

## JESUS – THE PRINCE OF PEACE

*Isaiah 9:6* For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace.

The Christmas season traditionally is associated with peace and quiet – just think of the song “Holy night, Silent night!” In reality peace appears to be a very distant dream considering the major wars in the Ukraine and Gaza for instance. As of today, there are over 110 wars going on in the world. For centuries those who observe Christmas thinking of the birth of the Lord in Bethlehem, shepherds, angels and wise men attending, are giving expression to the deepest felt hopes and dreams of humanity – peace through the Prince of Peace, Jesus Christ. The good news is that they will not be disappointed; God has promised the world peace through Jesus Christ. Let us consider some ways in which this has been and will be fulfilled.

*Luke 19:42* Saying, If thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace! but now they are hid from thine eyes.

*Luke 19:43* For the days shall come upon thee, that thine enemies shall cast a trench about thee, and compass thee round, and keep thee in on every side,

*Luk 19:44* And shall lay thee even with the ground, and thy children within thee; and they shall not leave in thee one stone upon another; because thou knewest not the time of thy visitation.

According to Jesus, the Romans would not have invaded and destroyed Israel and the Temple had the Jews embraced salvation through Jesus’ name. In other words, war and conflict is the result of rejecting the Prince of Peace. This is a powerful declaration. If only nations and individuals would pay attention to Jesus, we would not have 110 armed conflicts in the world today. Notice the Lord said, “The things which belong unto thy peace ...” Through Jesus Christ we have the right to peace; it belongs to us because we have embraced the Prince of Peace. Peace is not just the absence of conflict and war, but the peace that Jesus gives us. “Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid” (John 14:27). Note carefully that Jesus’ peace is not of this world. Put differently, one cannot know the true meaning of peace until one comes to Jesus. His peace is not available anywhere in this world – only through faith in the name of Jesus Christ. I define Christian peace as a state or condition in which born-again Christians experience heavenly happiness because their sins have been forgiven and they live lives defined by friendship, love and harmony with the Lord Jesus. According to the apostle Paul, this peace which has its source in the Lord Jesus cannot be

understood through human reasoning. “And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus” (Phil 4:7).

I have spoken so far about wars and conflicts and showed how the peace of Jesus is the solution. However, human conflicts are not the only source for suffering and misery; countless numbers of humans continue to experience great distress and anxiety because of natural catastrophes. According to one source, there are about 6,800 natural disasters that happen every year worldwide. God blessed the earth in the beginning and commanded the earth to bless human beings. Sadly, when humans rebelled against God, the earth rebelled against humans. Note how God judged Pharaoh through the earth – undrinkable water, flies, frogs, darkness etc. The earth can be a terrible place if God commands the earth to rebel against us. Some years ago in Colombia, there was an acute epidemic of drugs, crime and killings. It was said that the situation was so bad that even the birds and animals left the areas where these problems were most prevalent. Some time later there was a revival of the Gospel and thousands of people came to massive stadiums to repent and hear the word of God. Suddenly, the birds and animals made a return to the place they had earlier abandoned. Nature works faithfully with its Creator.

The message of Christmas extends good news of peace in the future in this area also. Jesus Christ is God who controls storms, famines, earthquakes and every other natural disaster. Only God can rebuke the Red Sea and the Sea of Galilee. “He rebuked the Red sea also, and it was dried up: so he led them through the depths, as through the wilderness” (Psalm 106:9); “And he saith unto them, Why are ye fearful, O ye of little faith? Then he arose, and rebuked the winds and the sea; and there was a great calm” (Matthew 8:26).

*Ezekiel 34:27 And the tree of the field shall yield her fruit, and the earth shall yield her increase, and they shall be safe in their land, and shall know that I am the LORD, when I have broken the bands of their yoke, and delivered them out of the hand of those that served themselves of them.*

In addition to wars and natural disasters, we are troubled by physical illnesses of every sort. Diseases and illnesses are evidence of the rebellion of Adam. As his children, we carry the legacy of his rebellion against God in our mortal and fragile bodies. There is hope even in this sphere: Jesus carried our diseases in his own body on the Cross of Golgotha and now his blood is available for our healing in Jesus name. “But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed” (Isaiah 53:5). Any time a Christian has to face the cut of the surgeon’s

knife, remember Jesus' body was cut up for us. Every time we face a sharp and numbing pain in our bodies, remember Jesus screamed in pain when he was whipped for us. Indeed, "the chastisement of our peace was upon him". I love the simple, modern way the New Living Translation puts Isaiah 53:5: "But he was pierced for our rebellion, crushed for our sins. He was beaten so we could be whole. He was whipped so we could be healed." So, if you have lost your peace because of physical pain or disease, close your eyes and tell Jesus, "Lord, you were beaten and whipped for my healing. Take my pain upon you again, Jesus".

*Isaiah 2:4 And he shall judge among the nations, and shall rebuke many people: and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruninghooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more.*

Finally, the day will come when the scripture in Isaiah 9:6,7 will be fulfilled. Jesus will be physically and visibly King over all the earth. He will impose his peace on every nation and individual. What a beautiful day that will be! Nations will never learn war again. The last war in the history of humankind will be Armageddon where Jesus will defeat the forces that have been causing war and violence ever since the first human, Abel, was violently killed. No more murders, no assault and battery, no more rape, no more crimes against children, no more verbal violence even – that is why it is a sin not to desire the return of Jesus quickly. "Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing" (2 Timothy 4:8). Let us say "Maranatha, Jesus!" "Maranatha, Prince of Peace!" So this Christmas season, let us meditate on this message of peace in Jesus name.