

Today we are continuing with *Part 3* of this series entitled, *Jesus Christ's Real Life Story*.

The world, including the world of Traditional Christianity, does not understand, does not know the real life story of Jesus Christ and it does not understand what was quoted early on in this series concerning what Paul told the Corinthians when he said, "For even Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us." There is so much they're never taught. They're taught other things, but they're not taught things that he taught. They're not taught about some of the things that, obviously, are throughout scripture that lead up to his life and what he fulfilled in his life.

In *Part 2*, in order to help people to begin to understand and see far more clearly what Paul was actually saying, since people do not really understand, again, what he said, we went back to the first introduction of Passover, which some people do have a little knowledge, but not much. Most of it comes from the movie *The Ten Commandments*. It's an old, old movie. It's been around for a long, long time and that's about the most exposure that a lot of people have to the word. I'm not even sure how much it's used there. It may not even be used. I haven't watched it for years and years and years, but at least they know some of the story of what happened back in the Exodus. It was at that time that God raised up Moses to be His prophet at that particular time to lead the children of Israel out of enslavement, out of bondage, from out of Egypt.

So last time we were focusing on the point of time when the Passover lambs had been eaten, the blood of the lambs applied to the doorposts of the homes where they were observing and eating that particular Passover, and then death passed over the firstborn because of that, because of their obedience to what God told them to do, to put that blood of the lamb on the doorposts. So again, none of those firstborn died, but all the firstborn of Egypt, including of livestock and so forth, died. It was at this point here finally that Pharaoh told Moses to leave, to take the people of Israel out of Egypt. So it took a great deal, after going through all the plagues and finally that last one, for them to do what they finally were able to accomplish.

So they took from the Egyptians gold and silver, jewels, clothing, anything that they required and needed they asked - and they had no intention to ever give it back - they demanded, in essence, things to be taken, to be received, and people gave that to them because they wanted them out of Egypt or they felt they were all going to be dead. So they were anxious to see Israel leave Egypt. We ended that particular story in *Part 2*, how they'd gathered at Rameses, where after sunset, at the beginning of the Feast of Unleavened Bread, the first day of what is called the Feast of Unleavened Bread, they began their journey out of Egypt.

We'll pick up that story again. So we're going to pick that up again here in Numbers 33 where it's talking about that particular story at that time of their journeying out of Egypt. So, again, there

were many people; we don't know the full number. I've heard of all kinds of estimates of a million, two million, up to six million people that might have left Egypt. It probably wasn't that high, but again, as was explained last time the number that was mentioned there had to do with people that were of strength and strong as compared to children who were younger. It made comment about children as well leaving Egypt.

So it starts here in **Numbers 33:1**. It says, **This is the journeying of the children of Israel, who went forth out of the land of Egypt with their armies under the hand of Moses and Aaron**, and it is using that term "armies" because it was organized. They were very organized as to how they were doing this by families, by tribes, if you will, an incredibly organized process. Again, we don't see a lot of this in scripture because there are things that are there that we don't always, or haven't been always told, and it's just kind of a condensed story. There are certain words that give indication of other things that were taking place, but the preparation for all of this and their planning had to be extensive. It didn't just happen! They knew what they were to do. They were prepared to leave. They'd been preparing for a long time. So this instruction and everything they were told to do was done well ahead of time. When it came time then to meet, it didn't just happen. They gathered together in Rameses and began to leave in an organized fashion out of Egypt. So this is a part of that story here in Numbers 33, making it very clear some things that people get confused about that are explained here in Numbers.

And Moses wrote about their journeying, or about their going out according to their journey by the command of the Eternal. And these are their journeying's according to their going out. And they departed from Rameses in the first month, on the fifteenth day of the first month, on the morrow, and this word here is not the word for morning but it means "the next day." These things become important at times because people get things so messed up. They get them so confused and twisted. So it's important to know what some of these words are. **On the next day after the Passover the children of Israel went out with a high hand in the sight of all the Egyptians.**

And they departed from Rameses in the first month, in the fifteenth day of the month, on the morrow, again, the next day after the Passover. This becomes important because some people get this so messed up and they believe that they began to leave on Passover. They didn't begin to leave on Passover; they began to leave on the High Day, on the first day of Unleavened Bread. It gets very specific here about their timing. Again here, **on the next day after the Passover the children of Israel went out with an high hand in the sight of the Egyptians. For the Egyptians buried all their firstborn, which the Eternal had slain among them. And upon their gods also the Eternal executed judgments.** So it's talking about the first things that the Egyptians focused upon; it was the burial of the firstborn, and they did it right away. That was their focus, but that changes in a short order here after they've taken care of burying their firstborn.

Verse 5—And the children of Israel departed from Rameses, and pitched in Succoth. So again here, this is a beginning of the journey from Rameses. They then went to pitch in Succoth and as

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was brought out last time, that word has incredible meaning. It's the word for "booths," like the "Feast of Booths," the Feast of Tabernacles. That's the word that's used in the Old Testament. It's about the word "booths," and just as we did during the Feast of Tabernacles this past year we focused on some of that meaning talking about how the children of Israel were to build certain little booth. It was just a small thing where they were to sit and contemplate; God told them to think about this, about how He brought the children of Israel out of Egypt and that they had to dwell in temporary dwellings, booths, along the way.

Verse 5—So again here, the children of Israel departed from Rameses, and pitched in Succoth. And they departed from Succoth, and pitched in Etham, which is at the edge of the wilderness. Then they departed from Etham, and turned unto Pihahiroth, which is before Baalzephon: and they pitched before Migdol. And they departed from Pihahiroth and passed through the midst of the sea into the wilderness. So this is a very shortened version of their journeying and the different places they pitched along the way and stayed during the night, obviously, and then took off again in the morning. Then they came up to the Red Sea and it talks about this area here, of them pitching their tents and their temporary dwellings there, the booths, right beside the Red Sea. This is what it's talking about. Then it talks about them here leaving in the midst, or through the midst of the sea.

So again, here it was an evening when they began their journey. They left at that particular time beginning at sundown, because that's when time, a day begins. It begins at sundown. So as the Passover was ending, had ended and a new day was beginning, at the setting of the sun, they began their journey. They did it, they started out at night-time and went on down to Succoth and pitched there. An incredible, busy time because they weren't allowed to go to sleep that night. They weren't to go to bed that night, on Passover night, on the fourteenth, so they were up all night on the fourteenth waiting until morning, and they couldn't leave their homes until morning, and then during the daytime portion of the fourteenth they prepared, they started their journeying up to Rameses and they were taking things from the Egyptians, as it says, they were spoiling the Egyptians and taking of the gold, silver, clothing, and jewelry and other things that they needed for their journey. Then they began their way down toward the Red Sea.

So going back now to the flow of the story back in Exodus where we left off in *Part 2*. We'll go back there. There is so much meaning contained in the story of God bringing the children of Israel out of captivity in Egypt. That's something that people don't understand about Jesus Christ and what he fulfilled and what is so important about the example of the first Passover of the children of Israel coming out of Egypt. God uses Egypt as a "type" of enslavement, bondage to sin, that Jesus Christ has come to save mankind from, to bring mankind out of the bondage of sin because that's what human beings are under by a kind of nature that we have, and it's not one that wants God's way of life. It's one that resists God's ways.

So again, people miss the meaning of these things by their traditions and by the holidays that they observe. So starting here then picking it up again in **Exodus 13:17**, continuing on with the

story and their journeying and what took place. **And it came to pass when Pharaoh had let the people go, that God led did not lead them through the way of the land of the Philistines.** I love this part of the story because there are so many lessons in this, and that would have been the easy way to go to a land that God had promised them. It would have been the way that most people would have thought you should go, "the way of the land of the Philistines." It says God didn't take them that way. It says, **although that was near. For God said, Otherwise the people might change their mind when they see war, and then they return to Egypt.** So God took them another way and had to separate them from their life in Egypt, and it took a great deal of time to separate them from that life in Egypt as well so that they couldn't go back, so that they wouldn't go back because it didn't take too long and they did want to go back, but God made it impossible for them.

