

The Twelve Declarations of Christmas

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The Twelve Declarations of Christmas

by Alan Allegra



This may not be a catchy song title, but there is a lot of meaning to it. The song we know as "The Twelve Days of Christmas" catalogs the grandiose gifts given to the singer by a "true love." Every year, some wag calculates the cost of the individual gifts, somehow figuring out the value of leaping lords and a partridge in a pear tree. Is a partridge worth more in a pear tree than on the wing? Are French Hens more valuable than Jersey Giants or Dorkings?

Tradition has it that the gifts have religious symbolism. No one knows for sure.

One thing we DO know for sure: there were many declarations of the birth of Christ in the Bible, most surrounding his birth in the New Testament, plainly proclaiming the true love of God in giving the greatest gift, His Son Jesus (2 Corinthians 9:15). We will highlight an even dozen.

1. The first announcement came thousands of years ago, bringing hope to the first sinners: Adam and Eve (Genesis 3:15).

2. When Israel needed comfort in the midst of punishment, Isaiah proclaimed Messiah's birth in Isaiah 9:6.

3. The first New Testament announcement of the coming of the Lord came to the priest Zacharias in Luke 1:13-17. It predicts that John the Baptizer would prepare the people for Christ's advent.

4. The angel Gabriel greeted Mary, a virgin, in [Luke 1:31](#), with the news of her divine pregnancy.

5. Miraculously, John the Baptist heard and leapt for joy in his mother's womb in Luke 1 verses 41-45.

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6. At John's birth, the dumbstruck Zacharias spoke clearly of the Messiah's mission in verses in Luke 1:68-79.
7. When Mary returned to Nazareth, Joseph was told in Matthew 1:20-23.
8. We are very familiar with the announcement made by the angels in Luke 2:8-14,
9. but the shepherds were excellent heralds themselves in verses Luke 2: 17-20.
10. Upon Jesus' presentation in the temple at Jerusalem, two more announcements were made. It was not the High Priest who received him, nor lawyers or scribes, but a just and devout old man (Luke 2:29-32) and
11. a fasting widow (Luke 2: 36-38) who made these announcements.
12. The last announcement we will consider was made by the wise men who came from the east. They saw his star and traveled perhaps months to see the new King of Israel (Matthew 2:1, 2). They reported Messiah's arrival to King Herod, who verified the news by the priests and scribes. The wise men found the child Jesus in Bethlehem and worshiped him.

There is so much to be learned by reading The Twelve Declarations of Christmas. The grace and kindness of God are seen in that, in the midst of the curse brought by our first parents, the Redeemer is promised. While punishing Israel for her unfaithfulness, the Messiah's birth is foretold. Christ's purity is guaranteed by his virgin birth, and his deity by Holy Spirit conception. Christ came for the common people, and is rejected by those who would rather hold on to their power and religious pride. And, whether rich or poor, Israelite or Gentile, wise men still seek and worship the Christ.

Perhaps the greatest message that underlies the Twelve Declarations of Christmas is that of hope. The true "True Love" gave to me (and you) a gift that is imperishable, the value of which is incalculable. God gave us hope in the midst of despair, light in the midst of darkness.

Do not miss the announcement of the Son of God coming in the flesh. Wherever you hear the truth about Jesus, call him Lord and worship him there. Wise men still seek him.

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