

## Transcript - The Early Congregation Part 1

We are going to be starting today **on a series** I have been looking to do for a long time. I did this probably around almost 15 years ago and we took it down off the web site, I wanted to redo it. I thought this would be a great time to redo it now at the school on the Early Congregation. Yahweh willing, I am hoping to get this book written on this beginning of next year.

It's extremely important for a lot of different ways to understand, because, I said before, probably 90-95% of believers come out of some kind of Christian background and I don't think people realize how much that that background affects them. You know that if you came and you became a believer and you were a Muslim or you were a Hindu or you were a Jew, you'd have a whole different perspective but **coming as a Christian**, you know, we somehow we don't realize all of the **Christian baggage** beside Sunday keeping and Christmas, Easter and the things ... **false grace** ... that most people still take with them. And I think by understanding the early congregation and really seeing why there had to be an early congregation, how it started and what it came from; and then looking at the congregation through the wilderness; looking at when Christianity started. Some people think that Christianity is just basically a religion of believers that somehow started getting into pagan things. But we will see **the actual religion of Christianity is something that was started in the 4<sup>th</sup> century and really had nothing to do with the early believers, whatsoever.**

And Yahweh willing, hopefully we will have the time that we will be able to take it all the way into modern times; go through some of the history of the congregation in the wilderness and what they believed and what they did and what they went through. Because, like it says even in the Old Testament when the children of Israel were coming out of Egypt, that all these things were examples for us today.

So before really getting into the early congregation, I'd like to start in Genesis 17 because it's interesting. Yahweh willing, this week we will get into the genealogy of Yahshua. There are two genealogies; one is in the book of Matthew, one is in the book of Luke. Luke is the legal genealogy and it goes all the way back to Adam but yet in Matthew's genealogy, it starts at Abraham because Abraham is really where the covenant started and Abraham is really where we see the whole knead; the whole judicial order coming in together of **why there has to be a Messiah**, what He is going to do, the nation of Israel coming into it. So in Genesis 17<sup>th</sup> chapter ...

***Gen 17:1-7**And when Abram was ninety nine years old, YAHWEH appeared to Abram and said to him, I am El Shaddai! Walk before me and be perfect; and I will make My covenant between Me and you, and will increase you very greatly. And Abram fell on his face. And Elohim spoke with him, saying, **As for Me, behold, My covenant is with you, and you shall be a father of many nations. And your name no longer shall be called Abram, but your name shall be Abraham.** For I have made you a father of many nations. And I will make you very fruitful, exceedingly. And I will give you for nations. **And kings shall come out of you.** And I will establish My covenant between Me and you, and your seed after you in their generations, for an everlasting covenant, to be a Elohim to you and to your seed after you.*

So here we see where from the book of Genesis, you know, we see that **where Adam failed there had to be a seed of a woman that was going to come but never any kind of promise of eternity and kingship and rulership and all these other things.** Basically, it's that there is going to be a seed that is going to continue that is going to right the wrongs that Adam did. And we see this through Noah even to the point where there is a flood on the world, everybody is destroyed except for that one seed of Noah and then he continues on through Shem ... and you can see the genealogy for yourself if you look back in the book of Genesis.

But now for the very first time, we are getting into a bigger picture where you are not just seeing a promise, not just for redemption or just to pay the penalty for Adam's seed, but **you are seeing promises that are talking about eternal kingship, eternal dynasty, of having his seed like the stars of heaven living in this land as the rulers of the world**, you know. So it's a whole different situation that's coming and that is exactly what happened. From Abraham we know that Abraham's seed was Isaac, and Isaac had Yaaqob, and Yaaqob's name is changed to Israel. 'Yaaqob' is the 'Supplanter'. Remember, he grabbed his brother's heel in the womb and He changes him from the 'Supplanter' to 'Israel', 'the one who overcame with El'.

And then of course, he had the 12 sons of Israel and we know the story from there; that Yahweh had it where they went down to Egypt and after Joseph died, and there is another Pharaoh that comes and they are multiplying like rabbits and they are worried that, "What are we going to do with these people? You know, they are going to overtake us. Maybe they will go with our enemy." And they start putting them into hard bondage and slavery. And then probably the most amazing, the unbelievable story in the history of mankind, at least up to this point ... We know there is a 2<sup>nd</sup> Exodus coming that tells us, we will forget the 1<sup>st</sup> Exodus but at least up to this point in mankind ... that **Yahweh personally intervenes and doesn't just do a miracle but He literally takes a nation Himself; He's their forefront, He's their rearguard. He does all the miracles and plagues in Egypt**. You know, even having Moses come and march the people out, parting of the Red Sea, and just **an unbelievable adventure**.

Unfortunately, **Israel after seeing all that, still does not believe in Yahweh**. They still murmur in the wilderness, they still complain about what they don't have and what does Yahweh say? **He's ready to just destroy all of them** ... and this is where sometimes, like I said, the false grace comes in that Christianity somehow thinks that Yahweh's grace and mercy is that He just loves us even though we are sinners and He just allows us to be in our sin ... and I don't see that anywhere in the Bible. I don't see that in the Old Covenant, I don't see that in the New Covenant. **Where I see Yahweh's mercy is, is He never gives up on people, that Yahweh allows people up to their last breath to repent of their sins, to turn from their ways and come back to Him**. But if you don't, you're going to reap what you sow and that's what Yahweh said to Moses. He said, "Okay, Moses. I'm not going to do this, I'm not going to wipe out everyone but I also will not be mocked. Those who will honor Me, I will honor and those who don't honor Me, you know, they are going to get their just reward."

So the Israelites spent **40 years wandering in wilderness until the whole generation dies** and then of course, their children come up and they don't seem much better. If you look at Moses giving his parting words, right before he is ready to be buried somewhere in the valley underneath Mount Nebo, what does he say to them? He tells a prophesy for the end-time and he tells them that he knows after his death, they are a rebellious people and they are going to do the same thing and pretty much is exactly what happens. They come into the Promised Land, they have Joshua with them. So as long as they have Joshua and Caleb, things are going pretty good for that 1<sup>st</sup> generation. They are kind of too busy fighting their enemies to worry about the paganism and all that other stuff. But as soon as Joshua and Caleb die off, you have the times of the Judges which is probably the worst time in the history of Israel. It's amazing that Yahweh for these some odd 350 years allowed it to keep going on and going on and going on.

But then something happens that is very important in the story I Samuel 8,1<sup>st</sup> Samuel the 8<sup>th</sup> Chapter, starting in verse 4. And I am going through the history because I want to show you it is all tied in together. You know, when you think of Israel ... we are here in the land of Israel. **What is Israel?** What is Israel? To us, we think of the nation of Israel, right? We are thinking of **the kingship of David**, we are thinking maybe **of the eternal kingdom that is coming**. But in the 6,000 years, this land has been here 6,000 years, Israel has only been a nation maybe 850 out of 6,000. So about 80% of the time from creation to today, Israel wasn't here and they weren't a nation and they weren't doing all these things. It was something totally different so it is important in the history as we understand this.