Verse 18—But God led the people about, through the way of the wilderness of the Red Sea. And the children of Israel went up in order, in organized formation, if you will, out of the land of Egypt. That's why it uses the term "armies," that we just read earlier. Again here, God took them, it says, "by the way of the wilderness of the Red Sea." Well, what I love about this story is there was no "way of the Red Sea." We talk about "the way" or "a highway." It's the same type of term that we would use - a road or a pathway or whatever, a way to get from one place to another. It was a road travelled often, and "the way of the Philistines" was a way to go, not a specific road like we have today, but a general direction that was easier for them. This here was unique because people didn't travel this way, because you come up to the Red Sea and what are you going to do? You have to go back and find some other way.

That's the way our life is. When God begins to work with people He leads us in a way that people don't think that that's the way to go. People aren't automatically drawn to God and the way He says to live, just like this story here about Jesus Christ, the real life story of Jesus Christ. They don't understand. They think it's a different way.

Verse 19—And Moses took the bones of Joseph with him. For he had directly charged the children of Israel, saying, God will surely visit you and you shall carry my bones from here with you. An incredible story! He believed that in time God would lead them away, as a people, again. And he said, "When you go take my bones with you." **And they took their journey from Succoth, and camped in Etham, in the edge of the wilderness. And the Eternal went before them by day in a pillar of a cloud to lead them the way, and by night in a pillar of fire.** We can't even imagine something like that. Over a million people, most certainly, and here they are on a journey, having all gathered together, and in a very organized fashion. They begin moving in a particular direction and the only way they know which way to go is by this, by night time, by the light that led them, or was kept by their camp when they were camping. But that first night they went all night travelling, and the next day, and finally came here, as it talks about, "and camped in Etham, in the edge of the wilderness."

And the Eternal went before them by day in a pillar of a cloud to lead them the way, and by night in a pillar of fire to give them light; to go by day and night. And He did not take away the pillar of the cloud by day, nor the pillar of fire by night, *from* before the people. So it was with them during this entire period of leaving Egypt.

Chapter 14:1, it goes on, And the Eternal spoke to Moses, saying, Speak to the children of Israel, that they turn and encamp before Pihahiroth, between Migdol and the sea, over against Baalzephon. And next to there you shall encamp by the sea. For Pharaoh will say of the children of Israel, They *are* entangled of the land and the wilderness has shut them in. He went on to say, And I will harden Pharaoh's heart, and he shall follow after them. Again, another part of an incredible story here, of something that people oftentimes do not understand, of what God did. It's as almost as though it was God's fault that Pharaoh changed and began to go after the Israelites. It wasn't at all. It's just like all those plagues that happened leading up to the time of the Passover itself, and all the plagues, each time Pharaoh had a bit of a change in attitude. Not a lot, but it grew as time went along and he experienced more and more of the plagues. It reflects a great deal about human nature. Oftentimes, when there are hardships in people's lives, when there are difficult trials to go through it can tend to humble people and it can tend to humble attitudes. Then oftentimes this happens. When it's removed, what takes place? The normal, natural thing for the human mind is to go right back to what they were before.

It's kind of like the old story of someone being in a fox hole and they start praying to God. They're in war and their praying to God for deliverance, "And if You will do this I will do..." They start promising all kinds of things: "If you will save me and keep me alive..." and begin making all kinds of promises. Then the war is over and what happens? As a whole people went right back to the same way of life and they didn't keep their promises. That's just human nature. That's the way people are.

So the same thing was true with Pharaoh. Each time a plague came along he had a bit of a change in attitude, and as soon as Moses (because it was done through Moses) removed the plague, Pharaoh went right back to what he was and he wouldn't let them go. His whole attitude changed, but as he got closer and closer to the last of the plagues he was willing and talking in terms that he was going to let them go, but then Moses would take the plague away and he'd go right back to the same attitude and he wasn't going to let them go at all until the last one. That's the one that did him in, when his own son died. Finally. Finally he told them to get out. It shook the people so badly, because they believed, as we read earlier, they really, truly felt that if they didn't leave, if they didn't get out of Egypt they would all be dead. So they had a great deal of fear. It does a lot to the attitude, the thinking. It reminds me of this end-time and things that we're going to go through in time here in this world and what it takes to get people to a point where they will actually listen to God because as a whole for 6,000 years people haven't listened to God. Human nature is a tough thing. So it was here where God was saying that He was going to harden

Pharaoh's heart. What was going to take place was after he buried his son, after that plague was just passed for a day or two his attitude began to change again. He wanted to go after the Israelites. He really wanted to do a lot more to them, actually, but God wasn't going to allow that to happen.

I will harden Pharaoh's heart and he shall follow after them, and I will receive honour, or the word means, in essence, "to be glorified," because of what Pharaoh is going to do. I will receive honour upon Pharaoh, and upon all his army; that the Egyptians may know that I am the Eternal. And they did so. So you would think by now that they would know that He was God Almighty, but not yet. Even though people may come to a point in time where they believe He is God and He is all-powerful, it doesn't take long to change, because it happened with the Egyptians.

And it was told the king of Egypt that the people fled. And the heart of Pharaoh and of his servants was turned against the people, and they said, Why have we done this, that we have let Israel go from serving us? Because their whole life was about to change. They were servants. They were watching over and taking care of all kinds of things for Egypt and now who was going to do all this? Who was going to do all this work?

Verse 6—And he made ready his chariot, and took his people with him. And he took six hundred chosen chariots, and all the rest of the chariots of Egypt. There is a distinction here. It's not necessarily in all translations but there is a distinction here, even in the words here and what it's saying. He had that which was of training and those who were of war and that was a matter of that which was his, but there were others as well throughout the land of Egypt and armies as well. That's what this next part explains here when it goes on to talk about this. It's using some different kinds of terms and it's actually talking about those that were on horseback, those that were on camel. It's talking about an army that went, after Pharaoh. It wasn't just 600 chariots. It's a lot more than this. It's the entire army, if you will, of Egypt that he gathered together to go after the Israelites. So it wasn't just people on chariots after them, there was an army here on camel and on foot that was taking place after they were pursuing them. So again, it was his military that was going after them. Some of these things get lost in some translations.

So his desire, again, was to go after them. He didn't know why had they let all them go. So it says he took 600, **verse 7—six hundred chosen chariots, and as it is here, and all the chariots of Egypt, and captains over every one of them.** Again, that last part isn't just for about chariots. It's far more than that. It has to do with a military. In some places it talks about how that they are either on camel or horse, and so forth. **And the Eternal hardened the heart of Pharaoh, king of Egypt, and he pursued after the children of Israel. And the children of Israel went out with an high hand. But the Egyptians pursued after them, all the horses and chariots of Pharaoh, and again here, some of the horses and so forth. They had those that were on camel as well. It's talking about an entire army. ...and his horsemen.** Here is a specific word that has to do with camels and/or horses, and it's a word that's used oftentimes for a cavalry. **...and his army, as it**

goes on to say, **and overtook them encamping by the sea, beside Pihahiroth, before Baalzephon.**

And when Pharaoh drew near, the children of Israel lifted up their eyes, and, behold, the Egyptians marched after them. And they were exceedingly afraid and the children of Israel cried out unto the Eternal. So again here, just like in that movie, it shows some chariots chasing the Israelites, but it was far more than that. It was the entire, if you will, military power of Egypt. He was going after over a million people—maybe two million, we don't know exactly—to bring them all back (and to kill a lot along the way as well), but to bring back those who would be able to continue on serving them.

