

PEACE ON EARTH

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In the coming of Jesus Christ into the world, we have seen something new. It has brought to fulfillment the great dream of Judaism and of the Old Testament prophets. It is a universal reign of heavenly peace over all the earth. Indeed, “all the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of our God” (Ps 97:3). The poor and meek of the earth shall find justice and righteousness, joy and heavenly peace, for “with righteousness he shall judge the poor, and decide with equity for the meek of the earth” (Is 11:4). He shall, in fact, be clothed with righteousness. “Righteousness shall be the girdle of his waist, and faithfulness the girdle of his loins” (Is 11:5).

This is the new era that God has initiated on earth in the coming of Jesus Christ. The earth is renewed, and all nature is refreshed and transformed, for now it is the place where righteousness dwells, where the Sun of Justice shines and makes his abode among us. There will be no limit to the peace that he brings, for he renews the hearts of all who receive him. He is light itself, the light of the universe, and he fills the darkness with his splendor so that we can become light in him, refreshed and renewed through him. “Of the increase of his government and of peace there will be no end, upon the throne of David, and over his kingdom, to establish it, and to uphold it with justice and with righteousness from this time forth and for ever” (Is 11:7).

Endless peace, unto the ends of the earth, and salvation, unto the ends of the world, is what Jesus Christ has brought into the world. This is why the angels sang at his birth, “Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men” (Lk 2:14 KJV). He is the Wonderful Counselor, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace (Is 9:6). It is he, God in human form, come to save us all, to fill us with his own heavenly peace and divine life. He has come to take our sins away by his death in our place on the cross to satisfy the divine wrath and endure our punishment for us. Freed from sin, restored to his grace, and filled with his love, we dwell in the heavenly peace that he came among us to give to all who accept him as their Lord and Savior. That is why in his reign of peace on earth there will be no end to the increase of his dominion and of peace unto the ends of the earth and unto the end of time.

He has come to establish and uphold David’s kingdom with righteousness and justice for ever and ever. Our task is to live in this kingdom of peace on earth, to be the leaven of God’s righteousness and renewal in the world, for this kingdom is light in the midst of darkness, a reign of peace in the midst of conflict and confusion. It is the renewal of the earth, the light of the universe, the longing of human hearts, the fulfillment of all our desires. A great light has come into the world and has shown upon us. It is with us still. It is here for our salvation and renewal. It fills us with heavenly peace and the very happiness of God himself. It is a light that shines in our heart and illuminates us from within. It also shines on us from without, for it shines upon the whole earth, and we warm ourselves in its splendor.

That is why he came—namely, that we might walk in his light and be filled with his splendor. This is what it means to be born again in Jesus Christ, to have new life in him, to acclaim him as our Lord, and to rejoice in his salvation and heavenly peace. In his days, a new and universal peace came to earth, a new reign of peace, not a peace of this world. It is a new, objective reality, over which he is king, the Prince of Peace, the Wonderful Counselor, Christ the Lord. This is the Messianic age, the time when “the wolf shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard ... lie down with the kid” (Is 11:6). The lion and the calf will live together in peace. Indeed, the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea (Is 11:9).

Prophecy has been fulfilled. Christ our Lord reigns in the world, in his kingdom, and we are in that kingdom, warming ourselves in its splendor, walking in its glory. Its radiant light fills us. We are to be the sons of that kingdom, renewed by it, filled with light by it, basking in the radiant glory of our king. We daily seek to renew ourselves more in this glory and not fall out of it. We do this by always doing our king’s will and renouncing ourselves in everything. We wait on him daily. He is the source of all our blessing and joy. We wait on him even when in darkness until he shines on us again with his radiant light. And we ever seek to extend his kingdom in the world in all we do and say, in the witness we give, in the life we live. We preach Christ, the Lord, as our great king, the sun king, the Sun of Justice, the bringer of divine righteousness to the earth, the Prince of Peace.

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