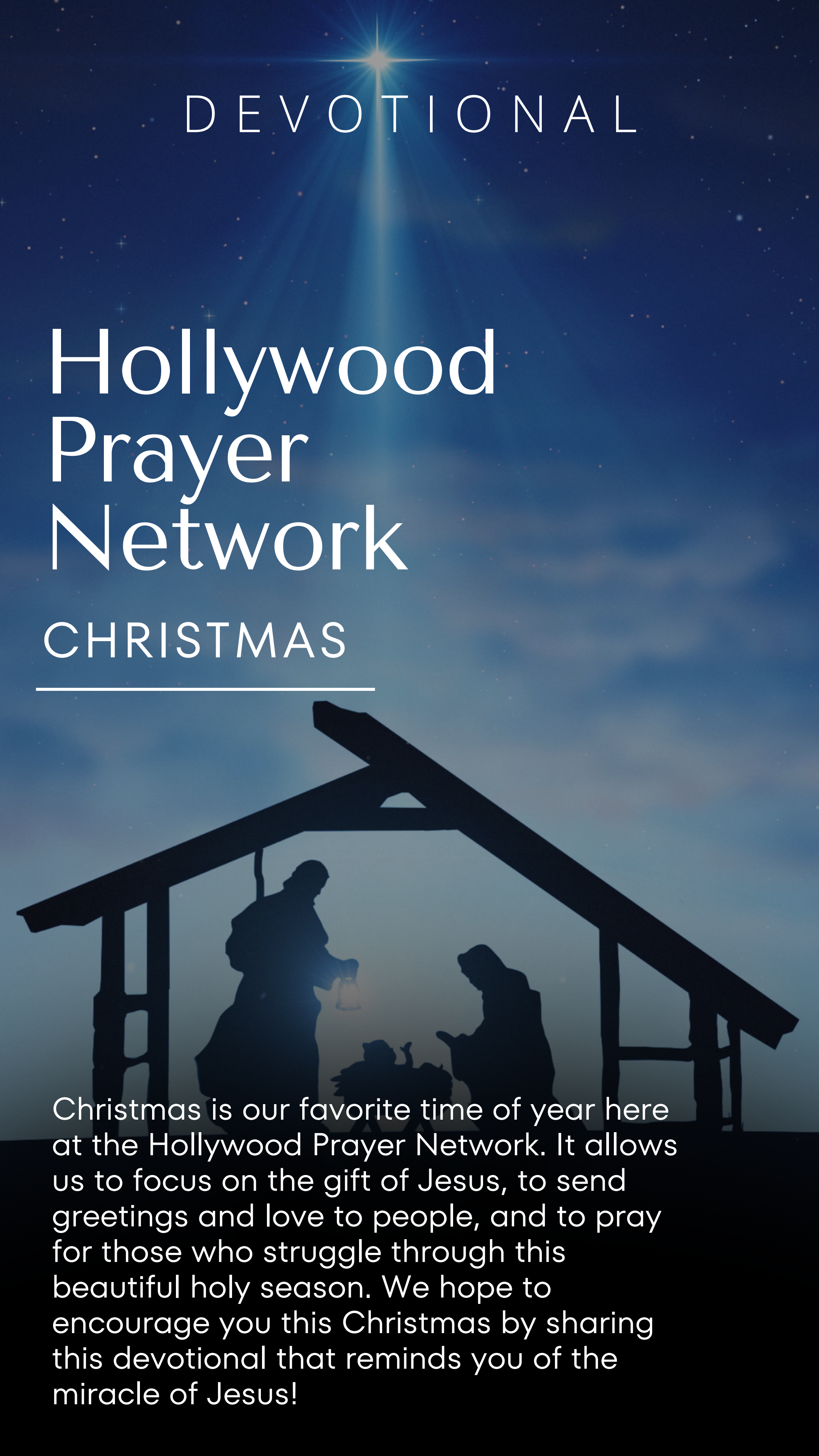


DEVOTIONAL

Hollywood Prayer Network

CHRISTMAS

A silhouette of a nativity scene is centered in the lower half of the image. It depicts Mary kneeling on the right, Joseph standing on the left holding a lantern, and the infant Jesus lying in a manger between them. The scene is set within a simple wooden stable structure. The background is a deep blue night sky filled with stars, with a prominent bright star at the top center casting a vertical beam of light.

