

Slide 1

The Trip to Bethlehem, The Traditional Christmas Story As A Guide to Spiritual Transformation by Hypatia Hasbrouck

Slide 2

The Foundations:

1. Bible stories have 3 levels of meaning: literal, moral, and metaphysical.
 - a. In Unity we are free to determine for ourselves if we believe the Bible as factual truth.
 - b. We believe in a metaphysical interpretation of the Bible.
 - i. Metaphysical literally translates as “beyond the physical.”
 - c. When we interpret Bible stories metaphysically we find personal meanings beyond the words printed on the page.
 - i. The “hidden” meanings for each of us.
2. In order for the Jesus story to be a myth, untrue, we have to accept that:
 - a. a committee of Jews fabricated a man to be the messiah.
 - b. They created a background for this man out of myths from the Romans, Egyptians, Greeks, Syrians, Hindus, Buddhists, and Chinese.
 - c. They gave this made up messiah character traits that flew in the face of society, such as acceptance of women as equals, tolerance of non-Jews, friendship with “sinners,” and forgiveness of the Romans.
 - d. These men portrayed themselves badly and knowingly risked their own lives, some suffering death, while steadily proclaiming faith in their lie.
3. Truth is more than mere fact. Truth is the invisible, eternal principles which underlie everything that appears in the outer world.

Remember - This is a journey, a very personal journey. We are all in a constant state of moving along and within this journey. Success is not a linear path and neither is travel. We constantly move forward, circle back,

and then move on through life. Accept the process and wherever you are in it.

Slide 3

Stage One: For this journey we must release our inner Herod...The only enemy of the newborn Christ in our Christmas story.

Herod represents the egocentric ego.

Egocentricity is defined as limited in outlook or concern to one's own activities or needs : a self-centered person.

Slide 4

Stage Two: Follow the Star - Wisdom

Metaphysical meanings and symbolism in this stage of the journey:

- The Star - **Slide 5**
- The Magi - **Slide 6**
- The Camel - **Slide 7**
- The East - **Slide 8**
- Three - **Slide 9**

Slide 10

In unity we recognize the twelve powers of man. We believe that , when developed, these powers (or faculties) can lead to a life of unspeakable joy and glory.

These powers are represented in the twelve months of the year, the twelve disciples of Christ, and by 12 colors. For example, we have enjoyed this purple candle, as a representation of the power of Power and the disciple Philip, in the month of May.

As there are 12 stages to this journey it may not come as a surprise that each stage corresponds to one of the 12 powers.

Slide 11

Proverbs 2:1-11

Slide 12

The Power of Wisdom

Slide 13

Stage Two takes place before the traditional story begins - The Magi see the star in the east long before the traditional story begins, months before Mary learned she would give birth to the Christ.

Slide 14

When something stirs the inner Magi to action the mystical trip to Bethlehem begins.

WE move in consciousness from the murky notion of ourselves as mortal, limited creatures, isolated from one another and from God toward the bright view of ourselves as eternal, unlimited spiritual beings, inseparably united with one another and with God.

Slide 15

Mystical experiences take place within our own minds and hearts and can be expedited by meditation.

Regardless of where we think we are on the journey - contemplation of the star will stimulate intuition and show us where we really are.

Slide 16 - Meditation

Sit comfortably in your space, back straight, arms and legs uncrossed. Close your eyes.

Take ten breaths, focus on the breathing, just breathing

One, two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight, nine, ten

Now as you inhale, imagine there is white, or iridescent, light entering through the crown of your head.

Hold the breath, imagine the light increasing and radiating through your entire being.

Exhale while imagining the light radiating from you.

Repeat 10 Times...

Now, for another ten breaths think of nothing as you breathe in.

If this is difficult focus on the word “nothing” or a white screen

As you exhale, focus on the word “star”

Nothing, star,

nothing, star,

nothing, star,

nothing, star,

nothing, star,

nothing, star,

nothing star,

nothing, star,

nothing, star,

nothing, star

It is a cloudless night and the sky is filled with stars. You stand on a high hill with two robed companions. You are Magi, you decipher messages written by God in the patterns of the stars. This night, you watch as the constellation of the Jews rises on the eastern horizon. Within it is a point of light you have never seen before. To you, the new star heralds the birth of a new King, One who will rule the world as the agent of the one God. You focus upon the rising point of light as its glow brightens. The light radiates and streams into the center of your very being. Its cool brilliance dispels all darkness and you see what you need to see. The light reveals all that you need to know about yourself and the way you must travel. In silence you rest secure, knowing that the light makes all things clear.

Silence

Now as you inhale, imagine there is white, or iridescent, light entering through the crown of your head.

Hold the breath, imagine the light increasing and radiating through your entire being.

Exhale while imagining the light radiating from you.

Repeat 10 Times...

As you return to this time and this space, allow your eyes to flutter open, gradually become aware of your body and surroundings. Give thanks for this experience

Slide 17