Then in **verse 11** it goes on to say, **And they said unto Moses, Is it because *there were no graves in Egypt that you have taken us to die in the wilderness?*** What an amazing thing, attitudes that people can get into, human nature that can pop up, and it does. Sometimes just because individuals begin to change their life even as far as God's Church is concerned attitudes can change. Human beings, we always have attitudes to be on guard against and to fight against. This shows how quickly attitudes can change. But this is, obviously, a very carnal approach, but it wasn't long and they were turning against Moses. Here, you'd think, after what God did? Here they'd gathered all the kinds of gold and jewels, clothing, all the things they needed above and beyond. They were able to take all their livestock, everything with them, and some of the Egyptians as well, and they were leaving Egypt and finally no longer under slavery. You'd think there'd be a lot of rejoicing here, but now they're up against the sea, mountains on the sides, and Pharaoh's army is coming. And it's like, "Why, Moses, did you bring us out here just to die in the wilderness?" Anyway, human nature. Amazing what we can be like.

So, **Why have you dealt with us this way, to carry us forth out of Egypt? Isn't this what we told you in Egypt?** You know, in the very beginning when Moses came along and began to say that God had sent him and began to perform certain miracles in front of them, their attitude was they weren't real keen on this in the beginning. They weren't real excited about this in the beginning because they knew the power of Pharaoh and the power of Egypt, and if you go against that you're going to die, and so they really just didn't want Moses to meddle in their lives. That's what it came down to. Incredible! That's the way human beings oftentimes are. Those who hear a story like this, the real story of Jesus Christ, there are things they really don't want to hear. Just like throughout this sermon. There's coming a point in time here though when God begins to humble people and they will begin to listen, but it takes a lot to humble human beings; it truly does.

So, **Isn't this what we told you in Egypt, saying, Let us alone so that we may serve the Egyptians?** You know, "Don't rock the boat. Don't change the status quo. We like things the way they are. Things aren't that bad!" It has to get pretty bad before people will leave. It had to get pretty bad there, the firstborn dying all around them before they'd actually leave. **For *it would have been* better for us to serve the Egyptians, than we should die in the wilderness.** And **Moses said to the people, Do not fear, but stand still and see the salvation of the Eternal**

which He will show to you today. For the Egyptians whom you have seen today, you shall never see them again forever. Awesome! The Eternal shall fight for you, and you shall hold your peace. There are things in life we can't do and God has to do it, just like in the life of Jesus Christ there are things that God has to do for us. We can't do it, just as coming out of sin, as changing and truly changing and truly trying to live a certain way of life in spirit and in truth. It's not just something that people do once a week, go on Sunday to church and then go right back to their normal lives again without really making big changes.

Verse 15—And the Eternal said to Moses, Why is it that you cry out to Me? Speak to the children of Israel, that they go forward. Sometimes that's what we do as human beings. Even with the Church I think of all who have gone by the wayside, who have given up, who have become upset because things didn't go a specific way that they felt that it should and that God can't lead in different ways. That's why we talk about if God leads to the right, we go to the right. If He leads to the left, we go to the left. If there's a change, we change. We're not in control, God is. So the same thing is true here. What do you do? You go forward. You keep moving forward. What else is there but this way of life? What else is there but the Passover, the Feast of Unleavened Bread, and on and on it goes and the things that those things teach.

Verse 16—He told Moses then, Lift up your staff and stretch out your hand over the sea, and divide it. And the children of Israel shall go on dry *ground* through the midst of the sea. And I, behold, I will harden the hearts of the Egyptians, and they shall follow them, and I will receive for Myself honour (glory) upon Pharaoh, and upon all his hosts, upon his chariots, and upon his horsemen, again, that word that has to do with cavalry, like we would use the term. They were more of a mounted army. **And the Egyptians shall know that I *am* the Eternal, when I have received for Myself honour upon Pharaoh and upon his chariots and upon his horsemen.**

Verse 19—And the angel of God, which had been going before the camp of Israel, left there and went behind them; and the pillar of the cloud went from before their face and stood behind them. And so what had been in front of them now moved to the rear between them and the Egyptians. ...and it came between the camp of the Egyptians and the camp of Israel; and it was a cloud and darkness *to them*, but it gave light by night *to these*: so that the one came not near the other all the night. So for the Egyptians it was dark, totally dark. On the other side there was light. Incredible, to give light to the Israelites throughout their camp, to experience something like that, the power of God. This is a very small thing for God, but it was a mighty thing for them at that time especially. It would be too for us if we saw it.

Verse 21—And Moses stretched out his hand over the sea; and the Eternal caused the sea to move *back* by a strong east wind all that night, and made the sea dry *land*, and the waters were divided. And the children of Israel went into the midst of the sea upon the dry *ground*: and the waters *were* a wall unto them on their right hand, and on their left. Even in the movie that is an awesome thing to see. Then all the children of Israel start going down in the bed of the sea there on dry land, to march from one side to the other. **And the Egyptians**

pursued, and went in after them in the midst of the sea, *even* all of Pharaoh's horses, his chariots, and his horsemen. And it came to pass, that in the morning watch the Eternal looked upon the army of the Egyptians through the pillar of the fire and of the cloud, and stirred troubled within the army of the Egyptians. So they began to experience something that wasn't too pleasant to them. It says, and took off their chariot wheels, so that they drove them with difficulty. And therefore, the Egyptians said, Let us flee from the face of Israel; for the Eternal fights for them against the Egyptians. So all this was coming back to them, all the plagues they'd gone through, and the firstborn having died. All of them that were out there, they knew firstborn, they had firstborn that had died, and yet they were pursuing after the Israelites. So as the ground was no longer dry the chariot's wheels got bogged down in that, and even horses or camels, and even if you're on foot, if you've ever been in a situation where it's a boggy, muddy type of earth or ground, and it just holds your feet in there and you can't get out, well, this is what was taking place.

And the Eternal said to Moses, Stretch out your hand over the sea, that the waters may come again upon the Egyptians, upon their chariots, and upon their horsemen. And Moses stretched forth his hand over the sea, and the sea returned in its strength when the morning appeared. And the Egyptians fled before it. And the Eternal overthrew the Egyptians in the midst of the sea. And the waters returned and covered the chariots, and the horsemen, *and* all of the army of Pharaoh which came into the sea after them. There was not so much as one of them remaining. And unlike the story, Pharaoh was in there, too. It destroyed Pharaoh, unlike the movie. So all of them. It says not one of them remained.

Verse 29—But the children of Israel walked upon dry *land* in the midst of the sea; and the waters *were* a wall unto them on the right hand, and on the left. Thus the Eternal saved Israel that day out of the hand of the Egyptians; and Israel saw the Egyptians dead upon the sea shore. So that power and that force when it came back together washed bodies, dead bodies along the shore. And Israel saw that great work which the Eternal did upon the Egyptians. And the people feared the Eternal, and believed the Eternal and His servant Moses. At least (it doesn't say here), but at least for a little while. It didn't last long. It's amazing how a little bit of time passed and they already started complaining and wondering about Moses, whether he was really a prophet of God. But that's another story.

