



# “Tuesdays with Pastor Jake”

Tuesday, December 5<sup>th</sup>  
in the year of our Lord, 2024

*Unfolding the Redemptive-Historical Promise of Christmas.*



## #1. “The Proto-Evangelium”

Lord willing, over the next four Tuesdays I'd like to unfold for you the Christmas story. We'll have to begin at the beginning, which is found in Genesis and is referred to as the “Proto-Evangelium” – otherwise known as the first announcement of the Gospel. Secondly, we'll have to look at the Virgin Birth of the Lord Jesus and what is known as the “Incarnation,” when God became man. Thirdly, we have to look at the angel's announcement that he who was born on that first Christmas morning was the Savior of the World. And finally, we'll have to say something about Jesus being a King, who rules on a Throne, over a Kingdom that never ends. It is my prayer these devotions will be a great source of blessing and encouragement to you during this Advent season.

I'm sure you've heard it before, but there is an old adage that says when you start a project, it's good to begin at the beginning. Sounds fair enough. There's a corollary to that thought by Stephen Covey in his book, The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People. He says you ought to 'start' your life with the 'end' in mind. If you know ahead of time what you want to accomplish and what your life should look like at the end, it's easy to get off to a great start and navigate through life's twists and turn.

In Genesis 3:15, we have something of a combination of these two thoughts. We have in this verse the beginning of the promise of Christmas which ultimately points to the end, or the fulfillment of that great promise. In this verse God is explaining the hope of humanity to the serpent in the presence of Eve – judgment for one and hope for the other respectfully. The promise is the seed of the woman (the Messiah) will conquer the seed of the serpent. The verse goes like this:

*“I (God) will put enmity between you (the serpent/devil) and the woman (Eve),  
and between your offspring and her offspring.  
He (the seed of the woman) shall crush your head, and you will strike his heel.”*

This verse shows us God always had a remedy for man's fall into sin and it centered on the coming work of His Son. Verse 15 is the 'first (proto) announcement (evangelium)' of this plan. It's important to understand 'more than meets the eye' is going on in this passage. It's probably fair to say that even Adam and Eve weren't fully aware of the significance of this promise. This is not just about a simple human experience in which snakes typically strike at the heel of a person while a person tries to step on, or crush its head. There is a *spiritual* dynamic that underlies these words. It's also not about a dualistic view of life, where good people (the people of God) fight against bad people (the people of the devil) and the good people win in the end. It's also not about Mary, the mother of our Lord. When Jerome translated the Scriptures into the Latin Vulgate, he mistakenly used the wrong Latin pronoun, *ipsa*, “she,” when he should have used masculine *ipse* “he.” The Douay-Rheims Bible carried on this error when they translated: “*she* shall crush thy head, and thou shalt lie in wait for her heel.” This has led some to refer to Mary as “The Undoer of Knots”. There's even a picture of Mary standing on a globe of the earth with her foot on the head of a snake. But the Hebrew words use the masculine pronouns which unmistakably refer to a singular *male* figure. Even Irenaeus of Lyon and other early church fathers saw this as a reference to Christ and his victory over the devil, not Mary. Os Guinness reminds us the first task of translating a passage of Scripture is to make sure we translate accurately. This passage says the seed of the woman will crush the head of the serpent – all masculine pronouns.

### So what?

Right here, at the very dawn of human history God shares a message of hope. It's a hope centered on the Lord Jesus. It's really a *trajectory* of hope that *starts* in Genesis, *runs* through and is modified thru'out the Old Testament and reaches its *end* in the person and work of the Lord Jesus. Phillips Brooks captures it well in the Carol, O Little Town of Bethlehem:

**“The hopes and fears of all the years are met in Thee tonight.”**

## Now this is a Thanksgiving Feast!



For Thanksgiving 2024, the U.S. Navy estimates galleys across the Fleet will prepare:

- |                                       |                                   |
|---------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| -44,815 pounds of Roast Turkey        | -11,457 pounds of Mashed Potatoes |
| -5,654 pounds of Stuffing             | -21,906 pounds of Sweet Potatoes  |
| -6,630 pounds of Green Bean Casserole | -4,606 pounds of Cranberry Sauce  |
| -11,960 gallons of gravy              | -23,678 assorted pies             |

*That's an awful lot of dishes for the Seaman!*

## A Christmas Catechism

The Twelve Days of Christmas, also known as Twelvetide, is a festive Christian season celebrating the Birth of Jesus. In 567, the Council of Tours 'proclaimed the twelve days from Christmas to Epiphany as a sacred and festive season, and established the duty of Advent fasting in preparation for the feast.' During the time of the English Reformation, it is thought that Roman Catholics used the Carol – "The Twelve Days of Christmas" as a catechetical tool to teach young people the elementary truths of the Christian faith. See if you can match the 'days' with their 'meaning'....

