

Now that we're past the Pentecost weekend, because with the Pentecost weekend obviously the message that we needed to preach on for those days, both the Sabbath as a whole, and on Pentecost, that Sunday, is about Pentecost or relating to Pentecost in some form or another. So that's what we did, and obviously that breaks into the current series we've been going through. So today we're going to return to that current series entitled, *The Real Truth About Christ's Death*, with this being *Part 4*.

Now, we're going to pick up just a few verses from where we left off in *Part 3*. We don't need to pick up very much, just a little bit there in the chronology of the story and get right back on track here and continue on. We're at a point now where Jesus Christ was being seized that night of the Passover, late, late, late into the night of Passover. There is a period of time they'd had their meal where they ate the lamb and so forth, and then Jesus Christ initiated a new Passover observance having to do with the washing of feet, the partaking of the bread and the wine, which has to do with symbolism about him and what he was getting ready to fulfill as our Passover. Then he went on to do a lot of teaching to the disciples, things that we normally read on Passover itself, on Passover night, that generally is in John 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, in through there, of things that Jesus Christ taught.

Then it says they departed and we've gone through some of those things where they went to a garden area. Christ began to pray. He went three different times to pray, came back each time, and said, "Could you not watch with me?" This was so late in the night. As human beings we get tired, we get sleepy, and that's what was happening to them, but he used those occasions to teach spiritual principles to the Church for later on, and used a physical analogy of something showing that we always need to be alert, on guard, awake spiritually in our lives.

Then we have the occasion now, and this is where we are, where they came to seize Christ before sunrise, late, late, late into that night, and this is part of the story. So in Mark 14, we'll pick it up there.

Mark 14. It says in **verse 43—And immediately, while he was yet speaking Judas came.** So this is right after the third time of praying, and he was talking to the disciples and told them to sleep on, and then he said, "Let us depart." So which is it? Anyway, we talked about that, but at that very point is when Judas came on the scene, Judas Iscariot. It says, **Judas came, who was of the twelve, and with him a great multitude.** So he brought a lot of people along, different soldiers and so forth. It says, **having swords and clubs, from the chief priests,** so they were charged from the chief priest to come there, **and the scribes and the elders.** So this is where they supposedly had their authority. **And he who betrayed him had given them a signal, saying, Whomever I kiss, he is the one. Take him and lead him away safely.**

So again, those who came to get Jesus Christ, basically were of the Jews but were still working closely with the Romans, different ones who had positions of responsibility and authority even within the Roman government, and used the authority, supposedly, then of the high priest, the chief priests, and they came and seized Jesus Christ, but Judas said, "Lead him away safely." He is betraying him. It's kind of a contradiction of terms here because they knew several weeks in advance that if he went to Jerusalem the likelihood of him being stoned, put to death by being stoned was very high, obviously. So Judas knew better, but another story.

Verse 45—And as soon as he had come he went right to him and said, Master, Master! and kissed him, a kiss of betrayal. Incredible!

Verse 46—And they laid their hands on him and took him. And one of them who stood by drew a sword. We know, as we read about that, it was Peter. ...and struck a servant of the high priest and he cut off his ear. So he was ready to battle. He was ready to fight and to prevent them from taking Christ. We know the story about what Christ said.

And Jesus answered and said unto them (verse 48), to those who were coming to get him, Have you come out as against a thief, with swords and clubs to take me? You know, this was late, late, late into the night. He's showing what they were like. He's showing the kind of people they were by the words that he had to speak here: their attitude, their spirit, and revealing those things by what he had to say. He said, **I was with you daily in the temple teaching, and you didn't take me. But so the scripture must be fulfilled. They all forsook him and fled.** Now, see, if they'd taken him in at the temple, what he's saying here, the reaction, the response would have been different, but instead they did it at night and with great force, if you will, with a multitude, it says, that came along with him, or with Judas.

So they came and took him at that point in time, and he's saying here so the scriptures could be fulfilled this is what's going to happen; the response from the disciples at this point in time is going to be they're going to flee. So this is a scripture being fulfilled. He's basically saying if the thing had have happened in the temple it wouldn't have been the same. Think about that, how human beings might react and respond under different conditions when no one else is around and you are highly outnumbered with a strong force that comes to do what they were going to do. So he said that they all forsook him and fled.

And there followed him a certain young man, having a linen cloth wrapped about his naked body; and the young men, it says, laid hold on him. So he left with the linen cloth, left it there on the ground and fled from them naked. And they led Jesus away to the high priest; and with him were assembled all the chief priests and the elders and scribes.

So this is where we left off in *Part 3* and we're going to continue right on, but we're going to pick up the story now in John 18. So all four accounts here, Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, they record different things. They were a witness of all these events, but they record them sometimes

totally differently, in the sense of their perspective of what they saw, of what they heard from their vantage point. They might cover a certain section of a period of time, if you will, where another one doesn't and jumps forward to another. So it becomes a little confusing sometimes to people when they try to put all four accounts together.

But in **John 18:12** in the chronology here, **Then the man (verse 12), and the captain and officers of the Jews took Jesus and bound him and led him away to Annas first, for he was the father-in-law to Caiaphas.** So here Caiaphas married Annas' daughter, and so that's what it's referring to here, this relationship, both in their time period, high priests. But the Jews recognized one until death, so the father-in-law obviously was recognized by the Jews as being in that particular office even though Caiaphas was going to succeed him and be the one to carry on. So they were jointly working together oftentimes here toward the end. It wasn't much longer after this that the father-in-law did die.

So it goes on to say, **they led them away to Annas first, who was the high priest that same year. Now, Caiaphas was he which gave counsel to the Jews that it was expedient that one man should die for the people. The high priest then asked Jesus of his disciples and of his doctrine,** so as he was quizzing him. Can you imagine? We can't. Them being in that situation, what are they trying to do? They want to know who those disciples are. Where are they? Who are they? They want to lay hands on them too. They want to stop this. They want to stop this threat to them as far as what was happening in the nation. So their full intent is they're going to make certain of who all these individuals are and they're going to go after them. They didn't stop after Christ died and was resurrected. They did continue on. They tried in every facet, every means possible to kill the apostles, the disciples of Christ, and even Paul later on.

So it says, **The high priest then asked Jesus of his disciples and of his doctrine. And Jesus answered him, I spoke openly to the world,** in other words, to all who could hear. It doesn't mean he went out in the world and spoke to the whole world, but he's just saying everything was out in the open for all to hear. **I continually taught in the synagogue.** That was his custom. Whenever he was in Jerusalem he would go to the synagogue and he would teach there. **...and in the temple, where the Jews always reside.** There are always Jews there. "There are always those of you who are there." **...and in secret I have said nothing.** So he's showing their incredible hypocrisy and the hypocrisy of what was taking place. He's bringing it out in the open. **Why do you ask me? Ask them who heard me what I have said unto them. Behold, they know what I said. And when he had spoken this, one of the officers who stood by struck Jesus with the palm of his hand, saying, Do you answer the high priest in this manner?** He was very indignant. "You're going to talk to the high priest like this? Who do you think you are?" Incredible. They had no idea who he was and they certainly weren't going to acknowledge in any fashion or form, or believe in any way, that he was the Christ, the Messiah, as others did.