So that which we've now covered about Israel observing the first Passover and their deliverance out of Egypt away from the control of Pharaoh concerned a type of a physical fulfillment in the observance of Passover. Again, I feel so sorry for people out here, especially this time of year here, they're getting ready to observe something, which I didn't realize in Europe, it's actually called Passover, the term that's used. In the States it's referred to as Easter. I don't know if it's different in different areas or not, but it's a similar word. It comes out of Passover. It's not like Easter that means Ishtar or Astarte. So that has a difference there, which I was rather surprised about, the different roots of words and where they come from, and yet in the States it's very

clear where it comes from. I'm sure in Great Britain it's Easter as well because of the English language. But anyway, incredible to realize it's a type of a physical fulfillment in the observance of Passover and people don't know what that means because they don't know what Passover is in the first place. There is so much more to the story. Again here, things about the first Passover that pictured a fulfillment of things that were to happen as indeed a fulfillment of a type that took place earlier. Here, the first Passover. It was a "type" of the actual fulfillment of what Jesus Christ was going to fulfill in his life and by his death, and to understand what it means indeed "that he is our Passover who was sacrificed for us," just as the Israelites killed a lamb and they took the blood and put it on the doorposts, the meaning that's contained in that so rich as a "type" of something that Jesus Christ had to fulfill for mankind.

So we're now going to begin to focus upon his, Jesus Christ's, real life story. It's a story that's very much about the complete meaning of Passover. The first observance of Passover in Egypt was, again, a "type" of the fulfillment of that which was to follow, but Jesus Christ was the actual fulfillment and the complete meaning of Passover.

You might want to turn over to Matthew 2. We're going to begin from the very beginning of some of the life of Jesus Christ. Again, things that people have never heard as far as the world is concerned, as far as the world of Traditional Christianity, but it's an incredible story indeed, of things that people just aren't told, that people aren't taught. Instead there are incredible, vast areas of falsehood, of things that we're going to go through here even in the beginning of this story that people don't understand. You didn't understand until God began to give that understanding to you in your mind and others in time as they begin to listen are going to be able to begin to understand.

So there is so much, again, that's twisted and distorted, even in some of the story here in Matthew 2 as we begin to go through this, where people tried to twist and they have to distort things to fit into a narrative or a story flow that they want to perpetuate that doesn't come out of the Bible, just as Easter doesn't come out of the Bible; there's nothing about Easter in the Bible, but to perpetuate that story there are things they have to distort and twist. And just like Christmas, it can't be found in the Bible. You really think about that, that's quite mind-boggling that here is an observance of something that you would think surely, if it's something that mankind is to observe year by year that's supposed to have to do with the birth of Christ, that surely there would be something in God's word, because God always gave the Israelites, He always gave people, even in the New Testament, meaning and purpose as to why they were doing the things that they were told to do. God explained things to them. You would think, most assuredly some of this would be there. So in these stories they have to twist and distort what's really said. It begins here in Matthew 2.

So we're going to jump into the final few weeks that led up to Jesus Christ actually fulfilling the meaning of the Passover later on, but this is a good place to start the story, the actual beginning of his life.

Matthew 2:1—Now when Jesus was born in Bethlehem (verse 1) of Judea in the days of Herod the king, behold, there came wise men, and it's pronounced in different ways, but it's "magi," "may-jahy," and they came from the east. So this is where this word comes from. If you look at history it has a lot of different meanings at different times. It's used in a lot of different ways through time and by different cultures and so forth. So there's a lot of confusion even over the meaning of the word "magi." Throughout history there have been all kinds, from those who have been bad and those who sought to do good. There were those who did seek to do good and a lot of times they were very often the more educated, the more highly educated among people, and they often served royalty as counsellors. That's what they were then called. They were the "wise men" that would counsel royalty or leaders, kings and so forth. So this is the term that was used to explain who they were. Again, sometimes it was good, because some tried to do good in the counsel they would give. Again, highly educated individuals, as a whole, as far as their words and how it's used. We see another one later on, one called Simon in the New Testament. We know what he was like. He wasn't good. He was bad. He tried to influence people in a wrong way and he was out for himself and not really serving any kind of king or royalty of any kind, but these that came out of the east, they were different. Their history is, and the things that go back, they don't really know exactly what country they came out of, but what they represented becomes very clear because of the things they did and because of the gifts they brought with them.

And so in **verse 2** it says, **they came**, as it talks about here, **from the east to Jerusalem, and asking, Where is he who is born King of the Jews?** So these weren't just travellers. They just weren't some individuals, ever how many there were. Most people believe, because of the stories, there had to be three, and there is nothing about three at all as far as the number of individuals that came long, the wise men or the magi that came. But they were not ordinary people. They were respected. They were looked up to. They carried with them wealth. They reflected wealth. Whatever, whoever it was sent them, as a whole, and ever how they came, they were not on their own. They weren't out here, as it were, just travelling from one area to another as a lot of people did trading and so forth and carrying goods on camels. They weren't like that. So when they came into Jerusalem they were looked up to for being unique and they were respected. That shouldn't be lost in the story as you read it, but people don't grasp that.

So it says here they were looking for the one who is born King of the Jews. Well, you can imagine how well that would go over in Jerusalem. You're coming into Jerusalem, in an area ruled by Herod, and you're talking about a different king, a different ruler? You're looking for this king, this person that's been born now King of the Jews? And these are wise, intellectual, well educated individuals that are coming into Jerusalem, respected individuals. They went on to say, **for we have seen his star in the east, and have come to worship him.** So if these were just traders coming into town and they were wanting to trade goods and so forth people would have laughed at them, "You're nuttier than a fruitcake," but they didn't respond that way to these individuals. Instead, they thought upon what was being said. It had a tremendous impact, as you're going to

find out as we go through the story. So there's a lot said here that's not taught accurately by the world of Traditional Christianity.

These wise men were asking, "Where is this King of the Jews, who is now born?" They didn't know. They didn't know where he was. They were asking. You know, you get this idea of this little star that's all of a sudden it's just pointing down on the little town of Bethlehem and they come to Bethlehem at the right time when Jesus is being born. That's not the timing at all. It's a lie! That didn't happen! These wise men didn't come to this area in that way at all. They were in Jerusalem looking for him. So if this was happening long before—now it pops up again here in a moment—and people could say, "Oh, well, see, here it is."

So it goes on here. They didn't know. They didn't know where he was. That's why they came into Jerusalem asking because of certain things written. They were educated. They knew of certain things that were written and they were told certain things, that there was now a King, one who'd been looked upon, looked to by the Jewish people, looked for by the Jewish people over time, over hundreds of years, and now they're coming into the city of Jerusalem and saying, "Where is he, the one that's now been born? Because we've seen his star in the east." Awesome! So the truth is they'd come to Jerusalem seeking where they could find the Messiah, the Christ. So when they came into town basically saying these things it didn't escape the Jewish people what they were saying; they were looking for the King of the Jews. The Messiah means "The Anointed One." All the prophecies in the Old Testament have to do with one who is to be anointed to be King of Israel. That's what the word means. Messiah, The Anointed One. A lot of people don't understand the word "Christ" is also of the same meaning. They're the same thing. The word "Christ" means the same as Messiah, "The Anointed One," which to the Jews didn't escape them. They knew it meant a king, a king that God had promised was going to rule. Awesome! Yet people don't understand this. They're never taught these things, of what's taking place in this account here.

So they came, in essence, to the capital of Judah. Where do you go to look for the King of the Jews but to the capital of all of Judah, to where he is supposed to be born in the first place? They knew of the prophecies. They were educated and they were coming there saying, "We know that he's been born. Where is he?" Surely all the Jews know where he is. They just had a journey there to find him.

So notice what's stated next: **When Herod the king had heard *these things*...** So this wasn't some small thing that took place. Again, people have different ideas and concepts here of some travellers coming along who had a great deal of wealth, or whatever, and they're trading from one area or another so they come into Jerusalem. No, not at all. So when Herod heard this he took it seriously too because he knew who these individuals were! It doesn't tell us where they came from; it doesn't tell us whom they represented. It doesn't tell us who sent them, but Herod was moved by it. Herod believed something here that he wanted to know more about. Awesome, what took place that these individuals had that kind of clout that even Herod wanted to know more, wanted audience with them. Awesome!