**1Sa 8:4-5** And all the elders of Israel gathered and came in to Samuel, to Ramah. And they said to him, Behold, you have become old, and your sons have not walked in your ways. Now appoint a king to us, to judge us, **like all the nations.**

Problem that Israel had going back from the beginning, they wanted to mimic the nations. **Yahweh was calling them out of the world to be separate, to be not to just be a separate people but now to be a separate nation, and He gave them His statutes and His commandments and His judgements and His Torah.** And He said, "When you keep all these things, the land will bless you, the rain from heaven will come down and then all the nations around you will see, "Wow, look how much these people have been blessed because they are obedient to Yahweh, their Elohim" and then the other people are going to say we want in on all this." So it is not that Yahweh does not want to bless them also but again, judicial order. But we know it did not happen that way. It happened, the opposite that **Israel went to the other nations looking how they were doing it, looking at their false deities and now they are even saying, "Give to us a king."**

**1Sa 8:6-7** And Samuel prayed to YAHWEH. And YAHWEH said to Samuel, Listen to the voice of the people, to all that they say to you. For they have not rejected you, but **they have rejected Me from reigning over them.**

See, that was the point. Why didn't they have an earthly king? They did have a king. Simply, **it was Yahweh that was king over them.** When we read Ezekiel 36, when we see that David will be over the people in that day but **Yahweh Yahshua is also with them.** So always Yahweh would be Sovereign and yet He would have an earthly body ... You know, we talked about a cabinet, so to speak, that would be working with Him ... but the people rejected that. They didn't want Yahweh reigning over them, they wanted an earthly king. And He says, *For they have not rejected you, but they have rejected Me from reigning over them.*

**1Sa 8:8-9** According to all the works that they have done from the day I brought them up out of Egypt, even to this day, when **they forsook Me and served other Elohims**, so they are also doing to you. And now listen to their voice. Only, protesting you shall protest to them, and shall declare to them the privilege of the king who shall reign over them.

We talked about all the earthly governments, right? We talked about communism and socialism and democracy, even republic; that it doesn't work. **It's never worked.** You can't ever give me an example of one earthly government from the time that Adam was on the earth until today that was ever a wonderful great government that loved their people and took care of them. Maybe in a fairy tale book, you might see it, but not in real life. So He is going to tell them what this king will do to them.

**1Sa 8:10-14** And Samuel spoke all the words of YAHWEH to the people who were asking a king from him. And he said, **This is the privilege of the king who shall reign over you.** He shall take your sons and shall appoint them for himself among his chariots, and among his horsemen. And they shall run before his chariots. And he will appoint for himself heads of thousands, and heads of fifties; and to plow his plowing, and to reap his reaping; and to make weapons for war for him, and weapons for his charioteer. And he will take your daughters for perfumers, and for cooks, and for bakers. And he will take your fields, and your vineyards, and your olive-yards, the best, and give them to his servants ... You know we saw what Ahab did to **Nabal or should be Nabath?** (12:30), right? Same kind of thing.

**1Sa 8:15-20** And he will tithe your seed and your vineyards, and will give them to his eunuchs and to his servants. And he will take your male slaves and your slave-girls, and the best of your young men, and your donkeys, and will use them for his own work. He will tithe your flock, and you will be servants to him. **And you will cry out in that day because of your king whom you have chosen for yourselves.** And YAHWEH will not answer you in that day. And the people refused to listen to the voice of Samuel, and said, No, but a king shall be over us. And we shall

be, even **we, like all the nations**. And our king shall judge us and shall go out before us and fight our battles.

It is almost, you know, like I was talking about a couple of weeks ago in Hukuk, you know, **are we being the model for the world or are we just being like them?** Whether it's Internet or whether every new gadget that is out there, whether it's the latest fashion or craze; what is it? Because it is all over the Bible from the Garden of Eden until the Book of Revelation, it's very simple that **Yahweh is calling a people out from Satan's world**. That's what the plan is all about. And if you want to part of Satan's world, if you like it better there ... you know, like it says ... even the parable to the rich man when He is saying the kings of the earth make friends among the wise, that the people of Yahweh are not as wise as the servants of this world. But what does He say? He says that when the money fails, they will welcome you into the everlasting habitations, basically the lake of fire. And you know, He is warning them not to do it, you know, not to look to the short term; not to look to the glamor that is right in front of you but you have to look for the long term, the kingdom of Yahweh. You have to look into what's coming, not just what is right in front of you. But the people didn't see it.

So this is a major turning point, right, because what happens? You have 42 kings of Israel and Judah; **not one king of Israel was any good**, there is not one who did what was remotely good in Yahweh's eyes. **A couple of kings of Judah were okay, I wouldn't call any righteous**. Even Yahshua said no man is righteous, not one. Even when you are looking at King David, a good man, a man after Yahweh's heart but also an adulterer and a murderer and other problems that David had. King Solomon, probably there is a good chance he may not even be in the kingdom; you know, turned away from Yahweh later in his life, not earlier, between all his foreign wives and concubines . So, not really a pretty picture from this point on but Yahweh is still working with Israel. He hasn't give them up.

But like I say, out of **6,000 years, only in this land 850and it's not a good history**. It really is not a good history. Read your Bible, you don't see a history of prosperousness; you don't see a history of people serving Yahweh; you don't see a history of this anywhere. **You see continuously,a people that's turning from Yahweh, that's following other deities**. You know, I mean in the days of Eliyahu ... it's a great story of Eliyahu's courage and Eliyahu's faith. But you imagine, there is**450 Israelite priests who are worshipping Baal**, 450 at that time. You know and that is just in the story that we know of. You know, so it's not a pretty picture. And then what eventually happens? Ezekiel 20, Yahweh gets to the point where He's had it.

**Eze 20:2-12** *And the Word of YAHWEH was to me, saying, Son of man, speak to the elders of Israel and say to them, So says Adonai YAHWEH: Have you come to inquire of Me? As I live, declares Adonai YAHWEH, I will not be inquired of by you. Will you judge them, will you judge, son of man? Cause them to know the abominations of their fathers. And say to them, So says Adonai YAHWEH: In the day I chose Israel and lifted My hand to the seed of the house of Jacob, and I was made known to them in the land of Egypt, when I lifted up My hand to them, saying, I am YAHWEH your Elohim. In that day I lifted up My hand to them to bring them out from the land of Egypt into a land flowing with milk and honey that I had searched out for them, the glory of it is to all lands. Then I said to them, Let each man cast away the filthy idols of his eyes, and do not defile yourselves with the idols of Egypt; I am YAHWEH your Elohim. But they rebelled against Me and would not listen to Me. They did not each man throw away the filthy idols of their eyes, and they did not forsake the idols of Egypt. Then I said, I will pour out My fury against them, to complete My anger against them in the midst of the land of Egypt. But I worked for My name's sake, that it should not be profaned in the eyes of the nations among whom they were, for I made Myself known to them in their eyes, by bringing them out of the land of Egypt. I caused them to go out from the land of Egypt, and brought them into the wilderness. And I gave them My statutes, and I made them know My judgments, which if a man does them, he will even live by them. And I also gave them My Sabbaths to be a sign between Me and them, that they might know that I am YAHWEH who sets them apart.*

And right off the bat, ***Isaiah 8:20****If they speak not according to the Torah and the prophets, there is no light in them.* I don't care how nice a person is, I don't care what his heart is; it really doesn't make a matter to me. **If somebody is claiming a seat of authority and they are telling the people the Torah is done away with, that all these things are not relevant to us today; they are a servant of Satan.** It's that evil; you know it's that simple because it is evil what they are doing. And it is very simple that **righteousness only comes through Yahweh's law.** Man cannot create his own righteousness. Every time he tries to do it, we see where it ends up. So He tells them, He gave them all these beautiful wonderful things of His but ...

