

Prince of Peace Prince of Peace, pt. 4 www.halseed.com

Good morning everybody!

I learned this week that, to the Piro tribal people of Peru, the word “peace,” means, “the well-arranged soul.” [*Peace = “the well-arranged soul”*]

To the Zacapoaxtla of Mexico, peace means, “completeness.”

[*Peace = “the well-arranged soul”*
= “completeness”]

To the Gbeapo people of Liberia, it means, “my heart sits down.”

[*Peace = “the well-arranged soul”*
= “completeness”
= “my heart sits down”]

And to the Baouli people of Ivory Coast, it means “a song in my body.”

[*Peace = “the well-arranged soul”*
= “completeness”
= “my heart sits down”
= “a song in the body”]

Those are great pictures, aren't they?

And for some of us, this year, like no other year, is year in which we need peace.

So, for the past 3 weeks around here, we've been traveling through a promise 2700-year-old promise that God gave to people about peace. The promise was God's Christmas present to us. That unto us a child would be born, a son would be given whose name would be called “Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.”

From the reports I'm getting, and from my own personal experience with this promise, this series is becoming a kind of landmark in many of our lives. And this morning it reaches it's climax as we talk about the huge promise God made to us, that in our darkness He would send to us a prince of peace.

For 3 solid weeks we've been reading the words of Isaiah chapter 9 together, because this is where the promise is contained, and this morning, we're going to read them together one last time.

So if you would find and open a Bible, [*Turn to Isaiah 9, p. 683*]. And then stand with me while we read this section.

There are some unusual words in the first verse or two, so I'll read those for us, and then, when I get to v. 6, I'll ask you all to read out loud with me.

Isaiah 9:1.

Nevertheless, there will be no more gloom for those who were in distress. In the past he humbled the land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, but in the future he will honor Galilee of the Gentiles, by the way of the sea, along the Jordan – Isaiah 9:1

*The people walking in darkness have seen a great light;
On those living in the land of the shadow of death a light has dawned.
You have enlarged the nation and increased their joy;
They rejoice before you as people rejoice at the harvest, as men rejoice when dividing the plunder. – Isaiah 9:2-3*

*For as in the day of Midian's defeat, you have shattered the yoke that burdens them,
The bar across their shoulders, the rod of their oppressor.
Every warrior's boot used in battle and every garment rolled in blood will be destined for burning, will be fuel for the fire. – Isaiah 9:4-5*

Isn't that a great promise? What God is promising here is that one day there will be no more need for warriors to wear boots and there will be no more fear of blood getting on people's clothes, because there will be no more war, no more strife, no more opposition or oppression. Why? That's the answer God gives in the next two verses. Read them out loud with me:

*For to us a child is born, to us a son is given,
And the government will be on his shoulders.
And he will be called
Wonderful Counselor,
Mighty God,
Everlasting Father,
Prince of Peace. – Isaiah 9:6*

*Of the increase of his government and peace there will be no end.
He will reign on David's throne and over his kingdom,
Establishing and upholding it with justice and righteousness
From that time on and forever. – Isaiah 9:7*

Let's pray.

God, many of us hear have loved ones who have served in war. Some of us have loved ones who even now are serving our country in this way. Thank you for them.

You know you never desired it to be this way. And from these verses we know that you're working on a plan whereby one day no one will ever need to serve in this way again. Make it so, Lord. Make it so soon.

In the meantime, help us today to understand what this promise means for us now, during this “meantime.”

In Jesus’ name, Amen.

Have a seat. And keep this passage open on your laps.

Well, this morning we are concluding the promise friends. It almost makes you wish there were more, doesn’t it?

Three weeks ago we began looking in this manger and learned 700 years before Jesus was born, God started telling people about the miracle of Christmas because he was so excited about it. Back then, God used one of His most trusted friends to give us this message. An ordinary man named “Isaiah.” Isaiah loved God, and listened to Him. And God told Him amazing things about the future.

