

War and Peace

The human race has had thousands of years to establish peace on the earth, but look at the state of affairs. In the last hundred years, over one hundred million people have died in war.



Frightful weapons have replaced the rifle and shell, which were terrible enough. Death can be delivered over vast distances, and with great accuracy. Weaponry exists that can eliminate 250,000 people in a vast fireball, in a matter of seconds. We see too the number of wars in Africa, in the Middle East and elsewhere, where brother kills brother and millions are homeless. It is frightening.

I have just been reading Joel and there is a verse that rivets the attention. It looks at the time just before Jesus returns to set up God's kingdom on earth, and it states:

I will show wonders in the heavens and in the earth: blood and fire and pillars of smoke (Joel 2:30).

I wonder if this is a description of the effects of modern warfare. Certainly, Daniel warned us of frightening times

just before the Kingdom of God is established:

There shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation, even to that time (Daniel 12:1).

Preparation

This is not meant to worry us but to prepare us. When we see these things happening, we can be sure that the Lord Jesus is preparing for his return. What a glad day that will be!

Whatever fearful events may take place the Lord Jesus calls on his followers to stand firm for their faith. In that grand Sermon on the Mount, he told us how to live, how to prepare:

Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth (Matthew 5:5).

In a world where many think only of themselves, he shows that pride is an enemy of true Christianity.

Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy (v7).

Being merciful is important on a personal level, behaving in a forgiving, gentle way to those around us. At a national and global level, it is sadly lacking, one of the root causes of war and atrocities.

Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God (v9).

Peacemakers are few and far between in our world. Jesus teaches

us that it is a vital character trait in his followers. We have peace with God, so should be constructive not destructive.

Just before he faced the horror of man's cruelty in his torture and death, Jesus gave us a powerful example of this type of attitude when he said:

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).

Better Times Coming!

At Jesus' return, there will be peace and harmony for those who have loved him. That is when the world's wars will be replaced by perfect peace. What a vision!

How then could a Christian press a button and wipe out a whole city? Or spray gas over little children? There is so much confusion among the nations that statesmen do not know which way to turn. Efforts to find peace fail or are sabotaged. Jesus said this about the time before he comes back:

There will be signs in the sun, in the moon, and in the stars; and on the earth distress of nations, with perplexity, the sea and the waves roaring; men's hearts failing them from fear and the expectation of those things which are coming on the earth, for the powers of the heavens will be shaken. Then they will see the Son of Man coming in a cloud with power and great glory. Now when these things begin to happen, look up and lift up your heads, because your redemption draws near (Luke 21:25-28).

It is an invigorating call to all who follow the Lord Jesus. Don't be despondent, don't give up, be ready!



The awful problems of the world are signposts that the Kingdom of God is coming.

The prophet Isaiah had much to say about the Kingdom. He wrote about the work of Jesus in establishing peace and doing away with the weapons of war:

He shall judge between the nations, and rebuke many people; they shall beat their swords into ploughshares, and their spears into pruning hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war anymore (Isaiah 2:4).

Describing the rule of the Prince of Peace, Isaiah said:

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 9:7).

Isn't it exciting to think on what God has prepared for those who love Him? No human can promise that but God will fulfil it, and soon!

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