**Eze 20:13-20** *But the house of Israel rebelled against Me in the wilderness. They did not walk in My statutes, and they despised My judgments, which if a man does them he will even live by them. And they greatly profaned My Sabbaths. Then I said, I will pour out My fury on them in the wilderness, to consume them. But I worked for My name's sake, that it should not be profaned in the eyes of the nations, before whom I brought them out, in their eyes. And I also lifted up My hand to them in the wilderness, that I would not bring them into the land flowing with milk and honey which I had given; it is the glory to all the lands, because they despised My judgments, and they did not walk in My statutes, and they profaned My Sabbaths; for their heart went after their idols. And My eye spared them, from destroying them, and I did not make an end of them in the wilderness. But I said to their sons in the wilderness, Do not walk in the statutes of your fathers and do not keep their judgments, and do not defile yourselves with their idols. I am YAHWEH your Elohim, walk in My statutes, and keep My judgments, and do them. And guard My Sabbaths to keep them holy, and they shall be a sign between Me and you, that you may know that I am YAHWEH your Elohim.*

Pretty simple, His rebuke to Israel. I say today, if you look around Israel, it's the same today. You know, two weeks ago they are having a big bike race on Shabbat, you know, violating the commandment. Yahweh didn't go through 2500 years of diaspora ... **He didn't work every miracle in the world to bring a nation back here for bike races on the Sabbath.** He also didn't bring them back to open up shopping malls and buying fashion clothes on Shabbat; running buses on Shabbat or anything else. So we see the same things that happened here, they will happen, no doubt about it. I will guarantee you 1,000% because Yahweh is the same yesterday, today and forever. And the same way He is telling His people here that the commandments are forever, that the Sabbath is a sign between Him and His children; it's the same for us today. Nothing has changed.

So what happens here? We know because of their rebellion to Yahweh, their refusal to listen ... first is 734 BC, there is the 1<sup>st</sup>siege that comes on the north and the king of Assyria, Sennacherib, he comes into Gilead, he comes into Galilee. All these areas are taken over, you know, and he starts controlling it. Then from 721-718 BC, about maybe 13 years later, he completely takes out all the Israelites. Now it's interesting at that time, they actually have from the Assyrian Annuls, they talk about that capture and they say that Sargon, the general at that time from Tiglath-Pileser (he was the king). That Sargon captured 27,290 ... something like that ... Israelites. You can look in the Bible and you could see right before this there is one battle where there is more than 500,000 soldiers alone, not even counting all the men and women there and everything else. So clearly there was much more Israelites than that, so what happened?

If only 27,000 are taken and there is no more in the land, what happened to the some odd 2 million Israelites? And we know what happened to them. From history, it tells us. Some of them actually migrated down to the south, a portion of them, when they saw how bad things were getting. They had Elisha's drought, they assimilated with Judah. We know that even in the 1<sup>st</sup> century there was a portion of Jews who were Israelites. We know from Ezekiel 37, He says take one stick for Judah and his companions, the sons of Israel. But that was a small portion, maybe 10%. The rest of them, they migrated down to what we would know today as Africa, at that time

it was called the Carthage Empire; Tunisia, Libya, Egypt; and then they migrated south from there.

Some of them went over to Parthia and the Black Sea area to what would be modern day Russia and Ukraine and those areas like that. Some went all the way east as far as Afghanistan and India. They have the white Indians that they found that their skulls and their make-up are exactly like Israelites. They have menorahs on their grave stones. They have all in their languages, some of the people from Afghanistan that were called Sakki, the tribe of the Sakki, the sons of I-saak. Then from there, some of them migrated over to Europe, later to places that were originally Gaul that became France, and Great Britain, Norway and all the other areas. You know and we know it. I'm not going to get into too much of the history but just showing that these people were basically in diaspora all over the earth.

Never said that Ephraim would be a great nation but yet it says in Hosea the 9<sup>th</sup> chapter, Ephraim would be a wonderer among the nations. **So it wasn't a blessing that Ephraim ... 'You're going to be wicked and evil and break My laws and I am going to cast you out to the earth and some day you're going to become the United States of America and you are going to become Great Britain and rule world.'** ... **No. That is not what it says and that is not who they are.** I know there is people that will believe that falsely. It is called British Israelitism which is a racist doctrine, something we do not preach because it is not Biblical and it is not accurate. The fact that you could have Israelites living in Great Britain or America does not make Great Britain and America, the land of Israel. When Israel in 586 BC, when the Jews were taken into captivity in Babylon and there were several million that were taken there, did Babylon all of a sudden become Israel because now 2 million Jews were living there? No, not what-so-ever.

So then we see, like we said, this happened 721. You have a short period of time there **where Judah is still not believing that they could be cast out because they controlled Jerusalem and that was Yahweh's throne** and Yahweh is going to dwell there forever, "So we are safe, we are never going to get cast out." They don't do much better than Israel did. We know that there is a king named Manasseh who was worse than any king that was with them before that and Manasseh, because of that, Yahweh says to Manasseh that, you know, He's just going to take Judah away from being a nation. Of course, we know after that there is King Josiah who is a real good righteous king but it didn't make a difference. The setting was already set, Israel was going to go into captivity and like we said, we know from 609 BC the 1<sup>st</sup> siege that was coming on Jerusalem going all the way to 573, there is 5 different sieges by the Babylonians. The last siege in 586, they destroyed what we know is the Temple and then they leave some vagrants there for a few years but that didn't go that well either and eventually they all wound up down in Egypt.

So now the land is basically desolate and Yahweh says the land is going to rest from that time. Yahweh did specifically give the time period though that Judah would be out of the land; He said it would be 70 years that they would have rest in the land. And then in 539 BC, 70 years from the 1<sup>st</sup> siege, what happens? The Persian King Cyrus, they come in, they sneak into Babylon by night, they divert the water in to a different direction, they come underneath the gate, they open up the two-leaf doors just like it talks about in Isaiah 45 and in one night they total sack Babylon. Jeremiah 50 and 51, talks about end-time Babylon's destruction. **When you look at Jeremiah 50 and 51 and the complete destruction ... that never happened in 539 BC. There's no fleeing of Jews, there's no mass murdering of people, nothing ... 1 night, without even really a big battle, they came in and overtook the Babylonians.** King Cyrus finds out that this was actually written about him in the Bible by Yahweh and he is so impressed that he says, "Wow, I am going to let the Jews not only to go back to Jerusalem , I'm not only going to support your rebuilding of the temple, I 'll give you a royal guard. I'll pay for everything, I'll give you everything that you need, you know, just you let me know what it's going to be."

So then the Jews come back, they start rebuilding the 2<sup>nd</sup> Temple now. We know from the book of Nehemiah, he's building the walls and all the things over there. And it's not such a real real happy time though for a very simple reason, when you see the glory ... it talks about Haggai of the second temple and how they looked at and compared it to Solomon's Temple. The people actually cried because some of them were alive and saw Solomon's Temple and now they are seeing, you know, this Temple that never had the Shekinah. The Ark of the Covenant was not there; the Shekinah glory was never in that Temple either and it was just a very different situation. **Israel was not a sovereign nation**, the way they were before. They had no king, they had no nothing. You know, they were basically back there; only 10% of the people came from Babylon. Most of them stayed in Babylon said, "Hey, I've got a good life in Babylon. I don't need to go there and have people shooting at us from the walls and risk the life of us and our family." So it was a really really hard time.