Christmas is our favorite time of year here at the Hollywood Prayer Network. It allows us to focus on the gift of Jesus, to send greetings and love to people, and to pray for those who struggle through this beautiful holy season. We hope to encourage you this Christmas by sharing this devotional that reminds you of the miracle of Jesus!

DAY 1

Our greatest Christmas gift is Jesus.

"CHRISTMAS GIFT SUGGESTIONS:
TO YOUR ENEMY—FORGIVENESS, TO AN
OPPONENT—TOLERANCE, TO A FRIEND—
YOUR HEART, TO A CUSTOMER—SERVICE, TO
ALL—CHARITY, TO A CHILD—A GOOD
EXAMPLE, TO YOURSELF—RESPECT."
ANONYMOUS

Matthew 1:21

New King James Version

21 And she will bring forth a Son, and you shall call His name Jesus, for He will save His people from their sins."

DAY 1

PRAY: Dear Father in Heaven, I thank you for giving me your Son. I praise you and thank you for loving me so much that you sent your Son to earth to give me hope, joy, peace and love. And it all started at Jesus' birth. Christmas is such a joyful reminder of what you have done for me and I don't ever want to forget that. My heart is overflowing with joy! Thank you so much. Amen

REFLECT: Reflect on the overwhelming joy of knowing Jesus. We believe in the most radical person in history and we have the privilege of celebrating His birth. It's a miracle that it happened and a miracle that you believe it. Have you thought about what a gift it is that you are able to believe in Him and so many other people just can't embrace the truth of this whole season. Why you and not them?

ACT: Begin this Christmas week by praising God for what He did for you by sending His only Son to earth as a baby. Thank Him for the miracle of Christmas and how this one day has changed the world. Embrace the glory of both God the Father and Jesus the Son. And thank Jesus for giving you the Holy Spirit as His greatest gift.

DAY 2

Money,
influence, power
and charisma
aren't needed to
be great in
God's eyes.

CHRISTMAS IS A SEASON NOT ONLY OF
REJOICING BUT OF REFLECTION.

-WINSTON CHURCHILL

Micah 5:2

New King James Version

The Coming Messiah

2 "But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah,
Though you are little among the
thousands of Judah,
Yet out of you shall come forth to Me
The One to be Ruler in Israel,
Whose goings forth are from of old,
From everlasting."

DAY 2

PRAY: Lord, thank you that Christmas is a reminder that the things of the world are not important, they don't last and we can't take them with us when we go to heaven. Would you please help me to express my commitment to you, Jesus, and your priorities and your position - the ruler over all of Israel and the world! I don't want my focus or identity to be in my job, status, house, title or income. I don't want to forget the true meaning of this day!

REFLECT: Have you ever thought about the people of Bethlehem, that they were a small, weak community among the clans of Judah, and that Jesus came out of that town?! Just think of what YOU can do, even if you are an unknown, a simple, quiet, weak person. None of that matters in God's Kingdom! Ask yourself, what are you capable of that you may never have thought of before? Let Jesus be your inspiration!

ACT: Dig deep into your heart this Christmas and write down your desires, your dreams and your goals - those that you have given up on or thought impossible. Trust that God gave you those thoughts and desires and He has plans for you that you may have given up on too soon. God loves to use those of us from small, weak clans, to do the unexpected. Write your list, pray about each goal and then take steps to walk into God's promises! What a Christmas gift that will be to you this year.

