

Peace – A Reality

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“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.

A crowd was once asked, “If you had a choice of what you wanted most in life, what would it be?” The most common response was, “Peace.”

People want peace. Peace of mind. Peace in their home, in their marriage, and at work. While we may have world-class medical institutions, quality education, good food production and an economy that provides for all, most people still don’t have true inner peace. What is the result? Marriages break down, families are broken, people hate one another, and there is a general discontent in society.

Of course the world offers its own solutions to distract weary minds away from it all. Alcohol, drugs, entertainment and immoral relationships promise much but only deliver misery in the end.

People may believe that peace means there are no troubles. They would rather not face their troubles, and therefore think this is the way to peace. But peace is not freedom from conflict. As Ronald Reagan once remarked, “Peace is not absence of conflict; it is the ability to handle conflict by peaceful means.”

In reality, the world does not have an answer to true and lasting peace. This is because real peace is a gift from above.

“Do not err, my beloved brethren. Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning.” James 1:16, 17.

All the things that we have come from God. Every earthly possession is only meant for this life – for the period between the hour of birth and the hour of death; we entered this world with nothing, and we shall leave this world with nothing.

“But godliness with contentment is great gain. For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out.” 1 Timothy 6:6, 7.

The Source of Peace

From a beautiful Messianic prophecy, we learn the answer to the question, “Where does true peace come from?”

“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.*”
Isaiah 9:6.

The works of Christ not only declared Him to be the Messiah, but showed in what manner His kingdom was to be established. To Elijah in the desert, when “a great and strong wind rent the mountains, and brake in pieces the rocks before the Lord; but the Lord was not in the wind: and after the wind an earthquake; but the Lord was not in the earthquake: and after the earthquake a fire; but the Lord was not in the fire:” and after the fire, God spoke to the prophet by “a still small voice.” 1 Kings 19:11-12.

When Jesus was here on earth, He let His people witness how peaceful He was and how He could bring peace into their lives. He healed the sick and brought the dead back to life with only very few words.

As in Mark 5:41, “and he took the damsel by the hand, and said unto her, Talitha cumi; which is, being interpreted, Damsel, I say unto thee, arise.” And in the story of the storm on the sea, “He arose, and rebuked the wind, and said unto the sea, Peace, be still. And the wind ceased, and there was a great calm.” Mark 4:39.

So never be in a hurry; do everything quietly and in a calm spirit. Do not lose your inner peace for anything whatsoever, even if your whole world seems upset. Do not let the behavior of others destroy your inner peace. King David acknowledges that “I will hear what God the LORD will speak: for He will speak peace unto His people, and to His saints: but let them not turn again to folly.” Psalms 85:8.

Promises of Peace

“Shortly before His crucifixion, Christ had bequeathed to His disciples a legacy of peace. ‘Peace I leave with you,’ He said, ‘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. *This peace is not the peace that comes through conformity to the world.* Christ never purchased peace by compromise with evil. *The peace that Christ left His disciples is internal rather than external* and was ever to remain with His witnesses through strife and contention.”¹

“The peace that Christ gave to his disciples, and for which we pray, is the peace that is born of truth, a peace that is not to be quenched because of division. Without may be wars and fightings, jealousies, envies, hatred, strife; but the peace of Christ is not that which the world giveth or taketh away.... His peace was that which was born of love toward those who were plotting for his death. His deep love did not lead him to cry, Peace and safety, when there was no peace for the sinner. Christ did not for an instant seek to purchase peace by a betrayal of sacred trusts.”²

God extends that same peace to all His people throughout the world. As we are facing difficult and challenging times, remember this promise “The LORD will give strength unto his people; the LORD will bless his people with peace.” Psalm 29:11.

“The troubled soul may find peace through faith in Christ, and his peace will be in proportion to his faith and trust. He cannot present his good works as a plea for the salvation of his soul.”³

The Peace of the World

God looked with satisfaction upon the work of His hands. All things that He had made He pronounced “very good.” Genesis 1:31. But though sin has entered this world and ruined His perfect work, “God still gives to us the Sabbath as a witness that One omnipotent, infinite in goodness and mercy, created all things.... He desires that the Sabbath shall direct our minds to Him as the true and living God, and that *through knowing Him we may have life and peace.*”⁴

Outside of the peace which God gives, there is no peace afforded by this world. “They have healed also the hurt of the daughter of my people slightly, saying, Peace, peace, when there is no peace.” Jeremiah 6:14.

Earthly governments maintain their dominion by force of arms, and yet King Jesus is the Prince of Peace. War is the world’s solution for peace. Yet the world’s peace will not last. Psalm 120:7 says, “I am for peace: but when I speak, they are for war.”