We know at 457 BC, that's when the decree goes out from Daniel, the 70 weeks to rebuild and restore Jerusalem. So you can do your math from there and count 483 years till the time of Messiah's going to come but it's a very much, you could say a black hole, in the history of the Jewish people from that point. Matter of fact ... oh, maybe we will just get into a little more of the history of it before we get down into the 4<sup>th</sup> century. But after that, what happens? You have the Persians that are kings until about **350AD or should be BC? (28:57)** and then all of a sudden the Greeks come in and Alexander the Great; he's a young general full of zeal, 20 years old, and within 12 years, he conquers the world. That's something that nobody ever did before. All the way, even to today, there's remnants of his battles that were going in Mongolia and Afghanistan, you know, coming all the way from Greece. And then at 32 years old, he gets poisoned by somebody, he dies; his kingdom is separated into his four generals but the two important ones **are the Seleucids to the north in Syria and the Ptolemies to the south in Egypt**. And you can see that Israel is right in between so they are kind of like a Greek sandwich in between there and whenever the Ptolemies are stronger, Israel is subservient to the Ptolemies; and whenever the Seleucids are stronger, Israel is subservient to them. And this is where the black hole kind of comes in the history. **If you look in the Talmud and the Mishnah, they say from about 350 BC to 170 BC there is really no great rabbis.** Their history, they don't even have a history, there's no great rabbis that's preaching but what's happening is, their civilization is being what is called 'Hellenized'. They are being very much assimilated into the Greek history. You know, if you look into the 1<sup>st</sup> century ... some of you who came to Caesarea, you saw the Hippodrome there. You saw the theatre. These are things you would never see in ancient Israel, you know, the whole cult culture. Even sometimes how we know the time period is by the Corinthian pillars. You know in the Herodian time period, everything was built according to the Greek and the Roman culture that you didn't have back then.

But again, what's going to happen? The same as we said, **Yahweh's whole plan was to keep His people separated from the world and if they're not separated you are going to assimilate and you are going to be like them**. You know, we are going to see that this is something that started with Abraham and still goes until today. In the wilderness, it was the same thing. **You will see some of the most ... strongest of faith, good righteous holy people, and then all of a sudden, what was the disaster?** Yahweh blessed them and they grew in numbers and every time the number got too big, what would happen? You know, as it got too big, you would have people that would want to assimilate and be part of the world and then the remnant would have to break off and move on and then the other people would become part of the world. It's happened over and over and over again from the beginning and that's why today, you might have 2 billion people in the world that, technically, their lineage goes back to Israelite. So are they Israelite today? Absolutely not, you know, they have intermarried, they interwoven into different societies so the fact that maybe, if you put your lineage long ago to 2-3,000 years ago, they can go back to one of the 12 tribes, doesn't mean anything today. Because they have no connection, they have no connection to the ancient culture or the people or whatever.

So this is what started to happen. They had this great Hellenization that's when they brought in the 'kephah'. It talks about it in the book of Maccabees, you know, that the Greeks forced the little skull cap that comes from the false god Hermes and that's when they started doing those things. They started going to gymnasium. You know 'gymnasium', you have heard that word before. It's a Greek word, it means 'naked men' because that's where they are coming and doing all their gymnastics and they are doing all their things and there is a whole different culture that is coming. So it is very different now, **that even though Israel is still living in this land, they are not sovereign. There is no King David, there is no King Saul; there isn't even a King Ahab. You know, they're basically a people that are here that trying to survive.**

So now what happens? You get the year 196 BC, a really important year for two reasons. Number 1, you get a religious movement coming out of that saying, "If we don't do something. If we don't do something, Judaism will be ended. We'll lose our whole culture. We will be completely assimilated with the nations." So they came up with something called the 'Sanhedrin' ... we read about it even in Chapter 6 of Acts. The Sanhedrin was a group of 70 Elders, a council; 35 Pharisees, 35 Sadducees and 1 high priest. Who are the Pharisees and Sadducees? We will talk about it in a minute when we get into Antiochus Epiphanies. And yet **the Essenes, they realized there was a corruption here, they realized that things were not the way that Yahweh had made it; they were not part of it.** So the Essenes go down to Qumran. They leave the community in Jerusalem, they go down to Qumran. They did have other places in Israel but that's their main place they are going at that time. So it's interesting though the same year that the Sanhedrin starts, it's the same year that the Essenes are separated. And that's why I said all the time, that always something would get big, they would get worldly and corrupted and there is always a remnant that would leave and that they would move on.

Then during the year 169-170 BC, you have the Syrian king Antiochus Epiphanies, the Seleucid king, that he becomes very strong. He's trying to unite the whole empire and now, how is he going to do that? He is saying, "These Jews are stopping it, they are too rigid, they're too much into their own way. They are too separated; we are going to have to stop it." So where the Jews, as far as culture goes they were falling in line. They were following the culture, they had no problem with it, they liked the nice dainty things of the Greek culture but now when he said, "You cannot circumcise your children, your male children on the 8<sup>th</sup> day. You are not going to be able to keep Shabbat, you know, you are not going to be able to do these things." What happens? They revolt and there is a man called Matthias Maccabees from Modi'im (near the airport) he has 3 sons, you know, that are going to be with him and they are going to fight; Judas Maccabees, Yonatan Maccabees, Shimon Maccabees and they are going to fight a guerrilla war. Because really, they are a small priestly family, they are farmers, they are not military; they don't have an army, they don't have these things but **they start this guerrilla war in the hills of Modi'im. They spread out and to the amazement of themselves and history, they start winning these battles.** They start winning the battles.

In the book of Daniel, it says that the Temple would be 2300 evenings and mornings; it would be desecrated until it was rededicated, 1150 days. **And exactly to the day, 1150 days from when Antiochus Epiphanies burned a pig on the altar in Jerusalem, what they called the 'abomination of desolation'; exactly 1150 days later was the day of 'Hanukah' which means 'rededication'.** And that's when they retook the Temple and came in ... Actually the story, I don't know if you ever heard of a story that they only had enough oil for 1 day and the menorah burned for 9 days. That is not in any writing; that's an oral tradition, that maybe just a legend but even in the Talmud and the Mishnah, it is not written. It's not written anywhere there but it is a story that Jews tell from generation to generation.

But we do know, which is a fact, the Temple was rededicated. The Temple was rededicated and one of the sons of Simon becomes the priest and the man John Hyrcanus who is also ... they are called Hasmoneans now because that is where they came from. So **the Pharisees are more of a working, more for the working class.** They're people that are more into all the oral writing

that were coming up from the 2<sup>nd</sup> century BC and they are into this. **The Hasmoneans were the people that became the Sadducees;** they only believed in the 5 books of Moses, they didn't believe in all the other writings, they were wealthy. They were aristocrats and as we see time going on here, they actually sold the priesthood to people who were not really Levites and not priests. So the problems didn't really get better they only got worse. They only got worse and now there is all this inter-fighting and **structure?**( 38:00) that going on within them.

67 BC now, we get to the point that a man by the name of John Hyrcanus II? (38:10); he's a Hasmonean, he's backed by Pharisees, he's fought his brother, Aristobulus who is a Sadducee. The two brothers are fighting each other and they call Rome for help, they are calling Rome for help.

