

Peace in the Branch of Jesse

Isaiah 11:1-10

Introduction

Last week, we talked about how the world needs hope and that we find our hope in Jesus Christ, the Son of Man. As we continue to look forward to and prepare our hearts for Christmas, we see how the world longs for peace and where we can find it.

The Need for Peace

One of the Bible verses you see frequently on Christmas cards is **Luke 2:14**, which reads in the **KJV**, *Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men*. Many times, it gets modified to “Peace on earth, good will toward men.” As we hear in Henry W. Longfellow’s “I Heard the Bells on Christmas Day”: *I heard the bells on Christmas day Their old familiar carols play; In music sweet the tones repeat, “There’s peace on earth, good will to men.”*

There Is no Peace

This shows two things: the world recognizes the need for peace, and they don’t understand what peace is about. People don’t like conflict and war because we were created to live in harmony and unity. Conflict is alien to the way we were created. The reason we have conflict and war is original sin. Because of our fallen nature, we live contrary to the way we were created. When the world talks about peace, they mean an absence of war. In the **NIV**, **Luke 2:14** reads, *... peace to those on whom His favor rests*. This verse is not about world peace. It’s talking about peace with God. That would be the absence of sin. We will never have peace in the world while we have sin. Verse 3 says, *And in despair I bowed my head: “There is no peace on earth,” I said, “For hate is strong, and mocks the song Of peace on earth, good will to men.”*

Hope Leads to Peace

Peace with others must begin with peace with God. One group of people who do have peace are those who have hope. Hope in the Son of Man leads to peace. “Branch of Jesse” is a Messianic term, just like “Son of Man.” The hope we have in the Messiah leads to the peace we have in the Messiah.

Peace in the Messiah

Remember, the way to peace is getting rid of the problem of sin. The Messiah, the Christ has already come into the world to *take away the sins of the world* (**John 1:29**). He is the One whose birth we will begin celebrating in three weeks. When He came the first time, it was not as the Conquering King but the Suffering Servant. He is *the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world* because He willingly went to the cross and died to pay the price for all sin (Read **Ephesians 2:14-16**). Because of His broken body and shed blood we have forgiveness of sins and are reconciled with the Father. We have peace with God because Christ has taken away our sin. But we won’t experience the fullness of His peace until He comes back.

What Messiah's Peace Looks Like

What will Messiah's peace look like when He returns and establishes His eternal kingdom?

Righteousness

The hallmark feature of His kingdom will be righteousness, as we see in **verses 3-5** of our text in **Isaiah 11**. Righteousness is living entirely without sin. Since He is God and God is holy, there will be no sin in His kingdom of glory. His kingdom is a kingdom of righteousness.

Justice

His kingdom is also a kingdom of justice. One way to think about these terms is: "Justice is social righteousness." The only way to have justice for all is to do away with sin. Justice for all is available only in a righteous kingdom. This is why Plato's concept of a "just society" doesn't work in real life. This is why all man-made utopias fail.

Edenic Tranquility

Verses 6-9 describe a setting that reminds us of pre-fall Eden. Creation will be restored and made whole again. All the animosity between people and things will be gone. *Then pealed the bells more loud and deep: "God is not dead, nor does He sleep, For Christ is here; His Spirit near Brings peace on earth, good will to men."*

How the Messiah Mediates His Peace

So, because of the sacrifice Christ made on the cross, we have peace with God now, and we will live in total peace with Him in His kingdom when Christ returns. This will be a kingdom of righteousness where there is justice for all, and everyone will live in the peace of God. We have a taste of this now through the Sacrament of the Altar and we look forward to the fulfillment of it at His second coming. Receive His body and blood. Receive the peace of Jesus Christ, the **PEACE OF THE BRANCH OF JESSE**.

*And the peace of God,
Which surpasses all understanding,
Will guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus.*