“I create the fruit of the lips; Peace, peace to him that is far off, and to him that is near, saith the LORD; and I will heal him. But the wicked are like the troubled sea, when it cannot rest, whose waters cast up mire and dirt. There is *no peace*, saith my God, *to the wicked.*” Isaiah 57:19-21.

If all men would keep the commandments of God, different conditions would exist among men. They would live in harmony with one another and in peace with God. “God presents before us two classes. For the one—the wicked—He says, “‘There is no peace’ [Isaiah 48:22]. Of the other, ‘Great peace have they that love thy law: and nothing shall offend them’ [Psalms 119:165]. Of that law He says, “The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul: the testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple. The statutes of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart: the commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes.””⁵

“As in the days of Christ, there will be the deep plotting of the powers of darkness, but the message must not be muffled with smooth words or fair speeches, crying peace, peace, when there is no peace, to those who are turning away from God. ‘There is no peace, saith my God, to the wicked.’”⁶

“Their feet run to evil, and they make haste to shed innocent blood: their thoughts are thoughts of iniquity; wasting and destruction are in their paths. The way of peace they know not; and there is no judgment in their goings: they have made them crooked paths: whosoever goeth therein shall not know peace.” Isaiah 59:7, 8.

To achieve peace in the world can prove an impossible task, when there are many who have not learned to restrain their own emotions and passions. They do not restrain themselves from putting others down in order to advantage themselves. They hold grudges, and refuse to let go of the wrongs of the past. But God says to “depart from evil, and do good; seek peace, and pursue it” (Psalm 34:14), and to “follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord” (Hebrews 12:14).

“There are *two courses* of action which we may pursue. One leads us away from God and shuts us out of His kingdom; and in this path are envyings, strife, murder, and all evil deeds. The other course of action we are to follow, and in its pursuance will be found joy, peace, harmony, and love. Love—that is what we are to cherish; and what we need most is the love of Christ in our hearts.”⁷

When the power of love overcomes the love of power, then people will know peace.

Blame for Lack of peace

Ahab knew that it was by the word of God that the heavens had become as brass, yet he sought to cast the blame upon the prophet. It was his own sins and those of his fathers that he sought to forget, in blaming Elijah for the famine.

“It is natural for the wrongdoer to hold the messengers of God responsible for the calamities that come as the sure result of a departure from the way of righteousness. Those who place themselves in Satan’s power are unable to see things as God sees them. When the mirror of truth is held up before them, they become indignant at the thought of receiving reproof. Blinded by sin, they refuse to repent; they feel that God’s servants have turned against them and are worthy of severest censure.”⁸

“It is because the saints are keeping all ten of the commandments that the dragon makes war upon them. If they will lower the standard and yield the peculiarities of their faith, the dragon will be at peace.”⁹

Jesus said in Matthew 5:11, 12, "Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake. Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you."

"We must not count it a strange thing if we are assaulted by the enemy of all righteousness. Christ has promised to be a present help in every time of need, but he has not told us that we shall be exempt from trials. On the contrary, he has plainly informed us that we shall have tribulation. To be tried and tested is a part of our moral discipline. Here we may learn the most valuable lessons, and obtain the most precious graces, if we will draw near to God, and endure all in his strength."¹⁰

Brothers and sisters, Heaven is coming! And we won't have to deal with these things there. Jesus' soon return is imminent. Praise God!

Finding True Peace

"He who walks in the way of God's commandments is walking in company with Christ, and in His love the heart is at rest. When Moses prayed, 'Show me now Thy way, that I may know Thee,' the Lord answered him, 'My presence shall go with thee, and I will give thee rest.' And through the prophets the message was given, 'Thus saith the Lord, Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls.' Exodus 33:13, 14; Jeremiah 6:16. And He says, 'O that thou hadst hearkened to My commandments! then had thy peace been as a river, and thy righteousness as the waves of the sea.' Isaiah 48:18."¹¹

"Men cannot manufacture peace. Human plans for the purification and uplifting of individuals or of society will fail of producing peace, because they do not reach the heart. The only power that can create or perpetuate true peace is the grace of Christ. When this is implanted in the heart, it will cast out the evil passions that cause strife and dissension."¹²

How indeed can we find peace of mind, no matter what? This beautiful passage presents the key:

"Those who take Christ at His word, and surrender their souls to His keeping, their lives to His ordering, will find peace and quietude. Nothing of the world can make them sad when Jesus makes them glad by His presence. In perfect acquiescence there is perfect rest. The Lord says, "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on Thee: because he trusteth in Thee." Isaiah 26:3. Our lives may seem a tangle; but as we commit ourselves to the wise Master Worker, He will bring out the pattern of life and character that will be to His own glory."¹³

Jesus loves you and He says, "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." "Moreover, I will make a covenant of peace with them; it shall be an everlasting covenant with them: and I will place them, and multiply them, and will set my sanctuary in the midst of them for evermore. My tabernacle also shall be with them: yea, I will be their God, and they shall be my people." Matthew 11:28; Ezekiel 37:26, 27.