Verse 23—And Jesus answered him, If I have spoken, as it says in some translations "evil" but it means "wrongly," **If I have spoken in any wrong way... If I have said something that's wrong,** in

essence, **bear witness of the wrong.** "Tell me what it is. Have some come forward and say what it is that was stated. Tell me what's been stated that's wrong." ...**but if well**, in other words, if correctly, if it's correct, **if it's true then why are you striking me?** So he didn't pull any punches; he told it like it was.

Matthew 26:57, we'll jump over there. Matthew 26, continue on with the story in Matthew and some of his account. We'll be jumping around at different times.

Matthew 26:57, just bringing in another vantage point here of how Matthew is recording this. **And they who had laid hold on Jesus led him away to Caiaphas the high priest, where the scribes and the elders were assembled.** Now, it's not even daylight yet. They were plotting this. They were planning this. They wanted to put Christ to death. That was their whole motive! So they were waiting because they knew Judas was going to betray Christ and lead a group of people up there to take him and bring him back, so they were all waiting around. This wasn't a normal thing on Passover that was taking place on Passover night. So here well before the sun was up they were already waiting. They might have been up all night, we don't know, just waiting. They were waiting for their chance to hear what they could hear and have a part in this to rail against him. Amazing attitude!

John 18:24— Then Annas had sent him bound to Caiaphas the high priest. Again, just bringing in a different way that they state some of these things. So they bring in both individuals. Again, when people read this about both of them being high priest, they think, how could they both be high priest? They don't understand some of the history involved here in what was taking place and who was related to whom, if related at all.

Matthew 26, continuing on, **verse 59—Now the chief priests and elders, and all the council sought false witness against Jesus.** This is already in motion. This is something that had been ongoing. So this is what they were wanting in order to **put him to death.** This isn't just a moment, a thing that happened just then. This is something they'd been doing and that led up to this moment. They had people gathered together for that very purpose, to bring them in, to bring them along, to have their say and so they could get a response from Christ so that they could find some grounds in their minds, in their distorted, perverted minds to kill him, to have him put to death. So it says, **they sought false witness against Jesus to put him to death.** So they had a motive. They had a direction they were heading and they were bent on accomplishing it. ...**but they found none**, it says. **Yes, though many false witnesses came.** So they still found that they did not have something that they felt that they could use that Christ would respond to in any fashion or form, or that they could ask Christ about or accuse him of, and they could tell that there were certain things in what people said that didn't agree because there were plenty of people who were willing to come forward - sometimes for money, whatever it might be, favor, you know "If I have favor from them I'll tell them what they want to hear." It's amazing what human beings will do, you know, to be swayed in order to be liked by others and the sides that people take.

Just like today, we see a world that's so crazy in that area. People are willing to jump in, take a side, say something, do something just to be liked by a particular group or to be seen by different ones, or to be recognized or have their name out there, or whatever it is. These things are in the news all the time, crazy things going on, especially between two parties here in this country. Crazy things are going on in the news of how people think. You can see their motives; it's very clear on both sides. No one is fully true and balanced in any fashion or form. Some are just outright corrupt and liars to the core and we have to be careful as God's people that we don't take sides in a lot of those things. Be careful! It's not a matter of sides. You're not going to get truth out there, out of this world. Both are wrong. Both lie. Both have problems. But there are things taking place in this world that God has put in motion - God has put in motion - to bring certain things to the surface for a purpose and for great reason and one day you're going to look back and understand that in a far greater way.

So it says here, **they found none**. And it says, finally, **And at last two witnesses came and said, This man said, I am able to destroy the temple of God and to build it in three days**. Liar. Liar. Liar. Liar. You know, you think, he didn't say anything like that! It's amazing how people can twist just a little bit because they're headed in a certain direction. They want to push something in a certain way and so they have a certain amount of truth that's there, but not the truth and that becomes a great lie because something isn't absolutely true from beginning to end, in order to sway in a different direction, just a little twist here and there. I think of things that have happened in God's Church through time, and especially toward the end-time, of individuals who would teach things and tell things and be true in 95% of what they said, but it's that last conclusion and 5% that got so many people and led them in different directions in a wrong way, away from the Church, away from God. Human beings can be very cunning. We should understand that because there is a being who is incredibly cunning, far more than any human being, and he knows how human beings function and how they operate in their life, how they reason and the things that move and motivate them in their thinking. So he sways many people in many wrong directions.

But it says he spoke of the temple and he will raise it in three days. I'm going to read to you John 2. Now, this goes way back because this happened a long time beforehand, but we're going to go back now and see what he did say. We, as a whole, know what he said, but many people who are new don't know what he said and when he said it. So this is going back toward the beginning of Christ's ministry, things that took place that oftentimes people don't realize, don't know. Here is a true account of this.

John 2, and we'll come back here to Matthew 26 momentarily. So this, again, this false witness came forward and said, "I am able to destroy the temple of God." He said that's what Christ said. Here is the true account in **John 2:18—And the Jews answered and said to him, What sign, always looking for a sign, What sign will you show to us, seeing that you do these things?** So they had seen different things and they'd heard different things from Christ. They'd heard of

different miracles, things that had taken place in his ministry, and they, some of them had witnessed various things that Christ had done. That wasn't enough though because human beings can always come up with some reason: "Well, maybe that isn't really the way it happened," maybe certain healings that took place, you know, thinking physically. So we want a sign. We want something that is so strong and such a sign that proves that you are the Messiah. That's what they wanted. That's what they wanted to hear. That's what they wanted to see, so that would close any doubt whatsoever that anyone might ever have.

What sign will you show us, seeing that you do these things? This was taking place, if you go back and read some of the account here, after he ran many out of the temple. Christ didn't do this just one time. He did this early on in his ministry as well. He ran different ones out of the temple, threw over the table of the money changers, and said some of the same things that he said just a couple of weeks before Passover, this final Passover. So this was very early on that this account took place. So it's telling here about this that was taking place. He told them, "You have made my Father's house a house of merchandise." So it wasn't the first time that this took place. And then, of course, the people talk about that and word spreads and Christ came back again and it didn't deter them because the Pharisees and Sadducees weren't enforcing things around the temple like they should have been, so they just eventually came on back because that's what they were doing. It was a way of making easy money as far as they were concerned and so they did things that they weren't supposed to do, selling around the temple like they did.

Jesus answered and said unto them, so this is the response after this comment: **Destroy this temple...** So how do human beings think? They look at the physical temple. They have no idea what he's talking about. It's easy for them to misuse this then. **Destroy this temple and in three days I will raise it up.** He didn't say, "I am going to destroy this temple," like the false witness said. He said, "Destroy this temple and in three days I'll raise it up." People are going to think, "You've got to be nuttier than a fruitcake." "You've got to be nuts." **Then the Jews said, For forty-six years this temple was being built.** "Look at all those people that were involved and it took them forty-six years! You're nuts!" That was their attitude. "You're crazy!" **...forty-six years this temple was being built, and will you raise it up in three days?** Now, he didn't always give them answers to things. He didn't go and explain all the things that were taking place. He told his disciples and taught his disciples as time went along and many of the things that he taught them they didn't really understand and know until after he'd been resurrected, until after the day of Pentecost in 31 A.D. when God gave them the holy spirit and began to help them to see things that they otherwise couldn't see, because they're like all human beings as a whole to that point in time, bound by physical senses, physical thinking. God has to give His spirit to help to understand those things that are on a spiritual plane. So he drew them and brought them along and they received certain things from Christ, but not anything, by any means, jelled for them on a spiritual plane, not at all.

