



The Kingdom of God - Peace on Earth

READINGS FOR THIS LESSON - Psalm 72; Isaiah 11; Isaiah 35

Peace on earth-when?



When Jesus was born, the angels sang for joy. The words of their song are written in Luke 2:14,

"Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to men on whom his favor rests."

Yet until now, there has never been any real and lasting peace on earth. There never will be, until Jesus Christ comes back to Israel to set up the Kingdom of God. The Old Testament tells us a lot about that Kingdom, and gives us many details of that time of peace when there will be no more poverty.

A Worldwide Kingdom

Look again at Psalm 72. In this Psalm we are given a picture in words of the time when God's Kingdom is established on earth. Notice particularly verse 8,

"He will rule from sea to sea and from the River to the ends of the earth."

This tells us that the Kingdom is going to extend over the whole earth. We find the same thing in Isaiah 11:9, where God says,

"They will neither harm nor destroy on all my holy mountain, for the earth will be full of the knowledge of the LORD as the waters cover the sea."

Let us look up one more verse. Please turn to Zechariah 14:9, where we read,

"The LORD will be king over the whole earth. On that day there will be one LORD, and his name the only name."

Jesus Christ the King

Jesus Christ will rule from Jerusalem, his capital city, which he once called,

".the city of the Great King." (Matthew 5:35).



His law will go out through all the earth, as we read in Isaiah 2:1-4, and note particularly the end of verse 3:

"The law will go out from Zion, the word of the LORD from Jerusalem."

The best Kingdom

Suppose you were asked to say what kind of world you would like to live in. Perhaps some of the things you may like would be safety, freedom from fear, enough food, good health, a place to live, a clean environment and for everyone to be happy. If so, you would have a picture in your mind similar to the one the prophet Micah gives us.

"He will judge between many peoples and will settle disputes for strong nations far and wide. They will beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks. Nation will not take up sword against nation, nor will they train for war anymore. Every man will sit under his own



vine and under his own fig tree, and no one will make them afraid, for the LORD Almighty has spoken."
Micah 4:3-4.

But before there can be peace men and women must be taught to walk in the ways of God. So long as they continue to go their own way, there will be trouble. So one of the first works of the Lord Jesus Christ will be to teach all nations the ways of God. But, you may say, "there are some who simply wouldn't listen!" That is true, and those who do not obey will be punished, as we read in Isaiah 11:4,

"but with righteousness he will judge the needy, with justice he will give decisions for the poor of the earth. He will strike the earth with the rod of his mouth; with the breath of his lips he will slay the wicked."

When Jesus returns, he will be all-powerful. Under the rule of Jesus Christ, all people will learn to do that which is pleasing to God – as we read at the end of Isaiah 26:9,

"...When your judgments come upon the earth, the people of the world learn righteousness."

Now turn to Isaiah 32:17-18, and you will read,

"The fruit of righteousness will be peace; the effect of righteousness will be quietness and confidence forever. My people will live in peaceful dwelling places, in secure homes, in undisturbed places of rest."

Blessings for all

With such perfect conditions, there will be happiness on every hand. We read in verse 16 of Psalm 72,

"Let grain abound throughout the land; on the tops of the hills may it sway."

If there is plenty of grain upon the tops of the hills, we can imagine how fruitful it will be in the valleys! As we read in Psalm 67:6,

"Then the land will yield its harvest, and God, our God, will bless us."

Even the deserts will be green in those days. Read the beautiful picture given in Isaiah 35:6-7,

"...Water will gush forth in the wilderness and streams in the desert. The burning sand will become a pool, the thirsty ground bubbling springs. In the haunts where jackals once lay, grass and reeds and papyrus will grow."



Healing of mind and body

With these blessings, will come also the blessing of good health. When Jesus lived on earth nearly 2,000 years ago, he healed many who were sick, by using the power that God had given him. In the Kingdom of God, this power will be seen again. Read Isaiah 35:5-6,

"Then will the eyes of the blind be opened and the ears of the deaf unstopped. Then will the lame leap like a deer, and the mute tongue shout for joy..."



We can well imagine, too, that people will live much longer than they do today.

In Isaiah 65:20-25 the prophet tells us that this will be so,

"Never again will there be in it an infant who lives but a few days, or an old man who does not live out his years; he who dies at a hundred will be thought a mere youth; he who fails to reach a hundred will be considered accursed. They will build houses and dwell in them; they will plant vineyards and eat their fruit. No longer will they build houses and others live in them, or plant and others eat. For as the days of a tree, so will be the days of my people; my chosen ones will long enjoy the works of their hands. They will not toil in vain or bear children doomed to misfortune; for they will be a people blessed by the LORD, they and their descendants with them. Before they call I will answer; while they are still speaking I will hear. The wolf and

the lamb will feed together, and the lion will eat straw like the ox, but dust will be the serpent's food. They will neither harm nor destroy on all my holy mountain, says the LORD."

God's promises never fail

Perhaps you are thinking, "All this sounds very nice, but it is surely too good to be true". If the promises, which we have read about, depended on men or women, then we certainly could put no trust in them. Even the best of them may not be able to do what they promise, because of human weakness. But these are the promises of God, and we can put all our trust in them.

Read Isaiah 55:6-11, and notice particularly verse 11,

"...so is my word that goes out from my mouth: It will not return to me empty, but will accomplish what I desire and achieve the purpose for which I sent it."

And so we can look forward with joy to the time when there shall be:

"Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to men on whom his favor rests." (Luke 2:14).

Summary

1. When Jesus Christ comes back, he will become King of the World.
2. His capital city will be Jerusalem.
3. All over the world there will be peace and safety, health and happiness.
4. In God's worldwide Kingdom, everybody will learn God's commandments and obey them.