"And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God." Revelation 21:3.

“Surround your soul with an atmosphere that will strengthen spiritual life. Cultivate faith, hope, courage, and love. Let the peace of God rule in your heart. Then you will be enabled to discharge your responsibilities. The Holy Spirit will impart a divine efficiency, a calm, subdued dignity, to all your efforts to relieve suffering. You will testify that you have been with Jesus.”¹⁴

Everlasting Peace

Today is the day to find eternal peace. “Your sins may be as mountains before you; but if you humble your heart and confess your sins, trusting in the merits of a crucified and risen Saviour, He will forgive and will cleanse you from all unrighteousness. God demands of your entire conformity to His law. This law is the echo of His voice saying to you, Holier, yes, holier still. Desire the fullness of the grace of Christ. Let your heart be filled with an intense longing for His righteousness, the work of which God’s word declares is peace, and its effect quietness and assurance forever.”¹⁵

“The peace of Christ, the peace of Christ—money cannot buy it, brilliant talent cannot command it, intellect cannot secure it; it is the gift of God. The religion of Christ—how shall I make all understand their great loss if they fail to carry its holy principles into the daily life? The meekness and lowliness of Christ is the Christian’s power. It is indeed more precious than all things which genius can create or wealth can buy. Of all things that are sought, cherished, and cultivated, there is nothing so valuable in the sight of God as a pure heart, a disposition imbued with thankfulness and peace.”¹⁶

While today we may find internal peace by God’s grace, the final installment of universal peace will take place in the New Earth.

“And it shall come to pass in the day that the LORD shall give thee rest from thy sorrow, and from thy fear, and from the hard bondage wherein thou wast made to serve.” Isaiah 14:3. “And the work of righteousness shall be peace, and the effect of righteousness quietness and assurance forever. And my people shall dwell in a peaceable habitation, and in sure dwellings, and in quiet resting places.” Isaiah 32:17, 18.

“In the Bible the inheritance of the saved is called ‘a country.’ There the heavenly Shepherd leads His flock to fountains of living waters. The tree of life yields its fruit every month, and the leaves of the tree are for the service of the nations. There are ever-flowing streams, clear as crystal, and beside them waving trees cast their shadows upon the paths prepared for the ransomed of the Lord. There the wide-spreading plains swell into hills of beauty, and the mountains of God rear their lofty summits. On those peaceful plains, beside those living streams, God’s people, so long pilgrims and wanderers, shall find a home.”¹⁷

A Picture of Peace

There once was a king who offered a prize to the artist who would paint the best picture of peace. Many artists tried. The king looked at all the pictures, but there were only two he really liked, and he had to choose between them.

One picture was of a calm lake. The lake was a perfect mirror for the peaceful, towering mountains all around it. Overhead was a blue sky with fluffy white clouds. All who saw this picture thought that it was a perfect picture of peace.

The other picture had mountains too. But these were rugged and bare. Above was an angry sky dropping torrents of rain and bolts of lightning. Down the side of the mountain tumbled a foaming waterfall. This did not look peaceful at all.

But when the king looked, he saw behind the waterfall a tiny bush growing in a crack in the rock. In the bush a mother bird had built her nest. There, in the midst of the rush of angry water, sat the mother bird on her nest . . . in perfect peace.

Which picture do you think won the prize? The king chose the second picture. Do you know why? "Because" explained the King, "peace does not mean to be in a place where there is no noise, trouble, or hard work. Peace means to be in the midst of all those things and still be calm in your heart. That is the real meaning of peace."

Jesus said, "These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world." John 16:33.

My prayer is for all God's people to have perfect peace, even amidst all the commotion of the world around us. Amen.

¹ *The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 84

² *The Review and Herald*, July 24, 1894

³ *Selected Messages*, book. 3, p. 199

⁴ *Testimonies*, vol. 6, p. 349

⁵ *Manuscript Releases*, vol. 12, p. 236

⁶ *S.D.A. Bible Commentary*, vol. 4, p. 1149

⁷ *The Review and Herald*, January 4, 1887

⁸ *Testimonies*, vol. 1, p. 223

⁹ *Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 139

¹⁰ *The Signs of the Times*, November 2, 1882

¹¹ *The Desire of Ages*, p. 331

¹² *The Desire of Ages*, pg. 302

¹³ *The Desire of Ages*, pg. 331

¹⁴ *Testimonies*, vol. 8, p. 191

¹⁵ *The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 566

¹⁶ *Testimonies*, vol. 4, p. 559

¹⁷ *The Great Controversy*, p. 675