That's why when the world, the Protestant world, goes through and bothers reading the Bible and reads certain things in scripture it doesn't jell for them. They can't see everything that's there that's so clear and so plain. They're in blindness because they're held by the physical senses. Without God's spirit there are things they can't "see," yet people think they have it, but if they did, then they would "see" clearly, exactly what Jesus Christ was saying and exactly what we're going through in this particular series.

The Jews said, For forty-six years we've been building this temple, and you're going to raise it up in three days? But he spoke of the temple of his body. It was about him. It was about his death and about a resurrection. And when he was, therefore, risen from the dead, notice, his disciples remembered that he had said this to them. "Ah, now I understand," and they believed the scriptures and the word which Jesus had said.

Now we have the Protestant world and the Catholic Church and they do not believe Jesus Christ. Awesome! The disciples believed. What did they believe? Exactly what Jesus Christ said: "Destroy this temple and in three days I'll raise it up," but they believe something else. They don't even believe the words of Christ like the disciples did at all. They believe that he died late on Friday and was resurrected right at sunrise on Sunday morning. Basically, that's what they believe. That's not three days, not three days at all. They don't believe at all what Jesus Christ had to say. I marvel at this! I truly do... and I don't, if you understand. But it shows the incredible hypocrisy in human beings and what people are willing to do because it doesn't take a whole lot on a physical plane even to go through this exercise and you either believe Jesus Christ or you don't.

People like to talk a lot about him, "Have you received Jesus? Have you accepted Jesus?" Sometimes they won't have anything to do with you at all unless you say, "Yes." Anyway, I don't want to go into that, but it's this sanctimonious type of thing. It's hard to even describe how fake, how sick that is. They talk in these various terms without meaning, without purpose, without meaning at all. They'd rather do that than believe what he said. Awesome! Yet the disciples believed him and they believed the scripture. See, it's in the scriptures. People out here, "Do you believe?" "Oh, I believe! I believe what it says in here." No, you don't. You're a liar.

You can't tell people that. It's not the way to win friends and influence people. We're not trying to win friends and influence people in the world, obviously, and God gives us a charge to stand up, to live by what we believe. You're never going to convince anyone else so there's no purpose, as a whole, in getting into the conversation anyway, and plenty has gone out into the world and it shows what that witness is, that people will not receive it, they'll not accept it. Just like for us, there is not any purpose as a whole for any of us saying anything until it's really clear that they're ready to listen, when they come to that point that they have the ability to begin to listen. Until then you might as well be talking to a brick wall because you can't get through.

When he was, therefore, risen from the dead, his disciples remembered that he had said this to them; and they believed the scripture and the word which Jesus had said. So most people think that they believe that word that Jesus said, and yet they don't. Not at all. Not even close.

Now returning to Matthew 26, Matthew 26:62. I think of how shocked so many people are going to be when so many begin to "see" all at once, when their minds are opened up to a reality that no, he didn't die late on Friday, and no, he wasn't resurrected Sunday morning around sunset. Not even close! Not even close! Incredible! Not. Even. Close. Because they don't understand the scriptures. They don't understand the story. They don't understand the timing of the things we've been covering in this particular series that begins with Passover, the Passover day.

Matthew 26:62—And the high priest rose up and said to him, Do you answer nothing? "Aren't you going to say anything?" They were trying to get something out of him, egg him on, you know, get some kind of a response. **What is it which they have witnessed against you? But Jesus held his peace,** or his place, if you will, what he was doing, and it was basically not to answer anything. So he held his peace; he didn't say anything. So he wasn't going to answer them, "What is this they have witnessed against you?" He isn't going to give a response at all.

And the high priest answered and said unto him, I charge you... Can you imagine? Here is the high priest so filled with haughtiness and pride, so high above the Messiah! He had no idea. He was so repulsive in his mind, so different in his mind than how he believed it should come about, a Messiah, that he fully rejected Jesus Christ as being this person in any fashion or form. Because what would they believe? "Well, it has to come from among us. Has to be someone we know and someone we like and someone that it's obvious." God doesn't work that way as a whole, and He wasn't working that way here. So they had great distain for Christ. You have to, to want to kill somebody. You have to, to so hate someone that you want to see them dead because he's such a threat, because of what he's doing out here and what he's saying out here that was so different from what they were doing and what they were saying. It was a threat to them because people were hearing and going in that direction. Ah, they wanted to put him to death all right. So this is just an incredibly haughty spirit from the high priest.

And so he said to him, **I charge you by the Living God,** as though he had the authority from the Living God to charge Christ with anything. Isn't that amazing? It shows you the absolute blindness. There are no words to describe this, how far out he was, eaten up with pride and haughtiness of his position, of who he thought he was - the high priest. **I charge you by the Living God that you tell us whether you are the Messiah!** That's what he said. He didn't use the word "Christ." That came along a lot later. It means the same thing. "Are you the Messiah?" because this is what the people were saying. "He's coming into Jerusalem. He's the son of David. He's of the lineage of David and he is the Messiah and he's going to take us from out of this Roman rule that's over us. He's going to raise up the Kingdom of God on earth!" Amazing! And so they knew this was what was being said.

So this gets to the crux of the matter and he wanted an answer from him. **Are you the Messiah?** "Tell us! I charge you to tell us!" He didn't stop there. **Are you the Messiah, the Son of God!** Awesome! Because all this was going around with the people. **Jesus said unto him, You have stated this. Nevertheless, I say unto you,** in other words, "You've stated this." It's just a type of response, "This is something you've stated," and not really giving him satisfaction, but then he goes on and pretty strong. He said, **Nevertheless, I say unto you, after this you shall see the Son of Man sitting on the right hand of Power, and coming in the clouds of heaven.** Whew! That didn't go over well. He knew exactly what he was saying. It didn't go over the high priest's head what Jesus Christ was saying, but he didn't answer him directly about being the Messiah. He didn't give him that satisfaction, though he was.

Then the high priest rent his clothes, tore them as their custom was, ripped them, **saying, He has spoken blasphemy!** "Do you hear this? Have you all heard this?" So he's ripping his clothes because that was their custom to do, and this was so hideous in his mind and he's telling everyone else, "Look how sick this man is, of who he says he is!" **He has spoken blasphemy! What further need have we of any witness?** We don't need to bring anyone else in. He said it himself now. **Behold, now you have heard his blasphemy! What do you think? They answered and said, He is guilty of death.** Well, they had their minds made up long before they ever brought Christ before them. They were just looking for something to say, "See! Oh, yep, now we've got it! He's guilty of death!" So they got what they wanted. **Then they spit in his face and beat on him; and others struck him with the palms of their hands, saying, Prophecy unto us, you Messiah! Who is it who struck you?** Isn't that amazing? You think of such attitudes, and having no idea that indeed they were beating on and striking their Passover that one day they're either going to come to acknowledge in a resurrection or not, and there will be some who can't. Amazing what human beings are like. **Saying, Prophecy unto us, you Christ (you Messiah)! Who is it who struck you?**

Let's take some time now and go back here and look at Luke's account of some of this. **Luke 22.** It just makes the statement here, **verse 63,** that the men who held Jesus mocked him and struck him. We're seeing some of the same story flow here.