In 63 BC, Pompey comes in .There is actually a king who was an Armenian king that unbeknownst to Rome coming down into this area and why is this area important? You know, if all you are having is fighting and inter-fighting and there is really no gold that they are looking for. There is no resources that they are looking for, **why would they care about Israel? Because Israel is the gate-way to the Middle East;** you know when you look, the ports of Tyre and Sidon, you know where they would call the 'Iron Triangle' where the ships of Tarshish would come from Spain over here to Tyre and they would go to the whole world. So this is why it was an extremely important place because it connected Europe to the Middle East, just as today. You know, that's why it's an extremely important place.

So as Rome starts to see the Armenian king is coming down toward what we would know today as Lebanon, the area in the north of Israel, what does he do? He decides that he has got to go and fight, he conquers the Armenian king and **now Israel, as we know it, is controlled by the Romans and they rename it Palestine.** That's where the name Palestine comes from. They don't like the Jewish people very much because the Jewish people don't like them very much and again they are trying to fight against the Roman occupation. And I have said this before, if you were a Roman soldier and you were sent to Jerusalem, either you really really had somebody upset or you did some kind of punishment, you did something wrong. It was not the place you wanted to come to. It would be, today, being banished over to the West Bank; you know, being banished to Nablus or Jenin, you know, into one of those places, if you'd survive. That is the way they looked at it in those days.

And when Rome comes in here, they divide it into 4 areas; they have Judah, Samaria, Galilee and Peraea on the other side of the Jordan River; Judah, Samaria, Galilee and Peraea. Then in 53 BC, Pompey, Julius Caesar and Crassius alliance from Rome falls apart, Crassius dies, Caesar beats Pompey in a war and although Rome is still a republic, Caesar takes totalitarian rule. So now Rome is changing, itself; it's going from a republic to more of a totalitarian rule. And after Julius Caesar, everyone will be called Caesar ... becomes a title. For Julius Caesar it was his actual name ... was Julius Caesar.

Aristobulus was imprisoned for years under Pompey, he makes friends with Caesar, he is released, he is poisoned and he dies. Arcanus makes a pact with Caesar; he declares the High Priest is hereditary to Arcanus line in return. So you see a lot now of political maneuvering going on but it is going to affect the priesthood that is in Jerusalem. **And these things are important as we start getting into New Testament stories and hopefully you'll understand these stories a little more by understanding the background.**

There is a man called Antipater II; he is a wealthy Edomite, he's a powerful landowner and he is an ally of Pompey. He now makes an ally with Caesar, he becomes more powerful in Israel than Arcanus, the High Priest, and his son becomes governor of Galilee. His name is Herod the Great. Herod the Great is the son of Antipater; he makes close ties with his Roman overlords, he suppresses his Jewish subjects. Herod's wife was a descendent of the Hasmonians. So you see now how the Hasmonians who are descendants from the Maccabees, Herod marries into that

figuring it's going to help him in his political premise but Herod realizes really quick, that he is not going to get too far. The Jews don't like him. Even though under the time of the Maccabees, in a place called Merishah ... some of you were with us there, BeitGorvin. Remember when we were thereand we went in the underground caves that were over there.

At the time, most of the people that were there were Edomites were converted to Judaism, so Herod was half-Jew, you know, at least through his conversion. But the Jews didn't like him. They knew that he wasn't dedicated or loyal to the religion of Judaism or the people of Judaism and **he realized right away that his best bet was being loyal to Rome, not to his Jewish subjects. And the more that he can oppress his Jewish subjects, the better it was going to be for his political life.**

I'll read you here this about his wealth just to show you the wealth of Herod. It says, "According to one estimate Herod's yearly income was at least 13 million denarii, a sum equal in today's terms of over \$1.6 million. His wealth acquired from several sources. Taxes on agricultural produce, for example, was 1/4<sup>th</sup>, 1/3<sup>rd</sup> on grain and up to ½ the yield on fruit. Until Cleopatra took them from him, Herod owned balsam plantations in Jericho and EinGedi, manufacturing a perfume from this mysterious plant that was worth its weight in gold. Herod extracted tolls and duties from the caravans bringing spices like frankincense and myrrh from Arabia across his territories to the port in Gaza." **Remember Herod was originally from Idumaea ... Nabateans**... coming over there, so all of the spice routes, he had his hand in all of that from his father. "Much of the economy of Judea was stimulated by the existence of the Temple. Doves and other animals were raised for sacrifice" ... some of you got to see actually where he did this ... "and sold in the markets of Jerusalem together with incense and all other items required by visitors and pilgrims. Of all these, Herod imposed taxes." So although he was an evil person, I mean he was an extremely evil person, we'll see what he did to his family; he was at least smart, he was a business man. He was a business man.

Then at 44 BC Julius Caesar is murdered by Brutus and Cassius. Mark Anthony, who is the official from Egypt, and Caesar's nephew Octavian (Octavian becomes Augustus Caesar) take over. There is a struggle for control. Mark Anthony goes to Egypt with Princess Cleopatra, Octavian paints him as a traitor; they battle off the coast of Greeceand Augustus wins. Mark Anthony goes back to Egypt and kills himself, Augustus is now the Emperor. So Octavian who becomes Augustus Caesar is now the Emperor. Antipator, Herod's father, was poisoned at this time.

Then at 37 BC after many battles, Herod takes control under Rome, of Jerusalem. So ruthless and paranoid that he has his wife Mariamne and her mother Alexandra killed because they were too close with him. This is Herod now. So he kills his wife, he kills his mother. He was also pretty close with it the Emperor Augustus. He then has his 2 sons, Aristobulus and Alexander, killed because he is afraid they may try to overtake the throne. And then Augustus the Caesar says, "It is better to be Herod's pig than to be Herod's son." Two sages, when they heard that Herod was on his deathbed ... Herod put this gigantic golden eagle up on the Temple of Yahweh ... and when they heard he was on his deathbed, went up and ripped **the Temple down or should be the eagle down? ( 46:15)**and Herod had them buried alive.We know from Matthew 2, maybe we will go there. We know what he did in the New Testament, so it shouldn't surprise us when we read about some of his background.

**Mat 2:1-9** *And when Yahshua had been born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king, behold, magi arrived from the east to Jerusalem, saying, where is He born King of the Jews? For we saw His star in the east and have come to worship Him. But Herod the king having heard this, he was troubled and all Jerusalem with him. And having gathered all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he asked of them where the Messiah was to be born. And they said to him, In Bethlehem of Judea, for so it has been written by the prophet, "And you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judea, in no way are you least among the governors of Judah, for out of you shall come out One ruling, who shall shepherd My people Israel."* Then

*secretly calling the magi, Herod asked of them **exactly the time** of the star appearing. And sending them to Bethlehem, he said, having gone, exactly inquire about the child. And when you find Him, bring me word again so that coming I may also worship Him. And having heard the king, they departed. And, behold! The star which they saw in the east went before them until it had come and stood over where the child was.*

Then I'll drop down to verse 12 ... **Mat 2:12-13***And having been warned by a dream not to return to Herod, they went back into their own country by another way. And they having departed, a Cherub of YAHWEH appeared to Joseph by a dream, saying, Rise up! Take the child and His mother with you, and flee into Egypt. And be there until I shall tell you. For **Herod is about to look for the child in order to destroy Him*** ...Again, you always see this, the seed trying to kill the seed.