One of the things God told Isaiah was about the coming Messiah. Throughout the book of Isaiah, God reveals all sorts of names and titles for the Messiah. We don’t have time to study all these names, but let me just give you a few of them to help you see exactly how God was thinking and feeling at that time.

One of the names is “Immanuel”.

[Isaiah 7:14 = Immanuel]

Isaiah 7:14 says, *The virgin will be with child and will give birth to a son, and will call him Immanuel.* – *Isaiah 7:14* Immanuel means “God with us.” God came to be with us so that we could understand Him, know Him, like Him, and learn to trust Him.

Another name is *Root of Jesse*. God tells us in Isaiah 11 that the Messiah will be born as a root on family tree of a shepherd who lived in Bethlehem, whose name was Jesse. That, by the way is why Joseph had to go to Bethlehem to register for the Roman census, and why Jesus was born in Bethlehem. Because Joseph’s ancestral home was in Bethlehem. God wanted us to know that the Christmas miracle wasn’t an accident, and it wasn’t a last-minute idea, so 700 years beforehand He said, *In that day the Root of Jesse will stand as a banner for the peoples... Isaiah 11:10*

[Isaiah 7:14 = Immanuel

11:10 = The Root of Jesse]

In Isaiah 4:2 God says that Messiah will be “The Branch of the Lord,” because out of Him will come much fruit.

[Isaiah 7:14 = Immanuel

11:10 = The Root of Jesse

4:2 = The Branch of the Lord]

In Isaiah 32:1 he calls Him “The King.”

[Isaiah 7:14 = Immanuel

11:10 = The Root of Jesse
4:2 = The Branch of the Lord
32:1 = The King]

In Isaiah 40:10 he's called "Sovereign Lord."

[Isaiah 7:14 = Immanuel

11:10 = The Root of Jesse
4:2 = The Branch of the Lord
32:1 = The King
40:10 = Sovereign Lord]

In Isaiah 40:11 he's called "Shepherd."

[Isaiah 7:14 = Immanuel

11:10 = The Root of Jesse
4:2 = The Branch of the Lord
32:1 = The King
40:10 = Sovereign Lord
40:11 = Shepherd]

In Isaiah 41:14 he's called, "Your Redeemer."

[Isaiah 7:14 = Immanuel

11:10 = The Root of Jesse
4:2 = The Branch of the Lord
32:1 = The King
40:10 = Sovereign Lord
40:11 = Shepherd
41:14 = Your Redeemer]

In Isaiah 42:1, he's called, "My Servant."

[Isaiah 7:14 = Immanuel

11:10 = The Root of Jesse
4:2 = The Branch of the Lord
32:1 = The King
40:10 = Sovereign Lord
40:11 = Shepherd
41:14 = Your Redeemer
42:1 = My Servant]

In Isaiah 53:3 he's a "Man of Sorrows" and familiar with suffering.

[Isaiah 7:14 = Immanuel

11:10 = The Root of Jesse
4:2 = The Branch of the Lord
32:1 = The King
40:10 = Sovereign Lord
40:11 = Shepherd
41:14 = Your Redeemer

42:1 = My Servant
53:3 = Man of Sorrows]

In Isaiah 60:16 he's "Your Savior."

[Isaiah 7:14 = Immanuel
11:10 = The Root of Jesse
4:2 = The Branch of the Lord
32:1 = The King
40:10 = Sovereign Lord
40:11 = Shepherd
41:14 = Your Redeemer
42:1 = My Servant
53:3 = Man of Sorrows
60:16 = Your Savior]

And of course, the names we have been looking at in this series, in Isaiah 9:6, he is called, Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

[Isaiah 7:14 = Immanuel
11:10 = The Root of Jesse
4:2 = The Branch of the Lord
32:1 = The King
40:10 = Sovereign Lord
40:11 = Shepherd
41:14 = Your Redeemer
42:1 = My Servant
53:3 = Man of Sorrows
60:16 = Your Savior
9:6 = Wonderful Counselor
9:6 = Mighty God
9:6 = Everlasting Father
9:6 = Prince of Peace]

I finished my Christmas shopping a week ago. Nine days ahead of time, I knew exactly what I was getting my children for Christmas. 700 years ahead of time, God knew exactly what He was getting His children for Christmas.