Then in **verse 66**—So this had been going on for a while before it was ever daybreak. They had him in there. They'd been gathered together. They brought in the false witnesses. They went through this questioning and so forth during this period of time. Then Luke begins to tell the story: **As soon as it was day,** in other words the sun was rising on the day, on the daytime portion of the Passover, because all these things we've been going through there's so much that happened on that Passover starting with the night, which is when a day begins, and then going on here finally until it was morning. So, **As soon as it was day, the elders of the people, and the chief priests and the scribes came together and led him into their council, saying,** so again, some of the same story here. This is already going on. **...And tell us, Are you the Christ?** So he's jumping right up to this point. So this gives us a good timeline of what was taking place.

And he said unto them, If I tell you, you will not believe. So all this was happening at this point. They brought him in, they were questioning, they brought false witnesses in. It wasn't daylight yet; it was still dark. We are at the point where the sun is just at the point of rising, and this is the point where they ask him the specific question that we just read about back here in Matthew 26. He says, **If I tell you, you will not believe.** Now, this is not recorded back in what it says in Matthew that way, but it is here by Luke. Again, something else that Christ said that one records and another doesn't say in the same way.

Again here, this is added to the story. **If I tell you, you will not believe. And if I also ask you, you'll not answer me nor let me go.** In other words, "Your mind is made up. If I ask you questions you're not going to answer me, and you're not going to let me go. Your mind is made up." Basically, that's what he was telling them, "Your mind's already been made up." Then this is when he said this, **Hereafter shall the Son of Man sit on the right hand of the power of God.** Again, this same account, but again, from a bit of a different vantage point, hearing certain things that stuck in his mind that he recorded that the other didn't record.

Then they all said, Are you the Son of God? And he said unto them, You've said that I am, or really what he was saying here in the Greek language was straightforward. He says, "I am what you have stated." That's how he said it basically. **And they said, What need do we have of further witness? For we ourselves have heard this from out of his own mouth.** So again, a little bit stronger in what was said. He didn't answer them. He didn't say he was the Messiah, but he said who he was in that respect, where he was from.

Now, let's go back over here again. That was part of Luke. Because they said, "What do we have need of any more witnesses?" Again, "He's basically convicted himself out of his own mouth," and this is when they went on their little tirade and began to beat on him and so forth.

John 18. This account tends to be a little bit clearer in the early morning hours and what John has to record here in **John 18:28**, beginning there. **Then they led Jesus from Caiaphas unto the Hall of Judgment.** Now, they have done their part and now they're going to take him before Pilate. That's where this is. They're going to take him to the Hall of Judgment. They're going to take him before the Romans. Why? Because they're not going to be responsible for putting him to death the way they want him to be put to death, and they're going to leave it to the Romans. The Romans have to do this. The Romans are the ones who can do this and they can't do this on the Passover.

Then they led Jesus unto Caiaphas unto the Hall of Judgment, and it was early. And they themselves would not go into the Judgment Hall lest they should be defiled, so that they might eat the Passover. Now, I'm going to be real candid with you. Some of this is a little unclear because a lot of Jewish history is very unclear, as to when certain things took place, as to when certain things happened. We know absolutely the period of time when Christ and the disciples always kept the Passover. When Jesus Christ was talking to the disciples about a time period of

going to preparing the Passover they didn't question him about the time, because they'd been with him; they knew exactly when Passover was. So whatever was taking place with them they knew exactly the timing of Passover. They always took it at sundown on the 14th. That's what they did on this last Passover. There was no questioning involved whatsoever. They knew the timing and they went and prepared it and they ate it just as they had always done, as it talks about in the story.

What isn't fully clear here is what the Jews did at this point in time and at what point they really began to cram together things about the Seder, that became known as the Seder. Again, these things you can't really prove one way or another in history, not even in Jewish history, because they're not fully open about their history anyway. So whether it's a particular term here that they couldn't do certain things on the Passover - but it mentions specifically here about eating something - but they also had the custom of having to be cleansed through the period of the Passover and even before that, but the Passover was the final period of cleansing so they could partake of the Feast day. They loosely refer to this whole period of time as Passover, the Passover time of the year.

Now, if we talk about the Passover season we know what that means. It starts with Passover and then the Passover is followed by the 1st Day of Unleavened Bread, which is a high day. So not to be confusing, because you know what, I really don't care what the Jews did. It's a matter of what does God command, what does He say it should be and how it should be, but sometimes when you read certain stories about how people did things it's a little difficult because we know they didn't obey God the way they should, they didn't keep things the way they should, and Passover is one of the first things they let go by the wayside. We do know that as a matter of history, as a matter of how they began to keep what's referred to today as the Seder. So that would start late afternoon, as they refer to it "at the going down of the sun." So they look up at noon, the going down of the sun. It takes a long time to go down on Passover day because it starts at noon for a lot of them; it starts going down. So they start going into this period of time of certain observances about Passover and preparing the meal and getting all that done during the daytime portion, and finally they're all together and they "eat the Passover," what they refer to as the Seder, on the night of the 15th. They call it Passover (or the Seder).

So again here, some of this indeed is not fully clear yet. God will make it clear in the short amount of time from now, but nevertheless, their belief was, and that's what's being stated here, they wouldn't go into the Judgment Hall. They couldn't be a part of what was going on with the Roman government. They didn't want to defile themselves and their ability to come before God, whether it was in their minds about keeping a Passover meal or whether it was in their minds about being able to keep what was referred to still as Passover in the 1st day of Unleavened Bread in the Holy Day offerings, the things that they offered up upon the altar. Because the Jews, especially those that worked in various areas, especially the Levites, there were certain things they could not do and be a part of unless clean. In order to be a part they had to be cleansed to

perform certain duties at the temple, or to partake of the sacrifices. So they did have the desire to make sure that they were not defiled. This goes back to Old Testament laws and so forth about being defiled and partaking of the high days or the entire Feast of Unleavened Bread, if you will. Passover was looked upon more as a time of continual cleansing and so forth, a final day of it before they entered into the days of Unleavened Bread.

But anyway, so they went to the Judgment hall. And **verse 29—Pilate then went out unto them**, because they wouldn't come in so he went out to them to listen to what they had to say, because in his mind, obviously, he was in an area where he knew their (in his mind) wacky religion. So he's over these people and he's working with these people and he's going to go out there to see what they're going on about this time because they really looked down upon the Jews. The Romans did for a long, long time. They eventually took a hundred thousand of them to build the Roman Coliseum, you know, some of the history of things that went on in time. They always had this loathing for the Jews anyway.

Pilate went out to them and said, What accusation do you bring against this man? "Why is he here? Why have you brought him to the Judgment Hall?" **And they answered and said unto him, If he were not a malefactor**, in other words, a criminal, a felon, a lawbreaker, **we would not have delivered him up to you.** It's like, "Well, what do you think? He's a criminal! We wouldn't have brought him here; we wouldn't have brought him to you if he wasn't a criminal?!" It was like, "What do we say?" Well, they couldn't tell him it was because he says he's the Messiah, because he says he's the Son of God, so they had to find something else, and they did as the story went along here.