So when the king had heard these things **he was troubled, and all of Jerusalem with him**. This wasn't a small thing. So what escapes a lot of people a lot of times in something like this story here is they don't recognize the kind of renown, the kind of reputation that these individuals had. As soon as they came into Jerusalem they knew of them, they knew what kind of people they were. It doesn't tell the story here, but most likely they knew where they came from as well. So Herod took this story quite seriously.

And when he had gathered all the chief priests and scribes of the people together, he demanded of them where Christ, the Messiah... So here it is, the city is talking about this. It's spreading around the city that these individuals have come into the city and they're wanting to know where the Messiah is born, the King of Israel, the King of the Jews. Where is he? And so this is being talked about amongst the Jews. Those of the leadership, they pass it along because there are those of Judah who served the Romans, who served Herod and were more loyal to him than they were to the Jewish people. That's the way things worked. So it finally got to Herod of what was happening in the city and what these individuals, these wise men, as they're referred to in scripture, magi, what they were saying. Herod taking this seriously, he said, "What does this mean? What is this that's taught amongst the Jews," in essence. **So he gathered the chief priest and the scribes**. That's why he gathered them together, because he wanted to know more. What is it you believe? Who is this individual? A King? It's not going to happen. Not on his watch.

And so **he gathered all the chief priests and the scribes of the people together and he demanded of them where Christ (the Messiah) should be born**. So, "Do you know? Is it written where he should be born?" Sure enough. It's written. **And they answered him, In Bethlehem of Judea**. They knew. They knew what their teachings were. They knew what had been passed down through time, that a Messiah would come and that he was going to be born in Bethlehem. They knew the prophecies. Awesome!

For thus it is written by the prophet, this is written by Micah in Micah 5:2. And You Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are not the least among the princes of Judah. For out of you shall come a ruler, translated here as "Governor," but it's a ruler, one who reigns, as the Hebrew clearly shows. That's what it's talking about, **out of you is going to come one who reigns**. It didn't escape them. They knew whom it was about. **...who shall rule My people Israel**. They knew this was a prophecy about the Messiah, that he's going to be born in Bethlehem.

World of Traditional Christianity, even the Jews today don't even know these prophecies and what they mean. They've lost track of this hundreds and hundreds and hundreds of years ago. They're not looking to Bethlehem for one to be born now. They've forgotten. They don't know what these things mean anymore. They don't know what Micah means when it reads of what's going to come out of Bethlehem. Incredible! So Judaism has lost the meaning of these things, that a Messiah was to come out of, a ruler was to come out of Bethlehem, and they won't accept this. They sure don't want to accept this. They try to erase all knowledge. They don't teach these things. Why? They don't want people to think about this, that maybe he is, maybe he was the one, maybe he

was the Messiah. They don't look to Jesus Christ as the Messiah, obviously. Then Traditional Christianity does another twist with it.

Going on, **verse 7—Then Herod, when he had privately called the wise men, the magi, so he invited them. He wanted to have an audience with them. He diligently enquired of them about what time the star appeared.** So they're telling the story back and forth and he's visiting with them and he is not being truthful with them. He's being very deceitful with them. He has different motives for why he's doing this but he's being nice to the magi and treating them really well, and I'm sure feeding them well, and having conversation with them as he had audience with them.

It went on to say then what he did: **And he sent them to Bethlehem, and said, Go and search diligently for the young child.** So how did they know where to go? Herod told them. They were asking throughout the city, "Where is the King of the Jews? Where is the Messiah that's been born?" Herod told them and sent them on their way. Said, "Go to Bethlehem." That's where you're to go. That's where he is because he'd already found from the scribes and the Pharisees where he was to be born, and so he was going to send them along the way. He went on to say here, **Go and search diligently for the young child. And when you have found him, bring me word again, come back and let me know that you have found him, that I may come and worship him also.** Lying low life! You think about somebody like this! Lying! He had no intentions of going back there and worshipping him. Not at all, but he's telling the magi because he wants to be on their good side, and he wants to be sure they'll come back. So he says, "I want to go and worship him too. He is the King. I want to go worship the King." I mean, there's no thought of him being truthful about this. But, anyway, you kind of have to laugh.

Verse 9—When they had heard the king, they departed; and, behold, the star, which they saw in the east, went before them. So from that point forward now they once again saw this star. So people say, "Oh, see! Now it's on the top of Bethlehem showing the way. It's this light shining right here." I think, who in their right mind can think that this is something up in the atmosphere, but people do. I guess they think that's the miraculous part of it, that there's this beam of huge light coming down—they don't know how far away it is—but anyway, coming down and it's shining right on top of a manger in Bethlehem. It didn't happen that way.

So it says here, again, **this star, which they saw in the east went before them,** and the word mean "to lead them forth," **until they came and stood over where the child was.** Interesting story. Again here, various words in the Bible are used in a manner that allows for others to stumble at what's actually being said. I think of the story, the stories of Jesus Christ, the parables. Even people in Traditional Christianity don't understand that a lot of what he had to say written in parables was for a purpose so that people can't understand, so that everyone couldn't understand. There's only one time in life where you really begin to truly understand what those parables mean in totality, and God has to give it to people to be able to see and to perceive and be able to understand what they truly mean as far as what His entire plan and purpose is and

what God is doing, because the world doesn't know. Again, he spoke in parables. Some things are written so that people can stumble, for purpose, for reasons, to allow for certain things to come about, that people will believe what they want to believe in what is written because human nature tends to twist and distort.

We see that today. People will believe anything they want to believe. Almost any subject that's out there today, I don't care what it is; you can look at the medical profession. Almost any subject that's out there you can read two sides of a story depending on who wrote it. You know what? People will choose which side they want to believe. Something can be written about different leaders in the world, and so forth, and people out here are writing two sides of the story - some for and some against. We get that a lot in the States. People will write two sides of a story. You know what the bottom line is? People will believe what they want to believe anyway. It's just human nature. They will choose to believe, and they will go to the sources that they want to believe anyway, because there's a certain way people think.

It is in the Bible as well. There's a way that people choose to think and they don't want to change. This happens a great deal even with stories like this, but God allowed some of that to take place for a purpose and for a reason - so there could be confusion. Because people are going to believe what they want to anyway, so let them twist and distort certain things. Paul talks about that as well in scripture. There are things that people choose to read. Peter talks about it.

Anyway, it's kind of like the word "mountains" in scripture. It's used a lot of times in prophecies. The word "mountains," there are people who understand it's talking about great nations, great kingdoms, and "hills," smaller nations. So there's certain words in the Bible that God sometimes uses, things about water, things about oceans, things all through the Bible. Trees. There are all kinds of things, that if you don't know what God is telling and His purpose in the entire story then people will read into that.

So it is in this case here. It's like the word "star." There's one spot in the Bible where it explains what this star truly was, and its **Revelation 1:20**. I'll just read it to you. **The mystery of the seven stars...** So it's going through here explaining certain things at the beginning of a foretelling, in essence, of what was going to happen to Churches, to God's Church through time. It was getting ready to go through all of that and it's going through and giving a story flow here and it comes to a point in time where it says here, **the mystery of the seven stars, which you saw in my right hand, and the seven golden candlesticks; the seven stars are the angels of the seven Churches.** So those who come to understand God, come to understand things that God is saying, God reveals His meaning and His purpose of things that are being spoken. It goes on to say then, **and the seven candlesticks which you saw are the seven Churches.** Again here, if a person doesn't know what these things are and they read a story, just like those here that are in Traditional Christianity, they go through and read a story here about the magi and they saw a star in the east and information was given to them about a child. Who gave this to them? It was an angel. It was an angel and the angel told them about some of these things and gave them

understanding of things that they had already been educated in, things that they had learned through time. An angel came along and put this together for them and said, "Look, this King of the Jews has been born." So they went looking, searching for him. We don't know how much the angel told them, but that was their first meeting and now the angel is now leading them along the way and showing them where indeed Jesus Christ was born, where he is, or where he was at that moment in time.