DAY 3

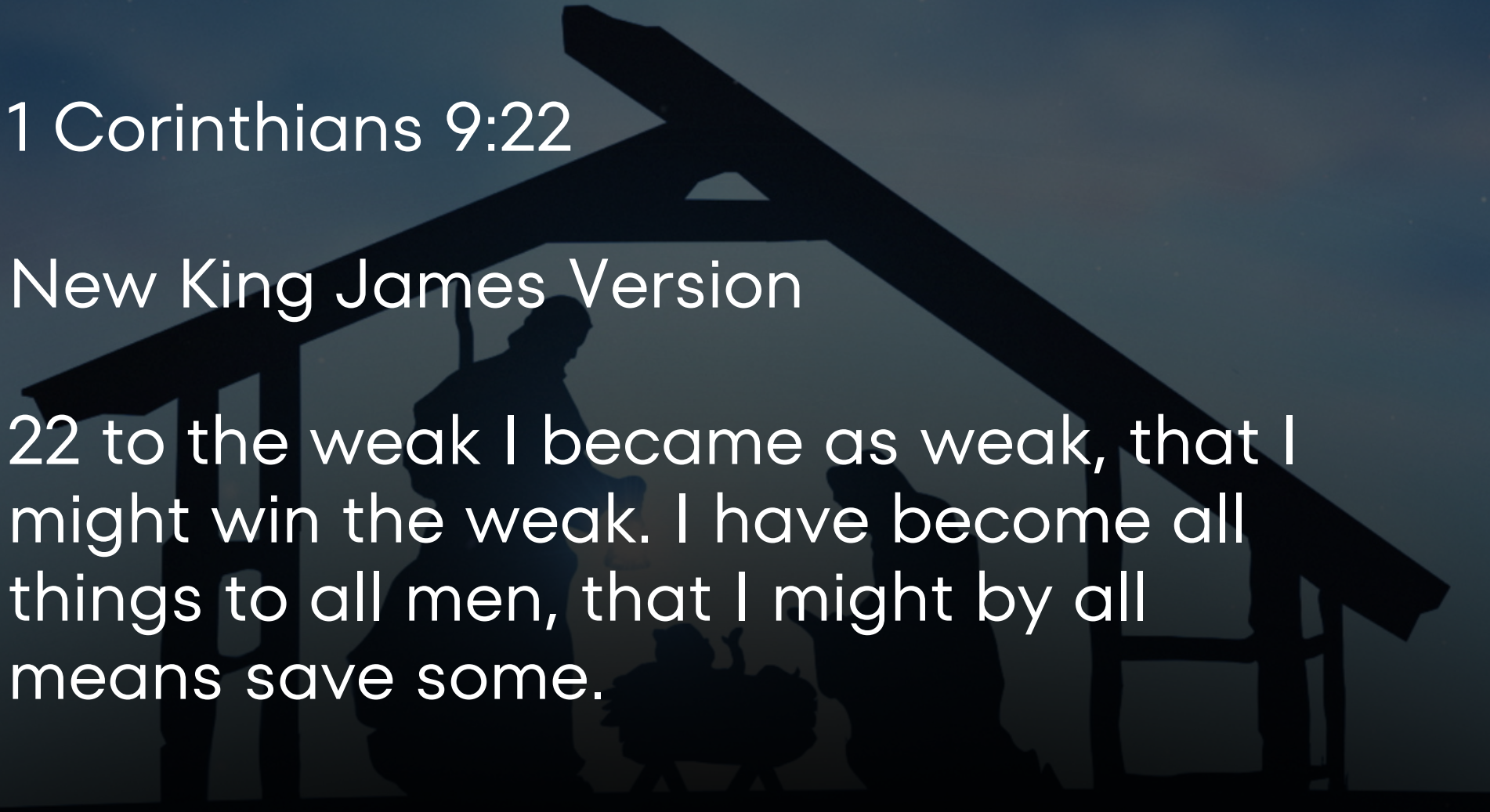
He is the God of the unexpected.

"AREN'T WE FORGETTING THE TRUE MEANING
OF THIS DAY - THE BIRTH OF SANTA?"
- BART SIMPSON

1 Corinthians 9:22

New King James Version

22 to the weak I became as weak, that I
might win the weak. I have become all
things to all men, that I might by all
means save some.