**Mat 2:14-16***And rising up, Joseph took along the child and His mother by night and withdrew into Egypt. And he was there until the end of Herod, that might be fulfilled that spoken by YAHWEH through the prophet, saying, "Out of Egypt I have called My Son." Then seeing that he was mocked by the magi, Herod was greatly enraged, and having sent, **he killed all the boys in Bethlehem and in all its districts, from two years old and under**, according to the time which he exactly asked from the magi ...So we see, just a ruthless person; killed his own wife, killed her mother, killed his own children and killed here all the babies.*

After Herod's death, Herod the Great (and now Herod is also a title, there is other Herods that we are going to see) the kingdom is divided between Archelaus, his son; Philip Herod that ruled up here in the north; Antipas Herod who ruled Galilee; and then in 26 AD a man by the name of Pontius Pilate, he takes over rule in Judea . And Augusta Caesar dies at the age of 76 in 14 AD and this is what you are dealing with as Yahshua's coming on the scene.

So before His ministry you are in total disarray; **you have a divided country**, you have even within the religious realm, you know, you have the Sadducees that are now aristocrats. They are doing pretty good, their political appointments, they are trying to keep the status quo and then you have the Pharisees that are more the average people, they are more of the zealous religious people. Their beliefs are very different; you know, the Pharisees go by the oral law, they believe in reincarnation, all these things. The Sadducees are only believing in the 5 books of Moses, the Sadducees are controlling the Temple because they are the priests; the Pharisees are not priests but the Pharisees control the synagogues. So again, even though the hagim, the pilgrim feasts, are all being controlled in Jerusalem, on a weekly basis, you know, things are being controlled by the Pharisees. And of course, like I said, we have the Essenes that withdrew from all of this. They are not even part of the system. Then you also have people who are called 'Zealots'. Zealots are religious people that want to take back by force; they are freedom fighters, they want to fight against Rome, they want to have a physical war and they want to take it back.

So now you have **Rome who is the occupier** and Israel is important to their kingdom, they can't lose it because again they have enemies that go east of Israel in Parthia and these other areas, so they need to keep the peace here. They try to appease the Jews as much as possible but at the same rate, if you are on the wrong side of the law, they are going to be ruthless. **They are not going to put up with for a minute for insurrection or anything that is going to come against their rule.** A matter of fact, even on the day of Yom Kippur, they would hold the priestly garments in Fort Antonia and if the Jews caused any type of disturbance, they wouldn't give the priestly garments to the priests so he couldn't keep Yom Kippur.

So now, this is what you are dealing with. Now if you were an average person and you're living here at that time, there's times when **there were up to 500 people being crucified a day on trees**. Just think how you would feel. You know, if you're a person that is believing in the Torah; you know, you're looking for the promises of Israel, you see all this disarray, you see all this religious hypocrisy and on the other end you see people who just don't even care. It's kind of

everybody out for themselves, so it wasn't really a time of real hope for the people. They didn't know what was going to come from there and they were very scared also. You know, were the Romans just going to do away with us? What's going to happen?

But one thing is because of the prophecy in Daniel, **they knew, they had Messianic expectations**. They were all looking for a second Moses, they were looking for a deliverer. They didn't know how he would come, they didn't why he would come but **they all knew something's going to come; someone's going to come**. A matter of fact, from the beginning of the 1<sup>st</sup> century AD we know when we look in history, there were **at least 10 or 20 false Messiahs** that showed up; people that were trying to get armies together, that were going to fight and then it didn't happen. Then another one came and it didn't happen, then another one came and it didn't happen. So you could see that even though they didn't want to lose hope, they didn't know where to turn to. **There were very very much in disarray. What do we do from here? How do our lives change? How did we get to this spot? We're the chosen people. You know, how did we get from the parting of the Red Sea and being here under King David just a few hundred years ago, how did we get to this spot?** And that's the way the people believed.

But certainly they were not looking for spiritual analogies; they weren't looking for a warm fuzzy feeling in the heart. **They were looking for a King David. They were looking for somebody that was going to be able to free them**; that this tortured life that they have had now for the last several hundred years now was going to be over. So let's ... now let's start looking at some scriptures understanding the background and try to piece it all together. Luke the 6<sup>th</sup> chapter, or John, I'm sorry; John the 6<sup>th</sup> chapter, verse 14 and 15.

**Joh 6:14-15** *Then seeing what miraculous sign Yahshua did, the men said, This is truly the Prophet ... What Prophet? Remember we went over in Deuteronomy 18? They are thinking Yahshua's go to be it! He's the prophet that Moses talked about ...truly they said, the One coming into the world. Then knowing that they were about to come and seize Him, that they might make Him king, Yahshua withdrew again to the mountain alone by Himself ...So as soon as they saw everything that He was doing, they were going to, by force, say, "C'mon, take over the kingship! We believe it, you're the guy. Do what you're supposed to do."*

Luke 24 and verse 19, this is when Yahshua is on the road to Emmaus, remember? And they didn't know who He was and they are saying, "Don't you know the things that have happened the last few days?"

**Luk 24:19-21** *And He said to them, What things? And they said to Him, The things concerning Yahshua the Nazarene, who was a man, a prophet mighty in deed and word before YAHWEH and all the people; and how the chief priests and our rulers delivered Him to the judgment of death, and crucified Him. But we were hoping that He is the One going to redeem Israel. But then with all these things, this third day comes today since these things happened.*

**They were hoping He was going to be the One to redeem Israel.** Are you getting in your mind? See, we are looking at this 2,000 years later and like I said, all of us are brought up from a Christian perspective. You know, we are brought up that with the Christian theology, you know, Jesus died for our sins and we all need to accept that, which is true to that degree but like I said for these people, they didn't have that theology. They didn't understand that. **When they were looking for a Messiah, they were looking for one thing; they were looking for a second David. They were looking for a guy that was going to be strong, that was going to be led by Yahweh, that was going to follow the Torah and was going to kill their enemies. It was that simple.** That's what they were looking for. They didn't understand the other parts. **They didn't understand that if Yahshua would have taken over as king, none of them would have been in the kingdom because all of them committed sins under the 1<sup>st</sup>**

**covenant that were never paid for.** But you have to understand the mentality to understand what they were thinking about.

Acts 1, Acts the 1<sup>st</sup> chapter, this is after Yahshua is resurrected. He is right getting ready to ascend to heaven.

**Act 1:3-6** those who also to whom He revealed Himself while alive after He had suffered. **With numerous signs for forty days He was being seen by them, and He spoke concerning the Kingdom of YAHWEH.** And while He ate bread with them, He charged them not to leave Jerusalem, but to await the promise of the Father, Which you heard of Me; for John indeed baptized in water, but you will be baptized in the Holy Spirit not many days after. Then, indeed, coming together they questioned Him, saying, **Master, do You restore the kingdom to Israel at this time?** ... Now, this is after He is resurrected and **they are still not understanding.** "You know, what's going on here? You know, are you going to restore the kingdom to Israel at this time?"

Luke 6 and verse 15. Luke 6 and verse 15. Talking about the apostles ...