Today we're concluding the series with "Prince of Peace."

Prince of Peace, as Isaiah wrote it, in his native language of Hebrew is "sar-shalom."
[Prince of Peace = "sar-shalom"]

"Sar-shalom." Say that out loud for with me: *sar-shalom*. Jesus is the sar-shalom.

"Sar" is the word for prince. Normal when we think of a prince, we think of the son of a king. But that's not what this word is designed to make us think. This word literally means, *Sar = head person, captain, governor, prince*. The man in charge. The go-to guy.

The Romans had a very similar word for their rule, he was called the “C-sar.” They had Julius Caesar, Augustus Caesar, Nero Caesar. That was their head guy.

Until the Bolshevik Revolution, the Russians adopted the same title for their head of state. They called their ruler the, “czar.”

Jesus is the sar-shalom.

Shalom is the word for peace. In the Hebrew language, peace is a rich and powerful concept.
Shalom = well-being, happiness, peace.

Jesus is *the governor of well-being, the captain of happiness, the ruler of peace.* The sar-shalom. Friends, this is the climax of Isaiah’s promise. And I want you to fully understand it today. Because if you can embrace this, you will see the Christ differently for the rest of your life.

Do you remember what the angels said when they announced Jesus’ birth?

***Glory to God in the highest,
and on earth peace to men
on whom his favor rests. – Luke 2:16***

Let me read the passage to you:
(read Luke 2:8-19)

“Mary treasured up all these things and pondered them in her heart.”

Imagine Mary doing that for a minute. How do you think she was sitting while she was doing this treasuring in her heart? Imitate her posture.

How do you suppose Mary *felt* while she was doing this treasuring?

I’ll bet she felt peaceful. A sense of well-being, happiness, internal health. Peace.

Jesus brought peace at his birth.

***[How Jesus brought peace
A. At His birth.]***

The Bible says that Jesus spent the next 30 years growing up, living the normal life of a human being so that He could identify with us in the things we go through. He experienced hunger, and tiredness, and disappointment. He experienced family. He learned a trade. He earned a living. He made friends, celebrated birthdays with relatives. (Of course, one bummer for Him was, He was born on Christmas, so His birthday fell on Christmas and He only got to open presents to Him once a year.)

He lived a normal life, so He would know what our lives were like, and so *we would know that He knows what our lives are like*. And then one day, he launched into ministry. He started revealing who He was.

His first miracle took place at the wedding of a relative, where they were running out of refreshments. Let me read you the story: (Read John 2:1-10)

See why Jesus did this? His mother was getting nervous. And his relatives were about to be embarrassed. He doesn't want that. So He does a miracle. And the miracle brings peace.

[How Jesus brought peace

A. At His birth.

B. In His miracles.

Mom's happy, the bride and groom are happy. There's peace, shalom, well-being.

The first time that Jesus stands up to speak is in his home town synagogue in Nazareth. Let me read you what happens when Jesus speaks: (read Luke 4:16-22)

[How Jesus brought peace

A. At His birth.

B. In His miracles.

C. In His words.

Look at this manger for a minute. "This One," God says, "is the sar-shalom."

His first moments brought peace to all who visited him, his miracles brought peace to all who experienced them, his words brought peace to all who received them, first to last.

The last time Jesus gave a formal talk, you know what He said? "***Do not let your hearts be troubled. Trust in God; trust also in me.***" – John 14:1

He concludes the speech by saying,

"Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid." – John 14:27

He's the Prince of Peace, the sar-shalom.

Isaiah 9 goes on to say,

Of the increase of his government and peace there will be no end.