Verse 31—Then Pilate said to them, You take him and judge him according to your law. He knew. There were certain things; he knew some of the stories. This wasn't a quiet thing that was going on in Jerusalem. It even brings out about Herod later on. Herod was anxious to talk to Christ, but here Pilate told them, "You judge him. He's one of yours. Judge him according to your law."

Then the Jews answered and said unto him, It's not lawful for us to put any man to death. "That's what we want to do. He's worthy of being put to death! That's why we brought him to you," ...**that the saying of Jesus might be fulfilled which he spoke, signifying what death he should die**, because the Romans had a specific way that they would put him to death. **Then Pilate entered into the Judgment Hall again and called Jesus, and said to him, Are you the King of the Jews?** This is what Messiah was all about. It was about the King who would come to set up God's Kingdom on earth. "Are you that King?" The word "Messiah" means "the one anointed." The word "Christ" means "the anointed one; the one anointed." Anointed for what? To be King in God's Kingdom.

Jesus answered him... You know, I think of the Protestant world, and they talk about Christ. Christ. Christ. Christ. And they have no idea what it means about the Messiah—same words—and

what that history is in the Old Testament about a Messiah. **And Jesus answered him, Are you saying this thing of yourself, or did others tell you this of me? Pilate answered, Am I a Jew? "This has nothing to do with me." Your own nation and the chief priests have delivered you unto me. What have you done? Jesus answered, goes on to say, My kingdom is not of this world. "It's not of this age." If my kingdom were of this world, or "this age" as the word means, then my servants would fight so that I would not be delivered to the Jews; but now my kingdom is not from hence.** In other words, the word meaning "not from this time." "My kingdom is not from this time." Yet there is a time for Christ.

When I speak of these things and go through this I can't help but think about the Protestant world and what they're missing and what they don't grasp. There are a few who will acknowledge that maybe we might be in the end-times. They have different ideas about him coming back a little ways anyway and then taking off again with a bunch with him. He's going to gather a bunch and then take off again. There are some ideas like that, but to think he's actually going to come back to this earth and be a King? It's not in their minds as a whole. It's just not there. They don't think that way. They don't understand, something so clear and so plain. So he's talking about reigning over people, reigning over human beings, not reigning over some kind of spirit beings that went to heaven a long time ago and they're still going there on a regular basis every day as they die and they go to heaven. That's not what he's talking about at all. So he said they would fight, but he said, "My kingdom is not from here," not hence, the word meaning "not from this time."

Pilate, therefore, said to him, Are you then a King? Jesus answered, You say that I am a King. He made this statement, in other words. He said, **to this end was I born.** Not just to be a Passover, but to be a King. What does that mean to the Protestant world? It blows my mind. "Are you then a King?" **Jesus answered, You say that I am a King, to this end was I born, and for this cause I came into the world...** But he was never a King when he first came, so there's a time when he will be. **...and for this cause I came into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth. Everyone that is of the truth hears my voice.** Those are powerful words: "Hears what I'm saying." To hear it isn't just the words being spoken, there's an agreement. You agree with what he's saying. You "see" what he is saying. Things are clear to you about what's being said, but not in the Protestant world. They don't believe about the three days and what Christ said about destroying this temple and three days I'll raise it up. They believe in a day and a half. That's what they believe in. They believe in a day and a half. They believe in someone who did it quicker. They did it quicker. He speeded up the process. He did it in a day and a half. It didn't take him three days like he thought he was going to take. Sick.

Verse 38—Pilate said unto him, What is truth? It's a famous thing that is quoted sometimes, and the world familiar with some of this. **What is truth? And when he had said this, he went out again unto the Jews, and said unto them, I find no fault in him.** "Death? I don't even find any fault in him! Why did you bring him to me?" That's basically his comment to them. "What are you doing? Why are you so riled up? Why are you so worked up?"

Luke 23. I think as we go through something like this it's good for us to always, always, always be reminded, when did you know these things? How long have you known these things? Now, if you grew up in the church, around the Church, you have an advantage that's unique to you because you were able to learn them when you were younger and they became a part of your thinking, and if you chose those things, which being still here, you did, then that's unique to you. But as a whole, people never learned them as they were growing up, and at some point in their lifetime all of a sudden they could begin to "see" these things. This is not small. The world doesn't see this. The Catholic Church doesn't even come close to seeing it. They pooh-pah it and think if you believe it you're part of a cult. So does the Protestant world. If you believe something like this you've got to be part of a cult because people don't believe that in the Christian church, churches. In modern day Christianity, who believes this? Nobody does. So if you do you're part of a cult. You're just weird because you've got to be pretty small because there are not very many who believe this, are there? Where there are millions who believe otherwise. There are millions and millions and hundreds of millions, hundreds of millions who believe that he was resurrected in a day and a half, which actually just disproves that he is the Christ, but they don't know that. Incredible!

How thankful are we that we "see" so clearly what is true? Because as human beings, if we're not careful, we can begin to take it for granted. Awesome! I think of people who still choose to go some other way, or choose, because of whatever pulls in this world, to give in to those and give all this up, to give up all that they know and understand, and it doesn't have a great bearing in their life and a great impact on their life. How could this not have incredible great impact in your life? Especially to know that we're ever so close to his return, to the actual fulfillment of the various things and stories we're reading about here. Those who will listen to this later on, they're only motivated because they're scared. They're scared. They're afraid.

You know, when it comes to a point in time and the semi's aren't going up and down the highway anymore with product, there are no trains carrying anything, there are no semi's going up and down, there are no airplanes flying, people are going to be afraid. No electricity. No juice. No gas. What do people do? They will experience a kind of fear they have never experienced in their lives. Incredible. It's just so their ears can be sharpened up a little bit to begin to listen, to begin to ask questions. It's too bad it has to be that way but there is just no other way for human beings to listen, and the Protestant world, they'll hold on to that day and a half until they die unless something scares the you-know-what out of them, and finally, maybe they'll begin to acknowledge, "You know, he didn't die on Friday. You're right! He wasn't resurrected Sunday morning. It's so clear!" Awesome!

But what about you? Are you ready to continue to fight and move forward? Whatever God requires in our lives, that we do it because of what we see that's so clear. Do we really grasp how blessed we are to see the things that we see? And after a time its like, "I've heard that story before." "Yeah, I remember him talking about the two trees. He doesn't seem to say anything new." I heard

a lot of people talk that way about Mr. Armstrong and things he taught. They just got tired of hearing about the two trees and they lost appreciation for everything that God did give them to know and understand, that they even knew that there were two trees there anyway. Amazing what human beings are like. Fight for this. Hold on to this because the pulls are to pull you away from it, more now, and it'll get worse. You have to fight for what you want. And so much, too, is to be thankful to God for what you grasp. When you pray, thank God for what you "see." We really need to be doing that on a regular basis. Mention some of those things sometimes, think about some of the things that you know, and some of the things you see because you're among a very few who do, you truly are, over 6,000 years. In the first 4,000 years people didn't even know about Christ. They knew about a Messiah that was going to come, but they didn't know the story of him and what he fulfilled and how he fulfilled it and the things we're going through. They didn't even have that part of the story. Amazing!