- |                               |                                     |
|-------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| 1. A partridge in a Pear Tree | a. The Beatitudes                   |
| 2. Two Turtle Doves           | b. The Days of Creation             |
| 3. Three French Hens          | c. The Fruits of the Spirit         |
| 4. Four Calling Birds         | d. The Gifts of the Spirit          |
| 5. Five Golden Rings          | e. The Commandments                 |
| 6. Six Geese a Laying         | f. The Old and New Testaments       |
| 7. Seven Swans a Swimming     | g. The Pentateuch                   |
| 8. Eight Maids a Milking      | h. Jesus, the Christ                |
| 9. Nine Ladies Dancing        | i. The Faithful Apostles            |
| 10. Ten Lords a Leaping       | j. The Gospels                      |
| 11. Eleven Pipers Piping      | k. Faith, Hope and Love             |
| 12. Twelve Drummers Drumming  | l. The points of the Apostles Creed |



1-h / 2-f / 3-k / 4-j / 5-i / 6-b / 7-c / 8-a / 9-d / 10-e / 11-l / 12-i ----- 1-b / 2-a / 3-c / 4-e / 5-d



## Christmas at Fellowship – A Carol Sing

Sunday Night – December 8<sup>th</sup> in the Zentz Community Center

6:00 p.m. Sacred Prelude with Piano, Organ and Brass

6:30 p.m. A Carol Sing

### Featuring:

The Heidelberg Brass Quintet / A 40 Voice Resident, Staff and Community Choir / Favorite Carols  
The Reading of the Christmas Story by Three Grandfathers and their Granddaughters / Ministry's of Music

## Better Lyrics

While I enjoy the song, 'Have Yourself a Merry Little Christmas,' I am bothered by the lyrics, 'Someday soon we all will be together, *if the fates allow.*'? What in the world does that mean? How comforting can that be?

In 1944 the songwriters Hugh Martin and Ralph Blaine wrote the classic song "Have Yourself a Merry Little Christmas" for Judy Garland's 1944 movie, Meet Me in St. Louis. Years later however, Hugh Martin was converted to faith in the Lord Jesus, and he eventually re-wrote the song and lyrics – 'Have Yourself a Blessed Little Christmas'

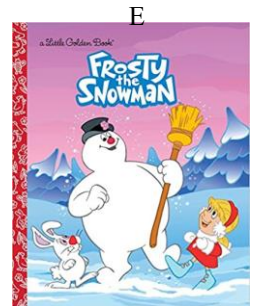
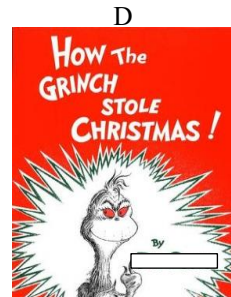
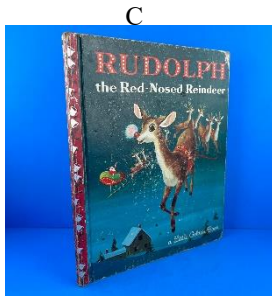
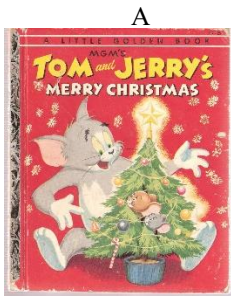
*Christmas Future is far away, Christmas Past is past. Christmas Present is here today, bringing joy that will last. Have yourself a blessed little Christmas, Christ the King is born. Let your voices ring upon this happy morn.*

*Have yourself a blessed little Christmas. Serenade the Earth, tell the world we celebrate the Savior's birth.*

*Let us all proclaim the joyous tidings voices raised on high send this carol soaring up into the sky, this very merry blessed Christmas lullaby. Let us gather to sing to Him and to bring to Him our praise.*

*Son of God and a Friend of all to the end of all our days. Sing hosannas, hymns, and hallelujahs as to Him we bow make the music mighty as the heav'ns allow. And have yourself a blessed little Christmas now.*

## Remember These Christmas Books?



### Who wrote them?

1. Clement C. Moore
2. Peter Archer
3. Johnny Marks
4. Steve Nelson, Jack Rollins
5. Dr. Seuss