

The Prince of Peace

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Luke 2:8–14 (NKJV) “Now there were in the same country shepherds living out in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. ⁹ And behold, an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were greatly afraid. ¹⁰ Then the angel said to them, ‘Do not be afraid, for behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy which will be to all people. ¹¹ For there is born to you this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. ¹² And this *will be* the sign to you: You will find a Babe wrapped in swaddling cloths, lying in a manger.’ ¹³ And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying: ¹⁴ ‘Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, goodwill toward men!’”

This world is weary of conflict. More than ever this world longs for peace. Beginning with Cain and Abel, this world has experienced perpetual conflict. Even as you read this article, there are many and various conflicts and wars around our world. At times the world seems to be just one step away from worldwide destruction. Never in the history of mankind have the stakes been higher.

Peace is an elusive dove while war is a roaring lion. World War I was thought to be the “war to end all wars”. Never had the world experienced such massive suffering and destruction in widespread war. When the war finally ended, it was determined that such wars should never be allowed again and the League of Nations was formed. In an address to the United States Senate in 1919, President Woodrow Wilson said, “The League of Nations is the only hope of mankind.”¹ Sadly this hope only lasted twenty years until World War II.

The threat of war is ever before us. Advancements in science and technology have only made war more destructive and horrible. There are evil men and regimes right now who have no reservations about attaining and using weapons of mass destruction. Our world has become a very dangerous place to live. World leaders work feverishly to put out or contain the flickers of war. Conferences, summits, studies, and plans are continually organized to achieve world peace. Peace treaties are routinely negotiated, ratified, signed, and broken. Peace seems to elude us no matter how advanced our world becomes.

When the League of Nations failed to prevent World War II, the United Nations was formed to bring worldwide cooperation to seek and maintain peace. Unfortunately it too has failed miserably. In his book “Peace with God” (1953) Billy Graham said: “If the United Nations could bring lasting peace, man could say to God ‘We don’t need You anymore. We have brought peace on earth and have organized humanity in righteousness.’ All of these schemes are patchwork remedies that a sick and dying world must use while waiting for the Great Physician.”² Billy Graham made that statement over sixty years ago. Has the United Nations brought our world any closer to peace than when it was then? Sadly no. Peace will never be achieved as long as men seek peace apart from the Prince of Peace. Peace will not come by seeking peace but by seeking the Peace Maker. Commenting on the peace of God, Charles Spurgeon testified: “I looked at Christ, and the dove of peace flew into my heart; I looked at the dove of peace, and it flew away.”³

Is there any hope to end all wars? The answer to that question begins by answering another question head on: “Where do wars originate?” Peace will never be achieved through containment alone. The origin of war must be addressed. Wars do not originate in military war rooms. War is not limited to conflicts between nations. The spirit of war is all around us. There are wars raging

¹ Tan, P. L. (1996). *Encyclopedia of 7700 Illustrations: Signs of the Times*. Garland, TX: Bible Communications, Inc.

² Billy Graham in Quotes, p. 251

³ Jones, G. C. (1986). *1000 illustrations for preaching and teaching* (p. 272). Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman Publishers.

among gangs, races, political parties, husbands and wives, parents and children, and even among Christians and Churches.

So where do wars originate? The Bible tells us that war originates in the human heart. James 4:1–3 (NKJV) declares, *“Where do wars and fights come from among you? Do they not come from your desires for pleasure that war in your members?”*² *You lust and do not have. You murder and covet and cannot obtain. You fight and war. Yet you do not have because you do not ask.*³ *You ask and do not receive, because you ask amiss, that you may spend it on your pleasures.”* War is a spiritual problem. War originates through sin in the human heart. The heart is the breeding ground of pride, greed, power, fear, anxiety, anger, unforgiveness, hate, and retaliation originate. Isaiah 48:22 (NKJV) states, *“There is no peace, says the LORD, for the wicked.”* Peace will never be achieved in our world until peace is first achieved in the human heart. Only Christ can extinguish the fires of war in the human heart and bring true and lasting peace to the human soul.

The birth of Jesus Christ marked the inauguration of an era of divine peace. The angelic host proclaimed, “Glory to God in the highest, and on earth, peace, goodwill toward men.” Jesus Christ is called the “Prince of peace”: *“For unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given; and the government will be upon His shoulder. And His name will be called Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.”*⁷ *Of the increase of His government and peace there will be no end, upon the throne of David and over His kingdom, to order it and establish it with judgment and justice from that time forward, even forever. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will perform this.”* (Isaiah 9:6-7 NKJV)

Jesus Christ came as the Prince of peace to bring peace between man and God. Men will only find peace with God when they surrender their lives to Jesus Christ and allow Him to rule in their hearts. The means by which Christ offers this peace is through faith in the Gospel. Through the Gospel men can have a relationship with God through Jesus Christ. There is a slogan that says, “NO Jesus, NO peace; KNOW Jesus, KNOW peace”. Those who know Jesus receive an inner peace with God that no outer circumstance can shake. Do you know that kind of peace? Do you know Jesus? The only solution for world peace is to take the Gospel of Jesus Christ to the entire world. Even now Christ is offering His peace to all men through the Gospel.