So the story continues. **Verse 9—And when they had heard the king they departed; and, behold, the star, again, which they saw in the east, went before them, and led them forth to where the young child was.** Another thing, amazing, an interesting word that's being used here. "And it came and stood over where the young child was." It doesn't say a baby. There is a word in the Greek language for baby, but it's making a distinction here and talking about a young child. Now, a baby can be a young child too, but there are reasons why it's using these words.

And where was the child? Going on... **and when they saw the star, they rejoiced with exceeding great joy. And when they had come into the house, they saw the young child,** and yet it's perpetuated by Traditional Christianity that they came to a manger, and here they are, they're offering gifts to a baby. That's not what happened at all. He was already a young child and he was already in a house at this point in time. He wasn't in a manger. Some time had passed. So it talks about coming into the house where he was, not into a barn type of atmosphere where there were mangers and where animals were being fed at all.

So it says, **And they saw the young child with Mary his mother, and fell down, and worshipped him. And when they had opened their treasures, they presented him with gifts; gold, frankincense, and myrrh,** very expensive what they brought. Obviously, we understand the gold, but the rest is expensive as well. So because there are three kinds of gifts the story is perpetuated that there were three wise men. So that's the idea that people get in their mind and they have these nice feel good type of stories that they read about Jesus Christ when he was a baby and they don't understand at all what was taking place.

I think of the example here of some of these gifts. Gold, traditionally, it was something that people brought to give to a king. There are reasons why these gifts were given, and three types of gifts. Again here, the tradition was if you come before a king you are to give gold. If we understand the rest of the story here about the incense and we understand what incense is about, what it means, that of some of that that was, again, was given here in this particular case here when you talk about frankincense and having to do with prayer and a relationship with God. So again, these things are a matter of fulfilling understanding of the importance of who he was - from God. Then myrrh had great meaning as a type of perfume that was mixed with aloe and oftentimes used as it talks about in **John 19:39** where it talks about Nicodemus. You don't have to turn there; I'll just read it to you. It says, **Who came to Jesus by night and brought a mixture of myrrh and aloes of about a hundred pounds.** Incredible what he brought, when you think about that, a huge amount, costly, exceedingly costly of what Nicodemus brought at that particular

time. But again, myrrh. So again, foretelling, in a sense, picturing something that was to happen in his life. Not that they understood and knew those things, but that's what they were moved and motivated and inspired to give, with great meaning.

Going on in **Matthew 2:12**—**And being warned of God in a dream that they should not return to Herod, they departed into their own country by another way.** So whatever country to the east of there that they came from, again, they took a different route back and not going by Jerusalem, because they were warned not to go back before Herod.

And when they had departed, behold, the angel of the LORD appeared to Joseph in a dream, saying, Arise, and take the young child and his mother, and flee into Egypt, and stay there until I bring you word. For Herod will seek the young child to destroy him. Awesome, the story flow here, of things that took place. So it talks about, **He arose, he took the young child and his mother by night, and departed into Egypt.** They didn't stay there at all. They took off immediately. So here the magi had come, they gave the gifts, they took off a different way right away, and immediately an angel gave to Joseph this command, in essence, of what to do and told him to flee down into Egypt. So that's what he did. It says, **He remained there until the death of Herod, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of by the LORD by the prophet, saying, Out of Egypt have I called My Son.** Awesome things that are fulfilled over and over again in Christ's life here, just one testimony, one witness after another, one thing that followed another all the way through the story.

Then it goes on to say, **Then Herod, when he saw that he had been mocked by the wise men, was exceeding angry,** because they didn't come back. He was waiting for them to come back because he wanted to do something. He wanted to go down and kill this king. That was his motive for finding out where he was. So when he realized, **he was mocked by these wise men,** they didn't come back, and it says, **he was exceedingly angry, and sent forth, and slew all the children that were in Bethlehem, and in all the coasts thereof, from two years old and under.** The reason being is because he didn't know the exact time but he wanted to make sure. That's why he talked to them about when they first heard this because it took them time before they gathered together to have their journey to come to Jerusalem. That's why he invited them in then, to enquire of them, "When did you first see the star; that you were to come here?" And so Herod wanted to make certain that he had a full time span here to make certain that he was able to get him put to death. That was his motive. How this escapes people is hard to imagine sometimes, but it does, and people don't know the story.

So, **two years and under according to the time,** it even says it here, **according to the time which he had diligently enquired of the wise men.** Now, if they had told him, "Well, this just happened last week," you know, or, "It just happened in the last few days and we travel fast coming over here," then they would have had to travel very fast. You've got to think about this; here he is in the manger still, supposedly. How long is he going to be in this manger after he's born? So they're going to have to make a pretty fast trip. The whole point was it wasn't a fast trip.

It took some time. That's why he enquired of them diligently to find out the timing of the time when they saw the star to the time they came to Jerusalem. That's why he went to two years and under. He wanted to make certain of that period of time. It probably was in the middle, knowing the minds of human beings, to make sure he was able to kill him. He was angry anyway and it says he just went out to kill all of them, to make sure, just kill everyone two years and younger. Incredible story. Incredible that human beings can be that way, have that kind of mind to do something like that. But he did.

And so it goes on here and talking about the story here of what had taken place here in **verse 17**—**Then was fulfilled that which was spoken by Jeremiah the prophet, saying, In Rama there was a voice heard, lamentation, and weeping, and great mourning, Rachel weeping for her children, and would not be comforted, because they are not.** In other words, they'd been killed. Again, another prophecy fulfilled that you can't even know what that prophecy is unless God shows it. He did at some point here to the disciples when they wrote this story here about this. It didn't have to be right then and there that they fully understood everything, but at some point here it was revealed to them.

But when Herod was dead, behold, an angel of the LORD appeared in a dream to Joseph in Egypt, saying, Arise, and take the young child and his mother, and go into the land of Israel. For they are dead who did seek the young child's life. Again here, he had died and so it was told to him now to bring Christ back, bring Jesus back.

Verse 21—And he arose and took the young child and his mother and came into the land of Israel. But when he heard that Archelaus did reign in Judea in the room of his father Herod... So again, he still didn't want to come into that area there because here was his son ruling and reigning. ...**he was afraid to go there, and therefore, being warned of God in a dream, he turned aside into the parts of Galilee. And he went and dwelt in a city called Nazareth, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophets, he shall be called a Nazarene.** Some people get this fouled up because they think it's talking about a Nazirite. It's not. It's talking about a region here and what people were called in a particular area they were from. It says here "that he might be called a Nazarene," because of where he lived.

Luke 2. Let's pick up some of this in Luke 2. Luke 2, another story here that's twisted and misunderstood by those of Traditional Christianity. **Luke 2:1—And it came to pass in those days, that there went out a decree from Caesar Augustus, that all the world should be taxed. (And this taxing was first made when Cyrenius was governor of Syria.) And all went to be taxed, every one into his own city. And Joseph also went up into Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into Judea, unto the city of David, which is called Bethlehem, so as it says here (because he was of the house of the lineage of David).** So he went back to this area. So they had to go back to their areas where the lineage is to do their taxation, for their accountability. And it goes on to say here, **to be taxed with Mary his espoused wife, being pregnant with child.** So again here, we're jumping into this story here about things that were taking place and why

they went there in the first place, into this particular area. They were going down there for the purpose of taxation, and here Mary is far along, obviously, already. They're still not married. It says "espoused wife"; she's pregnant with child.