He will reign on David's throne and over his kingdom,

Establishing and upholding it with justice and righteousness

From that time on and forever. – Isaiah 9:7

Which just begs the question, "How can that be? How can there be no end to peace as a result of the Christ-child coming? After all, there's no peace in our day, we're at war."

To understand that, you have to understand what Jesus said in those final words of his speech. Let's look at those again: ***“Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives.”***

What He's saying here is that He gives a kind of peace that is different than you can get in the world. He's talking about inner peace. Peace in your soul. Peace that comes from a sense of having God's presence with you, and forgiveness for your sins, and hope, and purpose.

Not the world's kind of peace, inner peace.

Friends, watch some time what happens around this place when a person who is far from God invites Christ to enter his life. The before and after shots are in stark contrast. For instance, I have a friend who I hope to introduce you all to on Vision Night, coming up in just a few weeks. This friend invited Christ into his life just a few months ago. And I'll let him tell you the whole story. But as we sat in my office a few weeks later, he just sited for me instance after instance of where God had changed him, brought him peace, since he began following Christ.

That's what Jesus is talking about here. Inner peace.

See if this distinction will help you:

Isaiah says, ***Of the increase of his government and peace there will be no end. – Isaiah 9:7***

That's a bold statement. But we've now had 2000 years since Christ's birth to track it. So is it true? Has his government and peace continued to increase?

Well, at his birth, Jesus governed but one life: his own. 33 years later, he left a handful of follows and told them to continue to expand His kingdom.

If we could do a chart of the growth of that kingdom – the number of followers who have signed on, year after year after year, it would be a Wall Street broker's dream. As far as we can tell, from that day to this there has been a steady increase in followers year in and year out. Never a decrease, never a down year.

Some estimates say that as many as 2 billion people today have come under the government of Jesus.

This is how God predicted Jesus' government would increase: People would submit their lives to Him.

[How His government increases

A. Currently: People submit their lives to Him.]

People would look around at the choices they had, and say, “I can invest my life in any number of different ways. But which way will give me what I'm looking for?” And then they'd ask, “Well, what is it I'm really looking for?”

And many of them, in sober moments would look past the trinkets and bobbles that promise to make us feel neat or look neat or make other people think we are neat and say, “You know, the reason I want to feel that way is because what I’m really looking for is shalom. Well-being. Happiness inside. Peace. And it makes sense, from what I know of Jesus, (about how He lived His life, what He promised people, and how He has delivered on His promise in the lives of people I know), that I should bow myself before Him and invite Him to rule my life, to be the prince of it, and give me peace.”

People have been making that decision, and then following through on it now, for 20 centuries. And it’s working.

This invisible government, the reign of Christ over His people called, “The Church,” is now the largest organization on earth.

Anybody want to join it? Anybody want shalom-type peace?

The Bible says that currently Jesus’ government increases one life at a time, as individuals submit to Him.

But it also predicts that one day Jesus will return, and then His reign won’t just be a spiritual one, it will be a physical one. ***In the future:*** (it say) ***He will restore nature and rule the world.***

Let me show this to you. This is a picture of how it will be when Jesus’ government becomes physical:

In Isaiah 11:6 it says,

***The wolf will live with the lamb,
the leopard will lie down with the goat,
the calf and the lion and the yearling together;
and a little child will lead them.
The cow will feed with the bear,
their young will lie down together,
and the lion will eat straw like the ox.
The infant will play near the hole of the cobra,
and the young child put his hand into the viper’s nest.***
- ***Isaiah 11:6-8***

***They will neither harm nor destroy
on my holy mountain,
for the earth will be full of the knowledge of the Lord...***
- ***Isaiah 11:9***

***In that day the Root of Jesse will stand as a banner for the peoples;
the nations will rally to him,
and his place of rest will be glorious.***
- ***Isaiah 11:10***

- When He comes, even nature will be at peace.
- And when he rules – the earth will have full knowledge of Him.

Amen.

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