So, **Luke 23:1**, Luke's account of some of these things. It says, **And the whole multitude of them arose and led him unto Pilate.** So this, again, is very early; the sun has just come up. It's not very far into the morning hours here they're taking him to the Judgment Hall, if you will, where Pilate is. **...and they led him to Pilate. And they began to accuse him, saying, We found this man perverting (misleading) the nation.** So it's not just a few people. It's the nation! He's causing problems out here. He's misleading people, **and forbidding to give tribute to Caesar.** So now this is a part of their story that starts to enter in. It didn't happen right away, but they start to bring this into the story. **...and forbidding to give tribute, to pay taxes, to Caesar.** Now, they're lying. Again, what did Christ say? What did he teach? "Give to Caesar what is Caesar's and unto God what is God's." And that's how people are to live their lives, to be faithful in both.

So he went on to say, **forbidding to give tribute to Caesar, saying that he himself is Christ, a King, Christ—the Messiah—the King. And Pilate asked him, saying, Are you the King of the Jews?** So this did come out early, this portion here, some of these things. That's why he went back and asked him. **And he answered him and said, You have said this. Then Pilate said to the chief priests and to the people, I find no fault in this man.** So a kind of a quick story here of some of the events that took place in this portion here, whereas John went into a little more detail on parts of it. So again here, different vantage, different memory recollection of the events in that regard, in their perspective, in their mind, of things that were spoken and when they were spoken.

It says in **verse 5—And they were the more insistent, saying, He stirs up the people, teaching throughout all Jewry,** so this didn't just happen once in this conversation back and forth with Pilate and the Jews there that brought Christ. So this conversation, he's gone out back and forth more than one time here and dealing with this. So he tells them, "I find no fault with this man." **So they were more insistent saying, He stirs up the people, teaching throughout all Jewry, beginning from Galilee to this place. And when Pilate heard of Galilee, he asked whether the man were a Galilean.** So again here, at different points here of things that were stated here. You

know, if they couldn't get him the first time then Pilate comes back out and so he says, "I find no fault in him," and so they tell him more and they bring in he doesn't believe, he teaches you shouldn't give tribute to Caesar. You know, "They don't pay their taxes. He's teaching don't pay taxes. So this is an offence. He's causing big problems." It's not just a matter now the Jews and what they believe, so they begin lying about other things.

Verse 6—And as soon as he knew that he belonged to Herod's jurisdiction, that's why he asked him about if he was a Galilean, because that was under Herod. And as soon as he knew that he belonged to Herod's jurisdiction he sent him to Herod, who himself was also in Jerusalem at this time. And when Herod saw Jesus, he was exceedingly glad; he was excited. For he was desirous to see him for a long time. He wanted to have an encounter. He wanted to see the one he'd been hearing about. This is not a small thing happening throughout Judea and all the way up into Samaria and Galilee and those areas up through the north. So he'd had a desire to see him for a long time, **because he had heard many things of him, and he hoped to be able to see some miracles done by him.** So to him it was like a sideshow. "I want to see some of these things that people are saying are happening. If he's able to do certain things, I've never seen." It's like people who are magicians and those kinds of things happened back then and it's like, "Maybe I'll get to see something that I've never seen before." He was excited by this. They had a lot of different kind of weird things anyway in what they believed and superstitious things. So anyway, this was his desire, to see some kind of a miracle.

That he questioned with him in many words, but he answered him nothing. Can you imagine? Here is a leader, a ruler of Roman government over the area of Galilee and he's asking him questions and Christ isn't responding. **And the chief priests and the scribes stood by and vehemently accused him.** So they just continued on, you know, with this tirade before, around Herod. **Then Herod, with his men of war, viewed him with contempt.** He's not answering and their attitude toward him began to change. They looked down on him more and more and more, to the point that it became aggravating to them and to Herod. So it says, **they began to mock him, and arrayed him in a shining robe, if you will, and sent him again to Pilate.** "You're a King?" So they mocked him as being a king and made fun of him and so forth.

And **verse 12**, it says, **And the same day Pilate and Herod were made friends, because of this occasion. They were made friends together, for before this they were hostile toward one another.** So before this they didn't really get along all that well, which is not unusual with rulers in different areas, with squabbles over different regions and who is more powerful and who has this and who has that. So they had their little squabbles over time and their relationship wasn't good. They were hostile, but this brought them together. One showed a type of respect to the other and over this occasion of someone so well known, because Christ was.

Mark 15. All these things happening on the Passover day, or in this case here, Passover morning. It's still in the morning. **Mark 15:6—Now at the Feast**, in other words, the Feast time, it's that time; again, that particular kind of language being used. Something, again, that the Protestant

world knows diddly-squat about. "What do you mean 'Feast time'? What's a Feast? What's a Feast? I know a feast is when people feast and have a great big occasion here, a festival of some sort," and most of the ones the world holds obviously are sick and distorted and perverted. But, you know, they look at something like this and what is this that they're talking about? Because they have no idea, again, that the first day that follows Passover begins a Feast, the Feast of Unleavened Bread, a high day, an annual Sabbath, the first annual Sabbath right after Passover. If they only knew this then they could begin to grasp that Jesus Christ wasn't in the ground, in the grave, or in a tomb for a day and a half but was there for three days.

Now at the Feast time he (Pilate) was accustomed to releasing one prisoner to them. So at this period of time right at Passover it was a custom to release a prisoner to the Jewish people, **whomever they requested. And there was one named Barabbas, who was chained with his fellow rebels. They had committed murder in their rebellion.** Isn't that amazing, a murderer in a rebellion there in Jerusalem? **Then the multitude, crying aloud, began to ask him to do just as he had always done for them, in other words, releasing one. But Pilate answered them, saying, Do you want me to release to you the King of the Jews?** Because really that's what he wanted to do. **For he knew that the chief priests had handed him over because of envy.** Isn't that amazing? He understood that. He understood motives and he'd sat in judgment over many different situations and he could spot jealousy, envy, and things were being said and how it was being said. He knew their motivation was one of envy and jealousy toward Christ. He knew that's why he was there.

But the chief priests stirred up the crowd so that they would rather release Barabbas to them. Pilate answered and said to them again, What then do you want me to do with him whom you call the King of the Jews? Now, they weren't saying this, but he was saying this as kind of a jab to them. "So what do you want me to do with the one that you have accused, that brought before me as being King? Because it's the King of the Jews." **And they cried out again...** Now, the word that's used in Bibles is "crucify," and I go over this again and again and again because I don't know at what point someone will come along and watch something on YouTube to understand what this word means. In the Greek language the word they have translated as "crucify" is "stauros." It does not mean anything to do with two pieces of lumber. No cross, no "X," no attachment of any kind. That requires a different word or a different explanation in the Greek language. This word, "stauros," always means, if you go back and read all the kinds of writings of those who have written, Homer, different ones through vast periods of time, even hundreds of years after the time of Christ, and the word "stauros" always means one thing, "a pole," often times used like a fence post, something that's stuck in the ground, that's anchored in the ground. That's the word that's used, only that word, and it can't be translated in any other way.

But some several hundred years ago translating things in the Bible into different languages (as an example, into English), began to use different words and not the original words and their meaning and what they meant at all because they had a different belief. They had this stupid belief that

he died on a fixture like this, a cross. It's not in the scriptures. Isn't that amazing that people have to learn in Christianity, traditional Christianity and in the Catholic Church he didn't die on a cross? He didn't die with his hands out to the side. There are very simple reasons as to why it couldn't have happened anyway in the way it's described. So I go over this again and again and again with hopes, and I know that in time different ones will see, different ones will begin to think, "Hmmm, that makes some sense," even in a physical plane. We'll get to some of that story later on when we come to it, but it was not a cross he died on. He died on a pole with his hands above his head with one spike driven through his hands and one with his feet together on the bottom of his feet. Nailed to a pole. Simple. Simple. Simple.

