

Hello my friends. Thank you for joining me today @ the PUNLA Coffee Table for the Christmas Story Retold.

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 Christmas traditions and where did they come from.

Today I'd like to ask you what is Jesus' birthday? Okay I'm guessing some of you said December 25<sup>th</sup> dummy. But spoiler, December 25<sup>th</sup> is probably not Jesus' birthday. Instead, December 25<sup>th</sup> is Christmas. Christmas comes from the Christ Mass which was traditionally held near the winter equinox in Europe.

The next obvious question is how did we get December 25<sup>th</sup> as Jesus birthday. I don't really know. Remember Jesus was probably not born on December 25<sup>th</sup>, Church tradition says Emperor Constantine formally had the church in Rome start celebrating the "Christ" "mass" on December 25<sup>th</sup> in the year 336 AD. After Emperor Constantine had a divine conversion to Christianity, he assumes the role of pope. Most people in the Roman empire celebrated the winter solstice, so Constantine thought to shift the focus of this celebration from the pagan worship of nature to worship and remembrance of the birth of Jesus.

In one divine decree, the focus of the season became Jesus.

So, when was Jesus born? We don't know for sure, but it is doubtful it was December 25<sup>th</sup>. In fact, the Christmas story in the Bible gives some hints.

In the gospel of Luke, Luke gives an account of the birth of Jesus in Chapter 2:1-7. Then after Jesus is both Luke says is verse - 20) *"Now there were in the same country shepherds living out in the fields,*

*keeping watch over their flock by night. And behold, an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were greatly afraid. Then the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid, for behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy which will be to all people. For there is born to you this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. And this will be the sign to you: You will find a Babe wrapped in swaddling cloths, lying in a manger." And suddenly 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, goodwill toward men!" So it was, when the angels had gone away from them into heaven, that the shepherds said to one another, "Let us now go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has come to pass, which the Lord has made known to us. And they came with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the Babe lying in a manger. Now when they had seen Him, they made widely known the saying which was told them concerning this Child. And all those who heard it marveled at those things which were told them by the shepherds. But Mary kept all these things and pondered them in her heart. Then the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things that they had heard and seen, as it was told them." (Luke 2:8-20 NKJV)*

So if the shepherds are in the fields with their sheep it is most likely the warmer part of the year. "*shepherds living out in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night.*" I've seen that most historians and bible scholars believe the most likely time of Jesus birth was June or July. So, probably not December because the weather would be cold and the shepherds would most likely have their sheep in shelter.

So what year was Jesus born. We don't know. There is a lot of theories but know one really knows. I've heard as early as 8BC to as late as 8AD, but we have no way of knowing for certain. I personally think the evidence points to sometime between 3-5BC, but this is only speculation on my part. I don't want to get into this any more today because it is really not important to the story.

What is important is Jesus. Jesus came to earth, born of a virgin in Bethlehem. Jesus fulfilled every prophesy about the birth of the messiah. Jesus is the reason for the season. It is not important which day or year Jesus was born. What is important is He was born and died for us. December 25<sup>th</sup> is Christmas. This is a special time of year we have set aside to remember the birth of Jesus. This is the beginning of the greatest story ever told. This is the story of my king and lord Jesus. We should be remembering Jesus every day of the year, but Christmas is a time

when the people around us are more open to the story of Jesus. Who he was, why he came, why this is so important to everyone? Jesus is the reason for the season, remind everyone you meet of this. Don't say Happy Holidays. Say Merry Christmas. Help the world to remember Christ and what this wonderful holiday is all about.

**Let's Pray**

**Father God.**

**I pray these things in your name Lord Jesus, Amen**

Don't let the world take Christ out of Christmas. Jesus is the reason for the season no matter what people want to think. So as we gather with family and friends, make sure to take time to remember Jesus. The amazing Christmas Story as the Bible tells it to us. Share the true Christmas Story with anyone who will listen. Christ is born. Merry Christmas. Hallelujah.

As always if you liked the message click like, you can leave comments here or our website or email me. And please subscribe, if you want to be notified when we post new videos, click the notification bell.

See you next time @ the PUNLA Coffee Table. Merry Christmas Everyone.