And so it was, that, while they were there, the days were accomplished that she should be delivered. So right up to the point of delivery here that's the reason they went down into that particular area in the first place. **And she delivered her firstborn son and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn.** So this is what happened earlier. This is when he was in a manger, but this isn't the period of time that these wise men or magi came to him. That happened much, much later - a year or so later.

It states in John 2:12, it says as well here and it mentions here this is her firstborn son. There is a particular religion that some don't like the idea of the thought that Mary had other children. She did. She had other children. They don't like the thought, the idea (it kind of goes against their beliefs), that Jesus had brothers, but he did. I think of the scripture in **John 2:12** where it talks about, **That after this he, speaking of Jesus Christ, went down to Capernaum, he, and his mother, and his brothers**—and it's talking about brothers, not the disciples, because again here, it mentions that next—**and his disciples. And they continued there,** it says, **not many days.** So crazy things that happen out here because people have different beliefs and they want to believe. There's an idea of Mary being a virgin and she was to be a virgin all of her life. That's basically the way that some look upon her. So this is a toughie for some people.

Luke 2:8—And in the same country there were shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. And, behold, the angel of the LORD came upon them, and the glory of the LORD shined round about them. And they were very afraid. You know, another part of the story here. There are shepherds out by night. Amazing how people don't even think about history or think about timing. They don't think about agriculture, the things in scripture that are messed up because of agriculture that even people in the Church have been confused about in times past, because of what was happening around certain areas of time of harvest when they came, the children of Israel came into the promised land. It's very specific about that timing and yet people get confused about what was actually taking place, and then this story here about shepherds out at night time, talking about changing in weather and so forth, and as the story is they didn't do that in late December. There is a time when you take animals out and graze them and so forth, and shepherds stay with them, and there's a time you don't do it, you bring them in and care for them, for that which you have saved up.

Verse 9—And, behold, the angel of the LORD came unto them and the glory of the Eternal shined right about them, again, and they were very afraid. And the angel said to them, Do not fear: Behold, I bring you good news of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, so again, talking about Bethlehem, and again, things that are written in prophecies and so forth. It says, who is Christ (the Messiah) the Lord. And this shall be a sign unto you: You shall find the baby wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a
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manger. So that part of the story is true. This is where they were. There wasn't room in the inn. They couldn't stay there when they came down to pay their taxes. Here it was it was time for Mary to give birth, but they still made the journey all the way down there even though she was as far along as she was, and when she got to this point then it was time and she had to deliver. Since they were there they wrapped him up in clothes, blankets type of environment and put him in a soft area, a soft area of a manger where there was hay.

And suddenly, again, it says, there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying, Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, as the correct translation is, peace to men of good will. And it came to pass, as the angels had gone away from them into heaven, the shepherds said one to another, Let us now go to Bethlehem and see this thing which has come to pass, which the LORD has made known to us. And they went quickly and found Mary, and Joseph, and the baby lying in a manger, in a feeding stall. That's what it was. And when they had seen it, they made known abroad the saying which had been told to them concerning this child. Can you imagine experiencing something like that? Here they're shepherds and they're out watching sheep at night and they're told about this and so they come in and they see the baby and this host and the things that were being said that they experienced. So naturally they're going to start telling others. There were probably different reactions to that from people.

But it says, **And all they who heard it wondered at those things which they had been told by the shepherds.** They kept it in their mind, wondered about what has been told to them. **But Mary kept all these things, and pondered them in her heart.** So there are things we can't even begin to imagine, of something that you're not given everything. She's already experienced something that she knows it doesn't happen this way in life growing in her womb, and then she gives birth, and then this host and the things that they hear take place and the individuals that come in and tell what they just experienced as well and why they came there to worship him. Incredible story!

Well, now it's time to jump ahead to the latter part of Christ's life because, again, there are those things in the beginning of it. People like to have the idea of Christmas happening in the wintertime, Jesus' birth, and most scholars by this time in history, they acknowledge indeed that it was more around the period of September when he was born and that he was not born around the period of December, but people want to hold on to that. It's hard to give it up. It's hard to think otherwise, but incredible! They have no idea the history of where the mass of Christ came from. Well, they really can if they think about it and choose to go back and study a little bit of history and what "mass," where "mass" comes from. Even those in the Protestant world who don't acknowledge the Catholic Church they still accept that teaching that came from the Catholic Church that teach about a "Mass," the mass of Christ, Christ's mass.

Anyway, Luke 17. We're going to jump all the way ahead because it's time to begin focussing on some of those things about Christ's life that lead up to his death and those things that he came to

do to fulfill the meaning of Passover that we've been focusing upon and begin to see what the entire purpose of all this was and how God lays it out before us. So first we simply come to some basic accounts in scripture that show Jesus beginning his final journey. As we go through this story we're going to spend a lot of time going through a lot of stories. It's really incredible when you start thinking about so much that was actually done in the final few weeks of Jesus Christ's life, so many of the things that happened to Christ, so many of the things that he taught that happened in the last few weeks of his life. I'm not going to take the time to even go through all that in this particular series. We're going to go through a lot and we're going to have several more parts to the series, but there are so many things that he began to teach along the way, and most of it that we're going to go through actually happened in the last week when he started spending a great deal of time in the temple and teaching in the temple and then at night time teaching the disciples additional things that he taught that he didn't teach in the temple, but he was teaching all day and all evening, of things that are written in scripture. There is a ton of scripture written that just happened in that particular time. So although there are some incredible stories, a few account of some things that happened up to that final 3½ years of his ministry, the vast majority of it was taking place toward the end. The most important things that were given were toward the end of his ministry.

Luke 17:11—And it came to pass, as he was going to Jerusalem, that he passed through the midst of Samaria and Galilee. So this is a beginning of a journey that's taking place. He's travelling in a particular direction here and this story gives that account. It's here where he begins to reveal at a certain point then to the disciples that they're actually going back down to Jerusalem. The disciples weren't too excited about that because of some of the things that had been taking place and knowing that there were those who had bad intents toward Jesus Christ, to the point of even desiring to kill him.

So this is a part of that story. It picks it up here then at this point. **And as he entered into the certain village, it says, there he was met by ten men who were lepers, who stood afar off. And they lifted up *their* voice, and said, Jesus, Master, have mercy on us. And when he saw *them*, he said to them, Go and show yourself unto the priests.** So this is something simple that he told them. He said, basically, "Just go and show yourself unto the priests." **And it came to pass as they went,** and so a simple charge that Jesus Christ had given to them and they were going to do it, and so they turned around and they were going to, it says, **as they went,** began to go, **they were cleansed.** Right there at that moment in time. Not later, but right then at that moment as they began to obey what he told them to do, to go to see the priests.

And one of them, when he saw that he was healed, turned back, and with a loud voice glorified God, and he fell down on *his* face at his feet, giving him thanks. And he was a Samaritan. He wasn't even of Israel. He wasn't a Jew. It says he was a Samaritan. **And Jesus answering said, Were there not ten of you cleansed? So where *are* the nine?** So here is an

account of a beginning of a lot of teaching that he gave in just the last three weeks of his life. Incredible story!

Verse 18—There are none to be found who returned to give glory to God, except for this stranger. Not even of Judah, a Samaritan from Samaria, of Samaria. **And he said to him, Arise, go your way. Your faith has made you whole.** In other words, "You believe. You looked. You obeyed and you gave thanks." Incredible. Incredible story here. An important story to always remember in life that when God intervenes and blesses us and gives us the things He does and sometimes maybe often times we don't do that as much as we should and realize how much God has blessed us with all the things He gives to us and all that we're able to understand in the mind and the clarifying of confusion, of a story that we're reading through that as a whole the world doesn't even know, the world of Traditional Christianity doesn't even know and grasp and understand. Yet we're able to see certain things and grasp certain things. Where did they come from and how thankful are we and continue to be for what God continues to give?

So, incredible lessons along the way of things that Christ was teaching here.