A dark silhouette of the Nativity scene is visible in the background. It shows the Virgin Mary kneeling, the infant Jesus in a manger, and the three wise men on camels. The scene is set against a dark, starry night sky with a faint, glowing light source behind the figures.

DAY 3

PRAY: Dear Jesus, you appeared so weak at first, as you did many times during your ministry on earth, and yet you did become all things to all people so that some, like me, might be saved. Thank you for your sacrifice. Would you help me to be like that and to trust that when I am weak, you will make me strong. Help me to, by all possible means, be a part of saving some people in my life. I know that's ultimately what Christmas is all about. I pray in Jesus' Name.

REFLECT: Think about the people who have no interest in Christmas or Jesus at all, because they don't see the power in His name, in His miracles or in His heart. How wrong might we be about people in our lives, whom we see as weak, unfocused or purposeless. If we are all created in God's image, isn't it possible that everyone has the potential to make an eternal difference in this world. Don't be attracted just to celebrities, because they are more beautiful or more famous or bigger than life. Who are the seemingly weak people in your life? Could they have more eternal power and/or influence than you ever thought possible?

ACT: Hollywood celebrities look so powerful and Washington DC politicians seem so influential. Make a list of the people in your life who seem weak and the ones who are bigger than life. Then pray for each of them. Ask the Lord to show the ones who appear weak to see His strength in them. If you're praying for Hollywood celebrities, ask the Lord to reveal to them how He sees them and how He can use both their fame and weaknesses for His glory.

DAY 4

Little things can change the world.

"I WILL HONOR CHRISTMAS IN MY HEART,
AND TRY TO KEEP IT ALL THE YEAR."

-CHARLES DICKENS

Isaiah 9:6

New King James Version

6 For unto us a Child is born,
Unto us a Son is given;
And the government will be upon
His shoulder.
And His name will be called
Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God,
Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

DAY 4

PRAY: Dear Father God, your son came into this world in the lowliest of circumstances and yet the government was, and still is, on His shoulders! Thank you that I can call Jesus Wonderful, my Counselor, my Mighty God and my Everlasting Father. He truly is my Prince of Peace. I praise you for this Christmas day and for giving me and the world your Son, Jesus!

REFLECT: This verse is MIRACULOUS! As you read it again think about the details that on the surface seem ridiculous, but because of God, are divinely perfect! God gave us a baby, His son, who is born of a poor, unknown young girl, and then suddenly, all the governments of the world will be on His shoulder?! He will go from being a weak, tiny, gurgling baby to God in the flesh: Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Isn't that mind-blowing?

ACT: First, ask the Lord to reveal to you all of the profound truths of this verse. Then, read this verse three more times to yourself, then read it twice more, out loud. Do you see the miracles all through it? Jesus is a baby, He's a son, but governments are scared of Him, men are worshiping Him, and He is known for His strength, power and love. And, it all started on Christmas day. Tell the Lord that you never want to look at Christmas the same way ever again!

DAY 5

God is a God of the impossible!

"A VIRGIN BIRTH I CAN BELIEVE, BUT FINDING THREE WISE MEN???"

-ANONYMOUS

Luke 1:29 - 1:33

New King James Version

29 But when she saw him, she was troubled at his saying, and considered what manner of greeting this was. 30 Then the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. 31 And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bring forth a Son, and shall call His name Jesus. 32 He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Highest; and the Lord God will give Him the throne of His father David. 33 And He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of His kingdom there will be no end."

DAY 5

PRAY: Lord, can you please help me to grasp the full meaning of this verse. What was Mary thinking? Can you help me to understand the full background and meaning of Christmas and the birth of Jesus. I want to know what Mary and Joseph went through to bring Jesus into the world. And then he became the Most High, reigning over all of us. I need your help to completely embrace the power of what you're telling me here. Amen and Amen.