Unfortunately Satan and evil men oppose the Gospel. However, the day will come when Christ will return from heaven and bring a thousand year peace to this world. He will establish peace on this earthy by judging the nations: *“He shall judge between the nations, and rebuke many people; they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war anymore.”* (Isaiah 2:4 NKJV) The reign of Jesus Christ upon the earth will be to “restore and perpetuate peace.” (Barnes) Christ’s perpetuation of peace upon the earth will stand in stark contrast to those who once perpetuated conquest through war. His administration of peace will even affect the animal kingdom: *“The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, the leopard shall lie down with the young goat, the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them.”*⁷ *The cow and the bear shall graze; their young ones shall lie down together; and the lion shall eat straw like the ox.*⁸ *The nursing child shall play by the cobra’s hole, and the weaned child shall put his hand in the viper’s den.*⁹ *They shall not hurt nor destroy in all My holy mountain, for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the LORD as the waters cover the sea.”* (Isaiah 11:6-9 NKJV)

Christ’s kingdom originates in heaven rather than upon the earth. His kingdom is an eternal kingdom; it will never end. Christ’s throne on the earth is found in the hearts of men: *“Now when He was asked by the Pharisees when the kingdom of God would come, He answered them and said, “The kingdom of God does not come with observation;”*²¹ *nor will they say, ‘See here!’ or ‘See there!’ For indeed, the kingdom of God is within you.”* (Luke 17:20-21 NKJV) The Prince of peace is enthroned in the heart of those who truly believe. Does the Prince of peace rule and reign in your heart today?

Jesus Christ *brings* peace because He *is* our Peace: *“For He Himself is our peace, who has made both one, and has broken down the middle wall of separation, ¹⁵ having abolished in His flesh the enmity, that is, the law of commandments contained in ordinances, so as to create in Himself one new man from the two, thus making peace, ¹⁶ and that He might reconcile them both to God in one body through the cross, thereby putting to death the enmity.”* (Ephesians 2:14-16 NKJV) Through His sacrifice for sin on the Cross, Jesus becomes our peace with God, with others, and with ourselves. He is our only means of experiencing peace with God: *“Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ,”* (Romans 5:1 NKJV) Once we find peace with God, it is possible to find peace with others and with ourselves.

Peace is not something men attain but something Christ gives. It is a gift. Before returning to be with His heavenly Father, Jesus said to His disciples, *“Peace I leave with you, My peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.”* (John 14:27) Although Christ is now seated with His Father in heaven, He has left believers the provision of His peace in this troubled world.

Christ’s peace is not like the peace that the world negotiates. The world’s peace is fabricated, flawed, and fleeting. On the other hand the peace of God is pure, perfect, and perpetual. The peace that Christ gives is grounded in a firm assurance of God’s abiding presence and in an unwavering confidence in God’s unalterable promises. Jesus said, *“Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid”* (John 14:27) Is your heart troubled or afraid? Do you have a peace that is pure, perfect, and perpetual? Are you assured of God’s abiding presence? Are you confident in His unalterable promises?

How can we maintain peace when troubles surround us, when evil threatens us, and when uncertainty torments us? The apostle Paul said, *“Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; ⁷ and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.”* (Philippians 4:6-7 NKJV) Fear paralyzes faith and worry weakens faith. Fear and worry make nothing better and everything worse. Peace on the inside is maintained by resisting worry, releasing our problems to God, asking Him to supply what we need, and thanking Him for His faithfulness to answer.

God wants to give us peace of mind even when storms rage around us. In Mark 4:35-41 we find that Jesus and His disciples got into a boat on the Sea of Galilee and Jesus told them to go to the other side. Being exhausted Jesus went to sleep. A storm arose that struck panic in the hearts of the disciples. They awoke Jesus because of their fear. Jesus spoke peace to the storm and the wind and waves calmed. There is a principle here. Jesus was at peace on the inside and spoke peace to the storm. We cannot bring peace to the storms around us when there is no peace in our heart and mind. Peace of mind comes to those who keep their mind stayed on the Lord rather than on the storm. Isaiah 26:3 (NKJV) says, *“You will keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on You, because he trusts in You.”* Peace is the seal of God on the heart of the one who casts his or her cares over on Him: *“Therefore humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time, ⁷ casting all your care upon Him, for He cares for you.”* (1 Peter 5:6-7 NKJV) When we do not trust and obey God, the seal of His peace is broken over our heart.

Does the seal of God’s peace rest upon your heart or has the seal of God’s peace been broken? Is there conflict instead of communion? Is there fear instead of faith? Is there anxiety instead of assurance? Is there heaviness instead of hope? Are you experiencing chaos instead of confidence? Is there a lack of peace—true peace with God, with others, with yourself?

There is good news. Jesus Christ came to set you free from the war that rages in your soul. He came so that you might receive forgiveness, salvation, provision, and peace. You can receive the gift of God’s peace today by receiving Jesus Christ, the Prince of peace into your life as Lord and Savior. Jesus invites you to come to Him: *“Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. ²⁹ Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in*

heart, and you will find rest for your souls. ³⁰For My yoke is easy and My burden is light.” (Matthew 11:28-30 NKJV) Come to Jesus today. Receive Him as your Prince of peace. Cast your cares over on Him. Keep your mind stayed on Him. Let the gift of Christ’s perfect peace rule in your heart and life today.

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