

You Can't Steal Christmas - *THE DAY LIGHT BROKE THE DARK*

Matthew 4:16, Isaiah 9:2, John 1:5, Galatians 4:4

A CHILDREN'S STORY AND A COSMIC WAR

Hold up Dr. Seuss' book and read: *"Every Who down in Whoville liked Christmas a lot...But the Grinch, who lived just north of Whoville, did not."*

"He slithered and slunk, with a smile most unpleasant, as he plotted and planned to steal Christmas by stealing each present."

Cute story...but I want to show you the real story behind every attempt to steal the song of redemption.

Hold up a Bible - This book says darkness has always tried to silence the light. From Eden to Egypt, from Babylon to Bethlehem, the enemy has always plotted to stop the arrival of joy. But all of history shouts one truth.

You can steal the ornaments, strip the tree, empty the room, silence the carols, and shake the foundations with darkness, but **you cannot stop the incarnation**. You may disrupt the celebration and tear away every outward symbol of joy, but **you cannot cancel what Heaven has**

decreed. When the Word becomes flesh, every scheme of hell collapses, every plot of the enemy is overturned, and the light that stepped into Bethlehem **bows to no thief, no tyrant, and no threat.**

TRANSITION: Before Bethlehem ever glowed with angelic light, the world was drowning in darkness. To understand how unstoppable Christmas really is, you must understand what the Bible means by *the fullness of time*.

The first Christmas didn't come early. It didn't come late. It came at the exact second Heaven declared, 'Now.'

THE FULLNESS OF TIME – WHY JESUS CAME WHEN HE DID

Galatians 4:4 (NKJV) - “But when the fullness of the time had come, God sent forth His Son...”

- **In Greek, *pleroma tou chronou* means the ripened moment. The completed season. The second in which history itself is pregnant with divine purpose.**

God is never driven by chaos. He is driven by completion.

Teach the four layers:

1. The Political Fullness

- Rome ruled the world from Britain to India.
- The Pax Romana created unprecedented safety for travel.
- Road systems stretched across continents.

God waited for the moment when the Gospel could travel faster than persecution.

Even rabbis wrote in the Talmud that Rome's roads and law systems were signs that the world was being prepared for Messiah.

2. The Linguistic Fullness

- For the first time in history, the world spoke one trade language: Koine Greek.
- **God waited for a moment when one message could be understood by all nations.**
- This is strategic. The Septuagint - the Greek Old Testament - was already in circulation. The world was literate and connected.

3. The Spiritual Fullness

- Israel was fractured into Pharisees, Sadducees, Essenes, Zealots, and Herodians.
- Rome worshipped many gods but found no peace.
- Greek philosophy had collapsed morally.

In other words, humanity had reached the end of its own wisdom.

The early church father **Chrysostom said: “God sent His Son when human wisdom had failed, and divine wisdom could no longer be ignored.”**

4. The Prophetic Fullness

- Every prophecy from Genesis to Malachi was converging into a single moment.
- Daniel’s timeline of seventy weeks pointed to that very generation.
- Micah named the birthplace.
- Isaiah named the virgin.
- Hosea named the escape into Egypt.
- Zechariah named Him the Branch.
- Isaiah called Him the Light.

Prophecy was so pregnant it could no longer wait. Heaven said, ‘Release the Son.’

When the world was drowning in its darkest night, Heaven was already standing in its brightest readiness, fully prepared to break in, break through, and rewrite the story.

TRANSITION: With that backdrop in place, now we can understand Isaiah's declaration. Darkness is never the end of the story. It is the stage for the next act of God.

DARKNESS NEVER GETS THE LAST WORD

Isaiah 9:2 (NKJV) - "The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light..."

Explain the historical darkness:

- Israel was under Roman occupation
- Herod was a murderous tyrant
- The priesthood was corrupt
- Prophecy had been silent 400 years
- Galilee was spiritually polluted by paganism

The Hebrew word for darkness in Isaiah is *choshek* meaning heavy gloom, suffocating oppression, moral confusion.