**Luk 6:15** Matthew and Thomas; Jacob the son of Alpheus, and Simon, the one being called Zealot ... Simon, the one being called Zealot ... So Simon is a Zealot and what is a Zealot? A Zealot was one of the ones, like we said, they wanted to take the kingdom by force. So again, **I'm trying to give you a background that you are understanding under what parameters the New Testament is being writ and the mindset of the people, that they weren't Christians.** They weren't being born knowing internally, that they all have sinned and we all need somebody to pay the penalty of our sins. That was not a concept to them, they had no idea about this. This is something that had to be revealed to them later through the scriptures. But they were pragmatic people, they are under occupation. **Every single person had somebody in their family that was killed and they are looking to have their lives changed.** You know, you had unbelievable famines that were going on in the land.

Matter of fact, when the Romans destroyed the Temple, how did they do it? You know, there was the great revolt in 66. The Jews came and overtook Fort Antonia; things looked good for maybe up to a year but then the Romans said, "That's it. We're not playing games anymore." They came in in 68 with Titus and Vespasian, they made a surrounding around the city, they cut off any supplies of food and water and they basically just starved the people out. If you read Josephus about it, you'll see that people were literally eating their children. "Today we'll eat my child, tomorrow we'll eat your child." And that's how bad it got. But that is the way they would do it. They'd say, "Hey, why should we go in there and have some of our soldiers killed in fighting? Close off the city, starve them out, let them kill each other and then we will go in when they are too weak for who's ever left, to clean it up." But this is the way they were looking at it.

So the apostles, the same ... probably 2 even being Zealots ... they were thinking to themselves; they knew Yahshua was the Messiah, they believed it. We know that Peter, remember at Caesarea Philippi, he said, "You are the Messiah, the Son of Yahweh." **But they were all waiting, at what point is He going to fight?** At what point, "Okay, we hear the love and we hear forgiving our enemy, we hear all these things. We agree, they are real nice sayings, you know, but at what point now? You're the Messiah, at what point are you going to bring this kingdom back to us?" And there is a point when this happens that Yahshua says some things that they are thinking, *this is the time that it's going to happen.* And when is that? His very last Passover. Let's go to Luke 22, Luke 22 and verse 23.

**Luk 22:23** And they began to inquire among themselves who then it may be of them, the one being about to do this ... Yahshua had just said to them, "One of you is going to betray Me."

**Luk 22:24-30** And there was also a dispute among them, who of them seems to be greater. And Yahshua said to them, The kings of the Gentiles are their masters and those who are authorities

over them are called doers of good. But you be not so, but the greater among you, let him be as the lesser; and the one governing as the one serving. For who is greater, the one reclining, or the one serving? Is it not the one reclining? But I am in your midst as One serving. But you are those continuing with Me during my trial. And **I appoint a kingdom to you**, as My Father appointed to Me, that you may eat and **drink at My table in My kingdom**; and **you will sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel** ... Wow, what do you think they are thinking at this point? You know, they are hearing this now. They are going to be sitting on thrones judging the 12 tribes of Israel. Then Peter, He tells Peter he is going to deny Him.

**Luk 22:35-36** And He said to them, When I sent you without a purse, or a wallet, or sandals, did you lack anything? And they said, Nothing. Then He said to them, But now, the one having a purse, let him take it; likewise also a wallet. And the one not having, let him sell his garment, and **let him buy a sword** ... Finally, finally we're going to go, we're going to fight!

**Luk 22:37-38** For I say to you that this that has been written must yet be fulfilled in Me: "And He was numbered with the wicked." For the things concerning Me will be fulfilled. And they said, **Master, behold, here are two swords**. And He said to them, It is sufficient ... Now, they didn't know that **according to Roman law, you had to have at least 2 weapons to get the death penalty. If not, it's not an insurrection**. So He's saying simply so He can fulfill the prophecy and be arrested as an insurrectionist and be put to death. But what are they thinking? **They are thinking it's time to fight, it's time to fight, finally, He's going to fight. Finally we are going to get everything He's talking about**. Then we drop down to verse 47.

**Luk 22:47-51** And as He was yet speaking, behold, a crowd! ... He's in the garden of Gethsemane ... And the one called Judas, one of the Twelve, came in front of them and drew near to Yahshua in order to kiss Him. And Yahshua said to him, Judas, do you betray the Son of Man with a kiss? And those around Him seeing that about to occur, they said to Him, **Master, shall we strike with the sword?** And a certain one of them struck the slave of the high priest and cut off his right ear... We know that it is Simon Peter ... And answering, Yahshua said, Allow it until this. And touching his ear, He healed him.

Then we know what happens after that. They took Him away and the apostles all fled and they are wondering, "What on earth happened? What happened? **Wasn't He just telling us that we are going to be over the 12 tribes of Israel? Didn't He tell us to get swords? We know He's the Son of Yahweh, what's going on here?**" So when you see the doubt that is coming later, the doubt isn't coming from Him being the Messiah. The doubt is coming from, what is the plan? "What is the plan? You know, we are under occupation. We are being killed everyday. Okay, we don't understand this. **We know you're the Messiah. We believe in that. We are believing in the resurrection but what now? When will Israel be restored to its former greatness?"**

**Mat 26:59-66** And the chief priests and the elders and the whole Sanhedrin **looked for false testimony against Yahshua, so that they might put Him to death**, but did not find any, even though there were many false witnesses coming forward, they did not find any. But at last, coming up two false witnesses said, This One said, I am able to destroy the sanctuary of Elohim, and in three days to rebuild it. And standing up, the high priest said to Him, Do you answer nothing? What do these witness against you? But Yahshua kept silent. And answering, the high priest said to Him, **I put You on oath by the living Elohim that You tell us if You are the Messiah, the Son of Elohim**. Yahshua said to him, You said it. **I tell you more. From this time you shall see the Son of Man sitting off the right hand of YAHWEH in power**, and coming on the clouds of the heaven. Then the high priest tore his garments, saying, **He blasphemed!** Why do we have any more need of witnesses? Behold, now you have heard His blasphemy. What does it seem to you? And answering, they said, **He is deserving of death**.

Now we know from Talmudic writings that if somebody commits blasphemy, they are to get scourged **but if you commit blasphemy using the name of Yahweh, it's the death penalty** so we know, **Yahshua clearly used the sacred name here**. There's no doubt about it. Also Leviticus 24:16, says similar.

**Lev 24:16** *And he who blasphemeth the name of YAHWEH surely shall die. All the congregation shall certainly cast stones at him. As to the alien, so to a native, when he blasphemeth the Name, he shall be executed ... And chances are, when Yahshua was being crucified, they were also pelting Him with stones as He was up there.*

John 18, John 18. They just had one problem though, according to Roman law they could not, they didn't have the ability to put somebody to death. So although according to their law, they would have wanted to; according to Roman law, they couldn't. John 18:29 and this is now when Yahshua is with Pilate.

