

21T20f Christmas Story OutTake (Travel)

Hello everyone. Thank you for joining me today @ the PUNLA Coffee Table. I hope everyone is doing well.

I love the Christmas season with all the traditions and gatherings of family and friends. It is truly a beautiful time of year. I love to see all the lights and decorations. But often we forget there is a reason for the season. That reason is Jesus. The birth of Jesus to be exact. For Christians we have lots of traditions about Christmas; the Nativity, the Star, the Wisemen. But I'd like to have some fun and look at some parts of this story we don't normally talk about. I'm going to call these Christmas Story Out Takes.

Today I'd like to talk about the travel in the Christmas story. First Joseph & Mary travel from Nazareth to Bethlehem, then flee to Egypt, then back from Egypt to Nazareth. Then there are these foreign dignitaries or Magi who travel a very long way to visit Jesus. And don't forget the shepherds in the field who trekked to visit Jesus at his birth.

First in Luke chapter 2 verses 1-7 tells us that while Mary was very pregnant, they traveled the from Nazareth to Bethlehem about 90 miles. We don't know the path they took but it is most likely they traveled down the Jordan River Valley to avoid Samaria. This would be a hard trip and a long trip. Especially for a pregnant Mary. Now we don't actually know how far along Mary was in her pregnancy. Most of us envision them barely getting to Bethlehem before she gives birth. But the actual story in the Bible only says while they were there in Bethlehem, Mary gave birth to Jesus. It could have been the very hour they arrived, and it could just as easily have been days, weeks or even months after they arrived. So, there is no reason to believe when they arrived Mary was already in labor. I don't see that detail in the story as the Bible tells it. But what a trip it would have been.

Next, at the birth of Jesus the Shepherds came to worship Jesus. This is a complicated part of the story. Shepherds watch herds of sheep. Typically, spread out over large areas. So, a group of shepherds got together and left their flocks and walked into Bethlehem to see Jesus. This may not have been a long trip, but it was a tricky one. Now Shepherds were the riff-raff of society. These guys were not the guys you would generally invite into your home. They left their flocks unattended to go see Jesus. And it's probably a lot more complicated than I'm stating it. The most amazing thing about the shepherds' story is how they found Jesus. Did you ever wonder how a bunch of outcasts were able to find a newborn child at night in the city? I personally believe the star lead them similarly to how the Magi later find Jesus. But of course, I could be wrong, since the Bible story does not tell us how they found Jesus, only that they did.

Next, the Magi visit. All we really know about the Magi is they traveled a long way to get there. I have heard lots of guesses as to where they came from, but they are only guesses. I have my own opinion but it's not really important where they came from as much as they came. They came a long way to pay their respects to Jesus because

they had an understanding of what Jesus was. Even if the rest of the world still did not know yet.

Then Joseph, Mary and Jesus flee to Egypt several hundred miles, at an instant notice probably leaving at night after the Magi's visit. Now this is some serious travel with a young child even if it is the son of God.

And then the long trip back from Egypt to Nazareth after Herod dies. Now that's a lot of difficult travel in this story. Any travel was tough in the first century. But several times in this story Joseph & Mary are uprooted and travel long distances with little notice or planning.

I don't think any of us can imagine what a 90 mile walk is like. But what would it be like to carry essentially everything you own while you did it? No plan to return just travel, and travel and travel some more. I wonder if Jesus ever asked Joseph, "are we there yet" well of course not Jesus is God he would have known.

Let's pray. Dear heavenly father, thank you for the story of this amazing story. Help us to understand the fullness of this story. The efforts Mary & Joseph went through. The commitment of the Magi. And the excitement of the Shepherds. I pray each of us take time to contemplate the details of this beautiful story as it is written in the Bible. I pray we can learn from the efforts and travel of the people in the Christmas story. May we be willing to be inconvenient for You. I pray this in your name Lord Jesus. Amen.

I hope you are enjoying the Christmas Story Out Takes. The Christmas story has so many amazing details, we too often forget to look at the full story. This is a truly amazing story. The greatest story ever told. The story of Jesus my Lord and Savior.

Thank you for joining me @ the PUNLA Coffee Table. If you liked the message, please select like. And Please Subscribe to our channel. Leave comments here, or our website or mail me at kip@punla.org. I appreciate your feedback. Until next time @ the PUNLA Coffee Table. God bless.