who were about to be killed as they had been were completed also.

Revelation 6:9-11

Application

Bethlehem was a place
where Messiah would be born
in order to die for our sins.

A religious illustration featuring a central starburst of light, likely representing the Star of Bethlehem, shining through a dark, arched window. The scene is set against a dark, starry background, possibly a night sky or a celestial map. The light from the starburst creates a bright, golden glow that illuminates the surrounding area, including the archway and the text below. The overall atmosphere is one of divine light and hope.

God's plan of redemption
has always involved a story
that links birth and death
in Bethlehem.

Next Steps

- I will reorient my thinking about the placement of my story in God's story.
- I will meditate on the context and cost of my salvation.
- I will invite someone to the Christmas Eve Service.