**Joh 18:29-38** *Then Pilate went out to them and said, What accusation do you bring against this man? They answered and said to him, If this One were not an evildoer, then we would not have delivered Him to you. Then Pilate said to them, You take Him and judge Him according to your own Law. Then the Jews said to him, It is not lawful for us to put anyone to death, (that the Word of Yahshua which He said might be fulfilled, signifying by what kind of death He was about to die). Then Pilate again went into the praetorium and called Yahshua, and said to Him, Are You the King of the Jews? Yahshua answered him, Do you say this from your heart, or did others tell you about Me? Pilate answered, am I a Jew? Your nation, even the chief priests, delivered You up to me! What did You do? Yahshua answered, My kingdom is not of this world. If My kingdom were of this world, My servants would have fought that I might not be delivered up to the Jews. But now My kingdom is not from here. Then Pilate said to Him, Are You really a king? Yahshua answered, You say that I am a king. For this purpose I have been born, and for this I have come into the world, that I might witness to the Truth. Everyone being of the Truth hears My voice. Pilate said to Him, What is truth? And saying this, he again went out to the Jews and said to them, I do not find even one crime in Him!*

**And he knew they were only trying to kill Him because of their envy** and we know that Pilate's wife had a dream, don't get involved with this man, He is righteous and Pilate is trying to get Him off the hook because He realizes he doesn't want to be the conduit because they are trying to kill Him because of something in Jewish law. Yet at the same rate before that, what happens? Matthew 22. So His crime in the end is insurrection. Remember, according to Roman Law, they put on top of you what your crime is and what did they say, "**Here is Yahshua of Nazareth, the King of the Jews.**" That was His crime; **His crime was claiming to be a king according to Roman Law, that's death if you do that.** And that's why in Matthew 22 and verse 15

**Mat 22:15-18** *Then going, the Pharisees took counsel so as they might trap Him in words. And they sent to Him their disciples with the Herodians, saying, Teacher, we know that You are true, and teach the way of YAHWEH in truth, and it does not concern You about anyone, for You do not look to the face of men. Then tell us, what do You think? Is it lawful to give the head tax to Caesar, or not? But knowing their wickedness, Yahshua said, Why do you tempt Me, hypocrites?*

Now, **why was this such a loaded question?** Because there was no answer you can give. Remember Rome is killing 500 Jews a day and if He says, "Yes, it's lawful to give taxes to Caesar", what do you think they are using the tax money for? They are using the tax money to kill Jews. But if He says, "No, it's not lawful to give money to Caesar", then what is going to happen? They are going to go back to the government and say, "This man is causing an insurrection. He's telling people not to pay his tax." So it was a trick question. **Either way, whatever He answered, they were going to get Him.** But Yahshua has the perfect answer and that is why He says, "Why do you tempt me, you hypocrites."

**Mat 22:19-22** Show Me the tribute coin. And they brought a denarius to Him. And He said to them, Whose image and inscription is this?... You know, just like Yahweh, we are made in His likeness and in His image ... And He said to them, Whose image and inscription is this? They said to Him, Caesar's. Then He said to them, then give to Caesar the things of Caesar, and to YAHWEH the things of YAHWEH. And hearing, they marveled. And leaving Him, they went away ... So again, this is where **they were so evil trying to trap Him** and He's dealing in these circumstances where you had a ... occupying government, you know, that you are going to get in trouble here and you had the religious authorities and you are getting trouble here and He was in a no-win situation. Back to John 19 and verse 6.

**Joh 19:6** Then when the chief priests and the guards saw Him, they cried out, saying, Crucify! Crucify! Pilate said to them, **You take Him and crucify Him, for I do not find one crime in Him!**... So Pilate still not trying to be used by them as He knows what they are doing.

**Joh 19:7-13** Then the Jews answered him, **We have a law**, and according to our Law He ought to die because He made Himself Son of Elohim! Then when Pilate heard this word, he was more afraid. And he entered into the praetorium again and said to Yahshua, From where are You? But Yahshua did not give him an answer. So Pilate said to Him, Do You not speak to me? Do You not know that I have authority to crucify You, and I have authority to release You? Yahshua answered, You would have no authority over me whatsoever, if it had not been given to you from above ... Judicial Order ... Because of this, he who delivered me to you, his sin is greater than yours. And because of this, Pilate was wanting to release Him, but the Jews were crying out, **If you release this man you are not a friend of Caesar. For every one who makes himself a king is an adversary of Caesar.** Now when Pilate heard this word, he brought Yahshua outside and sat upon the judgment seat in a place that is called the Pavement of Stones but in Hebrew, is called Gabbatha ... outcropping knoll and it's stone in the Praetorium.

**Joh 19:14-16** And it was the Preparation of the Passover, and about the sixth hour. And he said to the Jews, Behold, your King! But they were crying out, Take Him away! Take Him away! Crucify Him! Crucify Him! Pilate said to them, Should I crucify your king? The chief priests said to him, **We have no king but Caesar!** ... What hypocrisy! ... Therefore, then, he delivered Him up to them, that He might be crucified. And they took Yahshua and led Him away.

So now we see what is behind here. Let's go to 1 or 2 more scriptures before we end for today. Luke 23 and verse 21

**Luk 23:31** For if they do these things in **a live green tree**, what may take place in the dry?

So literally, **He is being killed in a living tree**. He is not being killed on a dead piece of wood. People ask, "What did he carry?" He would have carried the cross-beam; He could not carry a cross. As a matter of fact, they did not even do crucifixions in Jerusalem, there was no hardwood forests; they usually crucified people on trees. They did crucify people on crosses in the Roman Empire and even if there was a cross, it weighs about 450 pounds. You can't carry it. What you would carry is the cross-beam which is about 40-50 pounds, which is doable. But now when you look in Luke 24 in verse 9, you can understand it a little better.

**Luk 24:9-13** And returning from the tomb, they reported all these things **to the Eleven**, and to all the rest... This is when Mariam of Magdalene finds out He's alive ... And they were Mariam Magdalene, Joanna, and Mariam mother of Jacob, and the rest with them, who told these things to the apostles. And **their words seemed like foolishness to them**, and they did not believe them. But rising up, Peter ran to the tomb, and stooping down he saw the linen lying alone. And he went away **wondering** to himself at what had happened. And, behold, two of them were going on the same day... and that's when he sees ... we talked about that already ... But he went away wondering to himself at what had happened.

So when you see, when He appears to them and it says *but some doubted*, you'd say, "But how can they doubt, He's right before them?" **They are not doubting His resurrection, they are not doubting He is the Messiah. What they are doubting is; what is going on**, what is the plan, what's happening from here. They didn't understand that the Messiah was no just coming as a second David to restore the glorious kingdom to Israel that once was. They didn't understand that at first the Messiah must suffer and die for the sins of the people and pay the penalty for their sins and fulfill the 1<sup>st</sup> covenant so that there could be a new covenant. They didn't understand it. But then, once Yahshua was resurrected and they got the Holy Spirit, their minds started to be open to this.

So I am going to stop there for today. But like I said, really you can't get into the Early Congregation without giving the background. You have to understand what's behind it; you have to understand the promises, you have to understand Israel's rejection of those promises, their diaspora, you know, the inter-testament period that comes. The Hellenization that was coming to Israel during the time of the Greek and the Romans; all of the different political things that were going on, **all the inter-fighting and what exactly was the environment as Yahshua is making His birth and then His ministry**, you know, in 26/27 AD in the 1<sup>st</sup> century. And only by understanding all that can you really understand what's coming on now.

When we get into the next lesson on this, we'll get into now the New Testament congregation from Shavuot. You know, what are the changes now? We are going to see what is changing now at this point and what's progressing, what's happening. We will see what the early congregation believed. We'll see some of the things they were coming up with. We will see what happens when 15 years later, there is a big change and salvation is going to be open to another group of people. We'll see the apostle Paul come into the picture and his role that he plays in this and so many other things. So that's for next time. We'll stop here today. May Yahweh bless and Shabbat Shalom.