

Advent: A Season of Expectation  
Looking Forward to Peace  
Isaiah 8:20 – 9:7

This Christmas season people all over our land will be singing songs of “peace on earth, good will to men.” But does our world really know what peace is all about? Even now in locations around our world there are nations and people groups at war with one another. Politically and ideologically our nation is currently at war. Since 1900 there have been approximately 267 armed conflicts around the world. Obviously, what our fractured world needs is peace, lasting peace.

1. Only through obedience to God’s Word can we find internal peace.
  
2. Only in a promised kingdom can we find relational peace.
  
3. Only in a promised Savior can we find comprehensive, lasting peace.

The Israelites were very much in self-imposed darkness; however, God uses Isaiah to encourage them that their darkness didn’t need to last forever. There was light available. This is a word for all of us today, because if we are still living, we don’t have to remain in darkness. Light is available, and Jesus is that light. That’s why the hymn-writer once said, “Turn your eyes upon Jesus. Look full in His wonderful face, and the things of earth will grow strangely dim in the light of His glory and grace.”

Reflection

Take some time to consider in detail each of the titles given to this righteous King? What is the significance of each? For instance, what does it mean for you to have placed your trust in a wonderful Counselor? How does Almighty God reinforce the deity of this son/child of verse 6? We tend to think of Jesus in terms of peace, but how does the New Testament reinforce the conquering aspects of His current and future rule and reign? (Hint: read passages like Colossians 2:15, 1 Corinthians 15:24-28, Matthew 10:34-39.) Then again, how does the New Testament affirm the peace that comes from knowing Christ? Consider passages such as Romans 5:1 and Philippians 4:6-7. What does verse 7 teach us about the nature of Jesus’ kingdom? What are the theological implications of the phrase “zeal of the Lord,” and what does this phrase tell you about God’s nature and character?