Then by all indications the next account is a first account when the disciples are being told then what Jesus Christ's intentions are by starting down this way through the area of Galilee and Samaria here.

So we pick it up here in **John 11:1**. It says, **Now a certain man named Lazarus was sick, and he was of Bethany, the town of Mary and her sister Martha. (And it was *that* Mary who anointed the Lord with ointment, and wiped his feet with her hair, whose brother Lazarus was sick.)** So that's something that happens later on, but it says this is that Mary. So it's just putting in parts of the story here before they actually occur. **Therefore, his sisters sent to him, sent to Jesus, saying, Lord, behold, he whom you love is sick. And when Jesus heard *that*, he said, This sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of God, that the Son of God may be glorified hereby,** so God had already given it to him. There are things that are so astounding, of how God communicated with him, worked with him, the things he knew, the things he understood, the things of a relationship there that was just always there and always automatic and him knowing exactly why this had taken place, why it was happening, and what was coming to pass. He knew full well that he was going to, Lazarus was going to die, and why he did the things he did in response. But, again, there's more to the story as we go along.

Now, Jesus loved Martha, and her sister, and Lazarus. That's why it said, "The one you love is sick." And it goes on then in **verse 6—And when he had heard, therefore, that he was sick, he continued two days longer in the same place where he was.** Now, their intent, the sister's intent was that he come right away because they had seen many things, they knew many things, and they believed who he was. They believed that he was able to heal him of this sickness that he had, because he was exceedingly sick and they were exceedingly concerned that he was going to die. Therefore, Jesus Christ responding in the way that he did because of something he knew that

he was going to accomplish a little bit later here and it wasn't a matter of something that would end in death. Death would be involved, but it wasn't going to stay that way.

So it goes on here then with the story. It says he stayed there two days longer in the same place where he was (the location where he had received word of Lazarus, in other words). Other things happened, but it does come back to Lazarus later here in the story. This is just the beginning.

Then after he had said to *his* disciples, and after this had accomplished, other things were done, he said, **Let us go up to Judea again.** And, **his disciples said unto him, Master, lately the Jews have been seeking to stone you, and are you going there again?** So they knew that it wasn't a good time, in their minds, to go down to Jerusalem, because they knew already that there were people out there who wanted to kill him, who wanted to stone him. They were just reminding him of this, as if he didn't know it. But anyway, he knew it. His disciples were very concerned about it, especially as human nature is, of being with him and what might happen to them. It's just human nature.

Some of the same story here we're going to pick it up now in Matthew 19. We're going to jump around quite a bit here because there's Matthew, Mark, and Luke who primarily go through a lot of these stories, and John tends to add even a different amount of those things that Christ taught, especially in the latter days there, but sometimes all four give an account of the same thing, sometimes it's just from the perspective of what the recollection is of Mark or Luke or whomever. So sometimes, because of that, stories can get confusing to people. That's why a lot of the chronology here is so fouled up. Even those who have tried to put a lot of this together, it's exceedingly fouled up at times and it confuses people and they think there are contradictions then in the Bible. There aren't. There are no contradictions.

Matthew 19:1—And it came to pass, *that* when Jesus had finished these sayings, he departed from Galilee and came into the coast of Judea (Judah), as it says here, beyond the other side of Jordan. So again here, following some of the river down from there and now crossing over to the other side. It says here he came to the coast of Judea. He'd been on the other side of the river and so they crossed over it.

And great multitudes followed him; and he healed them there. And the Pharisees also came unto him, testing him, and saying to him... So they were always. They were constantly trying to find out where he was, where he was going, trying to find out what he was saying, because in the previous three plus years, nearly 3½ years that he'd been in the whole region there, he stirred up so many things amongst the Jewish people. Huge numbers, by the thousands, who were following him at different times and wanting to listen to him, and different ones who travelled behind him. So the Pharisees, Sadducees, they were constantly out there trying to find out what he was saying, and going back then to Jerusalem and reporting what was taking place, and basically trying to keep track of where he was and waiting for him to come back down to Jerusalem. So this is a part of this story here.

Now he's back in the area of Judah, no longer up in the area of Galilee, no longer in the area of Samaria. **And great multitudes followed him**, so all these people following. ...**and heal them**. Then the Pharisees came along because they were also wanting to listen to what he had to say, but for a different purpose. They wanted to twist things and they wanted to test him to try to get him to say certain things that they could use to take back, and find something new that he hadn't already said before that they could go back and report about. Again, always trying to trip him up, or at least thinking that they had tripped him up.

They said, **Is it lawful for a man to put away his wife**, in other words, talking about divorce, **for every cause?**

Matthew 19:1-3, and Jesus went on then and began to give them certain guidance here, certain things that they didn't understand. They didn't grasp what he was saying to them, anyway. He went on to say here, **Have you not read, that he who made them in the beginning made them male and female, and said, For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother, and shall be joined to his wife: and the two shall be one flesh?** So he begins to teach some very basic things here about life, things about marriage, what happens in life as people get married, and how married couples are to be.

And then he goes on to say, **So they're no longer two, but one flesh**. There are things even here that are taught that are physical that are taught along a spiritual plane about a relationship with God. **And therefore, it says, What God has joined together, let no man separate**. Then it goes on to say here, **And they said to him, Why did Moses command to give a certificate of divorce?** And so all this going through here, they're trying to trip up Christ and trying to find things that they can twist and distort. This continues on and on even through this entire story here. Christ begins to teach them other things here as he goes along then because he teaches them things they don't want to hear.

As an example here it jumps on down here where this young person came to him. **And one came to him (verse 16), Good Teacher, what good thing shall I do that I may have eternal life?** So again, anything that he's telling them they don't grasp and comprehend anyway. He goes on with this story now. He says, **Why do you call me good? No one is good but one, and that is God. But if you want to enter into life, keep the Commandments**. Then he begins to explain about the Commandments and talking about the relationship—not the first four, but the relationship of human beings towards one another. **You shall not murder. You shall not commit adultery. You shall not steal. You shall not bear false witness. Honor your father and your mother. And you shall love your neighbor as yourself**. And then the young man said, **All these things I have done from my youth. What do I still lack?** And Jesus said to him, **If you want to be perfect, go and sell that you have and give to the poor, and you shall have treasure in heaven. And come and follow me**. And so when the young man heard this saying, it says, **he went away sorrowful, for he had great possession**. This is human nature, the things and the responses that come out and the things that Christ had to say. They weren't able to trip him up, yet they kept

trying. He would come back with something like this and an individual then, what do you do? How do you answer that? How do you respond to that?

Then he went on teaching other things here that, again, get so messed up in Traditional Christianity, but I'm going to jump ahead here then to chapter 20, as I mentioned, jumping on down here to chapter 20, because there are things here you can read in the story flow of things that Christ had to say.

But finally down in verse 17, because we're following the timing and a story flow here. **Verse 17**, and it says, **Matthew 20:17, And as Jesus was going up to Jerusalem he took the twelve disciples apart along the way, and said to them, Behold, we're going up to Jerusalem. So** again, he says it in different ways in Luke, and Matthew now, and he's telling them "We're going up to Jerusalem," **and the Son of man shall be betrayed unto the chief priests and unto the scribes, and they shall condemn him to death, and shall deliver him to the gentiles to mock, and to whip, and to kill him on a stake, on a pole. And on the third day he shall rise again.**

Well, we're going to stop here today because there is so much said here in this particular story, and an incredible story flow here of things that were taking place, and really, we're just kind of setting the stage for some of the series here anyway, of things that happened early in Christ's life leading up to the point in time where he's gone through so many things in his ministry. 3½ years are nearly over with; he's down now to about the last two weeks of his entire ministry. We'll come and pick up the story. We'll stop there for today.