REFLECT: From Mary learning she was miraculously pregnant, to Jesus reigning over all men forever, this is the greatest, most profound, most controversial story of all time. This verse in Luke 1 has caused wars, divided families and transformed lives, and it's told over and over again every Christmas. Can you ponder the words and meaning of this verse so that you can embrace the full magnitude of what God has done for us, through the birth of Jesus?

ACT: Tell one person this story sometime this Christmas holiday. Choose someone who may never have heard it, or needs to hear it a new way, through your perspective, but with God's words. If you don't know who to tell, ask the Lord to put someone's name on your heart or to direct you to a person who will ask what Christmas is all about. Don't go through this season without telling someone the true, powerful, life changing story of Jesus! It will be a Divine Appointment!

DAY 6

Praise God and Spread Christmas Cheer this Year

"CHRISTMAS, MY CHILD, IS LOVE IN ACTION.
EVERY TIME WE LOVE, EVERY TIME WE GIVE,
IT'S CHRISTMAS."

•
-DALE EVANS

Luke 2:13 - 2:15

New King James Version

13 And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying:

14 "Glory to God in the highest,
And on earth peace, goodwill toward men!"

15 So it was, when the angels had gone away from them into heaven, that the shepherds said to one another, "Let us now go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has come to pass, which the Lord has made known to us."

DAY 6

PRAY: Dear Jesus, thank you for making your birth so dramatic, so miraculous and so visual. You brought your heavenly hosts to the most simple and poorest of people, to announce the birth of your Son. You didn't have Jesus born in a palace with the king and it was the hardworking shepherds who were the first ones to see Jesus, because you care about everyone! So would you let me see your angels as well, as I praise you and sing out about your Glory? I pray this in the mighty name of Jesus. Amen.

REFLECT: Can you imagine the scene in Bethlehem when suddenly the heavenly hosts showed up over the fields. And they were all praising God and giving Him the glory as they presented Jesus to the world. It's amazing that God created this scenario for His son. Think about how God wants us to experience Him with our community. Have you ever talked to other Christians about Jesus and got excited about Him, giving Him the glory? We often rave about our earthly experiences to other people, a great book, white water rafting, a new "crush," etc. But do we ever talk excitedly to others about "this miraculous thing that has happened on Christmas night?"

DAY 6

ACT: When was the last time you got excited about the Lord and talked to other people about Him? Have you ever? Right now, go to or call your best friend, your spouse, your parents, or your child and tell them how amazed you are by the birth of Jesus. That it's so incredible, you actually committed your whole life to following Him, obeying Him and falling more in love with Him. Put into words the miraculous fact that Jesus was born for you and you have chosen to follow Him forever! Shout it from the mountaintops and talk about it on the phone...