That is the world Jesus stepped into. God does His best work when the world is at its worst.

Tie in the Grinch: The Grinch tried to silence Whoville's song... but joy is not external. It is eternal. It does not live in things. It lives in truth. So even when he stole their symbols, he could not steal their sound.

Darkness can touch your circumstances, but it cannot cancel your covenant.

TRANSITION: Now watch how the enemy tries to plot. But every plot becomes the pathway for prophetic fulfillment.

PROPHECY ALWAYS OUTFRONS THE PLOT OF THE ENEMY

Micah 5:2 (NKJV) - "But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah... out of you shall come forth to Me the One to be Ruler..."

- Bethlehem was tiny. Forgotten. Off the map.
- God delights in planting greatness in small places.

Now let me unfold the prophetic intersections:

1. Caesar's Census Fulfilled Prophecy

- Caesar thought he was mandating a tax count. He was actually escorting a pregnant virgin into a prophecy.
- Earth thinks it's running things. Heaven is running earth.

2. Herod's Rage Fulfilled Prophecy

- Herod murdered the infants of Bethlehem. Joseph fled with Mary and Jesus into Egypt.
- **Hosea 11:1 - "Out of Egypt I called My Son."**

What hell meant for slaughter, Heaven used as strategy.

3. The Magi Fulfilled Prophecy

They were Gentile astrologers, yet Isaiah prophesied:
Isaiah 60:3 (NKJV) - "The Gentiles shall come to your light..."

- **God will use unexpected people to confirm unstoppable prophecies.**

Tie in the Grinch: "The Grinch underestimated joy. Herod underestimated prophecy. Satan underestimated the incarnation."

You cannot stop what God has already spoken. When God declares a thing, THE ENEMY CAN ONLY ACCELERATE IT.

TRANSITION: So, if prophecy outruns the plot, and darkness cannot overpower the promise, then the story of Christmas hinges on one massive revelation...

LIGHT ALWAYS WINS BECAUSE LIGHT ALWAYS SHOWS UP!

John 1:5 (ESV) - “The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.”

***Katálambano* (overcome) means to seize, grasp, extinguish, arrest.**

Darkness cannot arrest light. It has no authority to issue the warrant.

Early church father **Athanasius** wrote: **“When Christ was born, the dominion of darkness began to collapse.”**

Origen said: “The birth of Christ is God’s invasion into the territory of the tyrant.”

Ancient rabbis taught that Messiah’s arrival would be like dawn. Not an explosion of light, but a gradual, unstoppable rising that darkness cannot reverse.

Dawn does not fight darkness. It simply appears, and darkness dissolves.

Tie to the Grinch: **He stole the gifts. He stole the stockings. He stole the decorations. But he could not**

steal the revelation. Because joy does not live in things. Joy lives in Immanuel.

Hell can manipulate your environment, but it cannot mute your purpose.

CLOSING REVELATION: THE LIGHT IS STILL BREAKING THROUGH

Matthew 4:16 (NKJV) - “The people who sat in darkness have seen a great light...”

- To sit in darkness means resignation. Hopelessness. The acceptance of defeat. **But God sends light to people who have stopped looking for it.**

And that is why next week, through a simple story about a green creature trying to steal Christmas, we will proclaim a Gospel truth. Evil can plot. Discouragement can whisper. Circumstances can shake. But Christmas cannot be stopped because Christ cannot be stopped.

- He came when the world was at its worst.
- He came when prophecy was full.
- He came when darkness was deepest.
- He came when hope seemed gone.”

And if He came then, He will come now. He comes to broken people. To hurting families. To weary souls. To every heart sitting in darkness.

- Light is breaking through.
- The song is rising again.
- The joy is returning.
- Christ has come, Christ is coming, and Christ cannot be stopped.