The world has lied about it, starting with Constantine and different ones going all the way back. All the things that guy did in the Roman world, starting of the Catholic Church, it's absolutely mindboggling, truly is, all the lies that have come from that period of time. Every time I go through this I get riled up because I think how sick, and the millions and hundreds of millions of people believe that swill and that stupidity. It truly is! With a little bit of research you can find out that it's not like that at all, but who wants to know? "I'd rather hold on to being able to have Christmas, and the tree, and give our kids gifts because this is a nice thing to do, to remember Christ's birth, even though he wasn't born anywhere around December 25. Even though we understand that now we still like to do it and you can't take that away from us. And you can't take away this rabbit thing with them laying eggs and our kids going out there and find the eggs because it's so much fun to bring them out there and it's such an innocent thing and it teaches some nice stories to them when they're young." Yeah, that you're a liar! That you've taught them lies. You've given them holidays that are nothing but lies. That's a great thing to teach your children. I know some are going to love hearing things like that. They always do. I don't really care.

...so they cried out again, and the words that should be translated here, Nail him to the pole! They didn't use anything like the word "crucify" at all. "Nail him to the pole," to the stauros. "Hang him up on the stauros." That's basically what they were saying. **Then Pilate said to them, Why? What evil has he done?** This was a hideous type of death and he saw no purpose, no fault in him anyway. He said, "Why do you insist on this?" **But they cried out all the more, Nail him to the pole!** They were in a frenzy. **So Pilate, wanting to please the crowd, released Barabbas to them—a murderer, amazing—and he delivered Jesus, and he had scourged him, and after he had scourged him to be nailed to a pole.** That's what it's saying, "To be nailed to a pole." Awesome, what took place.

Luke 23. In the story flow in Luke 23. Every place brings in something a little bit different, adds a little bit more, something that wasn't in the other story and they all support each other and give a complete story of what actually took place. **Luke 23:13—Then Pilate, when he had called together the chief priests, the rulers, and the people, said to them, You have brought this man to me, as one who misleads the people. And indeed, having examined him in your**

presence, I have found no fault in this man concerning those things of which you accuse him; no, neither did Herod, for I sent you back to him; and indeed nothing deserving of death has been done by him. I will, therefore, punish him and release him, it states here then in parenthesis (for it was necessary for him to release one to them at the Feast), or at the Feast here, generally done on the Passover day. **And they all cried out at once, saying, Away with this man, and release to us Barabbas, who had been thrown into prison for a certain rebellion made in the city and for murder.** They'd rather have a murderer. This is an astounding story, it really is. It's absolutely incredible how human beings can respond and act toward things, especially when it comes to religious beliefs and their pet beliefs and ideas that they do not want to let go of. They do not want to let go of going to church or believing you can go to church on Sunday. "And you're not required to do so on a Sabbath, on Saturday, on the seventh day of the week. You're not required to keep annual holy days, but it's nice if you keep Easter and Christmas, and Halloween," and some of those goofy things. "It's okay to do that, but don't keep the things that God says." They will go a long way in their hatred and what they will do.

Verse 20—Pilate, therefore, wishing to release Jesus, again called out to them. But they shouted, saying, Nail him to the pole! Nail him to the pole! They just got louder and louder. Then he said to them the third time, Why? What evil has he done? I have found no reason for death in him. I will, therefore, punish him and let him go. But they were insistent, demanding with loud voices that he be nailed to a pole. And the voices of these men and of the chief priests prevailed. So Pilate gave sentence that it should be as they requested. And he released to them the one whom they requested, who for rebellion and murder had been thrown into prison; but he delivered Jesus to their will. Incredible, incredible, this story.

Matthew 27. So after the Jews got the sentence that they wanted then he was given over to Roman soldiers to carry out the sentence. Now, that's really an incredible story here, because it got to the point where between the leaders of the Jews and Pilate and so forth, that they basically threatened Pilate. They basically threatened him that they would go to Caesar with this story. That's basically part of the threat in the background of all this, that he claims to be a king and by law there can be no king but Caesar, no ruler but Caesar. They hated the Roman rule but they were willing to use that, and basically, if you don't put him to death you're not doing the work for Caesar that you should be doing. That's basically what they were saying to him. So, incredible what was taking place in all this and how far they would go to get their way. So Pilate gave them their way in all this and gave him over to the soldiers.

Matthew 27:27—Then the soldiers of the governor took Jesus into the Praetorium and gathered the whole garrison around him. And they stripped him and put a scarlet robe on him. And when they had twisted a crown of thorns they put it on his head, and a reed in his right hand, all this is a part of mocking him and making fun of him, And they bowed the knee before him and mocked him, saying, Hail, King of the Jews! They didn't care for the Jews at all but they were willing to do this toward Christ, toward the Messiah, and mocking and making fun

of him of the things that followed here. **Then they spit on him**, because what was going to take place? They were going to be the ones who were going to put him to death and they knew that. He'd been given over to them to carry out a job. So part of their job when they got a hold of someone like this, especially someone that had such things being said of him, they just made more fun of him. It's kind of to appease their own conscience, of how right they are and how wrong this individual is, how sick he had to be. Human beings have sometimes some sick minds. **Then they spit on him, and took the reed and struck him in the head**, some of the things that took place as they continued on with this.

Verse 31—And when they had mocked him they took the robe off him and put his clothes, in other words, back on him, and led him away to be nailed to a pole. Now as they came out, they found a man of Cyrene, Simon by name, and him they compelled to bear his pole. So at some point Christ was too weak, he wouldn't be able to do it, which normally they would have to do, and they got another individual and got him to carry this particular pole on a shoulder and drag it to the site.

Let's pick up the story then in Luke 23. Now, some of the beating here and some of the stuff he went through was horrendous. He was beaten with cat o'nine tails and some of the things they did to him before this was all done, but these are different accounts here that we're reading.

Luke 23:26—Now as they led him away, they laid hold of a certain man, Simon a Cyrenian, who was coming from the country, and on him they laid the pole so that he might bear it after Jesus. And a great multitude of the people followed him, and women also mourned and lamented him. But Jesus, turning to them, said, Daughters of Jerusalem, do not weep for me, but weep for yourselves and for your children. For indeed the days are coming in which they will say, Blessed are the barren, wombs that never bore, and breasts that never nursed! Then they will begin to say to the mountains, Fall on us! and to the hills, Cover us! Do you know what this period of time is talking about? The one we're going into. It was the prophecy and talking about how bad it's going to get. Now, for those in God's Church and those who look to God, we look to God to guide, to direct, to protect, to do those things, or otherwise we would not have what we need. So that's where our strength is. He's our High Tower, our strength, our fortress, and God takes care of His people, but as far as the world is concerned and the things they're going to experience; it doesn't mean things aren't going to be difficult and things aren't going to be hard, because they are, even for us, but not to the point so many are going to experience in the world around us. So this is what he's referring to when he talks of these things because he's looking ahead to what? To the purpose of why he's dying, to what's going to lead up to a particular time when he does fulfill the role as the Messiah and what has to take place on the earth before that Kingdom is actually established, before it's actually set up. He knew he was going to die. He's started the process there of being beaten, flesh ripped off his face and off his body, that people couldn't even recognize who he was, but he gave a prophecy of what was to come. It says, **For if they do these things in the green wood, what will be done in the dry?**