DAY 7

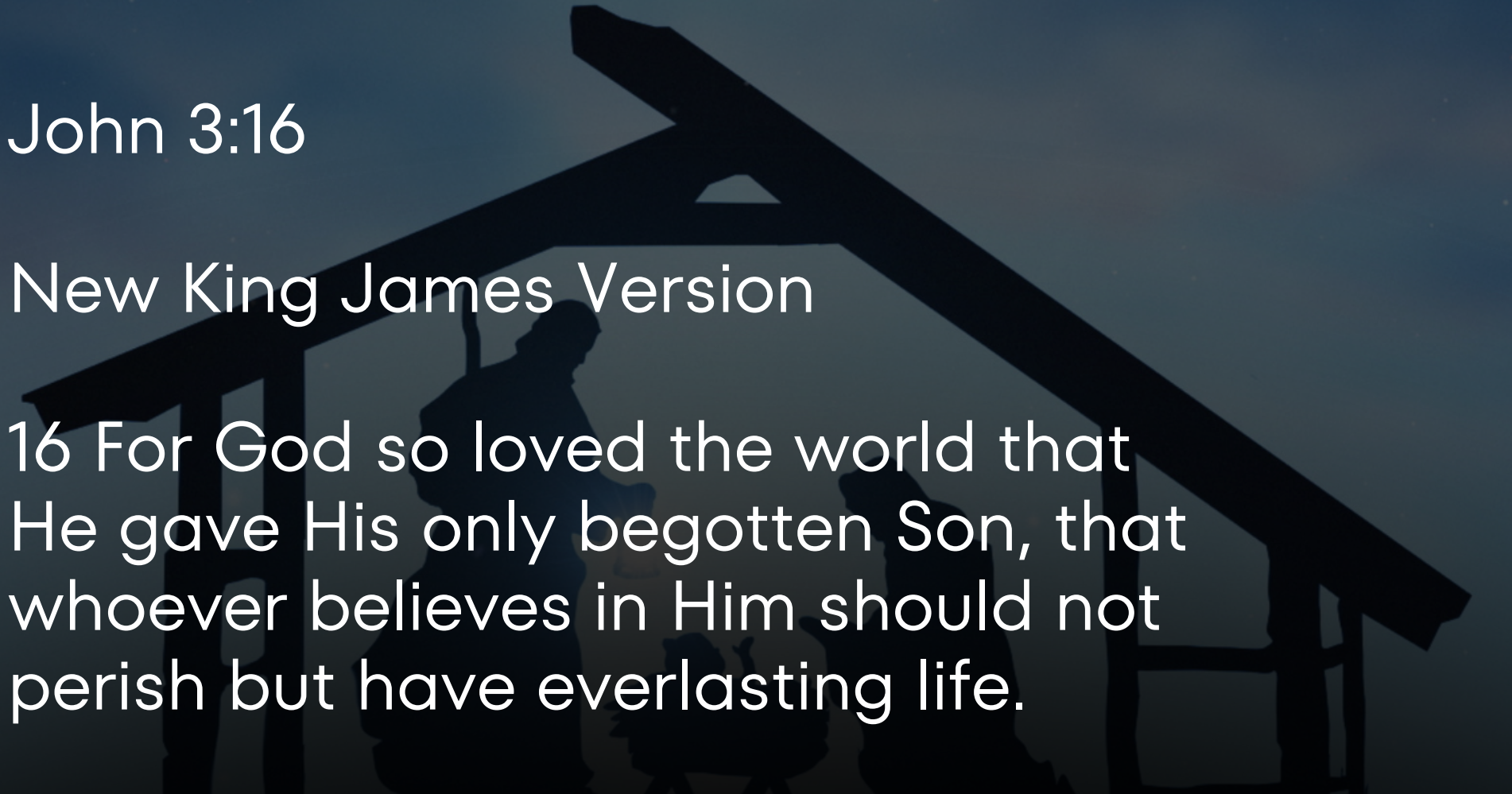
God loves us so much, He gave us His son...

"AND KNOW THAT I AM WITH YOU ALWAYS;
YES, TO THE END OF TIME."
-JESUS CHRIST

John 3:16

New King James Version

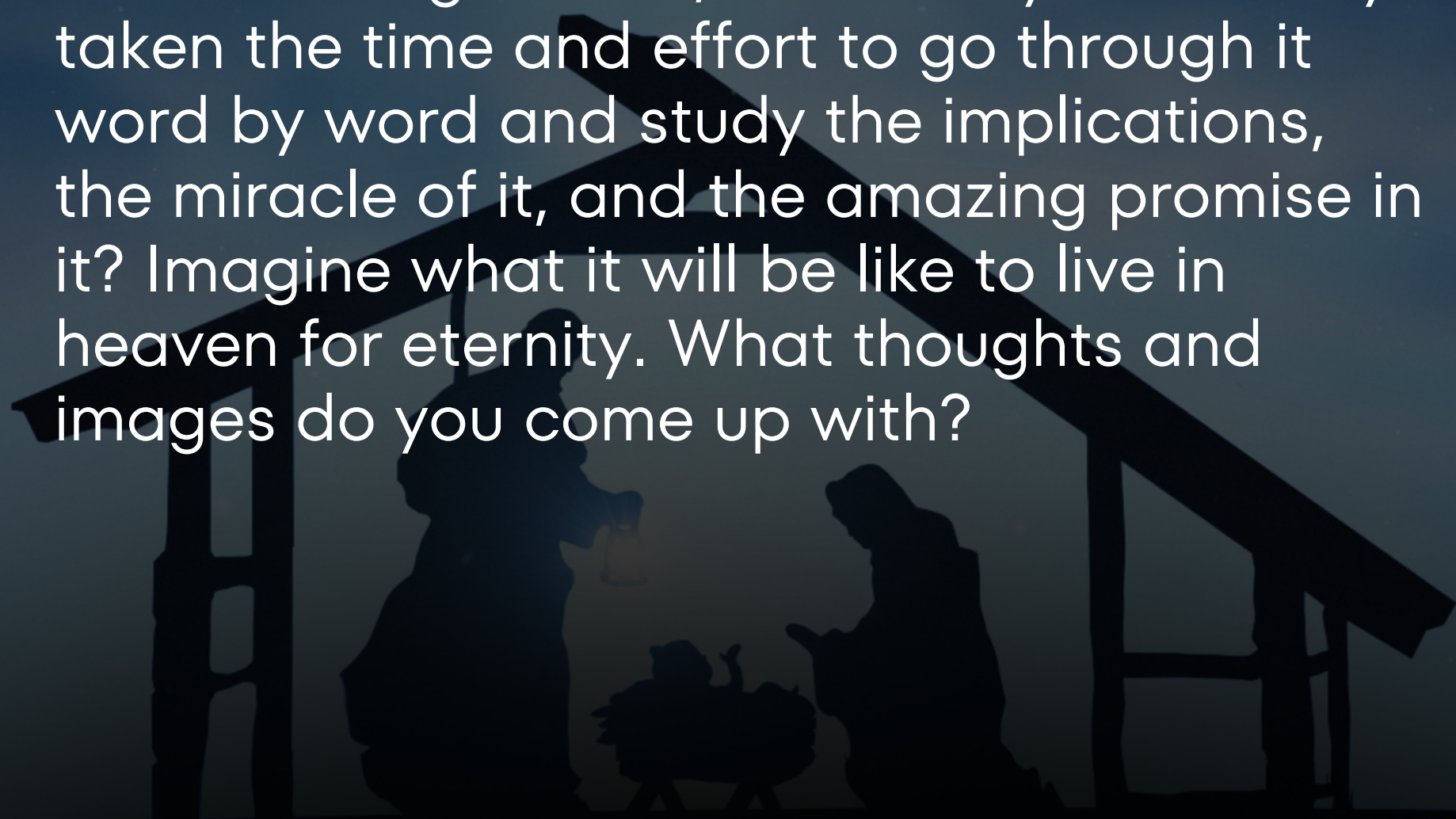
16 For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.



DAY 7

PRAY: Father in Heaven, I thank you that you loved me and every single person in the world, so much that you gave us Jesus. You gave us your one and only Son, and when we believe in Jesus we will NEVER perish, but live forever with you and Jesus in Heaven. Thank you for this promise. And please help me to make this not only a favorite verse, but a reality that I embrace every day.

REFLECT: This verse is so familiar to Christians that we often don't even think about the words any more. We have it memorized and we can even tell it to our non-believing friends, but have you recently taken the time and effort to go through it word by word and study the implications, the miracle of it, and the amazing promise in it? Imagine what it will be like to live in heaven for eternity. What thoughts and images do you come up with?



DAY 7

ACT: Take out a pen and paper and dig deep into your heart and soul to answer these questions:

- Can you imagine what it would have been like to be miraculously impregnated and then find out that your child is the Son of God?
- Have you ever felt a love anywhere near as big as the love that God tells you He has for you?
- As you contemplate that Love, can you consider expressing unconditional love to someone this Christmas?
- How did you get to believe in Jesus when most of the people around you don't believe?
- You are promised eternal life in heaven and you have chosen to believe that. How does that affect your every day life? Or does it?
- Do you live differently because of Jesus in your life?

That is your preparation for Christmas. Now you're ready to enter the season, with the right understanding, right priorities and a deeper love for your Savior.