There were also two other criminals led with him to be put to death. And when they had come to the place called Calvary, there they nailed to the poles both he and the criminals, one on the right hand and the other on the left. So Christ was in the center. And Jesus said, Father, forgive them, for they don't know what they do. Quite an attitude. Quite an example for us, of when it comes down to it in our lives and things we deal with in our lives, that we have to come to that point in time as well, as how we look upon others. And though I say the things I do about the Catholic Church and the Protestant world I understand they're blind and they can't help. There are leaders who know certain things and have knowledge of certain things, but they won't change and they won't tell the truth even though they know they preach lies so often in their lives, because they have been educated into things that they understand and can answer, and yet they won't teach what is true. But people are held in bondage, and just like those who were in Egypt, they had no ability to leave, they had no ability to escape until God gave it to them. So it is with the world around us. They have no ability to escape what they're in until God gives them that time and that time is coming.

So that should be our attitude and how we deal with people around us. People aren't going to treat us fairly, especially when it come to things you believe, so you have to deal with people around you in that manner, "Father, forgive them because they don't know what they're doing." And really, it's about you then as an individual to not hold anything against them and not to feel badly toward them. They're just caught up in what they're caught up in and they're going to fulfill what they have to fulfill in life as a human being. That isn't good until God calls you and you start to come out of that and be drawn out of it.

So he said, **Forgive them, for they do not know what they do. And they divided his garments and cast lots.** Incredible here. They were expensive. They were expensive, what he was wearing. What he was wearing, they wanted, and so much so that they wanted it even with blood on it. Blood! A lot of blood! But they wanted them. They wanted to clean them and to have them. So they were willing to cast lots: Who gets this? Who gets to keep this? It's like rolling the dice. So who's going to get this?

And the people stood looking on. But even the rulers with them sneered, saying, He saved others; let him save himself if he is the Christ, the chosen of God. You go through the story, and you just marvel at attitudes of human beings and how sick people can become. I think of that attitude that's starting to permeate this country more and more, and frankly, the world, this kind of attitude and how people think and how they sneer at others and everybody is so right in their own eyes in what they see and what they believe and the hatreds that are out here in this world. They're becoming more and more manifest as to what human beings can be like. It's amazing how far human beings will go when they don't get their own way. It's getting worse and worse and worse. It's going to get really ugly before it gets better.

Let him save himself if he is the Messiah, the chosen of God. And the soldiers also mocked him, coming and offering him sour wine, and saying, If you are the King of the Jews, save

yourself. And an inscription also was written over him in letters of Greek, Latin, and Hebrew. You know, sometimes people that study the Bible, they say, "Well, you know, this can't be true because they recorded something different." Well, it was said in three different languages. That's why the words are different and how you translate them and what was specifically stated and how it was stated. Anyway, basically this is what the intent of what was being said was: **THIS IS THE KING OF THE JEWS**. Now, the Jews weren't happy about this, but Pilate saw to it that this was going to be the sign that was going to be there. He's going to have the last say. That's what it amounts to. "They threatened me? Then as we put him to death we'll put this sign up here, 'Here is the King of the Jews.'"

Verse 39—Then one of the criminals who was hanged blasphemed him, saying, If you are the Messiah, save yourself and us, mocking him, making fun of him and saying if that's who you are, then save yourself and us. But the other, answering, rebuked him, saying, Do you not even fear God, seeing you are under the same condemnation? And we indeed justly, for we receive the due reward of our deeds; but this man has done nothing wrong. Awesome! Awesome. Awesome. Then he said to Jesus, Lord, remember me when you come into your kingdom. And Jesus said to him... Now, here is one the Protestant world really messes up, **I say to you, today you will be with me in paradise.** It's like as soon as they die they're all going to go off to heaven. This is the verse they use. Didn't Christ say, "Today you're going to be with me in Paradise"? So as soon as they die they're off to heaven with Christ. That's not what's being said at all. Man put in the commas. Man put in the punctuation. And given opportunity for different ones then, because this is what they want to believe, this is how they then translated it and they put in those commas for a purpose and for a reason. It isn't saying that at all. He's just basically telling them, "I say to you today." He didn't say, "Today you are going be with me in paradise," but, "I'm telling you today," "I'm telling you now," basically, is what it is, "you will be with me in paradise." There will be a time. He's talking about a great resurrection that will take place when they're resurrected, when they're brought to life again in a physical human body, Christ is there. He's the King of kings in the last Hundred-years, and when they're resurrected they're going to be there at the same time with him, obviously, because Christ is ruling this earth, this world. So that's all he's telling them. So, anyway, the Protestant world likes to twist things around to fit into their beliefs.

Lastly here, let's just turn over to John 19. We'll stop here today before we go on to another area and explaining some different things that took place. But again, just going through the story flow and the attitude of human beings, and especially when it comes to religious beliefs.

Be careful. We have learned a lot of things, we truly have. You have learned this through employers, employees, different ones you work with, neighbors, relatives, all kinds of people in your life. Don't forget the lessons that are there. You're getting ready to go into a very difficult time and you don't want to do what I do in the sermons when I speak out in the manner that I do toward what is true and what is right. There are certain things you don't want to say in the world around you, you truly don't, when things get really, really bad because that can go against you

very quickly. So you need to be wise. "Wise as serpents and harmless as doves," as we're told. Again here, unless there is a specific purpose, there are times that we should be wise and speak what we speak to those who desire, who have a genuine attitude of really wanting to know, but don't ever try to put someone on a spot later on as time goes on and things get bad and make a contest out of what you know. You may not live through it. That's the point. We're getting into those kinds of times that are coming, so you have to be careful, you have to be wise.

John 19:17—And he (Jesus) bearing his pole, went out to a place called the Place of the Skull, which in the Hebrew is called, Golgotha. Now, it started out he took it for a little ways, but couldn't; he had been beaten so severely, he was so weakened by what he went through that he couldn't physically do it. So that's when they got the other individual, Simon, they got him and had him carry it the rest of the way, but this is how it started. So John is telling that portion of the story, the first part of it.

So they went to the place in Hebrew, called Golgotha, and nailed him to a pole, and two others with him, one on each side, and Jesus in the center. Now Pilate wrote a title and put it on the pole. And the writing was: JESUS OF NAZARETH, THE KING OF THE JEWS. Then many of the Jews read this title, for the place where Jesus was nailed to a pole was near the city; and it was written in Hebrew, Greek, and Latin. Therefore, the chief priests and the Jews said to Pilate, Do not write, The King of the Jews, but that he said, I am the King of the Jews. You have to kind of laugh at something like that, because, again, it's their attitude coming out and they didn't want that to be written. But this is the way of Pilate getting one last thing in toward the Jews. He was Pilate and over the Roman rule at that time and he was making it quite clear that he's going to do what he's going to do. He gave in to letting Jesus Christ being nailed to a pole, but he was going to do it his way. So Pilate answered, What I have written, I have written.

So we'll continue on with the story, because there are other things we really need to begin focusing on in *Part 5*, and we'll continue that next time.